Special Issue

Talking about Roma:
Implications for Social Inclusion

Editor

Eben Friedman

Table of Contents

Editorial

Introduction to the Special Issue "Talking about Roma: Implications for Social Inclusion"

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Abstract

By the last decade of the twentieth century, official discourse calling for the elimination of Roma had been largely replaced by approaches aimed at inclusion. Contemporary approaches of this kind can be roughly divided into those which emphasize human rights as a basis for measures to improve the Roma's situation and those rooted in the proposition that improvements in the situation of Roma can be expected to provide economic benefits for the general populations of the countries in which Roma live. The contributions to this special issue critically examine public discourses from throughout Europe which are ostensibly aimed at promoting the social inclusion of Roma. While the fact that the discourses treated fit broadly within human rights and/or economic paradigms allows the articles to speak to one another in various ways, the articles also exhibit a wide range of variation in approach as well as geographical focus. Whereas the first four articles deal directly with issues of definition in relation to Roma, a second group of contributions compares developments across multiple countries or institutions. The last four articles each treat a single country, with the final article narrowing the focus further to a single city.

Keywords

assimilation; economics; genocide; human rights; inclusion; Gypsies; Roma

Since Roma first arrived in Europe, policies targeting them have varied both in ultimate aim and in proposed means. In the absence of a consistent direction in official approaches to Roma, from the sixteenth through the late twentieth century Roma in Europe were subject at various times and places not only to policies ranging from assimilation through enslavement to physical extermination, but sometimes also to official approaches recognizing Roma as a legitimate minority with a set of rights to be protected (see Friedman, 2014).

By the last decade of the twentieth century, official discourse calling for the elimination of Roma—whether through mass killing or by abolishing cultural distinctions—had largely given way to approaches explicitly aimed at inclusion. Whereas documents on Roma published in the 1990s by intergovernmental organizations active in Europe tended to emphasize human rights as a basis for calls for measures to improve the Roma's situation,[1] since the first several years of the current millennium similar calls have been increasingly rooted in the proposition that improvements in the situation of Roma can be expected to provide economic benefits for the general populations of the countries in which Roma live.[2]

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[1] See, for example, UN Commission on Human Rights (1992); Parliamentary Assembly (1993); European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (1998); UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2000).

[2] See Ringold, Orenstein and Wilkens (2003); de Laat et al. (2010); European Commission (2010, 2011); Parliamentary Assembly (2013).

Each type of approach has its own dangers for social inclusion. On the one hand, the ostensibly hermetic nature of human rights appears to drive some opponents of rights-based policies targeting Roma to call into question Roma's very humanity (see Spiegel Online, 2013), such that the continued deployment of human rights discourse as used to date in relation to Roma risks deepening divisions between Roma and non-Roma (Krastev, 2011; see also aktuálne.sk, 2012). On the other hand, economic arguments for improving the situation of Roma introduce an element of contingency which opens the door also to similarly grounded arguments against improving the situation of Roma and ultimately even to arguments for killing them.[3]

Human rights and economic discourses are sometimes deployed together in attempts to build support for measures to improve the situation of Roma,[4] but the coexistence of these two types of ostensibly more inclusive approaches is not necessarily an easy one. Simply adding economic considerations to considerations of human rights does not address the ongoing backlash against talk about Roma in terms of human rights. Further, combining human rights arguments with economic ones does not provide explicit guidance on how to adjudicate between the two in case of conflict.

The contributions to this special issue critically examine public discourses from throughout Europe which are ostensibly aimed at promoting the social inclusion of Roma. While the fact that the discourses treated fit broadly within the human rights and/or economic paradigms described above allows the articles to speak to one another in various ways, the articles also exhibit a wide range of variation in approach as well as geographical focus. Whereas the first four articles deal directly with issues of definition in relation to Roma, a second group of contributions compares developments across multiple countries or institutions. The last four articles each treat a single country, with the final article in the special issue narrowing the focus further to a single city.

The first contribution to this special issue is Mihai Surdu and Martin Kovats's examination of practices behind the construction of Roma as an object to be studied and targeted with policy. Tracing links between scholarship on Gypsies in past centuries and present-day research on Roma, the authors point to a self-sustaining cycle of knowledge production, identification of problems, and policy initiatives which effectively reinforces divisions between Roma and non-Roma.

Skepticism about the existence of fundamental dif-

ferences between current political discourses on the social inclusion of Roma and policies enacted under previous regimes is equally apparent in the contribution by Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov. In addition to observing commonalities between EU policy for Roma inclusion on the one hand and the policies of Communist regimes and the Austro-Hungarian Empire on the other, the authors note similarities in the ways in which successive regimes portray the policies of their predecessors. Marushiakova and Popov further characterize targeted policies for the inclusion of Roma as a Catch 22 insofar as they ultimately reinforce the vicious circles which they are introduced to break.

András Pap draws on an analysis of recent legislative developments in Hungary to offer a broad assessment of the relationship between terminology and policy design. More specifically, the article focuses on how inconsistent classification of Roma as an ethnic, racial, or national minority stands in a relationship of mutual reinforcement with inconsistent policy making.

Issues of definition are prominent also in Mary Christianakis's contribution to this special issue. Making use of critical discourse analysis and systemic functional grammar analysis, Christianakis examines the victimization and vilification of Romani children in public discourses on education, human rights, poverty, child rearing, and child labor. The result, in Christianakis's account, is the depiction of Roma as incapable of experiencing a healthy childhood in the absence of interventions by non-Roma.

If portrayals of the past constitute a peripheral feature of Marushiakova and Popov's analysis, they are central to the contribution by Ljiljana Radonić. Case studies on three post-Communist memorial museums provide material for an examination of representations of Roma as victims of genocide during the Second World War. The findings of this examination point to a tension between recognition of genocide against Roma on the one hand and stereotyping and de-personalization on the other.

Joanna Kostka offers a critical look at discourses on Roma exclusion adopted in the framework of EU cohesion policy. Taking such policy as a broad category of proposed solutions to the problems faced by Roma, Kostka explores the representation of problems implicit or explicit in the formulation of Roma inclusion projects supported by EU Structural Funds in Andalusia and Eastern Slovakia, elaborating links between domestic discourses and the scope and quality of such projects.

Characterizing Roma's persistent exclusion despite the expansion of inclusion projects for Roma as a paradox, Chloë Delcour and Lesley Hustinx look for limiting factors within inclusionary discourse. Analyzing reports on human rights violations issued by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, and the European Roma

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[3] Krausnick (1995, pp. 173-174) provides details of *per capita* calculations generated by the SS Central Office of Economic Administration (*Wirtschaftverwaltungshauptamt*) of the economic benefits of working prisoners to death.

[4] See European Commission (2010, 2011, 2012); European Union Special Representative/EU Office in Kosovo (2013).

Rights Centre as transnational judicial, political, and civil society actors (respectively), the authors find on the one hand a common tendency to frame violations in terms of discrimination but on the other hand differences in prescriptions which undermine the effectiveness of the shared broader discursive frame.

Helen O'Nions offers a legal perspective on the education of Roma as a key indicator of social inclusion. In so doing, she examines the evolution of a social inclusion policy frame in the Decade of Roma Inclusion and follows it into more recent EU policy on Roma. Additionally, she traces a gradual shift in relevant judgements of the European Court of Human Rights from cautious endorsement of integrated education to implicit calls for corrective measures to address disparities in access to and completion of education resulting from discrimination. Despite these developments, however, O'Nions observes that progress toward integrated education has been negligible, attributing this tendency to entrenched social norms reflected in unambitious state policies under the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.

Education features centrally also in the case study by Ada Ingrid Engebrigtsen, which explores the reasons behind the lack of success of Norwegian government policies implemented over the last 50 years for the purpose of educating Roma. Among the main reasons for this, according to Engebrigtsen, are widespread and superficial understandings of minority culture in general and Romani culture in particular ranging from a combination of art, costume, language, and music to a monolithic expression of a collective will inimical to individual agency and development. Consistent with these understandings, educational models aimed at Roma in Norway have been perceived as alien, bringing covert resistance despite overt consent.

Norma Montesino and Ida Ohlsson Al Fakir examine inclusion policies targeting Roma in Sweden in the period 1950-1970, attending in particular to the uncritical assumptions behind those policies. Montesino and Al Fakir's analysis shows how the classification of Romani adults and children as disabled in different contexts has grounded measures and practices explained in terms of social inclusion but which have effectively reinforced Roma's marginalization.

Reflecting on obstacles to the social inclusion of Roma in Serbia, Jelena Vidojević and Natalija Perišić explore representations of multiple deprivation in public policies and media reports, also conducting interviews and discussions with interlocutors in the social welfare sector. Their findings point to the mutual reinforcement of discourses on Roma across sectors and to a joint contribution to continued exclusion by promoting stereotypes of Roma as fundamentally different from and less civilized than non-Roma.

The final article of this special issue is Elias Hemelsoet and Pauwel van Pelt's case study of Roma in the city of Ghent (Belgium). In the article, the authors examine the fit between official discourses on social inclusion and the experiences and self-perceptions of Romani immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe. This examination in turn forms the basis for conclusions about the potential for the objects of policy to play a role in informing and shaping the policies that affect them.

The special issue also includes two book reviews. The first of these is Victor A. Friedman's review of the book *I Met Lucky People: The Story of the Romani Gypsies.* The author of that book, Yaron Matras, provides the second review, the object of which is Mihai Surdu's *Expert Frames: Scientific and Policy Practices of Roma Classification*.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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About the Author

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Eben Friedman holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, San Diego. The title of his doctoral dissertation was "Explaining the Political Integration of Minorities: Roms as a Hard Case." Since working for the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) from 2002 to 2007 and for the Roma Education Fund (2007–2012), Friedman has undertaken advisory, analytical, and research assignments as an independent consultant. Additionally, he is affiliated with ECMI as a Senior Non-resident Research Associate. Friedman's publications have focused largely on ethnopolitics in Macedonia and on Roma.

Article

Roma Identity as an Expert-Political Construction

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Abstract

The creation of an EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies (2011) marks a significant step in the politicisation of Roma identity by ensuring a further increase in the number of initiatives, projects and programmes explicitly targeting Roma. The Framework itself is part of a process that began with postcommunist transition and which has produced historically unprecedented levels of Roma political activism along with a proliferation of national and transnational policy initiatives focussed on Roma identity. In seeking to explain this contemporary political phenomenon, the article argues that Roma is an identity constructed at the intersection of political and expert knowledge by various actors, such as policymakers, Romani activists, international organizations and scholars. This political-expert identity is applied to groups that are not bounded by a common language, religion, cultural practice, geographic location, occupation, physical appearance or lifestyle. The article explores how this collation of disparate populations into a notional political community builds upon a centuries-old Gypsy legacy. It scrutinizes five strands of identification practices that have contributed to the *longue durée* development of today's Roma as an epistemic object and policy target: police profiling of particular communities; administrative surveys; Romani activism; Roma targeted policies; quantitative scientific research. The article argues that the contemporary economic and political conditions amidst which the politicisation of Roma identity is occurring explain how the ideological and institutional construction of the ethnic frame tends toward the reinforcement of the exclusion of those categorised as Roma, thus increasing the perceived need for Roma policy initiatives. A self-sustaining cycle has been created where Roma knowledge identifies Roma problems requiring a policy response, which produces more Roma knowledge, more needs and more policy responses. Yet, there are consequences to racialising public discourse by presenting Roma as both problematic and essentially different from everyone else. Hostility towards Roma has increased in many states indicating that the expert framing of Roma groupness affects social solidarity by disconnecting and distancing Roma from their fellow citizens.

Keywords

epistemic; expert knowledge; Gypsy; identification practices; identity; inclusion policies; racialization; Roma

1. Introduction

A standard narrative in mass-media, academic and policy expert accounts is that Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority, a population of 10–12 millions scattered all over the continent (and beyond), the de-

scendants of people who originated in India a thousand or more years ago. This racialised[1] narrative of com-

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[1] As discussed in the article, current representations of Roma owe much to the knowledge produced within a racial frame. Historically and now, Gypsies/Roma have been externally iden-

mon kinship continues with the image of the Roma as a disadvantaged population at risk of discrimination in all spheres of life and who need special treatment for achieving life opportunities comparable with that of the non-Roma with whom they live. Efforts to overcome these disadvantages are usually referred to as inclusion or integration.

The above narrative has a large circulation in policy circles and in society at large. Since the 1990s, Roma social policies have built upon it, while less circulated stories of Roma un-grouping have failed to attract the attention of policymakers. Critical social theory tells us that ethnic, national and regional identities are social and not natural phenomena. Yet, despite the inherently transformative aspirations underpinning the politicisation of Roma identity, its proponents almost invariably present its legitimacy as a reflection of an actual Roma people, rather than acknowledging it as an identity in whose construction they are themselves playing an active part. The political imperative to claim that Roma-related initiatives reflect rather than create a Roma reality is able to draw on more than two centuries of scholarship devoted to Gypsies, and now Roma as an object of study[2].

Just as political claims about Roma need to be critically examined, so does the premise from which this politics derives. This article builds on anti-essentialising perspectives that have been applied to explain Roma as a social and cultural phenomenon and it seeks to encourage the research agenda towards a constructivist position. We can see how contemporary Roma inclusion policy is not so much a break with the past as the latest form of a long-standing process of identity construction and control.

Historical context is important for several reasons. First, historians analysing the social formation of the Roma group under elite pressures and dominant discourses often do not address recent history and critical analyses usually stop before the year 1990 or earlier[3]. Second, political scientists[4] who are critical of recent

developments in Roma identity politics and inclusion policies avoid examining contemporary events against historical contexts or scrutinizing non-political actors. Third, interdisciplinary criticism of Roma identity construction is rarely articulated as historians[5] emphasise the influence of academic scholarship in the emergence of a public Romani identity, while political scientists concentrate more on the role of international organizations and Romani activism. Fourth, quantitative researchers—that is policy oriented researchers—most often use both a-theoretical and a-historical perspectives when explaining the Roma they are discussing[6].

This article does not attempt to explain all the contentious issues and disconnections highlighted above, but notes there being different scholarly approaches to the conceptualisation of Roma across time and disciplinary fields. Recognition of the ambiguity and contestation of Roma identity provides the starting point for assessing the effects of contemporary Roma inclusion policies on the meaning of Roma and the implications for social cohesion of the identity's politicisation.

Beyond the generation of countless strategic documents at national and European levels, the socio-economic mapping of millions of the Roma and thousands of targeted Roma programs, the reinforcement of the Roma label as an umbrella category for policy purposes should also be assessed for the effects that it produces *vis-a-vis* promoting a positive identity for diverse groups ostracised over time as Gypsies and currently conceptualised as Roma. In two decades, the Roma label has become institutionalised across Europe[7] and is replacing a wide variety of identities that were applied for centuries to diverse groups for de-

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tified and defined by surveys, police-led censuses, expert estimates and policy-related initiatives based on physical appearance and social context rather than self-identification. The political-academic consensus of Roma undercount in the census subscribes to a racialised perspective as it claims the existence of some essential Roma-ness that makes self-identification unreliable.

[2] That a lack of theoretical perspective in studies about Roma renders Romani studies a marginal position in academia is signaled among others by Surdu (in press) and Tremelett (2014).

[3] Willems (1997) analyzes academic framing of the Gypsies as a coherent group and Klímová-Alexander (2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2007, 2010) explores Romani activism in historical perspective. The research of Willems ends with 1945 while that of Klímová-Alexander stops before 1990.

[4] See for example Kovats (2003, 2013), Vermeersch (2005, 2006, 2012), Klímová-Alexander (2005), Simhandl (2006),

Popova (2015) and van Baar (2012).

[5] See for example Willems (1997), Willems and Lucassen (2000), Mayall (2004).

[6] After 1990 quantitative research on socio-economic and anti-discrimination topics were carried out all over Europe. For example, in Romania Rughiniş (2012) analyzed 8 quantitative surveys on Roma, between 2000 and 2008, Examples of regional/European level surveys on Roma include those of the World Bank (2002), UNDP (2002, 2005), FRA and UNDP (2012). Many smaller quantitative surveys were conducted by NGOs and research institutes.

[7] Efforts to replace Gypsy with Roma occurred in Romania in the interwar period (Nastasă & Varga, 2001). Currently there is doubt as to whether the interwar Romanian Roma politics aimed at national or international recognition of Roma as a group. See for example Klímová-Alexander (2005b, p. 172) for these debates related to whether an interwar international Romani congress took place or not. Archival searches have not produced evidence that it did, though Klímová-Alexander (2005b) argues that simply the idea of organizing such a congress was important for internationalization of Romani representation. Elevating Roma to the status of a transnational group occurred in 1971 with the First Romani Congress and adoption of formal symbols of a nation such as a flag, a hymn and the proposal of a standardized language.

marcating economic, cultural and social boundaries within European societies. While this re-branding was initiated in the political sphere, the new Roma label was swiftly adopted in other fields such as academic research[8], the mass media and in administrative censuses. This newly conceptualised Roma people has many resemblances with that which has been defined as Gypsies during the last two centuries. Today's "Roma" is the contemporary inheritor of the Gypsy legacy, an identity historically fabricated by scholars, experts and bureaucrats.

To be clear, the claim we are making is not that the Roma group does not exist, quite the opposite. We assert that the group is being formed and that the driving force behind this process is competitive political interest. Acknowledging the influence of political institutions and actors (and that of political context) in the emergence of Roma as a collective political identity does not preclude the active involvement of those defined as Roma. Indeed, in democratic Europe, Roma representation and participation have flourished in parallel with Roma policy. The article confronts the question at the heart of Roma inclusion policies; are the Roma an actual group of real people that can be accurately counted and characterised, or a political concept of convenience? In terms of politics, the key distinction between whether Roma is an objectively based or a subjective identity lies in the possibility of accountability each implies. The politicisation of Roma identity is designed to change the world, but we argue that taking Roma identity at face value in policy making has negative repercussions not only for those targeted, but also obscures reflection on problems of inequality and governance in European societies that affect large numbers of people, be they Roma or not.

2. Constructivist Perspectives on Ethnic Identity

As the conceptualisation of Roma ethnicity has rarely been confronted by critical theories of ethnicity, we offer here some approaches that could inform such a research agenda. We begin with Max Weber's influential view of ethnicity which sees ethnic groups as socially constructed and ethnicity as contextual, situational, performative and fluid. Constructivists reject the assumption of quantitative studies that claim ethnicity is objective, stable and independent of socio-political and economic contexts.

Critiques of cultural essentialism go beyond the concept of ethnicity and point to the intermingling of cultures in processes such as of colonization and globalization, as well as to cultural hybridity, migration and intermarriage (Bhabha, 1994; Burke, 2013). Other perspectives refer to the fictive character of ethnicity, understood as fabrication in the context of nation-state formation (Balibar, 1991) or to the anthropological description of foreign cultures as indirect accounts of a third order (Geertz, 1973). From a postcolonial perspective, Said (1978) approaches ethnic identity as a product of Western scholarly, literary and political traditions of exoticizing the Other, while Spivak (1987) addresses the instrumentalization of the subaltern voice and the pursuit of self-interest by spokespersons assuming the role of representing oppressed groups.

The spokespersons' role in the formation of ethnic groups is crucial for a social constructivist perspective. Political entrepreneurs, spokespersons and mediators are considered key actors for ethnicity formation, their contribution expressed in elevating minor cultural differences to an essential status (Balibar, 1991; Banton, 2007; Barth, 1969; Bourdieu, 1991; Brubaker, 2004; Jenkins, 1997; Weber, 1922/1978). Insight into categorization and grouping for academic endeavours also comes from science and technology studies. Scholars (Bourdieu, 1991; Callon, 1986; Latour, 2005) have argued that scientists and experts assume the role of spokespersons for groups that they describe through their research and that this scientific enterprise calls the group into being allowing spokespersons to transform in actors. Bourdieu and Waquant (1999, 2001) consider that ethnicity is used as a euphemism for race, being a concept globally adopted (including in Europe[9]) from the US context by scholars, semi-scholars and politicians with the effect of shifting debates around social and economic inequality towards one of ethnic difference. Suggestions to supersede essentialism point to an understanding of ethnic frames as a result of stereotypes, social categorizations, and cognitive schemes for interpreting the world (Brubaker, Loveman, & Stamatov, 2004).

The article discusses processes of social categorization that have contributed to the evolution of Roma identity, emphasising the role of political actors, institutions, scholars and Romani leaders and activists in the emergence of what we call the Roma political phenomenon. We argue that Roma is a dynamic political identity constructed mainly from above and from outside by political and expert communities and thereafter applied or adopted by people subjected to public labelling and policy interventions. Furthermore, this social

[8] Some historians and anthropologists still use the name of Gypsies (usually interchangeable with that of Roma) in order to reflect self-ascription and for historical accuracy.

[9] While we agree with Bourdieu and Waquant's (1999, 2001) thesis, nevertheless we believe it doesn't apply indiscriminately to the whole of Europe. Western European countries tend not to officially sanction ethnicity (two big countries such as France and Germany do not record officially ethnic identity in censuses for example) while countries in CEE account for ethno-cultural groups in official records. See for example Simon (2007) for an account of European countries that collect "ethnic data" and those that do not. In this regard Western Europe is closer to a model of civic nation while CEE countries adopt rather ethnic forms of nationalism.

categorization produces effects on those assigned to a category in a looping effect (Hacking, 1986, 1995) by which external ascription becomes self-ascription in a normative and prescriptive sense, setting up and limiting the potential for action of those categorised by experts. Though Roma policy routinely seeks inclusion, the newly institutionalised Roma label may strengthen the rejection of Roma by others and self-ascribing to the label may also entail the acceptance of expectations that limit aspirations and opportunities.

3. Scholarly Contributions to the Gypsy Legacy

The Gypsy Legacy includes the long-standing conceptualization by scholars, authorities, activists and experts of the Gypsies as a distinct ethnic group and transnational diaspora which informs current discursive and policy approaches towards Roma. For a critical analysis of this legacy we draw on what Stewart (2013) refers to as the socio-historical approach to Romani studies. Major contributions are those of Okely (1983), Lucassen (1991), Willems (1997), Lucassen, Willems and Cottaar (1998), and Mayall (2004). Willems' (1997) work is particularly important as it makes a thorough analysis of influential scholarly figures (Grellmann, Borrow and Ritter) and of their works that have shaped the conceptualization of the group that is the focus of Gypsy studies (more recently, Romani studies). Okely's (1983) book is important for explaining two important aspects of the Gypsy categorization process: historiographies of the Roma should be read with caution given the particular interest of dominant non-Roma elites who wrote them; an Indian origin assigned to all Roma (as with the Egyptian origin previously assigned to Gypsies) is merely a means of collectively exoticizing groups of people of diverse origins who failed to become absorbed into the salarial system with the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

One conclusion derived from the socio-historical approach to which our article subscribes is that Gypsies (and later Roma) have been collated and transformed from an administrative category to an ethnic group by singularization, minoritization, exoticization and stigmatization through the classification work of policemen, state authorities, church representatives, writers, experts and scientists. Anthropologists doing participative research in Gypsy communities (Stewart (1997) in Hungary, Gay y Blasco (2001) in Spain, and Okely (1983) in the UK) have noted that their subjects consider the issue of origins and ancestry highly irrelevant. Yet, a dominant theme in Gypsy/Romani studies (that has acquired a new political salience) has been the claim that the Romani people come from India, even when this assertion is contradicted by the self-narratives of people assimilated by scholars and policymakers into the Roma group[10].

A bibliometric analysis of Roma-related studies published since 1990 (Surdu, in press) shows that policy research by international organizations and genetic studies of Roma have scored highly in academic influence and recorded the largest number of citations[11]. Among policy studies, most frequently cited are World Bank and Council of Europe (CoE) publications. Studies by the UNDP have also proved influential in portraying the Roma group as a unitary whole for policy purposes. These policy discourses combine the vagueness of the concept of Roma with the political incentive to address objective problems of poverty and exclusion to confusingly portray Roma both as an ethnic minority and a disadvantaged group[12].

While the strategy of the policy-maker is to mobilise an ethnic perspective to target disadvantage, this presentation of Roma cannot but contribute to a perception of cultural characteristics of the group itself being responsible for its members' poverty and social exclusion. As Surdu (in press) argues, the World Bank's most widely read publications (2000, 2002, 2005) have constructed a Roma profile that inevitably cites Roma culture as contributing to poverty, low educational participation, dire living conditions in Roma settlements and the avoidance of public health care systems. The public image of Roma as a welfare dependent group was also shaped by a UNDP (2002) study which offered representations of collective criminality and deviance (Acton, 2006; Surdu, in press). Policy texts not only describe highly stigmatic images of the Roma, but the message is reinforced by the use of photographs representing how needy Roma really are (Surdu, in press).

Of particular importance for the rise of Roma as a political identity have been the interests of European political institutions. Presented as a pan-European ethnic minority, Roma can symbolise the need for European governance. The CoE was an early champion declaring "the Gypsies" a "true European minority" (Kovats, 2001). The CoE has been promoting European Roma governance since 1995 and and its estimates of the (probable) size of national Roma populations, and hence that of Europe as a whole, are those often cited in international (and even national) policy debates despite being far higher than what people say about themselves and the opacity of the method used in their calculation[13]. The preference for a large Roma number reflects a need to justify institutional involvement. The

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[10] This is the case for example of *Egyptians* in countries of for-

mer Yugoslavia, *Rudari* in Bulgaria and Romania, *Boyash* in Croatia and Hungary. As our aim is not to decide among narratives of origins but to point to the political preference for a simplistic racial narrative.

[11] Recorded with Google Scholar search engine.

[12] See also Popova (2015) for this dual positioning as an impediment for Roma inclusion policies.

[13] See for example Liègeois (1986), where estimates of Roma populations' size are provided without citing sources.

CoE first published estimates of the number of Roma in Europe in 1994 (Liègeois, 1994) and for more than a decade these figures were continuously reproduced not only by the CoE but also in most policy studies and mass media[14]. A 2007 CoE publication (Liègeois, 2007) gave the same number of Roma for countries such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Spain. It is unlikely that if these figures bore a relationship to an actual population they would register neither increase nor decrease over more than a decade. The authority underpinning the most widely quoted Roma population estimates, the most basic numbers of the Roma political discourse, is political rather than scientific.

The repetition of Roma population estimates is a technique of truth production supported by other expert estimates produced by think thanks, academics and Romani NGOs, and reproduced by international organizations, that has established the conventional wisdom that census enumeration of Roma significantly under-records their "real number". Interestingly, the presumption that determining who is Roma on the basis of self-identification undercounts how many there really are appears frequently in expert studies as far back as the interwar period allowing Roma experts to assume the role of identifying the "true number" of Gypsies/Roma in a country or for Europe as a whole.

This assumption of a Roma undercount in the census credits a racialised conception of the group according to which what counts as Roma is not self-ascription or objective characteristic, but public perception and expert assertions that unify the Roma through a belief in common kinship. The question of the validity of numbers for a population which self ascribes to Roma identity and one composed of those whom others label as Roma is less a methodological problem (as obviously both such populations exist), more an ethical one. One might think it would be better to count as Roma those who say they are Roma rather than those given a stigmatising label which has already proved so calamitous to people similarly labelled in the past.

Given high rates of discrimination, there may well be people who fear identifying as Roma, but this number has not been tested or quantified. For essentialists Roma are Roma, but understood as a social construction we can see that the issue is actually how people relate to Roma identity. The politicisation of Roma identity is a process of making Roma. As Simonovits and Kezdi (2013) argue, self-identification as Roma is significantly influenced by economic position. In addition, the fact that those registering as Roma has increased over time (including as a result of census campaigns by governments and NGOs explicitly encouraging people to choose Roma ethnicity) indi-

cates that the anonymous and confidential self-declaration of being Roma is not significantly impaired in the census. In short, we believe that for census purposes declaring oneself as Roma or not is largely a matter of agency and dependent on status position.

Since the 1990s, much detail has been added to the political image of Roma through surveys claiming to be representative, but which are actually based on biased samples (Surdu, in press). As several scholars suggest (Prieto-Flores, Puigvert, & Santa Kruz 2012; Rughiniş, 2011; Surdu, in press), quantitative research on Roma almost exclusively samples among the poorest individuals and communities and tends to avoid better off subjects. This reinforces both a pathetic image of Roma and justifies policy intervention. Scholarship's contribution to stigmatising Roma as a marginal group has been added to by the frequently cited policy oriented research produced by NGOs (Marushiakova & Popov, 2011).

Quantitative Roma studies use ethnicity to explain a broad range of phenomena, from poverty to low school graduation rates, ignoring that social status influences how people see themselves and self-ascribe under ethnic labels. If samples in earlier surveys were based almost exclusively on external identification, more recent studies introduce community level hetero-identification as a principle, even if in selecting "Roma communities" they rely on information provided by NGOs, other experts or public officials. That expert categorizations, be it done by field operators or other Roma experts, do not coincide with self-ascription was shown by Ladányi and Szelényi (2001) in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. Yet, this magisterial empirical demonstration of the ambiguity of Roma identity and the inconsistencies of its measurement seems to have made little impression on policy researchers.

Though it would be wholly erroneous to imagine that there is a scholarly consensus that Roma identity represents a racial diaspora of Indian origin, this thesis has political utility in that it provides a reason for bringing under one conceptual umbrella a vast number of far flung communities with diverse cultures and contexts (the other main justification is that all Roma suffer a universal prejudice and discrimination, however this has the problem of meaning that Roma are defined by those who hate them). Beyond policy studies, publications about the genetics of Roma have frequently been cited in scholarly productions in recent decades. Since the first sero-anthropological study[15] in 1921, Gypsies (and now Roma) have been constructed as a genetic object by specialists operating in different regimes of identity politics (Lipphardt & Surdu, 2014). Genetic studies since 1990 (population or medical genetics) build on narratives imported from social sciences such as Roma endogamy, Indian origin and popula-

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[14] See Surdu (in press) for an in-depth analysis of the size of Roma population as a discursive frame in academic and policy discourse.

[15] Verzár and Weszeczky (1921).

tion size. These narratives are, in turn, strengthened by revived confidence in the objectivity of genetic science[16]. Although the data produced may equally sustain alternative interpretations, through small, haphazard samples, contemporary genetic studies have presented findings for Roma in Europe that appear to provide conclusive scientific support to public perceptions of Roma foreignness and genetic isolation. The quest to prove Roma racial distinctiveness has inspired interdisciplinary collaboration between genetic scholarship, humanities and the social sciences to produce evidence for the reification and stigmatization of those included in the Roma group (Lipphardt & Surdu, 2014).

4. Roma in Censuses

National censuses also contribute to the homogenisation and spread of Roma group identity. The census is an administrative tool and not an objective method for recording ethnicity and race, but census categorization can be instrumental in the formation ethnic and racial groups (Aspinal, 2009; Bowker & Star, 2002; Goldscheider, 2002; Kertzer & Arel, 2002; Labbé, 2009; Nobles, 2002; Robbin, 2000; Surdu, in press). Historically, the census appears decisive in Gypsy/Roma group formation for the purpose of governance. Two examples are sufficient to demonstrate this point, one from Romania and the other from Hungary.

Before examining the construction of the Roma category in the contemporary census, we should consider the historical transition of Gypsy from a regulatory and fiscal category into an ethnic one. In the "Romanian" principalities of Moldova and Wallachia, Gypsies were slaves (robi) for almost five centuries, the fragmentary historical record of which has been the subject of scholarly analyses. Gypsy was a distinct servile legal category closer to classical than plantation slavery, and differing from contemporary serfdom in not being necessarily tied to agricultural production. The legal proscription of marriage between Gypsies and non-Gypsies was to regulate property, not ethnicity.

Those who theorise common origins as the essential characteristic of Roma prefer to see a happy coincidence in the arrival and enslavement of immigrants with recent origins in India, rather than considering that centuries of social and economic marginalisation might create communities that, though differing from each other, share a low social position and that this entrenched low social status could be adapted to racial explanations of difference as such ideas developed in European culture from the eighteenth-century. Applying to Gypsies a racial perspective derived for the later Atlantic slave trade may be politically attractive, but is not historical.

The categorization of people as Gypsy slaves was a dynamic process influenced in several ways: landowners were motivated to declare their workers as Gypsies to reduce tax, pauperised peasants could sell themselves as Gypsies, the non-Gypsy spouse and children of a Gypsy became the property of the owner, strangers, prisoners or the masterless, could be assimilated into the Gypsy category as a means of controlling their labour power. Conversely, people could leave the category (and hence identity), Gypsies could buy their freedom or find the protection of another master[17]. One former Gypsy even became a Prince. The late Roma theorist and activist Nicolae Gheorghe recognised that during the medieval period the term Gypsy was a label reflecting a social and not an ethnic status (Gheorghe, 1997, 2013). His view has been vindicated by a recent study of archive documents about nineteenth-century Gypsy slavery, which found no reference to Gypsies being seen as an ethnic group (Venera Achim & Tomi, 2010). Furthermore, Venera Achim (2005) has shown that in the first systematic administrative data collections (catagrafii) made during nineteenth-century, Gypsies were not considered a cohesive ethnos but a fiscal and social category. The first census in Romania to record Gypsy as an ethnicity took place in 1930[18] and this practice continued into the communist and postcommunist periods.

Despite the principle of ethnic self-ascription, in the Romanian 2011 census, a total of 19 different identities[19] were administratively subsumed under the label of Roma, illustrating how, despite the firm belief in undercount, even the census inflates the number of those who actually choose to call themselves Roma. Responding to the question about ethnicity was optional and more than 1.2 million people did not record one. Nevertheless, the theory of Roma undercount enabled the mainstream media and sociologists to attribute this high number of undeclared ethnicity to Roma who allegedly wanted to hide what they really were. The firm conviction that there must 100,000s of Roma hiding their true identity (thus implying a certain dishonesty) appeared unshaken by the fact that the census also recorded a higher number of Roma than its predecessor (not least as a result of the post-coding operation explained above as well as campaigns conducted by Romani NGOs which claimed that self-identifying as such could increase resources going to Roma) .

The first systematic[20] census of Gypsies in Hungary

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[16] See Surdu (in press) for a case study on genetic studies on Roma after 1990.

[17] See for example Viorel Achim (2004) and Giurescu (1943).

[18] For a discussion on interwar censuses' recording a Gypsy ethnicity in their political and academic context see Surdu (in press).

[19] Many of them designating "Roma sub-groups" in anthropological parlance.

[20] For the whole of imperial Hungary except for the city of Budapest.

was carried out by the Royal Hungarian Statistical Office in 1893 and was based on external identification—recording as Gypsies those considered so by their external environment (Havas, 2002). Many scholars consider this a scientific census of the late nineteenth-century Gypsy population though in fact it was commissioned by the Ministry of Interior (Kemény, 2000; Willems, 1997) and carried out by the Royal Society of Demography. As with other scholars in Roma-related research who also undertook political functions, the lead researcher of 1893 census (Arnold Hermann) was both the president of the Statistical Office[21] and chief counsellor for the Ministry of Interior. Since the patron of this special Gypsy census was the police and the executors were professional demographers, it is likely that a collaboration and an exchange of opinions between these two types of Gypsy expertise took place. Such collaboration between police and academics is even more plausible given that the reason for the census was to assess the problem of vagrancy following waves of immigration from the east[22]. The same definition of a Gypsy (s/he others consider a Gypsy) was also applied in national Gypsy surveys carried out under the aegis of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences from 1971 into the new millennium (Havas, 2002).

5. Police Profiling

Police work has one of the oldest research traditions of employing external identification for the conceptualization of Gypsy populations[23]. According to Lucassen (1998), the professionalization of the police and the emergence of police journals in Germany in the eighteenth-century led to the categorization of diverse and unrelated individuals and groups of people under the label Gypsy (Zigeuner), with priority given to those with an itinerant lifestyle and without fixed residency. Though mainstream criminologists rejected the theory of the natural born criminal and acknowledged the crucial role played by environment in criminal offences[24], from the end of nineteenth-century a biologically deterministic theory of criminal behaviour inspired the science of criminology[25] and further increased police interest in Gypsies as a population to be identified and controlled.

In the first half of the twentieth-century, the uni-

form perception of the Gypsy group as a dangerous class was further developed by collaboration between police, academics and Nazi authorities leading to a definition of Gypsies used for persecution and extermination[26].

This police work on Gypsy identification is important not only for its contribution to repressive policy measures, but also because it stimulated the external identification of Gypsies in other fields, such as the administrative census and academic scholarship. The importance for the police of creating the Gypsy as a target group is likely also to have led to the codification of Gypsies as a distinct identity in official censuses as the first special censuses carried out or commissioned by police preceded the administrative censuses that record a Gypsy ethnicity[27]. Gypsy-only censuses were carried out by the police in other countries and under different political regimes, including national socialism and communism.

In France, special censuses of nomads and Gypsies were undertaken by the police in 1895 and anticipated the introduction of special identity papers for Gypsies—the so called *carnet anthropometrique de nomad* which, when introduced, applied to a large number of French citizens who had lost their jobs during the *fin-de-siècle* economic crisis and who were incentivised to apply for one as possession would avoid being arrested for vagrancy[28]. These Gypsy IDs were required by law in 1912 and kept in use until 1969. Even in today's France special papers for Gypsies are used as a mean of identity verification by the police (Kaluszynski, 2001)[29]. Alongside enumeration in special censuses in France, anthropometric identification known as *bertillonage* (involving forensic photography) became a technique transferred from the identification of delinquents and suspects to the identification of Gypsies and nomads, who were seen as a threat to national security[30].

Inspired by French anti-nomadic legislation, in 1927 Czechoslovakia adopted the identification of Gypsies by special IDs. Special censuses of Gypsies were also conducted by the police in Romania in the interwar period, identifying Gypsies later subject to deportation in

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[21] See Kemény (2000).
[22] Yet the census categorized a merely 3.3% of those surveyed as vagrant (Havas, 2002)
[23] For a more detailed discussion on similarities and departures in police and policy analysis research practices see Surdu (in press).
[24] See Surdu (in press) for a brief discussion of critical reception of Lombrosian theory in its historical context in France, Germany and Romania.
[25] For an analysis of Cesare Lombroso references to Gypsies in his work see for example Widmann (2007).

[26] The empirical failure of racial scientists to demonstrate a distinct Gypsy genetic heritage was no obstacle to Nazi theorists as Gypsies could be targeted for persecution on the grounds that the mixture of Gypsy and non-Gypsy blood explained their deviancy. See for example Müller-Hill (1988), Willems (1997) and Lucassen (1998).
[27] In Czehoslovakia for example the first census having category Gypsy for nationality and language was in 1921 (Klímová-Alexander, 2005 b). In Romania the first census recording Gypsy ethnicity and language was carried on in 1930.
[28] See About (2012, pp. 109-110).
[29] For a history of Gypsies identification and surveillance by the police in France since nineteenth-century see also About (2012).
[30] Kaluszynski (2001), Filhol (2007).

Transnistria, which resulted in thousands of deaths[31]. Gypsy-only special censuses by the police or other forms of data gathering were undertaken in Bulgaria and in other communist countries[32] , the population estimates of which differed widely from those produced by national censuses (Liègeois, 1994; UNDP, 2002; World Bank, 2000). While communist approaches were notably inconsistent, continued interest in the quantification of Gypsies points to the ambivalent rhetoric and practice of the period. In the postcommunist period, these police derived population estimates have been preferred by policymakers over census numbers (notably the figure used for Romania—the highest for any European country—which originated in a report by the Securitate of the Ceaușescu regime). The surveillance of Roma by the police and their conceptualization as a suspect population continues today. In 2010 the French press reported the existence of an interministerial database used by the Gendarmerie and built since 1997 for the purpose of monitoring Gypsies, Roma and Travellers for criminality[33]. Another recent example is that of Sweden where a police database held information on 4029 individuals including children, elders and people without any previous convictions based solely on their ascribed group membership[34].

6. The Politicization of Roma: Romani Activism and International Organizations

We consider that the history of Roma activism can be seen in terms of the construction of a political community classed as Roma, which can be the subject of both public representation and targeted policy actions. Following Klímová-Alexander's series (2004, 2005b, 2006, 2007, 2010) of carefully documented accounts on Romani representation from the Middle Ages up to 1971, we argue that in most cases Gypsy leadership and representation have been instigated by extra-communal actors with the purpose of administrating and managing a broad range of populations that were not otherwise included in conventional social control mechanisms. As Klímová-Alexander argues, from as early as the fifteenth-century leadership positions over a Gypsy group, be they held by a Gypsy or otherwise,

were often assigned by states in order to help with the collection of taxes and to maintain social control. The unification of groups and families characterised as Gypsy under the authority of a leader was primarily a matter of surveillance and management[35]. Gypsies were united from among dispersed and unrelated families into larger units around a lord, location or profession for the purpose of more efficient tax collection and labour control. Leaders enjoyed privileges such as tax exemption for themselves and the right to mete out punishments. The more cooperative leaders were, the more likely they were to be rewarded and supported by their superiors to maintain their power (Klímová-Alexander, 2010).

At face value, the rise of Roma political consciousness and self-organisation (particularly since 1990) appears a fundamental break with the long Gypsy Legacy of exclusion from formal political life. However, it can also be seen as a continuation (in modern democratic form) of this age-old necessity of mainstream authorities requiring an intermediary through which to exercise control over "hard to reach" communities. Contemporary Roma leaders benefit from the huge increase in resources (primarily derived from the growing number of Roma projects) and status as recognised representatives (required to legitimate institutional intervention by the state). This creates a shared interest between ambitious Roma and mainstream institutions to construct a Roma "people" and to ethnicise social policy (Klímová-Alexander, 2005a; Kovats, 2001, 2013; Simhandl, 2006; Vermeersch, 2005).

If a central (though not universal) idea of Roma activism is to present Roma as a transnational nation in order to subvert nation-state governance and ideology, the last twenty years show it as often having the opposite effect and contributing to the revival of domestic nationalisms. Roma nationalism itself makes conventional demands for the political representation of an ethno-cultural group. The early Romani movement in interwar Romania was inspired by the Romanian nationalism of the time and was supported by two of its main institutional proponents, the Orthodox church and parties of extreme right (see for example Matei, 2010, 2011). An influential Polish Roma family lobbied the League of Nations and Mussolini for a Roma homeland in Africa. Apologists have argued that the links of these Roma leaders with the political establishment should be seen as merely an instrumental use of opportunities offered by the political context[36], but that does not add to our understanding as politics is always the art of the possible.

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[31] Archive documents about the categorization of Gypsies and the organization of this census can be found (in Romanian language) in collection edited by Nastasă and Varga (2001).

[32] The practice of external identification of Gypsies was also employed in social research in communist period an example being that of Hungary which in a 1971 survey used heteroidentification for mapping Gypsy population of the country. After 1990 this practice stirred a heated debate between advocates of external categorization of Roma and those asking for retaining only self-ascription in sociological research.

[33] About (2012).

[34] See Nordenstam and Ringstrom's (2013) article from 23 September 2013, *Police database of Roma stirs outrage in Sweden*.

[35] As Klímová-Alexander argues, historically some of the leaders cooperated not merely with fiscal authorities but also with the secret police. Currently there are no sources to document whether cooperation of assigned leaders of Roma with secret police prolonged in communist countries after 1945.

[36] See details on this debate in Klímová-Alexander (2007).

Since the turn of the millennium, transnational Roma activists have tried to develop the concept of a Roma nation without a state (Declaration of a Nation, IRU 2000 cited in Sobotka, 2001). This at least recognises that any attempt to corral Europe's Roma into a single territory would entail massive human rights abuses, but it ignores that the authority to effectively represent can only arise with legal and fiscal power over (and preferably a mandate from) those who are claimed to be represented. All of these pre-conditions are entirely illusory. Nevertheless, the persistence of the apparently perverse aspiration to deprive Roma people of their status and rights as national citizens demonstrates the importance of empty symbolism in the Roma political discourse.

7. Policy Making and the Presentation of Roma as an Oppositional Identity

The legacy of academic scholarship, police identification, census design and Romani activism has become incorporated into Roma-related policy research and policy making. This knowledge transfer is reflected in the three main assumptions of most policy studies and documents: first, the size of the Roma group is considered to be significantly larger than that recorded in the census; second, all Roma are seen as members of a transnational ethnic minority whose ancestors came from India to Europe centuries ago; third, Roma are seen as a closed ethnic community little influenced by global tendencies of cultural hybridity. Policymakers and often policy researchers project Roma as an oppositional identity to those of the mainstream state and society—ideologically reflecting the qualitative presentation of Roma as distinctly poor and/or excluded.

Since the end of the Cold War, the knowledge transfer between scholarship, activism and policy has benefited from the process of European integration to propose Roma as a transnational minority across Europe in order to encourage European political institutions to engage with and develop Roma as a unique political object. Europeanisation provides an extra dimension to Roma exclusion by moving responsibility for overcoming barriers to social mobility away from national governments and towards the European level and from national politicians to civil society actors such as NGOs (Agarin, 2014; Rövid, 2011; Sigona & Veermersch, 2012; van Baar, 2012).

As Vermeersch (2012) argues, the elevation of Roma issues to the European level has also given rise to a politics of reinterpretation that reinforces exclusive nationalist rhetoric, fuels an anti-Roma agenda, confuses lines of political accountability (between national authorities, European institutions and non-state actors) and favours a perspective of blaming the victim. Ironically, the aspiration to collate Roma into one group to justify transnational European governance also de-

Europeanizes Roma as many policy documents assert their Indian origins. This exoticisation is further supported by the aspiration to apply a racial civil rights paradigm to Roma. In this way the narratives and myths of Roma origins circulate in policy circles strengthening the otherness of Roma while affirming their alien European-ness. The greatest casualty of this way of thinking is the downgrading of national citizenship and consequently of all rights and entitlements deriving from such a status.

The politicisation of Roma identity is not only a state-led initiative, but is also promoted by the private sector. Communicative practices of NGOs for advocacy purposes build the image of Roma as needy and threatening, which has contributed to keeping anti-Roma sentiments high (Gheorghe, 2013; Schneeweis, 2015; Timmer, 2010). Scholars acknowledge that a major shortcoming of the anti-discrimination discourse adopted by NGOs and international organizations is to accentuate divisions between Roma and non-Roma which are often presented as oppositional identities.

Critical analyses argue that anti-discrimination initiatives fail to challenge the structural causes of the socio-economic decline of many of those labelled as Roma from being a relatively well adapted group in socialist economies to a pauperised one in current neoliberal regimes of CEE (Kovats, 2003; Sigona & Trehan, 2009; Surdu, in press; Templer, 2006). Moreover, when addressing "Roma" discrimination, the structural causes of disadvantage and exclusion (such a low labour demand, weak institutions, lack of accountability) and the functionality these create for discriminatory practises are largely ignored while the ethnic discrimination frame is enforced. This narrative that Roma people are primarily the victims of their neighbours' ignorance or hatred (which enlightened institutions can but try and combat) seems most likely to undermine social solidarity, whereas an agenda of systemic discrimination would attract larger constituencies, not least since the economic crisis has brought with it increased pauperization in Western and Eastern Europe alike.

Placing all Roma into an anti-discrimination paradigm as a way of fostering their inclusion seems not to be an effective method for solving individual cases of abuse and mistreatment but has led to largely cosmetic changes to particular exclusionary mechanisms. Though repeatedly identified as a high priority, institutional anti-discrimination initiatives have been too limited to create a critical mass, producing only symbolic victories that leave unchanged the root causes of unequal treatment. Roma rights advocacy has produced a backlash in states such as Hungary and Bulgaria where it is presented as an example of a foreign (inspired) liberal elite's rejection of national culture and societies, allowing racist prejudices to be mobilised to undermine the value of human rights in general. The very complacency of symbolically condemning hostility towards

Roma while failing to address its causes can be seen as a form of racism.

If the human rights discourse about Roma can be criticised, the economic approach pursued by policymakers is even more amenable to the production of negative outcomes. As Friedman (2014) argues, the tendency to put "Roma issues" under an economic rationale has come to override the human rights perspective. This is not surprising as from the first attempts at framing Gypsies as a population, economic arguments have played a crucial role in the group's definition. The founding father of Gypsology in eighteenth-century, the German scholar Heinrich Moritz Gottlieb Grellmann, used economic arguments to claim the coherence of the group, which he saw as a labour resource the improvement of which would be of benefit to society. Van Baar (2012) notes that current neoliberal social policies, advocated and facilitated by international organizations such as the World Bank, European Union and UN agencies, have given rise to a new form of governmentality for the Roma group. With the triumph of the neoliberal social and economic agenda, Roma were proposed by the World Bank as an opportunity to test employment activation schemes, which amounted to the exploitation of cheap labour, degrading and socially devalued jobs with dehumanising consequences for the individuals subjected to them while also publicly reinforcing a stigmatic image for the group as a whole (van Baar, 2012).

Roma social policy intervention is a growing sector, though there is no accepted figure for how large it has become with estimates rarely published. The largest of these claims up to three-quarters of a billion euros (OSCE-ODHIR, 2013) however (illustrating the fundamental lack of accountability inherent in the artificiality of Roma as a policy object), this estimate is derived from an unscientific aggregation of incompatible data. More realistically, a database[37] compiled by the Decade of Roma Inclusion of explicit Roma projects in 12 states since 2005 years adds up to around 200 million euro (Bojadjieva & Kushen, 2014). The adoption by the EU of its Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies means that the number of (and therefore spend on) Roma projects and programmes will continue to rise until at least 2020. While the Framework undoubtedly extends the politicisation of Roma identity, it at least attempts to draw a line in terms of governance by defining Roma inclusion as the responsibility of Member States i.e. asserting the rights and status as citizens of those labelled as Roma. Unfortunately, this creates an in-built hostage to fortune in that if Member States don't comply, the EU is left either climbing down or taking on even more political responsibility through strengthening European Roma governance!

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[37] The database can been searched at http://www.romadecade.org/about-the-decade-decade-good-practices

8. Conclusions

While the original idea of replacing the label of Gypsy with that of Roma was to escape historically accumulated negative connotations, the effect of the combined politicisation and Europeanisation of Roma identity since 1990 has been to institutionalise, as Roma, the stereotypical legacy of the Gypsy label. The failure of the political project to create Roma as a new identity is due to the fact that the ultimately economic failure to create demand that incentivises investment in higher need and less productive citizens has led to Roma being identified as a target group for inclusion. The ineffectiveness of Roma policy initiatives (due to lack of accountability) results in Roma being publicly presented as both different and unequal, accentuating the stigmatization of the group. The paradox of the Roma political project and its inclusion policies is that the more policymakers peddle inadequate interventions that target Roma as a particular, distinct and identifiable group, the more they build up and cut off this group from normal politics and societal relationships. Targeted policies on Roma have created a growth industry where 'need' is practically infinite and there is plenty of scope for new expert-government networks, but where failure is rarely sanctioned. Rather than improving lives and contributing to social cohesion, this separate system of expert governance is able to disregard (and even benefit from) the danger of further distancing Roma people from their neighbours and fellow citizens.

A crucial source of legitimacy for Roma expert governance is derived from the participation of (self-declared) Roma people, especially the endorsement of Roma representatives. Consequently, international policy documents routinely refer to the need to involve Roma in policy processes. This adds further political risks, some of which have already materialised. The first one is to establish token Roma participation with only a few Roma activists and organisations operating at a high level in national or international institutions, but who lack the power to affect strategic political decisions, only to ratify them. History lessons show that state authorities and international players will prefer weak leadership in order to ensure cooperation within their dominant paradigm. The instrumentality of representation means that lack of accountability remains a defining characteristic of Roma representation as the diffusion, diversity and subjectivity inherent in Roma political identity means it is hard to believe that democratic structures of Roma participation could be put in place at the European level. Merely replacing non-Roma with Roma in leadership positions in existing policy processes has little chance to substantively change the current situation insofar as the causes of poverty and exclusion are structural and not related to the personal qualities (or

lack of them) of those in management positions.

Seen in this light, the advancement of Roma in leadership positions reduces pressure to tackle institutional mechanisms of exclusion and moves responsibility for the eventual failure of inclusion policies onto the Roma themselves. A good example of this process is given by a consultation document issued by the CoE in late 2014 on a proposal to establish a European Roma Institute (ERI) to promote Roma culture and identity. The rationale argued that the ERI was needed to address the problem of low Roma self-esteem (due to prejudice and discrimination). This newly invented Roma problem was considered important because if Roma self-esteem can't be raised, Roma cannot participate effectively. Furthermore, participation itself was defined as a pre-condition for making the right policy decisions. In its struggle against prejudice and discrimination, the Council of Europe considers that Roma people (uniquely among all citizens) cannot expect to be served better by public authorities and organisations until they have a bit more self-respect (CoE, 2014)!

As a collective entity, the notional Roma people and political community serves the interests of institutions and organizations that seek to govern the entity that they themselves have created through programs, projects and policies developed in parallel to existing structures of governance. The universally disappointing results of the OCSE Roma Action Plan, Decade of Roma Inclusion, EU Roma Framework, as well as of numerous national and non-governmental initiatives show that separate Roma policy has not improved outcomes for those under the Roma policy umbrella. In accordance with the European Commission's 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma inclusion, we contend that better outcomes can be achieved by strengthening civic entitlements and promoting an equalities culture. Without addressing the structural problems that cause poverty and exclusion, racism and discrimination, the politicisation of Roma identity must inevitably provoke political crises.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

European Policies for Social Inclusion of Roma: Catch 22?

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Abstract

The article analyzes contemporary political discourses with regard to social inclusion of Roma on the basis of comparison with achievements and failures in the previous historical period of the communist rule in Eastern Europe. It argues that since the vast majority of the European Roma had lived in the past and continue living nowadays in the countries of Eastern Europe, no successful policy for their inclusion is possible without taking into account the experiences and outcomes of the actions for Roma integration in the socialist period. The experience from the times of socialism shows that successful policies are possible only in an appropriate socio-political context and only if accomplished within the mainstream approach. Against this background, the article scrutinizes the European Policies for Social Inclusion of Roma, and explains why they present a *Catch 22* situation: There is a vicious cycle of problems which need to be solved; the solution requires a special policy for inclusion, however this policy stigmatizes Roma and sets them even more apart from the rest of society. Thus the vicious cycle of problems expands. The main point of the article is to propose an explanation of this failure of democracy and liberalism, which could constitute a useful lesson for the future.

Issue

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1. Introduction

In recent years the "Roma issue" is increasingly attracting attention in the public space of united Europe and accordingly, the policies targeting Roma have become a serious challenge at national and European levels. A growing number of Roma activists, scholars, experts, journalists, and recently also some politicians, speak more or less openly about the failure of the European Roma policy. This failure has become already a public secret, although the policy makers consider it inconvenient and embarrassing to acknowledge it. At the same time, however, there is almost no study devoted to the state of the contemporary situation of Roma communities in Europe, which does not point to the deterioration of their economic and social situation in the last over 20 years of transition to democracy and market economy as well as to the increase of inter-ethnic distances, prejudices, hidden discrimination, hatred and open hostility against Roma.

Recently, several very interesting and inspiring analyses of the policies in the last more than 20 years have sought an explanation why the good intentions actually paved the road to hell. None of these analyses, however, has made a connection with the past experiences of policies for Roma inclusion in the region where the majority of Roma live or used to live. With this we do not want to assert that policies towards Roma during the so-called "socialist era" in Eastern Europe were not subject of academic interest till now. On

the contrary, there are authors, who paid attention not only to policies for Roma inclusion and the situation of Roma in the past, but also in connection with the present (to mention but a few: Bancroft, 2005; Guy, 2001; Klímová-Alexander, 2005; Lemon, 2000; Simhandl, 2006, pp. 97-115; van Baar, 2011; Vermeersch, 2006). Attempts have been done also for an analysis of the social, economic, and political dimensions of Gypsy marginality in different regime types (Barany, 2002). The vast majority of these analyses, however, are embedded in the discourse of the "Cold War" and their main line is to compare and contrast "the past" and "the present" (after the changes from 1989 to 1990) in Central, Southeast and Eastern Europe. What is really missing so far is a disclosure of the continuity of Roma policies in the two periods and their impact on Roma. We firmly believe that it is impossible to make an analysis of contemporary European Roma policies without taking into account the experiences from the previous historical period of the communist rule in Eastern European countries, which had a decisive impact on the life and fate of Roma in the region. Only through linking and crosschecking the past with the present, can the achievements and failures of contemporary policies be explained, and why not also a reasonable prediction formulated about their results.

2. The Time of Socialism

The socialist period started with the October Revolution in 1917 in Russia which brought the communists in power and was followed by the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was constituted in 1922. The USSR became the first and at that time the only country in Europe that realized policies on state level aimed at Gypsy inclusion[1]. It was constituted as a complex structure of national and ethnic state administrative formations at various levels—Soviet republics, autonomous republics and regions. At the same time a considerable number of peoples within the Union were not granted the right to establish their state or administrative units, but only pro-communist socio-political and cultural organizations. Gypsies were among them. This was justified by their small number (considering the scale of the USSR), their largely nomadic way of life, absence of compact territory and of an elite, seeking positions in state and administrative institutions.

The first aim of the new socialist state in regard of Gypsies was their "inclusion into labor for the benefit of society" and their transformation into "conscientious Soviet citizens". To achieve this aim, in the first period of the Soviet state, and in the spirit of the new

national policy, a number of measures were taken such as establishing of Gypsy organizations, providing land, financial support, premises, working equipment, bank credits and cash subsidies for Gypsy *kolhozes* (co-operative farms) and *artel's* (co-operative artisan's workshops), alphabetizing the Romani language, publishing textbooks and brochures in Romani, opening Roma schools and classes, creation of Gypsy Theatre *Romen* in Moscow and numerous musical ensembles countrywide (Crowe, 1996, pp. 182-186; Demeter, Besssonov, & Kutenkov, 2000, pp. 204-207; O'Keeffe, 2013; Rom-Lebedev, 1990).

A radical change in the Soviet national policy from the so-called "Leninist" to the "Stalinist" national policy began with the new Constitution of the USSR adopted in 1936 and it affected also the Gypsies. The first signs of this policy change were felt already in the early 30s. The schools of 16 separate nationalities were closed down, including Gypsy schools; mass publication of texts in Romani ceased; and the Gypsy *artel's* and *kolkhozes* broke up (Marushiakova & Popov, 2008a, p. 8).

This was a considerable turn in the policy for Gypsy inclusion in the Soviet state. Until 1938, the policy was based on their treatment as a separate people, who should develop above all as an ethnic community first, and as such it would be included into the Soviet society. After 1938, the paradigm changed, the *special* element in the policy gave way to the *mainstream* one, and the Gypsies started to be considered an integral part of the Soviet society, without any special attention. As a community their development was supported only in an ethno-cultural plan (mostly music and dance).

The end of the Second World War and the post-War years were a time of radical change for the countries of Eastern Europe. A new type of state-political system was established, which according to its own phraseology was defined as a "socialist system". Overall social and economic changes were carried out and Roma, in various degrees and in different periods, became target of an active state policy. When the so-called *socialist camp* is mentioned, frequently the impression is that it refers to a monolithic totalitarian system, directly under the Moscow rule, where a common policy dominated in all spheres. To a certain extent this was the case, yet quite a lot of differences and specific features in the individual countries remained, especially in the field of internal national policy. The common ideology presupposed total unity on the ideological level, and thus each country declared its national policy based on the *principles of Marxism-Leninism* and *Proletarian Internationalism*. Each country, however, interpreted these principles in its own way and respectively conducted its own national policy (Marushiakova & Popov, 2008b, p. 2).

The common ideological framework dictated elimination of the nomadic way of life (defined as vagrant, parasite), poverty and illiteracy; these phenomena

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[1] For sake of historical correctness in this part of our article we are using the term "Gypsies", which is the English translation of local terms, used in historical sources and documents until the end of the twentieth century.

were declared to be part of the capitalist heritage that should be abolished. The final result from these policies was similar in most of the socialist countries—till the end of the 1960s and 1970s the most severe problems were solved: the nomadic Gypsies were settled, illiteracy was eliminated, the alarming health status was improved, and the most catastrophic housing conditions (dugouts and makeshift dwellings) were ameliorated. The next steps involved civic and social integration of the Gypsies, with four major fields of action identified across the region: *housing* (dispersal of hamlets and compact settlements, resettlement and decent housing among the majority population), *full employment* (in the socialist countries employment was obligatory) *health* and *education*.

In general, two approaches were applied for the realization of these tasks: the "mainstream one" and the "special one" (sporadically, a mixture of both approaches was also applied). The "mainstream approach" meant that the state did not apply special measures for the social integration of the Gypsies. Their problems were resolved within the framework of the existing mainstream policies targeting the whole population, including the Gypsies (which, however, did not exclude efforts of the authorities to prevent possible deviations from the mainstream way of life). The "special approach" was directed towards the Gypsies as a community with specific problems, which required specific measures for their resolution (e.g. special school or housing programs).

The first approach was typical primarily for the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Poland, East Germany (formally the German Democratic Republic), Albania and Yugoslavia where there were no special government programs for Gypsies (with the exception of the program for sedentarization of itinerants in the USSR and Poland). The only sphere of public life in these countries, in which the mainstream policy was not applied, was the preservation and development of Gypsies' ethnocultural identity (e.g. *Romen* Theatre in the USSR).

In the remaining four countries Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, i.e. in the countries where the Roma population is most numerous, a "special approach" in the state policy for Gypsy integration was applied, however without abandoning the "mainstream approach". In order not to turn the special measures into exclusive ones, they were kept hidden and in some countries (e.g. Bulgaria and Romania), at one point of time, it was even explicitly forbidden to mention the mere existence of Roma (Achim, 1998, pp. 160-162; Crowe, 1996, pp. 223-225; Jurová, 1993, pp. 27-29; Kovats, 2001, pp. 338-340; Marushiakova & Popov, 1997, pp. 37-39, 2007, pp. 148-149). It was exactly in the spheres in which the "special approach" was applied that the major failures in the policy of integration occurred. For example, in field of housing, in Slovakia and Hungary the focus was on the elimination of the so-called *osady or kolonia* (segregated hamlets in the

countryside), in Bulgaria policy aimed at the dispersion of urban *mahalla*s (detached ethnic quarters in urban locations). As a result, in Slovakia and Bulgaria appeared segregated blocks of flats which were quickly devastated. In Hungary and Slovakia, the Gypsies were often accommodated in historical houses in town and city centers, assessed as the third lowest category of housing, and as an outcome in the middle of many cities appeared ghetto-like settlements. In the field of education Czechoslovakia introduced the practice of separation of children from their families and forcible placement of Roma kids in boarding schools; in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia many healthy children were enrolled in special schools for children with mental disabilities. In some cases fields of action matched, for e.g., in order to solve housing and occupation problems the state send Slovak Roma to Czech industrial regions; in Bulgaria in order to increase Gypsy education level and employment the state introduced vocational, de-facto segregated schools, etc. In search of radical solution of the problems authorities resorted to some drastic measures. The most known is the case in Czechoslovakia, in which with the goal of increasing the share of healthy population among the Gypsies, the Ministry of Health, inspired by the so-called Swedish model of integration policy toward Gypsies, in place until 1984 (Svenska Regeringskansliet, 2014), issued in 1972 a Decree for financial encouragement of voluntary sterilization of women, who had given birth to more than four mentally retarded children.

We can summarize that state policies, regardless of the aims set, eventually achieved contradictory results. On the one hand, the living conditions, health and education of Roma have seen a rapid improvement in comparison with the past, the degree of their integration has grown, and even strata of well-educated Roma emerged, etc. On the other hand however, the price paid for this integration was quite high. Many Roma in the countries from the "socialist camp" took on the road of social degradation and marginalization. It is indicative that these processes are best expressed and felt most strongly in countries with clearly formulated specific policies towards Roma and to a much lesser extent in countries where such policies were limited or simply absent.

In the end, it turns out that the social integration of Roma in the countries of the "socialist camp" was determined above all by the overall social development and by the *mainstream* (general for all citizens) policy towards Roma, and not by the *special* (targeted on Roma) policies towards them.

3. Present Time

More than 20 years after the "wind of change", the European policy makers, intergovernmental organizations active in Europe, individual governments, and civil society actors are searching for tools to solve the numer-

ous problems, facing Roma communities in the times of transition from Communism to democracy. The documents on Roma published by these actors in the 1990s accused the former communist policy for the precarious situation of Roma (similarly to the communists who blamed the capitalist past) and tended to emphasize human rights policy, which should provide redress for past violations and protection from future discrimination as a basis for calls for measures to improve the Roma's situation (Friedman, 2014, pp. 3, 15). Since then, and until now, in an effort to create a common European policy towards Roma, numerous diverse and often conflicting initiatives and measures were introduced not only in the field of human rights, but also in other areas (see below). European institutions adopted two main initiatives targeting Roma, the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005), which was initially introduced by the network of the Open Society Foundations, and the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (2011), followed by the adoption of new (or updating of old) National Strategies all over Europe.

The four priority areas in the European Roma inclusion policy are identified: employment, housing, education, and healthcare (sic! the same as in the communist period, and for the countries of Central Europe, largely the same as the priorities in the state policy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the reign of Maria Theresa and Franz Joseph II), with the addition of gender issues and the fight against discrimination and anti-Gypsyism. Within these areas a number of initiatives started, became a hit for a while, enjoyed active lobbying, advertising and funding for several years, then there was criticism by scholars and civil society actors, and these initiatives usually quietly ceased to be supported and went into oblivion. In the end, we are confronted with a situation in which "we need to acknowledge that most of the money spent by the previous Commission and EU funds spent by Member States were wasted" (Nicolae, 2014). A similar pattern is observed in the activities of private donors and foundations and especially in the activities of the most prominent among them, the network of the Open Society Foundations.

The reasons behind the problems and measures for improvement of the situation are continuously sought at different levels. For a long time the reason of fiascos was seen mainly in the corruption or failure of the various stakeholders, and the solution was sought in endless writing of recommendations, monitorings, evaluations. When this did not lead to success, the search for errors focused on the methods of monitoring or evaluations and began an endless writing of analyses, not of the situation, but of the monitorings and the evaluations. One of the causes for the failures defined is the lack of involvement of the Roma and remedy is sought in increasing of Roma participation at all levels in deci-

sion-making and implementation. Responsibility for decisions and for subsequent failures is sought at different levels—it is transferred from nation-state to supranational units and back, from nation state to the civil sector; from the civil sector to the lack of political will of the major political actors. The solution is sought in attempts to change public opinion and to create political will for implementation of measures to improve the Roma's situation.

In addition to all this, currently we have seen the trend to seek the cause of failures and justification for funds invested in vain, in the community itself and its specific culture. The solution—as absurd as it sounds—is urging the Roma to change themselves. This trend became prominent at different levels; even the European Commissioner for Justice and Fundamental Rights, Viviane Reding, said in an interview for Euronews on January 16, 2014, that Roma communities need "to be willing to integrate and to be willing to have a normal life", and so the "Roma integration in Europe has shifted to a right-wing definition of integration where the onus is being placed on the minorities to make the adjustments and accommodations deemed necessary for social cohesion" (Rorke, 2014).

Now we have the following situation: a defined problem—the precarious condition of the Roma population, and various proposals for solution made by different stakeholders. This is followed by a lack of success and various excuses why the European Roma policies do not lead to the desired results. Only recently appeared articles which look "at some factors that appear to be key impediments to the development of a sustainable and successful policy" within the European Roma policy making (Popova, 2015).

The starting point is connected with the ideological background. As the Eastern European socialist system was defeated one and the Western democracy won the historical race the recipe for the solution of the Roma issues was initially sought within the experiences of the leading Western democratic countries in which the Roma population is small, with a very short history of inclusion. The Gypsy nomadic way of life, which has disappeared in the East, is considered an immanent ethnic and cultural trait in the West, which should be preserved. This is done even at expenses of their citizens' rights (e.g. in France only now, in June 2015, arrangements are made for cancelling special travel permits that worked as identity cards for Gypsies and Travelers, called "livret de circulation"[2]). The sedentary way of life, the socialist experiences of inclusion and the large size of the Roma population in Eastern European were not taken in account.

Admittedly, the picture is not so simple as in East-

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[2] See http://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2015/06/10/l-assemblee-vote-la-suppression-du-livret-de-circulation-pour-les-gens-du-voyage_4650732_3224.html

ern Europe too some Roma continued at least partially their semi-nomadic way of life. The West was not monolithic either. In the countries on that side of Iron curtain some Gypsies have been sedentary for centuries too (in Spain, partially Portugal, Greece, Burgenland in Austria, etc.). These populations were not subject to specific policies for the settling of nomads, but at the same time the Roma there were often unable to benefit from the mainstream conditions and policies (e.g. in Spain Gitanos received full civil rights only after the end of Francoism). These nuances, however, does not change the general picture in the two political blocks as well as the fact that the leading paradigm about Gypsies as nomads was dominant at European level until the end of the Cold War (Liégeois, 1987).

We are convinced that the main reason for the failures of the European Roma policy making is the wrong formulation of the problem, neglecting of the lessons from the previous period, in other words, in the positions which were assigned to Roma in the last circa 20 years of transition. Due to lack of space we cannot go in details and will limited ourselves to the major reasons for the failure of the European policies for Roma inclusion that are rooted in the issues we discuss below.

The first major reason for failure is connected with defining the target, or in other words, with defining "Who are the Roma"? The problem here starts with terminology—in the last circa 20 years the politically correct term is considered to be "Roma" which is the self-appellation of a significant part of communities. Most often however, we see a mechanical replacement of the previously used designations with the term "Roma" and the issue of appropriateness or inappropriateness of the politically correct terminology is not on the agenda. The terminology used, however, reflects certain historical and cultural realities. In today's united Europe we are confronted with overlapping different historical realities and created perceptions, and as a result "two separate signified entities are captured by the term 'Gypsies' (or as it is nowadays considered politically correct 'Roma'). In one case, characteristic for Western Europe, the term denotes the social phenomenon of communities of peripatetics or commercial nomads, irrespective of origin and language. In the other case, typical for Eastern Europe, it is a popular English translation for a set of ethnonyms used by those groups whose language is or was a form of Romani" (Matras, 2004, p. 53).

Naturally, the political solutions of the issues related to the situation of nomadic on the one hand, and settled for centuries, complex ethnic communities, on the other, cannot be the same. In spite of this, on the level of policies we are observing hectic attempts to bring together the two types of communities under one umbrella term, and in this way to justify the common policy aims towards them and predetermine common outcomes for all member states. There have been numerous attempts by policy makers in the European Union and the Council of Europe level to solve the terminological issue and to find appropriate terminology and an umbrella definition. It is enough to quote the latest (for the time being!) "official" definitions in order to obtain an idea about the lack of relevance to the objectively existing realities.

The recently adopted European Framework of National Roma Inclusion Strategies states: "The term 'Roma' is used—similarly to other political documents of the European Parliament and the European Council—as an umbrella term which includes groups of people who have more or less similar cultural characteristics, such as Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage, etc. whether sedentary or not…" (EU Framework, 2011). This definition is misleading because Roma who live in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe share "more or less similar cultural characteristics" with the surrounding majority population much more than with other groups such as Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage, etc.

Not better, neither more precise is the definition in the Declaration on the Rise of Anti-Gypsyism and Racist Violence against Roma in Europe of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, adopted in 2012: "The term 'Roma' used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as 'Gypsies'" (Declaration, 2012) These definitions illustrate that it is not clear to date at the level of European institutions "who the Roma are" and thus the approach towards them remains mostly within the framework of centuries-old stereotypes. Actually, we can see the substitution and replacement of the old English term "Gypsies" which denotes nomadic lifestyle with the term "Roma". This is also a kind of continuation of the policies in the period before the 1990's, which reflected the realities of Western Europe and when the documents produced by European and international organizations referred to Gypsies as "travelers", "nomads" or "a population of nomadic origin" (Rövid, 2011, p. 3). And what is more frightening, in some instances, as for e.g. in regard of Roma migrants from Eastern Europe in Italy and France, the leading political line dictated solutions to their problems is as nomadic communities, which implies the total failure of these policies (Marushiakova & Popov, 2013a, 2013b).

Nearly all official documents underline the heterogeneity of groups labeled Roma, but in the same time they fail to recognize the importance of such diversity for policies (Rövid, 2011, p. 10). The question of imposing definitions what should be understood under the term "Roma" is connected to the issue of "power and labeling" (Tremlett & McGarry, 2013, p. 5). In fact, it demonstrates the Pyrrhic victory of the West over the

East, because a legitimate question that arises is, whether it is possible at all to have a successful realization of national and supranational policies if they are based on strategies and programs, in which it is not clear who is the main target.

In the struggle to find a common cover term and making efforts to have a common, unified European policy, the European institutional documents suggested *Evidence-based policy making* as most appropriate for building up a pan-European overview of the challenges facing Roma minorities. (Tremlett & McGarry, 2013, p. 5). The "evidence-based" is connected to the "good practices", thus EU programs and projects envisage exchange of good practices. However, these good practices are extracted from the nowadays practice, while failures and successes in the past are not taken into account, neither are the differences across the regions and the heterogeneity of Roma communities.

The question whether it is really possible at all to have a common strategy, or even just a general framework for the various national strategies towards communities that differ so much in their origin, ways and conditions of life, languages, cultures, etc., which are not only internally heterogeneous, but also socially and culturally differentiated and diverse and which are united only by an umbrella term, remains unanswered on the political level. Maybe surprisingly an answer comes from some Roma activists from former Yugoslavia who demanded introduction of two European Roma strategies—one for the Roma from the Balkans and another one for all nomadic communities from Western Europe. In this line of thinking is also the insistence of other Roma activists from the Balkans for a change in the overall approach towards the Roma issues - on the one hand, to address the problems of Roma as a vulnerable group together with problems of all vulnerable people, without mixing them with Roma issues, and on the other hand to formulate as Roma issues only the issues pertaining to the preservation and development of Roma language and culture, which would lead to strengthening of the Roma identity.

The second, no less important issue is to clarify the contents of the target, or in other words, in what discourse are considered Roma when key policies towards them are designed and implemented. The European Roma policies display a misunderstanding of the specific character of existence of Roma communities in the region in question. The Roma communities are not a hermetically isolated and self-sufficient social and cultural system; they have always existed here in the inseparable unity of at least "two dimensions"—both as a separate ethnic community and as an ethnically-based integral part of the society within the respective nation-state in which they have lived for generations, and of which they are full-fledged citizens (at least de jure) (Marushiakova & Popov, 2011, p. 54).

The failure to comprehend the essence of the "community-society" distinction, interconnection and unity, results in the framing of the Roma communities within two basic paradigms, which can be summed up as marginalization—as a social layer of the society, and exoticization—as a separate community. In both cases we can speak about two interconnected paradigms, which stream from the prism of orientalism (Marushiakova & Popov, 2011, p. 61).

When the Roma are seen primarily as part of the respective social structure in the forefront are the problems of their marginalization, which are usually seen in socio-economic terms. A great number of NGO-managed projects have been implemented to overcome this inequality, later followed by national programs and then also by European Union project lines. The leading concept of this approach is that Roma should not be treated as a "normal community", with its own identity, ethnic culture, but as strongly marginalized and to a great extent anomic community, that needs constant special care and social patronage. In the difficult period of the transition in Eastern Europe, the "Roma issue" and the Roma problems have fast been translated into the concept of the social inequality of the Roma community as such. Most national and supranational documents contain notions as "socially excluded", "marginalized", and "vulnerable" Roma communities, which de-facto equate the notions of Roma and marginalization. In order to avoid misunderstanding we would like to stress that we are in no way trying to state that the majority of Roma communities do not face major social and economic problems. However, the key problem lies elsewhere—in the real and present danger that the whole will be confused with its part, i.e. the entire ethnic community will be viewed and identified only with its problematic section and as a result, Roma will no longer be considered and accepted as a distinct ethnic community with its specific ethnic culture. Thus the logical result is to look for solutions of the problems through assimilation.

In parallel to the main social paradigm of marginalization, there is another one, which at first glance is an antipode of the previous. When the Roma are primarily seen as a detached ethnic community, and when the general cultural context and its social dimensions are ignored, it appears that their exoticization has been logically reached. According to this paradigm, which is very popular in Western Europe, the Roma are a community that is characterized by its uniqueness and peculiarity (in terms of way of life and culture); they should not be perceived and treated as a community of the same rank as all other ethnic communities, but a very special approach towards them is needed. Transferring this exoticizing paradigm into the sphere of social policy leads to the outcome that the Roma are not perceived and treated as a community of the same rank as all other ethnic communities, but a very special approach towards them is needed, which will take into

account and will preserve and further develop the extremely specific Roma ethnic culture.

These two paradigms of practice often go hand in hand, and they are indeed the two sides of the same coin. Currently in numerous programs and projects we can observe some kind of a schizophrenic model, combining the approaches toward Roma as an exotic community and in the same time as a marginal part of the majority society. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is not uncommon that both approaches which at first glance look totally opposing to each other can in fact be combined, and can actually complement each other, in particular when discussing specific policies, programs and projects of governmental and public structures, and/or civil society organizations on various levels. The most outspoken example here is from field of education – all EU strategic documents proclaim as main principle the desegregation of the Roma schools, i.e. mainstream education for Roma, as the main principle, and at the same time numerous EU projects are supporting Roma teacher assistants, school mediators, etc., i.e. various forms of special schooling for Roma (Russinov, 2013, pp. 415-432).

The third major problem is in the discourse of Roma policies (mainstream or specific), or in other words, whether they should be part of the mainstream policies (European, national, regional, local) or special policies targeting solely Roma. This problem arises directly from the previous one because whether Roma are treated as an exotic or marginalized community, or as a kind of combination of the two, the conclusion is the same—the need for specific policies towards them.

In the period of pre-accession to the European Union, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe had to elaborate and implement National strategies or programs for solving the Roma issues as condition to meet the criteria for EU membership. Under pressure from the West (and in the majority of cases with financing and expert assistance from the West) such strategies and programs were prepared and although they were specific for the individual countries, all of them were entirely in the discourse of special policy towards Roma (Guy, 2001).

The situation changed dramatically after the accession of the majority of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe to the European Union and the removal of visa restrictions. The mass migration of Roma from the new member states and incapability of Western Europe to deal with it (particularly acute in Italy and France, but to a lesser extent in other Western countries too) have clearly shown that special policies towards the Western "Gypsies", "Gens du voyage", "Zingari", transferred to Eastern European Roma (e.g. the treatment of "Rom, Sinti et Camminanti" in Italy) not only do not help the integration of Roma migrants but on the contrary, these policies discredit their public image (van Baar, 2015) and lead to marginalization and de-socialization of significant parts of these migrants. (Marushiakova & Popov, 2013a, 2013b)

One of the unanticipated outcomes of the special policies is the rise of xenophobic and racist discourses towards Roma, due to the fact that the European Roma policies are interpreted by the local populations in individual countries as special privileges for the Roma (Vermeersch, 2012, p. 1209). Special policies implemented in fact are leading to further stigmatization of Roma and as such they not only do not solve problems, but rather expand and deepen them.

In spite of this, the special approach remains enshrined in the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies too, according to which the "national, regional and local integration policies focus on Roma in a clear and specific way, and address the needs of Roma with explicit measures to prevent and compensate for disadvantages they face" (An EU Framework, 2011). The stress on special policies remains also in the promotion of "explicit, but not exclusive targeting" (Vademecum, 2011) as one of the Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion, because the *explicit* focus on Roma inevitably is also *exclusive. Explicit* focus on Roma leads to their separation from all other communities, which are not focused explicitly. At the same time bridging this separation is envisaged through the principle of mediation to which a special joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission is devoted, called ROMED (started in 2011). The principle of mediation is applied exclusively to Roma, but not to any other ethnic minority in Eastern Europe. Specially trained Roma are assigned to the role of mediators with Roma communities in the fields of employment, healthcare services, education and others, thus again they are set apart from everybody else.

Moreover, even programs that conceptually are not focused on Roma, are interpreted as "programs for Roma". The most striking example in this regard is in the field of social housing policy in which ethnicity is only one out of several criteria for distributing apartments in apartment buildings and so apparently, it should not be exclusive in theory. The facts, however, show another reality: For example, in the Czech Republic social housing policy has already led to the creation of new Roma ghettos. General programs for the construction of social housing in Bulgaria are publicly presented by politicians and the media as building "housing for Roma", a discourse that only amplifies anti-Gypsy attitudes in society, and as a result these programs are stigmatizing and segregating. Even the notorious case of Pata Rat in Romania presents a kind of social housing policy: modular social houses near the city's garbage dump provided to evicted Roma.

4. Discussion

Assessment of state policies towards Roma during the

so-called "socialist period" remains to date in the discourse of the "Cold War". The policy as a whole as well as its concrete manifestations are seen as one of the numerous crimes of a totalitarian regimes. The denial of Roma's ethnic identity, the push towards assimilation, and the assignment of Roma to a lower social status are considered to be the main sins of the former regimes. It is difficult today, seen from the point of view of ideological clichés, to find an objective and comprehensive analysis of these state policies in their complexity. The main problem here is to arrive at a distinction of and establish the relations between two interrelated and frequently overlapping processes—the process of social inclusion and ethnic assimilation. In the course of history many peoples, that lived surrounded by alien nations, went on the way from social integration to assimilation (as a natural process or as the outcome of a certain state policy). Following the logic of this model, (which by no means is universal) and applying it towards Roma, each state measure in the "socialist camp" directed towards Roma integration could be condemned as a step aiming at assimilation.

An objective analysis of state policy towards Gypsies requires a specific approach, in line with the particular situation in each country. Many circumstances should be taken into account, among them the place of Roma in the general context of national state policy in the respective country, and thereby the ratio between mainstream and special policy towards them. The last clarification is necessary, as Gypsies have never been the main target of a national policy in any of the socialist countries (unlike other minority groups), they have always been seen as a less significant group. Attitudes towards them have been contingent on the general strategic aims of the national state policy, defined according to the situation in a given country.

Having in mind the situation of Roma prior to the "socialist era" and after it, it is evident that the outcome of the policies towards Roma in the countries of the socialist camp was achieved above all due to the overall social development and the *mainstream* policy towards Roma (the general policy applying to all citizens, including Roma),, and to a much lesser extent due to the *special* policies towards Roma. The special policies were the main source of predicaments experienced by Roma during the times of the communist rule.

The socialist period ended by 1989 giving way to the much desired democracy. Roma from all over the former socialist countries now struggle again with inhuman housing conditions, unemployment, bad health status, problems with education, growing illiteracy, and other social ills. In many instances their present situation is reminiscent of the times before socialism.

Usually the "New Time" is opposed to the previous era, or in other words "the Time of Democracy" is opposed to the so-called "Time of Communism", but in terms of governmental policies aiming at Roma inte-

gration there is clear succession and continuity. Indeed, there is a major difference in terms of ideological reasoning and phraseology, but apart from that, in both historical periods the main aim was integration, and the policy agenda for Roma inclusion was and is mainly focused around the same thematic policy areas: housing, health, education and employment. The activities planned and accomplished nowadays, as well as the projects directed to the solution of Roma problems (including the new European strategies, programs and projects) are to a great extent well known from the recent past.

The main difference between the socialist policies for inclusion and the contemporary European policies is the prevalence of mainstream policies in the past and the emphasis on special, targeting, explicit policies nowadays.

Roma policies today are taking place in a complicated socio-political context of a difficult period of transition marked by frustrations in the former socialist countries due to the loss of social stability and security that were guaranteed in the past, due to failed hopes for prosperity and dignity associated with the change of the political system and the entry into the new powerful and rich bloc of the EU. In the European history, in critical socio-economic situations, the role of the main culprit for the failures of society has been ascribed usually to different ethnic minority communities. In conditions of transition, when the new socio-economic and political system was being established, with numerous difficulties, throughout Eastern Europe, the position "scapegoat" was assigned to them and the Anti-Roma public attitudes in society became widespread.

The prejudices and negative attitudes towards Roma in this region are not new, however, they were largely mitigated in the previous historical period. In the so-called "socialist camp" it was impossible and even unthinkable to demonstrate publicly anti-Gypsy attitudes in any form. The principle of so-called "proletarian internationalism" which was dominant at the official ideological level excluded demonstration of any form of racial and ethnic discrimination towards any community, and racism and discrimination were seen as intrinsic to the "decaying" Western capitalist system. The results, however, should not be overestimated, as the anti-Gypsy attitudes were not removed, they were just not publicly expressed and continued to exist in a latent state (Marushiakova & Popov, 2013c).

With the change of social conditions in the years of transition in Central and Southeastern Europe in terms of gaining democracy, understood in contrast to the previous totalitarian system as "liberty without borders" these anti-Gypsy attitudes not only received unlimited opportunities for public expression, but were considerably widened and deepened by acquiring new, hitherto unknown dimensions. In contrast to the previous era when the disregard of the main ideological

norms in public was unthinkable and would lead to an immediate punishment, the non-interference and lack of actions from Brussels to the overt anti-Roma speeches and actions even by representatives of national governments support the conviction that any form of anti-Gypsyism will pass.

Moreover, during the transition years a new anti-Gypsy stereotype was gradually instilled in the public consciousness. It is that Roma are a privileged group, that undeservedly enjoys privileges not available to the majority. Based on this stereotype Roma began to be perceived as a community, which not only parasitize on the labor of the society, but is also supported to do so. The Roma are perceived as a community, which makes their living mainly from social assistance and child allowances; to whom are devoted many special programs and projects; who receive huge funds that are then abused by Roma "bosses" (whatever that should mean); and who are engaged in widespread criminal activities. The general public firmly believes that the "Gypsies" are allowed not to comply with the national laws, to violate public order and not to fulfill their civic obligations; on the contrary, they are allowed by the state and by Brussels to enjoy special privileges and to be parasites. Direct related to this new public stereotype are apocalyptic pseudo-demographic studies that are being disseminated for years with the active role of the media, which predicts the "Gypsyisation" of the nation, i.e. the extinction of the main ethnicity due to the high birthrate of the Roma, and present Roma as a thread for the existence of the nation-states. In some countries the total disappointment with the entire political class has led to the firm conviction that politicians get elected by purchasing the vote of the Roma. The negative public image of Eastern European countries in the West is explained by the mass migration of Roma criminals and social assistance tourists. In the end, the Roma provide ideal excuses for the "EU's dream deferred" (Sigona & Trehan, 2011) and for the overall failures of the transition and the European integration.

Political elites in Central and Southeastern Europe often use the misconception of the special, privileged position of Roma as a cover for their own bankrupted efforts to solve the real problems of Roma, justifying their policy for social integration of Roma (or more often an imitation thereof) as a result of pressure from outside (by European Union, USA or numerous international organizations and institutions). The adoption of the European Framework of National Roma Inclusion Strategies (2011), which obliges EU member states to develop their national strategies for solving the problems of Roma, among other things, has strengthened in the public consciousness in Central and Southeastern Europe the stereotype that Roma enjoy a special, privileged position.

By way of summing up the foregoing we can say that the escalating trajectory of the anti-Gypsy attitudes and stereotypes in Central and Southeastern Europe over the past two decades suggests perhaps a less expected, even seemingly paradoxical, conclusion that the policies of "explicit, but not exclusive" targeting of Roma, regardless of good intentions, have led and will also lead in the future to results contrary to the expectations, if not implemented with a careful consideration of their overall societal impact.

As a result from the European policies of social inclusion of Roma the misconception of the special privileges for Roma has become the foundation on which the mass anti-Roma attitudes and stereotypes were rethought and developed until they firmly entered the public consciousness and became justification for all failures in the transition period in the new European realities. It is this new stereotype that has feds the numerous overtly nationalistic and pro-nationalistic parties in the whole region of Europe in the last decade and contributed to the strengthening of anti-European attitudes in the region.

It turns out that the more policies, programs and projects aimed at Roma are realized, the more aggravated are the anti-Roma public attitudes. In this situation, all *explicit* actions are pre-doomed to failure. All said above should not be perceived as an argument against any positive action regarding Roma. It is mandatory, however, before proceeding in the direction of such policies, to analyze very carefully and in all public aspects the results of previously implemented similar policies, starting from the "socialist era", with all its pros and cons, and to consider all possible consequences which they could have (both in with respect to Roma themselves and with respect to the whole society). Special Roma policies and projects, whether at European, national, regional or local levels, must be clearly focused and carefully implemented to avoid all possible negative consequences.

The only sphere of life were the *explicit* approach appears does not appear to cause any harm is the support of Roma identity in its different dimensions, e.g. language, culture, music, arts, etc. Such policies and projects are particularly necessary for the preservation, maintenance and development of the Romani language and ethnic culture, i.e. they are ultimately needed for the development of the Roma ethnic identity and positive self-esteem. A similar view was recently expressed by an activist, Rom from Bulgaria, in his open letter: "I realize the NRIS [Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 2012–2020] was created as a sign of the good will and intensions of the European Commission to *integrate* Roma and try to improve their livelihood. But I don't really feel the need to be *integrated* or *socially included*—not that I am an antisocial creature—by anyone. I simply feel the need for my language, culture and history to be recognized and accepted as equal….I hope you will stop calling me *marginal* in your efforts to help me" (Stoyanov, 2015).

All in all, the possibility of Roma to receive support for the development of the Roma ethnic culture is the only thing which distinguishes positively today's policies from the previous era, and despite massive anti-Gypsy attitudes in the society policies in this sphere still have a chance to succeed without negative social effects.

5. Conclusion

Policies towards Roma in the two historical periods—socialism and post-socialism, display a certain continuity, even though they are built on different ideological bases and therefore are usually considered in opposites. The main issue, however, is not how contemporary policy discourses on Roma relate to the official socialist discourses on Gypsies, because in the end, the two are rather similar. Regardless of the discourses, from human point of view and for Roma themselves, much more important are the results from the policies than their motives and objectives. To answer the question about the comparability of the results of these policies in the two periods is quite a difficult task. Most important is what will be compared. If we compare results within the four main priorities (employment, housing, education, and healthcare) the general picture is ambiguous and in some ways contradictory. In the field of employment, during the socialist period there was full (or nearly full) employment of Roma (as said above, to be unemployed was considered illegal), while nowadays the unemployment rates of Roma are extremely high (in any case much higher than the average unemployment in their respective countries). Similar is the situation in healthcare, where the main indicators in the case of Roma are worse today compared with the preceding period; moreover in some of the former socialist countries (e.g. Bulgaria) large parts of the Roma have entirely dropped out from the healthcare system. In the field of education, during the socialist period, the illiteracy which affected almost the entire Roma population prior to that period, was completely eradicated; nowadays the number of illiterate Roma is increasing again significantly; there is a sharp increase of school dropout rates, and there are children who are excluded from the school system. Along with these negative trends, however, the proportion of Roma with university education increased. In the field of housing the comparison of the two periods also leads to contradictory conclusions: The failure of socialism to complete its programs for the elimination of the separate Roma settlements and neighborhoods is not overcome until today; today many new illegal settlements are arising, the problem of homelessness appeared (to be homeless was also illegal in socialist times); in some cases, however, (as e.g. in Slovakia) at least some conditions in some isolated settlements were improved.

As we analyzed above, in terms of contents, the Roma policies pursued in the "socialist era" were quite similar with the current European Roma policies. The main difference comes from the fact that in the previous period these policies were implemented under the control of the totalitarian state, which excluded the possibility for public disapproval. Thus, at least from today's point of view, the socialist policies look more effective and successful.

The most important (but unfortunately the sole) advantage of the new age is the constitutional and legal instruments that guarantee the fundamental human and minority rights of the Roma and "the satisfaction at the long-awaited recognition of their ethnic identity" (Guy, 2001, p. xv) These guarantees have removed the existent real danger of Roma's forced assimilation and eradication as an ethnic community, ensured their freedom to express publicly their ethnic identity, and opened the possibility of preserving, maintaining and developing their language and ethnic culture. Unfortunately however, as seen from the distance of time, it appears, that "the Roma have been among the biggest losers in the transition from communism since 1989" (Wolfensohn & Soros, 2003). Moreover, whereas the total denial of everything that the socialist Roma policies achieved for the social integration of the Roma has ultimately led to discouraging results; the immense social disintegration of Roma is strikingly visible in the new social realities across the region. The processes, resulting from the contemporary policies lead to the domination of mass anti-Gypsy attitudes and the latter inevitably affect public policies; these attitudes immediately find their expression in the media and threaten to discard the advantages for the Roma that the "new times" have brought. So we are witnessing once again a growing number of people hiding their Roma identity and aspiring for assimilation in order to escape anti-Gypsy attitudes.

The overall development of the European Roma policies has already created a situation in which no matter what action and no matter which kind of the programs and measures will be implemented, all they will only exacerbate the problems. It appears that we already reached the situation, in which there is no solution and every step could be only a wrong one. In recent years, the Roma themselves have tried to analyze the results of current policies, programs and projects and to search for prospects. Perhaps most impressive was the action of young Roma activists in 2011, who during a meeting on Roma issues with representatives of the European Commission in Bulgaria called for a discontinuation of all European programs and projects for the Roma and raised huge banners with slogan: "Europe, stop funding Roma Exclusion".

A similar request was formulated by the prominent Roma visionary and activist Nicolae Gheorghe, who passed away on 8 August 2013. In his recently published text, a kind of political testament, he said: "projects for Roma, which are financed by structural or re-

gional development funds, should be stopped for a while. This is in order to have a moratorium and assess what is actually happening with these projects on the ground" (Gheorghe, 2013, p. 47).

Contemporary European Roma inclusion policy reminds the Catch 22. There is vicious cycle of problems which need to be solved; in order to be able do it, a special policy for inclusion needs to be introduced; this policy, however, stigmatizes Roma and sets them even more apart. Realistically spoken, it is obvious that the European Roma policies, programs and projects will continue. The question is what to do in order to stop the steady deterioration of the situation, to avoid repeating the mistakes, and to put an end to the contemporary social engineering for the creation of a united exotic and marginal community defined under the umbrella term Roma. World history offers sufficiently evidence about the consequences of social engineering, constructed on the basis of certain ideologically justified visions; there is no need to re-confirm the aphorism that the only lesson of history is that nobody draws lessons from it, this time at the expense of the Roma. The way out is to break the vicious circle of approaching the Roma as social marginals or as an exotic community, whose successful social inclusion requires special policies towards them, and to address them, as all other citizens of the European Union. Considering the possible solution we would like to quote literally the words of one of our old Roma friend, said circa two decades ago about those who work in the field of Roma policies: "they just need to understand that we are normal people like everyone else, and stop to look at us as aliens". There is nothing more to add to this.

6. Post Scriptum

Beyond the scope of this article is left another important issue of past and current policies for social integration of Roma, namely the participation of Roma representatives in them. More precisely said, left out is the issue about transforming the Roma from passive object into an active subject in the processes of social inclusion, (which is however not the same as the slogan often repeated in the last two decades "nothing on Roma without Roma"). This issue is too large to be included here and too important to be only briefly mentioned. It deserves to be elaborated in deep in a separate piece of work.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Racial, Ethnic, or National Minority? Legal Discourses and Policy Frameworks on the Roma in Hungary and Beyond

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Abstract
Inspired by recent Hungarian legislative developments that, in reference to the Roma minority, exchanged the term "ethnic minority" with "nationality", by providing a detailed case study of the development and morphology of policy measures and frameworks in Hungary, the article provides a general assessment of the relationship between policy instruments and terminology: that is, definitions and conceptualizations in international and domestic legal and policy documents for minority groups. The author argues that while terminology in itself is not a reliable signifier for policy frameworks, it may reveal contradictory group conceptualization and inconsistent policy-making. In regards to the Roma, the author claims that the inconsistent labelling as an ethnic, racial and national minority reflects the lack of consistent conceptualization of who the Roma are, and what should be done with them.

1. Introduction

This question often arises concerning the phrase "Roma": does it refer to a social class,[1] a race, an ethnicity, or a national minority? Inspired by recent Hungarian legislative developments that in reference to the Roma minority, exchanged the term "ethnic minority" with "Roma nationality", this paper starts by analyzing habitually used terms, definitions and conceptualizations in international and domestic legal and policy documents for minority groups.

I will first argue that the racial-ethnic-national mi-

nority terminology triad is unhelpful, and should be replaced by a more complex, functional set of categories, which better reflect socio-political realities, and the policy frameworks involved. I will also argue that group recognition is always politicized, and the form and substance of recognizing certain groups' legal and political aspirations will depend on the nature of their claims and its compatibility with the majority culture. I will claim that both in distinguishing between minority groups and in conceptualizing group membership, the question of external perception and the nature of the group-related claims will be of corollary importance. I will also point to the intrinsic relationship between categorizing minority groups and conceptualizing and instrumentalizing membership criteria.

I will claim that when approaching the terminology issue from the point of legal and policy claims and frameworks, we see three clusters: *minority rights* fo-

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[1] Reflecting on Oscar Lewis' concept of the "culture of poverty" (1968), there has been a fierce debate among academics in Hungary on the applicability of the concept of "underclass" for Roma in Hungary and Eastern Europe (Ladányi, 2000; Ladányi & Szelényi, 2000, 2001; Stewart, 2000, 2001).

cus on the recognition and accommodation of cultural claims of both groups and individuals, as well as identity politics. *Anti-discrimination* legal and policy frameworks are individual rights oriented, and the third batch includes those various and diverse *social inclusion measures,* which "ethnicize" social policies or, endorsing multiculturalism, include the recognition of other forms of group-based, collective claims. I will argue that "national minorities", "nationalities", are adequate terminologies for the first cluster; "racial" and "ethnic" minorities for the second cluster, while the third approach institutionalizes a curious mix of all three. I will make a further concluding argument that terminology in itself is not a reliable signifier for the policy frameworks behind it, but contradictory and ambiguous group terminology may be a useful signal for the underlying inconsistent policies, which may be the product of decision makers' conceptual and policy inconsistencies. I will make the claim that the inconsistent labeling of the Roma as ethnic, racial and national minorities signals the fluidity and the indeterminate nature of conceptualizing and targeting the Roma—both on the European and national level. I will argue that this inconsistency in labeling reflects the lack of understanding (or at least a lack of consistently interpreting) who the Roma are, and what should be done with them.

In order to support my claims, the second part of the article will provide the case study of Hungary. In this part of the essay, I will be following the Hungarian legislators' terminology and use "nationality" in the sense of a group of people who share the same history, traditions, and language, and not as a reference to citizenship; meanwhile I acknowledge that this choice of terminology is unfortunate and somewhat confusing. As a further note on terminology, throughout the text, I have struggled with using the term "the Roma", faced both ethical and rhetorical dilemmas, as it (even unintentionally) may not only signal "othering", and an outsider position, but also hints that there is a unified, general definition for the denotation. This, going beyond the general lessons learned from critical race theory, in the case of "the Roma" is even more controversial, since group boundaries are extremely fluid, situational, and given that the concept of this transnational minority is a recent political construction, it differs vastly from other "ethnic" and "national minorities". Also, it is the very argument of this paper that the conceptualization of "the Roma" will be completely different when referencing rights holders for minority (cultural) rights, beneficiaries of social inclusion policies, and victims of discrimination. I also find it important to add that in this article the self-identification of Roma per se is not addressed, only the question of how particular categorizations of Roma are used in legal discourses.[2]

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[2] On the Hungarian debate on who is Roma in Hungary, see

2. Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality: Clusters for Conceptualizing Groups[3]

In social sciences and law, the purpose of typologies and classification is to help us understand the internal logic and substance of concepts and institutions. Despite the fact that lawyers, legislators and drafters of international documents are well versed in creating definitions for concepts that are widely debated in social sciences and philosophy (consider for example the legal definition for poverty or disability), and notwithstanding the fact that the discourse on minority rights and adjacent policy frameworks are essentially law-based, most international and domestic documents on minority rights, human rights and social inclusion actually refrain from defining several of their core concepts. As a result, we have to settle for vague descriptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality. In order to evaluate and contextualize the potential policy ramifications of different conceptualizations of "the Roma", the following pages will provide an overview of what race, ethnicity and nationality can mean in reference to this unique, transnational, multifaceted group with a diverse set of claims and a complex socio-political environment.

2.1. Race and Ethnicity: Vague Categories, Inconsistent Application

Race is a controversial category. In the social science literature, it is widely understood to be a social construct rather than a biological trait (in the biological sense, the entirety of humanity constitutes one single race) without a theoretically or politically uniform definition (see e.g. Tajfel (1981)). Race-based international and domestic legal instruments identify race with the apprehension of physical appearance, and put perception and external classifications in the center when prohibiting discrimination, or violence on racial grounds. In this, it is rarely distinguished from *ethnicity*, and the two terms are often used interchangeably by lawmakers (and drafters of international documents) and, most of all, judicial bodies. For example, under Article 1. of the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, "the term 'racial discrimination' shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin…." Despite academic interest and insistence in differentiating between the two concepts, legal formulations seem to be unaware and unobservant of a potential difference between the two terms, and appear to be indifferent to it.

Feischmidt (2014), Havas, Kemény and Kertesi (1998), Kállai (2014), Ladányi and Szelényi (1998), Majtényi and Majtényi (2012), and Szalai (2003).

[3] For a more detailed analysis of issues raised in this chapter, see Pap (2015).

One of the most widely cited legal definitions for race and ethnicity comes from the opinion of Lord Frazer of the House of Lords in the Mandla v Dowell Lee ruling ([1983] 1 All ER 1062), which concerned whether Sikhs were a distinct racial group under the Race Relations Act: "For a group to constitute an ethnic [sic!—ALP] group…it must,…regard itself, and be regarded by others, as a distinct community by virtue of certain characteristics. Some of these characteristics are essential; others are not essential but one or more of them will commonly be found and will help to distinguish the group from the surrounding community…(1) a long shared history, of which the group is conscious as distinguishing it from other groups, and the memory of which it keeps alive; (2) a cultural tradition of its own, including family and social customs and manners, often but not necessarily associated with religious observance…(3) either a common geographical origin, or descent from a small number of common ancestors; (4) a common language, not necessarily peculiar to the group; (5) a common literature peculiar to the group; (6) a common religion different from that of neighbouring groups or from the general community surrounding it; (7) being a minority or being an oppressed or a dominant group within a larger community…." Using these criteria, Frazer held that Sikhs "are a group defined by a reference to ethnic origins for the purpose of the [Race relations!—ALP] Act of 1976, although they are not biologically distinguishable from the other peoples living in the Punjab" (Human Rights Commission, 2004, p. 5).

This has also been the approach applied in cases involving members of Roma communities. In *Koptova v. Slovakia*[4] and *Lacko v. Slovakia*[5], the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the body in charge of supervising the aforementioned treaty, had no qualms about accepting complaints concerning the treatment of Roma, thus recognizing them as a racial group (see also Human Rights Commission, 2004, p. 10). The Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights, spoke about *racial* discrimination against members of the Roma minority, when ruling against the Czech Republic in the segregation case of *D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic*[6] in January 2007. Most judicial bodies had no qualms about applying race and ethnicity as synonymous. In *Chapman v. the United Kingdom*[7] the Court accepted that gypsies constituted a distinct *ethnic* group in Britain by saying, "[T]he Applicant's occupation of her caravan is an integral part of her ethnic identity as a gypsy, reflecting the long tradition of that minority of following a travelling lifestyle". According to the Court in *Sejdic and Finci v. Bos-*

nia and Herzegovina: "Ethnicity and race are related concepts. Whereas the notion of race is rooted in the idea of biological classification of human beings into subspecies on the basis of morphological features such as skin colour or facial characteristics, ethnicity has its origin in the idea of societal groups marked in particular by common nationality, religious faith, shared language, or cultural and traditional origins and backgrounds. Discrimination on account of a person's ethnic origin is a form of racial discrimination."[8]

While in 2004, the Irish Government, in the course of reporting to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, declared that Irish Travellers, "do not constitute a distinct group from the population as a whole in terms of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin", Romani and Gypsy (used interchangeably) and Irish Travellers have been held to be "*ethnic*" groups for the purpose of the Race Relations Act in the UK. In *Commission for Racial Equality v Dutton*[9], a case dealing with the case of a London publican displaying a sign saying "No travellers" in his window, the Court of Appeals found that Romani were a minority with a long, shared history, a common geographical origin and a cultural tradition of their own. In *O'Leary and others v Allied Domecq and others*[10], a similar decision was reached with respect to Irish Travellers. In *Hallam v. Cheltenham Borough Council*[11], the House of Lords also held that a local council's refusal to let public rooms to a Gypsy family for a wedding amounted to discrimination on *racial* grounds for the purposes of the Race Relations Act. Then again, when dealing with a number of Planning Act cases involving illegally encamped Gypsies, it said in *Wrexham Borough Council v. Berry*[12] that one of the matters a court should take into account when considering an application for an injunction, was "the retention of his [the Gypsy Respondent's] *ethnic* identity" (at paragraph 41).

The Permanent Court of International Justice held in the Case of Greco-Bulgarian "Communities" (1930), that a minority community is: "a group of persons living in a given country or locality, having a race, religion, language and traditions of their own, and united by the identity of such race, religion, language and traditions in a sentiment of solidarity, with a view to preserving their traditions, maintaining their form of worship, securing the instruction and upbringing of their children in accordance with the spirit and traditions of their race and mutually assisting one another" (p. 26).

We can argue that if we want to grasp the substance of these definitions in the racial and ethnic mi-

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[4] 13/1998.

[5] 11/1998.

[6] Application No. 57325/00.

[7] Application No. 27238/95.

[8] Application nos. 27996/06 and 34836/06, p. 43.

[9] [1989] 2 WLR 17, CA.

[10] Case No CL 950275–79, Central London County Court, Goldstein HHJ. See also McVeigh (2007).

[11] [2001] UKHL 15.

[12] [2003] UKHL 26, at paragraph 41.

nority concept, there is one common element: the protection from maltreatment, that is, discrimination, hate crimes, hate speech, physical violence. Reflecting an anti-discrimination logic, the groups need to be defined by following the perpetrators' method: basing the definition of the group on the perception of either biologically determined characteristics or cultural attributes.

In a sense, however, ethnic minorities are multifaceted groups. While many of their claims are grounded in the anti-discrimination rhetoric employed by racial minorities, some "ethnically defined" groups, such as the Roma, may also have cultural claims (and protections) that national minorities would make. The international legal terminology habitually differentiates between the two groups on the grounds that ethnic minorities are different from national minorities in the sense that they do not have nation states as national homelands (Hannum, 2001). In this way, ethnic minorities are a sort of hybrid categorization, blending, and often mirroring, the claims made by racial and national groups.

The 1995 Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (probably the most important international document on national minorities) also fails to provide a definition for its targets.[13] (A relevant definition, also endorsed by the European Parliament's 2005 resolution[14] on the protection of minorities and anti-discrimination policies in an enlarged Europe, is provided by the 1993 recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on an additional protocol on the rights of national minorities to the European Convention on Human Rights: "'national minority' refers to a group of persons in a state who: reside on the territory of that state and are citizens thereof; maintain longstanding, firm and lasting ties with that state; display distinctive ethnic, cultural, religious or linguistic characteristics; are sufficiently representative, although smaller in number than the rest of the population of that state or of a region of that state; are motivated by a concern to preserve together that which constitutes their common identity, including their culture, their traditions, their religion or their language."[15])

When it comes to defining *national minorities*, I offer to settle for the definition that these are groups that, based on their claims for collective rights, bypass the anti-discriminatory logic and seek recognition of cultural and political rights, particularly autonomy or the toleration of various cultural practices that differ

from the majority's, which often require formal exceptions from generally applicable norms and regulations. In this case, we are dealing with claims for preferential treatment. According to Will Kymlicka (2001), cultural minorities can be divided into two kinds, nations and ethnicities. The former is a historical community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language or culture, the latter is a group with common cultural origins, but whose members do not constitute an institutionally complete society concentrated in one territory.

Concerning a special form of relationship between these clusters, we need to add the case when segregation is achieved by Roma parents being pressured to request specialized minority education, aimed originally at safeguarding Roma culture (Balogh, 2012a, 2012b). (This practice in not very common in Hungary but is well-documented.) The result is that Roma children are provided low-quality Roma folklore classes once a week, but are kept in separate, segregated classes, under inferior conditions.[16]

2.2. Claims as a Basis for Categorization

A useful way to help understand groups, and, I claim, the useful and meaningful way to conceptualize them, is to look at the claims they make. This should also serve as a helpful indicator for conceptualizing "the Roma". Based on the claims ethno-cultural groups in liberal democracies make, Will Kymlicka (2001) draws a five-way distinction among (i) national minorities, complete and functioning societies in historic national homelands which are either sub-state nations or indigenous peoples, (ii) immigrants, who do not want to engage in competing nation-building strategies, but want to negotiate the terms of integration (food, customs, holidays), (iii) voluntarily isolationist ethno-religious groups, which are unconcerned about marginalization, and seek exemption from certain laws, (iv) racial caste groups, and (v) Metics. (Kymlicka admits, however, that some groups like the Roma in Europe or African Americans are peculiar and atypical.). Minority rights claims, he concludes, may vary from immigrant multiculturalism to multination federalism, Metic inclusion, or religion-based exemptions from general laws. As Young (1997) sets out, "According to Kymlicka, justice for national minorities requires self-government rights of the national minority to govern their own affairs within their own territory, alongside and distinct from the larger society...Polyethnic rights, on the other hand,

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[13] According to the Explanatory Report (1995), "It was decided to adopt a pragmatic approach, based on the recognition that at this stage, it is impossible to arrive at a definition capable of mustering general support of all Council of Europe member States" (para. 12). See also Kymlicka (2007).

[14] 2005/2008(INI).

[15] Recommendation 1201 (1993).

[16] See the reports of the Parliamentary Commissioner for National and Ethnic Minority Rights (Kállai, 2011b, 2011c) and the report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Fundamental Rights and of the Deputy Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights of Nationalities Living in Hungary (Szalayné Sándor & Székely, 2014).

give special recognition to cultural minorities in order to compensate for the disadvantages they would otherwise have in political participation and economic opportunity in the larger society. The objective of poly-ethnic rights is thus to promote the integration of ethnic minorities into the larger society, whereas self-government rights of national minorities have a separatist tendency….The distinction between national minority and ethnic minority turns out to be a distinction between a[n immigrant—added by ALP] cultural group that wishes to and has the right to be a separate and distinct society, on the one hand, and a cultural minority that wishes to or is expected to integrate into a larger nation" (p. 49).

In line with Young's assessment, instead of a semantic analysis of the types of minorities, I propose a categorical distinction for minorities based on the aim of the particular protection mechanism sought. Instead of an empty typology, I call for a more complex set of criteria for distinguishing between minority groups, taking into consideration at least the origin of the group; the basis for group-formation; and the aspirations, needs, and demands of the group towards the majority. Let us not forget: rights protecting minorities may be dignity-based identity-claims; equality-based (synchronic or diachronic) justice claims; or even reciprocal diaspora claims.[17]

Protective measures for racial, ethnic, or national minorities may target a number of different things, such as:[18] socio-economic equality, de facto freedom of religion, the protection of potential pogrom victims and the prevention of brutal ethnic conflicts, decreasing cultural conflicts between majority and genuine minority or immigrant groups, combating racial segregation or apartheid, or race-based affirmative measures of compensatory, remedial, or transitional justice. In line with this, laws protecting minorities may take several forms, ranging from affirmative action and social protection measures to declarations of religious and political freedom to setting forth cultural or political autonomy, or controlling political extremists. The context-dependent meaning of minority-protection may also refer to a widely diverse set of policies such as: equal protection (non-discrimination); participatory identity politics (the political participation of identity-based groups in political decision-making); cultural identity politics (the recognition of identity-based groups in cultural decision-making by the state); the protection of historically rooted identity-based sensitivity (the criminalization of hate-speech, holocaust-denial, etc.); affirmative action; special constitutional constructions

form-fitted for the needs of indigenous populations; policies recognizing claims which mirror the state's ethnic kin's Diaspora claims abroad; right to traditional, pre-colonization life; or simply measures designed to maintain international security.

2.3. Recognition and Accommodation: The Political Sine Qua Non

The political element in the success of certain groups' recognition as minorities can best be demonstrated with the dynamic interpretation of the scope of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. For example, at the time of ratification, the German minority in South Jutland was identified as the only recognized national minority subject to the Framework Convention in Denmark. In 2000, the Advisory Committee urged the Danish government to reconsider the scope of application of the Framework Convention, in order to possibly include Faroese, Greenlanders and the Roma (Council of Europe, 2000).

It can be seen that the reception of groups' claims for protection and recognition, and institutionalizing these through the inclusion in the privileged club of minorities will depend on instances such as how compatible these claims are with the majority culture, how long is the group's common history with the majority, or whether there are historical or contemporary political sensitivities involved.

Bans on visible and politically loaded expressions of Islamic religion, such as women wearing headscarves, have, on the one hand, been repeatedly upheld by various judicial organs including the European Court of Human Rights (e.g. in *Leyla Şahin v. Turkey*;[19] *Dahlab v. Switzerland*[20]). In Central-Eastern Europe, headscarves worn by Roma women in traditional communities trigger no public response—even though the anti-Romani racist rhetoric (in some ways analogously to Western European anti-Muslim political actors) envisions the Roma as agents of a cultural, or a demographic takeover and a security threat. Also, in the UK, in similar cases involving turbans worn by Sikhs, legislative and judicial tolerance includes exemptions from wearing a helmet even while riding a motorbike or working on a construction site. The reason lies within the perception of Sikhs as a "harmless" group in the UK, with no apparent or manifest social, cultural, or political conflicts with the majority society.

As demonstrated above, group recognition is always political, and the form and substance of recognizing a certain group's legal and political aspirations will depend on the nature of their claims and on how compatible those may be with the majority culture. Thus,

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[17] In certain ethno-political situations (in Hungary, for example), the approach to ethnic and national minority rights is defined by reference to ethnic kin's Diaspora-rights (in the neighboring states). See e.g. Pap (2006).

[18] See e.g. Sajó (1993) or Bragyova (1994).

[19] Application no. 44774/98.

[20] Application no. 42393/98.

the length of historic coexistence or even the basis for group-formation will be critical elements in this process. In these debates concerning the Sikhs in the UK, German citizens of Turkish descent, Maghrebi immigrants in France, or the Roma in different European countries, it is irrelevant whether they are referred to as racial, and national or ethnic minorities. The pertinent questions, rather, relate to what legal instruments can be called for in advocacy and along which lines are policies drafted. A useful inquiry is not semantic, but one focusing on the morphology of claims and the socio-legal climate. The very idea of group rights includes adjusting society's perception of equality by including certain groups as eligible claimants for such treatment. Even if, in theory, the existence of a minority should not depend on the State's decision, in practice this process of broadening of the agents of ethno-cultural justice and equality will always include a political decision and a value judgment. The process of recognizing minorities as minorities, as groups worthy of *sui generis* recognition (that other groups do not have), is highly politicized.

2.4. Means to Ends: Concepts of Justice and Social Policy

These questions, therefore cannot be separated from discussions concerning what concept of social justice and equality are decision makers endorsing in regard to the given community. As McCrudden (2005) points out, there are at least four different meanings of equality, and what may be suitable in one context, may not be in another. What he calls the "individual justice model" focuses on merit, efficiency and achievement and aims to *reduce discrimination*. Second, the "group justice model" concentrates on outcomes and the improvement of the relative positions of particular groups, with *redistribution* and economic empowerment at its core. Equality as the *recognition* of diverse identities is yet another dimension, since the failure to accord diversity is a form of oppression and inequality itself; and finally, the fourth conception of equality includes social dialogue and *representation*, the meaningful articulation of group priorities and perspectives (McCrudden, 2005). Each of these conceptions of equality also has a different concept at its core, corresponding respectively to: direct discrimination; indirect discrimination, group-level marginalization and oppression; cultural and linguistic rights; and participation in political and public policy decisions is in the center.

As mentioned above, a useful set of terms therefore should center around the substance of legal and policy claims and frameworks. Under this approach there are three clusters: *minority rights* have the recognition and accommodation of cultural claims of both groups and individuals, as well as identity politics in focus. The second array of legal and policy frameworks is individual rights oriented, and has *anti-discrimination* in focus. The term should be understood in the broad sense, including protection from hate crimes or even hate speech, and several other related individual-based human rights claims. The third batch includes those various and diverse *social inclusion measures,* which "ethnicize" social policies or, endorsing multiculturalism, include the recognition of other forms of group-based, collective claims. "National minorities", "nationalities", are adequate terminologies for the first, "racial" and "ethnic" minorities for the second cluster, while the third approach institutionalizes a curious mix of all three.

While acknowledging that according to Tajfel (1981) both "ethnicity" and "nationality" are group-like social constructs (and imagined cultural communities, even if conceptualized and essentialized as biologically determined), and "race" functions as a category created by essentialist external perceptions and criteria, this does not mean that an ethno-national vs. racial binary would be a useful simplification. Also, while arguably external perceptions and classifications are corollary to defining and differentiating between these approaches, a national vs. ethno-racial binary is similarly reductionist. My point is that the recognition of ethno-cultural claims and policies for enhancing certain groups' capabilities for participating in cultural and public life, and the preservation of their identities, have to be differentiated from measures providing equal treatment, or setting forth group-conscious social policies. Due to the uniquely complex situation of the Roma, what we see in Roma policies is the chaotic application of all of the above.

2.5. Notes on Operationalization

The operationalization of policies and concepts is a crucial issue. Ethno-national identity can be defined in several ways, all of which is applied in different Roma-related policies: through self-identification; by other members or elected, appointed representatives of the group (leaving aside legitimacy-, or ontological questions regarding the authenticity or genuineness of these actors); classification by outsiders, through the perception of the majority; or by outsiders but using "objective" criteria, such as names, residence, etc. As noted earlier, for anti-discrimination measures, subjective elements for identification with the protected group are irrelevant, and external perceptions serve as the basis for classification. Policies implementing this anti-discrimination principle may rely on a number of markers: skin color, citizenship, place of birth, country of origin, language (mother tongue, language used), name, color, customs (like diet or clothing), religion, parents' origin, or even eating habits (Simon, 2007). Defining membership criteria comes up in a completely different way when group formation is based on claims for different kinds of preferences and privileges. In this

case, subjective identification with the group is an essential requirement, but the legal frameworks may establish a set of objective criteria that needs to be met besides. In the context of drafting affirmative action and ethnicity-based social inclusion policies, external perception, self-declaration, and anonymized data collection may be varied and combined. A special form of opting in to groups concerns mixed partnerships or marriages, where protections are extended to victims of discrimination by association.

When it comes to choosing legal or policy means to identify community membership, solutions should be tailored to match the policy frameworks. Thus, for hate crimes and discrimination, the perception of the majority and the perpetrators should be taken into consideration; in political representation, the perception of the minority community should matter; and in preferential treatment (remedial measures and affirmative action), self-identification along with community identification or endorsement should be key.

Policy makers may even find that attempts to misuse the system will inevitably occur. Thus, "explicit but not exclusive targeting", currently a dominant approach in the context of the European Union's Roma inclusion policies is a meeting-point between color-blind measures preferred by old Member States, and group-tailored "Roma policies" applied in Central-Eastern Europe. According to Principle no. 2 of the Vademecum by the European Commission (2010), "This approach implies focusing on Roma people as a target group without excluding others who live under similar socio-economic conditions. Policies and projects should be geared towards 'vulnerable groups', 'groups at the margins of the labour market', 'disadvantaged groups', or 'groups living in deprived areas', etc. with a clear mention that these groups include the Roma. This approach is particularly relevant for policies or projects taking place in areas populated by the Roma together with other ethnic minorities or marginalized members of society".

2.6. Inconsistent Terminology, Inconsistent Conceptualization and Policy Framing

It has been shown that terminology in itself is not a reliable indicator for policy frameworks. On the other hand, contradictory and ambiguous group terminology may be a useful signal for the underlying inconsistent, confused and confusing policies, which may be the product of decision makers failing to take sides in broader debates concerning the multicultural or multi-ethnic nature of the states, or avoiding a straight forward commitment towards directly targeting minority groups to address inequality, or insisting on privileging individuals over groups (and favoring hybridity over boundaries, signing up for post-ethnicity, etc.) (Kaufman, 2014).

It is not too far-fetched a claim to make that the inconsistent terminology for the Roma as ethnic, racial and national minorities signals the fluidity and the indeterminate nature of conceptualizing and targeting—both on the European and national level. In order to support my claim, contextualized by recent Hungarian legislation that changed the label for the Roma from an "ethnic minority" to a "nationality", the following chapter provides an overview of how the Hungarian legislator and the European Union approached the Roma question in Hungary.

3. Roma in the Pharisaic Hungarian Multiculturalist Model

3.1. The Roma in Hungary

Debates and theories applied to multiculturalism in an immigration context need to be adjusted accordingly when talking about Hungary. In order to properly contextualize the Hungarian case, the following facts need to be stated concerning the Roma population. In the 2011 census, 6.5% of the population declared that they belong to one of the minority groups. According to the Council of Europe, the cultural rights and situation of the new minorities (immigrants) is a marginal issue; immigration figures are very low, and the overwhelming majority of immigrants are ethnic Hungarians from a neighboring state, who do not constitute a cultural minority. With an overall population of about 10 million, the immigration authorities recorded 213,000 foreigners living legally in Hungary in 2012 (Council of Europe & ERICarts, 2015).

According to the Council of Europe (2010), 7.05% of the total Roma population lives in Hungary. Roma constitute the largest minority group in the country. In the 2011 population census about 3.2% of the population, 308,957, were identified as Roma (Central Statistical Office, 2013), but the Council of Europe (2010) suggest as many as 700,000–1,000,000. In Hungary practically the Roma are the only visible minority, and have been present for centuries. Roma in Hungary are linguistically assimilated: practically all speak Hungarian, some only Hungarian, others are bilingual, and they also do not differ significantly from the majority in religious affiliation. Also, Roma in Hungary live a sedentary lifestyle—unlike some Roma communities in Europe—; only a very small group of Sinti (estimated to be less than 1% among the Roma population, some operating travelling carnivals/carousels) are semi-sedentary (Szuhay, 2003).

The Hungarian Roma population is very diverse: there are three main groups (and several subgroups) of Roma in Hungary, in cultural and linguistic senses: the Romungros—who are linguistically assimilated, and speak Hungarian as a mother tongue—, the Boiash—many of whom speak a language which is based on an ancient version of Romanian—, and those who also

speak different dialects of the Romani language (the most widespread version is the Lovari) (Kemény & Janky, 2003). The Hungarian Roma community is extremely diverse and heterogeneous, unified only by the "othering" of the majority, and the political concept of the Roma, as constituted by state policies, and to a very limited degree, the international Romani movement (see e.g. Fosztó (2003)).

With respect to identity and advocacy, there are two competing ideologies and movements among Roma intellectuals in Hungary: one centered around civil-rights-oriented emancipatory politics (Horváth, 2004), another with ethno-national cultural identity in focus. The former emphasizes antidiscrimination and desegregation, the latter groupism and cultural rights. András Bíró (2013) calls these groups modernists and culturalists: "Modernists are mostly drawn from a younger urban elite who see themselves as representatives of an ethnic minority group facing multiple social, economic, educational, but primarily, discrimination problems. Consequently their problems focus on equal opportunities, human rights and integration. Culturalists are located primarily in rural areas and while less visible, are a significant presence in Roma communities. Headed by an older leadership, these prefer retaining tradition to integration" (pp. 33-34).

A note on terminology: in line with the Council of Europe Descriptive Glossary of terms relating to Roma issues (2012), throughout the text I will use the term Roma, but it needs to be added that in Hungarian the term "cigány" and "roma" are used interchangeably. Before 2011 the minority rights act and most government documents used the former term, while politically correct analysts and advocates would prefer the latter. According to the aforementioned Glossary of the Council of Europe (2012), currently Council of Europe documents prefer the term "Roma", referring to "Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned….The term 'Roma/Gypsies' was used for many years by before the decision was taken to no longer use it in official texts in 2005…, in particular at the request of International Roma associations who find it to be an alien term, linked with negative, paternalistic stereotypes which still pursue them in Europe. Consequently…it is recommended that the word 'Gypsy' or its equivalent no longer be used, as it is felt to be pejorative and insulting by most of the people concerned" (pp. 3-4). The term "cigány" is closely connected to "Gypsy", and the etymologically related "Zigauner", and "Gitano". Similarly to several parts of former Yugoslavia, in Hungary, depending on the context, it may actually not carry a stigma at all; some Hungarian communities only used this term for self-identification and until very recently were unfamiliar with the term "Roma", and many even today self-identify as "cigány", and prefer the term over "Roma".

3.2. The Hungarian Minority Rights Framework

The starting point to understanding the contemporary Hungarian minority rights framework dates back to 1920, when in the post-WWI treaty[21] Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and the corresponding population. Ever since, the aspirations to reunite and reinstate the old glory and territorial integrity (or at least a responsibility for ethnic kins in the neighboring countries) have always been a cornerstone of conservative domestic politics, and after the political transition in 1989 a constitutional responsibility and a foreign policy priority as well. Arguably, the 1993 Act on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities,[22] was designed in a way to provide a politically marketable example for the neighboring countries with a substantial Hungarian minority (see e.g. Pap (2006) and Bíró (2013)). The law enumerates 13 recognized minorities: Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatian, German, Greek, Polish Romanian, Ruthenian, Serb, Slovak, Slovenian, Ukrainian, and Roma. There is a complicated procedure to extend the list, which involves a popular initiative, an advisory opinion of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and a vote in the Parliament amending the Act, and no such initiatives were successful so far. The Act guarantees cultural and linguistic rights for these groups, and contains provisions on the establishment and maintenance of minority education and establishes a unique Hungarian institution, the minority self-governments (hereinafter MSGs). Funded by the local authorities or by the State where national bodies are concerned, MSGs operational in the local, regional and national level, have special competences for protecting cultural heritage and language use, fixing the calendar for festivals and celebrations, fostering the preservation of traditions, participating in public education, managing public theatres, libraries and science and arts institutions, awarding study grants and providing services for to the community (legal aid in particular). MSGs are thus elected bodies, functioning parallel to mainstream institutions, and have certain rights regarding decision-making in the areas of local education, language use in public institutions, media, and the protection of minority culture and traditions; minority self-government representatives have the right to provide input on public policy matters through access to the local councils' committee meetings. In 2006, 1118 local Roma minority self-governments were operating in Hungary (NDI, 2007, p. 5); in 2010 1248 (Kállai, 2011a, p. 25), and in 2014 1197 Roma minority self-governments were elected (National Election Office, 2014). (National censuses, as well as elections of minority governments are all based on voluntary self-identification.)

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[21] Treaty of Peace Between the Allied and Associated Powers and Hungary and Protocol and Declaration. Signed at Trianon, June 4 1920.

[22] Act LXXVII of 1993.

The law, thus set forth a broad set of cultural and political rights for traditional national minorities, and Roma ("*cigány*", as it stood in the law). It is worth noting that the name of the law included both national and ethnic minorities, with Ruthenians being the only group besides the Roma which does not have a nation state. (The Ruthenian community numbered 1098 in the 2001 census and 3882 in the 2011 one, with 1113 and 999 native speakers respectively (National Ruthenian Self-government (2013)).

Connecting to discussions in the first part of the paper, the function and the design of the MSGs is quite ambiguous: political representation and empowerment, cultural competences and a vague promise of social integration potential is bundled together. Generally, while acknowledging that it serves as a "training school" for up-and-coming Romani politicians, giving them skills that they can use in the mainstream political arena, observers are quite critical of the institutional design (Barany, 2002; Curejova, 2007; Kovats, 1996; Majtényi, 2005, 2007; Thornberry, 2001). As Melanie Ram notes (2014), the MSG-system, "which at times has been touted as a possible model for other countries, has not brought a substantial improvement in Roma lives. While it has increased participation of Roma to some extent, it has hardly enhanced social inclusion of Roma, largely because its mandate is limited to cultural autonomy (basic education, media, language, and promotion of culture. The language provisions are simply not so helpful for a community that largely speaks Hungarian at home, and local self-governments do nothing to directly address either discrimination or socioeconomic inequalities" (p. 31). According to the report of the National Democratic Institute (supported by the Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), "the MSGs tend to marginalize Romani issues by depositing them in a parallel, fairly powerless, quasi-governmental structure rather than addressing them through established governing bodies" (NDI, 2007, p. 6). Claude Cahn argued (2001) that the framework is not only "largely inappropriate for addressing the situation of Roma" but has "reified the exclusion of non-white minorities in Hungary". The above mentioned report of National Democratic Institution (NDI, 2007) pointed to many problems with the system. These included "unclear competencies, the lack of differentiation between various minority needs, deficiencies in financing, and voter enfranchisement regardless of ethnic affiliation" (p. 5). According to the report: "Hungary was among the first countries to create a system to promote minority rights and its minority self-government offers a unique approach to fostering Romani participation. While some consider it a model for countries with significant Romani populations, many in the international community, and among Roma themselves, say that [it—ALP]...tinkered with a fun-

damentally flawed concept that offers the illusion of political power rather than genuine inclusion (p. 4)....The MSGs tend to marginalize Romani issues by depositing them in a parallel, fairly powerless, quasi-governmental structure rather than addressing them through established governing bodies....MSGs fall far short of the range of competencies that the title 'self government' implies. They lack the authority to take action outside of a very limited scope of issues and function more like NGOs than elected governing bodies. The use of the term 'self-government' is not merely inaccurate, but actually damages the credibility and legitimacy of the entire system among Roma, as it raises unrealistic expectations on the part of constituents regarding what they can accomplish through the MSGs. In truth, the very design of the system prevents it from having a significant impact on issues of greatest concern to most Roma and hinders political integration. This is due in part to the fact that these were not the government's initial aims in creating the system. Rather, its goal was to give minorities a safeguard for preserving their distinct cultural and linguistic traditions, and...to provide the means for encouraging neighboring countries to allow Hungarian minority communities the same privilege. Governance over socio-economic policy was never the intention" (p. 6). The NDI also points to flaws in funding, claiming that "MSGs lack adequate funding to carry out either socio-cultural projects, per the system's original intent, or additional projects to improve the living standards of community members. With a budget of approximately $3,000 per year, with no consideration for the size of the town or Romani population, MSGs cannot cover even a modest stipend for a part-time employee to coordinate the work of its elected representatives or implement projects" (p. 6). "...Roma often approach their MSG expecting assistance related to a broad number of issues including housing, employment, discrimination and utility services. This problem is often exacerbated by many local governments which send Romani constituents to their minority self-government to seek help in areas where the MSG has no mandate. As a result, citizens often find no answer to their questions or requests and emerge from the process disillusioned with both their Romani and mainstream representatives. This lack of authority leaves MSGs as a 'half-way house' between a government institution and an NGO, with an undefined, under-funded mandate. Other than very limited government funding and the right to consent in issues of education, language, and cultural preservation, the MSGs have few advantages over NGOs....As consultative bodies, the MSGs have not proven to be effective in promoting Romani interests on a broad array of mainstream policy debates" (p. 24).

In sum, the NDI report pointed out that, "the government's stated purpose for creating the Minority Act was to assure the cultural autonomy of minorities and

to fulfill international obligations regarding the protection of minority rights. However, another important factor in the development of the act was Hungary's desire to protect the rights of the large number of ethnic Hungarians living in neighboring countries. By developing the MSG system and other minority institutions, the government hoped to build leverage that it could use in bi-lateral negotiations with neighboring states on guaranteeing the rights of Hungarians abroad…the MSG system in Hungary is not specific to the Roma community and includes 12 additional minority groups....While other minorities are primarily concerned with protection of cultural and linguistic autonomy, the Roma population faces an almost opposite challenge, needing more integration to combat segregated education, discrimination, unemployment, and problems with housing and healthcare" (p. 5).

Hungarian Roma leaders repeatedly call for a redistribution, rather than recognition-oriented minority policy.[23] According to Molnár and Schaft (2003), "Roma self-governments see as their main objective the improvement of social conditions in their community rather than the preservation of minority culture and strengthening of minority identity. The ambitions of local Roma leaders are influenced primarily by the marginalization of their community, while the protection of Roma identity remains secondary" (p. 41).

3.3. Beyond Cultural Rights…

Despite the fact that none of the targeted national minority communities ever voiced their demands in a politically compelling way (and Roma representatives certainly would not have advocated such a framework), the first freely elected Hungarian government acted in a proactive manner, exceeding international minority rights commitments and created an identity-politics oriented minority rights framework—even if partly, or mostly in order to fuel national sentiments and political commitments towards ethnic Hungarians in the Diaspora.

As Balázs Vizi points out (2013), despite all its flaws, for the first time in Hungarian history, the 1993 law formally recognized the Roma as a group with legitimate claims for a separate identity. Admittedly, the law facilitated a peculiar nation-building project (see for example Fosztó (2003)), conceptualizing a Roma national minority, a distinct political group, incorporating all its diverse subgroups. Also, the law to a certain degree successfully endorsed cultural aspirations of certain Roma communities and created a Roma political elite (Bíró, 2013), its declaration concerning the prohibition of discrimination, a daily practice for Roma in Hungary in all facets of life, received very little atten-

tion. For example, the first comprehensive anti-discrimination law was adopted only in 2003, 10 years after the minority rights law, necessitated by EU-accession obligations, and in 2000, only three years before its adoption, the Constitutional Court rejected complaints pertaining to the lack of such a legislation.[24] Likewise, the law was unfit to meet social inclusion demands in dire need for Roma communities. Despite the shocking sweep of market economy that hit the impoverished Roma the hardest, in the first decade or so after the political transition there were no serious attempts to institutionalize social inclusion measures targeting the Roma, as Hungarian legislators' priorities concerned enhancing exportable cultural identity for national minorities.

Let us now investigate further developments in these areas. What we will see is that the gradual progress we may acknowledge is also hardly a consequence of thoughtful concise strategizing, and that although European Union accession did fertilize and accelerate the development of social inclusion and anti-discriminatory measures, the conceptualization of these policies and envisioning the Roma in this process is just as blurry and inconsistent as in the inconsistent and internally contradictory multiculturalist model as set forth by the 1993 minority rights law.

3.4. Accession and the Role of the European Union

As analysts point out, in order to minimize unwanted mass migration after accession, the EU made efforts to facilitate the social inclusion of the marginalized Roma communities during the accession process (Guglielmo, 2004; Vermeersch, 2003; Vizi, 2005). However, as Balázs Vizi (2013) points out after a thorough analysis of accession reports, the European Commission was insensitive towards the difference between the complexity of social inclusion measures tailored to Roma and minority rights frameworks that enhance minority identity. There was no recognition or commitment to a separate assessment of assimilationist, integrational measures, and inclusion strategies that in fact build and rely on a separate and special ethno-cultural identity. Given the heterogeneity of Roma in Hungary and the very advanced degree of their assimilation, this was a severe omission. In a way, although doing the opposite, the European Commission turned out to be just as obtuse, blindfolded and conceptually disoriented as the Hungarian legislator. Even though annual accession progress reports and documents adopted by the European Parliament and the Commission discussed Roma-related issues under "minority rights" labels, recommendations and concerns only focused on anti-discrimination, very broad social integration measures and complaints against the treatment of Roma by the

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[23] For an academic assessment of the "redistribution-recognition dilemma", which are conceptualized both as analytically distinct categories of justice, see Fraser (1995).

[24] Decision No. 45/2000 (XII. 8.).

police and other authorities—none actually having to do much with minority rights (Vermeersch, 2009). Even the question of the parliamentary representation of minorities was seen as a missing tool for social integration and not as that of political participation (Vizi, 2013). The preservation of cultural identity was never raised within accession progress reports.

Despite these ambiguities concerning the conceptual framework of EU-accession demands, analysts agree on the efficiency of the pressure it put on Hungarian policy-makers to facilitate Roma social inclusion, which certainly improved after 1997. (It needs to be added that some argue that it may also have been due to the fact that this was the time by when the inadequacy of the 1993 law became apparent to the governments.) Even though the first government resolution on Roma integration was adopted in 1995,[25] 1997 marked a significant expansion in both the number of government documents,[26] strategies, action plans, etc. adopted and the broadening of the perspectives within (Vizi, 2013). Recognizing its policies as successful, during the accession process, the EU granted Hungary the largest amount of support from the EU for Roma integration as part of the PHARE programme: 18 million Euros between 1999 and 2001, altogether 34.5 million between 1999 and 2006 (National Development Agency, 2008).

3.5. From Ethnic to National Minorities: The New Hungarian Constitutional Order

The new 2011 Hungarian Constitution and the subsequently adopted new Act on the Rights of Nationalities[27] (i.e. minorities) which officially replaced the term "*cigány*" with "*roma*", re-labeled Hungarian minorities to "nationalities" ("*nemzetiség*") from "national and ethnic minorities" ("*nemzeti és etnikai kisebbségek*"). There is no evidence (for example in parliamentary debates or government documents) that this shift in terminology would have been based on overarching theoretical or conceptual reasoning, or it would have been accompanied by systematic political commitments, or that it even was determined with the Roma in mind. It is not clear what the legislator's problem was with the previous definition of "national and ethnic minority". Presumably, the constitution-maker neither disputed that "nationalities" constitute a numerical minority within society, nor that they suffer from certain disadvantages (which the minority law is designed to redress by setting forth minority rights). Furthermore, putting aside the difficulty of differentiating between "national" and "ethnic" minorities, nothing supports the understanding (and even the Hungarian legislator failed

to make this claim) that a "nationality" could or would be regarded as a greater set comprising both (Chronowski, in press; Magicz, 2013; Majtényi, 2014). Thus the most accurate description would be that it is synonymous with "national minority". It is no coincidence that the terminology used in international documents also employs the aforementioned distinctions, and that the original draft of the Fundamental Law talked of "nationalities and ethnic groups".

During the drafting of the new constitution in 2011, the Croatian[28] and the Ruthenian[29] national minority self-governments welcomed the change in terminology, which was also recommended by the minority rights ombudsman, because for some unexplained reason they considered the term "minority" demeaning. It is well to add that only four of the 13 NMSG's took the effort to comment on the draft constitution (all 13 were asked to do so as requested by the parliamentary committee in charge); crucially, the Roma minority self-government remained silent.

The preamble of the new constitution proclaims that "the nationalities living with us form part of the Hungarian political community and are constituent parts of the State", and this is repeated in Article XXIX. Although it is a repetition of the previous constitution's provision (not a verbatim reiteration, but substantially the same), despite several Constitutional Court decisions seeking to interpret its meaning, it still remains ambiguous. It would not raise interpretational questions if minorities were held to be constituent elements of the nation, but the semantic connotations of minorities or nationalities that are constituent parts of the state is rather confusing outside a Bosnian-style ethnic federation.[30] All in all, it appears therefore that members of the Hungarian nation, having given themselves a constitution, share public power with the nationalities that live with them. Incidentally, these nationalities are not subjects of the constitution, since the preamble of the Fundamental Law states that it is authored and framed by members of the Hungarian nation—even if there may have been (and in fact there were) members of parliament (even some governing party MPs who adopted the constitution) who are members of a national minority.

One significant development concerns the introduction of parliamentary representation for all nationalities as set forth by a new electoral law. For the most part, the 2011 nationalities act practically left the previous legislation intact, except for depriving minority self-governments of their veto rights concerning some local legislation. A rather curious development con-

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[25] Government Resolution No. 1120/1995 (XII. 7.).

[26] Government Resolution No. 1093/1997 (VII. 29.); 1048/1999 (V. 5.); 1186/2002 (XI. 5.); 1021/2004 (III.18.).

[27] Act CLXXIX of 2011.

[28] AEB/139/2010, retrieved from www.parlament.hu/biz39/aeb/info/horvat_onk.pdf

[29] AEB/136/2010, retrieved from www.parlament.hu/biz39/aeb/info/ruszin_onk.pdf

[30] Decisions no. 1041/G/1999; 35/1992 (VI. 10.); 24/1994 (VI. 6.).

cerns Roma minority self-governments (but not other minority self-governments) as they have formally been involved in social inclusion measures, creating an even more confusingly hybrid, mutant model. As an annex to the first version of the Hungarian National Social Inclusion Strategy (2011), the government signed a framework agreement with the National Roma Self-Government, and competences including the supervision of schools, developing new employment schemes, monitoring programmes have been assigned to the NRSG. In fact, it has been appointed as one of the core implementing bodies of the Strategy (Annex 2).

The new legislation, backed up by constitutional language, clearly signals that on the one hand, the legislator as well as the right wing populist elite conceptualize Roma issues as foremost within identity politics. On the other hand, government rhetoric and initiatives use cultural identity as a tool for social integration, and presents it in a simplified, essentialist, manner.[31] Let us see some examples from the first version of the Hungarian National Social Inclusion Strategy (2011), adopted in order to reflect policy aims set forth by the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (which, following the "explicit but not exclusive targeting" principle targets several vulnerable groups[32]): "The fostering and popularisation of Roma culture…should not result in an effect contrary to the desired goal by overly emphasising the cultural 'differentness'.…As the fostering of Roma culture contributes to the positive shaping of the social image of the Roma…we must…enable the majority society to acquaint themselves with the values of Roma traditions and culture in Hungary and abroad alike.…Learning about the life, values and culture of the other community is an effective means of the fight against stereotypes. We must therefore lay particular emphasis on providing information in public education on the culture and history of the Roma as a part of the multi-faceted Hungarian culture as well as on presenting the effects of the Roma culture on the national and Eastern European culture" (Chapter VI. Involvement, awareness raising, fight against discrimination, pp. 96-98). This approach is further articulated in the updated version of the integration plan (2014), which emphasizes the role of maintaining cultural traditions, which can function as a source of pride and confidence and "which is a prerequisite for the self-esteem, the consciousness-raising, and the re-creation of the integrity of Roma community". While the document sets forth the goal to "re-shelve projects fostering Roma culture from social issues to cultural identity" it also calls for the integration of a social inclusion approach to Roma educational and cultural programs (Dinók, 2012).

Flaws in the Strategy and its policy environment have been thoroughly criticized in the monitoring report commissioned by the Decade of Roma Inclusion Initiative[33] and compiled by an NGO coalition[34] involving most of the relevant organizations in Hungary (Balogh et al., 2013). For example, it points out that "some of the missing policies are closely connected with anti-discrimination and equal opportunities policies…abolishing the institution of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities and moving this function to the portfolio of the deputy of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, have resulted in far less powerful institutional tools for combating discrimination. Hungarian authorities do little to sanction hate speech, and criminal law provisions designed to protect groups facing bias are more often applied by the authorities to sanction Roma rather than non-Roma. In case of most hate crimes, no proper criminal procedure is launched. Romani women and children suffer extreme forms of exclusion, too. At the local level, the powerless position of minority self-governments has been further weakened: their consent is not obligatory any longer to decide on matters affecting the local Romani community (while, on the other hand, numerous governmental tasks which go far beyond the legitimate political role of national minority self-governments have been assigned to the National Roma Self-Government" (pp. 9-10). Also, "the circumstance that public security measures are connected with the measures aimed at the Roma inclusion is quite problematic, since this gives the impression that ethnic origin is connected to criminality" (p. 37). The NGO coalition makes the following general recommendations: "…the human rights and fundamental rights based approach, including the principle of non-discrimination, should be strengthened and become more dominant in the Strategy and its implementation.…Concerning hate crimes committed against vulnerable groups (especially Roma), coordinated measures should be taken in the following areas: data collection, accessibility of court decisions, preparing an adequate investigation protocol, training and awareness raising of law-enforcement professionals, providing information to victim groups.…Public policy measures should take into account the multiple disadvantages of Romani women and the phenomenon of intersectionality.…The principle of social equality between men and women should also be applied as a horizontal aspect in Roma inclusion policies.…When planning public policy measures, it should be taken into account that human trafficking and prostitution are areas where inequalities based on gender, ethnicity and social status interconnect" (pp. 11-12).

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[31] See for example a speech delivered by the Minister of Human Resources (MTI-EMMI, 2014).

[32] See Vizi (2011).

[33] For the assessment of the Decade see Kóczé and Mirescu (2011) and Jang (2015).

[34] For the role of NGOs see Kóczé (2012)

4. Conclusion

The Hungarian case serves as a litmus test for showing that labeling does not necessarily involve form-fitted conceptualization, and that terminology does not necessarily determine policy instruments. In the Hungarian case, the confusing legal terminology reflects and reveals confused conceptualization and the lack of clearly defined political and policy objectives. Here, despite all the efforts of human rights NGOs in strategic litigation and policy recommendations (e.g. the European Roma Rights Center or the Chance for Children Foundation) the collectivist, essentialist and patronizing approach, and the relabeling of the Roma as a nationality, is accompanied by a neglect of the individual justice based, anti-discrimination oriented approach. This clears the path for far-right rhetoric centered on collective responsibility, culturally rooted, but in essence ethnicized criminality, or the parasitical "culture of poverty", and an unwillingness to adopt Hungarian middle class norms and lifestyle. In sum, the terminology used in official documents, the new constitution, laws and policy frameworks, fail to comprehend the complexity of Roma-related issues, and even the essential difference the various policy models (minority rights, anti-discrimination, social inclusion) carry and require. Ironically, anti-discrimination focused policies advocated by the European Commission were equally blindfolded and obtuse concerning the differentiated nature of these policies.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Victimization and Vilification of Romani Children in Media and Human Rights Organizations Discourses

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Abstract
Through an analysis of European newspapers, human rights organization reportage, and United Nations documents and websites, this article examines how public discourse regarding education, human rights, poverty, child rearing, and child labour manufactures a dangerous, implausible childhood for Romani children. These discourses, perpetrated by human rights organizations and news media, leverage the languages of intervention, cultural difference, nationalism, and social justice to simultaneously victimize and vilify Romani children, rendering them incapable of experiencing humane childhoods. Employing critical discourse analysis and systemic functional grammar analysis, the proposed article seeks to disentangle the discourses of human rights for Roman children from the assimilationist arguments aimed at compulsory schooling and Eurocentric family and labour practices rooted in access to middle class dominant labor markets.

1. Introduction

> The solid ground of the earth is delineated by fences, enclosures, boundaries, walls, houses, and other constructs. Then the orders and orientations of human social life become apparent. (Carl Schmitt, 2003 p. 46)

The April 4th 2012 issue of the Swiss magazine *Die Weltwoch* features a close-up picture of a very young Roma boy pointing a gun straight into the camera of Italian photographer Livio Mancini. Underneath reads the article headline: "They come, they steal and they go." *Die Weltwoch* proceeds to claim that, "Roma families from Eastern Europe are responsible for a large part of increasing crime tourism." Deputy Editor and article co-author, Phillip Gut, asserts that "crime tourism" in Switzerland is largely carried out by Roma gangs, telling the Swiss newspaper *Sonntags Zeitung* that "the child in the photograph symbolized the fact

that Roma gangs misuse their children for criminal purposes" (Dewsbury, 2012, para. 4). Mr. Gut forgot to mention that the child was holding a toy gun—and that most Roma families are neither "tourists" nor "criminals." In 2010, French President Nicolas Sarkozy ordered 300 Roma camps closed, describing them as "sources of illegal trafficking, of profoundly shocking living standards, of exploitation of children for begging, of prostitution and crime" (BBC, 2010). Half a decade earlier, the British tabloid *The Sun* published an article entitled, "Sun War on Gipsy Free for All," (Barkham, 2005, para. 1) featuring the image of a Roma child entering a ramshackle trailer parked in a run-down trailer park. The discursive framing of Roma children as criminal, poor, dirty, and unsupervised creates a unique discursive cultural cast for the Roma, facilitating the dehumanization they have recently experienced at the hands of dominant European nations.

Simultaneously, and somewhat ironically, the public narratives of Roma children construct them as the

most victimized children in all of Europe, in need of protection from their parents, guardians, and both social and governmental institutions so that they may attain full democratic participation. The World Bank (2005) has published an exhaustive report entitled, "Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle." This report constructs Roma identity in Europe as a problem of poverty at the nation-state level. They argue that "[p]olicies to address Roma poverty…need to be an integral component of each country's economic and social development strategies (p. xiii). Similarly, the last ten years have been marked by a series of stories and reports demonstrating the startling marginalization of these children. For example, a 2005 United Nations Children's Fund Report cites culturally irrelevant pedagogy and discrimination in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the reasons why 80 percent of Roma children do not attend school and instead enter the labour force, working in unsuitable conditions and for unfair wages (United Nations Children's Fund, 2005, p. 28). Three years later, the news in 2008 showed two Roma girls, a 14- and 16-year-old, who had drowned to death and lay on a hot sandy beach in Italy covered with flimsy beach towels, while sunbathers continued their relaxation, as their corpses "were carried away on the shoulders [of the officers] between bathers stretched out in the sun" (Hooper, 2008, para 8). Then, in the fall of 2013, 4-year-old Maria, dubbed "the blond angel," was "found" in a Roma camp in Greece, reiterating the fear in Europeans to be fearful of Roma stealing (white) children. The British newspaper *The Guardian* provided a close up of a beleaguered and ill-kept blond blue-eyed girl after her two alleged parents were arrested for abduction and later found to have falsified birth registrations. The article title reads, "Maria case exposes extent of child trafficking in crisis-hit Greece" (Smith, 2013). Maria became the angelic face to champion the anti-child trafficking movement in Europe. And most recently, in January of 2015, BBC reported that a Roma baby who died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome was initially "refused" a burial in Champlan, France because "priority is given to those who pay local taxes," according to the Mayor Christian Leclerc (BBC, 2015, para. 5), who neglected to mention that children do not pay taxes. Reviled and vilified on the one hand and marginalized victims needing protection from both their parents and public institutions on the other, Roma children fight a seemingly impossible battle against their own social construction. Roma children and their childhoods are situated in public narratives of human rights, narratives of poverty and criminality, and narratives of unauthorized migration.

As Foucault (2003) argues, understanding the discursive features of modalities of power and decoupling them from the juridico-institutional bureaucracies operant in nation states may disrupt the power that seeks to disaffirm and disallow particular lives. Self-evident also is that specific language is deployed by govern-

mental agents to preserve their geopolitical hegemony. (Hardt & Negri, 2001). In the case of Roma people, both the human rights organization and popular media discourses have colluded to construct a socially impossible Roma childhood working in contradistinction with the nation state. Roma children's childhoods are conceptualized through European ideals wherein the complex cultural practices of Roma children are obfuscated as to preserve the normative archetype of the European child. Roma childhoods stand in contrast to the "normal" European childhoods and therefore need intervention from advocates. The construction of a normal childhood and the disidentification with that childhood by the Roma is produced because the norm invokes "multiple separations, individualizing distributions, an organization in depth of surveillance and control and intensification and ramification of power" (Foucault, 1977, p. 198). Outside the European norm, Roma children and childhoods can only be understood in a place of alterity. For those children whose lives are different from that of the hegemonic norm, childhood is a project doomed to failure by a discourse that constructs their impossibility.

The number of Roma in Europe is estimated to be between 10 and 12 million, with over half residing in the European Union, making them the largest minority group in Europe (Martinidis, Andrei, & Tkadlecova, 2014). Through an analysis of European newspapers, human rights organization reportage, and United Nations documents, this article examines how the publicly conducted philanthropic discourses of education, human rights, poverty, child rearing, and child labour fashion an implausible and dangerous childhood for Romani children. These discourses, emerging out of a neoliberal zeitgeist, leverage the languages of intervention, cultural difference, nationalism, and social justice to relinquish responsibility over and victimize Romani children, rendering them incapable of experiencing humane childhoods and leaving them unprepared them for adulthood.

Employing a critical discourse analysis and systemic functional grammar analysis, the present article seeks to disentangle the discourses of human rights for Roma children from the assimilationist arguments aimed at compulsory schooling and Eurocentric family and labour practices. In so doing, I aim to show how the well-meaning discourse of care and protection undermines and limits the fullness of Roma childhoods by constructing them as culturally criminal. The article begins with a brief review of the literature on Roma children and childhoods followed by a discussion of the analytical approaches that inform the critical assessment of the impact of such discourses on Roma Children.

2. Research on Roma Children and Childhoods

Much of the research on Roma children explores how

they fare in comparison to their European counterparts with the goal of assimilating Roma children and helping them gain access to the social and economic benefits regularly utilized by other European children. Some of the research constructs the Roma child as "socially disadvantaged", arguing that "disadvantageous social, language and cultural background produces variability of the child's individual needs and conditions" (Lipnická, 2014, p. 59). Though well meaning, most studies of Roma children implicitly critique the parents, culture, and society in which they are raised, framing Roma children as perpetual victims in need of political and policy intervention so that their acceptance and proper socialization can be facilitated. Van Baar (2009) argues that such policies and practices intervening on many Roma communities emerge out of Foucault's concept of governmentality, where the state is no longer restricted to matters of state, but may also intervene upon social and cultural life. As such, some of the research on the policies and practices of Roma families may laminate state governmentality on areas not typically subject to state control.

A primary focus of research on Roma children is on the educational resources provided to them. Historically, throughout Europe, Roma children have been segregated and separated in public schools. Researchers and children's rights groups view the educational integration of Roma children as a pathway out of poverty (Járóka, 2007). In response to lobbying from children's rights and Roma rights groups, the Grand Chamber of European Court of Human Rights made a landmark decision on November 13, 2007, ruling that the segregation of Romani students in remedial schools is unlawful and discriminatory. Eight years later, Roma children still face structural inequality, including the lack of equal access to quality schooling. For example, in a three country study of the Czech Republic, Greece, and Romania, Martinidis et al. (2014) found that Roma children are refused enrolment in public schools, overrepresented in special schools for children with disabilities or in substandard schools, and that even when they are placed in ordinary schools, they are likely to be discriminated against through both violence and segregation practices. Similarly, Trimikliniotis and Demetriou (2009) document how separatist school practices in urban cities within Cyprus make high educational attainment impossible for Romani children. Many migrant Roma, not surprisingly, refuse to attend European educational systems, where Roma children face segregationalist practices.

Roma children have not fared well in compulsory public schooling (Cozmas, Cucos, & Momanu, 2000). In an edited volume, Miscovic (2013) reveals the multiple practices, policies, and politics shaping the problematic education Roma children receive in Europe. An examination of the test score gap between Roma and non-Roma children in Hungary found that along with at-tending lower quality schools, "one-third to two thirds of the test score gap" can be explained by the home environment and the parents' income, wealth and education (2014, p. 2). Family poverty limits Roma children's access to school, as it often leads them to live in remote places (Martinidis et al., 2014). According to a United Nations Dependency Program Survey, Roma girls receive less education than Roma boys because they are more likely to experience poverty, marry, and give birth at an early age (UNDP, 2002). Findings from the study illustrate that Roma girls cease attending school when "the opportunity costs of sending children to school rise in households with falling incomes" (UNDP, 2002, p. 29). The low educational attainment of Roma children translates to low levels of employability skills and hinders them in the labour market (O'Higgins & Ivanov, 2006). In the literature, however, there is little critique about how the educational settings of most European countries aim to culturally assimilate Roma children against their own wishes and those of their families (Lesar, Čuk, & Peček, 2006). Little to no attention has been paid to the psychological and psychosocial effects of such discriminatory practices at the hands of the state.

Amongst the Roma, compulsory public schooling is conceptualized as a sociocultural problem. First, schooling is not necessarily linked to social or economic status within some Roma communities and is likely to be deemed disrespectful (culturally and familially), painful, ineffective, and a distraction from familial economic activities necessary for survival. Second, some Roma parents see formal schooling as an invasive and unnecessary intrusion by a society which seeks to control their parenting and their children's lives (Lee & Warren, 1991). Third, Roma children, for their part, may experience school as boring and irrelevant and have more interest in practical knowledge of everyday life than indoctrination into prioritizing "scholarly knowledge" (Kyuchokov, 2000). As a result, many Roma families opt to stop enrolling their children in school, if they even did so to begin with. Instead, Roma children are taught through apprenticeships (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) that expose them to the cultural practices of their community, including skills that will allow them to make money (Christianakis, 2010). In this way, knowledge construction is communal (Wasko & Faraj, 2000) and stands in opposition to individualist paradigms, which call for children to be socialized and taught in institutional settings separate from the family.

Research indicates that Roma girls have limited opportunities at home, in educational settings, and in the labour market. Roma families tend to reproduce hegemonic patriarchal structures (Levinson, 2005) wherein girls are taught to abide by paternalistic gender norms that relegate them to domestic and reproductive labour. They reside separate from mainstream society and culture, possibly to become wives and mothers at

a young age, resulting in little access to good working conditions and thus making welfare dependency more likely (Martinidis et al., 2014). The implicit cultural critique that results from some of the aforementioned research is that Roma culture prepares their girls to live off the dole rather than be gainfully employed in the labour market.

In addition to patriarchal gender acculturation and inadequate educational attainment, research on Roma childhoods construct the Roma families as lacking necessary information and common knowledge about public health and child safety. In a retrospective study of scald burns in children spanning 3 years, 58.7% of 201 children with scald burns were of Roma ethnicity, and therefore the authors recommended, "organized education of this vulnerable population" (Frisman, Rácz, Petrovicová, Ján Slávik, & Cimboláková, 2015). Roma children, according to the research, are not only vulnerable because of their living conditions, but also because of Roma health practices. In a comparative study of Roma vs. Non-Roma children in Romania and Bulgaria, "negative effects of Roma family life," such as unsafe living conditions (as determined by the standards of the state where they live), social discrimination, few sanitation amenities, and subpar educational environments predispose Roma children to have higher rates of mental health problems (Lee et al., 2014, p. x). Roma parents are conceptualized as negligent because often they do not register their children's births, and this prevents them from receiving free services, such as vaccinations; therefore, their children are more susceptible to contagious diseases (Kevorkyan et al., 2015; Mellou et al., 2015). There is a focus on the ways in which Roma resistance to vaccination is constructed as a threat to the health safety of the dominant populations in which they live (Hajloff & McKee, 2000). Within the research, attention to Roma children as public health risks constructs the Roma family as either lacking the basic information or as being negligent of the basic needs of their children and therefore recommendations call for public health outreach campaigns. Such deficit orientations fail to seriously consider that Roma parents may ascribe to very different world views and that unvaccinated Roma children may be indicative of lack of faith in the national governments, limited access to money, and distrust of the medical establishment and governmentally administered medications. There is a need for research that examines the health concerns of Roma people from their own perspectives, and not only from the perspectives of nation states.

Taken together, most of the research on Roma children frames the Roma people as economically and culturally impoverished and in need of governmental intervention and protection. There is little research, however, examining the representations of the Roma in news media and on human rights internet sites. Such research is necessary given that the media influences public discourses of Roma people, constructing what Patricia Hill Collins terms "controlling images," which are the myths and stereotypes that shape how marginalized people are perceived and treated (Hill Collins, 2008).

3. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis Methods

Power and dominance are reproduced and reiterated in varied social arenas, perhaps even unwittingly, through the discourses of well-meaning institutions and the individuals who make them up and run them, such as the news media and non-profit human rights organizations. However, the enactment of power through discourse is not always explicit (Fairclough, 2013; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Lazar, 2007; Van Dijk, 2013). Meanings of particular discourses often belie "hidden agendas," which often are responsible for reproducing inequality (Litosseliti, 2006, p. 56).

This analysis employs the tools of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Systemic Functional Grammar analysis (SFG) in order to reveal the "structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" (Wodak, 1995 p. 207), as well as how the social power, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Van Dijk, 2013, p. 352). SFG is a "theory of meaning as choice by which a language or other semiotic system is interpreted as networks of interlocking options" or "metafunctions" (Halliday, 1985, p. xiv). Using the emancipatory framework of feminist discourse analysis (Lazar, 2008, Litosseliti, 2006), this CDA and SFG study aims to challenge the linguistic machinery that produces and sustains social inequalities rooted in patriarchal and Western Eurocentric ideologies. Additionally, given that the Roma are and were often represented as a social problem *of* or created *by* Europe, I also employed argumentation analysis (Neagu, 2013; Toulmin, 2003; Van Eemeren & Garssen, 2012), which allowed me to focus on the fallacies and topoi of arguments, perspectivation or framing, which allowed me to interpret the reporting or narration of Roma difficulties, and examination of the illocutionary force of the discourse, which gave access to the unintended meanings. In the spirit of post-colonial feminisms, which allow for the coexistence of disputed meanings and different subject positions, I not only critique representations of Roma people, but also examine discourses of contestation.

The aim of the present analysis is to contest the language and meanings in the newspapers, human rights reports, and United Nations documents that construct Roma children as both victims of the state and victims of their own cultural failing, thus rendering the project of making and living as a Roma child a failed one, rather than one of persistence, resistance, resilience, and strength.

4. Methods

The findings in this article are based on a close analysis of 50 newspapers/newsblogs from different Eastern and Western European countries that specifically identify a social problem facing the Roma in Europe during the years of 2005 through 2015. With few exceptions in Greek, my own native language, all publications were written in English for consistency of analysis with respect to my language and linguistic competencies. Initially, the data were analyzed through an open coding that identified recurring patterns or themes. The data were then reorganized into functional and grammatical categories pertaining to the representations and attributes related to Roma children and triangulated with the kind of argumentation structures they employed.

5. Findings

The thematic analysis generated domains in which Roma children and their childhoods were at stake: 1) societal and marginalization; 2) educational failure; and 3) child labour and child abuse. Two topics of argumentation emerged from the analysis. The first argues that nation states discriminate against the Roma children and their families and this is the reason why they are doing so poorly on social indicators. The second argues that Roma families' inability or resistance to assimilate is the cause of their children's deprived childhood. Both lines of argumentation construct an implausible childhood that Western human rights organizations have intervened upon. Their discursive intervention is the focus of this study.

6. Marginalization and the Dangerous Childhoods of Roma Children

A predominant theme across the texts examined in this study is that Roma children are socially marginalized and experience dangerous childhoods. The discourse is largely constructed through enthymemic rhetorical devices, which present syllogisms with implied premises: 1) that there is a specific kind of "adult" life for which to prepare; and 2) that governments are aware and capable of protecting Roma children. Both premises are logical fallacies. Consider, for example, UNICEF's position on Roma children's "protection." UNICEF identifies Roma children as more likely to "suffer from discrimination, exploitation, violence, and neglect" (UNICEF, n.d.-b para 1). Based upon a predetermined register from within the dominant United Nations cultural perspective, they go on to argue: "their childhood fails to prepare them for adult life". Under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, governments are obliged to protect all children and are accountable for failure to do so (UNICEF, n.d.-b, para. 3). The question that readers must ask UNICEF is protection from whom? Nowhere

on this webpage does UNICEF identify the victimizers of Roma children or question their own assumptions and cultural privileges.

Nonetheless, given the types of suffering identified, the readers can infer that both private and public social institutions may be involved in "discrimination;" however, "exploitation," "violence," and "neglect" are likely suffered predominantly at the hand of Roma parents and community members. UNICEF then goes on to argue that this suffering can be perpetuated because "many Roma children are born into families living in poverty, which puts them at risk of child labour and unsafe working environments and other risks associated with family disempowerment" (UNICEF, n.d.-b, para. 3). By implicating Roma parents and guardians as threats to their children's lives, UNICEF constructs the Roma child as victim (and product) of failed parenting and social inequity. Their failed parent is, in part, a result of their inability to keep their children out of poverty. According to the UNICEF, any society that does not protect "its most marginalised children denies them the chance to reach their potential and undermines its own chance to develop" (UNICEF, n.d. -b, para. 3). Hence, UNICEF presents us with the proposition that Roma children can never be fully realized adults because victimization stunts them from developing interpersonal, cultural, and economic tools during their childhoods.

Yet despite structural inequalities that have resulted in poverty, Roma and traveller cultures have persisted and survived, and the children therein have developed into adults. And, what is more, many Roma see no need for government intervention or "protection." Consider what traveller and Vice Chair of the UK's Gypsy Council, Candy Sheridan, tells the Office of the High Commission after the Irish government evicted some 300 "Gypsies" from land they owned:

> "I am proud of our Traveller traditions, but of course change is coming to the Travellers, too," says Candy. "We don't want to live permanently apart from other people. We want our children and grandchildren to have an education, to study, to have opportunities in life. But this development must come from within the Traveller community, from our own choices, not as a result of being forcibly dispersed and displaced. And we should not be forced to renounce our identity." (Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, 2013a, para. 12)

Ms. Sheridan postulates that Roma people must develop their *own* cultural understandings, choices, and values to combat governments paternalistically forcing them to live in particular ways in order to fill hegemonic and dominant culture goals. Not once in the United Nations Human Rights page did the Office of the High Commissioner discuss that Ireland and the Irish gov-

ernment officials may be acting with imperialistic and paternalistic intentions by seeking to evict traveller people from land they purchased. Critical theorist Carl Schmitt argues, "land-appropriation precedes the order that follows from it. It constitutes the original spatial order, the source of all further concrete order and all further law" (2003, p. 75). Hence, through the appropriation of land, the Irish government invokes an order and law that serves to marginalize Roma families.

In addition to the using enthymic rhetorical devices, almost all the texts analyzed used the passive voice to obscure the perpetrator of Roma oppression. Consider the following excerpts, which I identified as victimizing the Roma children without naming the victimizing agent. Instead, the agentless subject of the sentences remains "the Roma." I italicize and the passive voice to demonstrate how both the United Nations reports and the news media construct the victimizers as disembodied entities:

"In the last three years, more than 2,500 Roma from Kosovo *have been forced* to leave Germany, including people and families that lived in Germany for years. DW reports on the deportation of a family back to Kosovo." (Cani, 2013, para. 1)

"Roma and Travellers *are* among Europe's most *excluded group*s, facing widespread discrimination (and often segregation) in many areas of life including housing, education, employment and health." (United Nations Working Group on Roma, n.d., para. 1)

"The Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (LDH) together with the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) report that a record number of over 13,000 persons have *been subjected to forced evictions* in the first nine months of 2013. During the evictions, the meagre property of Roma migrants *is often destroyed*, forcing them to re-start from scratch. Children's school attendance *is interrupted* as families have to move and no housing alternatives are provided. Sometimes they *are driven* from one municipality to another, which the Ombudsman has described as an example of "*forced nomadism.*" (Working for a more inclusive policy towards migrant Roma in France, 2013, para. 5)

In just these three excerpts containing 6 sentences, the authors use the passive voice, "have been forced," "are…excluded," "have been subjected to forced," "is often destroyed," "is interrupted," "are driven." In the case of these passive sentences, the actors of force, exclusion, subjugation, destruction, interruption and driving away are masked. In truth, the subjects are the governments of Ireland, European countries, and France, respectively. By not naming them, the news and human rights organizations allow for the governments to be invisible victimizers and violators of human rights. Conversely, the authors construct the Ro-

ma families with the language of victimization, without agency, and absent of resistance. They "fac[e] deportation" and "have" to move. By constructing the Roma children and families in this way, they remain the passive recipients of unquestioned authority.

The media does not reveal the identities of the victimizers even when they are tried and convicted of capital murder. One case is the 2009 murder of a Roma father and young son by "Right Wing Extremists" in Hungary (Verseck, 2014, para. 4). In naming them as "extremists," the journalists also distanced these individuals from mainstream dominant culture, thus exonerating a society wherein a discriminatory zeitgeist acts against the Roma people. The "Right Wing Extremists" are sometimes referred to only as the plural pronoun "they," further disassociating their act from a name or identity in its anonymity. The passive verbs associated with the Right Wing Extremists ("were caught," "were sentenced," "were convicted,") only point to their punishment. The implied actors of these verbs are the government officials who prosecuted them. The killings, then, are detached from the agents of violence. The only adjective attached to them is "fanatical," which is already a synonym for extreme and still does not reveal the name of the so-called "extremists." Masking their names also masks their ethnicity and national origin. The article, however, does provide the names of the victims' family members and the fact that they are Roma. In so doing, Roma is constructed as the only relevant or non-normative ethnic category.

Rather than explain the origins and wrong doings of the "Right Wing Extremists, the focus is on the financial situation of those murdered—"Erzsebet Csorba and her family," are linked to the descriptor "poor," as though their poverty is a logical explanation for their murder. The only mention of the murdered child was a summarized memory from the grandmother: "And she remembers how she was holding her grandson, little Robi, in her arms. He was just four years old, and he was dead, riddled with shot pellets" (Verseck, 2014, para 3). There was no discussion of why the murderers would kill an innocent child. Instead, the particular sentence, "Erzsebet Csorba and her family are poor," (Verseck, 2014, caption) distracts from the topic of murder promised in the title. While the topic is the serial murders of Roma people in Hungary, the article states that "Roma families" live in "humble" houses on the "outskirts" of town—a "remote village." Csorba's home, specifically, is the "nearest to the forest"—making it the most "outskirted" of all the homes. This emphasis not only distracts from the crime at hand and any social factors contributing to it, but also allows for the Csorba family, the pitied victims, to be depicted as individuals literally residing at the margins of Hungarian society. Such a depiction implicitly frames the Roma as abject beings in Hungary; as the "not-I" against which Hungarians can construct their national identity.

In this same article, the author names liberal politician, Jozsef Gulyas. However, it is neither for any abrogation of responsibility nor for discriminatory practices but rather for his advocacy and care giving: "Gulyas takes care of the survivors and families of victims. He continually collects donations from friends" (Verseck, 2014, para. 12). It is not, therefore, that European journalists and human rights organization never use the active voice, but that the active voice is typically used to emphasize either victims or their champions rather than their oppressors.

Similar to the use of the collective noun, "the right wing extremists," "the police" is a noun category identified as culpable. In another article discussing Hungary, László Siroki, the coordinator of the *Hungarian Civil Liberties Union*, is quoted saying:

> "Roma also suffer harassment from the police—and that challenging such practices forms the bulk of his human rights work in the Cserehát region. "Roma often get absurd fines that no one else would get," says Siroki. "They get fined for children playing in a park, for collecting mushrooms in the forest, or even for technical deficiencies of their bicycles." (Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, 2013b, para. 4)

As in the other excerpts, Roma are framed as people who suffer harassment and are victimized through racial profiling and criminalization of culture. This reverence to the police is one of the few times that the victimizers were identified, even if they were simply a collective noun, such as "the police." However, none of the police officers that engaged in the "harassment" were named, and the resulting illocutionary message is that the Police and the Roma are at odds with one another. Nonetheless, the Police have authority, trust, and legitimacy by law, while the Roma do not have any legitimacy in this discourse. This disparity, especially in the context of crime and policing, again characterizes Romani people as criminal and other.

7. Roma Children Constructed as the Product of Failed Families

Some European media also criticize Roma children and their families. Consider the argumentation structure of the following excerpt:

> That fear is now erupting into violence. Earlier this week Roma camps near Naples had to be evacuated after local people torched the shacks, angered by reports that a teenage Roma girl tried to kidnap an Italian baby. Her arrest at the weekend sparked days of bitter protests, and on Wednesday night vigilante groups in the Naples suburb of Ponticelli chased Roma out of two squatter camps by throwing Molotov cocktails into their huts. (Spiegel, 2008, para.3).

The narrative of the Italian raids on Roma camps is framed as a justified response to the alleged criminal behavior of a Roma girl. The article represents the "local people" as "angered" by the kidnapping, and therefore explains and rationalizes the torching of Roma housing (shacks). It does not, for example, explain how Roma people were terrorized or threatened by the torching, which is presumably as illegal as the alleged kidnapping. The criminal behavior explains the "bitter protests" against the Roma people. Thus, the narrative again repeats the frame that violence toward the Roma people was incited by Roma behavior. For example, the bitter protests gave rise to "vigilante groups" who "chased out Roma out of two squatter camps by throwing Molotov Cocktails into their huts." By identifying "local people" and "vigilante groups" as collective bodies seeking justice, and by identifying the Roma as "kidnappers" and "squatters," the illocutionary force of the piece constructs Roma children and their families as abject beings who readily embrace criminal behaviors.

The lawlessness of the Roma people is further reinforced two paragraphs later, by declaring them as "immigrants without proper papers:"

> On Thursday police officers carried out raids on a Roma camp in Rome and detained over 50 Bosnian and Romanian immigrants without proper papers. Speaking at the same ceremony as Maroni on Friday Italian Police Chief Antonio Manganelli said that "only by blocking the entry into Italy of people who refuse to integrate, people who import crime, will we be able to help ease the fear that has crept across swathes of our country. (Spiegel, 2008, para. 5)

The article constructs the dominant group—Italian people—as agents aligned with the state against Roma from Eastern Europe who are therefore enlisted to "help" report crimes that can result in the deportation of the Roma, who "refuse to integrate." The illocutionary force of the article piece is that Roma are culturally criminal, abject beings and their unlawful presence in Italy is not only a threat to national security, but also a threat to Italian culture, since the Roma "refuse to integrate." This assimilationist ideology justifies the home torching as a matter of national unity. Their lack of ability to assimilate fashions Roma Childhood as a failed project in socialization and the result of faulty and deficient child rearing.

The framing of Roma people as undocumented immigrants constructs a legal basis for their removal and deportation. Based on immigration law, Roma children can be sent "back" to their parent's original country:

> Adnan, along with his 12-year-old brother Senjur and mother Vesvije, were deported from Germany back to Kosovo about a month ago. Vesvije, a 45-year-old mother, described how the police showed

up at their house at 5 a.m., while she was sleeping due to the medications she has to take. There were a lot of people: immigration officers, police, a doctor. And they said, "Pack your things, you're going to Kosovo." They were immediately taken to Kosovo, to the newly rebuilt "Roma Mahala" in Mitrovica, northern Kosovo (Cani, 2013).

The news media representation of their presence in Germany as unlawful justifies their dislocation and forced return to Kosovo. The inclusion of details about the mother taking medication calls her character and fitness as a parent into question and distracts from the fact that the two children were forced out of their home one morning. The article's framing of the family as law-breaking diminishes the innocence of the children and constructs them as threats to law and order.

In addition to constructing Roma families as a safety threat, a public concern about Roma child socialization within families has to do with early marriages. In 2015 United Nation Population Fund, Executive Director, Dr. Babatunde, argues, "the decision to marry should be a freely made, informed decision that is taken without fear, coercion, or undue pressure. It is an adult decision and a decision that should be made, when ready, as an adult" (Martsenyuk, 2015 p. 1). The report recommends that the Ukrainian government consider the Roma Specific Recommendations, especially by "provid[ing] information to Roma community members (especially young women and men) on sexual and reproductive health and on health consequences of child marriage" (Martsenyuk, 2015, p. 2). In the same article, the UNPF recommends that Ukrainian education programs educate these young women on "sexuality, reproductive choices, and family planning" (Martsenyuk, 2015, p. 7). Such programs are reminiscent of eugenic feminist movements, which under the guise of female empowerment, target marginalized communities for population control (Ziegler, 2008).

The argumentation on Roma girls is that their early entry into motherhood is both an immoral and irresponsible cultural practice. Consider the following news article critiquing young Roma mothers:

> She is called Nicoletta and, undoubtedly, is as delightful as any healthy newborn baby. But her birth 10 days ago in the southern Spanish city of Jerez has provoked a storm—because her mother is just 10 years old.
>
> What has shocked the rest of the world, however, is described as a happy event by the family. "My daughter is well, as is the little girl—who is very fine and pretty. She is very happy with her daughter," the baby's Romanian grandmother, Olimpia, told Spanish journalists. This is not a drama, it is a cause for happiness. At this age we marry in Romania. It is normal

amongst we Gypsies (Tremlett, 2010, para. 1-2)

The article's main rhetorical device is to contrast Roma cultural constructions of childbirth with those of mainstream Spain. The reader's attention on the "delightful" and "healthy" baby is disrupted by the coordinated conjunction "but," which stands in contrast to the "just 10 years old" mother. Similarly, the shock of "the rest of the world" stands in contrast with the Romanian grandmother's claim that "it is a cause for happiness...It is normal amongst we Gypsies." The apparent cultural clash between what is "normal" in Roma culture and what is normal in Spanish culture is constructed as a "storm" by discursively framing the Roma girl, her family, and all Roma as deviants. The Roma girl, framed as an abject being, stands in sharp contrast to normal Spanish girls, whose childhood is preserved by their culture, which protects them against parental and spousal responsibilities.

Similarly an 11-year-old Roma girl residing in Crete becomes the youngest girl to give birth on the island:

> It is not the first time that a minor girl gives birth to a baby, but it is certainly a Greek first. Sunday evening, an 11-year-old girl visited a hospital in Irakleio, Crete, complaining about acute pain in the belly. Much to the surprise of the hospital personnel the minor was not suffering from some bad food. The girl was 7 months pregnant. The doctors took the baby with a Caesarean section as it was impossible for the girl to deliver the baby with a natural birth procedure due to her young age….According to local media, the girl went to a public hospital on Sunday evening in the company of a woman who most likely was not her mother. Both the girl and the woman are Roma. Some media report that the minor mother was exactly 11 years and 5 months old. (UPD Crete, 2014, para. 1).

Mention of the hospital personnel's surprise serves to differentiate between Greek teenage mothers and the 11-year-old Roma girl, whose young age made her "a Greek first." While the article does not elaborate as to whether the girl knew she was pregnant, it constructs her as unaware of the cause for "belly" pain. The implication is that she is far too young to know how to take care of herself, let alone a baby. However, Roma people are not as atomistic and rarely live by themselves with a baby. There are typically many family members surrounding children. Additionally, the conjecture that the woman with her was not likely her mother, implies that either she is neglected, kidnapped, or possibly trafficked—all accusations typically levied at Roma families. Sometime after the initial report, another Greek news blog reported that the girl had been having an "affair" with a 14 year old boy who soon disappeared after being notified of the pregnancy (Crete:

Tha eksetasti, 2014, para. 4). By including this additional information and framing the girl's pregnancy as the result of an "affair," the report creates an image of her as a promiscuous, yet naïve girl—a confounding contradiction. How can she be both a child and have an "affair"? It is clear that her status as a child is incompatible with the dominant culture's idea of childhood.

In a Russian news report, Bashtam Gorbunenko, a 12-year-old girl, is constructed as emerging out of a line of women who do little else than breastfeed children, as though it were culturally hereditary:

> Well, it happened by accident, so I had to give birth to my child," says Bashtam Gorbunenko as she shrugs her shoulders. Bashtam lives in the village of Komsomolsky, in the Volgograd region. She turned 12 in February. (Grachev, 2006, para. 1)

> These days Bashtam is breast-feeding two babies since her first son is just one year old. Despite being a teenager herself, Bashtam has plenty of milk in her mammary glands. The circumstance is apparently running in the family—Pavlina, Bashtam's mother, used to breast-feed her babies until they turned 3-4 years old. (Grachev, 2006, para. 7)

The focus on Bashtam's mammary glands and the "plenty" of milk that she has, "despite" being a teenager, implies that there the Roma girl is biologically abnormal. By emphasizing that she is breastfeeding two babies at 12 years, the article constructs her as an irresponsible mother, who nonchalantly "shrugs" off the fact that gave birth for a second time in a year's time, and will be dependent on others to take care of her, thus reproducing a cycle of dependency that threatens Russian society. Implied in this analysis is a critique of Roma reproduction, a desire to stop it through thanatopolitics (Agamben, 2009) shrouded in a discourse of the sanctity of childhood.

8. Roma Children "At Risk" of Educational Failure

"The mental age of an average adult Gypsy is thought to be about that of a child of 10" said the 1959 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, 14 years after the end of the Nazi genocide of Romany Gypsies (Le Bas, 2014, para. 1). It seems that little has changed since 1959 when it comes to the public attitudes toward the Romani people. The education of Roma children is both a civil and human rights matter, as framed by the human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, UNICEF, and the United Nations human rights divisions. According to these organizations, schools in both Eastern and Western Europe operate on a deficit model with respect to Roma people and have been negligent and victimizing of Roma people by refusing Roma children entry, segregating them into separate and sub-

standard schools, or by placing them in Special Education programs, where they receive only the most remedial education. Watchdog organizations, such as the *Czech Schools Inspectorate* "expose" the schools for their discriminatory practices. The organizations, however, never name the real decision-makers in schools and do not identify the apparatus for segregative practices; instead, they too employ the passive voice, along with nominalized verbs to mitigate and distribute responsibility. The italicized passive voice verbs, nominalized verbs, and gerunds illustrate the discursive problem:

> A 2013 survey by the Czech Schools Inspectorate (the national body responsible for ensuring schools comply with national legislation) exposed the disproportionately high number of Romani children in schools for pupils with "mild mental disabilities." The *monitoring* of 483 schools with five or more pupils with this diagnosis found that a staggering 28.2% of them were Roma. However, Roma make up less than three percent of the total population. The Czech Ombudsperson (responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with anti-discrimination legislation) found this to be *discriminatory* in 2012….The prospects for Romani children that do make it to "mainstream" education are not much better. Many *are segregated* into schools and classes with lower educational standards. In 2014, Amnesty International has continued to collect evidence of Roma-only mainstream schools in which the educational programmes followed differed very little from those of schools for pupils with 'mild mental disabilities'" (*Amnesty International*, 2014, para. 7-8).

> Many Roma children end up in institutions and special schools, which leave them isolated from family and community and at risk of abuse. The *overrepresentation* of Roma children in institutions is a direct consequence of wider *exclusion* from society, lack of appropriate support to families to prevent *separation*, and a direct consequence of a system of identification of children with disabilities *based* on "defectology" approaches which tend to classify many Roma children as in need of "special education" on unsubstantiated grounds. (UNICEF, n.d.-b., para. 2)

> Roma children in all countries across Europe *are at risk of experiencing the systematic violation* of their rights reflected in severe poverty and *marginalisation, discrimination and the denial* of equal access to services and of equal opportunities in society. Policies are rarely 'in the best interest' of the Roma child and the voices of Roma children and young *people are often not taken into account*. (UNICEF, n.d.-a, para. 1)

With regards to education, efforts *are also being made to achieve the full integration* of Roma children in school. After the *closing* of the segregated primary school in the *excluded* Romani slum of Schinoasa in 2010, Roma children went to study in an integrated school with children from the majority population in the town of Tibirica, 7 km away from the Romani settlement of Schinoasa. A minibus service *was put in place* to allow children from Schinoasa go to school since there was no regular public or private transportation between the Romani settlement and Tibirica. "When Roma children from Schinoasa had to walk seven kilometres to Tibirica and back every day, their attendance was very poor. Roma parents were complaining of security because in winter it gets dark very soon. It was necessary to provide transport for the children", Claude Cahn explains after visiting the Romani settlement in Schinoasa. (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2013c, para. 5).

The passive voice verbs, "are segregated," "are at risk of," and "are often not taken into account," obscure the unnamed agent of the sentence, making the Roma children the subjects of the sentences, thereby protecting the interests of the schools and drawing the reader's attention to the social problem—"the Roma children." Similarly, the nominalized verbs of "over exclusion," "separation," marginalization," "discrimination," and "denial" also function to focus the reader's attention to the result of the practices rather than on the root cause—the government-appointed school officials and the evaluative tools of "defectology" they employ. Similarly, the use of gerunds, as in "the closing" focuses the reader's attention to the act of closing, conveniently deleting the entity that made the decision to close the Roma schools. There is no doubt that the human rights organizations have identified one of Europe's most pressing civil rights issues—the exclusion of Roma children from compulsory public schooling. Nonetheless, the obscuring nature of the discursive grammatical choices that the human rights organizations employ provides protection for those who continue to victimize deny Roma children opportunities for full democratic participation.

Roma children are marginalized, given fewer resources, and constructed as having lower intelligence—but we never find out exactly who does this and how. Roma children are victims of state educational neglect and the organizations' discursive solution is to point out the legal violations— but we never know who exactly violates the law. The discourse attacking "schools," does not take into account the populace in so-called democracies that fund and operate them. Lacking in the analysis is the identification of two operant populist ideologies. First the persistent ideology proposed back in 1959 by the *Encyclopedia Britannica*,

that Romani people are intellectually inferior as a cultural group. While such thinking may seem preposterous in this day and age, the ideology is, unfortunately, very much alive and well. The use of cultural- and class-biased IQ tests that cannot control for poverty and cultural differences continue to be a measure of superiority and inferiority. Cvorovic (2014) argues that across different countries Roma people have an average IQ of 70, or roughly two standard deviations below the norm. Second, that nation states do not see it as their responsibility to educate Romani children. Even though economists have argued that improving education for Roma children will benefit European economies (Kertesi & Kezdig, 2006), Europeans continue to construct Roma people as freeloaders. Consider Robin Page's column in the UK's *Daily Telegram*:

> The "pikeys" and "didicoys" are the problem, those caravan dwellers who don't travel, pay no rent, drive around with no vehicle license or car insurance, and who know as much about income tax as I do about algebra. They spend their time cruising around pinching whatever they can lay their hands on. (Page, 2011a, para. 9)

In another column, the very next day, Page quotes a woman protesting Roma public housing: "I have lived here for 28 years and it's a sleepy village and it's family orientated. Everybody has got to have a place to live but if they could only live in a civilised manner and pay taxes like everyone else in the village" (Page, 2011b, para. 24). The discrimination operant in the schools is an expression of the larger discourse of disdain against the Roma people, conceptualizing them as intellectually inferior and uncivilized. The children of these allegedly inferior people, limited by intellectual capacity, do not deserve to partake in public services, because they don't pay taxes "like everyone else." It is the fact that they are not like everyone else that makes their humanity problematic in Ms. Page's eyes.

Despite the human rights discourse of Roma children as victims of cultural and racial discrimination by dominant citizens of European countries, they are also constructed as culpable and partially responsible for their own educational disenfranchisement. Their disenfranchisement from school is attributed to their actions through the use of active verbs. Consider the following excerpts with verbs in italics:

> Despite efforts to expand and improve education for children in the Roma community, the largest ethnic minority in Europe, an estimated *50 percent fail* to complete primary education, according to a report on early childhood education unveiled today at a conference co-organized by the United Nations. (Half of Roma children drop out of primary school, 2010, para. 2)

Some children also *leave* school and start work earlier than others because of their origin or identity….I southeast Europe, it is children from the Roma minority. In each case, a combination of supply and demand factors are at work: the communities concerned *feel* that the school system was not designed for them and *consider it normal* for children to *abandon school early and start work*. (Balaguer, 2005, p. 12)

Those who are in school often *drop out* early to seek work. The underlying problem is one of prejudice and discrimination in local social services and the community, rather than a lack of infrastructure or services. (Balaguer 2005, p. 14)

In contrast to the previous excerpts where subjects of the sentences masked the victimizers of Roma children through the use of passive verb constructions, the same human rights organizations use active verbs to shift the blame of failure and risk onto the Roma children and families. These children "fail" school, "leave" school, "abandon" school, and "drop out." They are both the agents and the subjects of their discursive failure.

Their failure is vilified as a cultural imperative. Consider this ridiculing feature story on very young mother, "Bashtam," in a Russian newspaper below:

Bashtam does not sing lullabies to her children, and she does not tell them any fairy tales. "They're too small, they won't make out anything, anyway," says she. She is not going to read them any books either. Bashtam and her husband never went to school, she can't read, neither can he. But the young mother believes the ability to read and write does not matter much. She says raising her children strong and healthy is the most important thing. The Gorbunenko seniors share her views on literacy. "The woman is made for managing her household! You don't have to be able to read or write to be a good housewife. I can't read or write but I brought up four children, so what? Bashtam is good at taking care of the kitchen garden. I don't see any problem here," says Natalya, the mother of Mikhail. The young parents don't seem to see any problems related to a lack of money either. The Gypsies do odd jobs sometimes, and the money is barely enough to make both ends meet. "We, the adults, do need money to buy some nice clothes or a yummy thing. What the hell do children need money for? They suck on the teat all right. And we have a good stock of children's clothes. These rompers have been worn by my younger brothers and sisters, I wore them too in my time," says Bashtam.

She does not look so certain this time when asked about her plans for the future. "You know, you never know. Maybe I'll be in a family way again,"

says she with a shrug of her shoulders. (Grachev, 2006, para. 8-9)

Bashtam's distrust of and divestment from education and literacy and subscription to traditional patriarchal hegemony reiterates and affirms the dominant stereotype of Roma women as presentist, undereducated, unrealistic, lacking ambition, and lacking intelligence. Her project of childhood is a failure, as she demonstrates that she will not be ready to participate as a fully actualized adult by the normative, dominant hegemonic standards of adulthood. The article uses this one case to illustrate all of the cultural critiques that are central to the negative public discourse on Roma people and which hold the Roma people fully responsible for their lot in life.

9. Child Labour and the Threat against Childhood

Child labour is perhaps one of the most controversial topics with respect to Roma child rearing. Labour and the responsibility to earn money seem to be distinguishing features between adulthood and childhood in countries subscribing to the United Nations child labour policies. However, Roma people are a landless nation and do not necessarily subscribe to the edicts put forth by the United Nations on child labour. The reasons are complex. On the one hand, some Roma are amongst the cultural minority groups in Europe and need as much family income as possible to ensure the stability of the family. Their survival is sometimes on the labour of all family members, including that of the children. On the other hand, under certain conditions, child labour is considered a violation of child rights according to Article 32 the 1990 *Convention of the Rights of the Child*:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. (United Nations, 1990, Article 32)

Consequently, Roma families run the risk of being accused of child abuse by human rights organizations, like UNICEF, that have acted as watchdogs documenting child labour violations against Roma Children. Consider the representation of Roma children by UNICEF:

In some communities, employing children full time is the norm, and is seen as positive and beneficial for both the employer and the child concerned. In the small Roma community in Northern Ireland, for example, boys often start their working life at 11 or 12, once they have been confirmed. They usually

help their fathers in their business, which might be tarmacking roads or cleaning windows with power hoses. Whatever the discrimination and exclusion felt by some communities, every child in the UK has the right to go to school, a right set out in law. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that all children have the right to develop to the fullest, a right infringed if a child works full time at the expense of their education….In some European countries, it is predominantly minority groups, such as Roma and recent immigrants, whose children start work while still below the minimum legal age for employment. However, some industries involve more child workers than others. In Portugal, some 47,000 school-age children were reported to be working instead of attending school, many of them making shoes.18 The Portuguese government has made efforts for more than a decade to end this practice. Fewer children are employed in workshops or factories than in the past, but there has been a corresponding increase in the number of children working in their own homes. (Balaguer, 2005, p. 32)

UNICEF argues that, independent of discrimination, Roma boys in Ireland and Roma children in Portugal have the right to go to school. In this way, Roma children are constructed as both the victims of societal exclusion and the victims of their parents, who remove them from school so that they can work. This perspective, however, neglects the narratives of the Roma children themselves. Irish Roma boys, for example, must often reconcile their "rights" as children according to the law with their families' needs. The "discrimination" and "exclusion" that Roma people feel is realized through fewer opportunities to make money and provide income for their families. Without the help of child labour, Roma families inevitably lose much-needed income, but if they do not send their children to school, they are in violation of the law. Thus, the Roma boys' victimization renders their childhood inadequate to prepare them for the Western conception of their "fullest potential," yet their fullest potential cannot be possible if they are starving and homeless.

The non-profit reportage and news reports on child labour by Roma children construct them as vulnerable children regularly exploited by both their culture and their parents. Many, for example, are enslaved into forced begging, pickpocketing, commercial sexual exploitation, or fraudulent marriage for domestic service. To illustrate, consider the language—particularly the accusations levied against the parents, which I have italicized—in a report by the Bureau of International Labour Affairs documenting the worst forms of child labour:

> Most children in [Bosnia and Herzegovina] who are found in the worst forms of child labor are Roma.

Roma children *are sometimes used by their parents or guardians to beg*. Organized groups also exist that traffic ethnic Roma children and force them to beg. In addition, the Roma custom of paid and arranged marriages between families has resulted in the *exploitation of Roma girls as domestic servants*. There is a lack of data on the extent and nature of the worst forms of child labor in the country, including the *use of children in pickpocketing and commercial sexual exploitation*. Many Roma children do not attend school, which makes them vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor. (Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2014, p. 98)

Some children in Macedonia *engage in begging at the behest of their parents or other family members*, while other children are *forced into begging*. The majority of children involved in work on the streets, including begging, are of the Roma ethnicity. Girls, particularly Roma girls, *are trafficked for fraudulent marriages*, which may result in them *being sexually exploited or forced into domestic service*. Girls in Eastern and Central Macedonia have been identified as being at particularly high risk for trafficking (Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2014, p. 463)

The media in Europe also regularly reports on Roma children being exploited and victimized. The news stories compiled for this paper report that throughout the European Union, young Roma children are forced to beg (Bagnall, 2009; Wright & Eccles, 2010, para. 1-2) and steal (Bagnall, 2009; Ghosh, 2012; Wright & Eccles, 2010, para. 1-2) and are thereafter punished with harsh beatings if they do not return home with a sufficient amount of good and money (Bagnall, 2009; Miller, 2013). Additionally, there are reports of Roma children being sexually trafficked (Wright & Eccles, 2010, para. 1-2).

Unlike the agentless victimization in the educational discourse, the discourse of child labour violations clearly identifies the victimizers: the parents, fellow Romani, and the Roma culture. Their parents force them to beg, steal, engage in sexual exploitative acts, and enter into fraudulent marriages for slavery and servitude. Their childhoods are sacrificed for money by their caregivers, and therefore, their culture renders them incapable of their own self-actualization and participation in democracies. Their childhoods are, thus, dangerous and depart from the normative childhood set forth by the UN *Convention of the Rights of the Child*.

10. Conclusions

The discourse of care and protection invoked by human rights organizations and the European media present Roma children as the victim of unethical and in-

humane treatment by their nation-states and communities. However, a close examination of the discourse machinery employed in constructing the Roma childhoods reveals that both the news organizations and the human rights organizations avoid blaming governmental organizations and prefer to discursively construct Roma childhoods as dangerous and devoid of the resources that lead to healthy adulthoods. Their parents, the products of their own failed childhoods, are blamed. The discourse constructed in the last 10 years by media and human rights organization is both the product of and the machinery of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Well-meaning organizations such as the UN, UNICEF, and Amnesty Internationals are the unwitting producers of such discourses, which have simultaneously vilified and victimized Roma childhood, entrapping it in a liminality—a non-childhood. More to the point, the discourse of victimization, which calls for direct intervention, constructs the Roma children as abject beings whose impossible and implausible childhoods that keep them from developing into adults who are law abiding, contributing members of European societies. The interventions of organizations, such as the United Nations, reflect Foucault's critique that the state has constructed itself to not only institute legal order within political boundaries, but also to control procedures, techniques, and strategies that control, manage, and regulate populations (Foucault, 2003). The discursive tool of human rights advocacy, with its focus on the societal and familial failures constructing Roma childhoods as problematic, without highlighting the positive and affirming nature of their childhoods, suggests that the Roma can never produce healthy childhoods— only poverty, alienation, and marginalization. Such a discourse also forecloses on the possibility that some Roma communities can and may have developed their own interventions for cases of child abuse and victimization that do not reiterate or reproduce dominant culture fears of Romani cultures but rather reinforces strong and resilient family ties aimed at protecting and acculturating their children without governmental interference.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

"People of Freedom and Unlimited Movement": Representations of Roma in Post-Communist Memorial Museums

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Abstract

The "universalization of the Holocaust" and the insistence on Roma rights as an EU accession criteria have changed the memory of the Roma genocide in post-communist countries. This article examines how Roma are represented in post-communist memorial museums which wanted to prove that they correspond with "European memory standards". The three case studies discussed here are the *Museum of the Slovak National Uprising*, the *Jasenovac Memorial Museum* and the *Holocaust Memorial Center* in Budapest. I argue that today Roma are being represented for the first time, but in a stereotypical way and through less prominent means in exhibitions which lack individualizing elements like testimonies, photographs from their life before the persecution or artifacts. This can only partially be explained by the (relative) unavailability of data that is often deplored by researchers of the Roma genocide.

1. Introduction

When I was discussing an earlier version of this article with my colleagues—who are well aware of the pogrom-like attacks that cost the lives of many Roma in post-communist countries in the 1990s and the constant threats anti-Gypsism poses for Roma today, but do not read scholarly texts about Roma on a regular basis—they were glad to find out that there is a word for the mass murder of Roma by the Nazis and their collaborators: Porrajmos. But when they figured out that Ian Hancock, who coined the term, understands it as a "word for the Romani Holocaust" (2006), the need to equalize the two "final solutions" instead of scrutinizing both as historically precisely as possible, disappointed them. Since Roma do not have their own state to support their interests and there is no established term for the mass murder committed against Roma

during World War II, confronting these historical events still seems as difficult as overcoming today's anti-Gypsism—or seeing the continuities between the two by that matter.

This article is part of a larger project on state-funded post-communist memorial museums that concentrates primarily on the World War II period, focusing on the impact of EU enlargement negotiations on these new exhibitions. I argue that the understanding of the Holocaust as *the* negative icon of our era has led to the establishment of it as a founding myth of Europe. So how are Roma represented in permanent exhibitions opened in the last fifteen years? How have the "Europeanization of memory" and the insistence on Roma rights as an EU accession criteria influenced the memory of the so-called "Roma Holocaust" in post-communist countries?

Obviously, not all post-communist memorial muse-

ums deal with the history of the Roma. Although the *Terezín Memorial* in the Czech Republic for example cooperates with the *Museum of Romani Culture* in Brno when it comes to Holocaust Education and teachers' training (Munk, 2007, p. 40), the extermination of the Czechoslovak Roma is only mentioned in two sentences throughout the exhibition's guidebook (Blodig, Langhamerová, & Vajskebr, 2009, p. 15; 76). This can be explained by the fact that only very few Roma were interned in Terezín. But the absence of a state memorial museum in Lety—on the ground of what is today a pig farm and was formerly a Roma concentration camp—already tells us a lot about the representation of Roma in the Czech Republic.[1] This article focuses on those state post-communist memorial museums that have included the persecution of the Roma in World War II in their permanent exhibitions most extensively. I have chosen three exhibitions—one from 2004 and two from 2006—that must be seen in the context of the "universalization" and "Europeanization of the Holocaust" since they claim that their exhibitions fulfill "European standards" and/or their aesthetics and the focus on the individual victim clearly refer to archetypical Holocaust museums, most of all the *US Holocaust Memorial Museum* in Washington, D.C, as I will show later on.

Although all three museums deal with phenomena from the World War II period, the scope of their exhibitions is different. The *Museum of the Slovak National Uprising* focuses on one particular event (in 1944) in which Roma took part alongside others and which led to deadly racial persecutions of Jews and Roma. The *Jasenovac Memorial Museum* in Croatia is *in situ*—at the site of a former Ustaša concentration camp where Roma were the second largest victim group.[2] The *Holocaust Memorial Center* in Budapest is dedicated to the mass murder of Jews and Roma from an entire country—Hungary.

The fact that these museums have included Roma in the first place can only be understood in the context of the "Europeanization of the Roma Genocide". Furthermore, I will show that the way Roma are represented in those three institutions has more to do with the tradition of depicting Roma as the alien "Other" than with the national contexts of the museums. After discussing current trends of the "universalization of the Holocaust" and the "Europeanization of the Roma genocide", I compare how Roma are represented in the permanent exhibitions, the commemorative parts of

the museums and in the guide books. Of course not all elements of an exhibition are equally visible; text panels are far more prominent than info-screens with thousands of "pages" of information. Visual representations and personal stories of individuals call for more empathy than bare numbers or photographs of anonymous corpses—so it is particularly interesting to see not only how, but also where Roma are included. The fact that the *Jasenovac Memorial Museum* and the *Museum of the Slovak National Uprising* were inaugurated already in the 1960s allows us to scrutinize the research question in a diachronic perspective as well comparing the current permanent exhibitions and museum guidebooks with previous ones.

2. From "Universalization of the Holocaust" to "Europeanization of the Roma Genocide"

The "memory-boom" in the West after the Cold War emphasized the Holocaust as a "negative icon" (Diner, 2007, p. 7) of the twentieth century. It has become a universal imperative for the respect of human rights in general and a "container" for the memory of different victims and victim groups (Levy & Sznaider, 2005). Yet, Roma, Poles, and homosexuals were often referred to as "other victims" (Hancock, 2006, p. 53).[3] In the EU, this "universalization of the Holocaust" includes another dimension: the Holocaust has been addressed as a "negative European founding myth" (Leggewie & Lang, 2011, p. 15) by EU politicians and scholars (Judt, 2005): Post-war Europe is understood as a collective that developed shared structures in order to avoid a recurrence of the catastrophe of the Holocaust. In its search for an identity that goes beyond economic and monetary union, this founding myth provides a compelling common narrative that is otherwise lacking. The suggestion that countries join the *Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research* (today *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*—IHRA) and implement a Holocaust Memorial Day was the first step towards some kind of "European standard". While not officially applied during the eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004, these standards were internalized by the future

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1 In 2010, a tiny exhibition in a replica of a barrack next to the pig farm has been installed by the staff of the Lidice memorial.
2 The list of Jasenovac victims is not complete, but shows the dimensions: 47627 Serbs, 16173 Roma, 13116 Jews, 4255 Croats, 1128 Muslims and 846 other victims have been identified by name by the Jasenovac memorial site (List of Individual Victims of Jasenovac Concentration Camp, n.d.).

3 The dominance of the "negative icon" Holocaust becomes evident in the long and highly politicized debate about the term "Roma Holocaust": While Hancock (2006) on the one hand insists on the parallel between the two "final solutions" and Lewy (2000) on the other hand denies that even the terms "genocide" or "mass murder" can be applied to the crimes commited against Roma in Auschwitz, Margalit (2002) partially follows Lewys argument, but still in 2006 he names parallels between the "Holocaust" and the "genocide": "The genocide of the gypsies was carried out by the Nazi regime, sometimes in the same places and by the same murderers who perpetrated the Holocaust" (Aderet, 2012).

member countries—as suggested by the fact that Hungary's *Holocaust Memorial Centre* opened a few weeks before the country joined the EU—despite no permanent exhibition having been installed at that point.

One result of the "universalization of the Holocaust" has been the growing attention for the Roma genocide, both on a scholarly level and "for Roma organizations and for individual Romanies" (Kapralski, 1997, p. 276). In 1994 Roma from all over the world gathered in Auschwitz to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the elimination of the so-called Gypsy camp *(Zigeunerlager)*, and the Roma Association in Poland set up their headquarters in Oswiecim—a claim "to participation in the symbolic meaning of Auschwitz" (Kapralski, 1997, p. 277). In the new millennium the Council of Europe and the EU have increasingly stressed the importance of remembering the Roma genocide. In 2005 the European Parliament (EP) passed a groundbreaking resolution in which it argued that "the Romani Holocaust deserves full recognition, commensurate with the gravity of Nazi crimes designed to physically eliminate the Roma of Europe, and calling in this connection on the Commission and the authorities to take all necessary steps to remove the pig farm from the site of the former concentration camp at Lety u Pisku and to create a suitable memorial" (European Parliament, 2005a; see also van Baar, 2008, p. 382). The Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights stressed that "the importance of teaching about Roma history cannot be overemphasised. Teaching about Roma history, raising awareness of the Roma genocide during the Second World War, and building and maintaining memorial sites are the least states could do to honour Roma victims." (Hammarberg, 2011; Thornton, 2014, p. 111-112) Another EP resolution from 2005(b) not only "pays homage to all the victims of the Nazis"—Roma are explicitly mentioned—, but also links remembrance in general directly to the current situation ("attacks on minority groups including Roma") when arguing that "lasting peace in Europe must be based on remembrance of its history". Van Baar (2008, p. 382) argues that "the reason why the EU's mobilisation of Holocaust remembrance for integrative aims also affects the Roma has to do with another, more general and widespread tendency to Europeanise the representation of the Roma."[4]

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4 Yet, this development is an ambivalent one. On the one hand, the European Commission is aware of the "pitfalls" that come with a "declaratory 'Europeanisation'" of the question of Roma inclusion, as a working document from 2008 puts it, since it could "symbolically transfer the responsibility to European institutions without providing them with new instruments to deal with it and without sufficient commitments from Member States" (Vermeersch, 2012, p. 1204). Despite this awareness of the potential dangers of "Europeanizing the Roma", the EU is, on the other hand, "unable to prevent other ac-

Interestingly enough, some authors argue against these efforts, claiming that the "EU's deployment of Romani Holocaust remembrance may be particularly dangerous because its mobilisation for integrative aims could suggest that the Roma have 'always' lived in isolation and that their far-reaching socioeconomic and cultural segregation under Nazism was not the effect but the cause of their persecution" (van Baar, 2008, p. 384). Crowe, on the other hand, stresses that while it is true that "so much needs to be done to address the contemporary problems of the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe", knowledge about the Roma genocide is important: "The reason is the powerful link between the Roma past and present. For those of us who work to find solutions to the contemporary difficulties faced by the Roma in Europe, it is always shocking to find out how little politicians and others charged with helping solve some of these issues know about the Roma past" (Crowe, 2002, p. 84-85).

Even if state memorial museums are inaugurated in order to signalize readiness for "Europe" in an atmosphere without direct political pressure by the EU, but in which "the case for enlargement was articulated in terms of common values" (Varmeersch, 2012, p. 1198), they are institutions that can contribute to this knowledge of the long neglected Roma genocide. They not only display history, but also include a commemorative aspect since they deal with traumatic events of the recent past. Museums are key-producers of knowledge and history; they display how a society interprets its past, but they are definitely not neutral spaces of knowledge transfer showing how "it" was before. They are rather manifestations of cultural patterns, inclusion and exclusion mechanisms as well as social, ethnic and religious in- and outgroups—contested spaces (Sommer-Sieghart, 2006, p. 159). Memorial museums are sites where identity is represented, official memory is canonized, and the dominant historical narrative is made visible as the fundament of the present. Yet, museums can also challenge the hegemonic national narrative. In both cases, decisions concerning which objects and images should be used, how to organize them, and how to choose a space in which to display them involve aesthetic and ethical issues typically loaded with significance. Sarkisova and Apor (2008, p. 5) argue that physical objects play a significant role in the relationship of the present to the recent past, which is why the "'touch of the real' makes historical exhibitions so attractive for many variants of the politics of history and memory." Recent decades

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tors from reading its actions as a form of Europeanization" (Vermeersch, 2012, p. 1204) which provides "new discursive material for nationalist politicians with an anti-Romani agenda who try to minimize or evade their countries" domestic responsibility by highlighting the role and responsibility of the EU" (p. 1194).

have also witnessed a change in perspective. What was formulated as a desiderate fifteen years ago (Crane, 1997, p. 63) now goes without saying that the focus on the victims" perspective has for the most part replaced hero, martyr or resistance narratives. (Rousso, 2011, p. 32) Still, we need to distinguish between the individual approach that aims at displaying "ordinary life before" (Köhr, 2007) and empathy without identification on the one hand, and the victim represented as part of a collective, as an emotionalizing symbol for national suffering on the other hand.

When it comes to representing ethnic minorities, the exhibitions analyzed in this article fight the marginalization of Roma and the history of their persecution in their respective societies. But they might also "reduce complex histories of cultural and ethnic identification processes" to simplified portrayal of Roma "as unchanging, historically enduring cultural and ethnic subjects, unaffected by social processes such as interaction, internal contestation, interpretation and categorisation" (Vermeersch, 2008, p. 261). Representations of the Roma as a clearly delineable whole "are well intentioned and carry an emancipatory message that fits in with the minority recognition model that advocacy groups and governmental bodies seek to promote" (Ibid.), but negative implications of such politicization should be taken into account. The three case studies will show how this challenge is confronted in the museums.

3. Museum of the Slovak National Uprising

The Slovak National Uprising (SNU) was an armed insurrection against the Nazis and their Slovak collaborators organized by the Slovak resistance movement during World War II. It was launched on 29 August 1944 in Banská Bystrica in Central Slovakia and defeated in October. In retaliation, Einsatzgruppen together with Slovak collaborationists destroyed 93 villages and executed many Slovaks suspected of aiding the rebels as well as Roma and Jews who had avoided deportation until then (Kamenec, 2007). The largest executions took place in Kremnička (747 killed, mostly Jews and Roma) and Nemecká (900 killed). The architectonically impressive and monumental building that houses the museum today was inaugurated in Banská Bystrica in 1969. In the 1960s, the Holocaust of the Slovak Jews was mentioned in the exhibition for the first time—at least for three months during 1969. However, in the 1970s, repressive "normalization" politics denounced the earlier reforms in the context of the Prague spring as Zionist attacks against the communist regime (Sniegon, 2008). The Holocaust was permanently "added" to the exhibition in 1998, but it was dealt with in a section titled "Persecution of Opposition" and thus misinterpreted as a consequence of Jewish resistance (Slovak National Uprising Museum, 2000, p. 14).

Roma are not mentioned in the guide books from 1977, 1985 or 1990, only in the two most recent ones from 2000 and 2006—a result of the "universalization of the Holocaust" and the "Europeanization of Memory". In 1977 for example, Nemecká und Kremnička are mentioned as sites of "the cruelest fascist crimes in Slovakia" (Múzeum SNP, 1977, p. 53), but, adhering to the socialist narrative, the information that most of the victims were Jews and Roma is left out. The first time "Gypsies" are mentioned is in 2000: "As part of the state persecution special military labour camps were founded for non-Aryan citizens....In the camps Jews, Gypsies, socially discriminate people—non-Aryans—were placed, having been deprived of all citizen and human rights" (Slovak National Uprising Museum, 2000, p. 15; see also Kamenec, 2007, pp. 314-326).

The current exhibition was developed in 2004, the year Slovakia joined the EU. "The SNU is no longer presented as an isolated historical event…but in a European historical context" as an "inseparable part of the European history". (Lášticová & Findor, 2008, p. 237) Already in 2000, the museum's director and curator of the current exhibition explained his plans to expand the museum's sphere of interest in order "to fill empty areas in the historical memory so as to be able to correspond to a European standard" (Sniegon, 2008). The EU did not exert any pressure to do so since Slovakia in that period was considered to be catching up surprisingly quickly after the international isolation under Vladimir Mečiar in the 1990s. The Slovak government—and thus also the state museums—rather has internalized the norms since the country was looking to "become European". Roma victims are present in the outer commemorative part between the two halves of the museum (see Figure 1) and in the 1000-"pages" of information on the TV screens all around the exhibition. In the exhibition itself, Roma are not mentioned, but might be subsumed under the term "racially persecuted people" on the panel that deals with the "unification of antifascist forces" before the Uprising. Eight "pages" of the info-screen material deal with Roma under the title "Persecution and repressions against Romany population": "From autumn 1942 to autumn 1944 the Roma question in Slovakia was solved in form of labour camps for antisocial and difficult to adapt people. Over 5000 Roma were in the camps. In November 1944 the labour camp in Dubnica nad Váhom was transformed into a detainment camp, where whole Roma families were concentrated. It was reckoned that they would be deported into some sort of the [sic] concentration camps but because of a typhoid fever epidemic, the deportations did not take place." Like the "solution of the Jewish question", the term solution of the "Roma question" is used in the first sentence without ever being questioned or put in inverted commas, and Nazi argumentation is reproduced when using the terms "antisocial" and "difficult to adapt people".

Figure 1. Roma memorial at the Museum of Slovak National Uprising (2006), Banská Bystrica.

For the first time, however, the museum also provides detailed information about Roma victims and their not only German, but also Slovak perpetrators on the first page of the Roma section on the info-screens:

> "On October 6th 1944 the Nazis shot dead 13 Roma in Valašska Belá. 24 Roma from the settlement Vel'ká pri Žiari nad Hronom were burnt on October 17th 1944. In Dolný Turček the Nazis executed 46 Roma from the settlement Lutila….On November 15th 1944 in the settlement of Vydrovo they burnt alive Roma women and children, men from the village of Jergov were shot dead. At Kremnička and Nemecká the Nazis and members of POHG [*Pohotovostných oddielov Hlinkovej gardy*—special units of the Hlinka guard] shot dead 82 Roma on November 17th and 21st 1944. In December 1944 they arrested 19 Roma from Dúbravy and Detva and executed them in the Jewish cemetary in Zvolen. In the village of Slatina the Nazis burnt alive 59 inhabitants of the Roma settlement on December 23rd 1944. Other victims from among the Roma population were found in mass graves near Krupina and at Kremnička."

There is no mention of Roma taking part in the Uprising, but since the overall title of the chapter "Terror and reprisals in Slovakia in the years 1944–1945" is displayed above every "page", the murders are at least somehow contextualized. A map of "detainment camps for the Roma population" in Slovakia follows as well as an unsettling photograph of the "exhumation and identification of the victims from the mass grave near Krupina". It shows two men, presumably Roma, pulling a dead man that is hanging upside down out of a crevice after they have tied a rope around his thigh (see Figure 2). Another text screen informs about 14 Roma men who were shot at the small town of Tisovec followed by two photographs showing the "exhumation and identification of the murdered Roma Pod Hradovou [a part of the town]"—corpses first scattered in the mud and then strung together on timber planks. Two completely different photographs show portraits of Jozef and Jakub Eremiaš, two young Roma murdered at Kremnička on November 20th 1944.

The initiative *Ma bisteren!* ("Do not forget!" in Romanes), in which the museum participates, inaugurated a memorial (see Figure 1) in the outer, commemorative area of the museum on August 2nd 2005, anniversary of the day the Roma camp was liquidated in Auschwitz-Birkenau. The unveiling of the memorial was followed by a temporary exhibition on the persecution of Roma (Husova, 2006, p. 3; Mannová, 2011, p. 233).
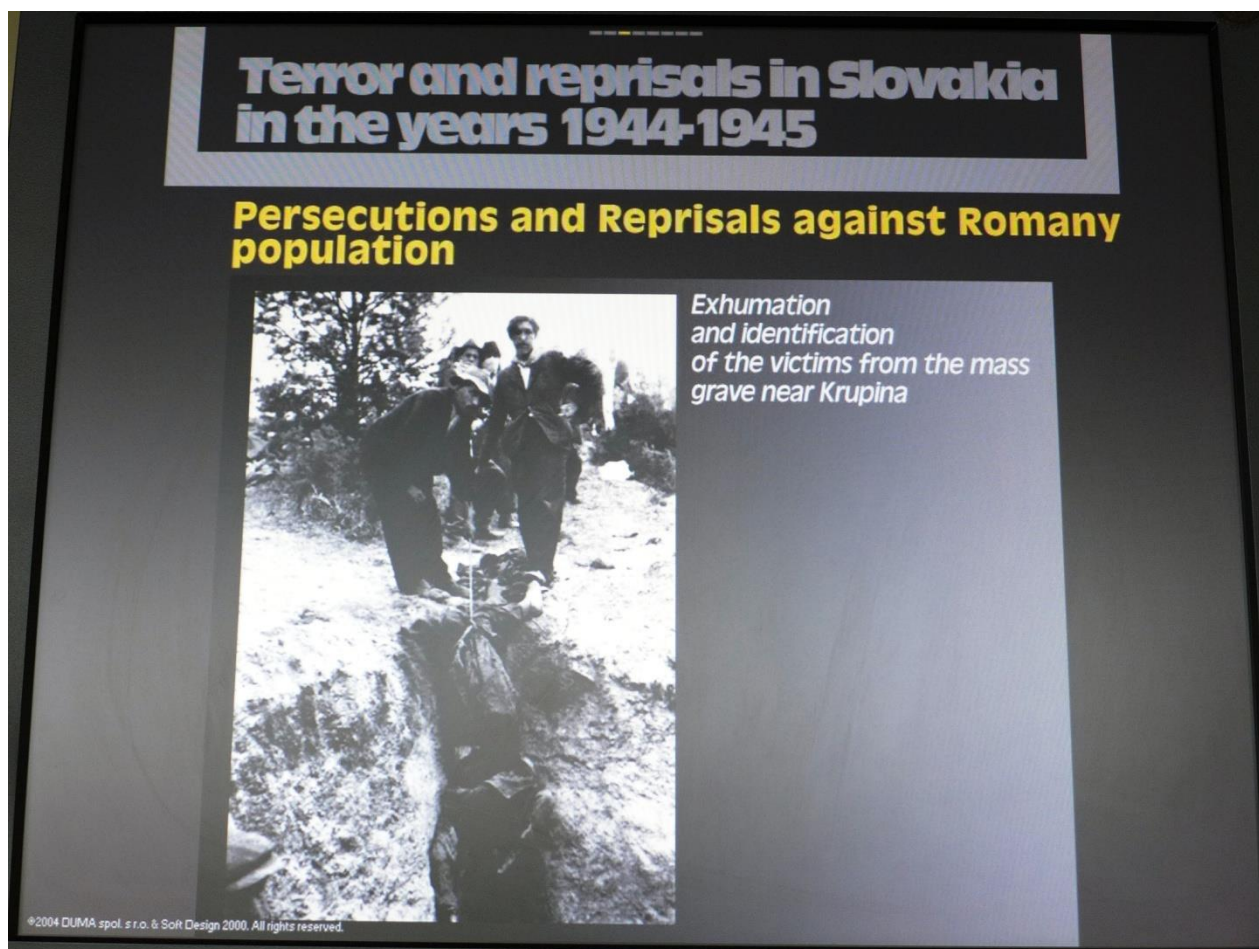
Figure 2. Photograph shown on an info-screen at the Museum of Slovak National Uprising (2006).

Since 2005, the "Roma Holocaust" is commemorated every year on the 2nd of August. The commemoration is organized by the Slovak National Museum, the Milana Šimečka foundation and the SNU Museum. However, the speeches at these commemorations give evidence of exclusion and justification mechanisms and show that knowledge about the Roma genocide remains poor. The museum historian Stanislav Mičev tried to explain the low awareness of the "Roma Holocaust" by the fact that "Roma in Slovakia did not suffer a fate as cruel as the Jewish population. They were confronted primarily with administrative restrictions of their living conditions and human rights" (SITA, 2009). Furthermore, when representatives of 32 nations attached a ribbon on the "Wreath of nations" on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Uprising, Roma representatives were not allowed to do the same. They protested arguing that Roma had also given their lives for Slovakia during the Uprising and had been deported to Auschwitz (SITA, 2004). To sum up, Roma play a role at the Museum of the SNU for the first time since the 1960s, but only in the commemorative part and on the info-screens. The museum dedicated to a historic event, the Uprising, does not feel obliged to represent Roma insurgents and the repressions against them in a visible spot, but when it does portray Roma, they appear in the context of "antisocial and difficult to adapt people". When it comes to the visual representation, Roma are shown both in an individualized and degrading way—on two portraits and hanging upside down in a crevice.

4. Jasenovac Memorial Museum

The mass murder committed by the Ustaša was a rare example of a collaborationist regime that had operated its own death camps beside the Third Reich. The biggest, Jasenovac, was a forced labor and death camp complex, where up to 100,000 people were killed (Holocaust Encyclopedia, 2014).[5] There was no memorial until in 1966 because in Tito's Yugoslavia, Jasenovac was an ambivalent *lieu de mémoire*, since it was taboo to assert that only Croat Ustaša had committed crimes there, while Serbs, Roma, and Jews were the largest victim groups. Once the memorial area was established, Jasenovac became a central site of memory for victims "of all Yugoslav nations", a site with tourist infrastructure, souvenirs, and other forms of kitsch (Sundhaussen, 2004, p. 400). Consequently, the first,

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5 For the discussion of the decade-long manipulations when it comes to the number of victims see Radonić (2010, pp. 95; 112-113, 122, 160).

short Jasenovac brochure from 1966 vaguely depicts the victims as "our men, women, children and elderly" (Babić, 1966). The publication from 1974 again does not explain who the victims were and why they were interned in the camp complex—with one exception. Interestingly, the only group obviously not considered as part of the tabooed civil war memory and thus explicitly mentioned are the "Gypsies–Roma" (Trivunčić, 1974, p. 28), the first ones to be interned in the "Gypsy camp" Uštica. We learn that this part of the Jasenovac camp complex was founded in the first half of 1942, that people were liquidated with blunt objects and knives and later burned. In the guide book from 1981, different ethnic groups are named. Roma are mentioned twice, first when introducing the racist policy of the Ustaša who "wanted to annihilate all Serbs, Jews and Gypsies" (Jokić, 1981, p. 5). The second "fact" mentioned in the guide is that approximately 40,000 "Roma–Gypsies" were killed after being brought to Jasenovac from the whole territory of the Ustaša state, the "Independent State of Croatia" (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*—NDH). This number of victims is too high and corresponds with the manipulation of the numbers in Tito's Yugoslavia, where 700,000 was the codified, mythological number of victims for Jasenovac (Sundhaussen, 2004, p. 399). Today 83,145 victims have been identified by name, 16,173 of them Roma, of which 5,608 were children, 5,688 men and 4,877 women. Roma were the second largest victim group in Jasenovac (List of individual victims). The number of victims is still difficult to identify since the mass graves at Uštica, only a few kilometers away from the museum, were never unearthed and are situated at a memorial site—the "Roma graveyard" as inscribed in Croatian and Romany—almost literally in the courtyard of a Serb family that was expelled from their home in 1942 (see Figure 3).

While developing the current exhibition from 2006, the director stressed that "we want to be part of the modern European education and museum system and follow the framework we get from the institutions dealing with these topics" (Tenžera, 2004). It had been conceptualized together with international experts in order to be "internationally recognizable and in the context of international standards" (*Vjesnik*, 2004). The exhibition follows the trend to individualize the victims. The names of Roma victims are inscribed among the others on the glass plates hovering above the heads of the visitors in the exhibition and the Roma victims are always mentioned alongside the others. The panel on the legal legitimation of crimes reads: "By the legal provisions on racial affiliation Jews and Roma (Gypsies) were stripped of their rights and subjected to various forms of persecution and seizure of their property." The text panel on deportations informs us that "Jews, Roma and Serbs were deported *en masse* from the whole territory of the NDH." The panel which depicts Jasenovac as a death camp explicates: "Serbs, Jews and

Roma were murdered with no verdict since they did not fit into the proclaimed Ustaša concept of racial and national purity." There is one map in the exhibition, on which Uštica is marked, but there is no explanation why it mentioned there or what it was; it is not even said that it was a "Gypsy camp". A central element of the exhibition are 16 video testimonies of survivors, one of them being Nadir Dedić who was arrested as a minor in the Bosnian part of the NDH in the fall of 1942, but not first of all because he belonged to the Roma community, but because he was blamed for setting a blaze as a signal for partisans.

Figure 3. Memorial at the site of the former "Gypsy camp" Uštica, part of the Jasenovac Memorial Site, Croatia.

There are several computer working stations throughout the exhibition. There and on the museum's website the victim groups are introduced. About the Roma we learn that mass arrests began in May 1942. "In July 1942, when the number of Roma arriving in the camp was at its highest, they were separated into two groups. The older men, women and children were separated from the younger men and immediately sent to be liquidated in Donja Gradina. The younger men were accommodated in Camp III C, set up in the open on the site of Camp III (Brickworks). Many died of hunger, dehydration, exhaustion and physical abuse. Some Roma were housed in the so-called Gypsy Camp in the village of Uštica, in the abandoned houses of murdered Serbian families….Almost no Roma who entered the camp,

regardless of age or gender, survived" (Roma in Jasenovac Concentration Camp, n.d.). The text is followed by links to two photographs, one showing Roma women and children, some barefoot and some sitting on the ground in front of a house titled "Uštica—House of Loud Weeping, the place where Roma (women and children) were housed during 1942". The other one shows an old woman with missing teeth wearing a scarf and a taller man, both being pressed against a barbwire fence. In contrast to the other groups, there are no private photographs of Roma from before (or after) the war, only photographs taken by perpetrators.

The current museum's publication consists of chapters on the "Independent State of Croatia", the concentration camp and the destinies of each victim group written by a renowned expert. The second largest victim group, the Roma, is only mentioned once outside of the chapter dedicated to them, solely stating that "the Roma were virtually eliminated" (Jakovina, 2006, p. 30). Lengel-Krizman, the author of the Roma chapter, writes of the "forgotten holocaust" of Roma (2006, p. 159) as opposed to "a wave of repulsion and revolt" against the mass extermination of Jews—"although, it must be admitted, their numbers were much greater than those of the Roma" (p. 155). Victims' hierarchies reappear at the end of the chapter: "It is certain that in comparison to the other inmates, the Roma had the worst time of it in the camp. Although they were used to persecution, the world of the concentration camp, in which hatred and evil ruled, was completely foreign to them. For a 'people of freedom and unlimited movement' the barbed wire of the camp was unthinkable" (p. 170). We learn that "immediately after the declaration of the NDH, the Ustasha terrorist regime targeted Jews, Serbs and Croatian Communists and anti-Fascists, while the Roma were left alone until the spring of 1942, when they were slaughtered within a period of two to three months" (p. 162). The question of resistance is raised only once: "After about ten days in these conditions, most of the inmates were so physically and mentally debilitated that they had no thoughts of organised resistance" (p. 164).

This chapter differs from the others significantly since it addresses questions like Romany grammar or where the name Roma comes from—while the chapters on the other victim groups do not give such exoticizing background information. Only four out of twelve text pages of the chapter are devoted to the Roma in the NDH. We learn clichés about "the nomadic Roma": "In time they learned the value of gold….Money comes and goes and is subject to change. Their experience of wandering through various countries taught them this golden wisdom" (p. 157) Lengel-Krizman also raises the "fact" that "their women are still known for their colorful style of dressing" (p. 158). Since she authored the first monograph on the Roma genocide in Jasenovac (Lengel-Krizman, 2003), which she also sums up insight-

fully in the chapter, one may assume that those "outliers" can be explained by some kind of weird pedagogical idea that ended up very close to racist cliché. In contrast to her book (2003, p. 37), here she does not mention the unique fact that Muslim Roma in the NDH basically avoided deportations due to severe protests of Bosnian Muslim religious leaders "whom the regime courted from the outset" (Biondich, 2002, p. 37) against the repression. Furthermore, while the texts on Serb and Jewish victims (written by a Serb and a Jew) include plenty of testimonies, there are none from Roma here, since—as the author argues in a shocking way—"the witness statements of the few survivors are so shocking that we may, although we are not bound to, accept them as trustworthy and authentic", so she does not accept them (Lengel-Krizman, 2006, p. 170). There is one paragraph that depicts a specific event in an empathetic way, and it deals with Roma musicians playing "the terribly moving concert which the Roma put on for their own people and the other inmates…at a time when the murder of their fellows was reaching its culmination. There were just a few terrified groups of Roma left in the camp, among them a singing group and some musicians….The next day they were led away to Gradina and killed, though the sound of their singing echoed in the ears of the remaining Jasenovac prisoners for a long time, like a funeral march for all the victims of the 'mindless Ustasha terror'" (p. 166).

The publication contains 221 photographs, most of them portraits of victims, pictures of them before the war and from inside the camp. Yet, Roma are the only ones who are represented with only four pictures, all of them solely from inside the camp, none from their lives before. The fact that there is only one video testimony from a Roma can be explained by the fact that hardly any Roma survived Jasenovac. But there is not a single visual representation of this group that was not produced by a perpetrator, while there are numerous portraits of Jewish, Serb and Croat victims from their life before. Also, in the museum's publication, the Roma are the only ones not allowed to speak for themselves since the author of the chapter is a non-Rom who declares "their" testimonies to be not "trustworthy", while this is the core element of the other texts. Obviously, the fact that the museum is *in situ*, at the site where over 16,000 Roma were killed, today obliges the museum to address their story, but with far less empathy than what is shown for other victim groups.

5. Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest

The *Holocaust Memorial Center* (HMC) in Budapest opened a few weeks before Hungary joined the EU, although the permanent exhibition was only ready two years later. This can be understood as an answer to the severe critique of the nationalist-revisionist museum *House of Terror*, which Victor Orbán opened during his

election campaign in 2002 (Creet, 2013). The aesthetics of the dark exhibition rooms reminds us of the *US Holocaust Memorial Museum* in Washington, D.C., and the *Jasenovac Memorial Museum*. The recent trend to focus on the individualized victim (Köhr, 2013, p. 74) is clearly visible at the exhibition, while at the same time the responsibility of Hungarian politicians, administration, gendarmes and population is displayed without restraints.

The exhibition is dedicated to the Jewish and Roma victims. Yet the sections focusing on Roma were not developed by the main curators' team, but by another group led by Péter Szuhay from the *Museum of Ethnography* in Budapest. The initial plan did not include the Roma victims and was changed due to an intervention of Roma activists (Kovács, Lénárt, & Szász, 2014). One element of the individualization of the victims are the stories of five families, four Jewish and one Roma, from Nagybicsérd in Baranya county. Together with the Jewish families, the story of István Kolompár's family accompanies the visitors from room to room. We learn that his daughter Aranka survived while many others including her eighteen-month-old sister Ilona did not.[6] Of the three exhibitions, this one has the most visible representation of Roma, starting off with six photographs and referring to Roma on numerous text panels.

Hungarian Jews and Roma are introduced in the first room (see Figure 4), showing Roma "working, countering a common prejudice that perceives Roma as work-shy or criminal" (Meyer, 2014, p. 185). Three of the photographs show Roma at work: making bricks, a coppersmith carrying pots, tub maker artisans and a band leader and his son

playing violin. The last photo shows a family of boilermakers in front of a tent. The first photo displays the subtitle "Roma women wandering and begging somewhere in Hungary, 1910s" and portrays a self-confident woman smoking a pipe, and behind her, among others, there is a girl wearing only a long shirt and walking barefoot on a dusty road. This combines the depiction of poverty, wildness and a sexual element represented in the challenging look of the smoking woman—the pipe typically being attributed to a fortune teller (Baumgartner & Kovács, 2007, p. 21). While the location where all the photographs of Jews were taken is indicated, even giving the name of the street or the square, three of the six photographs of Roma are situated in an unknown place "somewhere in Hungary". There is a long tradition of depicting Roma as standing outside the civil society (Holzer, 2008, p. 48), outside of towns, markets and villages. They are often shown wandering around in anonymous landscapes without a clear regional reference point (Baumgartner & Kovács, 2007, p. 19). The first panel on "the Roma in Hungary" says:

"By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the Gypsies in Hungary had settled down and spoke Hungarian. They lived on the peripheries of cities and villages under extremely poor conditions. From spring to autumn they were occupied in agriculture; thousands worked as travelling artisans, and were welcome in villages and towns. Many Gypsy musicians were famous nationwide, indeed all over Europe. As artists, they were held in high esteem and rewarded handsomely. Those vagrant Gypsies who kept to their traditional way of life were subject to often forced efforts by authorities to be settled and integrated into Hungarian society."

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6 For an overview of the historical events see Bársony & Daróczi (2008) and Karsai (2005).

Figure 4. The Roma section in the introductory room of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest.

What the text probably hints at is Hungary's pronounced assimilationist policy, but since this part comes directly after the one covering "The Jews in Hungary", it is the differences between the two that stand out. Meyer argues that "unlike in the introduction of the Jews in the first section, the Roma are not given a voice of their own; nothing is said about how they saw themselves in relation to the Hungarian nation or their own cultural practices….Most evidently in the example of the musicians, the jobs taken by Roma are presented as inherent qualities of the Roma rather than an effect of historical developments" (Meyer, 2014, p. 183). The distinction between settled and vagrant Gypsies becomes even more central as the narrative continues. While the high grade of assimilation is stressed when it comes to Jews, Roma are depicted as "the others", although some were "welcome". There is a strict distinction between "Gypsy musicians" "held in high esteem" and "vagrant Gypsies". Again, here we find a stereotype description of Roma who "clung to their nomadic way of life and permanently lived in tribal, clannish circumstances". "It was these people that the authorities kept trying to settle or drive to the territory of neighboring countries." Such a distanced and even depreciative phrase as "these people" or the statement that "the job of the authorities was not made easier by the fact that the law never defined who was to be regarded as a Gypsy" seems impossible in connection with the representation of Jewish victims.

While the photos of Roma are prominent in the first, introductory room, they are scarce in the rest of the exhibition and in the guide book. The later includes more than 50 photographs of Jewish victims, but only two of Roma and one of a Dutch Sinti girl. Furthermore, the artifacts in the introductory room can be associated with "Jewish" professions and Judaism, whereas there are no objects of Roma. When it comes to video testimonies on the multimedia stations, the testimonies of four Roma women have the caption "Persecution of Roma" without giving the names of the survivors as is the case with testimonies of Jews (Meyer, 2014, p. 194). There is one longer section dealing with tangible fates of Roma in connection with the culmination of persecution in Hungary at the Komárom fortress:

"In Hungary, in autumn 1944, many Roma children and the old and sick froze to death in the open air or died of hunger and thirst in the collecting camp at Komárom. A great number of Roma children and old people released from the Komárom fortress died due to the ordeals they had gone through on their way home….The brutality of the guards, the lack of food, and various diseases caused the death of large numbers of Hungarian Gypsies. Hundreds of them were shot into mass graves by Arrow Cross thugs and gendarmes at Szolgaegyháza, Várpalota, Lajoskomárom, Nagyszalonta, Lengyel and other places."

In contrast to the visual elements, the text is very precise about locations. Still, after the introductory room, the parts on Roma victims appear to have been added afterwards. In fact, there was far less information about Roma in the original concept, but a public debate in summer 2004 led to the recommendation to either extend this part or to completely skip it (Molnár, 2012). At the end of long paragraphs on Jewish victims Roma are often mentioned in two sentences, saying that Roma were "also" humiliated: "the racist Nuremberg Laws of 1935 covered Gypsies *as well*"; "Roma *also* fell victim to pseudo-medical experiments". This peaks in the statement that "in the concentration camps death harvested among Roma *as well*….Gypsies died by the thousand in that camp, *too*" (p. 52). In other cases, the fates of Roma are displayed in self-contained panels and chapters of the exhibition's guidebook. The chapter on "'Life' in Auschwitz" deals only with Jewish inmates, while the "massacres on Roma" are covered later. Only there do we learn how closely connected the fates of both victim groups were: The Roma camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau was supposed to be liquidated in preparation for the mass deportations of Hungarian Jews on the first day of their arrival, but the Roma resisted—yet were still murdered later, on 2 August 1944. Visitors are informed that in Poland "settled Roma were sent to Jewish ghettos" (p. 52) and later murdered "along with Jews from Warsaw" in Treblinka. In rare cases, the suffering of the Jewish and Roma victims is parallelized in a way that evokes empathy with both groups: "Roma imprisoned in Komárom, which functioned as the largest collecting camp, had to undergo ordeals very much like those suffered by the Jewish victims of the summer deportations: their provision was poor, they often had no latrines at all, and their captors beat them" (p. 34) or "EINSATZGRUPPEN following the advancing German army in Soviet territory often massacred Gypsies along with Jews" (p. 52). The comparison gets especially interesting when dealing with the effort to introduce forced military labor for Roma: "The organization of the Gypsy forced military labour companies was rendered difficult by the fact that unlike Jews, Gypsies did not enroll obediently, and if they were captured and pressed into service, they escaped at the first opportunity" (p. 33). This is the only sentence in the three museums in which resistance of Roma is explicitly addressed, and this is done in connection with the troublesome discourse on the passivity of Jewish victims.

This museum is also the only one that deals with "anti-Gypsy views", although not as remarkably comprehensibly as it does with anti-Semitism. Regarding the treatment of Roma in the interwar period it says: "It was always up to the good- or ill-will of the local authorities…when and how their settlements were inspected, or liquidated, as the case might be. Under the pretext of disinfecting, delousing Gypsy settlements,

the authorities sometimes acted with brutal force, making sure that Roma men and women were shorn of their hair, including body hair. The occasionally bitterly anti-Gypsy views and suggestions of low-level public officials and local civilians were usually not supported by competent authorities in the Ministry of the Interior" (p. 33). Although the pronounced assimilationist policy is not discussed in the context of Central European interwar developments here, it is yet only in this exhibition that the fates of Roma throughout Europe are mentioned—in Germany (which is also the case in the Jasenovac publication), Eastern Prussia, Burgenland in Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Crimea, Serbia, France and Belgium (p. 34).

6. Conclusions

The fact that newer post-communist memorial museums have included Roma in their exhibitions for the first time is clearly connected to the museums' assertion that they fulfill "European standards" and must be seen in the context of EU accession, the "universalization of the Holocaust" and the Roma genocide becoming a European agenda. Having analyzed ten post-communist museums from the Baltics to former Yugoslavia, I can say that those three museums whose aesthetics and rhetoric allude to international archetypes in the strongest way are also the ones to have included the Roma into their exhibitions most extensively in my sample. In the exhibitions, we learn about humiliations like the shaving of body hair and forced military labor service even before World War II; about deportations, hunger, freezing to death and mass liquidations, sometimes even before entering the respective Nazi or Ustaša camp; about music as a way to face the horrors of a death camp and sometimes lethal, sometimes successful resistance of Roma—in the Slovak National Uprising, Hungary and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Still, it became clear that there is a hierarchy of victims' representation in all three exhibitions, no matter what the specific topic of the museum is: The Roma are marginalized the most at the museum that deals with the Uprising—in which "our", Slovak victims come first—, while they are represented prominently in the Croatian museum at the site of a concentration camp and in the exhibition that deals with genocide on Jews and Roma in an entire country: Hungary. In the Slovak case, textual representations of Roma are restricted to the commemorative area and portrayed in just a few pages of the overwhelmingly extensive info-screens. They are mentioned alongside the other victim groups on the prominent text panels in the Croatian case, but we learn only little about the precise historical context and the reasons of the persecution (or non-persecution as in the case of Muslim Roma from Bosnia), and Roma victims are not allowed to speak for themselves. Or, like in the Hungarian case, they appear to be added to

the exhibition texts ex post, stating over and over again that Roma had "also" suffered and were humiliated, "too"—the mistreatment of Jews becoming the standard that all suffering was compared to.

When it comes to visual representations of Roma, the Slovak case is the most striking one since it provides both the only two private pre-war photographs of two Roma brothers which allow empathy with the individual victim—and the most humiliating image of a corpse hanging upside down in a ditch during an "exhumation", thus documenting a haphazard selection. In contrast to that, the case is quite clear in the Jasenovac publication. The individual victim is emphasized over and over again in most chapters and most of the images are private photographs from the life "before" or "after", but there are *no* such images of Roma. In the case of the Hungarian publication, the lack of private photographs is also striking, but there is one image of Aranka's family, one of the five families shown on the video screens. If group photographs are shown at the exhibitions, the similarities are striking since most protagonists sit on the ground, walk barefooted and only partially vested on a dusty road "somewhere" in the country, as opposed to precisely located pictures of Jews.

The Roma are completely absent when it comes to artifacts. This is quite a contrast to ethnographical museums like the permanent exhibition titled "Gypsy history and culture in Poland within the framework of their European history" at the branch of the Ethnographical museum in the southern Polish town of Tarnów, where objects like music instruments, harnesses for horses or scarves dominate the scenery (Bartosz, 2007). So there seems to be no lack of artifacts connected to the history of Roma. The question is whether there is enough information about the former owners in order to tell their story in a way that strengthens the individualization of Roma victims and does not reproduce ethnographical clichés. In any case, the fact that there are *no* artifacts that can be attributed to Roma in the three museums shows how marginalized they are in the hierarchy of victims' representation.

There might be good reasons why it is more difficult to provide individualizing elements when it comes to the representation of Roma compared to that of Jews, first of all due to the scarcity of testimonies and sources, but there is no reason to address Roma as "people of freedom and unlimited travel". Also, although the historical and current situation in the three countries analyzed here differs significantly, the similarities show that when it comes to *how* Roma are depicted, stereotypes dominate the representation in a much stronger manner than the national context. But it depends strongly on national discourses and the EU accession process *if* a state memorial museum includes the persecution of Roma into its permanent exhibition in the first place. The only exhibition that mentions Roma resistance, paints a Europe-wide picture of their

persecution, and addresses anti-Gypsism in the society, appears to be an anachronism in today's Hungary: The memorial for the victims of the German occupation and the "House of Fates", a new Fidesz Holocaust museum that is planned to deal with the children among the Holocaust victims and the Hungarian rescuers (but not with Roma or Hungarian perpetrators before the Arrow Cross rule in late 1944), demonstrate how marginalized the self-critical, Europe-oriented *Holocaust Memorial Center* has become. While this institution used to set a counterpoint to the nationalist *House of Terror*, which makes no mention of Roma, Orbán's Hungary today sees no need to broach the issue of their persecution in new museums any more. For half a decade, aggressive anti-Gypsism has gone hand in hand with historical revisionism and the successive abolishment of democratic checks and balances. Just like in 1968 and during the following repressions called "normalization", there is obviously still a close connection between confronting the past in a self-critical way and liberalization on the one hand as opposed to denial and authoritarianism on the other hand.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Implementation of Roma Inclusion Policies: Why Defining the Problem Matters

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Abstract

The concept of "Roma exclusion" has come to dominate political discussions about the marginalization of the largest ethnic minority. Placed at the center of the European Union political agenda, it recognized that Roma poverty has multiple and interrelated causes, which require multifaceted policy responses. Nevertheless, while the concept has acquired strategic connotations, by stressing socio-economic processes it has remained open to different interpretations. These are influenced by political perceptions of Roma identity and minority rights, as well as domestic policy approaches to equality. The pivotal instability in the discourse concerns the question of whether exclusion is a characteristic feature of contemporary European societies or a living condition visited on particular individuals and ethnic groups. This article critically examines the discourse on Roma exclusion adopted in the framework of European cohesion policy. Building on implementation and equality scholarship, it argues that every postulated solution has built into it a particular representation of what the problem is, and it is these representations and their implications that need to be discussed as potential causes of policy success or failure. The article presents key findings from the empirical investigation of Structural Funds (SF) programming (2007–2013) implemented in two convergence regions (Andalusia and Eastern Slovakia), which confirm that domestic discourse shapes the scope and quality of SF Roma inclusion projects.

Issue

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1. Introduction

In the last decade, the European Union (EU) has placed the concept of *Roma exclusion* on its political agenda, demonstrating its willingness to take a leadership role in addressing marginalization of the largest European ethnic minority. Concerned with deteriorating socio-economic conditions in numerous Roma communities the European Commission (EC) has advised Member States to make full use of the EU's instruments, in particular the system of financial transfers, the Structural Funds (SF) (EC, 2004, p. 42). The fifth report on economic social and territorial cohesion made explicit reference to the Roma—"deemed especially susceptible to social exclusion" and denoted the SF as key instruments for addressing Roma exclusion. Consequently, in the 2007–2013 funding period the majority of Member States made a commitment to formulate Roma inclusion objectives within their SF programming: the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and Operational Programmes (OP). In effect an estimated €12.65 billion was earmarked towards inclusion measures.

While the SF are instruments well suited to address systemic causes of inequality and facilitate changes towards a substantive equality for Roma people, their

absorption has been highly uneven. The 2011 evaluation reports *Support for Enhancing Access to the Labor Market and the Social Inclusion of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities* and *Roma Thematic Report* revealed that certain Member States have made substantial progress developing Roma inclusions measures with the use of SF, while others considerably lagged behind (CSES, 2011a, 2011b). Empirical data collected from 15 Member States indicated Spain as the most "successful" country in terms of absorption and allocation of available funding. In turn, Slovakia exhibited the weakest performance, falling behind other Member States including Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic[1].

Similar conclusions emerged from a study commissioned by the European Parliament (EP) *Measures to Promote the Situation of Roma EU Citizens in the EU* (2011). The evaluation of 12 Member States showed that Spain allocated more ESF budget per capita directly targeting social exclusion of vulnerable citizens than any other member state[2]. Slovakia appeared at the other end of the continuum allocating the least amount in the evaluated sample. *Decade Watch Survey* (2009) measured the impact of relevant government policies over the span of five years and also placed Spain at the top of the ranking list while giving Slovakia the lowest score. The survey disclosed that the "Spanish model" has been effectively promoting high quality Roma inclusion projects, most pronounced in the area of employment. According to the situational study conducted by the EURoma (2010), Spain has demonstrated a growing number of direct Roma beneficiaries. Vivian Reding, the European Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship praised the Spanish model on numerous occasions for showing "how to use EU funding most effectively and how to use it to promote social cohesion and combat poverty in the Roma communities".

While the existing reports have identified variation in the usage of SF, they provide a largely descriptive picture with little analytical enquiry into the causes of diverging outputs. As a result, it is difficult to understand why the Spanish government has been more successful in using SF.

This article aims to fill this explanatory void by presenting rigorous analysis of implementation processes developed in the Spanish and Slovak system of SF governance, and argues that implementation of SF is strongly influenced by the content of overarching SF inclusion strategies, in particular the representation of Roma exclusion as public problem. Building on a constructivist approach to policy implementation (Bacchi, 1999; Béland, 2005) it asserts that the formulation of Roma inclusion strategies does not follow a rational

choice model whereby policy-makers define Roma exclusion clearly and canvass many (ideally all) alternatives that might ameliorate it. Instead, their actions are often driven by political ideologies, institutional values or normative convictions that dictate what needs to be addressed and how. Goffman (1986) refers to this phenomenon as "framing", a concept implying that articulated problems are not simple descriptions of reality but specific representations that give meaning to reality. Empirical analysis of Spanish and Slovak SF programming shows that such "frames" are translated into judgement and procedures and their implementations have a real effect on policy outputs. With that it challenges common contentions that effective utilization of SF is a result of rational calculations and strong political and administrative capacities of the implementation bodies.

The article is structured as follows. First it reviews existing literature, which accounts for the variation in the use of SF, and presents the adopted methodology. Subsequently, the article discusses the concept of Roma exclusion with the aim to infer the prevailing frames inside cohesion policy discourse. The empirical section demonstrates how the framing of Roma exclusion inside the Spanish and Slovak SF programming impacted the SF outputs in the two convergence regions, Andalusia and Eastern Slovakia. The conclusion summarizes the findings and the implications of the study.

2. Theoretical Explanations of Diverging SF Outputs

A common argument for the Spanish success is based on the perception that Spain as a "richer country" has a stronger institutional capacity to absorb and allocate EU funding more efficiently (Leonardi & Nanetti, 2011). Allegedly, experience with EU procedures made the Spanish government more adept at optimizing available opportunities to address a wide range of issues including the exclusion of the Roma. However, the correlation between administrative efficiency and enhanced equity of undertaken measures is extremely weak. Although efficiency might improve overall public governance, it is highly unlikely that on its own it will promote equal treatment and tackle social exclusion. In fact, numerous studies demonstrate that the drive towards efficiency in European cohesion policy has actually pushed aside the interests of the most vulnerable and weakly organized groups (Bailey & De Propris, 2002; De Rynck & McAleavey, 2001). The capacity argument is further weakened by the fact that the Slovak government received substantial financial and technical support during the pre-accession period, aimed precisely at building policy expertise in the area of social exclusion (Guy, 2012) (similar financial support was never provided to Spain).

Another common argument asserts that countries with longer standing EU membership status are more likely to use SF effectively. Most pronounced in socio-

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[1] Bulgarian and Romania were not included in the sample.
[2] The per capita measurement took into consideration the size of the Roma population in each country.

logical debates about integration, the experience argument assumes that with time Member States acquire knowledge about European rules and procedures and internalize European values (Dąbrowski, 2010). Regular interactions between the EU and domestic policy-makers are thought to set in motion a policy-learning process, which with time reduces integration costs, administrative discrepancies and resistance. It is anticipated that with time domestic actors become familiarized with the procedures and supranational expectations which helps them navigate better through the system and optimize all its potential benefits (Ezcurra, Pascual, & Rapún, 2007). This argument, however, fails to explain why countries with similar duration in membership are not equally effective in utilization of SF[3]. More importantly it cannot explain the particular circumstances of the Spanish and Slovak cases. The Spanish government began to use SF for Roma integration only a decade after the country's accession, meaning it had approximately the same amount of time as the Slovak authorities to develop Roma inclusion strategies within national SF programming. Thus it remains unclear why Spanish policy-makers would learn "faster and better" than Slovak ones, especially if one takes into account the introduction of strategic inclusion tools by the Slovak government—the horizontal priority *Marginalized Roma Community* which required each OP to designate a section describing how general measures will contribute to Roma integration and earmarked €200,000 for demand-driven comprehensive community projects.

Finally, the Europeanization theorists contend that Member States are more likely to channel EU resources to the areas where the social costs of reform is high, the so-called "blame avoidance" phenomena (Weaver, 1986). However in both countries the on-the-ground situation challenges these theoretical arguments. The Roma minority in Slovakia make up almost 10% of the entire population while in Spain it represents only 1.8%. Having a large Roma population should be a strong incentive for Slovakia to use available funds to alleviate exclusion, especially given that the deteriorating situation of the Roma population entails social instability and represents a predicament in economic terms. Although the Roma in Spain face similar problems as to their Eastern counterparts (see Ringold, Orenstein, & Wilkens, 2005), the small size of their population makes it "easier" to overlook their exclusion, especially considering the frail political representation of the Roma (at all tiers of government) and their lack of lobbying leverage.

In sum, the conventional arguments largely fail to provide a valid explanation of the diverging SF outputs in the two countries. This article demonstrates empiri-

cally that the variation stems from discursive representation of Roma exclusion in overarching SF strategies which legitimizes measures not always well-suited to address problems experienced on-the-ground.

3. Methodology

This article presents key findings from PhD research on SF programming (2007–2013) adopted by Spanish and Slovak governments and implemented in two convergence regions, Andalusia and Eastern Slovakia (Kostka, 2015). Both of these regions fall under the NUT 1 convergence priority stipulated by cohesion regulation, and thus are the main beneficiaries of SF. Additionally, the majority of Roma communities and settlements are concentrated in these two regions (approximately 43% of Roma in Spain live in Andalusia while almost 80% of Roma in Slovakia reside in Eastern Slovakia), regions that also exhibit the highest level of social exclusion and unemployment (EURoma, 2010). Finally both of these regions have implemented the highest number of SF projects aimed at Roma inclusion (CSES, 2011b).

Data was collected via content analysis of the main strategic policy documents (the NSRFs and OPs) in an effort to deconstruct policy text according to pre-established analytical categories and a set of standardized questions developed by the Quing research project (2012). The content analysis was triangulated with 73 semi-structured interviews conducted with senior policy-makers, project managers and Roma advocates involved in formulation and implementation of SF programming. The use of interviews as a data collection method was based on the assumption that the participants' perspectives are meaningful, knowable, and can affect the success of the project. As such they are well suited not only for gathering "descriptive" data but also for exploration of attitudes, values, beliefs and motives. Using multiple source types allows the researcher to generate more meaning and, in turn, enhances the quality of syntheses. This method is considered most suitable for extracting information about severely under-researched topics (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

4. Conceptualizing Roma Exclusion

Before proceeding to empirical investigation it is important to analyze the concept of Roma exclusion mobilised in the framework of EU cohesion policy. While the concept has acquired important strategic connotations, by stressing structural and cultural/social processes, it remains rather elusive and subject to various interpretations. As some scholars describe Roma exclusion in terms of "not belonging" (McGarry, 2011) others conceive it in terms of the denial of citizenship rights, directing attention to institutionalized discrimination and political disenfranchisement (Nordberg, 2006). Still others contend that it is dependent on "dis-

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[3] See http://insideeurope.eu/taxonomy/term/35 for absorption and allocation data.

tance" whereby people become removed from the benefits of participating in a modern society (Woodward & Kohli, 2001). A common denominator of these discussions is the conviction that the Roma face a set of problems which differ considerably from those faced by the majority population (i.e. spatial segregation, discrimination, low educational attainments, and intergenerational poverty) (Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012). It is this understanding that is most pronounced in policy literature, stubbornly isolating questions concerning characteristic features of contemporary European society from questions pertaining to the living conditions of Roma communities. For example the majority of Slovak policy literature examining the causes of Roma unemployment rarely includes the analysis of macro-level factors driving labour market asymmetries (Slovak Government Office, 2011). Similarly, the EC has been reluctant to address Roma exclusion within its mainstream documents. Thus, neither the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion nor the Cohesion Policy Commentaries include assessment or reference to Roma exclusion. At the same time thematic papers on Roma exclusion have been multiplying. While such a dichotomy may seem legitimate given the dramatic exclusion experienced by the Roma it nevertheless obscures the common interests of Roma people and their fellow citizens and hides an increasing level of disparities across the EU.

The discursive treatment of Roma themes is further problematized by the fractious debates about the underlying causes of Roma exclusion. Conceptual divisions often stem from different normative positions scholars and practitioners hold on the ethnic dimension of exclusion (Vermeersch, 2012). Amidst the conflicting accounts it is possible to identify two prevailing frames. One views Roma exclusion as a by-product of wider socio-economic changes and the other ascribes it to behavioural and cultural conditioning. The former relates the incidence of poverty and disadvantage to wider processes of restructuring of economies and welfare states. It sheds critical light on existing patterns and privileges perpetuated by institutional arrangements, persistent socio-economic inequalities, and discrimination. As such, it problematizes the system as a whole and argues for the reconsideration of the hierarchy of goals and the set of instruments employed to guide socio-economic progress (see Kocze et al., 2014). The latter tends to discuss Roma in relatively isolated terms. It takes the moral fabric (or cultural characteristic) of groups and not the social and economic structures of society to be the root of the problem. In effect there is a tendency to "ghettoised risk category" under a new label and to publicise the more spectacular forms of cumulative disadvantage, distracting attention from the general rise in inequality, unemployment and family dissolution affecting all classes. As noted by Drál (2008) exclusion is thus presented as a product of

"adaptability" whereby people's interests, skills, or motivations function outside the core of the society which consists of people who are integrated into the sets of relationships and groups that are considered "normal".

In the framework of EU cohesion policy Roma exclusion has been presented as a multidimensional process which traps Roma communities inside an intergenerational poverty cycle (EC, 2010a). Yet this comprehensive definition has focused mainly on the "lack of skills and capabilities" among Roma communities and the need to close the gap between Roma and non-Roma in access to education, employment, healthcare and housing (EC, 2014). Critics have cautioned that Roma inclusion strategies act merely as tools for inserting Roma into mainstream society and fail to unleash structural reforms and address general decline in the inclusivity of the modern welfare state (Kovats, 2012). As such the onus is being placed on the minorities to make the adjustments and accommodations deemed necessary for social cohesion (Rorke, 2014). Empirical data confirms these criticisms by showing that the majority of SF initiatives took the shape of training and consultancy measures, with very few schemes directed at institutional modifications and equality measures (Kocze et al., 2014).

The representation of Roma exclusion in the SF programming implemented in Andalusia and Eastern Slovakia mirrors the vexing dispute between those who see exclusion as a product of discriminatory practices, norms and behaviours within public institutions and those who attribute it to inadaptability of certain groups or individuals. The next section demonstrates empirically these conceptual differences and the way they influence proposed action plans.

5. Representing Roma Exclusion

The content analysis of the Spanish and Slovak SF programming demonstrates that the diagnosis of social exclusion in the documents differs substantially, both in terms of defining the underlying causes of exclusion and specifying the circumstances of the Roma population. In the Spanish NSRF social exclusion was defined as "a condition generated by institutional barriers, which prevent groups or individuals from fully participating in socio-economic life" (NSRF, 2007, p. 135). The preamble established that rapid social transformation of Spanish society has left the bureaucratic apparatus unprepared and not flexible enough to address instances of poverty, inequality and structural discrimination (NSRF, 2007, p. 6). Emphasis was placed on a lack of integrationist instruments, incentives and flexible procedures needed for generating equitable and accessible public services. As explained by one of the designers of NSRF:

[Spanish] institutions continue to be largely un-

derequipped to address the new public demands and the complex realities of the Spanish society, such as an increased immigration, the disentanglement of family support system, changing gender roles, and urban poverty. Our anti-discrimination schemes continue to be quite limited and potential innovations of public interventions are constrained by the procedural complexity and inertia. (R. A. Serrano, June 14, 2011)

The majority of interviewed policy-makers, involved in the design of SF programming, admitted that SF were considered an "expedient" tool for developing a strategy of "competitiveness with a human face". The Andalusian authorities added that through the regional OP they had earmarked funds for accelerating reforms of the "sluggish" bureaucracy and developing high quality anti-discrimination framework at the regional level.

The framing of Roma exclusion in the Slovak SF programming has directed attention away from institutional and wider macro-economic factors. Although the Slovak NSRF described instances of labor demand asymmetries and uneven territorial development, it defined social exclusion in terms of "inadaptability of certain groups and individuals" and their "distance from the mainstream society" (NSRF, 2007, p. 20). The NSRF assessment explicitly stated that while some people "exclude themselves voluntarily from socio-economic life" others are "unable, incapable or unwilling to access available rights" (NSRF, 2007, pp. 24, 56, 158). Similar assertions appeared in OPs, pointing out that the unfavorable position of marginalized citizens stemmed from a lack of "basic competences which often lead to helplessness and an inability to guide or control the decisions which have implications for day to day life" (OP E&SI, 2007, p. 47). This framing was defended by the Slovak Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family:

When talking about marginalization we need to take in consideration issues such as inadequate skills to compete in the labour market, health problems, family situation and area of residence. If we are to use SF in an effective manner these circumstantial factors need to be properly identified and assessed so the projects can be carefully tailored. We already know that a 'one size fits all' strategy does not work in practice, people are different, they deal with different problems are differently predisposed…policy action needs to take this under account. (M. Vavrinčik, May 13, 2011)

6. Conceptualizing Strategic Targets

The overarching strategies also developed a very different conceptualization of the main SF targets. The Spanish NSRF emphasized that SF would be directed mainly at public institutions and public agencies (not individuals or communities) in an effort to accelerate "administrative reforms and mainstream equality principle" (NSRF, 2007, p. 78). Although the NSRF and OPs internalize objectives targeted at "vulnerable groups and persons at risk of exclusion", exactly who these vulnerable citizens remained open to interpretation. The Andalusian authorities insisted that this was a conscious choice resulting from political determination to avoid institutionalizing positive discrimination, which was considered harmful to the Andalusian socialist agenda. In effect all priority axes dealing with social exclusion were not directed at specific social groups but rather at identified socio-economic problems (i.e. long-term unemployment, limited entrepreneurship, early school drop-out, informal employment).

The priority axes also remained "ethnically neutral" with no reference made to Roma minorities, their cultural distinctiveness, specific circumstances or even areas of residence. While critics argued that this omission stemmed from a limited political attention to the living conditions of Roma communities (Bereményi & Mirga, 2012) the designers of SF programming once again insisted that introduction of ethnically specific priority axes would go against the socialist doctrine based on social solidarity and universality. They argued that a neutral approach to the Roma question was considered essential in preventing "ethnicization of poverty" whereby being Roma could be automatically equated with being excluded. A public manager from the Andalusian Ministry for Equality and Social Welfare expressed that some level of neutrality was instrumental in avoiding the promotion of "difference" over "equality". He argued that it reduced the risk of isolating the Roma question from the wider political agenda. Neutrality was also defended on the basis that transformation of public institutions would indirectly benefit all vulnerable groups including the Roma:

The main drive here is to invest in building more inclusive institutions rather than introduce independent projects targeted at excluded groups. It is not unreasonable to believe that once public institutions are prepared to support equality, those who are marginalized will benefit. Programmes directed at discriminated groups cannot be successful if governing procedures remain unchanged. (J. Navarro Zafra, June 22, 2011)

As such, the Spanish SF programming moved away from providing immediate assistance to those most affected by exclusion, opting instead for long-term systemic adjustments.

In turn, the Slovak strategic documents appeared more precise in defining excluded groups. While the diagnostic section stressed that exclusion affected various groups and individuals, it focused predominantly

on the Roma communities. The NSRF stated that "the problem of insufficient level of social inclusion is most obvious in the case of the Roma ethnic community" (NSRF, 2007, p. 21). The Roma were categorized as a group that faced greater risk of exclusion than any other faction of Slovak society (including the homeless, disabled, and immigrants). Moreover there was an explicit contention, that their situation was *unique* in its scope and character. The specificity of the Roma quandary was attributed to spatial factors: residence in disadvantaged and economically lagging regions and in segregated and impoverished settlements. However, the diagnosis did not explain the causes of such disadvantages, in particular common practices of spatial segregation. The interviewed NGOs attested that this omission gave rise to the false conviction that Roma intentionally choose to reside in isolation or are themselves responsible for inadequate living conditions:

> *Public authorities continue to focus on Roma culture and behaviour, despite a lack of data on that topic….Instead of accounting for wider socio-economic problems, the authorities engage in rhetoric that present Roma communities as the main barriers to cohesive development.* (M. Hapalová, July 23, 2011)

Indeed, the role of Roma culture in perpetuating exclusion was emphasized throughout the entire SF programming. While the NSRF stressed that "different cultural characteristics serve as barriers to meaningful integration" (NSRF, 2007, pp. 21, 23) the OPs linked cultural behaviour of the Roma to circumstances of exclusion stating that "natural socio-hierarchical rules of social life in Roma communities pose a risk for building up and maintaining communication barriers" (OP E&SI, 2007, p. 63). In this manner SF programming mirrored widely held political perceptions that Roma need to change in order to benefit from systemic provisions.

7. Acknowledging Structural Discrimination

Where the two SF programming differ most substantially is in their acknowledgement of structural discrimination. The diagnostic section of the Spanish NSRF and all relevant OPs explicitly recognized that "social exclusion is generated by systemic discrimination particularly entrenched in the area of employment" (OPA, 2007, p. 26). This acknowledgment prompted creation of the thematic multiregional OP Fight against Discrimination (OP FAD) that presented "discrimination in the labor market" as the main and most immediate cause of poverty and exclusion (OP FAD, 2007, p. 13). As explained by the Intermediate Body (IB) for the OP FAD:

> *Negative perceptions about groups and individuals prevent them from obtaining the same employment opportunities as the mainstream society. This is the*

single most important barrier to meaningful participation in the economic spheres of life. It is an institutional shortcoming that needs to be prioritized in all SF and other public interventions (B. Sanchez-Rubio, June 13, 2011).

Nevertheless, the diagnosis fell silent on the intersectionality of discrimination and inequality axes such as ethnic origin, race, or area of residence were altogether ignored. Interviewed Spanish anti-discrimination advocates maintained that such conceptualization of discrimination failed to capture critical racism and intolerance directed specifically at the Roma community. However, senior policy-makers maintained that discrimination affected all "different groups in similar manner" (i.e. preventing them from entering the labour market and/or accessing quality public services), and that was why SF were focused on discriminatory patterns rather than on group identity. The SF programing director argued that social exclusion framed in terms of institutional shortcomings rather than group dynamics is beneficial to the overall functioning of SF programming:

> *Taking into account the characteristics of the problems and not the types or groups of persons affected by it, forces public authorities to consider structural revisions in service delivery. The aim is making them more accessible and inclusive to all those in need, because this effectively prevents stigmatization of certain groups or treating them in separation from mainstream strategies.* (B. Sanchez-Rubio, June 13, 2011).

Consequently, the SF were earmarked for "generic anti-discrimination initiatives", aimed at warding off all forms of discrimination in the labour market. Under this approach the representation of the Roma as a unique socio-cultural category was rendered counterproductive. While critics maintained that such stance ran risk of diverting funds from anti-discrimination initiatives tackling anti-Gypsism, empirical data does not support this claim. In fact, the number of awareness rising campaigns aimed at reducing anti-Roma stereotypes has increased (Evaluation of the Impact of the Multi-Regional Operational Program Fight against Discrimination, 2013).

In turn, Slovak SF programming failed to link social exclusion to discriminatory processes. In fact, the diagnosis of Roma circumstances altogether omitted any references to institutional discrimination. As confirmed by public manager from Eastern Slovakia:

> *We talk about multidimensionality we talk about dependencies and critical living situation, we elaborate and analyze, but if you look carefully you will not find any references to systemic discrimination,*

as if the escalation of anti-Gypsism, the deeply-rooted prejudice in the Slovak public sector, and well documented patterns of segregation do not in any way contribute to the marginalization of the Roma. (T. Železník, July 28, 2011)

A reference to discrimination appeared for the first time in the prescriptive section of the NSRF, in a statement that all social inclusion actions would "aim to combat discrimination based on sex, race, ethnical origin, religion and beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation" (NSRF, 2007, p. 96). Elsewhere, discrimination was neither defined nor properly assessed, making it impossible to infer where it was felt most acutely and who the victims and the perpetrators were. The OPs also failed to identify institutional discrimination in their diagnosis of social exclusion. As pointed by a member of the Monitoring Committee:

It has been pointed out in numerous meetings with MAs that patterns of discrimination and unequal treatment should be elaborated on, unfortunately this has never been realized and in general there is a great reluctance on part of the authorities to account for discriminatory patterns, especially within public administration, despite strong evidence of such practices.[4]

Consequently, the thematic priorities and objectives inside SF programming failed to elaborate on the need to tackle any forms of discrimination and less than 2% of SF was allocated towards anti-discrimination measures.

8. Formulating Solutions: Mainstreaming Versus Targeting

In line with theoretical expectations, the analysis found that the solutions outlined in both SF programming had built into them a particular representation of Roma exclusion. In the case of Spanish NSRF, the acknowledgment that social exclusion is driven chiefly by systemic factors prompted political commitment to the mainstreaming approach (NSRF, 2007, p.135). In the interviews policy-makers affirmed that the social inclusion action plan was aimed at tackling discrimination in employment and consolidating the principle of equal opportunity inside public services. This aim was articulated under the priority "construction of a working environment free of discriminatory practices, committed to the principles of equal opportunity, transparency and economic as well as social innovations". The emphasis was placed on the need to adjust public services and administrative procedures in order to "strengthen attention to diversity and equal opportunities" (Evaluation of the Operation Program ESF Andalu-

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[4] Interview #59, 2011.

sia 2007–2013, 2007, p. 138). As confirmed by the manager from General Directorate for European Funds and Planning the IB of the OP ESF Andalusia:

We expect that all potential beneficiaries demonstrate how their initiatives will cater to diversity and equal access and how they will address discrimination, without such elaboration the proposed intervention is automatically rejected. To aid the process we set up equality indicators, time-frames and public budgets, we also designated bodies responsible for monitoring and evaluation invest in equality research and information exchange. (J. Moreno, June 22, 2011)

The interviewees, including local NGOs were in agreement that mainstreaming could bring attention to the long-term impact of policies and projects and facilitate expedient systemic changes (albeit rather slowly). Although, criticisms arose regarding the "unsystematic evaluation" of mainstreaming, the OPs established equality indicators, measures supporting cognitive activities, awareness-raising campaigns, and exchange of "good practices". Practical information and concrete tools were provided to the Managing Authorities in order to ensure that mainstreaming becomes an integrated part of their everyday work. While this process was not free of delays and resistance of the cadres, all interviewees insisted that at least it was put in place. At the same time the endorsement of mainstreaming strategy has ousted approaches targeted at specific groups or communities, as only one out of fifteen thematic objectives aimed to address employability of persons at risk of exclusion through targeted measures.

In the case of Slovak NSRF, focus on individual adaptability informed the adoption of a targeted approach. The majority of interviewees asserted that SF were seen as tools for developing "insertion" projects targeted at specific and "well-defined" groups. Social inclusion objectives within the OPs called for preparing and training excluded groups, so that they could participate in all aspects of socio-economic life. The strategy relied on slogans such as "catch up", "activate" or "motivate", all of which accentuated the need for behavioural change of the target group. As commented by a public manager working for the MA for OP E&SI:

SF can be a great tool for helping vulnerable groups develop their potential, so that they can partake in socio-economic activities on an equal footing with other citizens, SF projects can equip them with necessary skills, for example help them to complete secondary education. (R. Drienska, May 11, 2011)

The OP E&SI also emphasized the need to invest in human resources in order to break patterns of welfare dependency and assist excluded groups in accessing public

services and benefit from advancement mechanisms (OP E&SI, 2007, p. 45). The objectives called for the "integration of excluded groups and individuals" into the institutional landscape, with references made to adaptability, adaptation, and activation (OP E&SI, 2007, p. 142). Attention to systemic problems was kept to minimum, focusing largely on the need to modernize existing services (i.e. through IT technology and infrastructure).

The attainment of these goals was to be achieved through national and demand-driven projects, targeted at specific thematic areas and groups—the Marginalized Roma Communities (MRC).

The NSRF stated that "the circumstances of MRC are addressed separately, as projects need to be tailored to specific community needs" (NSRF, 2007, p. 95). The OP E&SI set up national programmes targeted specifically at Roma communities (i.e. field social work, community centers) while OP Education earmarked funds to a program supporting Roma teaching assistants. The selection criteria required potential beneficiaries to demonstrate how their projects would assist or include persons of Romani origin and applications would receive higher score for accounting for Roma beneficiaries. In effect the SF earmarked for Roma inclusion almost exclusively supported measures targeted at individuals and/or MRC—training, consultancy, vocational courses, etc. According to the Social Development Fund, 90% of these did not envision measures which could change or adjust the institutional landscape (Hojsík, M. July 7 2011).

9. Consequential SF Outputs

Thus far the article has demonstrated that the Spanish and Slovak SF programming conceptualized social exclusion differently which in turn influenced the content of proposed solutions. What follows is an attempt to demonstrate how these differences contributed to SF outputs.

The quantitative assessments demonstrated that Spanish SF programming committed a significant proportion of SF towards social exclusion and equality measures (55.4%)[5]. At the same time the absorption capacity for social exclusion has hovered above the EU average (Spain 46.3%, EU average 41.1%)[6]. The regional SF authorities ascribed these achievements to the strong commitment to push and consolidate institutional reforms:

The prioritization of institutional reforms by the OPA allowed us to focus our efforts…instead of introducing numerous project-calls we have opted for

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[5] Surpassed only by Germany and Poland (see Inside Europe 2014 available at: http://insideurope.eu/taxonomy/term/204).
[6] Data up to the end of year 2012 at: http://www.qren.pt/np4/np4/?newsId=3198&fileName=novos_Gr_Site_012013.pdf

two major calls, one directed at public organizations and the other at private and social ones…Given that the calls were thematically focused we avoided the inflow of miscellaneous applications, this speeded up the selection process and allowed for quicker absorption. (J. Moreno, June 22, 2011)

This commitment allowed for creation of projects larger in size and with time frames extended beyond the funding period. What needs to be pointed out is that the Managing Authorities tended to circumvent complex initiatives in favour of simple and focused projects. As explained by the manager of IB for OP FAD:

We generally feel that it is better to implement a smaller number of projects but of greater size and capacity. The small, localized projects are useful in providing immediate practical aid, but to facilitate real transformations and policy impacts we need ambitious, large-scale, and result oriented initiatives….We also strongly believed that such projects should be relatively "easy" to manage. From our experience as IB complexity of the management and control system discourages the usage of SF altogether. (I. Rodriguez, June 6, 2011)

Looking at fiches of Spanish ESF projects it appears that they were predominantly multi-million dollar initiatives, implemented by public authorities with substantial co-financing from the public budget. For example, a total budget of €41,700,000 was allocated to the labour insertion program Acceder in the 2008–2013 period; in total €72,222,833 has been invested since 2000 (EURoma, 2010). In Andalusia, the majority of projects ran by regional OP ESF, possessed budgets reaching €5 million or more (Evaluation of the Operation Program ESF Andalusia 2007–2013, 2010). By and large the winning project applications outlined in detail the strategies for tackling systemic discrimination.

The 2013 evaluation showed that these tactics not only facilitated greater and more efficient absorption but also anchored the equality principle in all individually implemented projects. The interviewees emphasized that the focus on institutional improvements has advanced quality management, control and monitoring inside the Managing Authorities. For example in the period 2007–2011 the amount of resources that were returned to the ESF by ineffective management was only 0.07% of the expenditure incurred, while the managed funds that did not exceed the control of different audits was less than 2%. Finally it was attested that institutions have increased the amount and quality of professional resources which allowed them to develop more effective social inclusion projects opened to all vulnerable groups and individuals. The IB for OP FAD Foundation Once expressed that:

Institutional quality should not be viewed as an end in itself, but a means to create accessible and cohesive public services and inclusion projects, using SF as an instrument for improving the way institutions deal with exclusion is imperative and such style of work should be prioritized in the future programming periods. (M. Tussi, June 27, 2011)

Despite these positive developments the negligent focus on the ethnic dimension of poverty was criticised by Roma inclusion advocates. The critics stressed that neutral treatment of vulnerable groups ran the risk of by-passing the most marginalized communities. For example Bereményi and Mirga (2012) argued that the use of ESF for the Roma in Spain was limited to the nationwide programme Acceder and that its existence served as a disincentive for regional authorities to programme meaningful Roma-related activities. These criticisms were refuted by the interviewed SF stakeholders who stressed that real changes take time and lack of ethnic indicators in the SF has not meant that Roma benefited less than other groups. Empirical data appears to confirm this stance. The 2011 CSES studies demonstrate an incremental rise in the number of Roma beneficiaries. A director of the Secretariat for Roma Community within the Andalusian Ministry of Equality and Social Welfare, argued that:

The international reports often put a lot of emphasis on the number of beneficiaries while neglecting to account for institutional changes that take place. Exclusive targeting of Roma is simply not feasible, not only because of the fluidity of the Roma identity but also due to legislative restrictions regarding the collection of ethnic data. That is partly why we focus on creating services and procedures that cater to all excluded and discriminated groups. Although the impacts of our initiatives are not immediately evident this does not mean that Roma do not benefit. We've seen a flourishing of Roma activism, a growing number of high school graduates, and falling number of ethnically driven hate crimes. These improvements are directly related to changes in procedures and regulations and numerous SF projects such as social enterprises. (J. Navarro Zafra, June 22, 2011)

While managers of Andalusian SF projects appeared more sceptical about the pace of institutional changes, they agreed that the streamlining of procedures and strong focus on equality and solidarity greatly improved conditions for engaging and working with vulnerable citizens.

In turn, the sub-optimal outputs of the Slovak SF programming have been well documented. The programming was criticised for acute inefficiencies, low absorption and a re-direction of SF from envisioned

goals (Hurrle, Ivanov, Gill, Kling, & Škobla, 2012). This state of affairs could be directly linked to the endorsement of targeting strategy which failed to account for institutional shortcomings. Targeting strategy has first and foremost led to the diffusion of funds among mixed and disparate objectives and measures—over 85% of competitive allocations did not exceeded a budget of €500,000 (Grambličková, 2010). The reliance on small initiatives was also tied to a lack of secured co-financing from public budgets (only the minimum 15% was provided) and meager administrative support provided for project managers. In practice entities competing in project-calls needed to amass their own funds and operational capital (even the NGOs had to contribute an expected 15%). This impeded the participation in project-calls of small impoverished localities and privileged "small and simple" interventions. As explained by a project manager from Banská Bystrica:

All projects directed at Roma communities were implemented by municipalities or local NGOs….neither the central nor the regional authorities contributed their expertise or extra co-financing. Not surprisingly the poorest of the poor were not able to compete with the well-off localities (…) those who did manage to get funds were only able to manage simple highly localized initiatives, nobody aspired to contribute to larger changes. (I. Mako, July 26, 2011)

Thus rather than promoting complex approaches the tendency was to introduce one-dimensional, "minor" assistance services (i.e. training, social curatorship, setting up of community centers, or infrastructural repairs).

The analysis unveiled that the targeted approach so strongly supported by the designers of OPs has neither curtailed the pervasive redirection of SF away from Roma communities nor contributed to a larger number of social inclusion projects or a higher number of Roma beneficiaries. The Regional Development Agency in Prešov attributed these dynamics to the separation of targeted measures from the regional development strategy and a lack of ample assessment of Roma living conditions:

Public servants simply lack extensive knowledge about the MRC, thus the indicators are designed according to technocratic rationales rather than assessments of the situation….What is especially frustrating is that Roma issues are constantly discussed outside the mainstream political agenda. This leads to absurd situations, where SF are earmarked for social housing which is not specified in Slovak legislation". (N. Fuchsová, July 26, 2011)

Other stakeholders argued that the adherence to the targeted approach in fact only reinforced the stigmatization of the Roma population and legitimized isolated

measures disconnected from wider socio-economic development agendas[7].

The analysis of project fiches showed that the majority of implemented initiatives did not internalize anti-discrimination or equal treatment goals; according to the 2011 Country Report, less than 2% of implemented projects addressed (directly and indirectly) structural discrimination. According to a Roma leader, this further dwarfed the effectiveness and impact of SF projects:

For a long time we've been saying that what needs to be targeted are the structures of exclusion and not only the excluded people, this might sound insensitive but offering training to people who live in segregated communities and face daily discrimination in employment and pretty much all other areas of life, well that is just throwing money out the window. SF should be used to change policies, tackle discrimination, promote equality ...we don't have projects like that. (V. Kokeny, May 14, 2011)

10. Concluding Remarks

This article demonstrated empirically that a particular framing of public problems influences the process of policy implementation and its final outputs. The analysis has confirmed that Roma exclusion is largely a constructed concept, underpinned by normative contentions about the causes of poverty and marginalization. While policy-makers rely on empirical assessments to formulate the definitions of Roma exclusion, these assessments tend to be mediated by the existing cognitive and moral maps that orient their actions and routines. In turn these politically accepted definitions legitimize a specific course of action, even if it is not needed or demanded by the final beneficiaries.

In the case of Spanish SF programming the framing of social exclusion in terms of structural barriers prompted the adoption of mainstreaming approach to exclusion. The analysis confirmed that institutionalization of mainstreaming generated an array of anti-discrimination measures that directly and indirectly benefited Roma communities. The absence of targeted strategies and negligent attention to specificities of Roma exclusion generated a counterintuitive result, as the expected redirection of SF away from the Roma did not take place. In fact the ethnically neutral approach fostered stronger political attention to patterns of social exclusion and allowed for higher allocation of SF towards social exclusion themes.

In contrast, the Slovak SF programming framed social exclusion in terms of individual or group adaptability with negligent attention given to general institutional inequalities and structural discrimination. This

neglect enforced channelling of funding towards measures that aimed to change the behaviour of target groups—Roma communities. The adopted targeted approach was supposed to offset the pervasive practice of re-directing funding from the most marginalized communities, instead leading to the isolation of Roma measures from regional and local development strategies. This de facto only reinforced the re-direction of funding to other priorities. While targeting appeared sensitive to the specificity of the conditions in the Roma settlements, it in fact contributed to the ethnicization of the problem. As confirmed by SF stakeholders the opportunity for systemic transformation was effectively lost, and the Roma could benefit only from short-lived training and consulting activities, not linked to public services or poverty reduction programmes.

These findings challenge the perceived positive influence of the targeting approach, championed by the EU and numerous international Roma advocacy organizations. It appears that targeting SF at minority groups without resources provided for institutional "transformations"—in particular the enhancement of anti-discrimination principles—is counterproductive as it leads to ethnicization of the problem and its separation from mainstream policies. This often leads to disenchantment and de-legitimization of the entire SF programming. In fact if one looks more closely, an increase in the allocation of SF towards Roma integration priorities in Slovakia has actually generated greater contestation of their usefulness in facilitating inclusion[8].

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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[7] The 2012 UNDP Report has demonstrated this empirically (Hurrle et al., 2012).

[8] A similar trend could be noticed in other Eastern European countries, generally endorsing targeted approaches (EURoma, 2010).

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Article

Discourses of Roma Anti-Discrimination in Reports on Human Rights Violations

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Abstract

In an effort to understand the paradox between the expansion of inclusion projects for the Roma and their persisting exclusion, this article explores human rights practice in order to grasp the complexity of meanings of inclusion negotiated in this practice. In this way, we scrutinize whether there are limiting factors within the inclusionary discourse itself. Specifically, we analyze the discourse in transnational judicial, political and civil society actors' reports on violations of human rights against Roma. A strong shared tendency to frame the violations in terms of discrimination can be discerned in the reports, demonstrating a dominant concept in the human rights discourse for Roma. However, a framing analysis of the underlying assumptions of this concept shows that not all three actors offer the same solutions for obtaining non-discrimination, which can partly explain the limited impact of the ostensibly strong and inclusive anti-discrimination discourse. In contrast, the actors do share a negative attribution of responsibility to the nation states, but the effectiveness of this shared discursive claim can be questioned. This article illustrates how inclusion discourses are actually quite complex to grasp and so it substantiates the need for greater critical understanding of such discourses in further research.

Keywords

human rights; Gypsy travellers; inclusion; discourse; discrimination; report; Roma

1. Introduction

From the 1990s onwards, the Roma have been increasingly ethnicized and represented as a homogeneous European minority by European institutions, Romani groups and associations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, scholars and various media (Van Baar, 2008). Moreover, they have been framed as a European minority *par excellence*. Having no established connection with a kin state which will lobby and advocate on their behalf, it is claimed that

Roma need to rely on European institutions and agreements to get their rights acknowledged. Consequently, the Council of Europe and the EU have gradually set up inclusive measures and projects for the Roma (Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012). European fora have been mobilized and European institutions and civil society have become increasingly alert to human rights violations for Roma.

However, Roma are also still continuously confronted with such human rights violations across multiple European countries (Bancroft, 2005; Pogány,

2012; Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012). Ideas about the Roma are submerged in multiple negative stereotypes and exclusionary logics. Apparently, these constructions are not overcome by the trends towards inclusion. Therefore, there is a need for analysis of the meanings that are created in inclusionary discourses in order to find clues about the limiting factors that hold back these inclusion projects.

An interesting and innovative way to do this is by looking at human rights practices. Although human rights are often perceived as universally accepted standards of inclusion, increasingly more sociologists recognize that it is necessary to understand how and in which contexts human rights cultures are created. Human rights are then perceived as originating, existing and being applied in specific contexts, which can be framed as social struggles (Keck & Sikkink, 1999; Madsen, 2011; Morris, 2006; Nash, 2009; Waters, 1996; Woodiwiss, 2005). This struggle forms a continuous (re)negotiation of norms and ideas about human rights through discursive framing by different interpretive communities (judicial, political, civil society); groups of actors which have different perspectives on the meaning of human rights (Madsen, 2011; Morris, 2006; Nash, 2009; Waters, 1996; Woodiwiss, 2005). This ambiguity is possible because human rights form an abstract set of norms and values which is open for interpretation. Certain norms or interpretations are therefore prioritized and thus a practical definition of what human rights are–or what they should be–is made, involving definitions of social inclusion. Thus, by looking into human rights practice for Roma, we can gain insight into the inclusionary discourses for this group.

Furthermore, within this human rights practice, we have chosen focus on reports about violations of Roma human rights. The discursive interpretation of human rights involves first determining whether a violation has occurred. When an actor declares a violation has taken place, this entails a definition of what human rights are or should be. Consequently, reports on human rights violations form an interesting part of human rights practice. Despite its importance, no research can be found on this topic.

Hence, this article analyzes reports on human rights violations for Roma and Gypsy travellers prepared by significant transnational judicial, political and civil society actors, the European Court of Human Rights, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Roma Rights Centre, respectively. This analysis first shows that the reports share a strong focus on the concept of (non-)discrimination. However, a framing analysis shows that this concept is not linked to a shared strict legal definition but instead entails different discursive interpretations for every actor, which can partly help to explain why discrimination practices have not yet been addressed in a consistent and effective way.

2. Theoretical Framework: Inclusion for Whom, by Whom, and How It Needs to Be Reached

Our theoretical framework is based on an analysis of Roma inclusion policy in the critical Romani studies tradition, which gives insight in to the question of for whom, by whom and how Roma inclusion is being envisioned. These dimensions will be used to analyze reports about violations in the results section and will thus enable us to unravel some meanings attached to human rights and Roma inclusion.

2.1. Who Is Included? Roma as the European Minority "Par Excellence"

From the 1990s onwards, European institutions and Romani civil society have argued that Roma and Gypsy people can be seen as a European minority "*par excellence*" (Van Baar, 2008; Vermeersch, 2012). Having no established connection with a kin state which will lobby and advocate on their behalf, it is claimed that Roma need to rely on European institutions and agreements to get their rights acknowledged. As a consequence, Europe has gradually developed a specific Roma-related policy focused on inclusion and integration (for example, the European Platform for Roma inclusion and the Decade for Roma Inclusion) (Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012).

However, Romani studies have shown that this promising policy also produces some important side effects. First, the fight for recognition of Roma brought forth an essentializing dynamic, representing Roma as a homogeneous minority (Hemelsoet, 2013; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011; McGarry, 2011; Tremlett, 2009a; Van Baar, 2008; Vermeersch, 2012). Consequently, although it is clear that there are vast differences between Roma groups, they are neglected. Roma who cannot identify with the new European Roma identity and its accompanying norms cannot, therefore, benefit from European-led inclusion.

Secondly, Romani studies have warned that the Roma-focused inclusion policy can produce the opposite effect. Holding the identity of an excluded European minority reconfirms the outsider character of the group and reinforces the boundary which separates them from the integrated mainstream group (Gay y Blasco, 2008; Goodwin, 2009; Hemelsoet, 2013; McGarry, 2011; Van Baar, 2008; Vermeersch, 2012). Although this confirmation of exclusion is not necessarily deliberately generated, it can be employed by rightist and racist groups to emphasize the different character of the Roma and to blame them for creating their own problems.

2.2. How to Attain Inclusion? Roma as Holders of Individual Rights, a Socio-Economically Excluded Group or a Cultural Minority

An important characteristic of the inclusion discourse

which has appeared in Romani studies literature is how the object of inclusion policy is conceptualized. These studies show that Roma can be framed in three different ways, leading to a different inclusion strategy and thus different outcomes. These different approaches are not exclusive, they share certain characteristics while differing in other aspects (this is summarized in Figure 1). Furthermore, the different approaches reflect a certain evolution in thinking about inclusion of the Roma minority, where throughout time different organizations and institutions have chosen to emphasize or neglect certain approaches/dimensions.

2.2.1. Roma as Holders of Individual Rights (Individual Rights)

The framework that was strongly used by Romani movements in the 1990s (such as the ERRC) and then picked up by judicial and political institutions was based on the ideas of equality and individual human rights (Rövid, 2011). This means that Roma are seen as human individuals, just as equal as other human beings. Therefore, they hold human rights, which are violated when Roma are discriminated against and deprived of things like personal documents, freedom of choice, secure housing, qualitative education, etc. In this perspective, Roma are not described as a group, but violations are evaluated in individual cases and their particular circumstances. This perspective stems from the idea that the target group approach causes a homogenization effect and unintentionally confirms the excluded character of the group (Hemelsoet, 2013).

However, this perspective has been criticized because it leaves a lot of responsibility in the hands of nation states, where nation states are given broad competences to protect the human rights of their Roma citizens, enshrined in the constitutions and Council of Europe legislation (O'Nions, 2011). When they don't succeed, there is still no real transnational body which can address such violations in a decisive and consistent manner (Faist, 2001; Isin & Turner, 2002; Nash, 2009). Therefore, there seems to be a consensus today in literature and in policy that the individual-rights-based approach is inadequate to attain the full inclusion of Roma in society (Rövid, 2011).
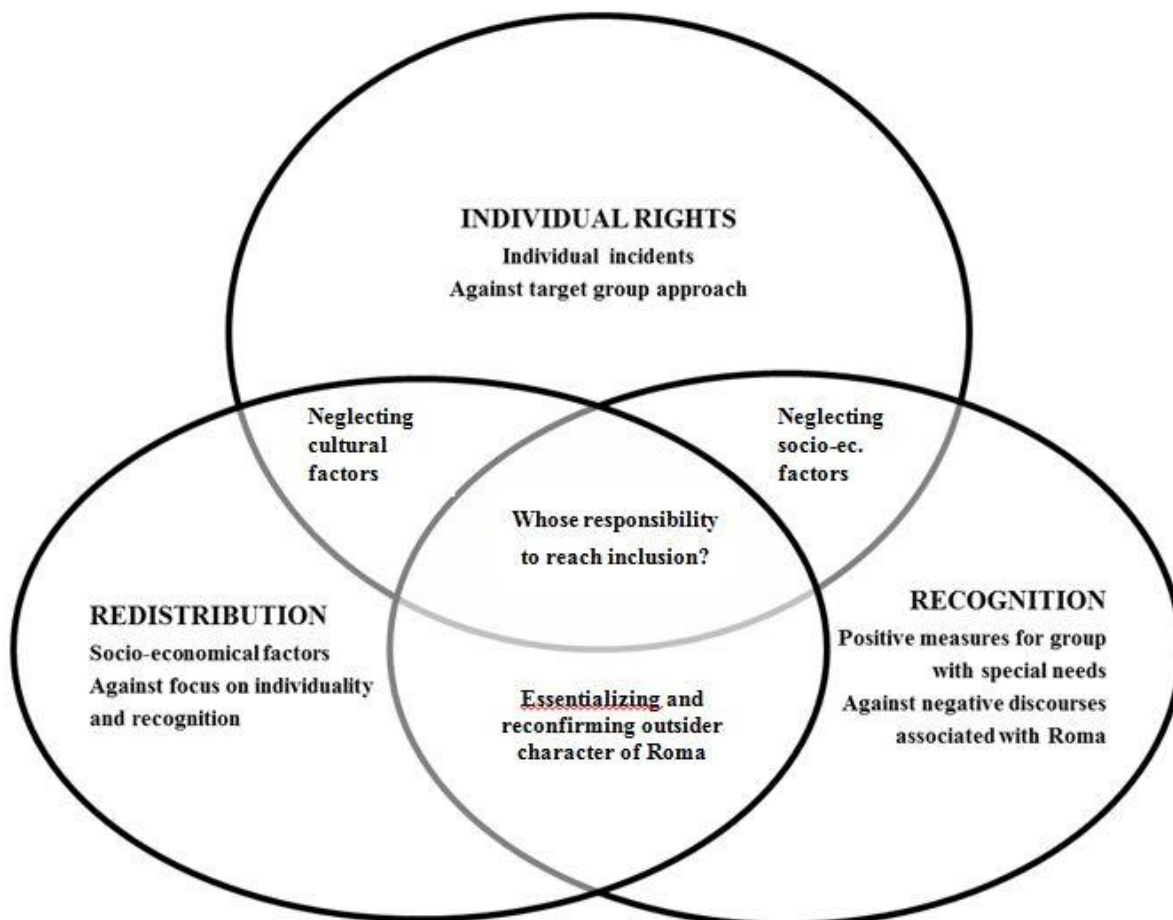

Figure 1. Dimensions of inclusion in discourse about Roma

2.2.2. Roma as a Socio-Economically Excluded Group (Redistribution)

Another criticism levelled against the individual rights approach that is increasingly emphasized is the observation that the focus on individuality neglects the fact that Roma are confronted with a strongly disadvantaged socio-economic structural situation (Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011; O'Nions, 2011; Rövid, 2011). According to this approach, which has received widespread support in recent years, Roma are targeted as a group that has primarily socio-economic interests because of severe deprivation, which intensified after the fall of communism. This approach is clearly reflected in EU institutions, who see EU funding (such as the European Social Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) as a key instrument in addressing the socio-economic deprivation of Roma. It is argued that the situation of the Roma is complex, and thus other societal factors besides racial discrimination need to be addressed, such as poverty rates, absence of public transportation in Roma neighbourhoods, poor health conditions because of living circumstances, etc. In its communication about the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, the European Commission (2011) clearly frames the improvement of the situation of the Roma as a social and economic imperative. Specifically, they focus on needs regarding equal access to employment, education, housing and healthcare.

Similar to the individual rights approach is the cultural minority perspective (see below), which is criticized for overemphasizing recognition and commemoration of the Roma group while underemphasizing the socio-economical character of their deprivation (McGarry, 2011; Rövid, 2011; Tremlett, 2009b; Van Baar, 2008; Vermeersch, 2012). This shared neglect of socio-economic factors in the individual rights and recognition approaches is shown on the right hand side of Figure 1. However, the socio-economic program is in its turn criticized for ignoring the impact of discrimination, while this can lead to a disturbed employment of financial means allocated, certainly on the local level (Rövid, 2013). Furthermore, in these socio-economically focused policies Roma are constantly identified with misery, unemployment, uncivilized living circumstances, lack of schooling, etc. This leads to a strong stigmatization, which reconfirms the existing stereotypes and frames Roma as a socially burdensome group.

2.2.3. Roma as Cultural Minority (Recognition)

In addition to the approaches above, the Roma can also be framed as a cultural minority. Although this approach is still only rarely applied to the Roma minority, it is the most common way to deal with the rights of national minorities; to identify them as a separate group with special needs and to take positive measures

to assure these needs are fulfilled (McGarry, 2012; O'Nions, 2011; Rövid, 2011). The focus on individual racial discrimination and socio-economic redistribution neglects the fact that Roma are a cultural minority which deserves recognition, which could in turn lead to special measures to improve their situation (see left part of Figure 1). Furthermore, as was discussed above, the individual rights and socio-economic approaches identify the Roma only with negative cases and frames, while this approach seeks to highlight the positive character of Romani cultural identity and therefore its need for preservation and development (Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011). This approach is increasingly employed during initiatives such as International Roma Day, in which different civil society organizations (such as the European Roma Information Office (ERIO)) are involved and take the opportunity to celebrate Roma culture, tradition, and identity and its contribution to European societies. They claim that Romani literature, music and art, together with Romani traditions, language and history form an integral part of European heritage, and that recognition of this can lead to empowerment and also to social inclusion of Roma (ERIO, 8 April 2015).

However, we should note that this approach is difficult to align with the nation-state model, which explains the persistent resistance against recognition of minorities (McGarry, 2012; Rövid, 2011). Furthermore, just as for the socio-economic perspective, this approach could also intensify the division between Roma and non-Roma, as great emphasis is placed on the different ethnic character of the group (this shared characteristic is shown in the centre of Figure 1). As this ethnic group is still severely deprived, they have a limited capacity to deal with problems using their ethnic shared interests.

To conclude, it can be said that the problems Roma are facing are a complex set of racial discrimination, socio-economic issues and minority claims, and thus ask for an integrated approach (Rövid, 2011; Tremlett, 2009b; Van Baar, 2008; Vermeersch, 2012). In the results section, we evaluate which inclusion dimensions the three selected transnational actors emphasize, and which–if any–attempt to combine all three dimensions in a comprehensive Roma inclusion approach.

2.3. Whose Responsibility Is It to Attain Inclusion?

Another important aspect discussed in globalization and Roma inclusion policy studies concerns the role of nation states in protecting the individual rights of its citizens and in providing redistribution and recognition for the Roma group (Nash, 2009; O'Nions, 2011; Rövid, 2011; Sassen, 2007; Tremlett, 2009b). Thus, this issue can be linked to all three inclusion perspectives (individual rights, redistribution, recognition), as can be seen in Figure 1. Because of the transnational character of human rights and the European guiding of Roma in-

clusion policy, a tension arises between the "new" responsibilities of supranational institutions and the "traditional" responsibilities of the nation states towards their citizens. For example, nation states with an anti-Romani agenda try to minimize or evade their responsibility towards the Roma by stating that because of the European character of this minority, the European Union is responsible for its integration (Rövid, 2011). But, although Europe proactively stimulates and coordinates the Roma inclusion policy, it still heavily depends on nation states to keep on investing in inclusive actions. This illustrates how human rights and inclusion of Roma people are actually a responsibility of both nation states and (different) supranational institutions, yet the specific balance and division of responsibilities is often a result of a continuous (discursive) power struggle between specific actors. Below we will assess which constructions are made in this respect by different transnational actors.

3. Analysis and Methods

3.1. Step 1: Overall View of the Discourse of Reports on Violations

As a first step in our analysis, the goal was to get an overall view of the discourse of reports about human rights violations against Roma and Gypsy travellers in a mix of West-European migration countries and Central- and East-European countries (where the Roma have been established for a longer time). Therefore, we set up a cross-national[1] inventory of reported human rights violations from the 1990s until 2012, using judgements and reports from a transnational[2] political, a judicial and a civil society actor.

Local and national political actors influence the human rights discourse by approving and implementing human rights law (Nash, 2009). Transnational political actors often take the form of intergovernmental institutions, bringing together national political actors on the human rights issue. In Europe, the Council of Europe (CoE) is the longest established institution in this category. The Commissioner for Human Rights (CECHR) forms an independent institution within the Council and provides advice and information on the prevention of human rights violations and releases opinions, issue papers and reports (CoE, 2014a). One of the recent reports (Commissioner of Europe, 2012) presents the

first overview of the (present and past) human rights situation of Roma and Travellers, covering all 47 member states of the Council of Europe (CoE, 2014b). Although strictly speaking the CECHR is an independent institution and although the report was prepared by a multitude of academic, intergovernmental and civil society professionals, its symbolic value derives from the fact that the report was published with the support of the Council of Europe and is recognized as such by public opinion. Therefore, we used this document to analyze political human rights discourse.

Judicial actors are also important with regard to human rights discourse because judges have a strong interpreting power in the underdeveloped and contentious field of human rights law (Nash, 2009). For this analysis, we looked at the past judgements of Roma human rights cases at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).[3] The ECHR makes judgements on the basis of the European Convention of Human Rights (CoE, 4 November 1950) and is one of the primary sources of human rights jurisdiction in Europe, embedded in the Council of Europe. This focus and thus the exclusion of the Court of Justice of the European Union is legitimized by the longer and more established tradition of the Council in protecting the human rights of Roma.

Finally, civil society plays an important role in putting pressure on other actors to live up to and extend the human rights system (Nash, 2009). One of their strategies in this regard is judgement- and events-based reporting about human rights, implying that they report about violations based on human observation of single violating events, which provide a more extensive and lively overview (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2012). One of the leading international NGO's striving for Roma inclusion, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), looks upon its public exposure and condemnation of the systemic abuse of Roma rights across Europe as one of its major achievements (ERRC, 2012; Goodwin, 2009; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011). Its extensive research programme has produced a reliable database on the human rights situation of Roma, which we searched for every selected country (starting from 1990 until 2012) in order to analyze the human rights discourse of the civil society actor.

It should be noted that the ERRC has consultative status with the Council of Europe and thus also has a strong link with the Council, like the Court and the Commissioner. Thus, it can be stated that all three selected actors take a prominent role in reporting about Roma and their human rights, as enshrined in Council of Europe law. Furthermore, these three institutions are interacting in important ways. First, the ERRC has lodged numerous cases against European countries

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[1] Italy, France, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria were included.

[2] It should be noted that we do not want to suggest that national and local actors do not take an important role in the discursive argument concerning human rights. However, we choose to focus on transnational actors because this paper focuses on the reporting practice which predominantly occurs at a transnational level.

[3] We used a recent factsheet summarizing the past judgements of the ECHR on Roma and Travellers cases (ECHR, June 2012) to start our analysis.

with the European Court of Human Rights, by representing the applicants (ERRC, 2015). Moreover, they have pursued multiple third party interventions in the Court's cases. Second, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights similarly engages with the Court, as he also has the right to intervene in pending cases on his own initiative (Muižnieks, 26–27 March 2015). But the Commissioner also takes on a complementary task: he looks at the broader context beyond the legal aspects of the case and tries to prevent legislative proposals that would violate the Convention and he assists governments in addressing the systemic problems causing the violations. Lastly, the Commissioner and the ERRC are primarily linked through indirect cooperation: they both refer to each other's expertise in their reports and comments (Commissioner of Europe, 2015).

This paper limits its focus to these three institutions engaged with Council of Europe law and thus excludes European Union institutions[4] as this enables us to suppose that all three actors are talking about the same package of human rights when reporting about violations and thus differences in their approach could not be explained by a different guiding document. This would not be the case if the European Commission were included, for example, as its discourse would be based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Instead, the aim of this paper is to understand how different kinds of actors interpret the same law (differently) and in this way attach to it specific meanings of inclusion when reporting about human rights violations for Roma.

3.2. Step 2: Uncovering Assumptions of the Anti-Discrimination Frame

After the first step, a second analysis was accomplished in order to better understand the underlying assump-

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[4] However, these institutions have set up important initiatives for Roma inclusion, such as the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (in which member states make a strong commitment to design and present their strategy or specific policy measures for Roma inclusion to the European Commission) and the European Roma Platform (bringing together national governments, the EU, international organizations and Roma civil society representatives to stimulate cooperation and exchanges of experience on successful Roma inclusion) (European Commission, 2014). Moreover, the European Parliament, which played a prevalent role in stimulating the Commission to develop the EU Framework, adopted multiple resolutions promoting Roma inclusion, showing their commitment to the issue. Furthermore, the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) is a strong partner of the European Commission through their research activities on Roma issues. We do not want to neglect these institutions and suggest that it would be very fruitful to analyze their approaches towards Roma inclusion and compare them with the findings of this paper in further research.

tions of the identified anti-discrimination frame. More specifically, we pursued a framing analysis, focusing on the concept and meaning of discrimination. For ECHR and CECHR, we again used past judgements (again starting from the factsheet (ECHR, June 2012)) and the overview report (Commissioner of Europe, 2012) (both the factsheet and the report were published in 2012).[5] For the ERRC, a framing analysis of all the reports found in the database for the six countries would have been too extensive, so instead we used the four newsletters published by ERRC in 2012 (ERRC, March 2012; June 2012; September 2012; December 2012), supposing these accurately reflect their most recent interpretation of the discrimination concept.[6]

Specifically, the framing analysis tries to grasp the hidden premises behind a certain frame by asking what features of the situation are highlighted or neglected and which kind of prescription for action is implied (Bacchi, 2010; Rein & Schön, 1993). So in the second step of the analysis, we posed the following questions: Which meanings are attached to the discursive focus on discrimination? Which are highlighted and which potential meanings are neglected? Which implications do these meanings have? Which kind of actions are prescribed to be taken against discrimination? Applying these questions, and guided by the inclusion dimensions discussed above in the theoretical framework, we iteratively coded the judgements/reports. Using these codes, we unravelled the non-discrimination frame for every actor, which enabled us to see similarities and differences and in this way to draw conclusions about the strength and scope of the anti-discrimination focus within the discourse on Roma human rights.

4. Results

4.1. Strong Focus on Discrimination in Reports on Violations

Despite the fact that all three actors under study are linked to the Council of Europe, they are considered distinct because of the different field (judicial, political, civil society) they belong to. Therefore, we expected to find some kind of discursive differences in their reports, which would reflect differentiated approaches towards Roma inclusion based on their competences and interests as a judicial, political or civil society actor. However, no notable differences could be found and discrimination (superficially known to be prohibited by Council of Europe law, but more broadly defined than

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[5] In the second step, we dropped the country selection.
[6] This means that the time periods for which we analyzed the discrimination focus in the second step differ between the ECHR and the CECHR (the factsheet and the report covering a period from the 1990s until 2012) and ERRC (only the newsletters from the year 2012).

in purely legal terms) was the common denominator in which all three actors often framed Roma rights violations. The perception seems to prevail that what connects everyone within the Roma group is the experience of racism and discrimination (Goodwin, 2009; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011): "In the end, the fact that the Roma are historically and structurally subjected to discrimination and racism may appear to be their most defining characteristic from which the multiple social problems flow." (Hemelsoet, 2013, p. 67). This is what Bacchi calls a specific problematization, which implies a discursive problem-setting technique (Bacchi, 2010; Rein & Schön, 1993). This is not to say that this discrimination is only discursive and not real, but it does show how the different actors involved focused on this discrimination concept as a key symbol in order to see the complex and precarious situation of the Roma through an orderly frame.

The actors evaluated the concerned practices as "systematic", "abusive", "disproportionate", "biased", "corrupt", "arbitrary", "without objective and reasonable justification", etc. Strong condemnation was pronounced for practices such as "segregation", "racial profiling", "negative stereotyping", "anti-Gypsism", "the Holocaust", etc. Roma were referred to as a "vulnerable" and "disadvantaged" group of a "different ethnic background" with "particularities", which national authorities have the "positive obligation" to take into account. These terms illustrate the frequent reference to terms which the different actors associated with discrimination in their discursive interpretation.

The legal literature describing this discrimination focus shows that the legal notion of discrimination is generally almost absent from legal texts and case law issued by the ECHR and the EU before the 1990s (Goodwin, 2009; Ignatoiu-Sora , 2011). From the 1990s, a general but also more specific shift occurs in describing the situation of Roma, and accordingly legal tools were designed to protect Roma from discrimination. This shift in the legal discourse on Roma cases can be explained by an increased interest in the situation of Roma because of the fall of communism and the subsequent political transformations and new migration waves and refugee flows towards Western Europe. Furthermore, the enlargement of the EU and the concern for a stable and secure region raised minority awareness. Also, there was a growing European movement that fought against discrimination, which was legally supported by the establishment of the Racial Equality Directive. Lastly, pro-Romani NGO's—led by the ERRC—stimulated a new discourse focused on human rights and anti-discrimination (Goodwin, 2009; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011; Rövid, 2011).

Although this historical frame and the fact that all three institutions are linked to the Council of Europe helps to understand the focus on discrimination in the reports of all three actors, two concerns convinced us

to go beyond this result and analyze the underlying assumptions of this anti-discrimination frame:

- The different character of the actors implies that they have different interests. For example, the Court is bound by its specific competences, while civil society will try to push the boundaries towards inclusion. If the different actors still employ the same discourse, this means that they are probably being guided by specific strategic considerations. Fox and Vermeersch (2010) frame this through the political opportunity structure theory, which postulates that actors will employ certain discourses according to the opportunities that occur, but always guided by their own logic and interests. So, although there were good general reasons to engage an anti-discrimination frame as was discussed above, this does not mean that all actors were aligned on a deeper level. Therefore, in the second step of the analysis, we aimed to uncover their potentially different logics.

- Although anti-discrimination discourse is used in a very convincing way, a significant change in practice still remains absent (Goodwin, 2009; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011). Furthermore, the discourse similarly entails essentializing and stereotyping/stigmatizing side effects, as was discussed for the framing of Roma as a true European minority (Goodwin, 2009; Hemelsoet, 2013; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011; Peroni & Timmer, 2013). In fact, Roma are represented as one group, a true European minority, which is continuously confronted with discrimination and thus remains excluded from mainstream society. To understand this low or even negative impact of the anti-discrimination discourse, we need to uncover its underlying assumptions.

4.2. Incoherent Frames Regarding How to Attain Non-Discrimination

For the anti-discrimination frame of the three transnational actors, we uncovered an implied prescription for action, and thus, in this case, the means to attain inclusion. In the reports of the three actors, we could distinguish all three perspectives–individual human rights, redistribution and recognition–as possible assumptions underlying the anti-discrimination focus. However, every actor highlights and neglects different assumptions.

It cannot be denied that the ECHR has recently taken up a strong stance against discrimination, prohibited through article 14 of the Convention. An important turning point can be situated in the D.H. case, whereby the Grand Chamber accepted in 2007 that the statistical evidence provided by the applicants was sufficient to give rise to a presumption of indirect discrimination and judged it as an article 14 violation as it did not regard the Czech government's justification as objective

and reasonable (Dembour, 2009; ECHR, 13 November 2007, § 185-204; Ignatoiu-Sora, 2011; O'Connell, 2009; Smith & O'Connell, 2011). Moreover, the Court provided a broad definition of what racial discrimination entails, including in it discrimination on account of one's actual or perceived ethnicity and condemned this as a particularly invidious kind of discrimination which requires special vigilance and a vigorous reaction (ECHR, 13 November 2007, § 176; Möschel, 2012). Furthermore, the Court has noticed in several cases that the Gypsy way of life needs to be facilitated and that the Roma constitute a disadvantaged and vulnerable minority group in need of protection (ECHR, 18 January 2001a, § 107, 18 January 2001b, § 96, 18 January 2001c, § 110, 18 January 2001d, § 98, 27 May 2004, § 84, 13 November 2007, § 182, 8 December 2009, § 61, 16 March 2010, § 147, 8 November 2011, § 146, 179, 24 April 2012, § 129-130; Peroni & Timmer, 2013; Smith & O'Connell, 2011).

However, this progressive and group-focused approach is a very recent evolution and only seems to apply for certain rights and in cases where a strong consensus exists among the member states, leading to an inconsistent and unpredictable case law. For example, education was established in the ECHR case law as a right (enshrined in article 2 of Protocol no. 1 (CoE, 20 March 1952)) for which Roma are in need of special protection (ECHR, 13 November 2007, 5 June 2008, 16 March 2010). Yet we could not identify any other intentions to relate discrimination practices to the socio-economic circumstances of the Roma, which also accords with the formal absence of socio-economic rights in the European Convention. In the remaining cases, the Court seems to apply a more formalistic and rigorous logic, assessing every case individually. In a number of these cases, the Court is still cautious to judge a violation of article 14, requiring proof beyond reasonable doubt or deciding the case purely through analysis of the other right invoked together with article 14[7], causing article 14 to remain underdeveloped in ECHR case law (Dembour, 2009; ECHR, 29 September 1996, § 88, 18 May 2000, § 94, 18 January 2001a, § 132, 18 january 2001b, § 129, 18 January 2001c, § 141, 18 January 2001d, § 129, 18 January 2001e, § 138, 20 July 2004, § 77, 6 July 2005, § 147-159, 13 December 2005, § 65-68,

26 July 2007a, § 93-95; Möschel, 2012; O'Connell, 2009; Smith & O'Connell, 2011). These cases often concern racial violence by the police or evictions, while cases of discrimination regarding classic civic-political rights, such as the right to a fair trial or investigation[8] or the right to stand for election, get more easily judged as discriminatory and thus violating article 14 (ECHR, 6 July 2005, 12 July 2005, 13 December 2005, 31 May 2007, 26 July 2007a, 26 July 2007b, 6 December 2007, 22 December 2009, 25 March 2010, Möschel, 2012, O'Connell, 2009).

In conclusion, we can state that the ECHR remains cautious in addressing discrimination as described in the Convention, only having a clear established view in evaluating individual cases of discrimination concerning classic civic-political rights. It should be noted that our focus on the ECHR can give a somewhat distorted image, as there are other judicial or quasi-judicial institutions with different competences that do take on a stronger anti-discrimination discourse. In particular, the European Committee of Social Rights has proven to be more progressive, for example in terms of the right to housing (Möschel, 2012). In a way this difference in approach is evident, as the ECHR relies on the European Convention of Human Rights, which has a traditional civic-political rights focus (and the prohibition of discrimination only applies to the rights set forth in the Convention), while the European Social Charter that guides the European Committee of Social Rights is built around socio-economic rights. However, this does not explain why the Court did make progress in cases concerning education but not racial violence (while one is protected against violence by the classical right to life and prohibition of torture enshrined in article 2 and 3 of the Convention (CoE, 4 November 1950)), which also suggests that progress is in fact possible (but until now very limited) with regard to socio-economic rights. Competence is thus an important factor to take into account when analyzing the Court's approach, but it does not account for everything. To conclude, as the ECHR is seen to be one of the most important judicial bodies in our current global society, its reserved attitude is worth paying attention to.

In comparison to the ECHR, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe takes a far more integrated approach: "The human rights situation of Roma and Travellers should be addressed as a whole and different fields addressed simultaneously" (Commissioner of Europe, 2012, p. 222). The report pays attention to discrimination regarding a variety of civic and political rights guaranteed through Council of Eu-

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[7] To clarify, article 14 always needs to be invoked in conjunction with another allegedly violated right. The Convention only prohibits discrimination for the rights and freedoms set forth in the Convention (as opposed to Protocol n° 12, which holds a general prohibition of discrimination, but which was only ratified by 17 of the 47 member states). This in itself shows a cautious design of the scope of article 14, limiting the competence of the Court. However, more importantly, even where article 14 applies, an analysis of this article is often dismissed once a violation of the other concerned article has been decided upon. This means that the Court is not applying its—already limited—competence to its full extent.

[8] In fact, the judgements on the violation of this right often concern the failure of authorities to investigate the possible racist motives behind the mentioned racial violence cases. So these cases do get a judgement of a procedural violation of article 14, but no substantive violations are found by the Court.

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rope law (such as racially motivated violence, unfair treatment by law enforcement and judicial authorities, forced sterilization, lack of personal identification documents, obstructed participation in public life and decision-making processes), but also broadly covers the socio-economic situation of the Roma (with regard to education, housing, employment, health, social security and access to goods, services and public places) in which racial discrimination is seen as one of the determining factors (Commissioner of Europe, 2012). For example, segregated education is described as being influenced by racist attitudes of non-Roma parents who send their children to predominantly white schools, but also by the socio-economic context of segregated neighbourhoods. Furthermore, the report also points at times to the need for special protection, which implies that states need to take special measures (such as teaching about Romani language, culture and history or recognition of mass atrocities against the Roma via truth commissions) in order to take the distinct character of the Roma community into account.

Lastly, the European Roma Rights Centre takes a firm approach in emphasizing discrimination as a violation of human rights of individual Roma, but also acknowledges the effect on their socio-economic resources (ERRC, March 2012, June 2012, September 2012, December 2012). For example, it will elaborate on the multiple effects of a forced eviction or lack of personal documents on housing conditions, access to work, education, healthcare and other services. However, recognition and the framing of Roma as a culturally distinct group in need of special protection measures seem to be absent in their anti-discrimination discourse.

To conclude, it is clear that the prescriptions for action behind the anti-discrimination frame are not aligned across the three different actors. Despite the interlinkage between the three institutions expressed in a shared superficial focus on discrimination, we thus found that there are important differences in the underlying meanings of this focus. In a sense, this is normal, as all three actors have different characters and thus also different competences. For example, it is more natural for the Commissioner to take an integrated approach as he can get an overview of multiple national situations, while the Court is bound to look only at individual cases. However, this issue of competence should not obscure the fact that these differences in the non-discrimination discourse do exist, as they can maybe help to explain why discriminatory practices have not yet been addressed in a consistent and effective way. Although all actors analyzed seemingly use the same frame embedded in Council of Europe law, this only entails a shallow alignment, in which every actor is highlighting different meanings and dimensions. For example, although the ERRC proudly states that "through its strategic litigation and landmark cases the ERRC has contributed the devel-

opment of the Court's jurisprudence regarding Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights" (ERRC, 2015), we argue that this jurisprudence is still quite limited, inhibiting a truly coherent approach of discrimination.

Subsequent analysis (of discourse outside of the reports, of specific measures aimed at eliminating discrimination and their implementation in practice, and of the interaction and cooperation between the three institutions) is needed to understand the precise implications of this incoherent approach within the Council of Europe's institutions. We suggest that the lack of synchronization can partly explain the limited impact of the anti-discrimination approach in human rights discourse on the lives of Roma and Gypsy Travellers. Further research is required in order to grasp the detailed specifics of and a full explanation for this limited impact. In conclusion, it would be interesting to critically analyze the anti-discrimination approach of EU institutions, to scrutinize whether they are more aligned on this issue and to compare their emphasized meanings and prescriptions with those found in this paper.

4.3. Accusing the Nation States

Another premise that clearly came to the fore in looking at the anti-discrimination frame of all three actors is the shared conviction that ultimately nation states are responsible for protecting the Roma residing on their territories (Commissioner of Europe, 2012; ERRC, March 2012, June 2012, September 2012, December 2012; ECHR, June 2012). This can be seen as a subjectification process (Bacchi, 2010), where nation states are created as the responsible parties in the human rights story of the Roma. This is predominantly a negative discourse, pointing to what nation states must do or didn't succeed in doing to protect Roma against discrimination: "The Commissioner calls on the governments of Europe to intensify and deepen their efforts to ensure that Roma finally enjoy equal dignity in societies free of discrimination" (Commissioner of Europe, 2012, p. 224).

Again, competence can partly explain this shared focus on the responsibility of nation states, as only the Council of Europe member states have the competence to take tangible measures towards non-discrimination as premised by the Council. Furthermore, the public nature of the reports issued by ERRC and the Commissioner implies that the victims and the global public expect them to clearly attribute responsibility. However, these explanations for a negative view of nation states should not impede its critical analysis. This article doubts the effectiveness of the focus on national responsibility, as transnational actors fail to take into account the complex responsibilities for some situations where nation states often have difficulties in impelling their local authorities to respect human rights. Furthermore, we suggest it only instigates more re-

sistance from nation states, a continuous shifting of responsibility, and an intensified opposition towards the Roma. Although globalization theories increasingly emphasize that globalization is a hybrid, cooperative project in which multiple actors play a crucial role (Nash, 2009; Sassen, 2007), transnational actors seem to emphasize the old oppositional idea of the global versus the national in their human rights discourse. Further research analyzing the human rights discourse of national actors could provide more insight in their response towards this discourse and thus in the discursive power struggle between transnational and national actors on the allocation of responsibility to create Roma inclusion.

5. Conclusion

In an effort to understand the paradox between the expansion of inclusion projects for the Roma and their persisting exclusion, this article explored human rights practices in order to grasp the complexity of meanings of inclusion negotiated in this practice. In this way, we scrutinized whether there were limiting factors within the inclusionary discourse itself. Specifically, we analyzed the discourse in reports on violations of human rights against Roma which were prepared by a transnational judicial, a political and a civil society actor. Discerning in their reports a strong shared tendency to frame the violations in terms of discrimination, we identified a dominant concept in human rights discourse for Roma. This has important implications as it means Roma are constantly associated with these discrimination practices. This runs the risk of essentializing and stereotyping the Roma as one group unified by the experience of discrimination which causes them to live "on the margins of society". Moreover, as this anti-discrimination frame only has a limited impact, we can question whether this frame is really a helpful instrument on the path towards inclusion.

Furthermore, an analysis of the underlying assumptions of the anti-discrimination frame showed that not all three actors share the same prescriptions for attaining non-discrimination, while they do share a negative attribution of responsibility to nation states. With these results, we were able to show how the seemingly coherent inclusionary discourse of transnational actors on Roma human rights can actually entail multiple meanings and specific premises. This illustrates how the inclusion trend is actually more complex to grasp and so this substantiates the need for greater critical understanding of the deeper meanings of this inclusion discourse in further research. These incoherent deeper meanings partly help to explain why discriminatory practices have not yet been addressed in a consistent and effective way. It is of course only a small aspect in providing an answer to this question, but it does show the importance of taking a critical look at inclusionary

approaches, which are often simply assumed to be the best solutions. Certainly for the Roma, there seem to exist some "popular" ideas about their inclusion the strength of which remains limited in practice (for example, anti-discrimination, the notion of Roma being victims, Roma empowerment, local participation, etc.). Perhaps these ideas are not convincingly shared by all the involved actors on a deeper level of meaning, or perhaps they have specific limiting assumptions, and thus a critical analysis of the discourses that carry these ideas is necessary.

Furthermore, this analysis contributes to human rights research, providing a rare empirical example of discursive ambiguity in terms of human rights and illustrating its complex character. Moreover, the discourse studied in this article was taken from the reports on human rights violations. Although reports are seen to be reflections of reality rather than steered discourse, we showed that these reports do inform us about definitions of human rights and inclusion from different actors and are thus an important part of human rights discursive contestation which should not be neglected.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Narratives of Social Inclusion in the Context of Roma School Segregation

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Abstract

Despite a series of judgements from the European Court of Human Rights and the enactment of the EU Racial Equality Directive, the educational segregation of Roma pupils persists in several European states. State action plans submitted pursuant to the European Framework for Roma Integration rarely provide clear targets and do not commit to inclusive schooling. Taking education as a principle indicator of social inclusion, this article identifies that structural inequality and entrenched discriminatory attitudes are the main obstacles to Roma inclusion. This can only be addressed through the diffusion of legal and social norms that mainstream equality. Focusing on the legal obligations, it is argued that the European Commission must be more decisive and effective in the enforcement of non-discrimination rules. A closer dialogue between the European Court of Human Rights and the EU institutions, grounded in a non-targeted social inclusion frame, could provide a platform for European consensus which may help to secure meaningful change.

Issue

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1. Introduction

Education is one of the fundamental measures of social inclusion. Equality in education is essential to the realisation of all other social inclusion indicators, such as employment, healthcare and poverty reduction. Further, unlike the other indicators, the right to education has a discrete international legal basis that establishes particular parameters against which it becomes comparatively easy to measure a state's commitment to inclusion.

As a starting point we can assert that an inclusive education should be free from discrimination but the development of legal principles in this area has come to mean much more than this. The judgements of the European Court of Human Rights (hereafter "ECtHR") have moved from a relatively cautious endorsement of integrated education to an implicit expectation that states adopt positive measures to address disparities in educational access and attainment where such dispari-

ties arise from discriminatory practices. Further it is probable that the separate education of Roma pupils (either in separate schools or classes) will be deemed unlawful, even when educators present separation as a remedial solution for educational disadvantage.

This article will begin by considering the adoption of education as a key measure of social inclusion and identify some of the challenges that the data reveals in terms of the educational experience of Roma pupils. The persistence of discriminatory educational provision needs to be viewed in the light of the legal standards established by the ECtHR since the seminal decision of *DH* in 2007. It is argued that the persistence of such practices can only be explained by reference to deep-rooted, discriminatory attitudes where Roma are regarded as less-deserving, "second class citizens" (Hammarberg, 2011). These attitudes need to be urgently addressed if social inclusion is to be more than empty rhetoric.

One way of assessing a Member State's commitment to integrated education and social inclusion for the Roma is to examine the national action plans submitted pursuant to the EU Framework for National integration Strategies (European Commission, 2011). When commitments to desegregation are not prioritised conclusions may be drawn about the national government's commitment to inclusion. In such instances, the dialogical approach of the open method of coordination which characterises European social policy may be accused of lacking teeth. Here it will be argued that the European institutions need to draw on legally binding non-discrimination provisions and the judgements of the ECtHR to forge a European consensus which centres on mainstreaming equality and inclusion (Kocze et al., 2014).

Two recent developments suggest that a defined EU position is emerging. The Commission's decision to commence proceedings against the Czech Republic along with the Council's recommendation that Roma integration needs to be improved are indicative of a more robust approach (European Council, 2013). This will be an important step in the move from social inclusion as a broad, policy umbrella towards legally enforceable obligations grounded in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Racial Equality Directive and the judgements of the ECtHR. As the lessons from the Decade for Roma Inclusion (hereafter "roma Decade") suggest, legal obligations are an essential ingredient for norm diffusion which must be viewed as fundamental to ensuring Roma inclusion (Uzunova, 2010). It is submitted that success requires, inter alia, active engagement of Roma stakeholders but must also avoid the pitfalls of specifically targeting Roma as a "special" case emphasising difference at the expense of equality.

2. Education as an Indicator of Inclusion

The relationship between social inclusion and educational integration is palpable. Put simply, there can be no social inclusion where a significant number of pupils from one ethnic group are isolated from the mainstream education system. The application of other inclusion measures, particularly employment, becomes incoherent when more than 60% of pupils from one ethnic group do not complete secondary education (as is the case in all twelve of the central and south-eastern European countries surveyed in 2011, see Brügemann, 2012).

Discrimination in education is prohibited by numerous international instruments, including the UNESCO Convention on Discrimination in Education; the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNESCO, 1960; United Nations, 1965; United Nations, 1989). The EU institutions and the Council of Europe have long been concerned about

disparities in educational access and attainment between Roma and non-Roma pupils (O'Nions, 2015).

Under European law, non-discrimination is a founding value of the European Union and the Union is tasked with combating discrimination and social exclusion (European Council, 2012, Art. 2 and 3). The treaty articles are given effect by the Racial Equality Directive which prohibits direct and indirect discrimination as well as harassment in the field of education. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice puts persons of a particular racial group at a comparable disadvantage. States may provide an objective justification for indirectly discriminatory treatment (European Council, 2000, Art.2 (2b)). Article 5 provides that special measures "can" be enacted to "prevent or compensate for disadvantage" linked to race or ethnic origin. It is worth noting that an unusually large number of Member States faced difficulties implementing the Directive prior to the initial transposition deadline, leading the Commission to extend the original date. The obligations necessitated the enactment of new anti-discrimination laws and equality bodies in many states where there was no existing legal obligations (EU Fundamental Rights Agency, 2011). The Directive has thus been important in establishing legal expectations in societies where discriminatory practices had previously gone unchecked. The scale of the task cannot be overstated. Although all Member States have since been assessed as having made the required legal adjustments (European Commission, 2014c), the diffusion of anti-discrimination norms is a much longer process.

The Europe 2020 initiative priorities education with a view to reducing the rate of early school leaving to below 10% and ensuring that at least 40% of 30–34-year-olds have completed "third-level" or higher education (European Council, 2009). These are certainly ambitious targets but they become particularly demanding when the education of Roma pupils is considered. The UN Development Programme has identified that in several European states over 80% of Roma are classed as early school leavers, having not completed a secondary level education. In some states, including the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia this rises to over 90% (Brügemann, 2012, p. 49). The same study found that computer literacy for Roma pupils was less than 50% in eleven countries surveyed, compared to a national average of over 80% (p. 28).

Whilst these figures are alarming they demand long-term, multi-faceted measures which go beyond the classroom to tackle questions of access including residential isolation, school transportation and parental attitudes (both Roma and non-Roma). There is no simple quick-fix solution. However, it is widely acknowledged that any solution depends on an integrated, inclusive school environment.

Yet a significant number of Roma children continue

to receive an education where they are separated from their non-Rom peers. The Open Society (2011, p. 71) have observed that school segregation is the biggest social inclusion challenge facing urban Roma communities in Bulgaria. In Slovakia 43% of Roma attend classes with a predominately Roma student body (compared to only 5% of non-Roma who live in close proximity to Roma neighbourhoods) and more than 20% of Roma children attend such schools in Hungary and Romania (Brügemann, 2012, p. 54). The extent of segregation in countries with relatively small Roma populations where integration should be easier to achieve is particularly noticeable. This includes the Czech Republic, Albania and Moldova—the latter has a Roma population comprising fewer than 3% of the general population but every third Roma child attends a Roma majority school (p. 65). Separation in special or practical schools designed for pupils who are deemed unable to cope with the rigors of mainstream schooling, remains common in many central and east European states. Over 60% of Roma in the Czech Republic and Slovakia attending these schools experience two-fold discrimination as the majority of pupils are also Roma (p. 71).

The European Commission quickly identified segregation as a particular challenge for Europe 2020 when it embarked on an EU Framework for Roma Integration Strategies (European Commission, 2011). Education is one of four policy objectives under the Framework and the Commission has made several pertinent observations:

> Member States should ensure that all Roma children have access to quality education and are not subject to discrimination or segregation, regardless of whether they are sedentary or not. Member States should, as a minimum, ensure primary school completion. They should also widen access to quality early childhood education and care and reduce the number of early school leavers from secondary education pursuant to the Europe 2020 strategy. Roma youngsters should be strongly encouraged to participate also in secondary and tertiary education (European Commission, 2011).

3. The Evolution of a Social Inclusion Policy Frame

Social inclusion is a comparatively recent, broadly constructed policy area covering a number of discrete indicators. Essentially it requires that every citizen should be able to participate in society. This includes access to the labour market, adequate income support and access to quality services (European Council, 2010).

As citizens of Member States, Roma are of course entitled to take advantage of general social inclusion initiatives. On the other hand, a discrete Roma inclusion dialogue has emerged which can be traced back to 2005 when twelve south-eastern and central European states began to collaborate on best practice under the Decade of Roma Inclusion. The Decade's focus covers the same distinct indicators (health, unemployment, poverty and education) as more recent EU policy. Thus it may appear that Roma inclusion is merely one strand of social inclusion. Yet it may be countered that a specific "Roma inclusion" frame offers greater potential to address the underlying barriers to inclusion for Roma citizens, including structural discrimination and intersectionality. The focus on Roma enabled the Decade to identify overarching themes, including the elimination of discrimination and gender equality along with poverty reduction. The presence of discrimination as an obvious barrier to inclusion may not be so evident in a policy centred on socio-economic marginalisation uncoupled from ethnicity. This deficiency could be fatal to a project's success as inclusion for Roma across all the indicators depends, a priori, on the eradication of discrimination.

Representatives from twelve states identified national plans for the Decade of Roma Inclusion leading to a variety of projects funded by a combination of national governments, private donors and civil society (particularly the Open Society Foundations). The Decade's original lifespan is now coming to an end and there are ongoing discussions over how the work should be continued (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2014a). Its activities have certainly raised the profile of Roma inclusion in the states concerned and its work can be viewed along with Roma migration as one of the catalysts for concerted EU action. Nevertheless, it has struggled to achieve tangible benefits for Roma communities. The Decade's own assessment of its overall performance identifies seven shortcomings (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2013):

1) overly ambitious mission and vaguely defined priorities;
2) inadequate resourcing;
3) lack of an enforcement mechanism;
4) failure to address structural discrimination;
5) sporadic and inadequate monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
6) certain shortcomings in its structure; and
7) the existence of parallel initiatives (chiefly the EU Framework).

It will be obvious that several of these shortcomings relate to a power vacuum which prevents effective monitoring and enforcement, hampering meaningful progress. Absent external supervision, even proactive national governments will struggle to sell social inclusion initiatives to local authorities and electorates. Successful projects have thus tended to remain small-scale and short-term. One further difficulty making Decade projects a hard-sell is the specific, targeted focus on Roma inclusion. Many projects under the Decade

adopted a targeted, exclusive approach which was often viewed with suspicion by non-Roma. If we accept that there is a great deal of animosity and mistrust characterising relations between Roma and non-Roma communities, this needs to be squarely confronted by inclusion projects. As Uzunova (2010, p. 386) argues "it is difficult to promote minority rights and non-discrimination when the majority and minority have not even agreed to cooperate with each other."

By contrast, more successful projects adopted a mainstreaming approach. Of these, projects that made a deliberate effort to bring Roma and non-Roma together were assessed as offering the greatest potential for inclusion (Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2014b, p. 9). In respect of both these criticisms, the parallel initiatives of the EU provide an opportunity for significant progress.

Social inclusion is a comparatively new arena for the EU, as its competence in social policy was severely circumscribed until the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997. The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) places the obligation to address social inclusion on the national governments in a dialogical relationship (Armstrong, 2010, pp. 96-100; Barroso, 2008). As Armstrong (2010, p. 299) explains, it is the function of the OMC to assist states in identifying problems and appropriate solutions but they retain the ultimate responsibility for levels of poverty and social exclusion. He cautions against transferring the governance of social exclusion beyond the state to the EU level as an "impulse best resisted" (p. 300). Indeed, if norm diffusion is a necessary goal for Roma equality as has been argued, the support of national governments is essential. Daly (2008) is optimistic about the possibility of broader social policy measures being translated into meaningful national social policies under the OMC, pointing to the added legitimacy of a policy vision emanating from European political deliberations.

The European Platform Against Poverty and Social Exclusion is one of several initiatives under Europe 2020 which sees increased resources directed towards the eradication of poverty and social exclusion. A number of Common Principles on Roma Inclusion were presented at the first Platform meeting in April 2009. They were annexed to the Council conclusions of 8th June 2009 and comprise: 1) constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies, 2) explicit but not exclusive targeting, 3) inter-cultural approach, 4) aiming for the mainstream, 5) awareness of the gender dimension, 6) transfer of evidence-based policies, 7) use of EU instruments, 8) involvement of regional and local authorities, 9) involvement of civil society, and 10) active participation of Roma.

These principles now inform the work of both the EU and the United Nations when examining Roma inclusion (United Nations, n.d.). The Commission has requested that state action plans should pursue a target-ed approach in line with these Common Basic Principles, actively contributing to the social integration of Roma in mainstream society and eliminating segregation where it exists. Member States are, inter alia, asked to bear in mind the need to set achievable national goals for Roma integration. As a minimum, they should address the four Roma integration goals relating to access to education, employment, healthcare and housing. The plans should identify particularly disadvantaged micro-regions or segregated neighbourhoods and allocate sufficient funding from national budgets, which will be complemented, where appropriate, by international and EU funding. Further they should incorporate effective monitoring mechanisms and should be implemented in close cooperation and continuous dialogue with Roma civil society and local government. Finally, a national contact point should be established to coordinate the development and implementation of the strategy or, where relevant, rely on suitable existing administrative structures (European Commission, 2011).

The Europe 2020 agenda offers an opportunity to move Roma exclusion from the periphery of EU social policy into a central, mainstreamed focus on the eradication of poverty. Vermeersch (2014, p. 204) observes this development during the work of the Belgian presidency to the Council in 2010 where the specific issue of child poverty in Roma communities moved from a marginal to a mainstream issue as part of the wider child poverty debate.

However, as a broad policy objective, social inclusion suffers from two essential flaws. Firstly, it tries to address too many issues and consequently obscures some of the most significant problems whilst throwing resources at schemes which will not be scaled-up enabling real change. The emphasis on national solutions may obscure the identification of common themes whilst simultaneously encouraging the generation of imprecise and woolly objectives that fail to reflect regional diversity.

The diversity of Roma populations certainly causes challenges for national governments seeking simple, uniform solutions (Klaus & Marsh, 2014, p. 341). It is also likely that the challenges facing Roma communities in the Czech Republic are more akin to those experienced by Roma communities in Hungary, rather than those experienced by non-Roma Czechs. The identification of inter-state best (and worst) practice, drawing on the work of the Decade, certainly provides potential for positive outcomes but early indications have not been promising (European Council, 2013).

Secondly, the promotion of social inclusion through the open method of coordination can appear to suggest a lack of leadership, presenting states with an opportunity to avoid setting targets and allocating resources by passing the buck. A clear example of buck-passing can be seen with regard to the collective expul-

sion of Roma migrants from France. The French government attempted to deflect criticism of the expulsions by passing the buck to the Romanian government (Crumley, 2010). The Romanian government in turn blamed the EU for failing to adopt a European strategy (Rostas in Guy, 2013; Sigona & Vermeersch, 2012, p. 1190). Most of the time however, the buck stops with the Roma themselves as they are frequently labelled as the architects of their own exclusion (Stewart, 2012, pp. 6-7; O'Nions, 2011).

There are also difficulties relating to funding for social inclusion in terms of both access and accountability. It is understood that only a small percentage of EU structural funds available for Roma inclusion have actually been absorbed to that end (European Parliament, 2013; Open Society, 2011, p. 49). Moreover, there are some cases where funds have been allocated to projects which have actively contributed to social exclusion. An audit by the Hungarian education ministry revealed that some grants awarded to European accession states under the PHARE programme had been used to perpetuate school segregation (EMS, 2004). More recently, the European Commission has expressed concern over the misuse of structural funds allocated to the Czech Republic (Albert, 2011; Amnesty International, 2013).

Controversially it might be suggested that the principle beneficiaries of inclusion initiatives are civil society organisations. This can be borne out by the myriad of reports, initiatives and best-practice documents that rarely achieve meaningful change on the ground. This is not just a problem for civil society. An absence of coherence can similarly be viewed at the route of European policy by the Commission's failure to take the lessons learned under the Decade for Roma Inclusion as its starting point (Open Society, 2011, p. 8).

4. Norm Diffusion through Legal Enforcement

The evaluation reports of both the EU and the Decade action plans confirm that money is not the biggest obstacle to successful inclusion strategies. Whilst there are undoubtedly practical difficulties facing stakeholders when applying for funds, the biggest obstacle to achieving inclusion for Roma appears to be the prevailing hostility towards Roma at all levels of society.

There are acknowledged difficulties with the transfer of responsibility for Roma inclusion from the national government to the EU (Kovats, 2012; Gheorghe & Kovats in Guy, 2013). But equally the accountability vacuum that exists at present seems unlikely to produce significant improvements in the near future. Indeed the EU may itself be accused of passing the buck by equating the primary responsibility of Member States with sole responsibility. It has been asserted that norm diffusion is the most effective way of addressing the challenges of structural discrimination and

social exclusion (Allam, 2010; Vermeersch, 2012, p. 1203). With this in mind, it is argued that norm diffusion is best achieved through a combination of social policy initiatives and the enforcement of legal rules. Whilst legal norms may be viewed as subsidiary to social norms in the formation of societal attitudes and behaviour, law is often required to establish parameters for these norms where prevailing attitudes and practices are resistant to change. This is particularly the case when racial discrimination is endemic.

It is therefore significant to observe the European Parliament calling on the Commission to establish inclusion priorities which notably include the "full implementation of relevant legislation", including "appropriate sanctions for racially motivated crimes" (European Parliament, 2011). Yet an opportunity to link these priorities to the fundamental human rights and non-discrimination norms established by the ECtHR, the EU Charter and, most importantly, the Racial Equality Directive, has so far been missed. The Parliament recognised these concerns in December 2013 with a further resolution reflecting on the progress of the action plans (European Parliament, 2013). The Parliament calls on the Commission and Member States to ensure, inter alia, the implementation of the Racial Equality Directive and asks the Commission to take strong action, including enforcement proceedings, where fundamental rights are violated (para. 1, 2). Their analysis of the implementation of Roma action plans reveals significant flaws and little progress by Member States despite the existence of underutilised EU funds.

The implementation of existing non-discrimination provisions is essential if there is to be any sustainable progress. There is of course a legal framework to tackle discrimination under EU law but there is growing concern amongst civil society actors that not enough is being done to address entrenched, structural discrimination that dictates the relationship between Roma and non-Roma (European Roma Policy Coalition and Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2012). As Gergely (2014) emphasises:

> Without addressing the root causes of the spectrum of Roma rights violations and identifying concrete, measurable and effective actions to redress discrimination and to promote equality, complementing prohibitive anti-discrimination legislation, these policies will remain elusive.

4.1. Non-Discrimination under EU Law

According to the principle of subsidiarity, the EU should only act where the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by Member States but can rather by its scale of effectiveness, be better achieved at a European level. The inability of several Member States to identify objectives and a clear strategy for Roma inte-

gration has led the European institutions to adopt binding recommendations pursuant to Article 19(1) TFEU which enables appropriate action to combat discrimination. Frustrated by the lack of progress, the Commission proposed a recommendation in order to encourage states to meet their commitments (European Commission, 2013). The Council accepted this proposal and issued its Recommendation on Effective Roma Integration Measures in Member States (European Council, 2013). The recommendation draws on the Racial Equality Directive, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the non-discrimination obligations in Treaty; explicitly embedding the legal norms into the Roma integration agenda.

The Racial Equality Directive does more than endorse formal equality. It will be recalled that it prohibits indirect discrimination and implicitly recognises that differential treatment for persons in substantially different situations may be required to ensure substantive equality. Specifically, special measures should be deployed in order to make reasonable accommodation for the specific needs of disadvantaged minority groups. In the context of education this could include pre-school support, free school transport and language proficiency classes (Henrard, 2010, p. 76). The Commission recommends that states "take effective measures to ensure equal treatment and full access of Roma boys and girls to quality and mainstream education" (European Commission, 2013, para. 1.3, 2.3a). However the Council are notably more cautious in their wording, recommending that "this goal COULD [my emphasis] be achieved by means of measures such as, inter alia, eliminating any school segregation" (1.3a) and "putting an end of any inappropriate placement of Roma pupils in special needs schools" (1.3b). The use of the word "Could" rather than "should" is regrettable and allows space for Member States to view de-segregation as an option rather than a necessity. On a more positive note, the reference in both documents to the Race Equality Directive, which is explicitly linked to the case-law of the ECtHR, is a significant step forward.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights recognises that the rights contained therein should be interpreted in line with the European Convention on Human Rights (Art 52(3)). This could assist in establishing what Scheeck (2009, p. 17) describes as a "common supranational diplomacy". The Court of Justice has already adopted a proactive approach by considering the jurisprudence of the ECtHR when determining the effects of an EU Regulation on asylum policy. The decision in *NS v SSHD* C411/10 (2012) was based on systemic failures in the Greek asylum system which breached the Charter of Fundamental Rights but the Court of Justice made reference to a case involving similar facts where a breach of Article 3 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights had been upheld (*MSS v Belgium and Greece*, 2011). Although the Court of Justice did not

explicitly draw on the reasoning of the Strasbourg Court to the extent of the Advocate General, there is a tentative precedent for greater judicial activism when assessing compliance with EU obligations when there are existing rulings from the Strasbourg Court.

If social inclusion remains a policy umbrella without legally binding, defined targets, its success beyond the buzz-word will remain limited (Daly, 2008, pp. 1-19). Legal weight could be added however by a closer unity between the ECtHR judgements on Roma education and enforcement of the Racial Equality Directive. Linking legal obligations and policy discourses will undoubtedly ruffle a few feathers but it could pave a more effective path for Roma inclusion. As former EU President, Manuel Barroso, recognised at the third Roma summit in 2014, all players must respect European law, its principles and rules (European Commission, 2014a). The European Council have now recommended that the ECtHR judgements become a point of reference to assess the human rights compatibility of non-discrimination provisions (European Council, 2013, para. 2.1). The recent decision to take enforcement action against the Czech Republic under the Racial Equality Directive sees the Commission drawing on Strasbourg case-law in assessing a Member State's commitment to its EU obligations (Cameron, 2014). Whilst the social inclusion agenda and the Framework do not impose legally binding obligations on states, where there is a failure to identify targets as part of an inclusion strategy, it may be legitimate to examine that state's commitment to related legal obligations. The infringement proceedings call into question the Czech Republic's compliance with Article 21(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which prohibits discrimination based on grounds including race or ethnic origin coupled with the Racial Equality Directive. The decision is explicitly informed by the ongoing failure of the Czech authorities to address the concerns of the Strasbourg Court in *DH* (2007).

4.2. Lessons from Strasbourg Jurisprudence

The series of cases heard by the ECtHR on the education of Roma in separate schools and classes generate far-reaching questions over the commitment of Member States to Roma inclusion and, consequently, the ability and capacity of the EU Framework to secure material progress (O'Nions, 2015).

The first case on segregated schooling of Roma pupils, *DH v Czech Republic*, was decided by the ECtHR's Grand Chamber in 2007 (O'Nions, 2010). The case concerned 18 Roma pupils required to attend special schools for students with limited intellectual capacity. These schools followed a reduced curriculum which concentrated on practical rather than academic skills and, consequently, the pupils struggled to subsequently transfer to a mainstream educational environment. Inevitably the limited academic education resulted in pupils

being less equipped to compete in the labour market.

The state argued that there was no intention to discriminate. The pupils had been identified following aptitude testing rather than ethnicity and the education provided was more appropriate for these pupils" needs and abilities. However, the absence of discriminatory intent could not belie the evidence that Roma pupils in Ostrava were 27 times more likely than non-Roma children to attend these schools (*DH v Czech* Republic, 2007, para. 17). The Grand Chamber reasoned that the aptitude tests were not culturally neutral, being conceived for the majority population without reference to the culture and socio-economic background of Roma pupils (White, 2011). The state's argument that Roma parents had consented to their child's placement was similarly rejected. In the face of entrenched discrimination, the signature of a parent on a pre-completed form could not be regarded as fully informed. Consequently the Czech Republic had violated the right to non-discrimination in Article 14 coupled with the right to education in Article 2 of Protocol 1.

The Court reached the same conclusion in *Sampanis v Greece* (2008) where Roma pupils attending an integrated school received their teaching in a separate building. Following the judgement the pupils were moved from the annexe into a newly established primary school where the practice of segregation continued. This became the subject of a subsequent legal challenge by 140 Roma applicants in *Sampani v Greece* (2012). The Chamber in *Sampani* recommended that the Greek authorities address the ongoing wrongs caused to these pupils through measures including adult education and second chance schools.

The Greek cases demonstrate the structural challenges facing advocates of Roma inclusion and validate the importance of full engagement with regional and local authorities (Sobotka & Vermeersch, 2012). The Ministry of Education were aware that Roma pupils were still receiving a separate school experience but considered it both impractical and expensive to initiate integrated schooling. Indeed it was suggested that separation benefitted the Roma pupils who could be protected from the hostility of non-Roma parents. The town's mayor expressed wholehearted support for Roma segregation due to their "illegal activities" (*Sampani*, 2012, para. 25).

In the more finely balanced decision of *Oršuš v Croatia* (2010) a narrow majority of the Grand Chamber rejected the argument that separate, remedial primary classes would provide most benefit for Roma pupils. These pupils had poor command of the Croatian language and certainly required additional learning support but in the Court's view this could not justify a position of segregation which subjected Roma pupils to ongoing discrimination.

In the same year, the ECthR found a complaint concerning special classes in Hungarian schools, to be inadmissible due to the applicants" failure to exhaust domestic remedies. As with DH, the students had received negative assessments of their intellectual potential following psychological evaluation. Rather than receiving special measures to remedy their position of comparative disadvantage, the students were taught by an unqualified teacher following a reduced curriculum. Three years later, a judgement was handed down in *Horváth and Kiss v Hungary* (2013) where two Roma men had been sent to schools for mentally impaired children having been diagnosed with mild learning difficulties. The Court accepted that Roma pupils were disproportionately consigned to these schools and that there no chance being able to sit the standard school examination. The reduced opportunities available in these schools left the men unable to pursue their chosen careers, limiting their life chances. The Court emphasised that, in light of persistent discrimination and the presence of cultural bias in past testing, states had a duty to avoid the perpetuation of discrimination disguised in allegedly neutral tests (para. 116).

The final case of *Lavida v Greece* (2013) demonstrates that ECtHR judgements alone do not provide a sufficient catalyst for change in the presence of entrenched, structural discrimination (O'Nions, 2015). As noted the Greek authorities had already been criticised for their persistent refusal to take anti-segregation measures. The Greek Helsinki Monitor had twice written to the Ministry of Education raising concerns over segregation in primary schools in Sofades. Although the town had four schools, Roma pupils were attending a segregated school in a Roma housing estate. The Court rejected the government's contention that the Roma parents could have requested a transfer to an integrated school as this would place the responsibility for avoiding discrimination on the victims.

4.2.1. Social Inclusion Framing in Strasbourg

The need to consider integrated education as an aspect of social inclusion was not considered in DH. This is perhaps unsurprising as the concept had yet to be developed as a central tenet of European social policy. Only Judge Jungwiert makes reference to inclusion and integration, both are given short shrift by reference to the work of Jean-Pierre Liégeois:

> We must avoid over-use of vague terms ("emancipation", "autonomy", "integration", "inclusion", etc.) which mask reality, put things in abstract terms and have no functional value…officials often formulate complex questions and demand immediate answers, but such an approach leads only to empty promises or knee-jerk responses that assuage the electorate, or the liberal conscience, in the short term. (Judge Jungwiert in *DH v Czech Republic*, 2007, para. 19)

In the Greek cases there is almost no reference to social inclusion. It does appear in a letter sent to the Greek education Ministry by the regional educational department where an explicit link is made between exclusion of Roma pupils and educational segregation. It does not however form an explicit part of the Court's reasoning (*Lavida v Greece*, 2013). By the time of the decision in *Horváth and Kiss*, the relationship between social inclusion and education is starting to appear in the facts of the cases as they reflect national policy instruments. The Court therefore is compelled to have regard to the Hungarian Government's National Social Inclusion Strategy but again the specific theme of social inclusion is not explicit in the judgement (para. 71). Thus there is no specific social inclusion frame apparent in the judgements of the Strasbourg court.

Alternatively, Peroni and Timmer (2013) identify Roma as situated within a "vulnerable groups' paradigm" in the Court's judgements. As a vulnerable group, they should be afforded "special consideration" according to the Court in *Horváth and Kiss* (para. 102) and *Oršuš and Others* (para. 147-148). This special consideration could require initiatives to address obstacles to integrated schooling including the hostility of non-Roma parents, poor school attendance and the engagement of Roma parents (Danisi, 2011, p. 798).

Despite the identification of Roma as a vulnerable group, states are afforded a wide margin of appreciation when it comes to identifying the appropriate national response (*Horvath and Kiss*, para. 103). It might be suggested that the European institutions could learn from each other here as a growing European consensus on social inclusion and appropriate measures could assist the Strasbourg court in narrowing the margin to better protect the interests of Roma applicants. Although the Grand Chamber rejected a European consensus argument in *Oršuš* it is at least arguable that such a consensus has emerged in the intervening five years. If the Strasbourg Court is prepared to examine reports from civil society and the United Nations (as it does in *Oršuš)*, it is even better placed to draw on the social policy experience of the EU and the Framework for Roma integration.

It is submitted that it would be preferable to forge consensus on Roma inclusion as an intrinsic part of the social inclusion narrative, rather than adopt a vulnerable group frame, when making a case for special measures. It has been noted that a focus on specific vulnerability carries an obvious danger in that it essentializes Roma as a problem minority characterised by disadvantage (Vermeersch, 2014, p. 216). The evaluation reports on the work of the Roma Decade reveal similar difficulties with Roma targeted projects which tend to be viewed with suspicion by non-Roma (Kocze et al., 2014). It is impossible to achieve social inclusion when such suspicion is not addressed as prevailing cultural and social norms remain unchallenged. In fact, targeted actions that do not begin by addressing these norms are likely to deepen inequality and social exclusion.

4.3. Lessons from the EU Framework

Whilst EU accession led candidate countries to produce national policies to address the Roma minority, commitment was often superficial (Guy, 2012). Melanie Ram (2010) questions why the European Commission made improvements to the Roma situation a "precondition for membership" but for many observers this is over-stating conditionality. Whilst the EU certainly became more interested in the rights of minorities (including the Roma) following the Copenhagen meeting, the decision to allow full accession to candidate countries, notwithstanding grave concerns over their treatment of the Roma, is regrettable. As McGarry argues, once EU membership was secured, states were given the impression that they had done enough to improve the socio-economic situation of their Roma populations (2010, p. 149). Nothing could have been further from the truth.

The work of the Decade (in particular the Roma Education Fund) along with the endeavours of civil society has enabled significant progress on best practice. For example, it can be said with confidence that attendance at pre-school dramatically reduces the risk of pupils attending special schools or leaving education early (Brügemann, 2012, pp. 74, 78). It is also clear that early language support can have a considerable impact on the number of students assigned to special schools or classes on account of presumed intellectual impairment.

If research demonstrates best practice and structural funds are available for social inclusion, the question remains as to why so little progress has been made. The number of pupils attending special schools between 2004 and 2011 has remained the same in Romania and whilst it decreased slightly in Hungary there has been a marked increase in separate education in Croatia (Brügemann, 2012, p. 68). The former Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg (2011), has reported that there had been no change in the Czech Republic since the decision in *DH*. The same year a group of Czech educational advisors resigned in protest at the Government's failure to target de-segregation as a priority. Their resignation letter stated: "Under the existing leadership of the Education Ministry, it is becoming more and more obvious that inclusive education will remain mere rhetoric" (Amnesty International, 2012; Education International, 2011).

Analysis of the experience of migrant Roma attending British schools found that 85% of Czech Roma had previously attended a special school. Educational psychologists had since assessed these pupils and found that between 2 and 4% had special educational needs which required targeted learning support (Fremova,

2011). These findings echo a report of the Czech school inspector in 2010 and the conclusions of the Czech Defender of Rights who found:

> no legitimate discriminatory reasons by means of which it would be possible to justify the disproportionately high percentage of Roma children who are, in these circs, recommended for practical elementary schools (Bikár & Albert, 2012; see also Czech Ombudsperson, 2012).

The European Council has acknowledged that progress under the Roma Integration Framework is insufficient. School segregation remains an enormous barrier to inclusion and it is extremely disappointing to note that it has not been viewed as a priority in national action plans (European Council, 2013). As with the Decade action plans, the indicators typically fall short of their potential to measure change (Brügemann & Kling, 2012, p. 26). The absence of valid ethnically disaggregated data in many countries has made it particularly problematic for states to adopt targets against which progress can be measured. Whilst this data collection is important (and is now being addressed) it cannot provide an excuse for the state's failure to commit to an integrated education as progress would be relatively easy to measure. Indeed, some of the national commitments appear little more than empty rhetoric; for example the Czech strategy pledges to increase "the accessibility and interlinking of early care services at local level in all required socially excluded Roma localities" (Brügemann, 2012). The "cut and paste culture" of some national action plans identified by Guy (2012) is indicative of casual indifference to the entire Roma inclusion objective.

There are several practical reasons why progress has been difficult to secure. This includes difficulties in accessing funding and the challenge of ensuring the engagement and participation of both Roma and non-Roma. School inclusion is often resisted by non-Roma parents who are deeply suspicious of Roma. This is seen clearly in the Greek cases where local officials were unwilling to facilitate inclusive education for fear of losing the support of their electorate. At the same time, Roma parents may prefer their children to be educated in a safe environment with similar pupils from the same background. Neither position is sustainable if we are to achieve progress in social inclusion as the active engagement of all stakeholders is fundamental.

By themselves a simple non-discrimination approach and even a special measures approach (as suggested by the ECtHR) will have limited impact where attitudes of mistrust and fear are deeply embedded. Both need to be complimented by equality mainstreaming (Kocze et al., 2014). For countries that have only recently adopted anti-discrimination legislation in response to the Racial Equality Directive this is a big

ask. Rather like the United Kingdom in the late 1960's, discriminatory attitudes are deeply embedded in some of the newer EU states. These attitudes will not change because of ECtHR judgements or European Commission enforcement action. Neither are they likely to improve through specific Roma inclusion initiatives (as seen in the Decade). Thus an approach which brings together all sections of society, aiming to bridge the gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged (ie the social inclusion approach) may offer the greatest possibility for change. However, if it is to have any success then it must tackle discrimination in all its forms and it must secure active participation from the Roma community.

5. Conclusion

The Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority and thus their integration must be a litmus test for social inclusion strategies. However, if we consider one key indicator of inclusion to be an integrated education, progress to date has been exiguous.

Daly (2008) contends that the EU has a "long history of trading on ambiguity". In the social policy context this ambiguity has enabled recalcitrant states to avoid committing to real progress towards Roma integration. This is particularly true for countries with relatively small Roma populations such as the Czech Republic. The European Commission has reported that the risk of social exclusion in the Czech Republic is the lowest in the EU (Sirovátka, 2012, p. 7). Yet this was the same year that Thomas Hammarberg referred to Czech Roma as "second class citizens" and civil society organisations recommended urgent action to overcome persistent segregation of Roma pupils (Amnesty International, 2013; Open Society, 2012).

Ten years ago, the European Roma Rights Centre predicted that soft law measures "may be necessary but not sufficient to tackle the particularly entrenched issues of racial discrimination against and systemic social exclusion of Roma and others regarded as "Gypsies" (ERRC, 2005). Yet to date there has been insufficient dialogue between European intergovernmental organizations. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency has reported on the implementation of the Racial Equality Directive but only makes passing reference to the jurisprudence of the ECtHR. In turn the ECtHR makes virtually no reference to the EU's social inclusion agenda in its judgements on discriminatory education.

This position may slowly be changing. The Czech government has recently reported that it will adopt an action plan to implement the judgement in *DH* (European Commission, 2014b). The Commission's infringement proceedings may well provide the impetus to adopt clear measurable targets. The carrot is provided by EU structural funds which should provide the Commission with renewed leverage and may help to en-

gage local and regional stakeholders whose support is crucial for the success of inclusion initiatives (European Parliament, 2013; Guy, 2012).

Yet, the Croatian, Hungarian and Greek action plans ignore the need to prioritise de-segregation (European Commission, 2014b). The latest report for the European Council on Racism and Intolerance reveals that school segregation is worsening in Greece (as it is in Croatia) despite a national programme for the education of Roma children (ECRI, 2015). The degree of embedded discrimination in several EU Member States is an uncomfortable truth for an EU that prides itself on respect for the rule of law and the protection of minorities. Without concerted action to tackle discrimination and to encourage the development of legal and social norms at all levels of European society, social inclusion initiatives will continue to have no impact on Roma exclusion. The legal norms stem from the judgements of the ECtHR and the obligations in the Racial Equality Directive but they undoubtedly need to be strengthened and supported by enforcement action. The social norms will come from an equality mainstreaming approach which brings Roma and non-Roma together, to tackle inequality and social exclusion for the benefit of all European citizens.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

Educating the Roma: The Struggle for Cultural Autonomy in a Seminomadic Group in Norway

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Abstract

This paper will discuss the rationale of a group of Norwegian Roma who have resisted the government's attempts to educate them since the early 1960s. Behind the scenes these Roma claim that a school education is irrelevant for their children yet, when faced with school authorities, they comply. The authorities have used different approaches to promote education for Rom children however, their success is questionable. So what is at stake here? What is wrong with education from the Roma's point of view and how do the authorities respond? This article opens with a presentation of the history and background of the Norwegian Roma. It then presents the Norwegian system of public primary and lower secondary education and their attempts to accommodate Rom children. It critically examines the concept of education and the unquestioned and self-evident understanding of schooling as a liberating force per se. It further makes use of Bourdieu's analysis of symbolic capital and habitus and discusses the Roma's resistance to education and why symbolic capital developed through public school education is not converted to the Rom field.

Issue

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1. Introduction

In school reports on the education of Gypsy[1] children during the 1960s in Norway, teachers enthusiastically write comments like: "*Gabriela wants to be a hairdresser and Radu wants to become a firefighter*" and comment that education will help them achieve their goals[2]. Yet forty years and several educational projects later very few children have completed primary school

and, to this day, only two have successfully completed secondary school. What happened and why?

This paper will discuss the rationale of a group of Norwegian Roma who have resisted the government's diverse attempts to educate them since the early 1960s. Behind the scenes these Roma claim that a school education is irrelevant for their children yet, when faced with school authorities, they comply. The authorities have used the carrot and stick approach to promote education for Rom children yet their success, thus far, is questionable. So what is at stake here? What is wrong with education from the Roma's point of view and how do the authorities respond?

One of the experiences from all educational efforts towards the Norwegian Roma since the 1960s is that they have been based on superficial understandings of

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[1] I use the term Gypsies (sigøyner in Norwegian) when I refer to reports and studies from before around 2009 when that was the official term, and Rom when I refer to the current situation. Norwegian Roma do, however, generally use the term *sigøyner* when speaking Norwegian and Rom when speaking Romanés.
[2] Unpublished report

the Rom way of life and of the concept of culture (Hjemdal, 1982). A wide-spread understanding of culture, at least in Norwegian public rhetoric about minorities, is that it, at worst, is an expression of a collective will that hinders individual agency and, at best, culture is limited to expressions such as: music, dress, art and language. Culture, in terms of behaviour, is not regarded as part of the personal and emotional characteristic of an individual, but a more superficial trait open to change, and is, in some contexts, considered a mistake or an expression of "false consciousness". Thus, culture should be something one may express in one's private life. These somewhat ambiguous notions are in line with the widespread idea that as soon as an individual from a minority group is taught "our" culture he/she will prefer that, as it is what is best (Wells, 2015). The Rom lifestyle is generally regarded as something of the past; that their culture will pass when they learn new ways. Furthermore, the opinion amongst school authorities is that their reluctance towards child education, wage labour and authority control is a mixtures of deviance, ignorance and naiveté.

The Roma were once believed to be an integrated part of society but, as society has changed, they have become a marginalised group in need of shelter and security and longing for state intervention. This theory runs through most evaluations, reports and action plans that the Norwegian government have developed through shifting political regimes (Hanish, 1976). Rom "culture" is generally seen as static, yet changeable, and a total "make-over" is deemed necessary for the Roma to adapt to modern society (Engebrigtsen, 2010).

As a result of these notions and expectations, projects and programs to incorporate, assimilate or integrate the Rom population in Norway have been contradictory. This is in line with general contradictions in policies towards minorities and points to the weak understanding of the personal, relational and emotional aspects of culture. To analyse the personal and social aspects of culture as driving forces of resistance, I will employ Bourdieu's concept of habitus (1986); that family history, environment, past collective and personal experiences and way of life is incorporated into the person. The notion of habitus is crucial to Bourdieu's theory of practice. Bourdieu explained practice as the result of the interplay between habitus (in terms of capital) and a social field that structures it and, in turn, is structured by it. Habitus is thus the social structure structuring and being structured by the subjective agent. Habitus is the social aspect of the subject and brings together past and present, the objective and the subjective, structure and agency (Maton, 2008). But, Bourdieu notes:

> The Habitus is the spontaneity without consciousness or will, opposed as much to mechanical necessity of things without history in mechanistic theories

as it is to the reflexive freedom of subjects "without inertia" in rational theories. (Maton, 2008, p. 56)

In line with Bourdieu here, I will argue that the Rom economic and social strategies are not to be seen as strategies in any intentional way, but as "culture": the *"modus operandi"* of the Rom person and group.

As a basis for my discussion, I will present some general ideological traits of the history of primary education in Norway and the historical background of the Norwegian Rom group. I will then analyse the Rom social field with Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and symbolic capital and discuss the value of formal education for social mobility and capital conversion in the Rom field. My main question being: Why do the Norwegian Roma avoid education?

The background for raising these questions is the increasing effort by Norwegian and international institutions to integrate the Roma into mainstream society and their reluctance to do so on the authorities' terms. Since the Norwegian Rom population was given the status of national minority in 1999, there has been a great pressure on the government to control, include and foremost to educate them (Vermeersch, 2012). The discussion is based on the Norwegian case, but is relevant for the understanding of the relationship between the Rom population and public education far beyond this case[3]. As Norway is a strongly developed welfare state and the Rom population is very small, the results of the continuing and unsuccessful efforts to educate the Roma should be of interest to minority educators in general.

My personal and professional interest in this relationship stems from my work with Roma in Norway and Romania, since 1980 to present day, through different contexts. From 1978 to 1985 I was employed as head of the kindergarten for Rom children that formed part of the program: *Rehabilitation of the Norwegian Gypsies.* I later lived with a Rom group in Transylvania and wrote my PhD on Roma and non-Roma relations in that area (Engebrigtsen, 2007). The data from my work and research among Roma in Norway and in Romania is the empirical basis for this paper; together with official reports from 1960 to present day and three master thesis' on education of Rom children by Anette Fuglevik (2014), Kristine Bjørndal (2014) and Maren-Johanne Nordby (2013). These have been invaluable for my work with this article.

2. The Norwegian Roma

The ancestors of the Norwegian Roma started to travel and settle temporary in Norway in the late 1800s. They belong to the vlach Romanes speaking Rom population,

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[3] No reports or academic work concerning Roma in Norway is published in English.

which shows that they left Romania after the abolishment of slavery and feudalism around 1860 (Achim, 2004). Around 1930 they left Norway for Central Europe, probably to evade the assimilatory regimes directed towards Norwegian Travellers (tater). When they tried to re-enter in 1934, seeking shelter from the rising racism in Germany and Belgium, the Norwegian authorities rejected them and sent them back to Central Europe, despite their Norwegian passports and birth certificates. In 1927, Norway had passed a law that prohibited Gypsies entering the country and rejected the legality of Norwegian passports for Gypsies. Research has shown (Rosvoll, 2015) that most of this Norwegian group ended up in concentration camps and died there. During the 1950s, a small group of approximately 100 descendants and survivors arrived and applied for Norwegian citizenship, yet were only granted this several lawsuits and many years later (Hanisch, 1976). Between 1960 and 2015, the government has launched several programmes to integrate the Roma through education, settlement and wage labour.

The history of the Norwegian Roma in Norway is important because it illustrates the last phase of the exclusion and persecution of this group in Norway (Lidén & Engebrigtsen, 2010). The Norwegian Roma that migrated from the Romanian/Hungarian regions[4] had survived centuries of exclusion, persecution and discrimination as slaves and serfs in that country. This history forms the backdrop of the Rom population and their relationship with governments and majority populations.

Today the Rom population consists of around 700 people, most of them seminomadic. They live in the capital in flats and houses, generally in extended family arrangements ideally composed of a couple, their sons, daughters-in-law and children. Most families travel spring through autumn for business, for religious meetings and for social gatherings with kin from all over Europe. They make up a group held together by marriage and kinship, with cultural and political autonomy and equality as binding values and with internal competition for respect and influence. Norwegian Roma are endogamous, they practice arranged marriages and hierarchies based on age and gender. They practice the Rom judicial system based on negotiation and consensus, and the Rom cosmology based on purity and separation of gender and ethnicity (Engebrigtsen, 2007; Engebrigtsen & Lidén, 2010; Frazer, 1995; Lidén & Engebrigtsen, 2010; Stewart, 1997). They are Pentecostals; members of the European Rom Pentecostal church. Today there is an increase in nuclear families or single parent families. Drug abuse, criminal activity and poverty characterise some families. The Norwegian Roma are, nonetheless, tightly connected through kin-

ship, marriage, business and religion. Some families rely heavily on social security benefits, whilst others rely on relatively shady business ventures such as: trading in property, asphalt laying (with Irish Tinkers) and as car dealers. Women are generally responsible for contact with social services and welfare officers. The majority are connected to Roma all over Europe.

Before discussing the Norwegian Roma's responses to formal education I will present aspects of the Norwegian School system and the education programmes developed for Roma from 1960 to the present day.

3. Basic Principles for Primary and Lower Secondary School in Norway

3.1. One School for All

In 1920 seven years of primary school became mandatory in Norway. Public schools then suppressed the earlier private schools and so the unitary schools system, which is still the basic school system in Norway[5], was established. This early public unitary school was a school "for the people and of the people" as teachers were no longer recruited from the clergy, as had been done so previously, but from gifted youth that were educated at teacher training institutions (Bergesen, 2006).

During the 1930s, inspired by Europe and the US, new ideas on education and pedagogies were formulated. These ideas argued that pupils should be active participants in education and primarily learn through their own activity, not by teachers lecturing from their desks. Another idea was that pupils should work together and support each other. This "working school", as it was called, introduced teamwork as central educational model. These ideas were made official educational policy in 1939 in the *Normalplanen for folkeskolen av 1939* that proclaimed: *The plan is focused on training the pupils in independent work and teaching them to find the material they need by themselves* (in Bergesen 2006, p. 22). This was established under a Labour government. Bergesen (2006) writes that these ideas were revolutionary at that time, stating that: "The objective of the education is not to assist pupils with unequal abilities and interests to become equally competent in their school work, but to give the pupils an education that as much as possible is fitted to their abilities and interests" (Bergesen, 2006, p. 23). He further states that this is a transition from one school regime to another: from a school where the pupil should adapt to a set curriculum, to a school based on developing the individual ability of each pupil. This and later plans were to be implemented in all schools in the country. These polices were characterised by ambigu-

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[4] The Vlach Roma that lived in Romania for around 500 years as slaves and serfs.

[5] In 1965–66 99.6% of the population attended public schools. In 2014 the percentage in public schools is 97%.

ous and, sometimes, contradictory goals. On the one hand, they desired to develop the individual pupil based on their abilities yet, on the other hand, they desired to use education as a means of creating the future equal society and "the future man" (Bergesen, 2006, p. 23).

The political and pedagogical currents of the 1960s–70s, with its emphasis on knowledge as relative and its quest against competition and measurements, fitted well with the social democratic school model with its intention of education for all irrespective of background. Difference in starting position should through "adapted education" (tilpasset opplæring) lead to outcome equality.

From the 1990s, the tide changed once more and the so-called "knowledge school" (kunnskapsskolen) took form as one of several expressions of the new liberalism. Research had shown that the parents' educational and class background was important if not decisive for their children's school results and future social positions in general. The new emphasis was on developing the curriculum towards a stronger focus on knowledge, individual achievement and academic ambition. The objective was, however, much the same as those that had guided pedagogical objectives since the 30s: "to make the country's population into one people in thought, words and deeds" (Hærnes in Bergesen, 2006, p. 32)[6]. During the 1990s elementary schools expanded at both ends— the starting age was changed from seven to six and schools ran up until the 9th grade (previously 7th grade). Ten years of basic education was now mandatory for all.

Egalitarian ideals have dominated Norwegian schools since elementary school became mandatory in 1920, together with a tension between individualist and collectivist objectives, as expressed by the tension between "the knowledge school" and "adapted education" (Bergesen, 2006). Yet, most importantly, here as elsewhere, primary school and education in general is one of the core institutions for nation building and in national reproduction (Takle, 2010).

Increasing ethnic diversity, due to migration since the 1980s, is, however, challenging the strong emphasis on equality and on education as a vehicle for shaping a diverse population of class, gender and ethnicity into one people with the same ethos and direction. To an increasing number of pupils Norwegian schools represent a new and often strange culture, and the chance that the school culture will triumph over the family's is dependent on several factors. The quest to incorporate these new children with diverse ethos and directions into a Norwegian unified "we", rests on the school's ability to adapt to their conditions and on the families' interest in education and inclusion (Skarpenes, 2007).

[6] Author's translation.

4. History of Rom Education in Norway

4.1. Political Awareness of Gypsy Problems in Norway 1960–1970

The history of formal education for Roma in Norway starts around 1962 when The Norwegian Gypsy Committee was established, consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Social affairs, the Social Department of the Municipality of Oslo, Oslo Police Headquarters and the Catholic congregation in Oslo[7]. With this committee the Roma were, for the first time, acknowledged as a different group than Travellers (Hanisch, 1976). The Rom population consisted of approximately 100 people; they were living in caravans in a camp in the city centre. The first official plan was to treat the Roma like the Norwegian Travellers; families should be sent to the "Travellers camp" (Svanviken) and learn Norwegian work ethic, language and values. This, however, turned out to be too costly a plan (Hanisch, 1976). After pressure from, and with the cooperation of the Committee, the Municipality then established special school provisions for Rom children (St.meld.nr. 37 (1972–73) Om tiltak for de norske sigøynere 1973). In 1973, The White Paper (1972–73) stated this with regards to education for Gypsies:

> To the degree that the Gypsies have stayed in Oslo, the school has been functioning. Some efforts were made simultaneously to settle some Gypsy families, without achieving permanent settlement.

and

> The effort of establishing the Gypsies as Norwegian citizens turned out to be more complicated than anticipated. Partly because the Gypsies' particular way of life did not make general social measures very appropriate, and partly because the public's attitudes towards Gypsies has created problems[8]. (1973, p. 3)

There was no evaluation of this early education for the Roma.

In 1969 the Gypsy Committee decided to establish a fast-working committee, the Nordland Committee,[9] to evaluate the work done and suggest new measures. A prominent ethnologist and university lecturer, who was a member of the larger Gypsy Committee, was appointed as leader. Other members were representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Municipality. Their mandate was to cooperate closely with the

[7] The Roma were Roman Catholics at that time.
[8] All citations from Norwegian reports etc. are translated by the author.
[9] Nordland utvalget.

Rom leaders. That same year the Committee received a letter from two prominent family heads[10] asking for cooperation with the authorities to solve some of the Gypsies' pressing problems.

The Committee concluded that the Gypsies had not managed to adapt to new economic and structural circumstances, but were left behind the general prosperity development. They therefore needed substantial re-orientation based on their cultural traditions. Housing, education for children and adults, occupations and social welfare were planned. Regarding occupation, the White Paper (St.meld.nr. 37 (1972-73) Om tiltak for de norske sigøynere 1973) noted:

> Passing from a roaming life to, for instance, a steady position in a Norwegian factory is too large to be realistic for Gypsies. It will therefore be necessary to plan for an occupation that is closer to what the Gypsies are used to. (1973, p. 6)

On education for children, the White Paper states that it should concentrate on reading, writing and arithmetic, but also social studies:

> The Gypsy children will, because of their background, experience a large cultural distance to Norwegian teaching. The Committee therefore argues that teaching should be based on their special conditions. If possible, the children should temporarily be taught in their own language, Romanes. (1973, p. 5)

The White Paper then argues that teaching should take place in a separate school for Rom children and that the demands should not be too high for them, as this would be their first schooling experience. This is in line with the general new orientation in educational and minority politics in Norway, as in Europe in the 1970s: away from assimilatory programs, towards integration. Integration was understood as a tool to include people based on their own conditions and to lead them (through education) towards equal opportunities. In school, this meant adapted teaching; that children and youth should receive education based on their abilities and conditions. This pedagogical model was part of a general political development in Europe and the US inspired by the Civil Rights Movement in the US and ethnic revival movements there and in the Third World. These movements established ethnicity and minority as new categories, with rights to self-determination and participation, such as inclusion of their history and culture in school curriculum (Engen, 2010).

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[10] One of them presented himself as The King of the Gypsies. The letter was written by supportive Norwegian social officer and supporters in cooperation with the Rom.

4.2. 1973–1992[11]: Making Up for Past Injustice

In 1973, the Municipality of Oslo and the state started the first regular primary school for all Roma children in Norway[12]. The political and pedagogical model of this project was, in many ways, modern in the sense that it represented a break away from earlier assimilation approaches and towards a model where the children and group's language and cultural world should play a decisive role. Norway had very recently started to close down the forced assimilation programs towards Travellers and the Sami, and this experience formed their approach towards the Roma. The Committee saw education as only one of several measures that should make the Roma prepared for modern society, but on their own terms. As a result, a comprehensive program called *"Rehabilitation of the Norwegian Gypsies"*[13] was developed. To coordinate the program "the Office for Gypsy Issues" was established by the Municipality of Oslo in 1973. The programme included settlement projects where extended families were offered fully equipped "barracks" together. The Municipality also planned vocational training in different crafts[14]. As Norwegian citizens, all Roma had the right to basic social welfare provisions and, as no Rom had permanent employment, every individual over 18 soon became social welfare clients (Persson, 2014). The Municipality developed a primary school system based on the new pedagogic of adapted teaching with the right for minorities to keep and develop language, religion and cultural traits. Education should be strengthened by mother-tongue or bilingual teaching. Family heads, men and women, were invited to co-operate in the development of all of these processes to better their situation.

The Committee faced some dilemmas (Fuglevik, 2014) regarding whether Rom children should attend regular Norwegian classes, whether one should establish a "Gypsy school", or one should have separate classes for Rom children in mainstream schools. The Committee's basic goal was to protect Rom language and culture, in accordance with the Rom representatives, and at the same time secure the children a proper education that could help them live independently in Norway. Their seminomadic lifestyle was not seen as an aspect of their culture; it was seen as an obstacle to education. Fuglevik (2014) notes that segregated education was contested at this time; all children should

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[11] The following presentation of Gypsy education from 1973-1992 is based on an historical analysis in a master thesis by A. Fuglevik in 2014.

[12] All Roma were then living in Oslo.

[13] The program was implemented by the Municipality of Oslo, with economic support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and guided by a steering committee with representatives of the Rom.

[14] This was however never implemented.

attend the same classes, but be taught *according to their abilities and conditions.* The solution was to establish Rom classes in Norwegian schools.

The following years Rom classes were established first in barracks near the new Rom camp close to the Oslo University and then, from approximately 1978 as Rom families were settled, in five schools in different parts of Oslo. The authorities appointed seven educated non-Rom teachers and three Roma as "mother-tongue instructors". One of these non-Rom teachers describes the mother-tongue teachers as "assistants", as they had no formal education at all and could barely read and write themselves (Fuglevik, 2004). In 1978 three Norwegian teachers and the mother tongue-instructors, developed the first spelling book in Romanes and Norwegian for use in primary school (Hjemdal, 1982). In 1980 three more public schools had Rom classes. In three classes teaching was primarily in Romanes as the children only knew very little Norwegian. Whereas in classes with children that knew enough Norwegian, teaching was in that language. During this period many children attended school but, there was also a high number of truants and drop outs (Fuglevik, 2014). There were also problems with transport to and from school, as most children lived too far away to walk. In order to cut costs and to improve efficiency the number of school were reduced to five. A working group was appointed by the Ministry of Social affairs in 1996 in order to evaluate the costs. The working group commented on the very high absence among Rom pupils, but argued that even some school attendance throughout the years would tie the Roma closer to Norwegian society. They recommended that the Rom classes should carry on, but that teachers should be more preoccupied with the compulsory aspect of education and that all work directed towards Roma should have a "normalizing strategy" (Fuglevik, 2014). Then in 1990 Rom education for children and adults was centralised in one school. The justification for this change was that the children should eventually be integrated into Norwegian classes. There were some disagreements about the educational benefits of this plan where children of different ages were in the same class, but in different groups according to their abilities. However, the authorities argued that there was no longer a need to segregate the Roma in education (Fuglevik, 2014).

4.3. 1992–2015: Liberalism and New Educational Paradigms

In 1992 this centralised education was closed, in spite of protests by "the Office for Gypsy Issues" (Sigøynerkontoret), and the children were transferred to ordinary classes. In order for the Roma to respect that education is mandatory, teachers had to report absences to the Child Protection Services (Fuglevik, 2014). The

following years different models were adopted; transport to and from school was offered during certain periods, home-schooling was arranged for some families whilst they were travelling, and some youngsters were offered education in the adult classes for Roma (From, 1985).

A general experience from this period was that school attendance was accidental. In some families none of the children attended school and for the children that did, most were away travelling with their families for large parts of the year (Engebrigtsen, 2010; Fuglevik, 2014). Another general trait is that educational models were changing according to the teachers' experience and knowledge, and the authorities' regulations. A woman that attended Rom classes during that period tells that they were given freedom of choice as to which subjects they would like to study, that she enjoyed school, but that she and her siblings were away from school for such long periods that they neither learned to read nor write. She also tells about the conflict within her family on the subject of school, as her father wanted the family to go on business travels when the children had classes to attend (Fuglevik, 2014). The children that frequently attended school seemed to belong to families that were slightly marginal in the Rom community with weak occupational traditions and were more or less dependent on social security benefits (Lidén, 1990).

These changes in the education of Rom children are expressions of general policy shifts regarding immigrants, minorities and integration, where individual rights were gradually given priority over collective rights. Mother-tongue education, which was never really established in primary education, was now terminated in most schools. The idea of every individual pursuing their own goals and aspirations, independent of group-belonging, was dominant and all special measures towards Roma and minorities in general were abolished (Lidén & Engebrigtsen, 2010). Culture and ethnicity was now regarded as a private quality and not a matter for public education. Another motive for abolishing Rom education, and for closing the whole program "Rehabilitation of Norwegian Gypsies" in 1992, was a major swindle of 30 million EUR from the Central Bank, committed by the family of the "Gypsy King" who had sent the historic letter to Norwegian authorities back in 1969. In the following years there was no special educational policy for Rom children. Nonetheless, different educational models and projects were tried out for some families based on their ethnic or cultural background, with varying results[15].

5. From Poor Outcasts to National Minority

In 1999 The Norwegian Roma were granted the status

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[15] See Lars Gjerde (1996).

of National Minority protected by *the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). This convention that protects minorities against discrimination and states their right to maintain and develop their language and culture, seemed to have provided new challenges for the Rom population (Engebrigtsen, 2010; Fuglevik, 2014; Persson, 2014). European political goals and efforts to include the Roma in national societies signified a resilient effort to educate the children and to employ the adults in wage labour. This again meant strengthened control and surveillance of family life and movements. An outcome of this internationally backed effort to educate the Rom children in mainstream schools was that absence from school was increasingly seen as child neglect (Persson, 2014). This interpretation of school absence among Rom children leads Child Protection Services to involve themselves in these families, to control the children's "circadian rhythm", the family's travel plans and emotional climate (Persson, 2014).

Contrasting the pluralistic theme of the 70s and 80s, the minority politics we now see emerging is an expression of the new centennial's increasing preoccupation with individual rights and, with it, minorities duties to conform to a common norm. With this, and with the new European common measurements for school performance (Pisa), education became a crucial part of the nation's quest for economic progress and political significance in Europe and the world. Although the Framework Convention is founded on a liberalistic individual rights context, its objective is, nonetheless, to ascertain the rights of national minorities to keep and develop certain collective traits such as religion, language and cultural traditions. As such, it could represent a challenge to the strong emphasis on individual rights in educational politics.

Around 350 of the Rom population are children and around 73 of them are aged 6–13[16]. After 1992, Rom children were enrolled in ordinary classes in Norwegian schools under the pretext: "Gypsies shall, as far as possible, be treated as any other citizen" (Nordby, 2013).

> Equal, including and accommodated education is an overarching principle in school. This implies that education must be accessible for all, and that all shall have good opportunities for learning, mastering and development. Pupils and apprentices are different, hence they have different needs and conditions. The same educational offer for all does not imply an equal offer. In order to supply equal education schools must provide varied and differentiated training. (St.meld.nr.30, 2003-2004:85 in Nordby, 2013, p. 12)

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[16] (Handlingsplan for å bedre levekårene for rom i Oslo, 2009)

To support the schools in this effort, each Rom pupil "released" supportive funds to compensate for their lacking basic education. These funds were used to employ special assistants, to supply extra "teacher-time" and to buy different kinds of teaching aid. Two master theses from 2013 have analysed inclusion strategies in three Oslo schools with Rom-pupils (Bjørndal, 2014; Nordby, 2013). The finding was that teachers in these schools were aware of the special cultural and ethnic conditions of these children and used the extra funding to benefit the Rom children specifically. During, "less important subjects," two of the schools place the Rom children into groups with extra teachers to provide them with supplementary lessons in reading, writing and mathematics.

6. Action Plan to Improve the Life-Situation for Roma in Oslo (Handlingsplan for å bedre levekårene for rom i Oslo, 2009)

In 2009 the then Ministry of Work and Inclusion presented an Action Plan to improve the situation of Norwegian Roma in Oslo. This initiative was a response to the European Council's repeated call for more concrete plans to include the Roma into Norwegian Society. The Action Plan was developed together with Rom representatives and the Municipality. The Plan recommended ten measures, but did not suggest changes in the schooling situation for primary and lower secondary school. It did, however, recommend a new educational initiative for young adults without basic education. The idea was that educating young parents would make them more favourable towards education for their children. The Action Plan also recommended developing a tutoring system for Rom children in Norwegian classes, so called Rom-pilots, to act as mediators between school and home and to support teachers and children. These two measures were the only ones that concerned education and both were implemented the following years.

The action plan was evaluated in 2014 (Tyldum & Horgen Friberg, 2014). The evaluation concluded that the Roma had not shown much interest in education, but that they generally attended school for social purposes and approached the teachers for all sorts of assistance in private matters. The teachers' tasks appeared to be rather contradictory; their task was to teach, to which the Roma showed little interest, whilst the Roma's genuine interest in asking for assistance in their dealings with authorities etc. was not part of teacher's duties. The report further concluded that the Rom tutoring system for Rom children in primary school was successful and should continue. It is not clear from the report why this measure was regarded a success, but it seems the schools had reached a closer understanding with parents through this measure.

7. Educational Ideals and Rom Resistance

7.1. Educational Ideology: The Hidden Curriculum

Education is one of the state's central socialising institutions with the explicit objective of turning individual family subjects to collective beings that incorporate central values and practices of majority society and state. In Norway, a strong commitment towards equal education for all, grounded on individual conditions, encourages this general ideal for public education. Education of the Roma has, as discussed, gone through several ideational and political changes. For example, during the 1970s to 80s with what we today would characterise as a multicultural phase; where the emphasis was on preparing the Rom children for social and cultural integration through education based on their collective identities as Roma. Then in the 1990s, with a stronger emphasis on the development of knowledge-based education of each pupil with respect to their personal conditions. To today where we see an even more individualised education, where social and cultural conditions of the Roma are seen as more or less irrelevant and, sometimes, even problematic for education.

7.2. The Hidden Curriculum

These ideas represent the open curriculum of schools; they are expressed as objectives by governments which represent shifting educational ideas and policies. The disciplining and developing force of the *hidden curriculum* in basic education, a topic much discussed by scholars in the 20th century from Dewy (1916) through Giroux (1983) and Bourdieu (1984), has, however, not been a topic in any of the evaluations and discussions of education for Rom children in Norway.

The disciplining force of institutions; (Bourdieu, 1986; Foucault, 1991; Meyer, 1986) by organising time and space, roles and relations, are perhaps the most important resources for a state in controlling and guiding a population, and for the individual's chances to convert these resources to social and economic capital. Adapting to the hidden curriculum in education provides the basic cultural capital to succeed in the Norwegian work force. By forging time structures in children that require them to sit quietly for a set period of time and see working with theoretical themes as natural and self-evident. By secluding children in predefined spaces for a predefined time span and by children accepting or submitting to the authority of a stranger outside their family, in this case that of Norwegian authority, a habitus ready, primarily for the Norwegian labour market, is developed. In Norwegian schools today, there is a basic agreement of the importance of education between home and government, although class, ethnicity, religion and other aspects of pupils backgrounds render the process of forging the proper habitus more or less smooth.

8. Rom Habitus

There are some basic traits that need to be taken into consideration to understand Rom habitus; the history of the Roma in Europe and the incorporated way of life and cosmology as it is lived and experienced among Roma in Norway. In the 1970s, John Ogbu developed the notion of "involuntary minorities" (Ogbu, 1974) to differentiate between minorities and school achievements in the US. His argument was that minorities that somehow have, "been brought to their present society through slavery, conquest or colonization" (Gibson, 1997, p. 319) seem to view public education as part of the oppression they feel they are subjected to (Gibson, 1997).

One trait is the deeply felt and ritually confirmed separation of the concept of Rom and that of Gazo, (non-Rom) based on historical experiences as a persecuted minority. The second, is the development of a mode of subsistence outside of state and wage labour, based on a history of economic marginality. The third, the deep-seated sense of belonging to family and kin, and the great sense of personal and collective autonomy and superiority as Roma (Engebrigtsen, 2007, 2013; Frazer, 1995; Lidén & Engebrigtsen, 2010; Mirga, 1992; Stewart, 1997).

The spiritual separation between Roma and non-Roma that is paired with an economic dependency on the majority population implies that Roma are obsessed with keeping separate what can be kept separate; language, knowledge and morality. The Norwegian Roma, only numbering approximately 700, express a feeling of having their backs against the wall and being in a precarious situation. Although they are few in Norway, they are, however, part of a European Rom population that is connected by kinship and marriage. To travel is not only crucial for holding up these networks, but also for confirming and "updating" one's identity and values as Roma in relation to the Roma of their networks. Travel is also important in order to evade unwanted projects and measures; it eases the pressure for a while. Additionally, to survive outside wage labour for people with sparse economic resources means having to utilise large areas, which makes mobility necessary. The strong commitment to family and kin all over Europe is based on and confirmed by physical presence and continuing exchange, and means that mobility in and out of Norway is a necessity for the Norwegian Roma to maintain their community (Hanisch, 1976; Hjemdal, 1982).

My interpretation is that many Rom populations have been more or less forced to rely on their own resources to survive as they have been, and still are, disqualified for ordinary wage labour. This subsistence

strategy implies the necessity to exploit many resources over large territories and to do so in family groups where all hands are needed. They have to travel, they have to keep together and they have to teach their children necessary skills to develop the cultural capital required to manage that mode of subsistence. This strategy is the source of the Rom habitus that upholds the deeply felt separation between "us" the Rom and "them" the Gaze, a protective device towards continuous projects and programs of assimilation and integration throughout the centuries. A former teacher expresses the central position of travel to the Rom habitus: "It is by travelling they learn to be Gypsies". This is the domestic transition of cultural capital that is realised by spending time together.

In Bourdieu's sense, education provides the child with cultural and social capital that confirms the general social structure of the given society and prepares them for participation (Bourdieu, 2004). This allegation is confirmed by most research on education and social class that finds that, at least in western societies including Norway, class structures are confirmed through education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Giroux, 1983; Levinson, Foley, & Holland, 1996). Children from the upper levels of society with parents who have completed higher education do better in school than children of less educated parents (Bakken & Elstad, 2015), and have better bargaining power in the quest for economic capital. Although this fact is a concern for most governments, school education is a relatively doxic field for politicians and planners in Norway. Education is seen as, "a common good", liberating and enabling for all, irrespective of the different outcomes related to the different class- and ethnic belonging of children.

9. Cultural Capital and Public Education: The Roma's Response Analysed

Throughout all educational projects presented to the Roma, the response from the Rom population has been double-sided. They have consented orally to the majority argument about their children's need of education while, in practice, most children have either not attended school, or have done so irregularly. I argue that this "double" response is an expression of the rather precarious situation of the Norwegian Roma. Being economically dependent on welfare and "black" business in different combinations and forming a separate community in Norway renders the Roma vulnerable to control and assimilation. This situation makes it necessary to express willingness and gratitude towards the authorities' efforts to include them. By doing so they are tolerated and are able to keep and develop their own cultural values and ways of life.[17]. They appeal to

the tolerance and benevolence towards vulnerable groups and, "exploit the cracks in the enemies armour" to put it poetically (de Certeau, 1984, p. 37)

Bourdieu views formal education as the elementary provider of social and symbolic capital in western society (1986). Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital is well suited to analyse Rom resistance. That knowledge, for instance, in the form of educational qualifications and social networks, is accumulated work and thus function in a chain of exchange with economic capital. Thus, in any order, achieved knowledge can lead to important acquaintances which can then be converted into economic capital. This capital conversion is tied to specific fields with specific social structures and value systems (Bourdieu, 1983). The Rom social world and subsistence economy rest on knowledge gained by participating in the economic activities of the Roma in Norway and elsewhere. Thus, time invested in school means less or no time invested in the Rom world. The crafts, skills and Rom habitus necessary to cope with that way of life will, at worst, be de-valued or left undeveloped in children. The social and cultural world of school is completely adversary to Rom family life, with its specific organisation of time-space (Nordby, 2013). As one mother expresses: "The children live with us in our adult life. As we do not have a job, we are up sometimes to two PM. and the children are with us. No mother will wake her child up at seven when there is -10°C outside. Cause the mother has not been to school and has not become someone. It's a vicious circle" (Nordby, 2013, p. 51). Rom children are not disciplined according to abstract principles and schedules, but according to the adults' practices, feelings and preoccupations. Confinement to a controlled space under the authority of an adult that is neither family nor Rom, will generally trigger fierce resistance.

Respect is a central value and resource among Roma, and in order to achieve respect one must adhere to the Rom value-system and socialise with respectful Roma. This again means having the knowledge of how to behave respectfully. This knowledge can be converted to social capital: networks of influential Roma that can again be converted to business opportunities or profitable marriages (of children or other relatives).

According to Rom traditions, youth are ready for marriage from the ages of 14–15 and signifies their transition into adulthood. At that age, a child should have incorporated the necessary knowledge to lead an adult life with spouse, children and responsibilities, supported by close family. In order to complete an education, this practice must be broken. According to the Roma, a school education is not a resource convertible to social or economic capital in their community, but rather a threat to their way of life. I do not see the Roma's self-segregation (Mirga, 1992) as a question of choice and strategy, but as an expression of the Rom habitus and the strategic situation of the Roma in in re-

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[17] This is my interpretation based on my work with Roma and my experience with their response to authority projects.

lation to non-Roma. It could also be seen as a response to the still existing negative prejudice and discriminatory practices they experience.

10. Closing Remarks

Two young Roma have completed high school and vocational training since the Norwegian Roma settled permanently after the Second World War. What made that possible? The question itself is complex. As their mothers were both married to non-Roma they held an ambiguous positions in the Rom community. For the boy that meant he did not have a father that knew and could teach him Rom trades. The girl did have a Rom father, but her mother divorced him and remarried a man who supported her daughter's school attendance. When the boy's mother died, he married a Rom woman, stopped practicing his craft and began business with his Rom relatives. Furthermore, shortly after completing high school, the young girl ran away with a Rom from another group and started a family abroad. These examples and the general experience of Rom parents that their children learn "nothing" in school, confirms their reluctance to send them.

Since being established, the programs for integration and inclusion of the Rom population have emphasised two basic intentions and goals: 1) The Rom population is expected to keep and develop their culture and 2) The Roma shall be included/integrated into Norwegian society in terms of education, wage labour and a settled lifestyle (St.meld.nr. 37 (1972-73) Om tiltak for de norske sigøynere, 1973; Handlingsplan for å bedre levekårene for rom i Oslo, 2009). Based on my argument of Rom culture as habitus, the nature of this contradiction becomes rather obvious. In order to respond to the intentions of the integration/inclusion programs, the Norwegian Rom population will have to change their way of life, their collective and personal identity and culture. I am not implying that Rom habitus and culture is unchangeable, only that change that attack their core institutions triggers gut reactions; more or less intended resistance.

As has been demonstrated throughout this article, Norwegian authorities have not used force in educating the Roma. They have tried, in different ways, to acclimate education to the Rom way of life. They have tried to support education whilst the families were travelling, they have experimented with mother-tongue education and they have tried to treat Rom children "*just as all other children*". The results have been much the same; whatever educational model the Roma have been subjected to, they have done what they generally do; consent orally and resist in practice. As long as the Norwegian Roma see their own way of life, social organisation and value systems as preferable to that of the non-Rom, formal education will not become a resource that can be converted as it will not become capital.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Prolonged Inclusion of Roma Groups in Swedish Society

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Abstract
Inclusion policies focusing on Roma groups started in Sweden during the 1950s, when the Swedish government recognized the formal citizen status of the so called "Swedish Gypsies", a group consisting of approximately 740 people. As the Roma were perceived as people living outside the boundaries of normal society, the challenge facing the Swedish authorities was how to outline and organize the new policies. In our analyses we focus on the taken-for-granted premises of these policies. We discuss the "entry process" of these Roma into Swedish society. People-processing organizations classified Roma as "socially disabled" in different administrative contexts. In the early 1960s adult male Roma were classified as socially disabled on the labor market. Later during the same decade, experts and professionals increasingly focused attention on the Roma family as a problematic institution. In this context, Roma adults were classified as disabled in relation to the normative representations of parental capacities during that time, while Roma children of school age were defined as children with difficulties and put in special groups for children with problems. The related interventions were justified by a discourse on social inclusion, but in reality produced a web of measures, practices and yet further interventions, which in the long run have contributed to perpetuate the social marginality of Roma groups.

Issue
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1. Introduction

In this article we focus on the period 1950 to 1970, i.e. the time when new Roma policies emerged in Sweden and were established within the welfare system. In our analyses we discuss the *taken-for-granted premises* of these policies and investigate the *perceptions and actions* of the authorities once the 740 Roma were recognized as part of the Swedish population (SOU, 1956: 43, p. 145). It is important to combine the analyses of the prescribed model role of policies with an analyses of the local and practical implementation of these, since the informal implementation of formal policies interacts and shapes social politics (Lipsky, 1980).

Brodkin conceptualizes this as the *politics of practice* (Brodkin, 2010). Methodologically, we are inspired by the concept *people processing organizations*, i.e. organizations that shape a person's life by processing them and conferring them a public status (Hasenfeld, 1972; Prottas, 1978), and thus become the site for the politics of practice. A precondition for the initiation of such a process for the Roma in Sweden was to formally recognize them as members of the nation-state. The citizen status is one of the most important entry categories to be considered part of the nation-state organization (Sainsbury, 2012). Hence, in 1952, the Roma were granted Swedish citizenship. However, this formal status was followed by a long series of steps that peo-

ple processing organizations developed in order to manage the entry of the Roma into the Swedish welfare state. The entry was thus turned into a comprehensive, expanding and continuous process involving an increasing number of interventions and knowledge producing activities (Kaminski, 1980; Marta, 1979; Montesino, 2002; Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015). These interventions and activities were justified with reference to the old narrative on Roma as a problematic group, which in the first place was used to legitimize the entry of Roma into the welfare system. The processing of the Roma into this system followed the classical steps in the work of *people processing organizations* (Hasenfeld, 1972, 2010; Prottas, 1978):

- A detailed evaluation of the current situation in order to determine the legitimacy and extent of public intervention.
- The identification of the attributes that make citizens potential clients in order to identify the appropriate interventions.
- To the above-mentioned steps followed the monitoring of the relocation process of the target groups.

Professionals in the social field and other experts assumed the role of *gatekeepers* in these organizations (Iacovetta, 2006). People processing work occurs at various places in society, thus gatekeepers are active at different bureaucratic levels and in different institutions. Assuming the role of institutional gatekeepers were, among others, officials, who in their professional every day practice serve as "cultural interpreters" dedicated to facilitate adaptation. In the Canadian post-war example discussed by Iacovetta (2006), this involved convincing "old Canadians" of the valuable contributions that the newcomers were making to their society and culture, mainly in terms of music, foods, clothing, etc. In Sweden during the post-war decades, there were not as many social agencies as in Canada dealing with newcomers. Instead, institutional gatekeepers were in most cases civil service officials at departments like the National Board of Health and Welfare and, notably, the National Labor Market Board. The later institution was an important agency in the Social-Democratic post-war reform programs aiming at full employment and welfare for everybody (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015; Rothstein, 1996; Tydén, 2002). Academic experts worked in close cooperation with officials at the different civil service departments to provide the scientific material on which interventions were to be based. Among these experts were those who defined the organizational boundaries for the processing of the new citizens in the social order. In their evaluation research they constructed Roma citizens as welfare clients. In doing this, they employed the administrative taxonomy of the welfare services, which they also refined using medical and social arguments. Hence,

during the 1950s and the 1960s these experts and professionals formulated the intellectual foundation for the institutional responses to the entry of Roma citizens in the welfare system. In practice this implied departing from established categories and identifying yet new dimensions in the classification map that justified new activities in which Roma citizens became targets of further evaluations. In these studies the expert added characteristics that confirmed the representation of Roma as deviants, that is, deviants who belonged to the national *deserving poor*.

This gatekeeper *elite* held what Prottas has defined as an "organizational role as a boundary actor" (Prottas, 1978, p. 290). They defined the institutional boundaries, within which the street-level bureaucracy acted. Gatekeepers at the local level such as social workers, public health staff and schoolteachers, i.e. street levels bureaucrats (in Lipsky's terms), or front-line caseworkers (in Iacovetta's terms), performed the routine work of ordering and processing Swedish Roma as *welfare clients* classified according to established criteria (age, health, family situations, etc.). In this way gatekeepers at both organizational/scientific and local levels were involved in shaping the politics of practice in processing Swedish Roma citizens.

In the following sections, we first present a background to this inclusion process. Then we go on describing the taken-for-granted premises of the authorities' evaluation of the situation of the Roma. The subsequent section discusses *disability* as a time specific content of these premises. Thereafter we examine the contents of the activities used to incorporate the new citizens. The article ends with some concluding remarks.

The basis of the article is empirical data collected in two research projects conducted in the fields of Social Work and History respectively. The first project (Montesino, 2002) makes an analytical description of the Swedish government's Roma policy from 1880 to 1970. The study is primarily based on the analysis of public documents in the Swedish National Archives (Riksarkivet, 1950–1960) and includes government reports and accompanying background material. The second project (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015) deals with one particular Public Health study concerning the Swedish Roma carried out in the 1960s and it concludes that the study in question resulted in increased and expanded activities of experts working with Roma in the medical and social fields. The empirical sources of this research consists of primary sources from various scientific and political-administrative contexts, including correspondence, working material and other written sources that reflect the daily work of experts and professionals in different scientific, institutional and administrative fields.

2. Background

The Roma, who became the focus of the Swedish au-

thorities in the early 1950s, were a demographically insignificant group, at the time estimated to include only some 740 individuals. They descended from Roma groups that had arrived in the country at the beginning of the 20th century (SOU, 1956: 43). The granting of citizenship to this group formed part of the new social policy, which questioned all earlier social policies in the years following WWII. This policy change by the Swedish authorities resulted in a new approach vis-à-vis the Roma and other groups perceived as social deviants (Lind, 2000; Lindqvist, 2007). How to incorporate these groups into to Swedish society became a specific field of social intervention (Montesino, 2002; Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

The public debate the years following the end of WWII was strongly influenced by social policy experts and social workers arguing for the inclusion of new groups. They criticized previous policies for being repressive and argued for a social approach to the understanding of deviance. In this debate, they collaborated with medical experts and added a social dimension to the medical definition of disability, stating that social conditions could also create disabilities (Kerz, Werner, & Wesser, 1995; Montesino, 2012; Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015). This new approach created the conceptual space for drawing up new policies directed at groups previously defined as undeserving and/or unwanted.

Hence, the inclusion of the Roma in Swedish society is a process linked to many different levels and aspects of Swedish social and political history. It includes questions about citizenship, the requirements for being considered part of Swedish society, and the imaginary and constantly re-constituted distances between old and new members of Swedish society and policy practices. These policies and their implementation are taking place against the background of the old and deeply embedded narratives about the Roma within public services (Cf. Montesino, 2002; Willems, 1997). In the construction of these narratives public health and social experts have played a crucial role. The taken-for-granted premises of the dominant narrative in policy and practices have their origin in the formulation of *the Gypsy Question,* where we find the basic premises for the 20th century interpretation of the situation of Roma citizens.

3. Taken-for-Granted Premises: The Gypsy Question

The structure of the evaluation of the Roma situation after WWII has to be understood in relation to the general content and structure that we find in other "social questions" (e.g. The Social Question of the late 19th century). Basic to this structure are the identification of a situation as unwanted, i.e. a social problem, and the subsequent demands for its solution. In order to solve the problem a number of strategies are elaborated and planned as progressive steps pointing to-

wards the final stage, when finally the problem should be solved. The contents of the "questions" represent a common attitude to social problems based on a plethora of taken-for-granted assumptions about what constitute normality and deviance.

The Gypsy Question as part of the wider discussion of the Social Question tells us a lot about the basic conditions for membership in a national community. The Social Question deals with how to make citizens of the poor, while our analysis of *the Gypsy Question* illustrates how authorities have envisaged this citizen making process in practice, when considering the admission of poor strangers in the nation-state organization.

The Gypsy Question epitomizes views and strategies for the social inclusion of Roma groups in different national contexts. It was originally formulated at the end of the 18th century by Heinrich Grellmann (1753-1804), who published the book *Dissertation on the Gipsies, being an historical enquiry, concerning the manner of life, economy, customs, and conditions of these people in Europe, and their origin* (Grellmann, 1787). This study and its thematic framework have had a strong influence on later policy and research concerning the Roma in different European countries. In Grellmann's study Roma people were for the first time considered potential members of society, that is, members who had to be "transformed" before they could be fully accepted. The contents of *the Gypsy Question* can be summarized in six basic statements (Marsh & Montesino, 2013):

1. *Gypsies* are one people.
2. The *Gypsies* are outsiders.
3. *Gypsies* should be transformed into "useful" citizens.
4. This transformation demands "special measures" and requires a long time.
5. Education/schooling is the key instrument in this process.
6. *Gypsy* children should be the principal objects of these measures.

These statements sustain that there is a question/problem, namely the Roma and their status as outsiders. This approach leads to a limitation in both the search for, and the production of knowledge. For instance any problems that occur in the process of policy implementation are automatically interpreted as caused by the Roma.

The statements have later been reproduced and adapted to national and local contexts whenever authorities of different kinds have taken an interest in the situation of Roma groups. The uncritical reproduction of century old statements have contributed to the still dominant perception of Roma as *one* people with common attributes (Lucassen, Willems, & Cottaar, 1998; Tervonen, 2010). Examples of this in Scandinavia are the social reports by Eilert Sundt (Sundt, 1859,

1862) in Norway and later those by Arthur Thesleff (Thesleff, 1898, 1911) in Finland and Sweden. Sundt's reports obtained mandatory status in the philanthropic organizations, initiating activities in Scandinavia at the start of the twentieth century, as well as in social reports arguing for public intervention (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2013). The statements of *the Gypsy Question* have in these reports been the taken-for-granted starting point (SOU, 1923: 2, 1956: 43).

In the following sections we elaborate on the consequences of this dominant narrative for the Swedish authorities' evaluation of and interventions towards Roma groups in the post-war decades. We argue that, in spite of changing official discourses, there is a strong continuity of policies in the practices elaborated by the welfare authorities during this period. The official Swedish policy discourse towards Roma (and other groups considered culturally and/or socially different) underwent a radical change in the 1980s when more or less enunciated *assimilation policies* were abandoned in favor for *integration policies* towards migrants and ethnic minorities. However, the Swedish political scientist Carl Dahlström (2004) differentiates between the *rhetoric* on immigrant policies and the *practice* of it; policy rhetoric has changed but practical policies show a remarkable continuity between 1964–2000 (Dahlström, 2004). This is confirmed when considering the practices developed since WWII to make newcomers "fit in"; migrant and ethnic minority groups have been seen as people with special needs in these processes (Montesino, 2012), "requiring special treatment to enable them to adapt to the Swedish society" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 280).

Despite changes over time in policy objectives, from assimilation, meaning *total adaptation to majority language and culture*, to integration, denoting individual *cultural, linguistic and religious freedom*, adaptation of immigrants and minorities has been the main goal. Furthermore, the practical adaptation programs has remained more or less the same, focusing mainly on language training in Swedish, information about Swedish society, support for language and culture, special labor market and adult education programs and support for "troubled urban areas" (Dahlström, 2004). It is thus clear that changing rhetoric does not necessarily correspond to changing practices in the area of immigration and minority policies. The question of what the notions of assimilation and integration actually implicate, and how the two differ, must in other words be answered in the following: it depends on which level the analysis aims at. In our analysis of social policies towards Roma in Sweden, we have focused on the underlying premises of these policies, that is, the administrative welfare routines and categories that were established in the development and implementation of policies. Welfare services developed practices based on perceptions of Roma as unable to manage their own incorporation to the Swedish society. Independently of policy frame,

this approach induces to practices that reproduce a view on Roma and immigrants as people who need *special social support* in their entry process.

In theory, for instance as expressed in formal policy documents, the difference between assimilation and integration is crucial as the former accepts no deviation from mainstream norms while the latter seems to support cultural difference. In practice, however, cultural difference has often been considered an obstacle (Cf. Bauböck, 1996; Westin, 1996). This contradiction is for instance expressed in the interventions targeting Roma (like those targeting immigrants). The contents of these interventions have remained much the same from the 1960s to the 1990s. The welfare services that work for the integration of Roma and other groups reproduce perceptions in which cultural difference is perceived as a social deviation. In our research, we draw the conclusion that the difference between assimilation and integration lays on the rhetoric rather than the operative level.

In this line of argument, we maintain that there is continuity in Swedish official policies towards Roma groups; the rhetoric has changed but the practices have been developed within the same policy paradigm formulated in the *Gypsy Question*. The six statements formulated in this question continue to shape the entire policy field where even newly created activities are reproducing and refining the contents of the old *Gypsy Question* (e.g. SOU, 2010). In the 1950s the incorporation of Swedish Roma was a part of the general policy towards groups identified as social deviants. The question of cultural difference was subordinated to this approach; cultural assimilation was considered the only strategy to overcome social disability.

The classification of Roma as socially disabled was later extended to newly arrived Roma groups and other migrants and refugees, who were incorporated into the already existing (and expanding) welfare practices (Iverstam Lindblom, Johansson, & Wall, 1978; Marta, 1979). In the 1980s when the official rhetoric focused on the integration of ethnic minorities and migrants, the contents of welfare practices remained (Dahlström, 2004). There is in other words a discrepancy between rhetoric and practice, which only becomes visible when juxtaposing normative with practical levels of policy work, and adding a historical perspective to the analysis of the politics of practice (Brodkin, 2010). Nowadays the term "Gypsy Question" is not used in policy documents at national level, but the statements are repeated in local policy projects, even in activities where Roma are represented among the staff. In the next sections, we elaborate on the main contents of the "question".

4. The Roma as One People

The assumption of the Roma being one people is based on the belief that the Roma consists of a group with a

common history and culture (Lucassen et al., 1998). This assumption is repeated in different studies, confirming the homogeneity and identity of the Roma as either a social or an ethnic group (Bunescu, 2014; Willems, 1997). In the Swedish context, this assumption was used at the end of the 19th century when the authorities started to distinguish between Resande (Travelers)—allegedly a result of a racial mix of Roma and native Swedes—and Roma as an ethnic group. The authorities at the time viewed the Roma as strangers to be expelled from the country, while Resande were seen as a specific category of Swedish vagrants and hence were exposed to compulsory and repressive policies. Roma groups arriving before the turn of the 19th century were described in public reports as undesirable outsiders (Montesino, 2002). When their entitlement to citizenship was recognized in the 1950s, the assumption of their identity as a homogenous group was reproduced, but at the same time the importance of the ethnical dimension was reduced and the Roma's *social* marginality in the Swedish welfare society was emphasized. As new citizens, they were registered as "one people"—the Swedish Roma ("svenska zigenare")—despite the fact that ethnic registration was officially abolished after WWII (Axelsson, 2011).

After proposals from local authorities for the need to establish a central register, the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen), created a small official national register (Socialstyrelsen, 1960). This national register was created using the information that the Board's in-house expert of the period, Carl-Herman Tillhagen, had gathered during the 1940s and supplemented while working on the 1954 inventory (SOU, 1956). The Board later recommended that the social authorities at the local level should use this national register for background information in all decisions involving the Swedish Roma. Later this register was used in a detailed and comprehensive socio-medical examination of Swedish Roma (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

The practice of registering the Roma in Sweden thus became institutionalized within different governmental contexts. A register was also accessible to a researcher, who, much later, reproduced the classification constructed by the authorities during the post-war decades (Cf Arnstberg, 1998). Such practices are still in use; as recently as 2013, the existence of an "unofficial" police Roma register was discovered, and later denounced, in Scania in the South of Sweden. This register can be seen as a consequence of the internalized and taken-for-granted premises in the Swedish authorities' evaluation of Roma groups as belonging to a certain problematic category. Registration was perceived in this process as a prerequisite to relocation. Hence, the police register must be interpreted as a continuation of the process of registering that was initiated at the national level after WWII, when the Swedish Roma became the target of author-

ity intervention (Westin, Wallengren, Dimiter-Taikon, & Westin, 2014).

5. From Outsider to Socially Disabled

The second statement of the *Gypsy Question*—Roma as *outsiders*—has likewise been the starting point for a great variety of studies in Sweden demanding public intervention. Among others Tillhagen (1965) substantiated this statement by arguing that the "traditional" Roma were victims of an unavoidable development in which they had become unable to survive without the support of the authorities (SOU, 1956: 43; Takman, 1976; Tillhagen, 1965). In Tillhagen's view, the Swedish Roma were left in a hopeless situation and lacked the appropriate resources to overcome this helplessness. Tillhagen and other researchers (e.g. Takman, 1966; Trankell & Trankell, 1968a) included Roma in the specific category, the *socially disabled*, developed in the 1950s and that provided a large number of arguments for intervention. In practice the classification of Swedish Roma as socially disabled permitted their entry in the administrative welfare systems (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

Consequently the introduction of this category into the conceptualization of social problems signified a further expansion of the social area; it justified new interventions and permitted the expansion of old practices. This expansion—the knowledge and technologies it drew upon and reproduced—was partly driven by actors in the medical field and/or in medical institutions (Berg, 2009; Montesino & Thor, 2009). Hence, the expansion of the social area was at the same time an expansion of the medical field into the social area, which indeed should not necessarily be interpreted as a medicalization of social problems but rather as part of the establishment of a new conceptual (and practical) space where the social and the medical fields were inseparably intertwined.

This development presupposed a reconceptualization of social problems, from repressive and openly excluding strategies to differentiated strategies developed to handle—i.e. socially relocate—citizens classified as deviants. During the decades following WWII the category of disability thus provided arguments for the admission of new citizens, as well as arguments for interventions towards "old" citizens considered socially deviant (Montesino, 2012). The scientific justification and legitimacy of such arguments was provided by both researchers and practitioners in the social field, hence giving way to the establishment of new dimensions in the understanding of social problems.

The political scientist Deborah Stone has elaborated on the decisive role played by the disability category in the development and expansion of welfare policies (Stone, 1984). In the early 1900s, disability became the administrative category that "entitles its members to particular privileges in the form of social aid and ex-

emptions from certain obligations of citizenship'' (Stone, 1984, p. 4). In this way, categorizing individuals as disabled provided a solution to the dilemma of redistribution. At the same time, the new approach established a temporal dimension in the political-administrative handling/management of the population; disability was a relative and "treatable" category, hence social relocation became possible. Originally borrowed from the area of clinical medicine, treatment and rehabilitation thus became the key instruments that would transform disabled individuals and groups into useful citizens and relocate them to productive areas of society.

This implied, in the words of Stone, that the authorities at the end of WWII "pushed new 'undeserving' to the side of 'deserving poor'" (Stone, 1984, p. 10), thus expanding the category of "deserving" and diminishing the category of "undeserving". The process added new social and medical dimensions to categorizations and classifications; from the previously dominant focus on *medical* aspects of the disability condition of individuals, disability was redefined to include also *mental* and *social* aspects. Social disability was related to different criteria: age (children and elderly poor), family situation (families with several children, single mothers), education (illiteracy), cultural belonging and cultural practices (minorities or non-European poor), etc. It was in this process of blurring boundaries that the incorporation of the new Roma citizens occurred in Sweden. Concretely, Swedish Roma were moved from the status of unwanted strangers to citizens' status and administratively relocated to the social services created to manage social deviance, i.e. the organizations formed to manage *disabled* citizens. In Sweden during the early post-war decades, such policies were primarily developed and implemented as part of the expansive labor market policies, including extensive vocational training programs (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

To be classified as socially disabled implied that the Roma (and other groups) were temporally entitled to social aid and to some other kinds of welfare support. At the same time it made them a target of interventions aiming at full incorporation into the obligations of citizenship, i.e. in the first place paid employment for adult men and compulsory schooling for children.

As disabled citizens the Roma thus became targets of rehabilitation activities, originally created by people processing organizations (e.g. sanatoriums and psychiatric institutions). In the decades following WWII, it was the expanding labor market authorities that organized most rehabilitation activities, notably within the rehabilitation treatment institution (arbetsvården) (Takman, 1962). Experts from the health and social area were engaged in these institutions to determine the extension and degree of the disability of individual adult Roma. The national authorities soon considered these experts to be the "Gypsy Experts" ("zigenarex-

perter") par excellence. Hence, social and medical experts became key persons in formulating contemporary and future policy plans concerning *socially disabled* citizens such as the Roma in the post-war decades (Montesino, 2002, 2012; Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

Expert knowledge has been fundamental in the development of Swedish policies concerning social problems during the twentieth century (Lundqvist & Petersen, 2010; Montesino, 2001; Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015). The experts engaged in the *Gypsy Question* after WWII were focusing on identifying the specific characteristics that made the Roma into disabled citizens, hence their alleged social disability was examined within different fields of expertise. The work of these experts resulted in a large number of professional opinions and detailed reports to inform authorities at local and national levels about the situation of Swedish Roma, individuals as well as families. Social workers focused on the economic situation and stated that Roma families were no longer self-supporting; social disability could also be the result of inadequate economic and social support. In socio-medical studies, researchers and social workers tried to calculate the degree of this disability, considering both medical and social factors (e.g. undernourishment, physical condition, disease, family situation, educational level, and housing situation) (Takman, 1962, 1976). Classifying Swedish Roma as socially disabled thus led to new, more detailed and comprehensive, social and medical evaluations, which would be used to develop public activities aiming at a social relocation of Roma citizens.

According to these socio-medical evaluations, adult Roma lacked the basic knowledge that was required for incorporation into the labor market. Illiteracy was identified as the most fundamental problem, which made the authorities develop interventions that would adjust these deficiencies. In line with this, experts proposed "rehabilitation measures", which included schooling and training to prepare adult Roma for the incorporation into the labor market (Takman, 1962). Professionals and experts from the educational and psychological fields subsequently added new aspects to the supposed disability of the Swedish Roma families, including parental capacities, children's learning capacities and women's maternal relationship to their children (Trankell & Trankell, 1968b). These reports conveyed the message that Swedish Roma were in need of external expert support: as parents they needed psychological supervision, while the Roma children were in need of special assistance to manage school as well as the family situation. This support should be provided by professionals, who supposedly would facilitate the entry of the Roma into the normality of Swedish society. How this evolved in the daily practices of local gatekeepers working in people processing organizations is the focus of the next section.

6. Managing the New Citizens

The incorporation of the category of disability into the administration of welfare led to the development of new institutions, e.g. the rehabilitation treatment institution discussed above. These institutions were seen as *transitional places* where the disabled had to be socially relocated into a new social context. Roma citizens classified as socially disabled had to adapt to the established routines, in many cases, developed for the treatment of other allegedly disabled groups, such as refugees (Montesino, 2012). In these institutionalized contexts Roma citizens would be prepared to fulfill the obligations of citizenship, i.e. to be educated in following the laws and adjusted to the mainstream norms concerning the settled population. Hence, citizenship obligations in this context spanned a settled lifestyle, employment within the regular labor market (mainly for the male adult Roma) and schooling for the children. To achieve these goals regarding the Swedish Roma, the authorities focused mainly on three different areas: housing, work training for adults and schooling for children. The *Gypsy Question* was thus reproduced in activities related to these specific intervention areas, which we discuss in the following sections

7. Housing

The housing situation of the group played a key role in the problematization of Swedish Roma after WWII.

> If the Gypsies are provided with permanent, adequate housing and the children are brought up in an understanding way from the very first years of life, one may presume that the 'Gypsy problem' will cease to be a problem *per se* within a couple of decades. (Takman, 1952, 1976, p. 11)

Housing was perceived as a precondition for both regular work and school attendance; hence the housing "problem" was the first to be formulated. Before the war Roma were not included in Swedish housing policies. Harsh local and national regulations of mobility and local populations' discriminatory attitudes against Roma contributed to the situation described in the social debate of the 1950s (Montesino, 2002; Westin et al., 2014). The permanent settlement of Roma was identified as a necessary condition to solve the "problem".

In line with this argument the housing situation of Swedish Roma was object of both social and medical studies during the 1950s and 1960s, and it also became the main area of interventions during these decades. In the 1950s, Roma families got permission by some local authorities to establish themselves in stationary camps. Later, in 1960, the state began to reimburse local welfare authorities for certain kinds of welfare support to Swedish Roma families, notably such support that would improve the housing situation (Montesino, 2002).

The National Labor Market Board also decided to create a special *housing improvement loan* intended for persons belonging to groups living in deficient housing conditions, such as Swedish Roma, refugees or immigrants. The authorities thus "solved" the housing problem mainly by establishing financial incentives for local authorities to include the Roma on local housing markets. The local officials who distributed these loans based their decisions on professional opinions made by socio-medical experts, who had evaluated the situation of individual Roma and Roma families (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015). Social and medical expertise thus contributed to defining the contents of the authorities' activities intended to make citizens out of the "disabled" Roma.

8. Work Training for Adults

Once most Roma could be defined as settled, a new problem emerged concerning their maintenance; as citizens without employment they lacked the financial means to pay for their housing. In line with this problematization, the National Labor Market Board assumed responsibility for Roma policies from 1958. Among the activities developed by the Board were the settlement loans discussed above. Paid labor was another mainstay in these activities during the 1960s. Authority interventions must, again, be based on knowledge. Hence, social and medical experts also evaluated the health of adult Roma in order to certify them as either able-bodied or physically disabled. These experts also recommended suitable interventions on the individual level, e.g. medical treatments or rehabilitation, literacy classes, driving instruction, professional training or other vocational education. Scientifically certified interventions like those mentioned, were thought to solve the "problems" for both the individual, the family as well as for society at large.

During the 1970s, the authorities' activities expanded and became even more detailed and invasive. The 1960s interventions had mainly concentrated on making adult Roma employable through education and not on their family and personal life. However, as these interventions were deemed unsuccessful, new psychological and pedagogical experts as well as other professionals claimed that the core of the problem was the Roma's lifestyle and ("dysfunctional") habits at home (Trankell & Trankell, 1968a). As a consequence, interventions during the 1970s focused partially on changing the Roma's private behavior as parents, wage earners and home makers (Ohlsson Al Fakir, 2015).

One of the instruments used to achieve these kinds of personal and familial changes was *Adaption to the daily life* (ADL). This was a method originally

developed by occupational therapists in the 1940s in order to take care of patients with chronic diseases (e.g. physical disabilities) and cognitive disabilities (e.g. "mentally retarded"), etc. In health institutions, ADL training had the aim of making the users competent in most simply daily matters (Marta, 1979, p. 15). The method was expanded during the 1950s to include social work with poor families. In such ADL work, social workers visited families and taught them the accepted routines for organizing family life, like getting up early in the morning, following established routines for mealtimes, sending children to school, etc. (Liljeroth & Niméus, 1971). The Swedish welfare authorities recommended that the practices developed in ADL training for individuals with cognitive disabilities should also be used in social work with Roma families (SOU, 1956: 43).

The intervention plan that was formulated in the 1970s took the form of an educational project intended to make Roma adults more attractive for the labor market. The educational plan included literacy classes and ADL courses for the adults, which were later imparted to Finnish Roma and other newly arrived Roma groups (Marta, 1979). To achieve the authorities' objectives, specialized social workers, so-called *family therapists,* worked with Roma families in their homes (Iverstam Lindblom et al., 1978). The family therapists were expected to have a mediating function between the Roma families and the authorities, focusing on transmitting the routines of what was considered a normal daily life. This mediating function was later extended to school teachers, neighbors and other social workers (Turunen, 1984). Today this function has been conferred to a new mediating category, so-called "brobyggare" (bridge builders), that is, Roma adults who are supposed to have the "cultural competence" required to mediate between members of their own ethnic group and welfare staff in different contexts. The notions of helpless and less competent, i.e. handicapped, Roma is obviously still prevailing in the politics of practice concerning Roma in Sweden. However, mediating strategies does not only apply to the (allegedly dysfunctional) relationship between Roma and local professionals, but also to the relationship between parents from different migrant groups and the teaching staff (Alfakir & Lindberg, 2004).

From the above related activities developed in the areas of housing and work, we draw the conclusion that gatekeepers, i.e. professionals and experts that worked with "deviant" (potential) citizens, assumed an *authoritative role* in the determination of how the entry process of Roma into Swedish welfare society initiated in the 1950s should be organized. They also contributed to define the content of the practical interventions. As a consequence multiple activities emerged and made the inclusion operation into *a prolonged processing of Roma as potential citizens*. Roma children were considered as strategically the most important target groups in these activities.

9. Schooling for Children

Towards the end of the 1960s, local authorities and experts maintained that, despite settled families and ongoing work training for adults, Roma children remained outside the school system. The identification of children as a special target group reflects a general perception of childhood as a period for investment in the future (Trankell & Trankell, 1967). This approach has justified the institutional violence (compulsory care and other maltreatment) against children from poor families and/or children from ethnic minorities (e.g. Westin et al., 2014). However, in the period under study, compulsory childcare started to be questioned and different methods of "care in the family" were development by the social authorities. Focus now moved to the schooling of the children and the compulsory elements assumed other forms.

The schooling of Roma children was part of a prolonged administrative process involving pedagogic expertise, teachers and social workers. In these processes, some Roma children were put in small groups, in so called "educational clinics", for children with learning disabilities. Other Roma children attended ordinary classes but they also had to attend the "educational clinics" (Trankell & Trankell, 1968a). In general, Roma children were considered children with special needs having enormous difficulties compared to most other children. At the same time the school authorities saw the school and education as the key strategy in solving the *Gypsy Question*.

To support the children in their schoolwork, a mobile school clinic was established in 1966 in Stockholm, with 35 children participating in the project (Román, 1992, p. 32). The aim of the mobile school was to help the children to adapt to the school routines and prepare them for the integration into normal school activities.

> The work in the mobile school consists to a large extent nowadays of repairing the effects of the Gypsy parents' inability to prepare their children for school (Trankell & Trankell, 1968b, p. 14)

As the authorities concluded in the 1970s that a project only aiming at school age children was not enough, kindergarten activities for Roma children were put on the agenda and outreach activities started to be implemented. These consisted of school staff from educational clinics for the older children working at home with both the children and their parents. Hence the parents also became targets of the educational work, which involved the initiation of yet new projects.

Managing the social relocation of the Roma in Swedish society resulted in an extensive administration.

New measures led to further activities in which the contents of the *Gypsy Question* were reproduced. Housing, work training and schooling of Roma became institutionalized activities where the assumed social disabilities of Roma were differentiated and reproduced. These activities were extended to the Finnish Roma immigrants in the 1970s and later to Roma refugees from Eastern Europe and former Yugoslavia; literacy teaching for adults, special support for school children, social projects for Roma youths, family guidance activities, etc., were established on a routine basis (Cf. Iverstam Lindblom et al., 1978; Kaminski, 1980; Marta, 1979).

10. Concluding Remarks

This article concerns the process were the Roma became a field of intervention for the Swedish Welfare State after the Second World War. In this process, individuals identified as Swedish Roma were constituted as a special category of citizens, whom had all aspects of their lives examined and used as the basis for intervention by the authorities. In their respective work areas, experts and professionals produced knowledge that confirmed that the Roma were a deviant social group, and their presupposed deviance was constructed in terms of social disabilities. In the process of knowledge production, the statements of the *Gypsy Question* were repeated and adapted to the contemporary understanding of social problems. The incorporation of the new citizens was thus integrated into the Social Question as expressed in the *Gypsy Question*. This was first described in local and national reports, later it was repeated in the specific practices developed to find the right methods to solve the question. The inclusion of the Swedish Roma was thus conceptualized as a social problem to be solved; the group's inclusion in the category of *disability* provided justification for the practices initiated during this period. The inclusion of the Swedish Roma turned out to be a long process that had to be planned and supervised by professional experts working at different levels and presenting arguments that had already been repeated for many decades. Their activities contributed to the expansion of the social area, and in this expansion the Roma were processed in different administrative contexts. We have explained this in terms of the logics of people processing organizations, which follow stepwise procedures. The aim of the authorities was the social inclusion of the Swedish Roma, but the inclusion process took another course: Swedish Roma were continuously labeled and treated as socially deviant citizens. When analyzing the history of Swedish Roma policies it is necessary to take into account how these policies contributed to the construction of excluding spaces within the organizational boundaries of the nation state. Focusing on these spaces gives a more nuanced view of the Swedish welfare state. With reference to the *Gypsy Question*, the period 1950 to 1970 is a good example of how a discourse may change while the practical contents of welfare policies remain the same. The prolonged process of Roma inclusion is primarily visible in the practices developed at the local level. We have focused on a period after WWII, but we see indications that the same ideas are reproduced in problematizations and local activities regarding the Roma and education today. From 1999, when the Roma were recognized as a Swedish national minority, policies and practices regarding their inclusion have been formulated in terms of *rights.* However, at the same time Roma continues in focus of interventions very similar to those of previous periods.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

The Power of Discourse: Reflections on the Obstacles to Social Inclusion of Roma in Serbia

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Abstract

The authors explore the discourses around the exclusion of the Roma in Serbia in two dimensions: social welfare sector and media reports. The paper is structured around the presentation of dimensions contributing to multiple deprivation of Roma in society (from education to labor market participation, social welfare and health care, as well as housing); a review of public policies directed toward the improvement of their position; and analysis of the discourses on Roma within the contexts of the social welfare sector and media reporting. A review of related literature and public policy documents was followed by a qualitative analysis of media reports as well as a review of the secondary sources regarding media discourses on the Roma. This was followed by evidence gathered from semi-structured interviews and discussions with stakeholders in the social welfare sector. The main conclusions of the paper point to the mutual reinforcement of the discourses on the Roma in the social welfare sector and media reports, with their subsequent mutual contribution to social exclusion.

Issue

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1. Introduction

Vivid European-wide debates and dilemmas that surround the concepts of social inclusion and exclusion of Roma are numerous. National adaptations of the concepts and strategies directed toward social inclusion have been confronted with various political, economic, social, ethical and other challenges and restraints, without any definite solutions, but with a convincing body of "good" and "bad" practices that could provide useful input for policy reforms. In Serbia, these challenges seem to be severe and hard to eradicate, especially regarding the social inclusion of Roma, one of the most marginalized, misinterpreted and mistreated cul-

tural and ethnic groups. The majority of these challenges seem to be shared, mainly with the neighbouring and ex-socialist countries, while few, if any, seem to be specific for the Serbian context, having mostly emerged during and after the transition of the 1990s. The main research questions of this paper are: what are the discourses on the social inclusion of Roma behind the official policies, as well as in mainstream media; and how do they contribute to the *status quo* regarding the Roma's unfavourable position. Therefore, the paper aims to present the official policies directed toward the social inclusion of Roma and also to analyse the "hidden" agendas supporting the survival of the *status quo.* The position of the Roma in Serbia, as pre-

sented in the first chapter of this paper, displays the Roma as traditionally occupying a disadvantaged position in Serbian society, not only compared to their position in neighbouring countries, but also to other minority groups in Serbia. Public policies directed toward the Roma are presented within a historical perspective from the socialist period onward. A certain continuum of policies has existed, although their major common feature seems to be a continuous implementation trap. The reasons for this range from the absence of real political commitment for the improvement of the Roma's position, to underdeveloped measures and limited resources, and overt and latent discrimination against the Roma. In trying to present a nuanced picture of the obstacles to the social inclusion of Roma, the authors confined their discourse analysis in this paper to social welfare and media reports, mainly due to the importance of the social welfare system in addressing the problem of exclusion, and the role of media in shaping public opinion towards the Roma. The chapter on media representation analyses the picture that the media have been presenting to the citizens, heavily relying on stereotypes, prejudices, and sometimes even a hate speech. The chapter on social welfare tries to depict the "positions" of the Roma and other stakeholders in this sector, mainly the professionals and organizations working *on their behalf* and *for their benefit*. The main conclusion of the paper is that there is a strong correlation between the dominant discourse about the Roma and their position in society, despite the obvious urgency to make a difference.

2. Poor and Socially Excluded: The Position of Roma in Serbian Society

According to the 2011 Census, 147,000 Roma live in Serbia and they constitute 2.05% of the total population (Republic Statistical Office [RSO], 2012). However, secondary sources state that this number is significantly underestimated, and that the number of the Roma living in Serbia is at least double. There are several main factors that contribute to the fact that Roma often avoid declaring their ethnicity: frequent migrations; significant numbers who are not registered and therefore are "legally invisible"; and, due to the history of discrimination, Roma often resort to "social mimicry" in an attempt to integrate themselves into the wider community, "willingly" abandoning their own identity. In Serbia, the position of the Roma has been traditionally disadvantaged, even though their status during the socialist period was much better than in other Eastern European countries. Yugoslavia was considered to be the most progressive of states, and Roma had more space to develop their cultural autonomy (Sardelić, 2011). Integration was preferred to assimilation and Roma enjoyed a more secure social status. Also, their political participation was comparatively higher. After

the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the transition to a market economy, their position changed for the worse, especially in terms of social exclusion and higher poverty rates, but also some stereotypes and prejudices have become even more emphasized. Studies show that the ethnic and social distance between them, expressed by the general population, is among the highest, along with that between Serbs and Albanians or Muslims/Bosniaks (Miladinović, 2008).

Poverty is widespread among the Roma population. It is multidimensional, usually accompanied by severe deprivation. It often results in social exclusion, which tends to be comprehensive, pervading and can be identified in almost every aspect of their lives. The main characteristics of their position are poor living conditions, poor educational levels, high unemployment rates and participation in the informal sector, as well as a low level of political participation that make them truly voiceless and, to use the language of postcolonial theory, subaltern. Roma who are internally displaced are the most disadvantaged (sub)group of all; they do not speak the Serbian language, and even their Roma dialect is quite different and not easily understandable in Serbia.

The vast majority of Roma live in more or less segregated, overpopulated settlements, generally lacking basic living conditions like clean running water and electricity, and usually unhygienic. There are 593 Roma settlements in Serbia, where nearly 70% of the country's total Roma population lives. Of those 593 settlements, 285 are in cities, while the rest are in suburban and rural areas. Only 28% were built according to formal plans, 25% were built illegally and 35% spread illegally from an originally planned core settlement (Cvejić, 2014). Spatial isolation has been seen as an important factor that contributes to further social isolation of Roma communities (Miladinović, 2008). During the past, resettlement of informal settlements was followed by evictions and a lack of adequate alternative housing, along with major human rights violations.

The right to education is recognized and guaranteed by several international documents and defined as a social, political and cultural right in the most important national legal acts. In spite of this, the educational structure of Serbia's Roma is traditionally unsatisfactory. Three main problems can be identified in this regard: Roma are not fully integrated in the educational system, they do not receive high quality education, and they are often exposed to discrimination and in some areas even to segregation. Almost one third of Roma do not have any education at all or have just a couple of years of basic education; one fifth has completed primary school, and only 11% and 1% graduated from secondary schools and universities or colleges respectively (Government of the RS [GRS], 2010). At the same time, the number of children covered by the preschool program is negligible (3.9% compared to 40% of

the children from the general population), which in combination with language barriers, is one of the main causes for poorer average performance of Roma pupils in schools, and one of the main factors that contributes to high percentage of their referrals into schools for children with special needs. Along with the language barrier, poor socioeconomic conditions significantly contribute to the poor educational performance of Roma children (Jovanović, 2013). It is estimated that around 50% of Roma parents do not send their children to schools due to a difficult material situation, and around 20% due to a lack of personal documents (GRS, 2010).

In 2007, the Ministry of Education recommended that schools provide for the enrolment of children whose parents do not possess a complete documentation, and in 2009, inclusive education was introduced. Despite initial positive results, largely limited to improved coverage and a higher enrolment rate, improvements will be temporary if not followed by more comprehensive approach (Jovanović, 2013). It is not sufficient to secure enrolment, but also to decrease drop-out rates and improve the quality of education. Drop-out rates from primary schools are extremely and comparatively high among Roma pupils and represent, among other things, a strong barrier to Roma children re-entering the mainstream education system. About 50% of Roma students drop out of school by the end of the fourth grade (Cvejić, 2014). Even though some progress has been made by means of affirmative action measures, the long term effects are yet to be seen.

An important source of Roma exclusion is the high unemployment and inactivity rate, despite their demographic characteristics and comparatively high proportion of young people. Low levels of education and vocational training, along with open or hidden discrimination by potential employers are considered to be the main reasons for Roma exclusion from the labour market, low levels of economic activity and lack of income generation. Roma are one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in the labor market, characterized by a very high unemployment rate, with extremely low quality of employment, and the prevalence of informal employment and engagement in the grey economy. The share of formally employed Roma is extremely low, and even where they are employed it is usually confined to informal, short term, unskilled and physically exhausting labor (Cvejić, 2014). Only 27.2% of Roma are economically active, while the unemployment rate is three times higher than amongst the general population (GRS, 2010), and only 30% of employed Roma are covered by social insurance (Cvejić, Babović, & Pudar, 2010).

Even though Serbia's Constitution and health-related laws assert that citizens and residents are universally entitled to health care, in practice this is strongly related to citizenship, residency and possession of healthcare booklets (Kaluski et al., 2014). Roma face several obstacles to achieving this, from incom-

plete coverage by health insurance, limitations of the health care package covered by the public insurance system, the introduction of a participation fee and a lack of information about their entitlements. In 2009, 8.1% of Serbia's population was uninsured, while the rate amongst Roma was 24.7% (GRS, 2010). A lack of healthcare booklets is strongly associated with residency status, which makes refugees and internally displaced persons (within the Roma population) particularly disadvantaged. To obtain a healthcare booklet, citizens must be registered with authorities and obtain a government identity card. This requires them to provide proof of permanent residence and any of the following: birth certificate, working booklet, citizenship card or IDP (internally displaced persons) card. "Since many Roma in Serbia do not have a permanent place of residence and lack the ability to be included in the recognized work force—they cannot exercise their right to health care" (Kaluski et al., 2014, p. 6). Their health indicators are lower in comparison to those of the general population. The mortality rate of Roma children is two times higher, than the national average, and 20% of Roma children are ill conditioned (compared to 7% of children from the general population), while life expectancy is 10 years shorter (Cvejić et al., 2010). However, the Serbian Ministry of Health and the National Health Insurance Fund are taking measures in order to improve the access of Roma to healthcare by simplifying whole procedure and separating eligibility to health services from citizenship (Kaluski et al., 2014).

3. Policies Affecting the Social Position of the Roma

During the past two decades, Roma rights have been receiving increasing attention from the public and policymakers, largely due to the EU integration process. This has had a direct effect on the state's policies towards Roma. Legal protection of Roma has been improving as a part of this process, with Serbia seeking to fulfil the conditions of EU accession, as specified in the Copenhagen criteria.[1] However, most studies show that the influence of the EU integration process is limited to mechanisms, rather than the actual conditions of minorities. Additionally, the sustainability of these measures is also questionable.

Current public policies affecting the social position of the Roma strongly reflect the policies conceived and implemented in Serbia during socialism (1945-1989) and transition (1990-2000). In that context, the post-war development of national policies concerning the Roma may be divided roughly into 3 phases, corresponding with the state's organization, underlying ideologies and dominant values in the public discourse of the respective period.

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/accession-criteria_en.htm

Arguably, socialist Yugoslavia[2] was an example of "how communist parties could actually have acceptable, progressive policies toward the Roma" (Barany, 2012, pp. 35-36). Policies at that time were aimed at Roma integration into society, first of all through education policies, through self-organization of Roma into autonomous cultural and social organizations, through agricultural land distribution policy, and finally through legally acknowledging their position as an ethnic minority. While the Roma were considered as an ethnic group in Yugoslavia and were granted equal rights, most notably in the 1974 Constitution, they were still, however, perceived as second-class citizens. The complex federal system of Yugoslavia was based on a hierarchy of rights, giving highest level of rights to its six constituent nations, while recognizing other nationalities at a lower level. This group of "other nationalities and ethnic groups," consisted of groups such as the Jews and the Roma (Sardelić, 2011). Despite the visibility of the Roma in the public sphere and the benefits they obtained based on equal rights, the practice saw some trends contradictory to those expected by policy makers. High numbers of Roma children were enrolled in schools for children with special needs, despite the actual absence of preconditions for this, while drop-out rates for Roma children were very high. Educational attainment among Roma was generally worse than among the rest of the population and also their living standard, despite improvement, was in general not satisfactory (Barany, 2012). Their membership within the Communist Party was extremely low, with only 0.15% of Roma (1,406 persons) joining (Mitrović & Zajić, 1998). Part of the explanation for the failure of socialist policies toward the Roma is probably that their position in that period was so underprivileged that socialist policies should have been more encouraging with stronger affirmative action in order to produce relatively similar outcomes as those for other citizens. Furthermore, ever since socialism, many public policies, not only those regarding the Roma, have been confronted with serious problems in terms of implementation, with consequent adverse effects on the position of targeted populations.

Serbia's aspiration to join the European Union, articulated more or less constantly only since 2000, has had a positive impact on the development of policies directed towards the Roma. Soon after this direction was adopted, Roma acquired minority status in 2002. In its policy papers, the Government officially acknowledged two facts, that were intuitively known, albeit without empirical evidence: the Roma were identified for the first time as one of the vulnerable groups in the 2003 *Poverty Reduction Paper* and also as a group exposed to discrimination and discriminatory actions in

the 2013 *Strategy for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination*. The Roma population has been targeted in many national strategies with various focuses, including the *2009 National Strategy for the Improvement of the Position of the Roma,* which was designed with the strategic aim of "improving the position of the Roma in the Republic of Serbia, with a view to reducing currently existing differences between the position of the Roma population and other inhabitants" (GRS, 2009, p. 1). The Strategy identified thirteen areas of concern regarding the position of the Roma, with education, health, employment and housing declared the most important. All thirteen chapters contained, among other things, recommendations for further actions, aims and priorities in the period that was to follow (GRS, 2009). However hard it was to reconcile different perspectives on the Roma "question" and to incorporate them into national policies (and legislation) along with the criteria "imposed" by the European Union, the issue of policy implementation proved to be even harder.[3] Notably, recent monitoring of the implementation of policies regarding the Roma conducted by several Roma organizations[4] focused on the *National Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Position.* The main findings are summarized below:

- None of 35 surveyed local communities had precise data and information about projects and funds directed towards the improvement of the position of the Roma on the local level in any of 13 areas identified in the Strategy;
- The majority of the surveyed local communities did not have Action Plans for the improvement of the position of the Roma. When the Action Plans for Education were present, there were no funds allocated for their realization. Action Plans for other areas identified in the Strategy were present very rarely;
- Extremely small number of measures provided in the Strategy has been realized, partially due to its recent enforcement, albeit with major breakthroughs in the area of Roma education (CPM et al., 2013, p. 9).

Along with these specific challenges, the challenge identified at all levels "still remains cooperation be-

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[2] Serbia was one of six Republics that constituted ex-Yugoslavia.

[3] One of the voices, that of one part of the Roma community in Serbia, finds out that the main cause of inefficiency of the *National Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Position* is the "absence of a decisive and unambiguous action against latent racism and discrimination" (Centar za prava manjina [CPM], YUROM Centar [YUROMC], & Bibija, 2013, p. 5).

[4] Stalna konferencija romskih udruženja građana (Permanent Conference of Roma Association of Citizens)—Liga Roma (League of the Roma) and Centar za prava manjina (Center for Minority Rights), Romski ženski centar "Bibija" (Roma Women Center "Bibija") and Yurom Centar (Yurom Center).

tween different sectors, as well as the implementation of adopted legal regulations and other documents" (CPM et al., 2013, p. 9). The expected finalization of the above-mentioned Strategy (and also of the *Decade of Roma Inclusion*), was seriously confronted with the challenge of limited effects in terms of its realization in Serbia, and connected with the creation of a study (at the end of 2014) to serve as the basis for a new Strategy from 2015 to 2025.

The Preliminary Study is very critical of the previous Strategy on several points: 1) its failure to determine the social, economic, educational situation and societal position of the Roma; 2) its failure to define overall paradigms and 3) its failure to establish the actual numbers of the Roma to be covered by the measures (Bašić, Jovanović, Čolak, & Ivanović, 2014, pp. 16-25). Therefore, the preconditions necessary to be fulfilled for the implementation of the Strategy and to be conceived for the following period are seen as the existence of a political will for its implementation, political and administrative responsibility and clear targeting (Bašić et al., 2014, pp. 37-39). An innovative approach is also offered through the proposed introduction of core values—freedom from deprivation, dignity, justice and human rights, while the governing principles expected to be useful are: 1) inclusion, 2) decentralization, 3) affirmative measures, 4) participation and subsidiary responsibility, 5) rationalization, efficiency and effectiveness (Bašić et al., 2014, pp. 39-45).

4. Discourses about the Roma in the Social Welfare Sector

Being the last resort for the vulnerable, the social welfare sector with its cash benefits and social services is one of the sectors the most relevant to the social inclusion process. In Serbia, means-tested social welfare is available where citizens have no employment options or are not able-bodied. Strictly speaking, the social inclusion concept was adopted only recently in the public policy governing the social welfare sector; it was accepted upon the intensification of the harmonization of the national legislation with the EU *acquis* (Vidojević, 2012). At the beginning of 2009, a proposal of a list of indicators for the monitoring of social inclusion was prepared. Its purpose was to serve as a basis for the intended creation of the *First National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction,* which was followed by a *Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction* released at the end of 2014. Meanwhile, in 2011, a new *Law on Social Welfare* was enacted, incorporating the concept of social inclusion as its objective (article 2 of the Law on Social Welfare).

Soon after, social exclusion has become one of the core areas of social policy in the national context. Based on the recommendations from the *Annual Progress Report of the European Commission for Serbia* in 2013, vulnerable social groups in Serbia started/continued to incorporate "women, children, persons with disabilities, Roma, refugees and internally displaced persons and the LGBT community" (GRS, 2014, p. 44). The obvious reasons for Roma "membership" among these vulnerable groups are their permanently and extremely high poverty rates, along with severe social marginalization. The progress made in poverty reduction in Serbia during 2002–2006 did not have a proportionally positive impact on the Roma, while the current economic crisis has aggravated their situation and revealed the resistant nature of inequalities between them and rest of the population. After the outbreak of the crisis, it has become evident that heightened concerns about the consequences of long-lasting and structured deprivation and social exclusion of the Roma cannot be overstated, calling for more efficient and effective policy measures.

However, the two-decade long transformation of the national social policy and consequent programmes and measures shows fundamental changes in the discourse on poverty and social exclusion of the Roma. Contrary to the socialist period, during which the state was supposed to care (or to "care") about them, the transition period introduced paradigms of personal responsibility, transferring a significant part of this obligations to the people themselves and their families. The normative context of social policy has changed to a great extent, especially in terms of dealing with social welfare benefits and services.

The new paradigm of social welfare legislation follows the discourse on the activation of (able-bodied) poor, requiring from them to find employment and depriving them of the right to cash benefits during any 3-month period in a year.[5] The repercussions of this shift for the Roma population are numerous, "ranging from eviction, exploitation, and dehumanization to difficulties for the Roma to effectively enact their legal citizenship rights" (van Baar, 2011, p. 191). With an unemployment rate of 17.6% and employment rate of only 40.6% among the general population (RSO, 2014), finding a job seems to present a serious challenge in the national context, not only for the Roma, but in particular for the Roma. Additionally, when taking into account the notorious fact of their dominant employment in the grey (informal) economy, it is almost impossible for Roma to comply with the requirements about official employment. The regulation on the number of family members that can be taken into account when determining the level of the social welfare cash benefit is also unfavourable for them: the number

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[5] The right to cash benefit for an able-bodied beneficiary is limited to 9 months during a year. After that, in the following 3 months, they cannot effectuate this right. Upon the termination of the 3-month period, they can claim the right again (article 85 of the Law on Social Welfare).

of family members is limited to six and the highest level of cash benefit is that for six-member families. A similar "solution" is found in the regulation of child allowances—the maximum number of children in one family eligible for the child allowance is limited to four. Bearing in mind that the Roma families and/or households are frequently extended ones (with grandparents, parents and children) and that they usually have more children, they are to a certain extent deprived of this right. The level of benefits is arguably the most contested issue; according to the latest available data in February 2014, cash benefit and the child allowance amounted to RSD 7,628,[6] and RSD 2,568 respectively (Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy [MLESP], 2014), while the minimum and average salaries amounted to RSD 18,400 and RSD 44,057 respectively (Paragraf, 2014). Thus, a Roma family of two parents and four (but also more) underage children is able to receive an amount a bit higher than the minimum salary and somewhat lower than half of the average salary. On the other hand, child allowance represents 13% of the minimal salary and only 5% of the average salary.

Contrary to the clear findings from poverty and social exclusion surveys on the average poverty rates among the Roma population, there are no official data about the numbers of the Roma taking advantage of the right to social welfare benefits and child allowances. There are, however, public documents[7] pointing to many obstacles for the Roma when trying to claim their social welfare rights. Most frequently, they are confronted with the problem of the lack of personal documents. The process of claiming the social welfare benefits in the national context is extremely complex as it requires the compilation of numerous documents as evidence of the person's living circumstances. This is especially hard for Roma who have returned to Serbia based on readmission agreements, since they frequently do not have a single document on their status. However reasonable the absence of the data about the number of the Roma claimants, this in turn creates room for the creation and survival of certain myths. An over-representation of the Roma within social welfare beneficiaries would not be astonishing, due to two facts already mentioned: they are exposed to poverty

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[6] The rules on the calculation of the level of benefits are such as follows: a single person in a family can receive the mentioned amount of RSD 7,628 (MLESP, 2014); All other eligible adult members in the family can receive half of this amount and all eligible children (i.e. persons under the age of 18 years of life) can receive one third of this amount (article 88 of the Law on Social Welfare).

[7] Ombudsman's Report of 2014 on the implementation of the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Position* and the Report of 2013 on the *Monitoring of the implementation of policies directed toward the Roma* by the Center for Minority Rights, YUROM Center and Bibija offer a lot of examples on current inability of the Roma to claim their rights.

and above average social exclusion; and their population is young, i.e. a lot of the Roma children (who are therefore non able-bodied) could be social welfare beneficiaries.[8] A fact often neglected in public discourse generally is that the level of social welfare benefits does not enable their beneficiaries to escape from poverty and social exclusion. "Depending on the type and characteristics of households, monthly transfers should be raised by 33–45% in order to reach the poverty threshold" (GRS, 2014, p. 182).

However, the processes of the transformation of society have created complex public attitudes towards the poor and socially excluded, which is a mixture of compassion and antagonism, accompanied by rigid and frequently ambivalent assumptions and stereotypes about them. When a Roma person is added into this context, the process of "othering" becomes simpler for the domicile population (due to their ethnic background), while public attitudes become increasingly complex and can be briefly described as victimization of a victim, by labelling the Roma as the "deserving poor." Additionally, this notion, when applied to the Roma, was recently expanded as to include the so-called "transgressing poor"—along with the deserving aspect of poverty, it includes law breaking in cases of denied benefits, for the purpose of surviving (Standing, 2010). Because of their poverty, the Roma are seen as dependent, at least materially/financially. Professionals working in the social welfare sector are not always immune from overt and/or latent discrimination against their Roma beneficiaries. Speaking of them sporadically in terms of "generational users of welfare benefits," "phonies capable of doing anything in order to get the money from the state," "those who benefit from being the minority," some do not contribute to the deconstruction of deeply rooted stereotypes and even add to further confusion, discrimination and hostile attitudes of the public. Such attitudes of professionals contribute to the survival of the picture of the Roma's material dependency and also add another, even more dangerous component; it is their psychological dependence, exactly through its manifestation of "a dependent role which may be clinging, demanding, manipulative, pleading, or any number of these things by turns" (Spicker, 2011, p. 66). Then, the extreme and generational powerlessness of the Roma becomes neglected instantly, as well as the structural causes for such a situation. Such public "amnesia" and "excuses" for discrimination originate from the idea of reciprocity in social relations and exchange theory. Reciprocity describes the expectation of a person receiving something that they should do or not to do something in re-

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[8] The percentage of children within cash social welfare beneficiaries accounts for 36.8%. Their participation is disproportional to their participation in the overall population of only 17.6% (GRS, 2014, p. 181).

turn, based on a claim that there are no rights without obligations. Exchange theory goes on further, with the moral obligation toward the one who is giving—"it is morally improper…; to break off relations or to launch hostilities against those to whom you are still indebted"; (moral) supremacy of the giver over the receiver— "a relationship in which the giver is more powerful than the receiver, because he can control aspects of the receiver's fate;" and finally there is a possibility of sanctioning the receiver—"the imbalance of power inherent in dependency may be used to the disadvantage of the dependent person" (Spicker, 2011, p. 67). On the one hand, misrepresentations of the position of the Roma by some professionals in the social welfare sector can be linked with traditional arguments against public welfare provision. Public welfare is paternalistic, while user perspectives and bottom-up approaches to policy making have only recently entered the agenda. All public services in the social welfare sector are systems of exchange, as per Pinker's classical essay *Social Theory and Social Policy*, accompanied potentially with stigma (Pinker, 1974). It is commonly believed that means-testing is stigmatizing, at least more than the insurance principle. "Above all, means-testing and other schemes based on selectivity criteria fail to satisfy any principle of social justice worthy of the name, because they tend not to reach those most in need of income support, a fact that research around the world has consistently demonstrated" (Standing, 2010, p. 58). Additionally, claiming the right to social welfare benefits requires the claimants to present arguably more documents than necessary. Consequentially, the Roma's auto-perception is frequently associated with stigma and humiliation, feeling of being intruded, loss of privacy and denied self-dignity, etc.

The above-mentioned attitudes among a section of the public and in part of the professional community characteristic of rigid and traditional views on minorities and social welfare beneficiaries are in a sharp contrast with the evidence-based statements in the recently released *Second National Report on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction*: "the position of the vulnerable social groups has been significantly improved…, but there is the need to make additional steps in certain areas. The process of improving of the Roma minority position has been continued, but the prescribed measures should be coordinated in order to have better effects in the practice. The Roma minority inhabitants have been still exposed to discrimination, especially regarding claiming their rights to social welfare and health care….special attention should be paid to the rights and inclusion of the vulnerable social groups, especially the Roma, and effective implementation of regulations on the rights of minorities, anti-discriminatory approach to minorities in the whole country…" (GRS, 2014, p. 20).

Clearly, there are many narratives in the public sec-tor consistent with the above-mentioned statement, first of all coming from professionals taking on other roles in their relations with the Roma beneficiaries. Secondly, some of the most distinguished examples are the Ombudsman and his office and the Commissioner for Protection of Equality who frequently raise their voices against discrimination toward the Roma and their disadvantaged position in society. The Ombudsman has pointed out many obstacles to the social and economic integration of the Roma and inconsistent policy measures aimed at the poverty reduction and actual realization of equality between the Roma and other inhabitants. He goes on to conclude that the affirmative action prescribed by the Constitution has not yet been operationalized to a sufficient level and thus does not present a way to overcome the extremely unfavourable social and economic position of the Roma (Ombudsman, 2014). The majority of claims about discrimination lodged with the Public Representative for Equality have been based on disability, but those based on ethnic background follow close behind, frequently referring to the discrimination related to the public services (Commissioner for Protection of Equality, 2014).

Other advocates of the poor and socially excluded Roma consist mainly of civil society organizations and non-Roma human rights activists. Frequently, it seems that they have much more understanding and empathy for the Roma and use more and authentic empowering approaches, encourage volunteers to support the Roma, mobilizing the public against Roma hardships and presenting consistently more conscious attitudes in public and in professional practice. Their activities range from the legal representation of the Roma to the everyday support of Roma children in the schools, empowering Roma women to confront domestic violence, etc. In their activism, NGOs apply different discourses, with three of them quite explicit and unequivocal: 1) the Roma are the most disadvantaged victims of discrimination for which 2) the state is to blame and 3) the Roma have rights that need to be politically recognized and protected (Schneeweis, 2009). In their activism, "NGOs are usually torn between different pressures, dynamics and loyalties, trying to formulate (support) solutions to the problem of the Roma which are in harmony with their commitment to the grassroots and to traditional and cultural stability; in agreement with their own organizational mission for social collaboration and participation; and in accord with national and international official political stance on integration" (Schneeweis, 2009, p. 270).

However, there are also arguments that could be directed against the proper representation of the Roma by the civil sector. There are several questions that need to be addressed. First and the most important of all is who has the legitimacy to be the voice of the Roma and represent their interests; NGO activists and

leaders are often perceived as "experts" in that field, but unfortunately "professionalization, as part of an NGO-isation process, might not lead to more participation for the 'target group' or the grassroots. 'Project logic' pushes towards upwards vertical participation and not downward horizontal participation, and can lead to further concentration of power in the hands of administrators and technocrats. NGO-isation leads to transformation of a cause for a social change into a project with a plan, timetable and limited budget, which is 'owned' for reporting and used for the purposes of accountability *vis-à-vis* the funders" (Jad, 2010, p. 200). Even though NGOs are often presented as passive recipients of external influence, at the mercy of the whims of donors, they also have the power to manipulate, renegotiate, and legitimize donor agendas using funds earmarked to further their own agendas (Jad, 2010). Also, there are concerns about effectiveness of the strategies and approaches applied by NGOs. The main challenge to their functioning is finding financial sources, the lack of which can reduce their activities to a project type. Thanks to the *Decade of Roma Inclusion*, many national and international donors have been active in the field and Roma protection has been collecting huge financial funds, training and expertise. Therefore, the practice saw increased, not necessarily honest, devotion of civil sector organizations to projects aimed at the Roma inclusion.

Roma themselves and their organizations within the social welfare sector are rather rare. Distinguished Roma activists sometimes do not use their potential to the best for the improvement of the position of "ordinary" Roma who are confronted with a daily fight to survive and have very low capacity for (self)organization. According to the data of the Roma Information Centre, there are 72 Roma organizations in total in Serbia (Roma Information Centre [RIC], 2015). Where they exist in the social welfare sector, they fight mainly against poverty, for sending children to school and compiling necessary documents in order to be able to claim their rights.

The Roma are underrepresented as professionals in the social welfare sector, even though their role would be arguably extremely beneficial. This can be extrapolated from the data on achievements of the Roma health mediators engaged by the Ministry of Health. Within the *Programme for the Improvement of Health and Health Care of the Roma,* 75 Roma health mediators have become active in 59 local communities, dealing with activities aimed at increased health care access for the Roma (GRS, 2014).

5. Media Representation of the Roma

The mass media have the power to represent the world according to their own standards, and their responsibility for the way that certain social groups are presented lies in the fact that very often images of certain people, events and relationships are built on the basis of simplified elements that carry certain meanings (Kleut, Drašković, & Prodanović, 2012). Media, among other things, contribute to continuing of reproduction of hegemonic ideologies, but also, more importantly, to positioning individuals, or even whole groups, in accordance with such ideologies (Sardelić, 2011). Therefore, the media has the power to reinforce racial and ethnic inequalities and barriers in society.

The role of the media in creating and/or shaping attitudes toward the Roma is substantial. Recent research has indicated that media reports represent the main source of information about the Roma for the more than 60% of citizens of the Republic of Serbia. The research also showed that Roma are perceived as the most discriminated against group in the society but, at the same time, people were not sufficiently aware of how severe their living conditions are (CESID, 2013).

Stories about Roma are generally produced by non-Roma media and are typically stereotypical. This has many implications for the way the Roma are represented. The image of the Roma created in the mainstream media fits into a larger "ambiguous" picture about equality and diversity in contemporary Europe. Representations range from images of poverty and crime to romanticizing the Roma *other* as inherently nomadic and bohemian ("symbolically privileged, and socially marginalized") (Schneeweis, 2009). This approach draws on a long tradition of literary and artistic representation dating from the era of romanticism. The Roma are portrayed through a musical, artistic, free spirited, romantic and bohemian character. This image was pervasive during communism, but since the transition it has been slowly abandoned.

Even though we cannot speak about public and direct display of discrimination, prejudice and hate speech in the media, various strategies are used to get around this. Stereotyping is one of the strategies that the media frequently uses while representing the "other", which is proven to be very successful in preserving positions of power and influence within society. Stereotypes are never neutral, but strongly motivated by certain interests. The notion of stereotyping means that there is a continuous repetition of certain images regarding specific social groups, which includes taking a set of characteristics that could be easily understood believing that they belong to a certain group, and then based on this creating an =image of the whole group (Mek Kvin, 2003, p. 183, in Kleut et al., 2012). There is a strong correlation between the representation of the Roma, and the representation of the poor, including the application of two different strategies with similar outcomes: the strategy of symbolic marginalization and the strategy of symbolic normalisation. The first strategy is to represent the other through stereotypes, as extremes within the society, lacking

basic living conditions. The second strategy tries to represent them as a totality of society, without a name, reduced to numbers and statistics (Kleut et al., 2012). Using the strategy of symbolic marginalization, poverty is presented in its extreme form. Also, bureaucratic statistical vocabulary is usually used, without in-depth analysis and explanation of the context. The poor do not have an opportunity to articulate their own problems, to tell their own stories. With a denial of the subjectivity to the poor, it is suggested that they are not capable dealing with their own problems, and that they are completely dependent on the state (Kleut et al., 2012). Stories are usually accompanied by images of deprivation, determinism and victimization that have a tendency to become a repetitive story, while their poverty usually becomes an ethnic issue. The strategy of marginalization represent poverty as a problem of a small group of people. While the strategy of symbolic normalization, the poverty is generalized as the problem of the whole population of the Republic of Serbia. This strategy corresponds with the deepest feelings of the citizens, following the principle of "anti-stereotyping" and it is characterised by the general feeling of poverty.

The representation of Roma strongly relates to the strategy of a symbolic marginalization, which is based on an oversimplified and stereotyped images where behavior is represented as a deviation from the social norm and is followed by visualizations which make these images more striking, creating an impression that only a limited group of people are facing it. With the minority, represented as "they", the mass audience cannot identify and for the majority of the audience denying the position of interested party, and therefore the interest to initiate broadening the discussion on poverty reduction, but also on the roots of poverty.

Regardless of the strategy used, the poor are usually denied of their own definition of reality in much the same way as the Roma. What makes the situation more complicated is the tendency of professionalism decrease in the media, manifested, among other things, through sensationalism and political instrumentalisation (Simeunović Bajić, 2011).

Although discrimination against the Roma takes a wide range of different forms, only the most severe expressions of violence attract media attention. When Roma are the subject of violence, media are usually indifferent or show signs of the "spiral of silence".

6. Conclusion

The Roma did not become marginalized and discriminated against after the transition. Rather, their marginalization and discrimination was constructed based on elements of the approach taken towards them during the socialist period (Sardelić, 2011). Still, compared to the subsequent periods, the socialist period of the development of policy towards the Roma could be described as positive, while the later periods could be qualified as completely the opposite. Serbia's transition during the 1990s was characterized by the denunciation of positive socialist values and principles and their translation into the liberal ones. The liberal paradigm of personal responsibility for one's own life and choices did not favour any policies in support of the Roma (or other vulnerable groups in society). Additionally, the specific situation of a total economic collapse and war in the country's immediate vicinity (in which Serbia participated), and the large-scale poverty which accompanied it, favoured the flourishing of extremely discriminatory practices and high levels of intolerance directed against the Roma. In this period, there was no major policy development regarding the Roma and previously enacted policies were not implemented. Therefore, this period presented a kind of vacuum with little devotion to minority rights in general. During the last two decades, however, Roma rights have become an important part of the policy debate and reform, largely due to EU integration process. Certain mechanisms are in place but still need to be put in motion. Along with policy reform, the dominant narrative on the Roma, and their media representation, needs to be fundamentally transformed.

Two recommendations for the improvement of the position of the Roma within the social welfare sector could be to try to make stronger and more reliable ties between the public and civil sectors, with the participation of the Roma community, by including their perspectives. This would be in line with the efforts aimed at creating opportunities for beneficiaries to make their own contribution. Another, compatible line would be their activation. However, the activation concept in the social welfare sector that was presented in the paper has severe disadvantages to the beneficiaries and preferably the state should be activated prior to its citizens.

The media can have an important role in changing the perception on the Roma. So far, media reports have been based on stereotyping, heavily relying on "poverty porn", which has contributed to maintaining the *status quo* when it comes to the Roma's position in the society. The Roma are kept in a representation mode that is different, separate and less civilized, and they are usually depicted as poor thieves and beggars; immoral and amoral with socially unacceptable lifestyles; inactive, dependent and lazy. Pictures that are used for visualization usually present poor living conditions; houses surrounded by garbage and waste, usually without in-depth analysis of the context.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

Questioning the Policy Framing of Roma in Ghent, Belgium: Some Implications of Taking an Insider Perspective Seriously

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Abstract

The recent flow of Roma immigrants to Western Europe has caused a lot of societal and political discussion. Initiatives and policy measures are introduced at the European and national or local level in order to deal with this situation. This article explores to what extent experiences and self-perceptions of Roma immigrants in Western Europe correspond with the constructed discourse in terms of "Roma inclusion". In policy practices, there seems to be a tension between a willingness to strengthen the particular identity of Roma on the one hand ("targeting"), and a desire to fit those people into mainstream society on the other hand ("mainstreaming"). Based on a case study in the city of Ghent (Belgium) with a small sample of in-depth interviews, the authors explore what an insider perspective may add to the construction of policy. Conclusions relate to the experienced gap with mainstream society, the identification with and definition of the "Roma" concept as well as intergenerational differences. Finally, the argument is taken a step further, and it is wondered how an insider perspective may also question policy. By relating policy conceptualisations of Roma to (self) identification processes, suggestions are made to redefine the meaning of inclusion.

Keywords

Ghent; inclusion; insider perspective; mainstreaming; Roma; self-identification; social policy; targeting

Issue

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1. Introduction

In 2004 and 2007 the European Union was extended to a number of Central and Eastern European countries, i.e. Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic (2004) and Romania and Bulgaria (2007). It is in particular from some of these countries (Hungary, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Bulgaria) that many Roma people have migrated—and increasingly continue to do so—towards Western Europe, mainly into cities. This increasing migration gives rise to much political de-

bate[1], as Roma are considered to have a very particular way of living which it is feared will infringe on social stability. Additionally, they are related to numerous social problems that have emerged or grown since their arrival in Western Europe by policy makers or in the media, such as (particular forms of) criminal behaviour, extreme poor housing conditions, noise and litter inconveniences, begging, etc. Consequently, a lot of action is taken at various policy levels, not least at the Eu-

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[1] See, for example, the Roma evictions by French president Sarkozy in 2010 and all forthcoming discussions (cf. Nacu, 2012a; Tran, 2010; Traynor, 2010).

ropean level. In this complex situation, a recurring question of decisive importance is to what extent the migrations of Roma are different from other ones. Targeted measures are often legitimised by the particularity of Roma. In doing so, reference is made to an ongoing history of diaspora, exclusion, discrimination and even persecution (Fraser, 1995, 2000; Hancock, 1997); to specificities of the Roma culture (Fraser, 1995; Hancock, 1992; Liégois, 2007); or to the absence of a homeland of the Roma people, often in relation to a problematic social position in their countries of origin (e.g. Bancroft, 2005; Ringold, Orentstein, & Wilkens, 2005). The field of tension between a need to confront social problems related with Roma on the one hand and the willingness to recognise Roma identity on the other hand, is very present here. It is in this tension the research at hand can be situated.

In this article, the question to what extent experiences and self-perceptions of Roma immigrants in Western Europe correspond with the way they are represented in contemporary policy discourses, will be further explored. As such, we build upon the significant contribution of Nacu (2012b), which stressed the centrality of the way in which identity has an impact on the politics of migration at European, national and local scales. The "ethnicisation" of Roma identity in policy measures influences the way these people contribute to the construction of this identity themselves. Throughout their contacts with public institutions, Roma are subject to struggles of definition and framing in which they use everyday strategies to try to turn the situation to their advantage. The pragmatic "use" of identity as constructed in policy may deliver benefits on the short term (e.g. by receiving support from target group oriented measures towards Roma). On the long term, however, there is a risk that this "use" will reinforce stigmatisation schemes. This process, of course, is not unidirectional. Beyond the question how a constructed identity shapes the politics of Roma migration, it may be questioned how self-definitions of Roma may in turn be meaningful to conceive of policy differently. What is at stake, then, are Roma's own attributions of meaning behind outer behaviour. The insight that the way the "Roma problem" is framed and reproduced in society is the most important obstacle hindering Roma political development (Vermeersch, 2002), compels us to take such an insider perspective seriously. Doing so, Roma's own definitions of their identity (and culture) may serve as a step-up to changes in the present socially constructed meaning-granting framework. Still, this commitment is not an easy task. In relation to the search for a proper understanding of the insider perspective, Bridges (2009, p. 120) refers to the need for an "ethical sensitivity" which outsiders need to bring to an enquiry into the experience of the other, i.e. the insider. Amongst other things, he mentions "the need for respect for and sympathy with oth-

ers' desire to construct their own understanding of their lives and practice; caution about importing external frameworks of understanding which might be oppressive rather than emancipatory; and sensitivity in negotiating alternative and especially threatening understandings". Elsewhere, he takes the argument for taking an insider perspective into account a step further, recognising that "respect, care and dialogic relations are not enough. Research must be conducted in such a way that it contributes actively to the creation of a more just society" (Bridges, 2001, p. 383). He proceeds by saying that "the claim '*nothing about us without us*' ought to be an ethical as well as an epistemological truism in educational research as a statement about the kind of relationship which should obtain between researcher and participant" (Bridges, 2001, p. 384). Insider understanding is not only about whose voices are listened to, but also about who is entitled to research them and how this can be done.

The starting point of our quest was an interest in what the people at whom initiatives are targeted have to say about the discussions they are subject to. Plenty is written on adequate policy strategies, but Roma themselves are only scarcely heard in the debate. An important presupposition of this position is that at this point the definition of "Roma identity" is to a certain extent open in the sense that it can be reframed or reconstructed differently. Our research focuses on how ethnic Roma who have recently migrated from Eastern Europe (*in casu* the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic) towards Western Europe (*in casu* Ghent), define Roma identity *themselves*. Two research questions were central to our project: 1. How do recently immigrated ethnic Roma in Ghent define their own identity and how/in what sense do they relate to "being Roma"; and 2. How does this self-identification correspond with currently predominant policy discourses towards Roma?

In what follows, we first provide some information concerning the research context. The situation of Roma in Belgium and the city of Ghent in particular will be described shortly, as well as local policy initiatives. We then proceed to the empirical part of our research, which consists of an in-depth case study with a limited amount of in-depth interviews. Based on our findings, we will argue that an insider perspective has an important added value not only for developing policy towards these people, but also for questioning these policy measures.

2. Methodology

2.1. The Research Context: The City of Ghent, Belgium

2.1.1. Roma in Belgium: A State of Affairs

It is estimated that there are about 30,000 Roma in

Belgium (Council of Europe, 2012)[2], although it must be stressed that there are no official numbers, as ethnic background is not recorded in the Belgian public administration system. Further research, moreover, shows that this number is going around since over five years and was taken over from older figures whilst most migrations are said to have taken place during the last few years (mainly since the expansion of the European Union as mentioned earlier)[3]. The Flemish expertise centre on migration and integration (since 2011, "Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie"; previously, "Vlaams Minderhendencentrum") provides a figure of 15,000 to 20,000 for Flanders and Brussels (Vlaams Minderhedencentrum, 2010), which fits quite well with the earlier, but as they mention themselves this number also goes back to 2003 (Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie, 2012). Still, there is a lack of more nuanced and relevant information.

Roma[4] in Belgium live in well-defined geographical spaces, mainly in the major cities (Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent are said to count for 90 per cent of the present Roma) but a few communities live in smaller municipalities too (e.g. Sint-Niklaas and Diest). Roma populations in these various cities can rather clearly be distinguished based on their countries of origin. While in Antwerp (as in Sint-Niklaas and Diest) most Roma come from former Yugoslavian states (mainly Kosovo, Macedonia and to a smaller extent Serbia and Montenegro), in Brussels it are mainly Rumanians. Ghent, in its turn, has a large population of Bulgarian and Slovakian Roma. Apart from these identifiable cultural and religious differences, the legal status between various groups may differ too. People stemming from other countries within the European Union can travel to Belgium freely, and settle under particular conditions[5]. This is not the case for people who come from Kosovo or Macedonia, for example, as a result of which these people often reside illegally in the country. These dif-

ferences evidently have consequences for the particular living circumstances of various groups (Decoodt & De Reu, 2009; Vlaams Minderhedencentrum, 2010).

2.1.2. The Interesting Case of Ghent

The city of Ghent seems an interesting case to further investigate for various reasons. First, the inflow of Roma is (albeit not in absolute numbers) probably nowhere as visible as it is in Ghent[6]. Second, this inflow consists of largely differing groups (cf. infra), which gives rise to a very particular situation in relation to group identification. Finally, a lot of initiatives towards Roma people are taken in Ghent, both by policy makers and NGOs. The foregoing properties explain why many discussions in the wider public debates in Flanders find their starting point in this city. The Roma living in Ghent can rather clearly be divided into three groups originating from various countries: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, and Rumania. Although some similarities can be observed, their motives of migration as well as their living circumstances, habits, integration patterns and survival strategies are to a certain extent different[7]. It is moreover remarkable that there is hardly—if not, any—communication between these three groups. Bulgarians generally seek alliance with the large Turkish (non-Roma) community in the city. It mainly concerns Turkish-speaking Bulgarians who are employed and housed by Turkish immigrants. Although their working and living conditions are in many cases abominable, they appeal only to a limited extent to social services. Slovaks struggle more difficulties in finding a job and are proportionally more de-

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[2] i.e. 0.28 per cent of the total population which officially counts 10,4 million people.

[3] Cf. figures provided in Liégois (2007). Still, the European Commission (2011) presents this number as a 14 September, 2010 update. For a large discussion on problems related to similar estimations, see Hemelsoet (2010).

[4] "Roma" should here be distinguished from the far smaller groups of Roms and Manuches (estimate ca. 300 people) or so-called "Woonwagenbewoners" [caravan dwellers] (estimate ca. 2000 people) who have the Belgian nationality and reside in the country since many generations (Vlaams Minderhedencentrum, 2010). Roma here refers to more recent immigrants stemming from Central and Eastern European countries of origin.

[5] Within the context of this article, we will not go deeper into the very complex legal conditions that are decisive whether one can settle in the country or not; but the major condition is "financial independence", which in practice almost always implies that at least one person of the family has a job.

[6] The number of legally residing Roma immigrants in Ghent was estimated to be 4,820 on a total population of 247,262 (i.e., 2 per cent of the population) on 31 December 2011. This estimation is based on official registrations of Central and Eastern European immigrants in population registers. The total amount of registered immigrants from these countries (EU10: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, Slovakia and Slovenia) was 9,433 at this moment, which is about four times higher than five years before. In absence of ethnic data, it is estimated by the cities integration service that 50 per cent of all Bulgarians and 90 per cent of all Slovaks and Czechs are ethnic Roma. This leads to total numbers of 2,815 Bulgarian, 1,737 Slovak and 268 Czech Roma. Rumanians are not included in the estimations, probably because there numbers are very limited. At the date of measurement, 175 Rumanians were registered in the city. It must be stressed though, that there are no clear criteria for the suggested percentages, and discussions with fieldworkers on their correctness persist. Moreover, unregistered immigrants are not included in these numbers and estimations for obvious reasons, which makes numbers even more uncertain.

[7] Tremlett (2009) stresses large differences amongst various Roma communities. This heterogeneous character of the Roma implies large difficulties for universal policymaking for (all) Roma and moreover problematises homogenising discourses.

pendent upon the social security system. Not rarely, their families count up to 10 or even 12 children with whom they often live in miserable circumstances in squats. Rumanians live in a smaller, rather close-knit community. Traveling back and forth between the place of origin (the city of Oraviţa and its surroundings), Ghent and other European cities is a common practice amongst this group. Their major source of income is begging in the streets. Most of the money they collect is sent to their home country in order to financially support their families and children who mostly stay there. Their ambitions to build up a life in Belgium are limited, as is their willingness to integrate into civil society (Hemelsoet, 2013). The hereby described situation explicitly illustrates the relevance of the question how policy makers can handle the present differences.

Before clarifying our empirical research, it might be interesting to have a look at local policy initiatives. The city of Ghent developed a particular policy to deal with the recent influx of Roma immigrants. In this policy, reference is made to the pressure that those new migrations exert on the social climate and on the supporting power of the local community. As the possibilities for local authorities to influence *push* factors (those are the factors which give people a reason to leave their countries of origin) are limited, the focus is mainly on so-called *pull* factors (factors of attraction for new immigrants to choose for Ghent more in particular).

As Philippeth and Philips (2010) phrase it in the city's policy document, "The city sets out a two-track policy by offering support through integration and settlement measures on the one hand, and taking repressive actions against all forms of (semi-)illegal practices on the other hand". Priority measures are situated on the following four levels:

1. *Coordination and intensification of the policy towards intra-European migration*. This should happen both horizontally (crossing different policy domains) and vertically (warranting the connection between different policy levels). A "Permanent Consultative Body", which will be responsible for further coordination, should be established.
2. *Housing policy*. This comprises proactive avoidance and consequent termination of squatting as well as further supervision of precarious living circumstances.
3. *Residence, training and work*. The establishment of a central information point for social workers and intermediates, the introduction of "bridging figures" and mediators and a more strict approach to irregular labour circuits are prior measures in relation to this topic.
4. *Supra-local action*. Amongst other things, this involves pointing out lacunas in legislation; sensibilisation for and provision of information on

voluntary return to countries of origin; exert of pressure on European authorities; organisation of specific information campaigns towards particular cities and regions of origin.

By now, action has been taken on each of these four levels and this policy document has been brought into practice in its various dimensions. As the proposed actions suggest, the Ghent policy is highly oriented to integrate Roma into the existing system ("mainstreaming") and draws little attention to the potential role of local Roma communities in the construction of policies. When developing the policy described above, no Roma were involved.

2.2. Framework

The empirical research consisted of qualitative interviews conducted in the city of Ghent, Belgium between April and September 2012 with a total of 17 persons all self-identifying as "Roma" and originating from the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. The aim of the interviews was to retrieve in-depth insights rather than generalizability based on representativeness, which explains the rather limited number of respondents. Respondents were contacted by the spread of words in our own and the translators" networks, which largely explains the Czech and Slovak origin of all respondents. Interviews were based on a semi-structured questionnaire in order to fully establish the narrative aspect of the requested information. During the interviews, socio-economic profile, identity, and cultural habits were inquired. As mentioned by Silverman (2007), regarding the way of measuring identity and cultural aspects, it is best not to ask about these themes specifically, but rather to consider the whole encounter as an expression of identity and culture. As such, we tried to "de-ethnicise" the interview as much as possible. Specific questions about culture and identifications were introduced in the end, and cultural expressions during the interview were taken into account (see Table 1).

To overcome the language differences, two translators were contacted, proficient in either Slovak or Czech, and Dutch. Even though the researcher had personal connections with Roma people through more than six years of voluntary work with Roma people, one of the most difficult aspects was to find people who were willing to participate in our research. The main reason for non-participation was that few people were willing to identify as Roma. As we could experience ourselves in our search for respondents, "the long-standing experience of xenophobia and marginalisation faced by Roma over decades [in countries of origin] has inevitably led to a deep mistrust of the majority community" (UNICEF, 2011, p. 74). At the beginning of each interview, we carefully presented ourselves as "neutral" researchers, affiliated with Ghent

University, and not in any way associated with the city administration (which we expected would only further nourish distrust). Furthermore we guaranteed the interviews to be anonymous, and only to use the obtained information in the context of our research. All 17 interviews were conducted at the respondents" residences.

3. Results

3.1. Socio-Economic Profile

All respondents had an official residence (in Ghent) except for one respondent, who was residing with her family in a squat. All respondents had access to (hot) water, toilets, bath room with shower, cooking facilities and heating.[8] Only the family in the squat had no access to hot water and only had access to heating through a bad functioning electric heating machine. The latter family was also the only one mentioning that they did not have a sufficient income to buy enough food and clothes. One respondent was living on her own, one family had their children residing elsewhere,

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[8] It must be stressed that this situation is very probably not representative for many Roma living in Ghent. Neither was representativeness strived for when searching for respondents, as our main focus was on respondents who reside in Ghent since a relatively long period and aspire to stay here and to "form part" of Belgian society to a more or lesser extent.

and in two cases the family was sharing the house with multiple families. The houses were often small and in very bad condition. Nine people mentioned that their house was too small for them.

Three respondents, of which a 19-year old youngster and two older people, had an income at the moment of the interview. One person was working part-time as a social assistant, and was the only respondent with a university degree, and also the most proficient in Dutch. Another respondent was working as a longshoreman, and got this job through a relative who was working at the same company. The third respondent with a job was working as a cleaning lady, and likewise found this job through a relative who was employed at the same place. These three respondents, together with three unemployed respondents, were also the only ones who were proficient in Dutch. Many respondents had been in Belgium for several years, but had never worked. Without any exception, however, every respondent commented that they would really like to work, and that they were looking for employment. It was often mentioned that they had not find a job yet because of their poor knowledge of Dutch. In addition, most of the women wanted to focus on managing the household and the children. One person was already residing in Belgium for over 18 years, was very proficient in Dutch, but had never found a job, despite her own intents.

Table 1. General characteristics of respondents (age; gender; nationality; time of residence in Belgium; number of children; source of income).

N°	Age	Gender	Nationality	Years in Belgium	Children	Income
1	40	F	Slovak	6	4	Welfare: unemployment, children
2	45	M	Slovak	4	4	Welfare: unemployment, children
3	30	M	Slovak	5,5	1	Income, welfare
4	41	F	Slovak	2	4	Welfare: unemployment, children
5	45	M	Slovak	1,5	4	OCMW[9], children
6	42	F	Slovak	0,2	4	Donations
7	19	F	Slovak	2	Pregnant	Income
8	16	M	Slovak	6	0	Student
9	37	M	Czech	2	3	Welfare: unemployment, children, donations
10	40	F	Czech	2,5	3	Welfare: unemployment, children
11	33	F	Czech	18	2	Welfare: unemployment, children
12	27	M	Czech	12	1	Welfare: unemployment, children
13	35	M	Czech	5	4	Welfare: unemployment, children
14	30	M	Czech	4	2	Income
15	33	M	Czech	8	3	Welfare: unemployment, children
16	37	M	Czech	9	3	Welfare: unemployment, children
17	18	M	Czech	10	0	Student

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[9] Public Social Welfare Center (Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn).

3.2. Access to Services (Healthcare, City Services, Education)

None of the respondents felt discriminated by any of the city services, healthcare institutes or educational institutions. Except for one respondent, all subjects and their families had access to affordable healthcare. Most families found their doctor or medical centre through referrals of their connections. All subjects were satisfied with their experiences with their medical centre.[10] We also specifically asked about the experiences of the people with city services (employment aid, police, integration office,…). Almost all respondents had positive experiences with these services. Interestingly, when asked if they "trusted" that these instances handled in their best interests, the answers were negative. Although they mentioned they can easily access city services, a basic distrust and discontent towards these services remains. It was often mentioned that the information was not specifically targeting "Roma"-issues, and lacked sensitivity to these issues. These issues concerned the receipt of information about their rights and opportunities (employment, etc.) in Belgium. Still, they seemed to uptake a rather powerless and expecting position, and limited the interaction with the service providers themselves. As depicted by two respondents:

> I: How about the OCMW[11]? Are you confident that these people really try to help you?
> R: Sometimes yes, sometimes not. I do not really know what my rights are. I do know about all the things I need to do, but I do not know about my rights when I visit an OCMW.
> I: And did you ask about your rights to the OCMW-employees?
> R: I asked once, and then I got a response that I did not really understand, it is all so difficult.
> I: Are you saying that communication about your rights should be improved?
> R: Yes, totally. People should better explain what our rights are, and maybe give some more specific information for Roma. (Czech man, >2 years in Belgium)

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[10] Throughout the first three months of their residence, intra-European immigrants officially reside in the country under "tourist" status. If they are willing to stay longer, they are expected to register in the city and continue to be self-supporting after that period (which generally implies to find a job). If they do not succeed to do so, they become irregular migrants. Concerning medical care, this implies that within the first three months they can make use of medical services as other tourists can. For irregular migrants, "urgent medical care" is provided; this includes free care in case of "urgent" need, a concept which in practice appears to be stretchable depending on the particular doctor/aid supplier.

[11] Cf. footnote 8.

I: What is your position regarding the city services? Do you trust them?
R: In general I think it is very positive that the city welcomes diversity. The quality of some services is low however. (…) Some services say that they provide certain services, but there is often something wrong. Often they do not know the background of the people, the social status, the family situation. They should also be better prepared to work with certain cultures and people, as Roma. (Slovak man, >4 years in Belgium)

Regarding their trust in the police, the answers were similar. The respondents declared that they felt they could make use of the police, and never had any bad experiences with them. When asked if they would also really contact the police in very difficult situations (e.g. difficult neighbourhood situations, fights,…), the respondents gave a similar answer: they would not contact the police, unless it would get "really bad".

3.3. Migration

The causes of migration to Belgium are diverse. Two respondents refused to talk about this topic, thirteen others declared that the major *push factors* of migration were economic issues.

> I: Why did you leave your home country?
> R: There was nothing there. (…) If you work there, you would earn 5 euros per day. So you go to work, and they do not even pay you. That way you can never earn enough money to buy a house. Everything is expensive there. And when you have children: milk, food, nappies,….It is all very expensive. Roma are also being discriminated. There are many advantages of living here.

Discrimination of Roma in their home country was mentioned by nearly all respondents and for some of them this was in particular the reason they moved to Ghent. As described by a respondent:

> I: Why did you leave your home country?
> R: But with people like us, us Roma, we are like dust under the feet of other people. And that is not good. When they see us, they say: "Oh, a gipsy, they don't want to work, etc…. but that is not true. A lot of people already showed this is not true. We want to work, we want to live like other people. Oh yes (sighs) for instance, if children lack certain things in those countries, they can get those opportunities here. For instance in our country our children don't have the opportunity to go to school when they get older, but

here, yes they even get something like money, for instance one hundred euro, or how much….There it is not the case, there they can go to school till they are eighteen years old, and then it is finished. Or for instance for being a doctor, there it is seven years and then it is finished, here you can still continue and study to be a specialist. But this is the way you can become a doctor, if you go to school for many years, then you can learn to do anything.

The particularly violent nature of discrimination against Roma in their home countries was mentioned a number of times. One of the respondents stated that his migration was informed by the fact that he had been threatened to death for being Roma.

> I: Why did you leave your home country?
> R: Well, I was nineteen years old, living with my parents. The skinheads came to our restaurant already three times. Well they came, and after the third time my father said "No, we have to leave everything" and we decided to come here. Twice the skinheads wrecked everything in the restaurant. And one of the skinheads…he stabbed a knife into my mother's chest…not such a big knife...the wound was not that big. But the bass….I think it was the boss of the skinheads raised his gun towards the sealing…not us…the sealing. And he said "If you dont leave"…to my father "if you don't leave with your family, I will come again, and you will have even more problems…and that happened. And the third time, they broke everything in the restaurant…my mother had problems with her chest…I was so scared…I was nineteen and the skinheads were looking at me and my mothers, the grabbed me and dragged my upstairs, we lived…that's why. At that moment the police still came, my father called them….After that we maybe still stayed for two or three days and we left…

When asked why specifically they decided to come to Belgium (*pull factors*), all respondents answered that they had family or friends here. Most respondents reported they were relatively happy in Belgium, and all respondents were keen on staying here.

3.4. Social Organisation

We asked our respondents about existing Roma organisations in Ghent, and were interested if they would be interested in getting more connected. All subjects responded that there were no official channels or groups by which the Roma people are in contact with each other. Six of the Slovak respondents had heard about *Opré Roma*, an organisation set up by a Slovak Roma,

taking initiatives specifically targeted at Roma. Besides this project, little was known about any project specifically working with Roma. Interestingly, during our study, *Opré Roma* took the initiative to start a football-team, which was a tremendous success. On the first training 30 youngsters were present, and this amount kept growing each training. This might also be related to the fact that the communication among Roma-youngsters might go faster than the communication between adults, but it did demonstrate a clear interest of at least some Roma people to get more engaged in "organised" activities.

Interestingly, when asked if they would be interested in the mere organisation of the Roma as a group, almost all respondents answered they did not feel the need to organise themselves. The social network of most subjects consisted of their (far) family, and there was little interest to get connected with other Roma (groups) in a formal way.

3.5. Self-Identification

We asked respondents to which extent they affiliated themselves with Belgians, non-Roma and Roma from the country of origin, Belgium and other countries, and how they felt about the "other" Roma groups.

The affiliation with the country of origin was rather limited. Most respondents had little or no contact with people in their country of origin, other than their direct family. Furthermore, the social network of our respondents in Ghent consisted almost entirely of direct family members, and Roma from the same group and region of origin (who often appeared to be "far" family).

With regard to "identification", our interviews revealed some differences between (older) adults and youngsters. Children identified even less with their country of origin, as demonstrated by their very limited interests in these countries, and had a stronger focus on improving their life and social network in Belgium. Their social network was significantly "broader" than the networks of the adult respondents. All the youngsters in our interviews had Flemish friends, as well as friends from a different origin, as a result of the social contacts within their schools. In addition, they were able to speak Dutch reasonably well.

Distinctions between the different Roma groups were established here as well. As mentioned, the social network from the (adult) respondents consisted almost entirely of Roma from the same region of origin, and simultaneous migrations. Additionally, most respondents had many prejudices about the "other" Roma. As discussed by some respondents:

> R: The things we share as Roma are the language, the music, food, dancing, and that is all. Our parents have always been poor. They had no means and time to spend too much time on the educa-

tion of their kids, it just did not happen.

I: Does that make it hard to speak in general terms about Roma?

R: Yes. There is also a lot of rivalry between Roma. They [the Slovak Roma] say that we are not real Roma because we do not wear that type of clothes, and dye our hair blonde. There are also many differences between the country side and the cities. I have no contact with other Roma in Ghent, only with my Roma neighbours, and my Roma family….With Belgians I have no contact at all, except for *** who sometimes comes here to help.

R: They sometimes confuse us with caravan dwellers! But we are not! They drive around in their cars and steal….But we don't!

I: Can you tell me about the people in your social network in Ghent?

R: I mostly deal with my family, yes, my family is the most important to me. With Belgian people I rarely make contact, unless for specific services. I do know some Slovak Roma who live next to me however.

I: Can you tell me about the interaction between the different Roma groups here in Ghent?

R: There is very little interaction, because this is not supported by the government, or by the offered services. They do not support the Roma culture. We have very little contact because at first sight, you do not know who is Roma, and who is not. You cannot talk to the people on the street, so you do not know about the other Roma.

These testimonies suggest that the main reason why various Roma (groups) do not know each other is not a certain "distance", but rather the fact that they are not familiar with each other's existence. It is particularly the (extended) family who plays a major role in the daily life of the Roma.

When asked with which ethnicity ("Belgian", "Flemish", "Roma", "Slovak",…) they identify most, all adult respondents said that they affiliated most with Roma, followed by "Slovak" or "Czech". The youngsters, however, responded differently to this question. They all affiliated most with "Roma", but after that they strongly preferred the "Belgian" identity. In addition, they minimised their Roma-identity. As mentioned by some respondents:

I: Who do you most identify with? Roma, Belgians, Slovaks,…?

R: With Roma. But not at school. There it does not matter that much either, and there I play a lot with my other [non-Roma] friends.   I: Do you see yourself as Slovak?

R: No, not really. I do not know, I have very little

affiliation with Slovakia, and I do not want to go back.

I: And do you look at yourself as a Belgian?

R: Just a little, but not really….I do not know. It does not really matter to me either. Nobody ever asks it to me, and we are all equal. You, me, we are all people.

I: You will soon go back to Slovakia for a holiday, are you looking forward to it?

R: Not really no. I have not been there in years, it has been too long ago.

I: And are you not excited to go back?

R: No, not really. Slovakia is not my country anymore, I do not feel it that way. I am also not proficient anymore in the language. And I like being here….And I have a cat here, I need to care for it. Do you want to take care of my cat while I am gone?

We were also interested in hearing to what extent people explicitly declare their (Roma) identity in social or professional environments. Most respondents told us that they usually do not mention they are Roma, but rather mention their country of origin. The reason for this is that services in Belgium do not require people to mention their ethnic background, but only their nationality.

3.6. Culture

Culture was discussed both directly and indirectly. We explicitly asked about the importance of language, religion, and the perspective on relationships. In addition, we inquired themes that would spontaneously arise during the interview such as hygiene, music, mobility,….Indirectly, we were confronted with culture, in the sense that it manifested itself continuously during the interview, from the moment we entered a living room onwards, until the moment we left.

The tendency to think on the short term that is frequently related to Roma, was often reflected in the interviews. It manifested itself most obviously in the way interviews were planned. Without exception, they had to be planned maximum two days in advance, because the availability of the people was too difficult to estimate otherwise. It was also manifested by the academic choices made by the youngsters, who were all very keen to start working as soon as possible.

We asked to which extent they were speaking Rromani[12] with each other, and if they were passing it to their children. Twelve respondents indicated that

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[12] Rromani or Romanes is the "proper" language of the Roma. This language exists in numerous varieties and even more dialects, which differ a lot between each other. Moreover, it has no standardised written form. For further reading, see Bakker et al. (2000) and Matras (2005).

they mainly speak the language of their country of origin (Romanian, Slovak, Czech) with their children. Two of the three interviewed youngsters understand Romani, but do not really use it.

The importance attributed to cleanliness and personal hygiene was a recurrent theme in the interviews. We mention it, because it reappeared often, and in a similar way with most respondents. For example, respondents stressed the importance of taking off shoes before entering a classroom or a house, which is a rather uncommon habit for Belgians. Additionally, the topics referred to by the respondents in terms of "hygiene" often raised spontaneously during a discussion in rather surprising ways.

> I: Would you like your child to marry another Roma? Or does that not matter?
> R: With a Roma, a Belgian, anybody… it does not matter to me. If only it is a good husband. But I would prefer her not to marry a Turkish person.
> I: Why?
> R: They are not very hygienic…They are circumcised, it is not clean…

4. What an Insider Perspective May *Add to* Policy Construction

Though our research was very explorative, some of our preliminary results are surprising. First, our findings reveal that there is a large gap between Roma and the provided services. Even though the respondents did not experience direct forms of discrimination, there is a general and explicit distrust in these services. A possible reason for this distrust may be found in migration histories. Most respondents identify economic issues as the major pull factor of migration, which corresponds with earlier research of Cherkezova and Tomova (2013) who identify "the production and employment restructuring, the access to job opportunities, and the level of welfare" (p. 153) as three major factors that result in similar migratory behaviour. Nonetheless, reference is almost systematically made to profound discrimination and racism in their countries of origin. Van Baar (2011) describes recent measures taken in Eastern European Countries that set forward an activation and reintegration of Roma. Recently implemented neoliberal activation programs and welfare reforms on the contrary lead to increasing treatment of Roma as an underclass in an exploitative and dehumanizing manner. These findings can be complemented with how respondents describe their feeling of being treated in a demeaning manner and given less economic or educational opportunities in their countries of origin. Also, while Roma often share economic and security motivations for migration, insecurity because of community tensions and violence are identified as particular for Roma (CDMG, 1995). These

hostilities and sometimes even the collective awareness of these hostilities often trigger Roma migration (Matras, 2000). Our findings concur with this statement illustrating how severe violence and threats linked to discrimination are prevalent and motivate migration. While nearly all respondents describe no negative experiences with institutions or services, a general distrust and an expectation of discrimination in services is mentioned. Discrimination is thus *a priori* presumptions of Roma in their contacts with services. This could be linked to the fact that Roma anticipate discrimination everywhere (Cherkezova & Tomova, 2013). Roma often describe exclusion from essential services, hostilities and violence by state institutions in their host country (Amnesty International, 2014). Moreover, studies reveal how Roma are in reality confronted with discrimination and racism when trying to access services like labour market, health, housing and education (Craig, 2011). Regardless of the lack of incidences of discrimination with services the feeling of distrust is an important finding to take into account within policy making towards these groups. Since although integration and participation of Roma is "expected", the provision of a proper political framework where trust issues between Roma and the often-distrusted governmental institutions are addressed is lacking (Van Baar, 2014).

Second, most respondents primarily identify with being "Roma". Surprisingly though, further questions on this topic revealed that this identification had few connection with the broader meaning which is generally attributed to it, i.e. Roma as an ethnic group living in diaspora all over Europe (and to a lesser extent in other continents). For the respondents, "Roma" rather refers to the informal social networks these people are living in. Those networks are mainly comprised of large extended families in which everybody is somehow related to each other, either through blood lines and/or marriages and if not as close neighbours (Nacu, 2012b). "We, the Roma" as distinguished from the rest of society refers to this extended family rather than to Roma as an ethnic group. This finding strongly corresponds to earlier findings that show how Roma often first and foremost present and identify themselves with their extended family (Liégeois, 2007). Moreover, respondents often expressed prejudices about other Roma (groups), which in some cases results in an unwillingness to identify themselves with these other Roma (groups). This became clear in the answers to questions on the desirability of forms of social organisation: there certainly is a kind of interest in social organisation but not merely for Roma as a(n ethnic) group. Implicitly, this is further affirmed in the self-group *Opre Roma*, which is received very enthusiastically but solely consists of Slovak Roma from the same area of origin.

Third, our findings revealed important intergenerational differences. Whilst for adults most contacts are

limited to in-group communication within the extended family, the youngsters in our interviews have broader social networks and a lot more out-group contacts. Moreover, they far less identify with countries of origin and rather feel Belgian than e.g. Slovak or Czech. These findings comply with studies carried out with young non-Roma-migrants that describe intergenerational differences in acculturation with young migrants getting more involved in the new culture than their parents (Birman & Poff, 2011). Our study showed that although these young respondents still feel Roma in the first place, this identification is clearly less strong. Apart from that, they also have Belgian and other non-Roma friends and they generally have better Dutch language skills than their parents. This is probably due to education: throughout schooling, they structurally and repeatedly get into contact with other children, which is evaluated positively by the youngsters themselves. The need for an affirmation of a Roma identity as being different from, opposed to or "outside" mainstream society seems thus to be less present in youngsters than in (older) adults.

Apart from the former findings some "family resemblances" amongst the respondents were found. First of all, the short-term perspective in their thinking and behaviour was very present. They referred to how planning was problematic to them and in almost every sense they expressed a day-to-day living style. Concerning language, there was only a partial use of Romani. Most respondents speak the official languages of the countries of origin at home, in some cases mixed up with Romani. Third, hygiene was a recurrent theme in the interviews. The opposition between "clean" and "dirty" structured a lot of observed behaviour and was often explicitly introduced in conversations. This relates to the importance attributed by Roma to cleanliness as well as ritual purity referred to in various studies as an important factor to take into account when conceptualizing service delivery that can enhance compliance and satisfaction of Roma people. For example, Vivian and Dundes (2004) refer to culturally distinct beliefs and behaviours of Roma related to health, knowledge of which is important to take into account in the provision of services such as health care. Although other research confirms some of our findings, we consciously make use of the term "family resemblances" amongst respondents rather than "cultural characteristics". Not only is our sample of respondents too small to generalise our conclusions, it would also run the danger of referring to a broader "Roma culture" which, as we have clarified above, has dangerous consequences. It is also unclear whether the described features refer to cultural characteristics or rather properties that relate to the particular—often deteriorated—living conditions of these people (it is for example plausible that the living circumstances argument counts for thinking on the short term).

This brings us to the added value of an insider perspective to policy making. Roma narratives supply interesting input for policy making for various reasons. First, we can distinguish informative–interpretative reasons. Roma narratives offer insights which could not be retrieved elsewise and as such they "inform" policy making: they may break through existing prejudices, affirm existing conceptions, clarify underlying motivations or causes and bring in new elements. As such, they add to the discussion on a proper understanding of social practices. The latter are not static realities though: social practices change over time and therefore the process of understanding is never-ending. That brings us to the second set of reasons, which are political-interpretative. Stories do not only inform us about a (static) reality, they in turn contribute to the constitution of that reality and form part of it in a creative way. This political dimension relates to one of the purposes of voice-giving: taking voices or perspectives into account is a democratic act. Interest in these narratives opens a space for participation in an on-going conversation and discussions on who Roma are and what is in their best interest. What they say (and thus who they are) is literally "taken into account": it forms part of the societal debate. Concerning identity, there are moreover good arguments to say that they are the most privileged actors to speak: who else is in a better position to say who they identify with and which group(s) they belong to?

There are thus good reasons to take an "insider perspective" into account beside the voices of other relevant stakeholders when constructing policy[13]. Still, the former arguments sound rather abstract. Some arguments as well as examples are presented of how Roma "bring in" something new or different. But what are the implications of this added "information" and how far do political implications reach? In the concluding paragraph we will further focus on the implications of the foregoing for the way policy towards Roma is currently conceived of.

5. How an Insider Perspective May *Question* Policy

This concluding paragraph stretches the developed argument a step further. It is our hypothesis that self-defined identities developed within an insider perspective may not only *add to* policy but can also be useful to *question* the latter in a more profound way. As Ver-

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[13] Evidently, what is eventually aimed for is a dialogue between all involved societal stakeholders. Although the scope of this article is somehow "limited" to the insider voice of a sample of Roma in Ghent, it is part of a broader study that also maps the perspectives of policy makers, professionals, and volunteer workers (see Hemelsoet, in press). Only by involving each of these perspectives, a well-informed policy doing justice to all involved stakeholders can be acquired.

meersch (2012, p. 1196) states, "the current EU appeals for increased attention entail the creation of a political space for the formation and contestation of new understandings of who the Roma are, what they need and how they should be helped (Simhandl, 2006, 2009). In other words, the EU has now joined a complex political game of framing and reframing the Roma". What then are the consequences of taking "insider voices" into account in this political space or game of contestation? By bringing in the question how Roma identify themselves, the present article invades the discussion on the desirability of targeted and mainstreaming initiatives.

To summarise again, our major conclusions stress the following: 1. there is a strongly mentalised gap with (institutionalised) majority society, 2. people first and foremost identify with being "Roma", but attribute a far more limited meaning to this concept compared to how this concept is usually understood both in the public debate and in scientific research (i.e., as an ethnic group or an international political/cultural/… movement) and 3. there are intergenerational identification differences (youngsters having a lot more outgroup communication and identifying less strictly with being Roma than older adults). These conclusions stress the present distance between the specific community (i.e. the own network which predominantly consists of the extended family) and mainstream society, mainly for elderly people. There is no desire to identify with the broader Roma community; as far as this is the case, it involves a local community of familiar people. This insider perspective expresses no support whatsoever for a targeted approach towards "the Roma" as such. Moreover, the affirmation of a present gap with the rest of society further strengthens the argument against particularisation. Listening to the insider narratives of Roma might imply recognising them as persons, rather than as Roma. As a Roma youngster framed it strikingly in one of the above quotations: *"It does not really matter to me…we are all equal. You, me, we are all people."* That conclusion may of course be transferred to other minority groups too. Its particular importance for the Roma lies in current policy discourse towards this group. The example of Ghent's policy is representative for a broader European tendency, although in its formulations it refers less explicitly to *Roma* and *inclusion* as guiding concepts. The major distinctive feature of this tendency is its directedness towards a particular (ethnic) target group which is moreover defined in terms of societal problems. Whether it concerns criminality, a condition of poverty, racism or discrimination seems to be of secondary importance; that these are presented as *features of a culture* is what is at stake here.

This observation may be surprising, as this approach towards integration of ethnic minorities has been left behind increasingly during the past few dec-

ades. And although policy makers may find good reasons to stick to an ethnic minority target-group oriented approach in the incomparable differentness of Roma with regard to other groups, the insider perspective seems to bring about a somehow different story. Its implications for policy may be far-reaching:

- The plea for "a right to self-identification" of Roma does not only bring about new, adapted definitions of the Roma concept "from the inside"; it moreover questions whether policy should still be directed towards Roma *as such* (i.e., as a distinguished target group).
- Rather than reframing *Roma* in current policy making, the insider perspective reframes the meaning of *inclusion*. What matters most to Roma is not the content of the name of the ethnic group they belong to, but rather how they are treated: they prefer to be approached as "people" instead of "Roma". As such, a direction towards a different understanding of *inclusion* is suggested.

Of course, it would be a dangerous pitfall to generalise these conclusions as being *the* insider perspective of *the* Roma. Statements should not be generalised all too much. Not going deeper into much of the political debate on social participation possibilities, it must be stressed that a massive volume of studies on Roma has been produced already in Central and Eastern Europe. Increasingly, the voice of Roma themselves is heard in both scientific, policy and interest group research. In Western Europe though, such studies are still very scarce. Moreover, when Roma are taken into account both within scientific research and policy making, large discussions remain on representativeness. Within the Romani movement, the question who gets the mandate to speak on behalf of the Roma is recurring since over two decades. It is unclear how a legitimate Romani representation can be created, meanwhile a "Roma political elite" that is regarded as representative of the Roma, has come to existence. As intellectual activists, this elite risks losing its connection with "ordinary" Roma citizens as well as grassroots advocacy movements (Vermeersch, 2007, pp. 208-211).

Consequently, there are probably good reasons to state that the sample of this enquiry is not representative for all Roma in Ghent, and that Ghent is not representative for the situation of Roma all over Europe. Other Roma in Ghent or elsewhere obviously *may* have a different opinion about things. But as we mentioned in the beginning of this article, this kind of generalisation was not our aim. That does not restrict the impact of the respondents' perspective in any sense though. On the contrary, we hope that the presented insider perspective may fuel broad discussions in a fundamental way: because however few they are, what they say, it is our opinion certainly in this case, matters a lot. In

what sense then does it matter, if it is not to be generalised nor can it claim representativeness? Smeyers (2009) refers to the limits of the predominant interpretation of insider understanding as experience-based. The latter evidently incurs insurmountable problems. Experience is highly liable to subjectivity between individuals: it always refers to *a subject who is having this experience*. This evidently follows from the insight that it is very improbable for two people to have the same experience for participating in it. As such, the "knowledge" produced by a small sample of respondents indeed is limited. Consequently, Smeyers introduces an alternative form of insider understanding. The question at stake here is in what sense *taking part in a practice* is an issue of understanding. The one who is part of a practice evidently is someone "who knows how to go on" and does so in a particular way. The focus thus shifts from "knowledge" to "doing" and being entitled to do so in the future. What we can learn from insiders is "what makes sense" to them *as* insiders. Exactly this is what privileges insiders: they know why they go on as they do. They have chosen to take a particular route exactly because that route makes sense to them. As the above-mentioned implications for policy proved, what makes sense to them may indeed be helpful to "know how to go on": not to find "the" proper definition of who the Roma are through new knowledge, but to value an insider perspective's contribution "to go on" shaping the society we all live in. And in that story, we are all insiders.

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The life of the second author of this article, Pauwel Van Pelt, was tragically taken in a traffic accident while writing this article. I hope that this final result does justice to his ideas as I tried to my best to further fulfil our shared interest and attempt to co-construct the space for an insider perspective in research as well as policy making on Roma during the past few years and months.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Book Review

I Met Lucky People: The Story of the Romani Gypsies. By Yaron Matras. London: Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 2014, 276 pp.; ISBN 978-1-846-14481-3.

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Abstract

This is a book review of *I met lucky people: The story of the Romani Gypsies*, by Yaron Matras. The work is oriented for a general reading public, but it can be highly recommended for academics and policy makers as well.

Keywords

Issue

While there is no dearth of books about the Romani people aimed at the general reading public and published by commercial publishers with broad networks of distribution, few of them can be recommended, and there are almost no such general works by specialists in Romani Studies. There is, perhaps, a twofold explanation for this situation. First, as a fully fledged academic discipline, Romani Studies as such is relatively young. Although the serious study of the Romani language is arguably as old as the field of modern linguistics itself, and anthropological ethnographies of Romani communities also have a long and significant tradition, the current burgeoning of academic interest in Romani subjects dates more or less from the so-called fall of Communism and the rise of the European Union. As symptomatic of this state of affairs is the fact that the North American Chapter of the Gypsy Lore Society was founded in 1979 in part as a reaction to the marginalization felt by anthropologists working with Romani communities. At that time, the overwhelming majority of scholars working in Romani Studies were anthropologists, linguists, and ethnographers of music and dance. It is only in the past couple of decades or so that we have seen the rise of a large community of scholars in a great diversity of humanistic and social scientific disciplines for whom Romani Studies is the center, or one of the centers, of their academic focus. The second part of the explanation is arguably the fact that popular books do not count in the building of an academic profile. Rare or non-existent is the academic who will get tenure or promotion on the basis of such a book. The Academy has thus provided a double disincentive to scholars wishing to write about the Romani people for a general audience. Until recently, Romani Studies were as marginalized as the Romani people, and even now that Romani Studies is more broadly accepted as a serious discipline, the popularization of academic knowledge is not encouraged by the system. We are fortunate, therefore, that a scholar with almost three decades of both practical and academic experience in Romani Studies and one of the leading specialists in the field has decided to write such a book. Moreover, the book does exactly what it is supposed to do in terms of popular, general ethnography and history. It thus fills an important gap in the literature on the Romani people.

The book is divided into eight chapters, an appendix, two maps, a bibliography, and an index. In the first chapter, Who are the Romani People (pp. 1-30), Matras

defines the topic and goal of his book: "to provide an overview of Romani communities, their customs, their social organization and their history" (p. 27). As he immediately notes, a truly comprehensive survey of the many Romani-speaking groups—let alone groups of Romani descent who no longer speak the language—would require an encyclopedia, and he must, therefore, limit himself to a selection. But his selection is as broad and representative as can be achieved for any relatively large ethnic, ethno-national, or national group in a popular monograph of this nature. (My use of *national* here does not mean requiring a nation state but refers only to the social identity category implied by the term *nationality*, to which Romani is recognized as belonging by a variety of governments.) Matras dismisses the pernicious constructivist perversion that Roms do not exist outside the imagination of majority populations with the following words: "But try entering the home of a Romani family and saying to their faces: 'You are not really Roms, you are just a construction of our imagination, a product of our romantic fantasies, there are no real Gypsies'…" (p. 28). In this chapter Matras also presents a good basic overview of the Indic origins of the Romani people and their language, and discussions of the terms *Gypsy* and *Tsigan*, and their cognates. He adduces here the most recent scholarly arguments that the European term *Tsigan-*, etc., is from Turkish *Çingene*, which then entered Greek, where the sound represented by Turkish *ç* (the *ch* of *ch*urch) regularly becomes *ts* in all borrowings. From Greek it then went throughout much of Europe. Matras concludes this chapter by making clear that his intent in providing this overview is informed by "the view that we need to rethink and revise our picture of the Romani people and to move away from the literary images and brands, and on to understanding the real everyday lives and aspirations of a real people".

Chapter Two, Romani Society (pp. 31-66), is a perceptive discussion of various aspects of Romani social organization, including mobility, work, kinship, conflict management, child rearing, education, household structure, and family values. Matras makes a variety of important points here in a compact space. As he observes: "Perhaps the key challenge facing Roms throughout the centuries, apart from mere survival in the face of persecution and exclusion, is how to maintain their own culture and identity in the absence of a territory and formal institutions" (p. 32). On this same page Matras makes the important point that "the great majority of Roms do not travel and their families have lived in permanent settlements and dwellings for many centuries." He points out that after the initial dispersal of Romani communities from the Balkans throughout Europe during the late medieval and early modern periods—i.e., the final century or two of the Byzantine and first century or two of the Ottoman Empires—most Romani migrations have been connected with

larger European migrations in general, e.g. the compulsory exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey under the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, the migrations of East Europeans to North and South America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the labor migration from Yugoslavia to Western Europe of the 1960s and 70s, or the exodus of refugees fleeing the wars of the 1990s in former Yugoslavia.

Matras also discusses here the distinction between those Roms who do follow a peripatetic lifestyle and other peripatetic groups, such as Travelers, the crucial distinctions being those of language and the practice of certain cultural norms. Matras' discussion of kinship (pp. 37-40) focuses on speakers of the Northern Vlax Romani dialects, which is appropriate given both the broad European and global dispersal of these Roms and the specificity of their kinship structures. Here, however, certain distinctions are elided, and while this is entirely understandable in a book of this nature and in no way dimies its value, nonetheless it requires comment in a review. In this instance, it is Matras' description of the North Vlax Romani groups as simply Vlax. This erases the distinction of the South Vlax speaking groups, who are linguistically and historically related to the North Vlax groups but culturally quite distinct. It is the South Vlax groups that migrated to what was still the Ottoman Empire during the main exodus of Vlax groups from the Romanian principalities in the nineteenth century. They thus represent the Vlax speaking groups in the southern Balkans. In this respect, as in others, the Balkans represent Romani specificities not necessarily shared with the rest of Europe. This is in part precisely because the Balkans, and especially the southern Balkans (roughly speaking the territory including and south of Bosnia-Herzegovina, southern Serbia, and Bulgaria) was the location where the Romani people first settled, and from which all subsequent Romani migrations first started out. This fact is also relevant to the section on Romani household structure. The living arrangements that Matras describes as "strongly resembl[ing]…western Asian cultures" (p. 41), are identical to those typical of the Ottoman Balkans. Such patterns of household arrangement have persisted right up to the present day, especially in some rural and conservative Muslim households, in various Balkan countries. Here, as in some other matters, what appears as typical of the Romani people in western Europe is in fact typical of the Balkans, or at least was typical of the Balkans until relatively recently.

All in all, the second chapter does an excellent job of explaining how the centrality of the extended family to the maintenance of Romani culture and identity works. Comparisons with other traditional societies are often made where appropriate, and in general the reader will get a sensitive understanding of the values and constraints of Romani family life. Chapter Three, Romani Customs and Traditions (pp. 67-100), discusses

belief systems that include the everyday and various rites of passage, the subsections are concerned with dress and appearance, the central cultural concepts of good fortune (*baxt*) and shame (*ladž*), and cleanliness (purity), marriage, death, festivals and celebrations, music, leadership, and religion. Matras discusses the value placed on displays of wealth as honorable, e.g. in women's wearing gold, to which we can add that in Macedonia it was precisely earrings with gold coins that would be worn by every Romani girl or woman. The discussion of clothing (pp. 68-69) focuses on Christian Roms. While the stricture to wear skirts is indeed strong among Christian Romani women, Muslim Romani women wore pantaloons called *shalvari (chinti-yane)*, which, depending on the purpose (work versus celebration) would have a narrower or larger cut. As late as the early 1970s, this style of dress was uniformly practiced as far north as Belgrade, although it was eliminated in Bulgaria after World War Two by the Communist authorities. The pantaloons were covered with a very specific style of red apron with black, yellow, and/or white vertical stripes, and women covered their hair with a kerchief that was tied in a specific manner, different from that of women in other Muslim ethnic groups, all of whom covered their hair. These clothing strictures broke down in the course of the 1970s and 1980s as a result of urban modernization, and today they are considered old-fashioned. For weddings, however, it is still traditional for women in the main bridal party to wear enormous *shalvari* made from nine meters of material, although more modern feminine-style trousers are gaining in popularity owing to their relative simplicity. Matras' observations about the effects of modernization are spot on. The discussion of *baxt, ladž,* and purity are very well done. We can note in passing that even among Roms who do not practice the kinds of ritual cleanliness codes found in the groups that Matras describes, there is a stereotype that non-Roms are "dirty". We should also note that the expressions cited by Matras as "I will eat your penis/vagina!" (p. 71) (in the dialects I am familiar with, the present tense is used) are used as expressions of intimate affection, and in fact they have no sexual connotation when used, for example, by a parent to a baby. Rather, these expressions are *de facto* similar to expressions such as "you're so sweet I could just eat you all up". While their translations sound quite shocking to non-Roms, in fact for Romani speakers they are simply idiomatic expressions whose literal meaning they do not even think about.

The discussion of belief in *mule* "ghosts, spirits of the dead" is anecdotal but effective. Here, too, the Romani belief system emerges as one quite similar to traditional belief systems in Europe. My grandmother made my mother wear an amulet to protect her from the evil eye, but firmly believed that the vampires that had threatened her in Romania could not cross the ocean to America. The discussion of marriage covers all of the basic points for various groups including those in the Balkans. The translation of *bori* as "daughter-in-law" (78 and *passim*) is accurate, but could have been more nuanced. In fact, the primary meaning of the word is "bride", and in Romani, as in all the Balkan languages, when a bride enters a family she is the daughter-in-law of her parents-in-law, but more importantly, she is the newcomer who must be integrated into her new household. Overall, this chapter does an excellent job of discussing all the basic points that are relevant for understanding various Romani groups. In the section on music (pp. 87-91) I have a couple of small quibbles that do not detract from the overall value of the section. Matras points out that in various countries Roms often specialize in various instruments (p. 88), and while the *zurna*, a reed instrument related to the oboe, could be described as a 'flute' in the sense of "aerophone", in fact Roms do not specialize in bagpipes in the Balkans. This instrument is traditionally played by non-Romani peasants. We can also add that in many Balkan and west Asian communities, the instruments in which Roms do specialize (such as the *zurna* and the bass drum), are considered essential for a proper wedding, and thus the hiring of wedding musicians is synonymous with the hiring of Romani musicians. One other small note with regard to Romani music in Bulgaria: while *çalgı* is the Turkish name for a type of traditional urban ensemble music typical of the late Ottoman Balkans and surviving into the post-Ottoman period, in Balkan Slavic this music is called *chalgiya*, while *chalga* is the post-1989 Bulgarian pop development with analogues in all the other Balkan countries as well.

The discussion of leadership is well presented, although I would have used the literal translation of *Baro Rom* "Big Man", both because *Šero* "Head [Man]" sometimes also occurs and because the concept has similarities to other cultures where the concept also translates as "big man". The section on religion is also very good in its coverage. There is one statement that deserves comment, however. Matras writes: "In the Balkans switching between Islam and (mainly Orthodox) Christianity accompanied either migration from one region to another or the changing power relations in the region, with the Roms keen to align themselves with the dominant group." This statement really does require nuancing and is simply too strong. In the post-Ottoman Balkans, especially in Macedonia and Bulgaria, but also, to some extent, in Greece, Roms that were Muslim have remained Muslim, a fact that Matras does discus in the context of Bulgaria in Chapter Seven. In the case of Greece, this meant that Roms outside of Western Thrace were subject to the same compulsory exchange of populations as other Muslims (except the Çam Albanians). In Western Thrace, Muslims are an officially recognized minority (note that recognition is

based on religion and not language), and Muslim Roms have retained their religion rather than identifying with the Greek Orthodox majority. Of greater significance, however, are the Muslim Romani communities in the Republic of Macedonia and in Bulgaria, which have constituted the majority of Roms in these countries and remained Muslim throughout the post-Ottoman period (except for in-roads made recently by Evangelical Christianity). These communities have chosen to maintain their religious identification with significant minority populations, rather than converting to what became the religion of the dominant state majority. In some cases, this choice can be connected with the fact that a national minority is a local majority. Thus in certain regions, or even neighborhoods, in Macedonia and Bulgaria (as well as Greek Thrace), Turks, Albanians, or Slavic-speaking Muslims constitute the local majority, and Roms have maintained their religious alignment with them. A similar explanation is arguably the case in Kosovo, which was administratively a part of Orthodox-majority Serbia for most of the 20th century, but which had a local Muslim majority. In other cases, at times when government policies favored a positive treatment of minorities, Muslim Roms could be in a better position by identifying with other minority populations rather than the majority. One final argument in favor or Romani particularism with respect to Islam in the southern Balkans is the fact that pre-nationalist Balkan folk Islam favored the kinds of values that were consistent with Romani culture in general.

Chapter Four, Romanes: The Romani Language (pp. 101-127), is a *tour de force* of popular linguistics, clarifying all the important issues for the general reader. The scholar could quibble here and there, but those of us who might use this book for teaching purposes—and indeed the book is on a high enough level to be suitable for that—can always supplement where needed. Given what we can deduce about Romani migrations from the Balkans, what Matras quite eloquently describes as "an almost erratic dispersion of Romani groups from and within the Balkan regions" (p. 112) occurred not so much from "the crumbling Byzantine Empire" (p. 112) as from the post-Byzantine landscape of the Bulgarian and Serbian Empires, as they were reduced to vassalage and then incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. To be sure, from a linguistic point of view, the Greek (Byzantine or Romaic) component in Romani attests to that language's early and pervasive influence. Matras also does a superb job of bringing in those languages that preceded or accompanied Byzantine Greek influence. But the early Slavic component in Romani, which Matras refers to citing Miklosich's classic work, is likewise shared across the broadest spectrum of the population. Unlike the Greek and other pre-Exodus components, however, where there are no cognate languages in Europe to confuse matters, it is the European nature of Slavic that makes identifying

that layer more complex. All those Romani groups that left the Balkans moved through Slavic speaking territory, and some settled in Slavic speaking majority territories, while those that remained in the Balkans were continually in contact with Slavic in most regions. As a result, isolating a specifically early Slavic component in Romani is often extraordinarily difficult. Still, such moments are possible. Aside from the items Matras cites from Miklosich, we can note the Calò (Spanish para-Romani) *zamba* "frog" as an excellent example of an early Slavic loanword that was retained in a Romani group that has long been far from Slavic influence. It is also evidence that the *Gitanos* of Spain arrived via Europe and not North Africa. We can also note in passing that *čelo* should be *celo* (= *tselo*) in the meaning "whole" (p. 113). The "once upon a time" opening that Matras cites (p. 119) as being found all over West Asia is also found in all the Balkan languages except Greek (or at least that standard variant thereof).

The discussion of the retention of retroflex (or at least distinctive) /r/ (p. 112), likewise makes the basic point of retention of aspects of Indo-Aryan phonology for a popular audience, although the educator would be better served by the example of distinctive aspiration of voiceless stops. Not only is the distinction more consistently preserved among Romani dialects, but by having Anglophone students hold their palms in front of their mouths and then pronouncing *pot* and *spot,* a point about the nature of aspiration can be made at the same time as teaching the nature of distinctive versus non-distinctive features. (Romani *perel* "fall" versus *pherel* "fill" serves as a useful example.) I must admit to being puzzled by Matras' formulation: "Romani at the time must have resembled Greek and other languages spoken in the Balkans in its sentence melody…" (p. 112). The rest of the sentence is fine, but it is precisely in matters of intonation that the various Balkan languages differ from one another, and, moreover, that Romani is also distinctive. Instrumental studies of Romani intonation—as well as those of other Balkan languages—remain an important desideratum, but my own personal experience has been that Romani intonation is distinctive. I once had the experience on the north side of Chicago of overhearing two women conversing and recognizing the intonation as being like the Romani I knew from the Balkans before I could actually make out what they were saying. As it turned out, they were speaking a Kalderash dialect from northeastern Europe. I can also note here that in the Balkans, while all Roms are thoroughly fluent in the necessary contact (majority) languages, many Romani speakers also have an ethnolectal "accent" that identifies them as Romani just as surely as African-American intonational patterns identify many or most African-Americans in the United States. At issue are physically measurable phonological frequencies, for which, in the African-American context, Alicia Wassink of the University of Washington

(Seattle) is conducting ground-breaking basic research. It is, of course, far beyond the requirement of the book currently under review, but for readers of this journal the point is worth making.

In the discussion of Romani names for various non-Romani ethnic groups (p. 121), it is worth noting that while *das* can be glossed "Orthodox Christians", in general it refers specifically to Slavic speaking Orthodox Christians (*balame* being used for Greeks, as Matras observes). The Indic meaning of *das* is "slave" and the term thus appears to be an old calque on the Greco-Latinate confusion of *Slavenoi* with *sklavenoi*. It is also interesting to note that both *bibolde* "unbaptized" and *činde* "cut" (= circumcised) for Jews are specifically Christian-defined terms, since both would apply equally to Muslims.

Chapter Five, The Roms Among the Nations (pp. 118-155) is an excellent account of what we can deduce about the early history of the Roms as well as what we know about their later history from documentation. As Matras makes clear, we know for certain that the Roms left India, and that they spent enough time in contact with medieval Greek that they must have been living in the Byzantine Empire. We do not know, however, the exact date of the exodus from India nor whether it was connected with some specific event in political history. There are various possible candidates for such an event. The "Egyptians" referred to in an order of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gregorios II Kyrpios, dated between 1283 and 1289 and levying a tax on "Athinganoi and Egyptans" in all likelihood refers the Roms (p. 130). By the fourteenth century, we begin to have numerous references that clearly involve Roms, and from then on there are increasingly numerous documentary sources. This chapter does a masterful job of covering approximately 600 years of recorded history concerning the Romani people. There was only one typographical error: Królikoa (in Poland) should be Królików (pp. 137, 161). As Matras makes clear, owing to the fact that the Roms do not possess documentation of their own early history, what we know is based on the records of those with whom they came in contact. Matras closes this chapter with the period when there was a general shift in attitudes towards Roms. As he writes (p. 155), by the end of the eighteenth century: "…Roms were being offered protection in the name of humanism and equal opportunities but on the condition that they abandon their traditions and separate identity."

Chapter Six, Baptized Heathens: Between Romanticism and Racism (pp. 156-183), basically picks up the historical thread in the eighteenth century, by which time Roms have become a significant factor in European artistic production. As Matras acknowledges, Gypsies were already the subjects of artistic production in the renaissance and baroque periods. Here we can note that the Italian renaissance poet Angelo Ambrogi-

ni ("Poliziano"), who lived 1454–1494, produced his *Canzone zingaresca* "Gypsy song" well before the 1521 poem in Old Spanish cited by Matras (p. 161). The words of Jacob Burkhardt (1878, p. 102) are worth citing here: "His [Poliziano's] gipsy's [sic] love-song is one of the earliest products of that wholly modern tendency to put oneself with poetic consciousness into the position of another class. This had probably been attempted for ages with a view to satire, and the opportunity for it was offered in Florence at every carnival by the songs of the maskers. But the sympathetic understanding of the feeling of another class was new; and with it the 'Nencia' and this 'Canzone zingaresca' mark a new starting-point in the history of poetry." We can also note in passing that Mikša Pelegrinović's poem *Jeđupka* "The Gypsy Woman", produced between 1525 and 1527 and modeled on the Italian *zingaresca* genre, is one of the most popular classics of Croatian renaissance literature. The Gypsy, like the Jew, was one of the stereotypical "others" mocked in Italian carnival traditions, but from this mockery grew the earliest literary representations as well. As Matras rightly observes, the Romantic period in the nineteenth century sees an enormous growth in artistic representations of Roms, which representations have continued into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. He also makes the important point that "[u]nderstanding the literary images of Gypsies that the arts cultivated, and continue to cultivate, is therefore an essential key to understanding Romani history and the history of society's attitudes towards the Roms." (p. 157). This approach enables Matras to move from a well chosen coverage of nineteenth and post-nineteenth century artistic works to the nineteenth and post-nineteenth century world of the European nation state in which those artistic works were produced. In this second part of the chapter, Matras covers the grim history of the Romani people that led to the Romani genocide of World War Two, for which Matras gives meticulously researched details. Moreover, as Matras observes: "None of those involved in the genocide of Roms under the Nazis were brought to justice after the war" (p. 183). Matras then names some of those who were responsible but who never faced criminal charges.

Chapter Seven, Romani Identity in the Twenty-first Century (pp. 184-224) picks up the story after World War Two. Here Matras makes the point that "[w]hile Jewish victims [of the Holocaust] were granted *prima facie* recognition as victims of racial persecution, Roms were denied such recognition." (p. 185). In this chapter Matras documents the Romani struggle for the recognition that their suffering, like that of the Jews, was motivated by Nazi racist ideology, a recognition that was, after decades, finally achieved. Matras also discusses the discriminatory and assimilatory policies pursued by various post-War East European Communist regimes. In detailing the discriminatory policies of the

Bulgarian state against Muslim Roms and Turks (pp. 190-191), we should add that Bulgarian-speaking Muslims, known as Pomaks, were likewise subjected to various forms of cultural oppression such as forced name changes. The Bulgarian state's battle against what historian Mary Neuburger has called *The Orient within* (2004) was a battle against Islam, and as such included the majority of Bulgaria's Roms. This section also documents more positive events, such as the recognition of Roms in the republics of former Yugoslavia. The discussion then moves to the post-1989 era, which sees the rise of Romani political involvement as well as Romani participation in population movements made possible by newly opened borders. It is perhaps worth noting that in addition to the parties cited by Matras, the Party for the Complete Emancipation of the Roms in the Republic of Macedonia was among the first Romani identified political parties to enter into ruling coalitions. This is especially noteworthy since the Republic of Macedonia was the only Yugoslav republic in which ethnic political parties did not overwhelm non-ethnic parties in the 1990 elections. This chapter does an excellent job of bringing the story of Romani politics up to the present day. Here Matras speaks with the authority of both the meticulous researcher and the practitioner, since he himself has been an active participant in the struggle for a fair and just treatment of the Romani people.

The eighth and final chapter, Conclusion (pp. 225-229) is a brief meditation on the challenges of writing about a marginalized people and on the changes being wrought by a new era of globalization. This is followed by Appendix: The Mosaic of Romani Groups (pp. 231-240), which includes a map. The appendix is followed by two maps giving Additional References on Romani Language (pp. 241-242) illustrating some of the major

dialectal divisions within Romani using a well chosen selection of diagnostic words. These are all very effective in conveying technical information to a non-specialist audience. The Select Bibliography (pp. 245-250) is divided by subject matter—History, Culture and Society, Images of Gypsies, Language, Politics—and contains about a hundred items, all of them appropriate. The book concludes with an Index (pp. 251-276).

As a popularly oriented account of the Romani people, Matras' book is unmatched in both the quality and the quantity of information that it successfully conveys. Moreover, it is written in a lucid and engaging style that makes it a very pleasurable read. It can be recommended without any reservations whatsoever to both popular and academic audiences, as well as to policy-oriented audences. Matras has done the general reading public, the academic and policy communities, and, perhaps most important, the Romani people a tremendous service in producing this book. It is a deeply sympathetic account that at the same time succeeds in beng academically sound. It deserves to be purchased by both public and academic libraries. It should be required reading for policy-makers as well as any academic whose work deals in any way with the Romani people, and we can hope that it will reach the broad audience for which it is intended.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Book Review

Expert Frames: Scientific and Policy Practices of Roma Classification. By Mihai Surdu. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015, 267 pp., ISBN 978-963-386-113-4.

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Abstract
The book offers a critique of current political and academic discourse on Roma, and calls for a "de-politicisation" of Romani ethnicity. While the critique of various disciplines' approaches to Roma is pertinent, the book fails to acknowledge the solid linguistic evidence for the Indian origin of the Roma.

Keywords
ethnicity; expert discourse; Indian origin; Roma

Issue
This book review is part of the special issue "Talking about Roma: Implications for Social Inclusion", edited by Dr. Eben Friedman (Independent Consultant and Senior Non-resident Research Associate, European Centre for Minority Issues, Germany).

The assertion that "policy research targeting Roma may do more harm than good" (p. 7) probably best summarises Mihai Surdu's motivation to engage in a critical assessment of expert and academic discourse on Roma. Surdu's argument is that European institutions have formed a bureaucratic apparatus in order to address "Roma" as a social problem (p. 3). According to the author this approach is accompanied by expert narratives, which in turn serve to strengthen the ideology that guides institutional policy. Surdu seeks to critically examine the "classifiers" that make up the target population of these policy interventions and the narratives that accompany them.

Surdu correctly identifies "Roma" as the self-appellation of a particular group as well as a term that has more recently taken on the function of a politically correct placeholder for "Gypsy", which in turn denotes a much wider and more vaguely defined target group consisting of diverse populations (for a similar view see Matras, 2005, 2013). But he argues that Roma were not an ethnic group until their status in Europe became politicised. Inspired by the works of Mayall (2004), Lu-

cassen (1998), Willems (1997), and van Baar (2009), Surdu proposes that Roma ethnicity is the product of political institutions, an activist elite, and the arguments provided by academics.

Laying out his theoretical perspective in Chapter 2 (p. 41ff.), Surdu relies on Weber (1956[1978]), Bourdieu (1991), and Brubaker (2004) in arguing that (any) ethnicity is primarily a product of mass mobilisation by political entrepreneurs in search of symbolic resources for themselves and their supporters (p. 50). As part of this enterprise, political entrepreneurs cultivate myths of origins, a process which in turn offers them political dividends.

Chapter 3 (p. 71 ff.) offers a casual discussion of historical definitions of Roma across institutional practices and academic disciplines, with brief references to police categorisations in the 18th and 19th centuries, race biology, anthropology, and genetics. This is supplemented later by Chapter 7 (p. 219 ff.), an excursion devoted to visual representation. Here the author comments on the choice of images that accompany reports and policy documents. At first I wondered about the purpose of this short, non-exhaustive survey; but then I

was reminded of the poignant choice of imagery that recently accompanied a joint statement by George Soros and Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland (in March 2015): The web comment announcing plans for a European Roma Institute appeared next to a picture of young Romani violinists and guitarists, clearly seeking to connect with what a wider public might accept as a positive image of Roma.

Setting out to prove that Romani ethnicity is not an objective concept but a contextual construction, Surdu devotes Chapter 4 (p. 103 ff.) to contradictions in the way ethnic classifiers have been applied. Roma are associated at times with socio-economic descriptors, language, and self-ascriptions, but these descriptors often fail to overlap. Such conceptual contradictions lead to practical policy challenges: Since the definition of Roma is permeable, survey tools that are applied to Roma are porous, rendering quantitative data unreliable. The concluding remarks to this chapter (p. 194) critique current trends in expert discourse: On the one hand, there is reluctance across much of the academic community to accept ethnicity as an objective category. On the other hand, researchers complain that Roma are undercounted, implying that more precise counting is possible and that there is an objective measure for identifying Roma. Surdu flags this contradiction as arising from experts' self-interest in promoting organisations that seek to secure resources and funds for themselves, and which therefore need to frame a problem and to highlight its importance. I was reminded here of policy reports on Roma by a group at Salford University (see Matras, 2015, Matras, Leggio & Steel, 2015).

Chapter 5 (p 151 ff.) is dedicated to the "Influences of Academic and Expert Discourse About Roma". Surdu draws a distinction between academics, who are affiliated with universities, and experts, whose work is published and disseminated by policy bodies such as OSCE, ERRC, OSI, the World Bank or the Council of Europe. The latter, he says, enjoy wider dissemination. (The distinction becomes blurred when academics assume the role of advocate-consultants paid by and arguing on behalf of NGOs, as in the case of the Salford group referred to above). As one of several case studies described in the following chapter, Surdu then discusses a World Bank report on Roma which claimed that Roma have an aversion to engaging with education and health care. He argues that this report contributed to framing a policy that makes Roma culture responsible for their precarious situation. He goes on to attribute the influence of Jean Pierre Liégeois to the fact that his work was published by the Council of Europe. Here Surdu might have mentioned the Council of Europe's "Romed" programme—its largest project on Roma, to which Liégeois served as consultant—which promotes the need for "mediation" and so implicitly the view that their culture leads Roma to disengage from public institutions. In fact Simhandl (2006), whom Surdu cites extensively, reminds her read-

ers of essentialising statements in Liégeois's earlier work, such as "a Traveller is someone who remains detached from his surroundings" and "the Gypsy worldview emphasises the present moment".

Overall, Surdu's point is that institutions adopt expert statements and impose a narrative, which then perpetuates itself through repetition across a sector of institutions becoming a dominant policy narrative. But in his concluding remarks he entangles himself in a slight contradiction. Having started off by claiming that ethnicity is by definition a political enterprise, he concludes with a call to "de-politicise Roma ethnicity" (p. 248). He even dismisses "Roma voices" as "just institutional views put forward about Roma". One wonders, then, what would be left at the end of such a process of "de-politicisation" and whether the ideal state of affairs would be one where any recognition of Roma identity has vanished completely from the public discourse. Surdu lends authority to his claim that Romani ethnicity is "constructed" by citing political scientists who "agree on its political construction from above" (p. 98). If that is the case then one wonders what the basis is for the construction of any ethnic identity—Irish, Palestinian, Kurdish, or Chinese—; and what justifies the effort to de-construct Romani ethnicity if it simply follows the pathway of any other politicised ethnic identity: Is it the absence of territorial claims, coupled with the range of lifestyle-oriented popular depictions of Gypsies as nomads, which leads Surdu to question Romani ethnicity with such vigour?

In fact, it seems that much of Surdu's scepticism with regard to Romani ethnicity is anchored not so much in the fundamental theoretical critique of the concept of ethnicity as such, but in his reluctance to accept the historical narrative of an Indian origin and the validity of the Romani language as an objective "classifier" of the vast majority of those who self-identify (in their own daily interactions, if not necessarily in formal census surveys) as "Roma". Inspired by the likes of Okely (1983), Lucassen (1998) and Willems (1997), Surdu speaks of the "supposed Indian origin" (p. 51). He argues in his concluding remarks (p. 245) that the deployment of the Indian connection portrays Roma as a non-European and therefore alien people, and that it thus reinforces the opposition between Roma and non-Roma (for a similar argument that claims that describing Romani practices amounts to "essentialising" and creates boundaries, see Tremlett's review of my book, 2014).

I do side with Surdu when he describes with some anguish how schools that he observed in Central and Eastern Europe have an "Indian corner" depicting India as the place in which Romani culture has its roots, and how they showcase Roma dancing and singing in front of delegations of visitors (p. 36). This reminds me of our own observations on the way Roma were exoticised in order to justify resources for third sector interventions in Britain (see Matras et al., 2015). The prob-

lem is that Surdu does not seem to allow the possibility that there is a factual reality behind the depiction of Indian origins, and that a flat denial of Indian origins amounts to a suppression of science rather than a mere discursive critique.

It is telling that in his survey of academic disciplines Surdu devotes only one single paragraph to linguistics (p. 82). Here he misrepresents nineteenth century attempts to classify Romani dialects on the basis of loanwords as if they had key relevance to contemporary Romani linguistics; he falls into the conventional laymen trap by equating language with vocabulary (rather than the coherence of core vocabulary and grammatical inflections); and he ignores two centuries of scholarship that have proven beyond any doubt that the Romani language originates in India and that its presence in Europe therefore testifies to a historical migration of a population from India to Europe. In describing this scientific argument as an attempt to exoticise Gypsies (p. 91) Surdu follows in the footsteps of Okely (1983), Willems (1997), Lucassen (1998), and others in challenging the epistemological legitimacy of historical linguistics rather than engaging with its arguments and the evidence on which they are based.

Arguably, denial of unique and separate Romani traditions, linguistic or other, whatever their historical origins, amounts to an assimilationist approach. The challenge facing European policy is not how to erase cultural differences, but how to ensure that Roma are free to maintain whatever unique attributes and traditions they choose without suffering discrimination as a result. Surdu's critique of the self-serving trends toward essentialising and segregation is welcome and inspiring; but in denying that there is anything at all in Romani identity that is tangible, he seems to be taking things just one step too far.

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The author declares no conflict of interests.

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