

ROMANI WORLDS:

ACADEMIA, POLICY, AND MODERN MEDIA

A selection of articles,
reports, and discussions
documenting the achievements
of the European Academic
Network on Romani Studies

Edited by _____ Eben Friedman / Victor A. Friedman



Romani worlds: Academia, policy, and modern media

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Edited by Eben Friedman and Victor A. Friedman

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INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

Eben Friedman, Victor A. Friedman with Yaron Matras

Preface

The current volume is intended as a contribution to the legacy of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies (EANRS). Our purpose in editing this volume is to bring the achievements of the Network — and thus Romani Studies in general — to a broad audience which includes but is not limited to academics. With these principles in mind, this introduction is divided into two parts. The first introduces EANRS, and the second, the works that make up this volume. The first part of this introduction, concerning the Network's origins and legacies, draws heavily and directly on the document "European Academic Network on Romani Studies: A balance sheet" by Yaron Matras (2015). Matras's document, which is ten pages long, is a careful and detailed account of both the achievements and the problems associated with the creation and functioning of EANRS as well as its legacy.

The Network

The European Academic Network on Romani Studies emerged at a meeting convened by the European Commission's Director General for Education and Culture, chaired by Xavier Troussard in March 2010, to which around 80 individuals were invited. The consensus formed at that meeting was that a



network should be created that would include qualified academics, and that it should help to raise the visibility of Romani Studies and to bring research expertise to the attention of policy-makers. The project and its activities were organized as a Joint Project of the European Commission and the Council of Europe with the financial contribution of both organizations. Such a network and its achievements would have been impossible before the rise of modern media such as the internet, whence the subtitle of this volume.

As a whole, the Network can show a broad set of achievements. First, it created a system of virtual contacts in Romani Studies on an unprecedented scale (see the Appendix to this volume), which enabled specialists in the field who were not aware of one another's work and areas of interest to engage with one another. Moreover, it produced a resource of value to academics whose research did not include Romani Studies and who wanted to become acquainted with such research and integrate it into their teaching. Through its sponsorship of research into policy and research training workshops, including participation of entire groups at the Central European University Romani Studies summer school (featured in Part Three of this volume), the Network allowed many dozens of researchers, most of them early career, to engage directly with one another. This opened up numerous new opportunities and had the added value of introducing a reporting structure through which information on all events and their content would be publicly available even if they did not result in an academic research publication.

Sponsorship of early career researchers had a significant impact on the inclusion of relevant content in international conferences and contributed directly to the visibility of Romani Studies. Also, the many approaches to policy bodies at European and national levels served to make them aware of the availability of a wide body of expertise in the area. Finally, the Network facilitated a number of core debates that will have a lasting impact on the intellectual agenda in the field, with direct

implications for policy. These include the issue of conceptualising Romani identity and identifying the target group, the issue of compiling quantitative data on Roma, and the role of academics in providing quality assurance of policy interventions at local and national levels. All three remain controversial issues, but the Network debates have, it can be argued, shifted the parameters of the discussion on all of them. Documentation of two of these debates are included in this volume and discussed in the second part of this introduction.

There were a number of exchanges with the EC connected with feedback from Network members. On one occasion, the SC worked to collate responses to National Strategies in a structured manner by setting up working parties with country-based expertise and delegating the lead to a number of designated members. The procedure resulted in the preparation of 13 sets of written comments by members of the Network, with other Network members sharing previously published work related to the Strategies. These responses were fed back to the EC and published on the Network website,¹ with EANRS' contribution acknowledged in a progress report by the EC to the European Parliament from June 2013 (see European Commission 2013: 4 fn 11, 9 fn 20). Additionally, the issue of consultation with civil society, which the EANRS participants had flagged centrally in their integrated response, was later taken on board and it now figures in various EC communications on the National Strategies.

EANRS' lasting legacy will include some of the analyses of basic parameters of both academic and political engagement, such as critical reflections on the way the majority conceptualises Roma and on the way of achieving a sound balance between affirmative action and advocacy on the one hand and transparency and the rigour of enquiry-led expertise on the other. This is an intellectual legacy that will last into the future. Another legacy, which you are currently reading, is this e-book.

¹ See http://romanistudies.eu/news/contributions_from_members/

Structure of the volume

This book consists of three main parts. Part One is made up of papers that were presented at the closing, showcase event of EANRS as a project in Strasbourg and entitled “Policies for Roma inclusion: The contribution of academic research.” Contributions by Ágnes Dároczi, Eben Friedman, and Margaret Greenfields address the questions “How can research benefit policy on Roma?” and “How can Roma empowerment benefit from research?” Yaron Matras provides a case study from Manchester, UK as an illustration of the local-level impact of trends in policy toward Roma at European level. A second case study, by Loizos Symeou, examines the inclusion of Roma in seven European countries, drawing on the findings of research conducted in the framework of the project “School Education for Roma Integration” (SEDRIN) in the period 2012-2014.

Part Two is comprised of edited versions of two e-mail discussions conducted under the auspices of EANRS. One discussion, which was initiated in late 2013, focuses on issues related to measuring and reporting on Romani populations. The other discussion took place in spring 2014 and is concerned with Romani identity and identifying the so-called target population(s) of EU/EC efforts concerning what has been come to be known as “inclusion”.

Part Three consists of edited reports from five events connected with EANRS. The first of these is the summer school held at the Central European University in Budapest in summer 2012. Featured events from 2013 include the research seminar for Romani scholars “Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Roma Studies: Whither Intersectionality?”, held in Cluj-Napoca; the workshop organized at the University of Liverpool entitled “The Uses of History in Romani Studies: Theory and Practice”; and the academic seminar “The European Dimension of Romani Culture: Scientific and Political Discourses,” which took

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place in Marseille in September of that year. The final event featured in Part Three is the workshop “Bringing History and Policy into Dialogue in Romani Studies,” which was held at the University of Liverpool in October 2014.

The volume closes with a contribution from Elisabeth Tauber, Chair of EANRS’s Scientific Committee. Tauber’s remarks focus on the role of the Network and the social and institutional environment within which it operated. The text ends with a poignant call for a change in the ways in which Europe conceives of Roma.

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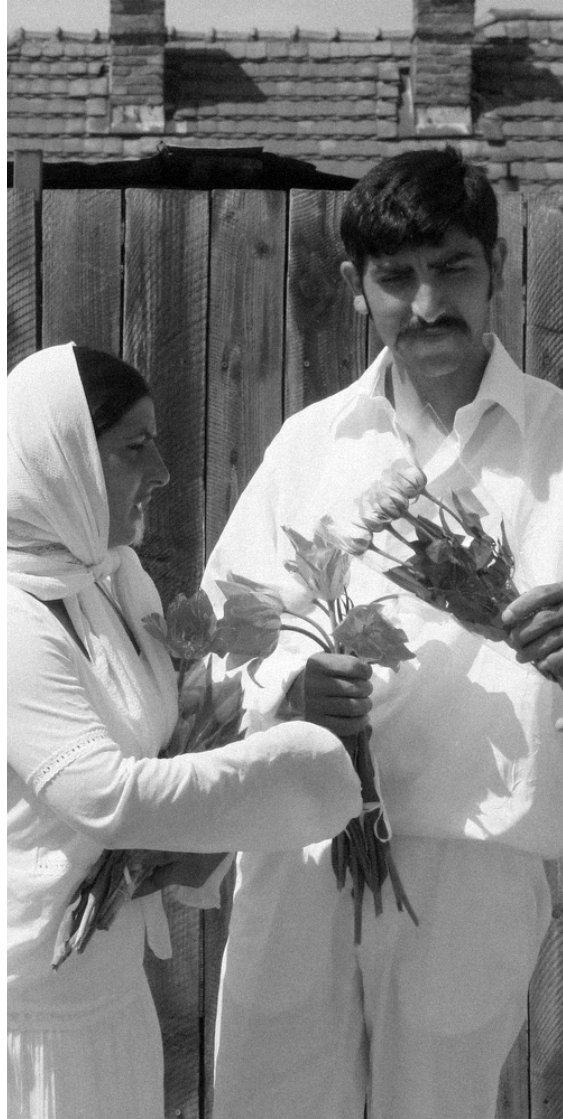
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PART ONE: THE STRASBOURG SHOWCASE EVENT

Edited by Eben Friedman with Victor A. Friedman

Introduction

The five papers that comprise this section were presented at the final event of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies, “Policies for Roma inclusion: The contribution of academic research,” held in Strasbourg on 22 April 2015. The contributions by Ágnes Dároczi, Eben Friedman, and Margaret Greenfields are based on their respective opening statements at the event and accordingly focus on the questions “How can research benefit policy on Roma?” and “How can Roma empowerment benefit from research?” Yaron Matras and Loizos Symeou provide case studies. Whereas Matras’s case study from Manchester, UK illustrates the local impact of European-level trends in policy toward Roma, Symeou presents findings of research conducted in the framework of the project “School Education for Roma Integration” (SEDRIN) from 2012 to 2014 on the inclusion of Roma in seven European countries.



Opening statement by Ágnes Dároczi (*European Roma and Travellers Forum*)

There are three main types of problems affecting Romani communities in Europe:

1. Roma people are strongly overrepresented among the poor and the disadvantaged
2. Roma are often isolated by prejudices and discrimination, making anti-Gypsyism a genuine phenomenon
3. Roma are subject to ethnic repression in the form of underdevelopment and/or non-implementation of supportive measures and minority laws.

Three examples from Hungary illustrate these problems.

Of the 1,400 inhabitants of Halmajugra, a village approximately 90 kilometers east of Budapest, 80% are Roma, more than 70 % of whom are unemployed. In applying for a subsidy from the European Union (EU), the local firm Detki Kecs pledged to employ only one Rom. With the EUR 600 000 received from the EU in 2013, the firm brought in workers from as far as 100 kilometers away. It is not at all surprising that the local Roma demonstrated against the firm and posed the question, "Why do EU institutions finance racism?"

In August 2013, in the town of Ózd, located near the Slovak border, local authorities cut off the water supply to the slums, claiming that it costs too much to provide water to those who do not pay for it. That same year, the town received approximately EUR 4.8 million in Swiss funds for modernization of sewage and water supply.



Source: Népszabadság 04.08. 2013.

[http://nol.hu/belfold/ozdon_kanikulaban_korlatoztak_a_vizfogyasztast-1404283]

In Miskolc, houses near a stadium are being destroyed and their inhabitants given a maximum of around EUR 7 000. This amount is enough to buy a house only in a small village. In this way, local authorities carry out ethnic cleansing as they expropriate the houses of Roma living in the city.

Instead of addressing the problems Roma face, politicians focus on their own status for the next several years, treating Romani communities as figures in a game. Although specifics vary from country to country, the general strategy against Roma shares a few important characteristics. First, poverty and misery are presented as part of a Romani culture which exists from time immemorial and which constitutes an irrational social fate that is beyond control. In this way, decision makers silence their conscience when they distribute the always scarce resources among more effectively represented interest-groups instead of ‘wasting’ money on easing the ‘hopeless misery of the Roma’.

Second, the acceptance of prejudices against Roma as being characteristics of Roma themselves is used to justify repeated postponement of action on Roma’s demands concerning minority and ethnic rights, culture, education, self-representation and the amelioration of misery. Often, the explanation is that the prejudiced majority would not accept it, ‘people’ would be against it, or it would only increase tensions between Roma and non-Roma. Other times, authorities refuse to admit the size of the Romani population, the seriousness of Roma’s problems, and the force of the prejudices affecting them, with cultural, educational, financial, informational, and media support for Roma set at levels appropriate for a community consisting of only a few thousand members.

Third, there is an attempt to belittle legitimate Romani and minority demands by turning to demagoguery and opposing these demands to other large-scale problems of poverty. This tendency is evident in statements like the following: “People need

bread and not museums, theatres, institutions or mother tongue education”; or “Romani culture interests only a few ambitious Roma. The rest of the people want to eat and work and not to learn in their language or to practice and develop their culture.”

Without real political commitment, only a few can escape from the trap of poverty. Our society is closed to the extent that schools, instead of contributing to equality, reproduce disadvantages. Moreover, we cannot expect the disadvantaged to change their situation alone, without any support. We also have to be aware of the fact that prejudices indicate basic social illnesses which will not disappear simply because we do not want them anymore. Finally, every piece of legislation is worth something only if it is implemented.

Given this situation, the role of the researcher is particularly important. In order to benefit policymakers, society in general, and Roma, research should begin by accepting and focusing on Roma’s interests, contributing to the understanding of their position and thinking. For example, research on Roma’s voting behavior had to be financed by Romani civil organizations because even pro-Romani organizations were of the opinion that the Roma do not vote. The research showed just the opposite: Roma vote in a higher percentage than the majority. Further, their behavior is politically informed, with the distribution of Roma’s votes for rightist and leftist parties similar to that within the general population.

Researchers also have a responsibility to present accurate information about resources allocated to Roma. In Hungary, for example, the National Court of Auditors showed no more than ten percent of the EUR 3.8 million invested in the Decade of Roma Inclusion actually reached Roma. To present as an investment the amount which Roma never saw generates hate against us! This is one of the reasons for growing neo-fascist tendencies.

Closely related to the previous point, researchers should be aware that the collection of sociological data about prejudices risks creating more prejudices. There is a need for more anthropological views on Roma, as well as for publicizing good examples of development in Romani communities.

Two examples from Hungary demonstrate the potential for media to promote the acceptance and support of Romani communities by making positive examples known to the general public. In the village of Told, the art school “Igazgyöngy Alapítvány” expanded from teaching drawing to establishing a small firm that sells not only pillows and knickknacks with drawings made by children from the local Romani community, but also briquettes and agricultural products.² Another good example is the “Hejőkeresztúr Model,” which provides viable and internationally accepted methods for the education of handicapped children and their teachers.³ Like the media, researchers have a responsibility to find and disseminate information on the design and results of successful approaches. Research in this direction is arguably of more use to Romani communities than is a constant focus on deficits and problems.

In the end, the emancipation of Roma requires two types of institutions, both based on participation, representation, and subsidiarity:

- In politics, Roma need a national-level body with the participation of NGOs to represent Roma’s interests. Keeping in mind that democracy is a process that depends on the quality of its structures, good examples of such bodies come from Austria, Finland, and Hungary’s National Integration Advisory Body in the period 2007-2009.

² For more information on the school and the firm, see <http://igazgyongy-alapitvany.hu/>

³ See <https://prezi.com/5bwe6-09h5z9/a-hejokereszturi-altalanos-iskola-tanitasi-modellje/>

- In the area of culture, Roma need institutions including but not limited to cultural centers, galleries, museums, and research centers.

While minority institutions are crucially needed, they are only half of the picture. Roma must also be represented in mainstream institutions. Moreover, Roma must be visible, the views of the majority will never change if its members do not have a chance to know us better and correctly.

The history of the Romani movement teaches us that the cultural paradigm of the early 1970s through the 1990s was a success, while the human rights paradigm has thus far proven unsuccessful. Keeping in mind that cultural participation is no substitute for political participation, we need both. Cultural institutions serve as tools for better understanding, creation of a Romani narrative, and for the modern content of our identity. Political representation, on the other hand, is the only way to ensure that the Romani voice is heard.

How research can benefit policy on Roma

Broadly speaking, research can benefit policy on Roma by moving policy dialogue beyond statements of ideology and into the realm of how specific courses of action actually or potentially affect the people targeted by those courses of action. At a very basic level, research can point to the need for clarity in arguments about policy on Roma. In recent years, human rights and economic discourses have been deployed together in attempts to build support for measures to improve Roma's situation (see, for example, European Commission 2010; 2011). This marks a change from the 1990s, when documents on Roma published by international organizations tended to emphasize Roma's human rights (see UN Commission on Human Rights 1992; Parliamentary Assembly 1993). Since the first several years of the current millennium, calls to improve the situation of Roma 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 (see de Laat et al. 2010; Parliamentary Assembly 2013).

If human rights and economic discourses have some immediate appeal, they also have their own liabilities (Friedman 2014). Moreover, the coexistence of the two discourses is not necessarily an easy one. On the one hand, adding economic considerations to considerations of human rights does not address the ongoing backlash against talk about Roma in terms of human rights. On the other hand, combining human rights arguments with economic ones does not provide explicit guidance on how to adjudicate between the two should conflict arise.

In addition to supporting the formulation of clear policy goals, research can provide accurate and detailed analysis of situations in need of appropriate policies. For example, in many countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Roma are over-represented in special schools and classes for the mentally disabled, with widespread acceptance of the idea that Romani

children belong in special education. At the same time, until fairly recently there was very little in the way of concrete figures on the representation of Roma in special education, and even less attention on the part of policy makers to the reasons for which so many Romani children spend their entire educational careers in special education settings.

Research conducted in the past several years in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe has drawn policy makers' attention to the situation by documenting a complex of factors which contribute to the overrepresentation of Roma in special education (see Friedman et al. 2009b; Mihajlović, McDonald, and Negrin 2010; White 2012). Some of these factors are related to the procedures and mechanisms by which children enter and leave special education, while others are related to the motivations of institutions and parents. By showing that the overrepresentation of Roma in special education is *not* a function of a higher incidence of mental disability among Roma, these research findings direct policy makers' attention to specific aspects of the situation as instances of injustice rather than mere misfortune.

Research can also offer empirically grounded advice about the appropriateness of popular policy approaches. Conditional cash transfers (CCTs) for education are one such approach, providing money to families with school-age children who meet enrolment, attendance, or performance requirements. CCTs have become popular in many countries for demanding responsibility from beneficiaries instead of providing 'something for nothing'. Case studies of CCTs for education implemented in Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, however, show that these policies have not met with the well-documented successes of some of their counterparts from outside Central and Eastern Europe (Friedman et al. 2009a). The main reason for this seems to be that impoverished Roma – unlike members of the majority with similar levels of income – tend to live in segregated settlements served by low-quality, segregated primary schools. As a result, providing incentives for school attendance neglects the conditions in segregated schools which tend to make them not only unattractive, but also ineffective. A wiser course of action in most cases is thus to focus on schools.

How Roma empowerment can benefit from research

Research can empower Roma both indirectly and directly. Indirect empowerment can result on a large scale when hard data are mustered against common misconceptions about Roma. One such misconception, as mentioned above, is that Roma belong in special education. Because the use of culturally and linguistically biased tests to diagnose mental disability figures among the central factors behind the overrepresentation of Roma in special education, research that demonstrates the biases of these tests has a particularly important role in making clear to Roma as well as non-Roma that intelligence is not an ethnic characteristic (White 2012). A related piece of research important for the empowerment of Roma focuses on the positive educational experiences in standard schools in the United Kingdom of Roma previously enrolled in special schools and classes in Czech and Slovak Republics (Fremlova 2011).

Another widespread misconception about Roma is that all have a cultural propensity to migrate. The findings of the Regional Roma Survey conducted by the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, and the European Commission in 2011 confirm commonly held views that Roma from Central and Eastern Europe are more likely to leave their country of residence than are non-Roma (Cherkezova & Tomova 2013: 34-36). The findings also show that the reasons for this are poor employment prospects at home. Further, there is evidence to suggest that Roma's poor employment prospects stem not only from lower levels of education and qualification, but also from discrimination (O'Higgins 2012: 45).

A third popular misconception is that Roma drain social welfare systems. A recent study conducted in Slovakia showed that spending on the districts inhabited primarily by Roma accounts for around 2% of public expenditures (Dinga & Ďurana 2014: 8). Analysis of data from the Regional Roma Survey further shows that the transfers which go to Roma tend to

target the younger generation and, in so doing, support the development of skills which benefit not only Roma, but also the society as a whole (Ivanov & Kagin 2014: 29). Transfers to non-Roma, on the other hand, go mostly to persons past working age.

Beyond discrediting misconceptions, research can also benefit the empowerment of Roma more directly. Perhaps the most important way in which research can do this is by involving Roma as sources not only of raw data, but also of ideas and as researchers. While this amounts to empowerment on a very small scale, it is of great importance for moving beyond divides – real and perceived – between ‘the researchers’ on the one hand and ‘the Roma’ on the other.

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Opening statement by Margaret Greenfields (*Buckinghamshire New University*)

In preparing this opening statement I have been asked to consider two questions:

- how research can benefit the development of policy on and pertaining to Roma; and
- how (and whether) Roma empowerment can benefit from research.

In responding to these questions I consider that I am fortunate in being an academic with a specialism in Social Policy, and one who moreover worked initially as a community lawyer dealing with the ‘lived reality’ of front-line situations. In addition, for some years I worked as a legal policy officer for civil society organisations. As a result I can reflect on the policy making process and policy cycle from several viewpoints; that of practitioner; the policy-advisor who needs to utilise reliable information to support recommendations; and the researcher delivering outputs which feed into policy formulation.

The recognition of the inextricably entwined nature of research and policy development has had a profound impact on my career. I realised that whilst it *is* possible to be a ‘fire-fighter’ who attempts to deal with the individual situation and circumstances of social exclusion and discrimination faced by a single client, without systemic change — which can *only* occur when there is a recognition at a high level of the extent of a ‘problem’ — clients will continue to come, with the same problems, on a day-by-day basis. For this reason, the development of appropriate, evidence-based policy, reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it is fit for its purpose and reflective of current situations is a key weapon in the armoury of those who wish to bring about greater equality and a fairer society.

In formulating policy, however, key actors are dependent upon research outputs which evidence the requirement for legislation and guidance. Inevitably, few legislators and civil servants are experts who work only in a single field or with an individual community (such as the Roma). Moreover, typically they work to tight time constraints and across broad policy areas which

include multiple groups impacted by a cluster of issues. Perforce their focus will alter, depending upon political circumstances or current priorities. Thus, when developing policy recommendations, there is omnivorous use of sources of data, of which research reports are but one. When considering which research influences policy there are a range of factors to be taken into consideration: the relationship between commissioning agencies and researchers; reputation of the authors; the agency which commissioned the research (e.g., the Fundamental Rights Agency utilises large scale international samples and rigorously reviews findings to ensure as far as possible that unjustifiable claims are removed); methodologies, and known or suspected biases in the findings reported. Policy makers thus rapidly assess research for validity and reliability as well as how it has been received by academic peers and whether it fits within an emerging body of evidence which adds weight to a particular policy area.

However, the voices of those directly affected are frequently unheard in policy debates, unless they are facilitated to 'speak to power' — either directly, through the pages of research reports in which their voices and experiences are heard, or through the auspices of their community representatives and civil society agencies. Thus the production of research for, on and about, the situation of Roma people creates an enormous moral responsibility.

When producing research about peoples who have for centuries been marginalised and excluded, and who in all EU member states experience varying degrees of ongoing discrimination, it is critical to ensure that researchers do not simply produce a 'horror narrative' which creates an image of Roma particularity and passivity and ignores the politicised structural inequalities they experience. Such deep and persistent exclusion is rooted in racism, discrimination, and inequity experienced by substantial numbers of Roma but also demonstrably by a range of other potentially vulnerable groups including refugees and asylum seekers, homeless people, et al. Research recommendations and policy formulations should therefore move beyond framing concerns as just a 'Roma issue' and ensure that equality of access, human rights and the absolute non-negotiability

of permitting or condoning discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, gender or other key characteristics are embedded into all research discussions where evidence of inequity has been found.

Whilst research is critical to exploring particular circumstances and impacts experienced by individuals and groups, policy underpinned by research should, in my opinion, engage not only with the particular situation impacting on Roma in a single location, but also seek to draw upon lessons learnt from existing research with other communities of interest (i.e. those experiencing deep poverty or racist violence). This approach not only enables comparisons to be made and hard evidence produced in relation to different outcomes and pathways attributable to discrimination based on Roma ethnicity, but also permits the development of solidarity across communities, and policy transfer or the adoption of effective transnational models as similarities are identified (UNESCO 2012).

To this end there is a need for research pertaining to Roma to implicitly support the building of bridges across policy areas (e.g., the impact of poor quality accommodation on health and wellbeing; discrimination experienced by migrants of low socio-economic status) whilst engaging with approaches and findings drawn from other disciplines and key agencies including the WHO; OSCE, OSF, etc.

The burgeoning number of Roma intellectuals, civil society actors, lawyers, medics, police officers etc. must also be part of the research narrative as their experiences and knowledge feed into identifying areas where there are inequitable processes and outcomes whilst adding value to the processes of research and policy formation. The key therefore to effective research-underpinned policy formation is partnership between Roma and non-Roma; policy communities and researchers; and between those who carry out research and those impacted by research recommendations and findings.

To ensure that high-quality and effective policy is delivered (and that such policy does not simply benefit a few, or is positively harmful to the group concerned), it is critical to ensure that policy makers can draw upon expert evidence rooted in solid research. Such research must be able to stand up to scrutiny and should not simply bear the hallmark of any particular academic's obsession; current political or social trends; or have been unfairly influenced or shaped by funders, media preoccupations, political rhetoric or civil society priorities (Becker et. al. 2012).

Throughout the process of undertaking and reporting research which holds the scope to influence policy, there is duty inherent on those of us engaged in such practices to ensure that we utilise our power responsibly, and that policy formation with which we are associated, is based on the solid evidence, designed in accordance with best practice and undertaken in the full awareness that decisions made and policies formulated impact on 'real lives' (see OFMDFM 2012).

To reduce the risk of poor, rapidly produced policy which responds merely to current circumstances and prevailing fashions, those working for Roma empowerment at the grass-roots level and researchers who are engaged with identifying trends and demonstrating variables must ensure that we remain reflexive and analytical in reporting findings and developing recommendations. In contrast, where policy is at the mercy of pressure politics or poor scholarship, bad legislation will follow, with potentially negative consequences for the most vulnerable members of the population (Becker et al. 2012).

In conclusion, I suggest that empowerment and research are natural bed-fellows. It is easy for the enemies of equality to simply ignore individual 'hard cases'. In contrast, solid, incontrovertible research findings form a substantial body of evidence. Where research is developed by those whose voices cannot be so easily marginalised precisely *because* they are privileged by dint of cultural capital, professional status, etc., it is harder to dismiss a call for change. High-quality research not only creates an audit trail whilst developing a body of knowledge, but also adds to the self-knowledge and awareness

Opening statement by Margaret Greenfields (Buckinghamshire New University)

of the diverse circumstances of Roma people through building collaborations across multiple domains: including those of Roma and non-Roma.

Finally, I argue that for all the self-evident good of Roma empowerment and voice, empowerment built upon a lack of credible research means that community and institutional knowledge is in danger of being lost and lessons must be learnt again as cycles of practice or exclusion reappear in the same or different guises. Accordingly, I assert that a symbiotic relationship exists between research, ethical policy making and Roma empowerment, and that our collective priority must be to ensure that these three mainstays of equality are strengthened through utilising the highest quality evidence to create the greatest positive impact for the largest number of Roma people, wherever they may live.

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EUROPE'S NEO-TRADITIONAL ROMA POLICY: MARGINALITY MANAGEMENT AND THE INFLATION OF EXPERTISE

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Introduction

My aim in this paper is to offer a brief comment on the direction of current European policy on Roma, and to illustrate the impact of this policy at local level, drawing on a case study from Manchester, UK. Since the fall of communism, European policy on Roma has been shaped by Western anxieties around the immigration of Roma from Eastern Europe. Western responses to the extension of EU freedom of movement treaties in 2004 and 2007 have combined two seemingly contradictory narratives. The first is the historical depiction of Roma as a threat. The second is the EU's post-1990 commitment to the social inclusion of Roma. The resulting blend might be labelled a 'neo-traditional' ideology, since it bears some similarities to the assumptions underlying historical policies such as the edicts of Maria Theresa and Joseph II in the late eighteenth century: It depicts Romani culture as a threat to its own people, especially to the vulnerable members of its community; it puts forward 'trafficking', 'safeguarding', 'early and forced marriage', and Roma's supposed reluctance to engage with public institutions such as education and health care as being among the principal challenges facing policy. In this way the ideology makes the inclusion of Roma conditional on containment and control. The operational response is presented as 'mediation', which



implies that individual Roma's interactions with public institutions need to be managed by trained professionals as Roma are unable to manage these interactions themselves.

The EU's National Strategies for Roma Inclusion from 2011 have set a framework for participation standards in education, housing, employment, and health care as well as anti-discrimination. However, these remain not just aspirational but largely theoretical. The strategic side of EU policy now targets primarily the allocation of funds to a secondary sector in an effort to launch and sustain mediation interventions. There is little evidence so far that this approach can help remove obstacles to participation, either by changing attitudes toward Roma or by enforcing existing equality protocols. But it offers financial incentives for agencies at local level to specialise in the provision of support and mediation services. Potential beneficiaries of designated EU funding schemes are in this way incentivised to frame Roma – their presence in general, and their alleged cultural pre-dispositions in particular – as a problem that necessitates targeted intervention. The competition to secure EU funds has opened up opportunities for consultancy work, the objective of which is to certify interventions and the agencies that lead them. This has created a genre that presents itself as enquiry-based research but which in reality is commissioned on demand by clients hoping to strengthen their position in the bidding process for funds. As a result, the distinction between enquiry-based research and commissioned appraisal becomes blurred and policy bodies and media alike are confronted with an inflation of expertise on Roma.⁴

⁴ For related arguments see already Trehan 2001; Timmer 2010; Nacu 2011; Trubeta 2013; van Baar 2013; and Matras, Leggio & Steel 2015.

Migration and European discourse on Roma rights

I have argued elsewhere (Matras 1998, 2000, 2013) that European policy toward Roma since 1990 has been shaped by Western reactions to the East-West migration of Roma. Two phases can be distinguished: The first followed the increase in migration in the years immediately after 1990. It was characterised by the emergence of a European discourse around the protection of Roma from human rights abuses and their empowerment in the origin countries in the East, as a way of preventing migration to the West. The second phase began with the EU enlargement in 2004 and especially in 2007. It features unease among policy makers toward the extension of freedom of movement rights to all new accession states and the legal presence of Roma migrants in the West, and an effort to alleviate what is seen as the burden that Roma impose on local authorities and local services across Europe.

Western governments' policy toward Roma migrants in the 1990s targeted the removal of migrants to their origin countries. In response to public protests at local level and concerns raised by human rights organisations, removal was often accompanied by gestures of expression of interest toward the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Political interventions to support social inclusion in the origin countries were pitched as a way to prevent or curtail migrations to the West (see Matras 2000). This rationale became embedded in the Copenhagen criteria toward EU enlargement (cf. Simhandl 2006: 108). Meanwhile the removal of migrants was accompanied by tokenistic gestures such as financial support by the German government for the re-settling of Roma in Macedonia in 1991 and for housing projects in Romania in 1993 (cf. Matras 1998: 60). These developments triggered interest among transnational organisations in the link between the social exclusion of Roma in the East, and their migration attempts to the West. Reports focusing on this link were commissioned among others by UNHCR (Braham 1993) and by the Council of Europe (Matras 1996).

The interest in the status of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe prompted a shift in the political discourse at European level from the traditional 'Western' narrative that regarded Gypsies as defined by a nomadic lifestyle, toward the 'Eastern' narrative that acknowledged their shared ethnic and cultural identity (cf. Simhandl 2006, Marushiakova & Popov 2005). Two landmark documents in this direction were the report by Josephine Verspaget to the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly from 1992 (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1993), and the report by the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities Max van der Stoep entitled *Roma (Gypsies) in the CSCE Region* from September 1993 (van der Stoep 1993). Measures introduced by the Council of Europe in response to the Verspaget report included setting up a regular policy drafting and reporting mechanism on Roma through MG-S-Rom ('Council of Europe Group of Specialists on Roma, Gypsies and Travellers') and the Coordinator for Roma Affairs, giving Romani culture consideration within frameworks such as the European Charter for Minority or Regional Languages, setting up networking initiatives such as the European Roma Youth Forum, information initiatives such as the Fact Sheets on Roma, and especially the granting of consultative status to Roma via the European Roma and Travellers Forum. At the civil society level, the period between 1990-2007 saw an emphasis on capacity building through subsidies awarded to Romani NGOs by the EU's PHARE programme and George Soros's Open Society Institute, and the emergence of a 'Roma sector', which promoted a new European discourse on Roma (cf. Marushiakova & Popov 2005, Vermeersch 2006). It has been argued that this public discourse, strongly associated in Central and Eastern Europe with the EU accession, later provoked a backlash in the form of extremist reactions and anti-Roma incitement as disappointment with the EU grew in the years following accession (cf. Stewart 2014).

Freedom of movement and the emergence of the 'neo-traditional' discourse

A new phase in European policy on Roma accompanied the extension of freedom of movement to new accession countries in 2004 and especially in 2007. As policy could no longer focus on wholesale removal on a legally or politically acceptable basis, emphasis shifted to a public discourse that sought to criminalise the mobility of Roma (cf. van Baar 2014). One of the best examples of this discourse is Operation Golf, launched with EU funding in 2007 as a partnership between the London Metropolitan Police and the Romanian Police. This enterprise became highly politicised, portraying trafficking, child exploitation, and organised crime as directly entrenched in Romani society and so-called 'clan structure' and as inherently linked to migration. It promoted a picture of vulnerable Romani children who were being abused by their own community and therefore required the protection of authorities. In this way, it reinforced a trajectory that focused on safeguarding issues and on early and forced marriage, and which argued that Roma show a propensity to disengage from mainstream public services, especially in education and health, such that they require mediation, intervention, and perpetual support.

Some of these images were incorporated into the Council of Europe's Strasbourg Declaration of October 2010 (Committee of Ministers 2010), which became the manifesto for the new European policy on Roma. The Declaration mentioned the need to combat trafficking and announced the launch of mediation projects. In effect it shifted the focus away from the human rights agenda of the Verspaget declaration and toward the delivery of contracted service-delivery projects. Some of these, such as Romed/Romact, which purport to provide training, have been criticised for not offering any accreditation (cf. Liégeois 2012); others, such as the Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion, have been flagged informally by Council of Europe officials as failures. Yet they continue to constitute the Council of Europe's principal engagement focus on Roma.

The Sarkozy government's expulsions of Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria in the summer of 2010 revealed the EU's incapacity to protect the rights of Roma to be treated equally under its own freedom of movement treaties (cf. van Baar 2011). In response, the EU adopted a compensatory strategy: In 2011 it launched the National Strategies for Roma Inclusion. The lack of a key concept behind the strategy is clear from the comparison of definitions of the target group adopted by the various states (see Matras 2013); these vary, some focusing on Roma as an ethnic group, others on different groups of Travellers, or even on populations that live below the poverty line in particular settlements. The ambiguity surrounding the target population is also reflected in European organisations' definitions of 'Roma' as a so-called "cover term for diverse populations" (Official Journal of the European Union 2013). This is an inherent feature of the neo-traditional ideology on Roma, one that licenses the traditional image of 'Gypsies' as a lifestyle but re-packages this image under a politically correct label (cf. Simhandl 2006, Matras 2013).

A further illustration of the ideological dispositions that accompany post-2010 policy toward Roma is the EU Council Recommendation from December 2013, which flags the need to coordinate the mobility of Roma and to combat trafficking and forced marriage (Official Journal of the European Union 2013). The Council of Europe's Ad Hoc Expert Committee on Roma (CAHROM) received reports at its meeting in May 2015 on "how to address and combat human trafficking within Roma communities (with a focus on street children and prostitution), [and] how to promote gender equality within Roma communities (with a focus on early and/or forced marriages)" (Council of Europe 2015). The focus on mobility as a menace, on Romani culture as a threat to its own people, and on vulnerable Roma (women, children, and young girls in particular) as alleged victims of their own community lends a patronising character to interventions. Not only does the narrative pathologise Romani culture, but it is wrapped in a seemingly progressive, emancipatory discourse that claims to be protecting Roma. It might be argued that it serves to shift the blame for the exclusion of Roma away from majority society's prejudiced institutions and onto Romani society itself.

The EU's report from April 2014 on the implementation of the National Strategies for Roma Inclusion (European Commission 2014) provides various examples of good practice; but for most there is little evidence that they are directly linked to an explicit National Strategy. For example, Romania is highlighted as having introduced a programme to train Romani language teachers, but this programme has been in place since the early 1990s. Examples are also cited from countries that lack a formal National Strategy, such as the UK. In effect, then, the EU's National Strategies for Roma Inclusion have merely created a reporting mechanism that is independent of an actual intervention strategy. Aware of this fact, the EU report from April 2014 complains that available EU funds are not being claimed by member states to support Roma. In 2015, the EU scaled up its effort to encourage potential beneficiaries to claim funds for Roma inclusion. A communication by DG Justice from June 2015, which set out new priorities for the National Strategies, flagged as its first agenda point "new approaches to funding Roma integration", stating that €90 billion were available for consortia of "civil society, local authorities, and social partners" (Jourová 2015). The parallel *Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 2015* emphasised the need to create greater administrative capacities "in order to absorb available funds" (European Commission 2015: 6). Tellingly, it flagged the Council of Europe's Romed and Romact programmes as models of "administrative capacity building". Soon afterwards, in August 2015, the Council of Europe issued a Call for Expressions of Interest on behalf of its Romact programme, announcing that it was looking for "experts in the fields of local government and access to EU funding" to work in Romania and Bulgaria.⁵ The focus had thus shifted since the inception of the National Strategies in 2011 from a long-term vision for inclusion, to middle-term strategies of fundraising and fund allocation.

⁵ http://coe-romact.org/sites/default/files/leaflets/ROMACT_Call_Experts_BG_RO.pdf

The period since 2007 thus has seen European institutions responding to the persisting inequality of Roma first by flagging an abstract vision for inclusion, but then by setting strategic priorities that often portray Roma as victims of their own community. The operational consequence that is derived from this narrative is to create and strengthen a sector that specialises in targeted interventions and which aspires to manage Roma behaviour and Roma's interaction with public services. This sector, flagged as made up of partnerships between local authorities and civil society (NGOs), in effect assumes the role of 'marginality management'. Perhaps the most dramatic development in this context is the transformation of the Council of Europe's engagement with Roma: In the 1990s it had taken the lead on drafting a political vision for Roma participation. But since the Strasbourg Declaration of 2010 it has become part of the sector of local agencies that are themselves beneficiaries of EU funding for mediation interventions. In this role it often acts as a middleman, managing large-scale EU contracts and sub-contracting the implementation of work packages to third sector agencies at local and national level.

Local responses to Roma migrants: A case study

In order to illustrate the manner in which this European policy percolates down to local level, I draw on the case study of Manchester.⁶ Roma from Central and Eastern Europe had begun to settle in Manchester in the mid-1990s. The presence of Romanian Roma migrants in the city became politicised in 2009, when local opposition politicians used it to challenge the City Council's community cohesion policy. The targeting of Romanian Roma coincided with the publicity around Operation Golf: The investigation focused on Roma from the southeastern Romanian town of Țândărei, which was also the place of origin of most Romanian Roma who had settled in Manchester. The images flagged in the public debate were similar, and

⁶ For a more detailed discussion see Matras, Leggio & Steel (2015) as well as the University of Manchester MigRom Extended Survey report (Matras et al. 2015).

petitions organised by local politicians accused the Roma of organised crime, trafficking, truancy, causing public disorder, illegal dumping, over-crowded residences, failure to pay taxes and reliance on benefits. In response Manchester City Council set up a 'Roma Strategy Group', which operated for around two years and which brought together representatives of the city's various public services. For the most part, the Roma Strategy involved specialised services working through a list of indicators to confirm that 'expected norms' were being adhered to. In some cases, measures were taken to appease those who raised complaints, such as a tokenistic police raid which resulted in no arrests and the formal admission that there was no evidence of either trafficking or organised crime, and a door-to-door round of visits by council tax officers that specifically targeted Roma households and raised a total of £3,000 in revenue – most likely just a fraction of the cost of the operation itself. In its final document on the Roma strategy from March 2013, the City Council acknowledged that the issues revolved primarily around negative perceptions of Roma rather than the actual behaviour of Roma in any of these domains (Mills and Wilson 2013). In practice, then, the Roma Strategy ended up confirming that Roma can and should fall under generic protocols of equality, that they did not constitute a threat to public order or to public safety, and that they did not require any dedicated or targeted intervention measures, although at the insistence of the City Council's Children's Services (see below) the issue of 'safeguarding' was mentioned as still unresolved.

But Manchester's Roma Strategy also gave birth to a secondary trajectory. A group emerged within the City Council's Children's Services that focused on issues of school attendance and safeguarding. In partnership with a voluntary sector agency, Black Health Agency for Equality (BHA), the group received a City Council grant to support Roma in schools and subsequently an EU grant to continue that engagement (see Matras, Leggio & Steel 2015). In a series of publications they put forward the need to cater for what they described as specific "Roma learning styles" (see Matras et al. 2015: 32-38, 52-57). They claimed in memos to schools that Roma showed "promiscuous behaviour" and that weddings of underage

Roma girls took place at a local park. Much of the material published by their projects romanticised and pathologised Romani behaviour: It advised teachers that Roma have a special ability to “navigate the world without the need for reading and writing”, that they are “unable to sit still for longer periods”, and that they are “unable to listen without talking at the same time”. It recommended that schools should follow a “Roma admissions protocol” that monitored whether “the child smiles at teachers” and whether it “understands that words symbolise concepts”. At a local secondary school, a segregated pathway for Roma was set up by the BHA, which continued for around three years. It employed Roma as classroom support assistants, flagging the arrangement as one that employed Roma role models but in fact embedding the very small circle of young Roma who had some kind of community work experience into the structure that was used to contain members of their own community. Paid by the hour, their ability to put forward any critique of the intervention was thus neutralised.

The BHA served both as sub-contractor and partner to the City Council on this activity. It also absorbed City Council personnel, who were moved from the City Council’s payroll to BHA on a part-time or temporary basis. In this way, the City Council was able to demonstrate that it was implementing austerity measures by reducing personnel costs while at the same time keeping its staff on the payroll of a de-facto subsidiary, funded by a City Council seed corn investment that was supplemented by EU grants. In an effort to secure continuous funding, BHA put forward reports and applications to the City Council claiming that Roma suffered from contagious diseases, and that their culture encouraged early marriage and school drop-out, and that the Roma community showed a disproportional rate of teenage pregnancies – all claims that lacked any backing through evidence (see Matras et al. 2015: 32-38, 52-57).

In order to lend authority and credibility to their claims, BHA commissioned researchers to write affirmations and appraisals of their interventions. The first such report (Lever 2012) stated that the goal of BHA’s engagement with Roma was “to

investigate claims of criminal activity whilst maintaining social cohesion” and went on to assert that Roma have a “strong cultural aversion to integration”. In conclusion it presented a list of recommendations that pertained exclusively to the need to provide funding for further interventions and to guarantee the involvement of “third sector agencies” in the process. A further report (Scullion and Brown 2013) presented interviews with BHA staff – those who commissioned the report – themselves and concluded “it was difficult [for respondents] to argue for additional financial resources to provide support to communities when they were unable to accurately state the size of the population they were required to support” (p. 42).

Drawing on this conclusion the authors – a team based at Salford University – proceeded with the release of a controversial report in partnership with Migration Yorkshire, another consortium of third sector agencies working together with local authorities in the north of England. The work formed part of Migration Yorkshire’s ‘Roma Matrix’ project, itself funded by the EU’s DG Justice to showcase third sector and local authority engagement with Roma. The report (Brown, Scullion & Martin 2013) estimated the number of migrant Roma in the UK at 200,000 – around four to five times higher than prevailing estimates (for a critique see Matras 2015). Fundamental flaws in the Salford team’s research methods were pointed out immediately after the release of the report in October 2013 in a series of contributions to the EANRS email discussion list (see documentation in Part 3 of this volume): The team relied on questionnaires sent to local authorities asking about the number of Roma in their locations, of which only 12% were returned with a numerical estimate. Even that small set was not coherent, because it consisted of responses from practitioners in different fields, based on different estimation methods (mainly anecdotal, since hard data are seldom available), and using different definitions of ‘Roma’. The authors did not disclose the actual figures received, so the sample remained impossible to verify. Yet they used the sample for a projection, ‘scaling-up’ the figures to fill in the missing locations – a staggering 88% – based on the unrealistic assumption that Roma migrants distribute themselves evenly across the country. It is telling that the findings were never published in any peer-reviewed outlet.

Presenting the team's findings in an "exclusive" interview on Channel 4 national television news in late October 2013, lead researcher Phillip Brown stated that it was necessary to provide a revised estimate because "population magnitude will guide the spending of EU budgets."⁷ In a follow-up article, Brown, Scullion & Martin (2014) reiterated that the lack of an official estimate of the number of Roma migrants made it difficult for local authorities and "community based organisations" to make use of the European Social Fund's considerable budget for social inclusion, and that providing a population estimate would help gain "high level recognition as to the impact this migration was having at a local level." The purpose of the report was, in other words, to amplify the problems triggered at local level by the migration of Roma and to underline the need to channel EU funds to local practitioners in third sector agencies who were sub-contracted by or worked in partnership with local authorities.

That the financial incentives motivate agencies to frame Roma as a 'problem', and to further essentialise the problem as deriving inherently from Romani cultural practices, is illustrated by the repeated attention given in agency reports and funding bids to the themes of safeguarding and early marriage and alleged disengagement with education. In January 2013, BHA requested funding from Manchester City Council in order to set up special "protocols to track hard to reach Roma girls at risk of school drop out and criminal activity". Faced with criticism that it was making unfounded generalisations about Romani culture (see University of Manchester 2014), its partner organisation Roma Matrix sought to provide 'proof' that Romani culture encouraged early marriage by featuring the story of a newly wed young Romani girl on its website.⁸

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iH5nQ4An7qg>

⁸ <https://romamatrix.eu/making-arrangements>

The expertise sector: Enquiry vs. appraisal

The Manchester case study shows how negative perception of Roma prompted a local authority to take interest in a small community (around 300-400 persons) of Romani migrants. This interest opened up a niche opportunity for an open-ended intervention pitched around the need to support Roma, supposedly, around health and education, a need that was purported to arise out of behavioural traits that were said to constitute an inherent part of Romani culture. The availability in principle of EU grants for such interventions created an incentive for a third sector agency with close links to the City Council to continue to flag Roma as a problem population even after most departments in the local authority had agreed to dismantle the 'Roma Strategy' and mainstream their engagement with Roma rather than sustain dedicated, targeted intervention structures. In order to secure grants, the beneficiaries commissioned reports from academics. This in turn provided researchers who had no background at all in Romani studies with an entry point into the public discussion on Roma and into the pool of funds for Roma-related expertise reports.

In a recent study, Surdu (2015) shows how expert reports on Roma that are published by international organisations receive much wider attention and circulation and thus have arguably a higher impact than those published by academics in peer-reviewed outlets. The work of the Salford team was circulated in the form of online reports, which were promoted by Migration Yorkshire, a consortium of local authorities and the lead partner in Roma Matrix. It received publicity through 'exclusive' media interviews and a parliamentary motion tabled by Jeremy Corbyn MP (at the time of writing, the leading candidate in the race for the UK Labour party leadership), who referred to it as "pioneering research".⁹ Despite that fact that

⁹ <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/788>

it has been widely criticised in academic circles, the Salford report from October 2013 continues to be referenced in mass media as well as in some policy briefings.

Two factors link current EU policy with the inflation in the quality of expertise. The first is the shift from a genuine commitment to the removal of barriers to inclusion, not least in the form of conditions linked to EU accession before 2004, to what is now essentially a reporting mechanism that revolves around the showcasing of good practice at local level and which to that end is keen to disburse funds to help proliferate local interventions. The second is the persistence of an ideological view of Roma as perpetually in need of external support and mediation. Put together, these two dimensions license a sector of marginality-management, which in turn gives rise to a sub-sector of commissioned expertise. As parameters shift from the field of enquiry to that of affirmation and appraisal, it becomes difficult for governments and inter-governmental organisations to define a reliable threshold for academic expertise. The fact that an emerging consultancy sector is linked to funded project interventions also creates a conflation of interests, whereby organisations that are contractors for service delivery projects avail themselves of commissioned appraisers. In this constellation it seems that academics whose work is devoted primarily to enquiry-based research, and who seek to protect the standards and evidence threshold of academic enquiry, risk embarking on a course of permanent collision and confrontation with both their fellow academics who are commissioned by the funding beneficiaries and with the commissioning agencies.

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THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCHOOL INCLUSION OF ROMA IN CYPRUS AND THE SEDRIN PARTNERS' COUNTRY CONSORTIUM

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Introduction

This paper explores the social and educational inclusion of Roma in Cyprus, and discusses these findings in the light of the respective findings of the rest of the partner countries constituting the “School Education for Roma Integration” (SEDRIN) consortium. The two-year SEDRIN project involved eight institutions (among which five Roma-led organisations) in seven European countries: Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Spain. It started in October 2012 and ended in October 2014. SEDRIN aimed at empowering Roma women in acting as mediators between the Roma children and the school. Roma women appear to be the most actively involved adults in Roma children’s life and thus more relevant to any endeavour to prepare Roma children for the school and the school-life. The necessary empowerment was achieved by developing a training methodology handbook which aimed to improve the preparation that the Roma children receive in their pre-school age and the first classes of the elementary school through the training of Roma women in skills, tools and strategies necessary to prepare in an effective way the Roma children.

Drawing on the research findings of the SEDRIN project, this paper highlights how Roma social and financial conditions in Cyprus and the rest of the



countries participating in the study link to Roma children's school attendance and inclusion. The paper discusses policy and educational implications of the research findings of the SEDRIN project for EU initiatives regarding Roma social and educational inclusion.

Setting the context

The Roma constitute one of the largest ethnic minorities in the European Union. According to the European Commission (2012) an estimated 10-12 million Roma live in different EU member states. Roma have been living in Europe for many centuries and for the most part, they were integrated in rural and urban areas where they worked in long-established trades and practices around agriculture and certain trades. Since the Roma's arrival in Europe, large Roma populations have lived on the territory of current Central and Eastern Europe EU member states, such as Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, but also there are some Roma that settled in other major member states, such as Spain, France and Ireland (European Commission 2012).

Mayfield (2013: 1) maintains that the Roma, "are an easily-identified, incredibly distinct, and unfortunately a bitterly hated non-European race dispersed throughout Eastern Europe and the Balkans." While it is indeed the case that Roma are subjected to racism and are perceived as non-European, in historical terms they are as European as the Hungarians with regard to the timing of their arrival, and Mayfield's use of "race" to refer to an "ethnic group" (albeit one subjected to racism) smacks of early twentieth century racism itself. The absence of written history meant that Roma origin as well as history was long an enigma (Fraser 1992) whilst, according to Liégeois (2005), there are still some unanswered questions that have long been asked with regards to Roma origin. As Matras (2002) makes clear, however, there is no question of the Roma's

ultimate origin in India, even if questions of the exact timing, stages, and routes of the exodus remain. Because many Roma in Europe do not have birth certificates, no country in Europe has accurate statistics for Roma in their records and official census (Jovanovic 2013). Moreover, many Roma do not self-declare as Roma in censuses for fear of discrimination. More important, however, is the fact that unregistered Roma are left without legal protection, civil rights such as the right to vote, and even without access to public healthcare institutions.

Roma communities are multifaceted, with variations in lifestyle and culture, as well as in the extent to which they are integrated in mainstream national societies. Many of the Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe were hit very hard by the economic and political upheavals that have changed the face of their countries' societies since 1989 (European Commission 2012). Consequently, for Roma, conditions have gone from bad to worse and with the presence of discrimination as well as extreme poverty, the situation has resulted in negative knock-on effects in terms of their education, employment, housing and healthcare. For example, in rural areas of Eastern and Central Europe, there is a lack of basic amenities for Roma people such as water supply, heating or electricity (European Commission 2012).

The perpetuation of difficult living conditions in the Roma community is often attributed to the lack of education of Roma populations across Europe. Around 50% of Roma children throughout Europe appear not to complete their primary education (UNESCO & Council of Europe 2007), while the enrolment differences between Roma and the rest of the European citizens are much larger beyond compulsory education. Moreover, only a small percentage of Roma receive college and university education. For example, in South-Eastern Europe, only 18% of Roma attend secondary school compared to 75% of the majority population, and less than 1% attends university (UNICEF 2011). The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and UNDP, in a recent survey report in 2011 across 11 EU member states, highlights that on average,

only half of all Roma children in EU countries attend pre-school or kindergarten, while just 15% of young Roma complete upper secondary education.

According to UNESCO (2010), persons who do not complete at least compulsory education have limited chances to develop learning skills and face high risks of living in poverty. This has proven to be the case with Roma, given that it is comparatively more difficult for Roma to find paid jobs, since most of Roma are lacking the professional skills and competencies that are required in today's labour market. In EU member states with significant Roma populations, this already has an economic impact, given that for example, Roma account for more than 20% of new labour market entrants in Bulgaria and Romania (European Commission 2011).

Social conditions, the educational system, and the relationship between the Roma family and school are factors which set obstacles for Roma children's school success (Symeou, Luciak, & Gobbo 2009). Roma families often seem to lack school-relevant information and knowledge, as well as specific skills to monitor and support their children's schooling (UNICEF, European Social Observatory & Belgian Federal Planning Service for Social Integration 2011), while the school and its system itself appear unfamiliar, different, strange and very often negative towards Roma children (Symeou, Luciak, & Gobbo 2009). Even more, it is documented that in some European countries Roma children are segregated by inappropriately being placed in special needs schools (Rorke 2013), and that Roma children across most EU member states face prejudice and discrimination in school (UNICEF 2007; European Commission 2012). Roma across Europe are thus denied the opportunity to access education, while at the same time, Roma people tend to feel safer amongst their own community, away from a hostile (school) environment (European Commission 2012). It thus appears that among the major factors that contribute to the early school drop-out of Roma children is the distance and inconsistency between the Roma family and community

environments on the one hand and the school environment and its workings on the other. Therefore, the EU and many other European institutions call for action for Roma children's school inclusion and integration, and for the adoption of strategies to establish equal opportunities for Roma in schools.

The Roma of Cyprus

In Cyprus, Roma represent a very small indigenous cultural group with the same citizenship rights as the majority group but with distinct cultural and religious traditions. Roma of Cyprus are considered, according to the Cypriot constitution, members of the Turkish-Cypriot community possibly due to their common religion (Islam) and their (assumed) common language (Trimikliniotis 2012). They are better known as *Cigani* or *Tsingani*, and arrived on the island in the 14th century CE (Marsh and Strand 2003). Most Cypriot Roma are referred to as Muslim Roma called "Ghurbeti." Greek Orthodox Christian Roma, called "Mandi," were fewer in numbers. Following the 1974 Turkish military invasion in Cyprus, most Ghurbeti moved from the south to the north. During the last two decades, Roma groups from the north moved to the south and settled in socio-economically deprived urban areas, altogether approaching 570 people (UNOPS 2004). More specifically, starting from October 1999, but especially during and after 2001, for reasons that have not been identified, several Roma groups from the north moved to the south -mainly Limassol and Paphos- and settled in socio-economically deprived areas of the two towns. Since April 2003, when travel restrictions across the demarcation line were eased, the influx of Roma to the south increased. Lacking access to social services funds and provisions for medical treatment, education or work (Iacovidou 2009), Roma are considered to have been largely ignored, avoided and kept on the margins of the local society as victims of prejudice and low educational achievement in both parts of the divided country (Demetriou & Trimikliniotis 2007). Moreover, Trimikliniotis (2012: 11) points out that even though Roma are considered as Cypriot citizens, they "live in extreme poverty with a low

degree of integration and zero civic participation.” More recently, the Ministry of the Interior addressed the Roma’s housing situation by financing the building of a small village of 16 prefabricated houses in Limassol and 20 prefabricated houses in Paphos, also refurbishing existing houses in both towns (Pelekani 2013).

As regards education, Roma in Cyprus still appear to endure educational marginalisation and teachers’ attitudes towards them appear rather complex, entailing several nuances that distinguish the experiences of Roma children in the school (Symeou, Karagiorgi, Roussounidou, & Kaloyirou 2009). Despite a ten-year compulsory education system and social service incentives aiming at retaining Roma children in school, school enrolment and attendance among Roma are low, and dropout rates, especially in the transition between primary and secondary school, are extremely high (Trimikliniotis 2007; Symeou, Karagiorgi, Roussounidou, & Kaloyirou 2009). Data on Roma students’ enrolment, attainment, and dropout rates suggest that most Roma children end up almost illiterate (Demetriou & Trimikliniotis 2007). Despite the fact that during the last ten years various efforts have been made by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), as well as by other governmental and non-governmental agencies, entities and institutions to integrate Roma in the community and education (Pelekani 2013), Roma families appear to have negative attitudes towards the education system. Roma appear to view formal education as an unnecessary burden, since their children understand little of what is taught in school, get into fights, feel excluded and face racial prejudice (Demetriou & Trimikliniotis 2007; Hadjitheodoulou-Loizidou & Symeou 2007; Zembylas 2010). Moreover, Roma children tend to drop out of school, partly because their parents do not trust but also do not find meaning for their future lives in the education system. This is also observed in the minimal participation of Roma parents in parents’ associations as well as from the minimal participation of Roma parents in school celebrations and events (Pelekani 2013). Theodorou and Symeou (2013) claim that Roma children’s relationship with the school and their teachers is wrapped in deeper layers of significance, with children speaking of teachers’ insufficient understanding of Roma cultural practices,

beliefs and attitudes towards schooling as these diverge considerably from the mainstream. It appears that teachers reflect societal perceptions and stereotypes regarding Roma, which need to be understood in terms of the lack of intercultural education training among pre-service teachers and the lack of a tradition of intercultural education within the Greek-Cypriot educational system in general.

State efforts to promote intercultural education in the Greek-Cypriot state education system have been linked with an increasing adoption of an EU and Europeanised discourse of interculturalism (Theodorou & Symeou, 2013). This infusion appears to have been operating largely at a symbolic level (Hadjisoteriou 2010). The Educational Reform Committee that was assigned the responsibility to propose a reform manifest of the Greek-Cypriot state education system criticized in 2004 the system's monoculturalism and ethnocentrism and claimed that it lacks a comprehensive policy for aiding the educational and social integration of culturally diverse students. Efforts to integrate culturally diverse students occur mainly at the primary school level and consist of remedial teaching in Greek as a Second Language to pupils who are other-language (αλλόγλωσσοι/*alloglossi*). The MoEC also provides a number of other supportive actions for Roma students and families, such as free Greek language courses for Roma adults and children during the afternoon, as well as tuition and registration fees in case Roma parents want to enroll their children in a private school (Pelekani 2013).

In addition, schools with a comparatively large number of Roma pupils have been included in the Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) initiative. ZEP consists of a small deviation from the mainstream education model, an institution introduced in 2004 and implemented only at a small number of schools across the country in areas which are deemed as socially disadvantaged based on several criteria, one of which is the presence of *alloglossoi* pupils. A ZEP is comprised of a cluster

of schools which receive extra assistance from the MoEC, such as having fewer students in class, more hours of remedial teaching and free lunch for all students (Council of Ministers 2004) but may not deviate from the national curriculum.

Roma children are grouped in schools with *alloglossi* pupils and specifically with *Tourkoglossi* (Turkish-speaking) pupils. Trimikliniotis (2012: 12) maintains that although “Greek language support classes are offered to the non-Greek speakers, the state is unable to avoid school segregation of the Turkish-speaking pupils, most of whom are Roma.” Reporting on discrimination in education in Cyprus, Trimiklionitis (2012: 31) summarizes the main complaints submitted to the equality body over the years as follows: “religious confessions, exemption from the religious class, school segregation and the content and method of education of Roma pupils.”

The SEDRIN project and its research methodology

The two-year “School Education for Roma Integration” (SEDRIN) project involved eight institutions in seven European countries: Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania, and Spain. It started in October 2012 and ended in October 2014. The research phase of the SEDRIN project aimed at investigating Roma children’s school exclusion from the perspective of their families in the participant countries. Following a thorough review of national and local literature, as well as policy documents in the partner countries, empirical data were collected in the partner countries apart from Cyprus.¹⁰ Interview and field observation techniques were employed in order to respond to the research objectives.

¹⁰ The research phase of the SEDRIN project was implemented in all partner countries except Cyprus, where data were not collected. As the only academic institution among the SEDRIN partners, the Cyprus partner (European University Cyprus) was responsible for designing the research methodology of the project, monitoring the implementation of the data collection in the other partner countries, analysing the collected data and publishing the research findings of the project.

In each country participating in the research phase of the project, 6-10 individual semi-structured interviews were conducted as well as 2-3 focus groups (each focus group consisted of 3-5 interviewee participants) of Roma women and men. Roma women interviewees consisted mainly of mothers, but also other close female figures, e.g. grandmothers, older adolescent sisters, female close relatives, female neighbors of Roma children. Roma men interviewees consisted mainly of fathers, but also of grandfathers, older brothers in adolescence, as well as close male family members. All interviews were conducted in the local Roma daily-life informal language.

Interviews were complemented with experiential/informal observations of activities in each countries' schools, neighborhoods, local communities, Roma settlements, communal spaces, Roma-owned spaces, as well as in local institutions and/or with contacts with Roma families and communities. Diary fieldnotes were kept of formal and informal activities in which Roma people (women, men, children, and adolescents) were involved (either separately or with other people). For the observation of Roma children, special attention was paid to carefully and informally approaching and discussing with them about their school experiences and family aspirations for education. For ethical and context-specific reasons, discussions with Roma children were conducted informally. The data collection methodology was designed in a way to highlight the links between Roma families and their socially determined status in their local communities. Analysis was guided by emerging themes from both the interviews and the fieldnotes.

The next part of the paper presents the research findings of the project regarding the social and educational inclusion of Roma in the partner countries constituting the SEDRIN consortium apart from Cyprus.

Roma social and educational inclusion in the SEDRIN consortium countries

In Greece, Roma seem to consider themselves as Greeks due to the fact that they participate in the Orthodox Church which allows them to use their religious identity in order to define their ethnic identity. Roma living standards in Greece, however, do not seem to cover children's basic needs and Roma children often do not appear to have the necessary school infrastructure and study space. Roma children seem to underperform in school and the drop-out rate is very high.

In Hungary, Roma appear to face deeply rooted discrimination in the fields of education, employment, healthcare, housing and access to assets and services. However, in the contemporary Hungarian educational system Roma children whose parents appear to be supporting them in the learning process become very successful, while results suggest that at the beginning of the 2000s two thirds of Roma children completed secondary school.

In Italy, specific school policies still do not exist (Bravi 2009) and Roma school drop-out rates appear high due to the early marriage custom, poverty, the lack of necessary school equipment, as well as family or domestic responsibilities. However, new approaches and initiatives in favour of the Roma pupils have recently been introduced.

In Portugal, several attempts to respond to and minimize school failure that is very common among Roma and non-Roma children who share a similar socio-economic situation were not sufficient to ensure the desired success. Lack of any recognised policy for Roma school integration appears to be a serious obstacle for Roma's children educational inclusion. However, some very positive results were observed in Portugal, such as the high rate of Roma children finishing primary school and attending secondary.

Roma in Romania are historically the least educated minority. Efforts are being made through some programmes focusing on promoting Roma children rights, including their access to education, as well as on informing educators about Roma cultures, in order to improve their living standards, to reduce the early school drop-out phenomenon and to eliminate discrimination against Roma.

Finally, Spain, which participated in the resolution of the Council of the European Ministers of Education meeting on May 22, 1998, adopted a series of measures to overcome the obstacles hindering the access of Roma children to school, especially school culture (Fernandez, Martínez & Riviere 2011). Apart from that, it seems that Roma families in Spain do not wish to send their children to any school in which Roma values are not recognised.

Roma social and financial conditions in the SEDRIN partners' countries appear to lead to the discouragement of Roma families and children to view school as a needed priority. Even if they lived in houses and not in camps, their living conditions were often very poor.

Our life is bad, because we're in a squatters' camp, unauthorised, amid garbage, and cops come all day. And all so often call us names. We're those people who lie down on the ground, all the way down.
Woman, 42, Italy

Poverty was a major negative factor affecting most Roma in the countries in study. Moreover, most Roma parents in Greece, Italy, Romania, and Spain did not appear to be able to acquire all the necessary school supplies (uniforms, schools, general supplies) for their children, due to the lack of financial income. For example some of the Roma mentioned the following:

There is no job around, there's nothing.
Woman, 28, Italy

It is difficult because local governments have reduced scholarships and without these scholarships it is very difficult for many families to be able to buy school supplies and books, as they are very expensive.
Woman, 35, Spain

In Italy Roma families disclosed that they could not afford to meet their children's basic needs, while in Romania children's school needs appear far beyond their families' financial capabilities and daily living realities. The following quotes are characteristic:

Life is hard in the camps. There's no water, no power, it's cold: no conditions. It's filthy and there are a lot of rats. When we eat, mice eat with us, when we drink, they drink with us, when we sleep, they sleep too.
Man, 49, Italy

For a period of one year I withdrew my child from school because I had no money to buy supplies and clothes, and the family of 5 persons lived only on social aid. But I wanted her to study.
Woman, 20-30, Romania

Roma parents' levels of educational attainment were part of a vicious circle of illiteracy in the local Roma communities. Most of the adult Roma were found to be illiterate and therefore claimed not to be able to support their own children's schooling:

I don't know anything, it's hard for me who can't write: I also talked to the teachers and schoolmaster for I'd like them to teach me writing.

Woman, 39, Italy

Moreover, a resistance was found among many Roma families to continue schooling beyond primary school, since Roma parents often saw no relevance of school beyond the provision of basic literacy and numeracy skills and/or due to their views of the purpose and nature of school education:

I don't have pleasant memories, because my school years were bad. I had only one exercise book and I used this book for grammar, mathematics, writing and everything else. I had just one pencil and one exercise book. However, life in the Gypsy ghetto was wonderful, I really liked it. I still dream about it.

Man, 54, Hungary

The marginalisation/discrimination among SEDRIN partners' local school settings and in particular from teachers and other children seems to enhance Roma children's early school abandonment and drop-out. In Greece and Italy the Roma children were reported to be facing discrimination and racism from their classmates and from their classmates' parents. For example, a Roma girl in Italy mentioned the following:

When I was at school everybody steered clear of me. I attended school here for two years, secondary classes. I asked them: why do you keep away from me? They answered: "you are a gypsy". "Yes, I'm gypsy, but I'm better than you: if someone comes and asks me for one euro for a slice of pizza, I'll give it, you won't."

Woman, 16, Italy

In Greece, Roma parents were found not well informed about the dates for their children's vaccination and school enrolment. Additionally, racist and cynical attitudes regarding Roma children's hygiene were reported among non-Roma:

*There are some schools that don't enroll Roma children for hygiene reasons or lack of papers.
Man, 31, Greece*

Even more, some schools appeared to label Roma children as having 'learning difficulties' or other special needs.

Roma children were described as feeling vulnerable and subject to racial repression, discrimination and overt institutional racism. The following quotes from Roma interviewees illustrate the poor relationship between teachers on the one hand and Roma children and their families on the other in the case of Hungary:

*Many teachers discriminate my two children. My children know much more but they don't get good marks. And if they lose their pencil case, nobody looks for it. But to be honest, if a Hungarian child loses something, everybody goes and looks for it. If 500 forints disappeared, they collected the sum from the Gypsy children. 20 years ago, when we went to school nobody considered if you were a Roma or a Hungarian. I am not satisfied with this school.
Woman, 36, Hungary*

*[The teachers] favour some children and sometimes look at everyone [Roma children] in a strange way.
Woman, 39, Hungary*

Amongst the SEDRIN countries, the early marriage custom appeared as a clear factor in Roma's children early school abandonment. Liégeois (2005) suggests that marriage in the Roma life does not necessarily imply legal marriage, on the contrary the marriage custom creates alliances between families. In any case, girls at a very young age are prepared to carry on their lives beside a man. In Greece, for instance, Roma parents maintained that they avoid sending their girls to school for fear of insults and harassment. They also maintained that the girls need to remain virgins until their marriage day, and that school attendance could pose a threat to this commitment.

There is this attitude that Roma families want women at home. They consider it as their personal right. They don't want them to meet with any other men. They want them virgin before the marriage which occurs in a very young age.
Man, 52, Greece

Although I and my brothers went to high school and we were good students, my sister never went to school because my parents were afraid that someone would harm her. They have heard a story about a girl that was harmed outside the school and they were afraid of that.
Man, 16, Greece

Despite the obstacles to Roma children's school inclusion presented above, it appears that in some participant countries (mainly Hungary, Portugal, and Spain) significant governmental measures have been adopted and the school enrolment rates of Roma children were much higher than in the other SEDRIN participant countries. In addition, in all participant countries many Roma parents were found to attach value and importance to the school as an institution as well as to school education. Consistent with this, many parents showed interest in finding ways for their children to attend school:

What they learn in school is very important for their future.

Woman, 46, Portugal

School is good for him. For us, we feel too uncultured and regret being unable to undertake anything. For him we want a good life.

Man, 46, Italy

Now more than ever, there is a need for the children to learn to read, to write, to speak Greek and English fluently and to know how to use a PC. These educational tools will bring a future to our children, boys and girls.

Man, 31, Greece

Discussion

Drawing on the research findings of the SEDRIN project, this paper has highlighted how Roma social and financial conditions in Cyprus and the rest of the countries participating in the project link to Roma children's school attendance and the discouragement of Roma children viewing school as a needed priority. It appears that the reasons that many Roma families withdraw their children from school in both Cyprus and the rest of the SEDRIN project countries often have less to do with not wanting their children to receive school education than with various aspects of life outside the school environment and with concerns about the school institution itself.

Roma children appear to still be subjected to many European education systems that are unresponsive to, or even repressive of, their culture, with schools still facing major difficulties in adopting an inclusive ethos that promotes cultural diversity. For their part, teachers tend to underestimate the effects of the school environment on pupils' learning in general as well as on Roma children's sense of identity and belonging in particular. These findings have major significance given the additional finding of this study as well as other studies (Acton & Gallant, 2000) that many Roma families *do* value education and wish to attend school. As Macura-Milovanović, Munda and Peček (2013: 498) state in a recent study "although those pupils value education, the lack of emotional and educational support from teachers and lack of acceptance by peers make identification with the school difficult or even impossible."

Due to their social position, Roma do not enjoy the same rights as other children and they are not regarded as full citizens in the school environment. In order for schools to consider issues of diversity and inclusion, they must therefore find ways in which Roma children can be included as full citizens in schools, particularly in relation to their marginalised position in society. To this end, it is particularly important that teachers become aware of the factors which contribute to Roma's cultural marginalization in schools and both committed and able to create a multicultural school environment where all children feel at home (Vajda 2013). The existence and implementation of coherent equality policies (particularly for tackling racism and bullying), a strong leadership ethos (Deuchar & Bhopal 2013), and an inclusive curriculum that makes Roma children and their culture feel valued appear to be significant in increasing positive attitudes towards Roma (Symeou, Luciak, & Gobbo 2009).

School curricula should be inclusive of the cultural, historic and linguistic backgrounds of Roma communities, with teachers' competences and intercultural knowledge improved accordingly. In addition, states must initiate schemes for educating

not only Roma children but others, too. For example, Roma parents also need to take more responsibility for how their children get on at school, as well as to be educated and assisted with this kind of skills. Also, according to Flecha and Soler (2013), Roma children, families and communities can benefit from dialogic learning interactions and addressing the problems inherent in education resulting in better learning outcomes and richer learning interactions, such as the Spanish project which involved Roma families and communities in children's school learning activities and decision-making spaces through a learning-related dialogue approach.

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PART TWO: EMAIL DISCUSSIONS

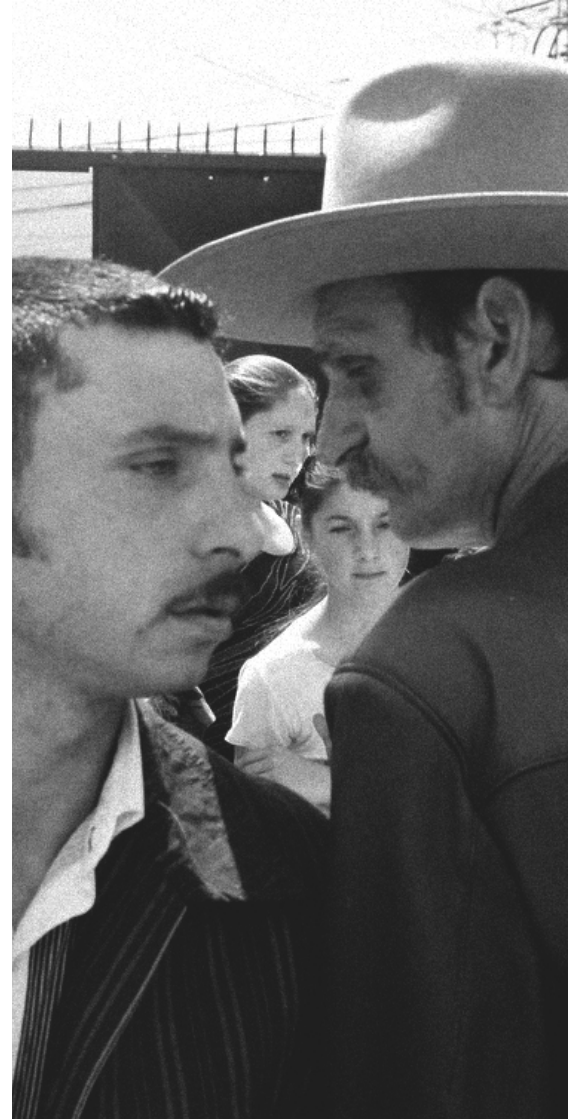
Edited by Eben Friedman and Victor A. Friedman, with Judit Durst

Introduction

This section of the volume consists of edited versions of two discussions conducted via the mailing list of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies. The first discussion focuses on issues related to measuring and reporting on Romani populations, and was spurred by the release in fall 2013 of an estimate of the number of Romani migrants from Central and Eastern Europe living in the UK in a research publication co-authored by a member of the Network. The second discussion, the immediate impetus for which was a query from a Network member reviewing a book, is concerned with Romani identity, with significant emphasis on how Roma are defined as a collective object of policy.

Earlier versions of both discussions were edited by Judit Durst and made available on the EANRS website at <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>.

The versions included in this volume differ from the earlier versions in the elimination of extraneous material not directly pertinent to the topics of the respective discussions as well as in the correction of obvious typographical errors; the addition of (some) diacritics; and minor revisions of spelling,



punctuation, grammar, and style with an eye to consistency and the smooth flow of the text as a whole. On occasion, clarifying information has been added in square brackets. In some cases, when the original text was unclear, ambiguous, or idiosyncratic, the text has been left as in the original rather than the editors attempting to impose an interpretation. No attempt has been made to homogenize various forms of English usage that are subject to variation. Finally, the discussion of Romani identity in this volume has been expanded to include the initial query and responses to it in addition to the later discussion, as well as relevant sections of a message not included in the version previously published on the Network website.

Each discussion includes a list of participants with their institutional affiliations. Wherever possible, affiliations have been updated to reflect the state of affairs as of summer 2015. Note that for Emeriti, the Oxford University practice of using the Latin masculine singular *Emeritus* for all genders is followed. An asterisk indicates those participants who were associate members of the Network, i.e. pursuing an advanced degree, at the time of the discussion.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

Edited by Eben Friedman with Victor A. Friedman

Background

The discussion below was initiated in November 2013 with Yaron Matras's critique of the Salford University's research team's published report that estimated the number of Romani migrants from Central and Eastern Europe living in the UK at ca. 200,000.¹¹ The main elements of Matras's critique concerned the methodology and the media dissemination of the report's findings. A total of 33 members of the Network participated in the debate, which grew into a broader discussion about the responsibility of researchers to handle the dissemination of their research findings with great care. Lessons learned from the discussion include that a lack of methodological transparency in policy-oriented reports – particularly in relation to statistics – makes such reports particularly vulnerable to abuse by media and the general public to feed anti-Gypsyism, and that the goals of reducing anti-Gypsyism and working towards greater inclusion of Roma in the UK would be better served by a higher level of cooperation among researchers.

¹¹ Philip Brown, Lisa Scullion, and Philip Martin, *Population size and experience of local authorities and partners: Final report* (Manchester: University of Salford, 2013).



Participants:

1. Thomas Acton (Emeritus, University of Greenwich; Sr. Research Fellow, Buckingham New University; Visiting Prof., Corvinus University)
2. Sam Beck (Cornell University)
3. Natasha Beranek (University College London)
4. Bálint Ábel Bereményi (Autonomous University of Barcelona)
5. Philip Brown (Salford University)
6. Christian Brüggemann (Humboldt University, Berlin)*
7. Laura Cashman (Canterbury Christ Church University)
8. Marius Ciobanu (independent researcher)*
9. Colin Clark (University of the West of Scotland)
10. Janie Codona (One Voice 4 Travellers)*
11. Ada I. Engebriksen (NOVA – Norwegian Social Research)
12. László Fosztó (Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities)
13. Margaret Greenfields (Buckinghamshire New University)
14. Jan Grill (University of Manchester)
15. Sharmin Hamvas (Brunel University)*
16. Ian F. Hancock (The University of Texas, Austin)
17. Irén Kertész-Wilkinson (Goldsmiths College London)
18. Martin Kovats (independent researcher)
19. Jose Luis Lalueza (Autonomous University of Barcelona)
20. Daniele Viktor Leggio (University of Manchester)
21. Martin Levinson (University of Exeter)
22. Yaron Matras (University of Manchester)
23. Aidan McGarry (University of Brighton)
24. Ciprian Necula (National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest)*
25. Judith M. Okely (Emeritus, Hull University / Oxford University)
26. Helen O’Nions (Nottingham Trent University)
27. Ryan Powell (Sheffield Hallam University)
28. David Scheffel (Thompson Rivers University)
29. Nando Sigona (University of Birmingham)
30. Michael Stewart (University College London)
31. Huub van Baar (University of Amsterdam)
32. Enikő Vincze (Babes-Bolyai University)
33. Cerasela Voiculescu (University of Edinburgh)*

Subject: Irresponsible research

Yaron Matras

1 November 2013

A group of researchers at Salford University in the UK have published a report that estimates the number of Romani migrants from central and Eastern Europe living in the UK at ca. 200,000. A summary and a link to the full report can be found here:

<http://www.shusu.salford.ac.uk/cms/news/article/?id=51>

The team based their estimates on questionnaires that were received from individuals within 150 local authorities in the UK, where they were asked to estimate the number of Roma in their community, specify their country of origin, and point out where they have experienced difficulties. The team then used a population demographics formula to multiply the figures obtained. The mathematical exercise yielded a total of 197,705 Roma in the UK.

The team did not speak to any Roma, or their representatives, nor did they involve any Roma individuals in the research. Further, judging by the bibliography,

Editorial notice

The earlier version of this discussion edited by Judit Durst is available at <<http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>> under the title "Compiling data on Roma. Discussions on Roma migrants in the UK and the number games". The version of the discussion included in this volume begins with Yaron Matras's message of 1 November 2013 with the subject heading "Irresponsible research". For subsequent messages making use of this same heading, which appears more frequently than any of the other subject headings used in this discussion, the subject line has been dropped. All other subject headings used in this discussion are provided at the beginning of the corresponding contributions to the discussion.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

the authors did not consult any of the research literature on the Roma, except for two titles, thereby limiting their sources to online policy reports.

The study was published just two months ahead of a change in UK legislation that will allow citizens of Romania and Bulgaria to seek full-time employment in the UK. Its sensationalist statements are fueling the voices that call to put a stop to immigration in general, and to that of Roma in particular. The echoes of this can be seen on this Channel 4 news report, to which the authors gave 'exclusive' access to their results:

<http://www.channel4.com/news/immigration-roma-migrants-bulgaria-romania-slovakia-uk>

It is unfortunate that research should contribute to scaremongering in this way. The report and its results are questionable both on methodological and ethical grounds: It is irresponsible to release figures based on a theoretical multiplication model which the authors admit (p 75 of the report) has not been verified in its applicability to the Roma community. The results are also unreliable since the sources have not been identified.

The authors claim to have received information from local authorities, but at least in the case of Manchester, where I checked this morning, the City Council is unaware of any official response sent on its behalf, and I would suspect that the authors simply gathered data from a random selection of contacts. The authors claim to be able to make statements about the reasons that motivated Roma to migrate, but they did not make the effort to speak to a single Romani family, and all their statements are based on the impressions of local agencies, not the experiences of the migrants themselves.

Not only is the reliability of the findings questionable, they were further sensationalised by selling an 'exclusive' to a TV news channel — the same channel that sensationalised Romani culture over the past two years in its series 'Big Fat Gypsy Weddings.'

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

The MigRom project — an EU consortium involving researchers based in Paris, Verona, Cluj, Granada, and Manchester, in partnership with Manchester City Council and the European Roma and Traveller Forum — is trying to set better standards for research into Roma migration by directly surveying the needs and aspirations of Roma migrants, by involving Roma in the research, and by contributing to capacity building within the Roma community:
<http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/migrom/>

We look forward to collaboration opportunities with interested colleagues.

Philip Brown (with Lisa Scullion and Philip Martin)

4 November 2013

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the critique offered on the recent study. Many of the issues and questions raised are in fact detailed in full in the report and we would encourage colleagues to read this report where it is relevant to you. We provide a response to the issues raised but also provide some context that has a material bearing on the statement issued by Yaron. We apologise for the length of this response but we are extremely concerned that readers could be significantly misled by how this research and its release has been framed and described.

Before responding to specific points, we would like to briefly discuss why this research was carried out. The research was conceived and conceptualised – in partnership with a number of experienced local authorities and practitioners - in order to respond to what was considered by many as a massive knowledge gap as to the size of the migrant Roma population

in the UK. This absence of data was being used by the UK Government to lessen their obligations towards Roma inclusion under their response to the European Commission's call to produce National Roma Integration Strategies – where the focus was mainly on UK Gypsy and Traveller populations. At this early stage, the government had not attempted an enumeration of the migrant Roma population or asked local authorities if there were issues to be accounted for. This position potentially severely reduced the chances for local areas to have recourse to EU structural funds to assist with Roma inclusion issues. Within the UK from 2014, these funds are to be administered via Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in the UK and their draft strategies were due to be submitted for review by the Government in October 2013. Prior to October 2013, alongside the production of the research, we have worked hard with partners to inform the Government department responsible, as well as LEPs, as to the issues emerging from our work and to influence the development of these strategies. At the same time that this research was undertaken, the University of Salford was approached to work with a number of partners – including Roma led NGOs – to form a UK National Roma Network.

This network has acted as a steering group to this research throughout its production. This network has also allowed the research team to disseminate key findings to a variety of organisations – notably Parliamentarians, UK Civil Servants and EU officials - in order to work towards, what is emerging as a more informed approach to Roma inclusion in the UK.

In response to particular points raised by Yaron:

1. The study surveyed all local authority districts/municipalities in the UK – a total of 406. A total of 151 responses were received once double counting was accounted for (in England there are two-tier governance arrangements in certain areas – there was occasional duplication of administrative boundaries as a result). A number of these authorities were able

to estimate the migrant Roma population in their area. A number of others informed us that they were unable to estimate the population, as they were 'not aware'.

2. The sample frame for the research (i.e. who in the local authority districts) was selected according to which department in the authority (e.g. equalities, cohesion, education etc.) would most likely possess information/knowledge of relevance to the aims of the study. Surveys were issued via letter and email to addresses obtained via the web or contact with the authority. Respondents were encouraged to discuss the completion of the questionnaire across different service areas to elicit what they considered the most accurate response. A copy of the survey was also issued to each Chief Executive of these authorities in order to inform them as to the presence of the study and to encourage them to pass the survey on to the officer they deemed most likely to be able to complete the survey. We did not merely consult the officers in authorities with whom we already have good relations. Instead we wanted a consistent approach with each authority in order to avoid response bias. Each authority was subject to extensive chasing via telephone and email to encourage as high a response rate as possible.
3. It is correct that we do not publish data attributable to particular local authorities with regards to the estimates they provide. This is an issue the research team discussed thoroughly, in partnership with our advisory group for the study. The conclusion we arrived at was that because there was a policy imperative to provide as comprehensive a population estimate as possible, we would require the response rate to be as high as possible. Therefore, we assured the anonymity of responses in order for authorities to feel comfortable that they could draw on a variety of sources (formal and informal) without fear of being singled out by local and national pressures with regard to the size of the migrant Roma population in their area. Unfortunately we cannot comment as to whether Manchester City Council responded to the survey in order to

maintain these assurances of confidentiality. The covering letter for the survey, available in the Appendices for the report, clearly states, “The responses we receive to questions will be reported on a non-attributed basis and the anonymity of responding authorities will be maintained.”

4. The data we obtained from local authorities was grounded in an approach often used to compare local authorities in the UK. We consulted with several senior UK based academic specialists in the area of survey analysis and human geography from the Universities of Manchester, Salford and Bristol. Following this consultation we utilised a tool used by the UK Audit Commission to assist in grossing the data received via our sample to the UK context. It is incorrect to say this is a population demographic approach. Rather this is a geo-demographic approach which takes into account a range of features within each local authority area in order to compare ‘like for like’. i.e. Manchester is incomparable to Salford (due to issues around demographics, deprivation indicators, tenure mix, employment rates etc.) but is more similar to areas such as Birmingham and Leeds for example. It is correct that this has not yet been used to enumerate the Roma population – we state this clearly in the report – but in the absence of any other meaningful methodology to estimate the population (we include a review of other approaches used across the EU to date) we consider this the most robust approach at the current time. The academics consulted recognised the difficulty in enumerating a community which does not appear in many (or any) central or local governmental data sources which was one problem elucidated in the Home Office sponsored study on monitoring illegal migrants in the UK but it was recognised that there is no easy solution to this issues but our approach was a fruitful method at this time. We clearly outline this approach and its potential shortcomings in the report. We believe this approach has value but make no claims as to its definitiveness.

5. It is also correct that this study did not directly consult with the Roma as one of the stakeholder groups. This was never the remit of the study. This study was very clearly focussed on the data held by public authorities and their experiences. Our work documenting the everyday experiences of Roma in the UK is currently on going. However, Roma led NGOs are a part of the National Roma Network and had opportunity to comment on this study on a number of occasions.
6. The findings of this report have been in the UK and EU policy arena for around two months prior to October 2013. It is naïve to suggest that a report of this nature would not be picked up by the media at some point in the near future. In collaboration with partners we carefully considered the implications of either reacting to stories in the media or being proactive and helping guide the initial story. We were approached by Channel 4 to include the findings in a piece they were planning to produce about migrant Roma in the UK. We were assured by their commitment to helping demystify the issues concerned and, post-release, we were mostly content with their handling of the story. We did not “sell” the story to the media. We do not feel that this piece contributed to ‘scaremongering.’ A number of people predominant in the field – both individual Roma and workers – have responded supportively on the piece. To be clear, we make no defence of the programme Big Fat Gypsy Weddings as we too feel this is extremely unhelpful in the inclusion of Roma populations. However, it should be pointed out that to our knowledge Channel 4 news is quite separate (produced by ITN) to the production company behind BFGW.

There are several other points of context that are relevant to state in order to underline our commitment to work towards the inclusion of Roma and our long-standing and recognised work in the field of community engagement and capacity building:

1. SHUSU is an award-winning research unit in the field of community engagement. We have worked in the field of community development and, in particular, community research for nearly two decades. Staff within the Unit have published on community research with UK Gypsy and Traveller populations as well as other Black and minority ethnic communities. We

have trained (and paid) at least 200 members of vulnerable and marginalised communities to be community researchers over this time – many of whom have used this experience to seek further sustainable employment and have engaged in community level capacity building. We have written good practice guides on this process. Similarly, we currently benefit from the expertise and insight of two Romany Gypsies as paid staff members at the Unit who have worked with us for around five years. Staff members – particularly Brown, Scullion and Steele – have published widely about our experiences of community research and capacity building across minority ethnic communities and in particular UK Gypsy and Traveller groups and migrants from Central and Eastern Europe. Readers are encouraged to consult those references if appropriate.

2. We have recently commenced an innovative programme of mentoring at the Unit where we are working with three young migrants Roma in Manchester/Salford. These people will be part of the SHUSU team over the next 12 months and are part of the community of mentees that are being supported by partners in the Roma MATRIX project. As a result of the Roma MATRIX project there will be more than 40 mentees working within public authorities across the 10 Member States in which we are working – along with a large network of supported Roma community mediators.
- 3 The Roma MATRIX project is a large exciting project involving 20 partners in 10 Member States. Partners include municipalities, private sector organisations, NGOs (a number of which are Roma led) and two Universities (Salford and York, UK). This also involves nine exceptional academics from across the Member States who will be supporting our research efforts. We are working collaboratively on research, capacity building, supporting Roma women, understanding Roma children leaving the care system and supporting positive image media campaigns, amongst other things.

Finally, we enjoy the sense of togetherness and shared endeavour that academic and practitioner networks can provide. We are members of a number of networks where we feel stimulated, supported and challenged. However, we have a sense of significant sadness that this network is not – as yet – able to match this as it is threatened by a small, yet dominant number of voices who are attempting to delegitimise the rights of others to engage in the diverse field within which we work.

Yaron Matras

4 November 2013

Thanks to Phil for providing prompt clarification. We are now able to establish that the data that reportedly underpins the research is not open to scrutiny, and that the results of the projection exercise are therefore not verifiable. This makes them non-transparent, or, in plain terms, unscientific. The only statement regarding numbers that the team is able or ready to make public is the hypothetical total of 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK. It is doubtful whether such a statement can help policymakers assess needs or plan resources without a breakdown by region, country of origin, age group, or other relevant factors.

The hypothetical total appears to be meaningful only as ‘media sensation,’ and that is the reason I used the term ‘irresponsible.’ Channel 4 News’s presentation of the findings and the interview with Phil as an ‘exclusive’ suggests that the team was seeking publicity rather than clarity. It is telling that Channel 4 News invited only one politician to join the panel to discuss the team’s results — a representative of the extremist anti-immigration movement UKIP. I wouldn’t know how to estimate how many voters UKIP gained on the day that the Salford study was published; perhaps there is a statistical tool that can perform the calculation.

But regardless of what Phil and his colleagues may think of the level of discussion on this network, Romani studies have been preoccupied for many years with issues of ethics and the responsibilities that come with feeding information into the public discussion. This is just one of those incidents where it would do no harm to take a moment and reflect at what has been achieved by this publication and at what possible cost.

Philip Brown

5 November 2013

It is evident that we do not agree with your characterization of our research. We have had some extremely positive feedback by policy makers: Roma, grassroots workers and senior social policy academics, regarding our research and its potential for positive impact for Roma inclusion. However, we are always very happy to get feedback on the work with which we are involved.

Yaron Matras

5 November 2013

I've obtained the following statement on the Salford study from a scholar with some 40 years of experience in population demographic work and the author of several leading textbooks on population studies. The statement has the status of an 'anonymous peer review' so that the focus can stay on the arguments rather than on the author. The comments pertain to the methodology, rather than the political value of the study or the timing and manner of its publication:

“In my own years in the academy and as a practicing social demographer I have come across more than a few crackpot or quaint schemes for estimation of poorly-documented sub-populations. For example, there have been attempts to estimate the Jewish populations (not so identified in the U.S. Census data) of American locales and communities by counting the excess numbers of pupils absent from school on Yom Kippur; or attempts to estimate numbers and proportions of “wanted” vs. “unwanted” children on the basis of family-planning and birth-control survey data. I did not find the Appendix 5 account of “a methodology for making an UK Roma population estimate” any more convincing. Some specific points are as follows:

1. Professional and competent census and survey organizations confronted with non-trivial levels of “Non-Response” would never use or report (or manipulate or “model”) the partial-response data or findings without careful study and investigation of (initially, but subsequently tracked down and studied; employing whatever additional post-initial-field-work time and resources are required) Non-Respondents and their characteristics and responses in order to learn, understand, and correct for the biases entailed by the non-response at whatever the levels.
2. As I understand it, the “geodemographics” approach cited as the basis of the studies and profiling of local authorities in greater or lesser involvement with migrant Roma sub-populations is an approach used by commercial demographic consulting agencies and organizations for estimates of specific target categories: purchasers of automobiles or bathtubs or mobile telephone services in specific sales or service areas, and not generally pooled for construction of population estimates. Moreover, and probably more important: the questions asked in geodemographic inquiries and surveys are typically objective, factual, personal behavioural questions (Do you own something? Do you need something? When did you last buy something? Are you employed? What do you eat for breakfast?) answers to which are replicable and verifiable, and not subjective, evaluative opinion questions (as in pp.61-72 of the Salford Report).

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

The stated objectives of the Salford group's research initiative: to obtain hard data about the numbers of migrant Roma; and to identify particular service areas of need are surely important independently of the political use or misuse of such information; and the Salford group has clearly not succeeded either in obtaining the "hard data" envisaged or in identifying convincingly the respective service areas of need.

Sam Beck

6 November 2013

I wish I could respond to the methodological issues regarding demography. Not my field. It seems to me that a bit of fieldwork would be helpful in expanding our understanding of this migration, whatever its size, and its impact on localities, socio-culturally and political-economically, both from the point of view of Roma and the local population.

What is of concern is the media representation of this Roma influx into GB. It sounds a lot like the alarmist approach FOX NEWS uses in the US when reporting on undocumented migrants, usually racist and xenophobic. There does need to be a response as an effort by public intellectuals/academicians!

Luis Lalueza

6 November 2013

Our responsibility in the impact of our research in society (specially with groups characterized by this difficult situation in the balance of the power relationships) must be an issue in the focus of critical academic work. The polemic started in this

list is good material that is now being used in my class regarding ethical issues in research in the Master of Psychosocial Intervention in the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Concerning methodologies used in demographical studies, we have the example of Carme Garriga and her team, who use several years of interviewing Roma families to build an approximation to the Gitano population in the city of Barcelona. It was interesting work, based on ethnographical field work, with the active collaboration of the population studied, that shared the aims of the research and was informed about the results (<http://www.edualter.org/bd/doc.php3?r=10&ids=457014>)

Participatory action research allows an explicit reflection regarding ethical issues, where the studied population has the possibility to express their opinions and thus have some control as to the aims of the research. An example of research understood as a collaborative task could be consulted here:
http://www.academia.edu/809577/Moving_communities_a_process_of_negotiation_with_a_Gypsy_minority_for_empowerment

Irén Kertész-Wilkinson

6 November 2013

I think the Barcelona group showed an excellent example of how to carry out surveys. The one I know by A. Beremenyi and A Mirga also pointed out the shortcomings as well as the difficulties of these kinds of work, hence giving an honest and thus respectable work alongside existing valuable data.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

I find it really interesting that academics working in Romani studies one way or the other in the UK, have been totally ignored by the Salford team. Has Thomas Acton been contacted, Martin Kovats, Michael Stewart or Colin Clark just to mention the most visible and knowable ones? Yaron is in Manchester University and knows a vast about Roma (just has his new book out on the Roma) and I have been myself involved with Salford University for a while and happened to be from Eastern Europe. Why do academics ignore the knowledge of other academics just because it is not exactly in the same field as they are? What about the much talked about cross-disciplinary research?

Alongside the academics there are number of self-support groups of Polish/Slovak Roma. Have they been involved in this study? After all it does concern them.

Janie Codona

7 November 2013

Does anyone know how/where I could get a copy of the below:

“The Barcelona group showed an excellent example on how to carry out surveys and the one I know is by A. Beremenyi and A Mirga.”

Does anyone have any research on Roma, Gypsy and Travellers, Community Development and transformation, conflict or research oriented? Also, does anyone know of any research undertaken regarding identity on Roma. Gypsy and Travellers preferred but on any community would be helpful.

Bálint Ábel Bereményi

7 November 2013

You can find our Evaluation Report in English, Spanish and Catalan at the following link:
<http://grupsderecerca.uab.cat/emigra/en/content/reports-and-non-periodical-publications>

Ada I. Engebrigtsen

7 November 2013

There are several works on [the topics raised by Janie Codona]; I take the opportunity to promote my own book: Exploring Gypsiness, Power, Exchange and interdependence in a Transylvanian village – from 2007.

Margaret Greenfields

10 November 2013

I'll take the opportunity to flag up some texts I suspect [Janie Codona] already knows - the chapter on 'Gypsies, Travellers and Identity' in the 2006 Clark and Greenfield book 'Here to Stay: The Gypsies and Travellers of Britain, UHP and Smith & Greenfields (2013) 'Housed Gypsies and Travellers: the decline of nomadism' Bristol: Policy Press, is overwhelmingly about identity and how it is retained/hybridized, identities and gender differences in the impact of making the transition into housing/loss of control

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

over environment etc. In the chapters on youth and gender, I drew particularly on focus groups with young women who at times challenged stereotypical expectations of their role/employment practices and so on. In places I utilized findings from Greenfields (2008) "A Good job for a Traveller?", a report on employment and training expectations and preferences amongst young people. There are some interesting discussions on the interplay between communities and partnerships with non-Gypsy/Travellers who become partially subsumed into the community whilst children frequently identify primarily with their Romani heritage.

In terms of community development practice and how this places out in expectations/work-placed identities, I can send you a paper I gave at a conference which I have sent for consideration for publication, so please treat with discretion. There is also the evaluation I carried out for the Traveller Movement on their women's community development course - downloadable from their website as well as the TEIP report (Ryder and Greenfields) which discusses impacts of community development practice.

There is also a chapter I produced in 2010 on identity and the trope of nomadism amongst Romany Gypsies/Irish Travellers and New Travellers - revisited in certain sections of the Smith & Greenfields text.

There are a number of good papers on identity formation amongst South Asian communities and also gay/lesbian identity formation, you can google-scholar or search for which might be helpful.

Finally, don't forget to read Brian Belton's interesting although quite challenging take on identity formation/adherence to specific models written from the stance of a Romany/Traveller/Jewish/Irish Londoner.

Questioning Gypsy Identity: Ethnic Narratives in Britain and America (2005) AltaMira Press; Gypsy and Traveller Ethnicity: The social generation of an Ethnicity (2005) Routledge.

Yaron Matras

13 November 2013

Subject: Salford study continues to serve anti-Roma incitement

Last week this list discussed the Salford study, which claimed that there are 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK, but failed to disclose precise data or sources.

The study's impact on the media was seen in the Channel 4 TV news report from 30 Oct, which presented an "exclusive" interview with one of the authors, Phil Brown, who later commented on this list that the authors were "content with their [= Channel 4's] handling of the story."

Today, this article appears in Britain's most popular tabloid, the Daily Mail:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2504398/A-spectacular-mistake-immigration-Straw-finally-admits-Labour-messed-letting-million-East-Europeans.html>

In it, Labour leaders, in what is obviously a coordinated media publicity effort, comment on how the rise in Roma immigration is likely to lead to "riots". David Blunkett, the former Home Secretary responsible for immigration, is cited commenting on "tensions" with Roma in the Page Hall area of Sheffield, his constituency, which was filmed in the Channel 4 news report on 30 Oct. The Salford study is cited at the end of the article.

The Salford study was made available to David Blunkett a couple of weeks before it was released to the public, and formed the basis of a consultation in Blunkett's office in the week prior to its publication. I know this from direct correspondence with Blunkett's office in the past few days.

The study, and the publicity that it was given through the "exclusive" interview, is being directly used by Labour leaders for a worrying public campaign against Roma.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

Nobody doubts that this was not the intention of the colleagues in Salford. But lessons must be learned by academics on how to deal in a responsible way with data collection, transparency of analysis, and publicity when it comes to research on Roma in general, and on Roma migrants in particular.

The MigRom project will initiate a seminar on the interplay of research and public engagement with Roma migrants, to be held early next year, in response to these events, and we will invite our colleagues from Salford and others to attend.

Martin Kovats

13 November 2013

Subject: CEE migrant Roma in UK

The publication of the Salford University report estimating the UK's CEE migrant Roma population at around 200K has unsurprisingly been swiftly followed by politicians whipping up an anti-Roma panic.

Fortunately, the UK government is not endorsing this estimate and has urged caution regarding its reliability - "Salford University figures should be treated with extreme caution, as they are estimates based on replies from only a third of local authorities and rely on anecdotal information."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24909979>

Jan Grill

13 November 2013

Subject: RE: Salford study continues to serve anti-Roma incitement

A similar story has been published by the Telegraph in which the ‘number games’ underline the alleged ‘significance’ of the ‘problem’ in the eyes and rhetoric of public officials in the UK.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/10442352/Roma-migrants-could-cause-riots-in-cities-warns-Blunkett.html>

Also, what is striking is the speed of circulation of these types of news to other countries. Below I’m attaching a story published on one of the most read Slovak newspapers SME, which basically takes the whole story from Telegraph. The title in Slovak newspapers is ‘Britain tells/asks the Slovak Roma: You must change’:

<http://romovia.sme.sk/c/7003477/britania-vyzvala-slovenskych-romov-musite-sa-zmenit.html>

In all these tabloid media stories, the estimates presented in Salford’s report are used to legitimise the numbers behind the story. I understand why certain institutions feel the need for more reliable quantitative data concerning the numbers of migrants (for example, various organisations and institutions can then apply for funding in order to run various services and projects for the migrants; or ‘about’ the migrants). In this context, I can also see the intentions of the authors of the report. However, I think that this case also highlights the double-edged character of reports of this kind, which might have rather a negative effect on the plight of Roma migrants in the UK when taken up by tabloid media and various policy makers alike.

As Martin remarks in his previous email, the UK government issued a rather cautious statement: “Salford University figures should be treated with extreme caution, as they are estimates based on replies from only a third of local authorities and rely on anecdotal information.” My suspicion is that this statement can be also related to the fact that if they were to recognise these ‘numbers’ claimed by the report, they might need to allow for more funding and spending to go to the ‘Roma problem’ (which would not go too well with the current efforts of ‘cuts and cuts’ in this sector). Regardless of the sensationalist embracement of the ‘200 000’ number by various tabloid media, the UK government statements of ‘caution’ implicated in their political struggles and agendas, or even the issues and problematic findings stemming from the methodology employed by the authors of the report (such as collecting estimates from variously situated individuals/local authorities with very different and uneven levels of knowledge of Roma migrants in their localities), what remains quite clear is that these ‘number games’ and discourses will have performative effects leading to potentially negative impacts on the everyday lives of Roma migrants in the UK.

It is rather symptomatic that these reports (i.e. the one published by Salford and a similar one published recently as ‘Mapping the Roma community in Scotland’ based on a similar type of survey methodology), and ensuing debates and critiques, tell us more about the ways in which various local authorities, policy makers and researchers imagine and represent Roma migrants and their needs rather than on more complex understandings coming from the Roma migrants themselves and/or based on a dialogue with them. In these reports, we can read about how some local authorities see and think ‘about Roma migrants,’ what they see as their ‘problems’ and how they formulate their ‘needs.’ However, these representations of Roma do not necessarily reflect the various viewpoints, experiences and understandings of needs arising from everyday struggles of diversely situated Roma migrants from various Roma groups in the UK.”

Aidan McGarry

13 November 2013

Subject: RE: CEE migrant Roma in UK

‘OpenDemocracy’ just published an opinion piece of mine regarding the recent cases in Greece and Ireland of state intervention and Roma kids, and the pervasive Romaphobia sweeping across Europe. For those who are interested, here is the link: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/aidan-mcgarry/romaphobia-last-acceptable-form-of-racism>

Margaret Greenfields

13 November 2013

Subject: RE: CEE migrant Roma in UK

Well done Aidan for that article - extremely timely.

I came across this link which I found particularly concerning and which is closely linked to my current preoccupations - note the appalling spectre of ‘fascist tourists’ - individuals crossing borders to engage in racist attacks on Roma and other migrant communities.

“International networking results in violent German neo-Nazis committing crimes abroad”

“There have been incidents of German neo-Nazis traveling to the Czech Republic and taking part in attacks on Roma and Sinti people - or going to Greece to see how the Golden Dawn operates,”

<http://www.dw.de/neo-nazis-form-expanding-networks-beyond-national-borders/a-17104509>

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

I reiterate once again the need for us to engage as both individuals and activists/scholars with broader networks and anti-racist alliances to challenge the rise of the Far Right. I would also note that given Blunkett was present at the recent APPG [All-Party Parliamentary Group] on Roma Affairs at which Czech Roma spoke about their experiences of escaping violence and coming to the UK for a safer life, I'm absolutely appalled at his statements. I wonder if he attended the event precisely to gather data for a pre-planned speech or if I'm maligning the man and in fact he has been deliberately misquoted in these articles?

Sharmin Hamvas

13 November 2013

Subject: RE: CEE migrant Roma in UK

Aidan's is such a timely publication. The media has stopped mentioning these two cases since this news is not interesting anymore as the girls are of Romani origin. I was wondering if his opinion could be brought to the media in a similar way as these cases were brought: to make a point on the media's role on this issue.

Judith M. Okely

14 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I complained to the BBC Trust about the fact that EVEN when it was discovered that none of the children in Greece or Ireland were trafficked, they still had the presenter Evan Davies interviewing an 'expert' on child trafficking on Radio 4's Today

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programme with NO critique of the racist hysteria and stereotyping. The choice of interviewee, by implication, continued to suggest the topics were interlinked. I eventually got a very defensive reply but no in depth understanding.

Sharmin Hamvas

14 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

Media response is truly shameful. And [Judith] has put her opinion across, which I hope would at least make them reflect on their future coverage on this issue. I am considering writing to them along the same lines.

Yaron Matras

14 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I'm really glad that Judith Okely and other colleagues have expressed their concerns about the media hysteria against Roma that has been sweeping Britain in the past few days. It's our duty to respond.

Here's my contribution: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24944572>

Margaret Greenfields

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I completely agree - and well done to Judith, Aidan, Yaron and others who have been so quick off the mark on this.

I wonder if it would be a good move to send a collective letter signed by academics and activists to the major newspapers.

Could/would one of the 'key' people (perhaps with as precise data as currently exists and good examples of mutual community solidarity at their fingertips) take a lead on drafting something to which we could add our signatures?

I'd be happy to have a stab at this, but Roma affairs are not my precise area and unless we want a simplistic condemnation of the hysteria and calls for solidarity, the amount of redrafting which may be required/comments by those with more accurate knowledge probably means it would be easier if someone else puts something together.

Helen O'Nions

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I think Margaret's idea is excellent. I have written about similar problems in France and Italy over the last few years predominately from an EU law and policy perspective but I think this approach would benefit from input by someone with knowledge

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

of the specific situation in Sheffield. I heard a Dave Brown interviewed on Radio 4 at 5.15 yesterday and he had personal knowledge of the issues and presented a much more balanced perspective than the usual inflammatory comments we are hearing. I'm not sure what organisation he represented though - is he on the network by any chance?

If he has no objection to being nominated, I'm sure Yaron would make an excellent job of constructing such a letter.

Ryan Powell

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

Dave Brown is from Migration Yorkshire - the organization that commissioned the Salford research on estimating the size of the Roma population in the UK.

Philip Brown

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

Yes, Dave is an excellent communicator on these issues from a practitioner/policy perspective. Just for clarity, Migration Yorkshire were not the commissioners but the partners on the research. The JRCT [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust] funded the work. He's not on the list but I can certainly pass this onto him.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

I'm in total agreement with the need for a letter from this list. I would be extremely happy to contribute.

Judith M. Okely

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

It is vital that, as the most recent emails confirm, we can show solidarity. I am happy to sign. I bought the horrible Express paper yesterday with headlines of a young Roma supposedly offering a baby to 'sell.' Also in the BBC 1 programme 'This Week,' last night a former conservative MP used the diversionary 'politically correct' argument of the Roma 'not integrating.' There is a good article in yesterday's Guardian by Jake Bowers who as always identifies his Romany identity.

PS. I recall the local media hysteria about Gypsy sites in the 1970s, especially when it was obligatory for local authorities to provide them.

Sam Beck

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

This is a good idea. It would be important for this effort to be led by a Roma or Romas. The rest of us can support them as allies in this struggle for dignity!

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

Laura Cashman

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I also like Margaret's idea of a public letter and would be happy to sign.

Members of the mailing list may also be interested in the following response from Colin Clark and Migrant Voice:

<http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2013/11/13/scaremongering-blunkett-faces-backlash-after-anti-roma-comm>

Colin Clark

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

See these articles below:

The first provoked a response (within an hour of going live) from Blunkett's office, claims of his words/views being 'misrepresented' and 'taken out of context':

<http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2013/11/13/scaremongering-blunkett-faces-backlash-after-anti-roma-comm>

This next piece genuinely surprised me - the IPPR [Institute for Public Policy Research] acting as apologists for Blunkett. Expected better from them but then they've always been close to New Labour and not very progressive on immigration issues:

<http://labourlist.org/2013/11/blunketts-views-on-roma-integration-deserve-better-than-farage/>

Judith M. Okely
15 November 2013
Subject: RE: Media coverage

We see Blunkett so steeped in clichés of ignorance, he declares the Roma live in ‘woodlands’ - regurgitating the nursery rhyme warning children against Gypsies in woods.

Martin Levinson
15 November 2013
Subject: RE: Media coverage

Just to add that we need to recognize that the current preoccupation is being driven by the media. It is not really about the rather foolish comments of Blunkett.

I was phoned a couple of weeks ago by someone who introduced himself as a ‘researcher.’ He claimed to be interested in my work, and asked several questions before moving on to a discussion about Gypsy groups and the kidnapping of young children. Did I know of any such cases among the communities with which I work?

As you will recall, this was around the time of the incident concerning a stolen child in Greece, and then the reaction in Ireland - the fiasco of the DNA test on a Traveller child. This narrative strand seems to have gone rather quiet in recent weeks.

It turned out that my interested researcher was working for the Daily Mail, and this is the type of source where the interest is being generated. There are quotes like Blunkett's every day, and as we know, the reporting occurs when it is considered likely to have impact or sell their papers.

One other observation away from the media. I am a member of a migrant forum. I attended a police presentation a few weeks ago during which we were informed that the Roma planning to come over from Bulgaria to the UK next year were 'a bunch of criminals'. What was the evidence? I asked. It seems that a 'fact-finding group' had gone over to Bulgaria and been told this by 'other Gypsies'. To my knowledge, the fact-finding team were all English-speakers only, and was made up of agencies 'dealing with Roma issues' rather than individuals working with Roma communities, or indeed, Roma themselves.

If such work is left to those on the outside, is it a wonder if the general public is presented with some combination of misapprehension and generalization?

Helen O' Nions

15 November 2013

Subject: RE: Media coverage

I agree with [Martin Levinson's] views of the media, although I think he let Blunkett off rather too easily. He is very much aware of the way that these sorts of comments will be interpreted and repackaged by the tabloid media. If politicians do not take a decisive stand and refrain from Powellesque language, they are a significant part of the problem.

David Scheffel

15 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

I have been following this growing outrage over UK media treatment of CEE [Central and East European] Roma migrants and the suggestions from several corners that the Network send a letter of protest against the circulation of allegedly racist stereotypes, ethnic profiling, and similar misdemeanours attributed to the media (and some politicians). I have only superficial knowledge of the situation of Roma migrants in the UK and their adaptation to local conditions (gained during a field trip a few years ago), and I cannot determine the degree of media distortion from personal experience. That's why I wonder how many of my colleagues, especially those living in the UK and conducting research there, have had more than superficial contact with Roma migrants from CEE, and where can I find publications that provide a thorough description (read: old-fashioned ethnography) of the communities formed by these migrants? In other words, if we wish to challenge media reports as (racist?) distortions of reality, where do we find 'thick' descriptions of the migrants' lifestyle to refute them?

While my experience with Roma in the UK is limited, I am well acquainted with the conditions in one of the source countries - Slovakia. And I can say with some degree of authority that among the scores of my east Slovak Romani acquaintances who had been to the UK, the vast majority had engaged there in some form of criminal activity, either intentionally or unintentionally as victims of machinations of local (Romani) 'bosses.' The criminal acts may be of relatively benign character, such as welfare fraud (some people known to me live in Slovakia on UK welfare/child benefits), but there are also cases of bondage, drug trade, and prostitution. I have just returned from six months of field research in Slovakia, and one of my (sad) discoveries was the existence of a network of Romani criminals in the UK who lure under-age prostitutes from Slovakia to the UK.

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Of course, I am not saying that all Romani migrants from Slovakia - or other CEE countries - are criminals. What I am saying, however, is that among Slovak Roma, Britain has the reputation of an 'easy' country where 'the system' can be more easily manipulated than in the home country.

Such a perception can lead to behaviour that may be interpreted as annoying by members of the host society. And this will surely find its way into popular media coverage and political rhetoric. Instead of writing letters, perhaps we should invest time and energy in thorough empirical research.

Sam Beck

15 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

Professor Scheffel's comments are well intended. However, they are a typical academic response to an urgent problem since a broad brush is being used to color ALL Roma and not the few who engage in criminal activities. This reminds me of how African Americans are often identified as a whole as criminal, drug dependent, amoral, etc. It is important to carry out the research and reflect as much as possible the reality of the social conditions under which Roma live, but it is also important to eliminate racism from the public discourse, especially by sensationalist media.

Colin Clark

15 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

David, have you reported this alleged criminal activity to the authorities? Re: Trafficking and under-age prostitution?

Thomas Acton

15 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

Having read Mr Scheffel's strange book on Svinia, it does not altogether surprise me that most of his Roma friends are criminals. They do probably tell him that no one loves a grass. But the spurious moral neutrality of conservative social anthropology in no way excuses, as Colin points out, his failure to report crimes of which he has knowledge.

Natasha Beranek

15 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

The only in depth, extended ethnographic study I am aware of in the UK is by Jan Grill, but there are likely to be others (perhaps in progress?).

Yaron Matras

16 November 2013

Subject: Research on Roma migrants in the UK

A report from 2009 on research among Roma migrants in Manchester can be found here (click on Report on the Romani Community in Gorton South, Manchester):

<http://romani.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/migrom/report-policy-briefs.html>

Martin Kovats

16 November 2013

Subject: CEE migrant Roma in UK

Does anyone else find it interesting that while some of us academics have expressed doubts about the Salford Uni CEE migrant population estimate because of the unreliability of the information on which it is based — and consequently the risk this entails for inflaming and racialising an ongoing public debate about CEE immigration — Jake Bowers embraces the big number because it makes '[his] community' seem more important!

How can there be objectivity in this discourse (beyond the small scale)? Is it just a matter of perspective, interest and opinion? If it is not possible to establish some kind of consensus about what we are talking about, what hope is there that societies can successfully go through the difficult process of coming to terms with Roma identity and people?

Yaron Matras

16 November 2013

Subject: CEE migrant Roma in UK

Continuing Martin Kovats's point, we mustn't forget that the hysterical reactions of media and politicians in Britain in the past few days were triggered directly by the publication of the Salford study, which contained a figure that is not backed up by any verifiable data.

I strongly favour public intervention by academics, and as I said earlier on this list, I believe we have a duty to use our expertise to introduce another angle into this public debate. At the same time we must not neglect to engage in a critical reflection on what can happen when academics provide media and politicians with selective pieces of information that can so easily be used for scaremongering.

At this stage, it would be enormously helpful if the colleagues in Salford were to issue a public statement denouncing the misuse of their study by politicians and media, and clarifying that in fact, they have no hard evidence for the figure of 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK.

Thomas Acton

16 November 2013

Subject: CEE migrant Roma in UK

I am slightly worried by the implication that the residence of 200,000 Roma in the UK should legitimately worry anyone, and also by the implication in spinning of the Salford report as a new revelation. The Fremlova and Ureche estimates were very similar, albeit without the rather spurious exactitude. The Salford report cites their work, curiously, however, without adducing it as statistical report. I'm glad that the points that Yaron was able to make in the BBC report did not get into the numbers game.

David Scheffel

16 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

Many thanks to Yaron Matras and Jan Grill for passing on publications about CEE Romani migrants in the UK. Interesting and useful as they may be, these are not in-depth studies of the social structure and cultural systems characteristic of entire communities. Such studies are time consuming and difficult - much more difficult than conducting interviews with a sample of 'respondents.' Some twenty years ago, the Slovak ethnologist Arne Mann edited a volume called "Unknown Roma". It seems quite appropriate to capture the situation in the UK where a handful of experts on Gypsies and Travellers use preconceived notions to make sense of the vast diversity of Romani migrants from Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, the

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Czech Republic, the Balkans, and beyond - without understanding their histories, languages, and cultures. Perhaps Mr Acton finds my book on Svinia 'strange' because it belongs to a genre that he is not acquainted with or simply not interested in: ethnographic community studies. It requires spending years in a muddy settlement, trying to piece together genealogies, status hierarchies, and reasons why 14 year old girls bear children and 10 year old boys do drugs in one settlement but not in another one five miles away (no, it's not all due to 'racism'). I agree, this is a distinctly old-fashioned type of social science, and that's why my 'strange' book remains the only ethnography of a Romani settlement in a country that has some 900 self-contained and segregated communities of Roma. I wouldn't dream of suggesting that the community I describe is representative of 'Slovak Roma'. Similarly, I don't believe that the snippets of publications devoted to Roma migrants in the UK present a comprehensive picture of who these people are.

Janie Codona

16 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

Is [David Scheffel's] book [on Svinia] in English? As a Gypsy woman I want to study this aspect with separate groups using my own knowledge and experience as a beginning and my research observations to inform my findings.

László Fosztó

16 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

This is the book under discussion: Svinia in Black & White: Slovak Roma and Their Neighbours by David Z. Scheffel
<http://www.utppublishing.com/Svinia-in-Black-and-White-Slovak-Roma-and-their-Neighbours.html>

Jan Grill

17 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

In response to David Scheffel's email and other contributions on the theme of research on Roma migrants in the UK:

While I agree with David's call for a more empirical research and I do agree that more ethnographic monographs are needed, I don't think that the current relative lack of in-depth studies in the field of Roma migration should prevent us from engaging and intervening against the current resurgence of anti-gypsyism and moral paranoia spread by politicians and journalists. I believe that there are a good number of members of this network who are well positioned to react to the current wave of attacks against Roma and we should respond. The petition can be one way of engaging.

As for David's comments on my own work, I just wanted to respond with some clarifications. I have carried out a long-term ethnographic fieldwork both in Slovakia and among Slovak Roma migrants in the UK (2006-2008; with regular re-visits and shorter fieldwork trips since then). Like most social anthropologists, I have worked within a specific network of Roma migrants coming from a particular area of East Slovakia (they do not come from Spis area of Slovakia where David Scheffel did his research). I have never claimed that these articles provide a comprehensive study of all Slovak Roma or all Slovak Roma migrants.

You can find some of my work on the following link: <https://manchester.academia.edu/JanGrill>

Due to the word limits and formats, articles obviously focus on some particular aspects and themes. However, they are not based on interviews or a sample of respondents (as suggested by David). I have done long-term participant observation, learned and speak Romanes, lived with Roma families for more than two years, etc. I also reconstructed social trajectories and historical developments in the particular area where I did my research. Of course, all these factors and methods are important for understanding the present situation and strategies of migrants. However, the fact one does not publish one's work in a format of monographic book (classical ethnography) does not mean that one has not done this type of long-term fieldwork. I also do not think that one has to wait for public engagements until publishing a classical monographic book.

Also, there are several younger scholars and activists who have been carrying out long-term ethnographic fieldwork among Roma migrants in Europe. Some of their works are currently being published; others are in preparation.

Christian Brüggemann

17 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

Elizabeta Jonuz (Stigma Ethnizität. Wie zugewanderte Romafamilien der Ethnisierungsfalle begegnen) has shown that in their search for structural integration, Roma migrating from former Yugoslavia to Germany might not be keen to present all aspects of their identity. Rather they pretended to be (non-Roma) migrants, thus facing only part of the possible difficulties that they might have encountered. My friend J. (coming from a small Roma settlement near Budapest) was never identified as Romani while doing her Erasmus semester in Tübingen. Literally every German might be able identify and study Roma migrants - going for example to Harzer Straße in Berlin (known as little Romania) or other marginalised places with huge media coverage. One would likely find issues Mr Scheffel has pointed out. And, one might find similar circumstances in many marginalised areas around the world. I would like to call for three approaches that might at least partly improve our perspective on Roma migration: a) not to focus on the marginalised only, b) taking into account an (international) comparative perspective c) paying attention to poverty and other confounding variables.

Sharmin Hamvas

18 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

It's very inspiring to see so many responses to writing the letter to the media. My research area is on the Roma in Hungary and I would be very keen to take part in adding my input to this message to the media. I have already personally written to the BBC and am waiting for their response!

I agree that it's better if the message comes from a Roma and we all support this. However, if it's not possible, I think that it shouldn't stop us from taking this action. I also agree that first of all we need to identify the issues that would be talked about in the letter but also to keep in mind that it would be more effective if we write sooner than later. I shall support whoever writes this message to the media.

Thomas Acton

18 November 2013

Subject: letter of protest?

We should not underestimate the practical difficulty of Colin Clark's advice to [David Scheffel]. As in all communities, there are a few Roma, Gypsies and Travellers who break the law, sometimes habitually, and my insistence in my own fieldwork and political practice down the years that I will neither be made party to crimes or the knowledge of crimes, and that I am prepared to go to the police, except in the case of manifestly unjust laws, has led very occasionally to tricky stand-offs, especially if one hasn't been clear enough about this from the start. Those who habitually carry out actions harmful to others among the Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, are usually feared as dangerous, and relatively isolated socially among their own people, and they do sometimes seek almost to seduce Gaje, including even academic enquirers, to be their confidants. The Portsmouth crime novels of Graham Hurley, while never explicitly indicating the ethnicity of the main criminal protagonist (and indeed the ethnic identity of notorious criminals of Romani heritage like the Kray brothers is often compromised, uncertain and ambiguous precisely because of their relative social isolation), are possibly a brilliant fictional portrait of such a flawed but charismatic individual. The moral disengagement inculcated by classical Western social anthropology can lead

the victims of such seduction into buying into their criminal mentors' deviant vision of their criminality being ethnic in character, and their exaggeration of their own criminal prowess. The late Werner Cohn was perhaps one such anthropologist.

Anyone on this list who fears they are falling into such a position should seek confidential help. They really should. Staying close to strong (or even quite weak) Roma organisations enables one to find such help and advice.

This does not mean one should never associate with people who have committed crimes. The Romani Christian congregations contain a few individuals of whom I remember people saying 20 or 30 years ago "it'll be a miracle if they ever go straight" - and as God is my witness, I have seen such miracles. Sometimes, especially where there is an addiction problem, the miracle may have to happen more than once. But it can. I'm with the late Clement LeCossec in believing one should never give up on a single human being. In particular, there is a strong Christian injunction to visit those in prison. One can only be of help, however, if one is confident in one's own integrity.

Speaking of those in prison, and perhaps to add balance, I should say that I have more often come across apparent police attempts to fit Roma, Gypsy or Traveller individuals up than I have experienced attempts to make me complicit in crime. But they are both still rare and this should not prevent one supporting the police in general. In particular support for individuals of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller heritage in the police force, or thinking to join it, is important in making clear that improvement of police support for the security and safety of these communities is a vital pre-condition for tackling the relatively rare crimes by individuals from those communities.

Finally, I should perhaps just say a word or two about prostitution, which David mentioned. It may be the case, as I have been told, that some Slovak Roma prostituted themselves or have been forced into prostitution. I have no personal experience; but I do have experience of young women falsely accusing one another of being prostitutes. Many of the Slovak Roma who have migrated to the UK, especially those who have discarded the Romani language (which may be as many as or more than half of them) are classically working class rather than entrepreneurial in their aspirations. Although extended kin networks are important in facilitating chain migration even in working-class families, there is often an expectation and hope that people will find jobs, (rather than join or start family businesses as in a lot of Romani chain migration and in some other communities such as Sylhetis and Patidars). Such proletarianised kin networks, I fear, find it much harder to find emergency resources in the case of unexpected family crises compared with more entrepreneurial ones (the opposite of what Blunkett suggests); and they also come much closer to European working class norms in their marriage and courtship practices. One doesn't need to be an anthropologist to make a virtual tour of you tube clips of Slovak Roma community dances and band concerts in the UK. Young men and women do go to such events looking for partners, and some non-Rom Slovaks too. And they find partners. The actual content of accusations of prostitution by young women who go to such dances against each other turns out in my experience to mean little more than "she stole my boyfriend" or some such accusation. All very regrettable and quite shocking to someone from a more conservative Romani background, and very concerning if social services become involved in the case of a family crisis, but not actually prostitution. And I would repeat what other UK academics on this network have said, that the vast majority of Slovak Romani families I have come across, whether or not Romani-speaking, whether of proletarian or entrepreneurial orientation, are working all the hours they can, and gaining what training and schooling they can access for themselves and their children to build new lives and a better future. Their optimism, good humour and courage in the face of adversity are stunning, and their migration is Slovakia's loss and the UK's gain.

Yaron Matras

19 November 2013

Subject: UK Roma debate

Another commentary on the public debate triggered by the release a couple of weeks ago of a study by a group at Salford university claiming that there were 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK”:

<http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2013/11/18/comment-the-roma-are-hardworking-people-who-don-t-deserve-to>

Philip Brown

19 November 2013

Subject: RE: UK Roma debate

One of the strengths of this network is that it allows academics from different disciplines and different countries to comment on each other's work. As an academic community we are all striving for equality for Roma. It is for that reason that I do not intend to further divert from the important conversation about the issues by replying, again, in detail to each of the criticisms and insinuations brought against The University of Salford by Yaron Matras. I agree with other contributors for the need to refocus on tackling anti-Roma sentiments.

However, the insinuation that recent media attention was caused solely by the publication of our most recent research into Roma in the UK is misleading and an attempt at a strange re-writing of what happened. It is obvious that media focus was already primed as a result of the events in Greece and Ireland. The involvement of senior politicians (two former Home

Secretaries and the Deputy Prime Minister) in the UK in the last week heightened these issues further. It is also clear that the majority of reporting is about tensions in local communities and the media would have run these stories whether we had done our research or not. This follows a pattern which many of us who have been working in migration for some time are familiar with, such as the media response to asylum seeking around a decade ago.

I have no argument with the assertion that as a group of academics and researchers we should reflect on the wider social impacts of our work. However we are not naïve enough to believe that a single piece of research can steer a national debate. As I've previously said we took steps to carefully consider the publication of our work.

I'm not going to provide further attention to Yaron's comments, and in some cases outlandish insinuations, about the research and University, including; that we 'sold' the story to the media (we obviously did not); about the quality of the research (which I have already commented on, is in the report in full and will be published in peer review journals in due course); that we, knowingly or otherwise, collaborated with an alleged Labour party agenda on Roma migration (?!!).

I am disappointed that Yaron has chosen not to talk on this list about the other many issues we have presented such as: the complexity of Roma migration and settlement; the lack of resources available to communities; the effects of compounded multiple exclusion; the reality of poor housing conditions and so on. It is encouraging to see that a number of commentators in the Guardian have now returned to these issues such as Townsend's and Younge's pieces and the Editorial. Furthermore, the highly respected Institute of Race Relations in the UK provided this review of the research. In a similar vein I welcome Yaron's recent positive contribution to the debate in his comment piece.

I echo the calls of other contributors on this network about the need for unity going forward in working towards greater inclusion of Roma.

Yaron Matras

19 November 2013

Subject: RE: UK Roma debate

The following link to a BBC report contains a segment from a radio interview with David Blunkett, in which he explicitly mentions the Salford study, and which thus documents how Blunkett's statements were directly inspired by the Salford study: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24909979>

I have said before on this list that I did not think the Salford team played into the hands of politicians intentionally; I simply think that they were careless with their data collection, their conclusions, and the manner in which they sought publicity.

Philip Brown

19 November 2013

Subject: RE: UK Roma debate

As I've said previously we clearly don't agree with these views on the data collection, findings or release of the work. Furthermore, those of us with even a general knowledge of what is happening 'on the ground' in communities like Sheffield will be aware that David Blunkett has focused on Roma issues for years and meets regularly with local councillors and senior officers about the issue. He has written regularly to the Minister, asked Parliamentary Questions and led a group of MPs to lobby on the issue. BBC Radio Sheffield has regularly run stories on these issues in Page Hall and Rotherham's Eastwood area. But by all means don't let the facts get in the way of a point.

Marius Ciobanu

20 November 2013

Subject: RE: UK Roma debate

Just to add the latest news on the Badalona case involving the xenophobic remarks and pamphlets on the Romanian Roma. <http://romaissues.wordpress.com/2013/11/20/xavier-garcia-albiol-sera-el-primer-alcalde-juzgado-por-su-discurso-xenofobo/>

Enikő Vincze

20 November 2013

Subject: RE: UK Roma debate

I would like adding an additional dimension to this debate.

While talking about the public responsibility of the researchers and in particular of those producing and disseminating knowledge about Roma migration, we should not forget that the whole anti-Roma-immigration politics and its underlying racism is part of an effort to “justify” on the side of older EU member states (and of the European Economic and Monetary union) why capital might travel freely across EU member states, and labor (especially labor force from former Eastern and Central Europe) should not. Anti-Gypsy racism is part of this neoliberal regime promoting on the one hand the extension of “free market” conceived as product of civilization (or the interests of the Euro area countries) and on the other hand sustaining the

austerity measures and the marketisation processes in the areas that the EC calls more and more explicitly as “peripheral countries”. This current form of anti-gypsy racism is having the function of protecting the former from the “invasion” of the impoverished populations from the latter, perceived as symbols of “primitivism.” Parallel with these processes we may witness how the impoverished populations (mostly from Romania and Bulgaria) are racialised, and how the political category of “Roma” is associated with Eastern poverty by those who had a crucial role in creating and sustaining it. And what are these “peripheral countries” doing? Their political decision-makers (economically benefiting from the system described above) are doing all their best to distance themselves from their native population(self)identified as Roma while blaming the latter for all the failures encountered in their road towards the promise land of EU. Meanwhile, the European social agenda and the European framework strategy for Roma inclusion are rhetorically flourishing.

László Fosztó

30 November 2013

Subject: Roma migrants in Manchester

Dear All,

You might be interested in a short broadcast about Roma communities living in the UK – video. <http://www.channel4.com/news/uk-immigrations-migrants-roma-eu>

This time it is about the Romanian Roma in Manchester.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

Daniele Viktor Leggio

10 December 2013

Subject: Roma in the UK debate

Here, you can find my contribution to the public debate about Roma in the UK. <http://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/dec/09/migrant-roma-communities-integration-uk-manchester>

Aidan McGarry

11 December 2013

Subject: Event in London

Romaphobia and the media

Monday 20th January 2014, 12pm– 5pm.

“Romaphobia and the media” responds to the recent negative reporting and the damaging political discourse about Roma minorities across Europe. Reflecting on both the British and European contexts, it addresses four crucial questions: (1) How and why do the representations of these groups repeatedly fail to recognise their diversity and normality? (2) Who defines who is ‘Roma’, and what for? (3) What are the styles in which these groups are portrayed? (4) Are there any alternatives?

The event will bring together academics, activists and journalists interested in challenging issues in the representations of minorities in the media. It is a collaboration between the University of Portsmouth (Centre for European & International Studies Research) and King’s College London (Centre for Language, Discourse & Communication).

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

The event is free and will be held at King's College London. For further information and to book a place please contact: annabel.tremlett@port.ac.uk

Jan Grill

11 December 2013

Subject: RE: Roma in the UK debate

In common with colleagues who have engaged in media with the recent growth of anti-Gypsism in Britain (and Europe in general), I have published a short piece on 'Britain's Gypsy moral paranoia' that might be of an interest to some of you: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/jan-grill/britain%E2%80%99s-gypsy-moral-paranoia>

Sharmin Hamvas

12 December 2013

Subject: RE: Roma in the UK debate

It is a very 'well said' piece. It is so true about the behaviour of the 'British lads' in the CEE and how it is tolerated by Britain and the host countries. I have seen this type of shameful behaviour on almost every flight to Budapest for the 'stag do.' Interestingly, this remains unnoticed by the same critiques who want Roma to change their behaviour! [Jan Grill] has made a very good point!

Judith M. Okely

12 December 2013

Subject: RE: Roma in the UK debate

Thanks to [Jan Grill] for the superb comparison with mobs who lay waste others' space as tourists, supposedly just being lads. There are comparisons even closer to 'home' within the UK, namely the famous Oxford Bullingdon Club, three of whose past members are either in the cabinet as prime minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer or mayor of London. (see images on Google). Here, poverty was never the issue but the proud ability to smash up a restaurant and tell the owner that the student(s) as multi-millionaire(s) had enough money to pay for the damages. Little of this was EVER reported to the police. It was all a competition to see who was the richest member parading sufficient inherited wealth to pay the maximum damage.

I have memories and indeed some lived experience of the macho, sexist, racist violence in 1960s Oxford among the elite male undergraduates, all covered up or even celebrated because it was 'just boys growing up, having fun.' When things had to go public they had expensive lawyers. Any working class lad from the town doing far less would have gone to prison.

No irony that in the 1970s the first night I moved onto a Gypsy site, an older man said 'If anyone hollers, just shout out, don't open the door. You'll be alright with us to look after you'. He, Mark Chapman, was right. I was safe. The danger was NEVER the Gypsies but seemingly any rogue gaje roaming outside the camp.

I could add more recent details of university/ student late night 'culture' in residential Oxford streets. When I rang up the council noise help number at 2.30 am, I was shouted at by the employee: 'Get with it, this is a student town'. Although my councillor was informed, you can see the 'culture' which a salaried local can argue as justification.

Ciprian Necula

9 January 2014

Subject: journalist invasion in Romania

These days, in Romania, there is an impressive number of UK journalists, looking for the “Gypsy invasion”, after the new privileges for Romanian and Bulgarian citizens related to the labour market.

I talk to some of them, but a source from UK, I guess, will help them better (time and money). Therefore, if some of you would like to share opinions on the Roma mobility from Romania and Bulgaria to UK, please let me know and send me your detailed contacts.

Most of them were disappointed while facing the realities from some Roma communities and moreover because nothing happens in relation to their subject “gypsy invasion”.

Thomas Acton

9 January 2014

Subject: RE: journalist invasion in Romania

We might just have reached the point where predictions based on the racist fears of Cameron and others have reached self-discrediting absurdity.

Ryan Powell

9 January 2014

Subject: RE: journalist invasion in Romania

Agreed. But unfortunately the media and government show little interest in such reality-congruent knowledge, preferring instead to stubbornly stick to their ideological/ imagined “knowledge” that suits their own ends. Similar debates are ongoing regarding welfare reform in the UK where some scholars have pointed to governmental (ideological) discourse as essentially the “production of ignorance” given the massive chasm between evidence and policy. Much work to be done in challenging this.

Ian F. Hancock

9 January 2014

Subject: RE: journalist invasion in Romania

The Nazis called it a “plague” – we’re not far away from that!

Judith M. Okely

9 January 2014

Subject: RE: journalist invasion in Romania

Ironically, a seemingly pro-immigration programme led by Evan Davis, some years ago, simultaneously showed appalling ignorance of English Gypsies’ vital historic economic contribution. Thus local Romanies are also denigrated by being written

out of recent history. Davis discussed E. European migrants, doubtless on slave labour wages, who came for seasonal agricultural labour. We now learn these contracts were indeed exploitative. Then Davis proclaimed a dubious 'economic' argument that the locally housed population did not do this because they were 'lazy' . I suggest they were on welfare payments not much higher than slave labour. Surely an economist should look back just a few decades. Just a TINY bit of research into the history of Wisbeach would have shown that all that migrant seasonal work was done for decades by Gypsies and indeed throughout the UK.

I recall those I lived with moving to the locality every summer. They provided their own accommodation, not needing cheap plastic tents and crumbling shacks. BUT after ever increasing conservative political restrictions on travel and the fear of losing a site place, Gypsies could no longer move seasonally with their trailers and families to farmers who had always welcomed and depended on them. Even the law officially absolved Gypsy children from school in those seasonal months. The State thus acknowledged the vital importance of Gypsies' work to the dominant economy. How disappointing that an economic 'expert' explained economic change only in terms of pseudo-psychology.

Some time later, I was asked to appear on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme concerning the Dale farm eviction. A car would pick me up early the next morning. I innocently asked who the presenters would be. When I learned one was Evan Davis, I naively and critically mentioned the above programme headed by Davis. If only I had kept back my comments for the live show. Five minutes later, the BBC employee rang back to say my services were no longer required. Seemingly my own economic expertise (I did the same undergrad. P.P.E. degree as Davis) would be far too threatening to a media celebrity and programme notorious also for sidelining female presenters.

Florentin Ciobanu

9 January 2014

Subject: RE: journalist invasion in Romania

ROMANIAN AND BULGARIAN MIGRATION TO THE UK - Report

http://www.ippr.org/images/media/files/publication/2013/12/in-transition_RomBulg_Dec2013_11688.pdf

<http://www.romaissues.wordpress.com>

Yaron Matras

12 February 2014

Subject: Roma migrants and the numbers game

The following comment was published by The Guardian this morning:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/12/roma-reality-check>

Within just a couple of hours of the online publication, more than 300 comments were posted, many of them hostile to Roma migrants. (Non-UK residents will, I'm sure, also be aware that The Guardian is considered one of the more liberal media outlets).

Interestingly, quite a few comments cite the presence of 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK — a claim made some months ago by a research team from Salford University — as if it was a true and verifiable figure. Most cite it in order to argue that there is a threat of uncontrolled and limitless Roma immigration.

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

This illustrates once again how important it is for researchers to act responsibly, and with caution and scientific rigour, when entering the public debate, especially when they claim to be presenting facts and figures.

No doubt those who are hostile to Roma in principle will not be consoled by the fact that there are in fact fewer Roma in the country that the Salford study claimed; while on the other hand even if the actual number was indeed higher it would be still be our duty to warn against exclusion and discrimination. But the fact that the debate is now revolving around fictitious numbers thanks to the publication of the Salford study, is not helpful.

Helen O'Nions

12 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants and the numbers game

I've just quickly put my comment up - I await a vitriolic response from commentators - many of whom appear fixated on stereotypes and ridiculous migration figures (200,000 - really!). I had the same response when I published a comment on Roma refugees from the C Republic and Slovakia, including a personal attack from a BNP campaigner sent to my work address.

Good luck [to Yaron Matras] with Blunkett tomorrow - he has a lot of explaining to do.

Philip Brown

13 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants and the numbers game

As the criticism by Yaron continues it might be of interest to note that since the report was published we have had dealings with a wide variety of stakeholders who have been, as we suspected, extremely positive about the study. Such stakeholders include the Institute for Race Relations, numerous local authorities, academics (from this network and beyond), NGOs and community development workers have commented about how the study has helped in their Roma inclusion work – contrary to Yaron’s views. For example, the study was reviewed positively by the very well respected Institute for Race Relations here <http://www.irr.org.uk/news/no-going-back-for-the-roma/> and was mentioned in a parliamentary Early Day Motion see here <http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/788> which had cross-party support. It’s not my natural inclination to advertise the impact our work is having but as this particular study is once again being misrepresented I feel it is pertinent.

No claims have ever been made as to the definitiveness of the population figure in the report – quite the reverse. As we have repeatedly said this is an estimate based on grassroots knowledge of workers who work in the communities where Roma have been making their home. The authors of the study are all steeped in daily empirical grassroots research and practice with Roma communities, workers and NGOs across the country (UK). These ongoing relationships, dialogue and feedback have given us extra confidence in the findings contained within the report.

We have always seen this study as an initial step in helping to understand where and how resources could be focussed to the benefit of Roma and the communities in which they settle. We welcome approaches that build on or replace this work in due course.

Yaron Matras

13 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants and the numbers game

Liz Fakeete's review of the Salford study, to which Phil has referred us, states this:

"What we now have – and not before time – is a no-nonsense report which provides hard data on the size of the new settled Roma migrant communities"

But this is simply untrue. The study does not provide any hard data at all, as Phil admits in his message from today. It merely speculates, based on anecdotal evidence that is neither properly referenced nor presented in any transparent way that would make this data quantifiable.

For this reason, the House of Commons motion that refers to the "University of Salford's pioneering research into the demographics of the UK's new Roma migrant communities" is misguided. There is no pioneering research here, merely a crafty marketing strategy.

As for the academics to whom Phil refers in his message — those who have supposedly commented positively on the study's merit —, they remain unnamed, much like the sources of data that Phil and his colleagues rely on in the report itself. The real test will be to see whether the study will be submitted, and accepted, to a peer-refereed publication. We are all waiting in suspense.

Thomas Acton

14 February 2014

Subject: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I think Yaron confounds 3 different issues here:

- 1) How justifiable are the Salford Study's statistical speculations?
- 2) Were they unwisely publicised?
- 3) Are the Salford Group competitive rather than co-operative with fellow academics?

1) I think Matras misunderstands the nature of statistical speculation. It is not a process of counting, or giving up if an exact count is not possible. It is a process of adducing the relevant evidence, and then trying to work out the minimum and maximum numbers compatible with that evidence. Although the Salford estimates are not as transparent as they might be, and are perhaps misleadingly specific, they are hardly unreasonable, and more importantly, it is only that spurious specificity which makes them a little less than the estimates by Fremlova L. and Ureche H. (2011, From segregation to Inclusion: Roma Pupils in the UK: A pilot project, London: Equality-UK)
http://equality.uk.com/Education_files/From%20segregation%20to%20integration.pdf.

If Matras and O'Nions think that a figure of 200,000 is unreasonable, why didn't they weigh in in 2011? (Even more surprisingly, why did the Salford survey not acknowledge Fremlova and Ureche, which actually I think has a more open methodology than them, but instead claim to be making the first serious estimate?) Heather Ureche died far too young, but I do hope Lucie Fremlova will enter this controversy.

In fact, I understood from Ureche, that their original estimates were a great deal higher, but were cut down by their funding sponsors at the insistence of government to an absolute minimum justifiable to civil servants. And they were still higher than the Salford survey! Critics of such speculative estimates have a duty to show how a lower number might be compatible with the evidence. Until then, theirs is a philosophical complaint about the necessity of speculative statistics, not a criticism of this particular work.

2) Were they unwisely publicised? To present such a figure as new (rather than echoing another study 2 years previous) and as a “problem” was indeed pandering to the anti-Gypsyism of public discourse, and thus perhaps cheating somewhat by the Salford group in the race for public funding, as compared with the Manchester group, which, to be fair, has largely avoided any panic approach, and has mainly, as in Matras’ excellent article in the Guardian this week, presented Roma culture and heritage as an asset to the country.

In this, Matras’ criticism has served a useful purpose. And I agree that some of the cited endorsements of the Salford work are hardly scientific validations. But actually pretending Roma in the UK are too few for it to be worth estimating their number undermines this a little.

3) Are the Salford Group competitive rather than co-operative with fellow academics? Maybe. But, in that Manchester has a better track record, and a deeper and more diverse competence, and continuing, if prickly relationships with some Roma, Gypsy and Traveller community members (alongside inevitable criticism by others), if I had to choose, I’d rather see public money go to Manchester than Salford. But how much better if we could co-operate when there is so much to be done and so few, relatively, to do it. (And how much better it would be if UK university finances had not come to depend on how much they can skim off research grants!)

Ryan Powell

14 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I am shocked by the continued attack on Salford colleagues by “established” academics. I have always found the Salford academics in question to be very co-operative, far from competitive and driven by the pursuit of knowledge, rather than ego or money. They’re hardly Nigel Thrift.

Yaron Matras

14 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

There is no issue of competition here — either in relation to funding or intellectual property. The Romani Project at the University of Manchester has invited colleagues from Salford on various occasions, including to closed meetings, and the colleagues in Salford have been among the first whom we have informed of, and invited to discuss our plans for the MigRom project launched last year.

My criticism of the Salford study is not personal, and has nothing to do with age or seniority; rather, as I explained before, it is focused on what I believe to be poor methodology, lack of transparency, and an irresponsible approach to public dissemination.

Martin Kovats

14 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

Thomas, you want a big number.

Is the 200K figure reliable? The point is that we don't know. It is not statistics but sources that are the issue.

Do we know whom the informers were who provided the figures from which the estimate was calculated? No. Do we know how reliable their figures were? No.

Is there any reason to think that these figures might be inaccurate? Yes, loads, in the Salford report, which should be commended for the openness with which it refers to the quality of the data.

The problem is not a study publishing a 200K or whatever estimate. It's a claim that it gets discussed.

The concern is about how it has been presented and understood. The authors cannot know the 200K estimate is 'conservative' (other than by their own data). How the findings are used is a more complicated matter.

Is a big number good for Roma? That is debatable.

The UK has the potential to have a healthy Roma debate, probably the best in Europe.

Let's do our best to make sure that happens.

Michael Stewart

15 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I have not yet had time to go through the Salford report but does anyone know of any sociologist or anthropologist or other field researcher who has reported the desertification of scores of Romanian/Hungarian or Slovak villages by the Roma who have come to UK? We do know plenty of such places in Spain and Italy. We do know of some places where hundreds (NB) of Roma have left Romania for UK and also Hungary — but not on anything like the scale that the 200k figure suggests. Moreover this is something that researchers track rather fast. We know rather well from where Hungarian Rom/Magyar Cigany have been coming to the UK because there are researchers working in those areas of Hungary. Inter alia, this is why no one I have spoken to takes the Salford claim seriously.

Sam Beck

14 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

In anthropology a central ethical position which we try to adhere is “do no harm”. [Martin Kovats’s] question — “is a big number good for Roma?” — is to the point! The steel-gored researchers must have known that the xenophobic and racist part of the population would behave predictably and that the media would fan reactionary sentiments. Why use questionable data?”

[Michael,] it is apparent that some sectors in England are taking the number seriously, even if scholars don't. Even if the 200,000 is correct, the ethical concerns regarding such a number for wide public distribution should be a concern and must be dealt with, with sensitivity and an approach that does not put the Roma in jeopardy. It is obviously seen by the public as a dangerous number. We would not be so concerned otherwise.

David Scheffel

15 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I know very little about the numbers of Roma migrants in the UK, but, looking at the migratory pattern that seems to prevail in the parts of Slovakia that I am familiar with, I would expect the numbers to fluctuate quite significantly. This is because Slovak Roma tend not to vacate their communities en masse (hence little evidence of 'desertification') but rather in waves that come and go depending on seasons, political climate, family obligations, etc. For example, Slovak press has been reporting an 'exodus' of displaced Roma from the infamous Košice ghetto Luník IX following the demolition of some buildings. Initially it was thought that most of these people would move to Ghent which already has a colony of close to 2,000 Slovak Roma, many from Luník, but whether they really get there is another question. Perhaps some will go to Manchester instead, stay for a few weeks or months (and get counted by some local enumerator), and then decide to try their luck elsewhere or return to Košice. My point is that there is a huge difference between migrating to Canada, for example, and moving within the EU. The former must be, by virtue of distance and cost, a more permanent change than the latter. I would expect such factors to have an impact on 'counting migrants'. Are we talking only about people who have permanently moved from place

A to place B, or also those who are in perpetual transit between the two points, and those who are merely visiting relatives and trying out what it feels like to live in place B, and so on...?

Yaron Matras

16 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I am somewhat intrigued by Thomas's continuing flagging of the report by Fremlova and Ureche in this connection.

There are actually two reports, one from 2011 on inclusion in the education system (which the authors of the Salford study do, in fact, cite), and another from 2009, which is a practical guide for managers on New Roma Communities in the UK (which the Salford study does not cite). Both are based primarily on interviews with Roma in various locations in the UK, and both are in my view, very valuable contributions to understanding the issues facing Roma immigrants in the institutional context. A third report, also from 2009, is authored by Fremlova (with support from Ureche) and is a mapping survey of Roma from new EU member states (again not cited by Salford).

The debate surrounding the Salford report is concerned with Salford's most 'sensational' and most widely cited claim, which is that there is a total of 200,000 Roma migrants in the UK. Recall that this was the focus of the publicity that the Salford team sought for their report, and that this figure has since been adopted in some media and politicians' comments as fact. Recall also that by his own admission in the Channel 4 News interview on 30 Oct, Phil Brown's motivation to carry out the report

was to highlight the need for additional resources to support Roma. The responsibility that Phil took on himself is therefore of considerable magnitude: not only was there a danger that the figure would back-fire and lead to calls to curtail migration, which is what has happened, but there was also a danger that if the figure was found to be incorrect, then that would serve as an excuse to withhold additional resources, or even to withdraw existing ones.

Thomas refers us to the Fremlova and Ureche report from 2011. This reports makes only one single statement about numbers, which is: "Although it is not known how many Roma live in the UK, the best estimate is around 500,000." (p 23). The authors don't elaborate, but refer the reader instead to Fremlova's report from 2009, while in their joint report from 2009 (practical guide) they say that "There is no clear picture of the number of Roma in many areas due to inaccuracy or, in some cases, non-existence of data on Roma" (p 20).

In Fremlova's 2009 report, she relies on a combined method of questionnaires sent to local authorities, reports from local practitioners, and interviews with Roma in various locations about their awareness of other Roma and the size of Roma families. There is thus a triangulation of methods here that goes far deeper than that of the Salford study.

Unlike the Salford team, Fremlova is open in regard to the individual sets of figures received from these different sources and discusses them in detail (p 79ff): Local authority estimates give 24,000, while adding responses from practitioners raises the estimate to 49,000. Adding responses from Roma raises the estimate again to 111,000.

This is still far from the 500,000 cited in the joint 2011 report with Ureche. How can the two figures be reconciled? On p 83 of her report from 2009, Fremlova mentions that anecdotal reports from Roma put the figure at anywhere between 400,000-1,000,000 (i.e. five times the estimate of the Salford group). The figure of 500,000 thus seems to be simply a convenient

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

'compromise' between Fremlova's source-based estimate of 111,000 and the highest possible anecdotal figures cited by some Roma, of 1,000,000.

One could of course argue that *IF* Fremlova's figure of 111,000 was accurate in 2009, and *IF* the population of Roma migrants has nearly doubled between 2009-2013, then the Salford figure of 200,000 *MIGHT* be accurate. These are both big *IFs*. (For Manchester, we have no indication of any significant increase in Roma migrants since 2009; in fact, there has been out-migration from the city of Manchester into neighbouring municipalities in the Greater Manchester area, such as Oldham, and only a very small number of new arrivals from outside the UK).

But the point is *not* that the figure is obviously inaccurate; the point is that the Salford study's methodology is fundamentally flawed, and therefore there is no basis for the claims that it is 'pioneering' or that it presents 'hard data'. So once more, at stake in this debate is the reliability and reputation of research on Roma migrants in the UK, and elsewhere for that matter, too. The Salford team may have guessed right, but then again it's possible that so have some of Fremlova's Roma interviewees, or some lone officer at the UK Border Agency. What we expect from academic colleagues, especially those who venture out into national media and parliamentary lobby groups, is a sound, transparent, and reliable research method, and that is something the Salford team has not delivered.

How can we fix the situation? In our report from November 2009 on Roma in Manchester's Gorton South district, we provided an estimate of a local community, based on face to face interviews with around a third of the community members, and supported by reports from schools that had a proven awareness of Roma pupils' background (not all schools do). If we could set up a network of research groups around the country to replicate such local investigations, then quite possibly we

might arrive at a more accurate indication not just of numbers, but also of problems and issues on the ground. This would seem more promising both as a collaborative research venture and as one that could deliver more reliable insights than an abstract calculation tool designed to market products like vacuum-cleaners and the like to consumers.

At the same time I cannot help but wonder whether we actually need a solid estimate of Roma in the entire country. Many Roma prefer not to identify themselves as Roma to authorities, but to blend in; and many, such as the Gabor Roma from Transylvania or the Latvian Roma — both in North Manchester — and the Hungarian Roma in Salford and Bolton, do so very successfully. There is at the moment pressure from local Traveller Education and International New Arrivals teams on these groups to “self-ascribe”, primarily so that these teams can argue for a greater remit and more resources for their own staff. Our local survey of Gorton in 2009 was designed in conjunction with the community, in order to help flag their needs, and was immediately followed by a joint intervention programme of local authority, voluntary sector, and the university, first with support from the government’s Migrant Impact Fund and the Big Life Company, and now with EU support. This has led to much improved school attendance and attainment rates, decriminalisation of the community, the emergence of community youth leaders and role models, and currently a campaign for Roma self-reliance (called “Le kio ilo ande-I dand!” or ‘Take your destiny in your own hands!’).

Where such local interventions depend on understanding local issues, including numbers, then a survey seems justified and feasible. At national level, however, it is not clear what speculations on numbers can achieve, especially considering the risks of manipulation of data and the unleashing of undesired and counter-productive responses by those who are not supportive of Roma social inclusion but would instead like to see migration stopped. The EU’s call for National Strategies for Roma Inclusion target local (‘indigenous’) Roma communities in the first instance, rather than migrants, but some countries,

such as Austria and Sweden, do refer to Roma migrants as one of the target groups. In the UK, Roma migrants may certainly benefit from a national strategy for inclusion. But lobbying for one should place qualitative issues in the foreground, rather than the tricky and very risky numbers game.

Cerasela Voiculescu

17 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I endorse David Scheffel's view. It is the same for Romanian Roma, who look for informal/formal work within EU, by traveling, in the course of one year or less than one year, from one country to another: Portugal, Spain, Germany, France, UK, Ireland.

Thomas Acton

17 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

I think we should be grateful to Yaron for this very useful summary analysis of the work of Fremlova and Ureche, which really answers its own question as to why I should have flagged it up. I may have over-relied on my memory in citing their work, so I'll own up to that in advance.

It also puts our positions much closer together. We are agreed that so far from being innovatory, the methodology claimed by Brown et al is probably much less thorough and diverse than that of Fremlova and Ureche, and certainly opaque in a way that theirs is not. (It isn't "anecdotal", it's just opaque.) That they cite the 2011 report, but not the 2009 one suggests that they may have been aware of this, which makes their claim to innovatory methodology disingenuous at best.

Fremlova and Ureche were even more frank about their methodology and findings in several seminars and talks they gave over the whole period of their work, and it is possible I may have mixed up my memories of these seminars with my memories of the reports. I really wish that Heather Ureche was still with us to discuss these matters. May I suggest to Yaron, however, that Lucie Fremlova might be the very best person from whom to request a review of the Salford study for the journal *Romani Studies*.

And of course, given that civil servants were thinking, after Fremlova and Ureche, in terms of 200,000, how reassuringly convenient it may have been for them that Brown et al came in with the surprisingly specific figure of 197,000!

Second, I agree with Matras, that whether or not 200,000 is a realistic and conservative estimate, is not the main point. What matters in this debate, is the way that estimate was spun in the press. I am grateful Matras now acknowledges that the estimate is a possible one. Of course, as he points out, it rests on a whole series of "ifs". But that is the nature of statistical extrapolation, and all sampling methodology. No one rubbishes the British Crime survey because it scales up its estimates based on intensive local samples. This is what I read Brown et al as telling us they are doing - they just give us very little detail of how. So I don't actually think we can say their methodology is "fundamentally flawed" — they don't really tell us enough about it to make that judgment. I don't think we can assert that their methodology is both opaque AND bad. We have to opt for one or the other.

Third, it is possible to argue that we should keep quiet about how many Blacks, Asians, Jews and Roma there are, for fear of scaring the working class. Enoch Powell, that quintessentially dishonourable Tory, always argued that he was not racist, but immigration control was necessary because the majority are. It has always seemed to me that pandering to racism thus is actually more dishonourable than being racist. My whole life I have faced people in church, in the pub, in public meetings (actually even in universities) who have turned to me incredulously and said “You can’t really mean that.” So I am confident - and glad! - that whatever Matras might say here, keeping quiet about possibly inconvenient truth is not something he will ever actually be able to do for long.

Can we defend Brown et al.? I used to sit on a university ethics committee, and I know how bureaucrats, reifying the idea of ethics, often take inappropriate models from clinical practice, and apply them wholesale to the social sciences. This is especially so on the issue of confidentiality, and we probably all know Roma, Gypsies and Travellers angry about having been quoted without acknowledgement because idiot university administrators have imposed a rule that informants should never be identified. Sometimes we even get photos of people, even community leaders, who are not named, even though they are easily identifiable. So it is possible, I suppose, that Brown et al. just weren’t able to stand up to an ethics committee ordering them to give inappropriate undertakings of confidentiality.

The Salford study was a team effort, led by Brown, who also has administrative responsibilities. Is it possible that Brown himself didn’t realise quite how much his underlings were cribbing from Fremlova and Ureche in setting up their methodology? That wouldn’t excuse, but might partially explain it.

And although various people on this list have idealistically defended the commitment of universities to scholarly standards in research, my conversations with Matras at times have indicated how robustly even he has had to assert the integrity of his research against university administrators, even with his distinguished eminence. Those of us who know what it's like in lesser universities can only speculate what pressures Brown et al. may be under to make their research pay, which may have taken the publicity for their research out of their hands.

So I still think that Yaron's dismissiveness towards the figure of 200,000 was unjustified, and detracted from the impact of his analysis and critique of the public use made of this estimate. It might have been possible to make these points, and flag up the weaknesses of Brown et al. without quite so categorically accusing them. But absolute respect to Yaron for taking the trouble to read and make a serious analysis of Fremlova and Ureche, which raises the tone of this debate very substantially.

Yaron Matras

18 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

There is a simple reason why the method adopted by Salford is 'fundamentally flawed': it relies entirely on filling the gaps through a projection that assumes even distribution of population across locations with similar attributes/general population indicators. This method is not applicable to immigration settlement, because there is no reason to assume that Roma — or any other group of immigrants — are attracted evenly to all locations in Britain. Our recent investigation of the spread of immigrant languages in Britain proves this point very clearly:

<http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/census/CoDE-Language-Diversity-Census-Briefing.pdf>

It shows that on the whole, immigrant groups tend to cluster in particular areas and locations.

If the gaps were marginal, then that might not be as big of a problem. But in the case of the Salford study, by the authors' own admission the figures received were for a tiny minority of locations; and even those figures are not verifiable, their sources vary considerably so we don't even know that they are comparable, and the figures used as estimates for a few locations and which then serve as a basis for the overall calculation are not disclosed, making the entire exercise non-transparent.

By analogy, if we took an estimate of the number of Orthodox Jews in Gateshead (total population ca 200,000), where there is a noticeable community, and then assumed that the same proportion of Orthodox Jews have settled in all other locations of similar population size, average income, etc around the country, we would reach a figure that is many times higher than the actual number. Such an exercise would remove from the equation the ethnographic and historical aspect — the factors that motivated Orthodox Jews to settle specifically in Gateshead and not elsewhere. Estimates only make sense if they take into account people's motivations, aspirations, and social and family networks and these were all completely ignored by the Salford team, which didn't speak to a single Romani family.

So there is no a priori reason to assume that the projection method that Salford applied is reliable, and every reason to assume that it isn't. My critique of the study has always been about this central aspect of the method, coupled with the over-confident manner in which the authors sought publicity for the figure.

Thomas Acton

18 February 2014

Subject: RE: Roma migrants, Salford, Manchester and statistical speculation

At the risk of anticipating the Manchester Summer School on Research methods, it would be good if we could remember to distinguish between reliability and validity. Reliability does not imply validity, merely consistency, while of course, as Yaron points out, a result that happens to be true does not mean the methods used to produce it are reliable.

The method described by Brown et al. could certainly be applied consistently, so we have no reason to suggest it is unreliable. If I were setting out to reach a plausible result just under 200,000, the very first thing I'd do is make sure I applied a consistent set of algorithms. So I think, although they are vague about their analytical methodology - it doesn't appear at all in their methodological appendix - they are unlikely to have been inconsistent or unreliable in their analysis. And one would hardly have suggested they ignore "general population indicators"! The nub of the matter is how they took the other "similar" attributes, of which they give us a rather vague list, into account. The validity of their method would entirely depend on how they did that, and without details of their algorithms and only regional distributions of their survey data to look at, that is uncheckable. And there is no apparent attempt to establish likely margins of error at any significance rate. But it's certainly not impossible to map clustered populations in this way. The late Sir Claus Moser, in his spare time from the Royal Opera, wrote an entire book on Cluster sample methodology, and while I think his enthusiasm for it was possibly a little over the top, there's no reason to assume a priori that they didn't attempt to map clusters within their regions.

I agree that relying on local authority respondents to report school data, or information from Roma families themselves, rather than seeking to assess those directly as Fremlova and Ureche did, makes the data less firmly based. I'm also slightly

worried by the way they cite the figures from 2006 CRE Report on Gypsies and Travellers, as though they were a primary source rather than an inconsistent and uncomprehending extrapolation of previous flawed extrapolations. But why should Brown et al. use “fundamentally flawed” algorithms? Broadly reasonable ones would work just as well, especially if you know what will be treated as a reasonable result. Even if it is presented with implausible specificity.

Perhaps actually we should be grateful for the crude way that the report was spun. Without that it would not have been so apparent how the mild and dispassionate tone of the report itself primarily presents a statistically ornamented account of how local authorities perceive their “problem”. This view from the local authorities is actually quite useful; but it subordinates the perceptions of front-line teachers, social workers and grassroots community leaders, and gives very little voice to what Roma themselves think, or the very considerable achievement and contribution to British society of Roma immigrants over the past 25 years.

David Scheffel

19 February 2014

Subject: Accuracy, advocacy, or both?

I am intrigued by the suggestion that social scientists should keep quiet about “inconvenient truths” - such as the number of Roma migrants in the UK - in order to avoid potential misuse of their data. Although Thomas appears disdainful of mainstream anthropology, he is actually advocating an approach pioneered by its North American practitioners. I know scores of U.S. and Canadian anthropologists who won't publish all kinds of ‘inconvenient’ data for fear of causing harm to

the reputation of the people they did fieldwork with. One consequence of this trend has been the excessive power we have collectively given to often ridiculously ill-informed ethics committees and the silly expectations that Thomas is also critical of. This is a slippery slope which may lead to a degree of self-censorship that can actually result in harming the interests of the people we are trying to protect. I addressed this issue in a short article dealing with the stereotypes and reality of violence in the context of Romani studies. It's available through Project Muse here http://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/collaborative_anthropologies/v005/5.scheffel.pdf. I can also send it directly to anybody interested.

It appears that the link doesn't work as it should. Here is the citation: Advocacy Trumps Accuracy? Stereotypes of East European Roma and Ethnography, Collaborative Anthropologies, vol. 5, 2012.

Huib Van Baar

22 February 2014

Subject: ['Mobile Banditry' Report]

Since the fall of 2013, I have followed the discussions about the Salford study Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom (Brown et al 2013) and, more generally, about the reemergence of anti-Romani (as well as anti-Romanian and anti-Bulgarian) attitudes in the UK. Several times, I intended to contribute to the discussion at this RSN forum, but my involvement in intensive domestic debates in the Netherlands repeatedly led me to postpone my comments. Now, I would like to take the opportunity to make a few comments on the ongoing debate and its more general context.

First, I am very happy to see that, over the last week, the debate has substantially deepened and that those involved in the debate have begun to explain their arguments and viewpoints more extensively. I think we also should widen the debate. The discussion has hitherto focused on the UK, on the methodology used in the Salford study, and on the report's (possible) direct and indirect impact on the public and political debate in the UK.

To widen the debate, I think we should discuss the role of academics and scholarship on the Roma with regard to (Roma-related) policy formation and transformation, particularly at a time of renewed anti-Gypsyism and particularly since the materialization of the 'ethnic turn' in EU Roma policy of 2011. The explicit ethnicisation of EU Roma policy and the EU's promotion of the development of national Roma strategies in the context of the EU Roma Framework have led to new and renewed ways to govern Romani minorities at local and national levels. These developments have led to the rise of the demand for those who can advise policy-makers about Romani affairs, particularly in countries that have hitherto been hesitant or reluctant to develop 'national' Roma strategies. To clarify my own position with regards to these trends, I first would like to move beyond the UK-centric dimensions of the current debate and to give an example of what has recently happened in the political and public debate in the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Belgium. Probably, this example is also telling of the challenges yet to come in the public debate about the migration of Roma to Western Europe.

The domestic debate (that has once in a while occupied me since the fall) began with the publication of another report and its media coverage. In *Mobile Banditry: Central and East European Itinerant Criminal Groups in the Netherlands*, Dina Siegel states that the Roma are radically overrepresented among criminal East and Central European gangs that are currently operating in the Netherlands. Siegel is a professor of criminology at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands and she published this report, which was commissioned by the Dutch police academy, first in Dutch in November 2013 and then in English in February 2014.

However, mid-September 2013 and, thus, relatively long before the report's official publication, Siegel appeared in various influential Dutch and Belgian media to present the main findings of her research. She claimed that 80 per cent of these criminal gangs are Roma and that, according to her Romanian police sources, almost all of them are Roma. She proposed to break what she called 'the Gypsy taboo' (*zigeuner-taboe*). The revealing of the ethnic Romani background of these 'itinerant criminals' would avoid the stigmatization of all Romanians and Bulgarians, or even of all Eastern Europeans in the Western European media. Many Dutch and Belgian media reproduced these claims without checking her report (which was not yet available at that time).

In the first half of October, I saw the final version of the report for the first time. I intervened in the Dutch media; I gave a couple of interviews and wrote a long newspaper article in which I criticized both the report and Siegel's media performances from the perspective of the Europe-wide emergence of what I call 'a reasonable anti-Gypsyism'. A scholarly article on this debate and its wider European relevance will appear this spring, in a volume on anti-Gypsyism edited by Timofey Agarin [Huub van Baar. 2014. The emergence of a reasonable anti-Gypsyism in Europe. In: Agarin, Timofey, ed. When stereotype meets prejudice: Antiziganism in European societies. Stuttgart: ibidem. 27-44.].

In this message, I will not repeat the arguments of my article. In brief, the problem is the following: Siegel's report is based on relatively small-scale qualitative, rather than quantitative, analyses. In no way can these analyses justify the claims that Siegel made in the Dutch and Belgian news. The percentages she mentioned in the media are even not included in the report. Moreover, the report and the research done to write it do not support the claim of the overrepresentation of the Roma in the so-called 'itinerant criminal groups'.

Consequently, this overrepresentation remains a hypothesis or, better, is based on speculation. Many of the conclusions of the report are based on statements about the Roma made by police officers in Romania and Bulgaria. These statements have been taken at face value and have not been put in their institutional and societal contexts. The report states that some 907 Dutch criminal files have been analyzed. Nowhere, however, does the report explain exactly how these files have been analyzed, what kind of selection criteria were used to identify them or whether there were any difficulties pertaining to their examination. For instance, have police and officers of the judiciary registered nationality and ethnicity in these criminal files, and if so, how exactly? How exactly have the researchers combined the information about the nationality and ethnicity of offenders with the report's central concern with regard to mobile banditry? The report offers no answers to these crucial questions. This report was commissioned by 'Science and Police', a department of the Dutch police academy. The Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security considers Siegel's report as a backing of its policy which, when it comes to Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands, primarily and symptomatically focuses on law enforcement.

What do the political, public, and scholarly debates about Siegel's and the Salford report tell us about the more general themes that I introduced at the beginning? Some caveats are in order here.

First, the tone and content of Siegel's report are very different from those in the Salford report. Siegel's report, for instance, explains its methodology much less carefully and openly than the Salford report. Nevertheless, both reports share a lack of transparency. Apart from various problematic issues with regards to the Salford study that have already been discussed at this forum, I consider the maintenance of the anonymity of the authorities that responded to the survey as one of the key problems of the report's methodology (as troublesome as the problematic extrapolation of figures to the entire UK). This maintenance implicitly obscures the reasons of why local and municipal authorities mention particular figures, which are,

in the end, not verifiable and, thus, not transparent. Siegel's report, on the other hand, uses most of its sources — whether ethnographical, juridical, historical, or conceptual — in an inadequate way. Statements made in interviews are taken at face value; the analysis of criminal files remains a black box; 17th and 18th century patterns of crime among 'Gypsies' are uncritically considered as forerunners of contemporary 'criminal Roma families', and the concept of itinerant crime is poorly explained and embedded in the overall research.

Second, the intentions of both reports are clearly very different. The authors of the Salford report 'are striving for equality for Roma' and intend to 'refocus on tackling anti-Roma sentiments' (see Philip Brown's email of November 19th), whereas Siegel claimed in the media that she wanted to break the 'Gypsy taboo'. In an interview with the Dutch daily newspaper *Vrij Nederland*, she suggested that 'the Gypsy has returned' (*'de zigeuner is terug'*), implying that (some of) the stereotypes are correct. Nevertheless, despite these differences between the reports, both of them have directly or indirectly produced anti-Gypsyism both in the public and in political debate.

One of the crucial issues that we should rethink from the perspective of the involvement of academics in policy formation is the relationship between my first and second point. What happens when a lack of transparency enables either the authors of such policy-oriented reports or other actors (media, politicians, policy makers, extremist groups, etc.) to directly or indirectly contribute to anti-Gypsyism? Both the Salford study and Siegel's report are strongly policy-oriented reports. In general, there is nothing wrong with such reports, but they should use reliable and sound methodologies and provide transparency on their primary sources and the ways in which these have been used.

I am afraid that the ongoing development and transformation of national Roma strategies, and the correlated rise of the demand for strongly policy-oriented and 'positivist' studies on the Roma will more frequently lead to the writing of

(commissioned) studies in which the conceptual and methodological backbones are weak or even flawed. Governmental authorities ask for easy to understand, relatively straightforward reports that preferably include figures and numbers that can be used to develop the official national strategies. In particular, now that we are entering the Romani Studies Network's second stage, in which the focus of some of us will be more explicitly on policy-oriented contributions, I want to encourage the members of this network to rethink their current or future contributions to policy formation.

In the Netherlands, but also in other EU member states, I have observed a tendency to exclude those with expertise on the Roma from new national policy-oriented developments. Of course, to some extent this is not a new trend, but, since the recent reinforcement of anti-Roma and anti-migrant attitudes in Western European countries, this pattern seems to fit those national policy trends in which more 'progressive' approaches to Roma issues are increasingly lacking.

One of the increasingly recurring topics in these policy trends is the supposed large-scale involvement of Roma in transnational criminal activities. This topic has also become a main concern of transnationally organized collaborations between police forces of several EU member states, including those of the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, France, and Romania. As some of you may know, in the context of the EU Roma Framework the Dutch government has Europeanized its approach to crime-related activities and called for the inclusion of the combatting of Roma related and organized crime, including human trafficking, into EU policies dealing with the Roma. Similarly, during its EU presidency in 2010, the Belgian government called for a European approach to so-called itinerant criminal groups.

The risk of these and similar developments is that policies (start/continue to) address the symptoms, rather than the causes of, most notably, the migration of Roma to Western Europe. A troublesome development, related to the main topic of this message, is the way in which police forces and officers have brought information in the news that also lacks transparency

but that has nevertheless been used to support national and transnational policy formation and to maintain or even reinforce anti-Gypsyism in the public debate.

Let me give one example. Some of you may be familiar with the name of Bernie Gravett of the London Metropolitan Police. Between 2007 and 2009, he led Operation Golf at Europol, a collaboration between the Metropolitan and Romanian police on the combatting of organized trafficking. I have not seen evidence supporting Gravett's claim that the forced participation of Romani children in organized crime in Western European countries is a wide-spread, large-scale, and almost uncontrollable phenomenon. I wonder whether some of our UK-based colleagues know more about Gravett's claim. In any case, Gravett played a major role in a recent Dutch news item in which he was interviewed and made this claim about Roma children who have been forced to steal and beg across Europe, as part of organized criminal networks (established by Roma). For those of you who would like to watch this fragment, please have a look at the following link (load the video at the right-hand side, wait a while and go to min. 8.44): <http://nieuwsuur.nl/onderwerp/601674-honderden-roma-in-criminaliteit.html>

Let me be clear about my view of research into criminality, in order to avoid that (some of) you may think that I do not grasp part of the current European reality. Without a doubt, research into criminality should be possible, and one should be able to identify the proportion of minorities among criminals. Similarly, within the limits of the law, the police should be able to map criminal offences committed by the members of minorities, including the Romani. The fact that criminal behavior occurs among the Roma is not under discussion here. However, what should be under discussion is the way in which the accumulation of deep-seated and repeatedly reproduced stereotyping of the Roma has led to abuses in the way they are treated, in the media and in policy building and implementation regarding them. As soon as strongly policy-oriented reports are not transparent in terms of their methodologies, statistics, the use of sources, or otherwise, these reports can easily contribute to anti-Gypsyism. I hope this message will encourage a debate about the relationship between expertise on the Roma and the demand for policy-oriented reports, particularly in a time of intensifying anti-Gypsyism.

David Scheffel

23 February 2014

Subject: Dutch report

Huub van Baar is right in cautioning against potentially inflammatory generalizations based on questionable research techniques. But I am not so sure that the claims he attributes to the report he refers to, are justified. Dina Siegel's 'Mobile Banditry' examines the phenomenon of hit-and-run crime in the Netherlands and asserts that much of it is perpetrated by people from Poland, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Romania. The report is concerned with the criminality of 'Central and East Europeans' rather than Roma as such. I don't think that Siegel states „that the Roma are radically overrepresented among criminal East and Central European gangs that are currently operating in the Netherlands.” What she does claim is that within the wider category of crime perpetrated by CEE mobile gangs (such as car theft, shoplifting, break-ins, etc.), Roma are over-represented in the sub-category of pick pockets, beggars, and shoplifters.

One of the five conclusions reached by Siegel is that criminality is a way „to escape repression, discrimination and economic destitution”, suggesting that crime-fighting strategies ought to include a larger effort at improving the socio-economic conditions in the criminals' home countries. Clearly, the report is intended as a warning about some unintended consequences of the free movement of people in the enlarged EU.

I sympathize with Huub's regret that scholars with Roma-related expertise tend to be overlooked in policy-orientated discussions. But could this trend be attributable to the already mentioned unwillingness among these 'progressive' academics to deal with inconvenient truths in a constructive fashion? The large-scale participation of certain groups of CEE Roma

in criminal activities committed in Western Europe may be one such inconvenient truth. By immediately invoking anti-Gypsyism instead of using our expertise to explain why this situation prevails and how to change it, we might very well disqualify ourselves from the advisory role we may feel we deserve.

Sharmin Hamvas

24 February 2014

Subject: RE: Dutch report

I agree with David with 'using our expertise to explain why this situation prevails and how to change it' but don't fully agree with 'large-scale participation of certain groups of CEE Roma in criminal activities committed in western Europe' since in a lot of cases they are wrongly targeted by media and local authorities assuming that they are the perpetrators as we have clearly seen in the 'alleged' child abduction cases in Ireland and Greece.

Nando Sigona

27 February 2014

Subject: on the Roma as EU citizens

I thought this might be of interest to some of you. It's a short piece on EU citizenship, Roma mobility and anti-Gypsyism": <http://nandosigona.wordpress.com/2014/02/25/eu-citizenship-roma-mobility-and-anti-gypsyism-time-for-reframing-the-debate-2/>

Thomas Acton

3 March 2014

Subject: Van Baar's comments over the Migrant Roma in the UK debate, criminology and 'tone'

It is worrying to hear of the re-emergence of the at least partially discredited fantasist Bernie Gravett in the Dutch debate. He is probably, through Operation Golf, the most prolific abductor of children in Europe since the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Fortunately, in England we still have an extremely professional and committed child protection service, (despite cuts and abuse from government ministers and the press) who promptly and within days returned the children abducted by police officers to their parents or carers. It is believed by some, that the Foreign Office and security services view Operation Golf as a success because of its deterrent effect to Roma migration in general, and there has been no public apology.

There has, however, in the UK, been a cautious realisation by mainstream police thought that the conspiracy theories of Operation Golf are not of much practical use in dealing with actual street crime. A conference organised a couple of years ago by the British Transport Police at the London Transport Museum reached out both to Roma NGOs and Romani Studies, and crucially acknowledged that the success of police work in the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Communities depends on the police being seen to be as willing to protect them in general as to arrest the small minority who break the law. The conference was addressed by the quite wonderful Petr Torok, the first migrant Roma to enter the police force in the UK, who is in the process of forming, with the blessing of senior officers, a Romani Police Officers' Association with an English Romani police officer, Jim Smith. So I agree with Huub that it is now both possible and necessary for Romani Studies academics to enter criminological debates, perhaps in a way we could not, before.

Without Yaron's critique we would not have had Philip Brown's measured and revealing response. A critical reading of the Salford report also shows us not only its weaknesses, but also its strengths in its qualitative insights into local authority attitudes - which we do need to document, just as much as we need to document migrant Roma attitudes. We may feel NOW that we need to record the latter more than the former; but will that be true in 20 years time? Van Baar's work, encapsulating the most important legacy of the "Dutch School" of Romani historiography, teaches us we need to approach all reports with a contextualising, critical eye, rather than treat any as "authoritative sources". The first question to ask, when seeking to understand any social-scientific text, is "with whom is the writer, covertly or overtly, expressing their disagreement?"

Epilogue

On 28 April 2014, Philip Brown, Lisa Scullion, and Philip Martin published an article entitled “Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom and the need to estimate population size” in the journal *People, Place and Policy*.¹² This article is directly relevant to the debate about population estimates of Roma triggered by the release of the report by the same team at Salford University in October 2013. It is that debate that constitutes the main body of this section.

On 12 July 2015 Yaron Matras posted a response to the 2014 article to the European Academic Network on Romani Studies with the subject heading “Counting Roma, once again”. Since the 2014 article is publicly available, and since it arguably supersedes the 2013 report, we are reproducing here Yaron Matras’ post to the Network. Here “2014 article” refers to the above referenced publication and “2013 report” to the October 2013 report that occasioned the original debate that constitutes the main body of this section.

¹² Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 19-33. The article is available for both reading and downloading at <<http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ppp-online/migrant-roma-in-the-united-kingdom-and-the-need-to-estimate-population-size/>> (accessed 6 September 2015).

Counting Roma, Once Again

Yaron Matras (University of Manchester)

In the 2014 article, the team acknowledges the problem of counting people of ethnic minority background and the special problems around “Gypsies and Travellers”. They refer mainly to the under-reporting of ethnicity by respondents. They then go on to describe studies that preceded their 2013 report and mention the inaccuracy and unreliability of previous estimates of Roma in the UK.

I generally agree with that part of the 2014 article, but would add two aspects to the argument. The first is the fact that inaccuracy is, at least in the UK, built into the very categorisation used in most surveys. The category ‘Gypsy, Roma, Traveller’ and certainly ‘Gypsy and Traveller’ is usually not meaningful to respondents who are ethnic Roma immigrants from eastern Europe, and they are therefore reluctant to identify with it, irrespective of fear of discrimination or other negative effects. (See discussion in 2.2 of this volume.)

The problem with that categorisation was recently illustrated when the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) issued a report on Roma in schools in England. Quoting officers of the Children’s Services in Manchester, it suggested that there was a more than threefold increase in the number of Roma children in Manchester schools between 2013 and 2014. We questioned the figures, and after some deliberations Manchester City Council admitted that the lower figure for 2013 related just to ‘Roma’, while the higher figure for 2014 included also ‘Travellers and Showmen’. Why would the City Council officers compare two different population groups from one year to another, and why would they report on Showmen and Travellers without so specifying, when they knew that the report focused specifically on Roma? The two most likely explanations are

either a lack of understanding or a desire to inflate numbers. As of this writing, however, the relevant authorities have refused to explain themselves. But in response to our query, Ofsted has since corrected the relevant wording in its report.

In addition to the issue of inaccuracy of categories, there is an issue with framing the questions. The 2011 UK Census offered a potentially accurate way of counting Roma migrants when, for the first time, it included an open question on “What is your main language?” Some Roma migrants do not speak Romani, but a great number of them, most likely the vast majority, do. And most importantly, only Roma speak Romani as their “main language” in the sense of ‘home language’. So responses to this question might have been able to provide a valuable source of information on the number of Roma. But in fact, only 629 individuals in England and Wales indicated in the Census of 2011 that their “main language” was ‘Romani’.

Phil has asked why this is the case. I think there are two main reasons: First, many Roma are simply unaware of the English term for the language ‘Romani’ (they refer to it in their own language as ‘romanes’), or even that their everyday home language has a formal designation that might be meaningful in some way to outsiders and institutions. We see this almost every day in settings such as hospitals, where Roma migrants are hesitant or reluctant to request Romani interpreters even though such facilities (for Romani) do exist (though our data for Manchester show that this has been changing in the past 2-3 years and there is an increase in such requests).

The second reason is that the Census 2011 question on language was framed in an awkward way. We have evidence that respondents interpreted the question “What is your main language?” in different ways. Many immigrants reported the official (ex-colonial) language of their country of origin as “main” because they didn’t consider their everyday home speech to constitute a “language” (many Africans for example have internalized the colonial attitude that their languages are merely

Network Discussion 1: Measuring and reporting on Romani populations

“dialects” and not worthy of mentioning in formal contexts). Clearly, most Roma respondents opted to state the national language of their country of origin rather than their home language. And many are bilingual even within the home, so citing one language rather than the other as “main” may have seemed random. This is part of a larger problem with the modernist project of censuses in general.

A third reason is that the discrimination Roma migrants have experienced in the past have accustomed them to declaring a language other than Romani in censuses.

The point is that even a tool with the potential to be accurate — the question is open, it allows self-ascription, and all citizens are required to respond — clearly does not give us an adequate result in this instance; the statistic that there were only 629 Romani speakers in all of England and Wales in 2011 is clearly inaccurate.

Six months after the publication of their 2013 report, the Salford team appeared to admit candidly to some of the faults of the initial paper. They write that “the paucity of hard data available to local authorities who responded to the survey posed the same problem faced by previous studies” (p 25), and that “It was clear that if a national estimate of the size of the Roma community was to be made, an appropriate methodology could not aim for statistical accuracy but produce indicators of the types of places Roma were likely to be found and an approximate sense of scale” (p 25). This seems to contradict the aim stated in their 2013 report, which was to provide “hard data about the number of migrant Roma” (p 6). They then go on to explain in detail how they used a model to obtain a projection of the Roma population in the country based on the core sample of estimates that they received.

For their 2013 report, the team had sent out questionnaires to local authorities, asking, among other things, for estimates of the number Roma in their jurisdiction. The response rate was low, and the rate of responses that included numbers was even lower. [See the discussion in the main body of this section.]

However one chooses to assess the merits or faults of the projection method, it is clear that it is based on the core sample of responses received. Even the most reasonable, accurate, justifiable and reliable projection model is useless if the core data fed into it to produce the projection are unreliable. The crucial problems for the enterprise under consideration here are the missing details on who (by function, not, of course, their names) supplied the data for the core sample, what was the nature of their access to data on Roma, and how did they identify Roma? The Salford team withhold this information from their readers. But without that information, one cannot assess the reliability of the core sample. And if the core sample is unreliable, then, as already noted, even the most optimal projection model cannot render meaningful results.

The question therefore remains concerning what meaningful result could be obtained from such a study in light of the circumstances and the difficulties that the team partly acknowledge. If the purpose was indeed to get “an approximate sense of scale”, then surely it would have been better to present a more cautious estimate — one that gave lower and higher approximations — rather than to send out a briefing to media and policy makers telling them that the estimate of Roma is (the rather precise figure of) “193,297 individuals” for England, and for the UK as a whole “at least 197,705”, as the team did in its 2013 report.

And this brings me to another issue — the publicity given to the 2013 report. As an academic exercise, it is of course perfectly legitimate to experiment with abstract models, whether the samples are accurate or not. Such experiments generally

have little or no impact in the public sphere. But when researchers engage with the public debate, then there are greater ethical issues at stake. The authors acknowledge this in the 2014 article, and they devote a final section to the reaction to their report in the UK media. To set this section in context, I will review briefly the public debate surrounding the release of the 2013 report.

There was intense, almost obsessive, public interest and also anxieties surrounding the numbers of eastern European immigrants, especially Roma, in the run up to the lifting of employment restrictions on Romanian and Bulgarian nationals in January 2014.

Phil Brown presented the team's findings in an interview on Channel 4 national television at the end of October 2013. Phil's appearance on the programme was complemented by an interview with a representative of UKIP, the anti-immigrant party in the UK, who used the Salford study to criticise the government for being lenient on immigration. The same programme also featured pictures and soundbites of hostile reactions to Slovak Roma migrants in Sheffield: residents accused Roma of overcrowding, littering, and anti-social behaviour.

The programme and the newspaper reactions to it provoked, within just a few days, public statements by two very senior politicians. Both were MPs for Sheffield and they were obviously drawn into the debate because Sheffield was featured in that particular television report: The first was David Blunkett, a leading figure in the Labour Party, and the second was Nick Clegg, at the time Deputy Prime Minister for the Liberal Democratic Party. Both expressed concerns over the presence of Roma. Nick Clegg said that the behaviour of Roma was "offensive and intimidating". David Blunkett said that Roma should attend school "so that their culture changes" and that they "shouldn't spend all their time on the street" (though he was initially quoted in the media as having warned of "riots").

I was one of the first to criticise these statements in public:

<http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2013/11/18/comment-the-roma-are-hardworking-people-who-don-t-deserve-to>

In response to my article, David Blunkett first clarified, then modified his position, and later joined a public discussion organised by the MigRom project in Manchester (in February 2014).

In the 2014 article, Brown et al. address the issue of media reactions to their report, but they do so in the form of an alibi: Instead of acknowledging that the sensationalist style in which they released their report, and their prediction that the number of Roma migrants “is likely to increase”, may have contributed to the media depiction of Roma migrants as an imminent threat, they refer to the media discussions of early autumn 2013 around the racist allegations of the kidnapping by Roma of the girl ‘Maria’ in Greece. They suggest that it was that discussion, rather than their own statements, which set the scene for anti-Roma media sentiments at the time. In view of the fact that the ‘Maria’ incident had, as far as the UK media were concerned, been resolved, so to speak, with all major pundits agreeing that it was a case of unjust scaremongering against the Roma (especially after it was immediately followed by another report of a similar kind from Ireland, which also proved to be false), their suggestion is unconvincing.

But let us assume that Brown et al. are correct in claiming that the Maria debate sparked a wave of media anti-Gypsyism that was still continuing at the end of October 2013. Why then, in the midst of this precarious media climate, did the Salford team choose to release their report, with the estimate of “at least 197,705” Roma migrants in the country, conscious of the fact, as they later admit, that their findings “could not aim for statistical accuracy”? Why did they go on national television

— which researchers are rarely asked to do unless someone is convinced that their findings are genuinely spectacular — at that particular point in time?

As I have written in the past, I am convinced that it was not their intention to spark a public backlash against Roma migrants. But I am also convinced that the urge to go public with figures that “could not aim for statistical accuracy” and to disregard the potential for a public backlash against Roma migrants had something to do with the organisational alliance of which the Salford team was and continues to be part: The Salford team was working closely with local authority and third sector agencies who had an interest to demonstrate publicly that there was a “Roma issue” of a significant dimension, and which required these agencies to obtain large scale funding support for their operations. A clue to that effect is presented rather openly in the 2014 article, where the authors write this (p 21):

“the European Social Fund allocated at least 20 per cent of a €74billion budget (2014 – 2020) to addressing social inclusion, thus providing significant resource implications for areas which invest in recently arrived disadvantaged populations. However, the lack of a specific and comprehensive NRIS [=National Roma Integration Strategy; YM], and particularly a lack of an official estimate by the Government of the number of Roma people who had moved to the UK, was seen by a number of local authorities and community based organisations as a major barrier to gaining high level recognition as to the impact this migration was having at a local level.”

From this statement it follows that the team regarded the releasing of their data — however “statistically inaccurate” — as a way of lending support to those organisations that wanted to get a share of the billion-Euro budget but were unable to do so without making the point, emphatically and in public and notwithstanding any ongoing media scaremongering campaign against Roma, that there were more needy Roma around than the government realised or was willing to admit.

I myself am a beneficiary of EU funding for the MigRom project. But — setting aside the fact that MigRom is a research and not a social intervention project, as well as its other merits — the relevant point is that my colleagues and I responded to an open call with a research plan, which was assessed through the usual peer-review process before a grant was awarded. We did not assert that there was a precarious situation that we would help resolve, and we did not resort to giving publicity to crude estimates in order to put pressure on the government or the EU to give us funds. Nor did we, either during the application process or subsequently, frame Roma as a ‘problem population’ or advocate the need for targeted interventions for Roma led by external agencies. Quite to the contrary, much of our research agenda is devoted to a critical analysis of policy intervention at local level and to pointing out the risks of perpetuating an image of Roma as a needy population and their dependency on others, and our public engagement is geared toward supporting the independence of Roma communities and the building of capacity within these communities to provide active advice and support and to serve as a voice for their own people.

The point for critical reflection is therefore not who got how much money, but what are the risks of the EU allocating funds as a substitute for a considered policy on Roma, thereby creating incentives for local agencies to frame Roma as a ‘problem’. Moreover, how can academics, in light of these difficulties, manage the risks of inaccuracy of interpretation, which are inevitable in research, in a way that is socially responsible?

As for a solid and reliable method for population estimates, I would argue that the permeability of categories, the confusion among practitioners about who Roma are, and the reluctance among Roma respondents to commit to a specific label when their identities are in fact complex and multi-layered, will continue to constitute hurdles to any attempt to arrive at accurate projections.

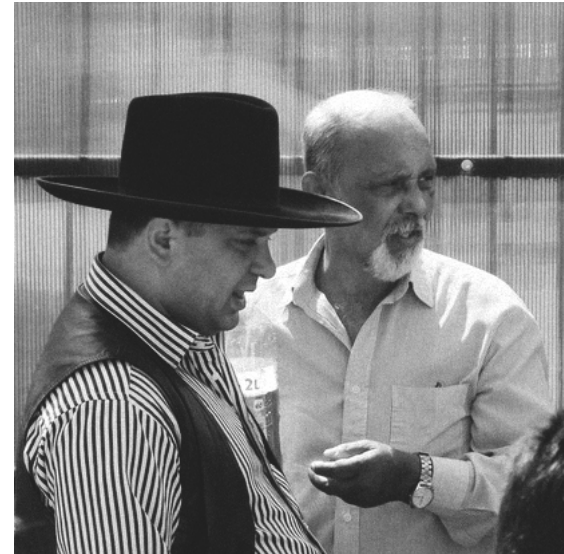
Network Discussion 2: Romani cultural identity

Edited by Victor A. Friedman with Eben Friedman

Background

The discussion below, which took place in March and April 2014, was prompted by a query from Dr. Helen O’Nion (Nottingham Trent University) to the Network concerning statements about Roma that were made in a book she was reviewing. The original query was made with the subject line “book on Italian Roma”, and it is given below, along with three answers that were sent to the EANRS list. The participants were

1. Thomas Acton (Emeritus, University of Greenwich; Sr. Research Fellow, Buckingham New University; Visiting Prof., Corvinus University)
 2. Yaron Matras (University of Manchester)
 3. Niko Rergo [Serhiy Yermoshkin] (Odessa Regional Roma Congress)
- In her original query, Dr. O’Nions invited list participants to e-mail her personally if they chose, and also received other responses. On 20 March, Yaron Matras began a new thread entitled “Roma: A misnomer?” that was prompted by Dr. O’Nion’s original query and the few responses posted to the EANRS. Dr. Matras’ posting attracted contributions from 25 Network members with a wide range of views on the matter of Romani identity.



Participants:

1. Thomas Acton (Emeritus, University of Greenwich; Sr. Research Fellow, Buckingham New University; Visiting Prof., Corvinus University)
2. Gabriel Bălănescu (National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest)*
3. Sam Beck (Cornell University)
4. Ethel Brooks (Rutgers University)
5. Christian Brüggemann (Humboldt University, Berlin)*
6. Martin Fotta (University of Kent)
7. Victor Friedman (Emeritus, University of Chicago)
8. Margaret Greenfields (Buckinghamshire New University)
9. Léon Grimard (Université de Montréal)*
10. Ian F. Hancock (The University of Texas, Austin)
11. Irén Kertész-Wilkinson (Goldsmiths College London)
12. Martin Kovats (independent researcher)
13. Siv B. Lie (New York University)*
14. Jean-Pierre Liégeois (Emeritus, Université René Descartes)
15. Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
16. Yaron Matras (University of Manchester)
17. Ciprian Necula (National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest)*
18. Judith M. Okely (Emeritus, Hull University / Oxford University)
19. Helen O'Nions (Nottingham Trent University)
20. Jean-Luc Poueyto (Université de Pau)
21. David Scheffel (Thompson Rivers University)
22. Carol Silverman (University of Oregon)
23. Michael Stanzer (Andrássy University Budapest)
24. Michael Stewart (University College London)

Subject: Book on Italian Roma

Helen O’Nions

13 March 2014

I am in the process of writing a book review on cultural rights and Roma. I am worried as there are a number of generalisations which are preventing me from focussing on the legal analysis.

I’d be grateful to hear what the network thinks.

For example:

“All Roma speak a variety of the same language, Romanes”

“Roma generally consider themselves to be a nation”

Neither point is attributed.

Thomas Acton

13 March 2014

Yes - these are clearly over-generalisations.

Editorial notice

The earlier version of this discussion edited by Judit Durst is available at <<http://romanistudies.eu/documents/email-list-archive/>> under the title “Roma: a misnomer? On the essence of the ‘cultural identity’ of Roma”. As mentioned in the introduction to Part 3, the current round of editing involved abridging the discussion in some places while expanding it in others, as well as minor revisions with an eye to consistency and readability. More specifically, the original thread of 13-14 March included a discussion of Romani words referring to the Romani Holocaust of World War Two. While of genuine linguistic interest, it is extraneous to the main topic here and has been omitted, as have messages that were posted after the final posting with the subject heading “Roma: A misnomer?” on 4 April 2014 (with one exception). All messages without specified subject headings had this as their subject heading. Messages relevant to the discussion but with different headings posted between 20 March

Without being sure which organisation, it suggests that the author is following the line of a particular organisation, and thus neglecting to explain the issues and interests that divide organisations and groups.

Yaron Matras

13 March 2014

Below are my answers to Helen's queries and the statements she cites:

1) "All Roma speak a variety of the same language, Romanes"

This is correct, provided that:

- the term 'Roma' is used in citation, i.e. as a replication of the self-appellation of the people who refer to themselves, in their own language, as 'Roma'. Some analysts have recently begun to use 'Roma' as a wholesale substitute for a variety of labels such as 'Gypsy' and 'Traveller'; of course not all Traveller or so-called 'Gypsy' populations speak Romanes
- the term 'language' is used to refer to clusters of closely related varieties that are often, by and large, though often only with some effort, mutually intelligible (i.e. in the sense that both Bavarian and Franconian are varieties of 'German' and so on); this would be well in line with the use of the term in linguistic science, and the reason why it is incorrect to speak of "Romani languages" in the plural

and 4 April have been included with their subject headings. Also, one message dated 9 April 2014, the sole message from a list member who had not participated in the discussion using the "Roma: A misnomer?" subject line prior to 4 April, is also included just before the final 4 April message.

2) “Roma generally consider themselves to be a nation”

This is correct, in the sense that

- all Roma are aware that there are other people, also called ‘Roma’, outside of their own community, with whom they share language and customs and values; and all Roma tend to feel some sense of common destiny with such people (inasmuch as ordinary people’s everyday lives afford opportunities to reflect on such issues as ‘common destiny’)
- and provided that
- the word ‘nation’ is used to identify a group of people with shared culture and origins, who feel a sense of mutual affinity, irrespective of whether they share forms of government, territorial sovereignty, or institutional organisation (e.g. the ‘Cherokee nation’ or the ‘Jewish nation’)

By comparison, I would suggest to consider the following statements:

- i) all Arabs speak Arabic > yes, but most Arabs only speak dialect, not Standard or Classical Arabic, and Arabic dialects are much less mutually comprehensible than Romani dialect; so if there is such a thing as Romani ‘languages’, then there are also Arabic ‘languages’; but if one were to regard as ‘Arabs’ all inhabitants of North Africa and Mesopotamia, and not just those who call themselves ‘Arabs’ in their own language, that is if one were to include Berbers and Kurds and Circassians, then in that sense not all “Arabs” (so defined) speak Arabic
- ii) Arabs generally regard themselves as a nation > yes, but the Syrians are fighting each other, as are the Libyans and the Iraqis, and there has never been a single Arabic state since the Caliphate, etc.

Niko Rergo

14 March 2014

“All Roma speak a variety of the same language, Romanes” - yes, linguistically it is right, despite the existence of mutually unintelligible varieties.

“Roma generally consider themselves to be a nation” - yes, it is right, at least in the 21st century, and many of us promote this idea politically.

Subject: Roma: a misnomer?

Yaron Matras 20 March 2014

Recently, Helen O’Nions addressed a query to this forum that concerned the essence of the ‘cultural identity’ of Roma and the way it may be seen to be represented by language and a sense of nationhood. The few responses to Helen’s query, which included my own, seemed to agree that ‘Roma’ refers to a population that shares, by and large, both language and a sense of nationhood.

In my experience, this conclusion is not disputed by anyone within the communities who define themselves as ‘Roma’: Most people who refer to themselves as ‘Roma’ speak Romani and feel an affinity toward others who define themselves as ‘Roma’ and speak ‘Romani’ (whether or not this feeling of affinity finds a political expression). None of these people feel the same

kind of affinity toward people who refer to themselves as 'Travellers', 'Jenische', 'Camminanti', 'gens du voyage' or many other terms – i.e. toward the people whom outsiders tend to label collectively as 'Gypsies'.

There are exceptions, or rather, margins, to this generalisation: The Sinti speak Romani and feel an affinity toward Roma, but the political expression of their identity emphasises their distinctness as a group, hence the preferred label 'Sinti und Roma' in Germany and Austria; this is connected with particular historical circumstances and the roots of the Romani political movement in Germany (the Romani-speaking population of Germany previously referred to themselves as 'Manusch' and 'Kaale' and the term Sinti was only adopted in the mid-nineteenth century, and of course it has nothing to do with the Indian province of Sindh, as sometimes suggested).

There are, on the other hand, individuals who do not speak Romani but regard themselves as 'Roma' because their ancestors were Roma and spoke Romani.

And there are also individuals who do not speak Romani, whose ancestors were Roma, but for whom their Roma descent is of no importance and who feel no particular affinity with (other) Roma; just like there are people of Jewish background who feel no affinity with other Jews, etc.

From this follows that 'Gypsy' is not identical with 'Roma': Roma is the self-appellation of a particular population. 'Gypsy' is the fictional image created by outsiders who fantasize about travelling populations, their supposed free lifestyle and supernatural powers, or their alleged propensity toward crime and anti-social behavior.

Why is it useful to discuss all this on the Network?

There are scholarly traditions that take an interest in the diverse populations called 'Gypsies' because these populations appear to share a socio-economic profile (family based service economy, etc.) as well as attitudes to outsiders. The comparative works of people like Aparna Rao and Bernhard Streck come to mind, among many others.

There is also scholarly interest in the way that majority societies and its institutions treat these diverse groups that they lump together as 'Gypsies.' In this connection, important works by people like Leo Luccassen and Huub van Baar stand out, among others.

But then there are also scholars who purport to be able to provide population estimates and assessments of population needs and to propose intervention strategies, including in areas such as language, education, and culture; and for this purpose, it would seem crucial to work not with external 'representations' but with accurate definitions of the individual target groups and their specific needs.

In Manchester, agencies working in the education sector have been trying to identify Roma migrants from Central and Eastern Europe and to persuade them, when registering their children to school, to tick the box 'Traveller.' It may seem odd to non-UK residents that such a box exists, or indeed that the ethnicity of pupils is recorded in the first place. The 'Traveller' box on UK school registration forms has to do with schools' entitlement to get additional support for pupils who are likely to be living on caravan sites and who have to miss long periods of school, or switch schools when their families travel. Ironically, these education agencies refer to their practice of trying to persuade Roma to register as 'Travellers' as 'self-ascription.' They argue that there is a benefit to the Roma, because their children can get additional support; and that there is a benefit to the schools, which receive additional resources. Of course there is also a benefit to the agencies themselves, whose remit is then extended to cover more clients and whose staff resources can then be expanded accordingly.

Should academic specialists therefore recommend that policy should conflate ‘Roma’ with ‘Travellers’ in this way?

In his blog from 28 October 2013 entitled ‘Who are the Roma people?’ (<http://newint.org/blog/2013/10/28/roma-minority-prejudice/>) Phil Brown of Salford University writes: “The term ‘Roma’, first chosen at the inaugural World Romani Congress held in London in 1971, is now widely accepted across the European Union (EU) as a generic and pragmatic term to describe a diverse range of communities, tribes and clans.”

Indeed, this is a view that one can find cited in various publications of the Council of Europe, among other organisations; although the source of Brown’s reference to ‘tribes’ is less obvious. Brown’s descriptive statement that the term is ‘now widely accepted’ in this sense is certainly valid. But his definition also seems to imply that nobody knew of or used the term ‘Roma’ until 1971, and further, that it has since replaced ‘Gypsy’ as a mere politically correct placeholder – a ‘generic and pragmatic term,’ in other words, something that is deliberately vague and almost evasive in not wanting to focus on any particular population, not even on those who have been calling themselves ‘Roma’ and their language ‘Romani’ for many centuries.

Such statements from academics lend a free license to organisations like the Council of Europe and the European Commission to avoid a precise definition of the target population for specific inclusion measures; they provide governments with a license to treat National Strategies for Roma Inclusion as an exercise in paying lip-service to a problem, at best, or as an attempt to secure resources on behalf of third sector mediation agencies, at worst. They also seem rather forgiving at least in spirit toward education specialists who try to coerce Roma into identifying themselves as ‘Travellers’ and who call that kind of procedure ‘self-ascription.’

Our Network has rather loose membership criteria as far as the specification of ‘specialisation in Romani studies’ is concerned, and that lends it its pluralistic character. Close first-hand familiarity with the population that is being studied is not one of those criteria. It would seem hard to imagine that anybody who has met or lived with Roma could ever come to terms with the suggestion that the label ‘Roma’ was not in place until 1971, or that its proper meaning should be ‘generic and pragmatic.’ What Phil Brown is in effect telling us is that until 1971 you could ‘think Gypsy and say Gypsy’, while now you must ‘think Gypsy but say Roma.’

I’d be interested in people’s views as to why we cannot call diverse populations by their diverse names, and why we instead require a label that is ‘generic and pragmatic.’ I would argue that the principal benefit of a label that is ‘generic and pragmatic’ is to allow us to continue to think ‘Gypsy’ and still get away with it by appearing politically correct. If this is the case, then surely it would be better to insist on terms that are ‘specific and precise’, and which have the potential to challenge stereotypes rather than reproduce them.

Léon Grimard

20 March 2014

I agree with the core arguments of Prof. Matras here, despite the alleged consensus and political rectitude of the use of the term Roma (or Roms) as a supposed correct generic.

During my fieldwork amongst the French Gypsies of Perpignan, in southern France, and as I was curious about this surprising statement of the International Romani Union that “we all are Roma,” I asked widely among Perpignan’s Gypsies about their response to this assertion, and to what point they identified themselves as Roma, or how similar they feel to other groups

like Sinti or Manouches, and how far they feel concerned on any point with those groups, and how much they sympathize with the political game going on about the Roma «question»; I also asked them about their self-ascription and whether they define themselves as Roma or as part of a so called Roma “transnational nation”.

On all these points, and for all the Gypsies I talked to about this, the results were absolutely negative. I would say they were particularly angry about this or these ideas. The only self-ascription acceptable for them was the term Gitans (Gypsies), and their only interest in other groups was in other self-ascribed Gypsies, and as the very last of their concerns. Their own community came first, then other Gypsy groups of southern France, as in Camargue or in Provence, because, in part, of the presence of concentric kinship family ties and provenance, and for Catalan Gitanos in Spain, which is where most of them came from to Southern France nearly 300 years ago.

Paloma Gay y Blasco also wrote about this during her many and continuous fieldwork trips among the Gitanos of Spain, and she reported the same feelings on this question.

Of those groups, the Kalo, are the third part of the vast mosaïc of Tsiganes (the generic term which is preferred in France, and, as far as I know there is no better alternative, to which I agree, despite the politically correct reference to Zigeuner). It is clear for me that speaking of Roma people means speaking of the Tsigane populations of Central and Eastern Europe (as perhaps of Russia and the Balkans, I am not sure as I know less about these.)

Also, the language argument is irrelevant here, in Southern France as in Spain, at least among Gypsy groups (I cannot speak about Manouches). For historical reasons, regarding the history of Gypsies in Spain, they have completely lost the knowledge and use of Kalo (Romani). Their «native» language is Catalan, and, ironically, as French Catalans of Roussillon lost the use of Catalan, it became Gypsies who preserved their language.

In conclusion, I would like to recall a memory of the process, which has resulted in this alleged generic ethnonym. As it became obvious to Western institutions and governments that the [communist system] in East[ern Europe] was about to collapse, they prepared for the ideological, economic and political occupation of the East. For this purpose, western NGO's were mandated and very active, and one of the activities was to engage with minorities. As a result, Roma populations were specifically targeted, through one NGO in particular, the PIER [Project on Inter-Ethnic Relations], in order to form new elites. At that time, there were two main Roma organizations participating in the process: the International Romani Union (IRU), and the Roma National Congress (RNC). The RNC was an umbrella organization, respecting in its constitution the large diversity of the many Roma groups, and acting for the defense of human rights. These positions were not viewed favorably by Western NGO's and institutions. They wanted a unique speaker for a unique people, and they wanted to get the question on the political and institutional agenda rather than on the agenda of defense of human rights, which they saw as "leftist or anarchistic thinking". They therefore preferred the proclamations of the IRU, with its vision of a "unique" language codification and promotion, its denial of the effective diversity (or particularities) of cultures and traditions of those many groups, its predilection for the political institutional path, its assumption to speak for and represent all the Tsigane populations around the world, and moreover, to consider them all as alleged Roma. This language of the IRU's was music to the ears of Western NGO's, institutions and governments, and therefore the RNC was pushed out and the IRU became the official leader and speaker for "Roma."

So my position is that specifically naming the ones we are working amongst is not only a question of scientific rigor, but moreover, a question of true respect for the people and groups we are working on and with, naming them as they name and view themselves. As such, it makes sense to contest the use of this alleged generic term of Roma, reserving it respectfully for the populations it belongs to.

Siv B. Lie

21 March 2014

I just want to chime in and add that amongst the (mostly Alsatian) Manouches with whom I am currently conducting field-work, I often bring up the question of “Roma/Tsigane identity” and their sense of affiliation with other so-called Roma or Tsigane groups. The most common answers are similar to those Mr. Grimard received, though usually not quite so dismissive. However, given the current situation in France, many are quick to emphasise that they have no connection with Romanian and Bulgarian Romani immigrants — at least they say this to people outside of their community. They complain that Romani immigrants have only made their lives harder because of the heightened atmosphere of anti-Tsigane racism, so if anything, it is in their best interests to emphasise that they are *French* Manouches above all. Language use is a related issue. Many Alsatian Manouches speak Manouche as a first language and are not too keen on sharing their language with gadje (however, I have yet to confirm how the majority feels about conversing with others who speak different dialects of Romani, whatever their self-ascribed identities may be). Never have I met a Manouche who has absolutely no problem sharing his or her language with this gadji. Furthermore, for those Manouches who are aware of this, the recent publications by a certain young politician intent on winning the Gens du voyage vote in France have only driven some Manouches to be even more skeptical of outside identity interventions into their communities.

Helen O’Nions

21 March 2014

I think there is a problematic tendency — for the purpose of simplicity (particularly in legal categorisations) — to bundle Roma, Gypsies, Sinti, travellers and so on, together and in so doing to homogenise an extremely heterogeneous community.

This regrettably leads to further generalisations and can allow policy-makers to evade responsibilities by picking on a particular 'typical' characteristic (nomadism comes to mind) and then using it to strip the non-conformists of their cultural identity.

As an advocate of minority rights I can see that this presents an enormous obstacle in the effective realisation of such rights (although I am unconvinced that an individualistic approach to rights protection (as we see in the ECHR) is able to address the structural discrimination that Roma, Gypsies, Travellers and other similar communities experience).

Sam Beck

21 March 2014

I think we need to look at this issue by identifying like examples. In the US, we bundle identities and operationalize the categories as if they were real. Most of the time we use race as an identifier of Asians, Hispanics, and Blacks. None of these identities exist on the ground. However, these are significant in struggles to reduce disparities and inequalities in American democracy. My friend and colleague, Nicolae Gheorghe, fought hard to unify the diversity of people in Romania identified as Tsigani in order to give them their deserved voice in the Romanian national arena. The reality of a highly segmented group we may recognise as having at least some sociocultural and economic characteristics in common are unfortunately powerless when dealing with State power.

Jean-Pierre Liégeois

21 March 2014

These discussions are important in bringing together perspectives which are coming from different points of view (geographical, historical, social, linguistic, etc.). These complementary views give us a better understanding of a complexity, and variability, linked with changing situations, patterns and level of discourses.

Following the previous emails, I would add some illustrations that come from fieldwork developed in the late sixties from a political point of view, while I was completing my 1973 PhD *La mutation des Roms: essai d'anthropologie politique dans un groupe tsigane* (which is the socio-political analysis of the development of a Roma political movement and of the gap between traditional organization and new forms of political participation). Of course, one face of the coin is discussed here. The other one is the new political organisation, and the “mutation” (and possible risks) it engenders of a switch between segmentarity and possible forms of unity of a common participation and struggle.

“A mosaic:

As a result of their diverse historical experience, the different pathways they have taken and the range of situations in which they live today, each of the various groups has absorbed a whole spectrum of cultural and social elements. Roma, Travellers, and Gypsies thus make up, throughout the world, a mosaic of diverse groups. This analogy has two key implications. Firstly, a mosaic constitutes a whole and its elements are interconnected in certain respects. The connections that run throughout the whole help to organise and structure it, although the structure, in this case, is fluid rather than rigid.

Secondly, each element of the whole, possesses its own specific characteristics that make that element, when considered in isolation, seem different from every other component: it may have its own texture or be made of a particular material. Clearly, a description of the whole structure will not dwell on the qualities of each component; and, conversely, analysis of one individual component cannot be applied to all. Equally clearly, each component – indispensable as it is to the whole – assumes its full significance and purpose only within the broader picture. Out of the differences that develop and are maintained (differences of language, trades, travelling practices and various rituals) what ultimately emerges is complementarity, and that complementarity determines the overall configuration.”

Subject: Endonyms

Ian F. Hancock

21 March 2014

Romani peoples”/”Romanies” in English at least avoids group-specific labels.

Thomas Acton

21 March 2014

In the course of my 47 years of working with Roma, Gypsies, Manouches, Cale and Travellers of many kinds, I have been with them as they have tried to explain who they are (or negotiated their identity, as we social scientists say) with many

Gajo/buffer etc. interlocutors, such as teachers, police officers, anthropologists, political supporters, clients, customers, and Roma from other groups, and my conclusion would be that how they represent their identity depends very much on their relative level of education, understanding and prejudice of the interlocutors. This is applicable to those Roma/Gypsies who are professors or millionaires, as much as for those who do not read or write and go calling. The whole process was well theorised by the late Nicolae Gheorghe in the paper he gave on identity at Greenwich, which was subsequently published in one of the 1997 UHP collections on Romani Politics. Or more recently by Brian Belton.

Yaron Matras

21 March 2014

The discussion is interesting and important, and it is valuable to be able to hear different perspectives, and from people with so many years of experience in different settings of both research and policy.

While from a strictly academic perspective there is no need at all to find consensus on this matter, and while it would be pretentious and patronising to try to find a consensus in order to help others define themselves or even just to help them articulate their own self-definition, from a policy impact perspective it is vital that we know which target groups we are identifying, and to what end. It makes no sense to lump together Travellers and non-Travellers when talking about housing, for instance, or Romani speakers and those who are not Romani speakers when talking about native language provisions.

A simple anecdote can, I believe, illustrate my earlier point: Last November the Romani project at the University of Manchester hosted a public debate and cultural event on Roma identity. We had a guest from Serbia — the Romani musician and activist Dragan Ristić, and a guest from Sweden — Romani teacher and writer Angelina Dimitri-Taikon, and young Roma who are resident in Manchester attended, some of them of Romanian and others of Czech, Slovak and Lithuanian background.

After the event, a group of some 15 people assembled in my office and discussed the experience. They agreed that they all felt a sense of affinity with one another, as ‘one people.’ The most obvious indicator of that was that they could share a conversation in Romani, but also that they shared manners and respect (such as allowing the more elderly to speak first, and adding appropriate phrases of respect when others mentioned their children and grandchildren). They also all agreed that they have nothing in common with Irish Travellers, when the topic came up.

There is a Romani ethnicity, even if some groups that belong to that ethnicity and speak the Romani language do not call themselves ‘Roma’ but use group-specific labels (while still calling their language ‘Romanes’).

At the same time, there is in my view no justification whatsoever for using ‘Roma’ as a ‘generic and pragmatic term’, to cite Phil Brown’s definition. The only thing that unites Roma, Travellers, and other so-called ‘similar’ populations under one category is the prejudiced image that outsiders have of them. ‘Roma’ as a ‘generic and pragmatic term’ represents this prejudice, not the reality on the ground.

This definition of the term does, however, shed new light on the Salford study. Perhaps the figure of 200,000 ‘Roma’ in the UK refers not just to those who self-define as Roma and speak the Romani language, but ‘generically and pragmatically’ to

all sorts of marginalised immigrants — homeless Poles, Albanian street vendors, Bulgarian peddlers, Estonian pickpockets? Clarification would be useful.

David Scheffel

21 March 2014

A footnote to Léon Grimard's interesting account: "speaking of Roma is speaking of the Tsigane populations of Central and Eastern Europe"....

The term 'Roma' continues to be challenged in some parts of that region, including Slovakia. An elderly acquaintance of mine recently castigated the Slovak-Romani writer Elena Lacková (author of the acclaimed "False Dawn") - incidentally, her cousin - for imposing the label 'Roma' on people who continue to identify themselves as 'Gypsies' (Cigáni). As Slovak-Romani businessmen come to gradually occupy (local) political offices, one can see an interesting polarisation between elite and commoners intersect with linguistic usages. Some of the latter refer to the former as 'Roma' while reserving the label 'Gypsies' for themselves. This ironic twist is meant to express the suspicion that the new elite members have been assimilated into the camp of the gadje where the 'Roma' label is seen as originating from. 'Gypsy', then, becomes something of a badge of honour and cultural preservation.

Sam Beck

21 March 2014

This is interesting because not so long ago, black youths from the inner city (whatever this means?!) in New York City would refer to their age mates who got legitimate jobs as “going white.”

In Romania, a Țigan was always a Țigan, no matter his status, even when a person had been assimilated into the Romanian ethnic mainstream for generations. When I asked about this, I was told that their last names would give it away or their “dark” skin, or other features that were identified with Țigani. For some, what gave a person away as Țigan was their “behavior.”

Ciprian Necula

21 March 2014

You are right. Țigan is a social status, described in the previous explicative dictionary of the Romanian language (1998), at the third definition as “a dark person exhibiting bad behavior.” The term is also internalised by some Roma, especially those who are in the process of assimilation and are non-Romani speakers. Additionally, some Romani speakers when using Romanian could also reference Roma as well as țigan. ISPMN published a book last year on the Rom-țigan debate and Nicolae had an extraordinary contribution in an interview with Luliu Rostas. In Romanian, calling someone a gypsy does not mean that you call him/her by ethnicity, but rather indicate his/her inferior status (see Martin Olivera, 2012). Even Ceaușescu after the fall of the communism was considered a țigan, as one of many other Romanians acting badly.

Jean-Luc Poueyto

21 March 2014

Following the email of Léon Grimard, I confirm that the Manouches that I know never consider themselves to be a nation, contrary to what European institutions say about them. When they talk about themselves as “Manouches”, it is mainly about their own family whose size varies with the circumstances. They never use the word “Tsiganes” or “Rom” for themselves nor to speak about Kalderash or Lovara. In this last case, they use the word “Hongrois”. They say “Espagnols” about the French “Gitans” and “Barengre” about the Yéniches. Moreover they constantly insist that they are very different from these other people. On the contrary, the others, and first of all some gadje or gadji, can become Manouches (mostly by marriage). So, I think that it is not only a question of names which are different (Roms/hongrois, Gitans/espagnols...) but that Manouches are in a logistical network (which implies a constant flexibility) rather than tight categorizations such as those used by most political and scholarly institutions.

Léon Grimard

21 March 2014

I also agree with Prof. Liégeois that we are referencing a mosaic, which effectively implies common membership in a wider group. All that Prof. Liégeois tells us is absolutely true. However, with regard to the various groups, this refers to authenticity mostly in a self-conscious awareness of stigma, as Claire Auzias has written (if I remember correctly). But I think the consciousness of the mosaic as a “whole” does not go far enough, given the stigma or common identity, among the various groups.

Where this holistic “wholeness” of the mosaic is pertinent, accurate and of primary importance, is in scientific research. What I want to say, in short, is that it is for us, scholars, that it is of importance, but not really important for the many Tsigane groups in their everyday life and concerns. Ironically, I would say this is gadjo / païo / gorgio stuff, which does not lessen its importance for the global body of knowledge or the understanding of the reality of this mosaic.

As Prof. Liégeois stated, this is quite an interesting debate, and of real importance, as it is important in social sciences to revisit, from time to time, previous hypotheses.

Carol Silverman

21 March 2014

For many years I’ve worked with several Romani groups including American Kalderash/Machwaya and various Balkan groups (both Muslim and Christian) in Bulgaria and Macedonia and in their migratory homes in western Europe and the US. This comparative perspective has led me to be reluctant to generalise about “Roma”, “Gypsies”, or any umbrella term with regard to culture and identity. On the other hand, political mobilisation requires umbrella terms.

American Kalderash/Machwaya speak Romani as their first language and use the term Roma when speaking Romanes. In contrast, Horahane (Muslim Roma) (both in the Balkans and in western Europe and the US) have varied interpretations of their identity. Some relate to the term Roma and some actively reject it (due to stigma or other reasons); many of these folks do not speak Romani and do not see language as definitive in their identity; few know their ancestors spoke Romani. I’m sure many of you are familiar with their various identity formations such as Turkish, Egyptian, etc.

I mention the case of Yuri Yunakov whom I wrote about in my recent book, *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Romani Music and Diaspora* (Oxford, 2012). Growing up in Bulgaria and speaking Turkish, he thought he was Turkish (although others saw him as tsigan) until he met Macedonian Roma in NYC (who are Romani, Macedonian, and Turkish speakers, depending on their region in Macedonia); he saw the cultural similarities and similar discrimination. I've witnessed many meetings of Romani musicians trying in vain to find a common language and common musical materials, but yet they do feel united in some way. Yaron mentioned a meeting that included Dragan Ristić and Angelina Dimitri-Taikon where they felt "a sense of affinity with one another, as 'one people.'" I agree with this observation but disagree that language is always the key.

Yaron cited "shared manners and respect (such as allowing the more elderly to speak first, and adding appropriate phrases of respect when others mentioned their children and grandchildren)." These cultural traits may be shared by Roma but they also may be shared with co-territorial peoples. I prefer to see Romani culture and identity as a shifting constellation; Thomas has also suggested this shifting nature. While the Roma in Yaron's office agreed that they had nothing in common with Irish Travellers, their statement can't be generalised. It is certainly possible that Scottish Romanies had quite a lot in common with Travellers when they intermarried with them during the last few centuries.

Yaron brought up the term "nation". Nation is a political term most often paired with state: nation/state. I have rarely heard Roma use the term nation unless they are activists. And speaking of outsider terms, anthropologists prefer the term "ethnic group" in the spirit of F.Barth. Barth emphasized differences between groups (which are subjective and may change) rather than defining features within the borders (such as older homogenizing criteria like language, religion, history, and culture).

Léon Grimard

21 March 2014

I understand what you [Ciprian Necula] are talking about; this is a perfect example of the large diversity of situations and circumstances, for the many groups as for the many areas or countries. At the other end of the scale, in the case of the Kalo, the Gypsies from southern France and the Gitanos from Spain, identify themselves as Gitans (Gypsies), and claim this Gypsy identity proudly, as well as their French citizenship. So, in the specific case of these Gypsies from France and Spain, I would not be correct, nor respectful, not to name them as they name and claim themselves: Gypsies. It illustrates the real difficulty, an ethical question for scholars.

I think no one can apply an 'eradication' or an ethnonym, as Gitans or Gitanos (Gypsy), without denying the self-identification of some groups elsewhere; on the other hand, this term can be socially negative for other groups in other areas, and we must be aware of those particular situations in naming our object of research. This could also be true for the ethnonym Tsigane, which is also largely used in France (this name is used in the prestigious journal *Études Tsiganes*, directed by Prof. Alain Reyniers). As I previously said, at least in the French language, insofar as there are no perfect generic terms, I go with Tsigane, for it is at least a more effective generic term than 'Roma'.

[In re: David Scheffel]: What an interesting note. It illustrates the huge difficulty in not falling into the trap of generalisation. And it is quite similar to the proud claiming of the Gypsy identity of my fellows from Perpignan.

Sam Beck

21 March 2014

We cannot ignore the various contexts, forces and conditions that generate particular identities. In Romania, the notion of nation building for Romanians has been an ongoing process that is associated with territorial imaginations. It was not surprising to me that this idea of national building (associated with the Romantic era in Germany and “das Volk”—“Blut und Boden”) was picked up by some Roma leaders and intellectuals. For Romanians, there is an imagined genetic relationship with the land. “Nation” in Romanian has a distinctive meaning beyond that of “ethnicity” the way we use it in the US. I’ve assumed that “the nation,” while not necessarily related to the nation-state, is connected to some territory. This is significant in Romania where Saxon Germans could be connected with Germany and Magyars could be connected with Hungary. Țigani, on the other hand, had no such relationship. This has significance in Romania, perhaps not in other parts of Europe.

The “Țigani” with whom I had contact usually identified as țigani, but also as Romanian citizens, something that Romanian ethno-nationals did not support. They were considered “outsiders,” no matter how long (500+ years) they have resided and worked in Romania, much like Jews all over Europe before WWII. This is particularly significant in relationship to the conversations about the number of Roma in England. Certain groups, (Roma?) traversed Europe and had territories that ignored state boundaries.

This is why they are so very interesting from an intellectual point of view but also from a political point of view. States, governments, don’t like migratory people, they don’t like people who do not conform to majority socio-cultural systems and speak languages of their own, and of course in the Euro-American (but obviously not only) point of view, they do not like dark skinned people.

Thomas Acton

21 March 2014

'Gypsy' is not a Romanian word, so someone speaking Romanian is unlikely to call someone a Gypsy, unless they are quoting the English word.

It is becoming clear on many levels that 'Gypsy' is a mistranslation of 'Țigan' and always has been. Where the G-word and the Ț-word co-exist, as in French, they are rarely synonyms, except amongst Gaje.

Irén Kertész-Wilkinson

21 March 2014

I just want to add that not long ago the nation was a notion that was present in Romany thinking which was of course a remnant of the old classification used not in terms of a nation state but as in terms of belonging to a group in early modernity.

The notion that Roma feel their unity or not depends on whether it is for their advantage or not. As Carol and Thomas mentioned, it is a fluid and flexible phenomenon. With the present movement of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma, there has been a re-emergence of "we are different, and we have been here for centuries" in many places in fear of getting attacked, and yet again marginalised and so on. Just as it was in the 19th century when the Vlashike Roma appeared in Hungary. That division between Vlach and Roma musicians lasted pretty well into the end of the 20th century. It is with the emergence of

Roma political thinking that this has slowly been overcome, not least due to and supported by many artistic and musical outputs! Of course, it is time to underline strongly the idea of similarity yet not homogeneity, both with Roma / Sinti / Kale / Manouche / Traveller groups, as well as with the host society, which has a less aggressive point of view than this perpetual 'difference' seeking. The idea is not mine but Geza Roheim's. He introduced this in the 1960s and considered this either/or type of difference seeking to be potentially fascist in nature (cf. also Hungary at present time).

Yaron Matras

21 March 2014

There is no doubt that any culture, nation or ethnicity is a constantly shifting entity. The same can be said about Germans, Brits or Scandinavians. Yet we don't spend time debating whether 'German' is a 'generic and pragmatic' umbrella term for Saxons, Franconians, Bavarians, East Frisians and the like. Nor do we make an effort to 'de-construct' the notion of German ethnicity by pointing out that some Germans are rappers who feel a closer affinity to Pussy Riot in Russia than to Bavarian brass bands while others are nuclear scientists who feel more at home at MIT than in Heidelberg. Instead, we take for granted that Germans are Germans because they live within the boundaries of the nation-state of Germany, or else because they are German by origin and ethnicity, whether they live in Kazakhstan and speak Russian or in Pennsylvania and speak a Franconian dialect which they call 'Amish.'

So in my view, the insistence on 'diversity' and 'umbrella terms' amounts to a denial of Romani ethnicity, which I personally find both empirically wrong and morally and politically discriminatory.

Of course some Romani people have links with Travellers, and others have links with Jews. And even more Romani people feel a close affinity to settled Bulgarians, Americans, and Russians who are neither Travellers, nor Turks, nor Jews. The fact the *some* Roma share *some* practices with *some* others, and that every culture is constantly shifting, that every ethnicity is hybrid, and that every nation is a somewhat arbitrary creation of political processes — all this applies to all peoples and to all ethnicities, and so it can be taken for granted. The constant need to yell ‘diversity’, ‘hybridity’, ‘ethnicisation’ whenever Roma ethnicity is mentioned is a reflection of the special status that ‘Gypsies’ have in our minds, and not an empirical necessity. It mirrors the traditional image of ‘Gypsies’ as ‘children of nature’ who are supposedly ‘free’ of the constraints of nationhood, territory, and also moral and legal responsibility, and that’s precisely the danger with insisting that Roma are different from all other ethnicities.

Nobody would go out of their way to object to a book that outlines ‘The culture and language of the German’ or to an essay about ‘The ethnic affiliation of the Gurindji’, and it is therefore not legitimate to challenge and question Romani ethnicity, or to pretend that ‘Roma’ is merely a politically correct, artificial construction.

David Scheffel

21 March 2014

The problem with ‘affinities’ (“a sense of affinity with one another, as ‘one people’”), ‘mosaics’ and ‘complementarity’ is that they are often cemented by political interests and can, therefore, quickly dissolve into dislikes, hostilities and even hatreds. All kinds of historical ‘isms’ bear witness to that. 19th century Pan Slavism was based on presumed linguistic and cultural affinities. Not unlike the various international meetings and congresses convened by present-day national awakeners of

Romani/Gypsy extraction, there were similar events (such as the First Slav Congress held in Prague in 1848) where Czechs, Poles, Slovenians, Russians and others celebrated unity and swore allegiance. Subsequent developments necessitated fragmentation of the 'mosaic', and we see the emergence of scaled down versions of Pan Slavism, such as Czechoslovakism and Yugoslavism. That didn't prevent the Yugoslav fratricide nor the disintegration of other entities based on the idea of 'Slav unity', such as Czechoslovakia or Greater Russia — witness the Ukrainian conundrum. Ernest Gellner is a good source on the link between nation building and the self-realisation of manipulative elites. The fragmentation observed among various Roma/Gypsy groups may be frustrating for the various NGOs and ethnic politicians speaking on their behalf, but it may also be the most effective way of retaining a degree of autonomy at the local level.

Victor Friedman

21 March 2014

The pairing of "nation" with "state" is a specific ideological interpretation (think Herder). The two concepts are distinct, as in the Five (or Six) Nations of the Iroquois.

Jean-Pierre Liégeois

22 March 2014

As I mentioned in my last message, there are different perspectives, contexts, and levels of discourses, and this is a challenging debate. I said that we are focusing on one side of the coin, but this is too narrow a statement, as there are many

“sides.” I do agree that some parts of the mosaic have few or no relations with other parts, and they do not feel themselves to belong to the same “whole.” One example: For a couple of years, I have stayed with Gypsy families in Southern Spain (Gitanos andaluces, en comarcas rurales) going back to a place where I stayed during long periods in 1965 and the following years. In fact, they have no contact with or even knowledge of Roma who have recently arrived from other countries or who are living in Spain for a long time, labelled as “Húngaros”, and they have no knowledge of political movements such as the *Unión Romaní española* and the many NGOs (Gitanas) active in Andalucía.

On another side, a movement bringing together the different elements of the mosaic is developing. For example, in France, the Federation bringing together about 35 NGOs is called the *Union Française des Associations Tsiganes*; “Tsiganes” is in this case the name accepted for the mosaic in which there are Manouches, Sintis, Yéniches, Gitans catalans, Gitans andalous, Romas, and Voyageurs. Indeed the idea of a mosaic is only a tool as a framework to try to understand what is going on. It has to be questioned and changed if necessary. Of course it has no direct pertinence from a local point of view and no visible incidence for the “everyday life and concerns” as Léon Grimard correctly observes. But the different political dynamisms which are developing (local, national, international) play a role and fulfill a function in terms of cultural recognition, political participation, policy negotiation, the implementation of national and international texts concerning minorities, the on-going struggle against discrimination, etc. The fact that, in my example, the grassroots-level gitano families do not know about the gitano political movement does not mean that the gitano political movement has no effects (and responsibilities) on and for their “everyday life” in terms of, for instance, social and financial support, educational programmes, the implementation of regional and local policies, etc.

As in all societies, there are also many situations in which persons or groups act according to what is called “dualism” in sociology, using social and cultural references in one concrete situation, and switching to other ones in other situations, in order to best adapt to various situations. And this is true for the self-designated: the same person speaking the same day to different persons (social worker, gažo friend, police, teacher, etc.) will use different names, such as “Gens du voyage”, Rom, forain, etc.

Another consideration is that the “mosaic” image is too static, and for this reason, for decades now, I also use the term “kaleidoscope” because of the value and the functional roles that it attaches to distinctions. Roma/Gypsy society is as much an assembly that is diversifying as it is a range of diverse elements in the process of assembly. Of all the apparently contradictory forces at work in the society, some tend to unite it and some to divide or disperse — the changing nature of ties between various segments, the different borrowings from other societies, and geographical movements — combine to transform the mosaic into a kaleidoscope. Each shift alters the configuration, but the connections remain.

Last but not least, it seems that for the moment in this Network most of the comments about the topic under discussion are from a social and traditionalist points of view, and not from a political one, which includes huge dynamisms and contextual changes. Both have to be taken into account and are, of course, articulated. For a better understanding, the whole landscape has to be considered.

Finally as Léon Grimaud says, a younger generations, scholars, and particularly young Roma/Gypsy scholars and politicians, are already bringing new references, food for thought, and new practices. Let’s consider those outcomes and let’s continue to “revisit” our knowledge.

Irén Kertész-Wilkinson

22 March 2014

Just a few words on 'nation.' Not long ago, when I talked to the Roma about their relationships, the idea of my nation popped up which was a kind of larger extended family idea. The other thing: In Hungary just before the most recent elections, the Roma formed their party called: Magyarországi Cigány Party – that is the Hungarian Gypsy Party. Perhaps it is still a collective term (as applied by Liégeois in his earlier writings) that fits the Romungre, the Vlashike, the Beash and the Vend.

Judith M. Okely

22 March 2014

I agree with Jean Pierre's preference for the kaleidoscope. There are continual changes and often brilliant transformations, dependent on context. As I explained in my defense, (on this network February 05, 2013), of the title 'The Traveller-Gypsies' and the interchanging of Gypsy and Traveller, all this was engaging with outsiders' and insiders' contextualised labels. In the 1970s, the people with whom I lived on English camps, preferred 'Traveller' when interacting with officials and house dwellers, believing it to be without stigma. Given compulsory official site provision for 'Gypsies', the increasingly negative label 'Gypsy' dominated public discourse. But among themselves, in trusting contexts, they used 'Gypsy' with pride. This contextuality echoes Jean Pierre's observations.

Acton and Raywid confirm the all-embracing 'Traveller' was acceptable in the 1970s to every UK group. Since my 1983 publication, 'Traveller' has again changed in public meanings, now linked more specifically with Irish and Scottish Travellers,

especially when 'Tinker' became negative in gorgio discourse. However, by the late 1980s, 'Traveller' was demonized after the emergence of 'New Age' Travellers. The latter had no ties with such ethnic groups. By the early 1990s, at Edinburgh University, I was invited to join the Scottish Traveller/Gypsy organisation. They had inserted the label 'Gypsy' precisely to avoid being confused with the 'New Age Travellers'.

Inevitably, there are different histories and political contexts throughout Europe. In 2000 Ignacy Marek Kaminski and I visited the Roma museum near Krakov. It fully documented the compulsory seizure of Polish Gypsy horses and wagons. Just one wagon was left as an 'authentic' exhibit. Bleak photos documented the Gypsies' forcible incarceration in high-rise concrete flats. All this in the iconic year of 1968, when Paris and beyond, were undergoing a very different revolution in Western and Northern Europe. While Eastern Europe was re-enslaving nomads, enforcing sedentarisation and institutionalizing racism, other parts of Europe were exploring some anti-discriminatory transformations.

Subsequently, more recent movement by some self-identified Roma from post-communist states to the UK or elsewhere in Northern Europe is as migrants not nomads. Some Roma have internalized the imposed stigma of nomadism and been quick to deny any such identity. By contrast, the majority of Western and Northern European Romany Gypsies and Irish or Scottish Travellers had, until very recently, survived through many further decades with their preferred habitation, which was rarely housing.

'Gypsy' derived from the early label 'Egyptian' which an expert Cambridge historian has informed me was once used generally for any 'foreigner' from across the Channel. It has, through centuries, become a global stereotype provoking every cliché. BUT some peoples have also embraced it, just as artists eventually adopted the label Impressionist, originally a term of

abuse thrown at them by art critics. The contrast in preferred labels across Europe emerged as follows: my Bulgarian Roma student recounted meeting a Pentecostal Gypsy preacher in Sussex. Without explaining the sub text, she excitedly repeated his words 'We Gypsies'. Finally, she was convinced that my use of the label for English Gypsies was indeed self-ascribed.

Labels change through time and emerge from stigmatisation. Martin Luther King used the now tabooed word 'Negro' in his 'I have a Dream' speech. This was replaced by 'Black' then 'African American.' Granted, the linguistic equivalent of 'Gypsy' may have been seen as representing outsider racist abuse by some groups in post-communist Europe. But it is sad that the EU initially resorted to one all-embracing title, banning the word 'Gypsy' in the public domain.

In 2004, before delivering a keynote in Berlin, I was informed, indeed instructed by the professor that on NO account was I to use the word 'Gypsy'. In accordance with the EU, I was to use 'Roma'. I remonstrated that 'Gypsy' is what the people, I lived with and studied for years in England, used and continued to use. My books *Gypsies and Government Policy in England*, (1975 Adams, Okely et al), *The Traveller-Gypsies* (1983) and subsequent articles highlighted this self-ascribed label. Other texts by Kenrick and Puxon (1972), Acton (1974) and Farnham Rehfish (1975) did not consider the label racist, but celebratory. Granted, the label or near equivalents have been stigmatized by some in post-communist Europe. But why extend the ban to those who embrace it, contrary to their preference?

Surely the EU, representing so many nations with different histories and sub groups, should have done its homework? The remarkable Gypsy Council, established in England in the mid-1960s, with representatives of Gypsy descent, was not re-named. Should that be outlawed by the EU? This mono-decision making reflects the differing histories within Europe. Kaminski elaborated in his monograph (1980) and in our exchanges through the 1970s, how some communist states sought

out and appointed representatives of each 'national' or ethnic group. They were given official status and salaries. Kaminski argued that some of these unelected, but skilled state employees were nevertheless avoided if not feared by Polish Gypsies at grass root level.

In contrast to a hierarchical polity, English Gypsies, and often Irish and Scottish Travellers, sustaining nomadism, have survived best with decentralised strategies. One Gypsy male friend declared: 'Anyone who says he's 'King of the Gypsies' or our 'Leader' will have to take on every man in a line at Stowe Fair. He'd have to beat each one in a hand-to-hand fight'. Unfortunately, the EU had been less likely to consider the long term and cross-cultural contrasts where there is not an established state tradition of formal, let alone salaried English Gypsy representatives

Previously, the occasional media savvy Gorgio, have stepped into this 'leadership' vacuum. One would appear on TV talking about 'My People'. There were once some fantasy interventions. Last week, when lecturing at the university of Macedonia, I informed the astonished students and staff that this same gorgio had, in the 1970s, declared that Gypsies should be given their own land or nation, namely Macedonia!

In that very same city, Thessaloniki, I was briefly taken to a Roma neighbourhood. Poignantly, in the face of increasingly demonised migration from nearby post-communist countries, these vulnerable peoples prominently displayed the Greek flag. My academic guide pointed out how, as we approached the residents, they were talking a form of Romany with their children, but immediately switched to Greek. Here is an example of sophisticated 'national' readjustment according to context.

Despite the EU directives, the self-ascribed label 'Gypsy' for the English continues proudly today. In 2012, when I convened a panel on 'Gypsies, Roma and Travellers throughout Europe' at a British Museum conference, two English participants were

happy to declare their identity as members of 'The Gypsy People'. It is extraordinary that the relevant EU decision makers could not consult the literature and political practices across the Channel. The celebration of Gypsy is confirmed in the recent book by David M. Smith and Margaret Greenfields 'Gypsies and Travellers in housing: The decline of nomadism', for which I was honoured to write the foreword. David Smith, the co-author and senior lecturer at Greenwich University, is also proud to identify his Gypsy heritage.

To conclude, in ever-changing contexts, single label and identity cannot be invented, let alone imposed. There are inter-group rivalries in one context, but group solidarity in others. The most inspiring development is the emergence of engaged graduates, postgraduates, and academics from the different groups. I have supervised the dissertation of a Bulgarian Roma, now employed by a leading NGO, the dissertation of a New Traveller, now completing a Cambridge Phd on nomads, and the Phd of someone of Scottish descent, now a full Professor. They can add voice and authority.

Yaron Matras

22 March 2014

So, I have a simple question, and perhaps one of the most recent contributors to the discussion can respond: What is the criterion for including particular communities into the 'mosaic' or 'kaleidoscope'?

For example, on what basis are settled Romani-speaking shopkeepers in Sofia included, alongside semi-itinerant Jenische from southwest Germany; but Orthodox Jews from Brooklyn and Walpiri construction workers in Northwestern Australia are not?

What do the settled Romani-speaking shopkeepers in Sofia and the semi-itinerant Jenische from southwest Germany have in common, which they do not share with the Orthodox Jews from Brooklyn and Walpiri construction workers in Northwestern Australia?

Thomas Acton

23 March 2014

How can there possibly be one right answer to such a question?

If we theorise ‘nations’ as imagined communities, then we might say those who ask such a question lack that imagination. Possibly a sense of community, too.

Yaron Matras

23 March 2014

It’s a practical question: If a researcher is asked by a policy agency to describe the target group and to name criteria for inclusion — should the researcher’s reply to the policymakers be: “use your imagination and sense of community”, or should that researcher make an effort to spell out criteria for inclusion in a more transparent way? Or if the Scientific Committee of this Network, for instance, received an application for membership from somebody who specialises in the ethnography of Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn or of Walpiri construction workers in Australia, should we accept them as members of this network on the basis of our “imagination” or on the basis of our “sense of community”?

Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov

23 March 2014

Yes, this is definitely a practical question. And it is important not only for academia, but also for policy makers and academics who are policy experts.

As we have written in our articles and say regularly in our presentations: “The legitimate question is whether it is possible at all to have a successful realisation of national and supranational policies if it is based on strategies and programmes without a clear main target.” In our case, the question is, who are the “Roma,” i.e., the target of politics? If we cannot reach at least a basic agreement on an academic level, it is not surprising that the policy makers at the EU and national levels use unsuitable definitions, and, as a result, everybody can discern it.

Jean-Pierre Liégeois

23 March 2014

This question is a rhetorical one and does not apply in real life. It is a virtual point for academic purposes. In another thread, a reference was made to the “Sam Konik” case. I also used it a long time ago, and this is interesting because with a journalist, a member of the police, a social worker or a scholar, a Roma may say “Sam Konik”, which by the way makes the list longer as to the possible self-designations which are employed. This last one is an illustration of a very pertinent and operational adaptation to the situation.

But “Sam Konik” does not answer to real life, and the person in question will know that very well: use and manipulate several interlinked criteria to answer your question “*What is the criterion for including particular communities into the ‘mosaic’ or ‘kaleidoscope’?*” The “simple question” has no “simple answer,” hopefully, because this is life. Everyone knows in a concrete given context to which wholes/groups? / bodies / social sectors or segments / communities (plural) he or she belongs, wants to belong, has to belong, is supposed to belong. This is most important because, following previous comments in various emails, it links personality and society, deep personal desires, social realities and broad political determinants.

In a previous message, [Yaron Matras] gave illustration of 15 people meeting in his office, and he rightly emphasized the question of “respect” which was clearly present. This is a key point (this question of “respect” and the many and changing criteria attached to it, core criteria and peripheral or secondary criteria, or ‘satellite’ ones as I have named them, are one of the main issues of *La Mutation des Roms*, mentioned before, and the basis for developing a theory of social and cultural change). This illustrates the fact that it is not a “simple question,” and not even a question for those living the situations, because the expression and translation, verbal and non-verbal, of “respect” that is shared by a group or community of persons cannot be reduced or objectivised in a single definition, as they belong to personal feelings.

Therefore flexibility is necessary as well as a comprehensive approach. As Judith writes, “in ever-changing contexts, single labels and identities cannot be invented, let alone imposed.” Usually policy makers have strong categories limited by strong boundaries, in which they do inscribe groups of “populations” on the basis of a weak, partial and also manipulated knowledge in order to justify the proposals that are being made. Realities have to be better known in order to develop adapted activities, and this is one of the tasks of the scholars. The role of the scholar is not to find out a criterion for classification, but to highlight and make understandable social and cultural dynamisms.

My short comments, which complete what I wrote before:

1 – It is a practical question for policy makers, I agree, but only an aspect of the global question. We should question not only “*Who are the Roma*,” but also, among other points, “*What is inclusion*” as it is a part of the target. 2 – About the “results,” expected or not, I wrote extensively, about European policies and projects. See for example the last chapter “Issues for the future” in *The Council of Europe and Roma, 40 years of action* (CoE Publishing, 2012). A series of weak points is analysed, and the question of definition of “Roma” is not the main one. There are many other reasons of failure. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/minorities/4866-the-council-of-europe-and-roma-40-years-of-action.html>

Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov

23 March 2014

Re: “The role of the scholar is not to find out a criterion for classification, but to highlight and make understandable social and cultural dynamisms.”

The issue about the role of scholar is complicated, but in our concrete case, we have doubts about the possibility “to highlight and make understandable social and cultural dynamisms,” without classification, i.e. without knowing whose dynamism is studied.

Léon Grimard

23 March 2014

A comment about Thomas's previous short sentence about Roma Nation. I understood Thomas's social and political involvement and it is something I do agree with, as every one of us is a committed, socially engaged scholar. What I think I can understand about Thomas's sentence is a commitment to the political aspect of our social engagement toward the Tsiganes / Roma / Gypsy's cause. I think I do understand why he is speaking of nation here, for he is committed and convinced as to the political path taken by Eastern Europe Roma activists, namely the IRU, and I have no problem with that; it is one of the many acceptable paths scholars can get engaged in.

But in my very humble opinion, this idea of a transnational 'Roma Nation' is a very interesting question in the theorisation of new kinds or transformations of the concept of nation without the territorial context of the state, and, always in a theorisation perspective or debate, it is in fact empirically observable, despite the many differences inside the holistic kaleidoscopic mosaic. But, even if we can be very sympathetic with that, we must admit, on a very grounded and pragmatic perspective, that the idea of transnational nation has no future at all, for it is attacking the very basic foundations of one of the pillars of Western modern civilisation, the nation-State, and so no national nor supranational political institutions or governments will ever get into what would be a trap for them, a veritable "boîte de Pandorre."

Moreover, as with Christophe Robert, and many other scholars, and along with what many Gypsy groups say and claim, I am convinced that, first, it will fail to improve Roma / Gypsy / Traveler's (RGT) conditions (as its failings are already clearly apparent), and secondly, that it is not what many or most of them (not speaking of intellectual activists) claim. Rather, it is



Photo: Stefánia Toma

a matter of full social and political official recognition as full citizens with equal rights in the respective hosting nations, and of not being second class (or classless) citizens. Moreover, I would say, as does Christophe Robert, that the 'transnational nation' concept and claim contributes, in fact, to maintaining negative categorisations and ostracisations and contributes nothing to breaking the expansion of exclusion and anti-tsiganism among majority populations all over Europe.

Of course, our commitment as scholars is and has to be, in some way, political. But the struggle is in fact about citizenship recognition, about social, cultural, and economic participation and contribution for all Gypsy populations within the nations they ask for and claim to belong to.

Now, on another topic, I totally agree with Jean-Pierre, Elena and Vesselin on comments about our task as scholars. Of course, we may be asked to act as policy counselors from time to time; and this task must be done as well as we can do it, as scholars. But, never forget that this is just an accessory task, not our main and primary one. As pointed out by Jean-Pierre, our tasks are to discover, describe, analyse and diffuse [knowledge of] the many very complex and dynamic social processes engaged both in social articulations (or boundaries to recall F. Barth) and in the everyday lives of the many social groups acting and engaging in the relationship process of making society a pulsing organism.

Perhaps I can give some insight towards a solution to the dilemma we have with denominations, or, categorisations, and the duality scholars / policy counselors. As some of you already know, my theoretical concerns and research frameworks are, in order, exclusion (in its many forms), poverty (together with inequalities and globalisation), and new racism (new forms of cultural racism). With regard to the concept of exclusion, there is a substantial debate among scholars about the use of the notion of exclusion, because, as it entered largely into the public sphere through debates (political discourses, media

discourse, broad popular discourse), it has come to mean anything and nothing. So the actual tendency is to use it as a 'concept - horizon,' which can say quite a number of things about a part of knowledge, and which can organise scholarly thought around a central core of combined (an amalgam of) ideas; but the condition for that is to strictly separate and conceive the scientific use or the concept from its public use. So, in the case we are debating here, I think it could be a good beginning to act similarly.

Sam Beck

23 March 2014

In this context, I would say use the identity that the people themselves use and then provide an academic explanation of what community they may belong to. It is possible that the two positions do not coincide.

Ethel Brooks

23 March 2014

I think that Sam is right about that: it is really a question of self-ascription, but this is combined with the ascription that others give; hence the confusion, often, as to who is Roma. In many ways, the outside ascription has won here, where Roma becomes a stand-in for Gypsies in the older (dare I say gypsylorist?) sense. We know that self-ascription among Romani people does not usually group Roma with Travelers or gens de voyage, or Jenisch, for that matter. We also know that Roma

as an umbrella term doesn't apply to Lomari or Doma, but also to Sinti or Romani Gypsies, or Gitanos in Spain, Manouches, Kale, et al —but many of these can fall under the umbrella Romani (as Ian has already pointed out). In many ways, it is a complex question that cannot be resolved, and if we are to take Yaron's question seriously, I am not sure that we would want to resolve it neatly for policymakers. Rather, we would want policymakers to understand its complexity and work with it accordingly. Of course, self-ascription also applies to whether we would group Satmar Hasidim, Jenische and Kalderash Roma. We wouldn't, primarily because they wouldn't.

Which brings us back to Benedict Anderson. Imagined communities, for Anderson, was not about how these communities were imagined by academic experts, but was rather about the nation-building process and its related practices. Again, it would seem, a combination of self- and outside-ascription. Anderson, when he wrote *Imagined Communities*, was working in a moment when a number of academics were looking back to older debates around nation (Renan's "*Qu'est-ce que c'est une nation?*", Stalin's "National-Colonial Question," Wilson's "Fourteen Points." Anderson looked at how nations —and the sense of nationhood— were formed through practices and processes such as print capital (i.e. the circulation of national newspapers in a national language); museums, the census and a shared history; and, interestingly, a notion of being in the same place at the same time (again achieved through print capital, but also through time zones, etc.). If you remember, Hobsbawm also had two books on nationalism —*Nations and Nationalism since 1780* and (with Terence Ranger) *The Invention of Tradition*. There was a moment, 20 years ago (most likely coinciding with the fall of state socialism?) when the idea of the nation — not ultra-right nationalism — was being debated.

It is important for us to engage these questions, but in the end, it is the complexity that I, as a Romani and as an academic, will hold onto. Growing up, I "knew" what our relationship was to Roma and what our relationship was to Irish or Scottish

Travellers. It was very clear and did not need debate. Again, the question is one of self-ascription. We (Romani people of Anglo-Romani origin, which some would call Romanichal, but we didn't in everyday conversation) were "Romani" like Kalderash and other Roma, but we also had relations with Scottish and Irish Travellers that recognized our sameness with regard to labor market niches and British Isles origins.

In the eyes of outsiders, of course, we were (are) all Gypsies. Personally, I would rather not lose the complexity of self-ascription in the name of neatness.

Sam Beck

24 March 2014

Even as academicians we must take a political position, not only informing policy makers. I find myself increasingly drawn into making decisions about who and what I must support because it is morally right for me to do so, the right thing to do. It is not a matter of knowing better than the particular group or groups with which we have association. For me it is a matter of justice and doing my part in bringing about a just world. Nicolae Gheorghe and I, for the short period of our association, sought to theorize what unity would look like among the diverse groups that Romanians identified as țigani in the context of actually existing communism that sought to bring about a world of workers without ethnic identities, making them all conform to an ethnic Romanian ideal.

Some țigani groups resisted and others could not wait to adjust to the opportunities that a status differentiation of a worker identity offered them. Sadly, to non-țigani, they remained "țigani." Nicu and I thought — actually it was Nicolae's lead I was

following — that by suggesting a Roma identity to all the groups, a political movement could be established that would give the most vulnerable of Romanian citizens a voice within a state where having a voice was immensely difficult. All of this is not to say that individual groups could not maintain their separate, individual identities.

I believe that a “Roma” movement in Europe can only improve the lives of the many individuals and groups who suffer the hardships of discrimination, racism, and xenophobia and who academics study. As academics, this is not enough. I am very glad for the discussions we have engaged in. I remain connected with the ideals Nicolae pursued.

Léon Grimard

24 March 2014

I like so much the ‘délicatesse toute en nuances’ you [Ethel] bring to the débat. As a païo scolar, it is exactly what I observed and what I was told, and thus what I understood and promised to defend, during my master’s fieldwork with and among my Gypsy friends from Perpignan. Thank you, for I could not have expressed it so perfectly. Thanks also for the very relevant reference effectively to Anderson and Hobsbawn, which you add also Ernest Gellner in anthropology, and the French historian Anne-Marie Thiesse on these topics.

Judith M. Okely

24 March 2014

Thanks [to Ethel] for a superb analysis so beautifully argued with key historians and social scientists.

When I presented aspects of my future chapter one at a Cambridge conference with Eric Hobsbawn, he asked to publish it in 'Past and Present'. I was naive, saying I had a contract for a monograph. If I had submitted it first to his journal, with such a mentor, I would have been saved from later mischievous misrepresentations.

Thanks for giving Anderson and Ranger the respect they deserve for exploring imagined and invented traditions. A political anthropology lecturer in Greece last week likened some of our misunderstandings to those in 'AREA Studies' where academics talk across each other, unaware of standard texts, themes and debates in other disciplines.

I fully agree with Sam Beck's stance. We are not merely detached academics. As Sartre argued, there are political implications in ANY position. Whether or not confronted, a choice is made whether to resist or to exploit taken-for-granted power. But there are no simple short cuts. Unraveling complexity and nuances is crucial.

I recall acting as 'expert witness' for Scottish Travellers banned from an Edinburgh pub. The lawyer kept instructing me to say they were ROMANY Gypsies from India, though this was not how they represented themselves. He argued they could only claim discrimination if so labeled. Fortunately, the landlord settled out of court.

One later triumph was thanks to Robbie McVeigh (another 'academic') who established legal criteria for Northern Irish Travellers. They could claim ethnic identity if having a common history, traditions and shared ancestors. without claiming non-European origins, they won recognition on new specific grounds. Subsequently, Colin Clark (now Professor) successfully used these criteria in his testimony, along with my past statements, in another Scottish case of discrimination. Finally, the Scottish Travellers (once labelled Tinkers), were recognised as an ethnic group who could henceforth appeal against discrimination. We were invited to celebrate at the Scottish Parliament.

There are many examples where the engaged intellectual CAN and SHOULD offer his/her skills for political justice against persecution, especially where vulnerable minorities are concerned.

Yaron Matras

24 March 2014

I fully agree with the spirit of the most recent contributions to the discussion. Still, however flexible we purport to be, we must admit that we are surrounded by categorisations. The mere fact that 300 or so of us subscribe to this network means that we demarcate our shared research and policy interests in a particular way, and thus that we are inclusive, but also exclusive. Whether we like to admit it or not, we subscribe to a category. We all have some kind of notion of the category that defines our shared interests.

And so I ask again: what defines the boundaries of the 'mosaic' or 'kaleidoscope' to which our shared academic interests are devoted? Why would we not accept members into this network on the basis of specialisation in the study of Algonkian culture or the economy of Japanese whale hunters?

At the political level, the question is linked to what defines the 'mosaic' of populations that fall under the remit of, say, the EC's 'Roma task force' or the Council of Europe's 'Roma and Travellers Division'? Why do the Tattare of Scandinavia belong to that remit, but not the Sami?

The answer cannot be 'self-ascription', because few of us, presumably, if any, have polled the communities that we study to ask them whether they believe we should join this network, nor has the Council of Europe carried out a survey asking communities whether they want their interests to be considered by a particular Division.

So on what basis do we include the Finnish Kaale and the Sicilian Camminanti, but exclude the Gagauz of Greece and the Karaim of Lithuania?

Why, when an NGO needs consultancy on education issues that face Roma migrants from Romania, does it feel that it can approach somebody who is an expert on the housing problems of Irish Travellers, but not somebody who is an expert on the subsistence economy of the Bedouins in the Negev?

Sam Beck

25 March 2014

There may not be a satisfactory answer to Yaron's question. I am unsure that if there is one what would it mean to him. Anthropologists, even linguistic anthropologists, use the comparative method to answer a basic question: What does it mean to be human? All the groups with which we are concerned are characterized by certain life ways that you rightly point out as having certain characteristics they hold in common. And, yes, they exclude other groups that might have some of these characteristics as well, but we exclude them. I suppose the flip side of Yaron's question would be: What makes a gadjo? Yaron seems to be looking for a defining boundary that we academics hold in our minds that separate a particular

set of social groups from other social groups. I think that we can do this simply by first identifying all those groups who have a Roma origin. I use Roma as a linguistic place holder for people who have a Sanskrit based origin that can be identified phenotypically, sociolinguistically, culturally, who have a particular relationship with States, etc., etc., etc. And those groups who mistakenly have been identified with the same origins of such groups. But, so what?

Yaron Matras

25 March 2014

Sam's is an interesting viewpoint, and one that I am sure many colleagues will find controversial, so I'm curious to hear their reactions.

In the meantime may I just correct a misunderstanding that frequently occurs when non-linguists discuss the origins of the Romani language: Romani is NOT based on Sanskrit (Annabel Tremlett is just one of those who got this wrong in her recent comments on my work). Romani is an Indo-Aryan language, and so is Sanskrit, but there is no evidence that Romani directly derives from Sanskrit. We simply use Sanskrit for analytical comparison because it is the oldest attested Indo-Aryan language and so it gives us a picture of what these languages may have looked like before changes in structure made them more diverse. (Just like we compare German with Gothic, but German does not directly derive from Gothic; and Arabic with Akkadian, but one does not derive from the other).

Another important point for comparison is Prakrit or Middle Indo-Aryan. As linguists, we devote as much attention when discussing the origins of Romani to Prakrit as we do to Sanskrit — see Hancock's seminal article from 1988, and my book

from 2002 — but that goes unnoticed by non-linguists, who are attracted to the more ‘famous’ label of Sanskrit and often take it out of context.

This is a side remark. I’m still waiting for somebody to explain to me why an expert on housing problems of Irish Travellers is automatically regarded as an expert on the education of Roma migrants from Romania, but not on issues of sexual health among the Yakut.

Sam Beck

25 March 2014

Thanks for the correction. This makes the Rom and Romani even more interesting. Yaron’s last comment is also interesting. They have no expertise.

Ethel Brooks

25 March 2014

Judith, thank you for your kind remarks. I also have a missed opportunity story about Hobsbawm. He was one of my mentors in graduate school and I wrote a few papers for him about Romani nationalism and European nation-state formations. We argued about these papers, and he urged me to go to Moscow to study the incorporation of Romani culture into Soviet and

post-Soviet national culture. He felt that it would turn my assumptions/analyses on their head. In the end, I didn't follow his advice. I felt insecure about studying my "own" people for a doctoral dissertation (and had gotten strange feedback as a twenty-something grad student the one time that I tried to present a paper on Malthus and Romani political economies at a GLS conference). So I decided to leave the work aside. I am back to some aspect of it, but when I wrote to him to talk more about it, he was dying, and so it was too late. Missed opportunities, indeed.

Sam and Judith, I absolutely agree with you about the need for a political stance — especially in the case of Romani groups. As you know, the history of the study and statecraft of/directed toward Romani people has been political in the worst sense, even when it purports to be scientific. It is only through an engaged scholarly approach that you have advocated that we can work to counter the damage that has been done. As Judith's invocation of Sartre (I love that you brought him in! I have been teaching him in my graduate methods seminar in sociology) brings forth, there are political implications in any position, which we need to keep in mind in every facet of our work. Judith, your example of Robbie McVeigh, Colin Clark and legal advocacy is a prime example of this. We are in desperate need of more of this work.

Yaron, it seems that you are thinking of the British case in particular — but of course this applies to all of the dynamics when you have groups of people labeled under the same term, or under the same cognitive umbrella, and an overall expertise is called upon to apply to them. It doesn't work for Mexican-Americans (those who were "native" Californians, there before California became the US, are very different from recent Oaxacan immigrants and have different needs, even as they are often racialised in similar ways). It doesn't obviate the idea of calling them Mexican-Americans, but certainly it is important to keep the historical and cultural complexities — and, yes, politics — central to both scholarship and policymaking. The question of whether we can expect an expert on Irish Travellers to be, in turn, an expert on recent Romani migrants to the

UK is another question, and, it would seem to me, an example of *reductio ad absurdum*. I know that there are those would try to make that argument, but it is a relatively straightforward counter-argument that one can make to advocate for a more appropriate policy. Of course, again, it comes down to a question of self-ascription and, also, paying attention to both groups' and individuals' assessment of their own needs. Otherwise, it becomes an attempt to manage populations without any reference to the people themselves.

Thank you, [Léon], for reminding us of Gellner and for alerting me to Anne-Marie Thiesse.

Martin Fotta

25 March 2014

This is not the answer to Yaron's question, but I guess given the character of his question (why should policymakers asking us care about our expertise), the first part of the answer would probably have to do with geography, since any policies would presumably be targeted people living within EU or CoE borders.

Thus, it would be at least weird to consult an expert on the subsistence economy of Bedouins in the Negev or Japanese whale hunters (although Israel has the observer status at the CoE, so who knows).

Having said that it might be equally weird probably to consult me on my fieldwork amongst the Calon of Brazil. Of course this is another version of your question: why should I with such a research background among the Calon in Bahia be part of this network (because they speak, "chibi" and refer to themselves also as "Ciganos"?).

Léon Grimard

25 March 2014

Yes, of course. So on the topic of the national concept and construction, here is a specific reference: *La création des identités nationales. Europe 18e - 19e siècles* [by Anne-Marie Thiesse, Paris, Le Seuil 1999]

I also recommend another French historian book for the comprehension of the stranger's rejection in France (as Tsiganes are archetype), in the analysis of the constitution or the Republic and the discourses of the Revolution. Sophie Wahnich. *L'impossible citoyen. L'étranger dans le discours de la Révolution française*. Albin Michel, 2010. Seuil, 2001.

Thomas Acton

24 March 2014

[This message included three attachments. The attachments themselves are not included here, but the references are part of the message.]

The Nicolae Gheorghe piece. It was published in *Gypsy Politics and Traveller Identity* published by University of Hertfordshire Press (UHP) in 1997 and edited by myself, pp. 142-171.

Some other basic reading that might help is (with his permission) Brian Belton's Essay from 'All Change' (edited by Damien Le Bas and myself, from UHP 2010, and my long-ago essay on commercial nomadism and ethnic identity, which first

appeared in J.Grumet ed., *Papers from the 4th and 5th Annual Meetings of the Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter*, New York: GLSNAC, 1985.

The Nicolae Gheorghe piece, does, I think, make clear his belief in a transnational, rather than a national, identity as being more helpful to Roma. At any rate, he personally persuaded the Vatican of this in 1992.

I had hoped to avoid intervening substantively in what I have found a very depressing debate. To see issues which I hoped Liégeois and I had put to rest more than 30 years ago, raising themselves as if we had never written, and to see so many Gaje rushing to cram Roma, Gypsies and Travellers into their own categorical schema is a lesson in the persistence of hegemonic ideologies. I see now that I have to. I hope to produce a more satisfying answer to Helen O'Nions' original unease about the strange certainty of the text she was renewing, which will also try to explain why most colleagues have responded with more or less strange certainties of their own, and attempt the beginning of a historical method for relating these certainties to each other.

Sam Beck

25 March 2014

Thanks to Thomas for the articles. Since being invited to participate in this list, I have renewed my interest in my Roma interests that I had to set aside for the sake of earning a living. This is a long story that includes remarks made by a notable university provost and two deans of another institution who questioned why I could be interested in Gypsies.

Yaron's question at first confused me as I tried to respond to it and the more I thought about it, I wondered "to what end do we need to know an answer?" Quite frankly, I still don't get it. There are distinct social movements that arise under particular conditions, forces, and processes. It is our job as social scientists to identify these and if one is activist oriented, redirect these to bring about social justice for those most vulnerable in society but also enlighten those who oppress. I believe the Roma movement in Romania was doing that. That Nicolae Gheorghe sought to make this a transnational issue does not surprise me. I lost touch with him after I had to redirect my career, although he came to visit me in NYC and stayed with me in my home a number of times, once giving a lecture at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, where I was able to invite him.

Michael Stewart

26 March 2014

A really very interesting discussion and huge thanks to Yaron for kicking it off with such a clear set of questions and responses that the whole debate has become a model of how we can - despite all our theoretical and temperamental differences - talk to and learn from each other. That is a BIG achievement. It also provides a rich resource in due course for policy makers if we can summarise some of these debates into a shortened form.

Now for comment:

It seems to me that the short comment below -from Elena and Veselin - sums up the problem that this debate has brought into focus:

"we have doubts about the possibility 'to highlight and make understandable social and cultural dynamisms', without classification, i.e. without knowing whose dynamism is studied."

Elena and Veselin's comment - rather like the general thrust of Yaron's comments - proposes that in social affairs there is an underlying 'substrate' of natural kinds that we are dealing with — kinds that can be classified independently of their sense of themselves, of their history — or the 'social and cultural dynamism', that is to say, history. To say that it is problematic to do this "without classification, i.e. without knowing whose dynamism is studied", suggests that there is some (reasonably) objective means of defining this object - outside of the terms of reference set up by the processes that are posited in 'social and cultural dynamism.'

Those of us who feel uncomfortable with this - and this is, I think, most of the social scientists in this debate - are convinced, for various, admittedly not entirely compatible reasons (in terms of the whole field of views), that in human affairs the classifications and the subsequent 'groups' that come to be formed, the sense of affiliation and commonality, the forms of solidarity and identification with others, has changed profoundly over the course of human history. For those who share this view, the classifications humans use to define entities that they call groups are only in part continuous. In other words, if you imagine the social world as divided into 'descent groups' (or better - if you imagine social connections established and divided by 'lines of descent') then the social world you live in is very different from one in which social connections are shaped by common language, territory and state. Again, if 'society' in your part of the world is imagined in terms of the houses that people share (what we anthropologists call 'house based societies') then your sense of what makes for a group and a social order will differ again from the above. This is the point that Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm have, variously, made in their studies of the rise of nationalism as the form of sociality of the modern age: the economic order, the institutions that have come into being in the past 4 hundred years (daily newspapers, novels, museums, censuses, national education systems, shared labour markets, democratic political structures, the ideal of 'the people', etc.) are the means by which pre-modern identities of all kinds have been transformed into the relatively homogeneous 'national identities' of the

modern world. It is the social and cultural dynamisms of the modern nation state — we argue — that has created the new classification of people into ‘nations’, that has created the items ‘whose dynamism is studied’ by social sciences.

Yaron says that: “Nor do we make an effort to ‘de-construct’ the notion of German ethnicity by pointing out that some Germans are rappers who feel a closer affinity to Pussy Riot in Russia than to Bavarian brass bands while others are nuclear scientists who feel more at home at MIT than in Heidelberg” but that is of course exactly what many sociologists and anthropologists do in fact do in detail and at great length. Blom Hansen’s great deconstruction of the BJPs attempt to pit Muslim v Hindu Indians against one another culturally rests on precisely this kind of deconstruction. I wonder if the problem is not that for many of us social scientists the idea of a ‘Volk’ is folk notion and not a category of analysis whereas probably for many historical linguists the idea of a ‘people’/ ‘community of speakers’/ ‘Volk’ remains more current. For me the idea of a Volk is part of the hall of mirrors of nationalism. ‘Scientifically’, Volk are as much a mirage as races. The notion that there are clear boundaries that distinguish in some measurable fashion one Volk from another is as much of an error as the once widely accepted (pre-Lewontin 1972) idea that there was something objectively distinguishable about ‘races’.

It is for all these reasons above that I cannot agree with Yaron’s talk of nation vis-à-vis the Rom. There is no question in my mind that the Rom could form a nation - look at France, to take a counter-intuitive but blatant and well-studied example. If you go back to Eugen Weber’s classic text - *Peasants into Frenchmen*- (or if you read Robb’s much more lucid and readable account, *The Discovery of France*) you will see that — pace Yaron’s account of national identities as a trans-historical phenomenon stretching back over hundreds of years if not millennia — ‘Frenchness’ is a creation of the 19th and 20th centuries, and indeed is, in part, a historically contingent creation that could in certain conditions fall apart: see Britishness if the SNP get their way. (Robb has comic accounts of Descartes being unable to communicate in French 60 miles out of Paris

and resorting to Latin before he gets to Lyons, etc.) So — for the Rom — given the right institutional conditions it would be quite possible to create a national (transnational, maybe) identity but this would be a creation of the political sphere, just as Israeli identity is a political creation and not the expression of the essence of ‘Jewishness’ whatever that might be — even as the only basis on which ethnicising Israeliness can ‘work’ politically is by claiming that it is the expression of ‘Jewishness’. These loose senses of affiliation and distinction are extraordinarily labile as others in this list have noted re pan-Arabism and pan-Slavism and as scholars of modern India have also noted.

In fact there is a phrase used by the scholar of Indian populist nationalism, Tomas Blom Hansen, that I often go back to: Talking of the ‘culture’ that is central to nationalist politics, the exclusive, clearly bounded phenomenon described by all of Herder’s descendants, he suggests that this “‘Culture’ is yesterdays politics naturalised, depoliticised, decontextualised, and re-authored as truth and authority” - in other words a product of social and historical dynamisms and not the expression of some underlying classificatory division of humanity into different groups.

However, I would also stress, that in contrast to the post-modernist take on this, most of us who subscribe to what is basically a Durkheimian account of what human sociality is about, do not think that this is all a matter of random choice, or that ‘anything goes’. So, to take Yaron’s question as to why scholars of Brooklyn Jewish families are not welcomed into a community of scholars of Romany populations: a) from an anthropological point of view, ‘identity based’ scholarly divisions are indeed counter productive (we will learn as much from comparing how Brooklyn Jews and Parisian Rom negotiate identity in 2014 as from comparing Parisian Rom of 2014 with Parisian Rom of 1814); but b) given that political institutions organise around these ‘ethnic/national’ type labels it makes practical sense to combine the knowledge of those who specialise in this area and trust that the best amongst them will be fully cognisant of Brooklyn-Jewish/ Cape-Town hybrid, etc., studies, so the existence of this network is, for me, not driven by a truly academic as a pragmatic logic.

So — consistently, I trust — I don't think that there is any academic merit in programs like Jewish Studies, Romany Studies, lack (British) studies, Scandinavian studies, etc., even if there can be practical merit (e.g., in European Studies training people who want to work in EU institutions). I know there is demand for such — and some say that these can be the means to mainstream issues that are casually left out of the curriculum, and that may be, and if so they may well be justified — but in terms of advancing human knowledge I am not persuaded that this frame is productive.

It may well be that beyond this level of debate there is a bigger difference. For those of us working in the Enlightenment tradition, the 'social' is ultimately the problem — inequality, unequal power, access to public space etc. For those in the Herderian tradition, culture remains the big question: How can different 'cultures' co-exist in the same political space? For those of us in the former tradition, these 'cultures' are rather more epiphenomenal than for our colleagues. And of course if you work on language then — unless you take a fairly radical Chomskyian view — then qua language discontinuities loom large. (I wonder, however, if you do sociolinguistics whether you would find that continuity over borders is as important as discontinuity as in the famous Wolf/Cole text, *The Hidden Frontier*).

It is striking that there are some apparent trans-historical continuities. For instance, [there is] the idea that humans live in 'groups' which share some sort of common substance (identity in modern parlance) — or are, as anthropologists used to say, 'corporate', that is share in some senses 'one body' — and this makes it possible to talk across historical time-frames and the forms that sociality takes in different parts of the world.

Yaron Matras

26 March 2014

Michael's note is very clear and inspiring, yet it remains contradictory: as a functionalist, I would posit that everything we do is pragmatically driven, and so, that pragmatics are not beyond analysis, but rather a method of analysis. Pragmatics provide us with a way to carry out an enquiry into how we act in pursuit of our goals.

Michael seems to suggest that his commitment to a network on 'Roma/Gypsy studies', and by extension his readiness to engage with an EU policy on 'Roma/Gypsies', is not based on the fact that there is a definable category of 'Roma/Gypsies', but rather because the existence of a network and of policy needs in this field offer interesting opportunities for discussion beyond the classification exercise itself. This is an honest admission that he — and perhaps all of us — are simply exploiting the image of 'Roma/Gypsies' to various ends. These ends can be purely scholarly in nature — such as an opportunity to reflect on whether boundaries among peoples, cultures, or languages are real or imagined.

Or, if one were to take a somewhat more cynical approach, we might view them as career facilitating in nature, such as the opportunity to join an advisory board, to give a lecture, or to author reports for the Council of Europe.

I am currently finding myself in a somewhat comparable situation in another field. I am co-editor of a volume in preparation, with a leading academic publisher, on 'Jewish languages'. I don't believe that there is such a thing as 'Jewish languages'. But many contributors have answered the call, and the volume gives me an opportunity to state in my editor's introduction that I don't believe that there is a category of 'Jewish languages' (i.e. any meaningful features that such languages share

among themselves, which are not also shared with other, non-Jewish languages) — an opportunity which I might not have had in such powerful form without the volume.

So perhaps we come together under the umbrella of ‘Roma/Gypsy studies’ because it gives us an opportunity to assert that there is no such thing as a Roma or Gypsy nation or culture, and that indeed the Roma are no different from non-Roma, and that in that sense there are no nations or fixed cultures altogether? Perhaps we are just here to explore how our view of the Other inspires us to view ourselves? That would be neat, because in a way it would resemble the traditional fascination of European societies with Gypsies as ‘children of nature’ who tempt us to question the reasoning behind our own social order and moral codes; a kind of Victorian novel about how being kidnapped by Gypsies is a realisation of hidden desires.

But that still leaves us with the question of how we should advise policy bodies: Should we tell the Council of Europe that they should go on maintaining a ‘Roma, Gypsy and Travellers Division’ in order to make the point that there are no shared policy interests for a group that is so defined? Can we really persuade policy makers to indulge in our intellectual exercise, or do we have a duty to advise them that the category is merely ‘imagined’ and therefore no concrete policy measures can be drafted or implemented to address its needs?

Léon Grimard

26 March 2014

Yes, now I understand, it all comes maybe from Yaron’s functionalist perspective. Reading the penultimate paragraph of Yaron’s comment, I just don’t understand him, as nobody since the beginning of this debate have said anything like that in

any way. All that people were talking about is a priority given to the dynamic complexity of social groups, and the need for scholars to embrace these complex thoughts and minds; but Yaron seems to be having difficulties with complexity, and a lot of tendency towards categories and categorisation.

The basic truth about social sciences [is that] they are in fact, very complex and do not go well with narrow-minded policy-makers.

Ciprian Necula

27 March 2014

Indeed, a challenging discussion! As [is the case for] all ethnicities, Roma is a construct. However, I have some difficulties to imagine my ethnical group as an imagined community, because: I am real.

So, please, see the difference between ethnic group and ethnicity, last being an assumed symbolic representation.

Moreover, at the Council of Europe there is no Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, but 'Roma and Travellers'. So, who imagines what? Why something assumed by the ones entitled to assume their own representations should be questioned by...and now, who are we? A community of scholars working on the same subject from different perspectives, branding our product?

(Shall we inform the German government and international institutions, such as NATO, that the German nation does not exist, as it is just an imagined community, with different groups, etc.?)

Prof. Vintilă Mihăilescu told me once: 'if you cannot find an answer, change the definition'. So, here we are, at the concepts of defining us and our 'product'.

Yaron Matras

27 March 2014

Ciprian's comment underlines precisely the point I've been trying to make over the past couple of weeks, which is that Roma are clear about their ethnicity, and so there is no room to question that ethnicity.

But to be fair to the point that Michael is making, Ciprian's remark about 'should NATO decree that there is no German nation' of course reveals just how volatile 'nations' in the political sense are. Look at 'former Yugoslavia' — a nation that was dissolved despite geographical coherence and strong historical ties and political sovereignty.

I admit to confusion on the CoE's label; this was caused by the fact that just yesterday I attended a RomEd training session in Manchester, where the official title was indeed 'Training Roma, Gypsy and Traveller mediators'. ACERT [Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers], which led the event, reported that they had deliberately changed the label to be inclusive in the UK. Which again shows how there is no fixed concept in the Council of Europe and among its contractors in regard to the target population.

Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov

27 March 2014

Michael Stewart's mail is a really brilliantly written piece which for us is an excellent illustration of an orientalist approach and of the creation of imagined realities. We cannot understand why Michael is attributing to us positions to which we, according to him, adhere and then refutes and disproves them. Only one small detail is missing in this brilliant chain, that indeed we have never expressed the opinions he ascribes to us, including in our publications.

We do not know by whom and when it was claimed that classification implies an "underlying, constant and almost biological substrate" of social and cultural phenomena and that each classification meant renouncing the historical dynamics (to put that in Michael's words: "Elena and Veselin's comment ... proposes that in social affairs there is an underlying 'substrate' of natural kinds that we are dealing with — kinds that can be classified independently of their sense of themselves, of their history — or the 'social and cultural dynamism', that is to say, history."), but these are definitely not our words or ideas. In any case, we (BTW as historians by education) never and nowhere denied social and cultural dynamics, on the contrary, always in our texts we underline (including in the examples from our fieldwork) that indeed this is the historical development, which produces the existing now (sic!) socio-cultural realities, including the various Roma communities. And to prove that the classification exists also among Roma, subjected to the distinction "we - they", seems unnecessary, especially since most of the previous mails in current discussion were focused on that.

Michael Stanzer

27 March 2014

Concerning “German” nation,

As a personal example: I am myself half Slovenian, half German heritage, my citizenship is Austria(n), where I was born and socialized as feeling Slovenian (nation) very strongly. I have no closer vicinity to Serb resp. (former) Yugoslavian state.

Please note: According to latest ethnogenetic researches all people living in area of central Europa are of the most mixed in the world. Today we have proved evidences by several neurogenetic researches like: http://www.eupedia.com/europe/neolithic_europe_map.shtml

What a nation concerns, please compare with Kurd nation living in at least 4 different countries today, or Cherokee nation without its own state.

In my opinion a Roma nation exists, at least since leaving India, esp. as they all understand the same language (romani *čhib*), living together in a typical manner and have common traditions like Maximoff’s “Les Ursitory” described (more the less).

Roma and Gipsy are of same heritage from India. Travellers, Tinkers and Jenische and similar, are different of European roots. Anyway, to cooperate in EC and other institutions is a political issue and of political need, this all should be clarified but also supported as much as possible.

Ian F. Hancock

27 March 2014

I presented this paper at a meeting in Geneva some years ago, and so it has dated references, but some of its content may be relevant to the ongoing discussion, since the voices heard have mostly not been our own. It is reproduced in D. Karanth, *Danger! Educated Gypsy* (Hertfordshire UP, Hatfield 2010, pp. 273-279). "Our need for internal diplomatic skills".

Diplomacy is defined as "the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; skill . . . in the conduct of international intercourse and negotiations." While the assumption was that we met in Geneva to discuss diplomacy between Romani and non-Romani agencies, I want to take a step back and address issues of diplomacy solely within the Romani world.

A diaspora people, we as Romanies exist in a great many distinct groups and are both geographically and politically dispersed. We have become fragmented by complex social and historical factors, with far-reaching consequences—thus the above definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Onions, 1968: 514) must apply equally well to us: we must be able to talk to each other before we are in a position to talk to anyone else.

At present, different Romani organizations representing different interest groups meet with various non-Romani agencies to address mutually agreed-upon issues. However, the Romani groups involved in each situation do not and cannot speak for all Romanies everywhere. They represent either their own shared agenda (eg, rights of the child) or their own group (eg, human rights training of Roma in Sweden). They do not speak for Romanies as one global people.

This, of course, is to be expected and is not what I am addressing here. What I want to focus on is why, even within such single-topic contexts, we find it difficult to find common ground amongst ourselves. I was in Stockholm not long ago, where at least five different Romani groups resident in Sweden had come together to discuss Roma-related issues; the lack of cooperation amongst them almost led in one case to a death threat. More recently still, I was in Saint Louis, Missouri, where nearly 3000 Roma have settled, part of a much larger population of some 45,000 Bosnian refugees in that city. They must deal with hostility from the non-Romani Bosnians, with learning English, with finding jobs and establishing homes. Yet, they exist in three distinct groups, who maintain their separateness and distinctiveness from each other despite sharing the fact of being a minority within a minority in a new land. At one of our international meetings, the Romani delegates from one particular country sat outside the conference hall angry and threatening to leave because they could not understand the Vlax dialect being used in the presentations.

It is this divisiveness that I want to concentrate on, because it causes us the most problems. I repeat, before we can talk to the rest of the world, we must be able to talk to each other. In order to talk to each other, we must know who we—and each other—are: what separates us and what we have in common. Are Roma one people? The fact that we met in Brussels and are here today in Geneva - from many different parts of the world - is an indication that we are now treated as though we were, regardless of how we have been traditionally seen.

Who's in Charge of Identity?

The definition of Romani identity rests in many hands, though hardly in our own. The media, and even some academics, regard it as based solely on social behaviour. Like Cher with her 1971 hit song “Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves,” in a recent issue *The New York Press* referred to “hoboes and gypsies” as if they were same thing, and *The New Yorker* magazine

wrote about “assertive women: female scholars, priestesses, gypsies, mystics, nature lovers” (Boyer, 2006: 36), evidently assuming that all of those labels refer to behaviours or occupations. One academic specializing in Roma, Professor Ralph Sandland of Nottingham University, says the word *Gypsy* “is merely a job description” (1996: 384), while *The Centurion: A Police Lifestyle Magazine* defines *Gypsies* as “any family-oriented band of nomads” (Schroeder, 1983: 59). The Romani Archives and Documentation Centre in Texas receive the *Google Search* links to “Gypsy” in the press every day. For January 23, 2006, the Centre received four items: one dealt with moths, one with Broadway chorus-line dancers, one with an Irish soccer team, and the last with recreational vehicles. Not one of them had anything to do with Roma.

The academics and folklorists who recognise an ethnic identity have, nevertheless, set their own limitations, traditionally wanting us to be illiterate and living under the hedges in order to be authentic. Even the great Paspatis maintained that “it is in the tent that the Gypsy must be studied, and not in the villages of the bastardized sedentary Gypsies” (188: 14); his contemporary, Pischel, too believed that “the Gypsy ceases to be a Gypsy as soon as he is domiciled and follows some trade” (1883: 358). This would disqualify most of us, and it is clear that educated, settled Roma pose a problem. The Czech sociologist, Jaroslav Sus, claimed that it was an “utterly mistaken opinion that Gypsies form a nationality or a nation, that they have their own national culture, their own national language” (1961: 89). The former sub-editor of the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* mocked the same notion as nothing but “romantic twaddle” (Vesey-Fitzgerald, 1973: 2). Dora Yates, former honorary secretary of that organization, asked “except in a fairy tale, could any hope [of a Romani nationalist movement] ever have been more fantastic?” (1953: 40). Yet another member, Werner Cohn, wrote in his book *The Gypsies* that we have “no leaders, no executive committees, no nationalist movement . . . I know of no authenticated case of genuine Gypsy allegiance to political or religious causes” (1973: 66) - and these are the experts. A firm denial of the nationalist movement also originates with the Gypsy Lore Society. One member, Jiří Lipa wrote:

To be exact, there is no one Gypsy culture nor one Gypsy language. . . . If in the process of looking for native assistants and for training them [the gypsiorist finds that] literary talents should appear, so much the better. . . . [I]n reality, however, it is mere toying, a waste of energy and material means which are not abundant for Gypsy studies. While a missing attribute is being artificially contrived, which is supposed to make the Gypsies an ethnic minority in the conventional sense in the eyes of wishful thinkers and bureaucrats, irreplaceable values of Gypsy culture are being lost in our time. (1983: 4)

The question of who speaks for us is one constantly addressed. Although sympathetic to our position, a non-Romani took it upon himself to “forgive” a non-Romani Auschwitz survivor for anti-Roma statements made in his book (Weiss, 2007). At The University of Texas in April, 2007, the promotional flyer for a conference on Romani women in Turkey entitled *Reconfiguring gender and Roma (“Gypsy”) identity through political discourses in Western Turkey* noted that “Rom and non-Rom men’s voices speak for Roma women,” though the “reconfiguration of Roma identity” in this presentation was made on our behalf by a non-Romani woman, and not by a Romani herself. In a new book on world music, the passages on Romani music are illustrated by two non-Roma Balkan music specialists (Naylor, 2006: 89-90). A week-long “Gypsy” conference at The University of Florida in March, 2007, consisted mainly of singing and dancing and dressing up by various non-Roma, but included no Romani participation. When they were questioned in this regard, the response was that they “couldn’t find any Gypsies.” They have since received a complaint from members of the Miami Romani community.

So Who Are We?

While some of the earliest Roma told the Europeans that we had come from India, this fact was not generally known, and was eventually forgotten even by our own people. As a consequence, a great many incorrect, and sometimes bizarre, hypotheses gained currency. Some gadže have written that we originated from inside the hollow earth, or on the Moon, or

in Atlantis, that we were the remnants of a race of prehistoric horsemen, were Nubians, or Druids, or even that we were a conglomerate drawn from the fringes of European society and that we artificially dyed our skin and spoke a made-up jargon for the purposes of plotting criminal activity.

The problem I am focusing on here is that we ourselves are as uncertain about our origins as is the general gazhikano population - and that uncertainty serves only to sustain the universal Hollywood image. Some of our own people have said that we are Berbers or Jews or Egyptians, or were a presence in the Roman Empire, thus giving the stamp of legitimacy to such claims. It is the very existence of this nebulous identity that has contributed to the ease of its manipulation.

In my book *We Are the Romani People* I complained that degrees have been awarded to graduate students whose theses and dissertations were supervised by committees the members of which had no expertise whatsoever in Romani studies. An article that appeared in a published collection of scholarly essays about Roma in 1999 maintained that “whether Gypsies originate in either Egypt or India is a matter that has not been settled” (Esplugas, 1999: 43). Since 1997 at least three “Gypsy” courses have been established at different American universities by faculty who have no qualifications in the area, who have never met any Romanies, and whose list of readings contain non-academic and misleading titles. Books and articles about Romanies number in the tens of thousands, but practically every single one of them has been written by an outsider—and most of those by people who have never actually met any Roma in their lives. It would be hard to imagine a book about modern-day Poles or Slovaks being taken seriously, had it been written by someone who had never visited Poland or Slovakia and who had never met anyone from those countries.

Recent scholarship is forcing a serious re-examination of our origins. My own sociohistorical and linguistic work supports genetic research conducted by Kalaydjieva and others, who found that “confirming the centuries-old linguistic theory of the Indian origins [of Roma] is no great triumph for modern genetic research,” but that “the major, unexpected and most significant result of these studies is the strong evidence of the common descent of all Gypsies regardless of declared group identity, country of residence and rules of endogamy. . . . [T]he Gypsy group was born in Europe” (2005: 1085-6).

This European perspective is fundamental to the discussion. Three hitherto unconsidered aspects of the contemporary Romani condition rest upon the facts of our history, and must be acknowledged if we are to understand our problems of identity and in-group communication or lack of it.

First, our population has been a composite one from its very beginning, and, at the beginning, was occupationally, rather than ethnically-defined.

Second, while our earliest linguistic, cultural and genetic components are traceable to India, Romanies everywhere essentially constitute a population that acquired its identity and language in the West (accepting the Christian, Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire as linguistically and culturally “western”).

Third, the entry into Europe from Anatolia was not as a single people, but as a number of at least three smaller migrations over perhaps as much as a two-century span of time.

Together, these account in large part for the lack of cohesiveness among the various groups self-identifying as Romani, and for the major dialect splits within the language. We might see each major post-Byzantine group as evolving in its own way, continuing independently a process of assimilation and adaptation begun in northwest India. Thus, the descendants of those held in slavery until the 19th century, and those whose ancestors entered Spain in the 15th century are today very different. The former –the *Vlax* Romanies – were heavily influenced genetically, culturally and linguistically by Romanian and the Romanians; the latter—the *Kalé* Romanies—were influenced in the same way by Mozarabic and Spanish, and both populations have, furthermore been separated by more than six centuries. Any originally acquired characteristics each group might still share, which constitute the genetic, linguistic, and cultural “core of direct retention,” are greatly outweighed by characteristics accreted from the non-Romani world. The reunification (or more accurately unification) movement urged by such organizations as the International Romani Union or the Roma National Congress seeks – as I do myself – to emphasize the original, shared features of each group, rather than those acquired from outside which separate them. Yet, for some, that original material is now scant, and creating for them any sense of a pan-Romani, global ethnicity would require the kind of effort that is, sadly, very far down on the list of day-to-day priorities and, pragmatically, would be difficult to instigate. It also calls into question the legitimacy of the exclusionary and subjective position taken by some groups who regard themselves as being “more Romani” than others.

Accommodating Our Dual Heritage

The extent to which our “Asianness” should play a part in the discourse is a matter of some debate. We are unique among world populations in having the Indian ingredients in our early makeup come together in the West; we are both an Asian and a Western people, but with no Asian experience or (hardly any) presence. Mirga and Gheorghe have noted that some of us “eagerly affirm [our] European roots and heritage and consider [our] Indian past as irrelevant to the current Romani causes

and claims” (1997: 22); while Šaip Jusuf said his feelings of affinity with India were so intense that he refused to recognise that we belong to any European country (Sharma, 1976: 29-30). The late Matéo Maximoff (1994) stridently claimed that if you did not speak the Romani language you could not claim Romani identity.

In a very real sense, we are as European as anyone else. “European” is not a nationality or an ethnicity; Europeans are composed of a multitude of these. “European” does not mean being originally from a part of Europe; if that were true, the Saami and Hungarians and Finns and Estonians would not be Europeans. Having a country is not a qualification; if that were true, then the Basques, the Catalans, and the Frisians would not qualify.

While the knowledge of our Indian origins is important, just as it is important for any nation to know its own history, it is not a body of knowledge kept in mind on a daily basis. In fact, most of us do not even know about it and some of us do not believe it when we first hear about it. When skinheads carry placards that say “Gypsies Go Back to India” this is an informed but unrealistic bigotry: European Romanies regard Europe as home, not India. Our own spokespersons, who believe we should refrain from bringing too much attention to our Indian connection, argue that if we stress our non-Europeanness, it will merely serve as justification for those who would like us to leave. In any case, in light of the details about our history that are now emerging, we may not even have begun to be an ethnic population until our ancestors reached the West, and the time spent in Europe and beyond accounts for practically the entirety of the Romani experience.

Despite the emphasis on Europe, it is important to remember also that we are a diaspora people found all over the world; we are a *global* population, with between a quarter and a third of our total number outside of Europe, particularly in the Americas. The exclusive focus of Romani-related organisations on populations located only in Europe fails to acknowledge

our existence internationally. With the constant (especially post-communist) migration of members of European Romani families to North and South America and to Australia, and with the tremendous increase in the use of the Internet, contacts linking us around the world will continue to grow.

At our follow-up meeting in Geneva, a document was circulated that I found entirely relevant to our own situation. It was the text of an interview by Eugen Tomiuc (2006) with the Chairman of the British Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony, Dr Abduljalil Sajid, part of which is worth reproducing here:

Muslims are a multifarious and multifaceted people throughout the world, and Europe is not separated from the world. Muslims are divided, as all human beings are . . . and Europe is also divided. We didn't come here as a monolithic, collective group in Europe. We all are coming from different backgrounds and we all have to cement our differences and work out together what are our issues, common challenges, common problems, and how we can bring a common approach to deal with those challenges. That will be our strength. I think we can form a permanent body of European imams—councils. That would be a great strength. There we can debate our issues and bring common resolution to those issues to the whole world, and especially to the European people that we are going to be our partners in faith, in belief, and in citizenship. And you have nothing to fear from the Muslims of Europe. [Regarding my identity as either] a Muslim in Europe or as a European Muslim, I'm both. I consider myself a European Muslim. My identity is in my geography, my area, but I myself also consider that my first and foremost duty is to the identity of my faith, believing in God. So I am a Muslim in Europe as well as a European Muslim. I do not see a contradiction in either of these two terms, and we should not be asked and forced to choose one against another. We can be both.

Everything that Sajid maintains for Muslims in Europe (a good many of whom are in fact Roma) also holds true for us. While not linked by a common religion, we share a common origin, but we are divided as the result of many factors, above all physical separation and lack of education. Both have kept us from taking charge of our place in the global community. This is now changing. Our leaders and representatives from all parts of the world are able to meet in person or communicate via the Internet. More scholarly works on our history and socio-political situation have been published in the past twenty years than ever before. Courses in Romani studies are being offered at the highest level, and educational grants for young Roma are now a reality. We have what we need to improve our situation, and to speak for ourselves in the international forum. But before we can be fully equipped to do that, we must speak to each other.

Thomas Acton

27 March 2014

Of course SOME Roma are “very clear” about their own ethnicity, as are SOME unthinking people of every ethnicity. And I have sympathy for people who choose to live their whole lives constrained in a little cardboard box of their own construction, playing, working, marrying and acting politically only with those who share their own limited mindset and prejudices. But I empathise with Nicolae Gheorghe asserting that people have not only a right, but may be forced, to play with their identity in a world that is always changing the rules, and I’ll follow Brian Belton in believing we have a duty to go on questioning identity and prejudice to the very limits of our capacity for reasoning.

Of course, at one level, Yaron does know this; hence his qualification in the second paragraph.

Judith M. Okely

27 March 2014

Subject: Politics: solidarity or conflict

Thanks Ian for a superb overview.

I found that there was solidarity among usually rival groups, such as Irish Travellers and English Romanies, when confronted by the intrusive Police. They were united in a shared crisis against the 'enemy'. When a Gypsy or Traveller betrayed another to the police, this was the worst crime.

As for policy influence, our joint authored book 'Gypsies and Government Policy in England' (1975) DID recognise the Gypsies' preferences. I chose the title. My original employer had first believed Gypsies wanted assimilation but, thanks to the accumulated ethnographic data, changed her mind. Some of this is in my interview in 'Anthropology Today' December 2011.

However, as I discussed in my unpublished Eric Wolf lecture, in Vienna 2006:

'Ethnographic knowledge has the power to transform: it may also be ignored, blocked or misappropriated.' It depends so often on the political climate.

Under Labour in the late 1970s in the UK, there was finally a political recognition of Gypsies' preferences for caravan dwelling and self employment. (see the AT). Later, under John Major the Conservative leader, all this was reversed in 1994, abolishing the duty to provide sites. It was hypocritically suggested that Gypsies buy their own land, knowing it was near impossible

to get planning permission. The multi-million pound eviction from Dale Farm, soon after the election of the Coalition government, was also a symbolic political statement by the Conservative minister. The site, he insisted, was 'sacred' Green Belt land. Actually, it was a highly polluted former scrap yard. By contrast, since this and other evictions of Gypsies and Travellers, there has been considerable successful and profitable lobbying from Building Firms and rich landowners to build multiple housing all over the 'green belt'. These groups repay the powerful with voting loyalty and party funding.

Thus we intellectuals can indeed influence policy IF the politicians want to listen. Many of us, of ALL groups and ethnicities, lobbied against the 1994 legislation, outside the House of Commons, to no avail.

Yaron Matras

27 March 2014

Subject: Who's 'We'?

I agree that Ian very nicely summarises many of the issues, especially those around Dual Heritage (some might prefer: multiple heritage).

Where his essay poses more questions in relation to our recent discussion than answers is, however, his sense of 'we': When Ian says 'we ourselves' — who is he referring to?

It's a serious question, to which I'd really like to know the answer — from Ian, if he wishes to share it with us, or from others who might have strong feelings about what 'we ourselves' means in the context of our discussion.

I'll offer a few possible interpretations that might lend themselves to the reader, and would welcome comments:

- 1) 'we ourselves' are individuals who come from a family background where people are engaged in a family-based service economy, often itinerant, such as showmen or fairground people, regardless of language, country of residence or origin, or particular customs or beliefs;
 - 2) 'we ourselves' are people who live in caravans, or have lived in caravans in the past, or whose family relations live in caravans, regardless of language, specific trade, or country of residence;
 - 3) 'we ourselves' are people whose families regard themselves as 'Roma' and who speak the Romani language in their homes across most generations, and who on that basis might be inferred as being ultimately of Indian origin;
 - 4) 'we ourselves' are people who agree with Ian, and who may or may not have made an effort to learn the Romani language as adults as a way of expressing their connection with the Romani political movement;
 - 5) 'we ourselves' are those who, on the basis of their family background, might be labelled 'Gypsy' or 'tsigan' or 'çingene' or 'ghajar' by others: Roma, Irish Travellers, Azerbaijanian Luli, Sudanese Halab, Turkish Abdal — in other words, 'we' are those who are labelled 'they' by 'them' (and who may adopt 'they' as self-ascription);
 - 6) 'we ourselves' are those who have taken active steps to tie their destiny to that of the people whom others regard as 'Gypsies';
 - 7) 'we ourselves' is an open category, based entirely on self-ascription; and so if I, or Judith Okely, or Michael Stewart, or others, wish to be part of Ian's 'we ourselves', then we can simply self-ascribe to that category on the basis of our own declaration, without any pre-requisites or 'objective' or 'essentialising' criteria;
 - 8) 'we ourselves' are all those whom Ian chooses to include as part of his 'we ourselves', and therefore subjectively defined by him on the basis of his own personal feelings of affinity and affiliation with others;
- or a combination of any of the above?

Judith M. Okely

28 March 2014

Subject: Who's 'We'?

Self-Ascription is NOT merely an individual choice as Barth makes VERY, VERY clear.

Again the problem with 'Area studies' where the MOST cited article in the 1970s in Social anthropology and ethnic studies throughout Europe, if not the USA, is parodied or unknown, namely, Frederick Barth's 'Introduction' to his edited 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries' 1969. Thanks to Will Guy for alerting me to this key text.

Barth's definition of self-ascription re the English Gypsies is explored in Chapter 5 of Okely's 1983 monograph. Descent was adopted as a minimal condition, alongside other self-selected but changing criteria.

This author might have been able to say 'WE', if only she had followed up the family rumour that, on her mother's side (Stockers), there are Cornish Smugglers where one had married a Spanish Gypsy. My site neighbours in the 1970s responded to this excitedly: 'That's why you've come BACK to us. It's in your blood'.

Here is the principle of descent, though expressed differently from a Norwegian professor.

Michael Stewart

28 March 2014

Subject: RE: Who's 'We'?

Yaron writes: "I don't believe that there is a category of 'Jewish languages' (i.e. any meaningful features that such languages share among themselves, which are not also shared with other, non-Jewish languages)". Exactly!

Indeed I do not believe there is a category of English or British people (i.e. any meaningful features that members of this category share among themselves, which are not also shared with other, non-English/British people and likewise for 'The Roma') - APART from the possibility that due to geography, institutional, market and political and local histories there might be some distinctive features of the social structure of life in Britain (and among Romany populations). I am very happy to concede that there may also be some distinctive features of the way speakers of some languages perceive the world (at least if you accept the Steven Levinson type modified linguistic relativism) - and indeed research on these kinds of claims in a bilingual environment sounds like an interesting project. But from an anthropological point of view I find the category people or culture, as used in the strong sense, unhelpful and tend to see them as second order reflections of other social processes (as in the Gellnerian account of nationalism) [or as a colleague once suggested: it is not nations that make Europe but Europe that has made nations..., if you see what I mean, transforming existing cultural material and differentiations into national difference].

In the case of Romany populations I don't want to deny patterns of cultural differentiation that commonly crop up among Romany speaking populations, among the descendants of such who no longer speak Romany and sometimes also among others who share 'Romany' social/economic niches. But that does not for me lead to talking of 'The Roma' - I suppose mostly because I don't see the evidence that the origin of the Romany language has grounded shared social forms; any more than I buy the idea that modern day Hungarianness is shaped by the Siberian ancestry of their language.

I do think that the diversity of Romany lives even within one country is as important as the connections between their experience. To take a simple example - a colleague of mine visited the Romany speaking families I know in Hungary. She has worked for 15 years or more with so-called Magyar Cigany (Romungros as they are rather perjoratively called by the

Rom...). This outstanding ethnographer just noted how entering 'my' community was like walking into another world. The Romungre she works with spend all their lives cultivating their distinctive sense of what it is to be a human - different from the Magyars and from other 'Gypsies' as they call them but still she is at home culturally in a simple way in their world - not in the day she spent among the Roma. Their political structures are far more easily assimilated into Hungarian state patterns. Not so the Roma.

So I am far from denying that there are patterns of cultural distinctiveness to be found in the world. What I don't think is that these are the expressions of deep essential features of the social order (and of course I may be completely wrong.... I concede the Herderian view has many attractions and great intellectuals attached to it).

That said there are several other reasons for me saying happily that I research among Roma.

- 1) The people I know call themselves Rom - and in my ethnographic work I try to avoid ever suggesting I am talking about 'The Roma' really beyond these people and their networks - occasionally up to a Hungarian Romany speaking level.
- 2) They speak Romany (see above) and other considerations of a linguistic-cultural sort
- 3) and this concerns the network - since there is a body of civil servants and others who propose 'Roma policies' they might as well benefit from the insight of people who know and research among the targets of their action. I personally don't feel like telling them who to target - that is up to Romany leaders. But if they have a policy that targets inclusion of the victims of segregation into mainstream schools then I probably have some expert knowledge which might make total failure less likely. I do think the world would be better if there were really good social and cultural support policies for the disadvantaged and ethnic distinctions were not the basis of social policy... So, unsurprisingly (!) I find the British compromise of robust anti-discrimination legislation and weak promotion of multiculturalism a happy balance of French

republicanism and Hapsburg multi-culturalism. BUT I also completely understand why Romany activists - in the absence of representation and acknowledgement in such programs - demand they are 'recognised' as a distinct voice.

- 4) And this brings me to the final reason - all these people called Roma etc (and others who Yaron would not include for perfectly coherent reasons, and whom I for partially different reasons would also not call Roma) are labelled Zigeuner by the majority and this profoundly affects their lives. And there is a bunch of work to be done there - deconstructing prejudice etc etc, and books like Yaron's recent one take that on head on (even if I disagree with some of the terms of reference he adopts, nation etc.. the difference between us are small compared to the difference between us and the rest of the world).

Yaron Matras

28 March 2014

Subject: RE: Who's 'We'?

Just a quick response on the linguistic angle in Michael's posting:

- 1) The interest in Romani-speaking populations as a coherent target group is not based on the INDIAN ORIGIN of the Romani language but rather on the contemporary affinity of varieties of Romani to one another (despite differences, they are at least as mutually comprehensible as varieties of German, if not more so). So the comparison is not to the Siberian origin of Hungarian, but to the fact that Hungarian speakers living in Hungary share a language with Hungarian speakers living in Austria and Romania.

2) I don't think anybody would nowadays take seriously the suggestion that a shared language points people to a shared view of society or a common way of perceiving the world; rather, the idea is that a shared language is in itself a key aspect of shared culture, i.e. not an instrument to view the world in a similar way, but a shared practice in its own right.

Michael Stewart

28 March 2014

Subject: RE: Who's 'We'?

Yaron,

Thanks for these clarifications. Yes indeed to both.

Sam Beck

28 March 2014

Subject: RE: Who's 'We'?

In the US the people who are considered “black”, even “Black” may have no language in common, but nonetheless, they are seen as belonging to one group. They are African descendent.

It's not always about language.

My son, adopted from Brazil with skin color we call “café au lait” when asked for his identity he does not identify as black, but Brazilian.

Michael Stewart

29 March 2014

Subject: RE: Who's 'We'?

I would be interested to discuss further how this works as below:

Because I would assume that for the most part, and even quite recently, most Romany speakers in CEE did not often encounter Rom from very far away and probably rarely from what is now legally called 'abroad'. I can see that the shared practice of creating modern literary Romani, while chatting on the internet for example, is indeed a shared practice that is one of the kinds of things that can ground a sense of communal identity of the sort that underlies nationhood in Anderson's sense of an 'imagined community' (the point, Ciprian, being made that nations are more imagined than any other form of community but that this is what all societies are - a form of 'imagined' (i.e. socially represented) connection that links otherwise 'animal' individuals. All social orders are a matter of imagination' in this view (see Durkheim) and pace Anderson who erroneously thinks this is a feature of the modern world.

I can also see that lots of the activities that international activists engage in are also creating new forms of 'shared practice' and Romani is a crucial part of that. And over time with the appropriate institutional support (museums, ethnic registration forms, schools, political parties and so on) this will or could create a new form of Romani connectedness. George Soros' NGO institutions are hard at work trying to do just this. But, for instance, the 'ordinary' Rom of Debrecen in eastern Hungary have not had much shared practice with the 'ordinary' Kelderas Rom of Paris in quite a while (I take an example that is favourable as it were to the community point of view - if we were to talk of the Manouches the time scale would be even greater... though I do accept [and this is why I ask the question] that there are affinities between the Manouches and the

Rom of Debrecen and - as Patrick Williams pointed out at a GLS conference about 11 years ago - they would recognise each other if they met (in a hospital A&E in Berlin), for example, as 'another kind of Rom').

So - how do you suggest the Romani nation has been created (sustained maybe?) through sharing language and other shared practices? Or, why do you call this kind of mutual recognition 'nationhood'? I would agree that there is a kind of mirror version of the wary mutual recognition that members of different social classes of a 'nation-state' afford each other when they bump into each other abroad - a recognition of commonalities but not an expression of the 'imagined community' that is a nation. [I am of course aware - described it - of how Rom who had no familiarity with each other in Hungary and communist Eastern Europe more broadly used to help each other out when they were 'abroad' - on the open road - because they are Rom, but I would have put that down to the 'state of siege' among Hungarian Rom of that time [and sometimes elsewhere as in Luc de Heusch's account, 'blitz spirit' in UK English] rather than an enduring sense of nationhood.

I said in the earlier mail that Rom could of course form a nation. What I meant was that it would be possible to turn one of the standard critiques of Anderson on its head and say that 'given the Roma are no more solidarity and communally minded than any nation really is in practice' [the willingness to die for king and country is far more loudly proclaimed in memorial than in the trenches where the rifle at the back of the 'tommy' going over the top plays an unsung role] they are in fact as much of a potential 'nation' as 'the French' were 200/250 years ago and all they lack is the institutional forms to enforce 'Romaniness' [conscription in times of war, school enrolment etc.].

So, I wonder if the important values you listed in an earlier email are insufficiently precise to demarcate off this population from others:

“Last November the Romani project at the University of Manchester hosted a public debate and cultural event on Roma identity. We had a guest from Serbia — the Romani musician and activist Daragan Ristic, and a guest from Sweden — Romani teacher and writer Angelina Dimitri-Taikon, and young Roma who are resident in Manchester attended, some of them of Romanian and others of Czech, Slovak and Lithuanian background.

After the event, a group of some 15 people assembled in my office and discussed the experience. They agreed that they all felt a sense of affinity with one another, as ‘one people’. The most obvious indicator of that was that they could share a conversation in Romani, but also that they shared manners and respect (such as allowing the more elderly to speak first, and adding appropriate phrases of respect when others mentioned their children and grandchildren). They also all agreed that they have nothing in common with Irish Travellers, when the topic came up.”

I would suggest that the thing they really have in common in this case is language - and this is a massive and hugely powerful resource - a force for enormous cultural inspiration and a source of potentially wide-ranging cultural imagination (see the history of nations), so not to be dismissed. There are also cultural values that these Rom share as you suggest - attitudes to the elderly, ideas of gendered behaviour probably, and probably quite a bit of other ‘stuff’ - but aren’t these also shared with many of the Balkan peoples from whom so much of their grammar was taken over? (And indeed with the Irish Travellers with whom they share no historical connection at all?). If you read Jill Dubisch for example on Greek villagers of the 60’s and 70’s it sounds very much like Romany families we know. [Which is not to say that the ‘Rom are just Greeks’ - you could say the opposite just as logically!].

I know that it is plausibly argued by some anthropologists that just as there are language families there are families of culture - culture areas in which enduring features of human sociality tend to be cast in a certain idiom. You might contrast African

societies which are so often imagined in terms of lineage and descent with Polynesian societies which are understood around idioms of co-residence and houses and European societies where idioms of forms of productivity/economic function seem to take such a determinant role. In this sense the Rom seem to me to be full square Europeans - the idioms of society are wholly European - they are part of that conversation that goes on in Europe - indeed the self-definition of so many Rom as traders, as self-employed etc. seems in this sense to be a thoroughly European 'gesture'...

Irén Kertész-Wilkinson

29 March 2014

Whilst I do agree that language is a very important and an essential instrument in creating any kind of community, as an ethnomusicologists I am really surprised how music, art, dance and other form of communication are underestimated in most of the discussions in Roma creating a kind of community among themselves. With various festivals, the internet, and other musical sources boundaries that have been kept for long between various Roma groups are overcome by manifold ways not least by incorporating into each other's music from other Roma communities or even non-Roma communities.

Music, which was the first public 'language' of most Hungarian Roma politicians, is often a road to a kind of unity that are already working in practice before it became noticed by the analysts while verbal discourse still may maintain the differences, or indeed, instrumental to create differences between various Roma communities as well as Roma and non-Roma communities.

Sam Beck

29 March 2014

What Michael says in his own way makes a lot of sense to me. The idiom of a Romani nation, indeed, is European. The question I have is how did that come about? And perhaps this is what Yaron is pointing at. We are looking for a unity that does not exist. However this does not mean it should not be.

Martin Kovats

29 March 2014

“Yaron wrote: Should we tell the Council of Europe that they should go on maintaining a ‘Roma, Gypsy and Travellers Division’ in order to make the point that there are no shared policy interests for a group that is so defined? Can we really persuade policy makers to indulge in our intellectual exercise, or do we have a duty to advise them that the category is merely ‘imagined’ and therefore no concrete policy measures can be drafted or implemented to address its needs?”

Politics creates a new form and meaning to Roma through the politicisation of Roma identity. Michael is right that ‘the Roma’ could become a ‘nation’ or political ‘people’, but we are a long way from that and it is questionable if that would be a good thing. At present the existence of a ‘Roma people/nation’ is just an abstract, aspirational claim.

What is different about our times is that ‘Roma’ people themselves are now active participants in the public/political discourse about Roma. The politicisation of Roma identity will be a part of politics in Europe for a long time. Unfortunately, Roma people and activists are very weak and have little influence on the discourse about themselves compared with other,

more powerful interests. Roma activism has huge potential and will grow in strength over time, a process supported by wider political, economic and ideological tendencies towards separate ethnic governance and the devaluing of citizenship.

This creates a huge problem for Roma activism – does it effectively promote equality of opportunity or segregation? Does it challenge racism, or contribute to the racialisation of politics? It also creates intellectual and ethical problems for scholars who contribute to the conceptualisation of ‘the Roma’. We could spend years developing definitions of Roma, producing macro data, transnational representative and governance structures etc. (much easier to do than resolve structural poverty and unemployment or winning the anti-racist argument). For nationalists the institutionalisation of the ‘Roma people’ may be an end in itself, but for those who value equality and social cohesion, such an approach may be an obstacle.

Politics is just one aspect of life and of all things ‘Roma’, but I suggest it is an increasingly important one. We cannot stop the politicisation of Roma identity (it is too useful for a range of interests), only try and influence its development. Maybe the best way forward is to emphasise smaller scale interventions to maximise accurate knowledge (about the target group and context) and accountability, rather than attempting to construct a top-down, transnational (politicised) Roma within which local activities take place.

David Scheffel

29 March 2014

Indeed, and it is this politicization of identity which Roma share with other peoples/nations/ethnic groups that have been molded through decolonisation. That’s why quibbling over parallels with Germans or French is less productive than seeing

the Roma as members of a larger category of formerly colonized subjects. Here it is surely the shared experience of oppression and outright subjugation that provides the kind of (Durkheimian) solidarity required for such 'imagined communities'. This has been amply documented for American Blacks, Native Indians ('First Nations' in Canada), and dozens of post-colonial nations and pseudo-nations all over the world. What Martin calls 'racialisation of politics' could be usefully seen as part of the 'indigenization' phenomenon that's making a mark on the contemporary (again, primarily de-colonized) world - while some of us might prefer the more traditional term 'parochialism'. Anthropologists (followed by political scientists) have been studying this for decades. Some of the more instructive demonstrations of the dangers of 'identity politics' come from post-apartheid South Africa where the quest for (national, tribal, community) purity has led to a de-facto reconstitution of apartheid in the form of witch hunts.

Yaron Matras

29 March 2014

But it's not really about various different people - Irish Travellers, Azerbaijanian Luli, Bulgarian Roma - getting together and uniting in a fight against colonisation, is it? It's more about academics and politicians defining them as one group, based not on an anti-colonial agenda or struggle, but rather on the images that have been entrenched in majority culture of them as a particular category of Others. So in fact, uniting 'Gypsies, Roma, Travellers' under one umbrella is a perpetuation of colonisation, not a liberation from it.

Margaret Greenfields

30 March 2014

At risk of sounding trite but speaking as perhaps one of (as far as I know) the very few policy/legal trained members of this list I think it is worth remembering that by its nature social policy is essentially both an academic study and a professional field which consists of the design and delivery of practice based interventions with the explicit intent of maximising social good and developing/refining systems by which wellbeing may be promoted.

As such, picking up on a comment I noted in an earlier email we are inevitably working with large ‘sets’ of people or ‘problems’ and definitions of the characteristics of those impacted are necessarily broad-brush. I personally have no difficulty (in the way a medic will use a surgical tool or drug to attempt to alleviate pain rather than want to ask precisely how the tool was conceptualised and designed) with using ‘general’ policies which relate to those experiencing poverty or racism etc and which are not exclusively targeted at Roma/Gypsy/Traveller peoples (howsoever these communities are defined). Such broad-brush policies have their place. However having identified a broad community of peoples [let us for the moment refer to these communities as Roma] who are subject in the main to wide-spread discrimination and racism, policy makers and legislators have in addition developed a set of policies [more condition-specific tools if you will] aimed at providing additional protection for these groups who can be brought within the enactments/formulations.

As such I would be very concerned indeed if academics — particularly those from other disciplines who may be less familiar with the creaking but far-reaching impact of tinkering with policy development — were to propose that a practice based ‘category’ should be dismantled and other definitions — which may leave some communities who are structurally excluded

outside of statutory protections — are used to replace the perhaps linguistically and culturally challengeable but useful term ‘Roma’ (and in the UK context ‘Gypsy and Traveller’).

Speaking as a practitioner, one who is currently working to complete a report — co-produced with Gypsy/Traveller researchers for the UK Department of Health — which is focused on the need to ensure that health and social care providers enhance the environmental living conditions of those communities variously defined as Gypsies and Travellers and, if necessary, may face legal requirements to do so, I find the idea that we should begin to dismantle admittedly loosely connected but potentially effective and definitely meaningful policies a conceit I can well live without. This is also doubtless the case for those people and NGOs I’ve been interviewing, working alongside and talking to on a daily basis who are dealing with individuals living in often appalling conditions without access to water or sewage, or who are supporting Roma migrants living in over-crowded accommodation with dodgy landlords who will not make repairs and merely threaten eviction if such legally required claims are made.

The broad-brush nature of definitions of Roma people may not be popular with all or many on this list, but when I’m dealing with someone on the roadside or who is able to utilise policy enactments to improve the situation of themselves and their families, I will use every tool in the box to do so. I feel that political debates of this kind are a luxury which needs, until the key barriers to decent standards of living and protection from violence are overcome, to be left well alone until or unless those Gypsies, Travellers and Roma (to use the common UK terminology) who are directly affected come forward and say that they feel that policies do not reflect their needs and should be unpicked and re-designed.

Like Yaron and others, I work very closely with increasingly politicised, highly educated and extremely sophisticated Gypsies, Travellers and Roma colleagues, attend All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) where the communities debate these very topics with each other, parliamentarians and policy makers and others, and I find this greatly to be desired. I would be

very happy to 'do myself out of a job' and see Roma/Gypsy/Traveller policy makers, academics and lawyers working in my stead. However, until that time and until I hear the voices of the communities with whom I work on a daily basis asking for these definitional changes to occur, I personally have significant doubts as to the value of this exercise of deconstruction of definitions, particularly given that the communities in question have a very clear idea of their own identities and, in UK terms at least, are constructing a shared and highly strategic political identity to bring about enhanced practical solutions.

For those of us working in policy contexts in the UK, it is impossible not to know that the very terms Gypsies, Travellers and Roma have been agreed by community activists in their current format after having engaged with the imposed political categorisation drafted by Government bureaucrats. Debate and lobbying by community activists has ensured that the terminology has been altered over time to recognise the diversity yet commonality of interest between the various communities who are strategically working together as required, and attending APPGs, National Federation and other meetings to fore-ground key areas of practical concern which impact on well-being and daily life.

In conclusion, whilst policy has an inevitable overlap with legislative enactment (i.e., it is designed to deal with macro level issues) — although individual cases typically explore the micro-impact on individuals — the precise definitions of those groups or categories 'caught' within policy formation will vary by nation-state and — if local authorities are charged with implementation — at a regional level. Accordingly, whilst the intent is to deal with a major social issue, I tend to feel that despite the flawed nature of sweeping definitions which colleagues from other disciplines identify as unfit for some purposes, it is worth speaking directly to community members impacted by exclusion, lawyers and policy practitioners to consider the value of existing regimes. Once something is dismantled it is very difficult, if not impossible, to reinstate it, and whilst debates may continue in comfortable offices, the lives of people living on the margins can be disrupted and damaged.

I have to say I've found this an enjoyable and interesting debate not least because it has made me realise now much of a practitioner I still am when compared with my academic colleagues.

Yaron Matras

30 March 2014

These are very interesting points and I think it would be valuable if the cited “voices of community members” could somehow be referenced — not necessarily in the academic sense of referencing, but referred to more specifically — because obviously there are different experiences here. Who are the community activists in the UK who are reported to have got together to forge a shared lobbying group for ‘Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers’?

I’m not sure what the precise borderline is between academic and practitioner: I worked for a Roma NGO for seven years before becoming a full-time academic, and as an academic I’ve been coordinating a project that has an outreach component in a Roma community, and so I am in effect the line manager of three Roma outreach workers. But whatever my credentials are, I have never once met Roma who told me that they felt that they were the same people as Travellers; and even the English Gypsies whom I know (who call themselves Romani Gypsies) emphasise that their culture and that of Travellers are “completely different”. At the same time, every time I witnessed encounters of Roma from different countries — and I’ve been witnessing these regularly since 1988 — all involved agreed that they were one people, despite subtle difference.

So in my experience, practice reinforces — indeed, inspires — my academic instinct to ‘de-construct’ the vague and undifferentiated category of ‘Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers’.

Margaret Greenfields

30 March 2014

I agree completely (see comment in my longer email below) that people have a very clear distinct identity as a member of a specific group (Gypsy/Traveller/Roma in our UK context and of course the sub-groups and dialects within such broad headings), and they do not all claim to be identical, but my point was with regard to the strategic usefulness of broad categories which enable communities/policy/legal/academic teams to collaboratively engage with specific problematic areas.

A quick list of the groups who were involved in such initiatives as the APPG and who are attending/working together in contexts such as the Travellers Aid Trust convened community for meetings/conferences — most recently in February 2014 <http://travellersaidtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/BOOKING-FORM-Printer-friendly.pdf> — note the discussion convened by community members on the need for a ‘shadow report’ to Parliament will include (in no particular order):

Roma Support Group

ACERT

Equality

The Traveller Movement

Friends Families and Travellers

National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups

The Gypsy Council

One Voice for Travellers

As well as many smaller community groups and individuals from across the Regions and Countries within the UK

Network Discussion 2: Romani cultural identity

Many of these groups are actively represented in terms of liaison with and advice to CLG, DH and other Government Departments and thus are linked through the APPG for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma affairs.

Next week, for example, 8th April, there will be various activities around Parliament, and I'd draw to the attention of those interested, the following EDM - WORLD ROMA DAY

- Session: 2004-05
- Date tabled: 04.04.2005
- Primary sponsor: McNamara, Kevin

as well as to the launch on the 8th April in Parliament of the PATRIN (specifically Romany/Gypsy on this occasion) history project sponsored by the Roma, Gypsy, Traveller APPG — demonstrating how an over-arching political configuration can also support a community-specific event.

Perhaps indeed rather than labelling myself as a practitioner instead of an academic I should say that I suspect it is my specific practice background and configuration (using broad-brush concepts and practices) which differentiates me from colleagues who may be more concerned with the particularity of groups — although I also fully acknowledge that “good law can make hard cases” — most importantly, however, throughout this debate I remain reassured that we are all seeking to mitigate discrimination and racism whatever our preferred tools and mode of discourse.

Sam Beck

30 March 2014

Yaron's example of academic/practitioner is an example of how these borders are permeable. Do you want hard lines of demarcation? I am also wondering if you are using the GB case to generalize across the landscape.

Yaron Matras

30 March 2014

Thanks to Margaret for the additional information. I note that the call for a conference on 'Gypsy, Traveller & Roma Communities' last February came from an initiative called 'Travellers Aids Trust'. I am not familiar with the background, but I wonder to what extent individual activist groups are 'shadowing' — this word actually appears in the document itself — the labelling and categorisation practices that have established themselves among government, practitioners, academics, and before that, the Gypsy Lore Society, in Britain, rather than 'organically' coming up with a 'strategic category' of their own; or perhaps the better way to put the question is this: Does it appear to individual representatives of Travellers and other groups strategically attractive to align themselves with 'outsider' categories in order to gain attention and recognition and to benefit from existing structures and attitudes?

Just as an example, Rudko Kawczynski, President of the ERTF, told me how the Council of Europe insisted back in 2004-2005, when it negotiated a contract with the organisation, that the representation of Roma at the Council of Europe should

adopt the word 'Travellers' into its name — hence European Roma and Travellers Forum — against the plans and wishes of the initiators of the ERTF. Kawczynski and his colleagues agreed, for 'strategic' reasons; but the strategy was, to align themselves with a category that had already been in use by the Council of Europe, inspired by the documentation produced by Jean-Piere Liégeois and others. It was not a bottom-up, community-based or insider categorisation, it was community representatives reluctantly adopting the categorisation set by others in order to gain acceptance and recognition from those others.

Margaret Greenfields

30 March 2014

Thanks Yaron for this secondary and important question and also the example provided. I think this is best perhaps answered by those community activists themselves who are members of this list — a hugely important question — but in terms of strategic effectiveness I can see why groups and individuals may wish to align themselves with pre-existing terms and in so doing be able to draw upon and influence policy and legislative formation, which is a process (obviously in the widest sense not in relation purely to Roma peoples) that in fact forms part of the core curricula in post-grad Policy courses. (I taught for a number of years a module on 'the policy making process' at Master level where we explored this very situation in some depth.) This is inevitably a very 'potted' response to this question which doesn't reveal — as I don't think it is my role to do so and indeed I may not be party to many discussions — the internal debates and alliances between and across Gypsy, Traveller and Roma groups in the UK and decisions made on lobbying practices and/or when differences of opinion or alternative advice on how policies should be formed. Inevitably this will shift at times but in the main there is a degree of

close working as far as I can see in relation to core issues. See further indeed the TAT [Travellers Aid Trust] panel review at the House of Lords in 2011 — the report on the website[<http://travellersaidtrust.org/>]where various groups gave evidence to parliamentarians and policy makers.

Responding now to the more precise questions (where I can help):

The Travellers Aid Trust was formed in 1986. I was in fact one of the founder Trustees as were others associated with NCCL [National Centre for Citizenship and the Law], as 'Liberty', the legal and human rights organisation, was then named, and initially TAT worked with generic 'Travellers' (often festival going New Travellers facing evictions and police violence). In time, as a direct result of approaches by individual Gypsies and subsequently Irish Travellers seeking legal advice and support as aided in its development by the subsequent close association with Friends, Families and Travellers (founded in the late 1990s), the organisation became the only registered charity at that time which gave direct grants to Gypsies, Travellers and Roma whilst we had the money to do so. In addition, constituent groups and Trustees (who come from differing communities) are often active in NGOs and policy practice. The TAT mission statement consists of supporting all of the above communities and individual members of the community experiencing hardship, and eventually, as the small pots of money ran out — all of my own royalties from books for example go to the 'small grants' arm of the organisation — we have become more of a broker for funders and engaged very closely in supporting community led policy engagement.

In the 1990s, TAT, as at that point one of the only groups working with *all* of the distinct communities, was one of the agencies who supported the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit, Friends Families and Travellers and the Irish Traveller Movement in hosting and managing the Gypsy, Traveller Law Reform Coalition which was a community led and managed activity which aimed to increase policy and legal representation of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. That configuration was initially called

the Gypsy Law Reform Coalition, and the title was changed in response to lobbying by Travellers who wished to have their distinct identity recognised — a move which has since reoccurred with Roma populations in more recent years in policy/political contexts. The change of terminology was indeed recognised politically, too, prior to Irish Travellers being recognised in law as a distinct cultural and ethnic group protected by the Race Relations Acts.

The Coalition which subsequently folded when members felt it was not functioning as they would wish, as such collaborative groupings often do, re-emerged in a different configuration as the Romany Gypsy led 'Federation', and again parties to the former Coalition are also active in the strongly community led APPG. All of these activities initially emerged out of the mid 1990s Cardiff Law School groupings and meetings, hosted by lawyers and practitioners, which brought together community activists to debate issues of concern to themselves and to seek to work in partnership with policy/legal practitioners to bring about substantive change. At that time, the Cardiff meetings — forerunner of the Coalition activities — aimed at supporting site building and ensuring recognition of different ethnicities and cultural practices alongside the need to engage with core policy areas such as education, health and anti-racist activities. That at least is my recollection of the events and whilst there will be different variants and narratives depending upon those to whom you speak, that we are mainly still speaking to each other and working alongside each other does, I feel, say something — although not as tellingly as the fact that the issues of concern remain largely the same, with the roll-back in state support and with the gains made during the previous political administration in many cases having fallen by the way-side in the light of severe cut-backs in services.

From my point of view, however, despite the various histories of cooperation and, at times, conflict which have occurred, one of the most important aspects is that what was largely initially a Gorja melded consortia working alongside feisty community activists many of whom were becoming more *publicly* politically engaged for the first time after a lifetime of challenging

racism and evictions on a personal level is now over-whelmingly fronted by Gypsy, Traveller and Roma activists who lead by example and increasingly by highly qualified and skilled community members who are able to draw upon (where they feel necessary or desirable) the skills of people like myself. In that way I hope that my work and that of the teams I work with means that we gorje/gadje are useful tools in the box possessed by community members, including the many dynamic young leaders who are coming to the fore.

I should also have added to the list of community groups the very active and astute Leeds GATE (Gypsy and Traveller Exchange). Apologies for missing them and doubtless many others off my hastily drawn up list in response to your question, Yaron. I hope it helps to clarify some of the background.

Yaron Matras

30 March 2014

What fascinates me about this account is the realisation that ‘self-ascription’ can be a by-product of outside ascription: non-Roma/Traveller/Gypsies set up an initiative to support a ‘diversity’ of communities; in so doing they are no doubt guided by their own images which lead them to lump together various communities in one category (Bengali immigrants, for example, and African-Caribbeans, were not included in the TAT remit); individuals from the targeted communities then take up the offer for support, and eventually integrate into the structure and help ‘front’ it, creating the impression that there is a shared Roma/Traveller/Gypsy community, or indeed forging such a community — or at least, one of activists — in the process.

To use terms similar to the ones proposed by David Scheffel: colonial categories are imposed on colonial subjects, who then adopt them as their own as part of their struggle for decolonisation.

Where does that place the phrase 'we ourselves'?

Sam Beck

30 March 2014

Read Gramsci on hegemony and others on counter-hegemony.

Margaret Greenfields

30 March 2014

And finally, the issue arose because of communities who were NOMADIC at that point in time — the key element of shared identity being moved on, beaten, children removed into care, evicted — and I literally spent time with people dying at the roadside as a result of being unable to access medical care. That perhaps is one of the main issues of difference in the UK context from broader more sedentarised people. If being part of a group who worked to try to challenge those brutal scenes — taking place in the context of Thatcherite policies — makes me a coloniser so be it. I'd not live myself if I walked away when I had opportunities to engage and make a difference. If I hold up my hands and say 'can't do it, sorry, you've not self-ascribed in the right way' what does that make me?

David Scheffel

30 March 2014

A good example of this “self-ascription as a by-product of outside ascription” can be seen in the adoption of the self-ascription ‘First Nations’ by Canadian aboriginal groups. These entities don’t constitute ‘nations’ in the sense of imagined communities’ since they are based on shared kinship. But by now it’s a matter of prestige but also reflection of colonial-era labeling, as in “Indian nations”. Perhaps the concept ‘colonisation of the mind’ is useful here, but I agree with Margaret that political expediency should be taken into consideration.

Yaron Matras

30 March 2014

So, the original TAT category was based on nomadism and the practical problems that nomads faced; fair enough.

But now, the organisation is seeking to integrate into its activities Roma from Eastern Europe, who are not nomads, but migrants (as we saw in the call for the February event, which Margaret forwarded).

Where does the affinity between NOMADS and Roma migrants come from?

Jean-Luc Poueyto

30 March 2014

Following our discussion and, in particular, Michael Stewart's remarks (with which I agree), I'd like to add the following: Benedict Anderson focuses on the place of literacy in the rise of the idea of national identity. In terms of our discussion, I think that *writing* is fundamental to the construction of such categorizations (Goody).

Beginning at the turn of the 19th century, as the types of classification systems, that were previously used for natural science began to be applied to people (M. Foucault, *Les mots et les choses*), the classification, based on writing, of human groups acquired a performative effect on scientists, politics and the behavior of bureaucracies. As opposed to classification based on the use of spoken language, this type of categorization, as it was presented, was no longer a flexible framework for discussing human culture but rather an exercise of power with dreadful results for many. Here I am thinking of the works of Foucault, E. Said (and, for example, those of JP Chretien, C. Coquio on the Hutus and Tutsis) but primarily, in the current discussion, about the way that the Rassenhygienische Forschungsstelle—directed by Ritter with the help of Eva Justin—used restrictive categories such as these to decide the fate of so many, who were grouped accordingly and eventually massacred.

As scholars, researchers, political thinkers, we are stuck within this inherited framework and its historical uses, a framework that is very difficult to change. The French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari proposed a different model, called the "rhizome", that describes the way that plants such as strawberries are linked. In this model there is no discernable origin or central place of power; each element is connected with others, which are in turn connected with others, in a network of dynamic relationships. This is in sharp contrast to a strict classification system that provides no place for the complexity of human culture.

In trying to understand the people I observe in my fieldwork — the Manouches of the south of France — and applying this model, I notice first their strong links to their restricted nuclear family; second, their links with their (ever-changing) extended family; and finally, their less obvious links with gadje, often from the lower socioeconomic classes, with whom they share friendship, play sports, enjoy marriages and feasts, and so on, as well as share a similar economic situation. These various and complex relationships exist outside of any rigidly defined identity. Moreover, these links do not extend just as a synchronic axis, but also a diachronic axis. That means that each Manouche I know built his own identity at the crossroads of a continual field of interactions. Some of them depend on the cultural, social, economic environment, and the result is that the behavior, the religious beliefs, the food, the music, even the language can always change by intercultural actions and be very flexible. But other ones involve him in an imagined common past, the one of the “dear departed” that he shares deeply with his close and also extended family. That is why I think that such a strong identity always escapes from any kind of strict categorization and leads to a constant misunderstanding with any form of political or administrative institution.

In conclusion, I find that the issue we are discussing is primarily an epistemological problem that has been linked to political actions with horrendous consequences. I believe that we must, in concert with the people we are trying here to talk about, build new models that are both scientifically satisfactory and less open to political manipulation.

David Scheffel

30 March 2014

I agree that political engagement (including contribution to social policy) is important, and I admire your dedication to and knowledge of this domain, Margaret. At the same time, it is useful to practice some debunking from time to time, because if academics don't do that, who will? We are expected to ask uncomfortable, provocative and even seemingly reactionary

questions, because the only alternative to a diversity of opinions is what Germans aptly call “Gleichschaltung” (imperfectly translatable as involuntary unification). Whether it’s in the name of Nazism, Marxist-Leninism or NGO-spearheaded political correctness, it’s dangerous. I have seen ‘engaged’ North American anthropology deteriorate because its practitioners are no longer allowed to ask critical questions about the people and groups whose de-colonisation (if I may use that word again) they helped bring about. Adam Kuper extends that circle of intellectual paralysis to other parts of the world when he says that anthropology has become “the academic wing of the indigenous rights movement” and “our ethnographies . . . worthless except as propaganda”. So, while I agree that some of the hair-splitting that has been going on in this discussion may seem redundant, I would rather endure that than face a rigid party line drawn by a few anointed opinion makers.

Actually, if we take Roma migrants from Central and Eastern Europe, some of them may be former nomads, and most of them would have been labeled (here we go with ascriptions again) at least ‘crypto-nomads’ by communist and even post-communist regimes. Although itinerancy was outlawed in most (all?) socialist countries in the 1950s/1960s, socialist-era Roma were believed to perpetuate certain behavioural and even cognitive traits associated with ‘nomads’, and these ‘urges’ had to be kept in check through appropriate policies. That’s why temporary labour migration was frowned upon (as opposed to permanent moves), and it’s also how authorities accounted for (and to a large extent accepted) the limited engagement of Roma in agricultural pursuits. It simply wasn’t in their ‘nomadic’ blood.

Margaret Greenfields

30 March 2014

Good point — thinking backwards, I seem to recall that it was contacts and requests made by Roma organisations and individuals/Traveller Education Services, etc., for access to the small grants programme which was/is when we manage

to top up the coffers again — the only direct access grant for individuals which requires minimal paperwork and a simple form of support from community groups to access. For example, TAT has assisted in helping women leaving situations of D[omestic] V[iolence], children needing school uniforms, washing machines for elderly carers on sites and replacements cost support for trailers burnout during racist attacks.

The need to support Roma in dire circumstances and representations/debates with other Gypsy/Traveller groups re similarities of interest with Roma re the shared history/linguistic/cultural similarities (and histories of persecution) between Romany communities and Roma meant that we simply began to work with Roma migrants too a few years ago — so I'm not sure how much further that brings the debate..

Thank you, David, for these measured and thoughtful remarks re: the use of provocative questions which are a reminder in some circumstances to retain both a scholarly and practitioner hat if such can be worn simultaneously. Also Jean Luc for your very helpful and interesting comments re 'rhyzomes'. The point you make in relation to Manouche social inter-connectedness with the communities from lower socio-economic backgrounds amongst whom they live map across perfectly to the findings (based initially on pure policy work which then mutated into a research project over several years as we repeatedly found evidence of patterns in differing localities) from the studies by David Smith and myself into housed Gypsies and Travellers.

Yaron Matras

31 March 2014

We seem to be moving toward a realisation that Roma are categorised together with Travellers/Nomads at least partly because they are or were “believed to perpetuate certain behavioural and cognitive traits”.

Back to my point from a couple weeks ago, I wonder if this is what forms the basis or at least the background to the assumption that 'Roma' should be used as a 'generic and pragmatic umbrella term' for diverse populations, or whether this is what motivates the setting up of a policy division on 'Roma and Travellers'.

Gabriel Balanescu

31 March 2014

In 1856 in Romania, the last Roma slaves were gaining their freedom and as you all know, the Romanian Roma are known by the association of their occupational trade with their name, for example Iron workers, Silver Workers, Brick makers etc. Nicolae Gheorghe once stated that "In Romania there are no Roma people to speak of, rather there are families, communities, kindred groups (Cafeneaua Civica 2013)."

The slavery period meant also that a lot of the Roma were dispatched, by their owners, in order to satisfy a particular or seasonal need for the respective trade. One example of a thorough analysis is provided by the work of Viorel Achim, Gypsies in the Romanian history. In his book, Achim advances the idea that many of the tools produced for agricultural needs are in fact the product of the Roma ethnics groups, in particular the Fierarii. We find the same idea portrayed in many other such studies that indicate that the art-crafts provided by the skilled Roma were in fact filling a need which was not covered by the Romanian production. If we consider the land attachment, through serfdom, of the Romanian peasantry we can indeed consider that the Roma artisans have benefited from some degree of freedom of mobility and might have contributed to the perception of desired nomad-ism. They were indeed able to carry along their product where the product was needed.

However, the term “nomad-ism” must take into account that social changes which took place in peasant revolution of 1907, which provided peasants with land, did not create a similar opportunity for the Roma, they were not given land nor were they assimilated to the areas where they were developing their trade. With the fall of communism and inherent property restoration the Roma did not receive any land for they were never given land. Some have managed to successfully sue the state and national bank for the confiscated gold. What I am attempting to get at is that elusive notion that it is “in their blood” to be nomadic whereas historical and present social context might provide a better explanation both for what we perceive as nomadic in the Romanian Roma. Today, we see more and more Roma migration just as response to difficult social conditions, at times almost an entire village will relocate, such as the community in Calarasi, studied by our colleague Ciprian Necula, and which community is localized in one of the many camps in Naples. It is rather difficult to consider them as acting out their “blood call” when in fact they are seeking better life conditions. The Calarasi community returns often and the result of migration is reflected by the improved living conditions of the community at home.

Sam Beck

31 March 2014

I think that David may not understand the nature of American engagement efforts. These are not uncritical. The critiques happen within those populations where anthropologists are working. These may not be visible to people on the outside. It seems as if you assume that policy decisions can only come from academics in collaboration with external groups or groups who see themselves as the “leadership.” Adam Kuper is the anthropologist who years ago at an international conference suggested a stronger division of labor within anthropology where theorists would lead the pack while having others go out

and collect the data for them. Academic elitism remains elitist. Engagement anthropology is in part an attempt to provide resources to vulnerable groups in their struggle for justice. This does not mean giving up a critical voice. The critique just happens somewhere else.

Thank you Gabriel! There are very specific responses to local conditions that generated specific sociocultural characteristics. Romanian Țigani/Roma are a great example of why they were unable to turn to agriculture even if they could. The migratory habits of Roma may be explained in part based on crafts production. Any one locality could only purchase/exchange a limited amount. There are exceptions, especially near or in urban settings.

Not far from Braşov there was an enclave of Țigani basket makers who during communism practiced gardening on plots allowed for home consumption.

Judith M. Okely
31 March 2014

As an anthropologist, I would confirm that Adam Kuper's views are NOT accepted by all in the discipline. His negative views on the fight for indigenous land rights and the crucial consequences of the anthropologist's positionality are contested. I will refrain from the specific details.

Ian F. Hancock

31 March 2014

Subject: Group perceptions

It's worth considering transgroup (Romani to Romani) perceptions in the discussion as well. Here in central Texas there is a large Romani population that consists of several distinct groups, in particular Romanichal (some of which families are in Thomas Acton's *Surviving Peoples* book), the established Vlax families (who were lucky enough to meet Nicolae Gheorghe and Ioan Cioaba when they stayed with me in the past—one of Cioaba's daughters lives in Austin too) and the more newly-arrived European Roma. The extent of social interaction amongst them is negligible. There is one Romanichal/Vlax marriage locally, and occasionally Romanichals will join a kumpaniya on a big job but only temporarily. Romanichals are called Boyash or gipsulya/djipsulya by the Kalderash and Machwaya, who are called *Turks* by the Romanichals. In Houston there are some marriages between Romanichals and (actual) Bayash, the latter gravitating to the Romanichal families because they don't speak Vlax Romani and can't participate in various Vlax social functions. If there are any negative attitudes, they are generally within the same group (there are two opposing bare in Austin for example) or between those who are Born Again and those who aren't. But the overarching perception amongst the different groups is that at some level there is some kind of shared identity: ask a Kalderash about this, though, and he'll say no, the Romanichals are different, they're 'not us;' but ask him if the Romanichals are gazhe, and he'll say no, they aren't gazhe, but they're not us. Ask the Romanichals if the Kalderash are gawjas, they'll say no, they're not gawjas, but they're not us. Not what we are, but what we aren't.

There is an Irish Traveller community north of Austin too, Micheal McDonagh and Robbie McVeigh visited them some years ago, but they are regarded as gawjas/gazhe and there is no interaction with them whatsoever. They are called *Gypsies* in the media nevertheless.

Judith M. Okely

31 March 2014

Subject: Committed intellectual

Here is a wonderful example of a committed intellectual who is now a top professor in Belfast who sees no contradiction in using his skills for political Justice. I met Phil Scraton in the 1970s when he was engaged in studying racism against Irish Travellers. Later, after YEARS of determined research, he is the main author of the report which finally demonstrated the conspiracy re the Hillsborough football disaster when many Liverpool fans were suffocated by overcrowding, (directed into unsuitable stand by the police), at a match in Sheffield. The authorities claimed the deaths were caused by drunkenness and blocked ambulances from the pitch. Over 40 might have survived, if given medical assistance. The police statements were changed. They even claimed other fans robbed the dying when actually trying to help them.

Today is the first proper investigation into cause of deaths.

It is thanks to a determined scholar who read the multiple 'doctored' statements etc that the bereaved can gain justice for their children, relatives and others. Phil did not wait for suitable mega grants and Ivory Tower accolades.

Yaron Matras

31 March 2014

Subject: RE: Group perceptions

Hypothetically, if the Council of Europe were to get involved in central Texas, then they too would lump together the various Romani groups with the Irish Travellers and call them all 'Gypsies' - just like the local media do - or perhaps call them all 'Roma and Travellers', just to appear politically correct, but still group them together.

So the challenge for us, as academic ‘specialists’ who try to provide input into policy making via this and similar channels, is whether we think that kind of practice is justified or useful, or indeed whether we should care or simply accept existing structures such as the ‘Roma and Travellers Division’ as they are, and hope that at some point or other they might provide us with a free meal or a trip to Strasbourg.

I personally take the dichotomy that Ian presents very seriously, and I believe that it is precisely this kind of introspection that should inform the structure of policy deliberations and policy drafting, to the exclusion of established practices that are based on a perpetuation of traditional images of ‘Gypsies’.

Sam Beck

31 March 2014

Subject: RE: Group perceptions

I’ve been trying to get my physician colleagues to put “race” into the rubbish. They won’t because it is a standard used by policy makers. There is no scientific evidence for race — racism yes, but not race. I think that your suggestion to disaggregate “Gypsies” for policy distinction is a worthy cause, but most likely more like spitting in the wind.

David Scheffel

31 March 2014

Two brief clarifications:

1. I do hope it's understood that when I referred to nomadism being in the blood of Roma, I was paraphrasing assumptions held by communist-era officials. I agree, of course, that much of the factual itinerancy that existed in the past was a response to socio-economic conditions.
2. My critical remarks about engaged anthropology referred to North America (not "America" as understood by Sam) and were meant to include Canada where I live and work as an anthropologist. While I am certainly not an expert on the situation in the United States, it seems that quite a few U.S. anthropologists have been expressing similar concerns. For a recent assessment of the impact of 'political correctness' on American anthropological research see "The Ethics of Anthropology and Amerindian Research" edited by Richard Chacon and Rubén Mendoza (Springer, 2012). The reference to Adam Kuper is "The Return of the Native" in *Current Anthropology*, 44(3):389-402.

Thomas Acton

2 April 2014

Some Roma migrants ARE nomads. Interestingly, however, the Chergashe/Serbaya Kalderasha, seem to be regarded by hardline sedentarist Roma nationalists with pretty much the same disdain and sometimes fear that they regard "Travellers".

So the more interesting question is where does the affinity between Yaron and the “Travellers are nothing to do with us” ideology comes from. I promise I will eventually get round to addressing this, and use it not as an attack on Yaron specifically, but as an example to illustrate the processes of the formation of the whole range of scholarly attitudes to Romani identity that have been exhibited in this sprawling correspondence which sometimes makes me feel I’m right back in the 1970s.

Sam Beck

2 April 2014

Hostilities among nomadic groups are often based on turf and access to limited resources. Among endogamy practicing groups, it prevents out marriage and group resources remain in the group.

Jean-Pierre Liégeois

2 April 2014

As I think important to open a variety of information in this already complex issue, I shall write a few lines.

First of all thanks for giving me such an important role in the choice of the name of the ERTF. It would be nice for an academic to have such an influence, but it is not the case.

- 1 - Here we have several different issues which are interlinked, and Yaron's ERTF example is challenging: we deal with the names (Roma, Travellers, Gypsies); but also with the possible role of academics or experts in decision making and decision taking; but also with the characteristics, dynamics and strategies of the different bodies of international institutions, to mention only three topics, because there are several other ones;
- 2 - One must have in mind that the international institutions are what their Members (Member States) wants them to be; the European Commission, or the Council of Europe Secretariat, are executive bodies. In the case you mention, as far as we can know by analyzing many documents, the ERTF name was decided after long negotiations between Member States, because a common agreement had to be reached in order for the ERTF to be created. Therefore, when you say that Rudko told you "how the Council of Europe insisted", I suppose that during those contacts the secretariat had to implement the decision of the Members States;
- 3 - In this case expert or academic influence had no room and role, it was a sensible diplomatic issue and conciliation at Member State level through their permanent representatives; maybe some expertise was used by some of the Member States, and this refers to my point here down about covert expertise, but it does not mean that this expertise had influence;
- 4 - More complex: There are 2 official languages at the Council of Europe, English and French. "Travellers" was not mentioned in the French wording for ERTF; the term was "Gens du voyage" which (I published extensively about that) is only a French administrative category which appeared in the seventies, and has several important functions in the French political context; it does not mean "Travellers", and not even "nomads" since in France the administration speaks about

“Gens du voyage sédentarisés”, but that was part of the mentioned negotiations, and the ERTF was finally attributed this labelling. Still today, after 9 years, the name is “Forum Européen des Roms et des Gens du voyage”. It is not “Voyageurs” (Travellers). I do agree with you that such an aspect can be far from the plans of the initiators (the Congress of Local and Regional authorities in 1993 and Mrs Hallonen, president of Finland, who made a key proposal in 2001; cf. also the different previous projects and tentatives of Roma NGOs in order to establish a European Roma body, see Roma in Europe chapter about that and the book I mention in the following point);

- 5 - The names or labels used by national and international institutions are changing from time to time; you have an approach in The Council of Europe and Roma, 40 years of action, which gives an overview since 1969 (the same overview should be done for the UE, because it is a very practical tool, as there is no institutional memory). It is necessary, as I mentioned for the negotiations about ERTF, to go deeper in the analysis, to read a lot of preparatory documents, comments from the Member States, historic and linguistic variations between several versions of each text, etc. in order to try to understand the reasons of one choice or other, and you can find sometimes discrepancies between representatives of the same Member States in the different institutions, for example the European Council and the Committee of Ministers, between the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly, etc.
- 6 - this brings me to another consideration important in this Network brain storming about the role of academia : in those bodies you find overt expertise (for instance academics and other experts preparing publications which are, by definition, public and visible) and covert expertise (producing confidential reports); this last one has usually much more impact in terms of decision but avoids criticism as it is not known, whereas the first one is visible, calls the attention, and remains open to criticism; and both may be manipulated by different stakeholders in the political field;

- 7 - the links and logical developments between academic expertise and political outcomes would deserve a long and in depth analysis; some of us, members of this Network, could do it, having a firsthand experience. For instance we could mention the first European survey commissioned to scholars by the EEC (now UE) in 1984, which ended, after several steps which have to be analysed, by the adoption in 1989 by the Council (now European Council) of its first Resolution about Roma issues (the text is still applicable - the second such Resolution was adopted 24 years later, at the end of 2013 and broadly presented by all the stakeholders, including the Press Office of the Commission, as the first one, because of the lack of memory mentioned before);
- 8 - Other considerations should be developed, but I shall add just one point : the juridical outcomes of the choice of one term or another are most important; it has importance for the “interpretation” and therefore implementation of key texts for National Minorities, for example, but also for Human Rights (see the judgments and comments about Roma, Travellers, Gypsies... issues from the European Court of Human Rights). Here too academics should play a role. Another question that you raise is important “Does it appear to individual representatives of Travellers and other groups strategically attractive to align themselves with ‘outsider’ categories in order to gain attention and recognition and to benefit from existing structures and attitudes?” Strategies are political necessities. “Roma” was accepted during the 1971 Congress, nowadays (not yesterday and maybe not tomorrow) in France the Federation of about 35 Roma, Gitans, Voyageurs... NGOs are under “Tsigane” name, but I shall not develop any more here. Several sociologists, including Thomas Acton and myself have published quite extensively about this question since the seventies; it is important to take into account the different findings and for the new generation to update the knowledge.

Judith M. Okely

2 April 2014

This is exactly the case between the Irish Travellers and English Romanies in my former fieldwork locations. And when all are criminalised, the toughest win. What sites remain are now no longer occupied by the English who are now housed against their will and many deeply depressed. They still prefer a form of nomadism which they do NOT stigmatise.

Yaron Matras

3 April 2014

The discussion of the past couple of weeks on categorisation has been one of the most challenging and illuminating in the short history of the Network. We've read different opinions and perspectives in contributions from some of the leading colleagues in the field. Below I would like to share my own preliminary conclusions from this discussion.

Why should we engage in a discussion about definitions of peoples and populations? Few of us, I'm sure, would take it upon ourselves to 'classify' or categorise individuals or even communities. But as members of an academic forum we are justified and indeed required to define the scope of our shared field of interest. And when policies at national or trans-national level target a particular population, then the need arises to identify that population. For these reasons, the discussion on who we mean when we refer to 'Roma', 'Gypsies' or 'Travellers' is a legitimate and a necessary one.

Linguists can distinguish populations based on their language, but multilingual communities make this a dynamic rather than strictly linear exercise. When ethnographers describe customs such as funerals, marriage, or dress codes, they are in effect defining community boundaries on the basis of shared culture. Linking various communities under one category such as 'Gypsies and Travellers' implies that they share elements of culture and so that culture can be used as a categorisation grid, though everyone knows that cultural practices are not static. Self-ascription allows boundaries to be permeable and respects individuals' own sense of identity, but we all agree that people cannot randomly self-ascribe as 'Roma/Gypsies' (at least in most cases); for this reason it is not enough to say 'we ourselves' without defining whom we mean.

If descent is to be added to the equation, then the question 'descent from whom?' cannot be avoided. The attribute 'nomadic' does not explain why we include the Luli beggars of Uzbekistan but not the Kyrgyz herders of Kazakhstan. It also conflicts with the self-perception of groups like the Sinte, who strongly resent being depicted as nomads. If we opted for 'historically nomadic' then the sedentary Roma of the Burgenland would qualify just as much as the Karaim of Lithuania. 'Service economy' fails to capture the difference between the Halab blacksmiths of Sudan and the Jewish goldsmiths of Yemen. And if we went consistently with 'descendants of slaves' then we would be lumping together the Kalderash of Minnesota and the African-Americans of Delaware. A tempting categorisation is 'those whom others define as Gypsies' — but surely that would contradict self-ascription as well as, potentially, descent.

Even meta-definitions of the label are problematic. The somewhat poetic depiction of a 'mosaic' or 'kaleidoscope' pretends that groups come and go as they please, when in fact it is the analysts and policy-makers who include some, and exclude others from consideration. The notion of a term that is 'generic and pragmatic' begs answers to the questions 'generic of what?' and 'pragmatic to serve what purpose'?

For a study of populations, all this is unusual. Academic disciplines that center around particular population groups (rather than universal, or conversely just local elements of culture and practice) tend to resort to clear and consistent categorisation criteria: region, as in Balkan studies; language, as in Turkic studies; country, as in American studies; gender, as in women's studies; religion and related traditions, as in Jewish studies; sexuality, as in queer studies; and so on and so forth. Romani/Gypsy studies are different in that they bring together not only interest in diverse populations, but also diverse criteria for defining them. Consequently, all kinds of individuals fall under the remit of Romani/Gypsy studies: Yifti musicians in north-western Greece, a Scottish academic who is reported to be related via one of his parents to Travellers, Jenisch families in southwest Germany who operate fairground rides, a Latvian immigrant in London who works in a bank and whose family language is Romanes, and many more. One would struggle to fit this kind of diversity into the portfolio of any other culture-based discipline. The paradigm of Romani/Gypsy studies appears to be truly unique.

Where does this paradigm come from? Historical policies certainly played a role. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, western European law enforcement agencies lumped together different populations whom they regarded as a threat to social order mainly because they were not or not entirely sedentary. Earlier, in the Balkans, populations of slaves and serfs were collectively treated as outcasts. Similar practices can still be seen today. In Italy, for example, 'Roma' are often equated with 'nomads' and are therefore assigned to housing in temporary or tightly managed 'nomad camps'. There are numerous other examples. Throughout history, literary and artistic depictions of 'Gypsies' have mirrored these policies by creating images that aggregated nomadism with a propensity to crime and exotic 'otherness'.

But I think there can be little doubt that the paradigm first gained academic credibility with the establishment of the Gypsy Lore Society in the late nineteenth century. Critique of the early Gypsylorist tradition stretches from claims that its scholarly

interest in the Indian origins of the Romani language amounted to an attempt to 'exoticise' Gypsies, and on to accusations of outright racism on the pages of its journal. But if there really was such a thing as an identifiable 'Gypsylore' paradigm, then it was surely the desire to share an interest in diverse populations who were classified as 'Gypsies' on the basis of a plethora of criteria including their trades, their portrayal by outsiders, their relations to one another, their treatment by the law, their everyday language, their artificial in-group vocabularies, similarities in their dress and origin legends, and more.

The Gypsy Lore Society was a British creation. By 1907 it had 151 members, 118 of whom were British. There is little doubt that prominent nineteenth-century literary figures such as John Clare, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot and of course George Borrow made a key contribution toward promoting popular interest in Gypsies in Britain. A fascination with the cultures of Britain's colonies in India fuelled interest in the historical roots of the Romani language. This curiosity was complemented by an awareness of century-old links between Romani Gypsies and Scottish and Irish Travellers in the British countryside itself. British Gypsylore thus developed their characteristically defining pre-occupation with romantic-literary images, Indian origins, and the travelling lifestyle of diverse communities.

Much of Volume 1 of the Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society (1888) is devoted to essays on the language and folklore of Romani-speaking populations in various locations, as well as to surveys of historical archive materials pertaining to 'Gypsies'. But there are also essays on itinerant musicians and labourers in Darfur, on horse-dealers in Anatolia, on the songs of Italian fortune-tellers and on the secret vocabularies of the Irish 'Tinkers'. It was the Gypsy Lore Society that first brought together scholarly interest in diverse populations under a single umbrella. Forging the 'kaleidoscope' is the true and unique legacy of the Gypsyloreists.

This Gypsyloist paradigm was continued in the works of British scholars like Thomas Acton and Judith Okely. Both promoted the idea that the study of 'Gypsies' requires an acknowledgement of diversity. Both put the links between Romani Gypsies and indigenous Travellers in the foreground. Inspired by their teachings and activism, a younger generation of researchers in Britain has now embraced the notion that 'Roma' is not the name of a particular ethnicity but a 'generic and pragmatic' label that can be used to lump together different populations on the basis of a variety of classification criteria. Jean-Pierre Liégeois inspired the Council of Europe to adopt the same paradigm into its political agenda — first in an attempt to address the education and housing needs of caravan-dwellers, then in an effort to embrace the political aspirations of Roma for representation and protection from racial discrimination. From there, in the early 1990s, it spread to the European Commission at a time when western governments were haunted by fears of increased Roma migration from the East, prompting initiatives to tackle inequality in the origin countries. Once again, the fear of people on the move gave rise to a dedicated interest in 'Gypsies', now pragmatically labelled 'Roma' — a process that some authors have referred to as the 'Europeanisation of the Roma issue'. Both organisations are still struggling to define who they mean, swaying between attributes like 'nomadic' and 'sedentary', 'more or less similar' and 'rich diversity', 'Sinti, Kalé' and 'perceived as Gypsies'.

A testimony to the extent to which the Gypsyloist legacy remains entrenched particularly in Britain is the fact that education authorities have established a category 'GRT' ('Gypsies, Roma, Travellers'). Guidelines issued in 2009 by the Department for Schools in England define the 'Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community' as including:

- Gypsies
- Scottish Travellers or Gypsies
- Welsh Gypsies or Travellers
- Roma

- Travellers of Irish heritage
- Showpeople
- Fairground families
- Circus families
- New Travellers
- Barge or canal-boat families.

One struggles to identify a general common denominator. It seems that 'Gypsies' in the above sense is pretty much everything that moves and is not 'mainstream'. Missing, to my great disappointment, are 'Descendants of Yiddish-speaking peddlers who used to sell lamp shades door to door and had no permanent domicile'; if that sub-category were included, then I too could self-ascribe as 'GRT'. Alas, no such interest group figured on the agenda of the Gypsylorists and so it has escaped their legacy in the present-day institutional configuration of British politics, education, and academia.

I will therefore conclude with a different kind of self-ascription. When I took over the editorship of the then 'Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society' in 1999, I moved to change its name to 'Romani studies'. This was an attempt to guide the forum toward the model of more established culture-based disciplines. But at the same time I had to take into consideration not only the fact that the journal remained the property of the Gypsy Lore Society, but also that it had a tradition of serving as a broad discussion platform. This practical consideration — to retain a tradition — led me too to embrace a 'generic and pragmatic' interpretation of 'Romani studies' in the particular context of the journal, where I believe it is justified and productive.

I am less convinced that I can see the benefits of arbitrary categorisations when it comes to the level of policy and policy-related expertise. If different populations have different self-ascriptions, needs, and aspirations, then what we need is diversity in expertise as well as in policy. The idea that there is or can be expertise in 'Gypsies, Roma, Travellers' or a single

integrated policy that targets this diversity of populations is surely more of an attempt to accommodate traditional external images than a reflection of reality. Where local interests combine, as in the struggle of both Romani Gypsies and Travellers to resist eviction from Dale Farm, then coalitions of different groups are of course natural and beneficial. But on the whole, the supposedly 'non-essentialist' approach to a 'diversity' of populations unified under one single category seems to me to come at the expense of a genuine recognition of Romani ethnicity. It denies those who share a language, a history, and many values and customs — those who have always, long before the Romani Congress of 1971, felt part of the people they called 'Rom' — a chance to represent their own interests in a way that is de-coupled from the fictional, literary and romantic images that majority society continues to entertain of 'Gypsies'. It is for this reason that we should question the political trajectory of the Gypsylorist paradigm and its adoption by European policy institutions.

[See Simhandl, Katrin. 2006. 'Western Gypsies and Travellers' — 'Eastern Roma': the creation of political objects by the institutions of the European Union. *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 12, No. 1 pp. 97-115, for a supporting view with extensive references to EC/EU documents.]

Margaret Greenfields

3 April 2014

A brief note - in passing - which doesn't deal with the majority of these elements raised (and I appreciate and find interesting your discussion, Yaron, of the broad categories of people/activities included under the rubric of Gypsy/Romani studies), but I wanted to respond explicitly to the point re use of GRT as an administrative category.

In the UK context following debates at wide-ranging meetings/residential events such as the February one I posted on last week - this acronym has more recently been challenged and Romani and Traveller groups are asking various UK Government departments to use the terminology Gypsy, Traveller, Roma in recognition of the historical period during which the communities came to prominence in the UK. This is gradually being effected. Interestingly the inclusion of Roma as a group within the formation is of relatively recent origins I seem to recall this coming into being during the late 80s-early 90s in response to migration flows and at the time asking why this should be. I was advised - can't remember who by - that the inclusion of Roma was precisely because of the historical/cultural and linguistic connections between Romani and Roma populations and as such it was felt that education specialists may have some point of linguistic or cultural knowledge/contact with children with whom they came into contact. Roma are therefore often perceived as the bolt on to existing categories of communities protected or 'caught' in policy terms.

The comment about mobility and nomadism being the key similarity between the groups mentioned in your list is precisely the point I made the other day - state policy was focused on working with/controlling (perhaps the more accurate description) nomadic Gypsies/Romani/Travelling people. The precise formation of legislation has been challenged and chipped away at by case law and incremental policy change in the UK to ensure that those members of the Romani and Traveller communities who gave up nomadism as a result of harsh policies were included within the (albeit limited) protections afforded by the various planning circulars (mainly the Housing Act 2004 and Circular 1/06) and included in GTAs with regard to cultural preference/needs etc. Prior to that time despite being recognised as ethnic groups housed Gypsies and Travellers were largely treated as de-ethnicised in policy terms which caused the most immense distress.

As such, in the UK context there are twin processes and categories - protection as ethnic minorities - which has come later to Roma but on the heels of the battles fought by and on behalf of Travellers and Romani Gypsies - have been inextricably

entwined with 'right to roam' and planning legislation to the extent that we have semi parallel regimes - that under planning which incidentally uses the 'small g' gypsy in all legislation and policy - and focuses explicitly on nomadism as a way of life - thus including the occupational travellers included in the list you give - and the Race Relations Acts which uses 'Gypsy and Traveller' (capitalised) and focuses on people of a particular heritage and culture.

Interestingly a major point on which many planning cases for sites hinge is on the heritage and historical background of many Romani and Traveller applicants with individuals typically being required to obtain statements from relatives, professionals and others who must state that they are aware of the ethnicity of the individual involved as well as requiring that they produce photographic evidence of their ancestors in typically 'stereotyped' situations involving caravans, horses etc... Roma are of course exempt from these requirements until or unless they seek to apply for 'gypsy status' (in the planning context) a situation which the practitioner part of me will await with immense interest as a person without a family history of nomadism despite having impeccably traced Romani/Gypsy ancestry cannot therefore be 'passed' as a Gypsy for site purposes. Even more interestingly which will doubtless make some people's blood boil more recent policy statements and administrative data sets now refer to Traveller sites rather than Gypsy sites.

A report I've very recently worked on (respondents living on Gypsy sites and who thus had 'gypsy status') asked respondents to self-identify by ethnicity - interestingly around one-third of people whom I would personally have identified as Romany Gypsies selected "English Traveller" or "Traveller" out of all of the options available or the free-text categories...

Thus would we say that someone who self-identifies in this manner and yet who can prove their ethnicity and history back several generations is excluded from the categories of Roma?

I'd stress again that the vast majority of Romani Gypsies I've encountered are very very vocal on the fact that they are NOT Roma (any more than they are Irish Travellers) despite similarities of language, culture (with Roma) and in the case of Irish Travellers, similar accommodation and site struggles which as you rightly identify means that there is a commonality of interest and experience.

I'd also like to say that I take exception with the claim (as I understand your point) that nobody who has policy expertise in one area/with a single community can have in another - I personally have always - until very recently in only then relation to areas of law and policy in which I have specialist knowledge which cuts across cultures/group labelling ie family law and health/housing legislation and policy - referred any enquirers pertaining to Roma onto those who specialise in working with Roma peoples - not least because I don't have the linguistic skills to communicate with clients/service users from those populations as well as only limited cultural understanding.

Further to that point - in relation to 'culture' I tend to say I know little (other than what I've been taught by Gypsy/Traveller people over the years of practice) pertaining to the distinct cultural practices or language etc of specific communities. However when it comes down to site provision policy, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory policies and the implications of these in relation to accessing health or education/commissioning services etc and inputting into drafting/reporting on these elements I know - in my opinion - rather a lot. As such I feel able to provide input and comment on these areas in relation to both Gypsies and Travellers and potentially/in some contexts - Roma accessing universal services. Similarly, in terms of sound research which supplies information on the policy/service delivery needs of the communities - I'd argue that the only sound research and policy input is that which incorporates the views and opinions of communities in question and is co-produced by and with community members and yet is based on hard evidence which supports the policy advice put forward.

To engage in co-production and use that as a basis for such activities becomes a possibility whether one is working with Roma, Chinese Hassidic or other types of informants as long as linguistic understanding and shared definitions and terminology are agreed upon advance and there is a very thorough background review and access to knowledge on pre-existing policy/legislation etc.

Christian Brüggemann

9 April 2014

Subject: RE: The principle of descent

This debate is really interesting and helps me understand discussions and struggles we have to deal with. My file about this exchange contains over 30.000 words and I really enjoy being part of this network. I would like to underline that critical approaches to each other's readings are extremely important to understand, to move ahead and to suppose new ideas and analytical approaches. I thus very much acknowledge the way in which people point to inconsistencies and challenges. Recently, the debate gets very personal. I suppose that the issues/arguments should be put in the first place with reference to the literature / the names of scholars (if necessary at all) in brackets.

Since having read a book review by Victor A. Friedman (citation below) I have always been referring to Roma as Romani-speaking or formerly Romani-speaking groups. At the same time I have been always referring to the Council of Europe (http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/default_en.asp) when citing estimations about the number of Roma living in Europe. Having read the discussion I assume that the number provided by the Council does not only refer to Romani-speaking or formerly Romani-speaking groups. It seems that I have thus repeatedly cited an estimation that does not correspond to the group I was writing about.

In some recent West European historical and anthropological literature, confusion has arisen between the use of 'Gypsy' as an ethnic label to refer to Romani-speaking or formerly Romani-speaking groups (who may or may not be peripatetic) and the second usage, which is more social than ethnic and does not have a firmly definable linguistic basis. Members of some groups of Gypsies in this second sense have secret lexicons that are not independent languages. Some historians and anthropologists have become so confused by these two usages of the term 'Gypsy' as to assert that Romani is merely a lexicon, not a language, and that there was no migration of speakers of Early Romani to Europe from India but rather that peripatetic peoples passed Indic lexical items from one group to another along trade routes.

(Romani: A linguistic introduction. Yaron Matras. 2002. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xiv + 291 pp. 50.00. ISBN 0-521-63165-3 (hardback). Reviewed by Victor A. Friedman)

Sam Beck

4 April 2014

Roma Summit live streaming now from Brussels

A picture is worth 1000 words.



Source: <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2035862,00.html>:

PART THREE: EVENT REPORTS

Edited by Eben Friedman and Victor A. Friedman

Introduction

The five reports which comprise Part Three provide an overview of five events connected with the European Academic Network on Romani Studies. With the exception of the report on the academic seminar “The European Dimension of Romani Culture: Scientific and Political Discourses,” which was prepared by Victor A. Friedman for the purposes of the current volume, the reports included in this section are edited versions of public documents. The URL of each original document is thus given for the events for which a report was generated before this volume was produced.

The reports presented in this section are ordered according to the chronology of the events which gave rise to them. A report on the summer school held at the Central European University in 2012 is accordingly followed by reports on three events which took place in 2013: the research seminar for Romani scholars “Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Roma Studies: Whither Intersectionality?”; the workshop entitled “The Uses of History in Romani Studies: Theory and Practice”; and the academic seminar “The European Dimension of Romani Culture: Scientific and Political Discourses.” The final event featured in this section is the workshop “Bringing History and Policy into Dialogue in Romani Studies,” which took place in 2014.



Central European University, Budapest, 25 June-20 July 2012

Overview of the Summer School

The Summer School consisted of two main modules of instruction:

- The Roma in Europe - Policy strategy: a course for policy experts (2-14 July 2012) and
- The Roma in Europe - Comparative analysis: a course for PhD students (9-20 July 2012).

An additional training in film documentation was organised in the period 25-29 June 2012.

The total number of students attending the Summer School was 53, with 22 students enrolled in the course for policy experts and 31 enrolled in the course for PhD students. A total of 12 student attended the training in film documentation (7 from the Policy strategy course and 5 from the Comparative analysis course).

The training was organised on weekdays as four classes of 90 minutes each. Teaching ran from 9:00 to 17:30 with a lunch break and additional programs in the evenings. The film training included practical camera exercise and editing. During the period of overlap between the two modules overlapped (9-14 July), students participated in a field-trip in North Eastern Hungary in order to acquire first-hand social experience about the issues covered by the in-class training. A group of students in anthropology supported the field research by acting as translators and facilitating communication with the people living in the villages visited.

¹³ The unedited report on this event is available at <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/reports-on-the-network-events/>



The 20 professors who comprised the faculty of the summer school boasted high academic credentials and extensive experience in academic and policy work. Additionally, five younger local scholars and policy experts and a group of Roma activists attended the concluding debate, which focused on the participation of the Roma scholars in the European Academic Network on Romani Studies, as well as on the broader relationship between the activism and academic research.

Course activities

The recruitment process produced a good combination of students from all over Europe and the Americas. Traditionally the CEU Summer Schools have good appeal to Eastern European students, as was the case with this summer school also. The relatively large number of students from the western and southern countries of the EU participating in the Summer School, on the other hand, can be explained by the broader coverage of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies and probably also by a growing awareness of the Roma-related issues in policy making and academic research. The distribution of the students thus covered not only the Eastern European countries, where traditionally most of the European Roma live, but most of the EU, Russia and Turkey, the USA, Canada, and several Latin American countries.

The teaching covered both regionally and topically the whole of the EU and the current research priorities and debates. The faculty of the Summer School provided in-depth regional knowledge on academic development and policy practices in many EU countries, as well as perspectives from major actors in European policy making and NGOs. Regional emphases included France, Hungary, Romania, and Spain, with constant attention to comparative dimensions of research and policy making.

Learning outcomes

The objectives of the courses as set in the course syllabus have been achieved as most of the students confirmed.

The policy module offered the students a comprehensive overview of the current developments in the European Roma policy with a particular focus on a critical review of the National Strategies for Roma Integration produced by the Member States of the EU. Members of the Summer School faculty introduced the students to the intricate details of the institutions engaged in the production and implementation of the strategies and policies on all major domains of the Roma policy (education, employment, housing, health). Students were also introduced to methods of policy monitoring and evaluation, forming evaluation groups which produced detailed and very critical reviews of the strategies developed by the governments of the Member States.

The students attending the academic module were introduced to the main paradigms of several disciplines (anthropology, demography, linguistics, sociology) which focus on Roma society and culture. In addition to these established models of research, new methods of collaborative research and ethnographical writing were introduced and debated, with students encouraged to experiment with new approaches. PhD students were offered the chance to present their own work in progress and results to their peers and to the faculty members, who acted as discussants for these sessions. These seminar discussions produced a lively participation of the peer-group and students were eager to debate the comparative potential of their analyses and the perspective of their future work. A visit from a group of Romani activists provided an opportunity for an additional event in the form of a roundtable discussion on the last day of the summer school around issues of the dialogue between academics and civic activists and the potential of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies to encourage and promote young Romani scholars in pursuing academic careers.

The practical training in film documentation provided the participants with the techniques and skills necessary to produce a short documentary from developing a script through doing fieldwork and shooting video up to refining the concepts and editing the video material. The participants of the film training produced four short documentaries on Roma related topics and these films have been screened and discussed.

The Summer School achieved its aim in creating a common discussion platform for young policy professionals and their peers who are engaged in pursuing academic careers through exchanges animated and moderated by the best specialists in their respective fields. The boundary and connections between academic research, activism and policy expert work was brought into sharp focus, particularly during the overlapping week when students of both modules were present and also in the situations of the field visit. Graduates of the Summer School are in a position to continue their exchanges and improve the communication between the spheres of academia and policy making.

Faculty

	Name	Surname	Topic
1	Gerhard	Baumgartner	Archival Sources and Their Critique in the Historiography on the Roma
2	Bálint Ábel	Bereményi	Equality in the Classroom
3	Liria	de la Cruz	Breaking through the Gitano Law
4	Judit	Durst	Demography, Mobility and Romani Women
5	Lilla	Farkas	Legal Remedies for Discrimination in Continental Legal Systems
6	Juan Francisco	Gamella	Demography, Census and Data
7	Paloma	Gay y Blasco	Breaking through the Gitano Law
8	Jan	Grill	Romany Migration within the EU
9	Gábor	Kézdi	Effective and Reliable Evaluation of Public Projects
10	Katalin	Kovalcsik	Romany Musical Practice as Forms of Social Integration
11	Yaron	Matras	Linguistics, Identity, Ethnicity and Migration

	Name	Surname	Topic
12	Kálmán	Mizsei	Making Most of the EU Funds for Roma
13	Jean-Luc	Poueyto	Manouches of France
14	Patrick	Simon	Demography and Natalist Politics
15	Michael	Stewart	Populism and anti-Romany politics
16	Klára	Trencsényi	Training in Film Documentation
17	Alekos	Tsolakis	Regional Development and the EU Structural Funds
18	Huub	van Baar	European Level Politics and Romany Identity politics
19	Enikő	Vincze	Approaches towards Roma policies from Human Rights to Development
20	Tünde	Virág	Poverty, Exclusion, Territorial Segregation and Roma

Participants

Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
1 Esteban	Acuna Cabanzo	Germany	Albert-Ludwigs Universität Freiburg
2 Başak	Akgül Kovankaya	Turkey	Yildiz Technical University
3 Angel	Angelov	Bulgaria	St. Kliment Ohridski University
4 Beatriz	Aragón	United Kingdom	UCL
5 Márton	Báló	Hungary	Eötvös Loránd University
6 Barbara Giovanna	Bello	Italy	University of Milano
7 Jenni	Berlin	Finland	University of Eastern Finland
8 Andreea	Braga	Romania	National School of Political and Administrative Studies
9 Claudia	Campeanu	Romania	ISPMN Cluj Napoca
10 Bogdan	Chiriac	Hungary	Central European University

Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
11 Patrick	Ciaschi	Canada	McMaster University
12 Neil	Cruickshank	Canada	Algoma University
13 Petra	Danková	Slovakia	Society of Jesus, Slovak Province
14 Adrian-Nicolae	Furtuna	Romania	University of Bucharest
15 Lydia	Gabčová	Slovakia	Roma Institute
16 Hector	Garza Flores	Mexico	Tecnologico de Monterrey
17 Yiannis	Georgiou	Greece	University Ioannina
18 Lidia	Gheorghiu	United Kingdom	Aston Business School
19 Özge Burcu	Günes	Switzerland	Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
20 Marek	Hojsík	Slovakia	Social Development Fund
21 Svetlana	Hristova	Bulgaria	Institute for Study of Societies and Knowledge
22 Jakob	Hurrle	Czech Republic	Charles University in Prague

Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
23 Stefan	Ionescu	United States of America	Clark University
24 Katya	Ivanova	United Kingdom	London School of Economics and Political Science
25 Yana	Kavrakova	Germany	European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)
26 Ľuboš	Kovács	Slovakia	Comenius University
27 Daniele	Leggio	United Kingdom	University of Manchester
28 Siv	Lie	USA	New York University
29 Ester	Lomová	Slovakia	Milan Simecka Foundation
30 Barbora	Maliková	United Kingdom	London School of Economics and Political Science
31 Chiara	Manzoni	Italy	University of Milan Bicocca
32 Marti	Marfa i Castan	Spain	University of Barcelona
33 Louise	Metrich	Czech Republic	Embassy of France to the Czech Republic

Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
34 Elena	Mihalache	Romania	Roma Civic Alliance of Romania
35 Hector	Muskus Guardia	Mexico	GCB Consulting
36 Ciprian	Necula	Romania	SNSPA
37 András	Nyiri	Hungary	Tinta Consulting Ltd.
38 Ágnes	Pakot	Hungary	Corvinus University of Budapest
39 Tatjana	Perić	Serbia	University of Novi Sad
40 Radu-Tudor	Petre	Romania	Ministry of Administration and Interior
41 Anamaria	Remete	Italy	Universita degli studi di Catania
42 Štěpán	Ripka	Czech Republic	Charles University in Prague
43 Raluca Bianca	Roman	Germany	European Centre for Minority Issues
44 Szilvia	Schmitsek	Hungary	Eotvos Lorand University
45 Federica	Setti	Italy	University of Turin

Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
46 David	Smith	United Kingdom	University of Greenwich
47 Dorottya	Szép	Hungary	ELTE
48 Barbara	Tiefenbacher	Austria	University of Vienna
49 Tatiana	Timchenkova	Russian Federation	Sant' Anna School of Advanced Studies
50 Maneka	Tohani	United Kingdom	Queens University Belfast
51 Ciprian	Tudor	Romania	National School of Political and Administrative Studies
52 Elisabetta	Vivaldi	United Kingdom	Bucks New University
53 Felipe	Vizcarro	Spain	General Directorate of Architecture, Housing and Land

Cluj-Napoca (Romania), 11-14 April 2013

Overview

The seminar “Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Roma Studies: Whither Intersectionality?” was organized by Iulia Hasdeu (Gender Studies Institute, University of Geneva) and Catalina Tesar (National Museum of the Romanian Peasant, Bucharest) in Cluj-Napoca in the framework of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies initiative “Supporting Roma in Academia.” The seminar was co-hosted by the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities and the Research Centre on Interethnic Relations, both based in Cluj-Napoca.¹⁵

The seminar included lectures by four members of the Network with long (anthropological) research experience with Romani people as well as presentations delivered by students enrolled in MA and PhD studies. It opened with a round table occasioned by the launch of the Romanian translation of Martin Olivera’s *Romanès ou l’intégration traditionnelle des Gabori de Transylvanie* (“Romanes or the traditional integration of the Gabori of Transylvania”) and it closed with a round table where local experts were invited to share experience of action research. The seminar aimed at addressing and challenging possibilities of applying the theoretical framework of intersectionality embraced by the postcolonial studies to research carried out among Romani people in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Another purpose of the seminar was to raise questions about modalities of linking academic research to public policy making, and to advance the relevance of the former for the latter.

¹⁴ The original report on this event is available at <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/reports-on-the-network-events/>

¹⁵ For additional information on the host institutions, see <http://www.ispmn.gov.ro/> and <http://www.ccrit.ro/index.html>



Participants

The selection of seminar participants was done on the basis of an assessment of applications by the organizers. The main criterion of selection was the academic relevance of the research projects. The applications submitted were evaluated according to the delimitation of the research object, the theoretical and methodological framework, the clarity of the argument, the originality of the research, and the importance of seminar for the student's career. The nine students of Romani background who were present at the seminar came from various countries in CEE: Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia. With the exception of the three students from Romania, all the other participants were enrolled at the Central European University (CEU) and had completed or were in the course of completing the Roma Access Program (RAP).¹⁶

Lecturers at the seminar were Network members Iulia Hasdeu, Gergő Pulay, Elisabeth Tauber and Catalina Tesar. Stefania Toma and László Fosztó, both of whom are researchers at Institute for Research on National Minorities and members of the Network, also participated in the seminar, as did Network member Martin Olivera. The closing round table was hosted by local experts and Network members Zsuzsa Plainer (Institute for Research on National Minorities) Cristina Rat (Babeş-Bolyai University), and Enikő Vincze (Babeş-Bolyai University).

¹⁶ Information on the Roma Access Program is available at <https://rap.ceu.edu/>

Description of activities

The launching of Olivera's book occasioned a discussion about alternative ways of 'integrating' Romani populations to the NGO, European and national institutions' discourses and practices. Issues such as incompatibilities between the institutional stakes and aims and the local cultural logics, and the misrepresentations of Romani people by the state, supra state and NGO actors were recurrent during the seminar discussions.

Students were allocated time for presentation and discussion of their research projects, with senior participants providing advice on methodology and ethics of research, as well as on the theoretical framework of students' projects. Whereas some of the presented projects dealt with public representations and self-representations of Romani women, one tackled the theme of education by asking whether the affirmative action models of African Americans in US could provide a basis for programs of integrative education for Romani people. The self-belonging of highly educated Roma and of Roma converted to neo-Protestantism were also addressed by students' research projects. Another project applied a critical approach inspired by postcolonial studies to the Hungarian National Strategy for Roma. The debates generated by these research projects conveyed the necessity to challenge or reframe analytical concepts such as gender, ethnicity, class, or the model of intersectionality (sometimes considered simply inadequate), in order to cover the multifarious social realities on the ground.

Iulia Hasdeu delivered an introductory presentation of the theoretical framework of intersectionality and its epistemological relevance in postcolonial studies. A critical approach of the articulation of Romani studies to the postcolonial paradigm was suggested. The presentations delivered by Gergő Pulay, Elisabeth Tauber and Catalina Tesar, all of whom have conducted long-term field research in Romani communities, addressed local conceptions and understandings of the otherwise reified notions of gender, identity and class.

In the discussions carried out during the concluding roundtable, ethical dilemmas of action research were voiced. On the one hand there are limits to the objectification of collected data, and the research funded by international organizations faces important constraints. On the other hand, the study of sensitive issues such as domestic violence and racist behavior in a highly deprived neighborhood presents problems of its own.

Outcomes

The seminar occasioned knowledge exchange between senior and junior researchers in the field of Romani studies. It opened a space for reflection both about the relevance of academic research for policy making, and about the positioning of the researcher vis-a-vis his object of study. Given that all the students who participated in the seminar were of Romani background and conducting research related to Roma issues, they voiced the tensions derived from their multiple belonging (e.g., academic community, community of origin, community of Romani students). The participants complained that there is no room for voicing these tensions in the academic programs they are pursuing and expressed appreciation for the space the seminar offered for self-reflection and for critical debate. For most of the MA students, this seminar was their first academic experience outside the space of the school in which they are enrolled. They appreciated the critical approach to received theoretical discourses which is often lacking in mainstream academic discourse in state schools in CEE.

All participants expressed their satisfaction with the seminar and their desire of organizing a follow-up event. At the same time, informal discussions with the participating students revealed a preference for mixed gatherings over exclusively Roma gatherings which limit their possibilities of networking with non-Roma peers. The CEU students, who were all RAP graduates, pointed to the conundrum they face during their MA studies about interaction with non-Romani students. They suggested that seminars such as this one should encourage the participation of Romani students without excluding the participation of non-Roma.



Participants

	Name	Surname	Country
1	Ana-Maria	Adăscăliței	Romania
2	Anna Csilla	Dároczi	Hungary
3	Sebijan	Fejzula	Hungary
4	Carmen	Gheorghe	Romania
5	Iulia	Hasdeu	Switzerland
6	Jelena	Jovanović	Hungary
7	Vera	Kurtić	Serbia
8	Patricia	López	Spain
9	Catalina	Olteanu	Romania
10	Gergő	Pulay	Hungary
11	Miranda	Ramova	Hungary
12	Elisabeth	Tauber	Italy
13	Catalina	Tesar	Romania
14	Atanas	Zahariev	Hungary

University of Liverpool, 28-31 May 2013

Introduction

The main aim of the workshop was to discuss the uses of archival research for historians and non-historians working in Romani Studies, taking the archives of the Gypsy Lore Society as an example. The Gypsy Lore Society Collections (GLSC) are clearly a problematic repository of material, given the particular historical and ideological context in which the Society operated, yet nonetheless contain valuable sources for historians. The workshop accordingly explored the GLSC as a possible starting point for writing the social history of Roma in Europe from a transnational and comparative perspective, using private and unofficial archives as well as official records. The final part of the discussion moved on to related themes, such as approaches to the narration of Roma histories.

Proceedings

Katy Hooper, Special Collections Librarian, provided an introduction to the archives of the Gypsy Lore Society housed in the University of Liverpool library. Ms. Hooper explained the history of the Gypsy Lore Society and the provenance of the archival collections, as well as the successive shifts in cataloguing (from theme to provenance) that reflected the changing uses and audience for the collections. The GLSC contains a wide range of material, from books to correspondence between Society members, manuscript submissions to the Gypsy Lore Society Journal (published and unpublished) and the personal papers of leading Society figures. Drawing on specific examples, Ms. Hooper provided an introduction to some of

¹⁷ The original report on this event is available at <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/reports-on-the-network-events/>

the material in the Scott Macfie Collections, as well as a sample of some of the visual images (photographs) that had been collected by the Society.

In the next session, titled “La formation des sociétés romani à l’époque moderne, XVI^e siècle-XVIII^e siècle” (The formation of Romani societies in the modern age, 16th-18th centuries), Professor Henriette Asséo used a series of documents to show the misunderstanding concerning the historical inclusion of Roma in Europe during the Renaissance period. She criticized the vision of a process of exclusion and the cultural construction of an Other, determined by an essentialist vision of the Roma. She contextualized the presence of Roma during the multiple migrations of populations belonging to the Greek Byzantine Empire in all the Mediterranean Area at the age of the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. The resettlement of communities in the Western Mediterranean indicated the common interests and exchanges between Roma as a social group totally integrated into local society, economical market and political power, as has been testified by many iconographic and written sources. Prof. Asséo demonstrated the creation of different ‘national’ models linked to political construction in Western or Eastern Europe and analysed the specific cases of Spanish Gitanos, Italian Zingari, French Bohémiens and Balkan Roma at the border of the Central European empires and the Ottoman regulation system.

The final workshop of the first day was led by Dr. Ilse About on the theme “The Policing of ‘Gypsies’ in Western Europe 1900-1930: A Comparative History in Progress.” Dr. About challenged the narrative of ‘victimization’ that has dominated histories of Roma during this period, situating his research in the 1890s as a period of economic crisis, urbanisation, huge population movements (especially rural to urban migration) and fragmentation of the labour market, as well as the transformation of media/mass communication in new democratic societies and the nationalisation of state and society. These processes created the notion of a ‘citizen’ to be both protected and used by the state, leading to the problem of defining

citizenship. A particular focus of Dr. About's talk was the professionalisation and centralisation of police forces in Western Europe during the early twentieth century, and the changing nature of borders as no longer merely a symbolic problem, but also a practical one. From 1900-1930 this led to the progressive criminalisation of the 'Gypsy way of life' from the 1895 *recensement des nomades et bohémiens*. A large part of the newly professionalised police force activities were focused on monitoring 'Gypsies'. Dr. About drew on his own research in police and government records to provide examples of state surveillance of Gypsy groups, as well as of the agency of those groups. He also discussed proposals for international cooperation to solve the 'gypsy question', such as a Swiss proposal for an international conference and the French *carnet anthropométrique* introduced after the 1912 Law on Nomads.

Dr. Margaret Procter, a lecturer in Archives and Records Management, ran a session on archives and human rights from the perspective of archival theory and practice. The aim of the talk was to provide a perspective on archive management that historians – as users of archival material – rarely consider. This wide-ranging talk gave a broad overview of the history of archives and record-keeping, but focused particularly on the recent interest among archivists in how the preservation of records can potentially assist in the redress of human rights violations, by furnishing claimants with evidence to back up their claims. Drawing on examples from Guatemala and Cambodia, the talk demonstrated how the preservation of police records was vital in tracking down victims of state repression and claiming compensation. Finally the talk considered the emerging interest within the archival profession in a broader "community archives" project for the purpose of enabling communities to participate in the preservation of heritage and community histories.

The final workshop session was led by Professor Eve Rosenhaft and titled "Archaeologies and genealogies: The Weltzel-Althaus collection as a record of German Sinti-Gadje relations in the shadow of Nazism." This talk focused on a specific

collection that has been added to the Gypsy Lore Society Collections, and was exemplary for the way in which historians could use private and unofficial records alongside state archives (in this case, the German *Bundesarchiv*) to narrate a history that included Romani subjectivities as well as the 'official' narrative. Professor Rosenhaft made extensive use of photographs, and the discussion focused on ways of reading these images, as well as on the ethics of interpretation and ownership of photographs of individuals depicting moments of intimacy. Connecting back to the previous talk about archives and human rights, Professor Rosenhaft made the point that the *Bundesarchiv* houses material relating to the genocide of Roma as a direct result of Sinti activism, which had demanded that the remaining records of Robert Ritter's unit devoted to genealogical research on Gypsies be moved to the Federal Archive.

Conclusions

Overall, the workshop was viewed as a success and a useful first step towards future cooperation. Avenues for cooperation identified by participants included the following:

1. Projects revolving around community archives and local histories, which would involve partnerships with non-academic institutions and what is currently termed in UK academia 'knowledge exchange'; and
2. Projects that seek to contribute to a transnational and comparative social history of Roma in modern Europe.

Participants

	Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
1	Ilse	About	France	University of Aix-Marseille
2	Henriette	Asséo	France	School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences
3	Bogdan	Chiriac	Hungary	Central European University
4	Rosamaria	Kostic Cisneros	UK	National Association of Teachers of Travellers
5	Lilyana	Kovacheva	Bulgaria	Ministry of Education
6	Aleksandra	Pudliszak	Netherlands	Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation Amsterdam
7	Paola	Trevisan	France	School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences
8	Alice	Vezzoli	Netherlands	University of Leiden

Marseille, 26 September 2013

Preface

At the 3rd meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) of the EANRS in Paris, on 26 June 2012, the SC decided to plan an event for 2013 in Marseilles (as one of the two the Cultural Capitals of Europe that year) which would involve the members of the Network and the SC. Jean Pierre Liégeois was assigned as a contact person and organizer of this event. At the 4th meeting of the SC in Brussels on 12-13 December 2012 it was confirmed that SC member Elena Marushiakova would organize an academic seminar entitled “European dimension of Roma culture: Academic and political discourses” with Jean-Pierre Liégeois giving practical and organizational support. The SC held its 5th meeting in Marseille on 25 September 2013, and the academic seminar took place on 26 September 2013. The academic seminar was followed by a public and press conference entitled “Roma culture in new European realities”.

Dr. Marushiakova organized an outstanding panel of papers, and the scholars themselves all gave truly wonderful presentations, every one of them succeeding in doing exactly what was appropriate in terms of both breadth and depth. The themes of the papers were, in order of presentation: language, music, museums, literature, art, and theater. The keynote paper at the beginning of the conference identified problems and challenges. The meeting report published here has a somewhat different format from the other meeting reports. It begins with an Introduction based on a revised version of the opening remarks that Victor Friedman prepared for the morning session. (Hristo Kyuchukov chaired the afternoon session.) These are followed by a version of the contribution by Yaron Matras on the Romani language. The remaining papers are summarized. Carol Silverman supplied an abstract of her paper, which serves as the basis of that summary. The other summaries were prepared by Victor Friedman on the basis of the presentations. The presentations were video-recorded by László Fosztó, Secretary of EANRS, and are available at <<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNJAfpudefGAAftLjZkLwYw>>.

Introduction

Victor A. Friedman

The academic seminar entitled “European dimension of Roma Culture: scientific and political discourses” was funded by The European Union and the Council of Europe and implemented by the Council of Europe with the Scientific Committee of the European Academic Network on Romani studies and hosted by the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur in Marseille Provence, which, together with Košice, Slovakia, was the European Capital of Culture for 2013. It was especially appropriate that this seminar took place during that year’s Episode Three, entitled “Marseille Provence - a Thousand Faces”, with its focus on, among other things, living together. The Romani people have been living together with other Europeans for many centuries, and they have been an integral part of European culture throughout the continent. One could even argue that the Romani people are the most European of European groups, since not only did the Romani language take its definitive shape precisely in Europe — as did most other modern European languages — but also Romani speakers are found throughout Europe. To be sure, language is not the sole definer of peoplehood, nationhood, or ethnicity, but it is a vital vehicle of culture as well as a useful historical heuristic, and the issues raised by such questions are among those to be clarified in any consideration of Romani culture — or, as Alexandar Marinov (U. of Swansea) pointed out, Romani cultures. I should note that by identifying language as a vehicle of culture I am not endorsing some sort of pseudo-Whorfian approach claiming that language defines culture. Rather, I am simply observing that language is a vehicle by which cultural values are transmitted.

It is likewise especially appropriate that Romani culture was being discussed at an academic seminar in the context of a European Union and Council of Europe sponsored event, since both modern European unity and the rise of Romani Studies

as a distinct academic discipline are arguably interrelated. We have documentation of Romani language and culture in Europe going back many centuries, including word and phrase lists from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from England, the Netherlands, and Ottoman Turkey in Europe. In the eighteenth century our documentation becomes significantly richer, and musical texts also begin to be documented. Thus, two of the themes of the morning session — Romani language and Romani music — have long-standing historical documentation. The nineteenth century saw significant advances in materials on Romani language and music, just as it saw the rise of historical linguistics — and thus linguistics in general — as a modern academic discipline as well as the establishment of the collections of folklore that served as part of the bedrock of modern European identities. The nineteenth century also saw the rise of the public museum as, among other things, a promoter of both knowledge and identity, and the Romani museum was another theme of the morning session. All three of these papers treated cultural phenomena that are manifested both in the traditional and the so-called modern cultural practices identified by Marushiakova and Popov in their opening, keynote speech. Romani theater, a theme of the afternoon session, has its roots Romani music, while Romani literature — in the sense of publications — has its origins in a twentieth century phenomenon, which, like Romani theater, first saw a kind of institutionalization in Russian speaking lands. Romani art, like Romani literature, is a part of twentieth and now twenty-first century modernity.

It was the twentieth century, however, that provided us with the mixed legacy whose positive aspects we celebrate here today, without losing sight of problems and challenges that must be addressed. I write “mixed legacy” owing to the fact that the mechanized and industrialized slaughter that characterized Europe in a significant part of the twentieth century’s first half — with the Romani people among those targeted for extermination — is clearly a horrible chapter, the repetition of which today’s European structures hope to prevent, despite the establishment of neo-nazi movements in various EU countries. It was during that same first half, however, that Romani language and culture enjoyed some state support, however brief, in

the former Soviet Union, as alluded to above. It was the second half, and especially the last third, of the twentieth century that witnessed the rise of Romani cultural as well as political activism among Romani people themselves in various parts of Europe, and since the so-called fall of communism the Council of Europe and the European Union have been especially active in supporting a variety of Romani cultural initiatives.

Roma Culture in European realities: Problems and challenges

Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov

(Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies and Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

This paper was the introductory keynote speech, and it served well to set the tone and the frame for the papers that followed. The speakers chose to cite the understandings of Romani culture common in Eastern Europe (in a broad understanding of that term), where the concept of *ethnic culture* is shared by Roms and non-Roms.¹⁸ Marushiakova and Popov identified two relevant elements, so-called *traditional* and *modern*. The speakers made the excellent point that in the relevant regions,

¹⁸ Although the Romani plural noun *Roma* is often used in English-language sources as both a noun (both singular and plural) and as an adjective, this is not the practice in any other language, all of which have integrated the words referring to the Romani people grammatically into their systems. No other European people is segregated in this way in English. In English, we refer to Russians, not *Russkie*, the plural of Magyar in English is *Magyars*, not *Magyarok*, the plural of Turk is *Turks*, not *Türkler*, the language is *Turkish*, not *Türkçe*, and one refers to, e.g., *Turkish music*, not *Turk music* or *Turks music* or *Türkler music*, etc. The grammatical segregation and exoticization of the Romani people in English is unnecessary and arguably inappropriate: the correct singular noun is *Rom*, the plural should be *Roms*, and the adjective *Romani*. Moreover the spelling *Romany* is reminiscent of older spellings such as *Hindoo* for modern *Hindu*.

Roms form a distinct ethnic community, but they also share cultural elements with the societies of which they are, for the most part, a socially distinct group. Here the authors are arguing against the exoticization and/or marginalization of Roms and their culture(s) — these two problems not being mutually exclusive — when Roms are viewed in isolation from their larger ethno-social context. Marushiakova and Popov criticized the stereotypes employed in various academic studies as well as projects and programs, and they called for a comparative approach with the cultures of other European nations. They made the very important point — too often elided in West European discourses — that far from being “naturally” peripatetic, most Roms have lived settled lives in Eastern Europe (*sensu largo*) for many centuries, engaging in both urban and rural settled economies.

The speakers provided considerable concrete historical data to make this point. After World War Two, it was only in Poland and the Soviet Union that itinerant Roms represented a majority vis-à-vis settled Roms in Eastern Europe. They also gave numerous concrete examples from Southeastern Europe of shared cultural practices, where, in some cases, what is perceived as specifically Romani is in fact simply shared or the preservation of older shared phenomena. However, they also made the point that Romani culture, like every other European culture (and, we can add here, also non-European) is not static but is rather a constantly changing system. Here they argued particularly for the authenticity of Romani culture, including its modern or globalized manifestations. The speakers were especially critical of scholars who attempt to place themselves in the position of validating what is and is not authentic in Romani culture. From this point they moved to a critique of the politics of funding Romani culture, with its emphasis on certain of the fine arts. They again brought in the point that Romani culture should be viewed in the context of the larger society in which it exists as a distinct but integral element. They also argued against the political deployment of stereotypes as justifications for marginalization or eroticization such as has been seen in the treatment of Romani migrants in places like Italy and France, where formerly settled Romani

populations are treated as nomads. The speakers also discussed problems in the allocation of resources, too much of which goes to so-called mediation rather than the education of Roms themselves. They concluded that in both the academic and policy communities, there is a need to overcome orientalism (in Said's sense) in approaches to Romani culture.

Of the six papers that formed the core of the conference, three of the papers treated themes that could be said to illustrate both the "traditional" and the "modern" — namely language, music, and museum — while three dealt with specific topics in the fine arts: literature, theater, and visual arts.

Roma Language and Roma Culture

Yaron Matras
(*University of Manchester*)

This text aims to provide a brief introduction for non-specialists to a number of key issues surrounding the study of the Romani language and its place in Romani society, and policy that supports the use of the Romani language. For a more detailed discussion of these and related issues see the bibliography at the end of the text.

1) Language as a carrier of culture and identity

Language helps the Roma define who they are, and so it helps us understand who the Roma are. In popular images, 'Gypsies' are often equated with travellers or nomads of various backgrounds. Some research traditions, especially in the

social sciences, define Gypsies as populations of diverse origins, but with a specific particular socio-economic profile, specialising in mobile trades and services. Both popular images, and this research tradition, have led to confusion in the political discourse. European institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe struggle to define whom they mean when they talk about Roma/Gypsies. On the one hand they acknowledge a Romani nation with its own distinct culture and history; on the other hand they keep referring to the label 'Roma/Gypsies' as an 'umbrella term' that includes travellers and nomads of different backgrounds. Since there is still no clear definition of the target group for Roma/Gypsy policy at the European level, there can be no guarantee that any implementation of policy and recommendation can have a chance of success.

What does being 'Roma' mean to Romani people? In some cases, individuals identify as Rom because their parents or grandparents spoke Romani, even though the language has not been passed on to the younger generation. In some other cases, notably among the Romani populations of England, Scandinavia, Spain and Portugal, identifying as Rom usually entails acknowledgement of a Romani-derived vocabulary that is still used in family conversation, even though the language itself has been lost. But by and large, Roma define themselves as people who speak or spoke Romani. This is in contrast to the way they are often defined by outsiders, as travellers or nomads. Understanding the relevance of the Romani language to Romani culture is therefore a key to understanding who the Romani people are.

2) Language as a mirror of social history

Sharing a language is not a historical coincidence. Romani people don't share a language because they went out and taught themselves a common language. They obviously don't share a language of their own because it is the language of the territory in which they live; Romani speakers are always a minority, and Romani populations are dispersed. Rather, Romani

people share a language, because they share a history, and because maintaining a distinct language is a vital part of the shared tradition that Romani populations maintain.

There have been many suggestions that Romani culture manifests itself in the Romani language, and that the language is a key to understand Romani culture and traditions. I tend to be skeptical toward such assertions. It is true that some aspects of Romani vocabulary point to key cultural concepts. For example, the fact that the default words for 'man' and 'woman' differentiate between 'Rom/Romni' and 'Gajo/Gaji', depending on whether the person referred to is a member of the group or not, is an indication of the importance given in Romani culture to the distinction between insiders and outsiders. But this is an exception.

There are many myths about Romani language as a mirror of culture, and I'd like to mention just a couple of those.

Some authors have suggested that some Romani people have difficulties following time schedules because their dialects of the Romani language do not differentiate between the words for 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' or because some dialects don't have a separate future tense. I've heard many schoolteachers repeat this assumption. This is complete nonsense. Every concept of time can be expressed in Romani and there is no such thing as grammatical deprivation.

Some writers, including scholars and even linguists, have suggested that the Romani language lacks important vocabulary and that Romani people therefore need to include words from other language or switch to other languages in the middle of their conversation. The reality is that codeswitching and the insertion of foreign words is common among every population of bilinguals around the world, and it is not unique to Romani. English has a high percentage of French words, Japanese has

a high percentage of English words, and Persian has a high percentage of Arabic words. The borrowing of words from one language to another is a natural process, and has nothing to do with language deficiencies.

Some authors have suggested that the presence of certain words in the Romani language point to a particular ancient culture that the Roma had before they came to Europe. Activist author and linguist Ian Hancock has claimed that the Romani words for 'knife', 'shout', and 'argue' are Indic and that this proves that the ancestors of the Roms were warriors. There is absolutely no scientific basis for such assertions. Romani also has Indic words for 'to beg', 'to sing', 'to dance', 'to steal', and 'to cheat', and that does not indicate that the ancestors of the Rom were beggars, singers, dancers, or thieves. And Romani has Indic words for the numbers up to six, but not for 'seven', 'eight' and 'nine' (the words for these numbers are Greek). That doesn't mean that the ancestors of the Rom could only count up to six.

But the Romani language does allow us to learn much about Romani history, even beyond what is recorded in historical documents. I will give just two examples.

The first is well known: It is thanks to the study of language that we know that the Romani people originated in India. Some scholars, such as Okely and Willems, continue to dispute this. They claim that the Romani language was acquired by nomadic traders on the trade routes. There is no precedent in the history of language for a population acquiring a language in such a way. The Romani language is clearly of Indic origin, and that clearly points to India as the country of origin of the Romani people. Popular sources continue to claim that the language originated in North India, although historical linguistics has shown that the language originated in central India, but then underwent some changes in the north before leaving south Asia.

The second point for historical reconstruction concerns the connection between Romani groups in Europe. For many years, some linguists were engaged in postulating so-called dialect Branches of the Romani language. They proposed that the present-day dialects of Romani each belonged to a sub-family of the language. There are speculations as to where exactly these sub-families emerged; some say they may have emerged before immigration to Europe, some say that they reflect different waves of migrations across Europe. This notion of dialect branches has become so prevalent that it has been taken over by some social scientists, who believe that Romani populations can always be classified according to the dialects they speak, and that dialects form strict boundaries.

I take a critical approach to this view. My own research and that of my collaborators has shown over the past decade that Romani dialects form a geographical continuum, just like in most other languages. Of course this continuum is sometimes interrupted when groups migrate from one location to another. But our historical and comparative research shows that most of the differences between the Romani dialects emerged after the initial settlement in Europe, around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Today's dialect map shows that neighbouring Romani populations tend to speak similar dialects. This means that travel and nomadism in the history of the Roms were not random; but that Romani populations were settled and had contacts mainly with those Romani groups that settled close to them.

3) Language as an identity badge and symbol of political recognition

My final point concerns the political status of Romani. Language has always served as a badge of national identity, and the elites of every emerging nation put much effort into elevating language into a symbol of national unity. This kind of thinking inspired the members of the International Romani Union when they began their activities in the early 1970s. Developing a standard Romani language was high on the agenda. There are still a number of activists who believe that there should be

a uniform way of writing and perhaps even of speaking Romani at least for official purposes. Some argue that this would make it easier for Romani people from different countries to understand one another. This argument finds some support among activists and intellectuals who are engaged in international networks. The main argument however is that a standard language can act as a symbol of unity and that it can be used to inspire people to promote Romani emancipation.

There are several reasons why efforts to promote a standard Romani have failed, and why such efforts appear to be futile and not necessary.

Firstly, there are practical obstacles. There is no central Romani government or education system that can promote a standard Romani. The international Romani union has failed to unite Roma, and most Roma do not find its ideas on language inspiring. Only a handful of people follows the IRU's guidelines on standard Romani.

But more importantly, Romani people recognise that a standard is not necessary and that it serves no function.

Romani activists and ordinary Romani people alike are able to communicate with one another when they meet Roma from other countries. The barriers are negligible in face-to-face communication. They are also marginal in writing. My research collaborators and I have been studying online written communication in Romani in a variety of media — translations of documents, email discussion lists, social media, and websites. We encounter a mix of dialects, and communication works very well.

Activists do not seem to feel a need for a unified symbol, either. The mere act of writing in Romani is seen as an emancipatory act and a demonstration of one's identity. Indeed, most activists prefer to express their own identity in their own dialect rather than comply with an imposed standard.

Finally, modern technology and online communication means that people are moving away from strict norms and over to flexible and creative use of language. This is a universal trend and it can be observed in emails, text messages and chat forums worldwide and in all languages. It would be odd if Romani were to go against this trend.

Where does that leave policy? Acknowledging the Romani language and its role in public discussion and in education is important, and it is right that European institutions continue to refer to the need to promote Romani. Many have done so already, but there is little implementation on the ground. There is a very strong network of linguists as well as of language activists and they are in a position to make a contribution toward promoting Romani. Romani is one of few languages for which the Council of Europe has designed a European Curriculum Framework. We have recommendations on how to teach Romani, and an online animated learning forum for the language, RomaniNet, was developed last year with the support of the European Commission. We need to expand such resources especially by training teachers and raising awareness of the language.

The Romani Project at the University of Manchester, which I have been leading since 1999, developed a website which it launched in 2006. We have since had some 50,000 unique visitors annually, which shows the considerable interest. Another online resource, Romlex, and online multi-dialect dictionary for Romani, has some 70,000 unique visitors annually. And our project is about to launch the Romani Virtual Library, which will document online teaching and learning materials for Romani, international resolution texts and translations into the language.

PART THREE: EVENT REPORTS

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Roma Music

Carol Silverman
(*University of Oregon*)
(based on the speaker's abstract)

Silverman's presentation illustrated how music provides a means analyzing issues of Romani identity in both theoretical and practical terms, i.e. by participating in scholarship concerted with Romani identity, on the one hand, and in policy oriented and human rights challenges, on the other. Music is arguably the most visible Romani art form in communication with non-Roma. Music constructs an entrenched Romani stereotype and is thus a vital element in debates about representation. Moreover, "Gypsy music" is now immensely popular in the West, and European institutions should, in principle, be able harness this interest for serious intercultural work. At the same time, the appropriation of Romani music by non-Roms is problematic. Silverman discussed what she calls the "difference conundrum", or "the essentialism conundrum" involving a paradox: the danger of reifying and essentializing Romani culture versus the necessity of defining Romani culture for non-Roms. She argued that the analysis of music can help interrogate various dichotomies, such as: nation/minority; folk/popular music; inclusion/exclusion; authentic/unauthentic (corrupt, kitsch); entertainment/education; art/advocacy; professional/amateur; and owning/borrowing. Her presentation dealt with the social, political, and economic roles of music in Romani communities, the world music market, and the important place of music in advocacy/activist work. Of particular concern in her presentation was another dichotomy, that between employment and exploitation. The paper did not resolve any of these problems and dichotomies, but by focusing on them, it opened an appropriate space for further discussion.

Roma Museums

Jana Horváthová & Alica Heráková
(Museum of Romani Culture in Brno, Czech Republic)

The paper by Horváthová and Heráková discussed the history and activities of the Museum of Romani Culture in Brno, Czech Republic. The museum was founded in 1991 by a group of Romani intellectuals, including Jana Horváthová, and hosted its first exhibition in 1992. In 2000 the Museum moved into its first permanent building and current home. In 2005, the first permanent exhibition was opened. The museum has exhibitions on the history and culture of the Romani people, with an emphasis on the Czech lands. The museum also has many temporary exhibitions, especially of Romani visual arts — painting, sculpture, photography, etc. — in addition to hosting concerts, lectures, conferences, shows, commemorative events, and Romani language courses. The museum also has a library with an extensive collection of materials relating to the Romani people, as well as a museum store and e-shop (www.rommuz.cz). The talk was accompanied by a PowerPoint of almost 200 images that gave a very effective presentation of the museum's rich resources in presenting both traditional and modern culture.

Roma Literature

Sofiya Zahova

(Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies and Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

Zahova's presentation provided an extensive survey of literature in Romani and literature by Roms, with some coverage of literature by non-Roms (Travelers, et al.) who are classified together with Roms by various European documents (see Section 2.2 in this volume). Although Romani folklore (and possibly other compositions) have been published by non-Roms since the nineteenth century, and there were Bible translations and some other efforts in the early 20th century, Romani literature as such dates from the period between the two world wars, when there was a thriving production of both original works and translations in North Russian Romani in the Soviet Union. From the end of World War Two until c. 1989 Romani literature in Eastern Europe resumed production, this time in more countries, albeit not on the pre-War scale. In the USSR and Yugoslavia, production was in Romani. The same was true in Bulgaria until the repression of non-Bulgarian nationalities beginning in the 1960s, after which Romani writers in Bulgaria published in Bulgarian. There was also some production in Czechoslovakia, while in Hungary Romani writers were considered part of the mainstream and wrote in Hungarian. In Poland, Bronisława Wajs (Papusza) became one of the most famous Romani poets of all time. Unlike the situation in Eastern Europe, where Romani literature received at least some state support, developments in the West were more modest but nonetheless worthy of note. The paper mentioned Mateo Maximoff, who became a recognized Romani novelist in France, as well as Romani authors in Spain, Sweden, Finland, and Canada. The decades since 1989 have seen a burgeoning and internationalization of Romani literature in a variety of genres, helped in part by European policies such as the European Charter for Minority and Regional Languages and support by the Open Society Foundation and other organizations.

Roma Theaters

Nadezhda Belugina

(Independent Scholar and Journalist)

Belugina's paper concentrated on the history of Romani theater in the Czarist Empire and its heir, the Soviet Union, with some attention to more recent developments. Romani Theater in Russian speaking lands arguably has its origins in the Romani Choirs. The first of these was founded by Count Alexei Grigoevich Orlov (Chesmensky), through Ivan Trifimovich Sokolvsky, the leader of Orlov's Romani serfs. The leadership passed through two generations of Sokolvsky's descendents, and then to Nikolai Shishkin. It was Shishkin who produced the first Romani language operettas at the end of the nineteenth century. The operettas were highly successful, and many popular Russian romantic songs have their origins in Romani choirs. After the October Revolution (1917), there were many Romani performing groups, and what would become the "Teatr Romen" was founded in Moscow in 1931. The paper detailed this history of this, arguably the most successful Romani theater, as well as other Romani theaters, notably Theater Romans in Ukraine, the Romani group Phralipe ('Brotherhood'), which has its origins in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, but subsequently moved to Germany, and the amateur theater of Uzhgorod (western Ukraine).

Roma Visual Arts

Timea Junghaus

(Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Gallery8 Roma Contemporary Art Space, Budapest)

Junghaus's paper discussed the theory and practice of Romani visual arts, arguing for a post-colonial theoretical framework that situates early representations of Romani people in a racist discourse. This was contrasted to visual representation by Romani people, which can be viewed as a result of a larger Romani cultural movement. Although Romani artistic work dates from the 1960s, the First World Romani Congress in 1971 was an important turning point in the claims and recognition of Romani artists as individuals. The first exhibitions, in both eastern and western Europe, date from the 1970s and 1980s. Junghaus argued that a paradigm shift in the 1990s and 2000s enabled Romani artists to enter the mainstream of artistic production, culminating in the first Romani pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2007. Since then, the field of Romani art has grown significantly, and the paper presented a variety of images illustrating this. Junghaus argued, citing, among others, Nicolae Gheorghe, that in the context of decolonial thinking, Romani art is political as well as artistic, and it is legitimized by the discourse of Romani cultural rights.

Participants

	Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
1	Nadezhda	Belugina	Latvia	Independent scholar and journalist
2	Andreea	Carstocea	Germany	European Centre for Minority Issues
3	Laura	Cassio	Belgium	European Commission
4	Colin	Clark	UK	University of the West of Scotland
5	Jane	Codona	UK	One Voice 4 Travellers
6	Ion	Duminica	Moldova	Academy of Sciences of Moldova
7	László	Fosztó	Romania	ISPMN Cluj Napoca
8	Katharina	Fouquet	France	Council of Europe
9	Victor	Friedman	USA	University of Chicago
10	Alica	Heráková	Czech Republic	Museum of Romani Culture, Brno, Czech Republic

	Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
11	Jana	Horváthová	Czech Republic	Museum of Romani Culture, Brno, Czech Republic
12	Claudia Anamaria	Iov	Romania	Babeş-Bolyai University
13	Tímea	Junghaus	Hungary	Hungarian Academy of Sciences/ European Roma Cultural Foundation
14	Irén	Kertész-Wilkinson	UK	University of Salford
15	Lilyana	Kovacheva	Bulgaria	Ministry of Education
16	Hristo	Kyuchukov	Germany	European Center of Romani Studies (Banská Bystrica, Slovakia)/St. Elizabeth University (Bratislava, Slovakia)/Free University of Berlin
17	Jean-Pierre	Liégeois	France	Independent consultant
18	Aleksandar	Marinov	Bulgaria/UK	Swansea University
19	Elena	Marushiakova	Bulgaria	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

	Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
20	Yaron	Matras	UK	University of Manchester
21	Kathrin	Merkle	France	Council of Europe
22	Ciprian	Necula	Romania	National School of Political Science and Public Administration
23	Marta	Padrós Castells	Spain	Autonomous University of Barcelona
24	Andrea	Pócsik	Hungary	Károli Gáspár Protestant University
25	Veselin	Popov	Bulgaria	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
26	Jean-Luc	Poueyto	France	Université de Pau
27	Isabel	Raabe	Germany	German Federal Cultural Foundation
28	Franziska	Sauerbrey	Germany	German Federal Cultural Foundation
29	Marianna	Seslavskaya	Russia	Federal Institute of Educational Development
30	Frederica	Setti	Italy	University of Turin

	Name	Surname	Country	Institutional affiliation
31	Carol	Silverman	USA	University of Oregon
32	Elisabetta	Vivaldi	Italy/UK	Bucks New University-Coventry
33	Ioana	Vrabiescu	Romania	National School of Political Science and Public Administration
34	Sofiya	Zahova	Bulgaria	Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

University of Liverpool, 10-11 October 2014

Workshop aims and rationale

This workshop brought together scholars and practitioners who engage with the field of Romani Studies through their work as archivists, historians, or educators to explore how practitioners in these three distinct but interlinked spheres can cooperate effectively and what they can learn from one another.

The workshop had three main aims:

1. To ask how historians and policy-makers might cooperate to ensure the existence and maintenance of as well as access to the archives that historians working in Romani Studies need to do their work: How might community or personal archives be maintained, and what are the ethics of archiving and preserving records in relation to the communities involved?
2. To discuss how historians and policymakers might cooperate for the benefit of community relations: How might history and historical knowledge be used to combat racism and xenophobia in local, national or international settings? What is the role of institutions such as museums in disseminating this knowledge? And how should academic historians work more effectively with cultural policymakers and local activists in this respect?
3. To assess the scope for further cooperation and joint projects.

In order to provide a basis for an informal discussion, participants were invited to deliver position papers based on their own experiences.

¹⁹ The original report on this event is available at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/romastudies/Liverpool-Report_10102014.pdf

Session one: Archives

The first panel presented the views of professional archivists and curators. Participants were asked to reflect on the practice of collecting, maintaining, and making visible archival materials that relate to Roma and Sinti. What, for example, are the particular challenges posed by historians or the wider public?

The speakers in this panel provided an insight into four different types of archive. The first were the state archives of Sachsen-Anhalt at Magdeburg, which house one of the largest surviving collections of police files on Gypsies in the Third Reich, and thus represent a crucial resource for professional historians as well as for legal claims by individuals seeking compensation for persecution. The second were the city archives of Dessau-Rosslau. The third were the archival collections of the Museum of Roma Culture in Brno, Czech Republic. The last example was the Gypsy Lore Society Collections housed by the Special Collections of the University of Liverpool Library.

Lutz Mieke, head of the Department for Data Protection, Reparations and Archives at the Interior Ministry of Sachsen-Anhalt, spoke in a personal capacity about the challenges of using official archives to reconstruct histories of Roma and Sinti that look beyond the perspective of state repression and discrimination. Drawing on his knowledge of the wide variety of records held by state or local administrations, Mieke suggested sources that would help to reconstruct 'ordinary' histories of Roma and Sinti. Frank Kreissler, archivist at the Stadtarchiv Dessau-Rosslau, also focused on how archivists facilitate the interface between historical research and educational work with local communities. As an example, he discussed Eve Rosenhaft's research into the story of Erna Lauenburger, a young Sinti woman known as Unku, whose life-story was fictionalised in the classic German children's novel *Ede und Unku*, which became part of the school curriculum in the German Democratic Republic.

The Museum of Roma Culture in Brno was established as a civic association in the early 1990s, after the collapse of the socialist regime in Czechoslovakia, but the idea for such an institution was initially conceived during the Prague Spring by activists in the short-lived Association of Gypsies-Roma (1969-1973). In late 2000 the museum moved to its current premises in a Roma district of Brno, and in 2005 became a state-funded institution. Speaking on behalf of the curator of archival collections at the Museum, Milada Zavodská explained that the museum functions as a cultural centre for local communities as well as a repository for historical artefacts. Providing a space for performances or social events, the museum communicates the results of its research projects to participants, witnesses, and a broader public. This reflection on the museum's role in the community gave an insight into how practitioners think about the complex relationship between Roma identity-building and the preservation of archives or the production of historical narratives.

In the final presentation of the session, Katy Hooper discussed the challenges of reorganising the eclectic collections of the Gypsy Lore Society for the benefit of contemporary researchers. Once catalogued according to categories replete with stereotypes about Gypsies and Roma, the archive has now been reorganised to reflect the logic of the original collections. This enables contemporary researchers to approach the records of the Gypsy Lore Society critically, in their historical context. This presentation exemplified the way in which changing attitudes towards academic knowledge about Roma shape the preservation of records relating to their history.

Session two: Historians and history

This session asked historians to reflect on their experiences with using official archives to study the history of Roma and Sinti. What particular challenges arise, for example, concerning access, interpretation, or responsibility toward the 'subjects'?

of research? What problems emerge vis-à-vis archivists and the wider public? Rather than presenting research papers, speakers were asked to draw on case studies from their research to make their points.

In the first paper of this session, Miika Tervonen reflected on the ethical, political and practical aspects of collaborative research into the history of Roma, with a focus on Scandinavia. Tervonen suggested that historians should work in partnership with Roma associations or representatives already in the very first stages of planning a research project. This presentation raised an argument that would become a common theme of the discussion: Roma communities may often not wish to support research into the history of institutionalised discrimination for fear of compromising their privacy or personal family histories.

The next presentation was given by Ilse About, a specialist on the history of policing and identification practices in Western Europe since the late nineteenth century. About's research into state control of mobility across borders has led him to focus on 'Gypsies' as a case-study for understanding the roots of the European system of migration control. In his talk, About stressed the need to study this history not only from the perspective of international and national bureaucracy, police, or legislation, but also the family histories of individuals caught up in these processes of identification and regulation.

Paola Trevisan discussed related questions arising from her research on the history of Sinti families in Italy under Fascist rule. As a scholar who works at the intersection of ethnography and history, Trevisan highlighted the challenges of an approach that combines oral history with archival research. Knowledge of family and individual histories – which can often only be obtained through interviews and ethnographic research – is crucial, especially since archival catalogues rarely categorize Sinti or Roma as a group. Trial records, for example, can only be searched by name. However, Trevisan strongly

emphasized the ethical obligation of researchers to protect sensitive personal data and to respect the confidence and trust of their interlocutors.

In the final presentation in this session, Petre Matei provided an excellent example of the crucial interface between historical research, archival practice, and community relations. Matei is a historian who has created a project to assist Roma survivors of deportations to Transnistria to claim the compensation – including monthly pension and medical care – to which they are entitled under Romanian law (Law 189/2000) and the *Ghettorentengesetz* of the Federal Republic of Germany. Since the law privileges documentary proof over verbal testimony, Matei assisted survivors to locate documents testifying to their deportation in local archives across Romania. In his talk, Matei explained the challenges this raised, such as changing orthography of names and places; unreliable memories of survivors; and, in some cases, resistance from archivists.

Session three: Community relations

This session asked participants to reflect on the use of historical knowledge and historical sources – including visual sources or oral testimonies – in community engagement or educational projects, as well as academic research.

Milada Zavodská and Helena Sadílková presented the case of *My Friend Fabián*, a film made in socialist Czechoslovakia during the early 1950s that dramatised the story of a Roma man and his son in Ostrava in the aftermath of the Second World War. Including Roma actors who were themselves survivors of persecution, the film can be read on multiple levels as a site of memory regarding persecution, internment, and mass violence during the war and Occupation.

The theme of memory and commemoration was pursued in the presentation of Jana Müller, a founding member of the Alternatives Jugendzentrum (AJZ) in Dessau-Roßlau, which runs projects to ‘make local history visible’ with a focus on commemorating the Holocaust and combating racism in contemporary society. Youth groups researched the life history of Erna Lauenburger, the Sinteza fictionalised as Unku in the novel by Grete Weiskopf (alias Alex Wedding) that became part of the GDR school curriculum. Using documents from the city archives, as well as interviews, the group produced a 35-minute film, “Was mit Unku geschah” (What Happened with Unku).

The next two presentations tackled problems of categorisation and labelling. Jan Selling from the University of Uppsala presented on the history of Roma in Sweden, and in the course of his paper warned against the use of the term ‘Gypsy’. This provoked a direct response from Lilyana Kovacheva (Centre for Educational Integration of Children, Ministry of Education, Bulgaria) in the context of a presentation based on her ethnographic research amongst Roma communities in Bulgaria. Two linked ideas emerged forcefully from her presentation and in the subsequent discussion. One was the way in which ethnographic classifications and taxonomies within communities identified as ‘Roma’ are created and maintained through social practice and the production of knowledge. The second was the political meaning ascribed to these ethnographic categories and the power relations at play when they are used as a means of identification.

The final presentation of the third session was given by John Cole, from the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service at Liverpool City Council. This talk highlighted the gap that often exists between academic research and local government or communities. According to Cole, closing this gap through better communication or joint projects is crucial for overcoming discrimination and prejudice against minority communities. In the case of Roma communities from East Central Europe, a more joined-up approach has proven crucial for challenging the stereotypes that frequently shape Roma’s interactions with local societies and government agencies.

Session four: Using history to combat racism and discrimination

In the final session, a group of secondary school students from the Enterprise South Liverpool Academy (ESLA) presented a project that used the story of Ede and Unku to raise awareness of racism in contemporary society. ESLA staff and pupils had previously been involved in an extra-curricular initiative on Tackling Racism and Promoting Diversity to respond to conflicts within the student body. Growing out of this, a group of students are using a reading of the novel *Ede and Unku* as the basis for a photo-montage project that reflects on the consequences of racism and discrimination.

Concluding discussion

The concluding discussion focused on two main topics. The first was the possibility of creating a website or database of archives across Europe as a resource for research into the history of Roma. The second concerned avenues for further research projects on a European scale.

Overall, the workshop demonstrated that historical research is crucial for understanding the roots of past and present discrimination against Roma (for example, in policing, child welfare, sterilisation) and thus has a vitally important role to play in policy-making and education. Human rights claims often require individuals to provide narrative accounts of their past experiences, supported by documentary evidence, and policy-makers should be sensitive to the complexity of this process. History is also of great importance for tackling racism and discrimination through educational and community projects. The commemoration of traumatic events is valuable and important but is not sufficient for understanding the complex histories of Roma, Sinti or Gypsies across Europe, which cannot be reduced to a simple story of victimisation or marginalisation.

EPILOGUE: ROMANI PEOPLE COULD BE THE BEST TEACHERS OF EUROPEAN SOCIETIES BUT EUROPE MISSED THE CHANCE – AGAIN

Elisabeth Tauber

I would like to conclude with first listing the positive things which happened in the Network over the last four years:

The Network enthusiastically supported research seminars allowing junior researchers – in particular with Romani background – to enhance their research experience through exchange with more experienced researchers. These seminars took place in Chişinău, Cluj, Budapest, and Liverpool. For me personally, the experience of working with MA and PhD students with Romani background was a real highlight.

The Network also supported and financed meetings of national Network members with national and local policy makers. These meetings took place in Barcelona, Bratislava, Bolzano, Budapest, Bucharest, Lisbon, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Prague, and Rome, as well as Turin. Here, I would like to mention the highly motivated group of Italian Network members, who worked especially hard to build a bridge from academics to policy.

Additionally, the Network provided a forum for intensive exchange among its members – especially on the electronic mailing list – and sparked continuous interest on the part of potential Network members. Particularly noteworthy were the debates on research ethics and naming [included as Part 2 of this volume].

The work of the Scientific Committee and the organization of the national events has been supported by several people whom I would like to thank, especially László Fosztó, our secretary who was available till exhaustion; Kathrin Merkle, who stood with us till the very end of this not easy project; Katharina Fouquet, Elena Dubinina, and Daria Cherepanova from the Council of Europe; and Laura Cassio from the European Commission, one of the idea givers who left the project a bit earlier.

I would also like to thank the two funding bodies, the European Commission (EC) and the Council of Europe (CoE), as well as the several policy makers who took the time to meet with the Scientific Committee.

As the project has come to an end, I will conclude with a short analysis on the attributed role and work of the Network and its Scientific Committee and a short reflection on the one-way street of European politics in the realm of Romani policies. I will do this by first looking at some shortcomings of the Network itself, which are mainly to be seen in its failure to analyse the historical moment of its own implementation and secondly by looking at the structural obstacles and political dynamics the Network had to face.

I.

In its function the Network – of which many of the members have long experience of research and friendships with Romani people – did not take the lessons it has learned from its Romani friends. The Network failed to watch carefully what has happened since summer 2010, after the expulsion of Romanian Roma from France. Instead of analyzing these events, the Network started to discuss other topics, without paying active attention to the very recent political development on the European level. It failed to see that it was not a coincidence that the Network was financed in the same historical period of the Strasbourg declaration (Committee of Ministers 2010).

Many of the Network members are well informed concerning the fundamental critiques of European development programs, which on the local level have caused uncontrollable dynamics of economic and political power relations as a side effect

of the sudden appearance of large sums of money. Romani people paradoxically enough pay a high price for being the target group of European development projects. The price they pay is twofold – they are the discursively formed objects of these programs and at the same time they are blamed by their local neighbours of being the addressees of these European resources.

Many scholars applying empirical research based in particular on qualitative methods are aware of these harmful dynamics, which some colleagues have also analysed in their publications. When the Network was introduced as an EC/CoE joint project, some of those researchers (not all indeed, as some of our colleagues remained skeptical) thought that finally their analytical competence would find a receptive ear at the European level. Colleagues hoped to be included in designing programs at the level of the EC's DGs. Network members saw concrete possibilities of being invited to give a profound analysis of (still-) current CoE programs.

When the Scientific Committee came together for the second time in December 2012, it was busy with other things and did not take time to carefully discuss the political and structural implications of its own existence and the Strasbourg declaration on Roma of 2010. How could the Network as such expect to be welcomed with its constructive critiques and analytical feedback at a time when the Committee of Ministers declared that Roma need mediators and are disproportionately prone to human trafficking, economic and sexual exploitation and early marriages? How could the Network ignore the ambiguous rhetoric of the Strasbourg declaration, which asserts the human right of cultural diversity and simultaneously accuses a culturally diverse group of exploiting its own members?

The Strasbourg declaration misses a macro analysis of the historical presence of Romani people in Europe and their unique but still unrecognized contribution to European societies. The Strasbourg declaration is just another example of how Europe fails to learn from its most forgotten citizens, instead continuing to attempt to teach them how to become 'proper people'.

While a new Romani political elite, very small in numbers but powerfully supported by benevolent persons and European politics, is emerging, local Romani communities deal with the challenges of their everyday lives to guarantee their families wellbeing and prosperity.

Travelling through Europe from East to West and from South to North we can, if open enough, meet poor Roma, wealthy Roma, Roma who speak and practice their language, and those who do not speak the Romani language but do practice and participate in Romani cultures. We can meet powerful Romani women and children who together with their husbands and fathers make their living as family entrepreneurs. What all of these very heterogeneous family networks share is the experience of structural discrimination as soon as they are recognized as “Gypsies”. In fact only in very few contexts it is strategically good to claim “Roma” ancestry, namely when belonging to a political elite pushing for privileges in the realm of European policies. At the same time, if we listen to the European discourse on Roma, as Kathrin Simhandl (2006; 2007) has illustrated so well, we will not see this diversity but will believe that “the Roma” are poor and in urgent need to be educated and this certainly by us.

In this context, the Network failed to recognize a shift of political paradigm. Yaron Matras’ (2015) very recent analysis is enlightening in this regard.

II.

Against this politically charged background, I feel that the Network – many experienced academics, with some of them actively engaged in the Scientific Committee while others were involved in organizing a constructive dialogue with policy-makers at the national level – was squeezed in between European policy agendas on the constructed category of “Roma”. The Network as a whole and the Scientific Committee as its representative body moved into this project without the preparatory work of soul-searching and vision-building. It somehow naively thought that it would be enough to do what academics always do: debate, discuss, decide on budget allocations by peer-reviewed principles and in the specific case work hard to get in contact with policy makers.

The second aspect which the Network and in particular the Scientific Committee tried to handle with much patience and good will was the political and structural challenge of its heterogeneous composition. Instead of discussing through its hybrid constellation (academics and activists as well as senior researchers and PhD candidates) the Scientific Committee tried to function effectively and to take up the responsibility it had been allocated by the two funding bodies. The twice-a-year meeting agendas were full with to-dos and the Scientific Committee tried to move through stormy times including instead of excluding its critics, among which were young PhD candidates. The resignation of several members of the Scientific Committee was used to defame and accuse the remaining Scientific Committee of being not transparent and manipulated by single members. This could only happen because the Scientific Committee had never worked on a written vision and strategy.

Much of the Network and the Scientific Committee was overwhelmed by a political dynamic characterized by attacks on non-Roma researchers by an informal coalition of activists, both Roma and non-Roma (the latter all being academics).

The whole scenario does not miss a sad irony: while the Scientific Committee came more and more under pressure during the events around the establishment of a European Roma Institute (ERI) in 2014, it tried to work as effectively and with as much intellectual and administrative responsibility as possible to fulfill its tasks to bridge academic expertise to policy. But the Network and the Scientific Committee had to learn the lesson their Romani teachers already knew: policy makers are reluctant to critically investigate their own practices. We heard how hard it was for the Italian group to bring together local policymakers for a meeting with academics in Turin. The same is true for the experience of the Scientific Committee – European policymakers simply were not interested in independent, high-quality academic expertise. If the Scientific Committee and the Network had taken the lessons of their Romani friends seriously, they would not have put so much time, energy and competence into this project. Here I am keen to specify that this work was done by all the academics involved on a voluntary basis.

While the Scientific Committee had to listen to the rather limited explorations of policymakers' ideas on the need of Roma to be helped, there was no single occasion on which policy makers showed real interest in the advanced research debates which have been developed mainly in the social sciences and humanities. The Scientific Committee worked hard to open the doors of the institutions dedicating their policies to Roma inclusion, but the doors remained closed.

I understand that this phenomenon is institutionally inherent. It would have been risky to open doors and ideas to the critical eye of researchers who might have had a say (Tauber 2015). This is psychologically understandable but politically a disaster, as Europe moves backwards and refers to rather dated paradigms. This concerns not only Romani people and its academic friends, but it should also worry Europe as a whole.

To conclude, as long as Europe and its EU and CoE member states construct "Roma" as a category which has to learn instead of teach, as long as policy needs the "Roma" to justify its agendas and budgets, no steering committee and no academic network in the world will be able to contribute to democratic processes which confer the right of citizenship on all citizens.

EPILOGUE

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APPENDIX: MAPPING THE NETWORK

László Fosztó

As of May 2015, there were 405 validated members affiliated with approximately 300 institutions: 225 full members (56%) and 180 associated members (44%). The membership is widely distributed geographically, gender balanced, composed of an increasing number of young and dynamic, highly qualified academics, who are well dispersed in terms of institutional affiliation. The fact that only 24 of the institutional centres in Europe host 3 or more members of the Network points to the Network's role as an important communication infrastructure for Romani studies and for the researchers in this domain.

- **Geographic distribution:** Members of the Network reside in 41 countries. There are members in almost all EU Member States. The large majority of the CoE countries are also represented. Countries with the highest number of members are: UK, Romania, Hungary, France, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, USA, Germany, and the Czech Republic. Additional detail is provided on the next page, as well as at the following link: <http://romanistudies.eu/maping-the-network/>
- **Gender ratio:** There is a good gender balance among the members, with 225 female (56%) and 180 male (44%) members.
- **Academic degrees:** all members have academic degrees or are candidates for a degree: 230 members (57%) hold a doctoral degree, 123 members (30%) are doctoral candidates, 46 members have been awarded a Masters degree, and 7 members have other qualifications.
- **Age:** Measured in terms the date when the doctoral degree was awarded, the Network membership is young: 176 members were awarded their doctorate after the year 2000 (76% of the 230 PhDs). In terms of the recent decades: 10 members have their degrees from the 1970s, 15 from the 1980s, 29 from the 1990s, 122 from the 2000s, and 54 members received their degrees after 2010.
- **Academic disciplines:** There are 85 disciplines and sub-disciplines represented in the Network. The largest numbers of members come from: anthropology, sociology, history, ethnology, political science, linguistics, and legal studies/human rights, but the range of disciplines encompasses most of the humanities and social sciences.

APPENDIX: MAPPING THE NETWORK

Country Members

UK	53
Hungary	43
Romania	40
USA	26
Spain	24
Italy	24
France	23
Bulgaria	20
Germany	16
Czech Republic	16
Austria	11
Belgium	9
Ukraine	8
Poland	8
Slovakia	7
Netherlands	7
Canada	7
Sweden	7
Finland	7
Portugal	6
Serbia	5

Country Members

Macedonia	4
Russia	3
Turkey	3
Ireland	3
Greece	3
Croatia	2
Slovenia	2
Switzerland	2
Moldova	2
Lithuania	2
Australia	2
Brazil	2
Norway	1
Mexico	1
Luxembourg	1
Cyprus	1
Chile	1
Latvia	1
Iceland	1
Hong Kong	1

Total

405

**Countries outside of the EU with
Network members:**

- Australia
- Belarus
- Brazil
- Canada
- Chile
- Hong Kong
- Macedonia
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Norway
- Russia
- Serbia
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- USA

**There were no Network members from the following EU
(marked with an asterisk) and CoE member states:**

- Albania
- Andorra
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Denmark*
- Estonia*
- Georgia
- Lichtenstein
- Malta*
- Monaco
- Montenegro
- San Marino