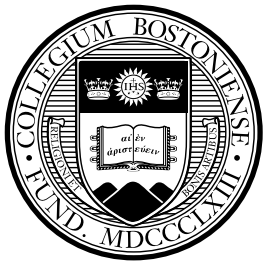
Roma Education in Post-Communist Eastern Europe: Pathways for Intervention to Reduce Incidents of Social Exclusion

Author: Garrett Lau



ROMA EDUCATION IN POST-COMMUNIST EASTERN EUROPE: PATHWAYS FOR INTERVENTION TO REDUCE INCIDENTS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

by

Garrett K. Lau

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of graduation requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts

Boston College

International Studies Program

April 2016

Advisor: Prof. Peter Skerry

Signature: _____

Second Reader: Prof. Hiroshi Nakazato

Signature: _____

IS Program Director: Prof. Robert G. Murphy

Signature: _____

Abstract

The post-communist political shift to liberal democracies in Eastern Europe has given new hope to Romani communities scattered across the region. However, plagued by a history entangled with episodes of slavery, persecution, and extermination, many Roma remain wary about this transition, lacking faith that it truly extends beyond a nominal domain.

This paper first offers a critical exploration into unpacking Roma culture – specifically their material disadvantage and discrimination – from both an abstract and realist perspective. By properly understanding the relationship between their experience with poverty and desires for cultural autonomy, forming a rational, multi-level plan to intervene becomes more accessible. Ultimately, this leads to a series of policy interventions, particularly in the realm of primary and secondary education. Looking closely at this one area of the Roma experience with non-Roma institutions could provide key insights into their interaction with other overlapping exchanges, help to break down the centuries-old legacy of distrust and antagonism between the two sides, and promote a healthier environment for cooperation.

Acknowledgements

To my friends, thank you for easing the transition back from London, for enduring hours of me ranting about my thesis this year (whether you liked it or not), and for helping me to maintain some semblance of sanity throughout this entire process.

To Professor Jennifer Erickson, for the countless times spent helping me to refine my original ideas and stimulating my curiosity as a student and scholar. Though this project reflects few of those original thoughts I proposed during my sophomore year, your wisdom and expertise taught me to persist until I found the 'right' topic. Maybe I can finally relax now.

And lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Professor Peter Skerry. Thank you for taking a chance and agreeing to work with me in the spring of my junior year. Your help in conceptualizing this project was invaluable in building it from the ground up. Over the past 12 months, your patience, guidance and wisdom have been paramount for the success and outcome of this thesis. Your office became like a second home to me this year and you helped to instill in me the confidence to believe in my work, push the boundaries of my intellectual capacity and craft something I think is quite remarkable. I hope you recognize the tremendous impact you have had on me as a person and over my final year at Boston College.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Roma and Their Challenges

1.1 Roma Autonomy and Culture Unpacked (Part 1)

Without doubt, the road ahead for the social incorporation of Romani[1] communities across Eastern Europe is fraught with difficulty. Assuming certain practices will work, simply because they have worked in the past for other minority groups, is not the best discourse for the Roma.[2] Previous studies on Roma culture have often lacked the nuance and needed attention to long-held Romani beliefs. In other words, many policy prescriptions that have been previously written have not given sufficient analysis to these values. Without examining these values in-depth, many of these proposals do not take into account *why* the Roma remain so antagonistic or fearful of outside intervention. At times, studies just glaze over these values, citing prior instances of success as the rationale for their repeated application toward the Roma. However, centuries of discrimination and systemic racism have made the Roma wary to outside systems. Thus, it is imperative to unpack this defensive stance and how things have come about to where they stand today.

Before moving any further, or setting out any examination of intervention methods, I will first tackle a more detailed analysis of Roma values, specifically their cultural autonomy. Despite the growing emergence of ideas such as cosmopolitanism and push towards westernized modernity, many Roma still grasp onto long-held beliefs. This

[1] The word *Romani* is used as a descriptive adjective referring to specific aspects of the Roma lifestyle. Additionally, while the term *Romani* will only be used as an adjective, the word *Roma* can be used as both an adjective and a standalone noun.

[2] The usage of the labels *Roma* and *Gypsy* are to be understood objectively and interchangeably. While the latter term has often been equated with a variety of negative connotations regarding this group's deviance and lifestyle, here the word neutrally refers to the ethnic group as a whole without associating prior stigma. Additionally, the word *Rom* refers to a single person of Romani descent.

pushback can be attributed to several engrained values the Roma are deeply attached to, which drive them to believe in the moral supremacy of their own people over non-Roma citizens. As exhibited by a group of hamlet Roma in Romania, their ambivalence towards the unfamiliar "influences their relationship to ideas like modernity, civilization and democracy. Even if they admire the West for its economic achievements and for what they see as its superior level of civilization, villagers reject what they see as moral inferiority as part and parcel of foreignness and civilization."[3] Their tribal-like affinity and regard for brotherhood and sharing distinguishes them from their non-Roma counterparts.[4] For the Roma, the concept of private property and cordoning off sections of land for individual usage runs counter to their communitarian lifestyle. Moreover, the idea of wealth being derived from money and objects, as most Western societies see it, does not hold as much meaning for the Roma. Monetary or proprietary wealth does not wield as much influence or power as does honor and respect. Thus, in keeping with their notions of brotherhood, "material capital must be 'purified' by ritual sharing in order to be converted into honour,"[5] which thereby reinforces their passion for their morality over materialistic concern.

Lastly, too much contact with the *gadje*[6] would destroy their cultural autonomy and fragment their ethnic in-group connections and brotherhood. University of Texas

---

[3] Ada I. Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness: Power Exchange and Interdependence in a Transylvanian Village*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 196.
[4] Ibid., p. 139.
[5] Ibid., p. 100.
[6] The word *gadje* is used by the Roma to describe someone of non-Roma descent. Oftentimes, the word carries a disparaging connotation towards out-group members of society. However for the purposes of this thesis, I use the words *gadje* and non-Roma interchangeably to suggest an out-group association in relation to the Roma.

Professor Zoltan Barany, who has done extensive fieldwork on Roma marginality, reports "in any event, just as in the socialist era, Roma frequently refuse to move to better-quality dwellings… away from the slums, preferring to maintain their compact communities."[7] In their eyes, placing additional value on materialistic objects should not come at the expense of their familial ties. Therefore, by unpacking Roma cultural autonomy, their regard for brotherhood, honor, and fear of foreign institutions and hesitation toward most outside influences becomes clearer. Nevertheless, the non-Roma community has an obligation to respond, not only from an ethical and moral perspective, but in order to preserve social order as well. Additionally, in some ways, the Roma are also indirectly expecting the non-Roma to, especially given the changing socioeconomic conditions that are making daily life exceedingly difficult for the Roma to survive.

These points about Romani cultural autonomy serve as a thorough underpinning for the remainder of this thesis. Although I acknowledge the challenges and differences the Roma present in helping to raise them out of a place of social and cultural marginalization, I nevertheless remain optimistic about their future success and turn-around moving forward in the 21st century. I hope that by the conclusion, I have resolved some aspects of this dilemma. However, even though I believe that there is a place and need for change - especially once considerations of the current political climate and changing economic conditions are weighed - that does not mean the Roma will take to these changes with the enthusiasm the West is hoping for. Nonetheless, that does not mean that we should not at least try and intervene.

---

[7] Zoltan Barany, *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*, (Cambridge,, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 179.

Chapter 1 – Roma and Their Challenges

The following section will introduce the Roma ethnic group with a short overview of the challenges and bouts of discrimination and violence they have faced over the past 500 years or so, with more attention to the Soviet era and the political liberalization and transition period that came about after 1989. The discussion will then move to the present challenges the Roma face, which include both material deprivation and persisting discrimination targeting them. Finally, I will provide a structural overview for the remainder of the paper, which outlines new opportunities for the Roma to both escape some of the negative prejudice associated with their inherited cultural paradigm and increased mobilization through education to help empower Roma youth.

1.2 Arrival in Europe to State-Soviet Regimes

The Roma, one of the largest ethnic minorities in Europe, have endured a turbulent existence. Much of what we think we know about the Roma is debated. Believed to have originated from the northern region of the Indian subcontinent, the Roma began migrating westward between the 9th and 14th centuries CE, with most settling in parts of Central and Eastern Europe. Traditionally, they were a semi-nomadic group – moving to new grounds during warmer months, with their wagons of possessions in tow, and then finding more permanent shelter during the winter.[8] The Roma community as a whole consists of many smaller subgroups, such as the Vlax Romanies, Romanichals, and Bashalde that differ in terms of their settlement patterns, dialects, and

[8] Volha Bartash, "The Sedentarisation of Roma in the Soviet Union after 1956: A Case Study from the Former Belarussian Soviet Socialist Republic," *Romani Studies* 25, no. 1 (2015): p. 29.

interaction with the *gadje* community.[9] Nevertheless, despite the factionalization and differences that may distinguish one subgroup from the next, they almost all hold a "shared sense of difference" with respect to the non-Roma, which loosely ties them together to some extent.[10] Gypsy parents also stress the importance of duty and family loyalty to their children starting at an early age as well as pass on traditions through song and dance, both of which they view as mechanisms for cultural expression.[11]

Unique to their history is how "Gypsies have created their own semi-autonomous cultural space rather than legally [and] politically defined territory."[12] Spanning across many countries, including Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia, the Roma defy the usual notion of having a rigid connection between place and culture. In spite of lacking a politically defined geographic space, many Roma communities have continued to thrive, gaining respect for their skills in areas such as music. However, they have also faced their share of challenges as well; despite their inhabitance of European lands for over 500 years, "the Roma's history in Europe has been characterized by alienation, persecution, and flight."[13] They have been victimized and have faced prejudice as early as the fifteenth century with some Roma subgroups falling into slavery. Habsburg policies during the eighteenth century, under the rule of Empress Maria Theresa, marked

---

[9] Dena Ringold, Mitchell A. Orenstein, and Erika Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle* (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2005), p. 11.
[10] Donald Braid, "The Construction of Identity through Narrative: Folklore and the Travelling People of Scotland," in *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity* (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997), p. 38.
[11] Iren Kiertesz-Wilkinson, "Song Performance: A Model for Social Interaction among Vlach Gypsies in South-Eastern Hungary," in *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity* (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997), p. 97.
[12] Judith Okely, "Cultural Ingenuity and Travelling Autonomy: Not Copying, Just Choosing," in *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity* (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997), p. 189.
[13] James A. Goldston, "Roma Rights, Roma Wrongs," in *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions* (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012), p. 15.

the first attempt at settling the Roma and breaking their nomadic lifestyle. 150 years later, similar to the Jews, Roma were targeted by the totalitarian Nazi regime, first with discriminatory legal measures and later by being sent to concentration camps where roughly half million Roma were killed.[14]

The persecution of the Roma did not end there though; they were seen as a threat to the structured economic system that was taking hold within the Soviet bloc during the twentieth century. Even as early as the 1920s, Soviets tried to displace customary Roma economic traditions with a system of collectivized farms, a socialist economy, and the goals of an industrialized society, a stark contrast with their established ways of life.[15] As Michael Stewart describes, "the very existence of autonomous Gypsy communities apparently quite beyond the influence of state organs was construed as a threat to political stability and ideological hegemony, a carnivalesque incitement to disorder."[16] To allow the Roma to exist alongside the rest of the non-Roma working class would provoke a response from the latter about why they had to submit to repressive state authority if the former did not face the same impositions. Thus, incorporation was necessary to bring the Roma into line for the sake of pragmatic purposes and political stability. "The Roma, with their 'deviant' lifestyles, did not fit into the communist design of a new society. Therefore, the fundamental goal was to assimilate them and to transform them into productive, cooperative, and supportive socialist citizens. The party-state pursued several

[14] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. 7.
[15] Bartash, "The Sedentarisation of Roma in the Soviet Union after 1956," p. 26.
[16] Michael Stewart, "The Puzzle of Roma Persistence: Group Identity Without a Nation," in *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity* (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997), p. 85.

integral policies to ensure speedy Romani assimilation."[17] To bring the Roma into mainstream society was to suppress their purported sense of difference in favor of overall class unity. Ultimately, the Romani belief in separate identity needed to be subdued and discouraged.[18] "The authorities of a communist state could not tolerate social autonomy of ethnic groups and subsequently, in the 1950s introduced regulations forcing the Gypsies to settle down."[19] Within the Soviet Union, their former nomadic way of life was criminalized and many had to abandon their traditional lives in response to political and socioeconomic change. Some Roma chose to move to urban areas, where employment opportunities were more plentiful, and to make use of the state system rather than remain culturally and economically isolated in remote areas where communist regimes cut off opportunities and their former means to live.[20] However, in relocating, mutual resentment between the two sides spiked, as non-Roma communities now had to contend with living nearby communities of people, which they had historically despised.[21]

Nevertheless, as disruptive and blunt as the communist state's efforts were, they did manage to recognize and combat discrimination against the Roma with some inclusive measures. Across several Eastern bloc countries, both literacy and school completion rates rose as a result. For example, "in Czechoslovakia, a campaign increased kindergarten enrollment rates for Roma from 10 percent in the early 1970s to 59 percent

---

[17] Zoltan Barany, "Politics and the Roma in State-Socialist Eastern Europe," in *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions* (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012), p. 28.
[18] Goldston, "Roma Rights, Roma Wrongs," p. 16.
[19] Janina Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear: The Plight of the Gypsies," in *Stranger or Guest? Racism and Nationalism in Contemporary Europe* (Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1996) p. 86.
[20] Bartash, "The Sedentarisation of Roma in the Soviet Union after 1956," pp. 36-37.
[21] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 86.

by 1980."[22] While noteworthy, these remarkable results should be viewed with caution though, as students were often funneled into lower-performing schools or schools intended for children with disabilities, which is far from the leveled civic incorporation into the working class that governments were theoretically aiming for. Therefore, inclusion for the state was merely a way to monitor and guide the behavior of Roma communities existing within their borders. The larger goal of complete equality with the non-Roma population was not something governments were necessarily concerned about; as long as the Roma did not coexist as a separate entity from the *gadje* was their main priority. For non-Roma officials, this contained a potential threat to social cohesion and stability, which had the potential to uproot leaders from their seated positions of power.

While these forced inclusion initiatives, at least to some extent helped to improve Roma access to public services and employment, such actions also laid the groundwork for later tension between the two sides. For them Roma, the lack of any sort of role in the decision-making process and implementation of such policies led to the development of mistrust towards Soviet leaders.[23] Exacerbating this rising friction was the fact that attempts for socialist inclusion did not necessarily connect to equal standing in society. For instance, Gypsies in Hungary were often given the jobs at the periphery of the labor market that others did not want to take, thus relegating them to a still second-tier status of citizenship.[24] Therefore, tension between non-Roma officials and Roma communities was

[22] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. 13.
[23] Ibid., p. 8.
[24] Stewart, "The Puzzle of Roma Persistence," p. 94.

worsened by the visible inequality that was extended during the course of Soviet regimes, laying the starting point for the struggles in the post-1989 era.

1.3 Political Transition and the Challenges Today

The Roma face a litany of problems on the road ahead. Political liberalization that has come with the shift away from communism has brought both positives and negatives. Though the Roma now have the capability for active participation in society if desired, the opening up for multiple, and opposing, political parties has also brought its share of extremist groups that seek to incite people against the Roma with discriminatory rhetoric. Such political dissent would likely not have been allowed under communist regimes.[25] Furthermore, in the post-socialist transition within the former Eastern Bloc, many Roma have been relegated to the fringes of society once again. In spite of the 'progress' that was achieved under communist regimes, those changes did not prove to be long lasting. While they were somewhat incorporated during the Soviet era, "Roma were often the first laid off from state-owned industrial factories, mines, and agricultural cooperatives. As a result, the Roma face significant hurdles to labor market reentry and have depended instead on poorly funded public assistance, insecure jobs in the informal sector, or work abroad."[26] While the Soviet-era constraints on their nomadic lifestyle no longer exist, many Roma still remain sedentary, a by-product of decades under Soviet rule. The movement across countries that was once guided by economic or housing motives has

[25] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. 10.
[26] Ibid., p. 9.

broken down after decades of sedentary living; consequently, this settling has fragmented traditional lineages and family structures, which customarily tended to remain together.[27]

Moreover, poor education has led to weak employment prospects, which are "compounded by discrimination and the low expectations of employers. As a result, Roma have…become caught in a vicious circle of impoverishment."[28] In the 21st century's globalized market economy that has becoming increasingly reliant on technology and other technical skills, the Roma are performing poorly and having a difficult time competing as a result of learning little during their limited schooling experience. The result is that the Roma, lacking the hard skills desired by employers, have some of the highest unemployment rates of any minority group in Eastern Europe as well as some of the highest rates of poverty, which places them in an especially precarious economic position and extremely vulnerable to unpredictable market fluctuations.

All hope is not lost, though. Whereas during the Soviet era most attention was attached to simmering geopolitical tensions, since the fall of communism 25 years ago, new focus has been devoted towards social and cultural cohesion and building relations between majority and minority groups. With renewed focus towards these areas, how other groups mend their differences with the Roma could have dramatic implications and establish a precedent for quelling hostility between contentious ethnic groups in general. "The trajectory of Roma is illuminating for understanding the social situation of other minorities, but also for a set of issues concerning the multiculturalism present within

[27] Bartash, "The Sedentarisation of Roma in the Soviet Union after 1956," p. 44.
[28] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. *xv*.

states."[29] Instead of viewing their historical legacy as non-European or as uncivilized or deviant, breaking down these presumptions will help to produce more meaningful and quality discourse. Speaking of the Roma in such a disdainful fashion presumably does little to motivate them or raise their interest to interact with the non-Roma community or any of the associated byproducts of this paradigm, such as education.

If the non-Roma school system performed well and provided clear indicators for upward social mobility and escape from cultural marginalization, that would be a reasonable starting point to encourage students to stay in school given that parents are beginning to recognize changing socioeconomic conditions. However, without sufficient cultural considerations of the Roma, the current system is evidently not enticing them enough to attend. If educational institutions were better structured, retention rates for Roma children would be much higher. As it is, Roma parents view schools as counter-cultural and as a particularly unacceptable environment:

> Schools are seen not only as environments that do nothing to teach a child to be a better Gypsy, but they seem determined instead to homogenize and de-ethnicize that child. Stories about children's interaction with domestic pets, for example, send a different message to the pupil from the values taught in the home. Stories about structured mainstream domestic life present a picture foreign to the Romani child, and newer-diversity-conscious storybooks, about same-sex parent families for example, are completely confusing and disturbing.[30]

Much more attention needs to be drawn to social incorporation with the non-Roma population. Current policies such as cultural mediators who are placed in schools or using the native language of the Roma to encourage them to stay do little to address this point

---

[29] Jean-Pierre Liégeois, "Roma Education and Public Policy," *European Education* 39, no. 1 (2007): p. 13.
[30] Ian F. Hancock, "The Schooling of Romani Americans," in *Roma Education in Europe: Practices, Policies and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 91.

directly. While such mediators serve as instruments to promote educational goals, they do so without adequately deliberating the social integration component or breaking down discrimination. Greater measures must be sought in order to entice Roma parents to back their children's schooling efforts. Rather than creating instances of having to decide between *either* school or family, policies must take into account the unique dynamic that familial ethics play within Roma communities.

Moving beyond the values perspective to looking at the reality of their material situation, for many Roma, basic material deprivation makes life exceedingly difficult for students to even consider assimilation or cooperation with the *gadje*. Even while some parents recognize the potential benefits of additional education, many children simply do not attend school because they lack the supplies necessary to participate within a schooling environment.[31] Without the proper materials, children cannot fully engage and therefore are placed at a further disadvantage. Additionally, the geographic segregation of many Roma children further inhibits their educational experience. Due to the seclusion and isolation of many Roma communities, access to social services is obstructed; often lacking the necessary documentation for legal access to these services, the Roma remain unable to claim benefits or sometimes enroll their children in school.[32] The lack of public transportation, or simply being unable to afford travel, also prevents some Roma children from attending.[33] The effect of geography is often amplified further with home

[31] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. *xxvii*.
[32] Ibid., p. 12.
[33] Lilla Farkas, *Report on Discrimination of Roma Children in Education* (Brussels: European Commission, 2014), p. 16.

neighborhoods acting as a marker of identity.[34] A sense of shame is often associated with living in certain areas or under poor conditions, making children vulnerable to teasing and bullying from their peers from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds.

From a social and cultural perspective, the lack of integration and upward mobility for the Roma is clearly impeded by discrimination and segregation faced within the school setting. The upholding of old, often-inaccurate stereotypes regarding the Roma are difficult to overcome and act as a major deterrent for them, resulting in low retention rates for Roma students. Nonetheless, placing complete responsibility on the education system would be somewhat unfair. The interaction between schools, parents of the non-Roma population, as well as the Roma community plays a critical role in the continued marginalization of Roma students. Continued suspicion of the non-Roma school system by Roma parents impedes integration and the efforts for escaping marginalization. Many parents still have fears that their children will be taken away, believe that such education will weaken their ties to the family unit and traditional Roma values, or simply do not recognize the full value in sending their children to school.[35] They judge the lessons to be mostly irrelevant since they are often not interested in *gadje* civic engagement. Similarly, if their children will be bullied or discriminated against because of their cultural heritage, parents instinctively seek to protect their children by not sending them. Naturally,

---

[34] Ian Law and Sarah Swann, "Racism, Ethnicity and Schooling in England," in *Migrant, Roma and Post-Colonial Youth Education across Europe: Being 'Visibly Different'* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 161.

[35] Mary Waterson, "'I Want More Than Green Eaves for My Children'. Some Developments in Gypsy/Traveller Education 1970-96," in *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity* (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997), p. 128.

avoiding this sort of negative experience seems rational to many Roma students and parents, who conclude that staying away from school is better for them.

1.4 Liberal Democracies, Increased Dialogue and the Road Ahead

On the other hand though, one of the other main changes that has occurred with political liberalization is the increased awareness of the dire material circumstances the Roma are facing. Prior to 1989, the West addressed little of this – the main concern was the political stalemate it was engaged in with the Soviets; human rights violations against the Roma were overshadowed by larger geopolitical strategic issues. Looking forward now, the critical goals are assessing and addressing Roma marginalization and the associated repercussions of continued discrimination. From the perspective of the most recent additions to the European Union, tackling the issue of Roma minority rights and integration is becoming increasingly interrelated. "In countries where Roma constitute a large and growing share of the working-age population, increasing marginalization of Roma in poverty and long-term unemployment threaten economic stability and social cohesion."[36] During the Soviet era, addressing the interrelations between the Roma and *gadje* was missing, partly due to the lack of recognition governments were willing to grant to the Roma as a separate ethnic group. With the reemergence of ethnicity and renewed intensity for addressing minority discrimination by many state governments, the issue has now been placed back on the agenda. Failure to address this contentious topic could potentially devolve across the region; "one need only remember the role that ethnic

[36] Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe*, p. *xiv*.

hatred played in inspiring the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia to appreciate the dangers posed to regional stability if minority rights are ignored."[37] Moreover, "a lack of effective responses by local authorities and governments intensifies the climate of impunity in which physical attacks and economic and social discrimination are carried out" and therefore creates socially undesirable operating conditions, which would be imprudent for countries not to address.[38]

In the hopes of avoiding this gradual buildup of social tension, this project will look more closely at the issue of education, more specifically at the intersection of the Roma experience within non-Roma school systems, as pre-primary or primary school settings are often one of the first encounters for children outside of their immediate family. Whilst other facets of Roma life could have been examined, such as the Roma's experience with the labor market, I believe education is one of the most critical factors of a young person's life. Having a strong educational background, both from a cultural and classroom perspective, provides tangible dividends. The upshot of this is that given increasing competition for jobs and the rising need for hard skills, the old way of Romani life, which revolves around low-skilled employment and cultural practices, is yielding weaker payouts and perpetuating the cycle of material deprivation. Therefore, "equality in education is essential to the realisation of all other social inclusion indicators, such as employment, healthcare, and poverty reduction."[39] Hence, education as a pathway for more plentiful opportunities is a sensible course of action for the Roma, even if they

---

[37] Goldston, "Roma Rights, Roma Wrongs," p. 17.
[38] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 88.
[39] Helen O'Nions, "Narratives of Social Inclusion in the Context of Roma School Segregation." *Social Inclusion* 3, no. 5 (2015): p. 103.

remain wary of the dissonance between formal education and their traditional cultural paradigm.

If we assume that well-qualified teachers and cultural mediators are staffing *early* education programs, such schemes can yield many positive benefits in the long-term for both the students themselves and their parents too:

> The most important function of nursery schools - besides attaining knowledge and certain skills - is to acquire the basics of regular activities that the school relies on and assumes as given… If this is missing, the first year may be unsuccessful and, according to the rules of public education, the child will have to repeat the year.[40]

Simply put, the economic rationale behind funding these early education programs is much stronger than putting money towards older children. Critical brain development takes place before children enter kindergarten, especially language skills. Therefore, to smooth the transition into formalized education systems, early education programs that "help Romany-speaking tots to learn the main language of the country in which they live" can help them start on a much better footing.[41] If incoming students do not gain at least some baseline familiarity with the majority language, they are less prepared relative to their non-Roma peers who have been accustomed to this main language since they began speaking. Of course none of this is to say that the Roma's own language is in any way inferior to the official language of the country, but similar to writing and arithmetic, the ability to speak to non-Roma persons is becoming increasingly important in today's economy. Thus, to develop these skills, through early education programs, allows Gypsy

[40] Katalin R. Forray, "Results and Problems in the Education of the Gypsy Community." *European Education* 34, no. 4 (2002): p. 74.
[41] "Go to School – and Stay There, Gypsy Children." *The Economist* (2001): n.p.

children to become more accustomed to the majority language sooner and facilitates the entire process.

Moreover, by incorporating Gypsy students into such early education programs from a young age and reducing incidents of institutional segregation, this approach is not only cost-effective but socially desirable as well.[42] Isolating students into 'special', segregated schools, often designed for the mentally-handicapped, as has been a common practice in the past, does little to help Romani students prepare for socialization with non-Romani students and leaves them ill-equipped with the skills necessary for future employment.

Therefore, allocating sufficient funds to early education programs can help on two fronts. First, programs can ease the socialization process for both students and parents by acclimating them to the formalized education system. Second, they can aid students in gaining familiarity with a new language, at an age when language-development skills are at their strongest, which sets them up for further success and an easier transition moving into primary school. Thus, looking at schools provides a smaller window for us to look at broader social issues and at the interaction between formerly competing cultural groups that are now being placed in overlapping spheres.

Having established a general overview of the issues at hand, this paper will proceed as follows. Chapter 2 will give an abstract level analysis of the notion of *disadvantage* and how we can proceed with an intellectual discussion that does justice to both sides of the debate. While most non-Roma standards would point to material and

[42] Gabriella Fésüs et al., "Policies to Improve the Health and Well-being of Roma People: The European Experience," *Health Policy* 105, (2012): p. 28.

economic disadvantage as tangible indicators, the Roma have more trouble with using the same measures to consider themselves as disadvantaged. Nonetheless, identifying other measures of disadvantage is possible from an in-group perspective. This potentiality and acknowledgement of disadvantage from both sides subsequently gives merit to and warrants engagement.

Chapter 3 serves as a segue from a theoretical approach and takes the abstract analysis of Chapter 2 and brings the topic down to the ground by laying out intervention and the non-Roma call to action to address systemic disadvantage. The liberalized political climate has shifted the arena from a state-centric emphasis to a host of actors at subnational, national, and supranational levels, each of whom plays a different role in addressing certain facets of Roma disadvantage. Together, they form a comprehensive package, which increases accountability and is more suited to confronting the issues directly.

Chapter 4 delves into policy proposals for Roma education. Overcoming the current political equilibrium and existing institutional structures presents some obstacles; however, by increasing the political will and broadening the scope of intervention beyond just the within-school experience will prove vital to ensuring long-term success. Building interest from the bottom-up, such as by getting parents more interested and involved, can help to engage the wider community in taking interest in education. Two existing educational programs will be analyzed as well to see their feasibility and place for future development in expanding work in education.

Finally, Chapter 5 will wrap up this paper and bring this education-focused analysis to a wider prospective, leading to some broader generalizations and conclusions that can be applied to other facets of the Roma experience. Intervention in education must be coupled with efforts in other areas in order to raise Gypsies securely out of a position of social and cultural marginalization.

Analyzing this issue from different perspectives – abstract and concrete –will help to illuminate the best way forward. Examining merely one or the other fails to consider the good the other can offer. Moreover, considering most literature on Gypsies so far has been written from an outsiders' perspective more often than not, most scholars fail to recognize the opposing Roma values, which impedes inclusion from occurring faster. Thus, taking a step back and approaching the matter from an abstract perspective *first* before further study is the best way forward; doing so seeks to give a more balanced analysis of both sides of the argument and adds context to the on the ground perspective.

At the end of the day though, this is a multigenerational process. Nevertheless, this should not preclude us from starting something now. "Changes will not at once be reflected in a new ethos. The present ethos will tend to perpetuate itself for a long time, even though many of the circumstances which gave rise to it no longer exist or no longer operate in the old way."[43] For the Roma, with the constantly changing political scene, have tended to focus on short-term material gains and things in their immediate realm of control; immaterial educational goals and broader aspirations that would impact and improve the next generation provide less, if any, guarantee of payout. Thus, consistent

[43] Edward Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 160.

action on both fronts must be present in order for levels of social exclusion to fall and for the empowerment of the next generation of Roma youth to begin.

Chapter 2 – Different Ways of Framing Disadvantage

Framing the overall discussion regarding Romani populations is a critical component for intelligent analysis. Here, I will outline some ideas regarding the notion of *disadvantage*. The purpose of doing so is twofold. First, further exploring the ideas of marginalization the Roma currently face will help our understanding of how intervention can be best applied. Second, discussing disadvantage will enable us to examine the Roma response in the wake of such discrimination; their behavior is not simply just to maintain a sense of difference, but also as a defense mechanism against *gadje* interaction. While some Roma groups might contest that notions of disadvantage that are thrown their way are false and that their ways of life are adequate, most conventional standards would argue the opposite and look at poverty and material deprivation. In essence, allowing the Roma to persist in the belief that they are *not* disadvantaged, simply because they refuse to acknowledge the relevance of non-Roma standards is not prudent. However, nor is it wise to solely apply traditional non-Roma measures of disadvantage. Thus, acknowledging disadvantage through alternative routes and striking a balance between these two perspectives is necessary for us to proceed and give due diligence to the Roma.

This chapter will proceed as follows. First, it will look at the ideas of oppression and disadvantage from a theoretical perspective as well as how these concepts apply to Romani communities. This scholarly underpinning lays the foundation for deeper understanding and the rationale for intervention. Second, it will look at historical examples of disadvantage, mainly from a US-based perspective, in order to draw comparisons to the plight of the Roma today and allow us to draw upon similarities for

how to respond going forward. Next, using these previous contexts, I will synthesize a discussion for the Roma today. On the one hand, we can touch upon both the reporting issues from the non-Roma standpoint as well as challenges on the part of the Roma themselves in identifying disadvantage. However, on the other hand, the more convincing argument is that there are some clear signals that display the presence of disadvantage and highlight the consequential need for intervention. Although some of the Roma might contest this necessity to engage with them, involvement can be justified using a moral perspective and by analyzing how their situation could be made 'better'. Lastly, it will delineate signs of disadvantage the Roma experience in a post-socialist era and trace out reasons why adequate understanding of their perspective is imperative to deliver meaningful action and the prerogative for non-Roma authorities to intervene.

2.1 Theoretical Perspective Behind Disadvantage

From a simply theoretical perspective, we can develop a structure that would credibly place the Roma as a prime example of a politically oppressed and disadvantaged group. In her book, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Iris Marion Young (1990) tries to broadly define the concepts of oppression and domination from an operational standpoint. She writes how "in this extended structural sense, oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions."[1] These theories of oppression, manifested specifically

[1] Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 41.

through marginalization and cultural imperialism, are particularly relevant and produce situations of disadvantage for the Roma and their unavoidable encounters with the *gadje*.

Ethnic marginality is a situation that "stems from the dominant ethnic group's exclusion of the subordinate ethnic group based on their different ethnicity. The relationship between marginality and the subordinate ethnic group is central because its ethnic marginality usually determines the socioeconomic and political frameworks in which the ethnic group exists."[2] Marginalization is particularly concerning because "a whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life and thus potentially subjected to severe material deprivation and even extermination."[3] Marginalizing an entire group of people can have other substantial ramifications. "The fact of marginalization raises basic structural issues of justice, in particular concerning the appropriateness of a connection between participation in productive activities of social cooperation, on the one hand, and access to the means of consumption, on the other."[4] The denial of a portion of the population from fair involvement in economic and social life can lead to the creation of an underclass that is pushed to the fringes of society. Having few means to contribute, this group remains a diminished entity continually subjected to scorn from the mainstream population. To reduce encounters and experiences of marginalization, some individuals of the subjected group attempt to assimilate into the social norms of the dominant group, in the hopes of gaining acceptance; migrate to new areas, in search of opportunities elsewhere; or dream for

---

[2] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 56.
[3] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, p. 53.
[4] Ibid., p. 55.

high-level regime change, which may provide a bounty of new prospects.[5] Nonetheless, beyond the socioeconomic and political concerns of oppression, there exist subtler and less overt transmissions that must be considered now.

Whereas marginalization takes on economic implications for the lack of participation of a group of people, cultural imperialism is more concerned about the social and cultural developments of oppression. Cultural imperialism, which Young defines as "to experience how the dominant meanings of a society render the particular perspective of one's own group invisible at the same time as they stereotype one's group and mark it out as Other," creates stark divisions between the dominant society and a secondary group that is reduced to an invisible position by larger faction.[6] "The dominant group reinforces its position by bringing the other groups under the measures of its dominant norms… Often without noticing they do so, the dominant groups project their own experience as representative of humanity."[7] Those saddled by the forcefulness of cultural imperialism are relegated to an outside position:

> [They are burdened by] a network of dominant meanings they [minority populations] experience as arising from elsewhere, from those with whom they do not identify and who do not identify with them. Consequently, the dominant culture's stereotyped and inferiorized images of the group must be internalized by the group members at least to the extent that they are forced to react to behavior of others influenced by those images.[8]

Thus, any interaction between the dominant group and ostracized group will be constrained by the fact that the former presupposes various subordinating stereotypes,

---

[5] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, pp. 56-58.
[6] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, pp. 58-59.
[7] Ibid., p. 59.
[8] Ibid., pp. 59-60.

which leads to feelings of oppression by the latter. Leaving little leeway for the latter group to incorporate elements of their own group's culture into the overall mix, minorities are left to face a repressing reality to balance two completely dissimilar paradigms, their own existing cultural traditions and those of the dominant group, the latter of which are being purported as the acceptable norm.

Now returning to the overarching idea of oppression, applying these criteria set forth by marginalization and cultural imperialism "to the situations of groups makes it possible to compare oppressions without reducing them to a common essence or claiming that one is more fundamental than another."[9] No two repressed groups are alike and therefore making sufficient distinctions becomes crucial as drawing basic, ill-conceived comparisons between them raises the risk of oversimplifying the challenges each faces individually. However, "in the most general sense, all oppressed people suffer some inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thoughts, and feelings."[10] Simply altering leadership or making other nominal changes are insufficient measures; these oppressive elements are so ingrained and systemically embedded into institutions that additional and more substantive coordinated action is required to address these features. Nonetheless, although the situation seems difficult to address and correct these pervasive disparities, from at least a fundamental social justice perspective, we should at least attempt to in order to aspire for some measures of equality. But first, developing the argument further may be useful; by delving deeper into the ideas of groups and group identity and how it applies specifically to the Roma, we

[9] Ibid., p. 64.
[10] Ibid., p. 40.

can uncover some of the features unique to the Roma that require non-Roma communities to apply more innovative solutions, rather than recycling previously conceived plans.

To completely eliminate the concept of groups or associated group identity is an unrealistic goal; people naturally tend to categorize people based on innate characteristics, thereby creating discrete categories of individuals. While the possibility exists that individuals fall within any number of categories under this system, regardless, the propensity to classify is present and thus group identification must be considered, especially those under oppressive circumstances. "Even when they belong to oppressed groups, people's group identifications are often important to them, and they often feel a special affinity for others in their group."[11] While the situation may not permit a complete disentanglement of a person and his or her associated oppressed group identity, we can still recognize the fact that group identity can be fluidly and flexibly constructed. In doing so, this allows individuals to take on multiple identities, and not exclusively that of a singular oppressed group. With an overlapping mindset behind group identity, to label one simply as *oppressed*, fails to recognize other group labels such as those based on gender, age, or occupation, which adds new dimensions beyond purely oppressed.

Specifically regarding the Roma, Young's theories of oppression are highly applicable. By describing how "a social group is a collective of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices, or way of life," one can immediately pinpoint how the cultural distinctiveness of the Roma would enable people

[11] Ibid., p. 47.

to erect a separate grouping for them.[12] Additionally, "groups are an expression of social relations; a group exists only in relation to at least one other group. Group identification arises, that is, in the encounter and interaction between social collectivities that experience some differences in their way of life."[13] While the Roma remain fragmented by elements such as language and the degree of nomadism, they almost exclusively share the identity of difference in relation to the *gadje*, which unites the Roma and allows scholars to view them under the *Roma* group heading. Because the Roma view themselves as this separate group, social group theory then becomes relevant and notions of oppression or, analogously, disadvantage can then be raised. This idea of *disadvantage* implies that the Roma care about their relational group position compared to the *gadje* population and therefore should ignite calls for action; to leave the Roma in their marginalized position would be a social injustice. Consequently, using these concepts of marginalization and oppression previously discussed, there are moral and ethical ramifications to addressing their disadvantage, for at the very least these social justice purposes. Thus, having established the Roma as a theoretically legitimate group, applying notions of inter-relational oppression becomes easier to establish and something to address. Social justice for the Roma "requires not the melting away of differences, but institutions that promote reproduction of and respect for group differences without oppression."[14] Without such recognition, the disadvantage of the Roma will persist, which leaves them in a precarious economic, cultural, and socially marginalized position

[12] Ibid., p. 43.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., p. 47.

and also allows for the continued preference for the *gadje* perspective and their ethnocentricity.

2.2 Comparative Historical Accounts of Disadvantage

An analysis of Romani marginalization is not limited to a contemporary timeframe; we can study previous historical examples to look at other instances of disadvantage and how such cases were subsequently addressed. First, examining the United States at the turn of the 20th century, female sociologist Jane Addams spoke on behalf of immigrant communities at Hull House in Chicago, Illinois. Emerging during a time of strong xenophobic sentiment, Addams became a forerunner for immigrant inclusion efforts by modernizing and shifting how we viewed the role of schools. Instead of viewing education as simply a place strictly for learning purposes and a pathway for skill, schools can also be a means by which immigrants could be brought into community life with fellow citizens.[15] In this sense, schools were a tool for assimilation and cultural adoption that enabled immigrants to move from a marginalized position looked down upon disdainfully by Americans to a more inclusive, accepted ranking.

Even with heavy xenophobic sentiment running rampant, she poured much effort towards the immigrant communities she encountered at Hull House. Especially with young people just entering the US at the time, Addams believed that social inclusion with non-immigrants was imperative to "give these children a chance to utilize the historic and industrial material which they see about them," which would help them ease their

[15] Jean Elshtain Bethke, *The Jane Addams Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), p. 377.

transition into America and establishing a new 'home' for themselves.[16] This give-and-take, more balanced approach would be more advantageous. All of this provides hope to the Roma today.

Current efforts have been overzealously nationalistic and so, as Addams states, perhaps we need to aim more for a "capacity for balance."[17] Basing cultural competence on a rigid country-based standard in many ways precludes the Roma from fully joining due to their flexible non-geographic based notion of culture. Therefore, the somewhat forced unity that has occurred in trying to include Roma communities does little the bridge the cultural gaps. Going forward, recognizing the ethnic differences the Roma embody and trying to work with that, rather than dismissing it as lesser, might be more fruitful. The continued mainstream discourse that their cultural practices are inferior to non-Roma ones, rather than being embracing of the *differences* does a poor job at trying to achieve this balance. With regard to education, oftentimes children are put in the crossfire between what their parents are telling them at home and what is being taught in school, with little common ground to be found. Thus, if these non-Roma schools want to better incorporate and raise the retention rates for Roma students, schools cannot continue promoting this sort of cultural binary in which there are two, non-overlapping spheres of culture. Take what the Roma have to bring to the table and allow these students to feel proud of this culture, instead of hiding it, and maybe then they will be more inclined to staying in school.

---

[16] Ibid., p. 238.
[17] Ibid., p. 116.

Similar to the case of many Roma families and their corresponding views on education, some immigrant groups also did not view education as a necessary pathway for future success. For instance, for early Italian-American immigrant communities that set up ethnic enclaves in the eastern cities of the US, education was actually looked down upon; familial duties and contributing to the economic stability of the family meant more than burying one's nose in books. Many coming from rural Italian villages believed "education was for a cultural style of life and professions the peasant could never aspire to. Nor was there an ideology of change; intellectual curiosity and originality were ridiculed or suppressed."[18] Nevertheless, over time as Italian American communities gradually assimilated into American society, they could not escape pervading American cultural influences. "Powerful as the Italian village culture was, however, it could not, when transferred to the United States, sustain the absolute power of the father and the unquestioning humility of the children. Instead, the children, finding a serious gap between themselves and their parents, tended to create groups of their own, with something of their own values, code, and morality."[19] Given the plethora of values and diversity of people found within US urban environments, the same sense of rigid familial duty found in an Italian rural village could not be maintained as immigrants learned to gradually embrace the American regard for education. Through this process, many Italian American families were able to improve their socioeconomic status and move into a comfortable middle-class echelon. This case of Italian-Americans produces a sense of

[18] Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), p. 199.
[19] Ibid., p. 188.

optimism for the Roma. Though their traditional values differ greatly from those of the *gadje*, these beliefs are not immovable. Over time, the Roma could potentially assimilate (if they so choose).

Furthermore, not limited to the immigrant experience, incidents of marginalization and discrimination are interwoven through the lives of many inner city African Americans. One such case is depicted in the book *A Hope in the Unseen*, which chronicles the life of a young man named Cedric Jennings.[20] Raised almost entirely by his single mother, Cedric fights through the broken education system in the Anacostia neighborhood of Southeast Washington DC and earns entrance to Brown University. Though Cedric, his mother, and other adult figures in his life view his personal ambitions positively, to his peers, his lofty ambitions are off-putting as they signal how he believes he is better than and trying to overlook them. For Cedric, the most pressing task at hand is meeting his dreams and finding that sort of satisfaction after suffering years of torment from his classmates; to reach the Ivy Leagues would validate all his efforts.

By conventional standards, many policy makers seek to correct these imbalances and encourage young people to continue their education for further opportunities in the future. Nonetheless, few programs take into sufficient account the social dynamics amongst inner-city peers. For most of Cedric's classmates, few hold such impressive goals; many do not graduate, and of those who do earn their diploma, only a fraction of his peers choose to attend college and they usually do not go far from home. Their

[20] Ron Suskind, *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League* (New York: Broadway Books, 1998).

ambitions do not parallel that of Cedric's and many choose to work immediately after, not attend school at all, or join gang life, which is highly visible in the neighborhood.

Cedric's life though has some notable differences compared to some of his peers. For a brief period of time, Cedric and his family moved out of Southeast DC to a lower-middle class neighborhood on the border of DC and Maryland. Through that brief exposure outside of Anacostia, Cedric was able to at least see a somewhat more diverse racial makeup, as opposed to almost-exclusive black population that attends Ballou High School. However, that sort of exposure was a rarity; more often than none, young people who were born into Anacostia stayed there, or unfortunately died there as well, a statistic of the violent gun epidemic that ignited the city. His peers have little understanding of the near complete segregation that they experience. Many of these students stay within their insular neighborhood with few venturing to other areas of the Capital, which makes them unable to identify with the notions of disadvantage that most theorists would associate to them. This point will reappear when moving to the discussion of the Roma in the next section.

The difficulty in shifting the mindset towards education reappears when describing the Roma. As described previously, many Roma parents simply do not recognize the value in sending their children to school. Just as the young people of inner city Washington DC do not fully recognize the injustices of the system or the lack of upward mobility they face, the Roma face a similar situation. While efforts have tried to target the Roma specifically and make education more agreeable to them, in many cases these efforts have done little to consider within-group interactions or the embedded

complexity to the issue. Nevertheless, addressing such predominant levels of disadvantage is what the crux of this paper will focus.

Nonetheless, we must be wary about drawing direct comparisons using earlier disadvantaged groups, such as African-Americans and early immigrant populations to the US, to the current experience of the Roma and must take account of the nuances and differences. With the former groups, we can recognize some of the unique distinctions that make some elements of the argument irrelevant to the present study. While whites acknowledge the historical oppression under slavery and segregation and have responded with policies such as affirmative action that serves as a bridge between the two groups, in the case of the Roma, there has been little acknowledgement that the Roma have been historically wronged per se and the usage of false stereotypes persists. Additionally, in many Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs), "politicians, the police, and citizens consider the Roma to be a 'security problem' – a menace to public order requiring unorthodox and in part drastic measures."[21] This framework of addressing contemporary issues essentially ignores any past injustices. If anything, this structure just hinders integration and intervention efforts in part because these damaging stereotypes of these allegedly criminal Roma makes them seem even more unable to relate to any part of outside culture. To the second point, with immigrants to the United States around the turn of the 20th century, many of these people were not in the same position as the Roma. For these immigrants, life in America was about starting over or discovering new opportunities unavailable to them in their respective homelands. Geographically

[21] Huub van Baar, "The Emergence of a Reasonable Anti-Gypsyism in Europe," in *When Stereotype Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies* (Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014), p. 31.

speaking, as already highlighted, the Roma are already in the same vicinity as the non-Roma people. Therefore, that element of foreignness that was present in 20th century America is less relevant since a completely new group of people is not being introduced.

An additional area that deserves some further recognition is the work of Jane Addams. Addams was paramount to the assimilation of the new immigrant populations in Chicago. Her expertise and assistance from an out-of-group perspective was crucial in the settling process. What this highlights is the need for outside intervention, or at the very least, the potential usefulness of it. Just as Addams was able to assist the immigrant populations, out-group organizations at the local, state, and supranational levels can assist the Roma.[22]

In sum, in all of these cases there is an imbalance between the dominant group and the marginalized group in terms of social standing and socioeconomic status. Such inequality makes ascertaining any sort of political voice difficult for said groups; those in power – commonly elites from the dominant population - dictate policy. While these political elites might have good intentions about how to promote some sort of idea of social justice and raising these populations out of a second-class status, oftentimes they have poor understand of the ramifications of their actions. Unable to take full account for historical trends or the full extent of disadvantage, their policy measures are repeatedly ineffective.

[22] Katharina Crepaz, "The Road to Empowerment: A Multi-Level Governance Approach," in *When Stereotype Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies* (Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014), p. 109.

2.3 Are the Roma Actually Disadvantaged?

Few times do theory and reality cleanly overlap but instead conflict with each other, resulting in some highly debatable instances that require more thorough analysis. From a reporting perspective, the elitist agenda, propagated by non-Roma institutions, often inaccurately portrays the issues plaguing Roma communities, as well as presents a one-sided study of the problems. What must now be taken into account is the opposing, or Roma, perspective. Instead of viewing the Roma historical legacy simply as non-European, uncivilized, or deviant from a static outlook, breaking down these presumptions will help facilitate more meaningful and fruitful discussion that is beneficial for both sides. Integration discourse has often been guided by a set of underlying assumptions. From the non-Roma perspective, this is frequently found when describing the Roma as backwards or cultural incompatible and how the corrective measures therefore must take steps to help uplift the deficient conditions in order to raise their social competence.[23] Speaking of the Roma population in such a diminutive fashion presumably does little to motivate them or raise their desire to interact with the non-Roma community or any of the associated byproducts of this system, such as education. Thus, in order to engender more quality and positive discourse, these assumptions must be addressed in order to facilitate the reduction of social isolation and pervading notions of backwardness that surround them. A more rich, comprehensive account must be painted in order to fully understand the full extent of Romani disadvantage in Eastern

[23] Silvia Rodriguez Maeso, "'Civilising' the Roma? The Depoliticisation of (Anti-) Racism with the Politics of Integration," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 22, no. 1 (2014): p. 66.

Europe, and not simply accept what the *gadje* are proposing as the related issues they think must be addressed.

Furthermore, the lack of literature generated from the Roma population is complicated by the fact that there is so much in-group division that segments the Roma. Not only do the Roma exist across multiple countries, but because they also vary so widely in terms of their culture and traditions, drawing generalizations that are applicable to the Roma community as a whole is a difficult task. Thus, accurate reporting is difficult to come by, and that which is written is often so narrow in scope that it does not contain much relevance to other groups. Moreover, the traditional oral, song and dance practices of many Roma groups are their form of cultural transmission, not writing.[24] "The Roma have not possessed a distinctive religion or a highly developed written culture. The Romani language (and its numerous dialects) has been unwritten until quite recently, a fact that has contributed to indifference on the part of most Roma about their history."[25] Therefore, to compare the *literature* of the Roma and *gadje* communities side-by-side would be unfair, as the two groups do not devote equal attention to written practices. Lastly, to presume the values of the *gadje* population are of higher status than those of the Roma communities invalidate the Roma's stake in society and subject them to a secondary position. On top of creating friction between a Roma out-group and a *gadje* in-group whose culture is clearly promoted to a higher degree, who is to say that something is not wrong, per se with the dominant society? Just because a majority of people embrace a certain set of cultural practices and traditions does not mean these customs are

[24] Kiertesz-Wilkinson, "Song Performance," p. 100.
[25] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 64.

better or does not have to necessarily relegate other dissimilar practices to a subordinate position. More careful reporting and attention should be given towards the Roma and their cultural legacy after centuries of abuse and discrimination that have marginalized them to the fringes of many countries.

Like Italian-Americans in the early 1900s, to uphold familial expectations and adhere to certain cultural practices often takes precedence over formal education; being unable to keep up with both simultaneously, many Roma students abandon the latter, as marked by sharp declines in school attendance as they grow older.[26] Following the wishes of their parents, many Romani children are compelled to forgo school at an early age in order to support the family financially or to marry young, where education is not seen as a pressing matter. "Many Gypsies/Roma/Travellers seek to avoid social exclusion by not identifying themselves as such, and this bedevils attempts to estimate their numbers."[27] The Roma, with their centuries-old customs and ways of life see nothing 'wrong'; in their eyes, they simply wish to maintain this distance away from these mainstream designations that are thrust upon them. Thus, while most conventional standards would tout the importance of education, for many Roma, they simply do not view education in the same way, therefore making the designations and regard most hold toward education difficult to apply their way.

---

[26] Pandelis Kiprianos, Ivi Daskalaki, and Georgios B. Stamelos, "Culture and the School: The Degree of Educational Integration of Roma and Gypsies in the Peloponnese Region of Greece," *International Review of Education* 58, no. 5 (2012): p. 694.

[27] Thomas Acton, Sarah Cemlyn, and Andrew Ryder, "Introduction," in *Hearing the Voices of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities: Inclusive Community Development* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2014), p. 4.

Geographic segregation also hinders their perception of notions of disadvantage. By being located separate from non-Roma communities, the Roma many not be able to compare disadvantage in the same way an outsider would be able to. Similar to how inner-city African American teenagers in *A Hope in the Unseen* used in-group comparisons with one another, few compared themselves students outside their immediate neighborhood. Analogously, for Roma children, the task of identifying differences between Roma peers is straightforward, but due to geographic segmentation, drawing those same comparisons with *gadje* peers is much more difficult. Though neighborhoods can act as a marker of identity in defining oneself, the lack of understanding of other neighborhoods makes comparisons difficult to draw across different geographic area.[28] When trying to teach an Albanian Gypsy named Dritta a few English words, Fonseca encounters immense difficulty, "not only because we had no common linguistic ground but because so much about me was plain alien to her: if you can't understand *actions*, the chances are you won't understand speech. I was continually shocked by the isolation my strangeness implied" (Fonseca, 1995, p. 62).[29] Lacking any sort of understanding or familiarity with non-Roma customs indicates an inability to try comparisons between the two paradigms. Therefore, without sufficient understanding of practices on both sides, it therefore becomes difficult, if not impossible, to establish a sense of disadvantage, if there is nothing to compare oneself to.

[28] Law and Swann, "Racism, Ethnicity and Schooling in England," p. 162.
[29] Isabel Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1995), p. 62.

Cultural practices also indicate some obstructions to fully embracing these ideas of supposed Roma disadvantaged that are assigned by the non-Roma community. The Roma simply have a different set of values and goals for which they are trying to achieve, which are not necessarily inferior, just simply different. As Fonseca notes, "they were incapable of establishing priorities. In fact their priorities were simply different priorities: value was assigned to all events equally but serially; what was happening at the moment… had top billing."[30] Without sufficient state intervention or resources to sway the Gypsies into joining non-Roma professions, many end up reverting back to traditional roles such as horse dealing.[31] Some local councils are putative and openly hostile towards Gypsies. One "not only resorted to every possible pretext for refusing assistance, which including setting absurd conditions for providing loans for improvement or purchase of properties, it also imposed punitive fines on Gypsies caught collecting wood on common lands."[32] Thus, assuming that the Roma will automatically adopt the same set of values as non-Roma society when presented with them is a false hope; to ask them to complete alter their way of life is simply asking too much, especially when state intervention from the non-Roma side is insufficient.

Some might consider notions of disadvantage meaningless as some Roma communities have actually incorporated certain non-Roma elements into their lives, which signals that the Roma are not completely intent on remaining ideologically dissimilar from communities surrounding them and additionally dispels notions of

---

[30] Ibid., p. 79.
[31] Kiertesz-Wilkinson, "Song performance," p. 101.
[32] Ibid., p. 102.

stubbornness that some may throw out regarding their traditions. So perhaps there is not a cultural deficiency after all but rather a cultural misunderstanding, or lack of understanding per se. One example of this gradual cultural adoption is how some communities in Hungary have combined Hungarian *gadje* "songs from the 1950s that deal with familiar Vlach Rom experiences such as falling in love or being jailed" into musical performance, which thereby blends (and blurs) the boundaries between the two sides.[33] Moreover, this incorporative practice highlights the fluid nature to culture and identity. Their cultural legacy is therefore not one that is completely isolated and distinct from the *gadje* communities surrounding them. Over time, like most other communities, Gypsies have been able to combine elements from formerly disparate cultures into an artistic fusion.

Nonetheless, the Roma view the world differently and frame situations and experiences with a distinctive mindset, which may not necessarily indicate disadvantage to them. Although, this attitude may lead to some economically questionable decisions that by all accounts would put them in a more precarious financial situation. While Isablel Fonseca is travelling she encounters a young Albanian, Gypsy couple, Nicu and Dritta, whose financial situation she reports on:

> Nicu had had a job in a textile factory. Boldly for someone from a neighborhood of near-total unemployment – there were 288 wholly unemployed families here – he quit. He wanted work, but like most Gypsies he had no use for regimented wage labor. The final blow came when they put him on night shift… Above all, Nicu trusted that he could do better on his own – earn more money, have more freedom and more fun, and design a better future than he could in any job.[34]

[33] Ibid., p. 105.
[34] Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing*, p. 29.

By rejecting traditional wage labor, to some extent, this fights the notion of marginalization. Some Gypsy communities "may exclude themselves by maintaining their customs and traditions rather than lose their identities and become members of the dominant social, ethnic, or religious group."[35] Evidently, if Nicu felt like he was under pressure, he would have kept the job in order to provide at least some financial stability for his family. However, by leaving the job and looking for other positions, he shows how he is not necessarily worried about finding other things and that other jobs are out there for him as potential opportunities. Therefore to assign these labels of disadvantage without fully considering the cultural aspects of the Roma community may be misguided. Nevertheless, such markers are not completely irrelevant and that is where this paper will now turn.

2.4 Can We Justify Intervention?

Looking at this from a more fundamental social interactive level first will help to illustrate the point of overlapping interests between the Roma and *gadje*. Without even beginning with the idea of outside intervention, we can turn to the interactions between Romani communities and nearby *gadje* populations as a launching point for discussion. The close geography with the *gadje* partially invalidates the Romani assertion of remaining isolated. "The Gypsies or Travellers have been deeply involved in the recycling on non-Gypsy waste, broken down into different parts and resold back to the non-Gypsy… These objects 'found', within the non-Gypsy manufacturing process, are

[35] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 59.

then symbolically transformed into material embodiments of their own separate Gypsy ethnicity."[36] So to claim separation does not work because it destroys part of their cultural fabric, which intrinsically relies on the close proximity and geographic overlap of the two sides. "Gypsy cultural identity is constructed through opposition, not isolation."[37] If Romani communities did in fact live in complete separation from their *gadje* counterparts, the argument against intervention could potentially be stronger with the claim that the non-Roma community is overstepping its authority in dictating the behavior or actions of the Roma. However, if the two sides are inherently tied to each other in at least a cultural way, then intervention, led by both *gadje* and Romani forces, can be validated due in part to their inevitable contact and dismisses claims that intervention is unnecessary.

In suggesting integration, mainstream majority cultures have a variety of concerns. For one, the challenge of dislodging common misconceptions regarding Romani culture is difficult since many of these beliefs have been firmly planted for centuries. To displace these caustic notions that Gypsies are thieves or mentally handicapped is no easy task, though one that should be confronted nonetheless. Reframing the argument and reasoning behind intervention, by including more of the Romani perspective, makes justifying intrusion easier for non-Roma forces since the Roma can now see the cogency behind such action. Simply put, the arguments that mainstream society fear losing the current status quo is an insufficient reason to stop

[36] Judith Okely, "Constructing Culture through Shared Location, Bricolage and Exchange," in *Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Romany Studies* (Budapest: Central European University, 2011), p. 52.
[37] Ibid., p. 53.

integration. Furthermore, intervention could be justified on the basis that it will help to clarify and dispel many of the existing beliefs regarding the Roma.

Much of the prejudice and stereotypes surrounding them are in fact not true and only serve to magnify this "us-versus-them" mentality. For example, this claim that many Roma groups are still nomadic in today's world is false. As Valeriu Nicolae reports in Eastern Europe, nomadic Roma comprise of less than two percent of the entire Roma population in the region.[38] Yet despite making up such a small fraction of the overall ethnic group, many people still equate Roma with nomads, thereby further perpetuating these incorrect beliefs onto the other 98 percent of the population. "Lumping together Roma and nomads/travellers creates serious misunderstandings about the citizenship and the rights and responsibilities of the former."[39]

At a primary level, we should be concerned about protecting the *dignity* of the Roma. As John Kerry noted in his Boston College commencement speech in 2014, "When families have access to clean water and clean power, they can live in dignity. When people have the freedom to choose their government on election day and to engage their fellow citizens every day, they can live in dignity. When all citizens can make their full contributions no matter their ethnicity… they can live in dignity."[40] However, in order to attain this level of asserted dignity, especially with regards towards Kerry's last point, we must reformulate the approach by which we target Romani communities. Instead of prescribing the ideals of an unfamiliar culture onto them, perhaps we need to

---

[38] Valeriu Nicolae, *We are the Roma! One Thousand Years of Discrimination* (London: Seagull Books, 2013), p. 18.
[39] Ibid., p. 19.
[40] John Kerry, "Remarks at Boston College's 138th Commencement Ceremony." (Presentation, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, May 19, 2014).

be aiming for an unbounded notion to culture that combines more elements from their perspective, whilst still helping to reform. However, to assist, some of this aforementioned responsibility falls upon the group itself. The Roma must self-identify the need to maintain their own dignity as well and not let this simply be another venture by non-Roma groups.

Furthermore, as Malcolm Gladwell describes in his book *Outliers*, the concept of *cultural flexibility* is particularly pertinent here because this notion stresses the balance between retaining elements of an existing cultural paradigm whilst also recognizing the need to change other parts.[41] Using Gladwell's ideas of the existence of outliers, just because the Roma may behave out of line vis-à-vis other ethnic minorities in the region, that does not mean their ways are completely irrelevant or wrong per se. However, many policymakers have neglected thus far to recognize this idea. Whereas their difference has served as a catalyst for continued apathy and indifference towards intervention, it should instead serve as a motivation and stimulus for change. Just because the Roma may be outliers here, that does not mean we should have to subjugate them to subordination. Using Gladwell's own example of Korean pilots in the 1980s, the high level of aviation accidents was cause for concern. Once outside study was conducted, results concluded that the regard for Korean cultural hierarchy between superior and subordinate and the specific mode of language used inhibited pilots ability to respond quickly during emergency situations.[42] What this example highlights is the need to recognize that if cultural legacies are ill-equipped to deal with contemporary problems, we should not

[41] Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008), p. 19.
[42] Ibid., p. 219.

necessarily just throw them away, but rather reevaluate them in order to come up with new, innovate solutions to deal with situations at hand. Thus, flexibility is highly valued here in order to adopt new methods, whilst still honoring existing cultural legacy. Korean Air's intention was not to fire all of its pilots and wipe the slate clean; instead, it used its existing cohort, who recognized the aspects of their cultural legacy that did not fit with aviation methods and the subsequent need for change. Similarly, because the Roma are outliers – culturally, geographically, and linguistically – this should serve as a reason for a different mode of analysis. I believe the possibility exists for the Roma to retain some traditional, cultural elements, whilst also seeing the need for change. To complement this, steps taken moving forward require more directed attention and prevents us from making perfect comparisons to other historically marginalized groups. Contemporary problems require innovative, collaborative solutions.

Undoubtedly, the perpetuated problematic situation should prompt action. To say the continuation of such issues, even if it allegedly maintains the cultural distinction of the Roma is what they want, seems absurd, especially if this reasoning is the main justification. Even if the Roma are not entirely keen on accepting help, at the very least states could try to establish minimum steps to prevent making things worse. In recent the years, Romani leaders have criticized state governments for not taking enough action, which ties back into the overarching point.[43] This call to combat injustices cannot be coupled with desires to remain separate. Under state socialism, the decline of cultural practices took place, which in some ways paves the way for possible intervention. The

[43] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 322.

declining influence of traditional leaders and the simultaneous emergence of a small intelligentsia indicates shifting patterns within the customary lines.[44] The Roma simply cannot simultaneously offer preference for opposing interests – they either must take the help and integrate further or remain separate and solve problems alone. They cannot pick and choose which aspects of intervention are acceptable in their minds and then lament about the perceived infringement upon their rights. And considering our current era, states have become much more adept at handling minority (including Roma) issues in general compared to a few decades ago, especially when you draw the comparison to how things were handled under Soviet regimes. What these governments must bring to the table is a strong sense of political leadership that affirms the need to respond as well as a greater level of social tolerance in order to make the Romani people feel more accepted.[45]

I am also somewhat skeptical about the true magnitude of remaining separate. One report states that only 5.6 percent of Slovak Gypsies want to be linked to their ethnicity.[46] Many hope to avoid the stigma typically associated with their identity. Subsequently, in the process of avoidance, the Roma naturally must take on a new identity. Thus, to declare that the Roma as a whole are incapable of co-mingling with outside society seems rather blunt and unsubstantiated. The shift away from a singular labeling as "Roma" towards either an entirely new cultural subgroup or a dichotomous balance between the two indicates they acknowledge the acceptability of other labels;

[44] Ibid., pp. 143-144.
[45] Ibid., p. 323.
[46] Ibid., p. 158.

otherwise they would not adopt them. Of course not to ignore the larger issue at hand here – if the Roma were not so stigmatized to begin with, the search for alternative labels and identities would not be nearly as pressing to them.

Disadvantage is not entirely the Romani people's fault. State socialism and the overall poorer economic status of the 2nd world hindered efforts compared to the ability to act by Western European states. Leaving aside communist concerns for cohesion among its populace, from a basic economic perspective, allocating funds to such a small portion of the population. And once you factor in communist considerations of trying to maintain political order and smother culturally differences with draconian policies, understanding why the Roma behaved in a certain way becomes easier.

The poor perception of *gadje* communities and the desire to remain isolated is partially spurred on as a defensive reaction to fall back on what the Roma know. The instability of the past half-century highlights why many Romani peasants react the way they do in regards to the *gadje*. "Peasants received private land in the 1930s, lost it to collectivisation in the 1950s, and got some of it back again in the 1990s."[47] Given the unpredictable political changes, the approach the Roma have taken is by no means surprising. The Roma have tried to fall back on something familiar – old cultural traditions; these are one of the few things they are firmly in control of and somewhat of a guarantee to them. Lacking confidence in contemporary political efforts for their inclusion, they require greater assurance that this current spur is not only temporary but

[47] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 15.

rather a permanent shift towards acceptance and not motivated by yet another underlying motive that seeks to simply quell dissent or difference.

While some of the Roma still may claim their desire to remain separate, as already exhibited, their level of interaction with the *gadje* is already too high to aim for a complete break away from them. Furthermore, from a very high level perspective, their desire to be unconnected could spell further disaster. Though their skills in metalworking, clothing and handcrafted goods were at one time revered, they have since lost relevance. Without sufficient means by which to support them, levels of depravity and material deprivation will skyrocket, leaving them in a more precarious position than before. Thus, though the Roma may not entirely believe in their inter-connectedness with the *gadje* community, to argue for the contrary of separation would neglect the ethical and moral needs to protect their dignity and material livelihood.

If education efforts are ever to make progress off the group, the Roma need help. The Romani people lack substantial positions of power and the maneuvering ability in order to enact policies and change. Coupling that with a lack of experience and a shortsighted perspective further hampers their efforts to respond on their own. To further back state efforts, breaking down territoriality leaves room for supranational institutions. Rather than a sole reliance on states as the main source of legitimate authority, we can look beyond. Perhaps this conception as a national, cultural container is not the best setup in order to accommodate Roma communities. You can have multi-nation states such as those found in Spain. Recognition of the Catalan people as a semi-autonomous group paves the way to a separate sort of identity construction. Though arguably most Catalan

do not identify as "Spanish", few would argue from a complete break from the current government and formation of an entirely new state.

Regardless, the alleged shared sense of national identity that has been put forth in many questions are clearly under fire. With so many Roma either claiming disinterest or irrelevance to *gadje* issues, one naturally raises concerns if the existing identity that unites these diverging groups is the proper one. Arguably a shared national identity should breed a mutual sense of obligation towards one another. However, under current conditions, this is far from true.[48] The current situation in many CEECs bears striking similarities to the internment of Japanese Americans and the purported allegation that the latter was too dissimilar from the majority of Americans. They were "portrayed as too foreign and unable to assimilate."[49] Perhaps instead of drawing these harsh divides that segment people into two separate paradigms that bear little overlap with each other, the more prudent action is to aim for a "bidimensional model" of integration.[50] Although Schildkraut uses this concept with regard to the assimilation of new immigrations entering a country, it is still at least partially relevant in the sense of bridging this culturally dichotomy. "This bidimensional model illustrates that 'it is possible to identify with or acquire the new culture independently, without necessarily losing the original culture.'"[51] Many would agree that the Roma do not share the same set of normative concerns as *gadje* populations. Thus, if we assume the Roma are not capable of living by such model, we are doing a huge disservice to them. The value the latter places on areas

[48] Deborah Schildkraut, *Americanism in the Twenty-First Century: Public Opinion in the Age of Immigration* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 35.
[49] Ibid., p. 36.
[50] Ibid., p. 42.
[51] Ibid.

such as security, equity, and fairness are not weighted the same for the former. Thus in many instances the norms of the majority are being incorrectly assumed and therefore projected onto this population inaccurately.

While much of this does not focus on children or education specifically, many of the ideas mentioned here are still applicable. Since we can't fully separate parents and children as independent bodies, what affects parents subsequently bears some meaning to children as well. Moreover, while efforts to assist children are arguably the focus of this project, tackling parental opinions as well is probably the next most critical component of intervention. Without addressing parental concerns towards *gadje* education, there is little hope that many of these efforts directed towards the children will be long lasting. Thus, to ensure the effectiveness of intervention directed at children, intervention towards adults must work in tandem to ensure its success.

2.5 The Necessity of State Intervention

Despite all the areas in which alleged disadvantage could potentially be dismissed, there are a multitude of other areas in which disadvantage can be clearly identified. From a high level structural standpoint there have been some noticeable shortcomings. "The transition [from state-socialist regimes] to democracy has established minority rights, although not all ethnic minorities have been treated fairly by states, nor have all minorities been equally successful in articulating and representing their interests."[52] Theoretically, one would think political regime change would help to

[52] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 43.

alleviate some elements of disadvantage; however in reality this has not been the case. Accompanying political transition is often political instability as various groups fight for control. The main priority is to gain control, not to run other elements of the state bureaucracy, which paves the way for rising discontent. Lacking strong leadership at the top level therefore has a cascade effect in amplifying political dissent below and extremist grassroots movements that target ethnic minorities as scapegoats for this period of political instability.[53] Unfortunately, many times the Roma have put in the middle of this crossfire, having to combat fanatic hatred that has once again come to the surface following the fall of the Soviet Union.

When Romani children do choose to participate in the educational system, their experience is often initially colored by their parents, whose own negative understanding begins to permeate their mindset. As children are often too young to make full, rational assessments of given situations and surroundings, the power falls upon their parents who take on this additional responsibility. Unfortunately, due to the parents' frequent poor experiences with the education system themselves, their "ethnic-racial identity shapes the frequency and content of ethnic-racial socialization messages… Parents who experience discrimination will be more likely than others to anticipate that their children will also experience it and to provide their children with tools for coping with it."[54] This implanted fear of discrimination outside their immediate community often permeates the minds of students, which only further discourages them from attending school to avoid these

[53] Ibid., p. 42.
[54] Diane Hughes et al., "Parents' Ethnic-Racial Socialization Practices: A Review of Research and Directions for Future Study," *Developmental Psychology* 42, no. 5 (2006): p. 760.

systemic discriminatory conditions. This has a potential cascade effect: Negative self-identification hurts school performance and motivation to attend. Even when schools are found within the immediate vicinity of the Roma community, the resources and quality of teaching provide are often weaker than in non-Roma neighborhoods, thus widening the apparent segregation and disadvantage of Roma students against their non-Roma peers.

From a cultural perspective, the battle between long-standing traditions often come into conflict with school practices, leaving students in a precarious position of have to decide between family customs and individual advancement. From an institutional perspective, well-intentioned policies are failing to reduce the gap; social exclusion and discrimination remain widespread and policymakers are left trying to plan out a reasonable course of action. "Although state policies might prohibit discrimination, marginalization may persist through dominantly accepted views, mores, and customs and as a result of ineffective protective mechanisms for the marginal group."[55] Thus, on multiple levels the issues of segregation hurt the academic achievement of Romani students.

Perhaps breaking down traditional understandings of racism would help to some extent. Simply looking at *color* racism does not capture the multifaceted complexity of racism. Analyzing elements of *cultural* racism instead, as described by Tariq Modood, would be more relevant to discussion revolving the Roma. While not to understate the physical components that racism still encompasses, a deeper analysis requires that discrimination be not based exclusively on physicality. "Cultural racism or culturalism

[55] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 62.

directed to a racialized or racially marked group may involve an antipathy to the group because it is perceived to be an alien culture rather than merely an inferior one."[56] Most experts would agree that racism, in any form, should be combatted, which further solidifies the need for action to tackle Romani disadvantage. Thus, despite the objections some Gypsies might throw about the *gadje* intervening, racism is not something that should be allowed to persist.

The current economic destitution and poverty that many Roma communities are currently contending with has not always been their reality. In fact, looking back even just a century ago, the Roma inhabited a much different economic status:

> Although the Roma were at the bottom of the imperial era's economic and occupational scales, they had a well-defined position in imperial economies and played useful and valuable economic roles… In essence, traditional Romani skills were appropriate to pre-industrial economies, but industrialization resulted in their gradual economic displacement and increasing marginalization.[57]

From a socioeconomic and historical perspective, if there did exist a point in history where the Roma were at least somewhat respected for the goods they produced or the services they offered, that would indicate agreeable relations between the Roma and non-Roma communities. If historical accounts passed down orally detail how generations ago things were not the way they are today, does that not serve a signal to Roma populations that their current state is one of disadvantage and marginalization dictated by non-Roma populations? Over time, the Roma have moved from a place of acceptance and at least middling integration to being completely shunned. "The vast majority of the Gypsies – as

---

[56] Tariq Modood. *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), p. 11.
[57] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 88.

a result of their traditional attitudes toward institutionalized education, their poverty, and the majority population's discriminatory policies – could not adapt to the emerging economic conditions that required specialized training and education."[58] At the moment, economic barriers oftentimes restrict or constrain efforts for sending students to school. Social measures, once supported by communist regimes, have been removed in in the post-communist transition as funding and attention have been redirected elsewhere.[59] In turn, this material disadvantage becomes one of the most easily identifiable indicators of disadvantage in the classroom. Feeling inferior to their non-Roma peers simply for their shabby appearance or lack of materials, Roma children soon become discouraged from attending school because they do not want to repeatedly endure these feelings of shame at the hands of other students.

Finally, moving back towards a contemporary timeframe, the "Roma often hold the state responsible for their joblessness because they became used to the universal employment of the past. A Bulgarian survey revealed that 65.7% of the Roma blamed 'bad national government…when asked why they were unemployed."[60] While a majority of the Roma direct blame towards the government for their marginal economic position, such feelings do not necessarily translate to the schooling. Many Roma communities are still resistant to state education efforts in whatever form these proposals may be offered. Again, here lies the problem: If the Roma want to reintegrate back into society, they

[58] Ibid., p. 90-91.
[59] Ibid., p. 165.
[60] Ibid., p. 174.

cannot completely dismiss state education services. Asking for better governances, whilst rejecting educational programs cannot exist concurrently.

2.6 Concluding Remarks

At the end of the day, I do believe from an ethically standpoint that intervention is justified. In order to uphold the dignity of the Romani people, engagement, especially in the realm of education, is necessary to help promote a more active livelihood in the future. Though many non-Roma still claim that education, or for that matter intervention of any sort is not what the Roma want, these arguments are often centered on old stereotypes and generalizations that misrepresent the Roma. Thus, stronger commitment and participation with Romani leaders will help to re-inform policy makers about the need and place for education in Romani communities.

Looking at different facets of disadvantage helps to legitimize the argument going forward. By analyzing aspects of disadvantage, from a theoretical, historical, and comparative perspective, we can relate multiple areas to the case of the Roma. Additionally by looking at the issue from multiple angles, this method enables a more objective investigation, rather than an imbalanced inquiry. While I still acknowledge the need to illuminate both sides of the argument – on the one hand the need for intrusion and on the other hand the futility of involvement - the case for the former is much stronger. Finally, while the Roma most certainly have their share of unique conditions present to their current condition, what this chapter helped to clarify is that there is existing research that is applicable and that lends itself well to study of Roma communities in Europe. In

sum, this chapter helped to elucidate how there is a "distinction between cultures of progress (those that are forward looking and based on a promising and hopeful future) and cultures of survival (which envisage the future as a sequence of acts of survival) [that] is instructive in understanding both Gypsy culture and marginality."[61] Our mission going forward must be to help empower the Roma in order to let them thrive not just survive. And in establishing the validity of the non-Roma's position with regards to Roma disadvantage, this will bolster the subsequent argument for how we can look at Romani interaction with non-Roma education and Romani children's adoption of some foreign practices – such as formal writing and arithmetic. As the two sides become more unified, Roma children could benefit from these practices, thus showing that the divisions between the Roma and non-Roma are perhaps not as stark as they once seemed.

There is hope for the Roma and some analysts are beginning to set up a pathway for future success. As long as *both sides* are willing to work together, with the recognition that the current status quo does not give sufficient rights or recognition to the Roma minority, then meaningful action can be produced:

> Ten years ago, for most Europeans the word 'Roma' meant nothing more than a city in Italy, whereas 'Gypsy' was used as a pejorative to describe the band of thieves who preyed on tourists from Barcelona to Budapest. Ignorance and stereotypes so deeply embedded in the popular consciousness will not be erased overnight. But the awakening of several million Europeans to their Roma roots has begun to effect profound changes, and the EU has played an important role in this process.[62]

However, looking beyond the broad *non-Roma* perspective, unpacking this concept further, with how a multi-pronged approach can be useful, is the next logical step. As

[61] Ibid., p. 64.
[62] Goldston. "Roma Rights, Roma Wrongs," p. 18.

Goldston suggests, perhaps the non-Roma angle must be looked at with more nuance. Thus, looking beyond just a traditional state-level analysis to other entities, such as the European Union at the supranational level might be useful in achieving a more balanced approach that I described earlier.

Chapter 3 – Pathways of Intervention

In Chapter 2, I took a theoretical and multiple perspectives approach to legitimize the need for intervention based on the presence of disadvantage and the ethical imperative to step in. Using that as an underlying framework, naturally the question of how we should proceed arises. By looking at this in a top-down, abstract manner, "without bringing it down to concrete events, we are likely to end up grasping nothing of value. But [similarly] if we restrict our exploration of change to concrete examples, the outcome will be just as sterile. The challenge is to successfully bridge the gap between general, abstract concepts and specific, concrete phenomena."[1] Thus, the task that arises is to arrive at this middle approach. While in theory, the abstract, normative ideas presented earlier gave us a context for analysis and appear quite straightforward, the Roma continue to present a unique challenge in their quest to remain culturally autonomous, which creates a break between the abstract and the reality we continue to see and presses us to look at this from a new perspective. Here lies the crux of this chapter: We must use those former theoretical and moral considerations to produce meaningful action *on the ground*, which the Roma will actually respond to positively and willingly.

This chapter will first lay out, from the perspective of the Roma, the values that they hold most dear and why these have been an obstacle for non-Roma intervention. It will then move to looking at the situation from the non-Roma perspective and their

[1] Fathali M. Moghaddam, "Threatened Identities, Change, and Globalization," in *How Globalization Spurs Terrorism: The Lopsided Benefits of "One World" and Why That Fuels Terrorism*. (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008), pp. 118-119.

respective call to action and right to intervene. Next it will examine intervention from three separate levels of governance: the subnational level, through Romani organizations and NGOs; the state level; and the supranational level, with institutions such as the Council of Europe. Having a multi-pronged approach, such as this, I argue, allows for more coordinated action, which is necessary here given the complexity and breadth of Roma marginalization and which extends across multiple European countries. Although coordination may be difficult to achieve fully, taking a more comprehensive approach allows us to move a few steps closer to achieving it.

3.1 Roma Autonomy and Culture Unpacked (Part 2)

Although the Roma work together within their own ethnic group, their desire to remain culturally autonomous and separate from the *gadje* acts as one of the highest prerogatives for them. It is retaining this sense of cultural individuality and uniqueness in the wake of corrupting *gadje* influence that dictates much of their behavior. For example, "by rejecting the state institutions for control and domination of its subjects, the Rom[a] mode of existence is relatively autonomous of state power and may be seen to constitute an alternative power system that is not to be understood as resistance."[2] Roma nomadism, in juxtaposition to rigid state hegemonic power is not necessarily referring to the notion of constant movement we traditionally associate with the term, but rather the idea of organizational fluidity and a flexible, non-territorialized relationship to land and

[2] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 189.

property.[3] Hence, state-organized functions such as schools do not fit into their cultural expectations. "By rejecting schools and avoiding wage labour, by differentiating themselves from peasants and by several other social practices, the Roma avoid the central state institutions for incorporation of its subjects, and experience a certain degree of cultural autonomy."[4] Now, looking to the same Romanian hamlet referred to above, evidence of this distaste for non-Roma institutions is evident. Rather than submitting their children to a "foreign" educational institution, Romani parents prefer to "educate" their children by allowing them to perform necessary chores. Romani "children are not protected from any aspects of adult life – they share the plights and tasks of their elders from an early age. They are given no special training or education, and no special food, toys or clothes."[5] Socializing children in this way teaches them to become self-reliant and inculcates them with the ideas of ethnic brotherhood. By limiting the exposure to *gadje* influence, Roma adults singularly control the socialization of their children with the traditional teachings. This serves a twofold purpose. First, it indoctrinates the next generation with established ideals. Second, given the tumultuous historical legacy of marginalization and stigmatization, Roma parents, in their own right, are trying to defend their children from torment. Though they are tied to nearby *gadje* for economic reasons, beyond that, they cannot get too close for the political climate might change once again. Though at the present, liberalized political regimes appear to be stable, the Roma have no guarantee for this and must act accordingly. Hypothetically, if they were to grow too

[3] Ibid., p. 188.
[4] Ibid., p. 189.
[5] Ibid., p. 54.

close to these non-Roma systems, new connections would be established; if political interests were to shift against them and persecution suddenly increased, these connections could subsequently be exploited, leaving them highly vulnerable. Thus, teaching their children to remain wary of outside influence and detached is as much about cultural preservation as it is for personal protection and safety.

3.2 The Non-Roma Call to Action

Shifting political organizations have created new opportunities for the Roma's concerns to be heard. Lacking the organization to be fully recognized as an independent cultural nation, the Roma never appeared to be a threat to state power relations or even opposing nationalist ideologies. However, as briefly highlighted in Chapter 1, the marginalized position of the Roma as a social category may be coming to an end with the shift toward liberalized democracies. "Lack of knowledge of the Romani language, laws and customs rebounds in superstitious fears of their alleged magical powers and has generated hatred amongst the natives in all countries of Europe."[6] Intrinsically, democracies are designed to help promote and protect minority rights; in other words, even though these embedded stereotypes and lack of knowledge have typified relations between Roma and non-Roma communities for centuries, democracies are designed to reduce those differences and promote (word choice), stronger ties between majority and minority communities. As just one example, "in their new national position as Roma, an ethnic minority, they are establishing a new position in the postsocialist Romanian

[6] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 83.

figuration that posits them as a threat not only on the village level, but possibly also to the nation."[7] The poor economic situation of the Roma acts as central force in influencing policy. While previously, the "Roma had basically no political clout and international actors had minimal power to influence state policy," significant changes have come about with political transition, which have drastically altered relations between the government and Roma.[8]

In spite of their cultural autonomy, they are economically *dependent* on nearby *gadje* settlements as "oppression and the spread of modern technology – cars, television – combined with the decline of the traditional features of Gypsy culture."[9]. This asymmetric relationship that is contingent on the continued financial bolstering of non-Roma communities makes the Roma extremely vulnerable to economic change. "The Gypsies, although stigmatised, were once proud and valuable contributors to their host societies economically and culturally, but industrialisation has pressed them to the margins of modern society where their culture is slowly degrading."[10] Lacking many alternatives, what has resulted has led to a rise in "delinquency and parasitism."[11] If the economic lifeblood of a non-Roma village was to change or if the villagers no longer saw the need to buy Roma goods, the Roma would lose a vital source of income. Though their means to beg and steal would still theoretically exist, ultimately that would be insufficient to sustain them, which would lead to a critical situation of further material depravity.[12]

---

[7] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 200.
[8] Barany, *The East European Gypsies* p. 153.
[9] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 86.
[10] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 200.
[11] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 86.
[12] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 200.

Arguably, to leave the Roma to rely solely on begging and stealing would not be a prudent course of action either, as it would threat the social cohesion between the two sides. Thus, even though the Roma's desire to remain cultural autonomous could be invoked here, it is their economic dependence that permits the non-Roma community to intervene in order to ensure harmony.

Furthermore, "many Gypsies identify themselves as members of other ethnic groups in order to escape the stigma attached to being a Rom in Eastern Europe. Socioeconomically integrated Roma often aspire to assimilate into the dominant society and classify themselves as one of its members."[13] It is one thing to self-identify as Roma and retain the desire to remain distinct, but when one disowns the label of being Roma, they are internally shedding their interest in being singularly, culturally autonomous. By taking on other ethnic labels in the process, they thereby make themselves responsible for upholding the expectations of the new ethnic group, including educational efforts. "Many Roma also expressed a desire to become gaže [*gadje*], or at least to live like gaže… That makes it possible to be either Rom or gaže in some contexts and more or less Rom and more or less gaže in others. This classification implies flexible boundaries that are negotiable, and allow for the social transformations of Rom to gaže and the other way round when necessary."[14]

Additionally, the Roma have also created expectations for how the state should respond to their needs. "Roma often hold the state responsible for their joblessness because they became used to the universal employment of the past. A Bulgarian survey

[13] Barany, *The East European Gypsies* p. 158.
[14] Engebrigtsen, *Exploring Gypsiness*, p. 139.

revealed that 65.7% of the Roma blamed 'bad national government,' 36.6% blamed ethnic discrimination, and only 15.8% blamed their own low level of education and lack of qualifications when asked why they were unemployed."[15] Assuming that this survey polled the segment of the Roma that has traditionally remained marginalized, these results are very revealing. The fact that nearly two-thirds hold state governments responsible for their current predicament indicates that they are open to outside influence or assistance to some extent. If they were completely resistant to non-Roma intervention, they would have little reasoning to criticize an institution that they want to remain far away from.

These expectations of the government are likely a direct result of life under state socialism. Having been incorporated into the working class and subsequently given jobs through the bureaucratic machine, the Roma have some built up expectations for how the government is able to interact with them. Therefore, even though these regimes collapsed two decades ago and the jobs they once held disappeared, their beliefs about the government have not changed dramatically. "The longing for the 'good times' of the socialist period of many ordinary Gypsies is not hard to understand. During that era many Roma got used to the guardianship of the paternalistic state and, in the new Eastern Europe, were unable to adapt to the merciless mechanisms of market forces."[16] Thus, by holding the government responsible, in part, for their high levels of unemployment now, it grants the government some leeway to intervene. Naturally, the solution is to rectify

[15] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 174.
[16] Ibid., p. 201.

this perception of bad governance, which includes renewed efforts of intervention and assistance.

Lastly, from a historical perspective, we have entered an unprecedented period for the Roma people. During earlier periods in history, although somewhat more respected for their skills by their non-Roma counterparts, the Roma were still marginalized. Under Maria Theresa of the Habsburg dynasty, they were subjected to slavery. Under communism, nominal egalitarianism masked the persistence of inequality and poorer job prospects that were extended to the Roma. Thus, moving into a period of liberal democracies and greater political freedoms and participations should enable them to raise themselves out of this sort of subjugation. They should not be reduced to the same marginalized role once again in yet another political framework, especially one that touts itself for equality and social inclusion. Therefore, while much of their desire to remain autonomous does stem from cultural differences with the *gadje* regarding property rights, brotherhood, and values, I believe that it is also out of defense to shield them from further harm. "In such a fearful world a parent cannot count on achieving anything by his own effort and enterprise. The conditions and means of success are all beyond his control."[17]

In this case, living under *gadje* political structures bears direct influence over their daily lives and prescribes certain expectations, which are hard to escape. Unfortunately, given the fact that most other times in history have been marked by their marginalization by other subgroups, naturally the Roma remain skeptical to current political affairs. From the Roma perspective, much of their resentment of outside influence stems from a

[17] Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, p. 107.

defensive reaction to preserve their own self-interest and in-group aspirations. "Rejected and misunderstood everywhere they went, they have become distrustful and highly secretive in relation with non-Gypsies, establishing their own laws and moral codes."[18] Their perception of the imposing out-group party is that politics and outsiders are looking out for their own interests first or what is beneficial for the, not necessarily what is best for the Roma. Nevertheless, in spite of these existing concerns about the true motives of *gadje* officials, the existence of expectations stemming from the state-socialist era should give rise to further efforts of intervention, especially in the realm of education, which serves multiple goals.

Addressing Roma education also serves a dual purpose. First, more from the perspective of non-Roma governance, education can act as a means to smooth over social instability in a post-socialist era where these issues have become more prevalent. Following post-communist transition, dissenting, rightwing political groups were able to freely express their negative sentiments toward the Roma. Having been suppressed by communist regimes for decades, these parties were able to openly advocate their positions, which led to rising intolerance.[19] While some of this has subsided, especially given the EU's insertion and push towards social inclusion, the presence of such antagonism emitted by the dominant group's attitude still likely reinforces the Roma's defensive reaction and makes them skittish toward outside help. Therefore, using education as a meeting place can help to break down this hostility and gives a more constructive and tangible route for which intervention can be conducted. On top of this,

[18] Bauman, "Demons of Other People's Fear," p. 82.
[19] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 190.

building more positive relations amongst children can help to end existing prejudice and prevent its spread to the next generation. Under state-socialism, the state's nominal egalitarianism and the reality of inequality propped up the marginality of the Roma. But under liberalized democracy, the responsibility now falls on the citizens themselves for the continuation or removal of such practices.[20]

Second, with the rapidly aging populations across Europe, including the Roma in education is a viable solution to contend with this population crisis. "Given the rapid ageing of the majority population and the comparatively high fertility of Roma, an important issue facing the countries of central and south-eastern Europe is a productive integration of this growing ethnic minority into mainstream society."[21]

The next three sections will help to unpack the growing efforts to empower the Roma and enact lasting change. Each serves a different, unique function when put *together* creates a cohesive course of action that facilitates the path toward a coordinated direction forward. Multi-level governance and the intersection of participants is the best means to ensure the needs of the Roma are adequately voiced and tended to.

3.3 The Shortcomings of Exclusively State Intervention

Given the fact that nation-states are still considered the primary actors in the international system by most scholars, I must now turn in this direction and delve first into state-level analysis. In the post-1989 era, most "democracies are marked by

---

[20] Ibid., p. 191.
[21] Jaromir Cekota and Claudia Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania: Increasing Gaps and Policy Challenges," *Europe-Asia Studies* 67, no. 4 (2015): p. 541.

inclusiveness, the willingness to negotiate and compromise, institutionalized competition for influence, and an extensive array of civil liberties guaranteed by law. By their very nature, liberal democracies are more concerned with human rights and minority rights than are states under other regime types," such as state-socialist or autocratic rule.[22] To promote these rights at the state level, democracies have the implicit sovereignty to enact laws within their territorial boundaries. While in theory these democracies should have the framework and flexibility to grant disadvantaged groups the ability to voice their interests and mobilize, often that is not the case, particularly in Eastern Europe. Because many of these states are still nascent democracies, they lack the same ability to maneuver and thus cannot fully address the concerns voiced by these internal subgroups such as the Roma.[23] "Although the East European states established democratic institutional structures soon after the fall of communism, the accommodation of ethnic minorities was generally not at the top of their agendas. Even in states that have been relatively quick to create the institutional framework for dealing with minority concerns, many view democracy as majority rule and overlook minority rights.'"[24]

In the immediate aftermath of political transition, more pressing economic and geopolitical concerns took priority in order to stabilize these countries following transition. Unfortunately, by not adequately addressing Gypsy concerns, it only exacerbated the problem further. Thus if the government is going to overlook their rights, why should Roma trust it? Here lies the problem: the inability of the state to act on its

[22] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 38.
[23] Ibid., p. 39.
[24] Ibid., p. 40.

own to fully address these minority issues should permit other actors to intervene on behalf of these people in order to best serve their interests. In many cases, political will alone is not enough to generate change. Practical concerns, such as finances, limit the full range of policy options that officials can propose. This captures "the salient political and institutional factors that impact upon state policy."[25] Even if the most passionate policymaker were to advocate on behalf of the Roma, without the necessary material capacity that the state must provide, that passion will not translate into action.

While state level assistance plays a pivotal role in engaging with the issue, state regimes alone are insufficient to tackle the full spectrum of issues. "Its values and institutions are being challenged by both subnational pressures and by European construction and integration in the world economy."[26] Acting in pure self-interest, states have a tendency to move towards the promotion of state identity over in-group cultural ones, which will depict the Roma identification as being secondary to the state. While, this may not be as concerning to other ethnic groups, for the Roma, who pride themselves on their cultural identity, any threat to that will not be taken lightly. Moreover, given the relatively small population of the Roma in each individual country, it is difficult for these countries acting on their own to devote significant resources to combat their difficulties. Relating it back to the overall focus of this paper, in many cases, "the introduction of new educational programs have been delayed not only due to the absence of political commitment, but also because of conceptual ambiguity about how to approach the

[25] Ibid., p. 45.
[26] Dominique Schnapper, "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis of National Identity," in *The Politics of Immigration in Western Europe* (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1994), p. 138.

problem, modest financial resources, lacking coordination between ministries and school districts, and conflicting messages from the Romani community regarding education in Romani language."[27] Thus the state must act prudently both to get the Roma on-board with any of their policy proposals as well as generating sufficient support from politicians.

In sum, state, level civil society can either support (or inhibit) the progression of minority rights. While states possess the needed framework to enact legislation, relying on state entities alone is unlikely to address the wide spectrum of needs of the greater Roma community especially if the political will is not there. And unfortunately for the Roma, the lack of political will by non-Roma authorities at the state level was a significant problem in the immediate years following the transition toward liberal democracies. "The capacity of states to influence or change societal attitudes toward minorities is rarely recognized. The state does have the power to increase society's tolerance and understanding of the marginal population's predicament through the enactment and enforcement of antidiscrimination laws and/or the introduction of affirmative action programs. Although such policies may be met with popular opposition, they key to their success is consistent, long-term, and patient implementation."[28] State interests are unlikely to include much in the way of helping the Roma, which creates space for the insertion of subnational and non-governmental organizations, as well as overarching supranational institutions which will be covered in the next two sections.

---

[27] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 40.
[28] Ibid., p. 45.

3.4 Romani and Non-Governmental Organizations

Democratization has paved the way for the proliferation of new institutions and organizations that have begun to advocate and spread awareness of the plight of the Roma. Under communism, nominal egalitarianism dismissed the potential for such advocacy. Therefore, following political transition two decades ago, the Roma have slowly begun to organize. In the early years after 1989, Romani activists' "infectious excitement about the new opportunities for mobilization was responsible for bringing hundreds of budding activists and politicians to the Romani movement. Many of these individuals saw the creation of organizations as the most appropriate vehicle for Gypsy mobilization."[29]

Just between 1990 and 1999 the number of Romani organizations in Hungary exploded, rising from just 18 to 250.[30] This bottom-up approach helps to engage the community and serves "as practical training grounds for thousands of Gypsies across the region, thereby directly contributing to Romani mobilization."[31] Obtaining community participation is "conducive to the development of pro-poor policies that are both comprehensive and feasible" as those with first-hand knowledge of collective needs are best equipped to advocate on behalf of the group.[32] "If collaboration is achieved 'bottom up', NGOs or activists can decide to lobby the European level for their causes, especially if the nation state is not responsive to their ideas and claims," which further highlights the

[29] Ibid., p. 206.
[30] Ibid., p. 207.
[31] Ibid., p. 208.
[32] Cekota and Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 573.

importance and place for these subnational organizations to initiate change.[33] Without such groups, left to their own devices, there is less certainty that states would act in the best interest of the Roma; so by circumventing states, if necessary, NGOs help to bring more tangible changes to the ground where it is needed most.

The rapid proliferation of socioeconomic and political organizations indicates a striking interest in condensing interest, organizing their concerns to outside authorities, and the expansion of participation of a greater number of individuals, which could create a positive feedback loop. "If Romani NGOS as well as civil society activists are involved in a dialogue from the beginning, and so make their contribution to all stages of the policy-making process, they could shift positions from mere recipients of protection to 'makers', which in turn could lead to empowerment."[34] Although many are still in their infancy and having experienced mixed results in terms of tangible change, due to minimal political experience and holding few positions of significance previously, such engagement shows the impulse and desire for change. "In the past decade the Roma have gained a political presence that states and societies have had to accept as legitimate. Undoubtedly, this presence will continue to expand as the number and effectiveness of Romani NGOs and organization increase."[35] Over time, their increasing visibility and continued expansion of efforts from the bottom-up will help to engage more members of the community, which advances group interests.

---

[33] Crepaz, "The Road to Empowerment," pp. 114-115.
[34] Ibid., p. 95.
[35] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 240.

However some community members have reservations about the strength of these groups. "Many Romani leaders and *gadje* experts remain skeptical about the impact of Gypsy mobilization. The majority remain poorly organized, they have serious difficulties getting along with each other… and they remain ineffective."[36] Given their tumultuous history, many organizations leaders have difficulties in working with state officials, citing personal reasons, and fail to see the potential good that could result from such collaboration.[37]. While not disregarding the work these groups have done, their limited capacity must be noted. "NGOs and international organizations have done an invaluable service by publicizing the attacks on the Roma, although they have not done an equally good job in providing balanced reporting. Their accounts are typically compiled by human rights activists who often do little more than collecting the 'story' from the Gypsies."[38] While publicizing the story is crucial to engaging the wide community, simply making it known will not prompt policy makers to respond, which highlights the limits to the ability that subnational organizations have when prodding the government for further assistance. Furthermore, striking the balance between the usages of traditional leaders, who command more respect within the community itself, versus employing more modern leaders, who tend to be well educated and better equipped to negotiate with *gadje* officials, is exceedingly difficult. Putting too much weight on one or the other either

[36] Ibid., p. 209.
[37] Ibid., p. 220.
[38] Ibid., p. 197.

threatens the overall effectiveness of enacting meaningful action or leads to skepticism among the populace with impressions that it is being boxed into a corner.[39]

Lastly the issue of funding threatens the overall effectiveness of these organizations. Since many receive financial support from the state or bureaucratic ministries, this causes concern among some in the community because these organizations feel they must act mostly in lines with what the state is expecting from them; acting too far to the right would potentially force the state to cut off their funding.[40]Moreover, the existence of so many organizations, while it has helped to engage communities at a grassroots level, often divide up finite funding and reduce the overall effectiveness of these organizations as a collective. Lastly, many ordinary Gypsies "had so little confidence in their leaders' integrity that they preferred state and other *gadje* organizations to distribute funds."[41] The preference for out-group oversight for the appropriation of funding suggests a degree of flexibility in their interests. Recognizing some of their own leaders inability to act fiscally responsible for the collective good, the Roma prefer to see outside management, sensing that would help to improve their situation to a greater degree, which again serves to highlight as another in-rout to non-Roma intervention highlighted in section 4.2.

By decentralizing the process, it makes it more tailored to meet the needs of specific Roma groups. Taking a one-size fit all approach to impose change does not

[39] Ibid., p. 220.
[40] Ibid., p. 227.
[41] Ibid., p. 230.

adequately meet their needs.[42] Alone these grassroots organizations lack the usual political experience to organize their concerns effectively at the state level. Gathering attention to the issues is one matter, but enacting political change is an entirely different one. Thus, other entities are required in order to produce change on the ground; other institutions at the state and supranational level must facilitate changes enacted by the Roma by inserting their organizational capacity to bring together these many subnational splintered groups.

3.5 Supranational Intervention

As strong as state institutions and subnational NGOs may be, a third prong must be considered in order to provide overall effective action. Hence, the inclusion of supranational institutions, such as the European Union and Council of Europe, as well as the associated documents they publish, such as the EU Framework for National Roma Integration, help to be bring recognition to the challenges the Roma face EU wide.[43] Given the fact that the Romani minority extend across such an extensive geographic area, "Romani policies represent an issue with a strongly transnational dimension, which does not only encompass different levels but also different policy areas, and thus cannot be appropriately tackled on a purely national basis."[44]

For many of these Eastern European countries, the post-1989 era has been marked by increasing desire to align with Western European counterparts. "The EU offered a

---

[42] William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why The West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill And So Little Good*, (New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), p. 5.
[43] Anca Pusca, Introduction to *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012), p. 4.
[44] Crepaz, "The Road to Empowerment," p. 104.

showcase of stability and prosperity based on liberal democracy and market economics that was influential in encouraging the idea of 'returning to Europe' that was such an important theme of post-1989 CEE politics: the goal of joining the EU was not just based on a calculated motivation of receiving specific benefits, but was seen as a way of becoming 'modern' and 'civilised.'"[45] Lacking the necessary tools to fully transform existing political institutions, many of these Eastern European states turned to the EU for advice on how to best modernize. The Copenhagen conditions of 1993 set out general criteria necessary for membership into the EU. While these conditions were very general to begin with, they gradually gained specificity over time as states moved further along in the accession process.[46] Candidate states rarely challenged the EU conditions because they felt the EU "had the benefits to offer, and so it shaped the rules of the game."[47] Through this agenda setting - laid out in the accession conditions - the EU was able to exert pressure over these states to make specific political, economic, and social changes to address certain issues. "The EU reinforced political will for reforms and its demands provided ammunition to governments that needed to overcome the resistance of interest groups."[48] Thus, while the EU did not necessarily have to issue legally binding contracts or agreements with these states, the pressure to meet EU expectations in order to join the union. In this way, the EU was able to put pressure on Eastern European states through conditionality to address social issues, such as Romani marginalization.

---

[45] Heather Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanization through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 52-53.
[46] Ibid., p. 14
[47] Ibid., pp. 193-194.
[48] Ibid., p. 53.

Additionally, from a high-level perspective, "the issue of Romani protection first arose in a security policy context. Heterogeneous populations and ongoing tensions between societal groups could lead to outbreaks of ethnic violence, which may have destabilizing effects not only for the affected region, but for the Union as a whole."[49] Due to the area in which the Roma live, inevitably, individual member states have tackled the issue of social inclusion in remarkably different ways; financial and political considerations – which have been highlighted above – have produced an increasing amount of divergence in tangible results thus far. "The sets of rights ensuing from 'Westphalian' domestic legal definitions were born as 'genetically' inadequate to address Romani cultural features as a non-territorial and diffuse minority."[50] Therefore, given the inconsistencies with state level implementation, "the European level can set a common aim that has to be reached by all member states."[51] "The supranational area can provide a forum for collaboration, exchange of best practices and civil society involvement."[52] This may be especially useful in publicizing and spreading best-practices and knowledge from Western Europe member states, where there have been some more successful integration effort involving the Roma, to Eastern Europe and democratic states still in their infancy. Additionally, in response to concrete expectations and goals, states can then proceed to individually decide what is the most judicious way to meet these expectations and implement the appropriate plans. Working in tandem with Romani organizations as well

---

[49] Ibid., p. 93.
[50] Sara Memo, "Roma as a Pan-European Minority? Opportunities for Political and Legal Recognition," in *When Stereotype Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies* (Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014), p. 133.
[51] Crepaz, "The Road to Empowerment," p. 97.
[52] Ibid., p. 98.

would help "to ensure sustainable developments and changes that are supported by the local populations."[53] Thus, supranational oversight can help smooth over the inconsistencies that states would inevitably produce if left to their own devices and without a common goal to strive for.

Though arguably the need for supranational oversight as a coordinating mechanism would be a useful tool, there is much difficulty in balancing the various member state preferences & interests that each separately brings to the table. With so many actors having to agree on a single policy, it is difficult to achieve meaningful action. Though norms and values are flexible and can change over time, this is not an instantaneous process and thus encounters difficulties, especially when demands for swift and accountable action are voiced with the unfolding crisis. [54] As political power changes hands at the state level, the associated agenda of each administration fluctuates as well. Thus, while one state regime may favor integration policies, there is no future guarantee for what the following establishment will do. Therefore, to ensure a fluidity and consistency of action, supranational organizations can prescribe certain benchmarks in order to mitigate the effects of the political pendulum. "The CE's Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities, which is ratified by member states and requires them to submit annual reports on human rights and minority affairs, has played a major role in raising political awareness of the need for more progressive policies."[55] By establishing the prerogative behind conducting action, it makes it explicitly know to

[53] Ibid., p. 97.
[54] Christian Kaunert, "Liberty versus Security? EU Asylum Policy and the European Commission," *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 5, no. 2 (2009): p. 164
[55] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 268.

states what expectations are set forth; additionally, states have an imperative now to meet these expectations because failing to do so would condone other states to shame them into adherence.

"The postmodern political environment is one in which national territory and other traditional geopolitical demarcations are de-emphasized."[56] As displayed by the rise of multinational corporations and decentralized businesses, the grip of singular state entities has been considerably weakened as these entities operate across multiple country lines, which is likely only to continue over the coming decades. Additionally, by desiring to join the EU and other supranational institutions, it signals the flexibility of their state sovereignty and the insertion of international political forces:

> The efficacy of international organizations and NGOs to a large extent depends on the state's responsiveness to their activities… Since 1989, however, international organizations have been far more effective in large part owing to the fact that the key foreign policy objective of nearly all of the region's states is integration to Western political, economic, and military alliances. Among the criteria these organizations have set for prospective members are the strict enforcement of minority and civil rights and the alleviation of ethnic conflicts. In short, the argument is that non-governmental and international organizations, particularly if they have a leverage vis-à-vis a given state, possess the power to influence that state's minority policies.[57]

Since many of these Eastern European countries revere the EU and hope to benefit economically, these links should extend beyond just economic ramifications to the political sphere as well. "The activities of supranational organizations can also motivate and facilitate changes in state policy toward minorities. "The EU and Member States have a joint responsibility for Roma inclusion and use a broad range of funds in their

---

[56] Anders Strindberg and Mats Wärn, *Islamism: Religion, Radicalization, and Resistance*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2011), p. 113.
[57] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 47.

areas of responsibility, namely the European Social Fund (ESF)."[58] Additionally, a powerful organization may be able to utilize various tools in influencing state minority policy by publicizing the conditions of a marginal group in the given state, criticizing that state's policy toward its minorities, refusing membership to the state, and so on"[59] Thus, "the leverage that IOs [International Organizations] enjoy vis-à-vis the East European states and the willingness and ability to use it has been an important reason behind policy changes because the nascent democracies of the region have become increasingly sensitive of their international image."[60]

However, similar to the state-level analysis, there are some potential areas of concern that make sole reliance on supranational institutions a potential pitfall. First, concerns of territoriality and fears of infringement of states' rights make some states wary about the power of these institutions. Although many countries in Eastern Europe still view the EU as a potential pathway to greater economic advancement, many of the existing members in Western Europe have begun to voice concerns and skepticisms about the usefulness of economic union and have suggested breaking away. Moreover, adding to Euroscepticism is the fact that many people still feel inherently more attached to their individual nation states rather than any supranational entity.

During the accession process, "the EU was slow to respond to the end of the Cold War and many member-states were reluctant to commit themselves to the accession of post-communist CEE. This unwillingness to take political responsibility for enlargement

[58] Europa Press Release, "Appendix 3: Roma People Living in the EU: Frequently Asked Questions," in *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012) p. 206.
[59] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 46.
[60] Ibid., p. 197.

led the member-states to delegate much of accession policy-making to the Commission in practice."[61] Supranational oversight presumes that existing members of these existing institutions have some interest in assisting. However, as exemplified here, the core members of the EU had little gain from the CEEC. These candidate states lacked many of the institutional characteristics that the old members possessed and integrating them into the EU proved much more challenging than enlargement during the 1970s and 1980s when then-candidate states were much closer in economic development and political status to the existing states. With little recognizable gains and a foreseeable list of challenges in integrating these new states into the EU, the existing member states simply tried passing along the responsible to the European Commission, hoping that other member states would pick up the responsibility instead, leading to a free rider scenario.

"Regardless of their objective integration into larger units, national peoples remain attached to the historical community – the nation – forged by centuries of common history."[62] Thus, garnering support from the French or British to help some faraway cause in Eastern Europe is that much more difficult. "'National identity' derives from a deep-rooted sense of ethnic community whereas 'European identity' appears as a relatively superficial and ineffectual force: a utopian dream of intellectuals and idealists with little chance of mobilizing mass consciousness."[63] Simply grouping them together based on the geographic proximity does not give enough attention to the territoriality of individual nation-states and lacks much feasibility in practice. Even if this identity was to

---

[61] Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*, p. 28.
[62] Schnapper, "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis of National Identity," p. 138.
[63] Cris Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 17.

take hold, while the notion of an EU-wide citizenship would in theory come to encompass Roma communities within the Eastern bloc, the opposite may occur as the suggested notion of citizenship irrespective of nation-state borders may actually be fuelling "xenophobia and racism throughout Europe by creating an economic 'underclass' of foreigners and the unemployed."[64] In other words the boundaries of inclusion may be stopping short of including the Roma into this Europe-wide designation, as there is no guarantee that the Roma would even be included in this redrawn European identification, which would make it effectively useless. As Cris Shore points out "nowhere is this contradiction between lofty Enlightenment ideals about cultural pluralism and individual freedom and the realities of cultural racism and European intolerance of other cultures more evident that in the case of Europe's gypsy population."[65] Lastly, by operating at such a high-level, supranational institutions run the risk of irrelevance or operating merely within the policy realm, lacking the recognition of what is happening on the ground. The original Copenhagen conditions set forth were so broad and generalized in scope that it lacked substance to enact much change for groups at the margin, such as the Roma. "The first two required definitions of what constituted a 'democracy' [and] 'a market economy'" were highly debated.[66] Therefore it is important to receive sufficient input, either through first-hand knowledge of Roma issues or Roma staff on board, within these offices to implement the most useful practices. Thus while the EU undoubtedly could provide key tools to apply pressure on governments to enact

[64] Ibid., p. 80.
[65] Ibid., pp. 82-83.
[66] Grabbe, *The EU's Transformative Power*, p. 32.

changes at the state-level, there are effectively limits as well to how far supranational power and influence can extend, making it necessary to be mindful about not being overly dependent on this approach as well.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

While the theoretical concerns covered in Chapter 2 presented a strong case to alleviate the disadvantage currently being experienced, the on the ground perspective is equally, if not more important to consider. What the Roma desire in terms of retaining their cultural autonomy must be weighed in order to produce meaningful and lasting change.

Undoubtedly the cultural values of the Roma present themselves as a far contrast to the "Western" values of the non-Roma communities surrounding them. Although in the past, there has been this purported notion to try to assimilation them into a Western-influenced ideology, the Roma have not taken keenly to this; in response, they have often reasserted their cultural autonomy, which has led to subsequent clashes between the two sides and rising social tension. In sum, overcoming these historical associations of marginalization and coming up with a new framing of the current social and political atmosphere lies at the heart of the problem.

Moving forward, a tripartite approach between grassroots organizations, state level intervention and supranational oversight is the most fruitful way to proceed. At the lowest level, subnational organizations help to increase publicity of the issues at hand; at the state level, policy action can be enacted; and at the supranational level, agenda setting

can smooth over domestic level inconsistencies that are influenced by various leaders' individual agendas. Building up socially just institution while simultaneously recognizing the need to be culturally sensitive but also realistic, viable, and progressive is no easy task. However, by externalizing and expanding the approach, the introduction of new actors will help increase the mechanisms of accountability and make the move towards developing these multi-leveled institutions easier to build and which take into account the principles that fit in with the larger geopolitical context:

> The European level can set a common aim that has to be reached by all member states, yet it is up to the local and regional levels to find measures to reach the goals set by the commission, and to supervise their implementation. Involvement of Romani organizations and civil society is necessary to ensure sustainable developments and changes that are supported by the local populations.[67]

Ultimately though, it will require a delicate balancing act between the division of power. Using this multi-prong approach, this sets the framework in which the focus of the next chapter can be set, as I delve into policy recommendations that directly target Romani children.

[67] Crepaz, "The Road to Empowerment," p. 93.

Chapter 4 – Policy Interventions: Areas for Education System Reform

The debate over education and its relevance in Gypsy children's lives remains frenzied. On the one hand, there are those in favor of incorporation within *gadje* school systems, arguing for the benefits that come with interaction with dissimilar students and formal educational lessons in basic skills, such as writing and arithmetic. On the other hand, there are some community leaders that believe that succumbing to these alien institutions will do nothing but harm by recalling previous ill-conceived efforts at assimilation, a lack of cultural understanding, and embedded racism as evidence for why formal schooling must be avoided. However, given the liberalized political climate examined in the previous chapter along with greater initiative taken at multiple levels of government, is it fair to once again write off education as useless to the upbringing of Roma children in the 21st century?

While it is easy to dismiss formal education as irrelevant, given Gypsy's inherently different set of cultural values, I argue that it is possible for these once-foreign institutions to become a meeting ground for Roma and non-Roma students to come together. As political scientist Edward Banfield writes, "formal education has always been an avenue – indeed the *only* avenue – of social mobility."[1] Thus, this chapter will analyze some of the most useful reconfigurations to the current system that will produce more long-lasting and positive relations between the two sides, help to reduce the shame associated with the Gypsy ethnic group, and help to empower one of the most stigmatized

[1] Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*, p. 164.

minorities in Europe with the tools needed to access a wider range of economic opportunities.

First though, accounting for existing institutions and increasing the political will for action are some initial considerations that address the non-Roma perspective on the insertion of Gypsy students. Although it is easy to suggest policy recommendations that might be in the best interest of the Roma, are they realistic enough to be implemented? Some things, such as the relative lack of resources and financing and general isolation of rural Gypsies, are simply factors that mutual cooperation will not necessarily fix.[2] Nonetheless, at least some policy proposals suggested here should be able to gain political traction and send a hortatory message for additional effort. Additionally, from the Roma perspective, while efforts within a schooling context are critical to quell anxiety many Roma parents have about sending their children away from the safety of their ethnic communities, attention must also be drawn to larger community-based efforts as well. By engaging with the wider community, this will help to engender a greater sense of cohesion and interest for all parties, not just for the students involved directly in the formal educational experience.

Confronting Roma educational experiences is no easy task. In theory, practices such as ensuring the proper staffing of schools, do little to address the deeper issues that still plague the Roma. It takes further policy recommendations to deal with this, many of which, however, rely on good staffing as a requirement of sorts for full effectiveness. In other words, simply placing motivated staff in these schools, while a good benchmark for

[2] Ibid., p. 157.

schools to strive for, is not enough. This should not be taken lightly though; if students sense that teachers loathe them based solely on their ethnic heritage, this will sharply reduce any parental or personal motivation to continue with school past the primary level. Feelings of scathing isolation do little to change Gypsy children's views of the outside world and are more likely to confirm the fears of their parents regarding the hostility of out-group authority figures.[3] Additionally, given the fact that Gypsy students are already being placed in what they perceive as a foreign institution to them, it is up to the teacher to enhance the classroom experience in order to stimulate their attention and make them more inclined to see the value of formal education. Teachers' disinterest in Gypsy minority students has the potential to lead to boredom in the classroom, further dissuading these students from attending past a certain point, if they rationalize that there is no added benefit to attending.[4]

It is crucial that teachers and staff come up with innovative solutions to help build trust with these students, overcome parental anxiety, and increase Roma interest in education.[5] This begins with the teachers themselves: "There are schools in which teachers undertake the more difficult job of teaching Gypsy students out of interest and a sense of vocation, but in most schools it is considered a punishment to be assigned to a so-called 'Gypsy class.'"[6] Arguably, it is no easy task to handle a group of students who are approaching formal education with a much different set of embedded cultural values.

---

[3] Martin P. Levinson, "'What's the Plan?' 'What Plan?' Changing Aspirations Among Gypsy Youngsters, and Implications for Future Cultural Identities and Group Membership." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 36, no. 8 (2015): p. 1157.
[4] Ibid., p. 1161.
[5] Kalwant Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education: Changing Needs and Changing Perceptions." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 52, no. 1 (2004): p. 56.
[6] Forray, "Results and Problems in the Education of the Gypsy Community," pp. 80-81.

While some teachers might appreciate a so-called challenge, for those that are not interested, dealing with intercultural conflict will only lead to mediocre results and the continued marginalization of Roma students. Therefore, it is essential that teachers and teaching assistants approach this with a high level of personal interest and compassion for Roma students who they are ultimately trying to assist. "The extra efforts of teachers tend to inspire students, as well as parents, whose commitment then reinforces the teachers' sense that they are needed and appreciated," thereby creating a feedback loop leading to further positive outcomes.[7] Motivated teachers who demonstrate a vested interest also tend to devise more creative and engaging lesson plans for their students. One example is demonstrated below from a Romanian classroom about the importance of racial tolerance:

> A non-Gipsy ethnic teacher faced with the following situation: students in her classroom were mostly Romanians. Among them [the students] there were some Gipsy students as well. Starting even with the first school days, teacher observed that Romanian students tended to marginalize and even exclude the others. Her problem-solving method was as simple as it was ingenious: she proposed children to play a game: The Prince and the Beggar. Under the authoritarian and ostentatiously accusing eyes of the others, Gipsy children felt themselves condemned to take the beggar roles. Surprisingly, teacher asked the Gipsy students to play the princes. Because the newly-called "beggars" were angry and began to protest – obviously offended by the situation, teacher took the opportunity to start a discussion about human and social hierarchies. And she also explained them that, no matter the previous social biases they were used to, they should know that all people have equal rights and access to opportunities. The tattered clothes can hide a wonderful man, whereas a monster can disguise himself by wearing some princely clothes. Colour is not essential. A hatching hen happens to have black chickens, yellow chickens, brown chickens. And she loves them all equally. They belong to the same species. The same happens with the

[7] Peter Skerry, "The Charmed Life of Head Start," *National Affairs*, no. 73 (1983): p. 32.

> people. From that day on children accepted one another and no racial conflict aroused among them. And [the] teacher always called them: "My lovely chicks"![8]

While this teacher was able to convey a serious lesson through an informal game, she was also able to serve an important role as cultural mediator. In taking on this role, she consequently helped to smooth the cultural gap and encourage "more participation and collaboration between Romani and non-Romani" students for future projects, building off of the lesson of ethnic equality she just demonstrated to them.[9] Additionally, given the fact that Gypsies' informal, home education is based around a "people-oriented learning environment," which helps to prescribe "values associated with maintaining social cohesion," Gypsies would likely respond well to such dedicated efforts on the part of the teacher.[10] By visually demonstrating a lesson, using students rather than abstract concepts laid out in a book, the idea is more likely to stick as it falls more in line with Gypsy students accustomed attitude towards social types of learning. Gypsy parents normally draw the limit only at in-group members of a given Gypsy community. So by broadening the lines of social cohesion to encompass both Roma and non-Roma students, this lesson stresses unity amongst a larger group of people as well. Hence, through the teacher's personal interest in Roma students and creativity in coming up with more innovative ways of teaching, she was able to impart an important lesson for intergroup cooperation and help reduce anxiety levels among Gypsy students by helping them relate to their *gadje* peers.

---

[8] Florentina Bucuroiu, "Trainers that Make a Difference. Gypsy Children Between Education and Delinquency," *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 76, (2013): p. 131.
[9] Tracy Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 18, no. 2 (1997): p. 253.
[10] Ibid., p. 247.

The positive impact of motivated and well-trained teachers extends beyond just the students though; teachers also serve as representatives of the education system to parents. If "the absence of Gypsy Traveller staff in education services contributes to the sense of marginalisation as well as a lack of understanding of cultural preferences of the group," then having trained staff provides crucial links between families and a foreign education system. [11] The teacher, or cultural mediator, is able to help resolve individual student problems and reduce parental anxiety about the apparent cultural differences within this formalized education system. In doing so, educators helps bring parents into the conversation and inserts an adult-focused dimension to the educational paradigm. Rather than just making school only about the students, teachers have the ability to engage with parents and making them more comfortable with *gadje* education systems, transforming schooling into a multi-generation process. In sum, teachers can serve as mediators or representative of settled communities, smooth social tension, and increase the safety of Gypsy students within the classroom setting. Thus, proper staffing as a characteristic of a well-functioning, integrated school is just one essential point, which then allows further policy recommendations to be built upon.

Therefore, states must put more directed efforts towards inclusive *educational* policies. Currently, "most member states do not have specifically targeted educational policies directed at Roma seeking rather to address their needs through anti-discrimination policy, intercultural education policies and/or policies targeted more

[11] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 60.

broadly at members of socially deprived communities."[12] While addressing broader concerns, such as discrimination, is undoubtedly worthwhile as well, without directly confronting the issue of education specifically, it is unlikely that states will successively take steps towards social inclusion. In other words, addressing the secondary or underlying issues without policies that directly influence the educational experience will see little traction in the long run for empowering Roma children. With that, the following sections proceed as follows. Sections 4.1-4.3 highlight three policy recommendations that, together, help to bridge the gaps in current education policy and the overall lack of interest from Roma students and parents. Section 4.4 highlights other underlying issues, such as poverty and systemic racism, which further hamper efforts that should be separately addressed. The chapter then wraps up by looking at two existing programs that could shed light on some best practices that might be feasible to implement for the Roma.

4.1 Policy Intervention #1: Parental Involvement

Understandably most Gypsy parents are wary of sending their children to *gadje* schools. Given their own rocky and contentious relationship with non-Roma groups in the past, this reaction is no surprise. Having been exposed to exclusion across most areas and limited access to the public sphere, this history of exclusion clouds their ability to look past and recognize the changes in the political climate over the past 25 years, especially since discrimination was not completely eliminated beginning in the early 1990s. It is difficult for parents to disentangle their prior experiences under social

[12] William Bartlett, Roberta Benini, and Claire Gordon, *Measures to promote the situation of Roma EU citizens in the European Union*.(Brussels: European Parliament, 2011), p. 72.

regimes from what could happen now. Given this high degree of skepticism, how can formal education systems respond in order to bring parents onboard with the changes that will dramatically impact their children going forward? In part, given the push by the European Union for member states to step up anti-segregation efforts and strengthen social inclusion policy, the political environment is certainly ripe for change.

Although education may not have been that useful for them in an earlier, socialist era, under liberalized democracy, the need for education is much greater and a prudent option, considering the limited range of job prospects for Roma youth today. "Parents' views on formal schooling often reflected their own past experiences of education and whether they felt these had been useful to them as adults."[13] Operating under the same model as their parents is doubly disadvantageous because previous generations had a higher degree of job security - albeit at the margins of society - and a certain set of contentious social group expectations with the *gadje*, -which are beginning to break down at the present.

Yet while many parents recognize the need for literacy in today's society, this does little to displace their fears about "mainstream education situations, which erode their children's self-confidence and pride in their own culture."[14] Traditionally, most Roma were concentrated in low-skilled manual for "demands of a rural economy."[15] Although formal education is opening up new opportunities and leading to the

[13] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 52.
[14] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 244.
[15] Christine O'Hanlon, "Whose Education? The Inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers: Continuing Culture and Tradition Through the Right to Choose Educational Opportunities to Support their Social and Economic Mobility," *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 42, no. 2 (2010): p. 239.

acquirement of a wider range of skills, many Roma feel these skills might cause them to lose touch with their rooted traditions, on account of the lack of understanding these institutions have about their group from a cultural perspective.

Nevertheless, while schools might make some in the Roma community nervous, can the group's invocation and reverence for a rural lifestyle really serve as a valid defense if so many Gypsies have moved to urban areas and left the nomadic lifestyle? I believe not. Even though this one element of their culture may be experiencing a decline in importance that does not necessarily reduce the significance of their other cultural traditions. Accordingly, to address these concerns, schools must actively attempt to reduce these fears and raise the levels of trust parents have towards educational institutions and present them as non-hostile environments. To many Roma, political changes in recent decades have little meaning unless tangible alterations can be identified. It was during the socialist period, "when the kin-based solidarity networks were broken, as the residential units in which they had previously lived were split up - housing was allocated very often to individual nuclear families, not to whole social networks of particular extended families. The spatial rupture thus translated into a social and institutional rupture."[16] This distrust of areas outside of education permeates different facets of their lives. Hence it is no wonder Roma still have so little trust of *gadje* efforts in general, given that the familial and community bonds – the very fabric of their existence – were broken up just a short time ago.

[16] Michal Ruzicka, "Continuity or Rupture? Roma/Gypsy Communities in Rural and Urban Environments Under Post-Socialism," *Journal of Rural Studies* 28, (2012): p. 87.

Having little trust of outside intervention, "Romani people strongly believe that they have the right to determine the course and direction of their children's education, and that educational decisions should not be imposed upon them by an outside authority."[17] The Roma will not blindly accept educational systems even if the dominant culture assures them of their children's safety and the validity and relevance of proposed lessons. Such parents require more substantive proof in order to identify what benefits will materialize from attendance and to make sure that promised gains outweigh any potential costs or their own fears.[18] Needless to say, while it is invariably difficult to garner the support of parents, whose own lives have been riddled with poor interactions with the *gadje*, it can act as one of the strongest motivations for children to continue in school. Kalwant Bhopal describes how working with parents is "important for linking across different phases of the school experience for children as well as securing their involvement and support."[19] Parental participation allows them to meet teachers, to increase their points of contact with the school and to recognize and assign trust to the school officials.

Accordingly, "involving the wider family in the education process can therefore be a useful means of promoting education from within the established education system but in a manner that reflects the norms of Gypsy Traveller culture."[20] One suggestion is to provide programs targeted specifically for parents. Literacy and adult education courses make it easier to meet teachers, understand and internalize the education process,

[17] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 244.
[18] O'Hanlon, "Whose education? The inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers," p. 239.
[19] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 58.
[20] Ibid., p. 57.

and build trust with education officials and teachers. Addressing educational needs such as literacy has ever-wider benefits. "Learning to read and write enabled them [Gypsy mothers] to have greater control over the school admissions process" when it came time to fill out forms. Such expanded communication abilities can lead to improvements in other critical areas, including healthcare and social services.[21] [22] Yet some parents question how they can attend these lessons when they need to work.

The two, though, are not necessarily mutually exclusive. It is possible for parents to work and take these classes. On top of that, if parents begin to see the value of school for their children, in an increasingly competitive and skill-driven labor market, that suggests they possess the foresight to acknowledge this economic change. In one study, the growing restrictions on Gypsy Travellers' traditional lifestyles meant such parents were "re-assessing the world their children would have to make a living in."[23] Similarly, while it is vital for such parents to provide for their families, the prudent long-run course of action would be to obtain some education as well in order to gain further traction under more demanding labor market conditions. If such parents may choose to keep their children out of school, that may seem to be a sensible act in the short run. It may not pay off in the future though.

By offering literacy programs to parents, two aspects get reinforced. First, parents' hesitation and skepticism of formal education should be reduced. Although their children's educational experience and their own will not entirely mirror each other,

---

[21] Ibid., p. 59.
[22] Fésüs et al., "Policies to improve the health and well-being of Roma people" p. 26.
[23] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 48.

gaining at least some exposure to some of the same fundamental lessons might make parents more accepting of the system. In addition, by personally encountering a *gadje* program, the cultural binary drawn between Gypsy and non-Gypsy students will arguably be broken down. Therefore, engaging with parents helps to instill a sense of bottom-up interest and extends the reaches of intervention.

Without literacy programs designed for parents, or other efforts to engage them in general, it is easier for them to criticize their children as being disloyal to their families or unfaithful to long-established Gypsy traditions.[24] As Bhopal puts it, the "consultation and involvement of parents and children in the educational process can be one of the most effective ways to identify barriers to attendance and achievement in order to achieve equality of opportunity for Gypsy Traveller children."[25] Hence promoting adult education as well may help to reduce the stigma associated with formal learning. Gypsy parents will no longer be in a position to chastise their children, if they themselves are seeing some tangible benefits from education.

4.2 Policy Intervention #2: Incentive Programs to Increase Attendance and Performance

Another possible route to explore is the installation of financial incentive programs that reward students for attendance and performance. To assuage these financial concerns and address the need for continued steady income then gives a place for cash incentive. Such incentives help to transform "the cultural of schools and the

[24] Levinson, "'What's the plan?,'" p. 1153.
[25] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 48.

attitude of students towards academic achievement."[26] While some might maintain that such incentives detract from the overall purpose of education and the intrinsic pleasure that comes with learning, such arguments do not hope up well when it comes to the Roma, who have historically resisted any formal education. In fact, providing cash incentives might work better for the Roma because they do not possess any such feelings about education. They enter formal education systems with a high level of skepticism and fear based on prior experiences. So there is typically nothing innately pleasurable about the process to them to begin with. Cash incentives might then render academic achievement more attractive, whether as a primary or secondary motivation.

However, while incentives may act as a significant motivation for Gypsy students, they must be applied smartly and used in tandem with other initiatives. Harvard University economist, Roland G. Fryer, has done extensive research on cash incentive programs in several U.S. cities, focusing mainly on African-American and Latino populations across a multitude of age groups. He finds "that cash alone did not consistently raise achievement, but that combining payments with tutoring, teacher training and other tactics could be promising."[27] Simply, incorporating incentives without providing additional coaching or development programs for teachers may limit the gains that these incentives can produce.

---

[26] Michael J. Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), p. 55.
[27] Sam Dillon, "Incentives for Advanced Work Let Pupils and Teachers Cash In," New York Times, October 2, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/03/education/03incentive.html (accessed March 13, 2016).

Additionally, such incentives could help to improve educational equity.[28] In terms of actual resources, the cash provided could be reinvested in necessary school materials, which would put Roma students on a more equal playing field with their more materially privileged non-Roma peers. The implementation of incentives would begin to realign how Roma students view education. Subsequently, as their interest increases in putting additional efforts toward schooling, Roma students would want to use the additional money to be able to afford books, supplies, and other relevant materials so they can maximize their experience. Concurrently, as parents begin to see the value that formal schooling can provide, would likely put the money towards additional educational resources rather than other household needs. However, the use of incentives must be properly structured; if incentives are provided too soon, scheming parents might view this as just another way to make money and fail to see the overarching purpose of education.

Another way to implement incentives is to provide them to educators and cultural mediators. According to Jaromir Cekota and Claudia Trentini, financial incentives could help attract educational and health professionals to deprived areas where Roma people live.[29] Additional money could encourage professionals to be more persistent in their efforts and change their perception of Gypsy students as an academic burden to be ignored to one that might be actively tackled. Providing teachers with additional training as well could better equip them to help Romani students; with special cultural training, they might better connect with their students and help raise their academic performance,

[28] Cekota and Trentini. "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 546.
[29] Fésüs et al., "Policies to improve the health and well-being of Roma people," p. 29.

rather than being disappointed or unmotivated by substandard results. While it is difficult to accurately predict a timeline for these sorts of programs, regardless, the efforts directly specifically at teachers is crucial in order to engender a greater level of consciousness and interest to the specific needs of Roma students, who still lack much experience in the formal education system.

Naturally, how to fund cash incentive programs is a legitimate concern for many. Given the fact that many of the CEECs are still reeling in the wake of years of socialist economic stagnation and are trying to make advances toward performing at the same level as their Western European counterparts, financing incentive programs for such a small portion of the population does not strike many policymakers as critical or feasible. Although some countries, such as Hungary, have put modest incentive programs in place, the expansion of such programs to have a more noticeable impact is difficult to argue for.[30] Inconsistencies in economic growth across the region also make it hard to make this a blanket policy for states to mutually agree to; states closer to the core European countries have much more financial flexibility and stability to entertain the idea of expanding these programs while a state like Macedonia lacks "the financial resources to substantively improve their [Roma students'] material well-being."[31]

Thus, alternative sources must be sought after in order to make this a viable policy recommendation. As highlighted in chapter 3, the rise of Romani NGOs and the insertion of supranational institutions present themselves as two possibilities. Finally, if

---

[30] Cekota and Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 548.
[31] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 323.

the EU wants to proclaim the social inclusion of Gypsies as part of the current agenda for its newest member states, it should assist these states with the financing of such programs. By directing money to such incentive programs would ensure that this strategy is properly funded. To be sure, this assumes that good governance is in place to ensure that such funds are directed to the proper places.

4.3 Policy Intervention #3: Flexible Schooling and Breaking Down Institutional Rigidity

Most western school systems are based around "structured competitive environments, where each hour of the day is regulated according to timetables and specific learning activities."[32] A rigid system also relies on the assumption that students attend early schooling and have a baseline understanding of how the system runs. If states are trying to move towards more equitable measures of inclusion today that entails incorporating Gypsy students, who have not been introduced to a formalized setting from the very beginning of their educational careers but rather midway through. So the issue turns to breaking down these structures that are based around a system of yearly advancement to attempt to smooth the transition into the system. "The current lack of success of Gypsy Travellers within mainstream education systems reflects a history of governments failing to adopt appropriate and effective policies… There is a lack of understanding towards the history and cultures of Gypsy Travellers, which contributes to

[32] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 243.

their marginalisation, and the racism they experience."[33] Additionally, by increasing flexibility and transforming the identity of schools, these institutions are able to take on multiple purposes and act as a community center.[34] By broadening the range of functions, schools can lessen the criticisms parents can levy against them; if there are a plethora of other reasons to go, such as to obtain social or health services, this encourages parents to send their children.

The notion of continued segregation of schools highlights an outdated and inflexible system. Keeping Roma and non-Roma students separate, in order for a few of these schools to meet certain targets, whilst leaving the rest behind is not a viable solution going forward and cannot accommodate increased pressure for integration. This holds from three perspectives. First, desegregated schools tend to improve educational attainment for the minority population.[35] Second, prematurely limiting the number of students who can take full advantage of the education system shrinks the pool of viable candidates for jobs requiring skilled labor further down the line. With many of the CEECs still trying to catch up to their Western European counterparts and raise economic growth, skilled labor is critical for the path forward, given the rapid ageing of the majority population. Therefore, expanding the size of the labor pool, by including Roma students, whose parents are beginning to recognize the need for formal education and the shifts in the labor market compared to their generation, will help set up these countries for future economic prosperity. Lastly, measuring performance based on attendance

[33] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 61.
[34] Skerry, "The Charmed Life of Head Start," p. 25.
[35] Cekota and Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 547.

imposes an unnecessary rigidity to learning. "There should be a move towards tailored learning pathways, which focus on 'learning outcomes' rather than attendance at school, as the most suitable approach to educating Traveller children. It is a shift away from the idea of equality of opportunity to equality of outcomes."[36] Concurrently, rigid national curriculums and testing practices do not fit with inconsistent attendance; teachers feel pressured to have students perform well on standardized tests and therefore cannot wait for stragglers.[37] Thus, the goal of appearing strong on paper academically comes at the cost of equal provision for both majority and Roma minority students.

While institutional flexibility is certainly a more prudent action vis-à-vis continued segregation and institutional rigidity, how much should these schools bend to accommodate Gypsy students? Considering they comprise of such a small percentage of each country's population, to ask these institutions to waiver and meet Roma students' needs is unrealistic. However, as Gypsy students and parents become more familiarized with the system, flexibility will decline in importance. It is only in these first years that reducing the gap between communal and formal learning makes the most difference in gradually acclimating students to a new educational setting.

Nevertheless, institutional flexibility extends beyond just the structure of schools; it also should influence the methods by which teachers and students interact. Rather than just presenting abstract facts or things Roma children cannot relate to, educators should strive to make the curriculum approachable and relevant for Roma students. Some

[36] O'Hanlon, "Whose Education? The Inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers," p. 247.
[37] David Cudworth, "'There is a Little Bit More Than Just Delivering Stuff': Policy, Pedagogy and the Education of Gypsy/Traveller Children." *Critical Social Policy* 28, no. 3 (2008): p. 368.

parents feel "a more 'hands on' approach to education could benefit their children, perhaps based around practical subjects" that connect Gypsy's traditional lifestyle and work to the lessons at hand.[38] Incorporating more creative ways to engage Roma children also acknowledges that these students have some social capital to integrate into the classroom. While the lessons taught through community-based learning rarely overlap with what is taught in a formalized setting, that does not imply that schools should completely disregard what Roma students have been doing. Rather, schools must recognize what they have to work with, respect such values, and then proceed from there. Instead of completely drawing a divide between Roma and *gadje*, breaking down this dichotomy and admitting Roma students have some skills coming in would help. "It is important for school provision to be flexible in order to recognise the skills Gypsy/Traveller children develop informally, in the home or in the family business, and to build on these skills in order to provide relevant and accessible curricula, in or out of school."[39] Acknowledging how community learning is based around observing their parents or other adults going about day-to-day life, Roma students absorb "the economic, social, linguistic, political and moral codes of their society."[40] Moreover, research conducted by the European Union has shown success increased "when there was a greater emphasis on the integration of cultural education activities in the classroom or the pursuit of other activities which advance intercultural education, especially instructional

[38] Bhopal, "Gypsy Travellers and Education," p. 53.
[39] O'Hanlon, "Whose Education? The Inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers," pp. 250-251.
[40] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 243.

materials on Roma history, culture and traditions."[41] Studies have found that "most success was achieved through a culture of supported risk taking and experimentation with the curriculum, a positive attitude to Roma/Gypsy students and high expectations for them to succeed."[42] Thus, creating a more inclusive learning environment that acknowledges and incorporates Roma cultural differences within the classroom helps to reduce the dichotomy and helps students feel more welcomed within schools.

In sum, by learning to better recognize the needs of students will help to acclimate them into a formal schooling environment. The push forward with responsive learning methods, based less on attendance policy and rigid curriculums and more around hands-on lessons are just some ways to better accommodate Romani children. These will help to break down the clash between formal and community-based educational paradigms and hopefully make them more accepting of a parallel system.

4.4 Other Problems to Address

Beyond the schooling experience itself lie a myriad of other underlying issues that must also be addressed. Doing so will facilitate the progress made by the changes made within schools. For many Romani students, "poverty, racism, and a lack of access to essential services are considerable barriers to equitable participation in mainstream education. The highly-structured nature of mainstream education does not compare

[41] O'Hanlon, "Whose Education? The Inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers," p. 251.
[42] Ibid.

favourably with traditional Romani child socialisation and education processes."[43] Systemic poverty is a massive problem that must be dealt with directly, as the vicious circle will not correct itself. Most parents have little formal education and as such are becoming increasingly displaced from the labor market. Without stable jobs, there is little money for essential goods, let alone additional supplies for school. Faced with the dire situation of economic survival, parents must pull their children out of school because they need the children to help support the family, they cannot afford the needed classroom supplies, or a combination of both.[44] Additionally, poor access to transportation or technology hinders efforts for education and other inroads to social participation.[45] Thus, policy makers must aim to break this cycle, which is why education or the associated proposals are so critical. States must focus on the material conditions of the Roma in order to fortify education's placement on their radar. Concerns about day-to-day survival are certain to take precedent over education if one were faced with this scenario. Associated with this, inconsistent funding within local districts has led to visible differences in quality in pre-primary education. For example, in some areas in Hungary, services were overcrowded and underfinanced while other "more prosperous residential areas had superior facilities for sport and language instruction and provided excellent remedial intervention services."[46] Therefore, providing more equitable coverage in terms of financing is also crucial since most Roma live in highly concentrated areas usually

---

[43] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 244.
[44] Ioana Roman, "Gypsies Integration – Education for All," *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 76, (2013): p. 718.
[45] Cekota and Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 562.
[46] Ibid., p. 547.

toward the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and in these former areas where services are underfinanced.

Related to this is the struggle to make formal schooling more appealing to Romani children and their parents, especially when grappling with this sort of economic depravity.

Legislators must work to convince Gypsy parents that formal school settings are useful and could be *complementary* to their village, hands-on approach to learning. While efforts to improve attendance is a key area of focus, continued monitoring from both an in-group Roma leader and out-group governmental or NGO administrator is crucial for the continued success of programs and retention of students. The high dropout rate between primary and secondary school, especially for girls, is of particular concern. This can be approached from two sides. Whilst currently issues of bullying and discrimination reduce the motivation to attend school, some policies suggested, such as cash incentives for teachers could help to reduce some of these social issues. By incentivizing teachers to address bullying or discrimination within the classroom, it will help to increase retention rates of Roma students.

From the Roma perspective, factors such as the inclination for people to marry young must also be addressed. Community pressures along with traditional and economic considerations often push girls into marrying young, which then forces them into leaving school.[47] Though historically that might have been a more prudent choice in order to maintain ties to the community and the family structure, economic considerations must

[47] Roman, "Gypsies Education," p. 720.

be weighed more heavily to ensure at least some measure of financial stability going forward. "The modern person is made up of a mixture of loyalties and identifications: national, regional, linguistic, religious, social, and professional – identities that expand or contract as people's lives change."[48] Decreasing insular ties to the community as well as the influx of urban values has helped to break down some of these patriarchal assumptions, which assists in giving a voice to these girls and help them imagine greater aspirations.[49]

Lastly, combating systemic discrimination and racism, both in a school setting and in a wider context, is necessary to promote a healthy self-image for Romani children. "Whilst participating in their community's day-to-day activities Romani children learn about their culture, history, political, social and economic life. At school, they are likely to learn only about mainstream culture, history and politics"[50] Most mentions to Gypsies in textbooks tend to be negative, referencing the past history of deviance or dishonest behavior. Parents do not want to have their children being taught a negative self-image or identity but rather have their pride reinforced. Thus, if schools cannot help Roma students understand their rich cultural heritage, naturally parents are more inclined to keep their children out of these institutions in favor of more traditional schooling so they remain informed. In sum, we cannot continue to treat their culture as secondary or inferior; while there are some aspects that should be deemphasized there are some cultural practices that do deserve mention in a more positive light. New curriculums that more depict a healthier

[48] Jack Citrin and David O. Sears, *American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 145.
[49] Roman, "Gypsies Education," p. 720.
[50] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 249.

portrayal help to engage "the imaginations of children who might otherwise have dropped out."[51]

4.5 Program in Practice: Head Start

Looking to existing examples of minority education programs could help illuminate some further insights for policy recommendations. In the following two sections, two programs will be covered – one looking at a program in the United States focusing on minority populations in urban areas and the second, a boarding school program specially designed for Roma students. While both have their individual merits, which give hope for the design and implementation of future programs for Romani children, both also have their shortcomings when it comes to their compatibility and feasibility on a widespread basis.

Head Start, founded in 1965 as a summer enrichment program to serve underprivileged and impoverished communities, has impacted the lives of millions of children across the United States. For residents in neighborhoods benefiting from the program, "Head Start is not just another federal program, but a place around the corner where young kids go to get their teeth fixed and learn the alphabet. This may seem a trivial consideration, but Head Start's tangible presence to ordinary citizens is a quality many federal programs lack."[52] The program's ability to impact multiple aspects of children's lives as well as its ability to engage parents is unique to its structural design and which has helped sustain it for several decades. Encouraging parents to participate

[51] "Go to School – and Stay There, Gypsy Children,", n.p.
[52] Skerry, "The Charmed Life of Head Start," p. 35.

helps to expand the range of the program's impact, facilitating a movement toward a wider sense of community change.[53] Similar to making usage of adult literacy programs to accommodate Romani children's shift to formal educational settings, interacting with parents in a direct program setting helps to assuage fears of what they perceive as foreign and boost the program's credibility. In fact, working with both children and parents as part of the program's design could make this a viable solution for implementation in other countries. By the architecture of the program, "center administrators are expected to rely on parent volunteers, since federal funds are intended to cover only 80 percent of costs, with the balance to be in-kind contributions from parents and community groups."[54] Moreover, the flexible nature of administration extends to the lesson plans as well; there is "no standardized Head Start curriculum; each center must develop and implement its own" with regional bureau oversight, which could help account for the differentiation between Romani sub-groups.[55] Additionally, the lack of standardized testing could promote the movement towards institutional flexibility, which aligns better with Romani values than the old, rigid system most systems still adhere too.

However, while both American political parties have touted Head Start for its apparent success in early education, there are some marked differences between the U.S. and CEECs that make its applicability questionable. For instance, as part of its fundamental structure, Head Start relies on parental encouragement and involvement. For both African-American and Hispanic populations, gaining support has been relatively

[53] Ibid., p. 22.
[54] Ibid., p. 23.
[55] Ibid., p. 26.

easy as both groups place considerable weight on education. "When the parents of black children are questioned about their attitudes toward schooling and their ambitions for their children, education is not only valued, but formalized schooling is often seen as the panacea."[56] More specifically, "long excluded from the mainstream, blacks have demanded open and equal access to all parts of American society."[57] These inbred values simply are not present with a majority of Roma communities. Rather than seeing formal schooling as a mechanism for socioeconomic ascent, many Roma community members still view school with skepticism and do not place the same cultural value to it as black communities in the U.S. do. Additionally, the idea that the community has been 'wronged' in the way blacks have is framed differently. Though both blacks and Gypsies have dealt with times of slavery and oppression, for the former, demands for equal treatment have been justified by their unique history as "the one group that did not choose to come to America. The result has been the persistent feeling that American society owes blacks a special debt, yet to be repaid," which has led to the installment of programs such as affirmative action to redress past injustices.[58] Moreover, the aim of Head Start is just another example in line with other instances of U.S. multiculturalism. National holidays such as Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the rise of cultural and racial sensitivity in political rhetoric, and the official apologies for slavery breed the notion that

[56] Ibid., p. 33.
[57] Ibid., p. 34.
[58] Ibid.

rectifying past injustices gives the U.S. a distinct identity as a country, which prides itself on its multiculturalist stance.[59]

However, while the U.S. and its people have recognized the past injustices its African-American citizens have faced, that same recognition is lacking for the Roma. In comparison, many European states do not feel such obligation to assist Roma communities in with the same mindset. To many non-Roma officials, addressing Roma-specific issues is looked at more from the perspective of promoting social inclusion, not necessarily with the intent of correcting past injustices per se. Many countries have neglected to acknowledge historical repression and as such do not possess the same imperative or the mindset to assist. To be fair, the onus does not fall squarely on non-Roma governance, as many Roma communities still remain hesitant of their leadership. Nevertheless though, the impetus for this sort of agenda simply is not there. It is also difficult to gather the will to help a marginalized population that comprises of such a small proportion of the overall population, unlike African-Americans and Hispanics who represent a fast-growing share of the U.S. population. Thus, while Head Start does possess some redeemable qualities that could theoretically be applicable and transferable to the Roma, full implementation of a program mimicking exactly is unlikely as the unique U.S.'s situation gives Head Start a firmer footing for its long-term success and bi-partisan appeal.

---

[59] Citrin and Sears, *American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism*, p. 17.

4.6 Experimenting with Boarding School

While the aforementioned sections have touched upon some potential avenues for further or future engagement, it might be useful now to discuss one current alternative that has already been put in place in at least one location: boarding school. The Gandhi School, a boarding school located in Pecs, Hungary, is a forerunning in this area of Gypsy education. By combining formal academic study with traditional Romani cultural traditions like music, dance, and crafts, the school attempts to find the middle ground that tries to be progressive in its academic pursuit whilst being cognizant to the unique needs of its students.[60] While some proponents might argue for the advantages of this type of system, such as the ability to allow Roma students to learn in a safe space with their ethnic peers, I ultimately remain skeptical about this scheme, both from the perspective of its ability to be implemented on a widespread basis and from the position of its actual effectiveness in learning and garnering parental support, which gives further weight to my policy proposals and their more realistic approach to inclusive learning.

There are many challenges, though, that seem to weaken the legitimacy and strength of this form of study. Leaving aside the educational components for a moment, as a *boarding* school, how does this institution encourage parents to send their children here? While touting itself as a school specifically designed to better meet the needs of Roma students, it simultaneously functions as a place of formal learning, something most Roma parents are still deeply wary about. Furthermore, even though the school is intended for Roma students, how can parents ensure that it preaches the same or similar

[60] Smith, "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process," p. 253.

values that the students would encounter if they were to remain at home? If Roma families and communities rely heavily on these communitarian ties, to turn to boarding school in lieu of this home setting appears to be a difficult idea to sell.

While it may make Gypsy students more comfortable learning beside their ethnic peers, this sort of learning does little to address the issues of social isolation and exclusion that remain predominant throughout the region. Whilst their in-classroom experience is unlikely to be marred by bouts of discrimination and bullying, as their time might be in a traditional integrated school setting, not socializing with their non-Roma peers makes these students ill-equipped to integrate in university or in a workplace setting. "It is dangerous to separate Romani children from their peers in the majority population because they need to learn about each other's cultures and how to interact with one another."[61] Third, as a secondary school, how can it ensure that the students entering are all on a relatively equal footing? If the students entering are coming in with a variety of prior educational experiences, depending on how much formal schooling they have received, that puts the school at a disadvantage as it must contend with attempting to equalize and correct these inconsistencies. Additionally, relying on these boarding schools does little to address the early years of education, which are often the most formative.

Thus, by the way the Gandhi School is structured, it presupposes that Gypsy parents are actively encouraging their children to attain formal education from an early, which in many cases is just not true. Turning to boarding schools does little to address the

[61] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 319.

early education inequalities many Romani students face and therefore cannot be dubbed as a viable solution to tackle educational issues on a wide-scale basis.

4.7 Hope for the Future?

Given the more democratic and liberalized political organization present across Central and Eastern Europe, strict adherence to historical models is not prudent. Because times and conditions change and with increasing systems complexity, current lifestyles and adaptations must be appropriate for a given social and cultural reality and not fixated on reliving and preserving some sort of nostalgia of a bygone era. There is a shift taking place right now and many Roma parents are beginning to recognize the need for formal education in order to find jobs in the future; some of these lessons, especially regarding writing and socialization with out-group members, can only be taught or experienced in more formalized *gadje* schooling institutions. Thus, proposing several recommendations, as well as acknowledging other areas of improvement, is crucial in order to establish the balance between Gypsy cultural concerns, as they enter a foreign space, with the economic reality and necessity of taking on these formerly unfamiliar lessons and shifting their once defensive attitude to one of that is more open.

Having laid out several propositions, affecting a multiplicity of actors, and approaching this issue from different points of entry, I firmly believe that a combination of these recommendations is the best in-road to promoting the social inclusion of Roma children and parents. However, as suggested earlier, caution in implementation must be exercised to ensure the proper application of these methods; lapses in oversight or lack of

regard for in-group needs runs the risk of collapsing into yet another instance of *gadje* effort collapsing and disregarded. The three policy recommendations laid out in sections 4.1-4.3 should be carefully applied in some sort of sequential order, which would likely breed the most fruitful results. The creation of adult literacy programs and increasing parental involvement would help to promote an in-group sense of urgency towards furthering education. Rather than keeping education as a top-down, *gadje* effort towards social inclusion, by incorporating parents, education becomes an in-group priority and shifts the agency of change towards members of the Roma community as part of a greater movement of grassroots change.

To argue the contrary for a moment, beginning with financial incentives or expand institutional flexibility, while each clearly has merit behind it, would likely be tepidly received by Romani groups. Both could be interpreted as just another attempt by *gadje* governments to "aid" the Roma and seen as an imposing effort lacking recognition of their needs. Thus, considerations and inclusion of Gypsies into a bottom-up approach is a crucial first step, which other recommendations can then be layered on top of.

Nonetheless, the focus should be centered on not completely writing off Gypsies. As Jane Addams viewed immigrants and their eventual assimilation into the U.S., perhaps there are even some lessons to be learned from minority communities in promoting democracy and the overall social good. Exemplified earlier through Italian immigrants and more recently Roma communities, the interest in children and strong community ties, while in their self-interest, is still a remarkable goal to strive for considering the breakdown of traditional familial values in most societies. *Gadje* officials

should be more patient with Roma parents and students, especially if they seek to reduce the 'us versus them' attitude that many Roma still draw between their own traditional communities and outside non-Roma ones. Thus, tapping into this existing social capacity and communitarian outlook is something non-Roma communities should consider examining and incorporating further.

Using Head Start as a model, collaboration of parental figures with officials and educators in a two-pronged approach serves as a good example. Allowing parents to feel invested in the system makes them more inclined for greater participation to ensure its continued success. In contrast, a boarding school structure eliminates the feedback parents can provide, which destroys the potential for bottom-up growth. Restricting contact to solely education and administrative figures at the school rests on the assumption that it is permissible to parents for leave their children in the care of other adult figures. The expansion of this system should be reexamined in several decades, once evidence of a liberal political environment and more positive relations with outside forces becomes more normalized, and traditional family based roles begin to loosen to allow other identity-shaping forces to insert themselves.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Implications: Where Do We Go From Here?

The Roma, one of the largest minority populations in Eastern Europe, have endured a history marred by marginalization, discrimination, and persecution. The ethos of the Roma is one defined by brotherhood and skepticism and hostility towards out-group force. Having been relegated to the bottom rungs of the social hierarchy for centuries has in part led to this formation. For centuries, under various governments, the Roma had continually been relegated to a second-class status. Under numerous political organizations and leaders – Empress Maria Theresa, the Nazi Regime and 20th century communism – this relationship of marginalization has been reinforced and indoctrinated to them. However, while this seemingly omnipresent oppression had defined their existence through the socialist era, the political shift toward liberalized democracies, which inherently promote more open and accepting cultural environments, laid the groundwork for the breakdown and conversion of the general climate to something that breeds a more tolerant and accepting attitude. The year 1989 marked the turning point for positive regime change, a shift towards liberalized democracies, and in theory, should have provided a fertile environment for the promotion of minority rights and increased attention towards Roma-specific issue. However, in reality, a history marked by centuries of acrimonious relations has left many Roma still wary of this heightened effort. Lacking trust or confidence in this system and seeing few guarantees that non-Roma governments are truly looking out for the Roma's best interest, has made bridging these social divides

challenging. Thus, moving forward, in what ways can both Roma and non-Roma organizations work together to reduce levels of social exclusion?

Looking at this issue, primarily through the lens of primary and secondary education, as formal schooling remains one of the first arenas of interaction outside of the nuclear family for both Roma and non-Roma children, could provide key insights for spillover into other areas of interaction. Examining this issue first through an analysis of *disadvantage*, from both the Roma and non-Roma perspective, allows for a more balanced analysis into justifying intervention. Simply citing traditional indicators such as high poverty levels, low accessibility to clean water and sanitation services, etc., does not bear the same significance to the Roma. As such, for them looking at these conventional measures is not the most prudent – or relevant – method to go about determining disadvantage to them.

However, by substantiating the existence of disadvantage from both a Roma and non-Roma perspective, this should legitimize the call for intervention from both sides. As such, devising a comprehensive plan from multiple levels of governance aids in providing the widest spectrum of coverage and accountability to enact meaningful and long-term action. Efforts taken by multiple actors can help to ensure the longevity and stability of action. From the supranational level, the European Union can provide oversight and use its hand at agenda setting to put pressure on member states. Through measures, such as the pre-accession criteria that outlined specific goals such as reducing levels of social exclusion, this provided to-be member states in Eastern Europe with the expectations set forth by its more established Western European counterparts. At the state

level, individual countries must pass legislation for the incorporation of Roma and non-Roma students, bills for installment of financial incentives and providing the forum for debates about improving flexibility within educational institutions. Finally, at the subnational level, Romani organizations and NGOs provide publicity to the issues plaguing communities first-hand; by spending time working at the grassroots level and within specific hamlets and towns, these organizations have the best understanding of specific community needs and how to address issues from the bottom-up.

Lastly, through proposing several policy interventions, targeting multiple facets of the Romani experience with formal education, they will hopefully reduce many parental fears and skepticism toward learning. While top-down measures, such as incentives, oversight, and institutional pressuring can help to facilitate action, ultimately, change must begin within Roma communities themselves from the bottom-up. By engaging with the wider community beyond just the students themselves, efforts are more likely to take hold. Parents, who dealt with segregation and discrimination under state-socialist schooling, naturally fear the repetition of such experience for their children. By providing them tangible evidence, such as adult literacy classes, that formal schooling is in everyone's best interest, it will help to redirect skepticism into something far more positive, thereby laying the groundwork for social inclusion between the Roma minority and majority populations.

While this thesis used education as the focus for intervention that should not preclude intervention in other areas as well. "The relatively low returns to education for disadvantaged minorities in general and the Roma minority in particular should be

considered by the policy-makers designing policies that aim to break the vicious cycle: poor education, poor labour market outcomes, poverty, welfare dependency."[1]There are transferable lessons to be drawn here that can be applicable to other areas as such discriminatory labor market conditions. Evidence hints that the Roma are more vulnerable to discrimination, "with a high percentage of the employment gap unexplained by differences in observable sills or characteristics."[2] If discrimination in labour markets is present then "skills and formal qualifications fail to translate into improved living conditions."[3] Simply equipping Gypsy youth with the necessary tools to be viable candidates is not enough. If the educational benefit is to have its full effects realized, then discrimination in the labor market must be confronted. For example, if they still face systemic discrimination in other areas, this will inevitably deter parents from sending their children to school out of a fatalistic mindset. Thus, education alone cannot raise Roma from social exclusion and we must strive to break down discrimination in other areas; I have just simply used it as a lens to highlight one aspect of the presence of persisting marginalization and means to correct it.

Nevertheless, I am not suggesting that discrimination will melt away overnight; though the *possibility* and *potential* exists for this process to take place now, whereas before there was little hope for this during the socialist era. It cannot be emphasized enough though that this is a multigenerational process though. However, this development leaves more room for negotiation and educational efforts compared to

[1] Claudia Trentini, "Ethnic Patterns of Returns to Education in Bulgaria: Do Minorities Have an Incentives to Invest in Education," *Economists of Transition* 22, no. 1 (2014): p. 133.
[2] Cekota and Trentini, "The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania," p. 545.
[3] Ibid., p. 542.

earlier. With a changing ethos, there is renewed hope for interaction and cooperation between the Roma and non-Roma. Thus, the breakdown of this defensive, in-group response in a post-communist era suggests the widening of opportunities and conduits by which non-Roma communities may bridge the gap.

However, with the unfolding refugee migration crisis currently underway, will these Eastern European governments be able to maintain the necessary level of attention toward improving Roma living conditions? Migrants have put a disproportionate amount of pressure on Eastern Europe vis-à-vis its Western European counterparts, which does not bode well since the former were already economically weaker and still in the midst of catch-up. Thus, can state governments balance the need to address new humanitarian concerns with the inflow of migrants with the set of existing issues that the Roma present?

In sum, using education as a cultural lens into Roma interaction with out-group forces has enabled scholars to examine routes for social inclusion. While formal schooling remains widely regarded as a means that "can facilitate upward economic and social mobility, helping individuals to break poverty cycles," achieving these positive results requires much attention to *how* schooling is conducted.[4] Segregation, continued discrimination, and hostility can both impede the overall effectiveness of this mode of education and simultaneously reinforce the innate fear Roma have towards the *gadje*. Thus, "no educational project is more critical than changing the negative or indifferent attitudes most Roma share toward formal education. Governments must find the proper

[4] Ibid.

method to convince Gypsies that education is an essential requirement of prosperity and social integration."[5] While the within-school experience is crucial, taking a wider approach and looking at more general issues as well must be factored into policy intervention in order to garner greater support within Romani communities about the power and importance of receiving formal education.

[5] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, p. 346.

Bibliography

Acton, Thomas, Cemlyn, Sarah, and Andrew Ryder. "Introduction." In *Hearing the Voices of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities: Inclusive Community Development*, edited by Andrew Ryder, Sarah Cemlyn, and Thomas Acton, 1-28. Bristol: Policy Press, 2014.

Banfield, Edward. *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*. New York: Free Press, 1958.

Barany, Zoltan. *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Barany, Zoltan. "Politics and the Roma in State-Socialist Eastern Europe." In *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, edited by Anca Pusca, 27-46. New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012.

Bartash, Volha. "The Sedentarisation of Roma in the Soviet Union after 1956: A Case Study from the Former Belarussian Soviet Socialist Republic." *Romani Studies* 25, no. 1 (2015): 23-51.

Bartlett, William, Benini, Roberta and Claire Gordon, *Measures to Promote the Situation of Roma EU Citizens in the European Union*. Brussels: European Parliament, 2011.

Bauman, Janina. "Demons of Other People's Fear: The Plight of the Gypsies,." In *Stranger or Guest? Racism and Nationalism in Contemporary Europe*, edited by Sandro Fridlizius and Abby Peterson, 81-94. Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1996.

Bethke Elshtain, Jean. *The Jane Addams Reader*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Bhopal, Kalwant. "Gypsy Travellers and Education: Changing Needs and Changing Perceptions." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 52, no. 1 (2004): 47-64.

Braid, Donald. "The Construction of Identity Through Narrative: Folklore and the Travelling People of Scotland." In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, edited by Thomas Acton and Gary Mundy, 38-66. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997.

Bucuroiu, Florentina. “Trainers that Make a Difference. Gipsy Children in Between Education and Delinquency.” *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 76, (2013): 130-134.

Cekota, Jaromir and Claudia Trentini. “The Educational Achievement and Employment of Young Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania: Increasing Gaps and Policy Challenges.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 67, no. 4 (2015): 540-578.

Citrin, Jack and David O. Sears. *American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Crepaz, Katharina, “The Road to Empowerment: A Multi-Level Governance Approach.” In *When Stereotypes Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies,* edited by Timofey Agarin, 93-118. Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014.

Cudworth, David. “‘There is a Little Bit More Than Just Delivering Stuff’: Policy, Pedagogy and the Education of Gypsy/Traveller Children.” *Critical Social Policy* 28, no. 3 (2008): 361-377.

Dillon, Sam. “Incentives for Advanced Work Let Pupils and Teachers Cash In.” New York Times, October 2, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/03/education/03incentive.html (accessed March 13, 2016).

Easterly, William. *The White Main’s Burden: Why The West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill And So Little Good*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2006.

Engebrigtsen, Ada I. *Exploring Gypsiness: Power, Exchange and Interdependence in a Transylvanian Village*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.

Europa Press Release. “Appendix 3: Roma People Living in the EU: Frequently Asked Questions.” In *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, edited by Anca Pusca, 205-212. New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012

Farkas, Lilla. *Report on Discrimination of Roma Children in Education*. Brussels: European Commission, 2014.

Fésüs, Gabriella, Östlin, Piroska, McKee, Martin, and Róza Ádány. "Policies to Improve the Health and Well-being of Roma People: The European Experience." *Healthy Policy* 105, (2012): 25-32.

Fonseca, Isabel. *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1995.

Forray, Katalin R. "Results and Problems in the Education of the Gypsy Community." *European Education* 34, no. 4 (2002): 70-90.

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Outliers*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2008.

Glazer, Nathan and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970.

"Go to School – and Stay There, Gypsy Children," *The Economist*, November 29, 2001, http://www.economist.com/node/886937.

Goldston, James A. "Roma Rights, Roma Wrongs." In *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, edited by Anca Pusca, 14-26. New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012.

Grabbe, Heather. *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanization through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Hancock, Ian F. "The Schooling of Romani Americans." In *Roma Education in Europe: Practices, policies and politics*, edited by Maja Miskovic, 87-99. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Hughes, Diane, Smith, Emilie P., Stevenson, Howard C., Rodriguez, James, Johnson, Deborah J., and Paul Spicer. "Parents' Ethnic-Racial Socialization Practices: A Review of Research and Directions for Future Study." *Developmental Psychology* 42, no. 5 (2006): 747-770.

Kaunert, Christian. "Liberty versus Security? EU Asylum Policy and the European Commission," *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 5, no. 2 (2009): 148-170.

Kerry, John. "Remarks at Boston College's 138th Commencement Ceremony." Speech, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, May 19, 2014.

Kiertesz-Wilkinson, Iren. "Song Performance: A Model for Social Interaction Among Vlach Gypsies in South-Eastern Hungary." In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, edited by Thomas Acton and Gary Mundy, 97-126. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997.

Kiprianos, Pandelis, Daskalaki, Ivi, and Georgios B. Stamelos. "Culture and the School: The Degree of Educational Integration of Roma and Gypsies in the Peloponnese Region of Greece." *International Review of Education* 58, no. 5 (2012): 675-699.

Law, Ian and Sarah Swann. "Racism, Ethnicity and Schooling in England." In *Migrant, Roma and Post-Colonial Youth Education across Europe: Being 'Visibly Different'*, edited by Julia Szalai and Claire Schiff, 151-166. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Levinson, Martin P. "'What's the Plan?' 'What Plan?' Changing Aspirations Among Gypsy Youngsters, and Implications for Future Cultural Identities and Group Membership." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 36, no. 8 (2015): 1149-1169.

Liégeois, Jean-Pierre. "Roma Education and Public Policy." *European Education* 39, no. 1 (2007): 11-31.

Maeso, Silvia Rodriguez. "'Civilising' the Roma? The Depoliticisation of (Anti-)acism with the Politics of Integration." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 22, no. 1 (2014): 53-70.

Memo, Sara. "Roma as a Pan-European Minority? Opportunities for Political and Legal Recognition." In *When Stereotype Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies*, edited by Timofey Agarin, 119-143. Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014.

Modood, Tariq. *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Moghaddam, Fathali M. "Threatened Identities, Change, and Globalization," In *How Globalization Spurs Terrorism: The Lopsided Benefits of "One World" and Why That Fuels Terrorism*. 109-124. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008.

Nicolae, Valeriu. *We are the Roma! One Thousand Years of Discrimination*. London: Seagull Books, 2013.

O'Hanlon, Christine. "Whose Education? The Inclusion of Gypsy/Travellers: Continuing Culture and Tradition through the Right to Choose Educational Opportunities to Support their Social and Economic Mobility." *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 42, no. 2 (2010): 239-254.

Okely, Judith. "Constructing Culture through Shared Location, Bricolage and Exchange." In *Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Romany Studies*, edited by Michael Stewart and Márton Rövid, 35-54. Budapest: Central European University, 2011.

Okely, Judith. "Cultural Ingenuity and Travelling Autonomy: Not Copying, Just Choosing." In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, edited by Thomas Acton and Gary Mundy, 188-203. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997.

O'Nions, Helen. "Narratives of Social Inclusion in the Context of Roma School Segregation." *Social Inclusion* 3, no. 5 (2015): 103-114.

Pusca, Anca. Introduction to *Eastern European Roma in the EU: Mobility, Discrimination, Solutions*, edited by Anca Pusca. New York: International Debate Education Association, 2012.

Ringold, Dena, Orenstein, Mitchell A., and Erika Wilkens. *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2005.

Roman, Ioana. "Gypsies Integration – Education for All." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 76, (2013): 717-722.

Ruzicka, Michal. "Continuity or Rupture? Roma/Gypsy communities in Rural and Urban Environments Under Post-Socialism." *Journal of Rural Studies* 28, (2012): 81-88.

Sandel, Michael J. *What Money Can't Buy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012.

Schildkraut, Deborah. *Americanism in the Twenty-First Century: Public Opinion in the Age of Immigration*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Schnapper, Dominique. "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis of National Identity," In *The Politics of Immigration in Western Europe*, edited by Martin Baldwin-Edwards and Martin A. Schain, 127-139. Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1994.

Shore, Cris. *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Skerry, Peter. "The Charmed Life of Head Start." *National Affairs*, no. 73 (1983): 18-39.

Smith, Tracy. "Recognising Difference: The Romani 'Gypsy' Child Socialisation and Education Process." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 18, no. 2 (1997): 243-256.

Stewart, Michael. "The Puzzle of Roma Persistence: Group Identity Without a Nation." In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, edited by Thomas Acton and Gary Mundy, 82-96. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997.

Strindberg, Anders and Mats Wärn, *Islamism: Religion, Radicalization, and Resistance*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2011.

Suskind, Ron. *A Hope in the Unseen: An American Odyssey from the Inner City to the Ivy League*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998.

Trentini, Claudia. "Ethnic Patterns of Returns to Education in Bulgaria: Do Minorities Have an Incentives to Invest in Education." *Economists of Transition* 22, no. 1 (2014): 105-137.

Van Baar, Huub. "The Emergence of a Reasonable Anti-Gypsyism in Europe." In *When Stereotypes Meets Prejudice: Antiziganism in European Societies,* edited by Timofey Agarin, 27-44. Stuttgart, Germany: ibidem-Verlag, 2014.

Waterson, Mary. "'I Want More Than Green Eaves for My Children'. Some Developments in Gypsy/Traveller Education 1970-96." In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, edited by Thomas Acton and Gary Mundy, 127-149. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997.

Young, Iris Marion. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.