Roma Policy after the Regime Change

In 1989–90, the countries of East-Central Europe once again embarked on the path of democratic transformation. In light of this, they rewrote their policies on minorities. After the 1989 regime change the Hungarian state recognized national identity as an individual choice. Thus, in theory, the individual was free to choose assimilation or opt for minority status, free of coercion. In practice, even in a democratic state with the rule of law, the degree to which the state intervenes in these processes, the possibility of obligation and the material tools associated with its preferences bear some impact on possible choices. As Charles Taylor stated: “Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being.” Following the title of the Charles Taylor article cited above, state policy ensuring minority status, or in better cases Roma policy ensuring minority status and minority rights, were called the coefficients of “the struggle for recognition” by Júlia Szalai. The term “the politics of recognition” applies aptly to Hungary. Roma movements in Hungary were able to reflect not only on domestic phenomena after the fall of the Iron Curtain, but since the 1970s they were also able to take part in the emerging Roma international movement, which strove to unify Roma communities from different countries on a national basis by creating a common culture.

In this chapter we will primarily analyze the policies of alternating conservative and left-wing liberal governments from the years 1990 to 2010. Since we saw continuity in these policies, we consequently did not break the period down into smaller units. Governments with divergent political commitments consistently faced the question of whether the state should transform its Roma policy into a
minority policy or treat the situation of Roma as a social (and minority) issue. As a result, the fundamental principles of such policies were never obvious. Was the goal to guarantee minority rights, support and integrate minority culture, or find solutions to social issues, entailing support for assimilation? In Hungary, after the regime change the mixing of various concepts and policies, along with the lack of political support and political will to carry them out, in many cases have led to dis-function and incomprehension in minority policy.

The expression *social integration* is frequently used in social science research but defined in different ways; in this book we use the term to refer to one of the fundamental questions of organizing a democratic society, and specifically how various communities can be unified within a society (it is by no means a synonym for assimilation). The integration policy of liberal democracies cannot limit the free choice of identity for individuals. In theory, the state cannot interfere in the decisions of individuals and communities: the state cannot deny minority rights as happened under state socialism when the adoption of minority identity was virtually impossible, and cannot grant minority rights and yet continuously treat social situation as a criterion for membership in the minority, which also limits the possibility for free choice of identity. The effects of state socialist Gypsy policy showed that when poverty takes on an ethnic meaning, it then works against social integration and as a result reduces prospects for assimilation. It is generally true that under the rule of law, the basis of integration is the policy of recognizing the choices of individuals and communities. An improperly understood minority policy, thus, can work against social integration.

In 1990, after the democratic elections, the new government established the Office for National and Ethnic Minorities, the main task of which was to prepare the Minority Act. In 1993 the Parliament passed the act on the rights of national and ethnic minorities. The Act recognized thirteen domestic minority groups and included Roma on the list of national and ethnic minorities. The Parliament also established new institutions: minority self-governments, and later the office of the Parliamentary Commissioner on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities (with a specialized ombudsperson for national and ethnic minorities). By adopting this Act the democratic state hoped to live up to foreign expectations and wanted to set an example for neighboring countries with high Hungarians minority populations.

Indeed, Hungarian politicians thought that passing the progressive Minority Act would be a point of reference in international debates on the situation of cross-border Hungarians. Beginning in the 1990s, official documents contained numerous passages and references that confirmed this position. For example, Government Decision No. 1120 of 1995 (XII.7.), which established a Coordinating Council on Roma Issues (only of historical interest today, as it is
now defunct), appointed the chairman of the Government Office for Hungarian Minorities Abroad to be a member of the nationwide council. It is also revealing that in the course of the parliamentary debate on the Minority Act, politicians often referred to the assumed or real problems of Hungarians living abroad. In fact, the Act was intended to be a kind of “model child,” setting an example for policy makers in neighboring countries. Hungarian minority policy after the regime change—at least in part—became (ethnic) Hungarian and neighborhood policy. This perspective also demonstrates that the Roma point of view (and that of other minorities), in line with established traditions, was not truly taken into consideration, and numerous questions remained unresolved. Those showboating and demonstrative efforts that reached across the borders and diverted the attention of politicians away from the real questions indicate not only a lack of expertise but also true naiveté.

A turn against the official policies of earlier periods, which did not acknowledge the minority status of the Roma, probably played a role in recognizing the Roma minority. The securing of minority status represented (or could have meant)
a kind of compensation for historical disadvantages. But only a few years had to pass for it to become clear that the new period had not brought an essential change in the relationship between the Roma minority and the “majority.” Having recognized this, the state interpreted and reinterpreted its Roma policy from time to time. As a result the still unresolved question of assimilation cropped up again and again. Today it is difficult to strike a balance between competing concepts (assimilation and/or ensuring minority rights) in the case of the Hungarian Roma. On the one hand it is not clear which policy would be successful, and on the other hand experience does not clearly falsify or verify any of them. It is possible that the premises of the choice (principles, norms) are in order, but the concrete steps to be taken are not (should the principles be executed poorly and without care in practice).\textsuperscript{7}

It is well known that after the regime change, unemployment and poverty became prevalent phenomena in society and hit Roma the hardest, leaving the group with a heavy burden to carry. Although their social integration was promised with grand statements in the Kádár era, these promises were never kept. Roma policy after the regime change appeared a failure in the eyes of the state, the “majority” and minority communities alike. The ensuing democratic governments tried to intervene in processes based on earlier experience. A government decision released in 1995 was the first to claim the government saw the Gypsy issue as both a minority and a social issue.\textsuperscript{8} Opposed to this approach, under state socialism the process of assimilation or “blending in” emphasized invisibility. Gypsies were to free themselves of all that distinguished them from the “majority,” to melt into “majority” society. On the contrary, the new integration policy in principle offered the opportunity to keep, maintain, and build traditions, or the choice to become visible.

This decision prescribed that the ministries work out some action plans. In 1996 the Coordination Council of Gypsy Affairs\textsuperscript{9} was established, its main mandate being the harmonization of Roma policy across ministries and national-competence bodies.\textsuperscript{10} However, this activity existed only on paper. The decision makers—with an eye to civil society initiatives and EU expectations—thought in terms of Roma programs.\textsuperscript{11} Then, in 1997 the government accepted the “medium-term action plan to improve the life situation of the Roma community,”\textsuperscript{12} and later released new governmental decisions announcing new Roma programs.\textsuperscript{13} From this point, cultural, social, and discrimination issues were not treated separately, but were to be solved with overarching interventions. Éva Orsós, the president of the Office on National and Ethnic Minorities, played a key role in the Roma Programme and the PHARE Programme that were worked out in 1997. The successive governments are responsible for the passing of political documents, which
were often full of inconsistencies, without following up with legal changes or concrete policy execution.\textsuperscript{14}

After the regime change, the first time the government took a concrete step to assist the social integration of those living in Gypsy settlements was in 2005. The “model program” launched at the time was meant to solve the housing and social problems of those living in situations of multiple disadvantage. Municipal governments with ideas on comprehensive programs to solve housing, employment, health, social and education could submit proposals for government support. In the first year of the program, between 2005 and 2006, nine municipalities received support for development, infrastructure and social, education and employment programs. The financial sum of the program was much less that what local needs called for and was a drop in the bucket compared to national needs.\textsuperscript{15}

In 2005 Péter Medgyessy summarized the programs of his left-liberal government in a report to Parliament suggesting that by this time, the Hungarian state had acknowledged that “[t]he severe problems of the Roma population have to be
managed within the framework of social policy. In the long term we must ensure that social and minority policy issues be clearly separated when dealing with interventions affecting the Roma minority. But this does not mean that there is no harmonization between such interventions.”

This position was not sustainable in the long term. Characteristically, governmental resolutions from between 1998 and 2005 most often used the term “those in disadvantaged situations, among them Roma,” while a newer governmental resolution from 2007 used the term “Roma and the disadvantageously situated” population.

The democratic system approached the social integration of the Gypsy community using the new motto “the improvement of the social situation of the Gypsy population.” These integration programs, however, brought only superficial results. The main state oversight arm for spending public funds, the State Audit Office, estimated that between 1996 and 2006 governments spent 120 billion forints on integration. From 2002 these amounts spiked thanks to accessing European Union funds. However, despite domestic and international publicity, these programs should not be seen as gigantic in scale. Their scale and extent should be compared to other types of expenditures: it is half the amount that the state spends in one year on maintaining fields, woods, fisheries and hunting grounds; the State Railways receives 190 billion forints per year from the budget. Independent of the amount spent, difficulties cropped up: according to the State Audit Office, which is the Parliament’s main body for supervising financial and economic governance in Hungary, the proportion of funds that actually reached the supposed beneficiaries could not be estimated. The Hungarian state, therefore, did not access all available European funds in this field.

**Minority issue**

During the preparation of the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities, the question of whether to include the Jewish minority in the list of national and ethnic communities came up. Most Hungarian Jewish organizations rejected the possibility. The recognition of the Jewish minority as a national minority would have created the illusion that Hungarian policy was trying to artificially turn back the process of assimilation. At the time of the regime change, new Roma organizations without exception demanded minority rights, unlike their Jewish counterparts and despite their experiences in the past. That is to say they demanded inclusion among Hungary’s national and ethnic minorities.

Since the passing of the Minority Act the question of whether it was wise to include Roma among national and ethnic minorities crops up from time to time,
even in expert circles, although as time passes almost all think the decision is irre-
versible. Consider for instance an essay by István Kemény and Béla Janky com-
paring the situations of the Hungarian Romungro and the Jewish minority. The
authors highlight the fact that the mother tongue of both groups is Hungarian
and the majority of both groups declared themselves Hungarians in the 2001
census.\(^{19}\) Comparing 1993 and 2003 sociological research data, Kemény and
Janky concluded that, as an effect of separation and discrimination, the majority
of the Romungro distanced themselves from assimilation during the last years.\(^{20}\)
Regarding Vlach and Boyash Roma groups there was a reverse tendency, as more of
them declared themselves Hungarian than before.

Belonging to a minority, or defining who belongs to a group that is burdened
by prejudice, became a serious issue for lawmakers. The state is more or less com-
pelled to define who belongs to a given minority given the nature of law. This is
necessary so that positive interventions can actually be directed at the members of
the given target group.\(^{21}\) The primary aspect taken into account is minority identity,
that is, who declares him/herself to be a member of the given community. While
everyone has a constitutional right to freely choose his/her identity, practice shows
that people can take advantage of this right. In Hungary after the 1993 enactment
of the Minority Act anyone could be the member of a minority self-government.
In other words, one could run for office as a representative of a national or ethnic
minority without even belonging to that minority. There is evidence that many
did so in the hope of material gain, with an eye to taking advantage of the special
rights granted to the minority. No one could debate the ethnic or national iden-
tity of the elected representative after their appointment. The misuse of minority
rights as a phenomenon was dubbed _ethnobusiness_ in Hungary. Further, given that
minority self-government elections were held at the same time as municipal elec-
tions, anyone could vote in minority elections. To solve these problems, a minority
voters list was introduced in 2005. From this point on minority candidates and
voters could be drawn only from such lists, that is, they had to register themselves
beforehand. (According to the principles of data protection, in the majority of
cases conscientious and informed consent legitimates the handling of protected
data, in accordance with information self-determination.\(^{22}\))

At times, the state can take points of view into consideration. When the
state uses anti-discrimination interventions to protect, or equality of opportunity
actions to assist members of a disadvantaged minority, it can acknowledge the
opinion, evaluations and day-to-day categorizations employed by the “majority.”
The state must protect those individuals who are discriminated against or become
victims of crimes based on their assumed heritage. (The reasons for differenti-
ated treatment can be various: appearance, family name, address, social situa-
tion of disadvantage.) In all such cases the true motives of the perpetrators must be made public along with the state’s response to racism. To this day this has not been achieved in Hungary, despite the existence of appropriate legal options. Up until 2009 no one had been sentenced for a racially-motivated crime against Roma. However, some Roma had been charged and sentenced for attacks against “Hungarians.”

Whereas a precise definition of the notion of minority is not absolutely necessary, the delimitation of the scope of persons belonging to a minority group is indispensable in certain cases of regulation. The category of minority is one that is beyond the scope of law. It would be difficult to find a single definition that applies to all situations and groups, and perhaps this should not even be a task for the state. It is common to argue for the necessity of coming up with a definition for the concept of minority by claiming that if we do not do so, it would be easier for the state to shirk responsibilities. Regarding this, we can claim that states—in lieu of international legal commitments and whether or not they define the minority concept—have a free hand in developing who they view as members of a minority in practice. International law is by no means unified in such cases either. United Nations documents hold that rights must be granted to all members of minorities, and this must go beyond those who hold citizenship in said states. Most European states grant special rights to those citizens who are members of minorities, and do not extend
these to foreigners, refugees and stateless persons. Some states that recognize minorities distinguish “old” minorities from immigrant minority groups. Those in charge of defining the concept must be aware of their responsibility, given that state delineations mark out the borders of groups and in some cases create new groups.

In international documents, definitions of the concept of minorities can only be found in soft law documents and drafts. Domestic legal systems are generally content to simply list minorities living on their territories, and similarly national regulations are satisfied with listing those minorities to whom minority special rights are granted. The Hungarian Minority Act belongs to those exceptions that define the notion of “national and ethnic minorities,” and it lists autochthonous minorities living in the country. For instance, the Act on Nationalities of 2011, which replaced the Minority Act, took a similar approach, and in the new law the label changes to national minority. The list and the definition of the concept are hardly harmonized. The criteria in the Hungarian Act include own language and a hundred-year presence in Hungary, while some of the minorities listed in the law can barely meet these requirements.

Ethnic groups are considered in some of the social science literature pre-industrial heritage-based communities, while nations and national minorities are considered products of modernity. The text of the 1993 Minority Act differentiates between “national” and “ethnic” minorities based on the notion that ethnic minorities, unlike national ones, do not have a mother country. This legal difference was completely unnecessary, given that Hungarian law granted both types of minority the same rights. Of the thirteen groups listed as national and ethnic minorities in the Minority Act, only Ruthenians and Roma are seen as ethnic minorities. Even though they received the same rights, until 2011 the differentiated use of terms left the impression that the identity and as a result the status of minorities in Hungary was split into two levels.

Prospects for multiculturalism

In the West, after the Second World War, in the spirit of liberal nationalism, states attempted to harmonize the aspirations of minority and “majority” nationalisms. Thus, policy for this purpose can be interpreted as the project of multiculturalism. If these goals were attained, theoretically multiculturalism would be realized within a democratic state. In fact, the realization of multiculturalism—as the ideology and politics of national pluralism—can be interpreted on many levels. In this volume we approach the concept from the point of view of whether those in power recognize ethnically organized groups and open the system of institutions and state support to
them. In our view, which is admittedly somewhat contradictory, lawmakers attempted to implement multicultural policy in Hungary after the regime change. This policy was halted when the new Hungarian constitution came into force on January 1, 2012.

The 1989 constitution recognized national and ethnic minorities as sub-political communities within the political community, and committed itself to the model of multiculturalism in the area of minority rights. Several scholars attempted to analyze the new policies. For instance, having mastered the topic, János Kis wrote of multinationalism and of a co-nation taking the place of the nation state. Joseph Raz characterized the phenomena as liberal multiculturalism. Generally, Will Kymlicka called the group status that arose as a result of the policy of recognition “differentiated citizenship.” The implementation of multicultural policy, however, can only be fruitful when a number of various criteria are met. A fundamental precondition is that the members of various cultures be aware of and respect one another’s cultures. It is also decidedly important that they break “the relationship between poverty, lack of education and ethnicity.”

The realization of the policy of multiculturalism requires on the one hand generous support from the state, and on the other for various cultural institutions as well as the public sphere to adapt to all the cultural groups, thus securing the coexistence of tolerant groups. The politics of tolerance can only be limited in the sense that communities are kept from oppressing their own members, and this rule must apply to all groups (“majority” and minority). The state must take steps to obstruct communities from practicing intolerant behavior vis-à-vis outsiders, and to make it possible for individuals to exit from groups. In other words, in the interest of ensuring human rights, state authorities must intervene in the lives of communities, as communities cannot be fully left to their own devices.

Should politics fulfill all the criteria, multiculturalism can lead to the emergence of a new, common culture, which in turn can result in the emancipation of multi-layered identities in society. Whether multiculturalism is an appropriate model for a society like that of Hungary’s, which is more or less ethnically homogeneous—whether to execute a polycultural political community—is an open question. Joseph Raz states that multiculturalism should not be employed toward cultures that have lost their ability to sustain themselves, that is, cultures that have assimilated yet still keep traditions to some level. By the time the Minority Act of 1993 came into force, minorities in Hungary were already in an advanced stage of assimilation. Today, minorities represent a relatively small percentage of the overall population, and they are to a large degree linguistically assimilated. Moreover, minorities are thinly scattered throughout the country to the extent that they usually form minorities even at the local level. In 1989 in the Republic of Hungary, among national and ethnic minorities, only Roma faced the challenge
of true social integration, which nevertheless remained an unsolved problem. Preposterous regulations for Roma were comprised of a multicultural policy guaranteeing a framework of minority self-government that did not provide a true option for integration.

The model of a multicultural state, which was intended to be introduced in Hungary, has been greatly criticized after reflecting on the recent ethnic and religious conflicts in Western Europe. Such criticism, however, does not offer new solutions, and the majority of critics would be presumably satisfied with the adjustment of the model. Nevertheless, Hungarian multiculturalism in support of national minorities failed not because of the assumed or real deficiencies of the idea, but because of inappropriate implementation and malfunctions of legislation. To paraphrase Julius Paulus, it might be said that not the law, but its realization is in error. Put otherwise, in order for the undoubtedly limited means of law to be useful in protecting minorities, the legislator should apply them correctly. However, the practice of multicultural policy in Hungary did not take place in this way. This is illustrated in the operational disfunction of the key legal organization of the multiculturalism model, namely the system of minority governments.
Minority (self-)government?

A typical example of minority elections in 2002 serves to illustrate the previously discussed issues. The citizens of Jászladány voted out the members of the minority government who were protesting against segregated education. They were able to do so only because the mayor’s wife and supporters were voted into the minority self-government on the back of “majority votes.”

A necessary condition for minority autonomy and self-government is for the state to use its public authority to empower citizens who are members of minorities to democratically establish associations. Autonomy requires functioning institutions decidedly elected by the minority. Minority autonomy and self-government are deemed as expressly important because minority representatives elected this way can consequently participate in the public sphere. The central power of the government, regardless how much good will it shows toward national and ethnic minorities, cannot be seen as ethnically neutral. In fact, various representatives of states are often biased in favor of the “majority.” As a result, those who are members of minorities have a legitimate claim to establish public (state-sanctioned) institutions in certain areas of public life. This is also important because in the “public officer-client” relationship they tend to fill the latter role. Minority autonomy allows them to turn to their own organizations within public administration, which

Voter in front of the ballot box, 2007
Election poster for Lungo Drom

Orbán Kolompár, Roma politician, Kinga Göncz, minister without portfolio for equal opportunities, László Teleki, Roma politician, 2004
can be more effective in taking steps to protect the interests of the community. This can secure minority participation in state decision making and the practice of minority and “majority” association.43

In Hungary, following the establishment of minority self-governments in 1995, a theoretical possibility opened for the Roma to represent their interests in accordance with deliberative or participatory democracy—with elected, publicly empowered organizations—in the context of the democratic state. However, minority self-governments at the local level became subject to the whims of municipal governments. At the national level, the government in power easily ensured that loyal (to those in power) minority bodies be established when it was necessary.44

Bleeding from numerous wounds, the 1993 version of the minority law’s most obvious flaw was the fact that voting rights were not restricted to members of minorities, and it remained so until 2005. One cannot speak of true minority self-government if the authorities decide who the minority representatives will be, nor if the entire population can take part in minority elections. Although the minority law attempted to ensure Roma representation in the state sphere, in reality the right to delegate representatives was transferred from the hands of the state to the hands of the “majority.” Based on the number of votes cast at earlier elections, it can be safely claimed that a significant number of citizens who were not members of any minority voted for minority candidates: at the first election 1,777,299 people, at the second 2,657,722 people cast their vote for some minority candidate.45 This way, the rights of minorities as defined by the constitution were violated, given that it was not they who established their minority self-governments.

After the first minority self-government elections in 1994–1995, a total of 817 local minority self-governments were established. Of these, 477 were Roma self-governments. Of the 1,363 minority self-governments established in 1998, 771 were Roma. In 2002 the numbers were 1,841 and 1,004 respectively. Although the institution of minority self-government received well-deserved criticism, the growth in numbers is worthy of attention, as it may indicate a strong local need and interest in operating such institutions among minority groups, particularly the Roma. A questionnaire and interview research project conducted in 2000–2002 showed that Gypsy minority self-governments—departing from the identity politics and cultural mandates set out for them in the law—basically strove to solve social problems and to raise the level of education for young Roma.46 This indicates on the one hand that the minority self-government system was not functioning in accordance with its original mandate, and on the other that the operation of the state and municipal social system was ineffective, to say the least. Despite abuses incurred during their elections, besides creating infrastructure and opportunity
for interest representation, minority self-governments fulfilled functions that were important at the local level and which diverged from the spirit of legal regulations.

Thanks to the phenomenon of *ethnobusiness*, as mentioned earlier, the Minority Act was amended in 2005, and minority voter registration was established. From this point only those Hungarian citizens could vote and be elected during minority self-government elections who declared their identity, had the right to vote in municipal elections, and were included in the minority voter register.\(^\text{47}\) The modification aimed to have minority self-governments elected by the members of minority groups themselves. Its real effect was to make the establishment of municipal-level minority self-governments easier. Elections could be held if the number of names in the minority voting register reached thirty. They could even be held if in the meantime this number fell below thirty. If no one beyond the candidates themselves takes part in the election (the law demands that the candidates also be on the voters’ list), or only one among them participates who casts a ballot for every candidate, then in theory his/her vote could be enough to establish the minority self-government. The text of the modified law states the following: “the candidate who did not get any votes cannot become a representative.” This wording implies that a candidate might get into the body of representatives even with one single vote, which could be his/her own vote or the vote of any another candidate.\(^\text{48}\)

In Hungary, as a result, the only candidates who could not become minority representatives were those who received no votes at all, not even from him/herself. This situation undeniably questions the foundations of the institutional system of representation. A scenario where representatives are voted in by themselves and represent themselves is unique, to say the least.

The concerns expressed in 2005 over the regulations came to the fore in the 2006 minority elections. For example, in the Ruthenian minority elections in Pomáz, altogether four persons cast votes, thereby electing five members into the minority self-government. Representatives elected in this way (with a minimal number of votes, or with their own vote) have the right to act as electors in the county, Budapest, and national-level minority self-government elections. The regulations for establishing local and national self-governments were also rather forgiving: a quorum of sixteen persons was enough to establish a minority self-government at the national level.

The basic question remains: how can Roma politics and its organizations be protected from the “majority” at the local level, or from politics-at-large at the national level? There are discussions about other institutions that could be introduced concurrently with the existing minority self-government system. One option that has been considered recently is a quota system, which would be a
kind of affirmative action procedure or a so-called “strengthening process.” With the understanding of the current practice of *ethnobusiness*, we cannot state that a quota system based on self-identification, similar to that in the United States, would work in Hungary. Consider, for example, a case where the only way to gain
an advantage in admission to a university is to proclaim that one is Roma. In theory a quota system could be introduced to function in tandem with the current self-government system, or it could work independently of it. Expressions reflecting this approach appear in contemporary official documents.

Divide at impera — The opportunities and impossibilities of self-organization

“When the sea no longer gives
nor the land nor the deeps of the woods
enough food, we will die
like pelicans did during the great hunger
we will die such that our last wishes
our last sorrows our own craws
will be torn up by our crack-mouthed brothers in arms
into insatiable hunger, we will die
slowly in tiny pieces
we will feed ourselves, like pelicans.”

This poem above by Hungarian Roma poet Béla Osztokán can serve as a motto to lead into a chapter on—extremely fractured—Roma policy since the regime change.49 It has never been truly in the interest of the government to create unity among Gypsy organizations. However, it is indeed in the interest of the government to divide them according to the needs of the state, or to appropriate Gypsy politics. Principles of multiculturalism thus exist mostly at the level of declaration and have little effect on politics-as-usual. As a result, various organizations have been unable to take common action to serve common interests. Before the regime change the basic question was how Gypsy politicians related to the Patriotic People’s Front, and to the political and cultural organizations established under the aegis of the Ministry of Education. (The Patriotic People’s Front was a unique organization under Hungarian communism, which on paper unified and represented all elements of the political system of the time, including the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party, mass organizations and social and cultural associations.) At the beginning of the 1990s the front that divided Gypsy politics formed in a way that split activists into two camps: one side was a collection of those who cooperated with the government of the time, while the other consisted of those who kept their distance from the government or allied with the opposition. A later fault line formed along judgments of minority self-governments.
Back in April of 1989 oppositional Roma and non-Roma, who supported the endeavours of Roma, established the Phralipe Independent Gypsy Organization at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) Department of Aesthetics. Members of the first Executive Committee body were: Béla Osztójkán, secretary chargé d’affaires, who also remained the key person in the organization, Jenő Zsigó, Aladár Horváth, Antónia Hága, Attila Balogh and a number of non-Roma intellectuals, such as Gábor Havas, Guy Lázár, Otilia Solt and Sándor Révéz. As a counterpoint, the government of József Antall offered indirect support to several other new organizations. Most of the politicians active in these were drafted from those who had been active in the Patriotic People’s Front, the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party, the National Gypsy Council and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarian Gypsies (MCDSZ).50

The Gypsy politicians of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party were active in the final years of the party-state and attempted to form a Gypsy organization that was loyal to those in power. In November of 1988, Gyula Náday announced the formation of the MCDSZ, which was essentially a grouping of Gypsy politicians who were active in the Patriotic People’s Front. On January 16, 1989, the MCDSZ held its inaugural meeting. The MCDSZ survived the regime change and with the support of the National Gypsy Council it stated during its assembly of August 26 that it wished to operate as a “national minority association,” and would represent the Roma in national minority terms from here on in. Later, in the fall of 1990, Flórián Farkas and his group exited the organization and formed Lungo Drom. The leaders of Phralipe released a statement emphasizing that a minority can only be represented by a body democratically elected by members of that minority. Until the establishment of a self-government system, they hoped to establish a common forum and a parliament for Gypsy associations, which was essentially based on the model of the opposition coordination forum (Opposition Roundtable) in the late 1980s, a definitive institution during the regime change and the transformation of public law.51

Phralipe finally managed to unify the rather divergent organizations. The establishment of the Roma Parliament was announced on January 19, 1990, at its founding congress. The leaders of Phralipe were at the fore of the forum: Aladár Horváth was the president, Béla Osztójkán was the secretary general and Jenő Zsigó was the spokesperson. The unified front they created was attractive neither to old political enemies, nor to the new government. As a response, at the beginning of 1991 there was a counter-organization established, the Gypsy Organizations’ Interest Alliance. In addition, the Roma Forum was founded at the end of the year. Finally the Coexistence Alliance of Hungarian Gypsies was established at the beginning of 1992, and the MCDSZ was expelled from the Roma Parliament.
at the beginning of the same year. The rivals to Phralipe exited from the Roma Parliament one by one, and the solidarity that kept Phralipe together also evaporated. In February of 1993, at the third Congress of the Roma Parliament, Béla Osztójkán was squeezed out of the leadership group. Afterward, Phralipe quit the Roma Parliament, and the leaders of the Roma Parliament quit Phralipe. The Roma Parliament and Phralipe became rival organizations.\(^5\)

In 1990 the democratic government appointed József Báthory as government coordinator for Gypsy policy, who was earlier partly responsible for defining Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party Gypsy policy. The goal of those in power, it seemed, was to strengthen organizations that opposed Phralipe and then the Roma Parliament. One of the possible explanations of this was that those now in power hoped to see leaders in Gypsy organizations who voluntarily accepted puppet status, were controllable and loyal, and were further incapable of real political action or defending their interests.\(^5\) In return they were offered positions and material opportunities.

The National Gypsy Minority Self-Government was first established in 1995. The victorious candidate was a Roma politician who had a subject-like relationship with the representatives of the powers that be. Of the eleven national self-governments that were elected that year, ten held their votes in the assembly hall of the Budapest Municipal Government. The National Elections Office authorized Gypsy representatives to assemble at Lungo Drom’s center in the town of Szolnok, in the local sports hall. The vote took place in a crowded hall that was impossible to supervise. Lungo Drom’s well-organized voting block controlled how events unfolded. As a result, politicians who stepped up to defend the minority in the years of state socialism were not elected to the self-government, even though these were the politicians who despite harassment from state security services still established the first independent organizations, fought for national minority status for Gypsies during the regime change, cooperated with others to ensure that minority rights were included in the constitution and assured that minority self-governments become possible. The candidate receiving the most votes was the leader of Lungo Drom, Flórián Farkas, who had numerous connections to the old regime.\(^5\)

There were many indicators that in general, political socialization and inside knowledge of closed institutions of the party-state was advantageous for a successful career in post-transition politics, more so than previous involvement in the opposition movement or democratic thinking under state socialism. Keeping this in mind, it is interesting to consider the Hungarian Parliament’s financial support decisions in 1992. The Roma Parliament was not supported at all by the politicians in office, while their political opponents received significant state funds. The largest sum was granted to the loyal Lungo Drom, led by Flórián Farkas.\(^5\) In 1993 Lungo
Drom received eight times more funding than Phralipe, and in 1994 this level was doubled. And this is not to mention indirect support and money accessed through foundations that were close to the government. Flórián Farkas stated the following in the daily Népszabadság before elections: “Lungo Drom was often criticized as having too close a relationship with the MDF [Hungarian Democratic Forum—a conservative party which led the first coalition government after the regime change] and the MSZP [The Hungarian Socialist Party, a left-wing social democratic party and a successor to the MSZMP] governments.” This means nothing more, Farkas continued, than the fact that “Lungo Drom seeks both expert and political relationships.”

In December of 2001, Lungo Drom signed an election agreement with the FIDESZ-MDF alliance. Flórián Farkas has been a member of Parliament with FIDESZ since 2002. As a result of this agreement three Gypsy politicians became members of Parliament in 2002, while the leader of the National Alliance of Gypsy Organizations also entered the assembly through the MSZP list. The dominance of Lungo Drom, allied with state powers, in Gypsy politics was only temporarily broken by a coalition of Gypsy politicians who formerly engaged in democratic opposition. At the electoral assembly for the election to the National Gypsy Self-Government on January 11, 2003, the Democratic Roma Coalition secured a majority, but Lungo Drom had quit the assembly beforehand, as the National Election Office had rejected its complaints. As a result, the Supreme Court ordered a new election, and of the 4,592 empowered electors only 1,347 participated in
the electoral assembly. The repeated election once again produced a victory for the Democratic Roma Coalition. Aladár Horváth became its leader, and Orbán Kolompár, the president of the Forum of Gypsy Organizations in Hungary, became the chargé d’affaires. In the same year, Aladár Horváth was removed as the head of the body, whereafter Orbán Kolompár took over.59

With this, the two key poles of post-transition Gypsy politics, which played out at both the minority self-government and Parliamentary levels, were formed. The new cleavage was drawn along organizational loyalties tied to the two biggest political parties, FIDESZ and MSZP. Aladár Horváth established the Roma Civil Rights Foundation on the African-American civil rights movement model. The civic sphere became the main area for independent Roma politics, and the struggle against the state resumed.

Civic movement

After the regime change many Roma organizations and their leaders were soon swept up in the tide of national politics and/or minority self-government politics. Of the civic organizations that were set up at the time, many later found it impossible to operate. Inappropriate legal frameworks led to a situation where the civic
and public (municipal, parliamentary) activity of the Roma organizations could not become independent in personal and organizational terms, even though this was true in national politics and the civic sector in general.\textsuperscript{60}

Among the best known Roma civic organizations are the Hungarian Roma Parliament and the Roma Civil Rights Movement, both of which run legal aid programs. These two organizations are led by known and respected Roma leaders (Jenő Zsigó and Aladár Horváth, respectively), who participated in national politics, minority politics and civil rights movements.\textsuperscript{61} Understandably, these organizations are unable to prioritize between Roma rights violations and Roma complaints, and as such a major part of their activities focus on social issues. State agencies charged with legal protection and organizations responsible for interest representation were also forced to primarily deal with social disadvantages that weighed on the community. In other words, institutions mandated to represent Roma interests and protect them, such as minority self-governments or the minority ombudsperson (specialized ombudsperson for national and ethnic minorities), are active in social issues, even though neither has a legal mandate to do so.

The management of anti-discrimination cases that were not directly related to Roma policy and interest protection, and thus not apt to the minority self-government system, was taken up by civic organizations active in the sphere of minority legal protection. The Hungarian Helsinki Committee (established in 1989) and the National and Ethnic Minority Legal Protection Office (NEKI) became institutions for legal defense against discrimination, and both organizations run full-time legal aid programs. It has been mostly these two organizations that have taken steps to protect minorities in important, strategic anti-discrimination court cases.\textsuperscript{62} When it was established, NEKI hoped to tackle discrimination against minorities in a general sense. However, given their situation in Hungary the organization developed to where it primarily dealt with cases affecting the Roma minority. (The institution of minority ombudsperson, which was the key institution for state minority protection, followed a similar path toward a focus on Roma issues, although this was never acknowledged publicly. The institution was shut down in 2012.) Chance for Children Foundation (CFCF) is an organization established in 2003, which ensures equality of opportunity for Roma children in education. This NGO has largely been managing lawsuits against schools. Even though several Roma intellectuals have taken on significant roles in the activities of the Foundation, it has not become active in Roma politics per se. The key area for civic self-organization after the regime change took place in the field of media. \textit{Amaro Drom}, a Roma newspaper connected to the Roma Parliament, was launched in 1991, and was published until 2010. Roma Press Center, an independent press agency, was founded in 1995. Radio C, a Roma radio station, began broadcasting in 2001.\textsuperscript{63}
Among regionally active international non-governmental organizations, the European Roma Rights Center, which has consultative status in the Council of Europe, is of particular note. This organization was registered as a foundation in Hungary in 1996, and quickly became renowned across Europe for its rights protection activities. Other human rights NGOs that take their work seriously cannot be indifferent to Roma rights. The increasing activity of civic organizations is indicative of the severe dysfunctions in the operation of the rule of law in the field of minority rights. One of the detrimental experiences of post-socialist life lies in the fact that Roma and intellectuals allied with Roma must continue their daily struggle against the discriminatory practices of the “majority” as well as the national and local powers. The model of solidarity based on the Miskolc anti-ghetto committee (1989) had to be revisited in 1997 in Székesfehérvár and in 2002 in Paks, in order to obstruct the eviction plans of authorities there. What happened there is the municipal governments demolished homes inhabited by poorly situated Roma without having planned for new housing, or hoping to transfer them out of the city to villages.\textsuperscript{54}

The town of Zámoly became infamous in 1997 when the local authority illegally bulldozed the houses of Roma families and then moved the families around various temporary facilities, where the local community did not accept them. In
July of 2000, the families decided to leave the country, applied for political asylum in France and asked for legal protection from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) of the Council of Europe. As an important gesture on March 9, 2001, thirty-eight well known public figures (including Péter Eszterházy, György Faludy, István Kemény and János Kis) thanked the Prime Minister of France and the French nation for granting the Roma of Zámoly political asylum in the midst of bigoted public dialogue.65

**National minority culture — national culture**

At the time of the regime change, Roma emancipation represented by Roma intellectuals would obviously have included Roma national culture and the establishment of a Roma nation. The development of Lovari as a literary language continued (the Romani language developed from the Lovari, the language of the Vlach community, is used as an international Gypsy language), and the same process began for Boyash.66 The first books summarizing national history in the Romani language were published.67 In short, Roma and non-Roma intellectuals made efforts to canonize Roma culture. Today, it is near impossible to grasp the breadth of academic and non-academic works, literature, fine arts and musical compositions about and for the Roma community. Several anthologies attest to the presence of Roma artists in Hungary.68 The demand for the creation of unified Roma arts appeared most forcefully in the areas of fine arts and music.69

Roma artists have been organizing joint exhibitions in Hungary since 1979, and several museums and exhibition spaces, including the Ethnography Museum and Romano Kher (Gypsy House) have significant collections of works by Roma artists.70 Works representing Roma culture to this day are deemed naïve, shabby, faked or genuinely uninteresting and of little value from the external professional point of view. A related question may be whether external “majority” point of view representations are acceptable to Roma. The series of published Roma literary anthologies and rows of fine arts exhibits are testament that Roma art is not understandable in the context of “majority” culture only, but should be viewed in its own Hungarian context and in an international Roma context as well. However, no canon has developed that can establish an inner hierarchy for such works, one that can make this art valued based on a more or less accepted set of values of a single culture and common tradition. Will such art become part of a cultural system that is jointly worked out and generally accepted by the Roma community?71 To this point, the Hungarian state has not offered appropriate support for Roma intellectuals and artists to execute this kind of canon building. In 2006 the Roma Gallery
and Library opened in Budapest in the headquarters of the National Gypsy Self-Government, but to this day there is no national Roma museum, library, research center or theater.

The lack of clarity in state policy toward the Roma and uncertainty in use of terms are reflected in Hungary’s accession to the Council of Europe’s Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1999. Hungary accepted responsibility for only six minority languages, even though the Constitution and the Minority Act demanded equal rights for all thirteen minorities in Hungary. Another interesting point is that Hungary did not offer legal language protection to very small minori-
ties and to Roma. It is important to note that census data indicated that Roma constitute the largest linguistic minority in the country. While Roma in Hungary experienced strong linguistic assimilation, nevertheless a 2003 sociological study showed that 40–43,000 people use the Boyash language and 97–102,000 use Gypsy languages. The 2003 study holds that a significant “language resurrection” has taken place, but the main reason for the upturn may be that those speaking Gypsy or Boyash as a mother tongue respond at a higher rate than before.\textsuperscript{75} The state only accepted obligations under the Charter for Minority Languages extending to Gypsy languages in 2008.\textsuperscript{76}

Additionally, after the regime change some attempts were undertaken to create Roma national minority education. Yet, there is still no expert consensus on the legitimacy of national minority schools. Due to the general uncertainty on the minority status of Roma and confusion in legal regulations, it is not surprising to hear opinions that minority education is a tool of educational segregation. It is also not surprising that Roma students are sometime separated or "encouraged to catch up" under the aegis of minority education.\textsuperscript{77} The terms are intentionally mixed. In any case, it is worth debating whether there is a method and real need for mother tongue education in the Roma languages. We have serious reservations about whether the few existing high-quality national minority schools are in themselves tools to combat the disadvantages experienced in the sphere of education.
Mara Oláh: Cigányország [Gypsy country]
Mara Oláh: *Kifehéredve* [Whitened Out]
Questions of equal treatment and equal opportunity

Anti-discrimination

In 1999, for claimed public health reasons—namely lice—the directors of the municipal school in Tiszavasvári banned Roma students from using the gym for the duration of their studies. Their graduation ceremony was also organized separately from that of the “majority” students. The parents protested in vain. The school directors threatened the parents, saying that if the students did not take part in the separate graduation ceremony they would not receive their diplomas. The students of class 8/c—who were the plaintiffs in the lawsuit—had their graduation ceremony held on June 15, 1999 at a time separate from the rest of the students. The Supreme Court declared this unlawful in 2001.78

The recognition of segregation as a social problem first arose in the United States in the nineteenth-century. The “Plessy vs Ferguson” case, which centered on a railway company whose services could only be used by whites and blacks separately, is well known. The Supreme Court declared that segregation is only illegal if there is a difference in the quality of service offered to whites and blacks. Should
no inequality be shown in such cases, as they claimed, then the separation was constitutional. In the second half of the twentieth century the civil rights movement of African-Americans set an important goal of eliminating this type of discrimination through legal means. A milestone in this struggle was the Supreme Court’s “Brown decision” that deemed the school segregation of blacks unconstitutional. The decision stated with finality that segregation is degrading, unjust and damaging in its very nature, independent of the quality of service. With considerable delay, the victories of the African-American anti-segregation civil rights struggle made their way to Hungary with the help of the European Union regulation. The use of strategic court cases in Hungary launched by civic associations and based on the American model began in the late 1990s.

In Hungary, before the passing of Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and Promotion of Equal Opportunities, the ban on discrimination was not uniformly regulated. (The name of the Act is misleading, as it hardly deals with equality of opportunity: it is in truth a law for anti-discrimination.) Earlier the codexes of various areas of law, such as Labor Code, Civil Code, Criminal Code, and procedural law all banned negative differentiation. These did not lose their force when the new law was passed. An important tool for the fight against discrimination can be criminal law, given that the most serious cases of racially motivated crimes can be punished through the Penal Code. However, this method was not used until 2008 in cases where Roma were the victims.

The Act was passed by the Parliament to meet commitments regarding European Union directives on Racial Equality (2000/43) and Employment Equality (2000/78), among others, along with legal system harmonization requirements. In turn, Parliament set up the Equal Treatment Authority. In accordance with principles of EU regulations the Hungarian Anti-Discrimination Act defines both direct and indirect discrimination, among other issues. Unlawful separation, as a specific form of direct discrimination, is named separately, which is presumably justified based on the segregation that burdens Roma.

An important step in the struggle against discrimination was the anti-discrimination law’s creation of actio popularis claim institution, which enables those who are not in a position of disadvantage to sue. In Hungary, this opportunity has been pursued mainly by civic associations. The Chance for Children Foundation, the European Roma Rights Center, and the Legal Protection Office for National and Ethnic Minorities have launched several strategic lawsuits. For example, the Chance for Children Foundation launched a lawsuit against the municipal government of Hajdúhadház over segregation. The vast majority of the town’s non-Roma students attended school in one of two well-equipped local schools in modern buildings. Roma students, almost exclusively, attended school in a dilapidated
Ágnes Daróczi, minority researcher, activist, stereotype embodied:
“the old pipe-smoking Gypsy woman”
From the exhibit Politics of the Roma Body

building that did not meet the minimal standards. In the interest of covering up segregation under the guise of national minority education, the children were taught Roma folklore. The first court to hear the case (the Court of Hajdú-Bihar County) established that the school had transgressed the ban on segregation, which was later reinforced by the Supreme Court in 2006.86

Less obvious cases of indirect discrimination occur when procedures that appear neutral and unbiased, which sometimes are indeed unbiased, put a definable group protected from discrimination in a situation of disadvantage. Before the birth of the anti-discrimination law, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities, specialized ombudsperson for national and ethnic minorities, established that the local government decree of Tiszaujváros, which made “rummaging through garbage” illegal, had caused indirect discrimination on an ethnic basis. According to the ombudsperson, given that a significant portion of the area’s Roma community scavenged to make a living, this seemingly
neutral decree that applied equally to all, undoubtedly affected Roma disproportionately more than non-Roma. In Hungary, examples of indirect discrimination also include municipal resolutions such as the one in the town of Monok that made workfare a condition for receiving social benefits, although this decision was later revoked. Similarly, local authorities disproportionately burdened Roma with this step and there is little doubt that this was the goal of such provisions.

Individuals and groups can also be burdened with multiple forms of social disadvantage (intersectionality). For example, Roma women are multiply disadvantaged on the labor market. Furthermore, the UN’s committee on discrimination against women criticized Hungary in 2006 for the sterilization of a Roma woman. The case, once again, was taken up by civic associations: the European Roma Rights Center and the Legal Defense Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities submitted a complaint in 2004. According to the papers A.S., a Roma patient, had a procedure done on her in a public health facility, where she was
sterilized. She was made to sign the authorization for this without having been informed of its contents. Eventually, the committee established that Hungary had violated the UN agreement on “the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.” In addition, the committee also demanded that the Hungarian government pay compensation to A.S., as well as review the rights of patients and the regulation pertaining to patients’ rights in Hungary. As a result, the Hungarian law on public health was modified to ensure that patients receive orientation allowing them to make informed decisions on operations. Overall, this case is indicative of multiple disadvantages that Roma women face.

**Equal opportunity**

The legal fight against negative differentiation in itself will clearly not lead to the elimination of social inequalities, while legal tools are undeniably necessary. In other words, factual and formal equality of those citizens belonging to the minority cannot be carried out through legal means alone, but importantly necessitates a change in society’s point of view and attitude. Inequality in the case of Roma is not exclusively a problem of the present, but it has clear historical roots. Consequently, equality of treatment alone is not enough to eliminate the disadvantages of certain groups, thus anti-discrimination and equality of opportunity interventions are implemented. Essentially, the state must take responsibility in assisting those who have “unjustly fallen into a situation of disadvantage” in education, employment and business. It is the job of the Hungarian state to take real action and to use material resources in order to create the economic conditions for such groups.

According to the equality of opportunity approach accepted under the rule of law, only people in similar situations need to be given identical treatment; consequently, in certain cases those who are disadvantaged can be offered benefits and advantages. It follows that the state can offer special support to members of a disadvantaged group if it is possible this way to compensate for various inequalities. For example, a student who is a member of an ethnic minority can only speak of equality of opportunity in school if he/she can study in his/her mother tongue, as it is the case for members of the “majority.” This, however, requires positive action from the state in the interest of using minority rights to grant true equality of opportunity.

In this sense, equality of opportunity policy means the concurrent utilization of legal and policy tools that allow the members of disadvantaged groups to compete with equal chances or be treated equally in various fields of life, such as education, health care or employment. In cases where interventions are aimed at individuals and not communities, legal rules and official documents name the
beneficiaries as “those in a situation of multiple disadvantage.” If the target group is truly the Roma minority, then this is not an appropriate solution. A situation of social disadvantage in itself cannot be labeled discrimination affecting the Roma, and such solutions confuse social rights interventions.

**Roma programs**

Private individuals and civic associations have launched several education and employment programs since the regime change. For instance, the Foundation for Self-Reliance was established in 1991 to support local community management initiatives. The Open Society Foundation (OSF, formerly known as Soros Foundation) founded by George Soros has also advertised several tenders of a social nature under the auspices of the Roma support program that was launched in 1993. OSF Roma programs have generously supported civic initiatives and had an effect on government action. The first state Roma programs essentially followed or mimicked civic initiatives. In 1995 the government established the Public Foundation for Hungarian Roma (MACIKA). The Foundation on the one hand supported self-reliance and local economies, and on the other hand granted scholarships to Roma students. The government, however, after accepting and embracing civic initiatives, later moved to control them and in many cases distort them.

The weakness of the civic sphere meant that associations always struggled with finances and were in need of material support from the Hungarian state. In the sea of state support systems and then EU tenders, the ships of civic associations became rickety dinghies, especially in comparison with the pinnacles of the state and local authorities. State intervention essentially took the wind out of the sails of civic initiatives, which at times just slowed progress, but at other times it steered non-governmental organizations completely off course.

**Education**

Leaders of schools, set up through civic initiatives, struggled with financial difficulties from the very start. In 1993 civic associations and private individuals established the Gandhi Secondary School in Pécs, which was led by János Bogdán and Tibor Derdák. The founders of the school on the one hand hoped to improve the further study opportunities for Roma students, and on the other hand wanted to maintain Roma (including Boyash) identity and teach the Boyash and Lovari languages. The non-profit sector could not fund the school on its own, and they turned to the state for support. Consequently, since 1995 the Gandhi Public
Foundation has been covering operating costs. In September of 1996 private individuals, with the financial support of Hungarian and foreign churches, founded Collegium Martineum with the goal of creating an opportunity for disadvantaged youth to participate in integrated education. Students of the Collegium studied in public (municipal) schools and staff had to be able to speak Boyash.

Beginning in 1987, Romano Kher, led by Jenő Zsigó, had started supporting Roma secondary school students along with college and university students with scholarships. In 1996 the Roma Civil Rights Foundation initiated Romaversitas as “a training and educational program for Roma youth studying in higher education.” As a first step, they organized a summer university in 1997 at the Gandhi Secondary School. The Romaversitas Invisible College launched in February of
1988. Another pioneering project was the Mentor and Scholarship program, supported by OSF, beginning in 1997. As part of this program, poor and disadvantaged Roma secondary students were given monthly support, and their studies were supplemented with mentors. Interestingly, the Ministry of Education and Culture later launched the Útravaló (For the road) Program in 2005, based on the model of the program that the OSF supported.

In 1996 the government prepared its first all-encompassing program on fighting against disadvantages encountered by Roma in education. The Ministry for Learning and Public Education released the Gypsy Education Development Program, which prescribed several concurrent steps to create equality of opportunity. The government concept included plans on building a network based on the people’s college model\textsuperscript{95} to assist talented students. Instead, the authors of the concept later recommended the establishment of a network of national minority secondary schools. The model institution throughout was the Gandhi Secondary School, which was the first well-functioning Roma national minority school. As a result of Roma education projects, vocational schools were transformed, whereby most of them made it possible to matriculate. Examples of this are the Roma Esély (Roma Chance) School in Szolnok that was later renamed András T. Hegedűs Secondary School, the Work School in Edelény and the Kalyi Jag Vocational School, all of which were based on a national minority model.\textsuperscript{96} In 1998 a Catholic and national minority kindergarten was established in Alsószentmárton.\textsuperscript{97} From the end of the 1990s essentially two concepts were critical in the formation of Roma education programs: Roma public education institutions founded on national minority school models were accompanied by integrative solutions that aimed at both disadvantaged groups and Roma students, supported by an increasing number of actors.\textsuperscript{98}

The Arany János Program was launched in 2000. In theory, it sought to support disadvantaged students, those living in towns with a population of less than 2000, those living in crofts or peripheral areas or those who were talented and in the eighth grade. However, studies indicated that the program failed to reach the children of the poorest families. For this reason in 2002 the government established the Collegium Basic Program within the framework of the Arany János Program, with the participation of five institutions (Gandhi Secondary School, Collegium Martineum, the college in Ózd that had just been established in the Borsod region, and colleges in Baktalórántház and Ibrány). Per capita financing meant that the already functioning model institutions could work with a reliable financial background. All institutions participating in the program had to initiate a grade-zero class. For this reason, the original concept in Collegium Martineum—namely integrated education—was compromised. The institutions designed to
target model programs at the secondary school level for Roma youth are not spread evenly throughout the country. Most of them are not even in the most underdeveloped parts of the country, but in Southern Transdanubia and primarily in Pécs. Recent years have seen the establishment of the Dr. Ámbédkar School in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County or the Pista Dankó Elementary, Vocational Secondary School and High School in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County.99

The Kis Tigris (Little Tiger) Secondary School and Trade School was opened in Alsószentmárton (a town with an all-Roma population) by Tibor Derdák with the support of the Buddhist Church in 2004. János Orsós helped establish the Dr. Ámbédkar School in Sajókazán in 2007. The founders named the school after Bhimrao Ramdzsi Ámbédkar, born a casteless pariah and untouchable in India who received a chance to go to school. He later became a lawyer, civil rights activist and then a government minister.100

Employment

After the regime change several researchers and non-governmental organizations suggested that low-skilled Roma could make a living in the agricultural sector. The social land-use programs launched in 1992 by municipal governments with the backing of the ministry served, or were meant to serve, this goal. The programs saw land, and thus the opportunity to be self-sufficient, granted to multiply disadvantaged families in the hope that this would provide extra income to supplement social benefits. However, the majority of these farming projects were not functional for internal and external (e.g., lack of funds and expertise) reasons. Then, at the beginning of the 2000s many organizations initiated Roma entrepreneurial programs. Government funds financed the National Employment Fund (OFA), the European Social Fund-PHARE, the Public Foundation for Hungarian Gypsies, or the Roma Entrepreneurial Development Program of the Széchenyi Programme. Several initiatives of the Foundation for Self-Reliance were civic parallels.101

After joining the EU, civic associations working to further Roma integration had in theory the chance to apply for funding from a pool of billions of euros. According to a report by the State Audit Office, between 2002 and 2005 “resources for improving the situation of the Gypsy community” rose from 7.6 to 21.8 billion forints “mostly thanks to the increase in annual EU support between 2003 and 2004 and the rapid increase in funds available for developing employment.”102

Following EU commitments, the right-wing government led by Viktor Orbán established the Roma Employment Program (RF Program) at the end of 2001. This framework consisted of three types of support: (1) tenders were announced for existing small and medium enterprises to encourage the employment of Roma,
(2) state compensation was offered for workfare programs in underdeveloped municipalities, and (3) investment and employment programs were announced for Roma community enterprises.103

The majority of NGOs tried to adjust to the changes in opportunities. Prior to EU enlargement, Western supporters began exiting the country en masse, referring to the approaching accession. This is how the Foundation for Self-Reliance lost its earlier sources and became a transfer organization for EU support programs. The preparation of such proposals required specialized expert knowledge and a relatively large apparatus. There were some PHARE support programs with lengthy contracts of 150 pages (without appendices). The basic goal of the government was to justify successful tenders and to manipulate the distribution of funds. The primary tool for doing so was to influence employment data with superficial programs. More specifically, due to a change in regulations six- and twelve-month work contracts fell under the category of “long-term” employment. Previously, long-term employment assumed a work contract of an unspecified duration. At the time of the left-wing Medgyessy government, the RF Program advertised by the Orbán government continued in a similar vein. The 65 percent Roma unemployment rate was suddenly reduced to 15 percent, although the Hungarian government never took steps to create jobs. Despite this, the state received 47.7 million euros for the project.104

The left-wing government headed by Ferenc Gyurcsány decided on a “new model public work program”: from 2005 municipal workfare programs were financed under the heading “municipal government resource supplementation.” Another unique occurrence was that between 2002 and 2006 every third municipal government in Hungary relabeled itself a “disadvantaged” settlement, and as such became qualified to receive higher state compensation for its workfare programs. Otherwise, municipal governments were on the hook for 60 percent of their workfare costs. But with the RF Program they could apply for “surplus support” after financing only 25 percent. The invested municipal funds were thus returned in four years. The number of Roma workfare participants under the duration of this program rose to 60,000, but after a six-month employment period, they once again lost their temporary jobs.105

Importantly, mayors had political connections they could mobilize and an apparatus big enough to write project proposals. Compared to NGO actors, it was in addition easier for them to come up with the self-financing portion of funding. Mayors could also solve financial issues caused by post-hoc funding. In reality, the executed programs were workfare programs. In 2003–2004, PHARE support financed the “Struggle against exclusion from the world of work” program, where the vast majority of supported partners were municipal governments or public-purpose associations founded by municipalities. The recipients of funds earmarked
for education, for instance, spent the funds on financing the training of park maintenance staff, lawn-mower operators and medicinal plant experts. Not surprisingly these professions offered little opportunity for future employment.

Overall, Hungarian governments spent billions in EU support without creating a single job. Yet at least temporarily, the roads in Hungary’s poorest villages were lined with English-quality lawns because Roma people mowed the grass and trimmed the hedges as long as workfare programs could be financed through project support. In reality, mayors became new landlords and distributed support according to their own whims. Later, when these temporary jobs were no longer available, the illusion that local relations could change faded away.

**Social policy and the Roma**

The term “project” in daily usage has taken on a “mystical” meaning, referring to something between by-the-letter religious rituals and magical passwords of yore, with which communities tried to influence their own future. László Tenigl Takács claims the word has become a “social policy mantra.” (Of course there are

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Goat in a village doorway, 1996
other curse-repelling magic words, like “budget,” “action plan,” “execution” and “success.”

A typical and likely accurate story has it that after the regime change, within the framework of a project, the poverty-stricken residents of a Hungarian village were given goats. The idea was that the locals could produce milk, cottage cheese and cheese, and thus a market and commerce would evolve, followed by a bit of income. However, people had been starving for some time. A few of the animals were quickly butchered, while the remainder began feeding on the village’s fruit trees, because the locals did not know that they ought to be leashed or penned in. When the goats were finally leashed, hungry dogs attacked and tore them apart at night. Finally, the few remaining animals were then butchered and consumed by the locals. Nothing remained of the goats, and the project petered out in its execution phase.107

The story is a good illustration of the general puzzlement that ensues when dealing with poverty or the poor. Jenő Zsigó calls this the “bead effect.” After the regime change, members of the elite and middle class often wondered about the social relations of those in (increasingly) underdeveloped regions, often from a position of good will. Their gestures were similar to the behavior of white travelers in the past exploring distant lands in America, Africa or Oceania, who handed out shiny but worthless beads to win over the natives.108

**Aid**

State socialism preserved pre-war poverty. Former servants, poor peasants, the proletariat class and their descendants became traveling unskilled workers or trained workers in collective farms and state plants.109 After the regime change they became the victims of “new poverty”: that is, unemployment. It became clear that poverty was not simply an issue of inequality, but a “disintegration problem.” In Hungary, state socialist order created a system of dependence on the state that applied to all. Those who were most at the mercy of this system were unable to connect to the market economy, which had begun appearing in the state socialist period. Now, much like during the late “socialist” period, reliance on the state persists. Although they appear to receive significant support from the state, the poor are most fettered by the relations of dependence and feudal-type ties.110

Today in Hungary social division means that equal citizenship still cannot exist. Júlia Szalai, when analyzing the social system, argued that we in fact have first- and second-rate citizens. In other words, separation means that the majority of Roma are locked into the group of second-rate citizens, and social benefits received by the poor are means of expressing and extending their exclusion. The state is eter-
nally present in their lives through its various institutions. The residents of regions undergoing ghettoization are characterized by living off benefits and a “single-pillar life situation.” Thus, the primary function of the current system of aid is to separate and maintain the society of the excluded. This system created the insular world of the poor, who have a dire need for the very institutions that exclude them and force them to the periphery.\textsuperscript{111}

The result of exclusion is banishment from the social relation system of “majority” society and an almost complete denial of rights.\textsuperscript{112} In Hungary, social processes are visibly moving in a direction of a society split in two. Starting with the 1960s, the social institution system has been filled with ethnic content to a degree. Sociological measurements show that the majority of poor are not Roma, but the majority of Roma are forced into deep poverty through the practice of institutions of exclusion. What’s more, in Hungary Roma heritage (i.e., being born into a family considered Roma) has become “a factor increasing the chances and being
an explanation of” exclusion.\textsuperscript{113} According to 2006 estimates, Roma made up about 30 percent of the poor. It should also be noted that domestic studies that were labeled “secret” in “socialist” Hungary in the 1970s came to similar conclusions.\textsuperscript{114} The data from a representative sociological study in 2003 showed that 56 percent of Roma households were in the lowest tenth in terms of household income, that is, among those living in deep poverty their proportion is the highest.\textsuperscript{115} Articles on poverty, however, do not provide a complete picture of the situation of Roma in Hungary. János Ladányi and Iván Szelényi’s research shows that at the turn of the millennium one-fourth of Roma were members of the middle class.\textsuperscript{116} Whether the “majority” members of the imagined middle class deem better situated Roma as members of the same group, or whether this is simply the result of sociologists describing society in “objective” terms is a different question altogether. (Comparing data from these studies is also difficult because authors use various versions of the concept Gypsy/Roma and different classification systems.)

The law on municipal government passed in 1990 once again gave local settlements the right to govern themselves. Later, the breadth of municipal rights widened again. The 1993 act on social policy decidedly decentralized the social benefits system and transferred a part of related tasks to municipal governments (i.e., aid for the poor and distribution of benefits). At the same time the financial situation of municipal governments was worsening. When transforming the distribution system, lawmakers likely did not think that local politicians and power-broking groups would limit the rights of individuals and groups in the minority in the name of the “majority.” Probably with past failures in mind, the state delegated decisions (and problems) to the lower levels of administration. From this point on municipal governments could use local resolutions to define the practice of social aid. Local authorities were thus able to force individuals and groups into a situation of dependence. This all reinforced and further constructed the power hierarchy that had always existed at the local level— independent of the nature of the central powers—along with client-patron relations.\textsuperscript{117} As such, conflicts resulting from social policy that formed along local society’s fault lines often appeared as antagonism along ethnic lines.\textsuperscript{118}

From 2005, since the passing of the new social policy law\textsuperscript{119} the state has managed benefits under various titles in a uniform manner, and has been calculating the sum of social aid according to a unified system.\textsuperscript{120} Still, both the state and municipal authorities are increasingly giving voice to their approach to distributing benefits, whereby social aid should be conditional to either forcing people to work, sending children to school, or the like.\textsuperscript{121} At the end of 2008 the government tightened up the conditions for aid under its “road to work” program. These attempts can only be interpreted as steps taken against the minority, that is, as a “gesture” to the “majority.”
Segregation

Many signs of disadvantage that Roma face are visible in the labor market, education and residential segregation. In the first few years following the regime change, 40 percent of Roma income earners lost their full-time jobs and were excluded from the labor market.\textsuperscript{122} In 1993 unemployment in their circle was three and a half times that of the “majority.”\textsuperscript{123} This unexpected and dramatically rapid process showed that superficial assimilation as created by the Kádár party-state was actually unsustainable, despite interventions designed to tackle the symptoms.

According to various studies, school and residential segregation of Roma has increased significantly in recent years. Research on Gypsies shows that between 1993 and 2003 the number of Roma children deemed mentally challenged and thus sent to a special school or class increased: a 2003 study indicated that 20 percent of Roma children attended such schools or classes.\textsuperscript{124} In Hungary today there are 180 segregated schools and 3,000 segregated classrooms.\textsuperscript{125}

International comparisons are often questionable, given that it is difficult to collect comparable data across institutions that function quite differently. However, it is important to note that in the first decade of twenty-first-century Hungary, about the same proportion of children are sent to special education institutions as were sent in Nazi Germany. In Germany, after Hitler took power, this proportion

\textbf{Bulrush weaving, 1992}
reached about 7 percent. In Hungary at the beginning of the 2007/2008 academic year the number of elementary school children in special education was a bit higher than this (7.1 percent), while the average for Western Europe was 2.5 percent.\textsuperscript{126} The education system trains consultants who filter the minority from the “majority,” collaborating with kindergartens and schools. A 2004 study counted 1,253 homogenous Roma classes countrywide, with 799 Roma special education classes within those. Of all special education classes about one-quarter were Roma classes. 15 percent of Roma students attended special schools.\textsuperscript{127}

Educational segregation begins in the lowest levels, but disadvantage in student body composition is most visible in secondary learning institutions. The opportunity to move from elementary school into secondary school is a sharp dividing line in today’s Hungarian society, one which separates the long-term poor, excluding them from the rest of the “majority” society.\textsuperscript{128} Studies show that currently only 10 percent of Roma children write secondary school matriculation exams.

The space we call the social periphery, but which actually denotes a kind of “outside of society” condition, is ever widening. Exclusion and segregation affect an increasing number of people. After the regime change only superficial efforts were made to stem this process, and even the executed slum-razing programs failed to strengthen social integration. A project costing 120 million forints in the Bodva Valley saw the state buying up peasant homes and moving former residents of Gypsy slums into them. The result was that the non-Roma peasant families moved away, turning the entire village into a Gypsy settlement.\textsuperscript{129}

A 2003 national study showed that about 6 percent of Roma, or 36,000 people, lived in Gypsy settlements. Official government documents estimate much higher numbers, but even the research referred to above estimates that more than 70 percent of Roma live segregated.\textsuperscript{130} Old segregated rows of Gypsy homes have not disappeared. Instead, they have outgrown their original streets and taken over entire villages. Villages undergoing ghettoization begin to form connected regions, creating ever larger ethnic ghettos. Demographic and social processes in these villages diverge from national trends: the population is growing and poverty has become inescapable and long-term. In some villages, people who had moved from the village to the city, then forced from the city back to the village, are now starting to form a majority.\textsuperscript{131} In these villages, state institutions and municipal governments continue to represent and guard the power of the “majority.” It is difficult to say on what grounds local societies more or less accept the authority of these institutions even today. Possible explanations are numerous methods of rule (e.g., punishment, reward) and personal reasons (e.g., interests, habit, apathy, or fear).

In summary, the decades of industrialization can be interpreted as the creation of “simple modernity;” a linear and uni-dimensional process of rationaliza-
Children in the courtyard of a District VIII tenement, Budapest, 1995
tion. The basis for this notion is that society produces, and can produce, an ever increasing number of goods. According to Ulrich Beck, “reflexive modernization,” or the questioning of this principle, has brought about a shift in the basis of industrial modernity. This involved the birth of the “risk society”: the notion of a kind of goal-oriented rationality driving social processes has disappeared. Social inequalities have not only strengthened to a degree, but have become individualized as well. The foundations of political and social institutions have weakened to the point that what we once thought of as rock solid now flows through our hands like sand. This leads us to the question of whether new challenges can be met with the use of earlier nation-state institutions, or whether such institutions should be transformed or outright demolished.\textsuperscript{132} Returning to Ulrich Beck, he sees the phenomenon called “reflexive modernism” as individual-centric, and he believes there is a need for intensified social control, the humanization of institutions, a self-critical society and generally a move away from the traditional value systems of modernity.
Disciplinary society

“Roma organizations must distance themselves from criminals,” said Prime Minister Gyula Horn to an audience of Roma politicians in 1997. According to an urban legend someone in the back row retorted: “We expect the same of the Hungarian government.”

The stereotype of “Gypsy crime” in Hungary was—at least in part—created and maintained by the institutional system of law enforcement. After the regime change, the so-called Gypsy lines ceased within the police forces, although they continued to use “Gypsy background” as a unique marker in investigations. The national Chief of Police apparently put an end to this practice with an internal order in November of 1996. Researchers—taking a stand against well-known prejudices—had proven in the 1980s that crime statistics are not affected by ethnic affiliation, but that certain criminal acts are related to social situation. However, this influences neither public opinion nor the speeches of politicians. At times it seems that in Hungary ethnic affiliation of only the Roma sparks interest in the news.

Under democratic rule of law it is politically incorrect to discuss higher criminal tendencies within an ethnic group, or “unfavorable ethno-social circumstances” of various neighborhoods. If a public servant engages in such rhetoric, there are generally consequences. In Hungary, no such rule limits the speech of politicians or high-ranking state officials. Beyond being simple reflections of prejudice, discourses on “Gypsy crime” in most cases have a goal of pandering to the “majority” population in order to increase the popularity of public figures. This does not mean, however, that various ethnic groups cannot be related to certain social situations that can have an effect on criminality statistics; criminality is not ethnicity-specific, but it affects the behavior of all citizens equally, including those who are not members of the minority. It is a fact that “Gypsy crime” as such does not exist and has never existed. It must be noted, however, that the proportion of Roma perpetrators in certain crime categories does truly exceed their proportion in the population as a whole. Considering a different point of view, this can also be explained by the situation of the minority within society and the state. Namely, the incomplete and insufficient delivery of state public services, prejudice within the police (which is evident in random identity checks and backed up by empirical data) and ensuing discrimination, among other things, are all contributing to this trend.

Under state socialism thoughts that were openly hateful and racist could hardly be expressed publicly. But because the past was never properly confronted, social attitudes and patterns of racist behavior were preserved. They not only survived past the regime change, but also gained strength afterward. Sadly, extremist and
racist principles soon escaped the political quarantine that the democratic regime-changing powers had shut them in. In the history of the Third Republic, the visible advance of the minority-hating far right is tied to the success of the Hungarian Truth and Way Party (MIÉP) in the 1998 parliamentary elections. More precisely, this far-right radical party was formed by István Csurka in 1993, who had earlier been expelled from the Hungarian Democratic Forum. In 1999 mostly university students established a radical organization called the Right-Wing Youth Community, or Jobbik. In 2003 the organization became a political party, and it soon grew to challenge MIÉP. In the 2002 parliamentary election MIÉP won no mandates, at which point it established an election alliance with Jobbik and the Smallholders called “MIÉP - Jobbik the Third Way.” Even together they did not reach the parliamentary threshold. However, among the various radical organizations the increasingly radical Jobbik slowly established a leading role. The party’s 2007 Gábor Bethlen Program contained a demand to use the armed forces to combat “Gypsy crime,” which was supplemented by the idea of establishing gendarmes. This became a central element of the radical party’s rhetoric: “The establishment of an organizational unit within the police to prevent and investigate Gypsy crime in crisis-stricken counties.” (The Royal Hungarian Gendarmes was a law enforcement arm organized on military principles in the age of the Dual Monarchy and the Horthy era, and in 1944 it played an active role in collecting Hungarian Jews.)

The Jobbik barge was soon home to paramilitary organizations based on violence against minorities. These tendencies first became visible on the political stage on August 25, 2007, with the establishment of the Hungarian Guard Tradition-Keeping and Cultural Association and the related paramilitary Hungarian Guard Movement, both with organizational ties to Jobbik. Of the two organizations only the former was a legal entity, and as such the movement could not be sued in court. The president of the association was Gábor Vona, whom the association named Chief Captain of the Guard. Jobbik’s earlier founding president joined two other founding members to release a statement following the establishment of the Guard, calling the paramilitary organization “an unmeasurable and unacceptable source of risk,” and later left the party. The united Guard members did not make hide the fact that they organized to fulfill state law enforcement roles, and they developed an inner hierarchy typical of armed forces, based on ranks. The movement swore in thousands of members in various locations. To instill fear, the Guard held marches in settlements populated by Roma. For example, in December of 2007 the Guard marched in Tatárszentgyörgy to support “rural public security” but in fact to threaten the local Roma. The organizers routinely used this framework to step up against “Gypsy crime.”

With the strengthening of the extreme right and increasingly serious ethnic conflicts, the country was shocked by a series of murders of Roma. According
to one charge in the current court case, four men were involved in an armed robbery in Besenyszög, fired shots on the refugee camp in Debrecen, and attacked Roma with arms and Molotov cocktails in nine settlements: on July 21, 2008 in Galgagyörk, August 8 in Pirics, September 5 in Nyíradony, September 29 in Tarnabod, November 3 in Nagycsécs, December 15 in Alsózsolc, then February 23, 2009 in Tatárszentgyörgy, April 22 in Tiszalök and August 3 in Kisléta. The attacks in Kisléta and Tiszalök resulted in one death each, while those in Nagycsécs and Tatárszentgyörgy resulted in two deaths each. As an effect of the attacks, Roma felt more threatened. During this period, Roma “patrol groups” were established in several settlements.140 The residents of small villages were right in thinking that they could not rely on the protection of the state. In the 2009 attack in Tatárszentgyörgy, where the the Guard had been present since 2007, a 27-year old father and his 5-year old son were shot by the racist serial murderers while trying to escape their burning home. The absolute ineffectiveness of the work of the doctor, firefighters and police that arrived on the scene is illustrated by the statement of the Pest County Police District after the attack: “the initial opinion of the firefighting investigators is that an electric short caused the fire in which two lives were lost.”141 The series of Roma murders, the tangible spread of racism and the ineffectiveness of state legal protection once again led non-governmental organizations to broaden their activities to include the legal protection of the Roma minority. For instance, in 2010 the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union launched an independent program to assist the protection and execution of the rights of Roma.142

Jobbik gained 15 percent of the popular vote in the June 2009 European Parliament elections and sent three representatives to the European Parliament. One of the party’s MEP’s, Csanád Szegedi, accepted his European Parliament mandate wearing the Hungarian Guard uniform of a vest emblazoned with a lion and an Árpád crest. On July 2, 2009 the court established that the operation of the Guard was illegal and demanded it be disbanded. The court decision stated that the association’s organizational unit encompasses the Hungarian Guard, and thus its decision extends to both organizations.143 The particular reason the court ordered disbanding was the Guard’s 2007 meeting in Tatárszentgyörgy, an inciting event that used the terms “Gypsy crime” and “Gypsy terror.” However, legal disbanding did not bring the expected results. On July 25, 2009, shortly after the decision, a membership similar to that of the Guard formed the New Hungarian Guard Movement, which in its founding document stated “given that New Hungarian Guard Movement is a long name,” they would continue using the name Hungarian Guard.144 On August 22, 2009, at the first initiation event of the New Hungarian Guard, 620 members were sworn in, and a “gendarmes squadron” was established. Jobbik has held mandates in Hungarian Parliament since 2010.
The transformation of discourses

Surveys conducted in 1987 and 1992 show that approximately one-third of those questioned felt “Gypsies will never fit into Hungarian society.” According to Guy Lázár’s research results, the “majority” forms its prejudices regarding Roma primarily in accordance with its own image: the “Gypsies” have become a kind of negative reference group. “Hungarians” came to define their positive characteristics vis-à-vis “the traits of the Roma.”

Since 1993, Gallup has been conducting surveys on prejudice. Since 1995 these surveys have shown that inhibitions regarding open anti-Gypsyism have disappeared, and this is clearly not independent of processes taking place in the public sphere. Although laws and official documents continue to use the term Gypsy, after the regime change the more politically correct term became Roma, given that the former name carries racist connotations when used in “majority” language. Politically correct speech, however, has not put an end to the prejudices of “majority” society but has instead exempted its users from such criticisms.

A 2006 sociological survey in Hungary showed that “Pirezians”—members of a group that in reality does not exist—are the subject of similar, if not in some cases worse, rejection in Hungary. A significant proportion of respondents would not have let Pirezians into the country, despite the fact that they could not have had any personal experiences with them. Typically, the survey showed that over the years antagonism to Pirezians—or spontaneous, unwarranted hatred of foreigners—actually increased.

The legal system to protect minorities in Hungary thus had to function in a social climate that was ever more prejudiced. This context also explains the insufficient use of laws in practice. In some cases the prejudiced environment itself may have been the primary reason for the failure of legal protection. Beyond the speeches of politicians and state officials, an analysis of the current extreme right discourse and a detailed examination of the relationship between state and far-right discourses could prove useful. We should mention that extreme right-wing political writers use literary works —works they are clearly not deeply familiar with—to describe their chosen enemies (e.g., hobbits and orcs) in order to protect themselves from being accused of hate speech.

Perhaps it is the lack of a dialogue that leads to politicians and the public believing that those social scientists and intellectuals who show solidarity with Roma are biased, out of touch with reality and elitist. Today, unlike in the Kádár era, sociology is unable to have a direct dialogue with the political sphere. When acting in the wider public sphere, politicians speak foremost to voters, keeping their
popularity in mind, while scientific and solidarity-based statements and positions are deemed unrealistic and an intense form of concession to political correctness. Questioning the credibility of experts has become commonplace, and social scientists are regularly charged with distorting reality. This phenomenon, as Csaba Dupcsik shows, forces social scientists, rights activists and civil rights defenders into a role in which the conceptual language of social science is mixed with that of political movements. Consequently, studies on the situation of Gypsies have increasingly become “activist” in nature, while chances that political decisions will be based on expert background reports is minimal, thanks to the political sphere’s apathy toward the pertinent minority and social science research.

Research methods

In the summer of 1961 a Belgian anthropology professor left Brussels. He was looking for a Kalderash Roma man called Yanko and his family, like a needle in a haystack. He found no trace of him, even though he had traveled through Hungary and Yugoslavia all the way to Istanbul, Turkey. Given that the anthropologist did not speak Romani or the languages of the countries he traveled through, he employed a guide-interpreter for the trip, one who had lived with Yanko’s family years before. It would only have taken the guide a few phone calls to discover the whereabouts of the Kalderash family, or he could have just asked in one of the Brussels cafés frequented by Roma. He did neither. Apparently, he did not want to compromise the anthropologist’s curiosity and sense of adventure, and the exciting research trip came to an end without having reached its goal. This story and the Belgian social scientist’s failure is a good illustration of the divide separating researchers from their subjects.

After the regime change, given its nature, classifications within social science began to distinguish “ethnic,” “social,” “linguistic,” “cultural,” “census,” and other categories when describing Gypsies. In the age of modernity another, considerably more uniform image of Gypsies could have been created, but public discourse about them—related to social processes—in Hungary only began in earnest at the end of the twentieth century. The postmodern fragmentation of this knowledge about Roma, or the fact that there is no narrative that is able to weave together the various types of knowledge, signifies not only that the group being studied is not unified, but also that the discourse about Roma has not consolidated into a whole. Scientific discourses further weaken the chances that Roma might be discussed as a unified group or minority, albeit Gypsy minority existence obviously contains a very real daily experience for individuals and com-
munities. Mainstream social science considers efforts of nation building by Gypsy politicians and intellectuals illusory.

Csaba Dupcsik studied “Gypsy images” in scientific discourse in his historical monograph. From the 1990s, he writes, Roma research was characterized primarily by its critical-descriptive approach, which was deviance-oriented and emancipatory. More specifically, those who were writing about deviance searched for reasons for the breaking of norms and crossing of limits. Those writing of emancipation researched opportunities for social integration. In particular, essentialist, structuralist and naïve scientific works can be distinguished from one another based on methodological and political aspects. Essentialists explain divergent systems of norms through cultural underdevelopment, situations of disadvantage and in some cases improper thinking and behavior, or by their interpretation of essential Roma characteristics (e.g., racial or ethnic). The structuralist approach—according to Dupcsik’s piece—interprets the situation of Roma through the lens of opposition and contrast between a “majority” and minority. Most of these analyses present Roma as a group defined (or potentially defined) from the outside (i.e., from the perspective of the “majority”). The naïve scientific approach is characterized by the assumption that there is a value divergence between interpretations that appear naïve and those that are strictly scientific.

There is certainly methodological knowledge—knowledge that is hard to define given the plurality of various approaches—that differentiates these works from one another. In terms of style and content, these pieces of research are often very similar to one another given that all try to create the illusion of objectivity when they write about Gypsies/Roma from their own points of view. Interestingly, the essentialists try to legitimate their work, which has the illusion of being scientific, in the same way. One of the signs of unscientific nature of such works is the complete lack of self-reflection in texts, albeit with a few exceptions.

Given the existing scientific approaches, this book has mostly followed the tradition of the emancipatory structuralist approach in a way that stays open to possibilities of other approaches and, to the degree possible, stays open to self-reflection when making claims. Our goal was to present the epistemological assumptions of mainstream social science about Roma, and to make their relativity clear. New concepts, themes and approaches always make it possible to revise earlier canons, theories and research methods. Thus, the use of any point of view that embraces scientific pluralism and multiculturalism will always have a transformative effect.

Clifford Geertz’s witty claim holds that scientific communities are as closed, and as big, as an average village. Nevertheless, sharing the inner set of relations with outsiders can do no harm, as it helps to interpret these pieces. Researchers relate not only to the world of academic life, but also to their own daily commu-
nities. While those who research Gypsies and related social groups appear to be unified in using a structuralist approach, in most cases their writings do not reveal whether they approach other groups, for example the “majority,” in the same way. In our view, in order to study people labeled Gypsy/Roma scientifically, it requires not only methodological self-reflection, but also the marking of points of reference (given the effect of research on forming reality).

It has slowly become a scientific cliché to claim “the Roma are not an ethnically homogeneous group, they cannot be defined from within or from without, but they cannot be seen as a heterogeneous group either. At the end of the day only one thing makes the Roma an ethnic group, and that is the labeling judgment of the “majority” Hungarian point of view that decides who is Roma and who is not.”

While studies on Roma since the 1970s may have had a significant role in shaping the state’s view about Gypsies as a unified group, today these studies actually question even the unification efforts of the Roma, as these are deemed illusory. We feel that today, seeing Roma as a unified group is in reality not acceptable within critical social science, but it is not necessary to take a position on the unification efforts of Roma. Today’s scientific approach simultaneously and continuously creates as well as questions knowledge about Gypsies.

It seems that even the structuralist approach (which attributes the situation of the Roma to the dynamic mutual effects of Roma and “majority” societies), had a doctrinaire interpretation whereby the relativist position only applies to one minority. Some researchers reject approaches for describing the minority that are generally accepted for analyzing “majority” society. It appears as if no one has any objections to treating Hungarian culture, society or history as unified. The unified Gypsy folk has never existed, it is only a construction—claims social science in its exalted voice. But this approach is hardly used when discussing the so-called Hungarian “majority,” which, of course, also could be interpreted as an imagined community. In fact, just like Hungarian history, Gypsy history is also an invention. We are more comfortable questioning “majority identity” formed against minority identity than vice versa. If the “majority” as such does not exist, then it is impossible to act, speak or write in its name. To be even more precise: it is only such reflective comparison that makes the “majority” a real entity.

The pursuit of science is a privilege of the middle class or the elite. Thus, from the point of view of Roma living in dire poverty researchers cannot describe and interpret the characteristics of the Hungarian nation, or the social status of the “majority,” its familiar and strange customs, tribal rituals and ethnic culture of “majority” communities. The exception to this inability in Hungarian academic literature is Sándor Rácz Romano’s memoir-sociography. The author complements his own life history and personal stories with analysis of scientific questions about
Poster for the 1993 photo exhibit titled
“The world is a ladder upon which some go up and some go down”
Roma, from the point of view of a Roma man. There is a clear need for articles that interpret and judge the social relations of the “majority” from the perspective of minority existence. An issue that arises is that research on the internal reasons for Roma separation can become a point of reference for extremist essentialist authors, or putting scientific euphemisms aside, racist authors, who blame the minority for integration failures. For example, Ian Hancock’s Roma history book, *We Are the Romani People*, dedicates a whole chapter to beliefs that the minority holds about the “majority” (“Our stereotypes of non-Roma”). Indeed, prejudices are not directed at the minority only. Hancock notes: “Very many [Roma] believe that non-Roma are happy to speak openly with strangers about the most hidden aspects of their private lives; that they announce to all their intention to go to the bathroom, and that they do not wash their hands.”

Rogers Brubaker questions whether we are right to artificially create groups in order to understand social phenomenon; Brubaker calls this “groupism.” Of course all groups are artificial, yet when examining social formations, is “groupism” the only tool at hand? A careful reflection on the artificial creation of groups serves no purpose, given that social sciences by necessity categorize. Furthermore, this results in the tendency to treat national minorities and nations as if they were solid entities with their own interests and actions.

The latest social science research, for the most part, does not use the conceptual dichotomy of the nation contra national minority to study the question of ethnicity. There are groups living in marginal spaces that have flexible national boundaries, that are open in space and time, and which as such have uncertain ethnic identities in many regards. The practice of classification in modern social science leaves such groups beyond reach. Acknowledging this can help us understand that other ethnic categories (e.g., national minority, nation) are also constructions. As opposed to the concept of fixed ethnic identity and the primordial understanding of nationhood and belonging, social and ethnic categorization (or identity) can be situation dependent: “Ethnicity has a defined emergence but an undefinable content.” Nevertheless, politicians and social scientists like to interpret belonging dogmatically.

**Notes**

3 After regime change, between 1990 and 1993, a right-wing coalition government led by Prime Minister József Antall (Hungarian Democratic Forum–MDF) and consisting of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, the Independent Smallholders’ Party (FKgP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) was in power. After Antall's death Péter Boross became the prime minister. After the next round of elections Gyula Horn led a coalition government backed by a two-thirds parliamentary majority and consisting of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) between 1994 and 1998. Later, between 1998 and 2002 another right-wing coalition government formed, which was made up of the Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESZ), FKgP and MDF. After 2002 Péter Medgyessy led a new MSZP and SZDSZ coalition government. Medgyessy was replaced by Ferenc Gyurcsány who was Prime Minister until 2006. After an election victory in 2006 the MSZP–SZDSZ coalition continued to govern. A constructive vote of non-confidence submitted by Gyurcsány himself led to his resignation, whereby the coalition government was led by Gordon Bajnai between 2009 and 2010. In 2010 a two-thirds parliamentary majority backed Viktor Orbán’s FIDESZ–KDNP coalition government.


5 International organizations tend to support minority rights. This approach is visible in the documents of the Council of Europe. One of the Parliamentary Assembly’s recommendations includes the following: "Roma must be treated as an ethnic or national minority group in every member state, and their minority rights must be guaranteed" (Recommendation 1557 [2002] The Legal Situation of Roma in Europe, point 6).


7 Niklas Luhman, Legitimation durch Verfahren (Suhrkamp, Frankfurt 1983).

8 Government decision No. 1125/1995 (XII. 12.) on the most urgent tasks regarding the situation of the Gypsy community. This first governmental decision that aimed to improve the situation of the Gypsy community can be considered the government decision that laid a foundation for later medium-term projects. The decision laid out a one-year deadline for affected ministries to work out detailed action plans in education, culture, employment, social provision, regional development and agriculture. It further set a goal of introducing anti-discrimination projects. Based on this, it demanded the preparation of a medium-term action plan with a deadline of June 30, 1997. Action plans were written and integrated into a medium-term plan by the deadline. The 1995 governmental decision established the theoretical opportunity for the government to map out a well-prepared plan and to execute an effective Roma policy. It is worth noting that until the medium-term action plan was prepared the government did not dedicate significant resources to finance projects expressly aimed at improving the situation of the Gypsy community.

9 Government decision No. 1120/1995. (XII. 7.)

10 This was replaced in 1999 by the Interministerial Committee on Gypsy Issues, which in the interest of executing the medium-term action plan was given a coordination mandate. In 2002 the Gypsy Issue State Secretariat was established within the Prime Minister’s Office, also to harmonize the activities of various ministries, and it was led by László Teleki.

11 Balázs Wizner, “Osztok, keverek. Cigány programok és roma szervezetek finanszírozása a rendszerváltás után” [Financing Roma programs and organizations after the trans-

12 Government Decision No. 1047/1999 (V.5.) on Medium-term Measures to Improve the Living Standards and Social Position of the Roma Population. Based on the preparatory work described above, the document would have served to make decisions on planned sub-programs and their execution, while also making fiscal resources available for them. The government decision, however, did not live up to these criteria. Characteristically, the appendix to the decision expressed the tasks in the following terms: “should look into,” “measure in the framework of a study,” “should measure,” “a comprehensive program and financing plan are necessary,” “should work out a concept.” The only concrete target in the document was the workfare tender to manage Gypsy settlements, but the municipal governments that could have applied for the project did not take advantage of the opportunity. When setting out who was responsible for what task, often several—and in some cases five to six—ministries were designated. This led to the erosion of the framework of actual responsibility. Moreover, this phenomenon characterized later governmental decisions as well.


14 Wizner, “Cigány programok és roma szervezetek” [Financing Roma programs and organizations], 437.

15 In 1998 the State Auditor Office prepared a report claiming that the common characteristic of these programs was that they demarcated tasks too generally and did not define who was responsible for their execution, nor did they ensure monitoring of the programs. Gyula Pulay and János Benkő, A magyarországi cigányság helyzetének javítására és felemelkedésére a rendszerváltás óta fordított támogatások mértékéről és hatékonyságáról [Rate and efficiency of expenditures spent for the improvement of living conditions of the Roma in Hungary, since the regime change] (Budapest: Állami Számvésvédelmi Fejlesztési és Módszertani Intézet, 2008), 23.

16 A sum of 680 million forints was spent, which is half of what was applied for (Model program for the housing and social integration of those living in Gypsy settlements, 2006). In 2006, eleven more municipalities were granted 500 million forints and in 2007 further 660 million forints was earmarked for another nine municipalities. When choosing municipalities the decision makers employed the typology designed

17 Typically, the text of the law on education of the time used the terms “Roma” and “Gypsy” sparingly, while the term “disadvantageously situated” was used 29 times. Dupcsik, A magyarországi cigányszág története, 297.

18 Summary evaluation study on the rate and efficiency of aid used since regime change for the improvement of the situation and advancement of Roma in Hungary. State Audit Office, Institute for Development and Methodology, 2008 [include to bibliography].

19 Regarding mother tongue, three Roma groups are defined: Hungarian-speaking Romungro, Hungarian and Vlach (Romani)-speaking Vlach Roma, and Hungarian and Boyash (an archic version of Romanian)-speaking Boyash Roma.


22 Ethnic data collection in the interest of executing fundamental rights is tied to the conditions and rules for protecting personal data. Individuals are provided with guaranteed protection, but in the majority of cases the creation of ethnic data and the use of it by state authorities is not ruled out. As such, the rules protecting personal data can be interpreted as defining the authorization of data handling, and excluding the possibility that those unauthorized would have access to the data, and in some cases later, when the handling of such data is no longer necessary, it will be erased.

23 In January of 2008, a five-person group attacked a Roma woman and her daughter in Szigetvár. The perpetrators were sentenced by the first instance court for truculence. In April of 2009, after an appeal to the Baranya County Court, the higher court passed a sentence on violence against the group, in accordance with the Criminal Code (174/B). For more information see: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), “Addressing Violence, Promoting Integration. Field Assessment of Violent Incidents against Roma in Hungary: Key Developments, Findings and Recommendations,” report on a field assessment in Hungary in June-July 2009 (Warsaw: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2010).

24 After murders in Tatárszentgyörgy, Gypsies in Miskolc attacked a car that was “patrolling” near their homes. The car damage was estimated at 100,000 forints, and the passengers were lightly injured. The court sentenced the eleven charged for a total
of forty-one years imprisonment. In September of 2009, a group of mostly Gypsies harassed a student in Tavaszmező street in Józsefváros (an inner district of Budapest): seven persons charged were sentenced a total of twenty-nine years in prison.

25 This approach reflects situations outside Europe as well. For example, in Canada non-assimilated immigrant groups are considered minorities.

26 A few EU member states—like France and Greece—do not recognize minorities at all.


28 According to the former Minority Act (Art. 1(2)), “a national or ethnic minority (hereinafter ’minority’) is an ethnic group which has been living on the territory of the Republic of Hungary for at least one century, which represents a numerical minority among the citizens of the state, the members of which are Hungarian citizens, and are distinguished from the rest of the citizens by their own language, culture and traditions, and at the same time demonstrate a sense of belonging together, which is aimed at the preservation of all these, and at the expression and the protection of the interests of their historical communities.” According to the Act (Art. 61(1)), the following groups qualified as autochthonous national or ethnic groups: Bulgarian, Roma, Greek, Croatian, Polish, German, Armenian, Romanian, Ruthenian, Serb, Slovak, Slovenian and Ukrainian.

29 Act CLXXIX of 2011 on the Rights of Nationalities.

30 The majority of Greeks in Hungary, for example, are not descendants of families who lived in the territory of the country hundreds of years ago and since assimilated. Rather, most of them are Greek communist partisans and their offspring who came to Hungary after losing the civil war. (In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Orthodox Christians from the Balkans who settled in the country were often called “Greeks,” but it is likely that the majority of them did not speak Greek as their mother tongue.) The Armenians who speak Armenian in Hungary are not the descendants of Armenians from Hungary in the nineteenth-century, but instead the descendants of those who fled the Armenian genocide in 1916 and came to Hungary.


32 The first Appendix to the Minority Act left the list unchanged but replaced the term Gypsies to Roma.

33 Majtényi, A nemzetállam új ruhája.


38 Ibid., 198.

39 Ibid.
"The law is not to blame, but its application". Paulus (Digest, XXVI. II. 30).

For more on this issue see: Vera Messing, “Egymásnak kiszolgáltatva. Inter-ethnikus konfliktusok és a média” [At the mercy of each other. Interethic conflicts and the media], in Kisebbségek kisebbsége. A magyarországi cigányok emberi és politikai jogai [Minority among the minorities: Human and political rights of Roma in Hungary], ed. Mária Neményi and Júlia Szalai (Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó, 2005), 316-353.

Bruno De Witte, “Politics versus Law in the EU’s Approach to Ethnic Minorities,” European University Institute Working Paper, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, no. 4 (Florence: European University Institute, 2000).


According to Act LXI of 2002 on the modification to the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary Act XX of 1949, § 7, the active voting right of all citizens in national and ethnic minority self-government elections was suspended, effective May 1, 2004. Later, the voting requirements for national and ethnic elections were defined in Act CXIV of 2005, § 2. The rules established in 2005 were the foundation for Act CLXXIX of 2011 on the rights of nationalities.


Magyar Nemzet, August 28, 1989; September 4.


Ibid., 24–25.


Wizner, "Osztok, keverek," 433.


On the colonization and logic of Roma politics see: Révész, “Hosszú útról”; Aladár Horváth, "A hübéres cigánypolitika folyamatossága" [The continuity of vassal Gypsy
policy], *Amaro Drom*, special issue based on “Humán Rajt” conference presentations (Székesfehérvár, May 14, 1995), 5


59 After the 2006 minority self-government elections the Hungarian Roma Parliament, led by Jenő Zsigó, found itself in a minority position in the Budapest Gypsy Minority Self-Government. In March of 2007 István Makai, the head of the Roma Civic Group, was elected president of the Budapest Gypsy Minority Self-Government.


61 Ibid., 161.

62 Farkas mentions the Roma Civil Rights Movement’s case on the segregated graduation ceremony in Tiszavasvári as an example. Ibid., 161.

63 There are many more media outlets that have appeared since the regime change that are for Roma, about Roma or produced in the name of Roma. These include *Glinda*, *Lungo Drom* and *Világunk* periodicals; C-Press press agency; and romapage.hu, romaweb.hu and recently sosinet.hu websites.


65 Several asylum seekers were granted political asylum in March of 2001. The European Court of Human Rights declared that the plaintiffs had not exhausted all legal opportunities and deemed the complaint unjustified on June 8, 2001. The full ECHR procedure is laid out in: Tamás Bán, “Az Emberi Jogok Európai Bíróságának ítéleteiből” [On the judgements of the European Court of Justice], *Fundamentum* 3 (2001): 112–113.


68 The periodical *Rom Som*, which was relaunched in 1995, included a volume named *Romane poetongi antológia*, in which the poems of Gypsy poets from Hungary and abroad were published. The three-language publication was a message from Roma artists claiming that their art was connected not only to Hungarian literature but to international Roma...


Péter Szuhay provides an overview of representations in Roma fine arts and photographic arts. Based on his study the main stations in the process of (self-)representation since the regime change are as follows: the Ethnography Museum opened an exhibit called “Images of the Hungarian Gypsy community from the history of the 20th century” in 1993 and “Roma in Central and Eastern Europe” in 1998. The latter—with an eye to the self-representation efforts of Roma artists—sharply distinguished Gypsy images by members of the “majority” and works of Gypsy self-image representation. On the 60th anniversary of the Roma Holocaust in 2004, thirteen Roma artists contributed to a joint project called “Common Memories.” In the spring of 2005 a review exhibit called “Images, Gypsies and Gypsy images” opened in the exhibit hall of Millenáris Park in Budapest. It covered photographic images of Gypsies in Hungary and provoked a spirited debate in the press over whether outsider “majority” representations are acceptable to the Roma. A private initiative in 2009 saw the formation of the fresco village in Bódvalenke, within the framework of which Hungarian and foreign Roma painted frescos on the walls of village houses. In 2007 Timea Junghaus organized the Roma pavilion exhibit at the Venice Biennale. In 2007 an exhibit put together from photos of the Chachipe Photo Contest were displayed at the Central Gallery of the OSA Archives, in a move against the presentation of Roma stereotypes. Szuhay, “Ki beszéd?” 373–386.


These were: Croatian, German, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak and Slovenian.


Act XLIII of 2008 on the extension of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to Romani and Beash languages as a liability undertaken in the European Charter.

78 Published dossier of the Supreme Court, EBH 2001. The decision of the court contained the following: “The legality of the decision…to justify banning all Roma students from using the gym for good based on the occasional infection of some Roma students (even if this infection was at times quite significant).”

79 Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).


83 Ibid., 15.

84 See for example Constitutional Court decision 41/2007. (VI. 20.).

85 Article 13 of the European Union Directive on Racial Equality committed Hungary to establishing a separate institution for the execution of equal treatment principles. The Equal Treatment Authority began its operations on February 1, 2005, even though Hungary—just like the other countries that joined the EU at the same time—should have passed the Act carrying out the directive immediately. The Authority is expected to be “independent,” but this is compromised by the fact that it is under the aegis of a ministry. Among other things this authority—should it discover breaches of the law—can order a cessation of the breach, mete out fines (of a sum between 50,000 and 6 million forints), or make use of legal consequences laid out in other laws. It further has the ability to launch communal suits (it has not used this right), offer its opinion on bills, offer its recommendations to government, provide information and aid in the effort to confront trespasses of equal treatment.


87 Országgyűlési Biztosok Hivatala [Parliamentary Commissioners’ Office], “Beszámoló a nemzeti és etnikai kisebbségi jogok országgyűlési biztosának tevékenységéről” [Report on the activities of the Parliamentary Commissioner on the rights of national and ethnic minorities], 2001, 83–86.

88 See the 2008 report of the Minority Ombudsperson: Nemzeti és Etnikai Kisebbségi Jogok Országgyűlési Biztosa [Parliamentary Commissioner for the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities], “Jelentés a szociális ellátásokat szigorító egyes helyi önkormányzati rendeletek kisebbségi jogi szempontú vizsgálatáról (a ‘monoki modell’)” [Report on municipal resolutions making social services stricter from the point of view of minority rights (the ‘Monok model’)].


91 UN CEDAW Communication No. 4/2004.

94 For a summary of the tendering system see: Wizner, “Osztok keverék.”
95 People’s colleges operated in Hungary from 1945 to 1949, and enabled talented young people from poor—mainly peasant—families to gain a university degree.
97 Diósi, Szentől szemben, 85.
103 Ibid., 35–36.
106 Jenő Zsigó, “Feltárnini és megnevezni az elnyomások direkt rendszerét” [To disclose and name the direct system of subordinations], in Kisebbségek kisebbsége [Minority among the minorities: Human and political rights of Roma in Hungary], ed. Mária Neményi and Júlia Szalai (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2005), 7–41.
108 Ibid., 58.

114 Éva Havasi, ”Megélhetési nehézségek, anyagi depriváció” [Subsistence Difficulties, Material Deprivation], in Feketén, fehéren [Black and white], ed. Péter Szivós and István György Tóth (Budapest: Tárki, Monitor jelentések, 2007), 59–82.


117 Tünde Virág, Kirekesztve: Falusi gettók az ország peremén [Excluded: Rural ghettos at the edges of the country] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 2010), 133–135.

118 Ibid., 141.


120 Virág, Kirekesztve, 147.

121 Ibid., 150–151.


123 Ibid., 17.


128 Kertesi, A társadalom peremén, xvii.


130 Kemény, Janky and Lengyel, A magyarországi cigányság, 57; Janky, “A cigány családok jövedelmi helyzete,” 402.


134 Source: [http://www.hirtv.hu/belfold/?article_hid=256286](http://www.hirtv.hu/belfold/?article_hid=256286).


136 MIÉP garnered 5.5% of the popular vote in the 1998 parliamentary elections.

137 “Gábor Bethlen Program,” point 9., Order is the soul of all things. The full text of the program is available at: [http://www.jobbik.hu/rovatok/bethlen_gabor_program/bethlen_gabor_program](http://www.jobbik.hu/rovatok/bethlen_gabor_program/bethlen_gabor_program).


142 The program saw the establishment of legal aid offices in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County.


144 Founding statement available at: [http://magyargarda.hu/alapito_nyilatkozat](http://magyargarda.hu/alapito_nyilatkozat).

145 Guy Lázár, “A felnőtt lakosság nemzeti identitása a kisebbségekhez való viszony tükrében” [The national identity of the adult population in the light of its relation to

146 TÁRKI – Omnibusz-research, 2008.

147 In Hungary in 2006, 59 percent of respondents did not want to accept Pirezians, while a repeated survey in February of 2007 showed that anti-Pirezianism increased to 68 percent. It decreased to 63 percent in June of 2009. See: http://www.tarki.hu/hu/news/2009/kitekint/20090708.html.


149 Dupcsik, A magyarországi cigányos cigányság története, 336.

150 Of course a lack of high-quality expert studies is not the reason that Hungary does not use evidence-based policy making. The opposite is true: there is no political and policy pressure on decision makers to make use of social science research results.


152 Dupcsik, A magyarországi cigányság története, 20–26, 249–267.


155 It seems as if the question of when a body of research constructs and then deconstructs, all while Roma communities change with the passing of time, depends primarily on science’s own sense of time (on the context defining scientific text). As Vera Messing put it: “There is a new Roma/Gypsy identity forming in a generation with strong consciousness and ethnic affiliation, of which the science and politics of the majority does not take note. The process of forming identity and community is by all means worth analyzing.” Messing, “Gondolatok,” 217.

156 Anderson, Imagined Communities: On the Origins and Spread of Nationalism.


