

Roma and Gypsies in the Mediterranean: Circulating categories, Maintaining boundaries

Milena Doytcheva¹

Within the background of an important and long-standing issue for ethnic studies about the individual and more collective framings of identification, belonging, and mobilisation, the article aims to explore the situations of age-old integration and the more recent visibility, driven by European mobilities, of populations identified as Roma and Gypsies (*Tsiganes*)². It proposes to pay attention to the way in which historical situations of minorisation have been reset in recent years by the spread of new intra-European migrations, thus favouring a particular path of analysis, which is the one of ethnic labels and distinctions underpinning the definition and politicisation of these issues. Drawing on the study of three main countries of immigration in Europe, namely Spain, France and Italy, we shall examine how the movements under way in the recent period from Eastern Europe have, to a greater or lesser extent, renewed old minority settings. What have been their consequences in terms of identification, collective claims and mobilisations? How do the ethnic distinctions at play represent, or not, relevant categories of knowledge and intervention to reflect on the dynamics of integration of those who experts identify as the ‘the largest European minority’?

The Mediterranean Basin offers, in this sense, a relevant entry point, as it seems to form a ‘nodal area’ both in the historic processes of Romani dispersion and the recent waves of immigration (Bergeon, 2015). Building on a comparative analytical framework, drawing on research about *Gitanos* in Spain, *Romanlar* in Turkey, Roma in Bulgaria, among others, we tend to show that European policies are not without some influence on the processes of social, national and more local construction of Roma public identities, while the literature mainly insists on the idea of a ‘local prism’ in the perception and formulation of a haunting “Gypsy question” (Sigona, 2005)³. Siding with these rapid preliminary remarks, we argue the need to systematically test these problems through various public arenas and ‘scales of justice’ (Fraser, 2008) – local, national, supranational and European – underscoring the logics of category and policy mobilities (McCann, 2011), as well as unveiling processes of boundary maintenance. Indeed, while the emergence of a supranational political space has, in recent times, fostered the possibility for claiming rights and equality (Balibar, 2011), it is undoubtedly far from exhausting the long-standing and deep-rooted system of persecution and

¹ Associated professor of sociology, University of Lille SHS, CeRIES (EA 3589): Domaine universitaire du Pont de Bois, BP 60149, F- 59653 Villeneuve d’Ascq cedex : doytcheva.milena@gmail.com

² We follow here the expression coined by French scholar Jean-Pierre Liégeois (2009) in his classical essay. The use of italics is meant to emphasise the subjectivist and relational dimension of labels and ethnic distinctions, endorsed by actors in situation in order to categorise themselves and others for purposes of interaction (Barth, 1969): whereby ethnic groups are primarily categories of ascription and identification, based on social relations (see also *infra*).

³ We draw here on the results under development of the research project “Migrants roms dans l’espace public: (in)visibilités contraintes, mobilisations, habitat” (Ville de Paris, programme « Paris 2030 », and Laboratoire d’Excellence TEPSIS- EHESS, ANR-11-LABX-0067, 2013-2016). Through multiple field studies focused on processes of politicisation (media coverage, collective action, local policies of ‘inclusion’), the project aims to explore in a cross-scalar and multi-situated approach the differentiated strategies of integration developed towards these populations by a plurality of actors (NGOs, elected officials, social workers, urban policy developers, international experts). Building on a comparative analytical framework, it points out some tensions between processes of ‘transnationalisation’ and rooted national and local configurations. See also for preliminary results Doytcheva (2015; 2016).

oppression, tied to Anti-Gypsyism, that these populations have been experiencing in differentiated ways across time and space. Finally, rather than a continuity or a mere juxtaposition, we argue the conflicted integration of policy schemes and interventions, whereby the ‘protection of minorities’ intersects, and sometimes blankets, age-old situations of exclusion and discrimination.

I. The public figure of the Roma: a European perspective

Recently, the issue were first raised in the East, within the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which, in the wake of several decades of Communism, had to reset a democratic rule of coexistence between various ethnic minorities. In this context, the concern was first formulated for the Muslim populations. Then, in the middle of the 2000’s, it shifted towards the Roma (Ragaru, 2008; 2015), who were enduring growing victimisation and rampant social and economic marginalisation. The common and, in theory, generic identification of *Roma* prevailed rapidly to define these groups and populations, against the traditional, local and more usual denominations (e.g. *Tigani*, *Tsigani*, *Cingenerler*, *Zingari*...). This renewal of identification partook also of a rationale of ‘destigmatisation’ (Pierrot, 2011). In fact, while these latter designations are exonyms, the term Roma (Rrom in certain spellings and variants of Romani) is deemed, on the contrary, to form an endonym, and to be clearly part of an identity claim and mobilisation, or to have been so at least at the start.

1.1 Salience of culture and pervasiveness of race

To shed light on these dynamics of Europeanisation and ‘transnationalisation’, the study of ethnonyms and identificatory processes offers indeed a heuristic opportunity. While, as demonstrated by Denys Cuche (2008), social categorisation is vital to the existence of any social group, categorising is not neutral. In everyday French, the term is implicitly pejorative, especially when used for vulnerable and deprived populations (Pierrot, 2011). Derived from *kategorein*, it means both ‘speak against, accuse, reproach’ and ‘state, signify, affirm’. By using the power of revelation exercised by objectification in discourse, “‘ethnic’ or ‘regional’ categories, like categories of kinship, institute a reality” (Bourdieu, 1980). This ‘reality’ is however not given but historically constructed and situated in the societies that use and legitimate them (Desrosières, 1993; Martiniello & Simon, 2005). As part of the definition and social recognition of groups that could legitimately act in democratic life, and possibly claim specific rights, these processes are a strategic issue of power in post-migratory societies. It is the power to impose a vision and representation of the world that are perceived as legitimate, but also the power to re-signify assigned identities, a power that is often denied to minorities (Guillaumin, 1972).

In this essay, so as to refer to the study populations, we follow the expression coined by the French scholar Jean-Pierre Liégeois (2009; see also Doytcheva, 2015), of ‘Roma and Gypsies’ (*Roms et Tsiganes*). Although, from the author’s viewpoint, these two terms are not synonyms, by borrowing multiple strategies of identification, we try, for instance, to underscore the fluidity and malleability of these collective identities. In addition, this allows the combination of a self- and a hetero-identification, given that many people today referred to as *Roma* identify themselves first and foremost as *Gypsies*, including in emigration societies. The latter form a traditional category, often considered as more socially meaningful than *Roma*, which may be perceived – especially in France – as a neologism. Thereby we

move away from any attempt of an ‘objective’ definition of these groups and collective ‘identities’, emphasising the way in which ethnic labels and distinctions are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves, primarily based on social relations, and used in order to organise interactions (Barth, 1969; see also Martiniello, 1995; Poutignat & Streiff-Fénart, 2008)⁴.

Institutionally, from the end of the 1960s, the Council of Europe was one of the first to address these issues. Amid a series of resolutions, recommendations and reports, its action could be characterised as global: the promotion of culture, the teaching of the Romani language and access to information and education occupy a prominent place (Liégeois 2007). In the approach developed by the CoE, Gypsies are also a ‘true European minority’ that greatly contribute to the cultural diversity of Europe (Recommendation 1203 of 1993). The aim of their identification and recognition – local *versus* transnational and European communities – has, in recent years, been at the centre of an important appraisal work. In 2003, following a dedicated seminar, the Council committed to a ‘harmonisation of terminology’: the term ‘gypsy’ was officially banned in 2005, at the request of the community’s organisations, who saw this term as an exogenous and paternalistic identification, laden with stereotypes⁵. At the end of the decade, the term ‘Roma’ prevailed as the generic designation and in theory common to all communities⁶. It should be noted that this work was followed by other European bodies, in particular the European Commission and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). In order to fight the effects of reification associated with a single, univocal categorisation, alternative spelling forms have been used: Rromani (with a double r as in certain variants of the Romani language and in certain schools), Romany (another variant of Romani); or even the multiplication of identificatory strategies, more so in the academic field, which we also endorse here: ‘Roma/Gypsies’, ‘Roma and Gypsies’, ‘Roma and Sinti’ in Italy.

But, while it undoubtedly opened new forums to claim rights and equality, the development of European and EU institutions may have produced ‘contradictory effects’. According to Etienne Balibar (2011), while, on the one hand, Europe granted Romani people a common identity, or rather a categorisation, this may have contributed on the other hand to a process of *racialisation* (cf. also *infra*), putting the Roma in the same category as ‘third-country nationals’, within the general framework of an emerging ‘European apartheid’, which constitutes the dark side of the European citizenship. Also adding to such a misapprehension is the question of ‘origins’, often raised about them, and that is significant of the clumsy will to valorise Roma – as ‘Indo-Europeans’, who came from India, etc. – whereas the priority for those concerned is first of all to obtain the same national legitimacy as their fellow citizens, or in some ways the right to autochthony (Pierrot, 2011).

In these analyses, several aspects define the current situation: one of them concerns the tendency of Europeans to project onto Roma their own racial prejudices vis-a-vis other nations. If the French press is eager to report on pogroms taking place in Italy or Hungary, or

⁴ We thus adopt a subjectivist and constructionist approach of ethnic distinctions, making emphasis on ascription as the critical feature of ethnic group. As Barth puts it, “the boundaries of the pariah group are most strongly maintained by the excluding host population” (Barth, 1969).

⁵ “The cultural identities of Roma, Gypsies, Travellers and related groups in Europe”, CoE, 2003.

⁶ According to the definition by the Council: “The term ‘Roma’ refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.” cf. CoE, *Glossaire terminologique*, May 2012, <https://rm.coe.int/1680088eaa>

discrimination in Romania, it remains almost silent on the way in which local councils in France reject ‘nomads’ from the municipal territory, or the way in which the French border police expel Romanians and Bulgarians to maximise their official records, knowing full well that, as EU citizens, they will soon be returning (Balibar, 2011; Dalibert & Doytcheva, 2014). European nations, who officially have surmounted their age-old hostilities, are in fact still full of mutual resentment and distrust, that they tend to project onto ‘deviant’ groups. The Roma, like a ‘nation in excess’, are an ideal target for the crystallisation and shift of these intra-European xenophobic tendencies. Through their trajectories of mobility and *detritorialisation*, they “incarnate the archetype of a *stateless people*, resisting the norms of cultural homogenisation” (Balibar, 2011: 141). The task of their identification however should not be limited solely to the work of international bodies involved in ‘minority protection’.

As shown in France by the work of Henriette Asseo (2007), as early as 1905, in ‘police conventions’, an ‘international gypsy question’ was raised, leading at the time to the implementation of discriminatory legislations in almost all European countries. Therefore this raises the question of differences and commonalities between the current situation of *transnationalisation* and other historical configurations⁷.

1.2 Racism and neoliberalism: the Roma example

Following the thesis of a recent book sought to explore the complex historical relationship between immigration, democracy and racism (Fitzgerald and Cook-Martín, 2014), the conventional claim according to which these two latter concepts are antithetical cannot explain why liberal democracies led the way in the adoption of racist immigration policy and were slower to repeal those racist laws. But while liberalism, authors argue, “has had a greater affinity with ethnic selectivity than with universalism”, this link is not in their view necessary, i.e. deterministic, but rather probabilistic. There is no “iron law” connecting them: rather than positing a strong correlation, it would be thus more appropriate to study the way in which the age-old phenomenon of Anti-Gypsyism today resounds with the neoliberal rationale of capitalism.

In this sense, the trend of neoliberal urban governance, which excludes and sends the most vulnerable to its outskirts, is first explored. When receiving various empirical tests (Günes, 2015; Sarcinelli 2015), the hypothesis cannot admit an unequivocal validation, as it is true that examples of segregative and exclusionist urban treatment are so numerous and various in time and space, for current governance to be their sole explanation. In a recent essay, by following the analyses of Michel Feher, Éric Fassin proposes another interpretation of the current activation of Anti-Gypsyism by neoliberal capitalism. According to him, if amid the political changes that intervened in 2012 in France there was no change in the political handling of the ‘Roma issue’, no more than in that of austerity policies, it is because both “are the flip side of a same neoliberal policy” that these governments from different political boards “are sharing” together (2014: 62).

⁷ Beyond and beneath, one could say, the posited distinction between segregation, exclusion *versus* nowadays integration, criticised however to produce some similar effects.

By using Feher's words, Fassin dwells on "a neoliberal condition" whose nature is to give a value to everything, where everything is driven by an "aspiration to rise in value". But what happens in these conditions of life with no value, hardly even worth *throwing away*? The 'Roma issue' would thus symbolise, on the basis of a minority exception, what could as well be the rule for the majority, the one of a 'throwaway economy' and a 'policy of scrap'. The author then operates a link with the Foucauldian concept of biopower: "Race, racism, is the condition for the acceptability of putting to death in a society of normalisation⁸". Racism introduces a caesura into the biological continuum addressed by biopower. It is the source of an original biopolitical regime invented by neoliberal governmentality in relation to the Roma: "Not letting them live, without necessarily making them die" (Fassin et al. 2014: 70). By taking pain as a political analyser, Lorenzo Alunni (2015) studies the current forms of this biopower exerted over migrants, through the medicalisation of *campi romi* and the mobilisation of humanitarian policies and emergency aid towards them. Not without paradox, in these examples, humanitarian morals contribute to a securitarian government (Ticktin 2011), when "protecting the Roma" also allows to "protect society against the Roma". Whether in terms of health or 'parenting', the copresence of suspicion and a compassionate relationship to these individuals constitutes a structuring and strongly racialising scheme (Sarcinelli, 2014; Alunni, 2015).

Finally, as shown by the examples above, the logics of Anti-Gypsyism can thus intersect those vowed to tackle it. However, in light of an historical and comparative analysis, its link to liberalism, we argue, cannot be essentialised. Sometimes 'totalitarian', sometimes 'liberal', 'democratic' or 'post-communist', expressions of racism resound with more general schemes of hierarchy and domination in society. According to Nadège Ragaru, on the basis of a fine-grained analysis of policies established by emigration countries, rather than a contradiction or ideological opposition between different policy schemes, it is more so a process of sedimentation that can be observed over time. At a time when (Western) European advisors were busy exporting 'best practices', a more ambiguous configuration succeeded, in which the homogenisation of knowledge and practice had the downside of disseminating models "henceforth saturated with shared prejudices" (Ragaru 2008, 2015).

1.3 Transnational *versus* local minority?

Within the neoliberal scenario, other hypotheses and more specifically French ones, underscore the role played in these processes by the European and international organisations: this is "the Roma issue's expert manufacture", a laboratory of neoliberal social policy, according to such an analysis (Olivera, 2011: 115). By fabricating this new category of intervention, and by bringing it forward to the attention of public opinions and policymakers, these organisations may have, in fact, subsequently produced 'the Roma problem' itself. By doing so, they may have created a 'diversion' allowing them to delete from agenda social and economical difficulties, recurring crisis, and austerity policies. The fall of the Berlin Wall, in 1989, may have played on these issues "the same role" as the weakening of the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century, following an argument that is not unlike Hirschman's thesis of futility⁹.

⁸ Foucault Michel, « *Il faut défendre la société* ». *Cours au Collège de France 1976*, cited by Fassin (2014: 68).

⁹ According to the French aphorism recalled by Hirschman (1991) to sum up the futility thesis: "The more things change, the more they stay the same" (*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*). Hirschman's futility thesis thus stipulates that some problems are so large and intractable that any efforts to address them are simply futile. As put by Olivera: "There is

But the explanation of racism and discrimination through the existence of an ethno-racial structure of differentiation is, we argue, no less problematic. Indeed, to what extent are these structures of differentiation the source of power relations and to what extent are they the very result of it? As sociological theories on racism claim, “contrary to what we often believe, the idea of ‘race’ is not what racism is logically rooted in, but on the contrary, what it produces.” (De Rudder et al. 2000: 35 et sq.). Reaffirming this perspective allows us to take into account the salience of processes of identity and cultural ascription. As Anne Philips puts it on another, nonetheless related issue, *culturalisation* of subjects and practices ‘works’ because it is familiar to majority, and not because it is ‘exotic’ or ‘foreign’ to it. Prejudices diffuse more easily when they resound with collective imaginaries that are already gendered, age or class-oriented (Phillips, 2007).

Likewise, approaches carried out by international organisations are not all equal or uniform. For the Council of Europe, which, as we have seen, has focused on the issue since the late 1960s, Gypsies form a “true European minority” that greatly contribute to the cultural diversity of Europe. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992) and The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1995) are as such two main instruments of its policy that are not specific to the Roma. On the contrary, it was much more recently that the EU addressed the question, through changing political frameworks, and, as shown by some pioneering research, a groping construction of ‘public Roma issues’. But above all, these concerns were subjugated to what we called a “dual European strategy” (Doytcheva, 2011).

Indeed, while the ratification of international instruments by Central and Eastern European countries was required as a condition prior to the accession negotiations, the same objective received little support and eventually raised suspicion in the countries of immigration¹⁰. Where it has come to question “who produces the ‘knowledge’ about this object?” and “for what reason?” (Olivera, 2011). According to this analysis, the “rhetoric of ‘Roma victimhood’” is not something new. It emerged at the end of the 1990s with the first talks with Central and Eastern European countries, candidates for accession. But “the epistemology of knowledge” produced in these conditions was criticised (Farget, 2011). Supposedly influenced by a solely ‘objectivist’ approach in the definition of these groups, it would have led to the crystallisation of mainly victimised representations associated with them. It thus may have helped to develop a notion of an only ‘palliative citizenship’ (Thomas, 2010:183), i.e. organised by others for them and most often without them. In addition, that would have strengthened a tendency towards an over-homogenisation of the diversity of local situations.

But, however diverse the nature and trajectories of local situations, as evidenced by the different contributions to this volume (Nedelcu et al., 2016) and beyond, by a growing amount of research in the field, the groups thus identified *qua* Roma share a long-standing situation of exclusion and discrimination, backed by the century-old system of persecution, tied to Anti-Gypsyism. The latter can be defined as a particular form of racism, characterised by the (very) long-term persistence of prejudice, its systematic nature, the fact that it is accepted by the large majority, accompanied by acts of violence, a dehumanisation of individuals, as well as institutional and systemic discrimination¹¹. From this view point, while the notions of

no point ‘fighting against discrimination’ or invoking ‘inclusion’, when it is the system itself as it functions that marginalises the weakest...” It is not the Roma that need a voluntary and coordinated policy, because “a good part of these communities, both in the West and in the East, are very well integrated into local societies [...] and do not ask but to lead their lives as they want, without reified categorisations coming from outside.” (2011: 116)

¹⁰ Typically France, but also Italy or Netherlands, among others.

¹¹ <http://www.ergonetwork.org/antigypsyism.htm>

'identity' or 'community' have been rightfully subjected to criticism, that of *minority*, defined in sociological and not in statistical terms, seems to suit quite particularly¹².

Although the principles of claiming rights and equality have been at the heart of approaches promoted by both European and international agencies during the post-war period, they seem for the time being insufficient to more deeply impact local political arenas, at least in the sense of reversing long-standing situations of exclusion and prejudice. The very use of the category *Roma* bears witness to this. Flagged in an autonomous way as an emblem of these communities in the early 1970s, at the first 'World Romani Congress' held in 1971 in London (which led to the formation of the International Romani Union some years later), it was clearly, even though discretely, part of a 'destigmatisation' strategy. Borrowed from the Romani language, the word *Rom*, which means 'man', allows the group to differentiate itself from others by identifying with 'men par excellence'. But, as noted by the linguist A. Pierrot, once the most generic term is "monopolised to speak of oneself", from a majoritarian point of view it can be perceived on the contrary as specific and become demeaning (Pierrot, 2011). An ideological reversal is thus operating in practises and representations, overturning policies designed to *include* the Roma into interventions that can even overlap with situations of direct discrimination, on the pretext of supposedly taking them into account. To paraphrase A. Philipps, what resembles a process of accommodating difference, can become the imposition of sameness.

II. National diversity models and Roma migrations

An examination of national policies and local situations provides an instant illustration. Indeed, while the idea of a 'Roma identity' is frequently denounced as a recent political construction, or even as a 'mirage' of the politics of recognition, patterns of *racialisation*, for their part, resound with the representations and structures of domination that are deeply entrenched in the majority and national views. By racialisation we mean the process of essentialisation and naturalisation of socially produced differences, whether based on culture, religion, history or physical and phenotypic traits¹³. The rationale of racism being to introduce a determinism between these arbitrarily isolated and socially constructed traits and individual behaviour, the distinctive feature of the assigned characteristics will be that they are thought to form an 'essence', predicating the intrinsic difference of these populations. Culturalism merges with biologisation, thereby creating a radical otherness.

In France, Henriette Asséo highlights "a historical marginality, consubstantial with Bohemians" (2007: 161), backed by overriding and discriminatory legislation which spread in the beginning of the 20th century, operating an 'exotic contamination' from immigrants towards nationals. The French Republic exerted very little corrective power over it. Rather than fighting ancestral prejudice against *Bohemians*, the Republicans on the contrary institutionalised them through various measures intended first of all for 'nomads', then more recently for 'Travellers' (*Gens du voyage*). The administrative category of 'travellers', which designates (without having a clear definition) populations subject to derogations from common law, was established by the law of 3 January 1969, replacing that of 'nomads', which had been in use since the law of 16 July 1912. Constructed from the late 19th century

¹² I.e., "which is included in the processes of social classification, differentiation and hierarchisation, within an unequal distribution of material and symbolic goods" (Simon, 2006: 152)

¹³ For further definition see, for example, De Rudder et al. (2000: 32 et sq.)

onwards by expanding on a professional category, that of ‘fairground artists’, so as to incorporate the deemed Gypsy groups, *Travellers* forms an “ethno-professional category” but also “a legal discriminatory tool” (Blum Le Coat et al., 2004; Belqasmi 2015).

In order to shed light on these forms of *segregative integration*, from a historical and comparative perspective, we focus here on the study of the three main countries of immigration, which in recent times have been France, Italy and Spain. Thus we aim to clarify the way in which the respective national settings, built in the long term, in relation to local communities, account for policies dealing with the recent migrations and mobilities. To what extent have these national framings influenced the acceptance of EU programmes and objectives? From a more sociological perspective, how have recent waves of immigration redefined the boundaries of a supposedly shared ethnic identity, fuelling specific strategies of mobilisation?

The French, Spanish and Italian cases provide very rich heuristic opportunities to approach such questions. We can schematically typify them on the basis of a three-fold distinction: The ‘politics of recognition’ of the *Gitano* people in Spain, in which the ‘new Roma’ are included. Spain has thus often been presented, although somewhat superficially, as a ‘model of integration’ for Romani populations (1). Building on the negative aspects of prejudice and a common ascription to the strongly racialised category of ‘nomads’, rather than on claims for recognition, another case for continuity is offered by Italy (2). Lastly, in between these two, as usual, the French situation is characterised by the theoretical refusal of public regulation on ethnicity: the latest research invites us no less to consider the ways in which current situations are intertwining with previous definitions of ‘*tsiganité*’ (gypsyhood), but also and very often, as we shall see, of coloniality (3).

1.1 The Spanish ‘model of integration’

The Spanish situation, which is relatively less studied in France compared to that of Italy, nevertheless provides an opportunity for particularly rich and stimulating insights. Spain is in fact the country with the highest number of new Eastern European immigrants: ranging between 50,000¹⁴ and 170,000 people (whereas 20,000 is the figure often given for France and 30,000 is cited for Italy). Spain did not apply transitional measures for new EU citizens over the period 2007-2014 in the same way than the other two countries¹⁵. While this did not overcome numerous situations of administrative and social difficulty, the influence exerted on public opinion and policy interventions remains to be assessed.

In addition to being a privileged destination for recent migrations, the country has a long-standing reputation as a ‘model of integration’ of the *Gitanos*. In the context of significant regional autonomy, these issues indeed found local relays. Catalonia and the Basque Country for example, built on principles of recognition to assert their legislative power. In 2001, Catalonia officially recognised “the identity of the *Gitano* people and the value of its culture”¹⁶. As the choice of terms shows here (that of *people*, rather than population), the approach is explicitly ‘transnational’ and minority-based, thus meeting the frameworks promoted by the European organisations: many regional plans for the inclusion of *Gitano*

¹⁴ According to a low estimate by: *Estrategia nacional para la inclusión social de la población gitana en España 2012-2020*, Ministerio de Sanidad Servicios Sociales e Igualdad (MSSSI), 2012, p. 12.

¹⁵ Initially ended January 2009, transitional arrangements were reintroduced for Romanians only in July 2011.

¹⁶ Resolution 1046/VI by the Parliament of Catalonia “Sobre el reconeixement de la identitat del poble gitano i del valor de la seva Cultura”, 21.11.2001 and *Butlletí Oficial*, No 240.

people from the second half of the 2000s integrated measures in favour of the ‘new Roma’ (Magazzini & Piemontese, 2015). Another striking feature is that Spain seems to be the only country (of the three studied here) to have directed these immigrants towards the common law structures of social action, mostly municipal ones. In both France and Italy the trend is almost reversed, with a prominent part of *ad hoc* solutions and specific measures, the latter having been partly the reason for greater visibility and mediatisation.

Research also highlights the role played by actors from the community, including the NGOs *Gitano* and *pro-Gitano*. While initially these associations seemed to be relatively uninterested, they began to address the issue as it became politicised at national level, and as dedicated European funds were implemented. The targeting of Roma populations is therefore based essentially on association networks, as is also the case in a significant manner in France when minority populations other than Gypsies are concerned (Doytcheva, 2007). For the latter, however, as we shall see later, in both Italy and France, selection is taking place today in an institutional manner, through public policy interventions carried out by *ad hoc* structures, coming under rationales overriding the common law.

But the Spanish framework that seems to a certain extent to have succeeded with the local populations is today showing its limits, when it concerns adapting it to ‘Roma from other countries’, according to the official designation. Indeed, on the one hand, there is a lack of association networks and they are not powerful enough to bear the interests of groups other than the local historic communities. On the other hand, more and more social practitioners seem to question the adequacy between *Gitanos* and ‘new Roma’ in terms of social work.

Last but not least, the allegiance to a common identity, which is claimed in theory, is weakened in fact by the lack of solidarity and real inter-community bonds. Maintaining boundaries prevails over circulating categories, highlighting in actual manner the historical dimension in the construction of each minority situation (Sayad 1977): long-standing and local for some, more recent and rooted in migration for others. In Spain, but also in France and in other countries of immigration, while recent mobilities have reactivated the issue of a supposedly shared ethnic identity, this is not raised spontaneously in the terms of solidarity (Roman 2014, Magazzini & Piemontese 2015). The NGOs *Gitano* and *pro-Gitano* fear for instance that the work carried out on fighting stereotypes and prejudice over several decades will be degraded by parallels made with these *gitanos rumanos*. Especially as the representation of the one who *estafa u obra con engaño*¹⁷ is still today an everyday definition of the Gypsy.

¹⁷

Literally who “Scams or deceives”, a *Gitano* definition still in use in the Royal Academy dictionary.

2-2. The ‘Gypsy nomadism’

Spain is nevertheless the country where social and political mediatisation of a persistent ‘Roma issue’, and the policies of expulsion and rejection that accompany it, have been less salient, even though the number of immigrants is slightly higher than those recorded in the neighbouring countries. Contrary to a common assumption, international requirements and European standards are therefore not without impact, as seen in the Spanish case, on policies implemented at local and national levels. However, far from reflecting a linear transposition or, by contrast, a form of resistance to supranational regulations, the latter are the result of a conflicted integration of schemes of knowledge and intervention, some of them, for instance the local ones, rather reshaped than discredited by European integration (Ragaru, 2015).

This is also what we learn from the study of the Italian situation, where the dynamics of continuity between past and present situations are illustrated, on the flip side of stereotypes and racial prejudice, through the use of a strongly essentialised category of ‘nomads’. Rooted in the racial theories of the 19th century, as well as in Fascist research, the latter involves the conception of heredity of the ‘asociality’ and ‘racial inferiority’ of the *Gypsies*: heterogeneous populations that share the common denominator of being identified as such (Sarcinelli 2014, 2015). In the aftermath of the Second World War, however, a movement of solidarity towards them also developed here, and initiatives of valorisation and social promotion emerged. From the 1980s onwards these paved the way for city policies that focused on implementing special facilities to welcome families. Yet, as shown by Sarcinelli, these different philosophies (stigmatisation *versus* promotion) in reality only had one single result: segregation and marginalisation through the creation of these specific facilities (*uffici nomadi, aree di sosta per nomadi, campi nomadi*). The heterogeneous group of Roma and Sinti, both Italian and foreign, settled or travellers, refugees or migrants, were thus all tarred with the same brush, being ‘nomads’, and therefore subjected to processing in dedicated offices. Reception areas were progressively transformed (including by their inhabitants) to become permanent camps, even though recent studies tend to nuance this observation (Maestri 2015, Vitale 2009). Seemingly marked by the will to protect minorities, this period saw a reappearance of the rationale of ‘gypsy nomadism’, which had been used in the early 20th century to justify exclusion. The multiform nature of the mobilities observed in the recent period however retrieves them from such a *nomadism*, making them on the contrary perfectly fit the contemporary transnational migrations, part of a Europeanisation “from below” (Diminescu et al. 2003, Bergeon, 2015).

After a period of latent problematisation, these recent developments in Italy have nevertheless allowed ‘the Roma issue’ to come to the fore in the political arena, public debate, and academia. Even though the European frameworks of ‘Roma inclusion’ seem, at first sight, to be at odds with local policies of securitisation and abandonment of migrants, neither have they been without some influence. Changing labels— from ‘Nomads’ to ‘Roma’ – are one example. Differentialist treatment continues however, accompanied by more subtle and discreet forms of exclusion, but with just as destructive results. The category of ‘Roma’ under these conditions remains in an ambivalence between “racialisation and categorisation through public policy interventions” (Sarcinelli, 2015). Also raised over the long term, the ‘humanitarian rationale’ helps reinforce this segregationist system, on the fringes of generalist health care and social security institutions (Fassin, 2010; Alunni, 2015). Here lays another mechanism of subordination and insidious racisation, at grips with the biopolitical dynamics of governmentality and ‘inclusion’.

2-3. A Republican ethnicity

Between the Italian situation and the Spanish one, French policies seem to occupy an intermediary and in some ways ambiguous position (Nacu, 2010), due among other things to the claimed principles of ‘colour-blindness’ and a long-standing refusal of ethnicity. In fact, however, they appear to be very close to Italian policies, as attested by a growing amount of comparative research (Legros & Vitale, 2011), as by lexical and conceptual proximities. As a consequence, it is often this ‘unthought’ racial dimension of the Republican model, in politics as in public policy, that is tackled by research.

Modalities of symbolic construction of space, whereby the prejudice against supposed ‘cultural specificities’ reinforces processes of urban segregation and spatial marginalisation, offer a first example to investigate. Other forms of markedness (Brekhus, 1998)¹⁸ and boundary-maintenance are at play implicitly, and not very seldom explicitly¹⁹, acting to project the public figures of these migrants onto an essentialised and radical otherness (Dalibert & Doytcheva 2014; Fassin et al. 2014).

The effects of disruption or continuity, between the political and social construction of the bureaucratised category of ‘Travellers’ (*Gens du voyage*) and that today of ‘Roma migrants’, provide another meaningful exploration target. Indeed, while *Travellers* have been subjected since the 1970s to very carefully designed administrative ‘de-ethnicisation’, migrants originating from the East have been simultaneously construed as a group and community, a process in which the ethno-cultural but also ethno-racial dimension held an important position. While the French government refuses to include French Gypsies and Travellers in its ‘National strategy for Roma integration’, a strong parallelism is at work in practices: implicitly, as in the housing and support operations that were implemented locally; and sometimes explicitly, in words and political interventions²⁰. These involuntary associations or deliberate conflation (Cossée, 2011), clearly indicate an essentialist rationale of racial ascription within a Republican framework, which nevertheless greatly refuses the principle²¹. As Mohamed Belqasmi (2015) puts it: whether it concerns brandishing the ‘Gypsy threat’ or launching trials on unmeltability, the representatives of public authorities exploit accusations of anti-Roma racism in order to better ignore the day-to-day discrimination which hard-up local communities of Gypsies (Travellers) experience routinely.

Means of exemption and exception that guide local policies towards the Roma are in fact not quite dissimilar to ‘the Gypsy policies’, also backed by an overriding and discriminatory regulation at the beginning of the 20th century, in the context of an intensifying ‘State work’ of national identification (Nacu, 2010; Belqasmi 2014, 2015; Doytcheva, 2016).

¹⁸ Following Wayne Brekhus, “the marked represents extremes that stand out as either remarkably ‘above’ or remarkably ‘below’ the norm. The unmarked represents a vast expanse of social reality that is passively defined as unremarkable, *socially generic*” (1998: 35).

¹⁹ As in the statement “they do not want to integrate” released by M. Valls, then Minister of the Interior, in the fall of 2013, arguing that Roma have ‘a specific way of life’ which ‘confronts’ French social norms. Interview at France Inter, the 24th of September 2013 (Dalibert & Doytcheva, 2014).

²⁰ As in the inter-ministerial meeting that followed President Sarkozy’s discourse in Grenoble (July 2010), acting the government will to get rid of “the problems caused by the behaviour of some Roma and Travellers.” (Doytcheva, 2016)

²¹ Travellers and Roma were included together in the first version of the ‘National Strategy for Roma Integration’, produced by the write-wing government of François Fillon in 2011 at the request of the European Commission. In 2013, a revision is planned by Jean-Marc Ayrault, the new left Prime Minister, but does not really take place. It is hard to know today whether the 2011 text is still in force, while the socialist government expressed the willingness not to treat in one and same document ‘Roma’ and ‘Travellers’.

These developments invite us to explore the way in which contemporary issues are, more particularly in France, but also in other countries in specific ways, part of a historical continuum, that is *segregative* and *differentialist*, without always being extraneous to a certain ‘Republican tradition’ (Bessone et al., 2014). In operations aimed to dismantle what are considered ‘illegal installations’ – as in their undersides that make up *inclusion villages* – whose stories pepper the news columns, just as in policies of ‘slum clearance’ in the early 1970s, the implementation of public housing interventions is much a pretext for culling populations, achieving the selection of a few families deemed ‘suitable for integration’, but neglecting the vast majority of *undesirables*. While the *inclusion villages* (Bessone et al. 2014; Doytcheva, 2016) have become trendy in recent years in France as a ‘best practice’ for Roma integration, it is never implemented for other groups or populations. These concerns, that are particularly salient regarding the ‘welcome’ of Roma people, bear witness, we argue, to the fact that their future is hardly perceived today in France through a “minority option” (Balibar, 2011), but appears rather well-rooted in the continuum of a particular Republican power/knowledge, that is segregative but no less assimilationist.

Finally, it is by observing ‘from below’ the paths and trajectories of immigrants in this “area of mobility and turbulence” which is the Mediterranean, that it becomes possible to reconstruct the complexity of a “geography of cosmopolitanism”, allowing us to think out new forms of hospitality and cohabitation (Bergeon, 2015). Circular or more classic, highly intense, these migrations, according to Céline Bergeon, highlight territorial fluidities in the European area that the Roma fully experience. Italy, France and Spain are, for them, privileged settlement destinations and spawn new relationships, both within the family unit and with the neighbouring societies where they experience the co-presence of other migrating communities. Acquiring evolving skills and developing new relations favour faster integration, the maintenance and amplification of migration networks.

Conclusion

In a recent reflection on *scales of justice*, which invites the reader to reimagine political space in a globalising world, Nancy Fraser (2008) points out *misframing* as a mechanism producing new forms of inequality and injustice, in relation to a lack of representation. The latter is understood here as “the ability to frame problems within appropriate political arenas”. The territorial principle of national sovereignty is obsolete and in a growing number of situations no longer makes it possible to define the subjects of (in)justice, whose structural causes should not be territorialised. The author consequently calls upon a post-territorial means of political differentiation. While the approach of this post-territorial differentiation is not entirely clear, she suggests at least the application of an “all-subjected principle” (2008): the common subjection to a given governance structure that can be widely understood as a state formation, but also any non-state and trans-state agency that sets the ground rules governing social interaction can serve as a basis for the constitution of subjects of justice, beyond geographic proximity²². What unites them is the common condition of being subject to the coercive power of new forms of governmentality, which determine their existential perspectives. Human rights activists, international feminists, critics of ‘structural adjustment’ policies are figures of political mobilisation that embody this new and critical standard for assessing the (in)justice of frames.

²² The most obvious examples, Fraser argues, are the agencies that set the ground rules of global economy, but many other examples can also be cited, including agencies governing environmental regulation, security, policing, health, etc.

In a similar manner, in the cases we studied, while the diversity of local situations is broad, the importance and the systemic nature of Anti-Gypsy biases, stereotypes and prejudices begin to form the horizon of such a common concern. Exclusion and discrimination, rather than, or with, identity and community, make it possible to conceive a policy on minorities that is rooted not in cultural specificities but in the structural causes of marginalisation and social exclusion. From this standpoint, if 'the Roma issue' when viewed from France seems to be a recent invention, it is also important not to forget its entrenchment in a system of an extreme and deep-rooted socio-spatial segregation.

The comparative analysis framework we favoured here, both from a geographic and a historical perspective, invites us particularly to engage with such kind of issues. Likewise, we argue for the necessity of an epistemic and methodological shift in their study: from the interest for specific groups, to a more broadly informed approach in the field of sociology of migration, ethnic relations, racism and discrimination. Also partaking in this shift is the systematic investigation of different political arenas and scales of intervention. Among these, as we have seen, categorical distinctions, policy models and schemes are circulating. But rather than a juxtaposition, it is a conflicted integration that characterises this circulation, both in institutional and political terms. As a result, processes of boundary maintenance are still at work. While the idea of a 'common cause' or concern has emerged in recent times in transnational arenas, among activists, deputies or experts (whose portraits are still to be drawn with accuracy), we need to know more about routine relationships being created on the basis of an everyday interaction between migrants and local populations, whether minorised or not, whether from immigrant descent or not. Our study is a step and also an invitation to these kinds of prospect.

Alunni Lorenzo (2015) « La douleur politique. Enjeux du corps malade dans les campi roms de Rome », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 103-113.

Asseo Henriette (2007) « L'invention des « nomades » en Europe au XXe siècle et la nationalisation impossible des Tsiganes », in Noiriel Gérard Ed., *L'Identification. Genèse d'un travail d'Etat*, Paris, Belin.

Balibar Étienne (2011) « Racisme et politique communautaire : les Roms », *Lignes*, 34, pp. 135-144.

Barth Fredrik (Ed.) (1969), *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of cultural difference*, Boston, Little and Brown, 153 p.

Belqasmi Mohamed (2014) « La construction d'une « question tzigane » : entre catégorisations et mobilisations sociales », *Migrations société*, 152, pp. 49-56.

Belqasmi Mohamed (2015) « Entre dissuasion, assistance et activisme: l'accueil ambivalent des migrants roms en France », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 127-141.

Bessone Magali, Doytcheva Milena, Duez Jean-Baptiste, Girard Charles & De Latour Sophie G. (2014) « Integrating or segregating Roma migrants in France in the name of respect: A spatial analysis of the villages d'insertion », *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36 (2), pp. 182-196.

Bergeon Céline (2015), « La Méditerranée comme carrefour des mobilités des migrants roms », *Confluences Méditerranée*, n° 93, p. 39-50.

Blum Le Coat Jean-Yves, Catarino Christine & Quiminal Catherine (2004) « Les Gens du Voyage: errance et prégnance des catégories », in Gotman Anne Ed. *Villes et Hospitalités: les municipalités et leurs étrangers*, Paris, MSH, pp. 157-176.

Brekhus Wayne (1998) « A sociology of the unmarked: redirecting our focus », *Sociological Theory*, 16 (1), pp. 34-51.

Bourdieu Pierre (1980) « L'identité et la représentation. Éléments pour une réflexion critique sur l'idée de région », *ARSS*, 35, pp. 63-72.

Conseil de l'Europe (2012) *Glossaire terminologique raisonné du Conseil de l'Europe sur les questions roms* [on line] accessed the 22/05/2017. URL : <http://www.angvc.fr/pdf/pouvoirs%20publics/institutions%20europeennes/COE-20120518-Glossaire-Roms.pdf>

Cossée Claire (2011) « Les-Roms-migrants-et-gens-du-voyage », *Lignes*, 35, pp. 167-179.

Cuche Denys (2008) « Modes de catégorisation et classement socio-ethnique au Pérou », in Alvarez-Pereyre Frank (Ed.) *Catégories et catégorisation : une perspective interdisciplinaire*, Paris, SELAF, pp. 35-55.

Dalibert Marion, Doytcheva Milena (2014) « Migrants roms dans l'espace public : (in)visibilités contraintes », *Migrations Société*, 152, pp. 75-90.

De Rudder Véronique, Poiret Christian, Vourc'h François (2000) *L'inégalité raciste: l'universalité républicaine à l'épreuve*, Paris PUF, 224 p.

Desrosières Alain (1993) *La politique des grands nombres. Histoire de la raison statistique*, Paris, La Découverte, 462 p.

- Diminescu Dana, Ohliger Rainer & Rey Violette (2003) « Les circulations migratoires roumaines : une intégration européenne par le bas ? », *Cahiers de recherches de la MIRE*, 15, pp. 61-69.
- Doytcheva Milena (2016) « Between *infra-right* and public hospitality: ambiguity in local policies towards Roma migrant families in France », *IJMBS*, 2 (4), pp. 365-381.
- Doytcheva Milena (2015) « Roms et Tsiganes en Europe méditerranéenne: l'actualité d'une question », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 9-25.
- Doytcheva Milena (2011) *Le Multiculturalisme*, Paris, La Découverte, 128 p.
- Farget Doris (2011), « Etude du discours des juges et experts du Conseil de l'Europe sur l'identité Rom », *La « question Rom » en Europe aujourd'hui*, Tours, 24-25 Mars.
- Fassin Didier (2010) *La raison humanitaire: une histoire morale du temps présent*, Paris, Gallimard-Seuil, 368 p.
- Fassin Éric, Fouteau Carine, Guichard Serge, Windels Anne (2014) *Roms & riverains: une politique municipale de la race*, Paris, La Fabrique, 240 p.
- Fitzgerald David S., Cook-Martin David (2014), *Culling the Masses. The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 512 p.
- Fraser Nancy (2008) *Scales of justice: Reimagining political space in a globalizing world*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 224 p.
- Guillaumin Colette (1972) *L'idéologie raciste. Genèse et langage actuel*, Paris, La Haye, Mouton, 378 p.
- Günes Burcu Ö. (2015), « A l'épreuve de la gentrification et de la transformation urbaine », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, p. 81-90.
- Hirschman Alfred O. (1991) *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 224 p.
- Legros Olivier, Vitale Tommaso (Eds.) (2011) « Roms migrants en ville, pratiques et politiques en Italie et en France », *Géocarrefour*, 86/1, URL : <https://geocarrefour.revues.org/8210>.
- Liégeois Jean-Pierre (2007) *Roms en Europe*, Strasbourg, Éditions du Conseil de l'Europe.
- Liégeois Jean-Pierre (2009) *Roms et Tsiganes*, Paris, La Découverte.
- Maestri Gaja (2015) « The residential segregation of the Roma in Rome: explaining the persistence of the Roma camps through comparison », Working paper, SemDoc CEE, Paris, Sciences Po, 16 July.
- Magazzini Tina & Piemontese Stefano (2015) « Modèles de gestion de la diversité en Europe et migrations roms : le cas espagnol », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 51-62.
- Martiniello Marco (1995) *L'ethnicité dans les sciences sociales contemporaines*, Paris, PUF, 128 p.

- Martiniello Marco & Simon Patrick (2005) « Les enjeux de la catégorisation », *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales*, 21 (2), pp. 2-11.
- Ministerio de Sanidad Servicios Sociales e Igualdad (MSSSI) (2012) *Estrategia nacional para la inclusion social de la poblacion gitana en Espana 2012-2020*, Madrid, MSSSI, 70 p.
- Nacu Alexandra (2010) « Les Roms migrants en région parisienne: les dispositifs d'une marginalisation », *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales*, 26 (1), pp. 141-160.
- Nedelcu Mihaela, Ciobanu Ruxandra O. & De Gourcy Constance (Eds.) (2016) « *Les migrations des Roms roumains en Europe* », *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales*, 32 (1).
- Olivera Martin (2011) « La fabrique experte de la «question rom»: multiculturalisme et néolibéralisme imbriqués », *Lignes*, 34, pp. 104-118.
- Phillips Anne (2007) *Multiculturalism without culture*, Princeton, PUP, 216 p.
- Pierrot Alain (2011) « Mythe nomade et logique migratoire », *Lignes*, 34, pp. 52-78.
- Poutignat Philippe & Streiff-Fenart Jocelyne (2008) *Théories de l'ethnicité*, Paris, PUF, 304 p.
- Ragaru Nadège (2015) « Les productions internationales et locales des frontières ethnoculturelles : les Roms de Bulgarie saisis par les institutions », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 27-37.
- Ragaru Nadège (2008) « ONG et enjeux minoritaires en Bulgarie : au-delà de l'«importation/exportation» des modèles internationaux », *Critique internationale*, 40 (3), pp. 27-50.
- Roman Raluca (2014) « Trans-National Migration and the Issue of 'Ethnic' Solidarity: Finnish Roma Elite and Eastern European Roma Migrants in Finland », *Ethnicities*, 14 (6), pp. 793–810.
- Sarcinelli Alice Sophie (2015) « La question rom en Italie, entre logiques sécuritaires et logiques humanitaires », *Confluences Méditerranée*, 93, pp. 91-102.
- Sarcinelli Alice Sophie (2014) *Protéger, éduquer, exclure. Anthropologie de l'enfance et de la parentalité roms en Italie*, Thèse en sociologie, Paris, EHESS.
- Sayad Abdelmalek (1977) « Les trois « âges » de l'émigration algérienne en France », *ARSS*, 15 (1), pp. 59-79.
- Sigona Nando (2005) « Locating 'The Gypsy Problem'. The Roma in Italy: Stereotyping, Labelling and 'Nomad Camps' », *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(4), pp. 741–56.
- Sigona Nando and Trehan Nidhi (Eds.) (2009), *Romani Politics in Contemporary Europe. Poverty, Ethnic Mobilization, and the Neoliberal Order*, Palgrave, MacMillan, 309 p.
- Simon Pierre-Jean (2006) *Pour une sociologie des relations interethniques et des minorités*, Rennes, PUR, 347 p.
- Thomas Hélène (2010) *Les vulnérables: la démocratie contre les pauvres*, Bellecombe-en-Bauge, Éditions du Croquant, 254 p.

Ticktin Miriam (2011) *Casualties of care: immigration and the politics of humanitarianism in France*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 312 p.

Vitale Tommaso (Ed.) (2009) *Politiche possibili. Abitare le città con i rom e i sinti*, Roma, Carocci, 300 p.