



**Towards Understanding of Contemporary Migration**  
**Causes, Consequences, Policies, Reflections**

**Edited by**  
**Mirjana Bobić**  
**Stefan Janković**



*Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade | 2017*



1838



T

owards Understanding of  
Contemporary Migration

*Causes, Consequences,  
Policies, Reflections*

*Editors:  
Mirjana Bobić,  
Stefan Janković*

*Edited by*  
Mirjana Bobić, Stefan Janković  
*Towards understanding of contemporary migration*  
*Causes, Consequences, Policies, Reflections*  
First edition, Belgrade 2017

*Publishers:*  
Institute for Sociological Research,  
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade  
Čika Ljubina 18–20, Belgrade 11000, Serbia  
www.f.bg.ac.rs  
Serbian Sociological Society

*Reviewers:*  
Mirjana Morokvasic-Müller,  
Institut des sciences sociales du politique,  
CNRS – Université Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense  
Anna Krasteva,  
Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies,  
New Bulgarian University  
Attila Melegh,  
Corvinus University of Budapest

*For the Publishers:*  
Danijel Sinani, PhD,  
acting dean of the Faculty of Philosophy,  
University of Belgrade  
Jasmina Petrović, PhD,  
President of the Serbian Sociological Society

*Prepress*  
Dosije studio, Belgrade

*Cover design and illustrations*  
Milica Vasiljević M. Arch.

*Printed by*  
JP Službeni glasnik, Belgrade

*Number of copies*  
200

ISBN (paper) 978-86-6427-065-6  
ISBN (e-book) 978-86-6427-066-3

*This volume is a result of the work on the project Challenges of new social integration in Serbia: concepts and actors (No 179035), supported by Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of Republic of Serbia.*

## 4.1. Migration of ‘Pariah People’: The Case Study of Roma in the Balkans

*Andrej Kubiček*

### Introduction

When reading the studies about policies and discourses concerning refugees brought to Europe by ‘The migrant crisis’ (Wodak, 2015), a sociologist who is acquainted with Roma issues can draw many similarities between representation and treatment of different people on the move. It seems that ‘migrants’ from the Near East have become Roma in a sense. Even a brief review of the mass media reports all across the Europe can clearly show that the old *topos* of ‘lazy-and-potentially-aggressive-gypsy’ whose only life goal is to enjoy all the benefits of the social care has been taken by the new actors (Kubiček, 2014; Kubiček, 2015). But, the social and discursive ‘scenario’ for their roles seems to be written a long time ago. Literary, 1000 years ago<sup>1</sup>. It looks like Roma and the XXI century refugees are sharing more than just the same roads stretching from Pakistan to Western Europe.

This should not come as a surprise, nor should it be interpreted as a mere coincidence. Persisting narratives are prescribed from one group to another and sustained because they are both determined by specific social relations and intertwined with them. The purpose of this

---

1 Roma elites are preparing to commemorate 1000th anniversary of their departure from India in 2018.

Chapter is to describe host-guest dynamics as a *longue durée* process on the example of Roma people in the Balkans region from the perspective of historical sociology of migrations. This approach can offer far better explanations than studies about contemporary migrations of the Roma, which fail to describe deep rooted socio-historical forces at play. To accomplish it, it is not enough only to present historiographical and ethnographical data concerning this subject, but one also needs to integrate explanatory model in a proposed description. On the other hand, it is also not sufficient to theorize in formal and abstract categories, by claiming that 'relations between domestic populations and the immigrants have always been like that'. Social relations have their histories, but they can't be reduced to an array of facts without any logic behind them. Max Weber's concept of *Pariavolk* (Weber, 1958; Weber I, 1978; Weber II, 1978; Veber, 1997) has a heuristic potential for analyzing the specific case of millennia long movements of Roma people across Asia and Europe as socially determined phenomenon, by integrating theoretical model and historical data.

Before that, we still need to solve one terminological dilemma which has important methodological implications. During the last millennia, over a vast area stretching from India to all of the corners of Europe we meet different populations on the move, sharing similar characteristics. Because historic accounts haven't been written by them, we can't determine their identity. Were they ancestors of modern Roma people? Or were they even a singular (proto)ethnic group? These are doubtful assessments. Although the ethnic name 'Gypsy'<sup>2</sup> is considered as a racial slur since the end of XX century, and the expression Roma or Romani is preferred as politically correct one, in this Chapter the first word will be used to refer to members of specific social (not ethnic) group. There are two reasons to do so: first, (quasi) ethnic name will be used in a historical authentic way, and second, connection between social status, migrations and (proto)ethnic group

2 Term 'Gypsy' ultimately comes from word 'Egypt(ian)'. Serbo-Croatian word 'Cigan' or 'Ciganin' has the same root as other names for Roma people in most of European languages, but it doesn't have a well documented etymology. Most widely proposed interpretation is that it comes from medieval Greek *ἀθίγγανος* (*athinganos*), which means 'untouchable', although it doesn't seem to be true (Soulis, 1961: 145). Other, more likely hypothesis claims that the origin of this ethnonym can be found in Persian word 'Chāngar', which denotes region in India (Mujić, 1952: 138; Digard, 2002), or a person who produces lime.

will be stressed. This set of social relations, which can be very complex (Janković, Kubiček, 2016), is crucial for an adequate understanding of this topic. All generalizations presented in this Chapter are describing typical relations between hosts and migrants, and do not have an aim to portray any nation or an individual person in particular. In a way, only migrating groups can be considered as pariahs and gypsies, and most of the ancestors of modern Roma were such. Those Roma which adopted sedentary lifestyles ceased to be gypsies, and affirmed their new ethnic Romani identity, or started to identify with the host society (i.e. to assimilate), although in both cases they still have to cope with old stereotypes and prejudices.

Itinerant lifestyle of the pariahs is intertwined with their political status, which can be at best described as vulnerable and insecure. Precariousness of their social position leads to migration (among other challenges and hardships), and migration are causing further diminishing of their power. Their spatial and social positions are both volatile, which is perceived as a 'normal' condition by domicile population(s) (Feldman, 2015). This argumentation leads to the main hypotheses of this chapter – that concept of migrations can reveal structures behind stigmatization, prejudices and discrimination. Furthermore it can serve as a basis for the more general theory of racism (Lucassen, Willem and Cottaar: 1998).

## Pariavolk

'Pariah' is a term filled with history of misunderstanding, and in a way, a concept which has its own history of migration. It doesn't represent any particular of the four castes (*varnas*) in traditional Indian society – as it is usually meant in the West – but originally denotes a lower subdivision in the caste system, and is territorially tied only to a small portion of south-eastern India (Tamil Nadu and Kerala). Yet, during the British colonial rule it was spread all across *The Raj* by officials who used it to denote all 'depressed classes' (Viswanath, 2014: 3). Later it was introduced into European languages as a synonym for outcasts, and with this meaning it has entered the everyday usage. In the 1823 German Jewish poet and playwright Michael Beer wrote the one-act play *Der Paria*, about an Indian outcast's tragic fate and his sacrifice. The term 'Pariah' was afterwards used outside of Indian context



by Theodore Herzl and Bernard Lazare (Momigliano, 1980), aiming to describe both the current and historical unfavorable social situation of the Jews. Yet, it was still a metaphor which merely summoned images of exotic lands. Max Weber adopted this term and elaborated it in a sociological way, but it was a theoretical endeavor with many risks. Some authors, such as Adair-Toteff, have argued that the concept of pariah-people is one of the most disputed concepts of both Weber's sociology of religion and his general sociological theory. His conception was labeled many times as racist and anti-Semitic, although in-depth analyses show that those accusations are untrue (Adair-Toteff, 2015: 84).

Still, the concept of pariah-people cannot be explained at the first place, without understanding another, broader Weber's term – the 'guest-people' (*Gastvolk*), which appears for the first time in his study *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism* (published in 1915).<sup>3</sup> In a way, *guest* is quite similar to Georg Simmel's conception of the Stranger (Simmel, 1971). They are both considered at the same time close in spatial and economic sense, but very distinct in symbolic and political sense. Also, *Gastvolk* carries one additional trait which is connected with the very meaning of the word 'guest', and is crucial for this Chapter. Guests come and go, but guest can also be a 'person who comes today and stays tomorrow. He is, so to speak, the potential wanderer' (Simmel, 1971: 143). Guest peoples are considered as migratory, and 'wandering' is perceived as an essential aspect of their very social being, even when this is not true at all (in case when they actually represent a subjugated native population). Migration, real or supposed, are connected with phenomenon of guest-peoples/strangers, so this is also true for pariahs. Paradoxically, even though Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed all had experiences of being refugees, people in The West – and we can include Near and Middle East here – have frowned upon migrants for a long time, interpreting causes and consequences of the movement of one population in very negative moral categories.

---

3 Usually nine kinds of degraded "castes" were distinguished: certain kinds of slaves, descendants of certain slaves and *coloni*, beggars, descendants of former insurgents, *descendants of immigrant barbarians (guest tribes)*, musicians and performers participating in family ceremonies, actors and jugglers as in the Middle Ages' (Weber: 1951: 98). It is apparent that Weber had a conception of pariah-people in *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, although he didn't mention it explicitly.

Also, topic of the guest-peoples is a rare – maybe even only – occasion where Weber actually mentions 'Gypsies', explaining that they are not only typical, but also the only kind of guest-peoples in Europe, while there are many kinds of such groups in India, dispersed in peripheries of villages and cities (Weber, 1958). However, more prominent place is taken by the Jews, people which Weber considered as a prime example of both pariahs and guests as ideal types in European case, while not all of India's guest-people are also the pariah-people. Difference is clearly defined in *The Religions of Ancient India*: 'Frequently, the representatives of a guest industry are excluded from intermarriage and commensalism, and therefore are held to be ritually "impure". When such ritual barriers against a guest people exist we shall, for our present purpose, use the expression pariah people' (Weber, 1958: 12). In the other place – in his study of Judaism, Weber defined a pariah nation similarly – as a 'guest people ritually, formally or in effect, separated from the social environment' (Weber, 1997: 10–11).

Weber related the migration with the economic situation of one group in the study about Hinduism: 'The purest form of this type is found when a people in question have totally lost their residential anchorage and hence are completely occupied economically in meeting demands of other settled peoples – the gypsies, for instance, or, in another manner, the Jews of the Middle Ages' (Weber, 1958: 13). In the *Economy and Society* there is another similar observation: 'Thus, in some instances, merchants may be members of the most highly privileged stratum, as in the case of the ancient urban patriciate, while in others they may be pariahs, like impecunious wandering peddlers' (Weber, 1978 I: 477).

Ambiguity of spatial and symbolic distance isn't the only discrepant relation which pariahs/strangers and domicile population share. Beside mentioned aversion, Weber stresses out that they are typically tolerated because of their special skills, which locals lack or find disgracing: "'Pure" anthropological types are often a secondary consequence of such closure; examples are sects (as in India) as well as pariah peoples, that means, groups that are socially despised yet wanted as neighbors because they have monopolized indispensable skills' (Weber, 1978 I: 386). In one other place in the *Economy and Society*, Weber adds that pariahs can even be 'frequently privileged', 'by virtue of their economic indispensability' (Weber, 1978 II: 934).

Following the line of argumentation, it is logical to assume that one group needs to guard secrets of its trade in order to maintain their monopoly. Weber writes about it<sup>4</sup>, and adds that self segregation, both spatial and ritual, can be part of this strategy. This often leads to formation of ethnic community of pariah group, or rather to belief in common ethnic origin (Weber, 1978 II: 934). Another consequence of monopolization of certain trade or craft is emergence of strong belief in magical qualities of the said peoples (Weber, 1978 I: 483) and faith in charismatic nature of their skills (as an assumption that they are God's gift) (Weber, 1997: 37).

To sum up, the basic elements of the pariah-people concept are: (1) (assumed or real) spatial mobility (2) monopoly on certain trade; (3) charismatic legitimization of their trade; (4) self-segregation and belief in specific means of salvation and (5) segregation and imposed ritual barriers by settled peoples. Presentation of those five aspects will begin with the spatial mobility, as a central theme of this Chapter. Still, this topic won't be depleted there, because migration constitute a constant and essential part of all other four elements as well, and they altogether produce and accumulate stigmatization and political insecurity on a structural level. In this way, Weber's concept of pariah people allowed us to operationalize preliminary hypothesis.

## Spatial mobility (assumed or real)

Different names given to Roma can be strongly connected with the migratory nature of this group in its essence. In countries which were under influence of Arabic language and culture, from Persia to Balkans, Romani people are named *ğorbati* or *gurbeti*, which is connected with an Arabic word for wanderer, or more literary to 'someone who is not at home'. Other names used for Roma in Persia also indicat-

4 'This occasional sale may then develop into a regular system of profit-making exchange. In such cases it is common for 'tribal' crafts to develop, with interethnic functional specialization and trade between the tribes, since the chances of finding a market often depend on maintaining a monopoly, which in turn is usually secured by inherited trade secrets. From this may develop ambulatory crafts or possibly pariah crafts or, where these groups are united in a political structure and where there are ritual barriers between the ethnic elements, castes, as in India' (Weber, 1978 I: 131).

ing their migratory characteristics. *Kowli* denotes that they have come from Kabul; *Čingāna* from Changar province in India and *Jat* also indicates foreign, Indian descent (Digard, 2002). Common name for Roma in many Balkan languages, *čergari*, comes from Turkish *çerge*, meaning 'tent',<sup>5</sup> which is traditional for nomads. In some parts of Europe (Scandinavia), Roma are commonly referred to as 'the Tatars'. On the other hand, very word for non-Roma person used by the Roma, *Gaja* (*Gadžo*), comes from Romani word *gav*, which means 'village'. All those (quasi) ethnonyms clearly suggest that Roma were identified as (1) people deprived of permanent home(land) or/and (2) as foreigners coming from the East.

In the oldest existing historical source mentioning Roma, the 11th century *Life of Saint George the Athonite*, term 'Sarmatian people' is explicitly used to stress their nomadic nature, comparing them with Iranian pastoralist from a modern-day Eastern Europe. Yet, even more illustrative depiction of migratory nature of the Roma can be found in this wonderful text written by Nicephorus Gregoras: 'During this time [i.e. the first decades of the fourteenth century] we saw in Constantinople a transient group of people – not less than twenty in number – versed in certain acts of jugglery. None of the older generation had ever heard or seen them. They came originally from Egypt, but then, as if following a circular route from east to north, they wandered through Chaldaeia, Arabia, Persia, Media, and Assyria. Then turning west they passed through Iberia in the Caucasus, Colchis, and Armenia and from there through the lands of all the tribes which inhabit the intervening territory up to Byzantium; and in every country and city [they visited] they gave performances of their art [...] Moving from Byzantium, they travelled through Thrace and Macedonia and went as far as Gadeira [i.e. Gades in Spain], and they made almost the whole world a theater for their art' (Soulis, 1961: 148–149, *emphasis added*). Famous Byzantine author finds causes of Roma's migration in their specific trade – offering entertainment to sedentary population all across the Mediterranean basin in highly professional manner. Also, specific group he is referring to is rather small in number. Much later, in the XV century Western Europe, Roma people were identified as pilgrims (again from Egypt), whom Pope ordered to wander for seven years (Trigg, 1973:

---

5 <http://www.mediantrop.rankomunitic.org/olga-zirojevic-antropoloski-pojmovnik-vi-cerga>, Accessed on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

4). Also, these groups were sometimes described as rather large (more than one hundred people), and led by ‘count’ or ‘duke’ although in other sources they numbered around ten people. Begging and stealing seems to be the only means of survival of Roma that early western chroniclers wrote down (Pym, 2007: 4–5). Since those groups haven’t been perceived as having any particular profession, their lifestyle was interpreted with only similar activity known in the West – going to pilgrimage. All examples clearly show that the Roma people were generally considered as ultimate aliens, hailing from semi-mythical lands and wandering around without any goal to settle and integrate in any particular society. Purpose of their traveling was to make living, usually by inducing sympathy of settled and better off peoples.

Ottoman sources are informing us about the great troubles state officials had with collecting taxes from nomadic Roma people. Suleiman the Magnificent’s *Qanun* recognizes non-territorial administrative unit for Roma people in Rumelia, *Çingane sancagi* (Mujić, 1953: 147) (similar unit was given to Yuruk Turks, who were also nomads, but not craftsman – they were herdsmen and warriors). But his successors had to put even more effort into levying tax. During the end of 17th century it was hard to find any magistrate who would accept to collect taxes from Roma, so they were left alone. Also, in many provincial archives there is evidence that officials were receiving special instruction on how to effectively tax wandering Roma (Mujić, 1953: 151).

Other example of clash between Roma’s migratory lifestyle and state policies took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century on the other bank of the Sava River, in the Syrmia region. New Austrian military administration desperately needed qualified work force in the frontier, so would employ Roma craftsman, but only if they were ready to abandon nomadism and settle down. This has led to many conflicts (Petrović, 2000). Austrian policies have affected nomads even more severely after the 1761, when new ruler, Maria Teresa, started with planned settlement, which targeted wandering Roma in particular (ibid.).

But, Maria Teresa and her son’s Joseph brutal attempts<sup>6</sup> to end nomadic lifestyle and control their subjects were only the beginning. Log-

---

6 Maria Teresa forbade usage of the word ‘Gypsy’, preferring ‘new peasants’ instead. Her decrees also imposed taking away children from the nomads; recruiting young Roma to the army; forbade marriage between them, keeping of horses, settling near forests, and usage of Romani language; ordered what

ic of modern state was austere, and in the next two centuries nomadic Roma will be severely treated (Lewy, 2000). Their very social being was incompatible with newly founded concept of state borders and control of territory and population. As Leo Lucassen explains, in pre-modern societies a vast majority of people were poor and powerless, yet some were tied to land (even by force), while the others wandered across the land. In a modern state even a poor citizen is still a citizen, providing that he/she is permanently settled and registered. On the other hand, wandering people were not only classified as different, but also stigmatized as dangerous threat to the rest of society and the state, even though they were, and still are, powerless by definition (Lucassen, Willems and Cottaar, 1998: 68–70).

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, many factors have contributed to renewed Roma migrations from east to west. The most obvious one is, of course, economic and social security pull factor, but there is as well notable push factor in form of insecurity and exposure to violence in many former socialist countries (Strielkowski, 2012). In a way, Roma are predecessors of now contested concept of a 'Europe without borders', but they were merely doing what their ancestors used to do, stigmatized and driven by political insecurity and modest economic opportunities. Only this time they were not the only pariahs in European part of globalised World, as in Weber's time, but were joined by many other immigrants from Africa and Asia. In a sense, Roma are bridging a blurry gap between the 'old' and the 'new' models of immigration in European context (Lucassen, Feldman, Oltmer, 2006: 291–294).

## Monopoly on certain trade

In the previous part, connections between migration and particular type of profession were clearly indicated. Still, what is the true nature of this connection? In agrarian and pastoral societies craftsman's status is typically low. There are exceptions in cases of artistic crafts and urban artisans who make lucrative products or have relatively stable market demand. But craftsman, as well as traders, who deal with

---

kind of clothing they will have to wear etc. (Petrović, 2000). It seems that Maria Teresa understood complex nature of pariah-people phenomenon long before Max Weber.

agriculturalists and herdsmen have hard time making for their living. First, they don't own any land or (large) cattle, so they can't produce substantial amount of food or raw materials. On the other hand, autarchic communities which buy their goods and services can live without them, while pariahs must trade in order to get basic life needs. Also, the demand for any type of everyday goods, as well as entertainment, is typically low in agrarian societies. That's why people who supply them always need to be on the move in order to look for new customers.

It is possible that ancestors of Roma people have brought to medieval Europe advanced technical and artistic skills in metallurgy, masonry and carpentry from India, Khorasan and Iran. But, historic data do not support this hypothesis completely, even though hegemonic Roma ethno-history claims that their ancestors were brought westwards as skillful and sought-after craftsman. Earliest mentions of Jats, people (a possible ancestors of Roma people in Sind), were written by Arab conquerors, who described them as nomads, herdsmen and fishermen who lived on margins of Hindu society and were prone to robbery. They lived in houses made from wicker and had responsibility to collect firewood for higher caste city dwellers. Jats were explicitly compared with Berbers, Bedouins and Kurds (Wink, 2002: 160–161), which are all nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples. Another, classical Persian source, Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, mentions an episode in which Shah Bahram Gor (Bahram V, historic reign 420–438) invited 12.000 musicians called Luri and gave them cattle and donkeys with loads of wheat, so that they could sustain themselves and play music for poor free of charge. But, after one year, Luri came back starved to shah, and sad they don't have anything to eat, because they have eaten not only wheat, but the oxen as well. Bahram was very angry with them, and banished Luri from their lands, taking donkeys and their musical instruments away from them. They have been wandering around ever since, trying to survive by singing and stealing (Mirga, Mruz, 1997: 15). Name '*Luri*' suggests that those people really were professional musicians, which comes from Persian word which denotes musicians: *Luṭī*. But, other names used for Roma in Iran, such as *Ahangar*, shows that some of them were engaged in blacksmithing as well (Digard, 2002). Up to this date, in some parts of Bulgaria local Roma have a strong self-identification as the '*Usta Millet*', which means 'a craftsman nation' (Erolova, 2012: 240–241).

Contrary to Persian sources, Byzantine one doesn't mention music as occupation of ancestors of Roma. Apart from being professional magicians and diviners – which will be described soon – typical Roma's professions listed are acrobatics and taming of bears and snakes (Soulis, 1961). It seems that they were also engaged in simple crafts, such as production of sieves and strainers or colanders (ibid, 151). Blacksmithing is surprisingly also rare, and appears (at least in sources) only after XV century. German travelers described Romani smith in Peloponnesus, amazed by his craftsmanship, which was described as 'wretched and strange'. He made nails sitting on the ground, with an improvised anvil in the open, while his wife (instead of an apprentice) helped him to maintain the fire burning (ibid: 155). This description is paradigmatic, because it suggests that most Roma have traveled and worked together with their families, and that those three fields (migration, working and family life) have become inseparable, which has led to further alienation from domicile populations. This become even more striking as those domains of society become separated during the period usually referred to as modernization. Also, marginal nature of their products seems to be a reflection of Roma's marginal role in society. It is clear that they were partially integrated in a host society only in terms of economy, by production and trade of some specific modes of goods and services. On the other hand, it is obvious that they have lacked any political power or symbolic recognition – legend about Shah Bahram has metaphorical meaning which proves this point: Roma people are summoned, provided and, in the end, punished by a powerful man (ibid).

Vast number of documents from Ottoman archives shows that Roma had modest standard of living: in the *Qanun* of Suleiman the Magnificent, Roma Muslims are separated from the rest of Muslim population and obliged to pay 22 akche as the *Çift resmi* tax, which was a minimal sum (other subjects had to pay tax from 22 to 57 akche) (Mujić, 1953: 147), and their family heirloom was also small, typically including only bedclothes and some kitchenware (Mujić, 1953: 162). Most common Romani trade was blacksmithing, and many of them adapted well to militaristic organization of 'The Eternal State'. Their skills were in great demand in the Ottoman army, which was typically on the move, so the Roma could join them with their caravans. Beside simple smiths who produced nails and other trinkets, and repaired



ships and forts, in the cities in modern-day Macedonia (Skoplje and Bitolj) and Metohia (Prizren) we can find urban artisans who owned shops and were well integrated into Ottoman society. They even had formal craftsman exams and licenses, and guild-like organizations recognized by the state (Mujić, 1953: 159). Other common professions for Roma in the Ottoman Empire were horse trading and music, both civilian and military (*mehter*)<sup>7</sup>. Other reports from urban areas of the Balkans are also suggesting that (at least some) Roma people lived integrated life of petty craftsman. Best example is medieval (XIV century) Dubrovnik, in which there were some Roma cobblers, hat makers, butchers and owners of small shops, although most of them were workers without any particular profession (Petrović, 1976: 141). On the other hand, in the Venetian lands in modern Greece (Peloponnesus, Corfu and some other islands), Roma craftsman (cobblers and blacksmiths) were segregated and lived outside cities or villages (Soullis, 1961: 155).

Great changes in (Southeast) European society, as well as in the modes of production, have severely affected Roma people. Non-agricultural professions were no longer de-valorized, so symbolic barrier of their monopoly crumbled. Most of simple, dispensable goods for everyday use Roma used to produce were now industrially manufactured.<sup>8</sup> But social disadvantages accumulated during the many centuries remained. Field research done by Aleksandra Mitrović and Gradimir Zajić in small village of Masurica in Southern Serbia (1.300 inhabitants) has shown that most Roma living there were forced to become seasonal farm workers or to live from welfare. In the 1984 there were 31.4% of Romani households which lived solely from welfare, while in 1992 the number raised to 66.7% (Mitrović, Zajić, 1993). Masurica represents a case study of typical degradation of Roma's social posi-

7 But there were also examples of Roma engaged in other trades, which were more lucrative, but still considered as crafts at that time. Roma man named Smolyan (*Ismolan*) in 16th century Bosnia was known as '*cerrah*' in Turkish or '*ranar*' in Serbo-Croatian, which means that he was a wound healer. From archeves in Sarajevo we can learn that he performed surgical operations of hernia and removed bladder stones (Mujić, 1953: 172).

8 Introduction of plastics in the 1970s put one of the last Roma crafts, basket weaving, out of use. Cheap goods from the Eastern Asia in the 1980s and 1990s are not worth repairing, so other typical Roma crafts (repairing umbrellas, pots and pans) become unprofitable (Marković, 1993; Bamski, 1993).

tion in many rural areas and small cities, in its most severe form. This again invoked new types of migration. Large part of Roma migrated to big cities, where they have started living from new pariah professions: paper and scrap metal collecting, begging and welfare. Others continued their migration westwards, toward states which offered better job chances or larger degree of social care, especially Germany, Austria and Scandinavian countries, and to lesser degree to France, Belgium and Italy. Those new migrations have not only fortified image of Roma as 'ultimate aliens' who do not have anything in common with 'regular citizens', but have also deteriorated weak social ties Roma have had in their countries of origin. Last wave of migrations have contributed to further accumulation of negative life chances for many Roma people who lost their citizenship, or diminished their cultural competencies and social capital, both in their native and their new countries, again leading to new stigmatization.

### Charismatic legitimization of the trade

In his study about ancient Judaism, Weber pointed to legitimizing character of biblical story about Cain and his descendants, who were blacksmiths, musicians and founders of the first cities as result of the curse (Weber, 1997: 37). While talent for the music is sometimes considered as 'otherworldly gift' even today, the same was true for metallurgy ever since it was discovered. Yet, it is worth noting that part of Cain's curse also included eternal wandering as well. Mircea Eliade, in his study *The Forge and the Crucible: The Origins and Structures of Alchemy*, have showed that blacksmithing was considered sacred and mystical in many cultures and historic periods (Eliade, 1978). In societies without thermometers and stopwatches, working with metal in fact can easily be interpreted as an extraordinary talent. Also, artisans used to rely on singing chants in order to measure passed time during the different processes of metal working. Apart from this anthropological perspective, it is worth noting that many professions were strictly separated from settlements because they were noisy, polluting or outright dangerous.

In the already mentioned Georgian hagiographical text *Life of Saint George the Atonite*, written in Mount Athos around the 1068

there is an episode in which the saint confronts a group of 'Adsincani'. Emperor Constantine Monomachus wanted to exterminate stray dogs which have overrun his haunting ground and killed many animals there. To do that, he summoned a group of people, 'descendants of Simon the Magician, named Adsincani, who were renowned sorcerers and villains' (Soulis, 1961: 145) and asked them for help. They have managed to eliminate all the dogs with enchanted (poisoned) pieces of meat, and the Emperor was delighted. He called them to his palace to show him their magic, but the saint George the Atonite made a sign of cross over magical piece of meat and disenchanted it (Soulis, 1961, 145). Ethical implications of this narrative relevant for Christian society of mid 11th century are not important here, but clear suggestion that Roma are able to do something which is quite unusual is a proof of charismatic nature of their crafts. Also, their foreign, alien appearance seems to enforce their supposed magical competencies. But, it is even more important to notice discrepancy of power between the pariahs and settled peoples. Roma's services are represented both as disposable and as product of deception.

Finally, even begging, although contemporarily not considered as legitimate 'profession', could be monopolized on the basis of charisma. Tihomir Đorđević recorded an old Turkish folktale in Niš, about the one poor Muslim who got rich very quickly. God wanted to test his kindness, and have sent angel Jibril (Gabriel) in form of the gypsy to beg him for charity. Turk declined, so the God cursed him to be poor once again. That's why Turks never refuse to give alms to Roma beggars<sup>9</sup> (Đorđević, 1984). Roma's otherworldly gifts and they nomadic lifestyle seems to merge in this short tale, because they are depicted as potential guests from some other world. But, nonetheless, begging has remained to this day an ultimate stigma of the Roma people. This should not come as a surprise, because it symbolically represents precarious position of pariahs in all of its powerlessness and dependence on domicile society. Begging, as well as receiving social care is considered to exclude a person from one society, and makes an ultimate alien out of him.

---

9 There are folk stories which explain that even thieving as result of God's grace bestowed to Roma people. Elwood Trigg quotes tale which claims that Jews have planned to pierce Christ's forehead and heart with nails, but some gypsies stole them. God was pleased with this action, so he rewarded gypsies with ability to steal without punishment, and to be responsible only to him (Trigg, 1973: 72).

## Self-segregation and belief in specific means of salvation

Closed nature of Roma groups<sup>10</sup> through much of the past had many causes. Endless migration and traveling in small groups forced them to depend on their families and relatives as their only support. Other reasons come from maintaining monopoly on specific trades. There are lots of subgroups, especially of Roma from Romania (which live all across the Balkans), who are following strict endogamy, or at least were doing it in the past. Their names are coming from different crafts: *Aurari* (gold panners); *Băieși* (which means 'miners', although they are carpenters); *Lingurari* (spoon makers); *Ursari* (bear tamers); *Lăutari* (musicians/singers); *Kalderashi* (cattle makers) (Sikimić, 2005). Of course, yet another reason for self-segregation of Roma is distrust of the settled peoples, which could pose great risk for their security, and has been a case up to day (Balić, 2014).

Belief in specific means of salvation of Weber's ideal type, which is evident in Jewish case, poses many difficulties when being applied on the Roma. Reason is simple: although Roma used to represent a closed group or even more precisely, a whole conglomerate of closed groups – they have formally lost their common religion long ago. Ever since they have been practicing many different ways of salvation, they have been usually combining them in a syncretic manner. Famous Ottoman author Evliya Çelebi described Roma as 'tyrannical, good-for-nothing, thieving, *irreligious people – they pretend to be Muslims, but are not even infidels!*' (Çelebi, in: Ulusoy, 2013: 248). Western (Christian) authors had similar impression, which can be noted in Heinrich Grellman's (1783) work, because he concludes: 'Ancient, as well as the more modern writers agree, in positively denying, that Gypsies have any religion; and place them even below the Heathens. This sentence cannot possibly be contradicted; since, so far from having any religion, they have an aversion to everything which in the least relates to it' (Trigg, 1973: 22).

Both cited judgments – and there are many more similar – have failed to notice rich spiritual life of the Roma people by (mis)understanding

---

10 Muhamed Mujić notes that Roma in the Balkan provinces of Ottoman Empire were strictly endogamous. Also, they would almost exclusively bring other Roma to the court as guarantors of property (Mujić, 1953: 158). These are all clearest possible signs of segregation.

religion relying only on categories their authors were familiar with. Transmitting folk stories, avoiding taboos and practicing magic don't offer salvation typical to organized, monotheistic religions with Holy Scriptures. Small nomadic communities have their own way which is more practical and aimed at providing salvation in this life in a form of a 'good luck'.

Notion of *Marime* (*Mokadi*, *Marengo*, *Marami*, *Mahrime*) is especially important here, because it implies things and actions which are considered as taboo. Many things can be forbidden in this ritualistic way, but they are usually connected to body fluids, human hair, sexual acts, pregnancy, preparing food and so on. But more important fact here is that at least some groups of Roma have practiced self-segregation on the grounds of avoiding *Merime*, which could be transmitted by the settled peoples (Trigg, 1973: 70). Such practices could bind groups of Roma close together, in the similar manner that Jewish dietary laws have bound Jews through history (Veber, 1997). Presented facts lead to conclusion that symbolic self-segregation of the Roma was closely connected with both their migratory lifestyle and particular economic roles they have played. But most of all, it represented an answer to sometimes hostile, but always insecure social surrounding they were entering, or leaving. Together with mentioned quotes from Evliya Çelebi and Heinrich Grellman this make coherent picture of symbolic relations between pariah and settled peoples who don't accept them.

## Segregation and imposed ritual barriers by settled peoples

Practice of segregation of Roma (both spatial and symbolic) by settled peoples is a very old phenomenon. In Byzantine sources we can find many examples of clergy forbidding believers to come in any contact with them (especially to bring them to their homes). Roma were accused of being 'false prophets' and 'servants of devil', (Soulis, 1961: 147) which are generic condemnations in medieval religious discourse. Even the strict punishments were introduced by the church: those who would use services of the Roma could be denied the Holy Communion for five years according to the Council of Ancyra (Soulis, 1961: 147).

It seems that already mentioned specific Roma alien ways of salvation could compete with the one proclaimed by the official church.

Similar practice can be found in the Ottoman Empire: 'Gypsies, who are labeled as "half-people" (...) are not allowed to enter places of worship nor cemeteries, but they have their own mosque' (Mujić, 1952: 163), as well as in Venetian possessions in the Balkans, where they had to live in separated settlements (Petrović, 1976). Phenomenon of *cigan-ma(ha)la* ('gypsy-quarter') survived up until the modern times in many Balkan countries. Sometimes they make a part of integrated city quarters, for example, the Terzi Mahala in Prizren, but more commonly they are run-down neighborhoods with houses built from improvised materials (plywood, planks, metal and plastic sheets and cardboard), without water and sanitation (Bašić, Jakšić, 2005). Houses like these can be built and abandoned quickly, so they in a sense materialize migratory tendencies of their owners. For example, in Belgrade most of those 'wild settlements' and 'cardboard cities', how they are colloquially referred to, aren't permanent, but tend to move, usually under pressure of city government in order to make room for building projects. So, Roma population which already have moved to Belgrade from Southern Serbia or from AP Kosovo and Metohia in 2000s in search for work or safety are now being on the move from one part of the city to another.

From the legal point of view, position of Roma was very peculiar in the Ottoman Empire. They had to pay *jizya*, a tax reserved for non-Muslims, even when they were claimed as Muslims (Mujić, 1953: 150). Most probable reason for that is distrust in wandering people and the true nature of their beliefs, as well as strength of their conviction. But, situation for Roma people (at least for semi-settled) was much better in the Balkans than in The Holy Roman Empire, where they have been practically forbidden to enter under the threat of being killed on spot after the year 1500 (Lewy, 2000). The most extreme case of Roma (forced) segregation in the Balkans region is, without doubt, slavery in the principalities of Walachia and Moldova. Especially for the types of household-slaves which were referred to as *vatraši*, literary meaning 'associated with a fireplace'. They were owned by nobility, landowners or even church (Marushiakova, Popov, 2009).

## Conclusion

One can see that drawing any strong analogies between Roma and Jewish people is very problematic (even though it is very common in everyday narratives). Most Jews were *segregated* throughout their history, which means that they were set apart from the rest of society while they kept strong sense of group belonging. Roma people were typically *marginalized*, which doesn't only mean that they were excluded from larger population, but that they didn't have any resources to maintain strong identity of their own – they have remained to be a varied group of people to this day.

The most striking deviation from Weber's ideal type actually can explain contemporary situation of Roma migrants. Pariah status is relatively stable, yet in Roma case it formed a basis for one specific process which affects their life up to our time. This is a process of racialisation, which made ultimate aliens and unwanted citizens out of Roma who lacked means to effectively counter racist and orientalist stereotypicalization. Careful reader can note that every aspect of pariah status contained a seed of social exclusion, which germinated through time as their typical professions become redundant. Without their trades, pariahs were left only with migrations and poverty as their social essence.

The logic behind the social relations between pariah-people and their hosts still proves to be a very potent force in our time, which will remain present as a heavy burden to all future attempts to integrate similar type new migrants into host societies. Although Roma are (trans)European community, they basically partake the same migratory patterns and social position in host countries with immigrants from Africa and Asia (Algan *et al.* 2012). Or, more correctly, new migrants from other continents have met the same destiny which Roma people suffered for one thousand years before. Still, upward social mobility represents an ultimate barrier for integration of migrant pariah communities. It was shown that in case of Roma, lack of social mobility, together with low security in terms of subsistence, has been always compensated through never ending spatial mobility, leading to many traumatic challenges both for them and for their hosts, thus making integration and settling in of the pariah people in both symbolic and political sense almost impossible. As long as whole (quasi-) ethnic group remain completely tied to meeting economic demands of the settled peoples, it will remain segregated and marginalized.

Most important of all, such ambulatory economic position is very unstable, and has tendency of drifting to precarious positions of typical urban poor. Roma are no longer constantly on the move, but they don't symbolically belong to a culture of the host society either. To quote famous Romani jazz musician Django Reinhardt: 'As well as settled people remain to be settled even when they travel, Roma remain to be nomads even when they stay in one place' (Mirga, Mruz, 1997: 176).

## References

- Adair-Toteff, C. 2015. *Fundamental Concepts in Max Weber's Sociology of Religion*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Algan, Y. et al. 2012. *Cultural Integration of Immigrants in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bamski, M. 1993. Porodica kao ekonomska zajednica kod Roma u Novom Knjaževcu ('Family as an Economic Community among the Roma in Novi Knjaževac'), in: ed. Macura, Miloš i Mitrović, Aleksandra. *Društvene promene i položaj Roma*. Beograd: SANU.
- Balić, O. 2014. *Bezbednost Roma ('Security of Roma')*. Niš: YUROM Centar.
- Bašić, G. and Jakšić, B. 2005. *Umetnost preživljavanja, Gde i kako žive Romi u Srbiji ('The Art of Survival: Where and How Roma Live in Serbia')*. Beograd: IFDT.
- Digard, Jean-P. 2002. Gypsy I in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. XI, Fasc. 4, pp. 412–415.
- Đorđević, Tihomir. 1984. *Naš narodni život I-IV ('Our People's Life')*. Beograd: Prosveta.
- Eliade, M. 1978. *The Forge and the Crucible: The Origins and Structures of Alchemy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Erova, Y. 2012. Identity and religion of the Muslim Roma/so-called Turkish Gypsies, in: Varadi, T. and Bašić, G. (eds.) *Promene identiteta, kulture i jezika Roma u uslovima planske socijalno-ekonomske integracije*. Beograd: SANU.
- Feldman, G. 2015. *We are all Migrants, Political Action and the Ubiquitous Condition of Migrant-hood*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Janković, S. and Kubiček, A. 2016. Between latency and political mobilization: (con)figurations of the ethno-national identification among the bureaucratic-political elite of Serbia. *Sociologija*, Vol. 58, no 4, pp. 552–577.
- Kubiček, A. 2014. Diskursi o Romima u dnevnoj štampi ('Discourses on Roma in Daily Printed Media'), in: Valić Nedeljković, D. et al (ed.). *Uloga me-*



- dija u normalizaciji odnosa na Zapadnom Balkanu*. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu.
- Kubiček, A. 2015. Rasizam prema Romima na Internetu ('Racism Towards Roma on the Internet'), in: Valić Nedeljković, D. et al. (ed.). *Uloga medija u normalizaciji odnosa na Zapadnom Balkanu 2*. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu.
- Lewy, G. 2000. *The Nazi persecution of the Gypsies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lucassen, L., Annemarie W. and C. 1998. *Gypsies and Other Itinerant Groups, A Socio-Historical Approach*, Centre for the History of Migrations. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.
- Lucassen, L., Feldman, D. and Oltmer, J. 2006. *Paths of Integration, Migrants in Western Europe (1880–2004)*. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.
- Marković, J. 1993. Zanimanja i način sticanja sredstava za život Roma u Kraljevu (1945–1992) ('Occupations and the Ways of Gaining Living Means of the Roma in Kraljevo (1945–1992)'), in: ed. Macura, M. and Mitrović, A. (eds.) *Društvene promene i položaj Roma*. Beograd: SANU.
- Marushiakova, E. and Popov, V. 2009. Gypsy Slavery in Wallachia and Moldavia, in: eds. Kamusella, Tomasz and Krzysztof Jaskulowski, *Nationalisms Today*, Oxford: Peter Lang.
- Mirga, A. and Mruz, L. 1997. *Romi: razlike i netolerancija ('Roma: Differences and Non-tolerance')*. Beograd: Akapit.
- Mitrović, A. 1992. Romi na granicama siromaštva ('Roma on the Edges of the Poverty'), in: Macura, M. (ed.). *Razvitak Roma u Jugoslaviji, problemi i tendencije*. Beograd: SANU.
- Mitrović, A. and Zajić, G. 1993. Decenija sa Romima u Masurici ('Decade with Roma in Masurica'), in: Macura, M. and Mitrović, A. (eds.). *Društvene promene i položaj Roma*. Beograd: SANU.
- Momigliano, A. 1980: A Note on Max Weber's Definition of Judaism as a Pariah-Religion. *History and Theory* Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 313–318.
- Mujić, M. 1953. Položaj Cigana u jugoslovenskim zemljama pod osmanlijskom vlašću ('Position of Gypsies in South-Slavic Lands Under Ottoman Authority'), in: *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vladavinom*, vol. 3–4. Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu,
- Petrović, Đ. 1976. Cigani u srednjevekovnom Dubrovniku ('Gypsies in the Medieval Dubrovnik'), in: *Zbornik filozofskog fakulteta*, XIII-1. Beograd: Filozofski fakultet.
- Petrović, Đ. 2000. Cigani u Sremu u XVIII veku (prilog proučavanju) ('Gypsies in Syrmia in XVIII Century (Contribution to the Study)'), in: Macura, M. (ed.). *Cigani/Romi u prošlosti i danas*. Beograd: SANU.

- Prokić, M. 1992. Socijalno-ekonomske karakteristike Roma u Jugoslaviji ('Socio-economic Characteristics of Roma in Yugoslavia'), in: Macura M. (ed.). *Razvitak Roma u Jugoslaviji, problemi i tendencije*. Beograd: SANU.
- Pym, R. 2007. *The Gypsies of Early Modern Spain, 1425–1783*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Quran*.
- Sikimić, B. 2005. *Banjaši na Balkanu, identitet etničke zajednice ('Banjas on the Balkans: Identity of an Ethnic Community')*, Beograd: SANU – Balkanološki institut.
- Simmel, G. 1971. *On Individuality and Social Forms*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Soulis, G. 1961. The Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* Vol. 15, (1961): 141–165.
- Tygg, E. B. 1973. *Gypsy Daemons and Divinities: The magic and religion of the gypsies*. New York: Citadel Press.
- Ulusoy, Ömer 2013. An Inquiry into the Ottomans' Knowledge and Perception of the Gypsies in the late 19th Century, in: *OTAM*, vol. 34, yr. 2014, pp. 245–256.
- Veber, M. 1997. *Sabrani spisi o sociologiji religije, tom III ('Collected Essays on Sociology of Religion, Volume III')*. Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižnica Zorana Stojanovića.
- Wadim, S. 2012. *Roma migrations, Economics of ethnicities and social groups in Central and Eastern Europe*. Prague: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of social sciences.
- Weber, M. 1951. *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.
- Weber, M. 1958. *The Religion of India, the Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.
- Weber, M. 1978. *Economy and Society I-II*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Wiswanatath, R. 2014. *Pariah Problem: Caste, Religion, and the Social in Modern India*. New York: Columbia University press.
- Wink, A. 2002. *Al-Hind: Early medieval India and the expansion of Islam, 7th–11th centuries*. New York: Brill.
- Wodak, R. 2015. *The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. London: Sage.
- Zelliot, E. 2008. Dailits, in: *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism: A-F*, ed. John Hartwell Moore. Detroit: Thompson Gale.

CIP – Каталогизација у публикацији  
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

314.15(4)“2014/2016”(082)

314.15(497)“2014/2016”(082)

314.114(082)

327.56(082)

TOWARDS Understanding of Contemporary Migration  
Causes, Consequences, Policies, Reflections / editors Mirjana  
Bobić, Stefan Janković. – Beograd : Faculty of Philosophy,  
Institute for Sociological Research, : Serbian Sociological  
Society, 2017 (Beograd : Službeni glasnik). – graf. prikazi,  
tabele. – XXVI, 285 str. ; 20 cm

Tiraž 200. – Str. XIII–XXVI: Introduction / Mirjana Bobić,  
Stefan Janković. – Napomene i bibliografske reference uz tekst.  
– Bibliografija uz svaki rad. – Registar.

ISBN 978-86-6427-065-6 (FP)

1. Bobić, Mirjana [уредник] [аутор додатног текста]

- a) Миграције – Европа – 2014–2016 – Зборници
- b) Миграције – Балканске државе – 2014–2016 – Зборници
- c) Миграције – Друштвено-економски аспект – Зборници
- d) Безбедност (политика) – Зборници

COBISS.SR-ID 240026124

This book will be an important contribution to the production of knowledge on migration in the region. It will represent an indispensable reference to scholars and students of contemporary migrations in particular those interested in the recent developments and their impact within the region of former Yugoslavia, but also beyond. Policy makers and civil society representatives will also find necessary and useful material in the publication.

*Mirjana Morokvasic-Müller, Institut des sciences sociales du politique,  
CNRS – Université Paris Ouest Nanterre la Défense*

The book offers an ambitious and interesting analysis of Balkan migrations. Its main positive aspects might be summarized in the following manner: Theoretical approach. Several collective books prefer national case studies; the editors of the reviewed one have opted for a conceptual 'entry' through the key steps of the migration phenomenon – the causes and the consequences of migration flows, as well as their management through migration and integration policies. The fourth 'entry' – 'Reflections' – is more an intellectual provocation, because critical reflections accompany all the other dimensions of the study of migration phenomena and policies.

Interdisciplinarity. The migration studies are interwoven in the border studies with their emphasis on rebordering, extraterritoriality and outsourcing of control. Migration policy has become a securitarian issue and these developments are also adequately treated in several articles. The nexus demography – migration inevitably attracts attention because socialist Yugoslavia is known for the divergent demographic trends among its constituent units. Does migration leads to more convergence is a crucial question addressed in the book.

Intersectoriality. The role of migration in crucial policy documents on a large variety of spheres – development, employment, social policy, education, youth policy, etc. – is an interesting analysis and expresses a dynamic and transversal understanding of migration.

*Anna Krasteva, Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies,  
New Bulgarian University*

Overall, the book is a valuable collection of texts edited by Mirjana Bobić and Stefan Janković. The volume contains a wide variety of approaches and even there are some original ideas. Even I would say one of the great merits of volume is that it dares to incorporate geopolitics, security, military expenditure with migration. This wider perspective has the potential to overcome the simplifying and therefore misleading perspectives which have gained wider publicity nowadays.

*Attila Melegh, Corvinus University of Budapest*