

**Description by the author**

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**János Szendrei police major**

**To his doctoral (PhD) thesis entitled „Roma in the light of law  
enforcement sources”**

**Topic leader: Dr. László Beréti retired lieutenant-colonel**

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After graduating from college, I started working as a deputy for human resources of the Head of the Szombathely branch of the Szombathely Border Guard Directorate. One of my tasks was to keep contact with minorities living within the area of competence of the branch. That is where I met the diversity of minorities in Hungary, given that Croatians, Slovenes, Germans and Roma cohabit in this small area.

In 2003, Dr. László Salgó, then chief of the national police asked me to take over the position of Roma liaison officer at the Crime Prevention Section of the National Police Headquarters.

That was when I started to seriously deal with the Gypsy ethnos in Hungary, as my job my was to keep contact with Roma organizations, to analyze conflicts between Roma and the police, to attract Roma youth to the police forces and, on the basis of the cooperation agreement between Gypsies and the police, to manage local and regional police authorities.

During my security and defence policy studies at the Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, I studied the situation of minorities in Hungary. That was the subject I elaborated in my university thesis entitled *“Trends of relations between the Police and the Roma minority, especially between 2003-2005”*.

Two decades have passed already in the process of democratic transition. In a plural society, it is absolutely usual that transformation is accompanied by many disputes and that there is also a debate on the objectives to be reached. Dispute is intensified by the fact that Governments ruling since the change of system followed different principles and introduced them to the norm system of the police, conceived the “issue of Gypsies” in different ways.

## **CONCEPTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM, JUSTIFICATION OF THE CHOICE OF TOPIC**

Prejudices, negative discrimination, inequality of chances, disenfranchisement – keywords when speaking about the situation of the Roma. In Hungarian public opinion, many still believe that the Roma get too many benefits from the State and do too little to improve their

own destiny. According to some researches, in these otherwise difficult years following the change of system, xenophobia has strengthened in Hungary and unfortunately germs of a violent approach against minorities can be found as well.

The change of system resulted in shifts in the social position of some groups which led to frustration and loss of confidence of their members. They unwillingly tend to identify possible solutions to the – according to their interpretation - negative change of their situation and conflicts deriving from it in factors reaching beyond themselves. The strength of the negative attitude in front of the “scapegoat” found this way becomes more intensive and mutual, if the scapegoat happens to be another minority (although from a completely different approach, but on the basis of certain components) group.

This social integration disturbance is especially dangerous, if the opposition appears as a conflict in the execution of State power. One of the basic tasks of a State is to guarantee social integration, i. e. to contribute to a civilized resolution of social conflicts. Therefore if a conflict situation is created by the dysfunctionality of a State organ’s operation, this has to be considered as serious perturbation of the State’s functioning. One of the most typical examples of this phenomenon is the conflict between Police and the Roma. On the basis of sociologic researches, we can affirm that the members of both groups – although from different, incomparable points of view - consider themselves as being disadvantaged, defenceless and surrounded by a hostile environment.

*They project their negative attitude to each other during the “usual daily intercourse”, they sometimes attribute their defencelessness to the other part, mutually. Handling the problem constituted this way may not be done with solely the traditional system of tools set by the legal instruments, there is also a need for the application of sociologic and social psychological methods of conflict handling. This necessarily implies that beside State organs, institutions of the civil society also have to play a role in the solution.*<sup>1</sup>

A quasi shock affected the police which were in constant transformation from a so-called oppressing organ to a service provider, in connection with the change of their power status,

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<sup>1</sup> Sándor Geskó: Rendőrök és romák: konfliktusok, vagy párbeszéd? (*Policemen and roma: conflicts or dialogue?*), Mediátor Tanácsadó Iroda 2000, page 4

members and organisational structure (as for example the integration with the Border Guard). This shock had to be faced while carrying out basic tasks with a serious responsibility.

I believe it is an important issue through what change of relationship the police “ragged” this way, going through an important change in approach and getting under political pressure from time to time passed with the Gypsies (to generalise this way), considered by many an old enemy. We can complete the picture if we listen to the opinion of the members of the organisation (policemen), NGOs, legal defenders, policy experts, sociologists.

I intentionally broaden the scope of my research. I do not limit it to the relations between police and Gypsies in Hungary, as these Parts are at the same time all nuclear elements of the Hungarian society too.

## **THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCHER**

Dealing with minorities is a basic issue of Hungarian society. I am convinced that our EU activity cannot be conceived without “finally arranging our common problems” with the minorities and above all with the Roma. We have to destroy walls of stereotypes so that only current rules of conduct comprised in a norm system provide for the framework of a police measure in the relationship between a citizen and the State, which can only be surrounded, as a halo, by the basic requirement of good morals.

The relation between the Gypsy ethnos and the police has historical roots. These relations have largely changed, their scientific examination is necessary.

I consider it to be a fact that from the 1990s the leaders of the police not only made a move forward outwards, in the direction of newly formed Gypsy organisations – when initiating a partnership – but also put a stress on the normalization of the inner norm system and the training methodology.

There is a definite demand for solving conflicts between policemen and Gypsies, but especially to prevent them, in the spirit of our European principles and partnership relations.

In my opinion, it is needed that the most possible persons enter the police organisation, who, though ignoring their origins, see with the eye of a policeman and feel with the heart of a Gypsy.

I want to point out the eclectic and the fractional of the relations in the society and between police and Gypsies, I do not wish to examine the details of when and how much resource was at the disposal of those concerned and with what efficiency they were used.

## **BASICS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC**

The objective of the research is nothing but the comprehensive development of an existing and old problem at the level of system theory. Starting from the above, examining present practical methods and drawing consequences, exploring dangers imposed by the problem and giving guidelines for future, I am seeking answers to the following questions:

- 1) Which were the more significant conflicts in the past period between the policemen and the Roma/Gypsy ethnos, what consequences can be drawn from this?
- 2) Which were the claims submitted between 2003 and 2007 by persons belonging to the Roma minority against police measures, what consequences can be drawn from this?
- 3) What impact has “Gypsy criminality” – as a concept out of law – on Hungarian society, on the Gypsy ethnos and on policemen.
- 4) I examine and assess the co-operation between police and Gypsy representations.
- 5) I examine and assess the practice of the police on redirecting Roma youth to the police forces.

## **WORKING METHOD OF ELABORATION**

During my analysis, I applied an interdisciplinary approach and research method.

I approached theoretic issues with a historic and comparative method, I carried out document analysis and interpreted contracts and programs related to the topic as well. I analyzed

national and international legislation, the directives/orders of the National Police Headquarters issued in this field, I treated documents of minority self-governments, polls by county police headquarters and cooperation documents of the police and minority organisations. I steadily point out references and footnotes in the dissertation. From all the above, I assessed the factors affecting the hypotheses of my work by drawing consequences. I made use of the theoretic researches and findings of law, political sciences, sociology and security policy, also as a researcher who himself has been working at the organisation for many years. I finished my research work and the collection of resources on 31 January 2010, and I started writing my dissertation afterwards.

## **SHORT SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

I wish to present **the first chapter** in three parts, divided logically. In the first part of the first chapter, I analyze the conceptual system of the minorities, including ethnic minorities. I describe the circumstances, the social necessity of the establishment of ethnical minority as a concept, the citizenship, the conceptual characteristics of the nation and the ethnical minority. In the second part of the first chapter, I present my view on the international legal determinations of minority protection, the “precautious” minority protection rules on different international organisations. Later on, I summarize the related Hungarian legal background in force. In the third stage of the first chapter - to make it evident whom these rules apply to – I present, as a fundament, Hungary’s heterogeneously composed ethnic groups apostrophized as Gypsies which sometimes include completely different attitudes and cultural values and differ from each other too.

I state that the minority protection regulation of international law basically based on human rights is in many regards enable the reference to minority rights, but its dispersion and its local regulation based on the principle of sovereign states, in many cases unsettled, has room for improvement. From my point of view, international law lacks binding guidelines that would make evident for participating States a unified regulation of minority rights.

**In the second chapter** I describe the sources of conflict between minority and majority society and some mechanisms creating the “scapegoat” from an analyzing-assessing aspect. In

this chapter the problematic which is the main subject of my study seems to become complete; I try to get an answer to how the conflict between policemen and Roma was in the past and may become in the future, what are its motivations, if a policeman's way of thinking can be fruitful in these conflicts and whether a person respecting the rules and disposing of supplementary rights and obligations is able to ignore the prejudices of a majority society. In the second part of the second chapter I present, by commenting on reports of conferences of some international organisations that there are preconceptions, discrimination, counter-Gypsism and their handling in a European way has no real roots in Hungary, moreover it is present more intensively here, as compared to other countries. In the third part of the second chapter, by describing the conflicts and some cases on this basis, I try to point out the mistakes between Roma and policemen pro and contra, separately addressing the reasons of the conflicts. I also write analyze the statements made at the internal police intranet forum against Gypsies which were largely mediatised in 2006.

I affirm that the sources of conflict reach beyond the relation between the police and Roma. The influencing role of majority society and the operation of the police based on law and respecting rules have to hinder these relations! As an example, in criminal matters, a relation cannot and must not be generated! The important thing is that the policeman representing the State has to proceed without prejudice and impartially, only respecting the rules applying to him, against anyone who he deals with.

**In the third chapter** I set as an objective to analyze the claims submitted by persons belonging to the Roma minority against police measures between 2003 and 2007 and I also analyze some crime prevention programs "tailor-made for Roma" by the police.

I confirm that handling these claims by the police is unimpeachable with regard to the current legislation. The crime prevention programs "tailor-made for Roma" are explicitly human-friendly projects intending to help, which reflect a will to be appreciated from a State administration organ.

**The fourth chapter** is about the analysis of a strange set of thoughts often appearing as a scientific fact. If nowadays someone wishes to acquire information rapidly, he is not likely to wait for a library to open. He rather takes seat in front of a computer, establishes an internet connection and enters the keywords of the topic he is interested in into a search engine then surfs through the information found on internet. That is what I did concerning the subject of Gypsies and criminality. For many, it is well known that there are websites that can be edited

by the users themselves, such as Wikipedia. Searching for the keyword “Gypsy criminality”, entries can be found in this area as well, which appearing to be scientific expresses, beside many information I find good and acceptable, a political stocktaking, preconception and a special attitude of the unknown author(s).

What will then these people read, what will they acquire if they look for information on “Gypsy criminality”? What is my opinion? To what extent is the opinion of certain people true or not true, to what extent can we draw correct or incorrect conclusions after learning these thoughts? I try to summarize, to adapt and if needed to deny or confute these different views.

I state that the fake science dressed as science – which is the most likely to be read by an outsider in order to extend his knowledge – has a very harmful effect on relations between Roma and Hungarian and between Roma and policemen.

**In the fifth chapter**, I examine the state of play of the partnership cooperation replacing the institutional discrimination of the police and aimed at preventing conflicts and at resolving eventually developed conflicts, as well as the system of relation of this cooperation, based on the social expectations between the parties, its faults and the new ideas. I sketch a foreign model (from Canada) which could have been introduced, as there was a connection between the police forces of the two states in this field. I present two ethnically basically Gypsy social organisations carrying also police identity, which – in my opinion – did not find the golden mean, so their efforts have so far evaporated. Finally, I analyze the problems related to keeping contact and to cooperation.

I state that keeping contact between the police and the Gypsy local governments is not faultless. One of the reasons for this is the permanent change of Roma representations, the lack of coordination of Roma liaison officers and the omission of other social organisations from the processes of the system.

**In the sixth and last chapter** – also on the basis of the knowledge already described – I analyze police materials on redirecting Roma youth to police work. I present the fundamentals of the cadet (police) training carried out at the drill base in Regina of the Canadian RCMP, comparing it with the Hungarian scholarship program and admission system. As for redirecting Roma youth to police work, I formulate some recommendations, then in a summary I point out that the “resolution of conflicts” between Roma and policemen does not



only depend on the consent of the two parties. I describe that this relation is largely affected by the current political, economic and moral state of the society.

I state that redirecting Roma youth to police work and the admission system of the police need to be reformed. The system is inflexible, the admission is intermittent. The current relations between Roma and policemen go beyond the parties.

## **SUMMARIZED CONCLUSIONS:**

*During my researches, I found out that:*

- a.) minority protection regulation of international law basically based on human rights is in many regards enable the reference to minority rights, but its dispersion and its local regulation based on the principle of sovereign states, in many cases unsettled, has room for improvement. From my point of view, international law lacks binding guidelines that would make evident for participating States a unified regulation of minority rights.
- b.) the sources of conflict reach beyond the relation between the police and Roma. The influencing role of majority society and the operation of the police based on law and respecting rules have to hinder these relations! As an example, in criminal matters, a relation cannot and must not be generated! The important thing is that the policeman representing the State has to proceed without prejudice and impartially, only respecting the rules applying to him, against anyone he deals with.
- c.) handling claims by the police is unimpeachable with regard to the current legislation. The crime prevention programs “tailor-made for Roma” are explicitly human-friendly projects intending to help, which reflect a will to be appreciated from a State administration organ.
- d.) The fake science presented as science on Wikipedia – an outsider is most likely to read in order to extend his knowledge - has a very harmful effect on the Roma-Hungarian and Roma-police relations.
- e.) keeping contact between the police and the Gypsy local governments is not faultless. One of the reasons for this is the permanent change of Roma representations, the lack of coordination of Roma liaison officers and the omission of other social organisations from the processes of the system!

- f.) redirecting Roma youth to police work and the admission system of the police need to be reformed. The system is inflexible, the admission is intermittent. The current relations between Roma and policemen go beyond the parties.

## **NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS**

Deriving from what I wrote in my doctoral dissertation, the new scientific results of my researches are the following:

- 1.) I proved that “Gypsy criminality” – as a concept out of law - did exist in the past of the police as a criminology concept, but is already out-of-date in a democratic state structure. I also proved that the survival of this concept in public opinion is due to the fact that the loss of respectfulness of some social layers, their financial difficulties, their being offended and the deterioration of the economic situation of the state itself strengthened the mechanism of creating a scapegoat which stroke and still strikes the Gypsy ethnos.
- 2.) I demonstrated that in the field of cooperation between police and Roma, police and the Gypsy representations concerned did not succeed in establishing the direct and indirect methods which would have turned cooperation into a daily contact.
- 3.) I proved that redirecting Roma youth to police forces does not correspond to the challenges of modern age, as it is unable to contribute to involving a great number of young Roma into the system. Consequently, the transformation of the admission, education and training system is now already indispensable.

## **PRACTICAL UTILITY OF SCIENTIFIC RESULTS, RECOMMENDATIONS**

I believe this issue is eternal. It is impossible to terminate, to definitely settle the problems described in this study. If someone glimpses at this study in 10-20 years, he will encounter

hundreds of errors, contradictions of system theory which do not exist or exist otherwise in his society. To make use of the scientific results discovered, analyzed and described in my doctoral thesis I propose detailed analyses, summaries and recommendations at the end of each chapter. The international legal rules in force concerning the area of my research are extremely important. The current situation of the society is also extremely important, e. g. the economic indicators, who is governing, what is the political approach to the resolution of minority problems. From the aspect of this topic, the qualitative and quantitative future change of the norm system applied for the police (not to forget that the police is only applying the law) is always very important. I believe utility of scientific problem is that it is a kind of a mirror to the legislators, it analyzes systems, enounces critics that can serve as a guide for creating norms in the field of elaborating the rights of the minority, their handling and the creation of the norm system of the police.

Without wanting to repeat myself, establishing a unique set of rules regarding minority is a priority task, the admission system of the police and the system of redirecting youth to the police forces need to be renewed, a well functioning network of police liaison officers could handle the conflicts more efficiently than the many times indifferent subjects of the Roma-police relationship which now still is diversified.

## **PROPOSAL FOR CONTINUING THE RESEARCH**

With my doctoral thesis, I called attention to some issues which require further research due to their future actuality. These are the following:

The legislative processes within the European Union – maybe just because of the effects of the economic crisis – will accelerate. Migration flow is likely to speed up, especially in nationalities completely impoverished. Their research and knowledge may have an important impact on the Hungarian legal system as well.

It is equally important to research the movement of norms in the police in the future, given that due to the social crisis, the number of crimes is expected to increase and a society calling for policemen will also have to speed up the admission procedure. In the near future, the fluctuation of policemen and the research of their moral status gained following the anomalies related to their superannuation will again be an important issue.

In my opinion, the Roma are exposed to a constant attack when creating scapegoats. I am not only referring to the physical violence, but also to the verbal communication, the strengthening of the so-called Gypsy hatred. The serial attraction of light to Roma criminals is in many times not accidental, there are political interests in the background. It is a very important social interest to settle Roma-police relations as soon as possible, and that their representatives find each other. If no rapid response formation of this cooperation is established, then the parties will be unable to affect social processes from inside and their opposition will become after a while unavoidable. Researching the efficient operation of the Roma liaison officers' network can be a really serious issue in the future.

I believe that my research work, my analytic and evaluating summaries can build the basis for getting to know the relations, not including the criminal ones, between Hungarian Roma and other minorities and the police and I also believe that the result of my researches will generate a norm change which will transform the Roma-police relations and make them more visible and evident for everyone.

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE AUTHOR

**Objective study of suicides and suicide attempts within the official and contractual staff of the Border Guard (“Az öngyilkosságok és az öngyilkossági kísérletek objektív vizsgálata a Határőrség hivatásos és szerződéses állományában”)**

OTDK study, Military Science section, II place (2001)

**You do not know anything about me, I know everything about you – cooperation with the Gypsies (“Te rólam semmit, én rólad mindent tudok...” - együttműködés a cigánysággal” (2005) )**

[http://www.police.hu/megelozes/bunmegelozes/cikkek/semmit\\_mindent.html](http://www.police.hu/megelozes/bunmegelozes/cikkek/semmit_mindent.html)

Co-author: Sándor Orbán police captain

**An efficient solution to crime prevention: the CAPRA model (“Hatékony megoldás a bűnmegelőzésre: CAPRA model”)**

Világunk (October 2007) pages 3-5

**SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES** Hadtudományi Szemle, 3. year 3. edition

**In the hope of a peaceful cohabitation (“A békés együttélés reményében”)** Rendőrség 2008 ISSN 1418-7965 Budapest, 2009

**THE „PÁSZTOR AFFAIR”** Hadtudományi Szemle, 4. year 1. edition

Co-author: Dr. László Beréti retired police lieutenant-colonel

**Interview with dr. Ferenc Horváth, chairman of the National Association of Roma Policemen (“Interjú dr. Horváth Ferencsel, a Roma Rendőrök Országos egyesületének elnökével”)** Hadtudományi Szemle, 4. year 1. edition

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2 **On the verge of a European Parliament and a Hungarian election (“Egy európai parlamenti és egy hazai parlamenti választás margójára”)** Társadalom és Honvédelem, XIV. year. 1-2. edition (2010), pages 169-182

**The Gypsies and crime or what to read on internet..... (“A cigányság és a bűnözés, avagy mit olvassunk az interneten.....”)**

[http://www.freeweb.hu/roma-police/2010\\_hirek/ciganybunozes.pdf](http://www.freeweb.hu/roma-police/2010_hirek/ciganybunozes.pdf)

**Redirecting Roma youth to police forces (“Roma fiatalok rendőri pályára orientálása”)**

[http://www.freeweb.hu/roma-police/2010\\_hirek/romafiatalok.pdf](http://www.freeweb.hu/roma-police/2010_hirek/romafiatalok.pdf)

## **PRESENTATION:**

International criminal course at the Central European Police Academy (CEPA), 2005-2009: presentations on crime prevention for students of the subject of “Ethnos in Hungary”

**“One weekend in the sign of diversity”** („Egy hétvége a másság jegyében”), Nagykanizsa, 14.01.2005.

Title of the presentation: The CAPRA model in Hungary (**CAPRA modell Magyarországon**)

**“One weekend in the sign of diversity”** („Egy hétvége a másság jegyében”), Nagykanizsa, 13.01.2006.

Title of the presentation: State of play of the cooperation between the National Police Headquarters and the National Gypsy Self-Government (**“Az ORFK és az OCÖ között megvalósuló együttműködés aktuális helyzete”**)

**II. Conference on Crime Prevention and Law Enforcement**, Kiskunhalas, 07.07.2006.

Title of the presentation: Cooperation between the National Police Headquarters and the National Gypsy Self-Government (**“Az ORFK és az OCÖ között megvalósuló együttműködés”**)

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**Studies:**

- 2008- Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University – Military Science Doctoral School - PhD student

**Topic: Roma in the light of law enforcement sources**

- 2006-2008 Security and Defence Policy Speciality, Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Science Faculty

- 2004- 2005 Police Organiser Training, Police College RVTK.

- 1998- 2002 Border policing and Defence leader Faculty, Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Science Faculty

**Language skills:**

- Russian: intermediate level, type „C” number of exam certificate: 304890

- English: intermediate level, type „C” number of exam certificate: 216566

**Professional activity:**

- 1997-2003 different border guard deputy officer and border guard officer and leadership posts at the Nagykanizsa and Szombathely Border Guard Directorates

- 2003-2004 National Police Headquarters, Directorate General for Crime Prevention, Criminal Department, Section for Crime Prevention – minority desk officer

-2004-2006 National Police Headquarters, Department for Prevention, Section for Crime Prevention and Equality of Chances – minority desk officer

-2006-2008 National Police Headquarters, Directorate General for Crimes, Criminal Department, Section for Crime Prevention and Protection of Victims - minority desk officer

-2008-2009 National Police Headquarters, Press Office - press officer

-2009 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Hungary in Moldova

Szentgotthárd , 28 April 2011

János Szendrei