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ION RATIU DEMOCRACY LECTURE

The purpose of the Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture is to bring visibility and international recognition to the ideas and accomplishments of individuals around the world who are working on behalf of democracy. The event expresses the deep commitment to democracy of the late Ion Ratiu through his contributions as a Romanian politician as well as his interest in democratic change worldwide. The Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture aims to replicate for campaigning democrats today, whether in exile from repressive regimes or representative of today's emerging democracies, the life-changing experience in Washington, D.C., of the then young Romanian democrat, Ion Ratiu, during the 1970s and 80s.

The Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture strives to enrich the intellectual environment in which ideas about democracy and democratic change circulate, both within and beyond Washington. It seeks to make available for students, scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers the experience and insights of individuals whose work and commitment on behalf of democracy are broadly in keeping with those of Ion Ratiu; to provide opportunities to engage a wide range of Washington-based and international audiences to increase their appreciation of the contribution that individuals can make in advancing democratic change. Equally important, the Lecture aims to be of value for the individual or individuals who are selected to participate, providing opportunities to reflect and learn, and to benefit from individual and institutional resources that are uniquely available in Washington, including meeting with U.S. government officials.

The 2008 Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture at the Woodrow Wilson Center is the fourth event in a series begun at Georgetown University in 2005 and held at the Wilson Center since 2006. Past awardees include Sergio Aguayo (Mexico), Saad El-Din Ibrahim (Egypt) and Anatoli Mikhailov (Belarus).

Professor Eliot Sorel, MD, serves as Senior Advisor to the Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture.

Nominations for the Ion Ratiu Democracy Lecture should be submitted to IonRatiu-lecture@wilsoncenter.org or to www.wilsoncenter.org/ratiu



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THE ION RATIU DEMOCRACY AWARD WORKSHOP

WILSON CENTER



**Democracy, Human Rights,
Entrenched Poverty:
Political Dispossession of
Roma in Contemporary
Europe Award**

Angela Kocze

Recipient of the 2013 Ion Ratiu Democracy Award

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

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Political Dispossession of Roma in Contemporary Europe

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Welcome. I think we're in for a treat with this panel, centered of course around the keynote by this year's Ratiu awardee, Angela Kocze.

The panel is entitled "The Politics of Roma and Contemporary Europe" and we will start with a brief introduction by Jonas Rolett, who's the Regional Director-Southern, Central and Eastern Europe at the Open Society Foundations, OSF, certainly one of the organizations that have done the heavy lifting and the major work on the issue in Europe, so I think it's very appropriate for Mr. Rolett to introduce the session.

He serves as a liaison between the foundation networks in Eastern Europe and the western newly independent states as well as the international advocacy community here in Washington, D.C. He has a notable history working on Southern, Central, and Eastern European issues, worked extensively with parliaments, political parties, and civic groups on a variety of initiatives designed to open the political process, promote good governance, and defend human rights. He lived in Albania during the 1990s and has stayed closely involved with political and social developments there. Prior to joining the Open Society Foundations, was a Senior Program Officer at the National Democratic Institute, where he promoted democratic development in Eastern Europe. He also worked as a Political Training Director for the magazine "Campaigns and Elections", running a campaign school for candidates and campaign managers, and he also served as Communications Director for the United Way of Greensboro County in South Carolina.

We're delighted to have him here and to kick off our session today. Welcome.

JONAS ROLETT:

Thank you, Christian. I think that was more than I wanted people to know about me. So, you've already heard about how Roma are represented in Europe, and we're about to hear a presentation from Angela Kocze, among others, who is far more qualified than I am to talk about the politics of Roma in contemporary Europe. So I'll say a few words instead about why I believe it's so hard to get the politics of inclusion right on the Continent, and what we have to do to try to improve things.

It's undeniable that Roma face terrible barriers to progress throughout the region; we all know this. Discrimination is pervasive, stereotypes are rampant, governments can be indifferent, ineffectual, or worse; the media is often hostile. Roma citizens of Eastern European countries lag behind on virtually every measure of the Human Development Index -- employment, life expectancy, literacy, income. A majority of Roma surveyed in the last decade said that life was better under the Communist system than it is in the new century. Eastern Europe gets a lot of blame for this, much of it deserved, but it has no monopoly on discrimination towards Roma. France, Italy, and the UK have all engaged in deportation or surveillance of one type or another in order to manage the population of Roma on their territories. Even Sweden -- ethical, egalitarian Sweden -- recently admitted to keeping a registry of Roma contrary to the European Convention

on Human Rights. So the grim state of Roma communities and individuals across the continent is what social scientists call a “wicked problem”, and that is a problem that defies resolution because of complex interdependencies and contradictory inter-dimensions.

Some of the defining characteristics of wicked problems are:

the problem is not understood until after the formulation of a solution; every wicked problem is essentially novel and unique; wicked problems have no given alternative solutions; every wicked problem can be considered a symptom of another problem; and solutions to wicked problems are not right or wrong, but they can be good or bad. At the Open Society Foundations we’ve worked on this wicked problem since the late 1980s. I have no doubt that one day George Soros will be canonized by the greater Roma community, which he deserves, in my opinion. A major lesson we’ve drawn from these efforts is that good intentions are not enough. What’s required is experimentation, failure, more experimentation, more failure, grit, money, more money, and willingness to take risks. That’s not an easy proposition for politicians who are seeking to attract the votes of a majority of citizens, nor is it easy for citizens who are in many cases struggling to feed, clothe, and educate their families. Mostly what we see around Roma issues in Europe, especially during the economic crisis of the recent years, is a vicious circle -- competition for scarce resources, downward pressure on incomes, increasing reliance on the state,

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Ion and Elisabeth Ratiu established THE RATIU FOUNDATION UK in London in 1979. The main objective of the Foundation is to promote and support projects which further education and research in the culture and history of Romania and its people. Projects, undertaken in Romania, are encouraged on different subjects, such as patrimony, civil society, democracy, civilization, and environmental protection.

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which has correspondingly less money for more people who need help.

In this climate, minority groups -- be they Roma, or immigrants, or even the rural population -- are often seen negatively by the majority and they often suffer disproportionately. The challenge is to turn things around, to create a virtuous circle based on social solidarity and shared prosperity. And one of the most promising and most difficult approaches is to sell politicians on the idea that addressing social and economic problems of the poorest citizens, among which you always find Roma, is really a benefit for everybody. There is another dimension to the problem of Roma in Europe. It’s sometimes described as “otherness” -- that is, Roma are seen as different, as alien. Majority communities believe they have different values, citing child marriages or begging on the streets as

fundamental elements of Roma culture that are repugnant to contemporary European society.

There are several problems with this view. For one thing, it's based on stereotypes that don't hold up when looking at Roma as a broader community. Given the same opportunities in education and employment that members of the majority population have, Roma perform at the same level as non-Roma. Absent those opportunities, the poorest members of all societies find different strategies for survival. There was a UNDP report in 2003 that found that Roma crime is directly associated with poverty. Quote: "The cost of complete compliance with the law is often starvation." Moreover many Roma pass for white in countries throughout the region, so their values and behaviors aren't factored in; neither are the legions of solid Roma citizens of all economic levels who conduct themselves just like the rest of the population. So, what can be done with this wicked problem? I'll throw

out a few ideas here, based in part on the many failures -- the requisite failures -- that we've experienced within the Open Society Foundations. Our Foundation in Bulgaria recently commissioned a survey to compare attitudes in the majority population toward Roma today as compared to 1990, and they found that all of the stereotypes had persisted, plus one new one had appeared, and that one was that Roma are a favored minority.

Why is that? Well it's probably because OSF and other well-meaning donors have been hammering the theme of human rights for Roma, and putting money into highly visible development projects without paying much attention to the needs of poor Bulgarians who are not Roma. So one lesson is to design programs that include poor citizens from the majority population, and to frame the development efforts as social inclusion, not as Roma inclusion. And governments and politicians could profit from this approach as well.

Angela Kocze is a leading Hungarian Roma rights activist and a visiting assistant professor at Wake Forest University, NC, where she teaches courses on Gender Studies, Feminism, Advocacy and Policy Making. She has an international reputation for interdisciplinary approach, combining political activism and policy-making with in-depth participatory research studies on the Roma situation in Hungary and elsewhere. Kocze worked as a founding director of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO) in Brussels (2003-2004), as well as the former director of the human rights education program at the European Roma Rights Centre (1998-2003) in Budapest. Kocze was the founding director of the Romaversitas program (1996) in Budapest which offers scholarships and mentorship for Roma minority university students. Kocze earned her PhD in Sociology and Social Anthropology from Central University in Budapest, where her dissertation focused on Romani women's political activism and social struggles. She has published two books: *Black and White: Romani Women Labour Status in Two Hungarian Micro-Regions*, and *Missing Intersectionality: Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Current Research and Policies on Romani Women in Europe*.

"It is undeniable that Roma face terrible barriers to progress throughout the region. Discrimination is pervasive, stereotypes are rampant, governments can be indifferent, ineffectual, or worse; the media is often hostile."

Another lesson is to meet stereotypes head on. That same survey found that a majority of Bulgarians believed that Roma do not pay their electricity bills. To challenge that view, we went to Stolipinovo, which is a neighborhood in the city of Plovdiv, and that in fact had the lowest rate of electricity payment in the country. And it turned out that the households in that neighborhood had no electricity meters, so there was no way of knowing whether the bills people received were accurate, and of course people had connected sort of informally to the power lines so there was no telling who was using power and how much. But by working with the community leaders, the utility companies, the local government, the meters were installed and now Stolipinovo is tied for the highest payment rate on electricity bills.

This example, which I have admittedly cherry-picked, shows that there are ways to solve wicked problems, or at least little pieces of the bigger wicked problem. There are other things we can do as well: invest in talented Roma and non-Roma kids; pressure governments to live up to their obligations under the EU Framework for Roma Integration, or under the Decade for Roma Inclusion; help capacitate Roma citizens as political actors so they can fight for their own interests just as other citizens do. Since my role here is introductory I'll stop there, though I would like to pose a couple of questions we might consider during the course of the panel. And these are the hard ones; these are the ones we've been struggling with for quite a while

now. So any thoughts on how to deal with them would be appreciated.

One of them is: what are the arguments we can use to convince politicians in Europe that inclusive policies are not going to cost them votes? And another one is: what incentives are there for ordinary citizens, especially poor ordinary citizens, to accept inclusive policies? Thank you.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you very much. It is now my great privilege and honor to introduce this year's awardee, Angela Kocze. Congratulations, Angela, on this award. We're all delighted and honored for you to join us here today. Let



me just introduce Angela briefly -- President Harman already spoke of her -- let me do the more formal introductory part by letting you know a bit about her background. She is, of course, a leading Hungarian Roma rights activist, and she's currently a Visiting Assistant Professor at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, where she teaches courses on gender studies, feminism, advocacy, and policy-making. She has gained an international reputation for her interdisciplinary approach combining political activism and policy making with in-depth participatory research studies on the Roma situation in Hungary and elsewhere.

She has worked as the founding director of the European-Roma Information Office in Brussels from 2003 to 2004, as well as the former director of Human Rights Education Program at the European Roma Rights Center in Budapest. Angela was the founding director of Romaversitas, founded in 1996 in Budapest, which offers scholarships and mentorships for Roma minority university students. She earned her Ph.D. in sociology and social anthropology from Central European University in Budapest, where her dissertation focused on Romani women's political activism and social struggles. She has published two books -- *Black and White: Romani Women's Labor Status in Two Hungarian Microregions* and *Missing Intersectionality: Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Current Research and Policies on Romani Women in Europe*. Some of us had the great fortune to have dinner last night with Angela, hosted by Nicolae Ratiu, the president of the Ratiu Foundation, and I think we were all inspired by Angela and her remarks and so I very much look forward to your keynote today -- again, a warm, warm welcome, congratulations, and the floor is yours.

"It's very important where your social and political location is. . . I'm talking from a position where both my parents are illiterate and actually I'm Roma but I'm not coming from Romania. I'm coming from Hungary."

ANGELA KOCZE:

Thank you so much. I feel really honored, actually, to join the group of people who already got the Ratiu Award. I think it's a really great, great group of people who really worked for democracy and defended civil rights. First of all, I would like to thank the Wilson Center for organizing this opportunity for me and also I would like to thank the Ratiu family for offering this award, and then, I'm really grateful to be here.

I would like to say a few things before I'm going to start my more formal speech. You know, I'm a feminist, and feminists stand on theories -- it's very important where is your social and political location is; where is the point you are talking from? And I'm talking from a position where both my parents, they were illiterate, and actually I'm Roma, but I'm not coming from Romania I'm coming from Hungary. I'm coming from a very little village, a segregated village, and I went through the education system -- of course there were many obstacles -- and one of the things I would like to emphasize -- I really feel myself as a product of the George Soros Scholarship and Fellowship, because without his support I never ever would be able to be here, and to go through that education channel I went through.

Also, interestingly I would like to point out that there's coincidentally several American women who made a huge impact on my life. Julie Clayton, who is kind of an honorary mother, and Deborah Harding, who is here -- and she was a vice-president in the Open Society Foundation -- and I truly thank her that she really made an enormous impact on me. And Dr. Diane Orentlicher, who's a law professor at American University -- and Diane is really important in my life because I met with her when she was working in the OSCE in '98, actually, and she wrote the first report on the discrimination of Roma in European countries. I helped Diane to prepare her trip and I introduced her in various Roma communities, and we had a dream. And we dreamed together that I would teach in a university in the U.S., one of the American universities. At first I started with Diane and we taught the course together on ethnic identity and international law in 2000 and 2001 -- and I came to the American University, which is here in Washington, D.C., as a "practicing visitor" -- that was the title, because at that time I did not have a Ph.D. But meanwhile I earned a Ph.D. and now I came back again and I'm teaching at the Wake Forest University, which is really a great pleasure, and I'm really happy to be there and to have such a supportive environment.

I think the American public is really important for the Roma cause, because showing the solidarity and showing moral leadership -- I think it's very important. I'm really grateful for that, to be here -- and really grateful for the American universities and my American colleagues and friends who contributed to the Roma cause in Central-Eastern Europe, and even in the Western European countries as well. Actually, why I gave this title, as *Failed Promises and Gendered Politics of Dispossession of Roma* -- first of all I'm writing -- I

already finished a book chapter which will be published by the Central European University Press and the title is "The Political Impoverishment or Political Incarceration of Roma" -- the Hungarian version of "Politics of Dispossession." So, these issues, these concepts were very much in my mind. I won't give you the whole paper because I was asked to be more informal and to not read an academic paper but I still would like to bring up some concepts I think are very important to discuss regarding Roma these days in Europe.

So first of all, if we're going to look at the map, according to the World Bank there are twelve million Roma in Europe right now. And the vast majority are actually located in Central and Eastern Europe -- as you see, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Macedonia, Czech Republic and Poland -- some of the places it can be 8 to 12 percent of the total population. So really we're talking about a significant number of dispossessed and marginalized people in Europe.

And one of the things I think it's really important to talk about is what happened after the changes, after 1989. So, many Central-Eastern European societies, including Hungary, experienced remarkable economic and political and social transformation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. One of the things was the external political forces -- we joined NATO, we joined the European Union, and we really hoped in many Roma communities that the prosperity would come and reach Romani ghettos as well. But unfortunately, as I will talk about, based on some statistical data, this kind of prospect never really came to the Roma communities. There was some internal restructuring in various Central-Eastern European countries -- and what we faced and

experienced was categorized as an “embedded neoliberal situation” by Bohle-Greskovits, who are my colleagues at the Central European University. And they argued that these countries, including Hungary, were less market-radical than the Baltic states, therefore achieving better results in building new markets and industries competently, as well as being socially more inclusive – as opposed to the Baltic States, where there was really a strong radical change after 1989.

However, institutions that are supposed to safe-guard macroeconomic stability have either not become established or do not function independently from government in most countries such as Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland. And Bohle-Greskovits, in one of the recent interviews they had in a Hungarian newspaper, stated that Hungary in fact stepped out of the category of embedded neoliberal and created a new variation of neoliberal regime, keeping the same strategies such as increasing the employment -- mainly by state-financed public works, which is a kind of debt -- and there was research on the public work in Hungary as well as in many other countries where people who are involved in a public work are getting a very little amount of money which is not enough to survive month by month. By reducing social welfare expenditures, creating new identity politics and promoting indigenous capitalists by suppressing socially and economically large populations who are not viewed as competent. Prominent among these socially and economically deprived individuals are the ethnically distinguished Roma.

I think it's a very important point that this kind of experimental identity based political regime has dated further back -- it ultimately,

as I call it, led to exclusionary democracy. And that's what we don't want to see and that's why we have to challenge these kinds of exclusionary democracy we are witnessing in Hungary, but in many other Central-Eastern European countries as well.

And then I did the research with my students and also we did the participatory research, which means we involved the local community as well, designing the questionnaires and doing interviews and of course the analysis of the data -- it was in my hands, but still the local community itself. They used it as an advocacy tool and they used it as a vehicle. So I really believe we don't have to do science for the sake of science. We have to do such science which is usable by people who are attached to certain issues, and it's usable by policy-makers as well. And one of the important things is that after 1989 -- so after the market economization -- we really hoped that Roma would be integrated, many funds would come, and people would be able to go to universities, and be able to work in various places where we never ever saw any Roma, just like universities, right? We would go there, and probably we're going to meet with the cleaners and the bodyguards who're going to be Roma, but no professors.

“We joined NATO, we joined the European Union, and we really hoped in many Roma communities that the prosperity would come and reach Romani ghettos as well.”

Social exclusion and pauperization, racial discrimination and territorial segregation actually increased in the last 10-15 years.

The first research project with my students was on Romani women, and the labor status of Romani women, and to make a comparison in an absolutely disadvantaged community, compare with the city which is relatively well-off and more prosperous economically. And it turned out that even in the city the Romani ghetto is actually not at the edge of the city – but in the middle of the city.

So in the middle of the city they lock the people up, completely hopeless even though there are so many funds available -- there are so many mechanisms, there are so many strategies, but the question is: what is the implementation of these strategies, and who is going to enforce anti-discrimination law? We were talking about legal issues as well -- that Europe has many things to learn from the U.S., from the Civil Rights Movement and using civil rights strategies, but in Europe, actually we have lots of legal instruments and legal tools but they are still not implemented and still we can find the places like that.

So we are talking about the European Union; we are not talking about the Third World, we are not talking about African countries; we are talking about the heart of Europe -- we are facing a Third World situation. As I call it, it's truly an "exclusionary democracy". And we cannot tolerate that. And we cannot ignore this degree of poverty and this degree of exclusion that many Roma are facing in Europe.

Being a sociologist and someone who's doing public sociology because I really believe in

what I'm doing -- we did so much research, there is so much data, in the last 5-10 years, done by Open Society Foundation, UNDP, World Bank, European Commission -- so we cannot say that we don't know the situation of the Roma. We should know it, because there are tons of research papers. -- The most current ones were published in 2011 by the Fundamental Rights Agency, which is an institution of the European Union, on the situation of Roma in 11 EU member states, and also by the UNDP, on avoiding the dependency trap. I myself contributed to this working paper series on civil society and civil involvement and social inclusion of Roma. Interestingly, at the beginning of the 90s there was a great interest to set up Roma NGOs and pro-Roma NGOs as well.

What I meant by pro-Roma NGOs, are not NGOs run by Roma, but promoting Roma issues. Based on the data set from 2011, it's turned out actually that the number of Romani civic organizations has been



decreased, as well as the participation of Roma in civic coordination, so there's somehow a step back. One of the most urgent things is that in those areas which are absolutely underrepresented, underdeveloped socially and economically, you can hardly find even an NGO that would do any kinds of social work and social service for Roma. So, being a sociologist I still would like to start with some facts and issues which should be raised from the comparative data, collected by the UNDP, World Bank, and European Commission in 2004 and 2011.

It's actually very interesting because it provides an opportunity to make a comparative analysis because the sample -- they were working on comes from the Roma communities who are living in very marginalized territories and people who are living in a close proximity to Roma. So supposedly these are the people who are in the same social and economic position as Roma. One of the issue which is very important on education is that the educational attainment of young Roma increased in some countries. This is not

surprising knowing about the European Roma Educational Fund, George Soros' generous contribution, as well as some of the state initiated scholarship programs. But still the representation of young Roma at the secondary level, in secondary education, is still not so great. Many of them who start high school are going to drop out after one year or after one semester because they basically have not enough support, not just financial support but educational and intellectual support from their family.

The data also shows us that there's a high share of Roma students with ethnically segregated schools or classes, so still segregation is an issue. Even though we have many educational policies, we have anti-discrimination law and we have educational law in Hungary which would ban segregation, but still we are very creative in Europe in finding ways to discriminate against Roma. The share of Roma that visit ethnically segregated special school exceeds 60 percent in the Czech Republic; in Slovakia, 30 percent; in Hungary 20 percent. In Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, and

Jonas Rolett is the regional director for Southern Central and Eastern Europe at the Open Society Foundations. He serves as a liaison between foundation networks in Eastern Europe and the Western Newly Independent States and the international advocacy community in Washington, D.C. Rolett has a notable history of working on Southern Central and Eastern European issues. He has worked extensively with parliaments, political parties, and civic groups on a variety of initiatives designed to open the political process, promote good governance, and defend human rights. He lived in Albania during the 1990s and has stayed closely involved in political and social developments there. Prior to joining the Foundations, Rolett was a senior program officer at the National Democratic Institute, where he promoted democratic development in Eastern Europe. Rolett managed programs related to governance, civic participation and political party building, and established domestic election monitoring organizations in five countries. Before joining NDI, Rolett worked as the political training director for the magazine Campaigns & Elections, running a "campaign school" for candidates and campaign managers. He also served as the communications director for the United Way of Greenville County, South Carolina.

Why are we tolerant? Why is it okay to talk about Roma? Why is it okay to use such a language? Why is it okay to use such an offensive political discourse against Roma? Somehow there is a tacit acceptance or consensus behind that.

especially the Czech Republic and Slovakia, there's a high share of Roma attending special schools -- this is another problem. So if we were not able to succeed in segregating them to another school in our locality, or we were not able to segregate them in a different class inside the school, then we going to come up with a new idea, and we going to segregate them in a special school which is designed for mentally handicapped children.

When I was working in the European Roma Rights Center as a Human Rights Education Director, we started the research on school discrimination and school segregation in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia as well. And the data was really telling. It absolutely showed the trends that the state and the school system are segregating Roma. What we did, based on the civil rights experience in the U.S., was we started to litigate and sue the government and sue the Czech educational system. That was the most famous case, what we started -- the Ostrava case -- and I think everybody in Europe knows what it is. This case actually went to the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg. And finally after nine or 10 years -- can you imagine, what happened with these kids over 10 years? It's again a lost generation, right? Because those who finish the special education, they won't have a chance to go to higher education, to college and universities. And the Human Rights Court stated that, yes, the Czech Republic violated the rights of the Romani children, and they have to improve the educational situation and we are banning

segregation based on ethnicity. We were absolutely happy in the European Human Rights Center because we really, truly believe that it will make a huge impact on European public education because certainly it was not just about the Czech Republic -- the same practice was exercised in Hungary, Slovakia, and elsewhere in Europe as well.

Unfortunately it didn't make such a big impact on the public educational system as we saw from the data. Segregation is still an ongoing practice and somehow it's become a norm. I think again we are going back to some of the fundamental issues -- Why are we tolerant? Why is it okay to talk about Roma? Why is it okay to use such a language? Why is it okay to use such an offensive political discourse against Roma? Somehow there is a tacit acceptance or consensus behind that. And I think that's what we have to challenge and that's what we have to dismantle in our societies.

The second issue which is very important is employment. Just highlighting a few points from this comparative data from 2004 and 2011, Roma face higher unemployment rates than non-Roma populations. This was from the data where they compared Roma who were living in a segregated neighborhood with non-Roma who were living in close proximity. So you can imagine that compared with the national average unemployment is even higher. The gap is even deeper than in the research itself. The research shows that Roma are more likely to be unemployed than

their non-Roma counterparts in all countries, for both men and women. Something which is very shocking -- again we all of us believed in that if we're going to be educated, we're going to go to high school, we're going to go to university, and then we will have a good job. But unfortunately not. So many educated Roma still face unemployment. So what's the reason for that? What is the explanation for that? Highly trained and professional Roma are still looking for a job in Hungary, in Romania, in Slovakia, and many other countries, and we are in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, right? And these are really sad and ironic facets of the situation.

Something else is the unemployment rates of female Roma and non-Roma, something which is very important for me. I'm one of the sociologists, actually, who started to analyze Roma issues not just based on ethnicity, but to see the gendered dynamic as well. It is very important to compare Roma female with Roma male and Roma female with non-Roma female. How do they succeed in the labor market? --I'll take Hungary as an example, because I'm from Hungary.

The unemployment rate of Roma is more than 60 percent in those segregated areas -- and the national average, the unemployment rate in Hungary, is approximately 10-11 percent. So just think about this -- the unemployment rate amongst Roma is more than 60 percent and the national average is more like 10-11 percent. In fact in a region such as eastern Hungary or southern Hungary, the unemployment rate would be much higher. So the social inequality actually is translated into territorial segregation and territorial inequalities as well.

Just to stick with my own issues as well, as a sociologist, because you asked me to feature myself as well -- one of the forthcoming research papers will be about the interplay between gender and ethnicity and exposing structural disparities of Romani women -- an analysis of the UNDP data from 2004 and 2011. Why is that important? Why is it important to talk about Romani women's issues, Romani women who are faced with multiple, or as I call it, with intersectional discrimination? When we were talking about Roma integration and Roma inclusion policies, we are treated as a gender-neutral minority for social inclusion policies. However we know that the poverty has a gendered face and discrimination has a gendered face and we have to discuss these issues as well and to address them properly in how policy works.

So this showing the difference between Roma male, Roma female, non-Roma male,



and non-Roma female -- for example, 45 percent of the Roma male population has no income whatsoever, and when we are talking about these people, they are really trapped in an embedded, an entrenched, long-term poverty. Basically they do not have any hope to get out; maybe they can come out for one month to do a little public work and to survive on nothing, but after that they will fall back again into poverty where you know they have no any hope to find a job. Amongst Roma females compared to Roma males it's 65 percent. When I was talking about Roma males with no income, it was 45 percent; Roma females, more than 65 percent. However, compared with non-Roma males, it's 28 percent, and non-Roma females, approximately 42 percent -- something which is really striking. So you see that there is a huge gap between Roma males and females, but also an ethnic gap.

There is interplay between gender and ethnicity. Like, if you see the differences between non-Roma males and non-Roma females, it's less than the difference between Roma females and non-Roma females, and the difference between Roma females, and Roma males. So women are really facing a double or intersectional discrimination. So why I was talking about all these issues -- such as education, employment, and income, by gender -- is because economic and social deprivation is becoming a condition for political dispossession. We really believe in that, that Roma will be mobilized and they will participate in an election and they will run for political office, they will set up their own political organization -- but unfortunately not, so the vast majority is trapped in a completely deprived situation. Their dilapidated social and economic situation does not generate political mobilization and civic participation among Roma -- it rather strengthens their submissive

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During his career, Uyehara covered the oil and gas industry during assignments in the economic section of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq (2008-2009) and Jakarta, Indonesia (2000-2002). He also served as a political and political-military officer at the U.S. Embassies in Kyiv, Ukraine (2005-2008); Tokyo, Japan (1995-1998); and Manila, Philippines (1991-1993). During assignments at Department of State headquarters in Washington, DC, Mr. Uyehara was responsible for U.S. foreign policy for Belarus (2002-2004) and the Pacific Islands (1989-1991). He served a consular tour during a split assignment in the United Kingdom, one year at the Embassy in London and a second year at the U.S. Consulate General in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Before joining the Foreign Service, Uyehara served in the U.S. Army for nearly a decade, both as an enlisted soldier and as an officer. He completed the Military Intelligence Officer Advanced course and left the Army with the rank of captain after from his last assignment at the Presidio of San Francisco.

status via various exclusionary political mechanisms in the Central and Eastern European countries.

So civic participation and political participation have absolutely vanished not just in Hungary but many Central European countries. The logic of the free market defined what and who is worthy and unworthy, not just in economic and financial terms, but also regarding landscape geographies and specific groups in a society. Socially and economically underdeveloped areas such as ghettos, slums, or segregated settlements are not valued and do not attract any significant capital investment. So we were really hoping that after the EU accession, financial capital will come and there will be some kind of revitalization in those socially and economically deprived micro-regions, but unfortunately not, they never reach these communities -- and what I state, actually, that these marginalized



populations who are living in such a deprived condition simply become disposable from these economic perspectives, since their contribution is not relevant to the legal economy. I think that's the biggest challenge for us -- how we can change that, and how we can turn around and how we can organize some kind of strategic solidarity?

And I would like to echo actually -- I'm not religious -- what was said by Pope Francis. I think it's very, very important that basically he was telling us that the new market economy, this kind of embedded neoliberalism, what I was talking about it at the beginning -- the result is that human beings are considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We witnessed a globalization of indifference where the poor are dehumanized and ignored, as he wrote in his speech. So what we are really witnessing and -- following the media news in the last few weeks, in the last few months -- that it's really dehumanized Roma and basically made them or designed them as a disposable population.

We have to think through what we can do for the young Roma, for the next generation. How we can invest in them, because I think it's really a lost opportunity if we do not think about it -- again, referring to George Soros' speech and article published by "The Guardian," one week ago -- you really have to create a Roma middle class and Roma working class, people whom we will see in various places in the society.

Just a few points, because we were talking about the EU and the advantage of the EU accession and we really hoped that the EU would bring prosperity and good life for Roma as well, but unfortunately it's never

really arrived and it's never really reached the Roma community. In 2004 there was an EU accession, as we know, and the eastward expansion, and a significant number of Roma became EU citizens as well. However, what we witnessed, even today as well, is that even though we are European citizens, many Roma are still pushed out -- they are stopped at the border, they are sent back to their home countries, to Romania and Bulgaria. Just think about France, Great Britain as well, and many other western European countries. Although one of the main principles of the EU is freedom of movement, freedom of labor; work, etc. So, why don't we think about it and change it?

And the other thing is actually that many Romani NGOs and many Romani activists who were very active at the beginning of 90's have become totally disillusioned and frustrated by the situation -- that nothing really changed. So just think about my work -- I just started to work at the really early stage. So we really worked so hard through decades, and after that, we just don't see anything. Right now actually I'm coordinating a research project supported by the Hungarian Academic Science Foundation, and it's about the institutionalization of Romani politics after 1989, and I would like to extend that research to many other European countries as well. But right now I'm doing it in Hungary and I'm conducting, with my colleagues, several interviews with Romani intellectuals and Romani politicians, who were massively involved in the human rights issues. And many of them just become so frustrated, and also see that their position is so fragile -- many of them in a kind of intellectual exile. I consider myself in an exile right now in North

There was a sense of resignation and resentment and frustration toward state politics and towards the EU politics as well, which promised a lot but Roma didn't get much out of that.

Carolina, in Winston-Salem and working with my Hungarian colleagues, using Skype and going back sometimes. There was a sense of resignation and resentment and frustration toward state politics and towards the EU politics as well, which promised a lot but Roma didn't get much out of that. In some degree they have some kind of resentment and frustration towards transnational organizations as well, such as the Council of Europe, even sometimes towards the Open Society Foundations -- and they just feel that they're out there, left alone, and many of them are totally abandoned and pushed out of the political sphere.

One of the things people are asking me when I'm talking about Roma issue and Roma political participation: so where is the Roma Martin Luther King? Why don't you have one person, right, who's going to integrate everybody? And they're going to represent the voice of Roma in one person. I would say, and my research actually reaffirmed for me, that there are several Romani Martin Luther Kings whose voices are silenced, and their activities are not supported, and their characters are attacked. Basically, as we see in many Central-Eastern European countries, in a political sphere, some people are attacking

each other. The same thing is going on in the Romani civil rights movement as well. Their power is delegitimized not just by the visible anti-Roma political forces -- but they do not get support even from the progressive political elite. I think that's the point where we can come into the picture, so I think it's really great and it shows something that so many people came today. Certainly it's not just about me, it's about the Roma cause, the Roma issues.

I think it's really important for us when we think about ourselves as progressive, social-political-whatever elite, how we can make a strategic alliance with them and how we can support their cause. Much work must be done to begin earnestly engaging non-Roma in difficult conversation -- no one said that it's going to be easy to start these kinds of discussions and dialogues which explore the majority society's complicity, if not contribution, to the situation of the Roma in Europe today. I would close here, so thank you so much.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you so much, Angela, for this brilliant presentation. When we, the Ratiu family, and Professor Sorel -- and there were others -- were thinking about establishing this award here at the Wilson Center, we felt we should aim for engaged thinkers and thoughtful practitioners. I would have a hard time putting you in an either/or category, and there's no one who fits this mold more than you do, so I'm very grateful for your remarks. The Ratiu Award usually comes with a month-long fellowship here at the Wilson Center -- which this year we'll actually separate from the actual presentation and award workshop -- Angela

will be joining us in the spring in May for a month -- so she will be back, and I invite all of you to be in touch with her. We wanted to replicate the experience that Ion Ratiu had as an exiled dissident -- Romanian dissident -- among other things, here in Washington, where in the 1970s and 80s he lobbied the U.S. government and the American society in his opposition against the Ceau escu regime, not often successfully. So we always feel that part of the exercise here is to get our awardees engaged with the U.S. policy community, with the US government. We will do more of that in the spring, but we always feel it's important to have the U.S. government within the workshop, and so I'm very grateful to have Mike Uyehara, the Director of the Office of European Affairs at the State Department with us here today.

We've had, over the past years, a number of U.S. government representatives here from the State Department, from the National Security Council, so I'm grateful that you can join us. He is -- I shortened the title -- he is the Director of the Office for Europe and Eurasia in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. That office manages all aspects of U.S. human rights policy towards 50 countries in Europe and Eurasia and oversees preparation of the State Department's human rights reports for the European region. He succeeded Eric Falls as Director in August 2012, arriving from a position as political-military officer at the US Mission to International Organizations in Vienna. During his career, Mr. Uyehara has covered the oil and gas industry during assignments in the economic section of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, in 2008-2009, and in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 2000-2002; he's also served as a

political and political-military officer in the U.S. Embassies in Kiev, Ukraine; in Tokyo, Japan; and also in Manila, Philippines. In assignments at the State Department headquarters in Washington, he was responsible for U.S. Foreign Policy towards Belarus and the Pacific Islands. He has served also a consular tour in the United Kingdom. Before joining the U.S. Foreign Service he served in the U.S. Army for nearly a decade, both as an enlisted soldier and as an officer. He completed the Military Intelligence Officer advanced course and left the Army with the rank of Captain after his last assignment at the Presidio in San Francisco. So I am delighted to have you here today and welcome your remarks.

MIKE UYEHARA:

Thank you, Christian. I am grateful to the Wilson Center for the opportunity to speak about U.S. Policy to advance human rights for the Roma. And my congratulations as well

to Angela for winning the Wilson Center's democracy award.

The marginalization and isolation of Romani citizens, preventing them from contributing their talents and participating fully in the countries where they live affects millions of men, women, and children across Europe, as we've heard. The recent seizures and attempted seizures of Romani children from their parents in Ireland and Serbia following the media portrayal of the Bulgarian girl found in a Greek Roma camp, demonstrates the unacceptable stereotypes of Roma that, sadly, continue to be accepted across the continent. In this context, it is especially critical for us to focus on Roma women and girls who are particularly vulnerable to multiple forms of discrimination.

In the face of this, I'd like to paraphrase former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton



This discrimination is more than a Roma issue. It is a direct challenge to a government's duty to protect the fundamental human rights of all of its citizens.

and say that Roma rights are human rights. Discrimination against Roma continues, whether it manifests itself as segregation in schools, the construction of walls between Roma communities and their neighbors, or a lack of identity documents that limits political participation and denies the right to social services.

This discrimination is more than a Roma issue. It is a direct challenge to a government's duty to protect the fundamental human rights of all of its citizens. This is especially true in the several municipalities across the region where local authorities have constructed barriers to segregate Roma from the rest of the population. We must speak out and be clear. The integration of Europe and the inclusion of Roma cannot be built through walls.

Such discrimination presents a moral and human rights challenge. But we shouldn't ignore the growing socioeconomic costs of exclusion. The World Bank has estimated that economic losses to states with significant Romani populations, such as Romania, Serbia, and the Czech Republic, stemming from Roma exclusion, particularly the lack of education and job skills, are in the billions of Euros. Demographic trends will just accelerate these losses. 36 percent of Roma are under the age of 15, compared to 16 percent of the overall population of the European Union. The average age among the EU's Roma population is 25 compared to the overall EU average that pushes over 40. According to the World Bank, in Bulgaria alone Roma

are expected to make up 23 percent of new labor market entrants by 2020. So, will young Romani men and women have the skills that they need to contribute to a vibrant 21st century economy?

Also, importantly, there is much work to be done to ensure the full political participation of the Roma population to guarantee that they have a say in their countries' futures. Unfortunately, when we see the election of the extreme anti-Roma politicians such as Marian Cortova's recent victory in a regional governor's race in Slovakia, we can only conclude that the Romani population remains marginalized. Roma women are in an even more dire position in this regard and the U.S. calls on our European partners to work to build up an effective and equal participation of Roma women in public and political life, including through the promotion of women's access to public office, public administration, and decision-making positions.

We are concerned about the prospect of interethnic tensions arising from this marginalization. We witnessed unsettling incidents of anti-Roma violence and protests this past year. In several countries extremist, as well as main stream, politicians continue to stoke anti-Roma sentiments. Unfortunately, sometimes we see politicians playing into racist stereotypes in a crude attempt to tap into the pool of disaffected voters. Election season is never an excuse for racism. Governments must continue to speak out forcefully against anti-Roma rhetoric and violence.

As part of its global efforts to promote universal human rights, the U.S. Government also promotes Roma inclusion. Our own experience in the United States with civil rights has taught us that broad-based activism, uniting members of marginalized communities, non-governmental actors, and governments to develop solutions and share best practices, can help break the cycle of isolation and intolerance. However, the responsibility to provide all citizens with equal opportunities in education, health care, housing, and employment resides first and foremost with governments.

U.S. support to Romani communities is part of our broader effort to partner with civil society and governments to combat racism and prejudice against all vulnerable groups in Europe. In addition to the Roma, we speak out publically and privately to condemn discriminatory practice, hate speech and hate crimes targeting other groups such as Jews, Muslims, LGBT individuals, recent migrants and others. Through bilateral and multi-lateral diplomacy and programming assistance, the State Department spearheads U.S. government efforts to promote the human rights of Roma across Europe. We seek to promote a strong, effective Romani civil society, capable of self-advocacy while encouraging governments to create an environment that fosters opportunity and provides effective protection for victims of violence and discrimination. Our annual country report reports on human rights practices and details the status of human rights in Romani communities, sending an important signal to governments and Romani citizens alike about U.S. awareness and concern.

Through the Human Rights and Democracy Fund, my bureau, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, manages Roma focused programs that provide legal services to Romani communities, build and train Romani civil society organizations, promote inter-ethnic dialog and civic engagement between Roma and majority communities and strengthens the advocacy skills of Roma youth and provides them with regional networking opportunities. We also welcome



the interests and actions of the U.S. Congress, particularly the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe or the Helsinki Commission. U.S. Embassies throughout Europe engage actively with host governments on issues affecting Romani communities, maintain close connections with Romani civil society organizations and communities, sponsor outreach activities and programs to promote tolerance and celebrate Romani culture, and help Romani leaders engage with their governments.

I was particularly pleased to see Ambassador Gitenstein today. His tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Romania is a hallmark of U.S. engagement on Roma issues and I want to thank him for his personal commitment to promoting Roma inclusion. As a recent example of U.S. Embassy engagement, the U.S. Embassy in Prague just concluded the pilot year of a groundbreaking program that assists Czech Roma youth in finding internship and employment opportunities. The U.S. Embassy partnered with the American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic and the Open Society Foundations to provide job hunting and interview training for Roma youth and helped place them in paid internships where they could build their work experience and professional tenure. This coordination of efforts between government, the private sector, and NGO's represents a creative approach to tackling discrimination by providing one of the most basic human needs, an opportunity. This opportunity for Romani youths to prepare for their full participation in a 21st century economy and for businesses to benefit from these young people's skills and expertise breaks down barriers and stereotypes. Given that opportunity to succeed, when combined with active efforts to combat discrimination and ensure access to quality education, Romani girls and boys will do the rest.

Another critical element of our strategy is cooperation with a range of international and intergovernmental agencies, including the European Union, the United Nations, the World Bank, and in particular, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the OSCE, to support policies and programs for the Roma and other

disadvantaged communities. As an OSCE participating state, the United States strongly supports the OSCE's long-term efforts to promote Roma inclusion. At the OCSE ministerial meeting being held in Kiev today and tomorrow, the U.S. is pleased to know that participating states have reached consensus on the ministerial decision on Roma and Sinti that specifically highlights the need to focus inclusion efforts on Roma women and youth. In particular, the decision calls on participating states to take active measures to support the empowerment of Roma and Sinti women and particularly notes the need to promote equal access for Roma and Sinti women in employment opportunities. We note that Roma women and girls are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence, early marriages, and trafficking in human beings. Not because of the racist characterization of cultural practices, but because of their systemic socioeconomic marginalization and exclusion. The U.S. will continue to work for the OSCE and governments across Europe to combat these vulnerabilities and secure the human rights of Roma and Sinti women and youth.

At a November Supplementary Human Dimension meeting in Vienna, the OSCE participating states also discussed the implementation of the 2003 action plan on improving the situation of Roma and Sinti. The participating states agree that it is critical to work to implement this action plan through better monitoring and assessment of the strategies and measures regarding Roma and Sinti integration. The meeting was also an opportunity to thank Andrei Marga, the outgoing OSCE Senior Advisor on Roma and Sinti issues for seven years of personal advocacy and work on Roma issues. The

U.S. looks forward to working closely with his successor, Miram Angela Carterly and supporting her office's initiatives.

Last year, the U.S. provided significant funding for the OSCE's largest Roma-related project to date: a regional capacity building program that provides legal aid and access to documents, improves living and housing conditions for Roma communities, builds awareness among the general public on Roma issues, and promotes participation and visibility of Roma communities and public life. The project is being carried out in seven Baltic countries and is co-financed by the European Union. We hope that this project will open the door for further collaboration between the OSCE and the EU on Roma issues.

We also engage with the European Union, which has assumed important new coordinating responsibilities with the adoption of the framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. U.S. participation as an official observer in the Decade of Roma Inclusion Initiative, which we joined last year, is another facet of our broader effort to partner with civil society and governments to promote Roma inclusion and to combat racism and prejudice against Roma in Europe. In June, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Philip Reeker attended the Decades steering committee in Zagreb, where he delivered a strong statement of U.S. support for the Decade's objectives, saying that we would continue until its work is done.

The fact that these remarks were delivered in Croatia, which just became the European Union's 28th member, highlights the importance of promoting Roma inclusion as a pillar of the EU's work to build more

Last year, the U.S. provided significant funding for the OSCE's largest Roma-related project to date: a regional capacity building program that provides legal aid and access to documents, improves living and housing conditions for Roma communities...

prosperous and just societies not just in aspirant members, but in long standing democracies as well. As Secretary Kerry stated on International Roma Day in 2013, referring to the importance of this issue, the United States reaffirms its determination to meet this challenge, together with European governments, civil society, and through international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to achieve equality, opportunity, and inclusion for all Roma.

In summary, advancing Roma inclusion is, and will remain, a part of the U.S. goal of promoting human rights and tolerance in Europe and around the globe. Thank you.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you, Michael. Would you like to respond to a comment on this?

ANGELA KOCZE:

Not yet.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Not yet? Okay, so I think we'll open it up and invite your questions and comments and please let us know first of all who you are, and your affiliation if you like, and also who you are directing your question to.

JOHN FEFFER:

Hi, I'm John Feffer. I'm with the Institute for Policy Studies here in Washington, D.C. I want to thank the panelists, they gave great presentations. I would like to ask Angela if she can't respond to something that Jonas said in his presentation. That was -- he noted that perhaps it might be useful to stop looking at Roma inclusion and look at social inclusion instead. And I've just been interviewing quite a number of people in Eastern Europe asking that same question. I found some support for that among non-Roma. I didn't find necessarily a lot of support for that among Roma, maybe because perhaps there's a perception of favored minorities that is so in contrast to the reality as you have illustrated in your presentation. So I'm curious whether you think this is a useful way to go politically and whether that will have some support in the Roma community as well.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Yes, thank you so much. Actually I think it's a really, really old discussion what we have internally. So what should we do, should we be mainstream or target? But already the question is not okay. These categories are not exclusionary. What we did in Hungary and many other countries in Central European countries, we really were focusing on social inclusion. So I pretty much believe in that, that the issue has to be main-stream. And the

Roma issue has to be tackled in the frame of social inclusion.

However, what we experience, after so many years, is that we press the button of Roma issues, equal opportunity, mainstreaming, integrating Roma issues into mainstream social policies and it didn't really bring results. Right? And one of the key points I would like to raise here, and certainly I'm not the only one this argument, but I think we should use both tracks, so these are not exclusionary categories.

I really believe that, yes, social inclusion and mainstreaming Roma issues are needed because we have to address the poor people issues as well for those who are living in the same social and economic position. I think that's why it's so important to see the EU and the UNDP research from 2004 and 2011 because they took the sample from a Roma-segregated settlement as well as from the population living close to the Roma. And actually it's turned out that there's a huge discrepancy -- even though both groups are poor and both are groups are perceived as marginalized. The point I wanted to make is that we cannot really address day by day the generational discrimination and racism Roma have faced for centuries in many countries.

So what should we do, should we be mainstream or target? But already the question is not okay. These categories are not exclusionary.

And I, myself, actually very much oppose affirmative action. I always thought that affirmative action is something that should not be used, but rather we should mainstream Roma issues and Roma even in the education system. But right now, what I am really experiencing, we really have to make a little push, because if we interrogate the public position in a society... who are the ones who are stigmatized and discriminated and facing institutional racism? That's the Roma. So they just can't take themselves from the mob. We need some kind of support to elevate them, to give them some kind of support. It doesn't mean that we have to do so for decades and decades, but just as long as we do not have a significant number of Roma in the working class, in the middle class, in a political and in academic elite. So we have to do something and the question is: what are we going to do?

I know that the contrary argument is that if we are going to support Roma and if we are going to make a targeted intervention than we will face the same issue, right? "The Roma are the favorite group; we are not supported; they are the ones who are taking all kinds of benefits in our society." In fact, we know that there is a myth that Roma are getting many more social benefits. This was refuted by research, but there is still this kind of myth. Certainly the answer is not easy and I would vote that we have to take both tracks. The social inclusion policies are very important, and it's very important that Roma issues should be mainstreamed. But meanwhile, I think we have to find some way to make some targeted intervention and to improve the situation in a direct way.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. Jonas, would you like to comment as well?

JONAS ROLETT:

I mean, I would agree basically. I think one has to be very pragmatic. So you know, our efforts have been focused on Roma and if they're not -- if those efforts are awakening some resistance from the general population -- then I think we have to figure out how to deal with that. But, you know, often we're working in poor communities and the poor people in those communities, they're disproportionately Roma. So I don't think there is really a conflict there. I think you go and work in places where people need a certain kind of help and you don't call it a Roma Inclusion program.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Yeah.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. Yes, front here.

CRISTINA BEJAN:

Congratulations Angela. My name is Cristina Bejan and I'm with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and also Duke University. So I understand your exile in North Carolina. Okay, I find this parallel with the civil rights movement so, so interesting and I think it can be really, really fruitful. And I was going to ask you what you thought about affirmative action, but you already answered that, but maybe to explore the school parallel. We had segregated schools

We were organizing a media campaign, but also when I working in the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs there was a specific program like a media campaign where we tried to influence the attitudes of the people and change their attitudes and then, well, there was some impact, but it was not huge.

in the south, which was national legislation, versus the school example that you gave us and how the Romani children are being sent to really medically handicapped schools, and so what is the apparatus that makes this happen? And how is that different from national legislation? And I think that you should really milk your time in North Carolina for what it's worth on that front, because you have a lot of people around you who have living memory of what happened. So, then another thing to consider is just general attitudes -- and this is where I really wish that Professor Michele Kelso was here from GW -- she can't because she's teaching today, but I encourage you to talk to her. Her most recent article is about Holocaust education in Romania and how educators pretty much across the board refused to teach the Roma holocaust because of contemporary execution and these are the educators in Romania. These are the educated and those sending the next generations off into the future, so of course we can talk about legislation on the one hand but we also need to consider day-to-day attitudes of most people and how do we have a targeted intervention for that. You know? Thank you so much. That's my comment.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Well, actually, you probably -- you can't say it's anything new because we did that as well, with Open Society Foundations. We were organizing a media campaign, but also when I working in the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs there was a specific program like a media campaign where we tried to influence the attitudes of the people and change their attitudes and then, well, there was some impact, but it was not huge. It wasn't so transformative. But still I do believe that to change the attitude in the majority society is very important. We were discussing this last night as well. When I was a Senior Policy Advisor, I was proposing for the Hungarian government to have a targeted program to train Roma to be nurses and I did it, not just for the sake of the employment issue, and not just for an increased employment rate among Romani women, but I did it for the sake of changing attitudes toward them because these the most intimate relations. When you are in the hospital, you are in a very fragile position, and there is someone who is going to be Roma, a Roma nurse or Roma doctor who will help you.

And I think these are the things which can start to make some kind of change and also that's why it's important to integrate the education system as well because that's, again, about the intimate relationship between

Roma and non-Roma. So even if we send them to a segregated school system, even if you send them to special education, they won't meet any non-Roma. Now, we have a generation meeting only very few non-Roma, so how you can deal with that later on? And vice versa. What will happen with those non-Roma who never ever went to the Romani ghettos and Romani settlements and that's why, actually, when I was teaching in Hungary at the University and I did my participatory research, I used to take students to the ghettos. I used to say "students, this is a Romani settlement" to meet them to make interviews, to make the questionnaires, at least to establish this kind of very intimate relationships with them and I have to tell you that most of my students are still working on the issue somehow. They are attached to various programs and I think these are the things what we need. Certainly not one person can change the world. There's a proverb in Hungarian, that "one bird cannot bring spring." And so we need a lot of birds and it doesn't mean that we need a lot of Romani birds, we need a lots of non-Romani birds as well to sing together.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Mandalina.

MADALINA MOCAN:

I would like to actually follow up on comments regarding the capacity of the Roma population to generate apolitical elite and why you think that this is failing time and again. And maybe Mr. Rolett can comment since he has a background in political campaigning. Because stronger political participation would probably answer one of your questions regarding the politicians being afraid to assume a political agenda. Because that would bring more Roma politicians into the parliament

so they shouldn't be afraid that the inclusion agenda would lose votes because they would represent that community. So why is it failing time and again? Thank you.

ANGELA KOCZE:

You want to start?

JONAS ROLETT:

Okay, well, so I mean one thing to consider is the incentives that are in play. So, really the incentives in a lot of counties are for people not to acknowledge their Roma heritage. So it's just a lot easier. You're going to get through life more easily. And so it may be that a portion of the Roma elite is so called syphoned off because they are not acknowledging their culture, heritage, ethnicity, and that they're actually out there. They're just not identifying as Roma. That may be one thing. I had a second point on the elites.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Political elites.

JONAS ROLETT:

Now, you're talking about political elites in particular. So, I mean I think Jud Nirenberg talked a little bit about the sort of fecklessness of Roma political parties. They just haven't managed to generate -- I mean, Romania has at least a million Roma, right? That's a lot of votes, and a lot of voters, but it's a pretty -- from what we've seen, it's a pretty fragmented group. There was the group of young Roma leaders, what was that called, five or six people who had been involved in NGO's, many of them, some in political parties who tried to create --

ANGELA KOCZE:

Deviate.

JONAS ROLETT:

Exactly. In Romania, the Roma Civic Network, what was I called? Civic Democratic Alliance. I mean, I think when you have a great deal of poverty and you have a great deal of isolation, it's pretty hard to build a movement out of that. The other thing, I know the other point I was going to make, is that sometimes when Roma go to University, Angela can speak to this, and become very well educated, they sort of lose touch with



their origins. You know, a Roma woman who's going to University is 22 years old, and might be seen as a failure by the family because she's not married and she doesn't have children yet.

When you use the word "elites" I think you sort of imply that there's this kind of separation somehow. It's a difficult question. I don't know that we have answers. There've been lots of efforts, we can hear about it from

NDI, to sort of build political skills within Roma communities and there were quite a number of mayors in Slovakia, I think, Roma mayors who were elected not long ago. But it just hasn't coalesced. There hasn't been enough momentum generated. I don't think I've given you a good answer.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Yeah. I think -- I mean, there's a really interesting development in Hungary. Hungarian Roma civil society always voted for mainstream Roma politicians in a mainstream political party. So integrate Roma into the mainstream political parties. But right now what we are experiencing is that those Roma who were delegated by mainstream political parties, many of them were co-opted and many of them totally detached from their communities and also, Hungary is a very special case because we had a minority law which was passed in 1993 and this minority law actually promotes minority counsel, local counsel as well. So there's a whole political structure, kind of state-driven political structure, and which was provided by the Hungarian state and that really segregated the whole Roma issue. I'm writing about that in my publications. I think it's really problematic, how they are monopolizing power and misrepresenting the Roma issues.

The interesting thing is that those Roma activists who very much voted for mainstream political parties because they believed, with me as well, in social inclusion policies and we do not have to detach Roma issues from general issues. And they are completely frustrated and what they see is that the mainstream political parties completely squeezed out the Roma

interest, the Roma issues from the political agenda, and we have this minority counsel which is totally monopolized by people who are very much attached to the government.

And these people right now are going to launch their own Roma political parties. And then, in fact, there are several statements made by them, that we went through several stages and we really believed in equal opportunity, we really believed in mainstreaming, we really believed in mainstreaming Roma issues, but what we see that we are completely squeezed out from this mainstream political representation by political parties and therefore we have to create our own political parties. Now, I'm really curious what's going to happen with them.

It's certainly a reaction to the very nationalistic-driven political system what we've been messing with in Hungary with choosing very anti-Roma, anti-Gypsy discourse and also the corrupt state-driven minority self-governmental system and people are running for an ethnic party. Is that okay? In 2013? So that's the democracy we want to have in 2013? I think not. And so I think we have a lot of work.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Okay. Thank you. Let's bring a couple of other people into the conversation. We'll go first over there.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

My name is Anna Bayer. I'm a volunteer and human rights activist and I'm really worried about Hungarian Roma and actually my question is about the new Hungarian election

law because you just mentioned the Roma minority governance. But right now there is a new change in the election law which states that if someone registers as a Roma in Hungary, they won't be allowed to vote for political parties, they can't post their protest votes because they will be forced to vote for the government-sanctioned Roma group. I'm so happy that you mentioned the Hungarian Gypsy party and I'm a big fan of all of that and I see that as one of the Martin Luther Kings of the Romani people. I think that this was one of the answers to this new election law, which is really an exclusion of Hungarian Roma people from fair elections. Thank you.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. Over here.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

Good afternoon, my name is Nadia Mouzykina and I run the Roma political participation of the National Democratic Institute. I kind of want to make a comment more than a question because I already know most of the people on the board, I meet with them on a regular basis and it's great to be among friends who work and are concerned about similar issues. And I'm proud to say that Florin is actually one of our program graduates from Romania so it is a pleasure to have him here.

In terms of Roma political participation, NDI's been working on this issue exclusively for about a decade now. We're maybe one of the very few groups that focus on that. Which is very interesting to me because why wouldn't you focus on bringing a voice to the people who have no voice, in a way? We've

been working in seven countries. We started out in Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Romania in 2003. And then added Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia and now Hungary, they've brought us back to Hungary. Actually, one of the programs that we did in Hungary focused on bringing together Roma and non-Roma youth from very poor segregated settlements and giving them civic education, to teach them about what it means to be an EU citizen no matter where you come from or your race, nationality, ethnicity, etc., with support from the Department of Human Rights and Labor. That was one of our most successful programs because the younger you start and the younger you open up the eyes of the people from the same impoverished communities, neither the kids who were coming from the Roma community nor the kids coming from the non-Roma community were really going to escape from those towns. I mean, really. They were all educated the same, most of them went to the same schools and nobody had job prospects and they were all facing the same issues. But they learned that by working together -- and they were still prejudiced, I mean, there were segregated settlements where the Roma that we brought together with the non-Roma had never met each other, had never talked to each other. Not only did it open up their eyes and they became friends and they started working to improve their communities, their parents then became very supportive and they started talking about how not all Roma are the same and not everybody's bad and their not all thieves, etc. And those conversations started taking place around dinner tables and family gatherings and things like that and so that alone shows that mainstreaming, especially mainstreaming from the youngest age, is the number one

priority. In terms of political participation, there are several things we learned. We came in with the thought that the more Roma that have political skills and are running for office at various levels, the better it is going to be. But there are several obstacles. One of them is, as you had mentioned, Angela, the various political barriers that exist in some countries whether it's the minority self-governance in Hungary, the National Minority Counsel in Serbia, or even the political system in Romania that prevents parties from being formed, Roma parties from being formed. Other things include the lack of support from the mainstream community.

We have people elected to parliament like Peter Pollak in Slovakia. He's one of our participants. He's been training with us since 2005. He came from a very poor community, he never forgot his roots but because he's the only Roma member of the Slovak parliament, he can't do it alone and he has to play both sides, so now the Roma community sees him as a traitor because he has to, you know, walk this fine line between pleasing the Roma community but also playing by the book because he needs to get support from the mainstream community.

And the final point that I want to make is that no matter how many Roma want to run or are able to run, if they are coming from having no job and they need to support their family, they have no running water, they have no electricity, certain concerns are going to take priority and that is probably the biggest challenge that we face. Thank you.

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CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you so much. The lady, yes, right back there.

FEMALE SPEAKER:

I'm Mina Scrivano. I'm at Georgetown University Medical Center. I was born in Romania. I have been involved with the orphans since '91, programs in Romania and so on. But I have an experience and I can say that education is the main thing and it goes both ways. Half of the children in Ceausescu's institutions were Roma. More than half actually, the figure is 60-some percent. They were adopted, when international adoption was possible, by all the countries of the free world, including New Zealand, the United States, everybody. And these children have flourished. I personally have been following some of them for many years and I know that education has created physicians, people who are mathematicians, people who have Roma background and the most important is the people who adopted these children, who never knew Roma culture, they lived in another world, you know, they started being interested in the culture. They're bringing the children back to Romania to meet their biological families because these were not really orphans; they were children who were given up because they didn't have the means to care for them. And that has created a movement. And I think that this movement of

people who love this culture and would like to do something for them, should be used to educate the rest of the population because it's very important. You cannot like something you don't know. And if somebody instills in you since you're born that you have to hate everybody that is not like you, you're going to hate them. So that's one of the things. The Roma community which has been allocated housing and who is integrated into city hall, they work for the city hall and the children go to schools. I had visited and I was surprised how well-integrated this community was. But again it came from the grass roots of a Romanian doctor who received an education. It's a long story, but you may want to look into this.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. Eliot? We'll take a few more interventions and then I'll let you react. And Jonas too, yeah?

ELIOT SOREL:

Eliot Sorel, George Washington University. Well, you know this week has been a very incredible week that is relevant to our dialog. We've got the apostolic exultation from the Pope. We've got the Presidential exultation from President Obama and President Nelson Mandela just died a few hours ago. And I think that these are not separate individuals.

The challenge before us, and I'm going to ask the panel for some ideas on this, is there a way to make and to facilitate after making the economic case, what are the economic consequences for exclusion?

All their lives are relevant to what I'll be talking about. And the Pope is making an appeal in a religious tradition of taking care of the dispossessed that Angela was talking about. The President is talking about devoting the remaining three years of his presidency to righting the wrongs and this exclusionary democracy in the United States of America. And Mr. Mandela devoted his life to inclusion, regardless of the color of ones skin and economic status.

I think the challenge before us is not to continue to complain or to blame. The challenge before us, and I'm going to ask the panel for some ideas on this, is there a way to make and to facilitate after making the economic case, what are the economic consequences for exclusion? Not just of Roma, the exclusion of young people from the labor market the gentleman from the State Department alluded to. But it's not enough to allude to. We need to develop a text book, or best practices, how are we going to turn that around and make it happen? Any one of you who would like to comment on that. Thank you.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you.

MALE SPEAKER:

In the beginning of the 70's there was very interesting research work about the Roma and politic in Hungary. And one of the main

statements was that there was not much difference between the lowest income, 5 percent of the Hungarian society, and the Roma. And after 1990, the situation got even worse because the inequalities were growing and people living in deep poverty, they had less and less chance to get education and health care and so on.

So I'm asking whether a more active social policy, schooling and other policies to help the poor to get rid of this deep poverty. more egalitarian policy would not help the Roma? I'm not speaking against anti-segregation policies, but according to my experiences in Budapest, when we helped the poor we were organizing programs to compensate the poor. That means they had to pay less for the electricity and other services of the city. We helped the Roma as well. On the other hand we were doing anti-segregation policies. So I am speaking about that there is no basic difference between people living in deep, deep poverty in our East European societies and the life of the Roma.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. Final questions. Down here.

FLORIN PRIBOI:

Thank you. Florin Priboi, Humphrey Fellow, American University. Congrats Angela, I'm so proud that you obtained this prize. Just a short mention: I still believe that the most efficient

solution for Roma political representation is that every mainstream political party proposes more Roma candidates. Angela, we have a possible problem that is coming for our countries. And as you know, I believe, there is a rumor, or gossip, that in the next political configuration of the European Parliament will come a lot of extremist political groups. We cannot stop it, but how can we be prepared to face it at least? Thank you.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you and we'll go for the final question all the way in the back and then I'll turn it over to our panelists for a final round of responses.

NATASHA LAMOREUX:

Hi, my name is Natasha Lamoreux. I work for the Women's Learning Partnership in Bethesda but I'm a long time very interested person in Roma issues. My question is bringing it back to some of the gender topics of the conversation and the presentation earlier. And as there are different interventions on behalf of the NGO community and others working to building the capacities of Romani citizens as political participants and politically engaged people, what can be done to ensure that the needs of Romani women and their interests are kept on the agenda and part of the conversation and engaged politically. As we've seen in the presentation, Angela, you gave... the disparities between Romani women and Romani men, between non-Romani women and Romani women, these disparities are so great that some of the needs of Romani women will take different interventions. And

so how can, as we work towards political engagement and political empowerment, we ensure that those needs and voices are kept on the agendas?

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you very much. So, Angela and Michael, Jonas, who would like to --

ANGELA KOCZE:

Would you like to start Michael? With the World Bank, you know with the economics.

MICHAEL UYEHARA:

Well, I mean, I think the statistics that I cited are quite relevant to the question. And I think also I did come into some previous discussions with what Ambassador Gitenstein had to say with regard to economic issues being a National Security issue and a way to engage the U.S. government. I think that, as a representative of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor within the State Department, we have this challenge before us with regard to how we get broad support



across the bureaucracy for some of the initiatives and priorities which we support that are a part of our mandate. And I think that is one of the approaches that we do find useful, and that is to stress the economic security aspects of human rights issues and that we look at it from -- not just with regards to the Roma issues, but with regard to human rights issues in various countries.

I think that we would take this approach, that discrimination, marginalization, not only being a human rights issue but it is an economic issue, and we can take a look at it in sort of a very clear-eyed and very rigorous and objective economic analysis approach. And the other sort of argument that we do make as well is that greater democracy leads to greater stability. And also feeds into, and is a matter of national security interests for us, and so I think that's an approach that we are starting to move towards more and more and this would be something that we would look at.

Also I would say that we would make the argument as well that it's a useful rationale in terms of economic assistance in terms of the programming that we do, the underpinning that is not just a matter of human rights it's not just a matter of moral principal but it's also a matter of interest for the U.S. going overseas, export markets in terms of encouraging greater stability and that results from greater economic opportunities in countries that are our partners as well.

JONAS ROLETT:

I'm going to go back to Madalina's question for a moment about the political elites. So, you know, we've heard about the civil rights movement a lot. The civil rights movement is

a deeply attractive parallel for Roma, because it's essentially a disenfranchised minority group mobilizing to claim its rights. What could be better? But it wasn't a political movement, per se. It was a social movement. Which is a different thing. And there were some very important differences, too. For example, the role of the black church in the United States was essential and there's no equivalent in Europe. Where did Martin Luther King come from? He came out of the church. So where is the Roma Martin Luther King going to come from? There was a more substantial black middle class in this country than you find among Roma in Europe.

ANGELA KOCZE:

Due to affirmative action.

JONAS ROLETT:

And you had, in a way, you had a lot of white support for the civil rights movement in this country. And you don't really have the same thing in Europe. So it's an interesting parallel, but it's not an exact cognate and I think one has to be a little bit careful in drawing those conclusions.

The cost of non-inclusion is an argument. And it's a very useful argument. It's an economic argument, because I don't have to like Roma at all in order to be convinced by the argument that it costs me a certain amount of money unless we sort out these problems.

There are other approaches; something called the deliberative poll. Which it not really a poll, it's an exercise where you bring a couple of hundred people together for two or three

days, you poll them at the beginning on their attitudes toward a certain issue and then you give them some information over the course of a couple of days and then you poll them later. And you find out that you can actually move attitudes on Roma issues, among others. That's an approach that is also needed.

And on the issue of social policy, I mean, I think that is the way to do it, it's exactly the way to do it, but we haven't seen a lot of authentic effort in that score in Eastern Europe. And I would say there's probably some difference between that bottom 5 percent of deep poverty and the difference is that they aren't Roma so they don't have that stigma on top of the poverty.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Final words.

ANGELA KOCZE:

I would just like to continue on that line, you've finished because I think it's very important what Guy Brodansky pointed out. That in fact it was in 1972, right, so during the socialism and you know, poverty did not exist at all. Yes, theoretically. But we know in practice, we find some, but still, something which is very important was that many Roma were working. Like my father, who is an illiterate guy, he went to work to Budapest, to the capital every week on a very big bus. We stayed then and he came back on the weekend. So everybody had some kind of stable income and also there were so many social places where the people were able to meet, such as the worker's dormitory, I was living there as well. Because I was working in a factory as well, after high school. So this

was a place where Roma and non-Roma were meeting and they had interactions and also you know that, because of the socialist ideology then, they wanted to create homogeneous society. Right? So we wanted to make everybody equal. But, after 1989, as I pointed out, the discrepancy between poor people and the people who belonged to the upper middle class increased enormously, and these kinds of social inequalities were transformed and translated into territorial inequalities as well. So there were not so many social places. Plus all of the big factories were closed and Roma were the first group of people who were thrown away by the market economy and then and also we heard that Romani, many Romani children were still in a segregated school where they had no connections with the non-Roma.

The point I wanted to make and that, actually, we researched in Hungary, is that under the European Union Funds System, the structural fund, Hungary came up with very progressive policies in a previous government. They were targeting the least developed micro-regions. Those micro-regions are economically, socially, deprived and coincidentally, in those micro-regions, Roma are overrepresented and they were using some complex program. Addressing

“During socialism, poverty did not exist at all. Yes, theoretically. But we know in practice we find some, but still, something which is very important was that many Roma were working.”

the issue, the poverty, social inclusion policies, not singling out Roma, rather mainstreaming Roma issues in social policies and with the help of the Open Society Foundation, making the most of the EU funds, we researched in the least developed micro-regions because we wanted to see what was the impact and what was the access to those kinds of funds and facilities for the Roma.

Still now, even though that very comprehensive social policy, which was very integrative, and aimed to alleviate poverty, not just for Roma but for the non-Roma as well, it hardly reached the Roma. So it's a gain, you know, even though they were overrepresented, there were some villages where 95 percent were Roma and only a few non-Roma were the teachers and the mayors, right? All the others, the inhabitants were Roma.

But still they were not benefiting from the structural fund. Also, if you are going to go back, you can read the UNDP, the World Bank, European Commission reports where I participated as well. There is an ethnic gap, ethnic differences between Roma and non-Roma and people who are living in close proximity to the Roma community can be assumed that they are in the same social, economic position. So there is something which can't be, explained just by the fact that there is an entrenched institutionalized racism and institutionalized discrimination which is so embedded in the system and embedded in the mechanisms, and people just have no access to certain resources. And I would stop here.

CHRISTIAN OSTERMANN:

Thank you. It's been a most fascinating and inspiring afternoon, I think for all of us. Thank you so much for your remarkable keynote. Thank you Michael and Jonas and all the other panelists for their presentations. Thank all of you for joining us. I'd like to invite you now to the informal part of the proceedings of the Ninth Ion Ratiu Democracy Award Workshop, upstairs to our Boardroom for a reception and a short awards ceremony. So please join us upstairs, one floor up, in the boardroom. Thank you. We're adjourned.

THE RATIU DEMOCRACY CENTER



The Ratiu Democracy Center is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization based in Transylvania, Romania. Through its varied programs and projects the Center seeks to promote values and behaviors associated with democracy, open society and multiculturalism. It was founded in July 2004 with the support of the Ratiu Family Foundation based in London, UK and leading faculty members of Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

The Ratiu Center is particularly active in the fields of democratization and civil society building through programs and projects that aim to improve the quality of democratic life and civil participation in the public sphere. The Center's beneficiaries range from specific groups (such as students, academics, women, teachers, pensioners, or discriminated groups) to wider audiences such as whole communities (for example as an organizing partner of Turda Fest, a well-established Transylvanian community agricultural festival).

The Ratiu Center for Democracy is also involved in several international projects including the prestigious annual Ion Ratiu Democracy Award in association with the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington, D.C. This public workshop, launched in 2005, is complemented by an award made by the Ratiu Family Foundation, as a means of encouraging and rewarding men and women of principle, thinkers as well as activists, struggling to implement democratic values and behaviors in parts of the world where these are either emerging or under threat.

The Ratiu Center team combines the energy of its younger members (including over 130 registered volunteers) with the expertise of its 24 professionals (both "town" and "gown," activists and academics) organized according to four principle modes of intervention that constitute the Center's four main departments: "researching," "learning," "informing," and "applying" the values and behaviors associated with democracy.

The Ratiu Center distinguishes itself by promoting "democracy as a way of life," the principle adhered to and promoted by Ion Ratiu (1917–2000), the life-long Romanian opponent of communism and advocate of democracy world-wide. This international perspective is complemented by programs and projects that are also distinctly local, focusing on the particularities of Transylvanian and Romanian post-1989 transition society.

—Indrei Ratiu, Director



A Short Note on Ratiu Family History

By *Indrei Ratiu, M.A., M.B.A.*

Trustee, Ratiu Family Foundation and Director, Ratiu Democracy Center

“**R**atiu” (or “Racz” as the name was typically spelled under Hungarian rule, or “Ratz” under Austrian rule) is one of the earliest documented Romanian family names in Transylvania. It first appeared in 1332 when Voivode Thomas Szeczenyi certified that Andrei (aka Indrei) is “Nobilis” (i.e. nobleman) of Nagylak and rightful owner of the lands around the village of Nagylak on the Mures river near present-day Alba Iulia. In mediaeval Transylvania, noble status such as Andrei’s entitled a man to many privileges, and especially to land.

In 1396, Thomas de Nagylak (Andrei’s grandson) and his men enlisted as crusaders in the army of the Hungarian King Sigismund of Luxembourg who had allied his forces with those of Romanian voievode Mircea the Old of Wallachia and other crusader armies from the West. This turned out to be the Western powers’ last stand against the Ottoman Turks’ invasion of the Balkans that ended with the Europeans’ disastrous defeat at Nicopolis and the permanent loss of all lands south of the Danube to Islam.

Nevertheless, Thomas de Nagylak distinguished himself in the campaign. As a reward for his services, King Sigismund ennobled him. In Transylvania, Thomas’ neighbours nicknamed him “Ratiu” or “Racz”—ie “The Croat” (“Hrvac”) because he had fought in the land of the Croats—and the name stuck: the family name became Racz de Nagylak.

From the 14th century onwards the family obtained several further titles of nobility. Emperor Rudolf II Habsburg appointed Petrus Ratz von Nagylak, (as the name was now spelled in German), “imperial translator for Romanian relations.” Petrus and his family settled in Rudolf’s chosen capital, Prague, and fought in a number of his campaigns. Eventually Petrus was appointed the emperor’s ambassador to the Court of Russia, in St Petersburg. These promotions are reflected in changes in the family coats of arms at this time; the family leopard not only gained a second head and a Mercury messenger stick reflecting the bearer’s ambassadorial status, but Petrus and his descendants also received a new, additional coat of arms in recognition of their

Crusader heritage; it depicts a decapitated janissary head (which the family rarely shows).

Since the rights and privileges of nobility in this part of Europe were frequently contested, in 1625 Prince Gabriel Bethlen of Transylvania formally renewed Stefan Racz’s Nagylak title (note the Hungarian spelling again). Twenty-five years later in the next electoral contest for the princely title to Transylvania, Stefan duly supported his Bethlen benefactors, but Bethlen lost, and in 1653 the victorious contender, Prince George Rakoczi II, confiscated all Stefan Racz’s Nagylak lands.

Stefan Racz’s two eldest sons now headed west down the river Mures and settled in the present-day town of Teius. There they entered the service of the victorious Prince Rakoczi. In due course they were rewarded with lands and a title of their own: Ratz von Tövis (note the German spelling). Stefan and his other children, including his youngest son Coman, headed north across the river Mures and settled in Turda, a “closed” city where only people of noble descent resided.

Somehow, the Nagylak Ratiu’s—nephews of Stefan and sons of Coman—were accepted in Turda and survived there. All the Turda Ratiu’s are descendants of these 18th century fugitives from Nagylak.

Eventually, in 1680, the Turda Ratiu’s Nagylak title was reconfirmed by Prince Rakoczi’s successor, Prince Mihai Apafi I. This 1680 document mentions Ratiu descendants Vasile with his sons Ioan and Vasile.

18th century Ratiu family members also became closely identified with the Uniate Church (i.e. Greek-Catholic) part of the former Orthodox diocese of Transylvania that had united with Rome in exchange for civil rights under Austrian rule. But the promised civil rights were all too slow in materializing.

In 1829 Fr. Basiliu Ratiu (1783–1870) a leading figure in the Romanian Uniate Church, countered yet another attempt by the local Hungarian nobility to evict the family from Turda. This was a landmark settlement that complemented Fr. Basiliu’s successful resolution of the family’s legal battle against the heirs of the family’s Nagylak lands—by this time held by

Ion now committed his life to the cause of unmasking the true nature of communism worldwide through numerous publications, broadcasts, demonstrations and the exhibition of political cartoons.

the family's former neighbors and friends in Nagylak, the Bethlens. Fr. Basiliu was not able to recover the land itself but he obtained substantial compensation instead. To these funds other family members in turn made donations of their own so that in 1839 a new stone Uniate church and a school—both catering primarily to Romanians—could be built right in the center of otherwise Hungarian Turda. Both structures have survived. The charitable foundation or “Eforie” established by Fr. Basiliu in 1867 with the balance of the Bethlen settlement later financed the construction of Turda's central market place (which also survives) and granted scholarships to numerous young Romanians until as recently as 1948 when all assets of the Romanian Uniate church were finally confiscated by the communist regime, and remain unreturned to this day.

The same “Eforie” founded by Fr. Basiliu Ratiu also supported the establishment in 1902 of Turda's first College of Arts and Trades which survives today as Turda's “Ratiu College” with buildings erected on Ratiu family land. During the 1930's his descendent Augustin Ratiu played a leading role in equipping the school with adequate buildings and a spirit of enterprise. Although for 40 years of communism the school was known as “Chemistry 2,” it has recently revived the family connection and (since 2004) Indrei Ratiu serves on the school board.

Fr. Basiliu Ratiu and his illustrious nephew, the lawyer Dr. Ioan Ratiu, took part in and survived the bloody 1848 revolution in Transylvania. Dr. Ioan Ratiu, whose statue can still be seen opposite Turda's city hall, went on to champion civil rights for Romanians within Austro-Hungary's officially multicultural empire, leading a 300 strong delegation of Transylvanians to petition emperor Franz-Joseph with a historic “Memorandum” of the civil rights they sought. Although Dr. Ioan Ratiu and his colleagues were jailed for their efforts, his memorable words at their trial were taken up by the press throughout Europe, serving as powerful encouragement to subject peoples everywhere: “Gentlemen” declared Dr. Ioan Ratiu before his judges, “it is not

we who are on trial here today, but yourselves. The existence of a people is not for discussion, but rather for affirmation...”

Dr. Ioan Ratiu died in 1902, but his widow Emilia and his daughter Felicia continued his struggle for Romanian civil rights and, once Transylvania had united with Romania in 1918, implementing the principle of national self-determination, mother and daughter focused more specifically on the cause of women's rights in Romania—in which they were pioneers—until their deaths in 1929 and 1938 respectively.

Also in 1918, following Transylvania's union with Romania, Dr. Ioan Ratiu's great-nephew, the young lawyer Augustin Ratiu was rewarded with the prestigious post of first Romanian prefect of Turda County. In addition to a successful law office and his active involvement in the town's College of Arts and Trades, he was also to hold office repeatedly as mayor and councillor at both the county and municipal levels. In Turda, Augustin Ratiu's civil administrations ushered in a period of prosperity (Turda's great glassworks opened soon after WWI), and post WWI Turda of Augustin Ratiu's day quickly became a cultural melting-pot (Romanian, Hungarian, German, Jewish and Roma).

Also present throughout the historic process of Transylvania's 1918 union with Romania were Dr. Ioan Ratiu's private secretary, protegee and distant relative of Iuliu Maniu, who was to serve many times as Romanian prime-minister during the inter-war period, and his young grandson, Viorel Tilea. Tilea later went on to set up Romania's first national tourist office, the “ONT”, and to serve as Romanian ambassador to Great Britain. Here in 1939, he was joined by another young lawyer, Augustin Ratiu's own eldest son, Ioan (later changed to “Ion” which he considered more pleasing to British ears!).

On his recall to Marshall Antonescu's nazi-allied Romania in 1941, Tilea and his entire embassy sought and received asylum in Britain. Ion immediately received a scholarship to Cambridge University where, already a qualified lawyer, he now committed himself to the study of comparative political systems

and economics. Tilea was to die in London in 1974 while Ion's exile from his native Romania was to last almost 50 years. It was not until 1990, after the fall of Ceausescu's communist dictatorship, that he was able to continue his lifelong campaign for Romanian democracy on home territory.

In London, Ion met and married Elisabeth, from the glass-manufacturing Pilkington family, who even boasted a crusader ancestor buried somewhere in Romania's Olt valley on his way to Palestine. After the war, the young couple planned to return to Romania, but in 1946, soon after the birth of their first son Indrei, they were advised instead by Ion's mentor Iuliu Maniu, to "continue the fight for Romanian democracy and freedom from abroad." In 1948 Maniu and Romania's entire democratic leadership as well as all loyal priests of the Romanian Uniate church were jailed by the newly installed communist regime. Most of those jailed, including Maniu and supporters such as Ratiu family member Liviu Cigareanu, died in prison, their bodies dumped in unmarked graves—in fields and on hillsides which can be visited to this day.

Maniu's advice and a long fight with tuberculosis spared Ion and his own immediate family from a similar fate. Ion now committed his life to the cause of unmasking the true nature of communism worldwide through numerous publications, broadcasts, demonstrations and the exhibition of political cartoons. He also engaged in activities specifically addressing the issue of a democratic future for Romania, such as the Cambridge University Romanian Students Association, the Free Romanian Press, (founded in 1957); ACARDA, the Anglo Romanian Cultural Association, and the World Union of Free Romanians, launched at the Geneva Congress of Free Romanians in 1984.

Like his ancestor Fr. Basiliu Ratiu, Ion was also to demonstrate considerable business acumen, first in shipping, later in real estate and media. The family business, managed today by his son Nicolae was to be the platform for yet another development in the family tradition: a new family foundation.

In 1979, Ion and Elisabeth established a British successor foundation to Fr. Basiliu Ratiu's original 1867 Family Foundation, or "Eforie." This was the Ratiu Family Foundation, a British charitable trust,

designed for the "promotion of Romanian language, culture and civilisation, and the relief of poor Romanians." In 1987, 120 years after his ancestor Fr. Basiliu had gathered members of his own generation in Turda to establish the first Ratiu Family Foundation—the "Eforie," Ion presented his vision for the new Family Foundation to a London gathering of over 25 family members, inviting all to participate in the new foundation's work, as volunteers.

Today the Ratiu Family Foundation is managed by his son Nicolae and partners with various institutions and organizations around the world in pursuit of its mission. The Foundation maintains offices in London, Turda, and Bucharest that are jointly staffed by professionals and volunteers. Communications technology makes it possible for family members in present-day Turda, London and Bucharest to share in the organization of Foundation-sponsored programs and events as far afield as Phoenix (where the Foundation offers Romanian travel scholarships through Arizona State University) and Washington, D.C. (where the Foundation has endowed the Ion Ratiu Chair of Romanian Studies at Georgetown University, the only one of its kind on the American continent).

Most recently, the Ratiu Family Foundation has worked with the Center for Democracy, the Third Sector of Georgetown University, and with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., to develop and organize the innovative annual lecture entitled the Ion Ratiu Democracy Award that seeks to recognize and reward men and women of principle struggling in their own part of the world to promote democracy and freedom.

More recently in Romania, The Ratiu Family Foundation funds organizations that include the Ratiu Democracy Center with offices in Cluj as well as Turda, offering (since June 2009) a historic library of 20th century political papers collected by Viorel Tilea and Ion Ratiu; an annual series of open Democracy Lectures in the university city of Cluj; competitions that foster innovative democracy-related social science research; the annual Turda Democracy Gatherings, and a multitude of civil society applications of democratic principles, such as Turda Fest—an annual agricultural fair; debating for young people; various campaigns,

such as anti-human trafficking—and a lively volunteer program.

Fundatia Ratiu Romania is a Romanian humanitarian foundation established by Ion's widow Elisabeth to provide vital assistance to categories of Romanians that other agencies fail to reach, such as children with leukemia, or fostering chronically ill or handicapped homeless children. Today Fundatia Ratiu promotes social engagement through the arts. These charitable activities are supported by the Ratiu Foundation U.S.A., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization registered in Washington, D.C.

When he died in 2000 Ion Ratiu left neither personal wealth nor major bequests....only family responsibilities: the responsibilities of managing and applying those resources that, like those of his 19th century ancestor, he had left in trust so that the family's work might continue.

ION AUGUSTIN NICOLAE RATIU

Ion Augustin Nicolae Ratiu, born in Turda, Transylvania, on 6 June 1917, was the son of Augustin Ratiu, a successful lawyer, mayor, county prefect and great-grandnephew of Dr. Ioan Ratiu, the leader of the Romanian National Party. A promising law student, Ion Ratiu seemed destined for an academic career, but in 1938 he was commissioned as top cadet at the Artillery Military Academy in Craiova, and in April 1940 he joined Romania's Foreign Service. He was sent to London as a chancellor at the Romanian Legation. The decision to align Romania with the Axis powers later in 1940 appalled Ion Ratiu, who resigned his post and obtained political asylum in Britain. He won a scholarship to study economics at St. John's College, Cambridge, and in 1945 Ion Ratiu married Elisabeth Pilkington in London.

In exile in London after the communist takeover of Romania in 1946, Ion Ratiu threw himself into the struggle against communism, becoming a regular contributor to the Romanian Service of the BBC, Radio Free Europe and Voice of America. In 1957 his book *Policy for the West* was published, radically challenging contemporary Western views of the nature of communism. He then went into shipping and later into real estate, where he accumulated considerable wealth. In 1975, the year he published another work,

Contemporary Romania, Ion Ratiu decided to devote all his energy to the pursuit of a free Romania. Mr. Ratiu led the British-Romanian Association from 1965 to 1985 and played a key role in the setting up of the World Union of Free Romanians, of which he was elected president in 1984. After the fall of Ceausescu, he continued for some years to subsidize the publication outside Romania of the monthly *Free Romanian*, which he had launched in 1985.

Ion Ratiu returned to Romania in 1990 to run for the presidency. Although he became member of the Romanian Parliament, and served as both Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies as well as Romania's roving ambassador to NATO, his failure to win the presidency was a grave disappointment to many. Sympathizers continue to refer to him as "the best president Romania never had."

Ion Ratiu died in London surrounded by his family after a short illness, and in accordance with his wishes, was buried in January 2000 in his home town of Turda. His funeral was attended by over 10,000 people. [Adapted from the obituary published in the *London Times*, 19 January 2000.]

