



**Thesis 2009/2010**

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**Title of the E.MA thesis:  
Roma: a scapegoat for wider societal ills?**

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**Roma:**  
**a scapegoat for wider societal ills?**

**By Cristina PACE**

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*I owe special thanks and appreciation to my mother Adele Terzano as a source of inspiration for her unconditional and non-judicial love for the least-advantaged members of society and I would like to quote hereafter one of her poems dedicated to the colourful and rich world of the Gypsies, which I have learned to discover and that she witnessed and admired when she was just a child.*

*Lastly, I would like to express my grateful recognition to all the Gypsy people of the world, which hold all my empathy and respect.*

## **Zingari**

Zingari alla fiera, ricordi di bambina  
affacciata alla finestra  
per guardarli ben presto  
su e giù per la via.  
Il capo zingaro, cappello in testa  
bastone in mano, gambe incurvate  
tutto arzilla, ad alta voce  
a darsi importanza tra giovani zingari  
belli da guardare.  
Zingare e zingarelle affaccendate  
gonne lunghe e colorate  
scialli e giacchettini  
orecchini e lacci d'oro  
pendenti al collo, appariscenti!  
Zingare incinte e uno zingarello in braccio!  
Come facevano a vivere  
tutti insieme... sotto le stelle!?  
Quel tempo è lontano  
rintanati nelle case  
a bere vino nelle cantine passano le giornate  
e di quelle cavalcate sotto il sole cocente  
capelli al vento  
e di quelle nottate di luna piena  
a ballare e indovinare le carte  
un ricordo lontano nei loro begli occhi spenti!

**Prof.ssa Adele Terzano**

## Abstract

In this thesis Roma people are considered as the subjects of one of the most significant example of discrimination, racism and stereotypisation of an ethnic group in Europe.

As recognised by all major international organisations, Roma are the largest minority in Europe with an estimated population of 10-12 million people, present in all 27 EU Member States. Most Roma are actually also EU citizens.

Roma reported the highest overall level of discrimination across all Europe with 66-100% of them not even reporting this violation to any competent authority because of fear and lack of confidence in law enforcement and justice structures.

Still in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Roma people are living as in the third world: victims of persistent discrimination and social exclusion, Roma are at high risk of poverty, unemployment and diseases in all countries of the civilised Europe.

The thesis is an analysis of human rights of Roma's minority in the general framework of the international protection of minority rights.

The main purpose of the research is to single out the reasons which are behind this stigmatisation, stressing the need for a demystification and a more realistic representation of Roma/Gypsies' image.

It investigates how international and regional human rights mechanisms can improve the conditions of Roma people in Europe and how the solution of this issue at European level depends first of all on the political will of European states, which can improve or deteriorate Roma's conditions.

As highlighted by Harold J. Laski in its classic work in 1925, "A Grammar of Politics": *'Every state is known by the rights that it maintains'* and European democratic societies will never be considered truly democratic as far as their biggest minority, Romani people, live at the borders of these societies.

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COE	Council of Europe
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
ECHR	European Convention of Human Rights
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
EU	European Union
EUMC	European Monitoring Centre for Racism and Xenophobia
FCNM	European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FRA	Fundamental Rights Agency
HCNM	High Commissioner for National Minorities
ICCPR	International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IGO	International Governmental Organisations
IRU	International Romani Union
MRGI	Minority Rights Group International
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSI	Open Society Institute
PCIJ	Permanent Court of International Justice
RNC	Roma National Congress
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations

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