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Romanies as social control targets in a European school grouping – “You [Pailhos] complicate everything!”

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Abstract

In this article, we present the results of a participatory action-research to understand educational inequities and social control mechanisms that target Romani students in a European school context. Using multi-method data collection, we grasped the discourses of multiple actors, both *Calons* (Romani people) and *Pailhos* (Non-Romani people). We developed an argument interpreting the processes forming the “school failure and problems” experienced by *Calon* students. We’ll focus on three branches of *power-savoir* processes to describe social control mechanisms. Firstly, the racialized “*conflict expropriation*” (Christie 1977). Secondly, antigypsyism. Lastly, the projection of racism and violence upon *Calon* people, which serves the function of expiation and scapegoating (Girard 1982). These strategies bias peacemaking at school disguising both (1) the institutional exclusion of *Calon* (Romani) students’ participation and (2) the school agents’ (re)production of techniques and discourses about *Calon* people that suppress *Calon* counter-narratives – which expose racial injustices.

Keywords: School inequities; School social control; Romani students; Antigypsyism; Interethnic school conflicts; Foucault; Gadjology; Critical Victimology.

I. Introduction

In this article, there is a selective approach to the main issues raised by a process of community action-research. The goal was understanding systemic educational disadvantage from the point of view of local narratives towards the co-building (with the disadvantaged people) of a community rooted vision of student's success – on a school grouping serving ethnically heterogeneous communities of a suburban area. The goal of such vision was dismantling a racial biased school climate: what we call the “*technology of unfair/biased Pailho*¹ legitimacy”. We use the concept “technology” drawing on the theoretical realm of M. Foucault (1994a) 1994b), 1994c) 2013 [1975]): rationalities of “*savoir*” (or regimes of truth) correlated with specific techniques of social control.ⁱ

Using a multi-method approach, we grasp the discourses, narratives, and interactions of multiple actors in different roles and positions of power, both *Calon*² and *Pailho*. During the data gathering and in the analytical stage, there is a reflexive effort of interpreting the phenomena from an inverted stance; this means, operating the anthropological decentering from “*Gadjo-ness*” (Matache 2016) to “*Gadjology*” (Gelbart 2011). In other words, we tried to decolonize the data collection and data interpretation. Instead of using non-Romani, white world views and filters, we sought to collect and interpret data using local Calon people perceptual filters, ideas, and world views.

In this paper, we'll focus in three branches of power-*savoir* processes at interplay in the school-community setting. First, racialized “*conflict expropriation*” (Christie 1977). Secondly, covert, and overt antigypsyism. Lastly, the implicit and explicit projection of racism and violence upon Calon, which serves two latent functions: (1) expiation (Girard 1982) and (2) legitimization of punitive practices. Before we present our main findings, we will provide the historical background of Romani people, briefly present the methods used in field work, and establish the theoretical specification in which those methods built.

II. Romani people: a brief historical account

Roma are a non-territorial racial-ethnic group that can be found throughout the world. Romani people are the largest ethnic minority in Europe and, probably, in many European countries individually considered; regarding this, estimates point to larger numbers in Eastern and Central European countries (ERGO Network 2019).

Their historical origins can be traced back to India, in the 1000s, when the Muslims were attacking the Hindu Shahi in Northern India. Mahmud Ghazni and Mohamed Ghori lead the invasions that focused on the area of Peshawar. By that time, India's king assembled troops to create an army that could establish a defensive force against sturdy Muslim invasions. The fighters were of different ethnicities and castes. However, they joined to fight. Still, these troops were mainly comprised of *Rajputs* – a high-status warrior caste, who had a tradition of resisting Muslim expansions. In addition, a large group of people known as *shiviranuchara* accompanied the military castes. Albeit they were not warriors, they were responsible for setting the tents, entertainment, taking care of the wounded, and cooking. These were mainly women of different backgrounds. (Hancock 2002)

As a result of a mixture of languages spoken on the battlefield, living together in military camps, and the need to talk with prisoners of war (or being a prisoner of war) they had to

¹ *Pailho*/*Payo* is the local Romani term (*Calon* language) equivalent to *Gadje*/*Gadjo*/*Gadzo*: it means “non-Romani person”. For a discussion on the concept of “legitimacy” see Tyler (2003, 307–310).

² *Calon* is the term that local Romani people use to refer to themselves in *Calon*/*Romano* (local Calon groups language).

develop a *lingua franca* to communicate. Hancock (2002) suggested that Romani (the language spoken by the Romani people) first emerged as a *lingua franca* in a war scenario.

The Muslim wars endured. In fact, it took at least two centuries until the Muslims were finally expelled from those Indian territories by the Mongols (Hancock 2002). When the war was over, these militia people had already started their migration to the West through what today is Pakistan and then, through the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains. They were either being pushed by the Muslim invasions started by the Ghaznavids or – later – as prisoners of the Seljuks that defeated the Ghaznavids in Eastern Iran around 1040. Most likely the migrations of these Indian troops were forced by both events. Moreover, the Rajput fighters could be amongst the captives of the Seljuks, when the latter defeated the Ghaznavids. The arrival to the Middle East should have taken no more than half a century, being accelerated. It also became violent through repeated confrontations with the Huns while these people moved West. Such migratory movements of the *Rajputs* and their *shiviranuchara* out of India settle the most likely historical origins of Roma (Hancock 2002).

Historical texts provide evidence that in the late 1200s, Constantinople was charging taxes to “*Tsigani*”. Accounts of dark-skinned, non-Christian, non-Muslim people are found throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Anatolia (today, Turkey). There are also narratives of “pilgrims” coming from Egypt in Europe and Byzantio. Because of their dark skin color, people thought they were “Egyptians”. Many Romanies in Europe are (or were) associated with their steel craft profession. However, they probably acquired the traditional profession of blacksmithing due to their passage through the Byzantine empire and Greece, because Romani words for metalwork are loan words from Greek. They are not found in the Romani language core, which has Hindi roots. Moving from India in different diasporic routes at different timings, the first Romanies arrived in Europe around the 1300s through Anatolia (Hancock 2002 2018).

Romani people have more commonly been known since then as “Gypsies”, “*Gitanos*”, “*Gitan*”, “*Tzigani*”, “*Zingari*” or “*Ciganos*”. However, many of these designations are grounded on historical errors, constituting racial slurs and biased conceptions. Indeed, Hancock (2002) has shown how these terms come from misconceptions about Romani origins and identities which are related to ancestral Rajput people and India, not to Egypt or some magic or exotic wonderland. “Gypsy” derives from Egyptian, an initial confusion when arriving to European lands, defining them as pilgrims or other wrong depictions. “*Tzigan*” (*Tigan*) – the etymological origin for many European terms for designating Romani people – meant “slave”. Romani people were enslaved for roughly 500 years in Europe, in Moldavia and Wallachia (today, Romania). During this long historical period, the word “*Tzigani*” and its derivations (found in most European languages) gained momentum and power to remain until the present. Since they first left India and particularly after arriving in the Ottoman-occupied Balkans in Europe, Romani history has been percolated by persecution, oppression, and genocide – for instance, they were targets of major extermination operations during Nazism in Germany. What is referred to as *o Baro Porrajmos* in Romani (the ‘Great rape’) (Hancock 2002 2011).

Romani people have been at the forefront of historical and current forms of oppression and disadvantages in Europe, but also in Northern and Southern American countries, facing segregation, violence, discrimination, forced migrations, racial profiling and systemic inequities. As a result, Romani communities display large gaps in life outcomes, in terms of health, education, well-being, and economic power when compared to the majority *Gadje* (non-Romani) populations (ERGO Network 2019; Hancock 2002). Indeed, historically speaking, Romani people are probably amongst the ethnicities who were most intensely and persistently subjected to segregation and subjugation, resulting in the huge disparities we see perpetuated today.

The condition of eternal “*internal foreigner*” and the “*pariah syndrome*” (as Hancock puts it) are features of Roma history. These features are kept preserved even though Roma have incorporated features of the cultures and/or countries in which they settled (e.g., language, habits). They are (or should have been) national citizens of those countries, but they are seldom treated – by the national dominant groups – as such. Consequently, such a mix within

different countries and cultures contributes to the rich Romani intra-ethnic diversity across the world (i.e., many different subgroups and dialects).

However, due to continuous identarian confusions and scapegoating processes, Romani people are still portrayed and socially constructed as exotic, mysterious, outsiders, and oftentimes dangerous people (Gelbart 2011; Hancock 2002). This is a major feature of *antigypsyism*, a specific form of racism against the Roma, Sinti, Travelers, and even others that are conceived and labeled as “Gypsies” in the collective imagination (Against Antigypsyism 2016). *Institutional antigypsyism* is a form of institutional and systemic racism deeply rooted in institutions, generating features and properties of a putative “Gypsiness” which leads to systematic discrimination of Romani people in several domains, from daily interactions to housing, schooling, health, and justice (Against Antigypsyism 2016; Carrera, Rostas and Vosyliūtė 2017; Hancock 2002).

In the context of this article, we will refer to the Romani people in the study as *Calon* (singular) or *Calons* (plural). We will do so because this is how the ethnic groups studied refer to themselves in intimate intra-ethnic communication settings. This concept is part of the ethnographic discovery itself, and it signals the intra-ethnic diversity of Romani people. Moreover, we learned that local Romanies also use this word to name their dialect. Besides, it is generally recognized that *Calon* (“Calô” or “Caló”) or *Cale/Kale* (“Calé”) is a specific cultural/ethnic branch/group of Romani people (such as the Lovari or the Romanichals). Notably, in Kalderash Romani, “*Kalo*” means “black” (Lee 2005) – this is probably the etymology of “*Calon*”.

III. Methodological strategy and action

During the activities conducted in a grassroots social intervention NGO, we strived to include community actors, especially *Calon* actors, in the process of community transformation, as *savoir producers*. The results reported here reflect a one-year field immersion.

We developed a flexible experimental ethnography consisting of daily and weekly registration of lived experiences, participant observation, guided/improvisational walking through the community, and dialogues resorting to reflexivity to see ourselves and our interpretations from the point of view of *Calon*. The mixed data gathering methods, included institutional quantitative data, informal conversations, participant and non-participant observation notes, school legal documents analysis and flexible format recorded interviews. Data was derived from multiple contexts: classrooms, streets, playground, community organizations, meeting rooms, school management spaces, student’s “punishment spaces”, cafés and public transports. A variety of actors participated: students, teachers, social workers, parents, community inhabitants, school staff, etc.

In terms of data analysis, we used categorical analysis (Mason 2002, 150). We developed an *illustrative* and *reflexive* argument interpreting the systemic racialized pathways of *Calon* students. Supporting these pathways is the constitution of experiences of *Calon*’ “school failure and problems” by *Pailhos*¹. There is a focus on *Pailhos*’ views of *Calon* “problems” but analyzing them from a critical point of view. This “critical” is informed by an interference between *Calon* people accounts, critical victimology, Foucauldian conceptions of power, and critical Romani studies, as we shall understand in the next sections.

IV. A Foucauldian statement: which “power” defines disadvantage?

In this work, the concept of power is used in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault 1994b), 95–101 2013). This means that the pure dualistic relationship *Pailho* – *Calon* is rejected as center of the analysis. In addition, binomial terms as “dominant” and “dominated”,

¹ *Pailhos*/*Payos* (plural) is the plural of *Pailho*/*Payo*: it means “non-Romani people”. Please see note 1, p. 1.

“oppressor” and “oppressed” are seen as a crystallization of relationships between different elements – roles, techniques, discourses, and rationalities. In this sense, power is defined as a relationship – and a productive, “positive” one. Power is not something that is “owned” but something that is exerted. It runs through a network composed by different sites, elements, and nodes. As Rose puts it, it’s “*rhizomatic*” (2000, 325). A systemic notion of power, instead of seeing suppressive control functions, entails that power relationships produce and induce discourses, rules for discourses, and specific forms of the individual relating with himself and others (subjectivities).¹

We propose a “*Foucauldian Gadjology*”, interconnecting recent critical Romani studies perspectives (Gelbart 2011; Cabanzo 2019) and Foucault’s genealogy (1994b), 2013 [1975]). This framework aims to understand the elements through which power and *savoir* are interrelated in daily Gadge-Romani interactions (in our case Pailho – Calon interactions) – in which race is *one of the many* elements at interplay. Besides, the framework tries to describe how these elements operate the subjection of Calon people, understood as an exclusion strategy working to produce *savoirs* – *a regime of truth* – that create knowledge about “them”: the “Gypsy Other”. Such regime of truth hinders both the possibility of analysis of racial inequities and the emergence of an alternative *regime of truth* that would expose *Pailhos’* subjection and exclusion of Calon people. Through this approach, we identified the specific properties and rules of a “*technology of unfair/biased Pailho legitimacy*”. A regime of truth and truth-discourses stem from (and are part of) this technology. In the next section, we explore the theoretical realm that fostered the dialogue between theory and data during our ethnographic fieldwork.

Foucauldian Gadjology, Critical Victimology and Peacemaking Criminology

While a positivistic approach to victimology works to identify and respond to victimizing events, critical victimology draws attention to the social processes which victimize some social groups more than others. Some groups (e.g., women, ethnic minorities, and low-income strata) have a higher risk of victimization (Mawby and Walklate 1994), broadly defined; this can be accounted for structural patterns of inequality and disadvantage. This implies not only being a victim of crime but more broadly being systematically targeted through subtle forms of violence, micro-aggressions, and biased social treatments (in other words, “biased legitimacies”). In turn, it positions disadvantaged social groups to systematically experience higher levels of harm when compared to privileged social groups.

Critical victimology questions the very processes of defining victimization, and the social, political, and structural foundations that shape it. The power structures and their relations have a strong impact on individuals and groups. Quinney (1972) recognized that power relations are in the nuclei of political and social processes, such as law-making and law enforcement. Thus, the power to dictate who is or who is not a victim is in the hands of the powerful. The powerful are a minority that represents privileged social groups and majoritarian identities (Mawby and Walklate 1994). For instance, Miers (1989) applies the “labelling” approach to critical victimology. The author argues that positivist victimology fails to explain the quotidian processes of defining, identifying, and constructing victims and victimization. The process of labelling individuals as victims starts with the acknowledgment of a set of values that are socially constructed. However, those values tend to be the values of the privileged, excluding values related to minoritized identities. Therefore, it is important to analyse how, when, and why some individuals/groups are labeled as victims and others are not, even in the presence of “objective” and “structural” victimization.

Thus, by using critical victimology lenses we assume that ethnic minority individuals/groups are more frequently victimized because they find themselves in a disadvantaged political, social, and structural (e.g., health, economic, education) position.

¹ “Control is not centralized but dispersed, it flows through a network of open circuits that are (...) not hierarchical.” (Rose 2000 325).

Interestingly, however, the majoritarian discourses and power institutions tend to refuse the “victim” or “victimization” labels/concepts when it comes to minoritized/racialized individuals or groups. More to the point, regarding the school system, it tends to build alternative labels about Romani pupils that do not match the “victim” concept or relinquish such concept to the discursive absence/silence: conversely, they are the “problematic”, the “troublemakers”, or “they don’t like school” (e.g., Dragos 2021).

The result is that Romani/Calon people are targeted based on their ethnicity. In addition, because of their ethnicity and age, they are also excluded from law-making and law enforcement processes in the educational systems. Therefore, Romani/Calon pupils are more exposed than other students to the risk of being victims of institutional discourses and the actions that stem from them. These discourses are built by the ones who (re)distribute educational power: school principals, teachers, school staff, and many White students (the majority, learning from the authority figures). Simultaneously, because of their underprivileged position, their experiences of objective victimization are silenced or occulted. Finally, the application of “victim” labels or victim-related schemata to Romani students is restricted by institutional school power dynamics.

In a nutshell, critical victimology explains both the social process of labelling individuals/groups as victims and its impacts (Miers 1990). It also propels us to look into the “absence” of such labelling or the differential application of labels as a phenomenon that demands attention. In the case of Romani/Calon students in school settings, the Pailho (non-Romani/White/Gadjo) dominated institution will determine who can and who can’t be viewed as a victim, both in the event category (e.g., bullying) and structural category (e.g., lack of access to quality education, biased treatment, racialization); it follows that the distribution of “labels” and concepts of “victim” will be often denied in the case of Romani students and families. This denial has implications, both for student attainment and teacher pedagogical practices – and more broadly speaking, for the overarching school climate. Paradoxically, Romani/Calon students are easily targeted for the application of “deviant” labels, but silence dominates when it comes to the victim/victimized, oppressed, and subjugated categories. This promotes selective labelling that is grounded on the privileged actors’ whiteness and classism.

We would like to conclude this section by establishing what seems promising as a framework. As a theoretical background underpinning our empirical study, we have experimented with a “Foucauldian Gadjoology” with a “structurally informed” (Walklate 1990 27–29) critical victimology (Fattah 1992, 7–8 15–16 23–24; Van Dijk 2006). The purpose of such integration is to describe and explain the meso-level causes of how both Romani/Calon pupils and Gadje/Pailho (non-Romani) school actors are subjected to harm, “pains”, structural violence, and processes of victimization in the school-community contexts through power-savoir processes (a regime of truth). In our view, such causes produce human rights violations (e.g., access to education, non-biased treatment), disparate life achievements (e.g., grade achievement, physical health), and differential labelling processes that ultimately lead to the subjection and exclusion of Romani students and families.

In summary, this approach addresses the “making of” school technologies of Pailhos (Gadje) unfair/biased legitimacy – sometimes, these technologies are even disguised as being in the “Romani/Calon people’s best interest” (on the behalf of Romani people). We can include such approach in the overarching qualitative action-research framework of a peacemaking criminology (Quinney 1995, 153–54) applied to schools as systems of child development: “Positive peace exists when the sources of crime – including poverty, inequality, racism, and alienation – are not present. There can be no peace (...) without social justice. Without social justice and without peace (personal and social) there is crime” (Quinney 1995, 155), violence, conflict expropriation, and subjection. Our empirical study buys into such conceptualization by parsing out how school discourses were shaped to promote a regime of truth that denies peace to Romani/Calon pupils and families. If we do so, it is intending to describe the context of “no peace” and imagine how it could be transformed into a positive peace context where the sources of conflict are eliminated.

V. School discourses and Calon students

Schools are embedded in the power systems through institutionalization; thus, societies' majoritarian narratives tend to define the regime of truth acceptable to both schools and the individual actors that compose them. The reproduction of such majoritarian narratives translates into educational contexts as *deficit discourses*. Thus, discourses percolated by whiteness and classism imply that ethnic minority students and their families reject schooling, are not concerned about their education or do not believe in the benefits of education. As a result, their languages/dialects, attitudes, cultures, and behaviors reveal "deficits" when compared to the "norm" – however, this white, middle-class norm is often silenced, not being named. (Alim and Paris 2017; Dragos 2021).

In Foucauldian terms, *subjectification* happens when school actors, such as teachers, principals, students, or any other staff, incorporate the majoritarian regime of truth about Calon/Romani people in their ways of being. In other words, incorporating such discourses into identities and tangible behaviors. As S. Dragos argues it follows that a "*majoritarian antigypsist narrative, being a regime of truth, produces and reproduces whiteness as the norm and the 'the deficient' Romani student as the deviant. It creates teacher-subjects and student-subjects who operate in a racist antigypsist regime of truth framing the education system.*" (Dragos 2021, 128).

Albeit such institutionalized regimes of truth at schools produce homogenized behaviors that should comply with the *Calon student-in-deficits model*, they also open space for *resistance*. Resistance encompasses denying the incorporation of truth discourses into the self and identity (as well as behavior).

In the case of Romani/Calon students, this means the space for counternarratives and counter-storytelling to emerge, by direct or covert opposition to the stereotypical depiction, biased expectations, and degraded treatment they experience in navigating educational settings. Moreover, overt displays of ethnic pride can also be part of such strategies, consciously and unconsciously. However, this is often difficult as classroom contexts tend to sanction "non-official" ways of behaving and learning. The challenge here is that officially accepted/encouraged behavior does not recognize or sustain the racialized students' lives, cultures, literacies, and languages. Their ways of being are often sanctioned or relinquished to "alternative" spaces, justifying segregation policies and practices. It follows that students' or families' resistance within school settings can become the target of punishment and sanction. (Dragos 2021; Kinloch 2017).

Kinloch (2017) referred to such resistance processes within classroom settings as students' "*performances of resistance*", which concerns specific ways of responding to biased treatment (actual or expected) that students of color often face, as a way of protecting themselves from potentially harmful interactions that directly attack or degrade their identities. These behaviors can encompass harsh replies, sarcasm, non-engagement in tasks, avoidance, apparent disinterest, rejection to speak, and strategic silences. For Calon students, it can lead to either behaving in ways that directly challenge subjectification or performing (expected) stereotyped *personas* to avoid worst outcomes.

Finally, this regime of truth generates an "expertise" about Calon people and culture(s) – especially students – (re)produced by schools and school actors. However, this "expertise" seldom incorporates the views of Calons. More to the point, this "expertise" is "applied" to Calon people in the process of subjection, essentializing them. A form of "*cultural competence*" (Hernandez-Wolfe and McDowell 2014) about Calon students and families is created by experienced school staff and teachers. As a consequence, they assume being "knowledgeable" about the culture and behaviors of Calon students and families. Alternatively, if they do not have experience with Calons, they will rely on the "experienced" staff and teachers' "knowledge" and "truth".

In doing so, individual differences, intra-ethnic variability, and the cultural dynamics/change/flux over time are eliminated or suppressed, contributing further to stereotypical imagery of Calon students, and families as well as rigid inter-ethnic interaction repertoires/scripts. In the ethnographic incursions, we focused on how Calon students and families performed resistance through their alternative discourses that exposed the schools'

regimes of truth (enmeshed in the contextual power imbalance between school staff and Calons). In addition, we made an effort to grasp how Calons interpret the school discourses produced about themselves.

In the following sections, we present our main findings of the ethnographic study of a school grouping receiving enrolling a considerable percentage of Calon (Romani) students in an European suburban context.

VI. Pailhos' constitution of Calon school failure and "problems"

The "problems" that are readily identified by actors, institutional quantitative data and school staff discourses are: *truancy*, *school dropouts*, *antisocial/defiant behavior* (leading to classroom expel) and "Gypsies" themselves appear as being "problematic". These problematizations are established as ethnic-based and institutional data supports an ethnically rooted explanation. For example, at one of the schools whose student population represents five per cent of group of school's totals, in the 1st and 2nd grades, there are about sixty Calon students, two thirds of which are in truancy state. Every student referred by truancy in both grades is – without exception – Calon.

At this school, Calon students represent the *ethnic majority*. However, one third of those Calon pupils are not truant. But the problem is still reified and subject to a kind of *savoir* that displays it as a matter of "ethnicity", having as its main feature the "Gypsy culture". This discourse seems to be everywhere in a disperse format and gives rise to particular control techniques and *Pailho'* normalization procedures. In turn, they produce specific kinds of *savoirs* about Romani groups. Let's have a brief overview of these *Pailho-controlled savoirs*.

They are a grid of *reasons*, *causes* and *justifications* about the "problems", that can be summarized as follows:

- (1) kids and youngsters skip classes, as the "Gypsy community" perceives the inadequacy of school as a way to reach success, because of the experiences and trajectories of school failure prevailing in the community; that is to say, that "we" perceive that "Gypsy community" perceives that it is not possible to go upwards in socioeconomic status ladder through school. So "they" don't see why "they" should go to school or follow the rules: *it's not exclusion, it's non-recognition of school's potential for social mobility; the "ethnicity" doesn't recognize school as a "vehicle"*. This justifies truancy and failure; at the same time, it neutralizes the failure of school when dealing with failure. Once spoken as a "cause", it makes the role of the school itself in contributing to truancy, invisible. *One of the causes pinpointed is that the "ethnicity" is not able to recognize something that is supposed to be clear.* "They" can learn but they don't recognize school. An "*institutional anomie*" (Messner and Rosenfeld 2009) lies in the relationship between "ethnicity"¹ and the school institution. This is one of the rules that directs micro-interactions and behaviors both intra- and inter-ethnic. As Calon is a community (inside the bigger local community) that doesn't have any reasons around "them" to bet on an educational path, there is nothing wrong or biased about the school system. As one person of the school staff commented about elementary students:

"Retentions happen, not because of learning problems, but due to missing classes...basic reading and writing skills are not acquired due to constant interruptions and classes skipping. There is a non-recognition of school as a vehicle to success by the 'ethnicity' [Calon], low expectations about school; it's not devaluation, it's the [Calon] community recognition of the inaptitude of the mean to reach the end".

- (2) The community or the "ethnicity" is at odds with prospects for innovation. "Closed" is a central concept used to describe the "Gypsy community", but it is not explained what is

¹ Objectified.

meant by “closed”. This is justified by the “ethnicity” preservation intents and inhabitant’s projects of non-integration and non-assimilation. The possibility of speaking about the concepts and daily practices of “innovation” and “integration” is pushed away. We argue that the concept of “assimilation” remains “unsaid” in the discourses as an essential part of excluding: (a) the need to give significance to the concept of “closed ethnicity” and (b) interculturality in the school day-to-day teaching operations. In contrast, teachers and social workers claim their discontent about “being abandoned” by repressive institutions and state workers in dealing with truancy of *Calon* students. Twenty years ago, the “integration” of the “Gypsy ethnicity” was advancing when there was the support of repressive institutions: minors courts and judicial suits. Nowadays, “integration” is not working. In most situations and contexts, integration itself is not defined. Which “integration” are the discourses referring to? Implicitly, by local *savoirs*, “integration” is the strategic action – working from the classroom towards the dean cabinet – of converting a will of non-integration into a non-said forcible assimilation. Hence, this covert assimilationist project is “factually” impossible, because “they” are “closed” and they explicitly do not want “to integrate”.

- (3) In the “closed” community, a particular figure acquires a central role and functioning: the girl. There is a pressure to marry “early”, generating precocious pregnancy which hinders learning and promotes dropouts (even before marriage happens). These girls are strained into marriage to serve the preservation of the “closed community”¹. *The girl is biologized and sacrificed by the relentless “community”*. She is manipulated and submitted as a natural part of functioning of an entity – the “Gypsy community”. If girls “don’t learn”, the cause lies in the “natural” functioning of the girl as an organic part of community self-preservation. The *Calon* girl student becomes the vessel of perpetuation cycles for a self-closed community. By biologizing culture, this reduces the problem to submission by correlating *Calon* girls, welfare dependency and municipality housing. “They” enable submission, even if “they” are “closed” and strive to perpetuate “themselves”. This can acquire a meaning of “truth”: this discourse is connected with daily school practices (e.g., learning, sanctions), thus, some *Calon* students and families become enmeshed in this specific *savoir*, and they become the enablers of their own submission. In turn, this supports the *savoir* itself, in a self-perpetuating cycle. The confusion between ethnicity and culture, using a biased “culture” concept as static, early marriage non-cultural aspects, girls’ agency, intersectionality of discriminations and expectancies/possibilities of post-marriage graduation, all remain un-said themes.

“These families are prone to what the municipality gives them (...) it’s submission. To the maintenance of the [Calon] community, girls should be held ‘Dummies’ and far from school. They get pregnant and marry early to the maximum prolongation of fertile age and in that way, they have two, three children, what permits the preservation of the community (...) It is not convenient that they [Calon girls] learn!” (School staff worker)

- (4) Other explanations developed are: (a) the lack of availability of *Calon* models of professional and educative – *Pailho* ways of – “success”; (b) the thematic narrative on the difficulties of “educating the Gypsy community” impacting the development of teaching attitudes that support the idea that the transmission of values, history and behaviors between “Gypsy” generations must be “cut” as an ethical mission – attitude that prevails for *Pailho* actors². *Pailhos* must then assume a position of constant education of “we towards them” that backfires in verbalized racial terms used by *Calon* students. Then, this verbalization of racial inequalities/differences is interpreted by other actors as a signal of non-conformity that must be normalized (e.g., by school formal

¹ By means of the extension of the fertile age that allows having more than two children.

² Not only teachers serve the function of teaching and excluding.

sanctioning, withdrawal of interaction with Calon, authoritarian discipline); and, (c) it's very difficult to obtain or gain "trust" from "Gypsy families".

We hypothesize that a circuit of control operates in the cross of the various *savoir* elements described above. In the circuit, to reach the status-identity of "credibility" and "truth" in a particular inter-ethnic situation becomes virtually impossible for Calon people. At each element implying Calon identity – true or represented – a *savoir* and a respective mechanism of social control is implied, rendering space only for *virtual identities* (INSSW and Dynamo International 2008, 70) to be performed. The Calon virtual realities and virtual "Calonized" behaviors, are the only "true" points of support for teaching and for the social intervention apparatus. We argue that those "virtual identities" and "performed behaviors" are the mirror through which we can expose the *unfairness and the bias* of the *Pailho's interaction system*, as well as its operating pathways.

We will focus on three of those pathways. In each one of them there is a different set of rationalities and internalized beliefs that support certain subjection techniques and social control actions. Their crisscross produces a paradox: at the same time systemic disadvantage (*latent*) and the truth of *Pailho* fairness (*manifest*).

The three hypothetical processes constitute racialized pathways that tend to the same result – thus, *equifinality*, provides them with practical significance. We further argue that without the combination of these specific processes, the *Pailhos* subjection strategy would be self-defeating, tending to entropy of accumulated vantage.

VII. Power-truth or power-savoir processes

a. Racialized conflict expropriation

N. Christie seminal works on criminal justice system serve as framework for understanding social control systems. Christie (1977) argued that victims of crime lose their ownership and powers over their conflict during penal procedure. Conceptualizing conflicts has property leads to the view that conflicts are "*expropriated*" from people – particularly, from crime victims. This means that they don't control the decisions or resolutions about their conflicts. Instead of their participation, a series of mechanisms replace or "represent" their voices, their supposed choices, intents, and needs. A set of professional actors (lawyers, judges, etc.) and of structural conditions (increased segmentation of social space and segmentation based on *caste* – e.g., race, age) perform the role of "*thieves*" of conflicts.ⁱⁱ Because data matches with this theoretical stance, we draw on it.

In fact, students, staff, parents, and teachers are expropriated from their conflicts, both student-student and student-adult conflicts. Our point here is that *the processes of "stealing" the conflicts (and their potential for change) work differently by race, being more frequent, intense, and harmful for Calon students and families*. What mechanisms are at stake? First, the centralization of disciplinary powers and procedures. Secondly, school's disciplinary rules that perform "*law-as-thieve*" and sustain a punitive, exclusionary rationality. Thirdly, inquisitor type disciplinary procedure (the school/teacher vs. the student). Fourthly, disciplinary measures that disregard/occult ethnic power relations and inequalities. Finally, discretion, subjectivity, and selectivity in the enforcement of disciplinary measures ¹.

Disciplinary centralization and concentration. A principal's adjunct detains a monopoly of control on disciplinary procedures. When a behavioral problem or "infraction" emerges, it flows to this teacher tutelage, if mildly serious². The "rule-breaking" student has to face this teacher as the representative of school, norms, teachers and "formal authority". It is not intended to know the motivations for rule-breaking, what is the conflict *really* about, the

¹ What we could eventually call "*school sentencing*" as a subtopic of this research.

² Depending on each teacher's perception of "seriousness" and also because "seriousness" is established by the continuity/repetition of petty infractions by the student.

perspectives of involved parties and the cultural misunderstandings (*Pailho*-biased communication) that led to the conflict or antisocial behavior. The priority is to enforce rules, to prove the behavior's illegality and to sanction it, maintaining institutional authority. *Calon* students' conflict's slide from their control, be it on the classroom, playgrounds or other spaces. Teachers and school staff play the role of *indicator devices*, making prejudice and stigmatization invisible when they act complying with their duty and in accord with their responsibilities. This is because, in the face of a conflict – particularly, serious ones (e.g., physical violence, insults) – they *need* to refer the students involved to the principal's adjunct. Importantly, these are the orders and beliefs that teachers receive and sustain, following the organizational hierarchies. It is a school-wide rationality. *Teachers also loose the conflict's potential to learn about subjection and power, acting on their own expropriation*: behaving on a self-defeating manner by avoiding their responsibility to solve or creating possibilities for solving conflicts.

In a school with more than 1000 students and about 200 teachers, there is one teacher that – acting directly upon the student or indirectly through organizational culture – defines the *truth* about the *conflicts* and *rule-setting questions*. The conflict is understood in a “Behavior – Infraction – Authority reposition” schemata; such schemata is organized in a way that the *Whiteness and Classism* of rules, teaching strategies and classroom discipline cannot be identified. This is precisely the reason why conflict expropriation is racialized. However, even though it is racialized, everyone involved in this context is harmed by it in some form.

Students don't feel heard, experiencing unfairness and “*stigmatizing shaming*” (Braithwaite 2000) when the disciplinary measures are applied to them. Teachers cannot establish a connection with their students and cannot set an inclusive learning environment, feeling “powerless”. The principal's adjunct, over-accumulating procedures, is negatively perceived by *Calon* students, contributing to the perpetuation of coercive cycles. Moreover, there is no prerogative in the internal school regulatory that states that a principal's adjunct should perform this role. There are some specific tasks directly assigned to the school dean, but not a legal reference to its adjuncts. Hence, this is a question of school governance.

Synthesizing, the characteristics of this disciplinary-justice model are the following: (1) highly centralized, discretionary and “personalized” rule-enforcement; (2) *Calon* students feel unfair treatment during disciplinary procedures (low levels of procedural justice); (3) determination of a passive involvement of *Calon* students and families in the conflict-resolution scheme; (4) focus on reposition of authority, sending the message to *Calon* people that “*We (Pailhos) are in charge!*”. Conflict expropriation acts as a mechanism to maintain school systemic *Calon* disadvantages. Below we illustrate the core issues outlined above, with an excerpt from an informal conversation and interviews:

“He [Principal's adjunct] has hate towards the Gypsies! (...) He is racist but it's not only about the Gypsies, he treats badly and stirs the persons who he thinks are ‘thugs’, not only Gypsies...He thinks that they are less than him!” (ex-student of the school)

I: ‘Do you think that this school makes Justice in the discipline domain?’

M.T.: ‘This school is fair! I'm sure of that!’

I: ‘Do the students feel that they are treated fairly?’

M.T.: ‘Ahh...that I don't know!’ (I: Interviewer; P.A.: Principal's Adjunct)

“There is differentiation between students...and because we are Gypsies (...) and some teachers know [that are treating us unfairly] and they do it intentionally to harm the student! (...) It is humiliating, it's just to castigate, there was another manner [to do it] (...) In this way, it is to push aside, it is to let it go, you put it ‘on the side’, it is ‘sending’ [the student/disciplinary case] to François [principal's adjunct] and ‘it's done’, it isn't their [teachers in general] problem anymore” (*Calon* student)

Disciplinary Legal Regimen as thief: Law-as-thief. Normativities correlate with the regulatory legal mechanisms. The school internal regulatory states that every “infraction”

should be directly participated to the principal. Every member of the school staff, when observing or participating in a conflict with a student(s) or between students should take the conflict “upwards” in the level of school organizational and administrative structure. Since the principal delegated the majority of his disciplinary powers to one of his adjuncts, there is the centralization of the disciplinary practices as previously explained. Thus, law acts as a thief of conflicts on his own stance: it states as *mandatory* that the conflicts should be as quickly as possible participated to the school board/principal in order to “*guarantee the regular school functioning*” and the “*respect for the teacher’s authority*” (school’s internal regulatory). In other words, *administrative law requires the stealing of conflicts from those who have their ownership*. Law obliges to the refusal of conflicts’ potential for transformation and for revealing the *Gadjo-ness* (Matache 2016, 2–7, 10, 17) of school climate and disciplinary practices.¹

These laws “steal” the possibility for teacher’s awareness upraising about the biased rule-setting and enforcement. In this sense, a set of legal provisions blinds racialized conflict expropriation, supporting teachers’ *non-accountability* for: conflict solving, exchanging cultural definitions, disclosure of deep cultural values or latent cultural conflicts. Consequentially, teachers do not see this as their professional duty. Indeed, it is the law that allows and sets this *non-accountability*. The conflict goes “upwards” and now it is the monopolist-task of the principal’s adjunct. Two points should be outlined in regards to this.

First, “*infraction*” and “*seriousness*” are poorly defined concepts: the repetitive use of indeterminate clauses creates conditions for discretion and subjectivity during disciplinary procedures. Second, there is an antinomy between the guiding principles of the school group and the ends of disciplinary measures – both are stated in the school’s internal regulatory. One of the guiding principles is to “*prevent social exclusion*”, but – amid “*pedagogic*”, “*preventive*”, “*deterrence*”, and “*integrative*” end ascribed to disciplinary measures – a *punitive end* is found in the letter of law (school internal regulatory). That means, the school applies the measure, because the student “deserves it”: punish to punish. One of the values – “*prevent social exclusion*” – is contradicted by this particular punitive end. A “*Calon penalty*” is formed and legalized because: (1) “*infraction*” and “*seriousness*” legal concepts are poorly defined; (2) there is the centralization and racialized conflict expropriation; and (3) a punitive purpose for school discipline is included in the administrative law. Therefore, there is a part of the school regimen that becomes mimetic of the current tendency of western penal systems, sliding towards “*law and order*” and “*just deserves*”.

Inquisitorial disciplinary process style. In the case of sanctionary measures, it is the *same entity* that opens the procedure, collects evidence, judges, and applies/decides the disciplinary measure.² Again, it is the school law that states this. It does not matter what triggered the conflict, what can be done to restore relationships and to regroup actors involved in the conflict through conversation. What matters is to collect evidence about the “*facts*” and settle a “*fair measure*”. The parts (e.g., students, teachers) are heard only to “*reconstruct*” the scenario and the “*infraction*”. In this sense, the conflict and the infraction are de-contextualized. The school acts “*against*” the student, and there is no space given to the belief that “*facts*” could be differently interpreted depending on cultural background and past experiences. Hence, *only one version of “truth” is possible*: the version established by *Pailhos* organizational school structure.

In each phase of a disciplinary process, the *Calon* student and his family are granted a passive role: (re)telling the “*facts*” in their view/opinion. When the law states that a student should be heard, it never says why and with what effects. This is the silent “*trick*”: he contributes to his own punishment, to the enforcement and maintenance of the rules – the culturally non-responsive rules.

¹ We could say “*Pailhismo*” (*gadjo-ness*) inspired on local *Calon* language.

² Most of the times it is the *same person* – the principal’s adjunct.

In inquisitorial type judicial processes/cases, the degree of impartiality and objectivity of legal decisions is problematic, because (1) there is no external control of the activities at each phase and (2) evidence gathering and judging become entangled. An inquisitorial type procedure privatizes the process, making it somewhat “secret”. Is there any space for Calon community representatives to be involved? Is there any space for the students to influence the course of a case? Is there some entity to oversee the impartiality or objectivity of the disciplinary enforcement (e.g., avoiding racial selectivity)? The answer to these questions is no. Any particular Calon student case can become a theatre play of “the school” vs. “the Gypsy student(s)”.

Feeling deeply the expropriation and the unfairness of an inquisitory disciplinary procedure that had started a few minutes earlier (he forecasted what was going to happen), a Calon student (14 years old) said:

“This school is a shit; the school is a shit! I won’t come anymore!”

As J. Braithwaite (2000, 287) puts it, he is rejecting his rejectors. More accurately, he is rejecting an inquisitorial type disciplinary procedure that rejects his participation and cultural/ethnic identities. Both teachers and staff loose in this game. But loosing, they still win: they are (almost) fully represented by other person when the conflict was with and about them.

“Pushing aside” (Exclusionary) disciplinary measures. Let us convey another antinomy in the school. For that purpose, we remember one of the guiding principles for the group of schools: preventing social exclusion. Aligned with that principle, the disciplinary measures applied to students should fulfil *reintegrative* (in the educative community), *preventive* (avoid future infractions) and *learning development* purposes/ends. But when starting to analyze the disciplinary measures stated by-law, there is a quick impression of logical incoherence between the ends of measures and the measures themselves. Why? The type of measures previewed by law and actually applied are of three types: “*exclusion to the exterior*” (e.g., order for going out of the classroom, school suspension), “*exclusion to the interior*” (restraint to certain spaces/conditioned movements; prohibition of going to certain spaces) and *segregation-shaming* (e.g., school integration tasks/activities¹, school transference and expulsion). In the case of “serious”² or “very serious”³ or even “light” infractions (if repeated), “*sanctionary measures*” are applied – the *punitive end* becomes an *obligation* to pursue in such cases. What is the common thread between this diversity of measures?

It is that they complete the expropriation of conflict, and they take it to another level. Not only the manifest problem/conflict is “proved”, and “sanctioned” – without any really active participation of the different views– but it is also: (1) deeply *individualized* – after the measure is decided or applied, the manifest conflict disappears and converted in a “payment of a debt” by the student – he/she owes to the school and pays through his/her punishment; (2) *pushed away* – in the course of punishment the conflict becomes a “problem” of the student, it is not about systemic functioning or teacher *Gadjo-ness* – the student is “problematic” or had a “problematic moment”; and, finally, (3) *silenced* – the latent conflict that produces manifest conflicts between Calon students and other students or Calon students and teachers is manipulated and then disappears. How far are we from the “preventing social exclusion” end?

¹ Note on the *euphemisms*: these tasks consist mostly of cleaning school spaces as classrooms, corridors or having to do some task works in the library during certain times (e.g., cutting recess times).

² E.g., Intentional and premeditated verbal aggression.

³ E.g., Intentional violation of the duties of respect and correction in the relationships with any member of the educative community, in the form of calumny, insults or defamation.

The conflict is expropriated and “pushed away” with the student target of the disciplinary measure¹. Systemic advantage is then reinforced because no latent violence or discrimination (e.g., non-culturally responsive teaching) can be visualized or spoken. It is not a conflict, and it is not racialized. There is no power imbalance at this school. He/she is “Gypsy” and needs to be punished by the rules he/she did not follow because “*we already know how they are, and what are the reasons*”. The problem is about if he/she pays his/her debt to the school/teacher².

Let’s remember that disciplinary measures should strive for “integration”, “learning” and “student development”. But the opposite is happening by means of a certain diversion movement and by the “punitive” element of school’s disciplinary regimen. It becomes a “soft” punitive strategy that it’s not *additive or co-lateral* to the other ends but in practice – with some *Calon* students displaying repetitive rule-breaking/academic failure – becomes *the central* component of the disciplinary practice, cumulating disadvantages in the learning trajectory. The disciplinary measures applied, hinder the learning of *all* students, specially *Calons*. Paradoxically, they block the very same learning and inclusion that they have as a legal end to pursue (by letter and spirit).

Discretion, subjectivity, and selectivity in enforcement. We’ll illustrate this feature with two field stories. Both happened at the class councils.³

In the first case there was an aggression issue of a *Calon* student towards a *Pailho* student. The meeting was settled to discuss how many days of suspension should be applied to the kid. At the beginning, there was a discussion about the present and past school behavior of the kid, then the discussion has flowed to a series of generalizations about “Calon-related issues”.⁴ The specific case turns into a biased narrative on *Calon* “problematic relationships” with formal institutions. At some point of the meeting, one of the researchers-interveners asked: “*Does the internal regulatory have some criteria to define the seriousness of the measure applied?*”.

One teacher answered: “Yes, *there are some!*”. And we wondered why these legal criterions weren’t being discussed in the concrete case, instead of this sliding towards the “problems” of educating the “Gypsy community”. After that question was posed, no comments about the usage of the objective legal criteria followed. The criteria applied was *somewhere* in the midst of teachers and social technicians’ knowledge on their own education, training and prior experiences about the “problematic relationships” of *Calon* with the formal institutions – a “grand narrative”. The application of the measure was like an auction, with each professional pointing his bid. We lived the same sort of experience in other class councils whenever a *Calon* student was to be sanctioned: “*Who gives more (i.e., days of suspension)?*”. Guess what? Neither the students, nor their families were there to speak up, explain, be heard, or hear.

But now, let’s see what happened in another class, one of the “high expectations” fully composed by *Pailhos* class of the school.

“Teacher 1: It’s not acceptable that a good class in the past year now enters in ‘drift’.

¹ He is also pushed away both in the geographical and social space.

² E.g., The same teacher that expelled him/her of the classroom because the teacher did not understand what he/she was saying in *Calon*.

³ The first was extraordinary, serving to discuss a disciplinary issue of a *Calon* student in a class of accumulated retentions students (mainly composed by *Calons*). The second was an evaluation meeting of the “elected for success” class of fully *Pailho* composition.

⁴ E.g., judicial court decisions on school dropouts of *Calon* girls, the “racism” and discrimination of the students towards the teachers (claims of inverted racism), how “they” should have repressive style consequences after rule-breaking.

Teacher 2: Notes in the booklet doesn't work...maybe going to the Student's Disciplinary Cabinet [after being given order of expulsion of the classroom] will work?! It is with these students that this works! Maybe it doesn't work with all students but with these ones it works, because they stay with fear! These infants are not equal!"

With other students – “other” meaning mainly “Gypsy bad-behaved students” – the measure of expulsion of the classroom is automatically perceived as non-effective. It has to be a more *serious and heavy* measure in order for it to be able to produce “fear”. This means that for the same type of behaviors (e.g., oppositional-defiant behavior towards the teachers) these “*Pailhos* high-performance” labelled kids” didn’t have a disciplinary measure applied to them (or had a less serious measure) compared with their “*Calons* very low performance” labelled counterparts.

As we can see, the school conflict resolution system is *discretionary*, because it is not fully bounded to the legal criteria to apply the disciplinary measures. Hence, it escapes from the law, but simultaneously, the poorly defined concepts and clauses allow space for this to happen. It is *subjective* because definitions of infraction, the decisions about the measure to apply and its severity are a “creative” game played in each concrete disciplinary case. This game follows the codes of antigypsyism, cultural essentialist or “otherness” frames. Finally, it is also *selective*, because it targets more frequently *Calon* students – that is why the conflict expropriation is racialized.

To become successful, the process of racialized conflict expropriation, normally turns into a “expiation” (that will be explored later). Between these two processes, there is also the interplay of *antigypsyism* (Against Antigypsyism 3–5). We’ll now turn to school system micro-level antigypsyism.

b. Covert and overt antigypsyism

Antigypsyism is entrenched in the school-community dynamics. It emerges as a set of attitudes, beliefs, actions, and spaces able to develop segregation, racial bias, and hate. The “we” and “them” is a “quasi-permanent inhabitant” in this discursive system. In the covert domain we have the rules, *Pailho* linguistic codes, standard ways of decodifying observed behavior and messages received from *Calons*. It largely consists of non-nominating and blinding the *objectification* of *Calon* students’ actions and “ways of being” formulated according to *Pailho* standards, perceptual filters, principles of justice and core moral values – maintaining those in the paralinguistic domain.

Ready-to-use expressions that make antigypsyism work without looking as antigypsyism are: “*For the reasons we already know*”, “*For the reasons we all know*”, “*Because of the characteristics of these families*”, “*We are not racists*”, “*I treat everybody equal it doesn't matter what*”, “*We already know how they are, they don't want to be integrated*”. But those *reasons/characteristics* are never pointed out, serving as heuristics for discrimination. Those *characteristics* are never defined – they appear only as broad categories (“unstructured”, “dysfunctional”). Also, it is not explicitly said “*how they are*”. Furthermore, treating *Calons* as *equal* means, in practice, that they are being treated according to *Pailho* rules, standards, norms, and principles of justice. Therefore, antigypsyism operates also covertly. Antigypsyism is barely articulated in the discourses, statements, and verbal interactions, but it is there – in the tone, form, volume and silences.

This discursive platform integrates the individual psychological functioning system by setting racial biased operations at social and sensory information processing levels. The space between what is said and non-said sets a continuous platform in which the discontinuous overt antigypsy behaviors/events happen. They are produced mainly by *Pailho* school agents, students, and parents.

We could define the dynamics of *micro-overt antigypsyism* as follows: *the cognitive-sensory-behavioral intercultural transactional states that, operating in an interweaved form tend to...*

- (1) deride;
- (2) produce noise in intercultural communication;
- (3) set misunderstanding(s);
- (4) demonization;
- (5) create techniques of domination (e.g., directly and indirectly sanctioning Calon styles of speaking and the usage of Calon as language/dialect);
- (6) a mix of fear and hate triggered by selected and interpreted “Gypsiness” cues;
- (7) generalization and uniformization of “Gypsy” features inferred from concrete cases in which negative stimuli arises in interaction;
- (8) attributing school-community negative characteristics to the “Gypsies”;
- (9) denial of local racialized history;
- (10) rejection of creative/innovative pathways to open dialogue,

...in a concrete event or chain of events, directed towards Calon groups (pupils and families).

Impressively, some *Pailho* students are vividly aware of this kind of transactions:

“In that school there is racism; the school staff always defends the Pailhos. The major fights that happen in the school are between Gypsies and Pailhos [students] and the school staff just listens to the Pailhos, they don’t listen to the Gypsies. That’s what I don’t like there... in the school” (11 years old, Pailha student)

When interethnic conflicts occur – whatsoever the triggers – overt antigypsyism can emerge. These conflicts happen within the school’s *cultural mononormativity*. When Calon students do not comply to cultural mononormativity, antigypsyism covers and feeds it, hindering *cultural heteronormativity*.

We’ll illustrate with two situations during directly observed Calon student – *Pailho* student conflicts in which *Pailho* actors faced the *Gadjo-ness and Whiteness (privilege)* of their attitudes (through Calon pupils’ non-deference) – while legitimizing and occulting their privileges by means of overt antigypsyism, working as “*neutralization techniques*” (Sykes and Matza 1957):

“This is the ‘Gypsiness’ [the Gypsies]. It is like this; it is not from the experience here [in the school], it is life-made experience, I worked in the police. This is all equal, everywhere, they all should go to the same place... All of this is inverted, the laws are all inverted... The ‘Gypsiness’ does what it wants!”ⁱⁱⁱ (school watchman)

T (15 years old, Pailho student): “Hey Gypsy! I’ll break your entire mouth! (...) Do you think I’m afraid of Gypsies?”

N (13 years old, Calon student): [starts crying and immediately leaves the classroom, very distressed]

R-I (researcher-intervener) – Talks about the situation of insulting and threatening based on race with the Teacher, after a conversation with N. “He called him ‘Gypsy’, should we do something!?!?” (Speaking with the teacher)

Teacher: “And is he not [a Gypsy]!?!? (...) Here [school], it works like this. He [N] is a bit babyish. They know how to protect themselves.”

To justify a *monocultural disciplinary model* built in the wider *Pailho* social control system, school actors: (1) trivialize, normalize and minimize discrimination; (2) deny antigypsyism; (3) generalize Calon’s “conflictual” or antisocial behaviors; (4) blame Calon students, denying victimization and the harms caused by antigypsyism and (5) *project racism and violence upon Calon*.

c. Projection of Racism and Violence upon Calon

Shortly, this last pathway is about the making of a “we” vs. “them” discourse that inverts the direction of racism (from *Calons* towards *Pailhos*) and deflects the narrative of *Calon* people exposing historical/present exclusion from social participation. As one teacher said: “They [pupils] say that we are racists, but they are the racists!”.

Our interpretation aligns with Girard (1982) accounts on “scapegoating”. Firstly, the “counter-racism” or “inverted racism” narrative camouflages the truth, the victim’s disempowerment, and disadvantage. It masks collective violence upon *Calon*, because they become “guilty” about their own subjection through school system racialized conflict expropriation. *Calon* become intrinsically racist, experiencing a double symbolic violence – racism and the assumption that they are racists. This assumption tends to wrap up the violence events cycles, harmonizing the *Pailho* regulated social control circuits. Racism is then successfully “expiated”, which maintains the school as a perceived “just world” (Lerner 1980) for the school staff’s and students/families (*Pailho*) majority.

That said, there is a legitimization of punitive roles and functions (authority-obedience schemata), among teachers and other staff, that can be decomposed in three features:

- (1) Exclusion of teachers’ and teaching “social role”. A teacher’s role is neither “social”, nor is the role of education “social”; there is a *découpage* between the “social” and the “educative”. If the teacher rejects his/her social function, he/she will not be aware of what’s going on, so probably he will project problems and guilt on the *Calon* student.

“I’m not a psychologist, I’m not a sociologist... I’m a teacher!” (Teacher)

- (2) The widespread belief that the disciplinary model acts to discourage obstacles to the teaching process (and not to foster learning processes). From the outset, the instruction-teaching model is not culturally sensitive to students, resulting on optimal conditions for misunderstandings and cultural suppressions. Let us make a classroom caricature situation that expresses this rationality: “Let me teach you my *Pailho*’ culture. If you don’t let me teach, we’ll punish you because you must let me teach – it is your right to learn in the ways of the *Pailho* culture. If you don’t conform, you are guilty and/or you are racist”.

“Everyone has the right to learn and to let teach! Period! This is on the Student’s Statute [law], we are not making up anything!!! It is just complying with the Student’s Statute!” (Teacher)

- (3) When school discipline acts to “let teach”, feelings of justice reposition and teachers’ “stakes in conformity” to organizational milieu, blossom. Teachers feel that the school becomes a fairer place if discipline is acting to “let them teach”. But, *generally speaking, the fairer the teacher feels he/she is acting¹ the greater will be the disjunction between the Calon student’s/families expected fair outcomes and the actual outcomes* (Agnew 1992, 53–56) – particularly, when it comes to conflicts and disciplinary issues (Tyler 2003). This leads to a paradox. The more justice a teacher perceives, probably the more unfair the *Calon* student will feel he/she is being treated, causing strain and distress. There is room for *projection*: if “we” are being fair, how can “they” say that “we” are “unfair”? It is not important to know how they feel they are treated: the problem is about *them*²! Of course, not all teachers follow this commonly observed process, but most of them fall between a light or extreme version of this perceived justice disjunction.

¹ If following control processes outlined along the article.

² See again the interviews’ excerpts at p. 11 that strongly sustain this argument.

VIII. Final remarks: reflexive discussion

This article described one European experience about how educative disadvantage works through local *power-savoir* deeply entrenched and contextualized processes. We strived to describe them drawing on ethnographic data, using active reflexivity (Mason 2002). We presented three hypothetic processes that we want to test further in the future, because they were drawn mainly from extreme situations and events. To some extent they are “*ideal types*” (in the weberian sense).

There was an interesting reflexive path because we consider that during some time (up to five months) while experiencing the school and community life, the participant intervener-researcher contributed to perform these subjection strategies of *Calon* people. So, we can say confidently that “We know them well”.

Interestingly, it the participation on them, as a *Pailho* actor, combined with the intense hearing and approximation to *Calon* youngsters and families, that led us to gain awareness and to understand what kind of power games are played out in context. At first, the one of the researchers was an active promotor of the disadvantages he wanted to eliminate. This personal reflexive statement and autoethnographic data lends further support to the evidence collected – it is an intrinsic part of it.

We learned from *Calon* students how to turn the subjection strategies and the systemic disadvantages into evidence by starting to reflect and value what they were saying *when reacting and performing resistance*.

One of the most important experiences in terms of questioning our assumptions was one day when after a class a *Calon* student asked for a ride to the “hood” and the researcher said no, because he did not trust him. The boy reacted: “*You [Pailhos] complicate everything!*”. Sentence that we try to honor by inserting it into the title of our paper. It was a serious “*turning point*” (Sampson and Laub 2005) for us because it made the research follow a different path. One of the participant researchers started to reflect over and over again about the meaning of what the boy had said after that day. It led us to discover what is happening at the school by inverting our positions and “*making our own place, a strange place*” (as Foucault would put it). It was a true liberation motto. We are really thankful to this student. He made us “wake up”. We are thankful to the learning experience that *Calon* people are continuously opening for us. As we could see, we *Pailhos* really “*complicate everything*”. It is so “complicated” that we *Pailhos* really cannot see the harm we are causing to *Calon* and even to ourselves (neither what, nor how).

IX. Disclaimer statements, Limitations and Summary

In the sense that the present research happened in a “practitioner-research” way, its terms, concepts, and conclusions refer only to the author's views and interpretation of data. Both institutions and people can have different perspectives and views. We do not try to represent through this research, the local Romani people or some of the school staff involved. Therefore, because the responsibility of the data collection and interpretation rests upon the authors, people involved in the action-research project (and institutions) do not necessarily feel represented by our findings. The participatory action-research reported here is limited to the problems definition and data gathering phases. In the interpretation phase, even though we built upon local narratives and interpretations, the degree of participation decreased. Hence, the first two steps of the study (problem definition, data collection) could be strictly considered “participatory action-research”, but the last two steps (data interpretation and dissemination/recommendation) would fall under a general action-research framework (not necessarily a *participatory* one).

Another caution should be made here. We have depicted a particular realm of European school-community relationships. This context is peculiar in terms of the concrete schools studied. We believe that we cannot generalize these particular findings to the more general patterns of the inter-ethnic schools in a European context – particularly, those with a

significant number of Romani students. That kind of inference seems abusive because our data does not allow to infer that. Thus, the findings concern this specific context only, and they cannot be generalized. However, this might be illustrative of specific contexts spread throughout Europe where overt and covert forms of discrimination, racism and exclusion are particularly acute.

Finally, we would like to conclude by wrapping up our main conclusions about the social control processes operating that ultimately contribute to the systemic disadvantages of local Calon people:

- The local schools tend to expropriate conflicts from Calon students and their families (as well as from other stakeholders), by the extreme centralization of school sentencing; establishing punitive ends to disciplinary sanctions; via exclusionary measures; via discretion/selectivity in the enforcement of school laws, and inquisitory-type disciplinary processes;
- Covert and overt antigypsyism, supported by cultural mononormativity and leading to continuous discrimination in concrete conflict events;
- Projection of racism and violence upon Roma, which is used by school and community stakeholders to deny institutional systemic racism and to create a sense that *Pailhos* are building a “fair world” in the school life even though they are repeatedly enforcing rules and performing behaviors that discriminate against Romani youngsters and families.
- In conclusion, we contend that through these three social control processes, the social intervention apparatus ends up intervening upon “virtual” identities of Romani people instead of “true identities”. In turn, this situation supports unfair daily interactions. However, it also creates a sense of fairness in performing the same unfair interactions that continuously push Romani students and families to positions of subjugation and disadvantage, being unrecognized and denied as the victims of institutional violence. This is what we refer to as “technology of unfair/biased Pailho legitimacy” in the school context.

X. References

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Appendix – Endnotes

ⁱ We use the original French word because “savoir” is a concept that defines something different of knowledge, particularly of scientific knowledge; it is a “wise” discourse – non-necessarily a scientific one – with specific formation rules. A *savoir* is a discursive practice with its own rules. We also use in some parts of this work, the concept of “truth” or “regime of truth” (*vérité*) – a “savoir” has a proper value of “truth”, even if it’s not the value of a “scientific truth”. Additionally, scientific truth appears in a particular domain of “savoir”. (Foucault 1994a) 1994b) 1994c))

ⁱⁱ “Criminal conflicts have either become *other people's property* (...) or it has been in other people's interests to *define conflicts away* (...) It is the conflict itself that represents the most interesting property taken away (...) it will easily be seen that conflicts represent a *potential for activity, for participation*. Modern criminal justice systems represent one of the many cases of lost opportunities for involving citizens in tasks that are of immediate importance to them. Ours is a society of *tasks-monopolists*” (Christie 1977, 7).

ⁱⁱⁱ *Gypsiness* (translated from the original language of the data): a negative connotated term equivalent to “Gypsies”, but used in a more stereotyped manner, referring to a “Gypsy world” as an integral unity, producing homogenizing and essentializing effects as the speech of the “other”.