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**Title:** Ethically ethnic: the ethno-culturalization of the moral conduct of the Sámi and the Roma in the governance in Finland between the 1850s and 1930s

**Year:** 2015

**Version:**

**Please cite the original version:**

Pyykkönen, M. (2015). Ethically ethnic: the ethno-culturalization of the moral conduct of the Sámi and the Roma in the governance in Finland between the 1850s and 1930s. *Journal of Political Power*, 8(1), 39-59.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2015.1010805>

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Ethically ethnic:

The ethno-culturalization of the moral conduct of the Sámi and the Roma in the governance in Finland between the 1850s and 1930s.

Abstract

Although there was not a focused administration on ethnic minorities in Finland until the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was variety of rationalities, techniques and practices of governance used for their conduct. In this article I analyze how the governance of the Roma and the Sámi – two biggest minorities at the time – changed after mid-1800s, when the new understanding, the ethno-cultural one, on population diffused among administration and governing bodies. This Foucauldian analysis concentrates on the descent of this 'event', the social and political conditions of its emergence, and the actual changes it meant in the governance of these minorities.

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Keywords:

Ethos, genealogy, governance, the Roma, the Sámi

## Introduction

This article focuses on the historical development of the governance of the Sámi and the Roma<sup>1</sup> in the territory of Finland. More precisely, the focus is on the late-19<sup>th</sup>-century and early-20<sup>th</sup>-century governance, when major changes occurred in how ethnic minorities were signified, understood, and their conduct shaped, in and by public administration and policies. Before that they had been mainly dealt with through social, economic, and religious discourses and practices, but after the “ethno-cultural turn”, they were approached and governed in ethno-cultural terms *par excellence*.

Why have I chosen these two groups for closer scrutiny here? First of all, they are the most administratively acknowledged minority groups in Finnish history and, hence, there is a large amount of administrative data available on them. Secondly, an analysis of the history of the governance of the *two* groups reveals more about the history and development of ethno-politics in Finland than an examination of only one group. A parallel analysis of the two reveals not only similarities cutting across the whole field of administration, but also suggests group-specific and sectoral differences.

In this article I focus on how these ethnic minorities were governed and why they were governed in the way they were. The research questions are: How did the rationalities and technologies<sup>2</sup> of governance concerning the Roma and the Sámi change, constituting an *event*,

after the mid-1800s? How did the 'ethos manuscripts'<sup>3</sup> of minority subjects, suggested in and by modes of governance, change? In the spirit of Foucauldian 'history of the present', I also discuss how these historical rationalities, interventions, and subjectifications have influenced later 20<sup>th</sup>-century practices of governances, with respect to minorities.

I begin the article by introducing Foucauldian genealogy as a method of systematic analysis of continuations and changes of rationalities, practices, technologies, discourses, and subjectifications of power. Then I focus in more detail on the event of the ethno-culturalization of governance in the mid-1800s, and the changes it encompassed in the governance of ethnic Finnish minorities. The final, and concluding part, describes the key findings and examines the effects this event had on the later understandings, and governance, of ethnic minorities in Finland.

### Genealogical method

Following Michel Foucault (1991b, 1977, p. 139–164) and several "Foucauldians" (e.g. Crowley 2009, Dean 1992, 1998, Kendall and Wickham 1999), genealogy entails an historical analytics of power. There are four interrelated premises in genealogical research: (i) things and phenomena do not have timeless essence – the genealogist does not search for the origins of things/phenomena; (ii) genealogy is a matter of writing 'effective historiography', which entails searching for continuities and discontinuities in ways of thinking, acting, and governing. This is premised upon a refusal to take any historical development for granted; (iii) the genealogical method includes the study of repression, dominance, and traces of counter-memory and counter-

practices, or resistance, in the development of modern institutions; (iv) genealogy is a history of the present as it aims at questioning the naturalness of some present societal phenomena, ways of doing or thinking, or practice of governance. The purpose is 'to open to scrutiny the phenomena of truth, value, and the power of life practices, relative to the conditions, and circumstances in which they are rooted...' (Helén 2005, p. 95; *transl. MP*).

The genealogist analyses the subject's relation to *truth* (the question of knowing/the knowable subject), *power* (the question of the active subject) and *ethics* (the question of the moral subject) (Foucault 1987: 3–6). In regard to these relations, genealogists ask questions, including: What knowledge formations influence the construction of subject(ivities)? In what power practices and relations is subjectivity constituted? How does the subject act morally toward herself? How does this behaviour manifest itself?

Genealogy is based on the use of analytical concepts, which direct the researcher's attention to issues related to power. The following concepts are used here:

*Event* means a juncture or break where new meanings emerge in a particular socio-historical context. The identification of events concerns the genealogist's ability to recognize these changes in time and space through a fastidious analysis of different kinds of data. This is the core of *eventalization* whereby these changes appear as a singularity. (Foucault 1991b.)

One of the main sub-concepts of the study of events is *descent*, which entails the exploration of continuums and breaks in historical processes, observation of transformations and substitutions between present and past discourses, practices, strategies, problematizations, and so forth. A closely related concept to descent is that of *emergence*. If the study of descent opens up the historical line and processes leading to an event, the study of emergence clarifies the actual context in which the event takes place. (Foucault 1977, p. 139–164.)

The concept of *practice* refers to a more or less established, general, and organized way of doing things and behaving. Therefore, practice is *a priori* understood as a program for behavior and action. In relation to practices, the genealogy focuses on *problematizations*. When studying problematizations the genealogist pays attention to challenging and disputing questions administrators, experts and religious leaders, for instance, pose concerning the existing forms of governance or subjectifications. These problematizations of ways of existence do not appear in a vacuum, but within a particular practice. Thus, the genealogist analyses the historical relations of practices and problematizations. In other words, what practices make particular problematizations possible and others impossible? Furthermore, how does a particular problematization affect the practices it is targeted at? (Dean 1998, p. 184–187; Helén 2005, p. 100–101.)

The genealogist is interested in how subjectification – or subjectivation<sup>4</sup> – takes place in relation to some moral rule(s). This is where the concept of *ethos* comes into play. The genealogist studies how a particular ethos constitutes a manual for eligible modes of existence, which means, in Foucauldian terms, an ‘art of living’ or the ‘cultivation of the self’. Ethos can be approached through the guidelines for (good) life, which gives meaning to the subject’s life and action. On an individual level, ethos is indelibly related to the analysis of the ethics and morals of the subject, which are the ways of action and thinking that the subject forms in relation to her/himself in order to improve her/his life. From the genealogical perspective, this is studied, first of all, in terms of ethical substance; including the external advice or guidance determining a particular part or feature of the individual as the prime material of moral conduct. Then the researcher pays attention to the mode of subjection, meaning the way in which the social subject establishes her relationship to the rules of conduct and recognizes herself as obliged to put them into practice. Thirdly, the researcher focuses on the modes of ethical work, i.e. the ways in which

the individual thinks and acts upon her/himself in order to control her/his own behaviour in accordance with a given rule. Fourthly, the researcher analyzes what the objective of this action is relative to both the external forces and the person her/himself. (Foucault 1987, p. 26–28.) In this article I pay attention to all these elements. However, as my data is not directed at the actual behavior and 'self-work' of subjects, I approach these elements on the level and in the mode that they appear in the governmental and administrative texts.

The 'ethno-cultural turn' of the mid-1800s

*Factors of descent:*

The 17<sup>th</sup>-, 18<sup>th</sup>- and early-19<sup>th</sup>-century governance of the Sámi and the Roma – and minorities in general – took place concerning religious, security-related, economic and social issues. The governance of the Sámi was usually considered relative to the efforts of ecclesiastical missionaries, taxation, the regulation of their trade and livelihood, with respect to nomadism. This meant that the rationalities of their governance were explicitly religious and economic. The technologies of governance employed by the secular powers towards the Sámi were almost exceptionally "distant" and non-corporeal: taxation, regulation of trade, livelihoods, settlements, land use, and border politics. The governing technologies of the church, however, were not distant. The clerical education given by priests and associated educators taught self-discipline concerning beliefs in a transcendent world and beings, as well as everyday patterns including moral abstention and purity (esp. sexuality), corporeal rhythms, control of gestures, positioning

of the body, and hygiene. This kind of ecclesiastic conduct was also an indirect way of secular governance, because, after the Reformation, the Crown was the ultimate authority for any orders, regulations, and guidance given by the Church, bishoprics/parishes and priests. (Enbuske 2008, Kähkönen 1982, Lehtola 2002a)

Between the 1600s and early 1800s the Roma were mainly governed with reference to their poverty and vagrancy. Royal or estate representatives' statements usually related to the economy of the state or communities, security of the nation, and public order. Whereas the religious conduct and regulation of the Sámi was justified with morality-related arguments, in the case of the Roma all kinds of governance were justified with them. The overall objectives of the Crown were: (i) to settle the Roma, (ii) to register them as stable inhabitants or, alternatively, drive them out of the Imperial territory, and (iii) make them adapt to the Christian faith and protestant work and everyday ethos. During the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century the governance of the Sámi and the Roma differed not only in their justifications, but technically too: the Sámi were governed through settlement policy and jurisdiction, including land-use contracts, court sessions, taxation and education. In contrast, the Roma were often governed through outright interventions in their spiritual and corporeal existence. This took place through deportations, labour camps, forced settlements, and army service. Later on prison sentences of adults and forced custody of children replaced some of the older techniques, especially deportation. (Pukero 2009, p. 67–71, Pulma 2006, p. 24–48; Pyykkönen 2009; Rekola 2012, p. 44, 50.)

The rationalities, technologies, teleology of governance and ways of signifying the minorities changed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This event corresponded to a new awareness of cultures and racial features of the minorities. While there was eagerness for ethnic naming and definition of the origins of both minorities already before this point (e.g. Ganander 1780, Schefferus 1673), the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was a time when governance and



administrative thirst for knowledge started to become systematically framed through the lens of an ethnic and cultural discourse.

Where did this change descend from, and in what kinds of political and societal conditions did it emerge? How did it re-problematize the older discourses and practices of minority governance, and what kind of ethos was now required from the minority subjects? Several factors of descent can be highlighted. One was the rise of the ethnological, folkloristic, and anthropological disciplines with their paradigm of cultural evolutionism, which resulted in the first empirical studies of the cultures and heritage of the Sámi and the Roma. Two studies stand out: Kristfrid Ganander's study on the Roma (1780) and Lars Levi Laestadius' study on Sámi mythology (1840–45). Both Laestadius' and Ganander's studies were crucial in the constitution of this event of ethno-culturalization. In both – but especially in Ganander's text – ethnic origin and features were intertwined with racial features; which was a pattern that became generalized, particularly by the early 1900s, among many scientists and administrators.

Ganander was a chaplain of a parish located in Ostrobothnia, Finland. His study on the Roma in Sweden and Finland was a response to a writing competition of Royal Science Academy of Sweden. The study received relatively great attention from administrators partly because of this competition. The study was not based on what social scientists today would consider the methods of empirical research. Rather, his observations were based upon personal experiences of interaction with a few Roma, coupled with openly pejorative ideas adopted from other contemporary European studies. Consequently, it contributed to the stigmatization of the Roma as a non-civilized, under class, degenerated group. Typical of this negative characterization is the following:

Our gypsies are easily distinguished from the rest of us: [...] Their lifestyle is based on vagabondism, lying, cheating, fortune-telling, stealing, and mugging. [...] Gypsies have little or no knowledge about the religious

issues. [...] They do not even know how to read. Only those of them who have significant dealings with priests remember how to say the Lord's Prayer. They never go to church. Therefore, it is no wonder that they do not have any moral or ethics at all, and they fall into rough extremities and vices. [...] Their godless lifestyle shows us how important it is to force these people to settle in one location, so that they could be evangelized into Christianity and educated in religious manners in the same way as the Lappish and other pagans. The result would be to turn them into useful workers, as docile and virtuous members of the society, instead of us having to tolerate them for their vice. (Ganander 1780, §13, §15, §17, §21, *transl. MP.*)

Laestadius was a Swedish Lutheran pastor of partly Sámi origin. His study "Fragments of Lappish Mythology" (1840–45) was a kind of update of Schefferus' *Lapponia* (1673) – which was the first broadly written description of Sámi ways of life and thinking. Laestadius concentrated on the belief systems and spiritual life of the Sámi. Like Ganander, one of his central objectives was to observe the pagan patterns of the Sámi for the purposes of converting them to the Christian ways.

The rise, expansion, and intensification Fennoman movement, which was a Finnish nationalist romantic movement, was strongly related to the academization of the discourses concerning ethnic minorities. The loudest exponents of this movement were part of the Finnish- and Swedish-speaking scientific and cultural elite of the time, who were active in the Parliament, municipal and regional administration, and educational institutions. The strengthening of the Fennoman movement in the mid-19th century resulted in a proliferation of discourse through books, newspapers, and journals, as well as in the Senate sessions and decisions, and administrative proceedings. Sakari Topelius' textbook for teachers and schools (*Maammekirja* The Book of Our Land, 1875), Elias Lönnrot's national epic *Kalevala* (1849), Johan Snellman's newspaper *Saima* and the newspaper *Suometar*, all emphasized the historicity and excellence of the Finnish national culture.

With regard to the 'culturalization' of the Sámi and Roma, the Fennomans' writings based their construction of the Finnish national culture on comparisons with other groups and their cultures. The rootedness and originality of certain "tribal" features to the Finnish nation was emphasized with reference to the Carelians, Häme tribe and Savolax people. This thinking portrayed the features of certain cultural groups as part of "normal" and "original" Finnishness and, consequently, placed other groups and their features – i.e. the Sámi and Roma – on the margins of the nation and its civilization.

The following poem by one of the authors of the Finnish Literature Society summarizes the minority attitudes of the Fennomans well:

The black kin of Gypsies,  
The lazy population, vagabond,  
With the obscure language,  
Unknown to all the Nations  
[...]  
In wonder I have been my whole life  
Very odd to my opinion,  
How long the Nation,  
And its powerful authors,  
Will tolerate that kin.  
(Korhonen 1848: 114–5, *transl. MP.*)

What made it possible to disseminate this new academic discourse of power, with its Hegelian ethno-cultural nationalistic discourse, was the expansion of printed books and newspapers brought about by the increase of literacy, thanks to the development of a mass educational system. The intertwining of nationalism and literary progress is witnessed in the wide appearance of literary tales, with descriptions of Finland that emphasize the particularity of its

people, history and traditions. Many were published directly by the Fennoman Finnish Literature Society, while others appeared in more general publications, including newspaper articles.

At this stage of the development of ethno-culturalizing discourse and related governing practices, the cultural (and later racial) recognition of minorities as cultural entities strengthened. This recognition meant differentiation from the *majority*, who constituted the *normal*. It also entailed that popular characterisations became explaining factors for individual and group behaviour. As nationalism valued ethno-cultural features and groups hierarchically, it reinforced the already negative images of minorities, and normalized them. On the level of administrative approaches, this was reflected in increasing demands for cultural assimilation of these minorities. In order for minorities to become full and equal citizens economically, socially, and politically, it was thought they should be normalized culturally.

The technologies used from the mid-1800s onwards inherited from the earlier practices, but, at the same time, they transformed into a softer and more holistic approach: (A) Prison sentences and other forms of enforcement or segregation decreased, although forced labour and child custodies remained relatively common technologies towards the Roma (Pukero 2009, p. 67–71; Pulma 2006, p. 74–97, Tervonen 2012, p. 87). (B) The civilizing role of education increased. This aimed at creating docile bodies and minds, which followed the same biopolitical ethos as with the rest of the population and, from the 1930s onwards, cultural assimilation of both groups became more overt (Lehtola 2012, Kähkönen 1982, 1988, Lassila 2001, Pulma 2006, p. 79, p. 93–99, Tervonen 2012, p. 90–93). With the Roma, this was seen to require coercive regulative technologies, such as forced custody of children (*ibid.*, p. 87, 118–9, 121–4). (C) Technologies of knowledge became increasingly important as studies, reports, statistics, and different ways of measurement started to play an active and influential role in governance (Thesleff 1897–98, Komiteamietintö [*Committee Report*] 1900:3, 1905:3, 1908:3).

The emergence of this event took place in the context of changes in political and administrative practices. In the organization of the Finnish estates at the parliamentary session of 1863 the position of the Roma emerged as key issues in relation to the general regulation of poverty and pauperism. The development and establishment of the committee system, as part of the new knowledge-based and more democratic administration of the state, influenced both the discourse concerning both groups. The Sámi were first dealt with in the committees concerning the development of Lapland and reindeer herding, plus other economically oriented committees. After the early 1920s the Sámi were discussed in terms of the ethno-cultural question as well. There was a strong relation between these governmental developments and their academization. Increasingly published studies and reports formed a truth-knowledge discourse that framed the presentation and decision-making at the parliamentary sessions. Furthermore, many of these academic experts were central forces in or behind the political parties.

Another aspect of governmental and administrative influence upon the emergence of the event was the development of a new municipal administration system in Finland, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>. C. This had a radical impact on the transformation of social services, as the municipalities slowly took over from the church and philanthropic associations. This affected the governance of the Roma by decreasing the administrative enthusiasm for separate forms of policy concerning the Roma. Gradually they became part of the general poverty policy once again. Typical in this regard was the abolition of the so-called Gypsy chapter from the vagrancy law in 1883. This gave rise to contradictory attitudes among municipal and state administrators; many – especially those from the clerical estate or municipalities with considerable Roma populations – still called for separate laws, chapters, and policy programs with regard to the Roma question during the last two decades of the 1800s (Tervonen 2012, p. 86–93). These ‘particularisms’ were, however, turned down by the Senate and most municipalities, in part due to the lack of public

resources, but more importantly because of unwillingness to countenance separate policies, which would be inconsistent with liberal-nationalistic trends of treating every citizen equally. With regard to the Sámi, the development of the municipal policy and service system had the same effect and, consequently, lessened the role of the Church as a central poor relief mechanism in Lapland (Komiteamietintö 1905:3). Another effect it had in the North was to destroy the self-governing village system of the Sámi for good (Lehtola 2002, p. 42).

### *The Roma – from social problem to ethno-cultural and social problem*

As discussed above, the Roma question was raised at the parliamentary session of 1863, especially in the initiatives of the clerical and peasant estates. Their aim was to correct the indecency of the Roma lifestyle, particularly their limited knowledge of Christian dogma, as well as their supposed laziness, non-married relationships, vagrancy, and violent behaviour. This was nothing new and reflected the guidelines suggested by Ganander in his study published almost a century earlier. The discussions of the Senate were significantly influenced by the fact that there was an increasing administrative tendency to no longer view unemployment as crime, and the old juridical laws were repealed by the *Imperial Decree on Handling Vagrancy of January 23, 1865* (KMAA 1). Instead, vagabondism was now judged in the legislation as associated with ill manners and aimlessness more emphatically than before. The will of the Senate representatives was that governors and police officers should take as strict an attitude towards the vagrant Roma as possible (ibid., §24). This coincided with the emphasis on rendering Christian education as effective as possible. The decree obliged priests to “use their best skills” to imbed Christian truths

in the minds of the Roma (ibid.). Even though the decree did not lead to as extensive and particular reform of the Roma, by the soul shepherds, as was hoped, it inspired missionary actions toward the settled Roma. The destinies of unsettled vagabonds were mainly left in the hands of municipal police authorities and, in many cases, this resulted in an increase in the number of arrests. When arrests were repeated, the hardening and extension of punishments, too. (Tervonen 2012, p. 87, Pukero 2012, p. 68, Pulma 2006, p. 75.)

What is crucial considering the focus of this article is that at the parliamentary session of 1863, and in the subsequent decrees, the Roma were explicitly considered a *coherent cultural group* for the first time in the history of state governance. The members of the estates – especially the clergy – leaned greatly on Ganander's old and thoroughly negative descriptions of the everyday characteristics of *the Roma way of life*. Despite the Roma being defined as a particular 'race', 'societal class', and 'group of people', many actions were justified with arguments demanding the civilizing of the Roma. Civilization was equated with the 'culture' that permeated official discourses of the time. In contrast, uncivilized groups were also cultural groups but on a lower level than "real cultures".

Although cultural characterizations were obviously made at the Senate debates, the Roma were still *generally* seen as a group characterized by their social features (vagabondism, poverty, and unemployment). Thus Roma issues were handled in the Economic Department of the Parliament. However, there was dissent in approach between and within the estates. The clergy approached the Roma mainly as a religious and decency problem; the peasants saw them as an economic and vagrant problem; while the burghers and the nobility considered them a policing problem. Despite these ambiguities, the Senate managed to include a separate "Gypsy section" (§24), in the amended vagrancy law of 1865, which was premised upon some of popular characterizations of the Roma, constructing them as essentially different from the other groups of

the Nation. (Senaatin talousosaston arkisto 1863, KD561/51; KMAA1; see also Pulma 2006, p. 48–78, Tervonen 2012, p. 85–87.)

As a result of the parliamentary session, the first ever White Paper concerning the Roma in Finland was produced and delivered to the Russian Tzar. It was not entirely hostile or even paternalist in its tone, in the manner the previous legislative acts, or Ganander's study, had almost without exceptions been, but included a new kind of 'understanding tone' in its claims that there was something wrong in the existing administrative and ecclesiastical practices toward the Roma. The cultural practices of the Roma were now also explained by their long-lasting persecution and poverty. This approach was influenced by the rise of liberal ideas and ideals – e.g. the rights and freedom of citizens – among administrators and Finnish senate representatives, as well as the wider context of a progressive wind that was blowing through the Russian administration at the time (Jussila & Nevakivi 1999, see also Pulma 2006, p. 75). However, these liberal ideas did not become hegemonic in parliamentary debates or among administrators, but were mixed with the Fennoman Hegelian ideas concerning the desirability of a monocultural nation (Lahtinen 2006, p. 61, 73–78). This "mix" was mirrored in the decrees of the time, which emphasized, on the one hand, the self-responsibility of the Roma, and other vagabonds, for their own maintenance and, on the other, there were strict state regulations against those who could not provide sufficient income for themselves. The latter, administrative interventions (which included special wardens for the management, including forced labour, of vagabonds and those without travel permits) were framed with reference to the concept of the citizens' responsibility to the national community. (KMAA1, § 24, KMAA2.)

The White Paper, which was mainly prepared on the basis of municipality-specific lists of Roma provided by priests, surmised that the Roma were a group with a vulgar way of life. The paper claimed that the education of the Roma is a long and hard process, but "it has to be done



for their own sake”, so that they could adapt to the civilized culture of the Finns; thus abandon their group-typical patterns of behaviour. The paper emphasized that this should not be done in the coercive ways tried in the 17th and 18th centuries or in many other European countries. Special emphasis was – again – put on the education of Roma children and philanthropic organizations’ cooperation with the social care of Roma adults. The report’s conceptualization of the Roma as members of Finnish society was path-breaking, because it meant that the administration had legal responsibility over them when tackling their socioeconomic deprivation. What is especially important from the perspective of governmentality is that the paper clearly problematized existing administrative structures and practices of minority policy, and it made way for a new way of thinking whereby administration should improve policy actions toward minorities. (Senaatin talousosasto 1863, KD 561/51; see also Pulma 2006, 48–78.)

The parliamentary session of 1863, the above-mentioned report, and the *Imperial Decree on Handling Vagrancy* in 1865, formed a basis for subsequent policy debates at parliamentary sessions, between 1872–1897. They also crucially influenced the Imperial Decrees regulating the lives and treatment of the Roma, often in mutually ambiguous ways. For instance, the Imperial Decree of 1883 withdrew the special treatment of the Roma within the law, placing them in an equal position with other unemployed persons, vagabonds, and those practicing an “indecent and immoral lifestyle”. The Imperial Decree of 1888, on passports, separated the treatment of foreign Romas from “citizen Romas”, forcing non-citizens to leave the country and preventing new foreigners from entering the territory of the Grand Duchy. (Komiteamietintö 1900:3, Landtagen 1888; see also Pulma 2006, p. 78–87, Tervonen 2012, p. 87, 123.)

The impact of the “spirit of 1863–5” was visible in the Senate sessions of 1894 and 1897 and the goals of a statistical report issued by the Senate in 1895. Politicians and secular and

clerical administrators tried to approach the “Roma problem” by collecting and producing as comprehensive knowledge on them and their conditions as possible. The tone in governance following this study and, for instance, at the Parliamentary session of 1897, was not so punitive or coercive as it was up to the Senate session of 1863. Rather, the dominant discourse was more ethno-paternalistic; the objective clearly was to save the Roma from their ‘ethnic selves’ by civilizing them more or less gently. (Senaatin Talouskomitea 1900, KD 10/375, Landtagen 1894 & 1897; see also Pulma 2006: 78–87.)

It is desirable that the gap between the Roma and other inhabitants still be decreased as much as possible by educating the Gypsies to the level of citizens and diminishing the special features typical for them until there is no separate Gypsy question to speak of. (Senaatin Talouskomitea 1900, KD 10/375, 16, *transl. MP.*)

A significant event in knowledge production was the emergence of a piece of research that included actual interviews with Roma informants on their means of livelihood and living conditions, which was done by natural scientist, linguist, ethnologist, and adventurer, Arthur Thesleff, published in 1897 - 1898. This study characterized group-specific ethno-cultural features as central to the problematics around the Roma question. The ethno-cultural heritage of the Roma was now seen as the principle cause for their misery and weak social position. According to this view, the laziness and deviousness of the Roma had become part of their bloodline and ethnic character. Their lack of “book knowledge”, illiteracy, and work-despising lifestyle were understood as indicators of their weak ethno-racial nature; rather than as symptomatic of their lack of Christian faith. (Thesleff 1897–1898.)

Thesleff’s study, and the statistical report of 1895, played a crucial role in the new administrative practices directed at the Roma, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the main acts was the so-called “Walle’s Committee” or “Gypsy Committee”, which was the first governmental body specifically dedicated to conduct a comprehensive study on the “Gypsy question”, instituted

by the Senate in 1900. Its explicit aim was the civilization of the Roma using forced education, philanthropy<sup>5</sup>, and, increasingly, the Roma's own "voluntary" actions toward themselves.

The variety of experts reporting for the Committee indicate that the "Gypsy question" was now not only recognized as comprehensive in volume but also as belonging to more sectors than the religious, social and health sectors. Now the experts came from sectors dealing with education, discipline, and control, such as the Board of Education and local police chiefs. The Roma question was seen as multidimensional, requiring comprehensive and long-lasting conduct.

The lust of thieving is inborn, which exists already in the Gypsy child as a disposition. One can hardly say that Gypsies have become thieves through the force of conditions, temptations, or examples. This characteristic is very much deeper in them; it has run in them from generation to generation and developed further. This lust can be controlled and removed by strict education, but it can be hardly ever exterminated completely. In all those European countries where Gypsies live, they have been objects of governmental procedures during long periods of time. However, experience has shown that it has been almost impossible to make Gypsies adapt to true Christianity or civilization. (Senaatin Talouskomitea 1900, KD 10/375: 5-6, *transl. MP.*)

In some respects, the "Gypsy Committee's" style and suggested technologies represented a turn away from the contemporary recognition of difficult social conditions to the older essentialisms concerning how the group-typical characteristics of the Roma had the potential to corrupt the behaviour of other individuals, especially the poor. Thus they were perceived to threaten the decency of the whole of society. This way of thinking, combined with the perceived hopelessness and failure of the moral conduct of the vagrant Roma, drove the Committee to suggest technologies of continuous and endless education, control, and discipline, which it was hoped would result in total assimilation. The Committee noted that this path was long and needed to be secured by the state.

Once again, Roma children proved to be the main target group for the desired breakthrough of this biopolitical educational rationality. The Committee planned the establishment of four boarding schools with the help of which the children could be separated from their parents and would receive decent religious, moral, civilizing, and vocational education. The Committee also set the scene for the establishment of philanthropic associations in cities inhabited by a large number of Roma. The first and a significant part of the Committee report was based on Thesleff's study on the *cultural* habits of the Finnish Roma. Consequently, it directed the administrators' attention to the Romani language, which was considered an obstacle for favorable assimilation and submission to the norms of Finnish society. In other words, the research played a significant role in creating the event of 'ethno-cultural turn'. (Landtagen 1897, Senaatin Talouskomitea 1900, KD 10/375.)

### *The Sámi – 'the weaker half-brothers' of the nation*

For the Sámi the event in 19<sup>th</sup>-century governance transition was more a process than a particular momentary occasion, too. The rise of the Fennomans movement, with their nationalist and romanticist ideas and, later on, their engagement in eugenics, influenced the discourses of governance of the Sámi more than those concerning the Roma. As witnessed in Topelius' *Maammekirja* (p. 149) and his lectures at the University of Helsinki in 1871, or in Matias Aleksanteri Castrén's (1953, p. 39–44) and Elias Lönnrot's (1902, p. 350–81) accounts of their travels in Finland, in mid-1800s texts the Sámi were usually considered part of Finland geographically but not culturally. They were considered part of the close kindred nations living

in the northernmost part of Finland. While usually considered partly racially mixed with the Finns and Swedish-speakers, they were commonly conceptualized as different in their cultural, social, historical and political character (see also Isaksson 2001, p. 180).

The Fennoman movement's premise concerning the development of ethnic group's cultures was that these cultures presupposed a civilizing process. In this respect, the state of a culture was measured relative to historical and present ways of life, literature, art, religion, and especially the level of written language (Lönnrot 1847). The civilization process was something that every nation had to go through before it can become a national culture. According to the movement, at the end of the 1800s the Finns were only a few steps away from this stage. The leading Fennomans favored Hegelian ideas of nation, culture, and governance; to be a strong nation state Finnish society had to become culturally and linguistically homogeneous. Other cultures inhabiting the same territory or belonging to the same "tree of cultures and languages" were evaluated, judged, and differentiated from the Finns by their cultural features that revealed their stage of civilization. Especially those kindred populations who lived mainly from nature-based economies were seen to be on a lower level in the cultural evolution process. In these terms, the Sámi were the most obvious object of intervention for Finnish nationalism. (Isaksson 2001, p. 195–206, Lehtola, 1999, p. 18.)

However, among politicians, thinkers, and writers there was not consensus in understanding of the relations between the Sámi and the Finns. Some Fennoman writers and thinkers of the mid- and late 1800s denied the linguistic, territorial, and cultural kinship between the Sámi and the Finns (Arwidsson 1832; see also Topelius' late works, e.g. Topelius et al. 1898, p. 57). Sometimes representations of the Sámi were hostile. They were seen as people who stole parts of their culture from, imitating, the Finnish. Yet, they could not do or be the same as "us" – at least not without giving up their traditional cultural patterns (Castrén 1953, p. 39, 49-50, 82-

88, Koskinen 1869–73). This kind of understanding was, however, not uncontested and gradually disappeared at the beginning of the 1900s. In a report of the *Lapland Committee* (which contained participants and experts influenced by the Fennoman tradition) of 1935-38, the Sámi speaking population was already considered 'a valuable addition to the common cultural capital of the Finnish nation' (Lapin komitea 1937, *transl. MP*).

Ethnological and linguistic studies and popular travel depictions gained more and more foothold among the reading audience as the level of literacy rose and the dissemination of publications improved in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Through dozens of renowned publications, the most eminent publishers of Lappology – a research, pastoral, and travel literature paradigm concerning Lapland and its peoples – constituted a truth-discourse (or -discourses) on Lapland and its inhabitants, which, on the one hand, strengthened the old myths of wild, poor, archaic, and virginal Sámi people waiting to be conquered and civilized by the South/West, but, on the other hand, also created new and often contradictory identifications. Some Lappologists, following Porthan's late-1700s example, concentrated on emphasizing the backwardness of all the Sámi and their all-encompassing and eternal hierarchical difference in relation to the Finns. A second cluster of publications included examples of how 'surprisingly civilized' some Sámi individuals were, which they attributed to the long-standing saving civilization work carried out by the Church and secular administration. A third group, which gained prominence especially in the 1920s and 1930s, understood the Sámi as part of the Finnish nation and emphasized the necessity of their preservation. Although, often in a spirit of patronizing cultural pluralism. This group of ethnologically oriented researchers, intellectuals, priests, travellers, and cultural activists, who focused on the uniqueness of the Sámi, also perceived cultural differences between, so called, the Sámi "tribes" (Lehtola 1997, p. 47–60, 1999.)

This group of Lapland enthusiasts included those who also established Lapin sivistysseura (*the Society for the Promotion of Sámi Culture*). This society viewed most elements of the Sámi cultures as valuable and made it an important objective to save the Sámi people, culture, and language from the destructive features of Finnish culture and modernity. This society had a crucial role in carrying out a unique project of reservation of the Skolt Sámi people of the Suonikylä village (Lehtola 2000). Researchers, administrators, and Suonikylä Skolts themselves started this project in the Petsamo (1920-1944, Pechenga 1944-) municipality –in which Suonikylä located – in the early 1930s. Its primary purpose was to preserve the Skolts' way of life by preserving the hunting, fishing, and reindeer herding areas of Suonikylä for the use of the Skolts only. Thus preventing Finnish settlers from building homes there. The Ministry of the Interior set up a project to clarify the situation and possibilities for establishing such a reservation in 1933. The project was carried out by the Lapin komitea (*Lapland Committee*) working under the Ministry of Agriculture.

After a quite thorough collection of information and clarification of stakeholders' opinions in 1938, the Committee prepared a consensus-driven proposal: the reservation would not be necessary if the Skolts' three main livelihoods – reindeer herding, hunting, and fishing – could be guaranteed otherwise. However, the ownership of the mineral and forest resources was reserved for the state, as required by the forestry administration, and farming was seen as a necessary new livelihood for the Skolts, as required by representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Committee and Lapin sivistysseura both emphasized the need for school education in the Skolt Sámi language, but at the same time many members of the Committee considered education in Finnish important. The latter ambivalence was justified by reference to the Skolts' own wishes: 'The heads of the families wanted Finnish to be the teaching language of the Suonikylä school, because this way their children would have better possibilities of survival in

the everyday life of Finnish society than they had themselves' (Lapin komitea 1937, *transl. MP*). Hence the purpose of the project was, on the one hand, to preserve the Skolt culture and language but, on the other hand, also to assimilate them for the sake of their own wellbeing – especially that of the children (cf. the similar intention in the Roma governance).

In short, the final version of the Committee report was a compromise between adapting the Skolts to modernity through home settlement, learning the majority language and modes of livelihood (farming), while simultaneously attempting to preserve aspects of their traditional livelihoods and of their culture. This entailed a tense tension between segregating museumization and assimilative transformation, which required the group's separation into a reservation to a limited extent (Lapin komitea 1937). This reservation nearly went ahead as the Committee's proposal was supported almost throughout the state governance. However, the Winter War started in 1939, which prevented the realization of this project.

Lappology strengthened, extended and differentiated by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some Lappologists started to evolve new, more negatively oriented tones as a consequence of racializing ideas on cultures and languages. When the Sámi and Finnish languages were scientifically proved to be closely related, racial differences started to play an important role in descriptions, which tried to prove that the Sámi were the "racially weaker brothers" of the Finns. This discursive change towards racialized, eugenic significations happened in the wake of the growth of cultural-ecological and racial anthropology. Eugenic ideas were not adopted by these disciplines directly after Sir Francis Galton's (1869) famous book on the racial inheritance of intelligence and civilization but a couple of decades later, "ennobled" and mixed with cultural-nationalist ideas, mainly from the Fennomans movement and its followers. In the case of the Sámi, one important element in the entrenchment of these ideas was that already early "ethnological" studies had explained Sámi behaviour with reference to population



characteristics, which included descriptions of their physical features. The researchers responsible for the first big racial anthropological and nationalistic research project in the mid-1920s adapted the aims of their studies to Fellman's, Porthan's and Topelius' earlier reports and travel descriptions. By using craniometry and phrenology some of them claimed that the Sámi clearly belonged to the so-called Mongol races, while the Finns and Estonians – representatives of the "cultural races" – were part of the Germanic races. Whereas many did not explicitly point to a racial or cultural hierarchy between the Sámi and the Finns, they nevertheless categorized the Sámi into the lower levels of the race classifications of that time. By doing so, they strengthened the popular views of the Sámi as relics within the modernization process. (Haartman 1847, Hällsten 1882, Kajava 1927, Lassila 1923, Westerlund 1900, p. 15, 1901, p. 74, 1912, p. 4–5, 19–20; see also Isaksson 2001, p. 180–206.)

Finland constituted a favorable ground for the spread of eugenic ideas, as there was a strong nationalist moral emphasis embedded within the developing educational and health care sectors (Mattila 1999). In health care educational discourse, some of the core rationalities concerned the wellness, strength, and vitality of an ethnically homogeneous population. The expansion of eugenics was helped by the problem of widely spread diseases, especially those easy to catch from one person to another, such as tuberculosis and syphilis. These were common causes of death among the Inari Sámi people in the 1700s and 1800s (IIS:1). People without permanent residence and a vagrant way of living – mainly the Roma but some of the reindeer herding or hunting Sámi as well – were seen as dangerous relative to the spread of such diseases; and Eugenics offered justifications for their racial stigmatization and control.

Schools were convenient places for prevention and control of these diseases, which endangered the health of the rising nation. In them soft technological realizations were found for the eugenic ideals. Schools pupils, and sometimes their parents, were medically examined on a

regular basis. Ideas of spiritual morality, physical purity, and punctuality were taught to children in religious education, reading, games, nursery rhymes, and songs. This pedagogic education, together with geographic lessons, gave Sámi children an understanding of the new nation in which they lived. The measuring methods, derived from racial studies, made it possible to manage the conduct of a Sámi child, in a very particular, personal, and detailed way in schools. This discourse offered the authorities knowledge about how much one should eat, what kind of physical exercise one should practice, and which kinds of bodily positions one should practice. Their purpose was more or less to turn the racial development of the Sámi in the direction considered favorable according to the Finnish health care and racial anthropological knowledge, which entailed a docile and industrious body and mind. (IIMI:2, IIMI:3, Hämeenaho 1886; see also Kähkönen 1982, p. 311–320.)

The educational system was the most significant apparatus of the process of culturalization of the Sámi. The school system had its origins in the catechist schools organized by the Lutheran Church, of its Utsjoki and Enontekiö parishes, in 1751. Eventually those efforts led to the foundation of the first permanent public school in Utsjoki in 1878.<sup>6</sup> The catechists traveled from village, teaching for several days in one place. They worked under the authority of chapters of the Lutheran Church, but their salary came from the state. Their key task was to teach reading and writing in Finnish/Swedish (which were the official languages in the Grand Duchy of Finland since the Language Act of 1863) and to teach Lutheran religion (catechism), biblical history, singing and mathematics to children aged between 7 and 20. The purpose of the catechist education was to support and complement the moral and civilizing education given in homes (Publique Handlingar I 1742, p. 391–393, Kuopion tuomiokapitulin kiertokirje 339 / 28.1.1892). From the point of view of economy and religion, the tendency for the assimilation of the Sámi existed in the catechist schools from the very beginning. The question of the cultural adaptation

of Sámi children, however, became explicitly central in the last decades of the 1800s. By then the catechist schools started explicitly to carry out the culturalizing mission of the nation state. Officially this was expressed as an “attempt to prepare children for the primary school” (ibid.). After the 1892 Kuopio Chapter’s code of conduct for catechists (ibid.), this took place through the personal activeness of teachers. Later, after 1921, the law on compulsory education came into effect, whereby education was transferred from the parishes and catechists to municipal schools, and the first official public curriculum created. This law affected how the Sámi languages were approached in schools: The catechists and the Lutheran Church had emphasized the importance of education in Sámi languages because it was in line with the message of the Reformation, but the public schools and their teachers preferred teaching in Finnish, which became the single teaching language after 1945. (Kähkönen 1988, p. 262–304, Kähkönen 1982, p. 309–331, Lehtola 2012, p. 288–297.)

#### Conclusions: The Governance and Its Ethnic Subject at the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

In administration and parliament, the Roma were clearly a greater concern than the Sámi at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was mainly due to the Roma’s poverty and vagabondism. Their problematic position screamed for a sustainable solution and aroused moral panic among politicians and administrators. For the rulers, the Roma appeared as a group of people that adhered to their traditional patterns and values and refused to submit to assimilation (Senaatin Talouskomitea 1900, KD 10/375). These threats raised wide and deep concerns and required direct interventions in the lives of Roma, by both secular and divine authorities. The rationality of

the dominant discourse was to assimilate the Roma, which meant to make them give up their traditions and language. However, the suggested means to reach this policy outcome varied between authorities. In sum, it might be said that in the case of the Roma the *event of ethno-culturalization* meant a shift from segregation in the name of their antisocial behaviour, or immoral character, towards ethnic-inspired segregation. This was no longer directly corporeal and coercive but psycho-cultural: controlling the ethno-cultural mentalities and patterns of individuals through assimilative practices and technologies.

In contrast, the Sámi had already been assimilated religiously, and to some extent in terms of language and livelihoods. Furthermore, their culture was not regarded as such a problem, because it was seen as archaic. Thus, bound to disappear sooner or later in response to the inevitable process of modernization and civilization (Lehtola 1999, p. 20–21). Since the mid-1800s, the most important goal for the governance was to make them abandon all their traditional patterns for the sake of their own wellbeing. The developing school system was the technology used to enhance the necessary skills of farming, Finnish written language, daily routines and regularities of the modern world. Overall, culturally coaching Sámi children into the ideas and patterns of national monoculturalism. However, national cultural orientation led some educators, priests and administrators to value the Sámi as a group who manifest the past life forms of the Finnish nation. Their relic-like cultural features were seen as part of the national cultural heritage and hence worth “museumizing” (Fellman 1907, p. 371–372, *Komiteamietintö* 1905:3).

When the understanding of these groups as cultural phenomena spread, education replaced more directly disciplinary ways of governing. This is especially the case of the Roma, who had faced the governmental techniques of deportation and forced labor. However, this did not mean the “end of governance”; if anything, the “ethno-cultural turn” created a basis for a

systematic governance of ethnic minorities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Up to the 1960s, the Sámi and the Roma were targets of systematic cultural assimilation, which aimed at generating an ethos of “being culturally like the Finns” among them. The objective was no longer to separate the minorities from the majority – although this tendency was momentarily very visible because of eugenic discourses – but to make them adapt to the ethno-cultural mainstream through educating the children and undermining the adults’ public cultural expressions. The event was special for both the studied groups because, when they became fairly accepted as part of the Finnish nation administratively, the primary biopolitical focus changed from the welfare and security of the Finnish population as a whole, to how big a risk individuals belonging to these minorities posed to themselves. They had to be governed and conducted also for their own best interests. This required ethical practices, par excellence, which entailed a cultural shift of subjectivation. In order to survive in the modern world, they had to conduct themselves like being ‘modern Finnish individuals’.

What changed remarkably during the observed time span was the understanding of the characteristics of the conduct of subjects and the telos of her/his self-subjectification, meaning the person’s ethical work upon her/himself. It seems that first there were two broad governmental discourses concerning the eligible subjective ethos of the Roma and the Sámi, which emerged already in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries: the discourses of *homo religiosus* and *homo economicus*. After the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century these discourses were complemented by another formation of administrative knowledge on the subjectivity of minorities: *homo culturalis*. This involved first of all the administrative recognition of the Sámi and the Roma as ethnic and cultural groups, and, secondly, the point of departure that governance of minorities should primarily concentrate on their cultures and cultural features, including their racial characteristics. Since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the objective of the external conduct of the self-

conduct of people belonging to minorities has more or less been to make them ethnically ethnic, whether this has meant forced assimilation into the ethno-cultural majority or recognition of their own ethnic representations, interests, and identities.

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<sup>1</sup> The Sámi and the Roma are considered 'traditional ethnic minorities' in minority political discourses. 'Traditional' refers to a minority that has inhabited the areas of Finland already before the independence and managed to keep its culture alive despite of assimilation attempts (Daher et al. 2012). In the light of present archaeological and linguistic knowledge, the first dwellers came to the areas of the present Sámi homeland from the east and south-east over 10,000 years ago. Genetic research has shown that they were the ancestors of the Sámi. However, their language was most probably not a Fenno-Ugric language, variations of which the ancestors of both the Finns and the Sámi have spoken since approximately 4,000–3,000 years ago. The first administrative sources about the Sámi in the Swedish administration are from 1328, when their rights to the northern fishing and hunting lands were guaranteed by the Chancellor of Justice Knut Jonsson (Enbuske 2008, p. 156). The Sámi also have an official legal status of an indigenous minority and their rights to their own culture are mentioned in the Constitution of Finland. The size of the Sámi population is 9,000 people in Finland today. Less than 50% of the Sámi live in their traditional Sámi homeland, which is constituted by the three northernmost municipalities of Finland and the northernmost part of the Sodankylä municipality. Most Sámi live in towns and cities in northern and southern parts of Finland, such as Helsinki (over 1,000 Sámi) and Rovaniemi (over 600). There are three different Sámi languages in Finland: (i) Northern Sámi with some 2,200 speakers, (ii) Skolt Sámi and (iii) Inari Sámi both with 400 speakers. The constitution also explicitly the Roma people and their rights to their own culture. Today, the Roma population numbers about 10,000. Although almost all the Roma understand the Romani language, only the elder population use it in their everyday communication. The exact number of speakers is not known, but the estimations vary between 2,500 and 5,000 people. The first literary sources of the Roma in the present territory of Finland are from the year 1559, when the Duke of Finland sent a commandment to the bailiff of the Åland islands (an archipelago between Finland and Sweden) with a strict command to end their "illegal trade" (Pulma 2006, p. 32).

<sup>2</sup> In Foucauldian analysis, 'rationality' or 'political rationality' or 'governmental rationality' means a leading idea of government, a historically constructed wide-spread discourse that government/governance is based on. Usual such rationalities in Foucauldian studies are political economy, liberalism, welfare of the population, and security of the nation, for instance. 'Technology' or 'technique' refers to the practical implementations of rationalities, i.e. the means that are used in governance to gain certain ends in line with a certain rationality or rationalities. (Dean 1999, p. 38–43, Rose 1999, p. 52).

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<sup>3</sup> By 'ethos manuscripts' I mean relatively established ideal definitions of subjectivities and their ethos provided for certain group of people in practices and discourses of governance or government.

<sup>4</sup> 'Subjectification' refers to the government of others and 'subjectivation' the government of one's self (Hamann 2009, p. 38).

<sup>5</sup> Discussed philanthropic technologies were Christian missionary work, childcare, foster homes, and labor institutions. One of the most visible reactions to the suggestions of the Committee report was the foundation of an association called *Mustalaislähetys* (Gypsy Mission, GM) in 1905. GM was the first civic organization fully devoted to the assimilation and conversion of the Roma. GM was founded by actives from the Lutheran Church and revivalist movements, but there were also active Roma people involved in it from the very beginning.

<sup>6</sup> Actually the first permanent schools were founded in the Sámi lands of Finland already in 1743 in Utsjoki. However, due to the lack of pupils and resources this school functioned only until 1752. It was established as one of four boarding schools in Lapland financed by the Crown and organized by the Church, which taught a small number of the most "developed students" of the Sámi villages located close to the schools. The purpose of the schools was that the children would first learn reading, religion, mathematics, natural sciences, and moral education there for two years. Then these students would go back to their home villages and spread their knowledge there by teaching other children. The best students were nominated as catechists and hired by the Church to organize ambulatory teaching in remote Sámi villages where children did not speak Swedish or Finnish but only their native language. (Lassila 2011, p. 103).

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