# 'BROAD AND NARROW' INSTEAD OF 'BROAD VS. NARROW': A CONCILIATORY RECONSIDERATION OF THE HUMAN SECURITY DEBATE

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# ABSTRACT

Human Security (HS) is a critical security theory that places the individual at the center of the security discourse and takes a holistic approach to the constitution of threats. It is motivated by both moral concerns and the conviction that the emancipation of individuals is a fundamental condition for sustainable global peace. Doubts about the HS real-world utility, based on the concept's incompatibility with the state-centric system and its complex framework, have resulted in the 'broad vs. narrow' debate within the HS school. Some HS proponents argue that if the original HS agenda is narrowed down it will gain analytical rigor and policy salience. Others, rejecting to compromise the concept's critical character and emancipatory potential, insist on keeping the broad HS agenda. This MA thesis offers a conciliatory perspective on the 'broad vs. narrow' debate within the HS school. On the one hand, it emphasizes the necessity of upholding the principles of the broad HS conception and explains why compromising the HS original approach is unacceptable. On the other hand, it acknowledges the importance of exploring narrow HS conceptions in order to make use of HS strategies and alleviate the suffering of victims of insecurity even today, at a time when the world's most powerful leaders are unwilling to embrace the entire HS theory as the leading approach to global security. The application of narrow HS versions does not obstruct the future quest for a more comprehensive inclusion of HS into global politics.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*„Not only do empirical studies cast light on the extension of concepts, but conceptual innovation can go far towards opening empirical reality to the eyes of the observer. The dialectic of 'human security' should be no less alluring: The meaning of the concept is not exhausted through its application. Rather, it is shaped by the evolving perspectives forced upon anyone confronted with the wide-ranging forms of security and insecurity."[1]*

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Human Security (HS) is an international security theory that experienced international proliferation after the Cold War and that seeks to comprehensively address today's security problems. HS can be described as a response to critical intellectual reflections on international politics and, particularly, on how to enhance global security and for what purpose. The HS approach is reflective of significant developments in the international system, such as the relocation of violent conflicts from the inter- to the intra-state level, the proliferation of human rights norms, and the growing sensitivity of states to the feedback and critique of the international community, including both other states and the civil society. The fact that most violent conflicts today happen not between states but inside a state renders the traditional realist approach to international security outdated[2] and strongly sustains the call for a focus on humans instead of on states in the international security discourse. The international proliferation of the assertion that states are obliged to protect their citizens as well as the increasing influence of the international civil society in the global arena[3] further support the argument that human beings rather than states should be the primary security referents in global politics. While sovereignty is still one of the fundamental principles in today's international system, the acceptance of a collective intervention when states are unable or unwilling to protect their citizens has

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[1] Burgess, J. Peter, and Taylor Owen. "Editor's Note." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 345.

[2] Mack, Andrew. "A Signifier of Shared Values." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 366.

[3] Thomas, Nicholas, and William T. Tow. "The Utility of Human Security: Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention." *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 2 (2002): 183; Liu, Zhijun. "Contention on the Value of Human Security." *International Review* 44 (2006): 85.

significantly proliferated. Furthermore, many argue that additional factors such as social, political, and economic ones must be considered in the process of updating the security discourse to appropriately address existing and emerging issues.[4] HS considers all these factors and is, therefore, a promising security paradigm for the world's future.

In order to fully appreciate the fundamental purposes and goals of HS, it is helpful to understand the theoretical foundations of HS. Critical Security Studies (CSS), as formulated by the Welsh School, is a body of critical knowledge dealing with the pursuance of security in the international system. Its primary concerns are security, community, and emancipation. The Welsh School approach to thinking about security is based on the more general critical theory tradition of the Frankfurt School, the fundamental goal of which is the emancipation of the human society at large from regressive (and, thus, oppressive) structures and processes that inhibit people from freely exploring the potential meanings of being human.[5] Pursuing this ideal, the Frankfurt School is interested in *immanent critique* – the observation of social and political phenomena in search of latent potentials for a benign social and political change. Although multi-faceted, due to the consideration of the immense amount of social and political phenomena, immanent critique is fundamentally based on the exposure of flaws and limited utility of positivist approaches to the study of human society and the description of all knowledge as a social process produced by people, always motivated by the pursuit of a purpose.[6]

Thriving on these fundaments, CSS interrogates the traditional conceptualization of security derived from "a combination of Anglo-American, statist, militarized, masculinized, top-

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[4] Hoogensen, Gunhild, and Svein Vigeland Rottem. "Gender Identity and the Subject of Security." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 2 (2004): 169.
[5] Booth, Ken. *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*: 263 Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2005
[6] Booth 2005: 260-269.

down, methodologically positivist, and philosophically realist thinking."[7] It challenges the realist approach to security in world politics by calling for a rethinking of security from the bottom up and a focus on individuals and communities and their emancipation from insecurity in the study and pursuance of security.[8] Thus, CSS conceives of security in a more comprehensive manner than the realist approach. Furthermore, CSS undertakes to observe the "prevailing structures, processes, ideologies and orthodoxies" from a critical distance while maintaining the awareness that "all conceptualizations of security derive from a particular political/theoretical position."[9] CSS seeks to offer a deeper understanding of social and political phenomena in relation to international security and, that way, to empower the human society to "overcome structural and contingent human wrongs."[10]

The individual and her community are the primary objects of focus in CSS. In an ever changing social world shaped by the interaction of different existing and emerging actors, the individual is the only transhistorical and permanent fixture. Consequently, the security discourse should focus on ensuring the safety and well-being of the individual. However, if the fundamental purpose is the security of the individual, the community that she is part of must be also secured; humans exist collectively and are only truly safe if their surroundings are safe. An individual is a member of various communities, differing in shape and size. The largest community, which all humans are part of, is humanity. Consequently, in order to secure the smaller social units the vital part of all of which is the individual, the ultimate community to be secured is the universal human society.[11] By placing such importance on humanity at large and, thus, on each of its individual members, CSS lays the foundations for a 'reinvention of human society.' This 'reinvention' of the

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[7] Booth 2005: 13.
[8] Booth 2005: 13.
[9] Booth 2005: 16.
[10] Booth 2005: 16.
[11] Booth 2005: 263/64.

universal human value, in return, clearly stresses that true security means the provision of safety for all the constituent parts of the human society, the smaller communities and the individual.

Ken Booth's 1991 text[12] is a fundamental contribution to CSS, because, there, Booth crystallizes the CSS stands on what the fundamental purpose of the security discourse should be. He bases his security conception on the call to grant all people the liberty "to do what they would freely choose to do." Security is defined as a process and entails "reducing the threats that impose life-determining conditions of insecurity on individuals and groups [and] opening up space in which people can feel safe."[13] Causes of insecurity in people's lives, such as "war and the threat of war… poverty, poor education, [and] political oppression"[14] represent concrete threats to the well-being of individuals and limit them from living up to the full human potential. The ultimate goal of the security discourse should be to empower individuals and groups to rid themselves from such life-determining constraints. Booth's approach clearly puts security in a close relationship with emancipation. In fact, for him, true security depends on emancipation: "[s]ecurity and emancipation are two sides of the same coin. Emancipation…produces true security. Emancipation, theoretically, is security."[15]

Emphasizing emancipation and, thus, raising the concerns of the majority of humanity on the political and academic agendas is not only normatively valuable but also remarkably pragmatic. The call for 'freedom from fear and want' for the people (i.e., their emancipation 'to do what they would freely choose to do') is highly relevant for the achievement and preservation of international stability. In fact, CSS perceives emancipation as the fundamental condition for achieving sustainable security within the international order. A situation characterized by life-

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[12] Booth, Ken. "Security and Emancipation." *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 4 (1991): 313-26.
[13] Booth 2005: 183.
[14] Booth 1991: 319.
[15] Booth 1991: 319.

determining constraints for people, on the other hand, is detrimental for the stability of the world order. Any order that is built at the expense of humans living under it is unstable and will ultimately collapse.[16] Clearly, CSS scholars do not argue in favor of sacrificing international order for the sake of emancipation. Instead, they argue that the means by which order is established are as important as the order itself, if not more important when sustainability is the goal: only an order in which people are free from threats that constrain their human development is stable in the long-term.

The observation that international stability ultimately depends on the security of individuals carries important implications for contemporary IR (in theory and practice) in the face of the current international climate characterized by globalization. Through the steadily increasing interdependence between individual social units, a growing number of humans are becoming vulnerable to existing and future threats. The level of vulnerability to numerous kinds of threats might be much greater in some parts of the world than in others. Today, however, more than ever in history, human communities across the world are increasingly depending on and influencing each other. With the undeniable multi-level progress of globalization, one can logically expect that in the future, the threats to the welfare of one group will create direct vulnerabilities for the members of another group, even despite rare direct contact between the concerned groups and across vast geographical space.[17] In other words, a serious threat to one human community will, in the long-term, potentially menace other groups, even if the immediate links between the distinct units are perceived as small in the short-run. Thus, increasingly, the security and welfare of humanity at large depends more directly on the well-being of its constituent parts; a threat to the security of an individual is, ultimately, a threat to international security.

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[16] Booth 1991: 319.
[17] Maclean, George. "Instituting and Projecting Human Security: A Canadian Perspective." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 3 (2000): 269-76.; Thomas and Tow 2002: 11.

The CSS body of knowledge is a critical and astute approach to the pursuit of global security. By 'reinventing human society' – recognizing and stressing the significance of the individual as the fundamental part of each social unit and calling for a concern with the safety of all individuals who together constitute the largest human community, humanity itself – CSS challenges the widely established notion of the state as a natural and most crucial social unit. By extension, CSS calls into question the legitimacy of the contemporary state-centric international system, which produces and rationalizes the regressive practices and structures that cause human insecurity. In order to meaningfully affect global affairs and the security discourse, the theoretical reflections and insights of CSS need to be put into practice. Therefore, a security project that is based on the CSS knowledge but that, at the same time, goes beyond theorizing is required.

HS is a specific security theory that strives on the CSS ideas. HS, based on an analysis of the real world through the lens of a critical approach to international security in line with CSS, has defined a theoretical framework for a human-centered security discourse. HS offers an interpretation of security components, from the security referent to security threats, security actors and potential agents of change.[18] It stands in clear contrast to the realist approach to global security. Realism defines the state as the principal security referent and prescribes that, in an irreparably hostile and anarchic world, states must continually advance their capability to deter or retaliate an external attack in order to be secure. Realist security is, therefore, inherently built on the insecurity of others – either on the fear from an external attack or from retaliation. Alternatively, HS defines the purpose of the international security discourse to be the freeing of the people 'from fear and want.'[19] In other words, the fundamental goal of the HS approach is to ensure the safety and well-being of all people. This goal is only achievable through the

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[18] Liu 2006.

[19] Bellamy, Alex J., and Matt McDonald. "'The Utility of Human Security': Which Humans? What Security? A Reply to Thomas and Tow." *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 3 (2002): 375-76.

emancipation of the individual and, by extension, of her community from life-constraining threats. Consequently, the spectrum of threats in the HS discourse is wide – for many HS proponents anything that harms human safety and well-being constitutes a security threat. Furthermore, they acknowledge that the various threats are often intertwined and mutually cause or reinforce each other and, therefore, need to be tackled in holistic ways.[20] Importantly, the HS approach to global security is not only normatively valuable but also highly pragmatic: HS proponents believe that ensuring the safety of the individual is the key to achieving lasting peace and stability in the world because any order that produces insecurity for the people is unsustainable and will sooner or later collapse. It can be said, consequently, that HS prescribes ways of achieving not only a more benign but also a more permanent world order than realism.

However, despite its powerful insights, a strong support from an eclectic body of proponents, and concrete, meaningful achievements including the successful banning of landmines and the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the process of establishing HS as a feasible alternative to realism in the international security discourse is not unproblematic. Not only is the HS critical approach to global politics hardly compatible with the dominant state-centric system and its basic norms, but, furthermore, the remarkably extensive agenda of HS is criticized by many as too complex to be of any concrete use for the real world. With the focus on individual and community security, HS radically challenges the political role and, thus, the significance of the state (traditionally the primary international actor): it reduces the state's role to a tool serving to provide security for the people. It is hardly probable that states, the factual strongest power-holders in today's world, will readily accept this demand.[21]

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[20] Thomas, Caroline. "A Brigde Between the Interconnected Challenges Confronting the World." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 353.
[21] Thomas, Nicholas and William, T. Tow. "Gaining Security by Trashing the State? A Reply to Bellamy and McDonald." *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 3 (2002): 379. (Thomas and Tow 2002 (II))

Furthermore, HS is criticized for its extensive agenda and the consequent complexity. Skeptics claim that HS complicates the security paradigm beyond measurable limits, which seriously impedes its application to security analysis and policy making.[22] While many agree that the HS nexus is a quite appropriate reflection of real world issues, it is undeniably complicated because it includes every individual and a large number of frequently overlapping threats into the security discourse.

Striving to enhance the HS academic and political salience, various HS proponents have suggested ways of narrowing down the HS agenda, which has led to the emergence of a 'broad vs. narrow' debate within the HS school. The proponents of narrowing down the HS agenda argue that such a move, although it sacrifices some of the original HS ideas, is necessary if HS is to serve victims of insecurity. The proponents of the broad HS conception reject the narrow versions arguing that they all in one way or another dangerously compromise the critical and comprehensive character fundamental to HS and threaten its emancipatory potential. The 'broad vs. narrow' debate within the HS school is often perceived as a fractured gap between the proponents of each side. This could negatively affect the development of the HS theory and the pursuit of its fundamental goal that all HS proponents share – the inclusion of the individual into the security discourse and her emancipation from life-constraining threats.

However, if analyzed in deeper detail and placed into the larger critical social theory context, on which HS is ultimately based, the debate turns out to be less divisive of the two (broad vs. narrow) camps than it might appear to some. Both sides are, fundamentally, advocating the same cause: the focus on the safety of the individual in international security politics. Furthermore, both offer important contributions to precisely this cause. The proponents

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[22] Buzan, Barry. "A Reductionist, Idealistic Notion that Adds Little Analytical Value." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 369-70.

of the broad HS version, unyieldingly championing the theory's fundamental ideals and continuously reminding us of the unacceptability of compromising those, ensure the survival of the critical and emancipatory character of HS. In the long term, only the critical and comprehensive lens through which HS analyzes the status quo will be able to achieve true, emancipated security for the people. Therefore, the broad HS version is, to a great extent, future-oriented.

Those who explore ways of narrowing down the HS agenda are also concerned with the alleviation of suffering as well as with the enhancement of HS as a security theory. However, they are present-oriented and trying to bring the HS emancipatory and individual-centered strategies on the dominant security agendas. They understand that the broad HS security theory, as comprehensive, critically insightful and normatively valuable as it may be, is unlikely to become the leading security paradigm in a state-centric international system. Therefore, they strive to include, at least, some of the HS strategies on the agendas of states who indubitably have great material capacity to stop human suffering. The narrow HS conceptions must not be understood as the final and permanent versions of the HS paradigm. Instead, they are – and admittedly some more than others – innovative reflections on how to alleviate people's suffering today using the HS approach.

Seeking to show that the HS debate is not as divisive as oftentimes perceived, this MA thesis argues that both the narrow and the broad HS conceptions are potentially meaningful contributions to the fulfillment of HS goals. For this purpose, it first explores the origins and basic concepts of HS theory, which entails much of the Welsh School reflections and explains why HS is a highly appropriate and comprehensive security paradigm for the future of the world. Subsequently, it focuses on the 'narrow vs. broad' debate. It discusses some suggestions of

narrowing down the HS paradigm before demonstrating the applicability of a particular, threshold-based, narrow HS agenda in a case study, through an examination of international efforts to alleviate the threats faced by numerous Roma individuals and communities across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The case study shows that today the implementation of HS strategies is most likely when it is linked to state-leaders' national interests, which supports the call of some of the proponents of a narrow HS agenda for making HS more appealing to politicians. At the same time, however, the case study exposes the risks of linking HS to state interests, by exposing the lack of genuine commitment by state-leaders to the alleviation of human insecurity if their short-term interests are not at stake. Based on these observations, this MA thesis suggests that although the broad version must remain the essential approach to security within the HS school, narrow versions, exploring how to apply HS strategies to contemporary issues, should also be considered.

# CHAPTER 1 – HUMAN SECURITY: PROMISES AND CHALLENGES

## 1.1 The History and Concept of Human Security

HS emerged as an issue of global political concern in the 1990s.[23] Clearly identifiable are three alternating approaches to HS as a policy tool during the 1990s: the focus on the reduction of human deaths caused by violent conflicts advanced by the Canadian and Norwegian governments; the focus on 'social safety nets' aiming at 'poverty-alleviation-oriented' revitalization of East Asian economies[24] brought forward particularly by Japan following the 1997/98 East Asian

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[23] Liu 2006: 78.
[24] Sato, Motohiko. "Restructuring the Social Safety Nets in East Asia." Aichi, Japan: Aichi University. http://www.eadi-online.org.

financial crisis;[25] and the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report (HDR), entitled *New Dimensions of Security*[26], emphasizing the necessity of establishing safety from threats to human life and basic well-being as a fundamental condition for initiating and accelerating the development in the underdeveloped parts of the world. Out of these three, the seven-part approach contained in the HDR is the most comprehensive one: the HDR defines economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political factors as potential and existing threats to the security of humans (and, hence, impediments to human development).[27] Furthermore, the HDR is a report by the UNDP, a UN body, and expresses the concern of the international community at large with the security of the people living in world's underdeveloped areas; the HDR is, consequently, the HS conception of the highest international relevance. Thus, the 1994 HDR can be defined as the origin of HS as a global policy tool.

The concentration on the individual at the center of the security discourse is the fundamental and most notable quality of HS. In all security aspects, including debate, analysis, and policy, individual human beings are paramount. In other words, the HS discourse revolves around issues concerning the safety and well-being of individuals; the fundamental goal of HS is the establishment of a safe environment for the people through emancipation from threats and constraints on their lives.[28] Consequently, with the focus on humans, HS significantly redefines the role of the state, the primary security referent in the realist security discourse:[29] the preservation of state-sovereignty, as the fundamental security goal, is replaced by the 'freedom

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[25] Suhrke, Astri. "A Stalled Initiative." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 365.
[26] United Nations Development Programme. *New Dimensions of Human Security*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

[27] Liu 2006: 80.
[28] Hoogensen and Vigeland Rottem 2004: 156.
[29] Thakur, Ramesh. "A Political Worldview." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 347.

from fear and want' for the people; the state is one out of various "collective instrument[s] to protect human life and enhance human welfare."[30]

A necessary characteristic of a security paradigm that places the individual at the center of its framework is the consideration of threats other than military force: although violent conflict remains a formidable security threat, violence is but one out of a large pool of threats to the safety and well-being of the people. The HS list of threats encompasses economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political factors.[31] Furthermore, most HS proponents understand that in a situation of insecurity, these HS threats exist simultaneously either directly causing or reinforcing each other.[32] In sum, it can be said that the two core characteristics of HS are its focus on the universal protection of vulnerable individuals and its holistic understanding of the constitution of threats. These features make HS an exceptionally comprehensive security paradigm reflective of various real world issues.

In line with the CSS understanding of effective ways to reach sustainable stability in the world, HS proponents see a critical link between international security and the emancipation of vulnerable individuals and communities. They emphasize that human emancipation from social, political and economic constraints is the single truly comprehensive way to achieve a sustainable global order. They strongly reject the notion that international order can rest solely on state-sovereignty.[33] Instead, they assert that the achievement of long-term peace and order in the international system is possible only if individuals are provided with the 'freedom from fear and want' and feel truly secure in their environment.[34] Notably, the multifaceted problems of human

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[30] Ibid.
[31] UNDP 1994.
[32] Thomas 2004: 353.
[33] Messari, Nizar. "The State and Dilemmas of Security: the Middle East and the Balkans." *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 4 (2002): 415.
[34] [34] Osler Hampson, Fen. "A Concept in Need of a Global Policy Response." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 349.

insecurity are best confronted through integrated solutions that will empower the victims to constructively deal with the threats that constrain their lives. Believing that emancipation is therefore a fundamental component of a sustainable world order,[35] HS proponents consider it crucial that in IR theory and practice, individual and group emancipation be given precedence over any order that is built at the expense of the people or disregards their insecurity.[36]

The agents responsible for empowering victims of insecurity to cope with their own situation are different social and political actors, including states, international and regional state-founded organizations, and the civil society. In today's world, more often than not, insecure individuals and groups are incapable of taking control over their lives and reducing their exposure to threats or changing behaviors that perpetuate their vulnerabilities by themselves. When local and regional instruments are not up to the task either, it is necessary to jointly take global responsibility for enabling those people to experience emancipation.[37] Therefore, international instruments have a critical role to play in empowering the world's endangered people to constructively confront the threats they are exposed to. HS relies on the strengths of the various practical approaches championing social change, including humanitarian relief, development assistance, human rights advocacy, and conflict resolution.[38] By doing so, HS embraces the traditionally quite distinct methods of alleviating the plight of the world's needy population and encourages the various fields of activism to join their efforts in the pursuit of an essentially common cause.[39]

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[35] Roberts, David. "Human Security or Human Insecurity?" *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 2 (2006): 255; Booth 1991: 319.
[36] Booth 1991: 320.
[37] Liotta, P. H. "Boomerang Effect: The Convergence of National and Human Security." *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 4 (2002): 473.
[38] Peter, Uvin. "A Field of Overlaps and Interactions." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 352-53.
[39] Ibid.

### *1.2 The Human Security Challenges:*

Despite the remarkable success that the concept has experienced since the mid-1990s, HS faces serious challenges while trying to establish itself as an accepted international security paradigm. This should not be surprising, considering that HS is based on a critical approach to security that sternly interrogates and exposes the flaws of dominant social and political structures. Consequently, much of the HS theory is hardly compatible with the prevailing state-centric international system. Firstly, HS inherently challenges the international status quo by calling into question the legitimacy of the state as the dominant security actor and primary security referent. It rejects the notion that the state is the natural social unit that must be secured under all circumstances. Instead, it places the responsibility on the state to protect and provide for its citizens and, moreover, makes this its primary raison d'être.[40] Accordingly, when a state fails to secure its citizens' well-being, it fails in its fundamental purpose.

Furthermore, by calling upon the international community at large to take responsibility for the security of all humans and human communities, HS implies the legitimacy and even the necessity of international intervention. Many HS proponents emphasize that nowadays the state is often the primary cause of insecurity for its people, or, at the best, is frequently unable to respond to the security threats its population faces.[41] This observation together with the establishment of global responsibility for the individual's emancipation does not only legitimize international intervention, but makes it a necessary tool of alleviating situations of insecurity, when required. Clearly, such a direct call for interference into a state's internal affairs goes against the fundamental principle of a Westphalian-based international system – the immunity of state-sovereignty. Admittedly, international intervention was not invented by HS proponents and has

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[40] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 375-76.
[41] Ibid.

been legitimized under certain circumstances even by state-led institutions. However, the HS approach, by putting an obligation on the international community to disregard the sovereignty of any state that fails to protect its citizens and to intervene to protect the people is nevertheless quite radical for today's status quo.

Another reason for doubting the HS compatibility with today's international system and, consequently, its utility as a global security paradigm, which has received the greatest attention from HS proponents, is the extensive comprehensiveness of the HS agenda. It is criticized as too complex and, thus, difficult, if not impossible, to apply to security analysis and practice. Skeptics claim that the HS paradigm extremely complicates the security discourse by considering potentially every individual and a vast number of non-traditional threats. Orthodox state-centric security scholars take this argument thus far as to claim that HS is incoherent and useless for academic analysis and policy application.[42] However, the overwhelming evidence of human suffering and death (i.e., the extensive amount of insecurity) with which the world is confronted daily, is an indisputable proof for an urgent need of an extension of the realist security paradigm. The HS nexus might be far more complex than the theoretical framework of traditional security studies; however, its comprehensiveness is not a futile and avoidable complication of theory but a reflection of the immense complexity of real world affairs. Thus, although complex, HS is a highly pragmatic and appropriate response to existent social and political issues.

This is not to say, however, that the criticism directed towards HS should be disregarded. Doubtless, the application of the HS agenda to world politics is far more difficult than following the prescriptions of realism: not only is HS more reflective of reality and, therefore, more complex but, furthermore, the most powerful security actors, states, remain focused on their short-term interests and often disregard the necessity of emancipating the world's vulnerable people. In

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[42] Buzan 2004: 369-70.

addition, states are unlikely to accept HS as the leading security paradigm considering that HS advocates a profound systemic transformation away from state-centrism to human-centeredness. At the same time, the immense suffering of many people and the increasing vulnerability of humanity at large to the threats some of its members face, make the application of HS strategies urgent. It is desirable, therefore, that HS reaches the agendas of the powerful, because that will significantly increase its chances to reach today's needy and create security for them. Therefore, considerable parts of the criticism directed towards HS are, in fact, a contribution to its advance. Critics challenge HS scholars to tackle the complexity of the HS nexus, advance the comprehensive HS agenda in innovative ways and strengthen HS utility for real life situations. The following section discusses different attempts by HS proponents to enhance the analytical and policy salience of HS will be discussed.

### 1.3 'Freedom from Fear' without 'Freedom from Want': Focusing on Violent Threats to Human Security

Various HS proponents have suggested narrowing down the HS agenda. Many of those in favor of a narrower HS agenda take a selective stand on the definition of threats and argue that HS should exclusively focus on eliminating threats of violent nature.[43] Others seek to enhance the conceptual clarity and practical applicability of HS by suggesting the establishment of thresholds for the identification of threats.[44] A threshold will allow for the consideration of various kinds of threats provided that they qualify as HS issues by surpassing the pre-set benchmarks. The following section discusses the advantages and flaws of focusing the HS agenda exclusively on violence and argues that such a narrow version compromises the

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[43] Mack, Andrew. "A Signifier of Shared Values." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 367; Krause, Keith. "The Key to a Powerful Agenda, if Properly Delimited." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 367-68; Macfarlane, S. Neil. "A Useful Concept that Risks Losing Its Political Salience." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 369.
[44] Taylor, Owen. "Human Security - Conflict, Critique and Consensus." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 373-85; Thomas and Tow 2002.

fundamental purpose of HS to protect people from insecurity because violence is only one of the many phenomena that endanger the lives and well-being of people.

Most scholars in favor of focusing on the prevention and alleviation of violent threats acknowledge the normative value of the broad HS version[45] and even express their concern about the seriousness of non-violent threats that many individuals face. Nevertheless, they argue for delimiting HS to violent threats for the sake of analytical rigor, conceptual clarity and policy salience. S. Neil Macfarlane, although admitting that violence is only one out of numerous threats to individuals, suggests focusing on 'freedom from fear' because it produces swifter and more concrete policy results than the broad HS conception. He points out that the focus on protection of individuals from violent threats has led to "significant normative change," such as the inclusion of the protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping mandates; the consideration of non-violent threats, on the other hand, diminishes the HS policy utility.[46] Macfarlane suggests sacrificing the comprehensiveness of the original HS agenda because that way at least some of the basic HS objectives are achievable. By focusing on violent threats, the essence of HS, namely the protection of the individual instead of the state, can be pursued more effectively than if all actual threats to individual security are taken into account.[47] Similarly, despite his expressed agreement with the values underlying the broad HS conception, Andrew Mack hesitates to accept it as a coherent security paradigm doubting the concept's analytical utility.[48] Consequently, he argues in favor of a human-centered security approach around protecting victims of such violent threats as genocide. Keith Krause rejects the broad HS version as not only extremely difficult to apply but, moreover, as an incoherent approach to security, because the idea of 'security' is intrinsically tied

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[45] Mack 2004: 367; Macfarlane 2004: 369.
[46] Macfarlane 2004: 369.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Mack 2004: 366-67.

to the control, prevention, and ending of violence.[49] Focusing the HS lens on 'freedom from fear' links the concept to an already influential practical and academic agenda that "has been central to our modern understanding of politics and to the struggle to establish legitimate and representative political institutions": the question of controlling and, ultimately, eliminating organized violence from political, economic and social life.[50]

While the proponents of narrowing down the HS agenda to deal exclusively with violent threats may be seeking to advance the analytical and policy salience of HS, the presence of non-violent threats to a vast number of humans is undeniable: "[a]lthough conflict, particularly civil war, continues to harm, the impact of environmental disasters, communicable disease, and poverty are often far greater."[51] The disregard of such serious threats to human life unarguably misses the point of the HS project to ensure the safety of the people. Considering that preventing and containing violence has been an objective of diplomatic practice for centuries and a central concern of IR science since its beginnings, Krause's assertion that a HS focus on violence would greatly facilitate establishing HS within a broader and recognized political and intellectual agenda may be right. It may also be correct that focusing exclusively on threats of violent nature would significantly simplify the HS paradigm, making it more analytically rigorous and politically applicable. However, considering that many humans are not threatened (directly) by violence and yet live under serious life-determining and, frequently, fatal constraints, focusing on violence would mean disregarding the high degree of insecurity of an enormous part of humanity. The numerous non-violent threats have such a detrimental, immediate, and urgent effect on so many lives that they simply must be considered in an up-to-date security discourse.

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[49] Krause 2004: 367
[50] Krause 2004: 368
[51] Axworthy, Lloyd. "A New Scientific Field and Policy Lens." *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 348.

Furthermore, oftentimes, the various HS-defined security threats are inextricably related and, therefore, if singled out, are taken out of context and can hardly be effectively tackled. Admittedly, insecurity caused through violence is often the most obvious and alarming threat because it immediately, directly, and uncompromisingly menaces the physical security of the people concerned. Therefore, ensuring safety from violence must be an integral part of a HS agenda. However, violence oftentimes occurs in a context of widespread and severe poverty, social marginalization, discrimination and other assaults on the endangered people; furthermore, violence and these other threats, most frequently, either mutually cause or reinforce each other.[52] In situations where threats have a 'symbiotic' relationship, an approach that focuses on the prevailing violence but disregards other existent threats will most probably fail to permanently prevent even the threat of its own concern. Therefore, in today's world, the prevention of violence, often, directly depends on improvements in social, political, and economic conditions: security, even if defined as 'freedom from fear,' can not prevail in the long-term in an environment ridden by extreme poverty, famine, disease and/or discrimination. An exclusive focus on violent threats compromises the fundamental goals of HS and is a too simplistic approach to existing (in)security issues. Consequently, the exclusion of non-violent threats from the HS agenda must be rejected.

So far, this MA thesis has suggested that the critique directed towards the broad HS agenda and underlying most of the narrow HS conceptions is reasonable; it points to actual problems HS faces in both the academia and the political international arena. The relevant critique can be summed up as threefold: 1) the difficulty to theoretically and practically apply the comprehensive, yet very complex HS agenda – the issue that has received the greatest amount of attention in HS literature; 2) a perceived lack of appeal to powerful politicians due to

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[52] UNDP 1994; Hoogensen and Vigeland 2004: 157; Liu 2006.

the concentration on the safety of humans, rather than that of the state; and 3) closely connected to the second point: the issue of the legitimacy of international intervention, which undermines state-sovereignty. At the same time, this MA thesis has rejected the widely advocated suggestion to focus HS on violent threats. The logical next step may be to analyze alternative suggestions of making the HS agenda more rigorous in theory and more applicable (and appealing) in practice. Threshold-based HS conceptions, that accept a wide range of existing threats and, at the same time, simplify the HS matrix by setting up definite criteria for what constitutes a HS threat, may be more appropriate solutions for the 'applicability vs. comprehensiveness' dilemma. The following threshold-based HS approach is remarkable because it embraces various kinds of threats and addresses the other two issues at stake: how to make HS more compelling to power-holders and determine when international intervention is legitimate.

### 1.4 Threshold-based Human Security: Focusing on Transnational Threats

Nicholas Thomas and William T. Tow[53] suggest prioritizing what constitutes a HS threat based on the magnitude each threat presents for the international community: a threat should be a matter of HS when it takes on transnational dimensions. The following section of this MA thesis presents the promises and risks of this approach, first theoretically and then by applying it to a case study. Thomas and Tow offer a way of embracing various kinds of threats to humans and, at the same time, making the HS agenda more analytically rigorous and appealing to decision-makers. Nevertheless, they are criticized for compromising the emancipatory potential of HS. The critics argue that by focusing largely on making the threats relevant to states, Thomas and Tow's agenda runs risk of perpetuating state-centeredness as opposed to focusing

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[53] Thomas and Tow 2004.

on humans.[54] The case study, an examination of the international community's efforts to alleviate the threats faced by numerous Roma individuals and communities across CEE, is highly appropriate because it captures both the benefits and dangers of a HS focus on transnational threats.

Believing that HS will be best put into practice if it is brought closer into line with the contemporary world order, Thomas and Tow call for a conciliation between HS and the traditional, state-centered security approach. They believe that this is possible only if the HS concept attains greater analytical rigor by providing tangible parameters within which to define a threat,[55] and if it manages not to delegitimize the state while containing an excessive reliance of states on the sovereignty principle. They assert that focusing HS on threats of transnational concern produces exactly those benefits: 1) although it embraces various kinds of threats, it still clearly defines which of them to prioritize – namely those that transcend state borders and 2) it sets a clear benchmark on when international intervention is legitimate, without undermining sovereignty.

Instead of advocating a radical revision of the statist security discourse, Thomas and Tow suggest that HS should evolve in ways that coexist with the traditional security outlook because states remain the primary security actors and hold the most concrete power to legitimize and implement measures that will protect people.[56] An approximation between HS and the traditional security will increase the HS presence on the political agendas and, thus, bring it closer to its ultimate purpose of protecting "all the world's human inhabitants."[57] For this to be possible, HS must narrow down its definition of a threat: "In dealing with an event from a

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[54] Bellamy and McDonald 2004: 374.
[55] Thomas and Tow 2002: 181.
[56] Thomas and Tow 2002 (II): 379.
[57] Thomas and Tow 2002: 181.

security perspective, limits must be placed on the analysis lest the HS paradigm become too amorphous and therefore questionable."[58] Consequently, Thomas and Tow suggest identifying a HS threat through "an objective evaluation…[of] how rapidly a threat materializes and how serious it will be to populations that transcend national borders."[59] In other words, the expected transnational outcomes of an event should be the primary determinant of whether something is a HS threat. This definition helps clarify what constitutes a threat on the HS agenda and makes HS more appealing to powerful state-leaders. States guard the principle of sovereignty and typically act based on national short-term interests. Therefore, they are most prone to confronting a HS threat either when a risk of international instability emerges, or when the issue becomes a matter of direct national concern. Because of the threats' transnational character and the menace that this could present to international stability, Thomas and Tow's approach makes the application of HS strategies by states more probable.[60]

Moreover, Thomas and Tow assert that focusing HS on transnational threats appeals to states because it does not radically undermine state-sovereignty: it rejects an outside intervention as long as the threat is contained within a state's borders. On the other hand, it approves of international action as soon as the threat begins to affect other states' sovereignty and the international order. While state-sovereignty remains a significant principle in contemporary IR, the developments of the post-Cold War era have legitimized international intervention under certain conditions. When a threat becomes transnationally significant, the international community can legitimately intervene to help alleviate the situation for the endangered people. In fact, a transformation from a national into a transnational threat clearly reflects the concerned state's and its population's incapability of confronting the threat and the

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[58] Thomas and Tow 2002: 182.
[59] Thomas and Tow 2002: 182.
[60] Thomas and Tow 2002 (II): 381.

concerned people's need for international support; the very incapability of containing the issue within a state's borders, therefore, creates a moral obligation for the international community to take action and alleviate the threat.[61] However, when a security issue does not cross the borders of one state and, thus, does not "assume a truly international significance, affecting other societies and individuals,"[62] the international community should respect the sovereignty of the concerned state and not intervene. Thus, it can be argued that Thomas and Tow offer a solution to the 'state-sovereignty vs. international intervention' dilemma, adequate for the contemporary world order.

Despite the persistent dominance of IR by states, Thomas and Tow acknowledge that the civil society holds concrete power to influence security issues by providing support for and exercising pressure on states to safeguard international norms. While the civil society influences state behavior and, thus, somewhat weakens state-sovereignty, it does not undermine it. Its role should be seen as complementary to the role of states in providing security for the people.[63] Many NGOs have regional social and cultural expertise that political decision makers often lack. In addition, NGOs generally attend to people's needs more directly than state-leaders. Consequently, they often effectively represent the vulnerable by calling the states' attention to their needs and interests (e.g., during the process of policy making). Thomas and Tow argue that their HS conception appropriately mobilizes civil society by calling it to both support states and scrutinize their behavior. While hard power typically remains in states' hands, the decision making process can be considerably influenced by other actors.

The 1994 international liberation of Haiti from the Cedras military regime illustrates how Thomas and Tow's HS approach can work out in real life. A US-led multinational effort

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[61] Thomas and Tow 2002: 177-78.
[62] Thomas and Tow 2002: 179.
[63] Thomas and Tow 2002: 188.

undertook to displace the oppressive Cedras regime that had illegitimately come to power by overthrowing the democratically elected Aristide government. The consequences of Cedras' rise to power completely destroyed Haiti's already struggling economy and in large numbers Haitians started escaping the economic misery in their home country. The refugee wave directly affected the countries in the region, including the U.S., which led to the passing of the UN Security Council Resolution 940 in June 1994, authorizing the use of force to rid Haiti from its dictator. After the UN took charge of the situation in Haiti in 1995, the international community focused on securing sustainable democratic peace through meaningful improvements in the country's economic, social, and legal sectors. This approach clearly reflects the HS prescription that achieving lasting stability requires the creation of a constraint-free environment for the people and their empowerment to cope with their situation. Thomas and Tow argue that the transformation of Haitian human insecurity into a transnational issue to which other states in the region became vulnerable was the key to the 1994 international intervention. The international intervention was legitimized by the UN and the human insecurity of the Haitians was tackled with emancipatory HS strategies. Furthermore, the UN acknowledged from the start that sustainable security in the country depended on the support of social and economic actors within civil society, in addition to the government: the establishment of peace and security in Haiti "relied upon a myriad of actions that were interconnected at both social and state levels."[64] Therefore, their case study also exemplifies the success of a collaborative relationship between the state and the civil society.[65]

In sum, Thomas and Tow's approach offering a reasonable way of merging HS with state-centric security is applicable to contemporary IR. The focus on transnational threats does

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[64] Thomas and Tow 2002: 184.
[65] Thomas and Tow 2002: 183-85.

not only offer a way to more rigorously define what constitutes a threat to HS, but it also transcends sovereign prerogatives without undermining the sovereignty principle, making HS more appealing to state-leaders. Furthermore, it provides room for a potentially meaningful involvement of the civil society into the pursuit of security for people. By mobilizing the different international actors to act in accord, this approach promises to enhance the international system's effectiveness in addressing emerging supranational threats, even before they intensify. Contemporary power sharing between state and non-state actors is a setting in which HS can gain significant influence on security issues, if modified according to the reality of contemporary IR.[66]

Alex J. Bellamy and Matt McDonald have contested Thomas and Tow's call for an integration of HS and traditional security, asserting that their suggestion is "largely inconsistent with the normative concerns inherent in the human security agenda."[67] Bellamy and McDonald warn that, considering that many states actively contribute to their citizens' insecurity – by perpetuating economic, political and military systems that put the individuals at risk and constrict their choices – "the co-option of HS into a statist policy framework…threatens to re-legitimize the very social structures (states and an international society)" that HS tries to interrogate.[68] Therefore, Thomas and Tow's attempt to merge HS and state-centric security seriously jeopardizes basic HS objectives. Bellamy and McDonald insist that HS, in order to stay true to its fundamental purpose of protecting the people from fear and want, must delegitimize states that create insecurity for humans and must struggle against the sovereignty

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[66] Thomas and Tow 2002.
[67] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 373.
[68] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 374

principle if it serves to protect those who put people's lives and well-being at risk, as well as against other systemic values and practices that perpetuate human insecurity.[69]

More particularly, they criticize the focus on transnational security issues, arguing that a security approach that determines the urgency of a threat according to its transnational character places state interests above the security of individuals and communities because it fundamentally remains focused on states as primary security referents. Therefore, Bellamy and McDonald reject the framework offered by Thomas and Tow within which human suffering constitutes a 'true' threat only when it transcends state borders and threatens to disrupt international stability: essentially, Thomas and Tow, instead of focusing on threats to humans, concentrate on threats to state-sovereignty and international stability. They, consequently, end up arguing for the political security of the international system and dismissing threats that don't jeopardize the international political stability as politically irrelevant. Bellamy and McDonald assert that this framework starkly deviates from the original conception of HS that concerns itself with what makes people insecure and how to empower endangered individuals. Consequently, Thomas and Tow's attempt to make HS more applicable to contemporary policy making puts at stake its emancipatory potential and forces it to yield to the same political practices and structures that cause human insecurity.[70]

Although Bellamy and McDonald's critique points to significant limitations inherent in Thomas and Tow's HS version, this MA thesis acknowledges and emphasizes the necessity of finding ways to include HS strategies on the states' security agendas: as long as states are the most powerful security actors, without narrowing down its broad agenda and making room for the consideration of states' concerns, HS will hardly achieve sufficient policy salience, which

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[69] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 375/376
[70] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 373-76.

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will limit its potential to alleviate human suffering. Therefore, attempts to make HS more appealing to politicians, such as undertaken by Thomas and Tow, should not be dismissed as worthless for a HS approach without further consideration. Instead, they can be regarded as one of many HS proponents' attempts to motivate politicians to use HS strategies in a system that is unwilling to embrace the entire HS agenda as its primary security paradigm. The application of narrow HS versions does not necessarily harm the original values of the HS agenda. The pursuit of a broader application of HS in the future is not obstructed through the limited application of HS in particular cases. The following case study is an attempt to show how this argument can work out in a real life situation: even if states are rejective of the broad HS version because it challenges the role they claim within the international system, the application of HS strategies, if perceived as useful by state-leaders for the pursuit of national interests, can set in motion a movement beneficial to a large number of insecure individuals. At the same time, the case study exposes the limitation of such a partial application of the HS agenda, and emphasizes the necessity of continuously searching for ways to apply as much as possible of the original HS agenda to real-life situations.

## CHAPTER 2 – CASE STUDY

The upcoming case study first puts the abject poverty and social marginalization of numerous Roma individuals and communities across CEE into the HS context. That the (most notably economic and social) insecurity that many CEE Roma face has not been directly analyzed through a HS lens yet is a gap in the HS literature. Peter Uvin describes a situation in which people live in conditions of great deprivation as a principal HS concern. According to him, 'great deprivation' is "characterized by a combination of severe poverty and vulnerability to

economic shocks, as well as, often, by social exclusion, discrimination and daily assaults on…human dignity."[71] The situation of numerous CEE Roma perfectly fits this description. The following analysis of the living standards of many CEE Roma demonstrates the severe poverty of a large number of Roma individuals across CEE, analyzes the detrimental effects of the sudden transformation from socialism to capitalism on their lives and provides examples of regular assaults on their human dignity through discrimination by majority populations. Social exclusion based on prejudice and stereotyping is a basic cause for the misery of numerous economically and socially deprived CEE Roma. Jennifer Leaning asserts that tackling social, psychological, political, and economic issues is the correct approach to providing social and psychological well-being of humans, a major goal of the HS agenda.[72] Accordingly, the below analysis further clarifies how the constraints on the lives of many CEE Roma absolutely fit into the pool of social, psychological, political, and economic HS threats. Considering that HS scholars see the provision of basic rights to all people as one of the fundamental conditions for achieving sustainable world stability[73] and improvements of the socio-economic situation of the people as crucial for the prevention of conflict,[74] the misery of numerous Roma across CEE, who are clearly deprived of several basic rights, must be considered in the HS discourse.

Subsequently, the case study analyzes the political developments related to minority rights protection in CEE after the end of the Cold War, which reflect much of what Thomas and Tow suggest in their HS version. In particular, the analysis focuses on how the EU, together with the international civil society, has confronted the suffering of many Roma individuals in Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) using HS strategies. Thomas and Tow's HS concept

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[71] Uvin 2004: 352.
[72] Leaning 2004: 354.
[73] Axworthy 2004: 348.
[74] Hubert 2004: 351; Roberts 2006: 255.

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helps explain the development of the multi-facetted project seeking to constructively address the CEE Roma plight through a HS lens. A meaningful international intervention in the politics of the concerned CEECs took place after several powerful EU members became directly vulnerable to the misery of the CEE Roma – after the proportions of the threats these people confront became transnational.[75] The observed developments clearly demonstrate that political leaders' use of HS strategies is motivated by the expectation that it will benefit their national security concerns. Therefore, the case study, at least partially, supports Thomas and Tow's call for conciliation between HS and the state-centric political order. On the other hand, however, the developments described in the case study also suggest that a focus on transnationally significant threats bears serious, considerable limitations and does not manage to support the implementation of a genuine HS agenda; while it encourages the application of HS strategies, thus benefiting victims of insecurity, it does so ultimately only for the preservation of the security of powerful states. Therefore, in sum, the following section of this paper, concerned with a prompt alleviation of threats to the security of humans encourages collaboration with states if this will help benefit the needy, and, at the same time, eager to support the goals of the original HS agenda, calls for further explorations of ways to include as much as possible of the original HS agenda into the global security discourse.

## 2.1 CEE Roma Human Insecurity: Placing the CEE Roma Situation in the Human Security Context

Many Roma communities in CEE live in abject poverty and face stern discrimination by regional majority populations. Experts estimate that with between nine and eleven million Roma living across Europe, they are the largest European minority. 80% of the European Roma live in

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[75] Vermeersch, Peter. "EU Enlargement and Minority Policies in Central Europe." *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (2003): 10-11. http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/Focus1-2003_Vermeersch.pdf.

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and 70% of these live in Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.[76] Across the region, Romani families are at the bottom of the income scale, and they are more likely to stay poor than members of the national majorities or other ethnic minorities. Data gathered by the World Bank in 1997 shows that in Bulgaria, over 84% of the Roma were living under the poverty line, while the national poverty rate was 36% and 40% for other national minorities. In the same year, Romania's Roma were in a similar situation with 79% of the Roma living in poverty compared to a national poverty rate of 31%. Poverty measurements for Hungary from 1992 to 1997 showed that 7.5% of the total population was living in 'long-term poverty' while 53% of the Hungarian Roma fell under the category 'long-term poor.'[77]

The causes for CEE Roma poverty are various and intertwined. A principal reason for Roma misery is the prejudice and negative stereotypes about them spread widely across CEE. The negative attitudes towards Roma result in constant and severe discrimination against them. One of the very serious consequences thereof is the lack of access to education and employment for the Roma throughout CEE. Significantly, low education levels and high unemployment rates are two of the most significant factors correlated with poverty in the region.[78] These and other factors, such as the extremely poor housing conditions many CEE Roma live in, are correlated. While the Roma low education levels create major barriers in the employment sector, the poverty caused by the unemployment restricts many Roma from receiving a (quality) education. The consequent reliance on undocumented work and public assistance are controversial income

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[76] Dena, Ringold. *Roma and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe: Trends and Challenges*: 1 Washington: The World Bank, 2001.
[77] 'Long-term poor' households, as defined by Ringold (2001: 1), are households that experienced poverty 4 or more times during the period of 1992-1997.
[78] Wang, Stephanie. "Roma and Eastern Europe." *Harvard International Review* 22, no. 1 (2000): 6-7; Ringold 2001; Zoltan, Barany. "Ethnic Mobilization without Prerequisites: The East European Gypsies." *World Politics* 54 (2002): 277-307.

sources encouraging further negative stigmatization. The perpetuation of negative stereotypes about Roma leads to further discrimination, which limits their access to education, employment and other opportunities. These circumstances create significant threats to their security and limit them from "carrying out what they would freely choose to do."[79] Furthermore, the overt and intense hostility against them creates threats to Roma's physical security. The following analysis of the deprivation the CEE Roma face daily serves to further illustrate how these life-constraining factors perpetuate each other, hindering the CEE Roma to emancipate and establish themselves as valued members within their respective societies.

Due to space limits, this analysis focuses on three particular socio economic factors – education, employment, and housing – because these are the fundamental causes of the CEE Roma's misery. Furthermore, special attention is given to the situation of the Roma in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, while references to other countries are made. Together with the Czech Republic and Slovakia, these three countries host the largest Roma populations in the region and they constitute 9-11% of the total population in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia.[80] Compared to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, a larger amount of reliable information on the Roma situation exists for Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria.

Awareness of some historical antecedents helps understand how the hostility and mistrust between Roma and non-Roma became such powerful parts of the CEE reality. Genetic, anthropological, and linguistic research suggests that the Roma came to Europe from Northern India in waves between the 9th and the 14th centuries. Their history varies depending on the region in which they built their existence, but their common experience throughout Europe is one

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[79] Booth 1991: 319.
[80] Ringold 2001: 1.

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of centuries-long marginalization and discrimination by the dominant societies.[81] Most scholars attribute this hostility to the Roma nomadic lifestyle and their dark skin. Both cultural and physical differences set them apart from the majority populations in Europe and made them an easy target for persecution and racial scapegoatism.[82] Furthermore, Roma have experienced institutional discrimination throughout their history in Europe. Two of the most striking examples are the formal enslavement of Roma in Romania until 1864 and their Holocaust experience which strongly resembles the Jewish experience: the Nazis sought complete extermination of the Roma and killed around half a million of them.[83]

Contrary to the widespread stereotype, not all Roma lead nomadic lifestyles.[84] In fact, most CEE Roma lead relatively settled lives. This fact has historic resonance as well: the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires made concerted efforts to force the Roma to settle. Under the Habsburgs in particular, numerous campaigns sought to eliminate the nomadic lifestyle and other Romani cultural specifics, aiming to force them to assimilate to the mainstream culture.[85] Although most Roma communities resisted much of the imposed integration, the efforts to force them to settle had a lasting effect.

Many scholars agree that the Communist era carries a significant part of the responsibility for the current CEE Roma misery. Socialist states tended to reject ethnic and cultural differences because these give rise to groupings within the society that could be harmful to the 'Class War,' one of the pillars of communist ideology. Therefore, the socialist

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[81] Wang 2000: 6-7; Ringold 2001: 4-5; Spritzer 2005; Nicolae, Valeriu. "Words that Kill." *Index on Censorship* 35, no. 1 (2006): 137.
[82] Wang 2000; Ringold 2001 4-5; Spritzer 2005.
[83] Wang 2000; Ringold 2001; Pohl, Otto. "Gypsies Gain a Legal Tool in Rights Fight." *The New York Times*, 7 May 2006.
[84] Ringold 2001: 4-5; Nurden, Robert. "Apartheid in the Heart of Europe." *New Statesman* 17, no. 795 (2004): 30.
[85] Ringold 2001: 4-5.

governments of CEECs not only continued to pressure the Roma to settle, but, once again, undertook large-scale projects to assimilate them to the mainstream cultures.[86]

Generally repressive and patronizing, these assimilation campaigns had few immediate positive, but several long-term detrimental effects. Across CEE, policies were implemented providing the Roma with housing, employment, education, health insurance, and other basic services.[87] Increased access to employment and other immediate outcomes of such campaigns had to some degree a clearly positive impact on the Roma. However, for the greatest part, the long-term effects have turned out to be highly unfavorable for the Roma's social position, having laid foundations for social inequalities that persist until today. Most importantly, these campaigns created dependency of the low-skilled workers (most of who were Roma) on the state. They guaranteed employment to even the least educated individuals through large state subsidies that became unavailable with the transformation of the CEECs to capitalist economies. When the transition started in the early 1990s, the Roma found themselves in an extremely challenging position within the new economic situation, which had become generally difficult across CEE.[88] The consequences of socialist rule in CEE, which hence carries a great share of responsibility for the situation of the Roma in CEE today, as well as methods used to confront the existing problems related to the largest European minority, will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of this MA thesis.

### 2.1.1 Housing:

Roma are confronted with unique problems concerning housing throughout the CEE region. Housing policies from past eras (empires, socialism) and from recent governments have

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[86] Ringold 2001: 5.
[87] Ringold 2001: 15.
[88] Ringold 2001: 15; Stewart, Michael. "Deprivation, the Roma and 'the Underclass'." In *Postcolonialism: Ideas, Ideologies and Practices in Europe*, edited by Chris Hann. Routledge, 2001.

resulted in geographic isolation and segregation of Roma neighborhoods.[89] Today, at least 13% of the Hungarian Roma, 60,000 people, live almost completely isolated from the rest of the society.[90] Every capital city of the countries analyzed here has at least one Roma ghetto with extremely poor housing conditions.[91]

The communist governments, seeking to integrate Roma into the mainstream cultures, provided them with state-subsidized housing along with employment. Many socialist governments in CEE created so-called 'one-company towns,' neighborhoods built around state-owned companies or factories. Rent in such industrial towns was either free or highly subsidized for the employees of the enterprises. During the socialist era the 'one-company towns' were populated by Roma and non-Roma workers. With the dawn of the transition, however, most of the companies were either closed down or restructured, including the cancellation of state-subsidies. Consequently, the state quit paying for the maintenance of those neighborhoods and many workers of the state-owned enterprises became unemployed.[92]

The following lack of monetary resources in former 'one-company towns' led to deteriorating living conditions. Most non-Roma, having better opportunities in the new job-market (precisely by virtue of not being a Roma), moved away from the impoverished neighborhoods. Most Roma ex-workers, who for the greatest part were poorly educated and did not have many opportunities to find new employment in societies that had begun suffering from unemployment in general, remained in the decaying neighborhoods with other Roma families who had moved there due to lack of housing options elsewhere. Today, most of these neighborhoods have turned into virtual Roma-ghettos, characterized by overcrowding, low-

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[89] Ringold 2001: 12; Stewart 2001.
[90] Ringold 2001: 12
[91] Ibid; Stewart 2001.
[92] Ringold 2001: 12-13; Stewart 2001.

education levels, high unemployment and criminality rates, drug abuse, and lacking prospects for the younger generations.[93]

Such poor living conditions do not only raise moral concerns about the obligation to maintain a minimum living standard for all European citizens, but are also directly connected to more concrete problems such as the quality of access to public services beyond housing. Some Roma neighborhoods are compared with the worst Latin American slums, while for many other Europeans the housing standards are among the highest worldwide. Furthermore, living in ghettos characterized by overcrowding, criminality, and drug abuse understandably tends to impede the Roma students' ability to take full advantage of educational opportunities. The consequent frequent poor academic performance among Roma students creates subsequent barriers in accessing employment.[94]

**2.1.2 Employment:**

The transition from socialism to capitalism in CEE brought the most immediate and dramatic changes for the Roma in the employment sector. Full employment and job security for the entire population were typical of socialism.[95] The employment rates for Roma men during socialism were not much different from non-Roma throughout the greatest part of CEE.[96] With the abrupt transition to capitalism, privatization and a radical reduction in subsidies for state-owned companies took place. Consequently, a huge part of the CEE population became unemployed. The Roma, primarily low-skilled workers, were among the first ones affected.[97] Lack of education and professional skills as well as discrimination, made it difficult for them to

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[93] Ringold 2001: 12-14; Stewart 2001; Nurden 2004.
[94] Wang 2000: 6; Ringold 2001: 19.
[95] Ringold 2001: 15.
[96] Wang 2000: 6; WBR 2001: 15.
[97] Wang 2000: 6; Ringold: 15; Stewart 2001; Spritzer 2005.

find new employment. In contrast to the non-Roma populations, an increasing number of whom were able to find employment after the economic stabilization in late 1990s, long-term unemployment among Roma remains exceptionally high.[98] The Czech Republic serves as an extreme example, with 70% of the Roma suffering from long-term unemployment while only 10% of the total population is unemployed. Shockingly, the unemployment rates in several Roma settlements in CEE reach between 96 and 100%.[99]

Contrary to the widespread popular stereotypes that represent Roma as lazy and unwilling to work, survey data across CEE indicate that Roma actively seek employment. In fact, the World Bank reports that in most relevant countries Roma are more actively searching for work than the rest of the population. In 1997, 19% of the unemployed Bulgarians were looking for work compared to 46% of the nations' Roma. In the same year in Romania 35% of the Roma were trying to find work while only 15% of the unemployed total population was doing so.[100] Furthermore, indisputable evidence exists that large numbers of the CEE Roma have been emigrating from CEECs to North Western Europe in search of employment.[101]

Most scholars agree that the two main reasons for the high unemployment rates among the CEE Roma are lack of education (the third socio-economic factor which will be discussed later on) and discrimination.[102] Discrimination against Roma in the labor market is both explicit and indirect. Job advertisements across the region exclude Roma from existing employment opportunities. In a Hungarian local newspaper a job recruitment ad reads: "No Roma need apply,"[103] and a Bulgarian ad promises: "We will immediately hire a white-skinned, non-

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[98] Wang 2000 6; Ringold: 15-16; Stewart 2001.
[99] Ringold 2001: 15; Stewart 2001; Nurden 2004; Spritzer 2005.
[100] Ringold 2001: 16.
[101] Nurden 2004; Marklein, Mary Beth. "European Effort Spotlights Plight of the Roma." *USA Today*, 2 February 2005; Nicolae 2006.
[102] Wang 2000, Ringold 2001.
[103] Godwin 2001.

alcoholic bricklayer."[104] Furthermore, numerous Roma with common Bulgarian names were invited to a job interview over the phone. However, upon arrival they were sent away on disclosing their ethnicity and told that the position had already been filled.[105]

Consequently, the survival of most Roma depends on work in the informal sector or on public assistance. Both of these income sources, however, encourage further negative stigmatization of Roma. Discrimination in the employment world, forces many Roma to resort to undocumented work to sustain their families. At the same time, their engagement in undocumented economic activity strengthens the stereotype of the criminal and asocial Roma.[106] The receipt of public assistance, on the other hand, serves to perpetuate negative stereotypes of Roma as lazy or indolent. The majority populations often perceive Roma as intentionally refusing to work and preferring to exploit scarce state resources instead.[107] However, both the Roma active search for employment despite their particular difficulties to find work and their labor emigration to North Western Europe contradict this assumption widely spread among the CEECs' majority populations.

### 2.1.3 Education:

Historically the educational status of the Roma across CEE has been low and remains so today. The constraints on education for Roma are various. The vulnerable economic situation of many Roma families, the lifestyle differences between many Roma communities and the majority populations, prejudices held by non-Roma towards Roma and vice versa, as well as the discrimination against Roma students all affect the Roma access to public education in

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[104] Ringold 2001: 16.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Stewart 2001.
[107] Ringold 2001: 33; Nurden 2004; Nicolae 2006.

CEECs.[108] The low levels of education of most Roma in CEECs are alarming. Lack of education creates major barriers to accessing employment and participation in civil society, two crucial conditions for Roma to rise out of the poverty and social marginalization trap. Therefore, education can be reasonably defined as one of today's most pressing issue concerning the long-term development of Roma in CEECs.[109]

The Roma children school attendance is alarmingly lower than that of the rest of the CEE population. Scholars suggest that three principal reasons for this exist. Firstly, the poverty of many Roma creates various serious obstacles for Roma families to send their children to school or negatively affects the quality of the Roma students' education. In addition, the cultural specifics of many Roma societies can interfere with school attendance of Roma students. Furthermore, the prejudice towards and discrimination against Roma students by their peers, the peers' parents and, maybe most importantly, the teachers prevent those who do go to school from accessing the same quality of education as the majority populations.[110]

Many CEE Roma are so poor that they not only cannot afford to pay additional school expenses but often struggle to provide the necessary resources for basic necessities such as clothing and food.[111] Consequently, Roma children are often required to work both at home and in the informal sector. Girls usually stay at home and take care of the younger children and the household, while the boys work either in agriculture or gather and sell scrap metals, cartons, and herbs. The families of the Roma students, confronting severe poverty, often have no choice but to rely on the economic activities of their children. Some children may remain in school, but due

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[108] Wang 2000: 6; WBR 2001: 27-29; Nurden 2004; Spritzer 2005.
[109] Ringold 2001: 24.
[110] Wang 2000 6; Ringold 2001: 28-29; Stewart 2001; Marklein 2005; Spritzer 2005.
[111] Ringold 2001: 25-26; Spritzer 2005

to the economic activities they are required to fulfill by their families, they cannot put as much effort into studying and learning as their peers.[112]

In addition, the cultural specifics of many Roma communities interfere with school attendance. Numerous Roma perceive their identity as separate from the majority populations in Europe, and their traditions sometimes conflicts with the customs and values of the mainstream cultures. One specific of many Roma cultures interfering with the acquisition of formal education is the marrying of numerous Roma individuals during adolescence, which often result in early age childbirth and parenthood. A 1994 survey of Roma communities in Bulgaria found that 40% of the Roma had married before the age of sixteen, and that 80% had married before the age of eighteen.[113] Marrying at a young age creates obligations for individuals that easily hinder the pursuit of an education. Young mothers in particular are affected since they are usually the ones who stay at home and raise the children. However, young family fathers, traditionally responsible to provide for the family, are doubtlessly affected as well by early parenthood.[114]

Another cultural aspect affecting strongly the access and quality of formal education for Roma is the linguistic challenge. Many Roma use the national language of the relevant CEEC only when they interact with non-Roma, while within their communities they speak a Roma dialect. Living segregated from the majority populations, many Roma are not proficient in the national language. Roma children in particular, who are least likely to interact with non-Roma, often lack proficiency in the national language. This clearly puts them at a serious disadvantage compared to their peers when they start school.[115]

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[112] Ringold 2001: 25.
[113] Ringold 2001: 26.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Wang 2000: 7; Ringold 2001: 26; Nurden 2004; Spritzer 2005.

In addition, discrimination against Roma students by non-Roma parents, children, and teachers deteriorates the education quality of many Roma children who do attend school. Non-Roma parents often demand that their children be put in "Roma-free" classes. Furthermore, they frequently encourage their children not to interact with Roma peers. This leads to the exclusion of and hostility against Roma children within schools.[116] Sadly, the peer hostility is further encouraged by many teachers who themselves hold strong prejudices against the Roma. They often treat them with less respect and patience than other children. Furthermore, the stereotypes about Roma's inferior intelligence or lack of interest can result in the teachers' lower expectations of the Roma students' performance.[117] Doubtless, the quality of the education Roma children receive is severely jeopardized when teachers, the central authority figures in the school environment, discriminate against them.

In order to improve the overall situation of the Roma across CEE, the entire education system must be made more accessible to them, as well as ensured that they receive a quality of education equal to that of the rest of the population. In modern European societies a higher level of education is most frequently directly related to a larger choice of employment opportunities and significantly higher wages.[118] Roma or not, poorly educated individuals, or those without any formal education, are significantly deprived of economic opportunities and find it more difficult to influence their own fate.[119] Furthermore, due to their relative lack of educated members, the Roma needs and interests are underrepresented in the national politics of the

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[116] Ringold 2001: 28-29.
[117] Ringold 2001: 29.
[118] Ringold 2001: 24.
[119] Ibid.

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CEECs.[120] Therefore, education is among the most pressing issues affecting the pursuit of a better future for the CEE Roma.

## *2.2 Addressing the Issues*

Importantly, during the past decade, the international community (most notably the EU, but also the Council of Europe (CoE), OSCE, the World Bank and numerous NGOs) has committed to improving the CEE Roma situation. In terms of international intervention to alleviate the Roma plight, through provision of financial and intellectual support for the disadvantaged people and through pressure on the relevant CEE governments to protect their Roma minorities, this section focuses on the EU. While in recent years the EU seeks an improvement of the CEE Roma situation, for years, the misery of this minority was largely neglected by EU leaders.[121] The civil society had been calling attention to the CEE Roma plight since the early 1990s. However, these issues did not receive significant attention from the international community until the late 1990s, when EU political leaders found that attention to them furthered their own interests.[122]

Nevertheless, many of the currently applied strategies to alleviate the Roma plight are prescribed by the HS agenda for achieving 'freedom from fear and want.' In order to alleviate the abject poverty of and discrimination against the Roma, the international community has understood the necessity of emancipating Roma individuals and communities and empowering them to combat their problems.[123] The activities addressing the Roma issues encompass the development of relevant policies, advice on mobilization, substantial financial assistance for both

[120] Stewart 2001; Barany 2002: 10.
[121] Vermeersch 2003: 9-11; Cahn 2004.
[122] Hughes and Sasse 2003: 15; Vermersch 2003: 9-10; Cahn 2004.
[123] Ringold 2001: 38-41.

the relevant national government initiatives and Roma grassroots organizations, the creation of various programs combating discrimination and racial stereotyping, and the promotion of education and employment.[124]

The European Commission (EC) coordinates the EU programs and policies tackling the problems of CEE Roma. It addresses Roma issues primarily through the Inter-Service Group on Roma (ISGR), which is chaired by the Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Directorate-General. The activities of the ISGR range from efforts to establish "the legal framework for equal treatment and non-discrimination" to "forums for policy cooperation and provision of financial resources."[125] More concretely, the ISGR is active in five major areas: 1) Anti-Discrimination, 2) Employment and Social Inclusion, 3) Regional Policy, 4) Education, Training, Youth and Research, and 5) Enlargement and External Relations.[126]

The EC identifies education and employment as the key factors for the full inclusion of the Roma into the rest of the European society. Therefore, the ISGR seeks to facilitate access for the Roma to these two socio-economic factors. The areas 'Employment and Social Inclusion' and 'Education, Training, Youth and Research' are intertwined, their main difference being that the former targets the adult population, while the latter focuses on primary and secondary education. Programs designed in these two areas offer education and (re)training opportunities for adult Roma to facilitate their access to employment, including the training of Roma in public administration. Furthermore, they promote the "participation, integration and equality of opportunity for [Roma] children in all [educational] activities."[127] Because poverty is recognized as an essential reason for the low education levels among Roma, these programs include

[124] Ibid.

[125] The EU and Roma; European Commission "DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities." http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/roma/.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

scholarships and internship opportunities specifically for Roma students. Together with the "Anti-Discrimination" area, these two umbrella programs receive the greatest part of the financial and technical support directed by the EU towards the improvement of the Roma situation.[128]

The EC realizes that the most undermining and formidable obstacle to the social inclusion of the Roma is the discrimination against them. Therefore, among the EC's activities in the 'Anti-Discrimination' area, are the attempts to pressure CEE governments to eliminate discrimination against the Roma within their national territories.[129] The Racial Equality Directive and the Employment Framework Directive[130] are the EU's main legal tools to exercise such pressure.[131] The national governments of the CEECs have various ways in which they can combat Roma discrimination. Among these are national-level policies prohibiting any kind of ethnic discrimination, programs to increase the interaction between Roma and non-Roma, and the inclusion in the educational curriculum of subjects such as multicultural education and the history and culture of national minorities. Two other potentially effective tools for combating discrimination on national level are multicultural training of the personnel working in public services (e.g., teachers) and the creative use of media to eliminate negative stereotypes about the Roma.[132]

These projects are selected examples from a large pool of activities addressing the plight of the CEE Roma in the recent years. The above discussed efforts are in line with the emancipatory HS agenda. They target directly the principal causes of social structures that result

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[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] The RED and EFD are two laws enacted by the EU in 2000 and provide a set of principles that offer every EU citizen legal protection from discrimination. (The EU and Roma).
[131] The EU and Roma.
[132] Ringold 2001: 31.

in serious threats to the well-being of many Roma individuals and communities. By trying to address the fundamental causes of Roma insecurity, such as discrimination, lack of education, long-term unemployment and the consequent poverty of many Roma, these initiatives seek to empower the concerned people to find ways to constructively confront the problems they face, actively establishing themselves as respected members of the CEE societies. The activities are a promising starting point towards Roma mobilization.

However, not all of the initiatives undertaken to alleviate the CEE Roma plight have been successful. Most of the ineffective ones, failed because the Roma were excluded from the creation and implementation processes. For the future success of such, one of the clearest lessons from the recent past is that Roma involvement is vital. Academics agree that few principles are "more essential to the success and legitimacy of initiatives to alleviate the concerns of Romani communities than that Roma themselves should be centrally involved in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and programs."[133] The involvement of Roma into the creation and implementation processes of programs addressing their problems is increasing.[134] This reflects the growing understanding of HS prescriptions among the entities addressing the misery of CEE Roma individuals and communities: in order to effectively emancipate endangered people from the threats they face, they must be able to choose how to address their plight.[135] If these initiatives' successes and failure are carefully observed and effectively acted upon, they could bring about a progressive emancipatory movement of the CEE Roma minority resulting in their social inclusion and economic ascent.

However, the insecurity of the CEE Roma was largely ignored by the EU for nearly a decade after the fall of communism. Evidence shows that this was largely due to the lack of

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[133] OSCE, 2000, in Ringold 2001: 35.
[134] Ringold 2001: 36.
[135] Osler Hampson 2004: 349.

short-term interests of EU members in the Roma issue. The main reason for the failure to address and alleviate the Roma plight earlier was not the lack of potential EU power to pressure and support the CEECs' governments to protect the Roma minority or to provide direct support to the minority group but, rather, the lack of genuine commitment by EU leaders to the Roma emancipation. The increased efforts directed towards the alleviation of the CEE Roma plight since the end of the 1990s are largely due to a shift in the national interests of some EU MS.[136] This observation supports Thomas and Tow's assertion that, today, the most effective implementation of HS strategies can be achieved if the approach is merged with the more traditional security approaches.

During the 1990s, all CEECs established a degree of minority protection regimes. A majority of experts attribute the development of minority rights regimes in the CEECs to the Copenhagen Criteria. These were formulated by EU political leaders at the Copenhagen summit meeting in 1993. The Copenhagen Criteria provided policy reform conditions which applicant states were expected to fulfill in order to become eligible for EU membership.[137] The concluding statement of the Copenhagen summit declared "membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the respect of and protection of minorities."[138] This strategy of making EU entry dependent on the applicant states' compliance with political (and a number of economic) requirements became known as the 'EU membership conditionality.'

An analysis of the domestic policy documents of three CEECs, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland, provides evidence that suggests that EU requirements on minority protection have led to the creation of new policies and legislation. Several analyzed documents

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[136] Vermeersch 2003: 9-10.
[137] Vermeersch 2003: 8.
[138] Europa Glossary 2008; http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/accession_criteria_copenhague_en.htm.

refer directly to the EU conditions of accession. Furthermore, responsible members of the domestic governments of the three countries have referred back to the EU conditionality when publicly discussing the introduction of the new minority rights policies. The timing of the introduction of minority rights policies – after the publication of relevant EU documents – also supports this conclusion.[139] These findings leave little room for doubts that the incentive to create new and/or reform existing minority policies in the CEECs was a response to EU demands.

Nevertheless, while the protection of all CEE minorities was a principle rhetorically promoted by the EU during the 1990s, the abject poverty of the Roma and its causes were largely neglected by EU leaders during the greatest part of the decade. In the early 1990s it was almost exclusively NGOs and human rights activists who called attention to the plight of the Roma in CEE. Not until a large part of the CEE Roma, in search of freedom from abject poverty, discrimination, and many other life-determining constraints started migrating in large numbers to North Western Europe (NWE), did the EU commit to improving their quality of life in CEE. The EU began exercising real pressure on the CEECs and providing meaningful economic and intellectual support for the betterment of the Roma situation only when the EU members saw their national interests jeopardized.[140]

Generally, research on national and ethnic conflicts associates eruptions of violence with the ethno-nationalist claims of territorial minorities. Veermeersch, Hughes and Sasse agree that the EU was worried "about the possible emergence of territorial disputes, inter-state war, and conflict between centralized governments and national minorities" in the face of the dissolution of multi-ethnic communist states.[141] Consequently, pursuing European stability in the early

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[139] Vermeersch 2003: 22.
[140] Vermeersch 2003: 10; Simhandl, Katrin. "Western Gypsies and Travelers - Eastern Roma: the Creation of Political Objects by the Institutions of the European Union." *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 1 (2006): 13.
[141] Vermeersch 2003: 9.

1990s, the EU focused its efforts on bettering the situation of CEE territorial minorities. Especially after the eruption of violence in the Balkans resulting from territorial claims of ethnic minorities living in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU became preoccupied with avoiding similar scenarios in the future. The situation of the largest CEE minority group, the non-territorial Roma, on the other hand, received significantly less attention from the EU.[142]

This approach drastically changed towards the end of the 1990s. By then, the concerns that ethno-nationalist claims by territorial minority groups would lead to further inter-state conflicts had diminished. The CEE Roma, on the other hand, were becoming increasingly an issue within the EU. Firstly, the international civil society intensified its denunciation of the discrimination against the Roma in the CEECs, repeatedly calling upon the EU to address the issue.[143] However, more importantly, the "growth of the number of Roma asylum seekers from Central European countries arriving in the EU" triggered a "political controversy within individual states (most importantly, Belgium, the UK, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden) about this migration and fears of a massive influx after enlargement stimulated the EU's inclination to promote better treatment of the Roma."[144] Therefore, in the latter half of the 1990s, the EU committed to the improvement of the situation of the Roma in CEE.[145] Vermeersch reports that, because of the perceived threat to the national interests the CEE Roma asylum seekers presented in several EU states, after 1997, the EU clearly defined the situation of the CEE Roma as a significant factor in its relations with the CEECs.[146]

An analysis of U.K. tabloid press reports of the 1997 - 2005 time period and the behavior of U.K. rightwing politicians supports Vermeersch's conclusion. U.K. rightwing politicians were

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[142] Vermeersch 2003: 9.
[143] Vermeersch 2003: 10.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid; Cahn 2004; Simhandl 2006: 11.
[146] Vermeersch, 10.

accused by their more liberal counterparts of "exploiting moral panics stirred up by the press"[147] and "resorting to the 'politics of fear' by pushing immigration and gipsies onto the election agenda."[148] In 1997, the U.K. immigration officials were reported to beginning to fear "a 'copycat' influx of gypsies from across Central and Eastern Europe after the arrival of hundreds of Czech and Slovak asylum-seekers."[149] In 2000, a U.S. periodical wrote about U.K. fears of a CEE Roma mass influx being "fed by tabloid press claims that Britain has become a soft touch for benefit-seeking…Romany refugees who enter the country illegally – primarily from Romania, Poland, and the Czech Republic..." and who upon arrival organize into "aggressive begging scams."[150] The New Statesman reported in 2004: "In recent weeks, the British media have been overrun with scare stories of an imminent influx of Roma - or gypsy - peoples from central Europe. It is claimed that once the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland join the European Union on 1 May, hundreds of thousands of their poorest will take advantage of the right to move freely and will 'swamp our shores' in search of a better life."[151] The establishment of U.K. border controls on Czech airports in 2001 that, according to numerous reports,[152] clearly focused on profiling out Roma passengers and preventing them from boarding the flights destined to the U.K. provides further support for the concern of some of the EU MS with the large influx of CEE Roma into their national territories. These events clearly reflect the resentful and fearful attitude of much of the concerned MS' majority populations towards the Roma asylum seekers arriving from CEE.

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[147] Freedland, Jonathan. "No battle is too dirty: Immigration, Abortion, Gypsies" *The Guardian (London)*, 23 March 2005, p. 25.

[148] Murphy, Joe, and Jason Beattie. "Tories 'Using Politics of Fear' on Gipsies." *The Evening Standard London*, 24 March 2005, sec. C, p. 10.

[149] Streeter, Michael, and Colin Brown. "Influx of More Gypsy 'Refugees'." *The Independent London*, 23 October 1997, sec. NEWS, p. 8.

[150] Grose, Thomas K. "Closing the British Door." *U.S. News & World Report*, April 2000, sec. World.

[151] Nurden 2004: 30.

[152] Green, Peter S. "British Immigration Aides Accused of Bias." *The New York Times*, 5 August 2001, sec. 1, p. 6.

Accordingly, in the latter half of the 1990s, the promotion of a better treatment of Roma became the new focus of the EU minority rights protection monitoring mechanisms.[153] The sudden increase in policy documents relating to Roma in the CEECs clearly demonstrates the power of the EU to induce political change in the CEECs if the organization's motivation is strong enough. From the mid 1990s, Regular Reports by the Commission about the minority rights regime progress began increasingly pointing to shortcomings in the responses to Roma-specific problems. For example, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, countries recognized as successfully continuing "to fulfill the political Copenhagen criteria" overall, were harshly criticized for their treatment of Roma within their territories.[154] Veermeersch finds references in the policy texts of these CEECs that point back directly to the scrutiny of the Commission's Reports. The Czech government's resolution of 14 June 2000, for example, describes the Roma situation as "one of the obstacles [hindering] entry into the EU," and states that the introduction of a new Roma policy was a direct response to the concerns raised by the EU.[155]

Notably, the civil society is also given credit for the increase in EU's activities targeting the insecurity of the CEE Roma. It is acknowledged that the persistent pressure by the civil society has contributed to the above described surge of EU activities targeting the insecurity of the CEE Roma.[156] The civil society acted as a scrutinizer of EU's lack of action during the period when it was neglecting the suffering of the Roma. In addition, it has been providing technical and intellectual support to alleviate their misery. Consequently, it can be said that since the very end of the Cold War, the civil society with regards to the CEE Roma has acted in line with the role assigned to it in Thomas and Tow's narrow HS version. Nevertheless, it should be noted that

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[153] Vermeersch 2003: 10.
[154] Hughes and Sasse 2003: 16, 26; Vermeersch 2003: 10, 22.
[155] Vermeersch 2003: 22.
[156] Ringold 2001: 35; Vermeersch 2003: 10.

evidence suggests that, although the civil society provides significant intellectual and technical support for the ongoing emancipation efforts of the CEE Roma, not the scrutiny by NGOs and academia but a shift in short-term interests of powerful EU MS was the primary reason for concrete EU action in relation to the CEE Roma misery.

## *2.3 Discussion*

The above presented case study is an example of a real-life application of Thomas and Tow's narrow conception of HS. It contains various aspects of their proposed approach: the confrontation of HS threats after they became a transnational issue, the international intervention in the domestic affairs of states whose citizens were exposed to considerable insecurity, and the supportive participation of the civil society. Significantly, the case study shows that political leaders are most likely to implement the HS agenda when their national interests and security are concerned: while the movement addressing the CEE Roma plight can be sensibly described as an implementation of the HS agenda, the HS normative goals are not the primary drive behind it. The CEE Roma misery was not vigorously tackled until powerful European states felt threatened by the vulnerability of these people. Consequently, the case study renders valid Thomas and Tow's claim that in contemporary IR efforts to attend to HS concerns are the greatest when they are tied to the short-term interests and security concerns of states.

However, the case study also proves the relevance of Bellamy and McDonald's concerns. The emancipatory potential of HS is seriously limited if human insecurity is only addressed when it interferes with states' interests. In such a case, the efforts to combat the suffering of the CEE Roma – and any other insecure community – are likely to be only as strong as state-leaders consider it beneficial for their interests. Doubtless, any effort to tackle people's insecurity deserves recognition. However, actions based on self-interest, rather than on the conviction that

every human deserves 'freedom from fear and want,' are unlikely to be as lasting as actions motivated precisely by this conviction. Most likely, this is why many are insisting on the broad HS agenda. They warn that co-opting HS into the statist security framework will lead to a submission of HS to states' interests and dangerously limit its critical comprehensiveness and emancipatory potential.[157] Doubtless, the reservations about the narrow HS conceptions must be taken seriously and the principles of the broad HS agenda continuously championed by anyone interested in human-centeredness and sustainable global security.

Nevertheless, the dilemma need not be as divisive as it might appear. Bellamy and McDonald are correct in asserting that compromising the HS transformative and emancipatory aspirations is unacceptable. The HS normative concerns are the theory's fundamental drive and its very justification. Therefore, maintaining a standpoint sufficiently independent of states and primarily concerned with human well-being is crucial for HS. At the same time, the HS agenda is hardly compatible with today's dominant international system. The original HS conception resolutely resists the contemporary power-distribution by devaluing the state's traditional significance from the primary security referent to an instrument serving to protect and ensure the well-being of individuals. However, states remain the most influential security actors in the contemporary international arena and they are doubtlessly interested in preserving their supreme status. Consequently, regardless of how insightful, comprehensive and significant in the long term the role re-distribution as championed by the broad HS conception may be for true global stability, in the short-term, it is highly unlikely to be meaningfully incorporated into the state-centric security agendas. A systemic change of the world order, in which states will cease to be the strongest security actors and in which the implementation of the broad HS agenda will be

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[157] Bellamy and McDonald 2002: 376

possible, is a future prospect. However, undeniably, such a profound change will not happen in the near future and will require unyielding, organized, and joint efforts.

Simultaneously, as all HS proponents rightly observe, numerous and urgent problems that demand the application of HS strategies exist even today. Therefore, the merits of Thomas and Tow's attempt to make the HS agenda more appealing to state-leaders should be acknowledged. Even if states are typically not primarily concerned with individual well-being, sometimes their actions can benefit vulnerable people, as the emerging activities directed towards the CEE Roma plight promise. If HS is to have a chance in reaching today's needy individuals, at least those HS strategies from the broad agenda that will appeal to state-leaders should be utilized. This technique, of offering as much as possible of HS to the world's needy population in a system that refuses to accept the entire HS conception, should be the meaning of narrowing down the HS agenda. Such a compromise doesn't mean sacrificing the ideas that HS is based on, which must remain the basis of the HS approach. Instead, it means taking from a comprehensive international security theory as much as is accepted by the leaders of a fallible system and using it to enhance the security and well-being for as many endangered individuals as possible. As long as HS proponents continue to champion human-centeredness and a holistic approach to threats, the consideration and application of particular HS strategies by state-leaders should be seen as a step towards a more just global society rather than a threat to the HS concept. The limited applications and narrow versions of HS can help elevate large groups of people out of insecurity. In addition, they help diffuse HS ideas and practices, whose future successes are likely to positively impact the further establishment of HS principles as a viable alternative to realism.

## CONCLUSION

This MA thesis has tried to offer a reconciliatory perspective on the 'broad vs. narrow' debate within the HS school. On the one hand, it has emphasized the necessity of upholding the principles of the broad HS conception and explained why compromising the HS original approach is unacceptable. On the other hand, it has acknowledged the importance of exploring narrow HS conceptions in order to make use of HS strategies and alleviate the suffering of the needy even today, at a time when the world's most powerful leaders are unwilling to embrace the entire HS theory as the leading approach to global security.

HS is a critical security theory that addresses highly important security issues and, most significantly, places the individual at the center of the security discourse. It does so, not only out of normative concerns, but, furthermore, because it perceives the emancipation of individuals as the fundamental condition for sustainable and lasting global peace. It has been argued that HS proponents envision a world order based not only on a more benign, but also on a more sustainable stability than provided by deterrence or balance of power, the traditional tools to achieve stability in IR: considering the increasing global interdependence, HS proponents, by promoting a commitment to universal human safety and well-being, offer a more realistic perspective on present and future challenges and opportunities to ensure global security than traditional security scholars do.

The doubts concerning the HS real-world utility are also its most notable qualities: its demand for a move away from state-centrism to human-centeredness in the security discourse and its comprehensive approach to international security issues. The focus on humans in the international security discourse radically challenges the traditional role of the state, which due to

the continuing dominance of states in the international arena, diminishes HS policy salience in the contemporary international system. In addition, the HS holistic understanding of the constitution of threats unavoidably entails a complication of the traditional security discourse.

The suggestions to narrow down the HS agenda to deal exclusively with violent threats are an ineffective approach to existing security issues considering the frequent interrelatedness of various threats and that many serious and, often, fatal threats to humans are not of violent nature. Thomas and Tow's threshold-based HS conception advocating a focus on transnational threats was analyzed as a possible alternative way of narrowing down the HS agenda. The case study used for this purpose suggests that, indeed, HS issues are most likely to be confronted by states when they affect their national security. On the one hand, this observation supports the call for conciliation between HS and statist security. At the same time, it demonstrates that such an approach fails to live up to the fundamental purposes of HS because it disregards human insecurity when it is not affecting state security.

Doubtless, if we focus on the fact that today, the application of HS strategies frequently depends on the short-term interests of powerful states, the situation appears bleak. However, if the challenges that HS faces today are placed into the larger context, as this MA thesis suggested in the beginning, sufficient reason exists to be optimistic. The eclectic body of HS proponents clearly reflects a widespread departure from realism; the establishment of the ICC and the successful banning of landmines are only the most prominent examples of concrete HS successes. Considering that HS began its political ascent little more than a decade ago, its achievements render its progress undeniable.

These achievements, furthermore, reflect the power of immanent critique. Although a focus on the preservation of state power and a lack of genuine interest in the well-being of

54

individuals are typical of today's international system, the identification of these fundamental problems and the quest for systemic cracks with room for their alleviation are another part of contemporary reality. The Frankfurt School endeavor, including CSS, is a proof for existing resistance to the "intellectual hegemony of realism."[158] The establishment of a critical security theory like HS is proof for the inclination to take concrete political action and seek a meaningful social change based on discerning observations of the social and political reality. The broad HS version, comprehensively taking into consideration both urgent global problems and trends, is a feasible and powerful alternative to the realist security discourse. Narrow versions of HS (though clearly less comprehensive than the broad version) take into account prevailing power-relations and search for potential ways of applying and proliferating HS strategies in a state-centric system, which fundamentally tends to reject HS ideals. Therefore, they should be seen as a further endeavor in line with the idea of immanent critique.

The truthfulness of such a claim is best supported by a real-life example such as the case of the CEE Roma. After centuries of severe oppression and a nearly decade-long neglect by powerful states following the end of the Cold War, today, both the CEE Roma and the civil society in support of their emancipation have become inscribed on the political agendas and gained such public presence that they will be hard to overlook in the future. Even in a state-centric system, the future of the CEE Roma, although not without further serious efforts, is likely to look brighter than their past. Similarly, the HS agenda, although it will doubtlessly continue to face the challenges discussed in this MA thesis, will achieve a much greater and more general presence and application in global politics if its proponents continue their resolute and dedicated efforts.

On this note, it is appropriate to close reiterating the suggestion for a conciliatory reconsideration of the 'narrow vs. broad' HS debate: J. Peter Burgess and Taylor Owen rightly

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[158] Booth 1991: 318.

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observe that "the meaning of a concept is not exhausted through its application" but instead "shaped by the evolving perspectives forced upon anyone confronted with the wide-ranging forms of security and insecurity."[159] In other words, applying HS strategies, even if the HS agenda becomes limited by the powerful to serve their interests, should be noted as laudable if it enhances the security of individuals and communities; it should not automatically be dismissed as a submission of HS to the state-centric system. The limited application of the HS concept in particular cases neither exhausts nor puts a halt to the further exploration of the concept itself; its broader and more inclusive application still can and, in fact, must be pursued in the future.

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[159] Burgess, J. Peter, and Taylor Owen 2004: 345.

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