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Hungarian Roma and musical talent

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Hungarian Roma and musical talent: Minority group members' experiences of an apparently positive stereotype

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Minorities do not always welcome apparently positive stereotypes of their group. At first sight, this may appear churlish. However, we show that minority group members' theorizing on the production and operation of apparently positive stereotypes helps explain such a negative reaction. Reporting interview data ($N = 30$) gathered with Hungarian Roma, we differentiated several bases for a negative response to the popular stereotype of Roma as possessing a distinctive musical talent. Although participants recognized the stereotype had instrumental value in easing everyday intergroup encounters, they also reported that the stereotype reflected the majority group's power to define Roma identity; constrained recognition of qualities that they themselves valued; limited their abilities to act on terms that were their own; and could facilitate the reproduction of more negative Roma stereotypes. Taken together, these findings imply our participants saw this apparently positive stereotype as speaking volumes about the majority's power to define Roma identity without reference to how they themselves defined their identity. We conclude with a discussion of the analytic value of the concept of 'misrecognition' in explaining negative responses to a positive stereotype. We also discuss the potential for such an apparently positive stereotype to facilitate improvements in intergroup relations.

Social psychology has much to say on the significance of negative stereotypes for minority groups (Tajfel, 1978). As manifestations of intergroup hostility, they exact a psychological toll on their targets and help reproduce inequitable hierarchies (Feagin, 1991; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Major, Quinton, McCoy, & Schmader, 2000; Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). Small wonder those experiencing such stereotypes may seek to invoke alternative dimensions of judgement (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and assert more positive features of their group identity (Biernat, Vescio, & Green, 1996; Klein & Azzi, 2001).

In contrast, positive stereotypes are often to be assumed to be complimentary. Yet, these too can elicit negative responses (Czopp, Kay, & Cheryan, 2015). Below, we examine minority group members' responses to such stereotypes and analyse responses to the stereotype of Roma as possessing a distinctive musical talent. Given the stigmatization of Roma, it is tempting to assume this stereotype would be welcomed. However, our analysis of interview data obtained with a sample of Hungarian Roma shows

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this cannot be assumed. Rather, we need to consider minority group members' understandings of why a particular attribute is valorized by the majority and what this reveals about the majority's power to define a minority's identity and so position it on terms that are not their own.

Positive stereotypes and their consequences

Positive stereotypes can bring benefits for minorities. The positive stereotype of American Asians' mathematical skills can (if subtly activated) boost performance on stereotype-relevant tasks (Shih, Ambady, Richeson, Fujita, & Gray, 2002) and benefit impression formation (Pittinsky, Shih, & Ambady, 2000). The positive stereotype of gay men as 'warm' and 'friendly' can mitigate negative stereotypes of Black men such that gay Black men are evaluated more favourably than straight Black men (an effect not observed with White targets: Remedios, Chasteen, Rule, & Plaks, 2011).

Yet, positive stereotypes have downsides. A positive performance-related stereotype can elicit harsher performance evaluations (Ho, Driscoll, & Loosbrock, 1998) and impair performance through the pressure to live up to expectations (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000). Positive stereotypes can also negatively impact minority group members' outcomes. For example, White participants' stereotyping of Black athletic talent resulted in advice that an academically struggling Black college student should put more effort into athletics than academic study (Czopp, 2010). Similar observations can be made concerning the seemingly positive images of women's 'warmth' that feature prominently in gender stereotypes: Such a stereotype can negatively impact women's understanding of their options (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Barreto, Ellemers, Piebinga, & Moya, 2009; Becker & Wright, 2011). It is also appropriate to note that positive stereotypes can provide majority group members with the 'moral credentials' (Czopp & Monteith, 2006) to continue to hold and express hostile attitudes. Moreover, attempts to challenge apparently positive stereotypes can incur social costs (Becker, Glick, Ilic, & Bohner, 2011). Also, as apparently positive stereotypes are less likely to be questioned than negative stereotypes, they can facilitate the attribution of group differences to inherent biological factors. This is particularly clear if we consider the positive stereotype of Black athleticism (Kay, Day, Zanna, & Nussbaum, 2013), which can normalize and naturalize the use of highly problematic racialized categories.

Minority group members' negative responses to positive stereotypes

In addition to documenting the dangers of apparently positive stereotypes for their targets' perception and treatment, research has explored minority group members' own evaluation of such stereotypes. This shows that negative reactions may arise as minority group members resent being judged in terms of a group membership when they would rather be judged on their individual merits (Siy & Cheryan, 2013). Yet, those who welcome being seen in terms of their minority group membership (high identifiers) may also respond negatively as they assume those attributing stereotypically positive attributes to the minority (e.g., 'athleticism' to Black Americans, 'warmth' to women) are also likely to attribute negative stereotypical attributes to the group. Indeed, exploring this issue, Siy and Cheryan (2016) found that compared to just being categorized in terms of a group membership, the attribution of a positive stereotype to group members resulted in an increased sense of being judged in prejudicial terms.

Our approach to minority group members' concerns is to emphasize that the positivity of any attribute cannot be assumed. In the abstract, 'athleticism' and 'warmth' sound positive, but as Howitt *et al.,* (1989, p. 143) observe, 'the traits ascribed to a group must be understood in relation to those that are withheld' and wider beliefs 'about what is and is not desirable conduct'. Ascribing the traits 'musical' and 'athletic' to African Americans whilst failing to ascribe others (e.g., 'scholarly', 'intelligent') conveys the derogatory implication that they 'are good for singing, dancing and running about, but not for serious careers, which demand intellectual study' (Howitt *et al*., 1989, p. 143). This implies we need to be alert to the reasons why majority group members come to attribute social significance to particular attributes.

Take the example of Black 'athleticism'. Analyses of racism show that colonial fears about Black people's resistance came to focus on the body (Carrington, 2002; Fanon, 1961/1967). This fear (and fascination) is evident in the detailed measuring and photographing of Black body parts associated with 'scientific racism' (Butcart, 1998). This tradition lives on in diverse genres, for example, sports reporting. Indeed, Carrington argues that 'colonial myths about black power have been most clearly expressed in the discourse of the "tough" black athlete making the *athletic black body* a key repository for contemporary desires and fears about blackness' (Carrington, 2002, p. 15, original emphasis). The negative consequences of the (apparently) positive image of natural Black athleticism are striking. Black athletes are perceived as essentially physical beings in a way that Whites are not (Gane-McCalla, 2011; Johnson & Jackson, 2017). As a corollary, Black sportspeople's success is less likely to be attributed to a cerebral understanding of strategy and determination than Whites' success (Carrington, 2002; Gane-McCalla, 2011; Johnson & Jackson, 2017; Stone, Perry, & Darley, 1997). Furthermore, the focus on the Black body and its characterization in terms of its 'animal-like speed' or 'beast-like strength' contributes to Black athletes' dehumanization (as when one commentator described the boxer Joe Louis as 'the magnificent animal. . . He eats. . . He sleeps. . . He fights. . . Is he all instinct, all animal?' cited in Carrington, 2002, p. 17; see too: Cooper, 2019; Johnson & Jackson, 2017).

Appreciating such a history of usage enriches our understanding of the stereotype of Black athleticism: Although superficially positive, it is deeply racist and part and parcel of the construction of Black Americans as a subordinate and racial other. Small wonder then that African American participants hearing a White male referring to African Americans' athletic talent, perceived that person as more prejudiced and less likable than those not hearing such a reference (Czopp, 2008). Related observations may be made in relation to the stereotype of Asian American women as feminine and attractive. What may initially appear positive reveals much about the processes of sexualized objectification (Civile & Obhi, 2016) and the ways in which Asian American women are reduced to being the 'passive companion to White men' (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007, p. 76). Again, the implication is clear: Any appreciation of minority group members' responses to apparently positive stereotypes must attend to their under-standings of these attributes' wider meanings and how they feature in the reproduction of hierarchy.

Roma and music

Roma constitute significant minorities in many Central and Eastern European countries and experience multiple forms of discrimination, for example, in education and

employment (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014; Kertesi & Kézdi, 2011) and health (Masseria, Mladovsky, & Hernández-Quevedo, 2010). Although anti-Roma prejudice was most clearly manifested in the genocide known as the *Porajamos* or Roma Holocaust (1939–1945), it continues unabated. Such is the historical persistence of this othering of Roma communities that many analysts maintain it has a distinctive dynamic and force (Ljujic, Vedder, Dekker, & Van Geel, 2012). Indeed, although fed by contemporary right-wing populist rhetoric (for analyses concerning Hungary, see: Tremlett & Messing, 2015; Vidra & Fox, 2014), anti-Roma sentiment is so normative (even in apparently liberal media) that Van Baar (2014) designates it as 'reasonable anti-Gypsyism'. The form and scale to this prejudice is no accident but reflects a process of political mobilization (Tileagă, 2015) in which a range of social and discursive practices constitute Roma as outside the moral community (Tileagă, 2007). Roma are routinely racialized and depicted as lazy, intellectually weak, and crime prone (Csepeli & Simon, 2004), and as constituting an alien presence threatening the social order (Kende, Hadarics, & Lášticová, 2017; Kligman, 2001; Loveland & Popescu, 2016). Integral to this racialized othering of Roma communities is the use of animalistic and de-humanizing imagery (Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, & Cotterill, 2015, study 4; Pérez, Moscovici, & Chulvi, 2007) with the corollary that many amongst the majority population in Hungary believe Roma have criminality 'in their blood' (Orosz *et al.*, 2017).

The only positive element in the stereotype of Roma concerns Roma musicality. Indeed, such is the prominence of musicality in the stereotype of Roma that there has been comparative research (Roma vs. non-Roma children in Romania) investigating rhythm perception abilities (no evidence for enhanced Roma rhythm perception was found: Dolean & Tincas, 2019). The history to this stereotype is long with references appearing as early as the 15th century. During the 19th and 20th centuries, the racialization of Roma facilitated a racialized conception of 'Gypsy music' in which a people's 'racial' features were believed to be reflected in the music they created (Piotrowska, 2013). In Hungary, these developments were accompanied by debates (e.g., Franz Liszt's *The Roma in Music*, 1859, and Bela Bartók's *Gypsy music or Hungarian Music?* 1947) about the degree to which the Roma repertoire could be said to reflect Hungarian national identity (Piotrowska, 2013). As Roma musicality was associated with improvisation (which has connotations of primitive spontaneity), the celebration of Roma musicality fed into the representation of Roma as an exotic, free-spirited, and passionate other (Piotrowska, 2013). Such representations abound in literature, ballets, operas, and film culture (Malvinni, 2004) and are often made concrete in female characters who, through their free-spirited musicality and dance, convey a sense of sexualized allure (and animalistic danger). The overall effect was to confirm the position of Roma as a racialized and essentialized exotic other.

Survey data show that in Eastern Europe, majority group members typically regard Roma musicality as a distinctive and positive attribute (Kende *et al.*, 2017; Orosz *et al.*, 2017). Indeed, this positivity has encouraged debate as to whether it has potential to facilitate positive intergroup encounters and promote attitude change amongst majority group members (Orosz *et al.*, 2017). Given the potential for apparently positive stereotypes to be experienced negatively, it is important to investigate minority group members' understandings of such a stereotype and we do so with interview data obtained with a sample of Hungarian Roma. As we will see, this apparently positive stereotype can be experienced negatively because it is understood to reveal much about majority group members' power to define Roma identity and position them on terms that are not their own.

Method

Participants

30 Roma (18 = male, 12 = female; age = 20 to 65) were interviewed. 28 were contacted through Roma associations, two through personal acquaintance of the first author. 23 were students or had a university degree. 15 were actors/writers, journalists, or political activists. Five had professions performing music/dance (one of whom was also an activist). Interviews were conducted throughout 2014–2015 in Budapest (or surrounding locations) and in Debrecen. As this sample is not statistically representative of Hungarian Roma, we cannot make generalizations about Roma responses to the stereotype of Roma musicality. However, a sample of educated, culturally knowledgeable group members who routinely represent Roma interests is suitable for the purpose of investigating group members' understandings of what this stereotype means for the community.

Interviews

The interviews (semi-structured) took place in offices, public places, and participants' homes. Their average length was 64 min (range 14–100 min) and focused on their understandings of Roma identity and the intergroup relations that Hungarian Roma experience. The interviews included questions concerning participants' experiences of discrimination and stereotyping, their interactional experiences, the costs and benefits of being categorized as Romani, etc. The interviews were conducted by the first author (a non-Romani Hungarian woman) and received approval from the University of Dundee's Research Ethics Committee. Interviewees received no reimbursement. To preserve anonymity, our data are not publicly available but interested parties are invited to contact the authors to discuss the analysis.

Analytic approach

Our initial reading of these interviews was informed by our interest in how Roma experienced their construal as a problematic alien other (Kligman, 2001). As our reading progressed, we became interested in the romanticized image of Roma musicality and our participants' experience of this stereotype. As this interest crystallized, the next step in the analysis involved the first author identifying extracts featuring references to Roma musicality. These data were organized using *NVivo* and were subsequently reviewed by both authors (together).

Reviewing the extracts, we sought to inductively differentiate participants' responses to this apparently positive stereotype. Extracts were compared against each other in an iterative process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) resulting in an inductive form of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in four analytic categories. First, we identified extracts referring to the benefits of this stereotype for minority–majority encounters (e.g., in relation to putting majority group members at ease). However, we also noted such extracts could feature a simultaneous concern that this benefit revealed the extent to which the minority had to orient to the concerns of the majority. Second, we found extracts in which participants reflected on the reasons why musicality featured so prominently in the Roma stereotype and what this revealed about the power of the non-Roma majority to define Roma identity. Third, we found extracts in which participants discussed the ways in which the stereotype of Roma musicality failed to capture the complexity of Roma identity and limited their ability to act on their own terms. Finally, we

found extracts in which participants were concerned that the stereotype of Roma musicality could be implicated in the reproduction of negative depictions of Roma identity.

Throughout the process of analysis, we interpreted the interview material as providing insight into participants' concerns in relation to the stereotype of Roma musicality. Accordingly, we did not approach these data with an eye to the rhetorical resources with which participants assembled their accounts. Nor did we focus on the interactional work such accounts accomplished in the interview. As a corollary, our analysis is not informed by the theory and practice of discourse analysis or conversation analysis. It should also be clear that we do not seek to make any quantitative claims about how Roma in general respond to the stereotype of Roma musicality. Rather, our purpose is to add analytic insight into why an apparently positive stereotype may be experienced negatively.

Following Elliott, Fischer, and Rennie's (1999) advice on how to ensure quality in qualitative research, our analysis is grounded in multiple examples. When reporting these data, open brackets – [ ] – mark text that has been excluded for reasons of space, and text appearing inside such brackets is to aid comprehension.

Analysis

The instrumental value of positive stereotypes

The stereotype of Roma musicality was sometimes reported to bring employment opportunities and ease intergroup relations with the non-Roma majority. With regard to the latter, one interviewee (#16, male, dance teacher) explained that 'there are people and social groups who don't accept Gypsy people to any extent' and explained that music and dance provided opportunities for intergroup communication. Referring to the historical shaping of Roma identity, they continued:

Extract 1

> Gypsy dance and music remained [preserved], because I think that this is the only part of Gypsyness that may be a key, a door between Hungarians and Gypsies, because when it comes to partying, Hungarians are here with us, and they feel better, so there are no disagreements then. Those people who have had any kind of prejudices at some point, if they come to such a Gypsy community, and they have no conflict with Gypsy people, then something may be moved inside them like 'these Gypsy people aren't so terrible'.

For this interviewee, music and dance brought opportunities for joint participation in an activity that all would find pleasurable ('when it comes to partying, Hungarians are here with us'), which could improve majority group members' image of Roma. Indeed, music and dance constituted a 'door', breaching boundaries that otherwise limited communication. However, whilst evidencing appreciation of the instrumental utility of the stereotype, this extract also implies that musicality features in Roma identity because of its utility to the majority. Indeed, there is a sense in which Roma musicality has value (and remains a feature of Roma identity) because of the prejudices of the majority: It makes them 'feel better'.

Similar issues appear in extract 2 where interviewee #5 (male, journalist) reflected on the potential for the stereotype of Roma musicality to encourage respect for Roma. Asked about his experiences of discrimination, he related a story of how his teacher attempted to protect him from prejudice through telling his classmates about Roma musicality:

Extract 2

Interviewee:	It happened so with that teacher that, I was scolded as a Gypsy, and I had a fight, and he told me next time if they scolded me because I'm Gypsy, I should let him know. So next time I told him. And he talked to the other child, his name was XXXX. I remember the whole story perfectly still today. He talked to him and said: "XXXX my dear, Gypsy people shouldn't be treated like this, because Gypsies preserved our folk music, and since they preserved our folk music, you should value them."
Interviewer:	And how did you feel about this, what did you think?
Interviewee:	Well, even back then the whole thing pissed me off terribly.

Again, this extract offers a mixed evaluation of the stereotype of Roma musicality. On the one hand, it had utility in improving one's treatment. On the other, even as Roma were valued, this was presented in terms of servicing the majority group's needs (Roma 'preserved our folk music, you should value them'). Such an instrumentality implies Roma occupy a secondary and subservient position. Indeed, for this interviewee, whatever the benefits of the stereotype of Roma musicality in terms of protecting one from abuse, this was painful: 'even back then the whole thing pissed me off terribly'.

Thus far, we have considered the instrumental value of the musicality stereotype in mitigating negative attitudes to Roma and in easing everyday interaction. Yet, we have also identified hints that the outgroup's valorization of Roma musicality was understood as revealing something about the majority group members' power and priorities. Simply put, it highlights the degree to which minority group members must routinely orient to the concerns (and prejudices) of the majority.

Intergroup power relations and production of a positive stereotype

In this section, we explore in more detail the ways in which intergroup power relations were understood as contributing to the prominence of musicality in the Roma stereotype. Interviewee #27 (male, musician), asked about what it was to be Romani, responded that because of negative stereotypes, various features of Roma identity had disappeared:

Extract 3

We don't cook Gypsy food, we don't speak in Gypsy at home, we don't teach our children about Gypsy habits. Apart from music. Music can be seen as a tradition, but apart from that, they [our children] won't be blacksmiths or adobes, those times have passed already. But if we didn't raise them to be musicians, then what would make them Gypsies? [ ] We've allowed ourselves to remain Gypsies, because at our workplaces, in the restaurants or anywhere, we

had to behave like that. They expected that, and we provided, and it was rewarding. And shortly one outgrew those Gypsy traditions which weren't actually appropriate. One outgrew those and left them behind.

This account of the prominence of music in Roma identity implies a process of selection shaped by the requirements and interests of the majority group. Referring to the ways in which Roma culture developed over time, the interviewee describes how Roma no longer worked as blacksmiths or adobes ('those times have passed already') because such skills were no longer valued or required (Roma 'outgrew those Gypsy traditions which weren't actually appropriate'). In contrast, music remained because the non-Roma majority 'expected that, and we provided, and it was rewarding'. In other words, the prominence of musicality in the Roma auto-stereotype does not only indicate the minority's valorization of this dimension, but also reflects the majority's power to define what is of value in their identity.

The power of the majority to define minority identity also featured in interviewee #2's (male, musician) observation that minorities needed to work harder than majorities to prove themselves ('you have to be more diligent, perform better, and so on'). He continued that this was complicated by the issue of who has the power to define the dimension on which performance was to be judged:

Extract 4

> But there is one problem I think: As soon as we create an image of someone or something, [as soon as] we imagine a world for one, if it is not like that [in reality], if it's a little more or a little less, it won't be [considered] 'normal'. Now, I tell you an example. If we suppose that a Gypsy must be a violinist [ ] and sings in a Gypsy language, and so on and so forth, then this will become like 'normal'. It's like normal that the Gypsy plays clarinet, dulcimer, violin. [ ] You know? Because they will say that you should do only so. No matter if I played metal - which I won't - I would remain just a Gypsy. You know? They wouldn't say 'what a great musician', but they'd say that the Gypsy plays to be a rocker - you know - while he should play on violin or dulcimer. And from that point, when minority people start thinking more logically, and try to improve their lives, they [the majority] don't like that and want to push you back."

Once again, we see concerns about the majority's power to impose a definition of what it means to be a 'normal' group member with the interviewee spontaneously invoking the stereotype of Roma musicality as an illustration. Indeed, such is the majority's power that deviation from the stereotype (whether in terms of one's musical style, or more fundamentally through 'thinking more logically' and trying to improve one's life in other ways) incurs censure ('they don't like that and want to push you back'). All this implies that the performance of Roma musicality constitutes a performance *for* the majority and reveals much about the latter's power to shape the minority's aspirations.

Interviewees also commented on the Roma response to this stereotype. For example, interviewee #11 (male, artist) observed that for the non-Roma majority 'to be a Gypsy means, "Oh, these are going to play the violin again, they are already taking the violin, they will be playing violin here" and also "How much they know those chords!"'. They continued such a stereotype encouraged Roma to compete with each other along this one valued dimension, and that observing this had impacted his respect for his own father (himself a musician):

Extract 5

> But they [Roma] had rivalry amongst themselves too. And luckily this became ridiculous to me quite early, and I'm very grateful for that, to someone or something. I don't know why, but from the age of ten these [rivalries] started to occur to me as problems, to be able to accept these, I started to consider those things as petty and stupid, and quite early, so therefore I started to become alienated from my father.

In this extract, the interviewee laments the way in which Roma compete with one another on the only dimension of Roma identity accorded value by others: It was 'ridiculous', 'petty and stupid'. Furthermore, such was the interviewee's reaction to the competition to excel on this dimension that he reports becoming 'alienated' from his own (musician) father.

Thus far, we have considered evidence of the ways in which the stereotype of Roma musicality could be experienced negatively and as reflecting Roma's subordinate position in the social hierarchy. In the next section, we continue to address the issue of hierarchy and power through considering how this stereotype is experienced as constraining.

A positive stereotype as limited and limiting

A stereotype defined around a single dimension of positive evaluation can be experienced as allowing only a very limited understanding of one's qualities. For example, interviewee #29 (female, student) argued that the image of Roma musicality was 'partly good, partly harmful'. On the one hand:

Extract 6

> It's also a good thing, because when I get into a new environment, and I tell that I'm Roma, then many people start to ask that then I must be good at dancing. [ ] Of course, I can be happy about this too, and then I smile, and say, "yes I can", and of course, we'll dance and sing together. But it depends on the situation.

Yet:

Extract 7

> When I get into a community, I don't want to be appreciated because I tell them that I'm Roma. I'm not a walking music and dance [show]. It's inside me somewhere, but it doesn't determine me. It's somewhat painful, because it's as if I consisted of only these two things. These two things are positive in me, so let's build everything upon these, because these are good things, and if we build upon these then the whole person will be good. No!

Extract 7 reveals a sense of frustration at the way in which the positive stereotype of Roma musicality limits a proper appreciation of the interviewee's qualities. Although music and dance were 'inside me somewhere', the stereotype was 'painful' because it conveyed an incomplete picture of who she was: 'it's as if I consisted of only these two things'. Furthermore, she continued that the pressure to 'build everything upon these,

because these are good things' was to be resisted ('No!'). Her sense of frustration at being valued in terms of a such a limited range of attributes (when she self-defined in terms of a wider range of positive attributes) was emphasized when she proceeded to explain her particularly negative response to finding this restricted positive evaluation of Roma was reproduced in her interactions as a student in her University with other educated individuals. As she explained, 'What can I expect from others then? It's disturbing, because hopelessness could overwhelm me then'.

Another (interviewee #10, female, author/artist) also explained how the musicality stereotype could limit people's expectations of Roma. Indeed, she lamented how majority group members who were keen to support Roma often tended to emphasize this positive stereotype:

Extract 8

> This positive stereotype creation is a tough one too, because those majorities who so to say, take up the Roma issue [ ] they also want to strengthen that particular stereotype which is about that Roma people mainly play music, and this is a very big problem though. I greatly appreciate our Gypsy musicians, it's beautiful what they do, and they have assimilated very well. But we know more and know other things too, and when we shape the positive Roma image, we need to be much more open, wide and boundless.

Again, although the stereotype had instrumental value (e.g., allowing some to succeed: Musicians 'have assimilated very well'), the interviewee complained it limited appreciation of other dimensions of value and wished for a less constraining and 'more open, wide and boundless' representation. Furthermore, this same interviewee explained the constraints associated with this stereotype were manifested in everyday interaction. Simply put, non-Roma expected light-hearted and joyous interaction (around music), which limited Roma's opportunities to engage on other issues. Referring to the music stereotype, she explained:

Extract 9

> This is not the maximum we are capable of. Because we do indeed have Roma intellectuals who are able to have a conversation. At this point the majority society recoils a little and says: 'wait, leave that conversation thing and just stay with the nice music and love each other guys!'

Again, a negative response to the positive stereotype is associated with the mismatch between self and other definitions. However, it is appropriate to note that the interviewee is not simply referring to how she is seen as an individual. Rather, she is referring to how the group as a whole is seen. Moreover, this mismatch in group-level perception has concrete implications for intergroup interaction: Majority group members want and expect such intergroup encounters to be structured around the production of pleasurable music such that as soon as Roma attempt to depart from the stereotype and talk about other issues, they are rebuffed ('wait, leave that conversation thing and just stay with the nice music'). Simply put, Roma agency is circumscribed. For interviewee #10, this was particularly annoying because music 'is not the maximum we are capable of'.

More generally, interviewee #10 objected to the pressure to express Roma culture as imagined by non-Roma because this curtailed the scope of her artistic pursuits:

Extract 10

> I feel a whole person, a universal person, so to say. Every artist has to be a universal person. I don't want to put myself into a box, I'm dealing with spirituality, I mean with different religions, philosophies, it has few connections to Gypsyness. [ ] Basically, I'm very annoyed that I'm expected to create particularly Gypsy-themed works, because I think that the artistic soul is much more boundless. [ ] The relationship to God, the transcendent in itself, the connection to thoughts, nature, maternity are all such universal human emotions, states of mind, which are worth being processed in art. Who has the right to expect me to cut myself off from all of these and deal with only 'Roma' themes, it's impossible. No, I see the greatness exactly in that, when we show that yes, Roma people can have the same universal consciousness, feelings, can deal with the same things, it's not always only the red wheel running under the blue sky in the green field as it's expected.

Here, we have a glimpse of how what appears to be a recognition of Roma cultural distinctiveness can be painful. In part, it is because she resents the power of the other to dictate what counts as appropriate artistic expression ('I'm very annoyed that I'm expected to create particularly Gypsy-themed works'). In part, it is because the expectation to reproduce Roma culture as defined by the majority is experienced as constraining the full artistic exploration (and celebration) of the 'universal human emotions' defining our humanity. Indeed, this interviewee articulates the need for cultural expression to show that 'Roma people can have the same universal consciousness' as others rather than being limited by a narrowly drawn cultural stereotype (signified by the Roma flag which depicts the blue sky, a green field, and a red wheel). This not only refers to the ways in which a positive stereotype can be experienced as constraining, but hints at the potential for a positive stereotype to be experienced as contributing to the dehumanization of Roma: If Roma artists are limited in terms of fully exploring such human themes, then their potential to re-define the dominant (and de-humanizing) representation of their community is circumscribed.

Positive stereotypes and the reproduction of negative stereotypes
Here, we more fully consider participants' theorization of how the musicality stereotype could contribute to the reproduction of prejudice. One (#17, male, student) suggested it could do so through impacting the range of positive exemplars with which to contest prejudice. Responding to the question 'How easily can someone be successful as a Roma?' they argued 'people can hardly imagine that a Gypsy can get to the top in a decent way', and continued:

Extract 11

> *Interviewee:*   those who deal with music, or theatre and they are Gypsies, they can even be
> accepted, more or less. But if, let's say, there is a Gypsy businessman, and [ ] he
> has a Mercedes, then he certainly, steals, cheats, lies, works illegally, doesn't

	pay taxes at all, has 15 children, pimps girls. But they don't think it through, that he may have a successful business and [buys a Mercedes] in the same way as the non-Gypsy buys the Volvo S80. [ ] The Gypsy musicians are usually rather accepted. But in politics they aren't, because they [majority group members] say that they are silly, or they always only protect Gypsies' rights, and they have only claims but they don't comply with their duties. [ ] The positive examples are missing, such as Gypsy priests, Gypsy teachers, Gypsy lawyers, Gypsy physicians, Gypsy lecturers, Gypsy professors. So these are missing. If people met more of those, society may not be so prejudiced, but it's difficult to become a lecturer as a Gypsy, if you don't get the opportunity.
Interviewer:	Or if they are successful, their success is not noticed?
Interviewee:	Yes. From then on, they are different. So, the problem is, if someone gets into such great positions, or even if it's not a great position but something that he worked for, from then on, he is not recognized as Gypsy, but as a Hungarian, and he is different.

In this extract, the interviewee argues that although Romani success in the stereotype-consistent domain of music was possible, success in other domains was not ('it's difficult to become a lecturer as a Gypsy, if you don't get the opportunity'). As a result, there was an absence of a broad range of successful Romani exemplars with which to challenge others' prejudices ('the positive examples are missing'). However, it was not simply that the opportunity structure for musicians reproduced a skewed vision of Roma identity. The unidimensional valorization of Roma identity also meant that even where other forms of success were achieved (e.g., in business), it was unrecognized ('he is not recognized as Gypsy', 'he is different') or attributed to the other element of the Roma stereotype: criminality.

Another interviewee (#19 male, political activist) expressed a rather different concern about the ways in which the unidimensional positive stereotype of Roma identity could contribute to the reproduction of negative Roma stereotypes. Reflecting on the racialization of Roma identity, he asked: 'If they say that we are barbarians, will we become barbarians? [ ] This is a psychological thing. If we tell someone that one is silly, after a while one will believe that one oneself is indeed silly'. In turn, he asked what happens 'if one is said to carry crimes in one's genes?':

Extract 12

> This is why I don't like it when Gypsies are said to have music in their blood. I don't like such comments either. Because if one says that crime is in my blood, or it's in my children's blood, even before they are born, they have it in their blood genetically, I never liked such things. Because after a while your unconscious says: "Well, it's true." The same happens with illnesses, if you say you will get ill, you will. I always tell my children never say anything bad, think of only the good, support yourself. [ ] The same applies to Roma. If they are said to be animals and are treated like that, they will become animals.

For this interviewee, a danger of the musicality stereotype is the risk that group members represent this positive stereotypical attribute as 'in their blood'. Whilst this may contribute to a sense of positive distinctiveness, it reproduces the racialization of Roma as an alien other (Kligman, 2001; Tileagă, 2015). In turn, it makes it all the harder to counter

analogous claims about more negative stereotypical attributes (e.g., criminality). Previous research has shown positive stereotypes are less likely to be regarded as prejudiced and are therefore more likely attributed to inherent biological factors (Kay, Day, Zanna, & Nussbaum, 2013). Extract 12 suggests minority group members can be sensitive to this tendency. Moreover, it demonstrates a concern that such racialized self-representations may instigate a self-fulfilling process such that Roma conform to the worst features of the Roma stereotype ('If they are said to be animals and are treated like that, they will become animals'). That is, for this interviewee the danger of this apparently positive stereotype is that it might (rather paradoxically) facilitate the behavioural confirmation of the negative stereotype held by the majority.

Discussion

Previous research suggests a negative response to a positive stereotype may reflect a desire to be judged on one's individual merits rather than in terms of one's group membership (Siy & Cheryan, 2013) or a fear that negative stereotypical attributions may follow (Siy & Cheryan, 2016). Our qualitative analysis complements the insights from such experimental research through providing insight into minority group members' understandings of the prominence of musicality in the Roma stereotype. Inevitably, the small-scale nature of our study precludes empirical generalization as to the full variety and strength of Roma reaction to such a stereotype. However, if larger-scale studies are required, we show that the positive stereotype of Roma musicality can be judged problematic because it is understood as illustrating the power of the majority to define the terms on which Roma were to be valued and allowed success.

For example, we found participants arguing that Roma musicality was not valued in and of itself but rather for its instrumental value to the majority (e.g., extract 2). So too we found arguments that the prominence of musicality in the Roma auto-stereotype spoke volumes about the majority's power to define what was to be valued in Roma identity (e.g., extracts 3, 4, and 5). Such observations suggest that in order to understand a negative reaction to the stereotype of Roma, we must appreciate minority group members' understandings of why a particular attribute is singled out as of value by the majority and what this says about the minority's social position *vis a vis* the majority. This implies we could expect different reactions to a positive stereotype if it was understood as conveying respect for the minority in and of itself rather than being motivated by the instrumental utility of the minority to the majority. Whereas the former may result in a sense of pride, the latter may result in a sense of humiliation.

Minority group members' concerns about the majority's power to define Roma identity were sometimes accompanied by references to the ways in which the apparently positive stereotype of Roma musicality was both limited and limiting. Thus, even when group members valued music, they complained there was more to their Roma identities but that these other qualities were not acknowledged or accorded value (see extracts 7 and 8). Moreover, this restricted vision of Roma qualities had practical consequences: Roma cultural expression was expected to be of a specific (highly stereotypical) form which constrained Romani musical expression (extracts 4 and 5) and their opportunity for artistic and cultural engagement with more universal human concerns (extract 10). It also impacted the range of domains where Roma could succeed (extract 11). Again, the point is that if we are to understand a negative reaction to an apparently positive stereotype, we must explore minority group members' understandings of how that

stereotype is judged to constrain their autonomy in constructing and enacting their identity on their own terms.

Implications

In order to integrate many of these empirical observations, we believe that there is analytic value in the concept of 'recognition' (and by extension misrecognition). This concept has diverse roots in philosophy (Honneth, 1995; Ricoeur, 2005) and social and political theory (Renault, 2007; Taylor, 1992). It builds on a philosophical tradition (e.g., Hegel, 1969) which developed to counter atomistic conceptions of the self with the argument that individuals' identities are bound up with their interactions with others and the value those others accord one. The concept is prominent in political theory with Taylor (1992) arguing that the recognition of identity 'is not just a courtesy we owe other people. It is a vital human need' (p. 26). Although it is less prominent in social scientific theory, a range of authors emphasize the importance of others for our sense of identity. This is especially so in social anthropological (e.g., Barth, 1969) and sociological (e.g., Goffman, 1969) theory, which makes the point that if we are to speak of a person as 'having an identity', it is important that others recognize and orient to them as having that identity (Jenkins, 1996). Social psychological research is also increasingly sensitive to the role of others in affirming and validating our self-conceptions (Amer, 2019; Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011; Swann, 1987).

At its simplest, a sense of misrecognition arises when there is a mismatch between how individuals view themselves and how they believe others view them. Sometimes, such misrecognition may involve the denial of one's ingroup membership (as when one is assumed to be foreign when one self-defines as a national ingroup member: Amer, 2019; Cheryan, & Monin, 2005; Pehrson, Stevenson, Muldoon, & Reicher, 2014). Sometimes, it might involve the hyper-visibility of one identity over another as when British Muslims find that they are always categorized in terms of their Muslim identity and not in terms of other valued identities that they regard as situationally relevant (e.g., their identity as a citizen, a professional, and a mother: Hopkins, 2011; Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011). Sometimes, it may involve the experience of having other stereotype one's group membership in ways that do not accord with one's own understanding of that group membership (as when British Muslims find that others believe Muslims support terrorism: Blackwood, Hopkins, & Reicher, 2015).

With regard to explaining the negative response to a positive stereotype, this latter form of misrecognition seems particularly relevant: Throughout our data, there is a clear sense of a mismatch between self and other perceptions as it concerns Roma identity. Moreover, this mismatch was understood by our participants as speaking volumes about the majority's power to define Roma identity without reference to how they themselves define their identity. That is, whilst the valorization of Roma musicality appears positive, it conveys and confirms the minority's lack of autonomy in self-definition.

Acts of misrecognition elicit diverse responses. People are motivated to sustain the content of their self-conceptions and can be proactive in eliciting self-confirming feedback concerning their personal (Swann, 1987) and social identities (Chen, Chen, & Shaw, 2004). However, minorities must operate in an environment permeated by power inequalities. On the one hand, they are particularly attuned to what they believe others think about their group because they know majority group members have the power to

act on their beliefs and so make them count (Lammers, Gordijn, & Otten, 2008). On the other, although there may be opportunities to exercise some control over the interaction through adopting various identity performances (Dobai & Hopkins, 2019; Hopkins & Greenwood, 2013; Kamans, Gordijn, Oldenhuis, & Otten, 2009), success cannot be guaranteed. Certainly, those involved in the production of identity-related cultural products and practices (e.g., music) are likely to find their options limited because their livelihoods are dependent on orienting to the tastes of others – especially majority group members. Indeed, Lidskog notes that 'the dominant culture's views on particular music (and thus its practitioners) can lead musical practitioners to adapt to existing expectations and prejudgements, often causing stereotypes to be confirmed' (Lidskog, 2016, p. 33). However, the prominence of musicality in the Roma stereotype is such that many others are also likely to experience the 'romanticized images' that 'call Romani people to account for their existence in terms other that their own' (Tileagă, 2015, p. 74). Moreover, the racialization of Roma identity (and the associated talk of inherent biological factors) may (if accepted) facilitate essentialized self-perceptions amongst Roma. With regard to this, our analysis revealed worries that the racialized representation of Roma musicality (Piotrowska, 2013) could result in the internalization of racialized representations of Roma criminality (see extract 12). Again, the point is that minority group members expressed concerns about their ability to assert their own understandings of who they are.

Following on from the above, our analysis raises wider questions about the potential for the apparent positivity of the Roma musicality stereotype to facilitate positive intergroup encounters. There are some suggestions that this stereotype can allow relaxed and friendly interactions structured around the enjoyment of Roma musical talent (see extracts 1 and 6). Indeed, at first sight it could appear that such encounters could approximate the 'ideal' conditions for positive intergroup contact encounters (Allport, 1954) that so rarely obtain in everyday life (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2005). However, there are significant risks. Heavily stereotyped perceptions – even if they involve such apparently positive features as musical ability – can encourage the sharp demarcation of groups and thus 'serve as a tool to exclude the Roma from the national ingroup' (Orosz *et al.*, 2017, p. 325). Moreover, our analysis suggests that minority group members are well aware of how the stereotype of Roma musicality reproduces their marginal social position and so sheds light on why apparently positive intergroup encounters are experienced differently by minorities than majorities (on Roma/non-Roma contact, see Kamberi, Martinovic, & Verkuyten, 2017; on minority/majority differences in the experience of contact, see Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Viewed from this perspective, our analysis complements and extends previous research revealing the burden minorities experience in orienting to the prejudices of majorities in contact encounters (Hopkins, Greenwood & Birchall, 2007) and the frustration that arises when concerns about intergroup inequalities are avoided (Maoz, 2000, 2011). Rather than presenting an opportunity to communicate their own understanding of Roma identity, such interactions are likely to be experienced as geared to satisfying the expectations and priorities (e.g., the musical pleasures) of the majority and as reproducing the highly problematic misrecognition of Roma identity.

In summary, the take-home message from our analysis is that what counts as positive in a stereotype cannot be assumed. From the minority's vantage point, what appears positive, may be understood and experienced as a form of misrecognition, which communicates the minority's subordinate position, and which limits their opportunities to exercise a degree of autonomy in self-definition and achieve success on their own terms. Moreover, with regard to Roma, the racialization of the musicality stereotype is

particularly problematic as it contributes to the reproduction of the representation of Roma as an exotic, alien other.

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Conflict of interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author contributions

Anna Dobai conceptualised the study; was involved in formal analysis; contributed to the methodology; administered the project; and wrote the original draft of the manuscript. Nick Hopkins supervised the project; was involved in formal analysis; and revised the manuscript.

Data availability statement

To preserve participants' anonymity, our data are not publicly available. Interested parties are invited to contact the authors to discuss the analysis.

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