Students Protest In France

Oct 21, 2013 By Deepa Gopal



Mark areas of confusion and show evidence of a close reading.

Draft a written response to this article that shares your thoughts.

High school students in Paris blocked the entrances to schools in Paris and several other French cities last week. They were protesting the arrest and deportation of a 15-year old high school student.

Leonardo Dibrani was on a field trip with her classmates when police entered the school bus she was on and took her away. The police have said they were carrying out orders after the family's application for political asylum was turned down. However, the manner in which Dibrani was taken away has angered students, who took to the streets demanding she and others like her be given legal status in the country.

Dibrani and her family were deported to Mitrovica, Kosovo. In a twist to this case, Dibrani's father had claimed in the application that he was from the war-torn Kosovo region in the hope of getting asylum. In reality, however, Dibrani and her family belong to the Roma community -- better known as gypsies.

France And The Roma

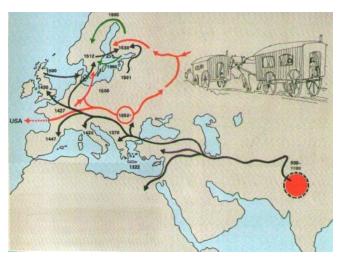
Nearly 20,000 Roma gypsies live in France, on the outskirts of cities and often in makeshift camps. They sometimes travel from place to place, beg on the streets and some have been accused of running criminal gangs that prey on tourists.

France has had an ongoing battle with the Roma. In 2010, the country expelled more than 10,000 illegal Roma immigrants to Romania and Bulgaria, countries from which they had illegally entered France. France and Germany have also opposed the addition of Bulgaria and Romania to the list of Schnegen group of countries within the European Union, because this would mean no passport check to cross borders. With

2.5 million Roma living in these two countries, this is just the kind of problem France does not want on its hands.

It appears public opinion is in favor of the government, since many French are fed up with the petty crimes and unsightly Roma neighborhoods.

Who Exactly Are The Roma?



How the gypsies spread? Courtesy bbhc.com

Based on genetic evidence, historical events and clues from the Roma language, the most probable place for the origin of Roma is north-west India. It is believed that the invasion of a Muslim army into India in 1000 AD led to these people either fleeing to Europe on their own, or being taken as slaves. The Roma have always remained wanderers and have not assimilated into any society. While they were originally regarded as good metal workers, musicians and soldiers, they were later persecuted because of their differences.

The United Nations and other international organizations are insisting Europe give an opportunity to Roma to integrate into society. This will require effort by both sides. The Roma will have to give up their ways as well, while Europe figures out how to deal with a problem that is not going away any time soon.

Write a ½-1 page reflection on any topic in this article.

- Why did students protest? How would you react if that had happened in your presence?
- Do you feel this was handled correctly? Why or why not?
- Does this remind you of anything you've seen or heard before?