

WHY AND HOW TO BE A ROMA?

Identification Processes of the Students of Roma Access Program at CEU

By

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ABSTRACT

The Roma Access Program (RAP) at Central European University is a one-year preparatory program designed to facilitate access of young Roma to post-graduate education. In doing this, the program aims to contribute to the improvement of the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, in the long run. Asserting that identities are not fixed, but rather relational; the study in hand examines the definition of Roma identity constructed and interiorized in RAP, and the relationships of power and privilege determinant in construction of a definition of being Roma. Additionally, the study analyzes how being enrolled in a program on the basis of their ethnicity influence self-identifications of the students and the relationships among them. While examining the identification processes of the students and the likely outcomes of the program, the study takes RAP in relation to wider pro-Roma networks, and policies aiming at empowerment of Roma.

Depending on the fourteen interviews held with the students, tutors and administrators of the program, and the theoretical concepts of “social fields”, “social and symbolic capitals”; the study claims that RAP turns to be an educational venue equipping the students with previous access to social capital, with symbolic capital. At the same time, the study suggests that while self-identification as Roma turns to be an asset facilitating students’ access to RAP and to pro-Roma organizations, defining being Roma is the main site of contestation for the students at RAP. Lastly, asserting that the program remains weak in recognizing the structural inequalities “within” the Roma community, the study remains skeptical towards the achievement of the longer-term aim of the program, which is to contribute to improvement of the situation of Roma in the region.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
List of Abbreviations	iv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 About RAP	6
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	11
2.1 Conceptualizing Identity and Identification	12
2.2 Social Field.....	15
2.2.1 Transnational Social Field Approach.....	18
2.2.1.1 <i>Locating Identity in Space and Time</i>	19
2.2.1.2 <i>Conceptualizing Simultaneity</i>	20
2.3 Relationships of Power and Privilege in Construction of Dispositions	21
2.3.1 Social Field as a Site of Domination, Subordination and Equivalence.....	24
2.4 Implications of Theory on the Study of RAP (or Conclusion):	26
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY:	29
3.1 The Sample of Interviewees	29
3.1.1 Background Information of The Interviewees	31
3.2 Access to Informants and the Interview Processes.....	32
3.3 The Topic Guide	33
3.4 Analysis.....	36
3.5 Research Ethics.....	38
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS	40
4.1 Access to Roma Access Program	41
4.1.1 The Role of Social Capital	41
4.1.2 Strategic Uses of Identity.....	45
4.1.3 Students' Perception of the Application Process.....	49
4.2 Social Field as a Site of Domination, Subordination and Equivalence.....	51
4.2.1 Pressures on the Autonomy of the Students	52
4.2.1.1 <i>Unpacking "Internal Restrictions"</i>	57
4.2.2 Struggles on Defining Proper Roma.....	59
4.2.2.1 <i>How Is Roma Identity Defined?</i>	59
4.2.2.2 <i>Who Defines Being Roma?</i>	65
4.3 Different Ways of Identification and Implications of Symbolic Capital.....	72
4.3.1 Identification Processes.....	72
4.3.2 RAP in Acquisition of Symbolic Capital	77
4.3.3 Decade of Roma Inclusion and Implications of Symbolic Capital	79
4.3.3.1 <i>Affirmation vs. Transformation</i>	83
4.4 Conclusion.....	85
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION:.....	87
APPENDIX I- The Application Form	93
APPENDIX II- TOPIC GUIDES.....	95
Appendix II. I The Topic Guide for the Students.....	95
Appendix II.II. Topic Guide for the Tutors	97
APPENDIX III: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK.....	99
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	100

List of Abbreviations

CEU : Central European University

MA : Master of Arts

NGOs : Non-governmental Organizations

OSI : Open Society Initiative

RAP : Roma Access Program

REF : Roma Education Fund

RELP : Roma English Language Program

RGPP : Roma Graduate Preparation Program

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Roma Access program (RAP) is a one year-preparatory program for post-graduate studies offered to Roma students within the body of Central European University (CEU). While the program is designed to facilitate access of young Roma to the University's post-graduate programs in Social Sciences, it also offers a field of inquiry for social sciences, especially for Sociology and Political Science: as it can provide insights about questions related to identity formation and socialization in general, and can also serve as an example that illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of such programs targeting the empowerment of ethnic groups (often referred to as “affirmative action programs”).

Relying on twelve semi-structured and two exploratory interviews held with the students, graduates, tutors and administrators of the program, this thesis mainly looks at how the students define their ethnic identity, how processes of identity formation are shaped by the relationships of power and privilege, how identity can be used as an asset to access different resources, and how institutional expectations about what it means to be a “proper Roma” influence the students' self-identification. In this context, RAP is considered not only as a discrete entity within CEU, but also in its wider relationship with local and transnational pro-Roma networks and wider policies aiming at the empowerment of Roma (including the ones in the field of education). In this way, the study attempts to conceptualize the ways different connections of the students to these networks and policies (or their drive for them) influence their identity formation and the relationships among them. Moreover, examining RAP with regard to its position among the policies targeting the empowerment of Roma provides important insights about the likely outcomes (with regard to the longer-term aim of RAP to

contribute to improvement of the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe) of the program.

From my preliminary observations of the program as a CEU student and as a non-Roma tenant of the CEU dormitory -second floor of which hosts Roma students- I could see that there are several ways in which RAP students define themselves, even though their studies and daily lives are mostly characterized by the centrality of their ethnic identity. Every participant in the program is a bearer of more than one identity (ethnicity, but also gender, nationality, class, age, etc.). However, ethnicity is the key criterion for their enrollment in the program since their *nominal* identity (e.g. self-identification as Roma) is a formal condition for their admission. This yields questions as to how the students manage their different belongings and how they perceive their own identity. It also raises the question of the relationship between their “official” self-identification and their “real” sense of identity: as I could observe both in my everyday life and later in my interviews, not all of the students identify themselves Roma, or as *primarily* Roma. Engaging with identity issues therefore also implies looking more closely at the strategic uses of identity.

My preliminary observations also suggested that in addition to the ways the students define themselves, the ways they define Roma identity itself are not uniform. That is why this research will look at how RAP students identify themselves and how they reflect upon their identity, their relationship with the other Roma students, and the aims of the RAP.

Starting from identity as a *relational* concept relying on Jenkins’s conceptualization, this research thematizes Roma identity as an individual and collective construction and, at the individual level, as the product of a process of interiorization that is affected by RAP. It also examines in what ways the students’ aspirations to access to different resources influence their self-identification or, in other words, whether and how they shape their identity for strategic reasons.

As a theoretical background this thesis relies on the Bourdieuan conception of social field¹, and on the transnational social field perspective² which is prominent in migration studies. While with the concept of social field, Bourdieu draws attention to the relationships of power and privilege that are decisive in construction of social relationships and dispositions, according to him, each individual has different field positions determined by the distribution of different forms of capitals³. And relying on Bourdieu's conceptualization, transnational social fields approach provides insights about the social fields transcending nation-state boundaries⁴. The reason behind employing a social field perspective relying on Bourdieu and the scholars of transnational social field approach is that the perspective provides the necessary framework both for studying identity as a relational concept, and also for examining the relationships of power and privilege which are constructive for identification processes.

Examining the relationships of power and privilege that are part and parcel of these identification processes requires taking different "field positions" of the students into account. My preliminary observations and the interviews held demonstrate that social and symbolic capitals play the decisive role in the ways students of RAP define themselves. While social capital brings access to resources through networks, symbolic capital is the capital in the eyes of others and embodied in socially recognized legitimization of holders of it⁵. And looking at students' prior access to different sorts of capitals, and their drives for better access to these capitals in different fields demonstrate that social and symbolic capitals are at utmost

¹ Michael Grenfell ed. *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*. (Durham: Acumen Publishing Limited, 2008)

² P. Levitt and Glick Schiller, N. "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society" *International Migration Review*, vol. 38, no. 3 (Fall 2004): 1002-1030.

³ Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma and Moishe Postone, *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*. (Oxford: Polity Press in assoc. with Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p. 5.

⁴ Levitt and Schiller, p. 1008.

⁵ Calhoun, et.al., p. 1, 13.

important both in determining access of the students to RAP (as embeddedness in pro-Roma networks turns to be a notable factor enhancing students' access to RAP) and to transnational pro-Roma networks (as with the program the students of RAP are introduced to these networks, and equipped with social recognition), and also for shaping the relationships between them and the ways they identify themselves. Thus, the study places a heavier emphasis on social and symbolic capitals while discussing the relationships among the students, and the construction of Roma identity in RAP.

Relying on all those, the study attempts to see the relationships of power and privilege determining the ways Roma identity is defined in the particular context of RAP, while researching the ways these definitions influence the autonomy of the students, and their self-identification. Additionally, the study asks what kinds of previous field positions (in terms of their access to different resources) are more favorable for students' access to RAP and with what kind of resources RAP equips its graduates. Providing answers to this last question also sheds light on discussions about wider issues, namely whether the program can really contribute to empowerment of Roma in general, or whether it is likely to benefit only those Roma with the most favorable preconditions. Moreover, the study researches the ways students' drive for access to different resources influence their self-identification. In this vein, the study examines students' motivations to identify themselves Roma when they seek access to resources such a self-identification can bring (e.g. access to RAP).

The first claim of the paper is that in a program notably characterized by ethnic identity of Roma, how being Roma is defined turns to be a site of struggle. And in examining the ways Roma identity is defined in the context of RAP, the study researches the relationships of power and privilege and the role of perceived expectations of RAP as an institution (including the funders and the administration) from the students. Then the study

looks at what kind of an impact the definition of Roma identity constructed in RAP has on the autonomy of individuals and on the ways they identify themselves.

In addition to this, the paper asserts that all the struggles about the definition of being Roma, and the strategic uses of identity in order to promote social mobility have important implications for individual identification processes. In other words, I will show that being Roma is not experienced in the same way by all the bearers of this identity, and that the ways the students identify themselves are shaped by the particular contexts they are parts of, and by their attempts to gain access to different resources, and different field positions.

Finally, I claim that the program is “elitist” in the sense that it is much more accessible to those Roma who have higher prior access to different sorts of capitals (social capital in particular, because access to the program is partly conditioned by the applicant’s pre-existing connections with pro-Roma networks). At the same time, the program itself equips Roma students with further symbolic capital which is embodied in their recognition by pro-Roma organizations such as Roma Education Fund, OSI and Roma Decade Secretariat Foundation. Moreover, examining the likely long-term outcomes of RAP in relation to affirmative action policies and transnational pro-Roma networks suggests that the program remains weak in considering the structural divisions within the Roma community. Thus, while the program remains rather reachable to those with further access to different sorts of capitals (particularly social capital), it remains weak in overcoming injustices within Roma community and likely to serve to the reproduction of them.

The thesis is structured as follows:

After providing a brief information on RAP in the following part, the study elaborates the theoretical concepts of identities, identifications, (transnational) social fields, and economic, cultural, social and symbolic capitals (ch. 2). The methodology chapter (ch. 3) then

provides information on my interviews: the interview process, sample of interviewees and data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the findings, starting with a discussion of the factors that increase the students' access to RAP, and shows that one's prior access to social capital is at utmost important for his/her access to RAP. Additionally, this first argues that Roma identity itself turns to be an asset facilitating students' access to RAP and to some other resources, and thus is subject to strategic uses. The second section of the analysis chapter deals with the definition of being Roma as constructed and interiorized in the context of RAP, and examines the relationships of power and privilege that are constitutive for the ways Roma identity is dominantly defined. The last section looks at the identification processes of the students and the ways students' drives for access to transnational pro-Roma networks influence these processes. This section also shows by equipping the students with symbolic capital, RAP in turn facilitates their access to pro-Roma networks. Finally, likely long-term outcomes of RAP are discussed in relation to broader affirmative policies aiming at empowerment of Roma. This section namely raises critical questions as to RAP's potential to correct social inequalities among Roma.

Lastly, the conclusion provides a brief summary of the outcomes of the study, while it reserves place for the discussions on the strengths and weaknesses of affirmative policies in the field of education.

1.1 About RAP

The Roma Access Program (RAP) is a non-degree, one year-preparatory program for post-graduate studies offered to Roma students within the body of Central European University (CEU). The longer-term objective of the program is to prepare young, promising Roma for academic and advocacy work with the aim of contributing to the improvement of

the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. The program which was established in the body of CEU in 2004 defines its goals as “to contribute to the development of a core group of young Roma future leaders, and to create role-models for other young Roma.”⁶ The program is funded by VELUX Foundations, Open Society Foundations, Roma Initiatives Office, and the Roma Education Fund⁷.

Starting from 2012, CEU enrolls Roma students from Central and Eastern European countries (and from Turkey in addition to those) to two different preparation programs. The first program which has been known as RAP since its establishment in the body of CEU in 2004, has from 2012 been renamed as Roma Graduate Preparation Program (RGPP). The program provides intensive academic tutoring classes (in disciplines such as Gender Studies, International Relations and European Studies, Law/Human Rights, Nationalism, Political Science, Public Policy, and Sociology) while also offering training in English Language and Academic Writing. Additionally, students enrolled in this program are able to attend core degree programs of CEU, by auditing CEU’s master level classes in the second semester of their studies.

The other program enrolling particularly Roma students from Central and Eastern European countries in CEU is Roma English Language Program (RELP). This program with a particular focus on English language training used to operate in the body of American University in Bulgaria until 2011 when it was moved to Budapest under the administration of CEU.

Throughout the paper, these two preparation programs designed for Roma students will be referred under the common label of RAP (apart from the times the paper refers to the particular statements of the students from one of the two programs) as both programs are

⁶ <http://rap.ceu.hu/about-us>

⁷ Roma Education Fund is sponsored and supported by the governments, NGOs and Development Agencies in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and also by private sector. <http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/support-ref-2005-2015>

included into the same framework of “preparing promising Roma youth to compete for places of study in English-language Master's degree programs at CEU and other recognized universities and to carry advocacy work on Roma issues⁸” by CEU and the funders. Additionally, the students enrolled in both of the preparatory programs are accommodating in the same floor of CEU Conference and Residence Center which hosts CEU students. Although the general policy of the dormitory “to locate students of the same departments into the same floors” does not operate strictly, it is possible to observe that the students of the two Roma preparatory programs are living in the second floor. One exception to this rule is about previous students of RAP who have been enrolled in MA programs in CEU after completing preparatory program. Most of those students are living in the ninth floor as they have been located in the ninth floor during their previous studies and kept their rooms after they finished the preparatory program.

Apart from the courses, CEU offers some venues for those students enrolled in RAP to engage in “critical debates regarding the political, economic and social condition and status of Roma through seminars that combine the study of history and identity with recent developments in the politics of governing Roma communities in the region⁹”

Eligible candidates for RAP are those Roma students from Southeastern & Central Europe and former Soviet Union countries¹⁰ with a university degree, preferably in the Social Sciences and Humanities. About the application process, there are two main issues worth mentioning here as they are related to main topic of the paper. Firstly, the first question of the application form appears to be “Are you Roma?¹¹”, and this question has been the main tool to determine whether applicants are Roma which constitutes the main criteria for admission.

⁸ <http://rap.ceu.hu/node/21457>

⁹ <http://rap.ceu.hu/node/21457>

¹⁰ Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, and Ukraine

¹¹ An example of the application form can be found in Appendix I.

Secondly, the institution strongly recommends to have a reference letter proving applicants' previous engagement with Roma issues from a "recognized Roma Organization". This requirement will be central to discussions on social and symbolic capital, while also has been a point referred by interviewees.

While talking about RAP, it is also necessary to locate the program within wider framework of policies and institutions targeting improvement of socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma. Angela Kóczé and Márton Rövid tell about emergence of a pro-Roma microcosm within global civil society¹². Although the roots of pro-Roma activism in Europe can be traced back to 1920s and 1930s¹³, the contemporary nature of this microcosm is worth mentioning as RAP turns to be an important component of such policies targeting inclusion of Roma in the field of education.

The contemporary embodiment of this pro-Roma microcosm can be found in Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. Although RAP has been established a year before the initiation of the decade, it has significant connections with the organizations and government agencies included in Decade of Roma Inclusion. The Decade which was launched by OSI and World Bank, included several non-governmental and inter-governmental actors since then¹⁴. And, what makes this special microcosm significant for the study of RAP is the fact that (as stated by the tutors and also staff of the organizations included in this microcosm) RAP constitutes the main recruitment basis¹⁵ for the organizations and governmental agencies involved in the decade. Additionally, because most of the students of RAP are seeking positions in and recognition by these organizations, students' drives for access to these organizations

¹² Angela Kóczé and Marton Rövid, "Pro-Roma Civil Society: Acting For, With or Instead Roma?" 2012, p.110.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ OSI, World Bank, United Nations Development Program, Council of Europe, Council of Europe Development Bank, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, the European Roma Information Office, the European Roma and Traveller Forum, and the European Roma Rights Center. (taken from Kóczé & Rövid)

¹⁵ Tr. 7, p. 1.

constitute an important factor determining the relationships between them and their self-identifications. Thus, in the analysis chapter reflections of the students' drive for this transnational networks on RAP will be examined. Additionally, since most of the graduates of the program take their places within this transnational pro-Roma network, likely long-term outcomes of RAP will be elaborated in relation to the promises and weaknesses of this special pro-Roma microcosm.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study in hand is grounded on Richard Jenkins's conceptualization of identity, as it does while viewing the processes of identification. While taking identity as a relational phenomenon rather than a fixed one, Jenkins argues against taking identities given above the practices of the bearers of them¹⁶. In this respect, identity is conceptualized in terms of process and it cannot be analyzed in isolation from the particular ways the agents identify themselves. Conceptualizing identity "as identification at work¹⁷", Jenkins attempts to avoid the distinction made by social scientists between structure and action while he also attempts to underline the relationships of power and privilege that determine particular ways identities are constructed.

In this respect, Jenkins comes closer to Pierre Bourdieu in his attempt to overcome the division between structures and agents, while what Pierre Bourdieu refers to as "field" provides the necessary framework for making relational analysis.¹⁸ Thus, the study mobilizes Pierre Bourdieu's conception of social field, and locates the discussions on identities and identifications within this wider framework. In addition to this, transnational social field perspective¹⁹ employed by the scholars of transnational migration provides important theoretical tools for examining identity as a relational concept.

Applying a social field perspective does not only provide insights about the ways individuals identify themselves, it also sheds light on the relationships of power and privilege shaping the practices of the individuals. So, the framework offered by Bourdieu will also be

¹⁶ Jenkins, 2004, pp. 8-51 & 124-159

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁸ Calhoun et.al, pp: 3, 5.

¹⁹ Levitt & Schiller, 2004.

used in analyzing the relationships between the students enrolled in RAP. What brings Jenkin's conceptualization of identification and Bourdieu's conceptualization of social field even more closer in this attempt to analyze RAP, is the fact that the lives of the students enrolled in the program are notably characterized by the ethnic identity of Roma. In addition to this, the accesses of the students to the program and to transnational networks of pro-Roma organizations also have a lot to do with Roma identity. Thus, the study analyzes the relationships of power and privilege among the students of RAP, and the ways Roma identity is constructed and used by the agents with a social field perspective.

Relying on all of these, the chapter starts with a theoretical introduction to Jenkins's conceptualization of identity which takes identity as a relational concept. And since applying a social field perspective provides the necessary framework for such an analysis, the chapter goes on by providing a theoretical introduction to Bourdieu's conception of social field and to the transnational social field perspective which relies on Bourdieu's conception of social field. As applying a social field perspective also provides an entry point for the analysis on relationships of power and privilege determining the ways identities are constructed and identifications are practiced; the chapter introduces the concepts of social, symbolic, cultural and economic capitals as the tools to examine what Jenkins refers to as relationships of power and privilege in the third section. Lastly, the chapter concludes with a brief discussion on how all these theoretical concepts come together in examining RAP.

2.1 Conceptualizing Identity and Identification

Taking identity as a relational concept, Jenkins argues against the tendency to make clear-cut distinctions between individual and collective identities as the two are taken to be mutually constructive. In his attempt to accommodate the individual and collective while theorizing identification, Jenkins talks about three distinct orders that the world is constructed

and experienced: The individual order, the interaction order, and the institutional order²⁰. In his explanation of individual order, Jenkins states, in this order an understanding of selfhood emerges as an outcome of “dialectical synthesis of internal and external definitions²¹” (definitions of oneself offered by others). On the other hand, according to Jenkins, the interaction order is where the selfhood is validated. This talk about validation of self-hood is a reminder that identification is not only about self-assessment, but rather it is something also shaped by what people think about us. And this line of argument brings what Goffman calls “impression management strategies” in the construction of identity to the forefront in examining identification.

Impression management, in the words of Jenkins “draws to our attention the performative aspects of identity and the fact that the identification is a routine aspect of everyday life.”²² And referring to Goffman’s “impression management strategies”, Jenkins draws attention to the role of self-conscious decision-making in the processes of identification. Recognizing that identifications (and the construction of the identities) are to be found “in the dialectical synthesis of internal and external definitions²³” and can be mobilized self-consciously, has important implications on studying the identification processes of the students of RAP. And the implications of the theory and the strategic uses of identity will be discussed in the light of interviews in the analysis chapter.

The third order Jenkins describes is the institutional order. Talking about the institutional order, Jenkins makes the distinction between “groups” which identify and define themselves; and categories which are identified and defined by others²⁴ which is the distinction between the way the groups define themselves and the way they are defined by the

²⁰ Jenkins, 2004., p. 17.

²¹ Ibid., p. 19.

²² Ibid., p. 20.

²³ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

others. Revisiting the internal-external dialectic, it is possible to say that group identification and categorization feedback upon each other.

The distinction Jenkins makes between nominal identity and virtual identity that is the distinction between name and experience also has important implications for analyzing identification processes in the interaction and institutional orders. The distinction drawn between the two implies that the individuals may have the same nominal identity, however this might not influence their lives in the same way, or they might be practicing identity differently. In the words of Jenkins:

Nominally, the categorization of people, by state agencies for example, may be subject to change and it may be resisted. It may also be part of a virtual change in their conditions of existence and quality of life²⁵.

And the impact of institutional categorizations on self and group identifications in the particular context of RAP will also be discussed in the analysis chapter.

To sum up, all these three orders mentioned by Jenkins co-operate and determine the ways identities are constructed, and constitute the identification processes. In other words, the way the one perceives him/herself, the ways he/she is perceived by others, and the constructed categories are constitutive for each other and are (re) constructive for identities. And in the interplay of these three orders, what determines particular ways of identification is the relationships of domination and resistance. In the words of Jenkins:

Identities exist and are acquired, claimed and allocated within power relations. Identification is something over which struggles take place and with which strategems are advanced- it is means and end in politics- and at stake is the classification of populations as well the classification of individuals.²⁶

And the Bourdieuan conception of social field and the capitals at stake in social fields (social, economic, cultural, symbolic) provide the necessary framework for examining the

²⁵ Ibid., p. 22.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

relations of power and privilege in the processes of identification. Thus, the next section introduces the Bourdieuan concept of the field, and provides a brief theoretical introduction to transnational social fields perspective which informs about the need to view identity within multiple relations and in particular space and time it is advanced, while also taking multiple connections of the individuals into account.

2.2 Social Field

Jenkins and Bourdieu come closer in their attempt to overcome the strict distinctions made between structure and agent in analyzing the social world. Stating neither objectivism nor subjectivism can adequately grasp the social life, Bourdieu attempts to transcend the opposition between structure and agent. “Social life, Bourdieu argues, must be understood in terms that do justice both to objective material, social, and cultural structures and to the constituting practices and experiences of individuals and groups.”²⁷ In his attempt to overcome the theoretical oppositions (between agency and structure) characterizing social theory, Bourdieu introduces the concept of “habitus.” While also according to Jenkins habitus provides a bridge between subjectivism and objectivism, it can be defined as:

A system of general generative schemes that are both durable (inscribed in the social construction of the self) and transposable (from one field to another), function on an unconscious plane, and take place within a structured space of possibilities (defined by the intersection of material conditions and fields of operation)²⁸

So the habitus is constitutive of the person in action inter-subjectively, while it is taken to be a system of dispositions. In relation to habitus, the two other theoretical tools Bourdieu employs in bringing structure and agent together in his thinking are; “the field” and “the capitals at stake in a field”. And these three are taken to be constitutive for each other. According to Bourdieu, position of a particular agent is “the result of an interplay between

²⁷ Calhoun et.al., p. 3.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 4.

that person's habitus and his/her place in a field of positions as defined by the distribution of the appropriate form of capital.²⁹”

What such a conception of field underlines is the fact that agents do not act in a vacuum, while it also provides the framework for “relational analysis” as stated by Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone³⁰. Defined in this way, Bourdieu's conception of social field provides a larger framework to locate Jenkin's theorization of identity and identifications. Jenkin's emphasis on dialectical relationship between internal and external (that is subjective and objective) in identification, his emphasis on the role of domination and resistance in the processes of identification have a lot to do with Bourdieu's conceptualization of social field where dispositions are constructed in relation to resources in one's hand. While the next section provides a theoretical introduction to the resources/capitals at stake in the social fields that are constructive of the practices and dispositions, following part provides a brief introduction to the transnational social field perspective.

It is worth mentioning the transnational social fields perspective for the aims of this study as the approach provides implications of the idea that “agents do not act in a vacuum”, in the study of identities. In addition to this, the approach brings the transnational component into the studies of social fields. However, before moving into this direction it is worth to say a few words about the way RAP is located within a social field perspective in general.

RAP can be taken as a field in itself relying on Bourdieu's explanation of fields which “involve four semi-structured levels: the field of power, the broad field under consideration, the specific field, and social agents in the field as a field in themselves” (e.g.: field of power, field of education, the discipline as a field, the university, department or school as fields)³¹. However, talking about the fields in such a subdivided way results in encountering with so

²⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Patricia Thomson. “Field” in *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*. Michael Grenfell ed. (Durham: Acumen Publishing Limited, 2008), p. 79.

many fields as stated by Patricia Thomson, and brings together the problem of “too many fields”³² in analyzing the social world.

In relation to this, Bourdieu has been criticized by not offering boundaries for the fields, which may lead to ending up with high numbers of fields. However, he suggests (what can be taken as a counter argument towards such criticisms) “the boundaries of the fields are imprecise and shifting, determinable only by empirical research.”³³ And he adds, the more a society is complex and socially differentiated, the more relatively autonomous fields it is likely to have, while he also states that each field is semi-autonomous in relation to the others. In order to avoid this problem of “too many fields”, and bearing in mind Bourdieu’s statement that each-field is semi-autonomous, the study in hand attempts to avoid taking RAP as an autonomous social field in itself. However, what the empirical study held suggests is to take RAP as a specific, semi- autonomous sub-field which is strongly connected to transnational pro-Roma networks and larger field of education. Thus, what the study in hand intends to do is to look at reflection of different field positions of agents on the relationships they develop in RAP which is taken to be a sub-field in relation to transnational pro-Roma networks and larger field of education.

The positions of the agents in different fields (determined by the capitals in their hands), and their drives for access to resources in different fields are decisive for their positions in particular contexts³⁴. Thus, the study attempts to look at the way the capitals the students brought with themselves; the way their positions in the field of education; and the ways their drive for further access to different resources in different fields shape the relationships among them. Such a perspective requires one to view multiple and simultaneous

³² Ibid.

³³ Richard Jenkins, *Key Sociologists: Pierre Bourdieu*. (New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 53.

³⁴ Levitt & Schiller, p. 1010.

connections of the individuals; and this is where the transnational social field approach with its attempt to conceptualize simultaneity comes to the forefront.

2.2.1 Transnational Social Field Approach

Transnational social field perspective “proposes a view of society and social membership based on a concept of social field that distinguishes between different ways of being and belonging.³⁵” According to Schiller and Levitt, although Bourdieu’s approach does not preclude the notion of transnational social field, there is not a direct discussion on implications of social fields that transcend state boundaries in his theorization³⁶. Thus, depending on Bourdieu’s conception of social field, transnational social field approach discusses the implications of social fields that are going beyond state boundaries. With their focus being on migration and the migrants, the scholars of transnational social field perspective underlie that individuals within transnational social fields are “influenced by multiple sets of laws and institutions” through their everyday activities and relationships³⁷. Emphasizing this transnational component in the study of RAP is important since the students enrolled in the RAP are coming from different countries, and viewing themselves as part of a broad transnational network while seeking for access to transnational pro-Roma networks (which shapes their practices).

Mobilizing the theoretical tools advanced by transnational social perspective in the study of RAP is useful from two other different angles. Firstly, the perspective provides important insights about the ways identities should be studied. At the same time, the approach underlies the ways multiple connections of the individuals shape their practices.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 1008.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 1010.

2.2.1.1 Locating Identity in Space and Time

Transnational social field approach warns against the fallacy of “methodological nationalism” in the study of societies and identities. Methodological nationalism is defined as “the tendency to accept the nation-state and its boundaries as a given in social analysis.³⁸”. In a broader sense, methodological nationalism leads naturalization of boundaries of the nation state, and limitation of analysis by those, while ignoring the role of nationalism in modern societies. Being cautioned against methodological nationalism for such a study is important as scholars of transnational social fields approach warn against the problematic usages of the term ethnicity. Wimmer and Schiller explain how naturalization of nation-state and national identities in relation to it influences analysis on ethnicities. According to them, this sort of a naturalization of nation-states leads anthropologists to describe ethnic groups “as culturally different from the majority population because of their different historical origin, including their history of migration, rather than see these differences as a consequence of the politicization of ethnicity.³⁹” What’s more, according to the authors, such naturalization makes it even harder to spot the differentiations within the ethnic groups. Thus, the scholars state, in order to avoid the fallacy of methodological nationalism, it is necessary to view ethnic groups within the context they are located, rather than taking them as stable, unified units.

Additionally, transnational social field approach warns against taking the identities as given above the practices of those who are taken to be bearers of it, and outside the particular relations between them and “outsiders”; instead, they propose to take identity more as a relational phenomena and to see what it refers to and how it is employed in different ways, in

³⁸ Levitt & Schiller, p. 1007.

³⁹ A. Wimmer and Glick Schiller N. “Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-state Building, Migration and the Social Sciences,” in *Global Networks*, vol. 2, 2002 p. 306.

different contexts. According to the scholars of transnational social field approach, such a formulation of identity enables one to move away from adopting ethnic lenses which prevents to spot impact of multiple connections while “prioritizing one form of subjectivity over all others⁴⁰”

2.2.1.2 Conceptualizing Simultaneity⁴¹

While warning against taking identities as given above the practices of the subjects, and underlining the need of examining identities in the particular contexts they are constructed; transnational social field approach does not view these contexts as isolated areas. On the contrary, it underlies the need of considering multiple connections of the subjects and their impacts on the relationships they develop in these particular contexts. In examining the multiple and simultaneous connections of individuals to different fields, and their impacts on the ways they define themselves and on the relationships they develop; transnational social field approach underlies the distinction between ways of being and belonging. . Ways of being, according to Schiller and Levitt, “refers to actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in, rather than to the identities associated with their actions.⁴²”. Social fields contain various institutions, organizations, experiences which constitute identities. However an individual embedded in a social field may not necessarily identify her/himself with those labels or cultural politics associated with the social field. On the other hand, the practices which can be referred to as “ways of belonging” signal a conscious connection to a certain group. “Ways of belonging combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies.⁴³”

⁴⁰ Ayşe Çağlar, “Locating Migrant Hometown Ties in Time and Space: Locality as a blind spot of migrations scholarship”, 2013, p. 32.

⁴¹ Levitt & Schiller, p. 1002.

⁴² Levitt & Schiller, p. 1010.

⁴³ Ibid.

This distinction made between ways of being and belonging has important implications on approach's attempt to conceptualize simultaneity. As stated by Schiller and Levitt, "individuals within transnational social fields combine ways of being and ways of belonging differently in specific contexts."⁴⁴ And what the study in hand intends to examine is the ways individuals manage their multiple and simultaneous connections to different fields in the context of RAP.

2.3 Relationships of Power and Privilege in Construction of Dispositions

While taking students enrolled in the program within wider sets of relations, and making this distinction between different ways of being and belonging, the paper attempts to point out the particular factors behind different ways of defining and practicing Roma identity. Here again, Bourdieu's conception of social field that brings power relations into the analysis turns to be central. Once again, a social field, in the sense Bourdieu conceptualizes it, is defined as "structured system of social positions – occupied either by individuals and institutions- the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants"⁴⁵. And the social positions within a field stand in relationships of domination, subordination or equivalence to each other "by virtue of access they afford to the goods or resources (capital) which are at stake in the field."⁴⁶

Defined in this way, applying a social field perspective enables one to grasp that identity as all different sorts of dispositions is not fixed, but relational; while also the perspective points out the role of relationships of power and privilege that are decisive for identification processes. In addition to this, a social field perspective is also useful in analyzing the practices the students of RAP are going through (with regard to relationships of power and privilege) in a context notably characterized by ethnic identity. In order to be able

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 1010.

⁴⁵ Jenkins, 1992, p. 61.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

to examine the factors shaping practices, and identifications of the actors in the fields, it is necessary to look at the factors shaping relationships of power and privilege.

According to Bourdieu there are four forms of capitals at stake in the social fields: economic capital, social capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital; distribution of which position agents within the social fields. While economic capital implies money and assets, the cultural capital is embodied in the forms of knowledge, taste, aesthetic and cultural preferences⁴⁷. In Bourdieu's conceptualization, cultural capital is institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications. With this concept, Bourdieu underlies the investment strategies (in terms of money and time) of the subjects to acquire academic ability, which in turn can be transmitted to economic capital. Additionally, he emphasizes "the contribution which the educational system makes to the reproduction of the social structure by sanctioning the hereditary transmission of cultural capital⁴⁸" while he examines educational investments within families, or in other words while examining the domestic transmission of cultural capital.

On the other hand, social and symbolic capitals turn to be central for the scope and the content of this study. Bourdieu defines social capital as:

The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group- which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.⁴⁹

The networks of relationships, which create the basis for social capital, are not static. As Bourdieu rightly puts it "the networks of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or

⁴⁷ Grenfell, p. 69.

⁴⁸ Pierre Bourdieu. "The forms of capital" in J. Richardson ed. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York, Greenwood, 1986), p.49.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in short or long term⁵⁰.” So, while social capital enhances access of holders of it to the resources through networks, what this study attempts to look at is the “investment strategies” of the agents and kind of relationships they establish and reproduce, looking at the case of RAP.

On the other hand, symbolic capital refers to “degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honor and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge and recognition⁵¹.” Symbolic capital –“socially recognized legitimization such as prestige or honor⁵²” is the capital in the eyes of others, and together with other capitals it advantages and disadvantages the agents. What the main advantage a symbolic capital brings is the recognition in the eyes of others, and the chances this brings for achieving more desirable field positions.⁵³

These four types of capitals do not stand in isolation from each other. The convertibility between these different types constitutes “the basis of the strategies aimed at ensuring the reproduction of capitals⁵⁴.” According to Bourdieu economic capital is the one which can be converted to different types of capital in easiest way. And even though economic capital is at the root of other types of capitals, the effects of the capitals are not reducible to economic capital. Additionally, transformations of capitals require a specific labor like care, expenditure of time and so on⁵⁵. Thus, the ones with higher access to different sorts of capitals are likely to accumulate more, as they are more likely to invest time, care, and expenditures conversions require. And according to Bourdieu, education as a field also

⁵⁰ Ibid., 1986, p. 52.

⁵¹ Pierre Bourdieu *The Field of Cultural Production*. ed. Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993) p. 7.

⁵² The Sociological Cinema: Bourdieu’s Forms of Capital:
<http://www.thesociologicalcinema.com/1/post/2013/01/bourdieu-forms-of-capital-in-pretty-woman.html>

⁵³ Grenfell, p. 141.

⁵⁴ Bourdieu, 1986, p. 54.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

plays role in the conversion of capitals, and serves to the reproduction of power and privileges since the holders of different sorts of capital are advantaged at the outset, in their access to education⁵⁶.

What the study in hand attempts to analyze relying on these definitions is the relationship between social and symbolic capitals in the context of RAP, and their role in the ways Roma identity is defined and practiced in RAP. And the statements of the students suggest that RAP turns to be an institution enhancing agents' access to symbolic capital relying on their acquisition of social capital; while with the recognition it brings, symbolic capital also serves to gain further access to social capital. While these claims will be discussed further in detail in the analysis section empirically, it is worth to mention about the role of social and symbolic capitals in shaping the relationships among the subjects and construction of identities and dispositions from a social field perspective.

2.3.1 Social Field as a Site of Domination, Subordination and Equivalence

Applying a social field approach, symbolic capital becomes decisive in construction of relationships of domination, subordination or equivalence. With the concept of symbolic capital Bourdieu draws attention to the fact that “value of any capital largely depends upon social recognition⁵⁷”. And relying on this recognition, the holders of symbolic capital are likely to dominate the ways the categories, relationships and dispositions are re-produced. In addition to this, stating that holders of symbolic capital are least likely to change categories of perception⁵⁸, Bourdieu draws attention to reproductive impact of symbolic capital in shaping the relationships and the dispositions in different fields. When it comes to acquisition of symbolic capital, this has a lot to do with actors' previous access to different sorts of capitals;

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 49.

⁵⁷ Grenfell, p. 88.

⁵⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, ed. J.B. Thompson (Cambridge, Polity, 1991) p. 56

according to Bourdieu, individual's early experiences in the sense their prior access to different types of capitals contribute disproportionately to the construction of dispositions. And in the social fields, dominated groups with their relatively lower access to different sorts of capitals are likely to move "in the direction of dominant positions"⁵⁹

So, according to these conceptualizations, the ones with further access to different sorts of capitals are likely to dominate construction of dispositions and relationships in the social fields they are located. And one of the main claims of this paper is that ethnic identity (and defining it) turns to be a main site of contestation in a context notably characterized by ethnic identity like RAP. Relying on Bourdieu's discussion on roles of four types of capitals in construction of dispositions, it is possible to claim that due to diverging accesses of agents to the capitals, particular ways identities are defined are likely to dominate this site of contestation. And in analyzing how certain ways identities are defined put pressure on the autonomy of the bearers of these identities, the study relies on Appiah's discussion on group rights. Appiah, according to whom "between politics of recognition and the politics of compulsion there is no bright line" states, collective identities calling for recognition come with notions of "how a proper person of that kind behaves", and in turn put pressure on the autonomy of the individuals⁶⁰.

However, as implied by social fields perspective, this is not a one-sided relationship that can be analyzed within the dichotomy between oppressed and oppressor. Applying a social field perspective enables one to view what kind of reactions, strategems the subjects excluded by dominant definitions advance⁶¹ as the perspective reminds that relations in the fields are not unidirectional. Thus, the study attempts to see the role of social and symbolic

⁵⁹ Grenfell, p. 144

⁶⁰ K. Anthony Appiah, "Identity, Authenticity, Survival: Multicultural Societies and Social Reproduction" in Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp: 149, 163.

⁶¹ Jenkins, 1992, pp. 52, 53.

capitals in (re) construction of dispositions, while also trying to point out the strategems the agents advance against the dominant positions.

2.4 Implications of Theory on the Study of RAP (or Conclusion):

As mentioned above, instead of taking RAP as an autonomous field in itself, the study views it as a semi-autonomous, sub-field in relation to wider field of education and also in relation to transnational pro-Roma networks. And it researches the ways different field positions of the students determine the relationships between them and the institution, and the relationships among themselves. And while studying the role of the capitals at stake in the fields, the study allocates most of the place to social and symbolic capitals.

Even though RAP as an educational institution can be examined in relation to educational investments and cultural capital, the study focuses more on the role of social and symbolic capitals. Because, the program does and aims at more than equipping the students with academic knowledge when introducing them to pro-Roma transnational networks with the recognition it provides. Additionally, access of the students to social and symbolic capitals in different fields seem to be determining factors for students' access to RAP itself and to transnational pro-Roma networks; while the diverging access of the students to these two capitals are the main factors differentiating students from each other, and positioning them in RAP. And the study attempts to examine the ways the students' positions and their drives for access to resources in different fields, shape their identification processes and the relationships among them in the context of RAP.

According to Bourdieu, each field is “semi-autonomous⁶²” in the sense it is characterized by its own agents, history and forms of capital while capitals gained in one field can be transferred to another. In addition to this, each field is a “site of struggles” including

⁶²Calhoun et.al, p. 5.

the struggles within the field and struggles over power to define the field.⁶³ Thus, according to Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone “the constitution of different sorts of capitals and their convertibility in various fields of activity become central themes for research.”⁶⁴ And locating identity as a relational phenomenon among these theoretical statements, the study researches the constitution of different capitals, and their convertibility in different fields; while it also attempts to view how different field positions of the students influence the struggles over power to define the norms and dispositions constructed in RAP.

In terms of constitution of capitals and their transmission to other fields, the study asserts that one’s access to RAP largely becomes possible by his/her prior access to social capital. And the study attempts to view the relationship between social and symbolic capitals, and the program’s role in equipping the students with symbolic capital and introducing them to the transnational social field of pro-Roma organizations. Relying on the theoretical discussions above, the study asserts that: it is not only access to social capital enhancing one’s access to different capitals in different fields via RAP, but also identification as Roma. Thus, recognizing the role of the relationships of power and privilege, and self-conscious choices in the processes of identification relying on Jenkins, the study looks at the ways individuals identify themselves in relation to their accesses and/or drives for access to different capitals. And bringing together the self-conscious model of identification and concept of symbolic capital; the study argues that nominal identity of being Roma is strategically mobilized by some of the students to gain recognition both in the eyes of RAP, and also in the eyes of transnational pro-Roma networks.

Coming to the struggles between the agents over power to define the fields or the contexts within which they are positioned with regard to their different field positions, the study asserts that in a context notably characterized by ethnic identity (like RAP) defining

⁶³ Calhoun et.al, p. 6.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

ethnic identity turns to be a site of contestation. Thus, the study views the relationships of power and privilege in RAP by looking at the struggles on defining Roma, and argues the ones holding social and symbolic capitals are likely to dominate the ways Roma identity is defined.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY:

In order to see the ways the students enrolled in RAP view the program, the ways they define and perceive what being a Roma means, and to see their relationships among each other, twelve semi-structured interviews were held as part of qualitative research methods. In addition to these twelve semi-structured interviews held with the students, graduates and previous tutors of the program, two exploratory interviews with two of the administrators of the program were conducted. The initial idea was to have more interviewees from the administration of the program to make a contrast between institution's position and students' perception of it. However, due to time constraints (or some other concerns) of the administrators, it was not possible to have longer semi-structured interviews. That's why, two shorter exploratory interviews were held with two different administrators in order to grasp the main idea about the operation of RAP as a program and the expectations from it. In addition to these, interviews held with some of the previous tutors of the program also provide information about the running of the program. This limited number of interviewees from the administration of the program has important implications for the analysis. Because the students constitute the majority of the sample of the interviewees (also in line with the aims of this study), the analysis relies on the perceptions of the students on the program. That's why, at times the paper refers to the institution (including the funders, and the administration); it talks about the institution from the students' perspective, as long as it is not stated otherwise.

3.1 The Sample of Interviewees

As the general aim of this study is to see the ways the students identify themselves in relation to the dynamics of the RAP and in relation to the definition of being Roma constructed and institutionally situated in this context, students constitute the majority of the

sample of interviewees. Among the nine students with whom interviews were held, four of them are current students of RGPP, two of them are current students of RELP while three of them are graduates of RGPP who are doing MAs at CEU currently. The main motive behind including graduates of the program to the sample is to gather data on the program that covers a longer period of time than just the education period of 2012-2013. In addition to this, information received from the graduates of the program constitutes an important segment of the data which is used to examine the program's role for the future prospects of the students. At the same time, the cases of these three students are highly representative for the overall graduates of RAP, in the sense most of the students completing their studies at RAP go for an MA at CEU.

Among the nine student informants (between the ages 23 and 27), there are students from Hungary, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia. And among the four students who are currently studying at RGPP, three of them gained acceptance from different MA programs at CEU. Although the results for admissions to the RGPP are not announced yet, two of the students of RELP included in the sample have applied to RGPP to continue their studies and aim to do an MA at CEU. The longer term aims of both the current students of RAP (including RGPP and RELP), and the graduates of it are similar. The aim of almost all of the students included in the sample is to have an MA from CEU (mostly in the fields like Political Science, Public Policy and IRES), and to “use their knowledge as well-educated Roma in one of the International Organizations working on Roma issues where they can have a paid-job.” Organizations like OSI, REF are the ones recurrently referred to by the interviewees while telling about their future plans. At the same time, one of the most common aims of the interviewees turns to be having an internship/job at the European Commission.

3.1.1 Background Information of The Interviewees

Although the future plans of the students are similar to each other, their background conditions and their previous attachments to Roma identity represent a wide variety. And this diversity constitutes an important segment of the data for the analysis on the role of social capital and strategic uses of identity; since it exemplifies that not all of the students have strong ties to Roma identity, even though they identify themselves so when seeking for access to different resources. Two common themes in most of the students' lives prior to their application were their involvement to some local pro-Roma NGOs, and the funds they got from Roma Education Fund or some other international organizations like OSI. However, being bearers of Roma identity, being member of NGOs, and getting some funds from pro-Roma organizations do not mean Roma identity was something central, or the primary identity students identified themselves with. To put it in numbers, while four of the students were mentioning the Roma identity and working for Roma were central themes for themselves, for the remaining five students involvement to such organizations (and benefiting from the funds) has either been forced-upon themselves by their parents or preferred because of the opportunities they bring. In addition to this, interviews demonstrate that some of the students have relatives holding high positions within the transnational pro-Roma networks.

Lastly, looking at the economic conditions of the sample of the students before their application demonstrates that students have relatively better economic conditions compared to large numbers of Roma. While most of the students included in the sample do not come from Roma Settlements, and seven of them do not speak Romani language, the students enrolled in RELP have relatively harder economic conditions compared to those enrolled in RGPP.

Apart from the students, three previous tutors and two of the administrators of the program are included into the sample. The administrators are contacted to get information

about the operation of the program. Additionally, the interviews with the tutors contribute to the data on running of the program, while also providing insights about the recruitment of the students, relations among them and the relations between the students and institution (including the administration and the funders). The tutors interviewed are previous or current PhD students of CEU since RAP recruits the tutors among the CEU's PhD students at different departments. Two of the tutors interviewed have already completed their PhD studies at CEU. While one of them is currently working in one of the international organizations targeting inclusion of Roma, the other one remains to be a researcher. And the main areas of interests of these tutors are international relations, public policy and sociology which in turn determined the courses they have been teaching at RAP.

3.2 Access to Informants and the Interview Processes

As a tenant of CEU Conference and Residence Center where the students of RAP are also accommodating, I relied on my contacts I developed during a year of living together, at the initial stages of the fieldwork. Three of the interviews were held in February-March 2013, and the rest were conducted in April-May 2013. The first three interviewees were the students I know from the dormitory, and were approached by me with a request of interview; whereas the selection of subsequent interviewees owe a lot to what is told by these three students. One main criterion for selection of interviewees was having people from different countries as much as possible, in addition to having a gender-balanced sample (Four male, and five female students; a male tutor, and two female tutors; one male and one female administrators are interviewed.) In addition to these concerns, it is attempted to talk to people with diverging background conditions and ideas on the program, as the study attempts to view the different ways the ethnic identity is practiced. And the three interviews conducted in the beginning constituted the main source of viewing the lines of divisions among the students of RAP, while some of the students afterwards introduced me to the people with different ideas on the

program. In accessing to the tutors, an exploratory talk with a PhD candidate at CEU was carried out, and cross-references among the tutors constituted the main source of getting in touch with the three tutors with whom semi-structured interviews were held.

While seven of the interviews are conducted at the CEU Conference and Residence Center, four of them took place at the CEU building. In addition to this, an interview held with one of the previous tutors of the program took place at the office he is working now, upon his request. The average length of the interviews were around an hour, while in some exceptional cases they took around an hour and a half. Although the means of communication was English, one of the interviews was held in Turkish due to the preference of the interviewee. However, the parts central for this study are translated to English and represented in the quotes. At the same time, as the students of RELP feel uncomfortable with speaking in English in public, these interviews were kept shorter compared to other ones. These twelve semi-structured interviews were transcribed in detail. However, during the shorter exploratory interviews with the coordinators, notes are taken, upon the preference of the informants not to be recorded

3.3 The Topic Guide⁶⁵

Having the interviews with the help of a pre-prepared topic guide, and mobilizing the method of semi-structured interviews enable the interviewer to have a more organized and consistent data collection, and also make it easier to analyze the data afterwards. Bearing the handiness of a topic guide in mind, for the preparation of it, the framework provided by

⁶⁵ The examples of the topic guides used for the students and the tutors are available under Appendix II.

Arthur and Nazroo in the article “Designing Fieldwork Strategies and Materials⁶⁶” is used. As the semi-structured interviews are conducted with two different groups of subjects (students and the tutors), two different, though similar topic guides were used.

Relying on the framework of Arthur and Nazroo⁶⁷, questions about general ideas on RAP, usefulness of the program, the application process in addition to some descriptive information were asked as opening questions during the interviews with the students. Relying on the same framework, those questions were tried to be asked in an order from general to more specific.

Following the opening questions, questions related to identity formation were asked. This section of the topic guide tries to develop an understanding of the students’ attachment to Roma identity, and the changes the program brings in this respect. Questions about background conditions, centrality of Roma identity in informant’s life prior to applying to RAP and after the program, strategic uses of identity, previous membership to Roma NGOs were asked. And what this section of the topic guide also intends to examine is the role of social capital in access to RAP and the strategic uses of identity. The following group of questions deals with the students’ experiences in a program notably characterized by the nominal identity of Roma. During this part of the interviews, questions about informants’ ideas about staying on the same floor, discussions on being a proper Roma, relations among the Roma students (conflictual, competitive or solidarist), kind of pressures (if any) were asked; in addition to questions about the relations with the outsiders to RAP and the program administration and the funders. Overall, these questions intend to view the struggles on defining Roma, expectations attached to it and the ways these are experienced by the students.

⁶⁶ Sue Arthur and James Nazroo, “Designing Fieldwork Strategies and Materials”, in Ritchie, Jane et Lewis, Jane ed., *Qualitative Research Practice*. (London: Sage, 2003) ch. 5, pp. 109-137 & pp. 112-113

⁶⁷ Arthur & Nazroo, pp. 112, 113.

Additionally, questions intend to view what kind of a role all those discussions and relations with outsiders to RAP are influencing the ways the students identify themselves.

The last group of questions is generally about the future prospects of the students, while these questions also constitute the “calming dawn phase”⁶⁸ of the interviews. By the questions about the opportunities the program brings and the expectations of the students, data regarding RAP’s role in acquisition of social and symbolic questions is collected.

However, it is not possible to talk about clear-cut targets for these different sets of questions; since the interviews were held much like conversations, and also because answers given to the same questions can have implications for different parts of the theory. During the interviews, several different stories are told about the conflictual relationships among students, thus especially the part of the topic guide dealing with these issues is used in a more flexible way depending on the particular stories of the students.

When it comes to the questions asked to the previous tutors of the program, the opening questions are composed of questions about their overall experiences at RAP and their recruitment to RAP. As the tutors in the sample are also the people working on Roma issues, their ideas about the role of RAP in the general framework of inclusion policies targeting Roma are asked. Interviews with the tutors are conducted in an even more flexible way as each interviewee comes from a different academic discipline and examines RAP from different perspectives. However, in line with the topic guide employed during the interviews with the students, opening questions are followed by three distinct sections; about the application process and recruitment of the students, about the relations and identities students construct during their studies at RAP (including questions about the identity component of the program and the curricula), and about the likely outcomes of the program. Interviews held

⁶⁸ Ibid.

with the tutors provided the data on the location of RAP within the general scope of Roma Inclusion Policies, and pro-Roma networks, and also on institutional dynamics.

Lastly, two exploratory talks held with two of the administrators of the program are composed of questions about the RAP's aims, relations between the funders and CEU, and the identity component of the program.

3.4 Analysis

All twelve semi-structured interviews were subjected to full transcriptions, and the transcriptions took between twelve and twenty-one pages. So, in total, approximately a hundred and sixty five pages of detailed transcriptions are analyzed. In analyzing the transcriptions, tools of thematic analysis⁶⁹ and discourse analysis are used together. Although the themes are centered on four distinct categories, it is not possible to make clear-cut distinctions for sub-categories in locating them under main themes as the each theme are related to each other. So, some of the same sub-categories are used in analyzing different themes. In creating the thematic framework, the scheme offered by Ritchie and Spencer is followed. After getting familiar with the interviews by reading the transcripts in detail, “a priori issues (informed by topic guide), emergent issues rose by respondents and analytical themes arose” are brought together in identifying the thematic framework⁷⁰. Then, following the same scheme offered by Ritchie and Spencer, the transcripts are analyzed in the light of the main themes constituting the theoretical framework as discussed in the second chapter.

Used in a flexible way, the thematic framework is composed of five main themes about: Ways of being and belonging, social and symbolic capitals, relations of power and

⁶⁹ Appendix 3 provides a brief description of the themes used in analyzing the transcripts.

⁷⁰ Jane Ritchie and Liz Spencer, "Qualitative Data Analysis for Applied Policy Research, in Huberman, A. Michael and Miles, Matthew B. ed., *The Qualitative Research Companion*. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002), p. 313.

privilege, identity formation, and the future prospects of the RAP. The answers given to the questions about attachment to different identities, motivations, relationships with Roma and non-Roma students and centrality of Roma identity before and after RAP are examined in making the analysis about different ways of being and belonging. On the other hand, respondents' statements about network creation, benefits of the program, social mobility and strategic uses of identity are analyzed in relation to the main themes of social and symbolic capitals; while examining the role of these capitals in access to RAP and also while examining RAP's role in acquisition of them. While the reflections on the discussions of being a proper Roma constitute the main source of data for the theme "relations of power and privilege", all these three themes constitute the sub-themes of the analysis on identity formation. One last theme used in analyzing the data is "future prospects of RAP" and in construction of this theme, sub-themes of students' future plans, students' and tutors' perception of these networks, and students ideas on the future of Roma community are brought together.

Among these themes and sub-themes, strategic uses of identities in relation to RAP's role in providing access to different networks and opportunities; the way the students perceive and define Roma identity in RAP; and the role of their relations with non-Roma students and pro-Roma organizations in the way the students identify themselves are informed by the theoretical framework from the outset. On the other hand, the knowledge about the ways Roma identity is dominantly defined, the impact of the institutional expectations to the construction of such a conceptualization, and main lines of divisions among the students is acquired from the interviews held in the beginning. Thus, the questions related to these are included into the themes and to the topic guide afterwards. What's more, especially the interviews with the tutors required integrating a new theme which deals with the likely outcomes of the RAP to the framework; and the sub-themes about the students' perceptions of

pro-Roma networks, the way they locate themselves within these networks, and the ways they perceive the future of Roma community constituted the tools to analyze this theme.

In addition to thematic analysis, tools of discourse analysis are used as discursive constructions of reality and the ways language is used are important in understanding processes of identification, and subjectivities⁷¹. The language the students use while representing RAP and their perception of Roma in general to me as a non-Roma outsider has significant implications of the way the students manage their different identities (being Roma, being a woman, being a student). Especially differentiating the different usages of categorizations with regard to Roma identity and Roma community are central in understanding where the subjects locate themselves in relation to those. For instance whether the interviewees use the “we” or “they” language in talking about Roma students in RAP in different situations is central in grasping the power dynamics, and subjects’ locations in the processes of identification. As the paper tries to see the relations of domination and subordination, discursive preferences of the interviewees were taken to be important components of the analysis.

3.5 Research Ethics

The facts that the students know each other well, and also they are known by the teaching staff and the administration of the RAP require adopting an attentive stance towards confidentiality. Since most of the students interviewed are likely to study at CEU in the coming years, and the interviews include some statements of the students about the relations among themselves in addition to the statements on students’ perception of the program and the CEU, it is necessary to ensure confidentiality at the highest level. Thus, the study uses

⁷¹ Adrian Coyle, “Discourse Analysis”, in Breakwall, Glynis M., Hammond, Sean and Fife-Shaw, Chirs ed. *Research Methods in Psychology* (London: Sage, 2007), pp. 243-258.

some fake names while referring to the students. Additionally, when a fake name is given to a student, he or she will not be referred with the same name systematically all over the text, in order to prevent the possibility of their statements to reveal their identities. What's more, a small number of footnote references for transcripts are also removed from the text in cases where it is possible to follow the statements of the person and to identify him/her. Lastly, when students tell about a particular event while sharing their experiences at RAP, these stories are not represented in great detail since due to the fact that they spend most of the time together (during their classes and also during their stay in the dormitory) students are likely to recognize these events and the actors of them.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

The analysis section is divided into three main sections in line with the phases the students of RAP are going through: the first one is concerning with the admission to the RAP; the second one deals with the relationships among the students and the definition of Roma identity constructed and interiorized in RAP; and the last section examines the identification processes the students and the future prospects of RAP in relation to the positions graduates of the program take. While looking at the students' access to RAP, the first section asserts that one's access to RAP is highly shaped by his/her previous access to social capital in the fields of local and/or transnational pro-Roma networks. Additionally, the section argues that the nominal identity of being Roma itself turns to be an asset in accessing to RAP and to the opportunities it is likely to bring.

The second section which examines the relationships among the students and the definition of Roma identity constructed in RAP, proposes that being located in a program like RAP notably characterized by ethnic identity of Roma is likely to put pressure on the autonomy of some of the members of it, due to the precepts attached to being Roma. However, while dealing with these precepts the section attempts to view the relationships of power and privilege in construction of particular definition of Roma in RAP, instead of taking these precepts given.

Lastly, the third section looks at the impact of RAP on the ways students identify themselves while also examining the role of the students' drive for access to transnational pro-Roma networks on their identification. While the section asserts that RAP enhances access of the students to these networks by equipping them with symbolic capital, it also intends to analyze the likely outcomes of RAP in relation to the prospects of these pro-Roma organizations and affirmative action policies.

4.1 Access to Roma Access Program

Relying on the interviews held, and on the admission requirements of the program, this section of the analysis chapter examines the factors enabling students' access to RAP. While doing this, the section relies on the Bourdieuan concept of social capital in viewing the importance of networking for students' access to program. In addition to this, the section analyzes how Roma identity itself turns to be an asset in accessing to RAP, and the ways it is used strategically both for networking and also for accessing to the program. The section concludes with a brief discussion on students' perception of the application process which constitutes one of the grounds for the struggles on defining Roma. And providing a selection of students' ideas on the application process, the section intends to provide a brief introduction to conflicts among the students.

4.1.1 The Role of Social Capital

The Roma Access Program is designed to facilitate access of young, promising Roma to graduate education. The program enhances access of the Roma students to MA programs and also to the international organizations working on Roma issues by introducing the students to these networks. Looking at the application process both relying on the personal stories of the interviewees and also on the official requirements, it is possible to say that the access to RAP itself as well, largely becomes possible by one's ability of networking. Personal histories of the students enrolled in the program demonstrate that most of them have already been members of local networks by their involvement in some local NGO's working on Roma issues. And the access of the students to the program is largely enhanced by their embeddedness in these networks; since institutionally, the students applying to the program "are strongly recommended" to get a letter of recommendation from a recognized Roma

organization⁷². Thus, one's access to social capital appears to have utmost importance in having access to RAP.

Social capital in Bourdieuan sense is defined as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group”⁷³ -“ And the interviews held reveal that social capital which is embodied either in one's access to local NGOs or having well-connected relatives⁷⁴ is of utmost importance in one's access to RAP. Being well-networked is not only decisive in one's acceptance to the program, but also in his/her ability to learn about the program as one of the interviewees stated: “When you are involved in these things and when you work or being a volunteer even, you are pretty much updated with the things going on. So it is not just RAP, but many other opportunities and many other project ideas or contacts or whatever it comes to your mind.”⁷⁵ Moreover, another graduate of the program who has been volunteering in a Roma NGO before his application states: “in my country, the information about Roma are distributed through some networks that we have established. (...) And I knew about the program two years before I applied⁷⁶.”; while he adds he has been guided for his application by the members of these networks.

According to Bourdieu, in a social field there are four forms of capital at stake: “economic (money and assets); cultural (e.g. forms of knowledge; taste, aesthetic and cultural preferences; language, narrative and voice); social (e.g. affiliations and networks; family,

⁷² <https://rap.ceu.hu/node/21457>

⁷³ Bourdieu, 1986, p. 51.

⁷⁴ Although their positions will not be mentioned for the reasons of confidentiality, interviews illustrate that some of the students have relatives holding important positions in the transnational pro-Roma networks; while other students state well-connectedness of these students have reflections both on their access to RAP, and also on the relationships among the students of RAP.

⁷⁵ Tr.12, p. 2.

⁷⁶ Tr. 1, p. 4.

religious and cultural heritage) and symbolic (things which stand for all of the other forms of capital and can be “exchanged” in other fields, e.g. credentials).⁷⁷ And these different forms of capital do not stand in isolation from each other; in the sense one’s access to one of them is likely to contribute to his/her access to one other form of the capital. And among those, economic capital can be more easily and efficiently converted into social, symbolic and cultural capitals⁷⁸. The story of Roma students’ access to social capital embodied in the local networks which then enhance their access to RAP, empirically supports Bourdieu’s theoretical claim. The personal histories of the students enrolled in the program demonstrate that those with the most significant access to social capital are from relatively high-income families. And one of the previous students of RAP who is now doing an MA at CEU, Robert, answers a question on whether or not economic differences play role in access to the program and different other opportunities, saying:

It plays, it plays a lot. For instance, if I were from let’s say a poor family, if they didn’t work, I wouldn’t apply to RAP. Because you know, it creates a dependent strap (...) If you are a poor Roma, you have to fight 50% more than the others in order to achieve something.⁷⁹

It is also possible to locate the dependent strap the student is talking about in a social field perspective. According to Bourdieu, “there is no level playing ground in the social fields⁸⁰”, thus the ones holding particular forms of capital are advantaged at the outset, and they are able “to use their capital advantage to accumulate more, and to advance further (be more successful) than others⁸¹.” And it is not only Robert among the students who refers to such kind of a dependent strap. One of the students enrolled in RELP states, “ There are Roma who are rich, and they have more access to these kind of opportunities. And I think the

⁷⁷ Grenfell, p. 69.

⁷⁸ Calhoun, LiPuma & Postone, p. 5.

⁷⁹ Tr. 1, p. 6.

⁸⁰ Grenfell, p. 69.

⁸¹ Ibid.

program is incapable in making this distinction and in benefiting poorer Roma⁸².” What’s more, the student himself refers to the role of social capital in accessing to RAP, and states “There is something called social capital, everything is mixed with politics. For instance, when someone applies to the program, he/she better has some background to support him/her.”⁸³ “

Additionally, while some of the students’ access to RAP has been facilitated by their relatives holding positions in international pro-Roma organizations, most of the students state “they would not have a chance to be in RAP, if they were from a Roma Settlement or were living under harder economic conditions.”⁸⁴

The advantage of these previously well-networked students in accessing to RAP is not independent from the institutional requirement of presenting a letter of recommendation from a recognized NGO. In relation to this, one of the previous tutors of the program who has also been working in the recruitment process tells about how letters of recommendations from certain institutions significantly enhance access of the applicants to the program:

Some students already come with these individual networks. So, for example, one of the things OSI was always promoting or pushing is that they have chapters of their own organization in different countries, or NGOs with which they work... These things matter during the recruitment. Because they naturally want to support their institutions⁸⁵.

A student who has also been benefitting from OSI funds before his studies at RAP, problematizes this issue the tutor is referring to. He argues that there can be many forms of activism (like publishing a newspaper at school, individual initiatives for preparation of conferences and so on), and asking a letter of recommendation from NGOs to determine

⁸² Tr. 2, p. 7.

⁸³ Tr. 3, p. 3.

⁸⁴ Tr. 10, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Tr. 8, p. 1.

whether someone is active or not on Roma related issues, is to limit activism with membership to certain networks⁸⁶. Moreover, a graduate of the RAP adds about this requirement to present a letter of recommendation from a recognized NGO: “then you need to have some connections to provide this letter [even if you prefer different forms of activism.]⁸⁷” Thus, as the statements of the students illustrate being well-networked (also enhanced by one’s access to economic capital) turns to be an important determinant for one’s access to RAP.

4.1.2 Strategic Uses of Identity

Apart from the students’ access to local networks, nominal identity of Roma, or in other words being Roma itself, turns to be an asset to access to the program and opportunities it brings, since the application form starts with the question of “Are you Roma?⁸⁸” and the students are asked whether or not they identify themselves as Roma during the interviews for the admission⁸⁹. However, not all the students enrolled in the program are willing to identify themselves Roma in each and every context. And relying on the interviews, it is possible to observe that being bearers of Roma identity is being mobilized by some of the students as an asset to access to certain networks, and also to the program itself. And this draws attention to the strategic uses of identity in accessing different resources, and the role of drive for social mobility in the processes of identification.

The distinction between ways of being or belonging; and the distinction between nominal and virtual identity as Jenkins puts it, comes to the forefront in examining the role of being a bearer of Roma identity in accessing different resources.

⁸⁶ Tr. 1, p. 6.

⁸⁷ Tr. 10, p. 7.

⁸⁸ An example of the application form is available as Appendix I.

⁸⁹ Tr. 8, p. 3.

To start with the distinction between different ways of being and belonging, it is necessary to refer back to the background conditions of the interviewees. As mentioned before, for some of the interviewees Roma identity was not a central theme prior to their application. However, they still ended up applying to a program which asks for being Roma as the first requirement for eligibility. A deeper look at the stories' of these students shows that "being a Roma" has not been necessarily experienced in the same way, and it does not automatically imply a "conscious connection to the group", as such⁹⁰. This can also be analyzed referring to the distinction Jenkins makes between nominal and virtual identity⁹¹. As stated before, the distinction drawn between the two implies that the individuals may have the same nominal identity, however this might not influence their lives in the same way, or they might be practicing the identity differently. As it is seen from the background information of the interviewees, they all share the same nominal identity of being Roma in one way or another, but they do not experience it in the same way necessarily. However, when it comes to applying to RAP, each student mobilized their nominal identity as an asset to access to the resources regardless of their prior ties to this identity. What Olya tells about her application process reveals the mobilization of nominal identity -which was not central for her self-definition- in order to be able to access to some opportunities:

Honestly to tell you, I was a bit forced to come here. Because, I've never declared myself Roma before. Because, I didn't know anything about Roma. I just knew one part of me is coming from this origin. Because, I am coming from a mixed marriage. I was more connected to my mother's side, because I didn't know about the other side. And they were expecting me to accept the fact I am Roma, only because of the fact. I didn't have any background to rely on. So, for example my father wanted me to come here because he thought that maybe I will have more opportunities.⁹²

As it is seen, Olya's parents inclined her to mobilize her ethnic identity for application, although she was not declaring herself Roma. What makes the story more interesting is that

⁹⁰ Levitt & Schiller, p. 1010.

⁹¹ Jenkins, 2004, p. 22.

⁹² Tr. 6, p.1.

this was not a conscious mobilization of identity on her side, but rather it was something forced upon her by her father who believes her enrollment in the program would bring new opportunities.

This can also be analyzed with reference to drive for upwards social mobility. And Bourdieu argues that education is one of the main “strategies used by the families to perpetuate or advance their social position⁹³”. So, in case of Olya, studying at RAP is taken to be an opportunity by her family to advance her social position. This is not something peculiar to students of RAP, given the graduate or post-graduate education can mean the same for many people. However, what is intended to underline here is the fact that identities can sometimes turn into tools facilitating people’s access to different opportunities, thus can be mobilized selectively. In the end, even though Olya was not the one mobilized her Roma identity initially, she has been convinced by her parents and explicitly identified herself Roma both in filling the application form and also during the interview despite the fact that she was attached more to her national identity before⁹⁴. Now, Olya states “of course, identities are used strategically⁹⁵” and about the program, she adds: “I think it is a good opportunity, very very good opportunity. (...) Nobody in the world gives you this kind of an opportunity.(...) and I have never felt more Roma than now⁹⁶ “

Olya is not the only one who exemplifies strategic uses of identity. Another student enrolled in RGPP who has been holding a position in her country of origin thanks to being Roma, has been enrolled in RAP identifying herself Roma, and now got an internship in one of the pro-Roma organizations states “I was raised in a different style⁹⁷” while she also says

⁹³ Grenfell, p. 76.

⁹⁴ Tr. 6, p. 6.

⁹⁵ Tr. 6, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Tr. 6, pp. 1,12

⁹⁷ Tr. 11, p. 6.

she has never lived with Roma and never had (strong) attachments to this identity⁹⁸. However, these facts did not prevent her from identifying herself Roma in applying to different positions.

At the same time, some of the students refer to how some other people strategically mobilized their Roma identity even though they are not strongly attached to it, saying, “of course, Roma identity is used strategically, once programs were open or let’s say some job positions... People start declaring themselves Roma. I find this really interesting and will write my final paper on this⁹⁹.”

The statements of the interviewees imply that the fact that Roma identity as a nominal identity is the main criterion of being able to apply to RAP led identification of the students with their nominal identity, regardless of their previous attachment to it. And while access to social capital is decisive in one’s access to RAP as mentioned above, self-identification as Roma can also be analyzed in relation to the concept of social capital. In the end, the students strategically mobilizing their nominal identity of Roma to access to RAP are referring to Roma identity as an indicator of their membership to Roma community. So, taking the concept of social capital in a more flexible and broader way, it can be stated that self-identification as Roma in seeking access to RAP and transnational pro-Roma networks serves as social capital.

However, given the conditions large numbers of Roma are living under, neither usage of education to advance one’s status, nor the strategic usage of identity to access education (especially to graduate and post-graduate education) is that possible for all Roma. In the end, as mentioned before, even access to a program which is exclusively designed for Roma students to enhance their future prospects is strongly connected to applicant’s possession of social and economic capitals, as one of the students states:

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Tr. 9, p. 6.

You have to reach a certain level to find out about these programs, right? (...). It is more reachable for me to use the advantage of having a special place in the university. Then, I don't know for a Roma girl from the ghetto... [it is not..]¹⁰⁰

In relation to this, one of the previous tutors of the program, who has also been working on Roma issues, states that these students enrolled in the program “constitute the elites of elites of the Roma community¹⁰¹”. According to him, the students enrolled in RAP represent a very small group of Roma community which is composed of English speaking Roma (at least to a certain level) with a BA degree. And the program provides a venue for them to enhance their social position, as intended by Olya’s father and many of the students enrolled. While the tutor mentions about the role of the program in creation of “elites of elites of Roma community”, this issue will be discussed under the section titled “Different Ways of Identification and the Implications of Symbolic Capital” which discusses the role of RAP in acquisition of symbolic capital relying on one’s possession of social capital.

4.1.3 Students’ Perception of the Application Process

“Look, people are saying they are Roma just to get benefit from the program¹⁰²”

As most of the students agree, self-identification as Roma, and ability to get an outstanding letter of recommendation from a well-recognized NGO are the main factors enhancing one’s enrollment in RAP. However, what appears from the interviews is that students are problematizing these requirements, and the application process in general from two main different angles: whereas some of the students argue against the strong emphasis on identity, some others find the institution incapable of determining who is Roma and who is not. And these divisions in the way the students view the application process are also reflected

¹⁰⁰ Tr. 10, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Tr. 7, p.2.

¹⁰² Tr. 2, p. 7.

in the relations among them. While those discussions on the identity component of the program and their reflections on the relations among the students will be discussed in the following section, some students' perception of the role of social capital is worth to mention here.

The student mentioned above who himself refers to the role of social capital tells about his rejection in his first application although he fulfilled all the requirements in his view. According to him, the application process to RAP is not that just in the sense "in order to be able to get an acceptance from the program, you need to have a background, or someone supporting you¹⁰³". Besides that, one of the graduates of the program elaborates on this "strong encouragement" to get a letter of recommendation from a well-recognized NGO, saying:

Encouraged means you have to have it, and I received that recommendation latter through the help of my friend who supported me to apply. Because her husband works in an NGO. (...) So, then you have to talk to someone who works somewhere, who is willing to give you a recommendation even you didn't work with them.¹⁰⁴

On the other hand, some of the students think due to "people's tendency to lie" about their membership to NGOs or due to the fact that "anyone can claim he/she is Roma", "the program should design a method which would definitely give the insight of a person."¹⁰⁵

The intention behind representing these quotes is not to make any judgment about how just the application process is, but rather to support the claim that social capital and strategic uses of identity play role in one's enrollment and to demonstrate that students are well aware of these issues which in turn creates one of the basis for the conflicts among the students.

¹⁰³ Tr. 2, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ Tr. 10, p.7.

¹⁰⁵ Tr. 12, p.4; tr.9, p.6; tr.6, p. 3.

4.2 Social Field as a Site of Domination, Subordination and Equivalence

It is very selfish. Because you know that you are going to apply for a Roma program and why would you say no [to the question “Are you Roma?”]. I mean consciously you know that you are going to apply to be part of a Roma program... And why would you say no, if you want to benefit from it. And there are such examples even right now, right here! People are just being Roma, because they get benefit and that’s it. I mean, this is another story (...) If you say you belong to an identity, you should follow the tradition, should follow the culture, should know the language, you know; the nucleus of the identity.¹⁰⁶

The statement above is taken from one of the interviews held with a current student of RAP, and provides a brief introduction to the discussions on “being a proper Roma” taking place among the students. What the statement indicates and will be discussed further in detail is that according to some of the students, self-identification as Roma in the application to RAP is not enough in its own to prove someone is Roma. And applying a social field perspective, it is possible to examine the ways Roma identity is defined in the specific context of RAP, and also the ways students identify themselves in relation to those definitions constructed and interiorized in this particular context.

Given the students enrolled in RAP are mostly attending to the classes composed of Roma students, and are staying on the same floors which make Roma identity a main component of daily practices of the students, how and who defines Roma identity turns to be a site of struggle. What this section of the analysis chapter is intended to look at is how Roma identity is defined in the specific context of RAP. As the study relies on transnational social field perspective which warns against adoption of ethnic lenses leading prioritization of one form of subjectivity and the inability to spot the distinction between different ways of being and belonging, the section analyzes particular ways Roma identity is defined in the context of

¹⁰⁶ Tr. 12, pp. 4, 3.

RAP. These definitions in the end, constitute the basis for the ways the students identify themselves. And the Bourdieuan conception of field provides the frame for a “relational analysis” as the study takes identity as a relational phenomenon and as “something over which struggles take place and with which stratagems are advanced”, relying on Richard Jenkins.¹⁰⁷

In an attempt to examine the struggles taking place with regard to who is Roma and who is not, the section starts with a discussion on what kind of a suppressive side being located in a program main component of which is ethnic identity has, relying on Appiah’s critique of identity politics. And then, applying a social field perspective, the section looks at what kind of reactions, stratagems the students advance against the dominant definitions of Roma identity, as the perspective reminds relations in the social fields are not unidirectional¹⁰⁸. Lastly, the section analyzes the factors making certain ways Roma identity is defined by the students dominant or marginal in relation to each other, while referring to the institution’s role in these conflictual relationships among the students.

4.2.1 Pressures on the Autonomy of the Students

K. Anthony Appiah discusses about the problematic relationship between recognition of collective identities, the survival of cultures and the ideal of individual authenticity¹⁰⁹. While pointing out some shortcomings of the measures aiming at recognition of collective identities, Appiah does not rule out the historical or strategic needs for those measures designed for historically disadvantaged collectivities. However, he states, it is necessary to think further about likely outcomes of those policies. Eventually, according to him, demanding respect for some group rights requires that there are some precepts that go with being member of those groups, and there will be proper ways of acting, and expectations to

¹⁰⁷ Jenkins, 2004, p. 23.

¹⁰⁸ Jenkins, 1992, p. 48.

¹⁰⁹ Appiah, 1994.

meet in relation to being bearer of a certain identity. And his argument goes by saying “someone who takes autonomy seriously will ask whether we have not replaced one kind of tyranny with another¹¹⁰”

Reflecting on Appiah’s concerns, it is possible to observe that there are many students having difficulty with the expectations from them as a Roma student enrolled in RAP. One of the graduates of the program who is now doing an MA at CEU states:

To be honest I am more discriminated by Roma than non-Roma. (...) When you gather with other Roma, people have the tendency of behaving in a certain way. (...) What if you don’t like; that can be problematic for some people. Or you can feel maybe you are being stigmatized because you are different and you dare to be different.¹¹¹

And one of the previous tutors of the program reacts to these kinds of concerns of some of the students, saying: “this is the tragedy of identity politics and it is not only with Roma people, with many other minorities. You constantly have to sort of measure everything else in your life in relation to identity; ethnic or whatever, cultural identity¹¹²”

What the tutor refers to be a tragedy of identity politics is that identity politics presupposes collective identities that can be unsubtle in their understandings of the processes by which identities, both individual and collective, develop¹¹³. And she draws attention to the problems of such policies when they enforce particular understandings of a particular collective identity against the autonomy of the subjects to identify themselves differently.

This line of the argument brings the distinction between different ways of being and belonging, and the distinction between nominal and virtual identity to the forefront. As stated earlier, being enrolled in a program designed for Roma main component of which is ethnic identity do not necessarily imply that all the individuals embedded in this site identify

¹¹⁰ Appiah, p. 163.

¹¹¹ Tr. 10, pp. 8, 6.

¹¹² Tr. 8, p. 3.

¹¹³ Appiah, p. 156.

themselves with those labels or cultural politics associated with it. However, as Appiah states, such sites are likely to put pressure on autonomy of the individuals who are not that willing to identify themselves with all those labels and cultural politics.

As some of the students enrolled in the program state, being located on the same floor of the dormitory also contributes to these kind of pressures students put on each other. One of the students enrolled in the program tells about a story that took place on the second floor of the dormitory hosting the Roma students, and complains about difficulty of having a privacy under these conditions:

There are reactions. For instance there is something called private life. You can't intervene anyone's private life (...) But in case of Roma, maybe because of culture... For instance someone in the second floor [a Roma woman] invited someone who is from another country¹¹⁴ to her room, and this stirred everyone up. Scandal! (...) It was a problem, because they are taking this as a Roma being a bad example for the community. They are saying 'there are already lots of stereotypes about us, don't contribute to those!'¹¹⁵

According to the interviewee, what makes this case an issue among Roma students is about the gender roles existent in Roma community, and their implications on RAP. About the situation of women in Roma community, another student, Tereza, states:

Now I need to talk as a Roma woman who is living in this traditional community. First of all, I am very against the part of being virgin before the marriage. I think everybody should have the right to choose whatever they want. What I don't like is that it is very pushed in our community, and is something that is a very taboo topic, and nobody really talks about. It is very compulsory. While you are growing up, you are all the time aware that you need to be virgin before your marriage¹¹⁶

And she answers a question on whether there are reflections of this mindset on virginity of women in RAP or not, saying: "yes, yes. Definitely, yes (...) and I think men are more traditional than girls."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ The name of the country is not stated for the sake of confidentiality.

¹¹⁵ Tr. 2, p. 12.

¹¹⁶ Tr.9, p. 9.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Tereza is not the only woman having uneasiness with the roles attributed to women both within traditional communities of Roma in general, and by Roma students at RAP in particular. Another student who also complains about this emphasis on virginity before marriage states “Okay, these organizations [referring to Roma activists and NGOs] and programs fight against the discrimination that is being addressed to Roma from outside of Roma communities. But how do you fight the discrimination that is being perpetuated inside of your own community?¹¹⁸”

What’s more, the pressures students put upon each other are not only related with the gender roles. A student enrolled in RELP states: “Sometimes I feel that I am not equal with them, but not just because I am woman; because where I am from, because I don't speak the language. I don't know, I don't know why, but not just because I am a woman.¹¹⁹”

And she adds “They [the students of RAP] have an idea about everything; how you have to study, how you have to sit; how you have to behave yourself, everything!¹²⁰

Bringing the statements of all the interviewees together it appears, in line with Appiah’s claims, that the expectations and precepts attached to being Roma put pressure on the autonomy of some of the students of RAP. For instance one other student refers to those expectations and proper ways of acting attached to being Roma in RAP as “romantic stereotypes¹²¹” and states:

People in the program have some romantic stereotypes in their minds. (...) It is not fine at all. But maybe it is not so harmful. But sometimes I feel that if they really want to know my personality, they have to forget these kind of romantic stereotypes.¹²²

What the interviewee refers to be romantic stereotypes are composed of expectations of Roma from each other including the gender roles and codes of behaviors (including a wide

¹¹⁸ Tr.10, p. 9.

¹¹⁹ Tr. 3, p. 8.

¹²⁰ Tr. 3, p. 5.

¹²¹ Tr. 5, p. 8.

¹²² Tr. 5, p. 9.

spectrum from the way they dance to the language they speak); and the implications of such expectations on the particular ways Roma identity is defined in RAP will be discussed in relation to the relationships of power and privilege in the following section.

As it is seen from the quotes above, the students having uneasiness about the expectations of some of the students in the program distance themselves from these expectations by referring to this group of students “they/them”. Looking at these statements, it is possible to sense the existence of this tangible division among the students, and the tensions attached to this. And the quotes show, as Appiah warns, some of the students are stigmatized by the very members of the community; stigmatization towards which is tried to be broken.

Appiah concludes his critique on identity politics stating “between politics of recognition and the politics of compulsion, there is no bright line¹²³”. However, before labeling what is going on in the particular context of RAP as a reflection of politics of compulsion, it is necessary to look at what kind of strategies are advanced by the students marginalized by some expectations attached to being Roma. So, relying on a social field perspective, it is necessary to look at the dynamic relations of domination, subordination and equivalence instead of viewing the conflicts among the students of RAP as a unidirectional one which takes place between the oppressed and oppressor.

This attempt to view different strategemes advanced by the students is not to deny that some students still feel excluded from certain expectations and definitions. It is rather an endeavor to view the relationships of power and privilege making certain definitions dominant, and certain individuals advantageous; instead of taking those precepts attached to being member of a collective identity fixed or given. Thus, the next section deals with the relationships of power and privilege in the construction of definition of being Roma in RAP, and examines the strategemes advanced by the students marginalized by the dominant

¹²³ Appiah, p. 163.

perception of Roma identity. However, before moving into this discussion, it is worth to open a small bracket and to locate what Appiah refers to as “suppressive site of community rights” and its implications in RAP within wider theoretical discussions on multicultural group rights.

4.2.1.1 Unpacking “Internal Restrictions”

While defending provision of particular group rights to national minorities and immigrants in the nation-states they are settled, Kymlicka (as one of the main promoters of the idea of multicultural group rights) makes the distinction between “external protections” and “internal restrictions”. According to Kymlicka, while “external protections” should be guaranteed by special rights given to a particular cultural group to preserve its very particularity and distinctiveness, and to achieve equality among different cultural groups; “internal restrictions” apply to intra-group relations and are likely to lead to oppression of group members in the name of preserving the culture¹²⁴. According to him, if there are internal restrictions in a group conflicting with liberal principle of individual rights, the liberal community hosting the group has the right and also the responsibility to intervene and prevent any kind of restriction¹²⁵.

The difficulty to determine the boundaries between “external protections” and “internal restrictions” is the point that liberals and feminists root their criticisms towards Kymlicka. For instance, Susan Moller Okin states that since the oppression of women takes place in the private sphere, it is not usually possible to be aware of the existence of “internal restrictions” imposed on women as a criticism to Kymlicka, and that’s why she thinks there is a contradiction between gender equality and multiculturalism¹²⁶. On the other hand, Bhikhu Parekh states the common problem with both Kymlicka and Okin is to “equate the good and

¹²⁴ Will Kymlicka, “Individual Rights and Collective Rights” in *Multicultural Citizenship*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995 [1999]) Pp. 34-48.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

¹²⁶ Susan Moller Okin, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?” in *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 9-24.

liberalism¹²⁷” while they are calling for intervention from liberal majority in the existence of internal restrictions.

The case of RAP demonstrates that “internal restrictions” (also towards women as implied by Okin) are likely to appear as a result of policies aiming at recognition of collective identities. However, even though Kymlicka and Okin are right in mentioning the likelihood of “internal restrictions” the way they take collective identities are rather problematic. Both authors seem to share this tendency to take precepts attached to collective identities as given, rather than as something determined by the relationships of power and privilege. Thus, they end up in a dichotomy between Western liberal cultures and collective identities in need of recognition and likely to impose internal restrictions within the group while attempting to preserve their culture.

Looking at the relationships of power and privilege in the construction of categories and the identities (what the study in hand intends to do) is likely to offer a different perspective than Kymlicka and Okin advance. As implied by Nancy Fraser, the affirmative remedies associated with multiculturalism remain weak in generating arrangements to disturb the underlying relations of power, and they are likely to leave “both the contents of the identities, and the group differentiations” intact¹²⁸.

Thus, in the next section the study attempts to look at the relationships of power and privilege determining the way Roma identity is defined in the particular context of RAP; while the prospects of affirmative remedies associated with recognition rights will be discussed under the title of “Affirmation vs. Transformation”.

¹²⁷ Bhikhu Parekh, “A Varied Moral World” in *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton University Press, 1999)

¹²⁸ Nancy Fraser, “From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a ‘Post-Socialist’ Age” in *New Left Review* 1/212, July-August 1995: <http://newleftreview.org/I/212/nancy-fraser-from-redistribution-to-recognition-dilemmas-of-justice-in-a-post-socialist-age>

4.2.2 Struggles on Defining Proper Roma

Since enrollment in the Roma Access Program requires one to identify him/herself as Roma, and since the students enrolled in the program take classes together and live together in the dormitory, the main component of RAP turns to be the nominal identity of being Roma. Thus, it is expected that the main struggles between the students take place on how Roma identity is defined, and on who defines it. While the way being a Roma is defined in the particular context of RAP puts pressure on the autonomy of individuals as referred above relying on Appiah, whose definition among several definitions turns to be dominant has a lot to do with individual's access to social and symbolic capitals.

4.2.2.1 How Is Roma Identity Defined?

The interviews demonstrate that defining Roma identity is an important site of contestation for the students of RAP. For instance one of the students enrolled in RELP states, while answering a question whether or not some sort of solidarity is developing among them;

We have a lot of conflicts, we everyday have. But common, if somebody is asking me 'are you Roma?', how can we unite ourselves? (...) They have this word which means true, and are asking 'who is true Roma?'¹²⁹

On the other hand, one other student who is enrolled in RGPP, David, answers a question on whether or not there are discussions on who is Roma or who is not, saying: "No, no. No such discussions. (...) Nobody, I say, nobody can say to anyone that he is not Roma enough."¹³⁰; while he also thinks the program contributes to development of unity and solidarity among Roma students as opposed to the previous informant.

These kind of contradicting perceptions and ideas are not unique. However, it is possible to observe that the ones complaining most about staying on the same floor, and the ones critical about the strong emphasis on identity in the program are usually the ones stating

¹²⁹ Tr. 3, p. 7.

¹³⁰ Tr. 12, p. 7.

their uneasiness with the discussions on who is Roma and who is not. On the other hand, the others tend to ignore existence of such discussions.

For instance, one of the students of RGPP, Karl, shares his ideas on staying on the same floor saying; “Where is the integration then? (...) It is like a Roma Settlement¹³¹.” And he adds: “According to them [other Roma students], if you are a Roma, and you are here because of this, then you have to be together with the Roma people all the time.¹³²”

On the other hand, David’s ideas -according to whom there are no discussions on who is Roma and who is not taking place- about staying on the same floor are as follow: “I say it is okay, it is great [staying on the same floor]. There are certain pro’s and cons. I’d tell you... Okay, if you ask me than I’ll give some pro’s¹³³” and he keeps telling mostly about some pros like being together with people who can understand you better.

What is striking among all these discussions is the fact that both David as someone according to whom there are no discussions on who is Roma and who is not in RAP; and Karl who states his uneasiness with the existence of these kind of discussions keep referring to a particular type of “true” Roma. In relation to this, David states:

I can really tell you some people perform much better, and are being conscious and are being aware that something should be done. You know, they feel it, they do it, they want... They are thirsty of knowledge, they want to learn more, they want to help... They want to engage and they want to take part in this Romani movement I’d say...¹³⁴

As it is seen from the quote above, although David states there are no discussions on who is Roma or not taking place in RAP, he has his own definition of being a proper Roma with an emphasis on being active in Roma related issues. Another issue that makes one a proper Roma according to David is the self-identification as Roma in each and every context:

¹³¹ Tr. 2, p. 13.

¹³² Tr. 2, p. 6.

¹³³ Tr. 12, p. 10.

¹³⁴ Tr. 12, p. 4.

People get scholarships, skills in the name of Roma. And tomorrow they'd rather say I am Hungarian, Slovakian.... Anything, but not Roma.(...) So the program should develop a better method to determine whom to enroll¹³⁵.

While, on the other hand, Karl as a student complaining about the existence of those discussions on who is true Roma states:

How should I say...? There are some people in the program... And I sometimes say they cannot be Roma. Because as far as I see, they don't have our mentality (...) and even don't speak the language¹³⁶.

The main intention of representing these quotations from Karl and David is to show each student develops his/her own definition of Roma -including those who state there are no discussions in RAP on who is more Roma, and those who state their uneasiness with the existence of these kind of discussions- while they contrast and evaluate their colleagues in relation to their own definitions

Among the students who have been interviewed under the scope of this project, Karl is not the only one who advances his own definition of being Roma more inclusive for himself, while thinking he is marginalized by certain definitions. And the students who feel excluded from the "dominant" definition of being Roma either develop their own definitions of being a proper Roma (which is more inclusive for themselves), as Karl does; or they try to avoid these kinds of discussions with a more ignorant stance. For instance, at the end of the interview Michel states:

The most difficult question you asked was "do we have some conflicts between us?" and because of my personality, and because of my point of view... Maybe I didn't want to see that. Because maybe I just wanted to be in my world. And I don't want to see these things. So maybe it wasn't true what I said to you!¹³⁷

Michel is not the only one who tries to avoid discussions on who is Roma or who is not by isolating himself from these kind of discussions. Another student of RELP also states:

¹³⁵ Tr. 12, p. 5.

¹³⁶ Tr. 2, pp. 4, 2.

¹³⁷ Tr. 5, p. 10.

It is very hard my situation here. I have never met this kind of an attitude they have. And this is very strange for me. (...) But I don't really care, also doesn't matter where I live. I am alone in my room. And I close my door, ciao!¹³⁸

The statement of the interviewee is not only significant in demonstrating that some of the students try to distance themselves from these kind of discussions by isolating themselves from the group; it also has the implications of the dominant definition of being Roma constructed and interiorized in RAP. The reason behind the student states "my situation is very hard here" is that she feels excluded by the proper ways of behaviors and expectations attached to being Roma in the context of RAP. Because she has a different dialect as her mother tongue than most of the students have, because she does not want to engage with Roma issues, and because of the expectations being a Roma woman brings, she states, she feels excluded and pressurized.

The story of another interviewee is also worth mentioning here. Both because it exemplifies this line of division between the students mentioned before (i.e. the ones feeling uneasiness with staying on the same floor, the emphasis on Roma identity and the discussions on who is Roma and who is not vs. others.) and also because her case supports the claim that those excluded by the dominant definitions are not passive receivers of those definitions, but they advance their own strategies to deal with them.

The student, referred to as Sinem¹³⁹ henceforth, is enrolled in RGPP program, and she talks about those discussions taking place on who is Roma and who is not saying: "They are saying you are not Roma, I am more Roma than you. And for me, it is still not clear what this sentence means." What makes her case significant is the fact that she moved out from the second floor the Roma students are located upon her request from the Residence Center

¹³⁸ Tr. 3, p. 6.

¹³⁹ The references about Sinem's statements about her moving from the second floor are removed from the footnotes, as this is a unique case and everyone in RAP knows about it. In order to prevent revealing her identity with regard to her following statements, no references to transcripts are given in this part.

administrative. Although the reasons for her moving from the second floor will not be presented in detail for the sake of confidentiality, the overall reason for her moving is a personal conflict she had with one of the Roma students. And how she answers the question about “how the people on the second floor perceived her moving” is rather significant. “I probably didn’t leave a great impression, since I didn’t tell anybody about [the main reason] “ while she also states she prefers to hang out with non-Roma people, and not to get into these kind of discussions on who is Roma and who is not.

Moreover, statements of one of the graduates of the program on Sinem’s moving from the second floor confirm that “she didn’t leave a great impression”:

She is here because she is Roma. They are paying her because of this. At least, she could have stayed on the (second) floor during this year, while she is studying in RAP. She has strategies, and she is more individualistic. She wants to be enrolled in an MA program at CEU and develops strategies for this. But there is nothing you can do. Some people are using the program in this way¹⁴⁰.

The aim of this paper is not to make any judgments about who among those students have the right position. However, all those quotes show, subjects attach different levels of importance to Roma identity, and they perceive requirements of being a proper Roma in different ways. And in turn, as they try to impose their own conceptions to each other, definition of being a proper Roma turns to be a main site for struggles. And the expectations appear as a result of all those struggles shed light to the suppressive dimension of community life. As a student states:

That is another problem. Because we have this expectation like we should create a Roma group that is going to represent Roma community at the CEU. For me, that was kind of a pressure. And it was expected just from the beginning that we are going to be a group, we are going to be perfect friends. (...) I think this is creating some kind of an artificial environment. Because you can’t expect that people will just have perfect relations.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Tr. 6, p. 13.

¹⁴¹ Tr. 11, p. 7.

The interviews indicate that a group of students' definition of Roma is rather dominant and put pressure on the others, while the other students either remain ignorant, or the definitions they advance are not taken into consideration. According to this dominant definition, a good Roma is the one "who identifies him/herself Roma in each and every context, who is in harmony with the Roma students in the program and takes care of the collective appearance of Roma students, who is willing to take action on Roma issues, and who follows the traditions¹⁴²." What makes claiming that this definition is the dominant one among all other plausible is the fact that a group of students refer to these attributes while telling about being a proper Roma confidentially, or while problematizing institution's (in) ability to enroll the right people to the RAP: "I don't really get this point like 'okay, I will be Roma only when somebody ask me, only when I benefit something (...) this is not good'; "Collective appearance, following the tradition are very important, and the institution should make sure it enrolls people following the tradition, culture and who feels like Roma¹⁴³,"

Additionally, the ones who do not feel comfortable with development of such a definition keep telling about their experiences with reference to this definition; while they are making contrasts between themselves and the "others". What comes attached to this is that most of the students feeling excluded with this definition are somehow internalized such a definition, and are trying to isolate themselves from these discussions (or sometimes from the group as a whole); thinking it is hard to cope with all those expectations.

After all, when this kind of a dominant definition appears, the question turns to be "why" this particular definition is dominant among all others, and "who" makes this kind of definition. And answering these questions requires looking at the role of social and symbolic capitals and at the role of the RAP as an institution both in acquisition of these capitals and also in development of a mainstream definition of being Roma in the context of RAP.

¹⁴² Tr. 12, pp. 9, 10; tr. Pp. 6,7; tr. 6, p. 8.

¹⁴³ Tr. 12, pp. 7, 4.

4.2.2.2 Who Defines Being Roma?

Interviews suggest that as a result of all these struggles, a particular definition of being Roma is constructed and interiorized in the RAP. And in the end, as discussed above with reference to Appiah, this particular definition brings together some expectations and proper ways of behaving. However, all those expectations and requirements attached to Roma identity are not fixed or given. That's why it is necessary to look at the dynamic relations of power and privilege leading one particular definition of Roma identity to be dominant above all others. And as indicated above, among several individual definitions, a definition of Roma identity which puts emphasis on explicit self-identification as Roma, solidarity with Roma, attachment to traditions and willingness to take action on Roma issues turned to be dominant. Looking at the dynamics behind why this particular definition turns to be dominant, it is possible to observe that such a definition is the one promoted by those students with more access to social and symbolic capitals; while it is also possible to claim that RAP as an institution (including the funders and the program administration) also contribute to development of such a definition.

Symbolic capital –“socially recognized legitimization such as prestige or honor” is the capital in the eyes of others. With the concept of symbolic capital Bourdieu draws attention to the fact that “the value of any form of capital depends, in part, upon social recognition.¹⁴⁴” In addition to this, according to Bourdieu, the fields are means of production of symbolic capitals of different types¹⁴⁵. And as stated by Moore relying on Bourdieu,

Symbolic capital is given and valorized by the structure of fields (a) in terms of relations within them- internal complexity and (b) relations between them in the social space- their relative status¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴⁴ Grenfell, p. 88.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 114.

¹⁴⁶ Robert Moore, “Capital”, in *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, ed. Michael Grenfell, (Durham: Acumen Publishing Limited, 2008), p. 115.

While the relations between the fields, and the transmissions of symbolic capital between different fields will be discussed under the title “Processes of Identification and Implications of Symbolic Capital”, this part of the analysis section deals with who among the students of RAP turn to be the holders of symbolic capital in the particular context of RAP and relying on their acquisition of symbolic capital dominate the ways Roma identity is defined.

According to Bourdieu, individuals’ early experiences and their prior access to different types of capitals contribute disproportionately to the construction of dispositions. And dominated groups with their relatively lower access to different sorts of capitals are likely to move “in the direction of dominant positions¹⁴⁷”. Although access of the students to RAP largely becomes possible with their previous access to social and economic capitals, it is still possible to observe that some of the students are in a more advantageous position in their access to those capitals. In turn, the students coming from relatively advantageous backgrounds in their access to social, economic and cultural capitals are likely to have better “socially recognized legitimization” in the eyes of others; both in the eyes of the students themselves and also in the eyes of the institution (including the funders and the administration). In relation to this claim, the statement of one of the students enrolled in RELP, Hannah, who feels excluded by the definition of Roma in the context of RAP and who tried to remain outside these kinds of discussions are significant:

Sometimes I feel I am not equal with them. But not just because I am a woman; because where I am from, because I don’t speak the language... I don’t know, or because of my BA.¹⁴⁸

What was possible to come across during the interview with Hannah and also others who feel excluded by the way Roma identity is constructed and institutionalized in RAP is the

¹⁴⁷ Grenfell, p. 144.

¹⁴⁸ Tt. 3, p. 8.

idea that the students with superior previous engagement and connection with Roma issues and NGOs (social capital), the students with a BA degree in more “prestigious” fields (like Political Science, IRES, Public Policy), and the students with more attachment to Roma identity are dominating the way the Roma identity is defined. However, what makes these students superior in defining Roma identity is not independent from the funders and/or program administration. In the end, as stated before, each student is likely to develop a definition of Roma identity more inclusive for him/herself. But better recognition of some of the students of RAP, and institutional expectations from the students, make certain ways Roma identity is defined superior. A student of RELP at the stage of writing up his statement of purpose to apply to RGPP states: “it is really hard to write what I want to do after the program. They don’t want to invest you if you will not work for your community¹⁴⁹. “

While the program in general has this emphasis on “working for the Roma community”¹⁵⁰, one of the graduates of the RAP says “you need to have a community first, I don’t consider myself as part of such a community¹⁵¹” and adds:

In a way focusing on Roma identity and what it means, are pushed by the funders; students are not to forget they are Roma or so on. (...) So you know. It has been raised a question on who is Roma and who is not. And how to police these kinds of people and to make sure you give the money to the right person¹⁵².

It is not that possible to make a strong claim about what exactly the institution (including the funders and the program administration) aims for, relying on the perception of the students. However, such statements of the students turn to be plausible in the sense that they reflect that students *do* think the institution has an idea on what kind of a Roma the students should be. And according to the students, the main expectations of the institution

¹⁴⁹ Tr. 5, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Tr. 8.

¹⁵¹ Tr. 10, p. 13.

¹⁵² Tr. 10, p. 5.

(mostly of the funders and notably of OSI) from the students are to take action on Roma issues, while developing a sense of community relying on being Roma:

They expect we will be more connected and we will do some action, maybe, I don't know¹⁵³

In relation to this, one of the previous tutors of RAP states:

I think RAP does not necessarily wants to be a channel just for sponsoring successful individuals and this is where this identity sort of trap door is set up. (...) They want to improve the situation with the Roma in the region. So how do you achieve that? And the answer is that we try to recruit people who would be able to make this change through using this education as a tool. So it's difficult. Bu then there is the pressure of identifying yourself Roma. One definitely has to identify him/herself Roma.¹⁵⁴

The institution's (especially those of funders) expectations on the program to improve the situation of Roma in the region and likelihood of this will be discussed in the following section. However, relying on the quotes, it is possible to observe that with all these expectations the program administration and the funders contribute to domination of one particular definition of Roma which requires active engagement with Roma issues and self-identification as Roma.

The (perceived) aims of the program are not the only factors contributing a particular definition of Roma to become prominent in RAP. Diverging access of students to social capital prior to their application, and recognition of these differences by the institution (at least in students' perception) which in turn leads to disproportionate access to symbolic capital, also play role. And this is reflected in the division among the students: the ones with a more active background in terms of engagement with the Roma issues (mostly from Macedonia) and the others. And the speeches of the students located in these two different camps reflect the unequal relationships of power and privilege between the students. For

¹⁵³ Tr. 6, p. 2.

¹⁵⁴ Tr. 8, pp. 2, 3.

instance while a graduate of RAP who has been benefiting from OSI funding, and was active in pro-Roma NGOs before his enrollment in CEU, Erman, states:

People from Macedonia, in Macedonian level they are more active. We are active. We are doing these and we want here to show how we can do it. (...) We started to do various activities to pick people together; watching films together, organizing activities for 8 of April¹⁵⁵... This is the process of learning, to change your idea, to change your thinking, and to escape from the box of stereotypes are hard.¹⁵⁶

Statements of Erman and the statements of some other students who are referred to be more active and dominant, share this similar motive on “how hard it is to change people’s mind, and how necessary it is to achieve and to make people more active¹⁵⁷. “ While these students keep telling about their aims to “help” their friends to realize and to promote their Roma identity, the others remain skeptical of those students who are complaining about “hardship of getting people to the right place and giving them responsibilities.¹⁵⁸” So, while a group of student cast themselves the role to make their friends proper Roma, one of the students excluded from the mainstream definition state: “Okay, they are so active. I don’t agree with them. They can do whatever they want. But I think what is damnful is that they are closed and nobody else can go there.¹⁵⁹”

What the interviewee problematizes by saying they are so closed is that these students (most of whom are from Macedonia according to her) who are more active and visible in RAP prefer to act like a closed group, according to her. “ Nobody else can go into this group. And they don’t want you to go there. I have this feeling.¹⁶⁰”

And from some of the students’ perception, this group of active students are so visible because the institution supports them more, they have better relations with the funders and the program administration. Although it is not possible to judge whether these claims are correct

¹⁵⁵ International Roma Day.

¹⁵⁶ Tr. 1, Pp. 7, 8

¹⁵⁷ Tr. 1; tr. 6; tr. 9; tr. 12.

¹⁵⁸ Tr. 12, p. 16.

¹⁵⁹ Tr. 3, p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Tr. 3, p. 9.

or not, it is possible to observe the contribution of social capital to the possession of symbolic capital. To put it bluntly, the engagement with Roma issues and involvement in the pro-Roma NGOs are the main sources of social capital in the context of RAP. And these are taken to be a reflection of being a promising Roma by the funders and the administration of the program, (at least as argued by the students and the tutors); thus they bring together the recognition and legitimization to the students in the eyes of the institution. And these well-recognized students, in turn, have a superior position in defining certain categories.

When the students are asked why they think the institution favors the students with previous and/or current engagement with Roma issues, one of the students answers:

I spoke with my classmates. And he said that he asked somebody from OSI: ‘what is better; if you are active or if you concentrate on your studies?’. The answer was ‘it is better if you concentrate on your studies. And of course you have to be active too’¹⁶¹.

Even though she thinks this statement implies that for OSI studies are more important, she adds that they still expect the students to be active:

First, I have to plan my life. Without catching my aims, I cannot work for other people. And everybody says you have to be kind of an activist: no! (...) If my biggest problem is how I can pay my bills, how can I work for them?

When the student is asked whether or not she shares those concerns (and some others) of her with the institution, she states:

I am really thankful that I am here. And they give me really a lot of money, for my studying. And this is something good for me that I can learn English. I’ve never learned before I came here. And I think we have to be thankful, not always just complain.¹⁶²

Besides that, another student states, when she is asked what prevents the students from talking about their concerns and conflicts among the students:

What prevents the students from talking about them [the problems, the conflicts among the students] is... There are two reasons: one is being afraid and one is licking

¹⁶¹ Tr. 3, p. 10.

¹⁶² Tr. 3, p. 6.

asses! Like showing only your good side, like you would do everything the way they [the funders and RAP's administration] ask¹⁶³.

These statements are not to show that Roma students are coward. However they are represented here as indicators of the impact of the institution on development of a particular definition of being proper Roma, in RAP. What these quotations also demonstrate is that the students themselves think the benefits they get from the program are likely to prevent them from reacting to the policies of the institution; including its perceived expectations from the students. And these perceived expectations of the program contribute some of the students to become better- recognized in the eyes of the institution, according to some of the students.

To state that the institution contributes to development of a particular definition of being Roma is not to say it imposes such a definition upon the students from above. However, as stated by Cris Shore and Susan Wright, institutions and the policies advanced by them are likely to have an effect on the ways subjectivities and identities are constructed. As implied by the authors, policies with their neutral, legal-rational portraits are likely to promote norms of conducts which are then adopted and internalized by the individuals¹⁶⁴. Thus, institutions also play a role in construction of more dominant discourses by “giving institutional authority to one or a number of overlapping discourses¹⁶⁵.” And what makes interiorization of such discourses by the students of RAP possible is that the recognition they seek in the eyes of the institution in their drive for social mobility, as implied by the statements above.

Moreover, the funders and the administration are not the only bodies in the eyes of which the students seek recognition; the students also look for symbolic capital in the field of international pro-Roma organizations. So, the discourses employed by these organizations are also likely to have an impact on the ways the students identify themselves. Thus, it is

¹⁶³ Tr. 9, p. 11.

¹⁶⁴ Chris Shore and Susan Wright ed. *Anthropology of Policy: Critical Perspectives on Governance and Power*, (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 8, 29.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 18.

necessary to locate the program within wider process of Decade of Roma Inclusion which targets empowerment of Roma minority via policies of positive discrimination. And the next section attempts to locate the program in this wider context and looks at the identification processes and implications of symbolic capital in relation to all those.

4.3 Different Ways of Identification and Implications of Symbolic Capital

After being enrolled in RAP on the grounds of “being a member of Roma community” the students of RAP continue representing different positions in relation to Roma identity. Although each student has mobilized his/her nominal identity of being Roma in order to access to the program, the ways they identify themselves remain to be diverse. However, depending on the talks I had with the students, it is possible to talk about two main motives they state while defining their positions. Some of them emphasize the transnational Roma community and their role in it, while the others talk more about being a member of transnational community of experts, activists, and political leaders working on Roma issues. While talking about being or becoming members of those communities, they heavily rely on the concepts of networking, and recognition. And this is where the role of social and symbolic capitals (or the drive for access to them) becomes prominent in the way the students identify themselves.

Thus, this section of the analysis chapter begins with an analysis of the ways the students identify themselves, and the factors behind particular identifications. Then the section concludes with a discussion on likely outcomes of the program while locating the RAP within the wider context of Roma Decade of Inclusion.

4.3.1 Identification Processes

Although this drive for access to different resources brought interviewees with different trajectories together around defining themselves with the nominal identity of being Roma, this has not necessarily been experienced in the same ways during their studies in

RAP, either. And these differences among interviewees have a lot to do with the experiences they are going through with Roma community in the body of RAP, as well as with their different backgrounds. So, it is necessary to differentiate the ways of being and belonging from each other in the context of RAP, as well. For some students' self-identification, the nationality, gender or religion can play a more important role than Roma identity in different contexts. In order to be able to analyze these different ways of identification, it is necessary to look at the student's relations with the "outsiders" in addition to their relations within RAP as each student is trying to position him/herself also with regard to relations with "outsiders."

While talking about one's representation of him/herself to the outsiders, the concept of symbolic capital- "socially recognized legitimization such as prestige and honor"- which is the capital in the eyes of others comes into prominence once more. Relying on the interviews, it is possible to talk about two main groups of outsiders; one being pro-Roma networks (including activists, academics, NGOs and the funders and the administration of RAP) and the other being non-Roma students at CEU. When it comes to representing themselves to the pro-Roma organizations and the networks, the students exclusively identify themselves Roma, or to be more specific: well-educated, skilled, young Roma¹⁶⁶. Because in this way, they gain recognition within these networks. While this makes them holders of symbolic capital, that kind of an identification also enhances their future access to these networks which is again, an embodiment of social capital. The case of Olya who has never declared herself as Roma before applying to RAP, and who says she was "attached to her national identity more¹⁶⁷" before her application exemplify the role of RAP in the self-identification of the students. According to her, RAP is not simply a program for preparation for MA. She takes it more as "an institution for strengthening your identity¹⁶⁸" and she states, with the program she feels

¹⁶⁶ Tr. 9, p. 8.

¹⁶⁷ Tr. 6, p. 6.

¹⁶⁸ Tr. 6, p. 1.

more Roma than ever¹⁶⁹. While talking about the change the program brought for the way she identifies herself, she also adds about the program's success in terms of introducing the students to the international pro-Roma networks:

If you strengthen this network, then you feel more solidarity. You feel more connection, and you are able to do something in the future. We also have more opportunities than the ones who didn't pass the program. Because we have more possibilities to go for an internship in European Commission in Brussels, to have internship in European Roma Right Center, Roma Education Fund... Because the head of the department, the mentors, tutors, they all have data of every student. And whenever somebody offering an internship asks about candidates, they give him the data. So they see the recommendation, and how our performance is...¹⁷⁰

Olya is not the only one who talks about the opportunities the program can bring, almost all the interviewees share similar opinions. For instance, Nancy for whom Roma identity was not a central theme prior her application, also mentions how she has taken this program as an opportunity to improve her application to "prestigious American Universities¹⁷¹.

As it is seen from the quotes, and was referred above, drive for social mobility lead some of the students to identify themselves as Roma selectively. However, it is not enough to declare themselves Roma only in the application process if they intend to get benefit from the program for their future plans (which is usually to have a position in transnational pro-Roma networks for almost all of the interviewees). And in order to achieve this, they need to "prove that they are the right person to be invested¹⁷²".

However, when it comes to their relations with the non-Roma students at CEU, not all of the students keep identifying themselves Roma, and this also adds to the conflicts among them since the definition of Roma identity dominant in RAP requires one to identify him/herself Roma in each and every context. For instance Karl and Nancy try to differentiate

¹⁶⁹ Tr. 6, p.1.

¹⁷⁰ Tr 6, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ Tr.11, p. 1.

¹⁷² Tr. 9, p. 11.

themselves from the Roma community especially when it comes to their contacts with the students from other departments. Karl states:

I don't know how to say... but sometimes I feel ashamed of them [the other Roma students]. For instance, how to say... Some of them are really different. Not because they are Roma, but because their levels of culture. I don't prefer waiting bus with them, or drinking coffee with them. Because they don't know how to behave in different situations. I am trying to avoid these kinds of people.¹⁷³

What appears from Karl's statements is that he is not that willing to be seen with the Roma people by the outsiders. Nancy also has these kinds of concerns about the behaviors of Roma people, and she seems to be concerned with the perception of these kinds of acts by other people. Although both interviewees tried to avoid these kinds of statements during the interviews, it was possible to observe before and after the interviews how certain ways of behaviors were appropriated for "gypsies" while representing those to me as an outsider. In these cases, while telling about some of the practices (that they find "unusual or uncivilized") of the Roma, the interviewees referred to those as the ways "gypsies" behave and attempted to distance themselves from them. Following are some quotes from the interview with Nancy while she is representing herself and her experiences on the second floor:

I really didn't know. Because I never had a connection with... So, for me this was the first time. But that wasn't like a big shock or something like that. It was just, I am not used to certain things. Maybe it happened like those certain people are raised in that way, and it doesn't have any connections with being Roma. I am not saying this is coming from Roma culture. I just couldn't handle some things like people touching my food in my plate with their fingers, and stuff like that. Like when you are drinking coffee, like taking you coffee. It's like you don't do these kinds of things. [laughing.] ...psychological aspect, yes. I think you don't do these kinds of things in many cultures. I mean you have kind of a bonton, and you know what you should do and what not...¹⁷⁴

Another student referring to the students who try to distance themselves from Roma students, states:

I think they are ashamed of Roma people. And they try to avoid being seen with Roma people (...) When with other people, [they] even don't salute the Roma students. Thus, I

¹⁷³ Tr. 2, pp. 20,21.

¹⁷⁴ Tr. 11, p. 6.

even doubt [they] are Roma.

While the student made these comments with reference to one of the students trying to remain outside the group of Roma students at CEU, this detail will be kept confidential. However, the abovementioned statement's of the student has the implications of what Goffman calls "impression management strategies"; while it also supports the claim "the students preferring to remain outside the group of Roma students are taken to be less Roma or even non-Roma by some of the Roma students."

Impression management, in the words of Jenkins "draws to our attention the performative aspects of identity and the fact that the identification is a routine aspect of everyday life."¹⁷⁵ And the quotes exemplify how the ways students identify themselves are being managed, constructed and re-constructed in everyday life depending on their relationships between insiders and outsiders or to put it in the words of Jenkins "in the encounter between internal and external."¹⁷⁶ As it is seen, when the students represent themselves to the institution (funders and the administration of RAP), and also to the transnational Roma networks, they engage more with Roma identity.

For instance, a student states; while applying for an internship, he has benefited from being bearer of Roma identity, and identified himself in these lines¹⁷⁷. However, at the same time, he states that he does not want to be seen with Roma students by non-Roma students at CEU and adds "They know you are Roma. But, then you are introducing yourself to them day by day, and this takes time."¹⁷⁸ Thus, as implied by Goffman, the subjects keep defining themselves in different lines in relation to with whom they are getting into contact. And while some of the students distance themselves from Roma identity when getting into contact with non-Roma, most of the students tend to define themselves Roma when seeking

¹⁷⁵ Jenkins, 2004, p. 20.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁷⁷ Tr. 2, p. 15.

¹⁷⁸ Tr. 2, p. 17.

recognition in the eyes of pro-Roma networks, and RAP.

4.3.2 RAP in Acquisition of Symbolic Capital

What is likely to bring recognition to the students in the eyes of pro-Roma organizations is not only their self-identification as Roma. In addition to this, in relation to abovementioned definition of a proper Roma -which is constructed and interiorized in RAP-, the students tend to identify themselves as well-educated, young, activist Roma; and they take these qualifications as the factors enhancing their access to jobs in transnational pro-Roma networks. A student states:

Firstly I will apply for his internship in European Commission. And I think here, [CEU] was a good place to gain the competences. And it will be really good to be part, the right piece of the puzzle there. So I think they need [us]. I don't want to prize myself. I don't think I am the smartest girl (...) Just think, I received a good knowledge here and very good competence¹⁷⁹.

When she is asked what kind of a role being Roma can play in her applications, she states:

From 2005, the Decade of Roma Inclusion is launched. And they have a policy that clearly state this minority should not, must not be discriminated. You can see in an application for a job: you have gender balance, ethnicity balance; minorities are encouraged to apply. So, in most of the places you can see that you apply, and they see that you are Roma. And maybe now, they would rather take you if they see your degree and everything. Because (...) they want to promote their institution for example like being tolerated etc.¹⁸⁰

She is not the only student who thinks the program and being Roma itself provide the students recognition in the eyes of pro-Roma networks. Most of the other students also state that they want to work in international NGOs working on Roma issues, and the RAP provides the knowledge and skills they need to have for this¹⁸¹. While most of the students aim at having a job in organizations like OSI, European Commission, Roma Education Fund and so on, they think that while RAP contributes to their recognition by these networks with the

¹⁷⁹ Tr. 6, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ Tr. 6, p. 13.

¹⁸¹ Tr. 5, p. 1.

knowledge it provides, it also introduces them to these networks:

Yes, for sure the program helps to introduce ourselves to networks of international organizations, academics and so on¹⁸².

Moreover, these statements of the students are supported both by the statements of the tutors and also by the statements of the administrators:

RAP is kind of a recruitment basis for many of the NGOs and international organizations dealing with Roma issues. (...) And the program really helps the students in this sense¹⁸³

Additionally, the seminars organized in the body of CEU targeting the students of RAP, are taken by students as opportunities to meet activists, academics and the organizations working on Roma issues:

First, we have academic English and academic writing; and these are the requirements that are asked when you are applying to some international organizations. The second good thing about the program is that during the program we also have these Achievement Seminars where someone from some organization, let's say OSI is coming. And we are talking about [Roma issues]. They are bringing us some Roma people who are in positions and who have already passed, what we are passing now. And they are sharing their experiences. (...) And it definitely provides some opportunities for networking.¹⁸⁴

So, all these statements demonstrate that RAP plays a significant role for the students in their acquisition of symbolic capital which is embodied in their recognition by transnational pro-Roma networks. Additionally, RAP also equips the students with cultural capital in the form of the knowledge it provides, and also serves to the recognition of this knowledge by the pro-Roma networks. And this recognition also equips the students with social capital since with the program they are already becoming part of this international network.

As it is also seen from the quotes above, most of the students' aim is to have jobs at pro-Roma organizations that are included in Roma Decade of Inclusion, relying on their recognition. And as stated by the members of those organizations, students have high chances

¹⁸² Tr. 11, p. 10.

¹⁸³ Tr. 7, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Tr. 9, pp. 5, 6.

to get job in these organizations¹⁸⁵. Thus, the program seems to achieve its end to “prepare young, outstanding Roma students to conduct local and international academic and advocacy work¹⁸⁶”. However, in order to see implications of this for the achievement of the more ambitious aim of “improving the situation of Roma in the region¹⁸⁷”, it is necessary to locate the program within wider framework of Decade of Roma Inclusion. As the graduates of the program mostly take their places within the organizations involved in Decade of Roma Inclusion, it is necessary to look at the prospects of these networks to achieve a change for the wider Roma community. Thus, the next part attempts to locate the RAP within this wider framework, while discussing about the implications of symbolic capital for the achievement of the long-term aim of improving the situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe.

4.3.3 Decade of Roma Inclusion and Implications of Symbolic Capital

“RAP is designed with some aim behind it. It is not just the aim of getting Roma students to MA, but also... Okay, I am investing you, but in order you to be in some position in the future that you can return back in different ways to your community: like you are lobbying or advocacy about your community in the high levels of (international) institutions.”¹⁸⁸

The Decade of Roma Inclusion was launched by OSI and the World Bank for the period between 2005- 2015¹⁸⁹. While the decade is formulated by non-governmental and inter-governmental actors, “states were encouraged to join on a voluntary basis¹⁹⁰.” Under the framework of the decade, the member governments are required to improve socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma in their respective countries.

The co-authored article “Pro-Roma Global Civil Society: Acting For, With or Instead of Roma” talks about this process as a recent reflection of “a special microcosm developed

¹⁸⁵ Tr. 7, p. 1.

¹⁸⁶ <https://rap.ceu.hu>

¹⁸⁷ Tr. 8, p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ Tr. 1, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.romadecade.org>

¹⁹⁰ Kóczé & Rövid, p. 116.

within global civil society that is specialized in the so-called ‘Roma issue’, comprising non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations¹⁹¹, expert bodies, foundations, activists and politicians.¹⁹²” And one of the authors of the article who also has been tutoring in the RAP states “RAP is the main recruitment basis for many of the NGOs and international organizations dealing with this issue¹⁹³.” In addition to this, most of the students while talking about their future plans refer to those organizations included in the decade (like OSI, WB, Council of Europe, the European Roma Rights Center) as the organizations they want to have a job in. While the students recurrently refer to how higher their chances are to be involved in these organizations via the networks RAP provides and due to being well-educated, activist Roma, the program itself talks about the aim of preparing “young, outstanding Roma students to conduct local and international academic and advocacy work and to serve as role models and leaders for the Roma community overall¹⁹⁴.”

So, while the program provides recognition to the students in the eyes of these pro-Roma networks, this recognition in turn is likely to serve as social capital in enhancing access of the students to the future jobs within these networks.

However, according to Kóczé and Rövid, this pro-Roma Microcosm has some divisions and controversies. As stated in their study, those international organizations working on Roma issues (like OSI, WB, Council of Europe and so on.) are being referred to as “white civil society¹⁹⁵” by Roma grassroots associations and some local Roma. And according to those critiques, the “white” NGO’s promote hegemonic discourse on human rights while downplaying socio-economic dynamics, are accountable to their donors but not to Roma

¹⁹¹ OSI, World Bank, United Nations Development Program, Council of Europe, Council of Europe Development Bank, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, the European Roma Information Office, the European Roma and Traveller Forum, and the European Roma Rights Center. (taken from Kóczé & Rövid)

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 110.

¹⁹³ Tr. 7, p. 1.

¹⁹⁴ <http://rap.ceu.hu/#>

¹⁹⁵ Kóczé and Rövid, p. 117.

community, and contribute to weakening of Roma grass-roots movements as they lead to brain-drain of successful Roma with high salaries they offer¹⁹⁶.

These line of critiques are also significant in analyzing what kind of a change can RAP bring for Roma community in general. A previous tutor of the program reacts to this issue, saying:

We end up with Roma people for whom the Roma carriers have been created.¹⁹⁷

While another tutor who has taught in the program and keeps working on Roma issues states:

Now, there exists this pro-Roma civil society which is also international. And it is couple of hundred people who have very good chance to be there. But what is interesting from the outside world is, it is like a bubble¹⁹⁸.

While remaining skeptical about the likelihood of bringing a wider change for Roma community via RAP and those other organizations labeled as “white civil society” by some Roma activists, the tutors also draw attention to the fact that “if anything this program helped is a very small number of people.¹⁹⁹” Because, as one of the previous tutors of the program underlies, the students who have chance to get into the program constitute a really small segment of Roma community since prior to coming they at least need to have a BA degree, and access to some networks. Relying on this, the tutor states “while recruiting elites of Roma people, the program contributes to creation of elites of elites.²⁰⁰” Looking at the statements of the students, it is possible to observe that this idea of “creation of elites” is also very much internalized by the students. As a student states:

I think we as new-Roma elite should be different from them. [Referring to non-Roma majority.] (...) Also, what does it mean to be an elite and activist? Have you seen

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 117.

¹⁹⁷ Tr. 8, p. 4.

¹⁹⁸ Tr. 7, p. 2.

¹⁹⁹ Tr. 4, p. 5.

²⁰⁰ Tr. 7, Pp. 2, 3.

activist elite? The elite, in my opinion... It is a closed circle which is working on something...²⁰¹

This creation of elites of elites, from elites of Roma has a lot to do with acquisition of symbolic capital which is likely to be transmitted into social and economic capitals (while introducing the students to pro-Roma networks, and job opportunities it brings) via RAP. While according to Bourdieu, education as symbolic capital together with other capitals position social agents in multiple fields, it also has re-productive effects in production and maintenance of elites²⁰². And while the students of RAP access to symbolic capital of education at CEU and the recognition it brings relying on their acquisition of social capital; they also acquire social capital in the eyes of international pro-Roma organizations by the help of the program.

And one of the students states in answering a question whether being studied in RAP introduces them to the pro-Roma networks:

Yes of course. I really believe. I mean I saw it. I really saw it. Most of the people who came to RAP, we all know (each other) even the ones who were here 10 years before. Because I think this is RAP's 10th generation. 10 years... And I know someone who was here in 2005. It is a network, if you see it. And I think most of them have got their chances and they did something like, something real. Either they went abroad and improved more, or they took some places. I don't know, for example in Macedonia, they took some places in ministries.²⁰³

While the program provides these kinds of opportunities to the students; given the reproductive effects of symbolic capital whether or not it can bring a wider change for Roma community in the region remains to be a question to pose. And cases of some of the students pose a big challenge to the claim of the program to contribute to improvement of the situation of Roma in general. One of the students (who has been working in Roma Inclusion Office, is a student of RGPP, and recently got an internship in one of the international organizations

²⁰¹ Tr. 3, pp. 3, 10.

²⁰² Grenfell, p. 76.

²⁰³ Tr 2, p.12.

working on Roma issues) thinks that Roma should be assimilated into wider, ‘civilized’ communities:

Roma people need to get out of ghettos, to assimilate with other people. (...) Some of the Roma leaders are saying that Roma people should assimilate with non-Roma. And in certain way, they will have like a role-model on how they should behave; not just like properly, but how should to behave. Because usually Roma people are not finding important that their children is going to school for instance. So if they see his neighbor is sending his child everyday to school, he will say ‘okay, this is something I should retake’ and so on. In that sense, if we have this kind of issue: yes, they should assimilate, I agree with this²⁰⁴.

According to Bourdieu, holders of the symbolic power due to their attachment to symbolic capital are least likely to change the “categories of perceptions”²⁰⁵. And above mentioned statements of the student creates the question: whether the program will create the “role-models” which will bring a serious change for Roma community, or will it create a new elite -by providing symbolic capital on the basis of their social capital- that will re-impose the majorities as “role-models” to Roma community?

4.3.3.1 Affirmation vs. Transformation

This discussion about the reproductive effects of education as symbolic capital can also be approached in relation to the discussions taking place on affirmative action in education, and also on affirmative action in general. Charles R. Lawrence, as a beneficiary of affirmative action in graduate education, underlies some weaknesses of such policies and draws attention to the way these policies leads to reproduction of elites²⁰⁶. What Lawrence criticizes about the liberal defense of affirmative action in education is that “even though with such policies the members of disadvantaged groups gain access to graduate education, the policies do not question the traditional admission criteria that perpetuates class and race

²⁰⁴ Tr 3, p.18.

²⁰⁵ Bourdieu, 1991, p. 56.

²⁰⁶ Charles R. Lawrence III, “Two Views of the River: A Critique of the Liberal Defense of Affirmative Action”, 2010: <http://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/facpub/340/>

divisions.²⁰⁷“ The story Lawrence tells about is mostly concerned with affirmative action policies in the United States, however many commonalities can be found between what he tells about blacks’ admission to elite universities of United States, and Roma students’ access to CEU. In both cases, some of the underlining injustices are left untouched, and as mentioned before, those with higher access to social, economic, and cultural capitals turn to be the beneficiaries of such policies, while the ones more disadvantaged in relation to their access to these capitals remain so.

This line of argument brings the problems of affirmative action policies in general to the forefront, and draws attention to the necessity of transformative policies. Nancy Fraser makes this distinction between affirmation and transformation, and states: “affirmative remedies for injustice aim at correcting inequitable outcomes of social arrangements without disturbing the underlying framework that generates them, while transformative remedies aim at correcting inequitable outcomes precisely by restructuring the underlying generative framework.”²⁰⁸ And she adds that a transformative remedy requires policies of recognition and redistribution to go hand in hand, as injustices related to one are likely to trigger injustices with regard to the other.

Thus, in order to achieve the more ambitious aim of contributing to improvement of situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, RAP and also those organizations involved in what is referred to constitute pro-Roma microcosm, need to take the differentiations among Roma in their access to different capitals into account, and should develop more redistributive and transformative mechanisms. As one of the students of RGPP states:

There are Roma students who are successful but not able to come to RAP because they don’t have the necessary relations. Or there are Roma who can be successful but not able to access to education because of the economic conditions.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 931.

²⁰⁸ Fraser, 1995.

²⁰⁹ Tr. 2, p. 5.

So, as implied by Fraser, only those policies that are more encompassing, and aware of the structural differences characterizing the targeted groups can go beyond reproduction of elites, and can have impacts going beyond the boundaries of a special microcosm.

4.4 Conclusion

What all these discussions demonstrate is that the Roma Access Program equips the students enrolled with symbolic capital while providing them recognition in the eyes of transnational pro-Roma networks. At the same time, as stated above, students' access to program itself is highly enhanced by their access to social capital (which is embodied in their access to local pro-Roma networks). Thus, the program can be taken as a means to provide the necessary social recognition to the social capital most of the applicants already have in hand. In this vein, RAP turns to be a means that facilitates transmission of social capital in students' hand, to the recognition in the eyes of pro-Roma networks. At the same time, this recognition equips the students with social capital in the wider networks of transnational pro-Roma organizations, as it introduces the students to these networks.

The role of social and symbolic capitals is not limited by providing access to the program itself and to the transnational pro-Roma networks. They are also decisive in shaping the relationships among the students during their studies at RAP. And the interviews suggest, as stated by Bourdieu, holders of these capitals are likely to dominate the ways categories of perceptions are constructed. And since the main category constituting RAP is nominal identity of Roma, holders of social and symbolic capitals play a decisive role in the way this identity is defined.

The ways Roma identity is constructed and interiorized in RAP also have implications for the ways individuals identify themselves. And the statements of the students prove that neither the ways identities are defined nor the ways individuals identify themselves are static; and identity itself can turn into an asset facilitating agents' access to the resources.

Moreover, social and (especially) symbolic capitals also have significant implications for the outcomes RAP is likely to bring. As the program serves to acquisition of recognition in the eyes of transnational pro-Roma networks, most of the graduates of the program take their places in these networks. However, whether these networks (to which RAP constitutes the main recruitment basis) can bring a serious improvement for the conditions of Roma in Central and Eastern European countries or not, remains to be a question. Given the theoretical suggestion of Bourdieu that “the holders of symbolic capital are least likely to change categories of perceptions²¹⁰” which underlies the reproductive nature of symbolic capital, and given the worries of some grassroots Roma movements mentioned above; the study remains to be rather skeptical towards the possibility of achievement of the long-term ambition of the program.

²¹⁰ Bourdieu, 1991, p. 56.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION:

The Roma Access Program, which aims at creation of Roma role models, and future leaders, is not necessarily composed of Roma students who particularly identify themselves with Roma identity in each and every context. In addition to the ways the students define themselves, the ways they define Roma identity diverge in relation to their experiences, relationships within Roma students and relationships between them and outsiders, and also with regard to the stratagems the subjects advance²¹¹. While analyzing identification processes of the students enrolled in RAP, this paper has employed a (transnational) social field approach that brings relations of power and privilege into the analysis. Taking identification as a relational phenomenon following Richard Jenkins, the role of the relationships of power with an emphasis on social and symbolic capitals in identity formation have been analyzed.

The findings derived from the twelve semi-structured interviews held with students, previous tutors, and graduates of the program and from the two exploratory interviews conducted with the coordinators of RAP demonstrate that, one's prior access to social capital is a significant factor enhancing his/her access to RAP. Additionally, the interviews suggest that Roma identity itself has been mobilized by some of the students as a strategic asset to access to certain opportunities and networks. Moreover, the interviews suggest that once the students get access to RAP either relying on their prior access to social capital, or relying on (sometimes strategic) self-identification as Roma, the program itself provides a venue to acquire symbolic capital.

²¹¹ Jenkins, 2004. p. 23.

What the interviews also demonstrate is that social and symbolic capitals are also decisive in the construction and interiorization of a particular definition of being Roma in the context of RAP. As implied by the interviews, while a definition of “proper Roma” that puts emphasis on explicit self-identification as Roma, active engagement with Roma issues and attachment to tradition and culture turns to be dominant, such a definition is likely to put pressure on the autonomy of the students who are marginalized by the definition. However, what the interviews also imply is that the ones marginalized by such a definition are not passive in accepting this definition, but they develop their own strategies to deal with it; either by employing an ignorant stance, or by developing a definition of Roma that is more inclusive for themselves.

According to the data gathered by the interviews, while the students with further access to social and symbolic capitals are likely to dominate the ways Roma identity is defined, development of such a definition is not immune from the perceived interests and aims of the program. In addition, the interviews indicate that the students tend to identify themselves with the definition of Roma constructed and interiorized in RAP when representing themselves to the institution (including the funders and the program administration) and also to the transnational pro-Roma networks.

What all these suggest is that RAP should not be approached in isolation from local and transnational pro-Roma networks, and the affirmative action policies in education. As implied by the interviews, multiple field positions of the interviewees and their drives for access to resources in different fields are decisive both in their access to RAP and also in the way they define themselves during their studies and afterwards. Additionally, RAP’s strong connection to the wider field of education and transnational pro-Roma networks has important implications on the definition of Roma constructed and interiorized in RAP and also on the future promises of the program.

In terms of construction of identities and subjectivities in RAP, RAP's strong connection to policies targeting empowerment of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe is decisive. As stated by Shore and Wright, policies are constructive for the identities, and relationships between the individual and society²¹². The discourses of Roma Inclusion policies, and the discourses of the organizations involved in these processes are influential in the ways the students of RAP identify themselves. As self-identification as Roma and active engagement with Roma issues are the main components of RAP's (and institutions alike) discourse on recruitment, the students have this tendency to define themselves in these lines.

The students' tendency to define themselves in these lines are not immune from their drive for social mobility, given they take studying in RAP as a big opportunity facilitating their access to transnational pro-Roma networks. And given the most of the graduates of the program take their places in these organizations, RAP seems to achieve its end to prepare its students for "conducting advocacy work." However, what kind of a role such a progress can play in the achievement of the wider aim of improving the situation of Roma is a question to pose. The answer to such a question can be discussed in relation to education, in relation to affirmative action policies in education, and in relation to affirmative action policies in general.

In relation to wider field of education, in a more theoretical discussion Bourdieu talks about the socially reproductive effects of education. According to him, education serves to production and maintenance of elites, given the beneficiaries of education are usually "those already possessed social and economic advantages²¹³." However, what can distinguish RAP from education in general is the fact that it targets a group of students with relatively lower access to these advantages compared to majorities.

²¹² Shore & Wright, p. 3.

²¹³ Grenfell, p. 76.

Since, as part of affirmative action policies in education, RAP aims at providing Roma a venue to access post-graduate education, likely outcomes of the program can also be discussed in relation to affirmative action policies in education. And, this time, questions about the divisions and differentiations (in access to capitals) within Roma community come to the forefront. In this respect, RAP seems to share what Lawrence calls “the weaknesses of liberal affirmative action policies in education²¹⁴”, relying on his analysis in the United States. According to Lawrence, liberal affirmative policies in education remain weak in considering inequalities within targeted groups, and serves to the perpetuation of injustices within them²¹⁵. In the same vein, for the affirmative policies in general, Fraser implies that with their attempt “to correct inequitable outcomes of social arrangements²¹⁶”, affirmative policies remain weak in disturbing underlying injustices. Moreover, according to Lawrence, affirmative action policies in education, in the end contribute to the “reproduction and maintenance of elites” within the target groups.

Applying these suggestions to the case of RAP, the interviews demonstrate that RAP as well (similar to the affirmative action policies in education in the United States), remains to be more reachable to those with relatively higher access to different sorts of capitals (especially to economic and social capitals). And by equipping the elites of the Roma with further resources, in a way, the program contributes to perpetuation of such structural differences by contributing to creation of elites of elites. Thus, RAP seems to contribute to further empowerment of a relatively advantaged small segment of Roma, rather than to the improvement of over-all situation of Roma in the region. In this way, by benefitting those already in a relatively advantaged positions, the program contributes to widening of the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged Roma. And, by overlooking structural divisions

²¹⁴ Lawrence, p. 928.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Fraser, <http://newleftreview.org/I/212/nancy-fraser-from-redistribution-to-recognition-dilemmas-of-justice-in-a-post-socialist-age>

within Roma, RAP leaves inequalities within Roma intact, thus remains short in contributing to transformation of the situation of wider Roma community in the region.

Additionally, most of the graduates of the program equipped with symbolic capital take their places in what is called to be “pro-Roma microcosm²¹⁷” within global civil society that is considered to be downplaying socio-economic injustices within Roma community by grassroots Roma organizations. And given the idea of being elites within this microcosm is internalized by most of the students, and given the elites as the holders of “symbolic power” are least likely to change categories of perception²¹⁸, whether these elites of elites would contribute to overcoming inequalities within Roma community remains to be a question.

Overall, what these theoretical discussions and the data derived from the interviews suggest is that “RAP is likely to benefit these Roma students with relatively higher prior access to different sorts of capitals. And it contributes to the maintenance and reproduction of elites within Roma community by equipping the students with symbolic capital in the eyes of transnational pro-Roma networks, which are taken to be in isolation from structural problems of Roma²¹⁹ by grass-roots Roma organizations”.

One last issue emerged out of the interviews and which can be subjected to further research is the references some of the students were making to a “nation” of Roma, while talking about the discussions among themselves on a future “Romaland”. Although discussions on this emergent issue were kept out of the scope of this study since it requires engagement with another wide literature on nationalism, it is worth to mention in a nutshell that statements of some of the students and the tutors have references to some talks about a nation of Roma in a future “Romaland” taking place among the students. Thus, content of these discussions, the role of the program in development of such an idea, and the ways these

²¹⁷ Kóczé and Rövid, p. 110.

²¹⁸ Bourdieu, 1991, p. 56.

²¹⁹ Kóczé & Rövid, 2012.

discussions (or desire of some of the students for this) on creation of a Roma nation and establishment of Romaland influence students' identifications can be subject to another research.

APPENDIX I- The Application Form²²⁰



Application Form Roma Graduate Preparation Program 2013-2014

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Are you Roma? _____

Given/First Name: _____

Family/Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

EDUCATION

Year of graduation from university: _____

Full title of Bachelor's degree: _____

Name and location of university: _____

WHICH SUBJECT ARE YOU INTERESTED TO STUDY IN RGPP? (Please underline one or two)

Sociology and Social Anthropology

Gender Studies

Legal Studies (incl. Human Rights)

Public Policy/Public Administration

International Relations and European Studies

Political Science

²²⁰ <http://rap.ceu.hu/node/21457>

Nationalism

Economics

History

Environmental Sciences

Other (please, specify): _____

English language skills

(Please indicate your level of English language knowledge by crossing the appropriate box)

Beginner	Pre-Intermediate	Intermediate	Upper-Intermediate	Advanced

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THIS PROGRAM? (Please underline)

RAP website

RAP mailing list

RAP Facebook page

Your university

Former student of RAP

Local Open Society Foundation

Announcement from a mailing list or another electronic source (please specify):

Other (please specify):

What would your goal after the completion of this program be? (Please underline)

1. Post-Graduate Studies (MA, PhD) 2. Work in NGO 3. Work in Business 4.
Work in government 5. Other

Date

Signature

Please send your application by 2 May 2013 by e-mail, fax OR post to:

E-mail: romaac@ceu.hu

Fax number: 00 36 1 327 3190

Postal address: Central European University, Roma Access Programs, Nador u. 9, H-1051
Budapest, Hungary

APPENDIX II- TOPIC GUIDES

Appendix II. I The Topic Guide for the Students

INTRODUCTION:

- It has been almost six months since the program has started. How would you describe your **experiences in CEU so far**?
- How was the process of your **application** to this program? (i.e. how did you find out, how and why did you apply?)
- How **beneficial** the program has been for you so far?
- Have you applied for **further studies** already?
 - How helpful the program in this process of applications?
- Overall, do you feel it is **worth** to have such a preparatory program for one year?

IDENTITY FORMATION:

- Can you briefly tell about your previous studies?
- Which languages do you speak? Which ones do you prefer to talk here?
- Have you been involved in any volunteering project on Roma issues before?
 - If so: Can you briefly tell about your experiences?
 - What were the **reactions** of people around you? / Have you been **satisfied**? / What kind of **opportunities** did those create
 - If not: Have you ever thought of being involved into one? What kind?
 - Are you planning to be involved in these kinds of organizations **now**? **What has changed**?
- **How central was Roma identity** for you before?
- How central it is **now**?
- How do you think your identity will be in the **future**?
- Do you have a sense of **duty for Roma community**?
- How important Roma issues as a **topic of study**?
- What do you think about other people for whom being Roma is important/not?

- Do you think any **symbolic aspects** attached to Roma identity? In what ways?
- How would you define being a **proper Roma**?
- In what ways do you think identities can be used **strategically**?

PRESENT CONDITONS:

- About the dormitory, how is it staying in a **floor** with Roma people?
 - Would you prefer to leave with people other than those? Why?
 - Which one would you choose?
- Do you feel any **pressure to act like Roma**?
 - Have ever been irritated?
 - Has anyone suggested to behave more like proper Roma?
- **Solidarity:** Do you feel that you have some sort of a solidarity with the ones in your program or the ones in your floor?
 - Is it because you are Roma? Or why?
- **Conflict:** Is it sometimes related to Roma identity?
- Are you going through any **animosities** on national base? Gender? Religion?
- **Hierarchy-competition? Any jealousy?** What kind?
- How do you **see the other students** in CEU?
- How do you think you **are perceived** by the ones who are not enrolled in the program?
 - Depending on what criteria you choose the classes you audit?

FUTURE PROSPECTS & CALMING DOWN:

- What are you planning to do **after finishing the RAP**?
- How do you think the certificate you will get from here would be helpful?
 - Do you think the fact that the certificate will indicate you have Roma origin can create a problem?
- Do your members of family or your friends from your country of origin have **some expectations** from you?
 - What kind of expectations are those?
 - Do they make you feel under **pressure**?
- In which country are you planning to live? Why?
- Is applying to CEU for further studies among your preferences? Why/Why not?

Appendix II.II. Topic Guide for the Tutors

INTRODUCTION:

- How would you define your experience of tutoring in RAP in general?
- How does the **recruitment process for the tutors** work?
- What about **recruitment of the students to the program**?
 - Can you tell about your experiences or observations about the recruitment?
 - Which factors do you think are determinant for the **admission of the students**?

IDENTITY, CONFLICTS, THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

- Did you encounter **problems** during the time you have been working?
 - If so, what were these related to?

- How do you **prepare the curricula?** (Who are involved in this process, are you free to teach whatever you want?)
- Do you think RAP as an institution has an aim **of promoting Roma identity?**
 - If so, in what ways?
- How do you view **the identity component** in the program?
- Which factors do you think influence **the relationships among the students and the way they identify themselves?**
- Have you witnessed any **conflicts among the students?**
 - If so, what are these problems related to?
 - Can you provide examples?

LIKELY OUTOCMES OF THE PROGRAM

- What kind of places do you think the graduates of the program would take?
- Can you please mention about the **positions the graduates** from your tutoring classes took if you are still in contact with them?
- How do you view the position of **RAP in relation to wider policies aiming inclusion of Roma?** (i.e. Decade of Roma inclusion?)
- What are the **promises and weaknesses** of these policies according to you?

APPENDIX III: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

The Thematic framework:

Main themes:

- 1. Ways of being and belonging**
 - a. Attachment to different identities
 - b. Motivations
 - c. Relationships with Roma students
 - d. Relationships with the outsiders
 - e. Centrality of Roma identity prior to application
 - f. Centrality of Roma identity after the application
- 2. Relations of power and privilege**
 - a. Pressures on the autonomy of the students
 - b. Strategies of those who are marginalized by the dominant ways Roma identity is defined in RAP.
 - c. Relations with Roma students
 - d. Ways of being a proper Roma
 - e. Main lines of divisions among the students.
- 3. Social and symbolic capitals**
 - a. Network creation
 - b. Strategic uses of identity
 - c. Opportunities
 - d. Social mobility
 - e. Access to the program
 - f. Benefits of the program
- 4. Identity Formation**
 - a. What is to be a proper Roma
 - b. Who/how defines being a proper Roma
 - c. Centrality of Roma identity prior to application
 - d. Centrality of Roma identity after the application
 - e. Relations with Roma students
 - f. Relations with outsiders
 - g. Institutional expectations from Roma students
- 5. Future Prospects of RAP**
 - a. Students' future plans
 - b. Students' and tutors' perception of pro-Roma networks
 - c. Students' ideas on future of Roma community
 - d. The ways the students locate themselves in pro-Roma networks.

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