'BECOMING' ROMA INTELLECTUAL IN EASTERN EUROPE

LIFE-STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

CASE STUDY FROM BUDAPEST

By

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Abstract

In the existing sociological and anthropological literature on Roma identity often the figure of the Roma intellectual is either missing of described as assimilated. This thesis aims to bring different prospective into discussion. By tracing the experience of a group of international group of educated Roma who live and study in Budapest this thesis attempt to show how through changing practices, lifestyle, and life strategies these Roma construct (more nuanced) alternative Roma identity that allows them a certain level of acceptance by the mainstream society and upward mobility.

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I INTRODUCTION

In the sociological discourse Roma identity in Eastern Europe in terms of class struggles and related life-strategies and practices have been often discussed with regards to 'underclass'(see Marushiakova and Popov 2005) or 'social exclusion'(see Stewart 2001). In many cases, Roma in Eastern Europe have been studied in relation to their intergenerational experience of poverty and marginalization and some practices linked to their socio-economic situatedness (such as early marriages, large families etc.)(Hancock 1987). There is less research on Roma intellectuals. The main discourse labels these Roma 'assimilated', because their lifestyle and everyday practices do not significantly differ from that of the 'non-Roma'[1] with similar status. This thesis attempts to examine the identity of educated Roma from different prospective. In this sense, this study poses a less asked question. It examines how through changing social practices and attitudes, some Roma construct (more nuanced) alternative Roma identity that allows them a certain level of acceptance by the mainstream society and upward mobility. This thesis suggests (possible) common life-strategies involved in the process of *becoming* Roma intellectual in the East-European context during the state-socialism and after the fall of the regime.

This thesis presents a study how an international group of Roma from Eastern Europe who live in Budapest challenge/or redefine the image of the East European Roma presented in sociological and anthropological literature. Their lifestyle suggests an alternative identity; an amalgam of practices that combine the mainstream/modern/'western' with elements of 'Roma' culture. I look at their identity as outcome of the specific life-strategies their parents and they adopt in regards to the economic conditions in the region during and after the fall of state-socialism. I argue that they are product of intergenerational upward mobility. I claim that during

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[1] In Romani studies 'non-Roma' refers to individuals from Roma origin

the state-socialism some Roma gain certain economic capital, became part of the mainstream society, and part of the working class that allowed them to change their lifestyle. The change in their economic position gave them the possibility to live (in comparison to the average Roma) in better geographic area, to adopt the mainstream values and practices regarding sexuality, reproduction, education etc. Further, the accumulation of 'economic' and 'cultural capital' in the family, the affirmative action in education allowed their children to make a step further and to become cultural middle class[2]. I argue that the globalization is another factor that impacted the identity of these Roma. After the fall of state-socialism East Europeans become influenced by the western lifestyle. The globalization brought more liberal thinking of sexuality, family values, and everyday life practices.

Although, these educated Roma and their family members do not differ significantly from the 'non-Roma', they are not assimilated, but represent an alternative identity. In other words, I claim that although, these Roma accept the mainstream lifestyle and life strategies, they add supplementary to the mainstream set of elements related to their understanding of Roma identity. Some of these elements are: Roma music, family values, and certain customs.

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[2] This conception will be explained further

II Theoretical framework

2.1 Subject and structure of the chapter

In the academic discourse the Roma intellectual is missing or as described assimilated. In other words, the sociological and anthropological approaches to Roma intellectuals defined them as Roma whose (1) social status and lifestyle differ from that of the poor Roma, (2) whose lifestyle does not significantly differ from that of majority population and (3) whose lifestyle is influenced by ('western'[3]) modern lifestyle (Liegeois 2007, p. 95-98). In other words, to Roma with higher social status (lower middleclass or middle class) is attributed the label 'assimilated', because they seem to fit in the definition of ethnic assimilation[4].

The aim of this chapter is to provide theoretical ground for theorizing the identity the international group of the educated Roma from Budapest out of the framework assimilated/non-assimilated; this chapter defines the identity of this group of educated Roma as alternative Roma identity. In this thesis the group I study does not encompass the whole variety of professionals who constitute that group of Roma intellectual/'Roma elite'[5]. The group I study is limited to the international Roma students from Budapest most of whom study in Central European University(CEU) (part of English language program or preparatory for master degree (MA) program for Roma students, Roma students at CEU who pursue master degree, Roma students who study in Budapest, Roma professionals who live and work in Budapest (mostly in NGO sector).

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[3] See the discussion below
[4] Definition of assimilation and further discussion regarding this phenomenon will be given in the following sections
[5] See the discussion below

By tracing the sociological and anthropological discourse regarding Roma, this chapter will attempt to bring different light on the issue. In order to do so, this chapter will present the key concepts that produce the equation between educated Roma and assimilated Roma. It will discuss how 'Roma'[6] as term have been constructed in relation to practices and lifestyle linked to poverty, and the problematic that such conception brings with. After, it will present a case study how an international group of educated Roma who live and study in Budapest Roma challenge the assumption that educated Roma are always assimilated. However, chapter is limited to the theoretical consideration of the research; it will present the context, method, and theoretical framework. The analysis of the study will be given in the next chapter.

2.2   Who is a Roma in the sociological and anthropological discourse?

The following subsection will present and problematize the discourse in sociological and anthropological approach to Roma. In this sense, I argue that the term 'Roma' represents a limited to distinction between 'Roma' lifestyle and 'non-Roma' lifestyle[7]. Thus, these academic discourses miss to recognize the existence of alternative Roma identities that, in terms of lifestyle and practices blur the boundaries between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma' as established categories.

2.2.1 Introduction

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[6] When referring to 'Roma' (with quotation marks) I refer to the established 'sociological tradition' (see Kocze 2011) that suggest that Roma are sharply different from the mainstream society and link their lifestyle to certain practices (such as early marriages, early parenthood etc.) that are an outcome of segregation and poverty.(see Oprea 2004)
[7] I mean the lifestyle of the mainstream society

In sociological and anthropological literature Roma have been theorized as population whose lifestyle and related practices are sharply different from that of the mainstream (modern) society. Many authors claim that Roma do not accept the modern lifestyle, but they have their own internal laws and traditions (Laederisch and Tcherenkov 2004). Often these traditions present, as Hancock (1987) defines it, 'mythical image'. This image sometimes refers to lower educated, poor Roma, who marry early, have many children, live in segregated community follows 'intral [Roma] law' that imposes strict regulations on female sexuality and emphasizes the importance Roma girls to marry virgin etc.

Another sociological discourse regarding Roma (see Oprea 2004; Kocze 2011) also depicts Roma identity in regards to these practices. However, it defines these practices as an outcome of life-strategies that Roma adopt for coping with poverty and discrimination that they experience generation after generation starting from their arrival in Europe to XXI century. In other words, many scholars define Roma in relation to their position of 'social outcaste' (see Stewart 2001) and their sharply different (from the rest of the population) lifestyle (Liegeois 2007). This sharp difference between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma' (in terms of lifestyle) is always already emphasized as crucial for the construction of the Roma identity as distinct category. In addition, when some Roma diminished the difference between them and the mainstream society (the non-Roma); when their economic situation does not differ from that of the mainstream society[8] and they start to bridge /overcome the differences between themselves and 'non-Roma' (start living in mixed area, accept the mainstream family model, disregard the internal laws that impose strict regulation of female sexuality, deny the virginity before marriage as part of their lifestyle, prioritize education as family value[9]) they are defined 'assimilated' (see Liegeois 2007). This idea of labeling the economically and culturally mobile Roma is strongly associated with educated Roma.

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[8] As described above the economic differences between Roma and 'non-Roma' is always emphasized whereas Roma are defined as poorer than 'non-Roma'. This assumption does not take into account that not all Roma live in harsh economic condition.(see UNDP report on Roma http://europeandcis.undp.org/data/show/D69F01FE-F203-1EE9-B45121B12A557E1B)

[9] See the description in the fallowing sections

2.2.2 Social outcaste and 'exotic others'

Most of the studies on Roma identity suggest Roma in Eastern Europe to be defined as non-homogeneous, therefore not unified in terms of cultural content (see Cherenkov 2004; Liegeois 2004). However, some researchers attempt to bridge the differences and suggest common features and trends of the Roma identity ('Romanipe/n'/'Romanija') (see Cherenkov 2004; Liegeios 2007). Usually, such umbrella categorization refers to 'Roma' as those who are part of 'traditional Roma communities'[10]. These approaches create (or assist for the creation of) a crystalized image of 'Roma' than encompasses a multiplicity of different experience of poverty, marginalization and segregation. Without doubt, one certainly can make such association. As many researchers show Roma history is a history of persecution and social rejection. As Hancock points out this fact made 'Roma' an embodiment of 'pariah', (a 'social outcaste')(Hancock 1987). In this regards, as Marushiakova and Popov stress, some researchers defined 'Roma' as 'ethnoclass', 'underclass'(Marushiakova and Popov 2005, p.3). However, as Stewart points out this idea do not accurately represent Roma.

As Stewart takes on the issue, the 'underclass', is problematic:

> segregated from the rest of society and discriminated against' in such as way that 'those in the underclass have almost no chance of finding roles in the new division .of labor or of having 'normal' jobs, income, housing, social security, or access to better education for their children…people cut off from the civilizing effects of participation in 'normal' social life (Stewart 2001, p.12).

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[10] By saying traditional Roma (community) I refer to the understanding of the Roma as 'others'; those whose values and practices sharply differ from the modern life-style in terms of education, sexuality etc. According to such understanding 'traditional Roma' sustain various combination of values and practices are usually produces in relation to the idea of early marriages, large families, lower education, life in segregated area, bohemian life-style

In 'Deprivation, the Roma and 'the underclass' Stewart claims that portraying Roma as underclass stigmatize Roma and define them as homogenous group of 'no hopers'.

In addition, as Memedova highlights,

> These studies (…)contributed to the categorization and (…) stigmatization of 'gypsies' as a stable and inherently inferior group.(Memedova 2005, p. 23)

Stewart's critique of Roma -as- underclass opens up space for theorizing Roma identity out of the understanding of collectivity of 'no-hopers'. He suggests an alternative, more nuanced term to be attributed to Roma - 'social excluded group'. As Stewart claims 'social exclusion' 'does make clear that we are talking of an on-going process, rather than a fixed state, (Stewart 2001, p. 13). However, his understanding, although giving space to theorize Roma as fluid, shifting (or at least having such potential) category, he links the Roma life-style and identity to marginalization, and intergenerational experience of coping with poverty strategies.

In this regard, many scholars approach Roma identity in relation to certain practices closely related to poverty, marginalization and exclusion. This repetition contribute for creation/development of an academic 'tradition' of seeing the Roma in the European context as the 'exotic others', underdeveloped, 'burden for the state', failure for the modernity, 'failure for inclusion' unwilling/or unable to participate in the social life of the country (see Hancock 2007; Royrvik 1998). Thus, the academic discourse[11] misses or undermines the social practices and meaning making of some Roma whose 'tradition' focus on social mobility, adaptation to social system and appropriation the mainstream values.

This representation contributes for establishing a framework that puts emphasis on Roma as exotic indigenous population in Europe that do not fit in the modern society[12]. In this regards, the 'Roma' became term that rather suggests diversity of marginal communities in Europe with specific 'traditional' practices that reject the 'modern' values. Therefore, there is not as much conceptive space to define 'Roma' in different terms regarding their 'cultural capital' and practices. For example, when discussing Roma different than those who live in a ghetto or other segregated areas, the main question is not whether they construct a new understanding of Roma that contribute to general term 'Roma', but their identity and practices are exclusively defined in relation to the idea of assimilation by the mainstream. (see Hankock 1987).

2.2.3 Assimilation, (authentication) or 'becoming'

According to Gordon's (1964) ethnic assimilation is a process where 'subordinated' group (in this case the group of Roma intellectuals as representative of the Roma minority) accept certain aspects of the dominated culture (the culture of the majority). However, this definition of assimilation suggests that the subordinated group lose certain aspect of their identity and its distinction in terms of cultural content. In other words, this conception classifies only two cultural category: the culture of the dominant and the culture of the subordinated group and dismiss the significance of the culture that is produced by those who combine these two cultures (accept certain aspect of the mainstream and keep certain aspect of their own culture). In other words, the label assimilation disregards the significance of the produced alternative Roma identity in the process of negotiating their social space.

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[12] See the discussion in the next section

Moreover, ethnic assimilation refers to an identity that previous to the contact with the dominant culture was authentic and when this identity clashed with the dominant culture it became highly influenced by the dominant. In this sense, those whose identity became influenced (the 'subordinated' ones) lost certain components of their identity. This process is defined through loss; it does not understand this process as productive (it does not take into account the potential crafting an alternative own identity in such progression).

Deleuzian understanding of 'becoming' helps to understand the problematic of the use of such terminology (assimilate/non-assimilated Roma). Deleuze defines identity as fluid concept; identity exists in relation to other identity, it is built in a process of interaction and it has its temporal meaning (May 2003). In other words, there is always change in terms of practices and lifestyle, always 'becoming' that is influenced by other identities. Than the practices and lifestyle that seems to describe an 'authentic' (traditional, or non-assimilated) Roma identity should be understood as temporal and the identity of the so-called 'assimilated Roma' as alternative Roma identity. As Deleusze implies both assimilated and non-assimated identity are influenced by other identities. Thus, he stresses on the importance of the produced subjectivity in the process. In this sense, the Deleuzian understanding of 'becoming' helps to see identity as changeable structure. Moreover, 'becoming' give a theoretical tool to move away from the duality Roma/non-Roma, assimilated/non-assimilated, and suggests a pluralism that overcome the limitations that these categories suggest. Furthermore, it helps to understand identity as a process that produces variety of different identities that are always in relation to one another. In other words, it gives a tool to see how Roma identity change over time; how different practices and lifestyle emerge and bring different connotations of the Roma identity.

Some theorists (such as Liegeois 2007) highlight that, as the discussion above suggests, Roma identity is fluid, it relates to the lifestyle and practices of the population where the Roma live. However, these authors still Roma identity do not move away from the idea of assimilation, but

still refers to Roma whose lifestyle represents hybrid model that incorporates Roma and non-Roma lifestyle as assimilated(2007, p. 95-96).

Taking into account the discussion above the next sections will analyze how through changing practices, in relation to reproduction and sexuality some Roma construct their reality differently; how accepting the mainstream practices some Roma crafted differently their Roma identity.

2.2.4 'Upwardly mobile Roma'

In *Fertility and Child Bearing Practices Among Poor Gypsy Women in Hungary: Intersectionality of class, race and gende*r Durszt gives a more nuanced understanding of Roma identity in relation to class/strata and life-strategy and the process of adaptation and appropriation of the mainstream values and practices. Her analysis shows how new group emerges and negotiates its boundaries[13]. The 'upwardly mobile Roma', the group she classifies as such differs from the understanding of Roma as homogeneous 'group. That group disturbs the direct link between Roma and 'underclass'. In her article Durszt gives a basis for new theoretical foundations for better understanding the stratification in the Roma community in relation to different life strategies adopted by different groups. However, the group she analyzes does not entirely differ from Roma-as-underclass/socially-excluded in its socio-economic terms, and ideas of assimilation but it is sharply distinctive in regards to specific cultural practices (e.g. neglects the early marriage practices, and large family structure, stresses on education as needy for one's success in life etc.)(I will further elaborate on this issue in chapter II).

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[13] Although her group represents a mixed-marriages families, she refers to them as Roma ('upwardly mobile').

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Although 'upwardly mobile Roma' represent mixed marriages families, they still (the author herself) define them as Roma. In this thesis, I refer to this group as cultural marriage; a bridge that some Roma make and amalgam of culture that embodies the 'Roma' and 'non-Roma'. This group is symbolic for the emerging of new category that of the educated Roma. Her article shows mechanisms and the strategies for challenging the status quo (for upward mobility) that some Roma adopt. The upwardly mobile Roma relate their life-style and identity to the mainstream culture (non-Roma). They seem to be assimilated or to make an attempt to assimilate, however their mixing of Roma and non-Roma culture does not suggest assimilation (although such claim may be possible), but production of new identity, that, as Durszt implies, is neither Roma nor entirely non-Roma[14]. However, in regards to education and practices related to control over female sexuality, are identical (similar) with those of the local non-Roma communities.

Durszt's upwardly mobile Roma are a signifier for the rise of the upward mobile groups such as that of the educated Roma, a (symbolic) fact that represents the nuanced Roma identity and shows instability of Roma identity and life-style as well as the mechanism of its construction. The Upwardly mobile Roma represents the fragmentation of the Roma identity in terms of class, gender relations and social space. They justify potentiality of 'becoming', that Stewart points out for Roma.

2.2.5 'Roma elite'

As mentioned above, another social category of Roma is studied as well- the successful Roma. According to Tomova (1995) successful Roma are:

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[14] Here the question is not a claim for authentic identity; new identity does not mean authentic identity, but simply a new combination of existing structures.

> The heterogeneous stratum of Roma businessmen, Roma politicians and government officials (in central and local community government), influential leaders and activists of Roma NGOs (dealing with Roma projects, especially on 'desegregation in education', and with practical projects, whereby they come into frequent and highly subordinating contact with the Roma population), representatives of the Roma intelligentsia (teachers, assistant teachers and other educational staff; journalists in Roma media and other media; artists: musicians, singers, musical instrumentalists, dancers, etc.)(Tomova 1995, p. 204).

Tomova discussion on successful Roma, produces a discourse around the social mobility in the Roma communities. Her discussion describes educated Roma as part of the 'successful Roma'(see Tomova 2005, p. 206). Tomova characterizes those Roma, as those who overcome the imposed barrier of cultural differences. However, her study does not show the economy of becoming, (i.e., the process of adaptation), neither she describes their cultural practices, nor she gives a description of what constitutes their identity. Her study implies that assimilation of the Roma to be condition for their upward mobility and success in the contemporary society. (Whether, such theoretical ground is possibly accurate or not will not be discussed in this research.) The consequence of such theoretical conception is that if one accepts such theoretical consideration falls into the trap to define Roma identity in terms of assimilated and authentic Roma identity. The question that fallow of such interpretation is what is the authentic and what is unauthentic; that raises a whole range of other queries, but does not give concrete answers. As Deleuzian understanding of *becoming* suggests authentic identity is impossible because individual constructs his/her identity by adopting practices of pre-existing norms. As Narayan points out:

> We need to move away from a picture of national and cultural contexts as sealed rooms, impervious to change, with a homogenous space "inside" them, inhabited by "authentic insiders" who all share a uniform and consistent account of their institutions and values (…).We need to be wary about all ideals of "cultural authenticity" that portray "authenticity" as constituted by lack of criticism and lack of change' (Narayan in Oprea 2004, p. 31)

As discussed above, the Roma (as any other culture) is a fluid culture, it exist in relation to the mainstream values and practices, so the implied idea that there is an authentic Roma culture and identity (or any other cultures and identities)is problematic. There isn't any culture that exists in a

vacuum space; there has always been an influence between the 'Roma' and the 'non-Roma' (Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian etc.) culture (see Hancock 1987; Liegeois 2004). Therefore, Roma identity has always been influenced by the lifestyle and practices of the mainstream society. In other words, there has always been, change of the content[15]of the Roma identity (Liegeois 2007), and therefore 'becoming' Roma.

2.3. The problem with defining 'Roma' as umbrella term

This section presents the basic conception: 'Roma', 'Romanipe'/Roma identity. By understanding how they are constructed and used in sociological and anthropological discourses I will be able to present their problematic stance. These three notion as I will further discuss are problematic because they imply that , in terms of practices, Roma identity is constructing in sharp opposition with the 'non-Roma'.

In this section I will discuss the process of becoming upwardly mobile Roma/ Roma intellectual as reflection/ most of the cases opposition/ to the stereotypical and the image of the 'traditional Roma' from Eastern Europe. These two images will not be discussed in opposition but together because in many cases the stereotypical and non-stereotypical create a unitarian image of the 'Roma' that refers to the idea of the image of the 'traditional Roma'. This image represents Roma in relation to poverty, and marginalization as their social context. Whenever represented, the Roma culture, Roma identity are represented as collective image of poor, low educated, living on welfare, people with many children who marry early and value system that sharply differ from the

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[15] I mean lifestyle and practices

mainstream conception of living. More positive approach to Roma represents their 'Romanipe' in relation to bohemian life-style- poor but free, people who challenge the modern social order (i.e. they do not pursue education, have many children, marry early etc). Many researchers suggest such ideas in relation to 'Roma' /Roma identity (see for ex. Lemon 2000; Action and Mundy 1997). In this view, there are some missing images that challenge the historically established tradition to see Roma as the distinct others: the educated, integrated Roma are missing, in many cases their images are defined in relation to the idea of assimilation. In this paper I give a different reading of this phenomenon. I claim that, those educated, non-'traditional Roma' create a broad range of identities that challenge the established conception of the 'Romanipe/n' as directly linked to practices poverty and marginalization and the epistemological opposition between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma'.

2.3.1. Stereotypical images

In his note to the reader, in 'Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity' Action suggests 'most books [on Roma] have been repetitive and parochial'. In many cases, these books define 'Roma identity' in relation to established (stereotypical and non-stereotypical /'traditional') images of the Roma. They define Roma as: musician, 'hot blooded dancer', the women with many children, the 'criminals', stinky, 'stupid', 'pagan', 'beggar', 'bohemian', nomadic person, person who lives on social welfare etc. (see Røyrvik 1998; Lemon 1965; Action and Mundy 1997). As Røyrvik highlights these images are presents many other discourses discourses, and in the academia. Further, these images together crystalize a common understanding of what means to be Roma (or how to 'do'/'be' Roma). Media and academic discourse coincide, and define the image of the Roma as the 'others' (see Røyrvik 1998). As Røyrvik points out the representation of the Roma in

the media discourses (in most of the cases are based on stereotypes, and hate speech than rooted in concrete well supported evidence and arguments), and the academic discourse reinforce the meaning of one another and present an authenticated image of the Roma.

On the other hand, these images present open space of interpretations and contextualization (see Action and Mundy 1997; Cherenkov 2004; Liegeois 2007). In other words, these so called 'Roma' images, however, have different meaning in the different (geographic, socio-political etc.) context. They are refined differently in different regions and countries by different Roma groups. Some of these images of the Roma resisted and evolved overtime. As Røyrvik points out in his analysis of the Roma stereotype in the Bulgarian society:

> (…) specific stereotypes are not at all inevitable or unchangeable, rather to the contrary. The relation between signifier and signified, between the labels and the labelled are never 'naturally' fixed and static. (Røyrvik 1998 , p. 19)

The 'bohemian', free person in Eastern-European imagination became the dark-skinned individual that lives on welfare; he/she became the 'burden of the state'.

The image of the musician resisted, the hot-blooded women, 'sexual temptresses' became the over sexualized women, sexually available, exotic women; the image of the women with many children also resisted over time.

More recent images of The Roma are those of the early married uneducated girls (boy) from the ghetto, the beggars who go abroad in Western Europe. These images are the primary manifestation of the 'Roma'/ 'Roma identity', tradition and life-style in the popular, academic discourse in Europe (see Røyrvik 1998). As described above many studies look at the Roma in relation to these conception, they put emphasis on the Roma identity in relation to established

normativity to see Roma as 'others'- images of musicians, bohemians, ethnic groups that has sharply different 'customs', 'laws' from the Europeans culture.

2.3.2 'Romanipen'

The notion of 'Romanipen,' is established universal umbrella notion, that incorporates the opposition Roma/ 'gadge'('non-Roma')[16] identity, (see Hancock 1987; Stewart 1987) creates a hegemonic Roma identity, and seems to claim authenticity for some Roma identities and oppresses or denies other (if they are associated with 'gadge'(or-non Roma). Romanipen itself is controversial notion, because tries to reconcile the differences that cannot be bridged.

As many researchers show, Roma identity is not easily unified construct. What constitutes the Roma identity is rather arguable (Memedova et all. 2005), it is defined as diversity of traditions, customs, practices, dialects but what unifies Roma is the common experience of social exclusion, mistreat, marginalization, outsiderness. However, when questioning ideas of social status 'Romanipen' comes to presents a framework, which bridges the differences and presents universal status quo (Hancock 1987). In other words, 'Romanipen' is suggested to be essential construct to the extent that suggests that the social exclusion and the history of segregation and alienation and mistreatment to present an essential identity building, one somehow authenticated identity, constructed in opposition to the 'non-Roma'. Moreover, it proposes 'Romanipen' to be an identity built by negating/ rejecting the practices and lifestyle associated with non-Roma ('gadge'). However, 'Romanipen' in such view seems to be problematic, due to the fact that the idea of keeping the boundaries between Roma/'Gadge' strict has multiple interpretation in different context. For example, being Muslim Roma and being 'gadge' from Macedonia,

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[16] This term refers to individual from non-Roma origin

comparing to being Christian orthodox in Bulgaria in relation to being 'gadge' in Bulgaria, implies different notions of 'Romanipen' and 'gadge' in each of those two countries. Moreover, it might be possible what it means 'gadge' in one context to be similar to the 'Romanipen' in another and vice versa, which undermines the very essence of 'Romanipen' as not-'gadge'. If we accept Romanipen as notion opposite of 'gadge' one has to deal with its problematic universalism. Romanipen suggests universal epistemological standpoint which accept that certain cause (such as marginality and oppression, social exclusion etc.) will lead to the same effect for all the subjects (or all Roma as oppressed ethnic minoritarian subjects define their identity in sharp difference to 'gadge').

2.3.3 Definition of 'Roma'/'Romanipen'

The term 'Romanipen' encapsulates different meanings and connotations in relation to cultural differences between Roma and non-Roma. Many authors attempt to give a precise definition of the Roma identity. In this paper I will consider only the one given by Cherenkov in *The Rroma.*[17] *Volume 2: Traditions and Texts*, and the one given by Liegeois in *Roma in Europe*. Cherenkov description of 'Romanipen' stresses on the epistemological frame of the term, on the other hand, Liegeois (2007) proposes a different view of the common Roma identity that highlights the practices and life-style/s that constitute the 'Romanipen'.

According to Liegeois 'the form taken by Romani culture and ethnic identity emerges from all these elements: from language to independent trades, from solidarity to in all forms to the lack of reference to territory, from social organization to pride in being different, from consciousness of a shared origin to common rules for living, from the sense of belonging to a group to antipathy towards those outside the group, from shared history to a philosophy that children to the

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[17] Rroma is a different spelling of Roma

strength of the family – and so on. Elements picked up in the course of the group's travels are adapted to suit the group- not vice versa- within a culture that draws its strength from its flexibility' (Liegeois 2007, p.97).

Other authors also attempt to describe the Roma identity and lifestyle. Therenkov (2004) define a more abstract conception of the Roma 'global identity'. According to the authors Roma identity is based on idea of 'bloodline, history and an entire culture' (Cherenkov 2004, p. 523) and many cases with the idea of the Roma language. However, the authors stress that to define Roma in the basis of commonly spoken language is problematic, because not all Roma speak Romanes (Roma/ni language). Of course, another dimension is the correlation Roma/'Gadgo'(non-Roma) i.e. this concept for its basis the understanding Roma is what non-Roma is not. But, as Cherenkov points out the sharp distinction may also be problematic, because of the term itself is contextualized differently. In other words, the elements that construct the distinction between Roma and non-Roma in Serbia for example and in another country may vary and comprise elements. Hence, the contradictions between what are Roma and 'gadge' in different social, cultural and geographic settings are unavoidable. However, as the authors stress there is always such differentiation that constitutes the 'Romanipe/n'. As Cherenkov claims 'Rroma [Roma] nevertheless know its content and signification' (2007, p. 525).

More precisely, Cherenkov suggests 'Romanipen is 'built on three tenets: law and customs, honor and shame'(2007, p. 525). Roma laws, according to the authors, are set of principles, 'unwritten conventions' that are to 'regulate personal and social behavior', that should not be understood in 'strictly legal' terms. These 'laws' are to be understood in relation to the idea of 'traditions' claimS Cherenkov. These conventions are highly respected and not obeying these laws is 'unthinkable', suggest the authors. They are understood as the 'pillars of the Rroma [Roma] existence and identity'. On the other hand, Honor or 'patjiv' encompass ideas of 'honor and respectfulness',

'connotations of the respect of the laws as well as the concept of reliability'. In other words, the honor and traditions are intertwined so to regulate the 'Roma behavior'. In contrast to, 'patjiv' the idea of the shame / 'ladz', according to Cherenkov is deeply entrenched to 'Romanipe'. Shame itself, as the author suggest, has broader meaning and include the meaning of 'modesty' and as 'patjiv' , 'ladz' 'is carried to a high degree and is perhaps the principal source for preservation of the Roma culture'.(Cherenkov 2004, p. 529).

To sum up, 'Romanipe/n' as regarded above, claims an identity that stems from the concept of 'traditional Roma' therefore exclude the non-traditional Roma (those who do not fit into the above mentioned description of Roma identity).More precisely, the Roma who do not follow the 'laws', have critical views about traditions, customs and practices are understood as 'assimilated', therefore somehow not Roma. In other words, there is an implied conception of authentic 'Roma' and unauthentic 'assimilated Roma' that is problematic. So, if the Roma identity has always been influenced by the local non-Roma, than authenticity or even sharp distinction between Roma and non-Roma would be never possible. What is at stake is that 'Roma' as (cultural) category claims denial / rejection of the 'non-Roma' that by definition is impossible because there isn't any culture that exists in vacuum, independently without being influenced by other cultures, so authenticity is impossible.

3. Theoretical foundation

Sociologist's Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of social space, gives a theoretical tool for descriptive analysis of the Roma class reality and their identity as a construct of practices and lifestyle. According to Bourdieu (1986) social space is multidimensional highly stratified and

codified paradigm. The social space, according to the author, is tied to the means of production. The society by such definition is divided between different groups on the basis of these material conditions which create different material realities for different social strata. Further, these material realities presuppose certain distinct social identities. In this sense, class position of the individual ascribes to him/her different means of identifications and authentication. This means of identifications are embodied practices, an expression of certain lifestyle and life-strategies, through which individual mark his social position (belonging to a certain group and distinction from other). In other words, one's living conditions create multiplicity of social bubbles, 'habitus', where the class distinction produces certain life-style, worldview and taste for the individual. These conditionality However, in order to understand the habitus as a 'structuring /structured structure' and life-style as the 'sense of one's place' one have understand another underlined conception- the capital of the individual.

Capital

According to Bourdieu the capital is:

'Capital is accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its 'incorporated,' embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor. It is a vis insita, a force inscribed in objective or subjective structures, but it is also a lex insita, the principle underlying the immanent regularities of the social world'(Bourdieu 1984, p. 241).

In its Marxist consideration capital suggest production and exchange of values that lead to accumulation of surplus values. This surplus highlights the accumulation of power and the

unequal distribution of values and therefore, power in the society. In addition, the capital may act as regulatory principle in the society. It underpins the longstanding structural mechanism of the society as 'the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices' (Bourdieu 1984, p.242). This accumulation, transfer of capital finds its material expression: object, material and symbolic, that is valued in a certain social system in a given time period (the rarity of the object, how these objects are fetishized /given certain values according to the social system etc.).

For Bourdieu, capital is a broad notion which comprehends far richer meaning than one's economic conditions. It takes into account the opposition between 'rich' and 'poor', however, the 'economic capital', is not the only fundamental one for the identity class formation. It is rather preceded by another means of capital, implies Bourdieu. The fundamental factor is the cultural capital of the individual.

According to the author cultural capital is 'the most valuable, cumulative form of educational assets, that guarantee certain social position to the individual' (1984, p.185). Cultural capital is defined in relation to the 'legitimate culture'. 'Legitimate culture', or dominant culture is termed 'as identified cultural practices which operate as tacit imposition of what is worthy to experience' (Yaran 2009, p.10). It encompasses a wide range of choices and practices that individual makes on everyday level: from which types of music are appropriate to listen and which types of clothing are suitable to be worn on a work place; appropriate sexual and reproductive choices. In sum, cultural capital is knowledge, which value is determined by the dominant culture that is, as Bourdieu argues, the culture of the dominant class.

In Bourdieu's understanding accumulation and transmission of any form of capital including cultural capital is a long process that involves individual and family labor. In this sense, the author

highlights the importance of the family as social institution that (does not only transmits economic capital from one generation to another), but cultural capital as well. Moreover, the transmission of cultural capital in the family eases mobility across generation. In other words, the (accumulation and) transmission of cultural capital demands family education. (Liebau 1987,p.185 in Drews 2008). As Drews claims 'the less it is transmitted by the core family' the more individual efforts are required (2008, p.42).

Social capital

Social capital, according to Bourdieu, is the acquired knowledge about how to act in a given situation from the prospective of certain social position. It represents the 'connections' for making use of the cultural and education, and in particular, the scholastic'capital. It is the time and the experience in life that is prioritized. In addition, Social capital is manifested through bodily practices – shape of the body, its mannerism and clothing.

Habitus

All these forms of capital help one to understand the construction of the social space the complex structure of the 'habitus'. According to Bourdieu, 'habitus' is the organizational principle which defines the meaning of the social space, it presents its logic and classificatory mechanism. As the author claims, habitus is a 'generative principle of objective associations of internalized and internalizing rules' and 'system of classification' of those rules. It is relationship between 'capacity to produce classifiable practices and works (products) and the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste)' (Bourdieu 1984, p. 372)

In addition, Bourdieu adds, suggest that 'social class is not defined solely by a position in the relations of production, but by the class habitus which is 'normally' associated with that position'. (1984, p.372)

Bourdieu' defines 'habitus' as double edge structure, internalizing the outside words and externalizing of the inside. Thus, the individual enrolls in the social system and perpetuates its value by internalization of external requirements of the society, its values, and models of behavior and reproduces them afterwards. In other words , the member of a given class learns how to (unconsciously) respond in a given situation to the given cultural pushes (products and practices) and to ascribe to them certain values such as 'attractive' or 'vulgar' (see Bourdieu in Yaran 2009, p.16). As Bourdieu highlights, as a result, members of a given class expresses them as a 'systematic opposition to those of other classes' (1984, p. 175). The opposite effects is also present, the members of similar of same class express similar values and practices. That expression of distinctiveness encompasses the whole range of products such as 'houses, furniture, paintings, books, cars, spirits(…) clothes' and practices for example, 'sports, games, entertainments' that indicates the social position of the individual(1984, p.173). In this sense, other two concepts emerges in relation to class 'habitus'- 'taste' and 'life-style'.

Taste

According to Bourdieu taste is an actual manifestation of the individual's belonging to a given class habitus. It is synonym for 'stylization of the life'–a 'mutual reinforcement of the aesthetic perception and internalizing that perception (conscious, unconscious)'(1984: 174) and as form of expression of the class represents the need of the individual to demarcate its social position. Taste it is a 'practical operator of the transmutation of thing into distinct and distinctive signs of

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continuous distributions into continuous discontinuous oppositions' (1984, p. 174). In other words, taste is a manifestation of distinctiveness of the individual as well as indicator for belonging to a particular stratum, i.e., it serves both to create ruptures between individuals and social groups as well as collectivities. 'Lifestyle' is the expression of the taste that signifies one's social position.

In sum, the stratification of the society as described in Bourdieu, suggests opposition in terms of material conditions, values and practices. The system presents as essential the opposition between 'rich' and 'poor', lower and middle/upper class, it legitimates the middle/upper middle class values and undervalues the position of the lower classes so that legitimates the opposition between beautiful/ugly, high/low , 'legitimate taste'/ 'popular taste' etc. In this sense, as Bourdieu implies, the struggles for recognitions emerge in such system. This idea of class struggles is symbolic for the struggle of one class to validate its values and its position in the society. The former depends on :

> the interest (…) in self-representation, the attention they devote to it – profit-investment , sacrifice of time, care for the chances for material or symbolic profit that expect from it. They depend on the labor market opportunities, and activities which determined their habitus and values.(Yaran 2009, p17)

These are struggles of the individual (and groups) (in relation to middle class) to keep and transmit to the next generation his/her (their) socio-economic position by adopting certain life-strategies and practices. The author suggests that these life-strategies depend on individual and family efforts to accumulate economic and cultural capital. Investment in education is one of the strategies that are often used for this purpose. It is used by middle classes to give certain security that their children will inherit their social position and by lower classes that their children will

have better chances for upward mobility. However, at this point it should be noted that there are other strategies involved in this process, but they will not be discussed in this chapter.

Space segregation

Space segregation is another characteristic of the system. The geographic alienation of the classes' one from another represents the symbolic division of the society in terms of space location i.e. 'their distribution of socially ranked geographical space' (1984, p.124). This division of social space emerges in relation of the idea of lifestyle. The organization of the geographical space has the function to guarantee to the individual material conditions for living in relation to its economic, cultural and social capital. It may also imply in relation to the upward mobility moving into better ranked geographical location.

Bourdieu's conception of class, although claims middle class to be more than just economic category, the material settings (one's economic status to be significantly different from that of the lower classes) are basic condition for defining middle class(quote?). In this sense, the term middle class is problematic to be used in relation the group of the 'Roma intelectuals'(students and individuals working in NGO sector) because their economic conditions not always correlates with those of the middle class individuals. Although, in this case, using the term class in Bourdieu's terms is problematic, the idea of 'capital' (cultural, social, educational etc.), as well the conception of how practices and life-style emerge and create social bubbles that crystalize new identity with specific value system in opposition to/in correlation with other social bubbles are important for understanding the emergence of the 'Roma inteligencia' as social category (cultural, social, ethnic etc).

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Bourdieu's understanding of the division of social space may be crucial to understand the emergence of groups such as that of the international group of Roma intellectuals who live Budapest. It gives a tool to identify the specifics factors and practices that codify the identity of certain socio-economic-ethnic group. The habitus as a 'sense of one's place' gives the theoretical ground to comprehend how educated Roma make sense of the social space they occupy. This conception also contributes to recognize the concrete expression of the identity of the Roma inteligencia in terms of lifestyle. In addition, the concept of 'habitus' makes clear the need to understand 'Roma inteligencia'/ 'successful Roma' not as economic group, but in terms of cultural values system and lifestyle and practices that derive from it. However, Roma identity are to be understood within certain context .

These practices and life-styles take into consideration the global amalgamation of ethnic and national identity, the hybridization of the identities as cultural and ethnic construct, which emerge on global scale. In other words, the global and mainstream modern/postmodern culture affects (especially the) the Roma upward mobile groups. On individual level one is now puzzled how, on one hand to make sense of the tradition, which ethnicity suggests, and how to understand the amalgam global culture and to adopt it. Tsing (2001) understanding of the interplay between the local and global helps to understand how new practices and life styles amongst Roma emerge in relation to the traditions/customs and practices, and the idea of modernity.[18] Therefore, I understand the identity of the Roma inteligencia in such correlation that juxtaposes the global and modern with traditions and customs. In such correlation, I claim that some Roma create new meanings that challenge the traditional understanding of 'Romanipe' in terms of practices related to 'laws, customs, honor and shame'(Tcherenkov 2004). In other words, this research shows how 'Roma inteligencia' creates'hybrid' identities by redefining the traditional understanding of 'Romanipe'.

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[18] According to Tsing the western ideas are appropriated differently in different contexts, the interplay between local and global creates 'frictions', 'global connections' that are in fact mixture of the global and local ideas. These global connections creates different subjectivities that are hybrid models of the global and the local.

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4. Roma identity in sociological context

There are several factors that brought to emerging of the international group of educated Roma who live in Budapest as a socio-economic group and shaped their identity in terms of life-strategies and life-style: the industrial economy of the state-socialism, the affirmative action in education and, the 'westernization' of the East European countries.

4.1 State-socialism and the Participation of the Roma in the labor market – opening up opportunities for upward mobility

Many authors suggest that the state-socialism did not bring a bright future for Roma. State-socialist regime introduced polices of assimilation of the Roma population (Roma were forced to change their names, to abandon their nomadic live and to settle down), created the segregated schools and the Roma ghettoes. The regime gave the opportunity to Roma to participate in the labor market, but it gave them access mostly to low paid jobs that did not help Roma to overcome the poverty trap and the marginalization (see Bancroft 2001, p. 145-147). However, a more positive approach is possible as well.

My respondents suggest a positive account how state-socialism shaped the identity of their parents and their own identity. According to Bancroft, apart of the policies of ethnic assimilation, the state socialism in Eastern Europe gave certain access to Roma to mainstream social space (see Bancroft, 2001,p. 147). That gave the opportunity to some Roma, as those of my interviewees'

parents or grandparents to adapt to the system and become part of the social geography of the mainstream society– culturally and geographically. In each of the state-socialist countries polices for compulsory participation in the labor market of the *proletariat[19]* were introduced.(Crowe 1995, p. 55-58). As a consequence of these policies Roma become part of the industrial communist society (by this time to most of the Roma were not given the possibility to become part of the mainstream labor market) (Crowe 1995, p. 55-56). Being part of the labor market (even though occupying low paid professions) gave the opportunity to some Roma to adapt to these changes, to gain certain economic capital, to create close relationships /connections with non-Roma, to learn the mainstream strategies and cultural practices (such as shift from strict regulation to female sexuality, large family units and early marriages to more permissive view in regards to sexuality, nuclearization of the family, education as high value) and by doing so to become part of the mainstream society. However, this becoming suggests that they changed their social position, became part of another class, and learn how to navigate within the space of that class. Or in Bourdieu's terms, they learn the codes and the language of their social space.

4.2 Affirmative actions and globalization effects

As many scholars show (for example Troc 2005) after the fall of the state-socialism, the contraction of the labor market as well as the new demands of the market economy, left many Roma out of the labor market and lead to their capsulation, social exclusion and (further) marginalization. Nevertheless, some of the Roma who already occupy the mainstream space; those who become successful part of the mainstream society during the state-socialism overcame these obstacles. Moreover their success in adapting to the mainstream system – the economic and

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[19] According to 'Oxford Dictionaries 'proletariat' refers to 'working-class people regarded collectively'. In other words, individuals who are part of the state-socialist society.

capital they gained, the mainstream lifestyle and life strategies they adopted – became an advantage not only for their success but for their children's success and upward mobility. However, at this point should be noted that their children's ability to achieve higher (than working class) social status was also boost by the affirmative actions in education that many of them benefit from.

Thus, the Roma inclusion became acute problem in the European countries especially in those of Eastern Europe where 2/3 of the Roma population is concentrated (Troc 2005). Affirmative actions are implemented in order to boosts the process of the Roma inclusion. Such politics of positive discrimination the option to some Roma to continue their education and to become part of the emerging group of 'Roma elite' (see Marushiakova and Popov 2005). For many educated Roma that became one of few alternatives for realization in the labor market and chance for upward mobility. However, as Marushiakova and Povov imply, these social policies has shaped their identity of those who benefitted from them. (Other than that there is another group of Roma, whose upward mobility has not being characterized by the 'Gypsy industry'(see Marushiakova and Popov 2005).

4.3 'Westernized' identity

In this thesis I claim that the emerging of the group of educated Roma that I analyze is an outcome of the 'westernization' of the East European countries(see Emmeson 2003). More precisely, I argue that after the fall of state-socialism the Eastern Europeans became influenced by the western lifestyle. The western culture brought more liberal ideas of thinking of sexuality, women's emancipation (see Kocze 2011). Those Roma who became part of the working class

became influenced by such ideas. The analysis of the study will show how their thinking of sexuality and reproduction their attitude towards pre-marriage sex became part of their lifestyle.

However, that was not the only outcome of the globalization for Roma. They became plugged in; influenced by global practices and lifestyle. By becoming mainstream, that in their case means accepting the lifestyle, life-strategies, values and practices they became part of the global economy. At this point it should be noted that the mainstream practices, lifestyle and life-strategies shall not be considered simply country specific, but as 'friction' (Tsing 2001) of the western ideas. In other words, the 'global connections'- the flow of ideas, different ideas of consumption of goods, and practices, as Tsing (2001) points out, clashed with the local culture and produced diverse interpretation of the global in different localities. In Easter Europe, the western ideas inflected the local culture with the western ideal of sexuality, emancipation, family values, and lifestyle. On a micro level, it influenced the individual taste for music, clothing style, educational patterns (stresses on the need of high level of education for the success of the individual) (Zajda 2012). Nevertheless, their lifestyle, their worldview did not absorb the global trends, but as I said before became 'a friction', an amalgam, a hybrid of global and local; apart of the western values and practices included specific elements of their own culture. This cultural cross-fertilization shaped the identity of these Roma, it became a condition their adaption to the social system, and in this process to craft an alternative Roma identity that do not fit into the traditional description of Roma.

5. Methods

In order to build a hypothesis on the outcome of upward mobility (understood in this study as effect of state-socialism and globalization) for the identity (understood in this thesis as lifestyle,

practices and life strategies) of the educated Roma; I have chosen international group of educated Roma who live in Budapest as my case study, which will exemplify these dimensions. The thesis combines historical analysis with case study method.

In order to understand how in sociological approach to Roma, Roma identity is constructed in relation to their social status and the social space they occupy; more precisely, how sociological studies define the identity of educated Roma is used a historical analysis. The historical approach builds upon collected data from wide range of sources that analyze Roma identity. The analysis of sociological literature on the issue gives a theoretical ground for positioning the study of identity construction of educated Roma. The historical analysis show that only small amount of literature describe identity of the educated Roma (their lifestyle, practices life strategies). Data about educated Roma is insufficient or whereas accessible difficult to be accessed and studied. However, statistical data on Roma and education exists, but usually the evaluation of the data discusses the need of improvement and the cause of the significant gap in education between Roma and non-Roma (see Mihaylov and Zhelyazkova 2004; REF Annual report 2006-20012). I have not been able to identify studies on educated Roma that describe how their class location influences their lifestyle.

5.1 Field research

The case study of this research the identity (their lifestyle, practices and strategies) of educated Roma from Eastern Europe. The lack of sufficient literature that describes the identity construction of the educated Roma required in addition to historical analysis to be adopted qualitative methods. I have chosen multi-method research (that consist of one-to-one semi-

structured in depth interviews and participant observations) with the purpose of extracting a profound analysis of the way in which some educated Roma demarcate their ethnic and class identity in the social position and how they through practices they produces meanings of that social space they occupy. The one-to-one interviews and the detailed conversations that came as outcome gave me the opportunity to observe and understand which practices in their lifestyles are common for the group and mark it as distinct category. Their narratives gave me the chance to identify common life strategies as well. The collected data include fourteen interviews where each of them lasts between twenty five and fifty minutes recorded dialogue. With regards to ethical considerations of the study, before conducting the interviews my respondents were clearly told that their identity will not be revealed, only the first letter of their first name they will be kept. Moreover, they were informed that they are not obliged to answer to all of the questions.

Taking these concerns into account my respondents were asked several structured question so as to obtain their socio-demographic profile. The data set were also used to determine their economic, cultural capital (In this research special attention to given to institutionalized cultural capital- the length of education of my respondents). Previous to the interviews participant observation took place.

5.2 Framework of the observation and interviews

The participant observations provided me with the opportunity to observe and describe the practices of these educated Roma take place on everyday level. This group consists is constituted mainly by students from Eastern Europe studied, former graduates from Central European University in Budapest or working in the Roma NGO's in Budapest. I have the opportunity to

observe for more than one year a group larger than 50 persons, mostly young people between 20-40 years. Other than that, I have the chance to meet other educated Roma, mostly artists, mostly musicians, painters, writers, working in media or private sector. My own location in such network gave me the opportunity to understand the commonalities, or some patterns, which all educated Roma, to a certain extend share. This led me to the assumption that there is a common ground to classify educated Roma in relation to certain class markers. The fact that I have closer connection with the group members than an outside observer eased the research in several ways: gave me the opportunity to have a closer look and deeper understanding of the meaning they attach to their everyday practices; ease the interview process – it made my respondents more eager and more open to reveal their life stories.

The interviews were conducted with several purposes: to understand which are the practices, and life strategies that made possible the upward mobility of my respondent; whether the change of the socio-economic position of these Roma led or not to a common life-strategies and life-style that is shared by those educated Roma; the emerging of socio-economic group on the basis of distinctions and similarities concerning ethnic, gender, spatial, and social disintegration. The interviews include another dimension as well: the respondents were asked questions regarding past changes in their life, the life of their families and expectations regarding their future.

With this regard, the interviews were conducted with Bourdieu's approach to social stratification. However, in order to understand how their class identity influence their understanding of their ethnicity I ask questions regarding practices (defined in sociological literature to be part of) the Roma culture. In this research the relationship between economic, cultural capital and ethnic identity was evaluated on the basis to their educational level; their occupation and the occupation of their parents; housing condition; family relations, social origin, educational experience, attitude toward education, sexuality and reproduction; social network relations; their relations with other Roma; (future) occupational and marriage preferences.

Occupational and educational patterns of the family – preliminary description

In order to be able to analyze the identity formation of my respondents I collected and categorized data regarding the social status of my informants. This set of data includes information regarding occupation and education of my respondents and their parents. The collected data allowed me to find incentives to classify upward mobility on the basis of these two factors; to link my further analysis of their everyday practices and lifestyle to their class position. In this sense I designed my study by adopting Bourdieu's (1986) conception of class defined in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste.* According to the author the position of the individual could be analyzed by examining his/her cultural practices. I choose to describe these factors (level of education, and occupation), because according to Bourdieu they are basic for understanding the class position of the individual.

Three of my interviewees were married, 11 were single. Therefore, there were 13 sets of parents (one of my respondents was orphan). The mother's group comprise of one teacher, one assistant teacher, one singer, 3 housewives, one farm worker, one cook, 5 workers in factories. The fathers' group comprise of one conductor, one shop owner, one teacher, one 8 factory workers, one shop assistant, one mason.

The education level of the fathers' was as fallowing: one uncompleted secondary, 3 secondary, 8 high school graduates, and one university graduate. Mothers' level of education shows similar pattern: 2 secondary school, 9 high school graduates, 2 university graduates.
The data I collected show that only small number of my respondents (three of them) may be considered middle class if one consider the family background. However, all of my respondents are university graduates. Eight of them have bachelor degree, and 6 – master degree (their choice

of university program also varies- most of them study/ed social science, communication, economics, political oriented discipline such as public policy and political science).

This data show that my respondents represent (in regards to the poor Roma) a socially group, that is socially mobile. In Bourdieu's terms this group of Roma represents an upward mobile group that struggle to overcome its social position and accept the practices of the group that this mobile group aims to associate with. As Fuchs puts it, 'people in a certain class or class-sector strive towards being part of a leading group or an upper class (section)' (2003,p. 399). The authors, adds, this struggle is a symbolic struggle for distinction one group from another, one class from another by changing practices and lifestyle. In addition the collected data show that the upward mobility of this group is primarily associated with changing (in comparison to the 'poor Roma') educational patterns. Most of the parents of my respondents have secondary and high school degree, but their children hold university degree. What makes possible such change will be explained below.

III. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

In reference to Bourdieu (1986) this chapter seeks to demonstrate the link between class and culture (lifestyle and practices), between 'habitus' and identity. More precisely, how certain cultural spaces are linked to certain practices and lifestyle; how changing the social position of the individual changes his/her identity. Moreover, it shows how social phenomena such as state-socialism, globalization and globalization also affect construction of class (identities). Further, this chapter suggests that not only does Bourdieu's conception of social space show how different social groups construct their class identity, but also how differently ethnicity is constructed in relation to class.

The case study of this thesis will demonstrate the mentioned above. It focuses on the identity construction of the international group of educated Roma who, work/ study and live in Budapest. This thesis includes 14 semi structured in-depth interviews and participant observations carried out for a period longer than one year. Selected materials from the interviews will be presented and examined so as to demonstrate the previously mentioned.

In this chapter I present a descriptive analysis of the lifestyle, strategies and practices that constitute the identity of an international group of educated Roma who live in Budapest who (comparing to poor Roma) have higher social status (they rather present a cultural middle class)[20]. This chapter examines the practices and the strategies that their parents and they themselves adopted that permit their economic and social mobility; how through changing lifestyle that incorporate practices and elements of the mainstream and the Roma culture they create an alternative culture and identity. More precisely, the analysis of the interviews show a shift in the

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[20] Although their economic status does not fit into the framework of middle class, their 'cultural capital', lifestyle and practices suggests middle class affiliation

lifestyle of these educated Roma: an intergenerational upward mobility that led to change in their class identity and in their understanding of their ethnic identity.

This shift encompass two historical periods: state socialism and post-socialism. The first period draws upon the important role of the entering in the labor market for the economic and cultural mobility, and conceptualizing their ethnic identity in relation to their new social position. The second highlights the experience of my respondents during the post-socialism; how they themselves became part of the Roma intelligentsia. This chapter emphasizes the importance of interplay of several dimensions that shaped the identity of my respondents as Roma intellectuals: the family values (change in education patterns and thinking of sexuality), the support of the family (financial and emotional), the individual determination, and affirmative actions in education.

The logical framework of this chapter will discuss the above mentioned divided into several sections: space and mobility; sexuality, marriage and family; Education; leisure and future plans. In order to be give incentives that my respondent are product of intergenerational upward mobility the first section will describe the class position of the parents and that of my respondents. The next section will bring into discussion the experience of the parents during the state socialism. It will describe how entering the labor market gave the possibility for economic and cultural mobility. After, the discussion will engage with how through changing practices related to sexuality, family values and childbearing practices my respondents families became upward mobile and how in this regard my respondent themselves understand their ethnic and class identity. The next section, will discuss how education shaped the identity of my respondents - choice of school of the parents for their children, the emotional and financial support that my respondent receive from their parents and the affirmative action (it stresses on the interplay of these three factors). The sections on leisure and future plans will show how my respondents in

their everyday life activities, by mixing the mainstream with ethnic elements, reiterate their class and ethnic identity.

3.1 State-socialism and the Participation of the Roma in the labor market – opening up opportunities for upward mobility

As many of my respondents suggests the access to the labor market, gave an opportunity to their parents for change - to become part of the mainstream society by adopting the mainstream life-strategies (primarily in regards to sexuality and reproduction) i.e. to become socially, but culturally mobile as well. Nevertheless, this does not mean that these Roma abandon their lifestyle or forgot their origin. Some Roma understood that the success in the system requires certain changes in their lifestyle (below I will describe this changes in details), but they also understood that success in the social system does not necessarily require one to lose his/her sense of belonging. All my respondents suggests although their parents accepted the mainstream culture, they kept some of their customs, traditions, other elements of their Roma culture (such as Roma music, certain family values, language etc.).

3.1.1. Economic mobility

As many of my interviewees suggest the participation in the labor market created an open space for negotiation the cultural and social boundaries between Roma and 'non-Roma'. In other

words, it created a 'contact zone'[21] (see Pratt 1991)- space where the strict cultural and class boundaries between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma' were broken, space where 'Roma' and 'non-Roma' influence their understanding of otherness and redefines their values and life-style. (This chapter has no aim to discuss how 'Roma' influence the 'non-Roma', although such claim could be made.) The fact that none of my respondents' parents live in segregated area (Roma ghetto) support the mentioned above i.e. some Roma become part of that mainstream geographic area. In other words, they became signifier that the strict border line between (poor) 'Roma' and (working class) 'non-Roma' is broken.

Most of my respondents suggest change in the economic situation of their families during that period. Their parents started working in the industry, gain certain capital and that fact changed their life and lifestyle. The accounts of my interviewees present a movement from an economically distressed space (geographic and social) to space that gave them better condition of living and different social setting (mixed area, or area where most of the population is non-Roma). Alongside with their economic mobility, their cultural mobility came as an outcome as well. Some of my respondents said that their parents bought apartment, they were one of the few Roma in the apartment buildings, or build a house situated in non-segregated, or mixed area in their hometown, in most of the case city, but also village. They start to negotiate their identity in relation to their cultural environment. My respondents parents' start working with 'non-Roma', occupying similar/same positions, interacting on equal footing, creating friendships and networks with other people from the working class.

However, that was a long path for them, suggest my respondents. Their parents struggled to achieve certain economic and social mobility and acceptance by the mainstream society. The life-stories of many of my respondents represent the difficult path of achieving better social status and acceptance in the mainstream society. Some of the story I heard by conducting my interviews

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[21] According to Pratt contact zone is 'the space in which transculturation takes place – where two different cultures meet and inform each other, often in highly asymmetrical ways."(Pratt 1991, p. 37)

were stories about ethnic and class discrimination. Their parents were discriminated at the mainstream school (where they were studying), at work etc., they were called dirty, stinky gypsy, because they were poor and because they were Roma. The fact that they were not fully accepted by the mainstream may be one of the reasons why they kept their ethnic identity and they did not assimilate. They become part of the mainstream society, they succeed to become part of the working class (in some cases they succeed to achieve higher social status than that of the most working class families), adopting (in regards to reproduction, sexuality and education) the mainstream values and practices.

As G. (male, Macedonia) says :

'My both parents comes from extended families, they were both, poor they suffered a lot (…)in my mum's family they were sever children. Almost the same for my father's family.(…) My parents wanted only two children. They worked hard to give us better future and wanted us to study.'

V (female, Romania) made similar statement:

'My grandparents' families were large. But we are only two children.(…). My parents wanted only two.'

D. (female, Bulgaria)

'I understand why my parents decided to have only two children (…).It was a way to secure our future.'

As discussed above most of my respondents come from working class family. My respondents suggest that their family accepted the mainstream values and life-strategies in regards to reproduction, family ideal and education, perhaps because they realize that adopting the

mainstream model (see the fallowing sections) they will be able to achieve upward mobility for themselves and for their children as well.

In addition, as G. and D. imply another reason why some Roma changed their reproductive patterns: the impact of modernity. As Elley, point out modernity suggests to the individual different attitude towards reproduction. According to Durszt the reasons behind that are primarily economic (but a matter of lifestyle as well).

3.1.2. Intergenerational mobility

The change of the economic conditions of my respondents' families gave them the possibility to choose different lifestyle. More precisely their economic betterment gave them the option to choose not to live in segregated area/ but in a mixed area (area with higher status), to avoid/rethink/ abandon the practices of early marriages and having a large family that living in segregated area impose to the individual; investing in education of their offspring became a priority. Further, my respondents themselves went beyond the experience of their parents, taking bigger step in crossing the cultural and social boundaries between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma'. If their parents had only secondary and high school education and occupied working class 'habitus' they reached higher education and better than working class position in the society.

My study shows that this economic and cultural mobility led to intergenerational mobility. The parents of my respondents adopted different life-strategies from those associated with Roma. That led to further economic and cultural mobility. Most of my respondents' parents have secondary or high school education, only few of them have higher education, but they all prioritize the investment of their children's education. They choose to live in a manner different

than many other Roma lived during the state-socialism; they became socially and culturally adaptive. As Emmison defines it:

> Cultural mobility is the capacity to navigate between or across cultural realms, a freedom to choose or select one's position in the cultural landscape. In addition the essence, then, of cultural Mobility is movement and choice: the culturally mobile are those best equipped to undertake these choices. What is crucial to the concept is the abandonment of the older hierarchical model of taste in which competence in 'legitimate' culture alone conferred social advantage (Bourdieu in Emmison 2003, p. 213).

Moreover, this process of adaptation to mainstream norms of the generation that lived during the state-socialism made possible they to pass down their learned life-strategy, gained knowledge how to operate in the social space (i.e. their 'cultural capital') to the next generation. As Bourdieu emphasize, the education in the family is crucial in the class struggle. According to the author, one of the reason why middle class families are able to perpetuate their social position is because they invest in education of their children, and they passed down to their offspring their cultural capital, certain knowledge and skills how to operate in a given social strata that skills are not learned at school but in the family and in the social circle of the family etc.(Bourdieu 1984). In other words, the experience of my respondents shows that they have been a product of such life-strategy. Their parent understood the importance of investment of education for the betterment of their children. My respondent also had the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and practices from their parents how to navigate within the system how to go further – to receive better education and better position in the society.

4. Sexuality, Marriage and Family

4.1 Roma traditions and 'intral laws'

In the academic literature, Roma are described as population that has different social organization that suggest internal regulatory mechanism that imposes strict regulations to female sexuality (Liegeois 2007, p.95-99). In other words, the Roma society is suggested to impose to the individual sets of practices such as early marriages (often claimed to happen at the age of 15/16 or earlier), virginity before marriage for the Romani girls, having more children (than the 'non-Roma' from the same region and country of residence), endogamous relations (marriages within the extended kin, subgroup), extended family as ideal form of family construction.

Many authors suggest the control over 'Roma' female sexuality and fertility is one strategy through which first, boundaries between 'Roma' and 'non-Roma' are demarcated. These practices for controlling female sexuality stress the importance of virginity before marriage, special place of the children as part of the Roma family institution, and disregards the education of the Romani girls for the purpose of preserving their sexual purity before marriage (see Liegeois 2004; Cherenkov 2004). In other word, Roma sexual behavior is regulated through (but not limited to) those) internal regulations. In this sense, these practices are tied to the social position of the Roma and the space that they occupy in the social system. However this dominant discourse does not explain how these practices are internalized so to create means of identification for those who occupy that space. Bourdieu's understanding of the social space gives a possible explanation of the process of internalization and reproduction of these practices. The conception of the 'habitus' gives a theoretical ground for understanding how practices generate means of identification. According to Bourdieu is,

> A product of history, produces individual and collective practices(..). It ensures the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices (…).This system of dispositions—(…)that tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices, an intral law (…). (Bourdieu in Yaran 2009, p.76)

With regards the discourse associated with Roma, this mechanism of ascribing membership and outsiderness is manifested primarily by regulation of sexuality and reproduction and firm family and kin relations. As many authors suggest, the control over Roma women fertility is a strategy through which boundaries between Roma and non-Roma are created and negotiated. These practices stresses on 'intral laws' that is expressed by practices such as virginity before marriage of the Romani girls, highly praise children, and disregards the education of the Romani girls for the purpose of preserving their sexual purity before the marriage (see Liegeois 2004; Cherenkov 2004). In other words, through enactment of these practices the individual validate the correctness of the practices and transmit them as values. In this sense, the 'habitus' of the Roma (as the dominant discourse suggest) represent itself by those practices and suggest to the individual these practices as means of identification.[22]

4.2. Challenging the tradition

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[22] However, as the class based approach to Roma suggests these means of identification do not represent ethnic elements of the Roma culture, but practices related to their class position. The poverty and marginalization make Roma people adopt such practices (see Kocze 2011). Hence, they may be considered as part of their class identification but should not be mistaken with ethnic 'tradition'.

My respondents (and their families, in most of the cases) challenge the Roma tradition in relation to child-bearing practices and early marriages. They define themselves through opposing/rejecting these practices, and the idea to be associated with such practices, by not choosing not to accept early marriages, early parenthood, large family as an ideal, and by choosing different attitudes toward how many children they will have, by critically evaluating virginity and prioritizing the investment in education for their upward mobility.

In this thesis I argue that this change made possible the upward mobility of my respondents. Many scholars suggest that the presence of these practices of early marriages, early parenthood etc. are main reasons for the high rate of employment and poverty among Roma. In addition, they argue that having large family, and lower education gives to the individual lower chances for achieving better social position. However, they also claim, that many Roma they do not decide for themselves whether or not want to marry, but they have to accept the 'intral law' of the group and to bear the consequences of such decision (Oprea 2004).

However, my respondents, themselves consider virginity till marriage, as their own decision and a matter of choice. They have freedom of choice, the one that some Roma do not have. In this case, their choice not to follow the tradition is a circumstance for their possibility to become upward mobile. My respondents and their family realize that need for changing these practices related to sexuality, family structure and education for achieving better social status (for themselves and) for their offspring. In other words, rejecting the practices of early marriages, early parenthood, large family unit as ideal for family became a strategy for some Roma to achieve better social position.

The group of Roma I examine show a lifestyle that represents that shift in thinking of sexuality, reproduction and family ideal: most of them are not married (the youngest individual I interviewed is 21), do not have children; most of them reject the idea of virginity before marriages, consider education as priority etc. (further description will be given below). Most of all

refuse these practices to part of the Roma tradition. They defined them as human right issue that infringes the personal rights. Moreover, the Roma intellectuals, embrace the mainstream alternatives of child-bearing practices and attitude towards education.

A. (male, Serbia) says:

'I want to have children, but first I need to finish my studies, after I will marry. And by the way, I am not traditional, I don't think my women should be virgin.'

V. (female, Slovakia) continues:

' I think this is the model I fallow…most of us fallow …we want what the others (non-Roma), to graduate, and after than to have family and children…I don't want more than 2 children. I mean it's difficult to raise more than 2.'

D. (female, Hungary) adds:

'Times are different now, before, my mom got married at the age of 18 after she finished school. My mother and my father they were young when they marry. But the times were different, people used to marry after they graduated from high school. Now we live differently. I am 28 and I don't wanna marry. If I marry I don't wanna children.'

Similar claims were made by many of my interviewees they all suggested that their practices lifestyle, in terms of view regarding sexuality and marriage first do not differ from the mainstream ideal, and second they do not differ because they leads to poverty, marginality and low social status. They are aware of the link between these two and they are discouraged to follow such patterns of sexual behavior. Most of my respondents, man and women suggest a shift in thinking of sexuality and reproduction, that is indeed their own choice. Not only do women think of virginity of the Roma girls differently, but men as well. Most of them respond to such practices as wrong, undesirable, a practice from the past. However, few of my respondents show a different pattern. Only three of them suggested preserving virginity to be considered as value, but

that may coincide with their personal and religious view[23], their own choice to follow certain rules, rather than obligation rooted in their tradition. In addition, although they accept virginity as value the do not neglect the need of education. All of these three individuals have a university degree.

As described above, almost all my respondents refer to their choice to embrace education, to deny ideas of early parenthood in relation to economic ideas. However, this in only one of the reason; as they said, the contemporary situation is different.

4.3 Family as an ideal

As described above, family as ideal has its class expression. As many researchers suggest the extended family, the large family units are associated with lower classes whereas the mainstream and middle class ideal suggest nuclear model. (see Zajda 2012). Along with this nuclearization of the family the investment in higher education becomes more important. As Bourdieu implies such family model represents a life-strategy that aims increasing the chances of better realization in society of the children in the family. As Fuchs claims, this investing in education is often practiced by middle class families as their life-strategy for protecting their children from downward mobility.

On the other hand this nuclearization and investing in education as a strategy for escaping the poverty trap and achieving better social position is a strategy that is relevant for all my respondents. It is a strategy for upward mobility. Many of them claim that their family invested in their education. For my respondents education was a priority.

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[23] All three accept the Christian religious view. According to the Christian dogma the pre-marital sex is prohibited

G. says (female, Hungary):

> ' It was not a question whether I will continue my education on university level. My family always supported (financially) me. For them it was important me to continue my education. If I want to have a good job I need good education.'

DE. adds (female, Bulgaria):

> 'It was difficult for my family because I family couldn't afford to support me (financially), but they (my father and my mother) insisted to continue my education. They supported me as they could.'

S. (female, Serbia):

> 'My mother and my father wanted me to continue. I was thought this way. Education is important for my personal and professional development. '

S. and G. imply investment in education for these families became life-strategy to escape the poverty trap; strategy that would give them the needed education, the 'scholastic (cultural) capital' needed for their realization in the labor market. Moreover, they see it as important connection between higher level of educational credential and better possibilities in the labor market. Bourdieu makes that connection (the higher level of education and labor market opportunities) clear. He argues that the 'scholastic capital' is an institutionalized form of capital that presents (but does not guaranty) a condition for upward mobility.

C (male , Bulgaria):

' I remember my years at the university. It was difficult for me, but that was the only way to achieve what I want in life, to get a better job. (…). My family they fully supported me, they were always behind.'

As C. many of my respondents highlight the key role of the family as a factor that permitted their social mobility. The emotional and financial support of the family as some of them suggest was crucial. For many of my respondents' families the education was a symbolic capital that they wanted to make available to their children.

My interviewees are a good example of what Fuchs highlights:

> People, families and groups in modern society commonly strive for upward mobility (…). Reconversion strategies are employed by individuals and families in order to improve their position in social space and are reflected in social transformations (Bourdieu, 1986a: 135 in Fuchs 2003, p. 399).

As I argued discussed above my respondents prove Bourdieu conception of family that is legitimate social structure that serves for transmitting the values, practices, and accumulated economic, cultural and symbolic capital. In this sense, the family serves for reproducing the class structure. In my case, it also represents a space for transformation of social. Through family education parents transmit their values and practices associated to their lifestyle (that is an expression of one's social position). In addition, family as institution assists (with its emotional and financial support) the personal struggles of their children for achieving better social position.

4.4 Close family and relations

As Bourdieu implies family as an institution is a privilege, it gives to the individuals certain benefits. According to the author the family does not only serves the (individual) needs for procreation, but for reproduction of social order in terms of class and culture. More precisely, it assists for accumulation and passing down of 'cultural', 'symbolic' and 'economic capital' to the next generation. Its mechanism, as Bourdieu highlights, works through the symbolic practices that he calls 'obligation of loving' (see Bourdieu in Yaran 2009). These practices of showing 'motherly love', 'brotherly love' create a close connection in the family that are expressed by members of the family through practices of solidarity, sacrifice and generosity. (Bourdieu in Yaran 2009, p.62). More concretely, these practices of showing affection includes visiting the family members, participation in celebration of family, national or other feasts, 'giving without expectation of reciprocity' (Bourdieu in Yaran 2009, p.62).

According to Liegeios, Roma have closer connection between family members. Moreover, these close family relations are extended to the kinship. The author argues that Roma have developed stronger feeling of solidarity towards members of their family and kin than the 'non-Roma'. In addition, Liegeois argues that the sense of ownership of Roma is lower than that of the majority i.e. the author implies that they tend to share their economic capital (their properties) more often and to a greater extent than the majority. In addition, Liegeois suggests that the Roma rather group oriented ('in comparison to the non-Roma') than individual oriented. However, the author also suggest that this feature of the Roma is developed in relation to their strategy to cope with poverty (sharing the common resource, keeping the family closer give the opportunity to the group to more easily in an environment where the resources are scarce) therefore is a class marker as well.

Most of my respondents claim that their relations with their family members are closer than that of their 'non-Roma' friends. Only in two cases my respondents suggest that their family relations are not different that those of their 'non-Roma' peers. Most of the cases, my respondents link

being closer with other family and kin members to their understanding of their Roma identity. According to my respondents keeping these relations closer includes frequents visits of their relatives, participation in family and ethnic celebration, such as 'Bango Vasili', 'Herdelezi', 8 of April the international Roma day etc., solidarity (giving presents to their relatives, helping financially their family members) etc. From my observations I realize that, they have strong attachment to their ethnic group members. They tend to meet often with other Roma from the same social group (the group I examine). They often show their solidarity to one another by proposing/giving their emotional support as well as their financial to members form the group. The mentioned above gives another reason to think that the group of educated Roma I study, although having the features of the mainstream society they are not assimilated but they identify as Roma.

4.5 Sexuality and family construction. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I argue that Roma identity changes in regards to the social position of the individual. Second, I claimed that in Relation to class Roma identity varies. In addition, I emphasize the role of sexuality for the construction of class identity in the Roma society. I argued that there are two different streams of theorizing Roma women's sexuality are class based concepts. As Skeggs claims, 'working- and middle-class men and women are regulated differently, producing different behaviours and attitudes towards sex and sexuality' (Skeggs in Elley 2011,p. 415). This differentiation may be applied to the 'traditional' and the Roma intellectuals. On one hand the traditional Roma emphasizes the strict regulation of the female sexuality (these strict regulations prohibit pre-marriage sex to the Romani girls), on the other hand, the Roma intellectuals do not accept these regulation, and have more permissive view regarding female

sexuality and pre-marital sex. However, not all of them accept the mainstream view of sexuality and reproduction. In addition, although ideas of having nuclear family dominate, is not understood as only one possible model to follow.

After, I claimed that Roma intellectuals are upward mobile group, which upward mobility became possible because they adopted the mainstream family model. However, the close relationships between the family members, the idea of close kin and group relationship, and the claim that they made themselves that these close relations are in their words an expression of heir Roma identity suggest that in their everyday interaction they combine the mainstream and the Roma lifestyle and strategies.

5. Education

5.1 Choice of school

During the state-socialism in all countries in Eastern Europe were established the so-called 'Roma school'. These schools were attached to the Roma ghettos. The establishment of these schools assisted for the segregation of the Roma and creation of racial boundaries. As many authors argue from their opening during the state-socialist regime to nowadays most of the Roma pupils have passed through these schools. In general, these schools give lower quality of education than in any other schools. As a consequence of the lower quality of education most of the Roma youngsters are less capable to continue their education in the further on a high school level, or university[24], and less competitive on the labor market. This fact, further minimize their chance for integration and upward mobility (see Rostas 2013, p. 2-9).

In addition, the anti-Roma movements after the fall of the state-socialism further complicated the situation of the Roma in the educational system in Eastern Europe. According to Rostas many attempts for enrollment in a mixed school were facing closed doors: 'Roma children are

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[24] Most of these 'Roma schools' are secondary schools (see Rostas 2013).

often discouraged to from enrolling, or simply denied admissions when they apply for enrollment'. (Rostas, 2013 p.9)

However, some overcame these barriers. As previously discussed, these families invested in the education of their children as strategy for increasing the chances of their offspring for better life and upward mobility. Some of my respondents' parents passed through these educational institutions, but they did not choose them for their offspring. They choose to live in a geographic area that gave them better social condition, including access to better school. None of them lived in a ghetto, but among the non-Roma or in a mixed area. Consequently they sent their children in schools where their pupils would receive education that will guarantee good education. My respondents all argue that they went to school, where they were only few Roma in the class. That was the decision of the parents. Their parents decided to send them to the mainstream school. In all the cases their school it was never even discussed the possibility they to study in segregated (Roma) school. In all cases my respondents were fully supported by their parents to study. As, Rostas (2013) claims, that was not the case for many other Roma children. All of my respondents received good quality of education that gave them the possibility to continue on a university level. They achieved high results in their education. As they say that was possible because of their family and their own motivation to study.

As A. (female Hungary) says:

' It was not a question whether will I study or not. It was expected to do so. It came naturally. My father worked as [Romani] teacher, my mum she is teaching as well.'

However, A.'s background was exceptional case her parents both have position higher than most of my respondents' parents. Nevertheless, all my interviewees claim that for their family education was high priority. During their school years they received the emotional and financial

support for from their family members. In fact, they define crucial their parents support for their education. This support could be summarized by D's statement (male, Macedonia):

> 'My parent always supported me. They wanted me to have good grades at school. They wanted me to be a good student. My mum always checked my and mine and brothers' grades. She was always saying that is very important to study. She wanted better life for us, and she knew that without proper education is hard to do it. She was always helping us, always talking with teachers about our achievements. She was always there to advise us. Of course I always receive father's support, but my mother was the first person to talk with.'

Indeed, many of them admit that their financial situation presented a big obstacle for their education, but their parents, were motivating them to study and continue their education. As a result, all of my respondents graduated from university programs. The fact, that in 13 of the all fourteen cases[25] the other children in the family have a university degree as well, suggests that perusing higher education became a priority and family value (Only in one case, my respondents was the only one of the two children that graduated from university). However, all of my respondent admit that their education was possible partially because they receive the financial support from international or national (non-) governmental organization. Although, their family was supportive, most of them haven't had the economic capital that would permit them to rely on their own resources. Their mobility became possible in relation to the affirmative action in education that took place after the fall of the regime (Toninato 2009, p.9)

5.2 Affirmative action in education

As discussed in the previous sections, the mobility of my respondents is related to their family support, their own stubbornness to continue their education, and the affirmative action that they were exposed to. These three factors shaped their identity as educated Roma. During my

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[25] As I previously discussed most of my interviewees comes from family with two (11 cases), sometimes with three children (two cases), and only one case with one children.

interviews and participant observations I realize that the upward mobility of my respondents was possible because these three factors were presents. What makes possible the emerging of a group as the one I examine in this thesis are the interrelationship of these three factors. However, I do not aim to define that the upward mobility of all Roma should be understood in relation to these three factors, because some Roma have never benefited from affirmative actions, or they never received any financial support from their parents for their university education, or they come from poor environment but still reached higher status in society. Nevertheless, support of the family, the personal inclination to study, and the affirmative actions in education (in terms of financial support of given organization or institution etc.) together ease the process of upward mobility and influence the class and ethnic identity construction of Roma (in the case I study). As many authors suggest (see for ex. Rostas 2013) not all Roma receive quality education, or have the support of their families. In other words, what made possible, the mobility of my respondents was the fact they received family education that stresses on education as priority and value, the support of families, the financial support of (mostly non-) governmental institutions and their own stubbornness to study.

For all of my respondents to study was a priority. For their family education was a value, that became their own value. Their family education, and their personal will, the support of their (emotional and financial) parents for their education, gave them a reason to continue their education. In addition they all benefit from certain affirmative actions in education such as the grant programs of Roma Education Fund (REF), Roma Access Program (RAP), Roma English Language Program (RELP), Roma Graduate Preparation Program (RGPP) English learning programs of funded by Open Society Foundation (OSF) and REF and/or financial support for their MA studies at Central European University (CEU) in Budapest (private American university where students from all around the world come to study). These programs gave them the possibility to receive better education, to most of them – to learn English in America university

in a multicultural environment, and the possibility to continue their education or professional path on high national or international level.

As an outcome of these affirmative actions, all my respondents are more positive for their future plans (I will elaborate it further).Those who studied in Central European University (took part in some of the programs I mentioned) describe their experience in relation to their future carrier path, but also stress the impact of their identity. The program gave them the possibility to study English (RAP students), to some of them to learn certain disciplines such as public policy, sociology, political science, human rights, gender studies in English (the RGPP students), to those who have continued their education on MA level(master degree)- to increase their knowledge in some of the above mentioned disciplines, build skills and receive diploma from one of the highest ranked university in Eastern Europe. In sum, they consider the experience at CEU will give them better possibility in the labor market. They often highly valued their personal connections with other Roma students. Some of them argue stresses the importance for building such connections for building their professional network as Roma specialists. Further, this network would contribute to their future involvement as professionals in tackling the problems of the Roma in their countries of residence and internationally.

However they also share that the experience at CEU contributed for building of their Roma identity. My respondents often stress that their participation in RAP program gave them the possibility to meet many other educated Roma. Several of them share that in Budapest they met for the first time other educated Roma. The fact that my participant are from different countries gave them the opportunity to go beyond the scope of their understanding of Roma identity. In other words, the meeting and everyday interactions with other Roma broaden their understanding of Roma identity and convince them that Roma identity is diverse in terms of traditions, customs practices. The Roma from different countries have different tradition, they have different understanding of Roma identity (for some Roma identity is tied to knowledge of

Romani language, Romani music from their country etc.). More important, they found other Roma who have similar background (similar social status, family background), different (than of the 'traditional Roma' and the sociological discourse) understanding of Roma identity.

6. Leisure

6.1 Clothing style

According to Bourdieu the clothing style represents an embodiment of esthetics associated with a given class. That makes a reference to hair style of the individual as well as form of expression of certain form of class aesthetization of the body. As most of my interviewees are either students (10 of them) or young people (age between 20-40) they tend to wear rather elegant, mixed style of sport and elegant style, most of them follow the modern trends of clothing. This clothing style varies on their fields of study and/or occupation as well. The respondents who work in NGO sector and/or study disciplines such as political science, human rights, public policy, and journalism are more conservative in regards to their clothing and hair style than those who study other discipline related to social science.

In regards to their shopping habits most of my interviewees do not fit into the framework of middle class. Most of them rarely spent money on designer clothes. Besides, there exist gender differences as well. Women dedicate more time and money for buying clothes. In addition, women are more apt to experiments in their looks by combining different style in their everyday life; they tend more often to where change their style of clothing (for ex. from elegant to official and sporty). Men are rather more conservative; they tend less often to change their clothing and hair style. Nonetheless, the general trend is more conservative or elegant look where the model is

directed towards the mainstream idea about professional look (for men combination of more conservative shirts, trousers, elegant jeans and shoes; for women rather elegant/ trendy shirts, trousers, elegant jeans, skirts, dresses, elegant shoes). The style of clothing of my respondents rather fallow the general trends of the 'habitus' (school, university, discipline, workplace) that they are associated with than representing some sort of typical Roma style of clothing.

Traditional clothing is rather rarely present among my respondents. Ethnic elements of clothing including jewelries or other accessories (such as scarfs or neckties) are worn only occasionally, on events related to Roma culture. Usually this clothing includes neckties, skirts, and dresses earrings for women. More precisely, these ethnic clothes and accessories represent modern fashion style that includes some ethnic elements, kept as decorative elements, patterns, and shapes. In their everyday life practices, although rarely, my respondents tend to add certain elements in their clothing style (mainly women). Wearing of certain scarf, necklace, or earrings are some of elements through which they indicate their ethnic belonging. Sometimes, these elements are not typical Roma, but they, create such association for some of person who wear it as well as for other Roma. Wearing bright colors clothes are other associated with Roma traditional clothing. Some of them make clear association between wearing colors such as bright yellow, red, orange, with showing their Roma identity. Similar association is made for Roma men that wear pointed shoes. These types of shoes are considered a way Roma man expresses his Roma identity.

In sum, the group I examine, suggests that there Roma do not differ from their 'non-Roma' peers from the same school, university, department or work place. Their Roma identity is not explicitly expressed in terms of clothing or hair style. However, some of them are willing to express their Roma identity in terms of fashion style, but that happens only occasionally in regards to cultural events dedicated to celebration of the Roma culture. Furthermore, they mark their ethnic belonging by expressing (although rarely) through their clothing style their Roma identity. In

other words, by adding certain almost invisible elements in their clothing, (so one have to be part of the group to be able to recognize the signification of these elements) these Roma (in most of the cases women) state, show to those who can see it, that they are Roma. As I describe above these are elements of(even color of) clothing and jewelries (such as scarfs, pants, neckties, brooch, earrings etc.)

6.2 Musical taste

In Bourdieu's claims that the taste for certain type of music in constructed in regards to the individual class position (Bourdieu 1984:158). The author argues that the music taste of the individual is a way the s/he to distinguish him/herself from as well as to position him/herself in regards to certain class/strata. As van Eijck points out, 'Bourdieu stresses the homology between legitimate ['highbrow'] culture and high social status'(…). Hence, the musical genres are defined in hierarchy, where musical genre such as opera and classical music is considered highbrow, jazz in on periphery of the highbrow music, and pop, rock, dance, folk, are defined in relation to the popular taste. Usually the Roma folk music in Balkans (knows in Bulgaria as *chalga* and *kuchek*, in former Yugoslavian countries as *turbo folk*, in Romania as *manele)* is considered as lowbrow popular music (see for ex. Rice 2002). The Russian Roma music (the Russian Romans) and the Hungarian Roma music is considered as rather middlebrow, but mostly associated with the popular taste.

Whether the taste for music of my respondents is 'lowbrow', 'middlebrow' or 'highbrow' is difficult to be defined. All of my respondents listen to some sorts of Roma music that is popular in their country. Most of them listen to classical music and jazz as well. From my personal conversation and observation I realize that they also listen to variety of other popular genre such

as dance, pop, hip-hop, soul, (hard)rock etc. As van Eijck and Cristin point out, nowadays the boundaries between popular and 'highbrow' music are more porous. Therefore, middleclass taste do not necessary associate only with musical genres of classical music and opera but include other popular genre. In this sense, the musical taste of my respondents may be 'highbrow'.

However, what is at stake is not whether their taste is 'highbrow' or not, but that their ethnic identity find expression in their taste of music. All of them listen to Roma identity; they understand the Roma music as form of expression of their identity. The fact that they listen to other musical genres prove the claim that the lifestyle (that is expressed in this case through their taste for music) of these Roma incorporate mainstream practices and elements of the Roma culture.

7. Future plans:

7.1 Marriage as value

Regarding the marriage most of all of my interviewees define marriage as a value. They understand marriage as a consequence of long-term relationship between two (male and female). For many of my respondents, same-sex marriage is not considered appropriate way of conduct. Most of them marriage is an important institution. However, (long-lasting, short-term) sexual relationship, including cohabitation with a partner is defined as correct and part of their lifestyle (Casual sex is not denied from the lifestyle of my respondents as well). In addition, they do not consider highly important their partner, husband/wife to be from the same ethnic group, but

stress on finding person with similar view, and similar values. In other words, they prioritize the social and cultural capital of their future partner.

Although my respondents became westernized they do not assimilate; they do not consider Roma identity related to so called 'Roma laws', but they find other ways to claim their identity. They claim, the language, common origin, feasts, and celebrations, national symbols of the Roma (the flag, the anthem etc), as the cultural heritage that makes them be part of the Roma society. Although, some of these Roma do not speak the language, (for example the Hungarian Roma), do not have these celebrations they consider them as value, as means for their affiliation with Roma.

7.1.1 Starting a family and raising children

In a previous section I discuss the importance of the family for upward mobility. I focus on the experience of being raised in a family (the child prospective). In this section I look at the process form different viewpoint. I look at their ideal of family from the point of view of parenting (them being future parents). For most of my respondents having a family is essential value. Some of them connect this fact in relation to their ethnic belonging. Being Roma, particularly being Roma women, they feel important to marry and have children. Some of them feel pressure from their relatives to marry. As some authors claims (see for ex. Oprea 2004) among Roma starting a family is more important than for the rest of the society. Another group refer to this willingness (or in some cases pressure) to start a family in relation to the mainstream social model.

In regards to the future plans of my respondents, starting a family came as a very important topic. As I previously discuss in chapter two, almost all of them give priority to the perusing education

and carrier and then starting a family. In almost of the cases, my respondents consider nuclear family model (that is comprised of two parents (mother and father) and a child/ren) where the number of the children are one or two. However, some of my respondents suggest a different model. They prefer the extended family model that is comprised of the nucleus of the family plus other family members such as the parents of one of the spouses (in many cases these are the parents of the husband).

Most of them understand the nuclear family as more successful, than the extended family. For them that model is more able to guarantee upward mobility for the children i.e. is financially more effective. Comparing to having more than two children, having one or two children gives the possibility to the parent to invest more in their offspring. This includes, better pre-school and school education (and extra curricula activities such as piano course, sports etc.), better social milieu where the kids 'should play eat and sleep' (see Yaran 2009:115). In addition, this model gives the possibility to the parents to dedicate more time for family education i.e. gives the possibility for 'accumulation of cultural and informative capital' (see Yaran 2009, p.114). Most of my respondents suggest these reasons to be part of their understanding of ideal family.

However, this thinking boils downs to their *becoming* mainstream; choosing to accept the successful strategy of the globalized worlds. Here becoming mainstream refers to accepting the mainstream ideal, that is not simply locally established but part of a bigger picture. More precisely, their models of behavior, thinking of sexuality and reproduction, highly valuing education are product of the global trends young people to invest in education, not to choose to prioritize starting a family and raising children, but education and carrier (Zajda 2012).

7.2 Future carrier path

Towards the end of the interview I ask my respondents how they see their lives in the near future (in 5 years). As in the previous chapter discussed most of my interviewees are young people, 8 of them students with previous working experience in the civil sector (manly in NGO sector that deals with Roma issues), 3 without any working experience, 3 young professionals who start their carrier in the civil sector (all of them working in NGOs). Those who already have previous working experience were more confident for their future. The rest were less confident for their future, but still positive for their future prospective. Most of all see themselves working in international organizations, governmental and supra national institutions (such as European Roma Rights Center, Open Society institute, European Commission, World Bank etc.). However, many of them relate their future plans with working in (non-) governmental institutions that deals with Roma issues. In their understanding working in Roma organization is a possibility to realize themselves as professionals, but most of them add another reason for working in such institution. Working for (inter)national Roma organization is a form of expression of their ethnic identity.

All graduated from local university, or international university (such as Central European University), or passed trainings and fellowships in governmental, non-governmental local and international organization (such as fellowship within the structure of the given municipality, fellowship in the parliament etc., local NGO that deals with human rights issues, fellowship in the US Embassy etc.) and know at least one language (English, but in many cases 2 foreign languages such as Spanish, French, German etc.). Most of all passed through English language program in international environment (such as Roma Access program, Roma English Language Program). These facts first show these Roma are highly interested in upward mobility; they situate their future social context in relation to middle crassness.

However, moving up in the social ladder for them does not mean that they are only interested in becoming middle/upper middle class, but they see their carrier path in relation to

their ethnic origin. Achieving higher social status, for most of them suggest better life for them, but responsibility towards the Roma community. During these two years of observation I often witness conversation regarding the abovementioned. Frequently, during their formal and informal meetings they discuss the present situation of the Roma in their countries, and how to take an action in regards to the cases of discrimination and mistreatments of the Roma they hear to happen in their countries. Often, one can hear that they want to continue their education, to reach high (in many cases political) positions so to be able to influence the democratic changes in their countries. That fact gave me another reason to think that they shall not be considered assimilated; they do not consider themselves only part of a non-Roma (intelligentsia or) middle class society, but part of the Roma diaspora.

In other words, they all consider giving back to their community as important part of their future. These young educated Roma consider themselves entitled with the responsibility to take an action in their personal and professional life to combat the discrimination and social exclusion of the Roma. For some of them giving back to their community means working in (establishing a new) non-governmental organization (NGO) that deals with Roma issues. Another group, stresses on the need to help other Roma financially, creating a trust fund, creating a supranational organization that would support financially the education of other young Roma. However, solidarity towards other Roma, as my interviewees highlight, does not necessarily mean working for local or international Roma NGO (as I had such presumption), but for them it means to be an activist from the position they would held in future. For them, being Roma professional does not requires working for a Roma NGO, but requires being as active participant in (future) Roma movement. In other words, they consider lobbying and networking, as form of activism that is a form of giving back to the community they come from. In other words, this lobbying and networking means for them promoting the Roma issues, Roma cultural heritage within the scope

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of their work (in their everyday work activities, at their workplace, organization etc.), supporting with advise, or financially other Roma who want to follow their path etc.

This sense of responsibility towards other Roma may come in relation to the fact that all of them benefit from different affirmative actions that target Roma. All of my respondents received financial support for their education from international organization (such as Roma Education Fund, Open Society Foundation, local and (non-) governmental institutions). Some of them clearly formulate that as a reason why they want to give back to their communities. Nevertheless, their thinking of giving back to the community they belong to, does not refers to giving back not to a specific local community but to a bigger, supra national community represent another phenomenon; it shows the impact of the globalization in their life.

G. (Macedonia,male)

> 'They invest [Roma Education Fund, Open Society] in us, I feel necessary to give back to the Roma…I appreciated that they gave me the possibility to study. However, …It is not necessary to work in NGO to give back to the community, but is important to give back. Who else could do that? I maybe work for international organization. I may be able to help from my position there. I will support other Roma, stay in connection with them…I will collaborate with them. Wherever I will be employed I will try to push the Roma interest in the organization.'

In sum, their future plans, they make the point clear that after their education in (most of the cases) international educational institution (such as CEU Budapest) they expect better future for themselves. Based on the education they receive, the skills they have, expect to have better opportunity on the labor market. Most of them see themselves in working on international level. Many of them suggest that they will be willing to work in Roma organization (Organization that deals with Roma issues).Nonetheless, they do not see it as the only one prospect for them,

although for some this is a priority. Some of my respondents are determined on their decision to work for a Roma organization. This possibility is often stressed in their conversations among them. However, for them working in Roma organization is a moral obligation. In relation to their future plans, more often not their economic interest is highlighted (nevertheless, they relate their future occupation in relation to middle class jobs that would give them better socio-economic conditions), but often they stress on working in such organization is for them a way to give back to their community way to express that they belong to certain community and they have not forgotten their origin. This solidarity and responsibility towards the group interest are in my opinion expression of their ethnic identity, a way to define express that they are not assimilated, but although having different lifestyle they still consider themselves Roma.

Their thinking of being connected to a bigger community and giving back to community is one of the outcomes of the globalization for Roma. The understanding that Roma are global community (diaspora) with a common social problem that need to be resolved creates a 'friction'; an outcome of certain global connection that produce/is produced by clash of the local and global. In recent decade Roma issues became such an issue that produce an echo on international level; the everyday struggle of the Roma produces an effect on high political level, but not only. Politicians, non-governmental institutions, activists became part of the process of tackling the segregation, discrimination, marginalization of the Roma. Educated Roma became particularly targeted to get involved, to become responsible, to take an action (Biro 2013). The Roma I describe embodied that discourse, they themselves reproduce it; they became product of it.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter I aim to describe the identity of an international group educated Roma that live in Budapest by presenting a descriptive analysis of their lifestyle and taste that is expressed through

practices related to sexuality, procreation, family construction, family values, education, leisure activity (such as clothing, taste of music, sports and regime). Their identity is based on the lifestyle associated with class, but also incorporates expression of their ethnicity (such as Roma music, family relations etc.).

This group of Roma intellectuals emerges in relation to intergenerational mobility. During the state-socialism their parent had the opportunity to gain certain economic capital and to become part of the mainstream society, to accept to a large degree the mainstream lifestyle in terms of sexuality, procreation, family construction, family values, education, etc. Moving up in the social ladder gave them possibility to create better future for their children. Their children move further and start occupying different social space of different social strata (they move from working class to middle class). They became different from the poor Roma, but still Roma. They find different ways to expresses their affiliation with the Roma culture.

IV. CONCLUSION

By examining the identity of a group of Roma intellectuals, that of the international group of Roma intellectuals that live in Budapest I aimed to find specific practices and strategies that they adopt that gave them the possibility so to become Roma intellectual. I did not aim to state that this group represents the experience of all Roma intellectuals, but to challenge the idea of assimilation that is always already attached to Roma intellectuals. By examining their personal experience, lifestyle and everyday practices I aimed to present a different experience, different story than that I often find in sociological and anthropological approaches to Roma; a story that show a more complex and more nuanced experience that the concept of ethnic assimilation and the conception of 'Roma' (that often misrepresent the Roma identity by emphasizing more the stereotypes than the reality of the many Roma) misrepresent or dismiss.

'Becoming' Roma

As all of my interviewees suggest Roma is a 'becoming'; it represent a whole range of interpretations that do not necessary consider Cherenkov or Liegeois description of the 'Roma/Romanipe'. Many of them do not speak Romanes, do not have any sense of independent trade, certainly have reference to a concrete territory (their country of residence, their city and neighborhood), not all of them refers to strong connection with extended kinship. However, they all share 'consciousness of a shared origin and history', 'sense of belonging to a group', but not the idea of strict common [Roma] rules of living', not 'antipathy towards those outside [the non-Roma]', not 'endogamous relationships' , their philosophy about raising children varies as well. In addition, they do not accept some of ideas about early marriages to be Roma tradition or part of their identity. Roma intellectuals refer to early marriages and ideas about larger family units,

family with many children as a structural/class/socio-economic matter not as Roma traditions.(Such claims has been made by some researchers as well see for ex. Durszt 2002; Kocze 2011; Oprea 2004) Ideas about preserving girls virginity till marriages also varies, some consider it as part of the Roma traditions; they do not consider it as part of their own life-style. For many of my interviewees this is an issue, a tradition that ought to be reconsidered.

My study shows Liegeois assumption: the young generation of Roma understands differently their identity; society become more and more fragmented, the individual choice becomes more often stressed (Liegeois 2007, p. 97). In addition, their narratives rather suggest cohesion with the 'gadge' than sharp distinction. In other words 'Romanipe/n' needs to be conceptualized and become more apt to accept new interpretations; to accept the new generation of Roma who reconsiders/rejects traditions, customs, and certain practices but still remains Roma.

Reason to *become* different

On the other hand, the emerging of the 'Roma intelligentsia', as my interviewees suggests, presents an identity that is formed in relation to the images produced by the social discourse, the stereotypes and the customs that some of them have been in touch with. In most of the cases, these Roma construct their identity in opposition of those images of the Roma. Some of my interviewees suggest their *becoming* is a reflection of the social attitudes towards them/their family members. The produced negative images, the 'poor', 'stupid', 'stinky', 'early married', 'have many children' etc. affect their life and made them stubborn to claim different image by simply becoming such. S. (female, Romania) confesses:

> 'My father was poor guy; he lived with his family in poor conditions. His family has only one room,
> where there were cooking. Once, he to school and the teacher said that the Roma are smelly and he
> was mentioning him/my father. He asked [the teacher] everybody to go and to smell his clothes. He
> felt very embarrassed. But, that motivated him more to study and get [economically] better…He

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succeeded. He was motivating me to study and to prove that Roma are not as what people say we are.'

G.(male, Macedonia). adds :

' … my family was poor. My mom and my dad, there did not have the chance to study. But they supported as, made as to be convinced that we have to study. They show us how important is to study. Me and my brother we were always good students. One day my brother received low grade(3) [lowest passing grade]. My mum went to the teacher and asks the teacher to test my brother again. She knew that some teachers have prejudices about us being Roma and she wanted to prove that we as Roma, we are not stupid. She knew that he knows the material because she was always checking whether he's prepared for school. And the end, he [my brother] showed that he knows the lesson and he received (5) [second highest grade].'

These are only two examples how the prejudices, the stereotypes made some Roma determent to prove their lack of credibility. Many of those Roma I interviewed claim that they always work harder than the non-Roma so as to show that they are not inferior to the others, but to prove that they are as the non-Roma. As Roma they do not consider themselves being part of communities that sharply differ from the non-Roma and have some sort of 'unique','exotic', (for the Europeans) traditions and practices. When asking them what are the differences between Roma and non-Roma they could not find easily very distinct features that are to be attached to their Roma identity. In fact, their ideas of what is Roma do not claim considerable differences between Roma and 'gadje'. They all have differences interpretations about Roma and these understandings claim common origin and past, being minoritarian subject, sometimes languages, family relations. Apart of this Roma identity for them is not so different from the non-Roma from their countries of origin. In addition, their understanding of being Roma is closure that they discover and create for themselves in the quotidian.

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