GENDER, ETHNICITY AND CLASS:
ROMANI WOMEN'S POLITICAL ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL STRUGGLES

By

Angéla Kóczé

Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisors: Professor Judit Bodnár

Professor Don Kalb

Budapest, Hungary

2011

Statement

I hereby state that the thesis contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. The thesis contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

ABSTRACT

The academic literature on Roma/Gypsies pays only limited attention to Romani women's political activism and social struggle. The concept of gender is treated as an isolated category rather than as a social factor which intersects with other categories of identity for purposes of understanding and combating inequality.

The aim of this dissertation has been to explain and analyze through empirical material the manifestations of gender, ethnicity and class in contemporary Romani women's life. To narrow my study, I have focused on transnational and local (particularly Hungarian) Romani women's political activism and social status, from the structural through the discursive and biographical level. I aimed to go beyond the superficial representation of women's activism, by describing the complicated relationship and intercations among donors, NGOs, other Roma and non-Roma activists, and also within their groups.

With the above outlined concerns in my mind, I have undertaken an empirical research project at the transnational level (mapping the various Roma networks and international resource centers) and at the local level (Szikszó, Hungary). As part of my research, I closely observed "women's issues" at the transnational and the local level, as well as discourses and activities through which they promote "Romani women's rights" and "human rights and democracy" under the banner of "empowering Romani women".

This area is under-researched and lacks theoretical conceptualization. The approach I have opted to take bridges empirical and theoretical gaps in the study of sociology and anthropology, particularly in respect of the representation of Roma in academic texts as well as aiming to raise the profile of the research field by diminishing their marginalized position within social sciences.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During my research I had the opportunity to receive research, travel and write-up grants from the Central European University. I am also indebted to the Center for Policy Studies, particularly to Viola Zentai who gave me enormous encouragement to finish my PhD. I would also like to extend my thanks to my employer, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Ethnic and Minority Studies that gave me generous support to conduct my fieldwork in Szikszó and carry out the comparative research in two micro-regions.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to offer my love and thanks to family and friends, whose patience has been tested beyond even what they could have imagined – thanks for always being by my side: János and Jónás and Szűcs Móni, Tóth Herta, Erika Sólyom, Borbála Juhász, Lídia Balogh, Lea Kőszeg amongst many other dear friends.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

FIGURES

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BAZ Borsod Abaúj Zemplén county
CEE Central and Eastern Europe
CoE Council of Europe
CPRSI Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (part of ODIHR)
ECRI European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
EP European Parliament
EC European Commission
ERIO European Roma Information Office
ERRC European Roma Rights Center
ERTF European Roma and Travellers Forum (consultative status with CoE)
FIDESZ Fiatal Demokratak Szovetsege/Magyar Polgari Szovetseg (Alliance of
Young Democrats/Hungarian Civic Union coalition)
GLS Gypsy Lore Society
HRW Human Rights Watch
INGO International Non-Governmental Organisation
IRU International Romani Union
IRWN International Romani Women Network
JMM Jobbik Magyarorszagert Mozgalom (Movement for a Better Hungary)
KDNP Keresztenydemokrata Neppart (Christian Democratic People's Party)
MDF Magyar Demokrata Forum (Hungarian Democratic Forum)
MIEP Magyar Igazsag es Elet Part (Hungarian Justice and Life Party)
MEP Member of European Parliament
MP Member of the Parliament
MSG Minority Self-Government
MSZP Magyar Szocialista Part/Hungarian Socialist Party
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OCO Orszagos Cigany Onkormanyzat (National Gypsy Self-Government)
ODIHR Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE Office of Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSI Open Society Institute
PER Project on Ethnic Relations
RCPP Roma Cultural Pathology Paradigm
REF Roma Educational Fund
RNC Roma National Congress
ROI Roma Civic Initiative
RPA Roma Polgarjogi Alapitvany (Roma Civil Rights Foundation)
RPP Roma Participation Programme
RWI Roma Women Initiative
SZDSZ Szabad Demokratak Szovetsege (Alliance of Free Democrats)
SZETA Szegenyeket Tamogato Alap
SZIROM Szikszói Roma Nők Egyesülete
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID United States Agency for International Development
VPN People Against Violence (Slovak Political Party)
WHO World Health Organization

Introduction: Gender, Ethnicity and Class: Romani women's political activism and social struggles

In the wake of post-communist transition and over the past two decades, the emergence of identity-based Romani[1] politics was one of the developments accompanying political changes in Central and Eastern Europe. This new social mobilization presented Roma people with the opportunity to represent their ethnic interests in the political arena and public decision-making processes at the international, national and local level (Kovats 2001, Barany 1998, Vermeesch 2002, Klimova 2004).

Until recently, most political scientists and historians who have written about the Roma 'movement'[2] and their political mobilization (Vermeesch 2001, Kovats 2001b, Acton 2000) neglected consideration of gender in their analysis, in part perhaps as a result of the traditional emphasis on forms of political struggles, in which men have taken a leading part.
The main characteristic of the Romani 'movement', similarly to other social justice movements, is that it is embedded in a human rights discourse, as Trehan (2005) argued based on the wholesale adoption of neo-liberal rule-of-law and 'democratization' principles as formulated by influential NGOs[3]. This has had profound implications for the trajectory of Romani projects and initiatives throughout the EU, mainly in Central and Eastern Europe. This exported discursive trend of neo-liberalism marked the theoretical and ideological terrain of Romani political activism.

Human rights based discourse created a new political leverage for Roma to present their plight as serious human rights discrimination and violence against them by the state or citizens. Intergovernmental organizations such as the Council of Europe (CoE), the United Nations (UN), the Organizations for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the European Union (EU) who master and apply the language of human rights put pressure on the European nation states to respect the human rights of the Roma population and provide an adequate legal remedy for Roma in case of discrimination and human rights violation.

This thesis will show that the specific human rights-based approach also embraces the gender equality discourse which has been adopted by key international Romani women activists. Furthermore, it exposes the transnationally imposed human rights ideas that have been locally translated and adopted in a contentious mode by activists who have access to political activism from the local to transnational scale.

---

[1] Note on terminology: This study employs the word "Roma" as a politically constructed umbrella category, used by politicians, activists, and academics to refer to a wide variety of sub-ethnic groups including Lovari, Romungro, Beas, Kaldreashi, Rudari, Kale, Sinti, Manush. Romani is mostly used as an adjective in the paper. The word "Gypsy"(synonym of Roma) is an English term used to denote ethnic groups formed by the dispersal of commercial, nomadic, and other groups rooted in northern India beginning in the tenth century and subsequently mixing with European and other groups in diasporic contexts. (Fraser 1995)

[2] The conceptualization of the Roma 'movement' has not been elaborated by scholars; it is rather a concept which is introduced and applied by top-down political leadership. At some point in my research project the validity of the concept has to be analyzed concerning Roma political activism.
[3] Such as, the Georg Soros-founded Soros Foundation network in the Central and Eastern European countries.

Intersectionality will be used as a core concept and analytic tool throughout the dissertation to explore the intertwining features of the identities of gender, ethnicity and class[4]. The thesis will employ theoretical frameworks and terminology from critical race studies, which sharpen the language and meaning of the issues of race and gender relations. The new turn in the academy, which attempted to trace and analyze the fragmentation of various identities, primarily gender, ethnic and class, within political movements of the late twentieth century (Brienes 2006) becomes a reference in my thesis. Through the empirical material of this dissertation, I aim to underpin the manifestations of intersectional discrimination, in other words, as it is named by activists, the *"double exclusion"* and domination by both Romani patriarchal and non-Romani political and economic regimes.

In my analysis, the main focus will be on Hungarian Romani women's political activism and social status, from structural through discursive and biographical level. This specific knowledge will deepen the understanding of Romani political mobilization and offer a voice for Romani women about their political mobilization and their difficult subject position which has never been discussed in public.

In my dissertation I will argue that in the case of Romani political mobilization there is a manifestation of ethnicity, gender and class which creates specific strategies of political representation and identity politics. As mentioned above, the political and social participation of Romani women is specific where intersectional discrimination and domination by various entities, both within and outside Roma society come into play.

My dissertation will demonstrate that human rights and gender equality discourses by local and transnational Romani women's activism on a local and global scale have a very different social life. I have taken, as my starting point, the understanding that globalization is characterized by transnational connections among scattered localities, which are unequally situated and internally differentiated (Burawoy 2000; also Appadurai 1997). Local "matters" should not be taken as a counterpoint to the global, but as the site where globalization is constituted and where its effects play out (Massey 1994). The dynamic landscape of "grounded globalizations and scattered hegemonies" (Grewal and Kaplan 1994), "forces," "connections," and "imaginings" (Burawoy 2000: 348), offers new political opportunities, resources, as well as constraints in political activism even for Romani women. In my research the mediator between the local and transnational level will be examined through reflecting on my own political and social activism.

One of the unique features of this research project is that my analysis is rooted in a native academic perspective and makes it possible to develop an appropriate conceptual language to theorize Romani women's political and social activism at the local and transnational level. This type of analysis of Romani women's local and transnational activism offers a prime

---

4 Even though the concept of intersectionality had been used by anthropologist earlier, it became named and conceptualized by critical feminists to describe the various forms of inequalities through institutional and representational dynamics.The earliest application of intersectionality in critical race studies, specifically critical race approaches sociology was used by Anthis and Yuval-Davis (1983) and in critical legal theory by Crenshaw (1989) and Duclos (1993). In recent years, research engaging intersectionality has been carried out in various academic contexts. To name only a few: interesectionality in political geography (Valentine 2007), in political science (Hawkesworth 2003), in economy (Brewer et al.,2002), in critical psychotherapy (Burman, 2004; Fernandes 2004), in sociology (Yuval-Davis 2006), in poscolonial studies (Arondeker 2005), and in socio-legal studies (Vakulenko 2007; Deckha 2004; Conogham 2007; Hannett 2003; Grabham 2006).

opportunity to gain an understanding of the internal gender dynamic of Romani women activism at local and transnational level.

My primary research questions I shall seek answers to in the forthcoming chapters are the following: *How are intersections of ethnicity, gender and class manifested at the local and transnational level regarding Romani women activism and social position? How are the transnational human rights and gender discourse translated and modified in a concrete local Roma community?*

The outcome of my research, as this will be demonstrated in detail, is that ethnicity, gender and class are inseparable determinants of inequalities. Functioning interdependently, they have interlocking patterns that serve as a basis for developing multiple systems of domination which affect access to power and privileges, influence social relationships, construct meanings, and shape people's everyday experience.

My theoretical framework offers to establish a rich, interdisciplinary (anthropology, sociology, gender studies, and human rights), critical and conceptually useful understanding of contemporary Romani women's political activism and social struggles.

Researching in and across multiple sites

In studying Romani women's political activism and social struggles in globalizing gender politics, I look at the resources, concepts and ideas that Romani women, as well as donors and intergovernmental organizations employ. In doing so, I build upon a growing body of literature, political statements that follow concepts as they "travel" across localities, from donors to various conferences and meetings organized by intergovernmental organizations, to local NGOs. Resources and concepts like "gender," "community mobilization," "civil society" and "empowerment" are conceptualized slightly differently by Romani women activists and experts. I frequently witnessed how women activists selectively appropriate and transform concepts based on the expectations of different social and political settings.

At the transnational level I collected and analzyed the available quantitative data and produced an overview which demonstrates gender, ethnic and class inequalities of Romani women. In addition, I also analyzed the discourses of major inter-governmental organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United Nation and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with a special focus on their language and initiatives on Romani women's issues.

To do this, at the transnational level, I found it crucial to go beyond a focus on the transnational level and "official" languages. Thus, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Hungarian Romani women who are (or were) active in political activism, (some of them even at the transnational level). These semi-structured interviews demonstrate their political activism through biographical and personal stories, and the interviews provided an opportunity for Romani women to use their own narrations and express their feelings and emotions regarding their political struggles (Chapter 6).

In conducting interviews with the elite of Romani women, I was pushed by my sociological and anthropological inquires to do fieldwork where I could meet women from the low social classes and understand the multiple, intersecting and conflicting ethnic and gender power

3

structures, grounded in specific localities. Being a feminist and a scholar with an activist background I wanted to do research at the local level in such a way that it generates knowledge in the community. I had the opportunity to conduct a feminist comparative research project with the involvement of the core Romani women who I worked closely with. This research process enabled them to construct and shape their activist language to expose their intersectional inequalities and advocate for social change. The research consisting of both quantitative and qualitative analysis compared the social and labor status of disadvantaged Romani and non-Romani women in the selected two micro-regions of *Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén* (BAZ) County and Pest County (Chapter 7). (I chose these two micro-regions for the reason that the structures of the settlements in the two micro-regions are comparable, however one is in an underdeveloped region, while the other is located in an economically more developed region.)

My selected research methods reflect upon my diverse research fields. They enabled me to understand the discursive, structural and autobiographical construction of Romani women.

Outline of chapters

I lay down the context of my research, the theorethical underpinnings and the key concepts for this study in **Chapter 1.** In doing so, I clarify the research methods, introduce the research fields and explain my personal relation to the subject of the thesis. My work is inherently interdisciplinary, thus the theories applied represent a cross range of perspectives: on gender, critical race theories, sociological and anthropological, critical perspectives on civil society, NGOism, human rights and democratization, transnational political activism.

In **Chapter 2,** I will explore how historical, social and political discourses create Gypsies and how these discourses generate structures of thinking. It appears that the (mis)representation of Roma in historical, social and political discourses contributed to the creation of the dichotomy between Europe and 'others', in this case the Roma.

First, I sketch the long term legacy of the conceptualization of Gypsy identity. To demonstrate this process, I use different academic and historical sources, including contemporary political discourses. Then, I provide a discussion of post-colonial racism *within* the Romani civil rights activism. I will expose various taboos and silent issues which characterize the internal oppression mechanisms within the movement. To tell this story, I will include some self-reflecting stories told by contemporary Romani women.

Chapter 3 presents the formation of a collective identity and consciousness amongst diverse groups of Roma, which activists see as a political response to rising hostility, racism and violence against Roma. I sketch the development of Romani women NGOs which are strongly connected to global forces. I conceptualize the 'Roma rights' movement embedded in a neo-liberal policy development. I problematize the donor dependency in the NGO sector and its relation to the Romani subaltern. Finally, I introduce the emergence of Romani women's transnational activism, which is assisted by international organizations advocating human rights, particularly women's rights.

Chapter 4 continues to expose contemporary Romani women issues, particularly the appropriation of women's bodies by forced sterilization and early marriage. Specifically, I examine how these issues connect to the global women's movement, and how it has fired Romani political discourse. In doing so, I will introduce the history and the theory of eugenics in Europe, which provided an academic legacy to conducting coerced sterilization. Apart from sterilization, I will analyze issues related to Romani women which receive

international coverage in the media or generate political concern, mostly illustrating the 'exotic nature' of Romani culture or serving to depict it as backward, primitive, and oppressive. This kind of representation and motive is similar to the colonial script of "saving brown women from brown men". In order to understand this process, I will apply the theortical framework of 'Critical Studies of Whiteness' which provides the analysis of racialized relations of dominance.

Chapter 5 exposes the structural position of Romani women through available quantitative data which demonstrates Romani women's gender, ethnic and class inequalities. In addition, this chapter gives an account of the structural inequalities of institutional racism and sexism against Romani women. The second part of this chapter reviews the discourses of major inter-governmental organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with a special focus on their language and initiatives on Romani women's issues developed in the last decade.

Chapter 6 explores how "Romani woman" emerges in the discursive fields of political activism at the intersection of race, gender and class, which I will explore through biographical stories and personal experiences in political activism. I will give an account of Romani women's representation in Hungarian researches. The main focus of this empirical chapter is to offer an opportunity for Romani women to speak about and reflect on their own political and social emancipatory struggles.

In Chapter 7, I will present my research findings based on participant observations, participatory feminist research and my work experience of more than two years with Romani women in a small Hungarian city. Throughout this chapter I will analyze the result of the participatory research in the light of the reconfiguration of global/local forces. I will expose through personal stories how "global forces, connections and imagination" (Burawoy 2000: 28) reconstruct and reproduce the different axes of power and subject position of Romani women at the local level.

In the **Conclusion** I revisit the hypothesis and the main arguments of the study, drawing some lessons about the Romani women's political activism and social struggle, addressing the inadequate attention given to the gendered politics of civil society in contemporary Europe particularly in Hungary, and also reflecting upon the potential of Romani women's activism in gender politics. I also offer recommendations and predictions on the future of the "Romani women political activism".

CHAPTER ONE: MAPPING A STUDY OF ROMANI WOMEN POLITICAL ACTIVISM FROM A TRANSNATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

1.1 Personal, political, theoretical

My dissertation grew out of my background as a daughter of illiterate Romani parents, a woman, a seasoned political activist for Roma rights, a scholar, and a feminist. Many Romani women, including myself, harbor countless, unspoken stories of discrimination, exclusion, and violence. Over the years, I have had many encounters during my participation in Romani activism when I felt that I was the target of discrimination, exclusion and premeditated attacks. I am sure that many times, these attacks were not directed at me, personally. However, they do reflect the specific political location, namely intersections of ethnicity, gender, and class which structure my life as well as Romani and non-Romani women's life. I have come to see my own subject position,"Romani woman", as a site where multiple forms of power and hierarchy are enacted. With a number of feminist-minded Romani women, who participate in various international and national Roma related activities, we have striven to understand our positions vis-à-vis our own communities and the non-Romani population. We have struggled to untangle the complex social, political, and economic issues that structure our lives, and develop a conceptual language to understand our experiences with multiple inequalities. This dissertation seeks to answer how intersections of gender, ethnicity and class are manifested at the structural and also on the personal level regarding Romani women and to analyze the social and political context of Romani political activism, which offered a seed to develop a contested gender perspective in the Romani movement. This "new way of thinking" stimulated new and sensitive issues amongst Romani activists, which invited new theoretical frames, such as critical race feminism and postcolonial theories to expose and understand the racialized and gendered subordination of Romani women. I work alongside many of my activist fellows furiously to find answer to: how do we explain the fact that many women's lives have significantly improved in Europe during the last two decades, and all women have seen their legal status enhanced, while for many Romani women daily life has become more fragile and threatening? What kinds of political responses to these paradoxical effects of improved legal status and declining quality of life have different women given?

Through my dissertation I argue that this disparity of Romani and non-Romani women's experience with neo-liberal human rights discourse is the contradictory experience of progress and oppression where the transformative power of Romani women activism is located. I shall explore this paradox and argue that despite Romani women's continuing marginalization in Romani politics from the transnational to a local level, their subversive political activities hold a great political potential to emancipate Roma people and transform the mainstream politics. The main underlying arguments of the thesis relies on a critical stance that systemic forms of domination operate to shape the lives of Romani and non-Romani women and men in our societies, which create different sites of power or resistance.

My study, then, is based on the hypothesis that racism, sexism, class exploitation and other institutional control are interrelated sites of domination and struggle that have a long socio-political legacy in Europe which continue to shape the life choices of Romani women. These systems of power create a political division and formative categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, economic and social class, and religion, language and so on to the sense of who we are and where we stand. Moreover, these political categories constitute various complexities of identities, where we cannot isolate discourses of race, ethnicity, class, gender, or sexuality from one another. All these personal lamentations which become political in the Romani women activism offered an opportunity to theorize and create more appropriate responses to the intersectional and structural discrimination/oppressions that Romani women face.

1.2 Entering the field

During the last two decades contemporary European societies have experienced remarkable economic, political and social transformations following the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite states with the neoliberal restructuring of post-WWII welfare systems in Western, as well as Eastern Europe, the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the enlargement of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the European Union to include former socialist countries and growing economic inequalities and crisis defining this period. This new economic and political restructuration has brought an affirmation and consolidation of neoliberal policies in the enlarged Europe. (Sigona and Trehan 2009:1) Many researchers recognized that one of the most visible by-products of this phenomenon have been the increasing social exclusion, pauperization, racial discrimination and terrritorial segregation of Romani citizens in the European countries, particularly in Central and Eastern European states (Ladányi-Szelényi 2006[5]).

After 1989, human rights, minority rights and later on equal opportunity discourses and regimes emerged as a response to the deteriorating socio-economic status of millions of Roma and to growing anti-Gypsism, and to address the situation.(Guy 2001; Kovats 2003; Pogany 2003; Trehan 2001) Furthermore, new political discourses have evolved in the Romani political movement as well putting emphasis on civil and political rights at the expense of economic and social rights(Bárány 2001; Pogány 2004;Veermesch 2006). However, critiques of the rights based discourse stress that the policy-making elite, politicians, and donors were "focusing on an American-led 'democratization' and a civil and political rights enhancement agenda via legislative and 'rule of law' reforms, while the social and economic (material) conditions of Romani communities went neglected in the opposite corner" (Sigona and Trehan 2009:3). With this democratization process, Romani political actors, as well as many other politically active groups have learned to use the international environment to their advantage[6].

One of the most remarkable international resources is the gender equality discourse, which created a political opportunity for Romani women to make their claims heard. Women rights and gender issues, forming a part of the human rights regime, become recognized and

---

[5] Read more about the social exclusion and territorial segregation of Roma in (Ladányi János and Szelényi Iván 2006)
[6] For similar examples internationally, see (Merry 2006)

accepted by NGOs and donor organizations in CEE countries. International gender discourse and the regional emerging civil society enhanced greatly Romani women activism; as Silverman put it in a Bulgarian context, Romani women "paradoxically are invisible in the sphere of state and macro politics, but are leaders in autonomous activities" (Silverman 1996:12). I would add that as a consequence of that in the late 90s several Romani women become active on the transnational level by the beginning of 2000 Romani women started to gain visibility even on the international and national level via the influence of the international human rights advocacy network and inter-governmental organizations (UN, CoE, EU, OSI). Nicoleta Bitu, one of the leading members of the community, for instance, was the first to articulate gender issues and concerns related to the Roma communities at an international level. In 1999, her report[7] was supported and adopted by the Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies of the Council of Europe.

Despite the active transnational participation of Romani women, particularly in Hungary very few attempted to transmit messages regarding gender issues from the global level to their local community. I often heard from one of my professors: "What do you want with the transnational Romani women activists, they are a small elite group, who have become detached from their communities. You have to go back to the particular Roma community and carry out your fieldwork amongst them." This statement encouraged me to connect the transnational level to the local one and expose transformation, negotiation or contestation of women issues on different scales in a diverse manner. Thereby, the newly emerged transnational Romani political activism and the marginal Romani gender affairs combined to produce a unique research entry point.

The idea of this particular project, that is, how intersections of ethnicity, gender and class are manifested at the local and transnational level regarding Romani women's activism, were planted in 2004 when I left Brussels as a disenchanted human rights advocate. I was the funding director of the Brussels-based NGO for two years where I had the "opportunity" to directly witness and observe the racist and sexist dynamics of the NGO and donor sector and the sexist operation of the male centered Romani movement. I shall integrate my stories in the dissertation under a pseudonym. My encounter with racism and sexism have the potential to expose the existing racial and gender relations that produce visible and invisible hierarchy in the Romani political activism. It took me many years to work on these experiences intellectually as well as psychologically. Nevertheless, these stories have a political significance in gender and ethnic relations and also I hope that it will be inspiring for young women from marginalized group to expose their experiences. This can be a source of confidence for political activism.

After my return to Hungary, I started to work as a community facilitator, trainer, and project manager in various local Romani communities where I encountered pervasive economic deprivation, uncertainty and hardship in daily life accompanied by narratives of gender oppression. One of my concerns was to understand local Romani women's daily experience, more specifically, how ethnicity, gender and class structure their lives. Despite the existing anomalies in the Hungarian NGO and minority self-government system, a number of Romani

---

[7] Nicoleta Bitu's report was the first policy document on Romani Women *"The Situation of Roma/Gypsy Women in Europe"* (Bitu 2003) (Accessed on 2006.10.24)
http://cps.ceu.hu/romapolicyfellowship_resources.php?cmssessid=Tf1b587168444c140a50c9af5adda001d5cf81e5048fe380d3f55b6da30b13a5

women have become leaders in their communities and recognized as 'negotiators' at the local level.

The growing literature on the anthropology of human rights forms a valuable base to study human rights and gender equality contextualization in specific communities. Anthropologist, Sally Engle Merry specifically, made an observation on the work of intermediaries, such as these Romani women activists, who 'play a critical role in translating ideas from the global arena down and from local arena up'(2001: 21). The specific local and global crossroad can be observed through Romani women activists who act as 'double' agents between the local and global scale. Amongst Roma NGOs there is a presumption that if the organization is led by Romani women, it could be qualified to deal with gender issues notwithstanding the fact that there is a number of NGOs led by Romani women in Hungary, very few are connected to transnational activism or have adopted the language of human rights and gender discourse.

1.3 Research design and methods

With the above outlined concerns in my mind, I undertook an empirical research project at the local level (Szikszó, Hungary) and the transnational level (mapping the various Roma networks and international resource centers) level. As part of my research, I closely observed "Women's issues" at the transnational and the local level, as well as those discourses and activities, through which they promote "Romani women's rights" and "human rights and democracy" under the banners of "empowering Romani women".

I formulated the following research questions:
How are intersections of ethnicity, gender and class manifested at the local and transnational level in respect of Romani women activism and social position? How do class differences amongst Romani women affect their access to rights and political activism? What kind of personal trajectories determine Romani woman to be activists, to fight for human rights and gender equality?

I had several hypotheses which have been tested in the course of the research process, namely:
1. There is a marginalized new (gender equality) discourse in the emerging Roma movement which is generated at the transnational level and transformed, negotiated and contested at the local level by Romani women activists. Moreover, the gender equality discourse can strengthen the political participation of Romani women, as well as be used as a political commodity by political parties and international organizations.
2. The local conceptualization of human rights and translation of gender equality principles supposedly depends on the class belonging and translation capacities of activists.
3. Unfair treatment, discrimination and violence against Romani women determine involvement in local and transnational activism based on class.

These hypotheses will be contrasted to my empirical findings in the last chapter, where I will draw specific conclusions about the effect of transnational Romani women activism at the local level.

1.3.1 Data collection at the transnational level

Data for this study at the transnational level was collected mainly over five years of close monitoring of the transnational events related to Romani women activism through ongoing relationships with friends and colleagues from various European countries, and brief visits to sites across Europe. I analyzed Europe-wide formal and informal networks of Romani women and the operation of European institutions with a specific emphasis on Romani women's participation and the discourses and policy responses to Romani women issues of these institutions. This was complemented by archives work and the comprehensive qualitative analysis of documents, reports and other materials. I also attended various gender related international forums organized by the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In addition, I participated in formal and informal meetings organized by the Open Society Institute, Women Network Program and International Romani Women Network. I analyzed documents, reports and statements delivered by these organizations. On several instances, I witnessed Romani women's interactions with politicians from the community of policy- and decision-makers and academics in academic settings, where women revealed their views on their gendered roles, experiences and their organizational struggles. I also observed how Romani women used these international events as an opportunity to negotiate within global-local dynamics and position themselves strategically in gender and Roma related discourses. I also established networking strategies with these highly mobile Romani women, to follow them, their materials, concepts and statements (Wedel 2001; Appadurai 1996) Moreover, I often participated in discussions, alliance building activities, confrontations via emails and on Internet discussion forums (Warketin 2001). I collected these materials, personal narratives, as well as other related media coverage. This research process enabled me to explore the flow of people, materials and conceptual resources, as well as to see how the transnational Romani women strategies, self/identifications and representations of self and others changed (or remained the same) over space and time (Markovitz 2001; Helms 2003).

Within the circle of transnational Romani women activists (from various European countries), I specifically focused on Romani women who live in Hungary and assume roles (or at least participate) both in the international political arena and in the national political and public life. I conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with twenty (used eleven for analysis) of these actors on at least three different occasions at their workplace, in public places, as well as in their homes (Appendix 1). In addition to these interviews, I also participated in "deep hanging outs" (Clifford 1997:188) with my interviewees, by visiting them in their office and home and had several informal conversations with them in cafés. All of these Romani women assume(d) leading roles in political parties, state institutions and local governments or Roma civic organizations in Hungary. An important factor in choosing my interviewees was that they should come from various age groups and from both urban and rural areas. Since most of the interviewees were first generation intellectuals with undereducated and low-skilled parents, thus born before 1970 making them of the age between 35 and 50, they could offer rich reflections on the emancipation of Romani women and involvement in the transnational Romani movement. Also, their transnational involvement mainly depends upon their language capacity either in English or Romanes, which made them capable of communicating with their Roma fellows from various European countries.

This study is, therefore, on the one hand based on my interactions with the colleagues, friends and family members of the above mentioned Romani women participants, and on the other hand on my research findings. In addition, on several occasions I had the opportunity to personally and professionally interact with them. Also, my long-term involvement in the field made it possible to follow the selected Romani women's activities over time, and to witness their interactions in a range of transnational and local contexts.

1.3.2 Identifying the local research site

The choice of the Hungarian town, Szikszo, as the research site to study Romani women's social and political activism emerged after half a year of unsuccessful field work in Pecs[8]. I assumed that at the local level there are specific social forms and institutions where the intersections of inequalities are more tangible, such as in the Roma NGO and minority self government. I wanted to examine the established formal and informal hierarchy in the Roma community and was interested in studying the participation of Romani women and their relations to specific local institutions, such as local authorities and educational institutions. I was particularly interested in how the class dimension affects the access to rights and political activism of Romani women in the community and how the language of international human rights and gender equality is translated into the local context. I also believed that the fieldwork provides an opportunity to meet with not just the very articulated transnational Roma elite, but also the most marginalized local group. My first attempt in Pecs failed partly because I wanted to totally detach myself from the whole research project. Despite the fact that I have a very strong activist history, I wanted to imitate the role of the 'real' ethnographer who is just doing an elegant participatory observation, conducting interviews, writing field notes and so on, but it did not work out in my case for various reasons. First, the person who acted as a mediator between the transnational and local level was not open to allowing me to enter her local community. Second, as I am a committed Romani activist, people had totally different expectations from me than a non-Roma white academic researcher. This was the turning point when I recognized that in this specific geographical context I could not do a classical ethnography like the one that was made for example by Michael Steward in Hungary (1996) or Paloma Gay y Blasco (1999) in Spain.

In fact, I am very grateful for this enlightening moment because it transformed my attitude towards my research project and also took me off the research trajectory which was not appropriate to my activist-scholar perspective. I took the advice of my professor to place myself in the research project and reflect on my personal experiences and involvement. (Burawoy and Verdery 1999; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fisher 1986) Having recognized the importance and advantages of an active participation of the researcher in the research project, I re-designed my original research. I believe that due to the various limitations and my personal involvement and political commitment, the research project in Szikszó cannot be dubbed as ethnography, but rather I shall term it as a feminist participatory collaborative research project using some ethnographic methods. Below I will discuss the characteristics of feminist participatory researches.

---

[8] Pécs failed for various reasons, but one of the lessons I have learned is that my expectations have to meet with community expectations.

Since my project in Pécs had to be aborted, I looked for a specific community where one of the interviewees is a mediator between transnational and local level. The choice of Szikszó was decided in August 2008 when I read an article in the Hungarian weekly called Magyar Narancs[9] where Szilvia Varro reported the march of the *Magyar Gárda* [the Hungarian Guard], an extreme-right paramilitary group with strong racist views, demonstrating against the local Roma population. This paramilitary group was supported by various local actors including notabilities and such local people as teachers, priest, shopkeepers, etc. However, it turned out that a Roma resistance group was organized by a few courageous Romani women, who mobilized the Roma community and, similarly to the Gandhi mode of peaceful, passive action, simply looked into the eyes of this group of threatening people. This prompted my decision to do my research among these women and hence my first trip to Szikszo to establish a relationship with this core Romani women group. I conducted multiple semi-structured interviews and conversations with these Romani women, as well as Romani men. My main focus was to explore how gender, ethnicity and class structure their lives and manifests in their social and political activities. Since I truly positioned myself in the research process, my role consequently became more complex. I was not just a researcher but also a community facilitator as I went there with an explicit activist engagement as a part of my research project[10]. There is a well-established socially and politically engaged brand of anthropology, which supports the explicit involvement of researchers in any kind of social process which improve the situation of the observed marginal or subaltern groups.[11] As a by-product of my presence in the community, we carried out a collaborative research project with the local Romani women on the social status of Romani women compared with non-Roma women in two micro regions. The results of this research have been used locally as a tool to describe their structural position when they apply for funding or negotiate with local authorities to address their social situation. In addition, we established a Romani women's NGO, called SZIROM. Also with my assistance, five Romani women became teacher's assistants at the local school. All my fieldwork experience and also the analysis of the interviews will be presented in chapter six.

1.3.3 Feminist activist participatory research project

Personal narratives, experiences, writings, stories from NGOs and NGO members are the primary source of my data, alongside my personal experience. Relying on critical anthropologist and feminist research, my immersion into the research project raises several issues pertaining to my role(s) through the whole research process, which deserve reflection. Similar issues are recognized and appreciated by many feminist researchers. When the researcher attempts to narrow the distance between herself and the other subjects and engages with them in the process, Helen Roberts (1981) calls this "reflexivity". Sandra Harding (1987) and Dorothy Smith (1987) claim that in the best feminist research the inquirer places

---

[9] This article call my attention to choose Szikszó:
http://www.mancs.hu/index.php?gcPage=/public/hirek/hir.php&id=16844http://www.mancs.hu/index.php?gcPage=/public/hirek/hir.php&id=16844 (Accessed on July 12, 2010)
[10] From December 2008 I also integrated in my project a role of consultant with the consortium of KAI Consultancy and Foundation for Roma Civil Rights. I generated various Roma related projects at Szikszo which has been supported by the EU Structural Fund.
[11] There are several excellent essays on engaged anthropology int the book of *Engaged observer : anthropology, advocacy, and activism* / edited by Victoria Sanford and Asale Angel-Ajani (Angel-Ajani, Sanford 2006)

herself on the same critical plane as her subjects, "[t]hus the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests" (Harding:1987:9). Within the field of Feminist Studies, all production of knowledge is understood as located or 'situated' in a specific context (Haraway 1991:183-201)[12]. The 'situated' knowledge builds on the critique of what she calls the 'good-trick' of positivist epistemology (Haraway 1991:191-196). With the term of 'good-trick', she refers to the scientific belief of "objectivity" whereas the researcher is contextless, bodyless and he/she appear to be able to take a completely detached position and produce objective knowledge. According to Haraway the 'good-trick' is an illusion. I agree with Haraway and with other feminist scholars who argue for a 'politics of location' and with their critiques of positivism stressing that the researcher is always in the middle of the analyzed world (Lykke 2010). There is a famous phrase used by Haraway, which says that we are always 'in the belly of the monster'(Haraway 1991:188). According to this conceptualization of knowledge production, there is no distant, 'objective' position, on the contrary, we have immersed knowledge production which will always imply a subjective dimension. I accept that as a researcher I cannot give an objective depiction of my research subject, only produce a story of which I am part of.

I attempted to construct my 'politics of location' in a way that it can become open for the local Romani women as well. I wanted to make the intimate connection between theory, experience and research in mutual engagement with the local Romani women in the research project with that in mind that to produce a local situated knowledge inevitably necessitates the involvement of local women activists.

Heidi Gottfried (1996:9) states that feminist activist research offers alternatives to conventional social science methods both within and outside the academy. Moreover, participatory feminist researches[13] (Brydon-Miller, Maguire, and McIntyre 2004), which mainly characterize my local fieldwork build on a "problem-posing", "consciousness" raising project. The participatory research project exemplifies one of the most radical activist elements of feminist methodology by connecting a community's participation and collaboration to social change projects.

In Szikszó, the involvement of Romani women in my research project was a byproduct of my local research. I believe, like many other feminist social researchers, that we should conduct research in a way that the subjects, particularly women should benefit from the research, which should provide a tool to challenge existing inequalities. According to Maguire (1987:241), participatory research has to produce progressive social change on three levels. First, it has to prompt social change on an individual level where it develops confidence and critical consciousness; second, on the local level, where it can and should strengthen activists' organizations and improve the living conditions of the subjects and third, on the wider social level where it should help transform power structures. Based on this assessment,

---

[12] Donna Haraway was the first feminist scholar who articulated the 'situated' knowledge in widly read article; „Situated Knowledges:The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilige of Partial Perspective (Haraway 1991)

[13] The most explicit political forms of participatory and action research are situated within the legacy of the Brazilian educator, activist, and political leader Paulo Freire. The feminist participatory research based on the Freirian perspective which have sought to develop praxis that raises consciousness about, for example, the gendered, racialized, and class–based dimensions in the educational system." Specifically, the Freirian pedagogical practices, including problem posing, decoding, and concientization inform participatory and action research in school and in community- or organization-based educational setting." Lykes and Coquillon (2007:303) „ Participatory and Action Research and Feminism". (Nagy Hesse-Biber 2007)

my fieldwork produced some social change in the local community which will be detailed in the further chapter.

The feminist participatory comparative research project I conducted with the involvement of the core group of Romani women activists from Szikszó compared the social and labor status of Romani women and non-Romani women in the selected two micro- regions of Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén (BAZ) County and Pest County. Szikszo was integrated in this research as the Borsod Abauj and Zemplen County[14] settlement. The research consisted of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. We distributed questionnaires to 248 households aiming to include all members in the given households, which altogether resulted in 1250 responses. We conducted 20 deep-structured interviews with Romani women, non-Romani women and Romani men, as well as an additional 20 structured interviews with local policy- and decision-makers. Moreover, in both counties we conducted 2 focus group discussions, one with Romani men and another with Romani women. In this dissertation I will only present one segment of the research which focuses on the manifestations of various inequalities at the local level. During the project the Romani women from SZIROM were trained to acquire research skills and they became conscious of their issues and were thaught gender and race conscious ways of relating their personal problems to unequal distribution of power and opportunities in their community and the local society. The participatory research enabled them to validate their commonsense knowledge about their gendered and racialized situation, identify specific problems and raise their self-esteem and ability to speak out.

1.3.4 Issues, bias and dilemmas

Since there is not much written about Romani women social status and their activism at the local and transnational level, I needed to rely heavily on my own experiences, which allowed me to gather rich data and also use anthropological methods, such as participant observation by attending various conferences, participating in debates, discussions and thematic workshops at both European and national level. Such public meetings offered much information about the interactions between Romani women with various socio-economic status, language-skills and religious beliefs. These were rich sites to explore the shifting meaning of concepts and approaches within various circles of women activists. In writing up my data, while I have preserved the name of the place and organizations, I choose to use pseudonyms in the case of those interviewees with whom I talk about their life stories and very sensitive issues. However, I do use real names when referring to individuals appearing in public arenas or when referring to publicly available materials. At this point, I feel really uncomfortable, because there are instances when I cite published materials produced by the interviewee using the author's real name, and later refer to them under pseudonym. Despite the fact that some of my subjects granted me permission to use their real name, I feel it is my responsibility to protect them and avoid abusing our unequal research relationship.

---

[14] This research was supported by the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs. The research report was published in May 2010. The research team consisted of Fruzsina Albert, Bea Dávid, Éva Havas, Angéla Kóczé. The research manager and the team leader was Angéla Kóczé. "Nehéz sorsú asszonyok feketén fehéren: Roma nők munkaerő-piaci és megélhetési lehetőségei két kistérségben" (Women with a tough fate in black and white: labor market and income-earning opportunities of Roma women in two micro-regions) in Kutatasi Beszamolo, (Kóczé 2010)

My participation in the research process certainly and naturally questions my positioning, since my own subject position affected my access, interpretation and the data I gathered. There are several "native" or "halfie" anthropologists, such as Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) and Dorinne Kondo (1986) whose approaches and genre of writing offered models for my own project for how to integrate my own connections and relations into the subject matter.

The fact that as a Romani woman, I will always be a part of the resulting analysis, could be both an advantage and disadvantage for my research. (Hartsock 1998; Harding1991). Researchers studying a group which they belong to often claim that they have an advantage as opposed to those researchers who are studying a group of differently positioned individuals (Abu-Lughod 1998; Altorki 1988; Baca Zinn 1979; Kondo 1986; Kumar 1992;). In many respect this is true, however I think that the position of these researchers should not be essentialized. I believe that the researcher should be aware of his/her special standpoint or double consciousness and should use this knowledge creatively in the research process. I particularly had this privileged position when I was able to create an intimate relation with my interviewees. However, I truly agree with Kirin Narayan who critiques the whole notion of "insider/outsider" paradigm (Narayan 1993: 672) when asking, "How native is a native anthropologist? How foreign is one from abroad?" (1993:671). In accordance, I asked from myself that how native I am from Budapest in Szikszó? I agree therefore with Narayan's argument that the focus should be on the "quality of relations" with those we represent in our text (1993:671). As she pointed out: "We have to belong simultaneously to the world of engaged scholarship and the world of everyday life" (1993:671)

I hope that beside my theoretical contribution, my work may also be influential in reformulating the model of male-centered white social science based on a detached, objective male, white and middle-class ideal and God-like observer and replacing it with a model that acknowledges subjectivity, emotion, and the inevitably narrative nature of social analysis[15].

1.4 Literature Review

A key aspect of this study is to understand the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender and class regarding Romani women social and political activism at an unbalanced and dynamic globalized transnational and local level. I present a number of fields of scholarship, circumscribing the main theoretical starting points of my study. The theoretical discussions of my research will be structured under three categories, namely "Race /Ethnicity, Gender and Class", "Human Rights and Role of the NGOs in Eastern Europe" and "Politics of Identity", which I shall present in the following sub-chapters.

1.4.1 Background scholarship from Romani studies

Until recently, Romani women have bfghtyhgyjyteen largely invisible not only in political and social discourses but even in academic studies. Furthermore, there are very few references to the socio-economic aspects of Romani women and their leadership in civic organizations in academic literature (Kóczé 2008; Kóczé 2010). Although, historians and

---

[15] One of the most influential 'native' anthropologists is Renato Rosaldo who has written on Southeast Asian cultures and US Latinos.

15

anthropologists have given attention to the place of Romani women in a traditional community, for example from sexual representations to matrilinearity, some of them described certain gender roles in social domains and their extended families, very limited attention has been given to the participation of women, or lack thereof, in political process. Moreover, none of the anthropological and sociological studies dealing with Roma political issues shed light on the role of women in political representation (Acton 2000; Barany2001; Guy 2001; Tong 1998), which is also true in the case of sociologists who built a strong base for research on Roma socio-economic inequalities (Kertesi 2005; Ladányi-Szelényi 2004; Kemény-Jánky-Lengyel 2004). The particular conditions of Romani women tend to be neglected in this kind of socio-economic literature as well.

Only very recently has policy oriented social research[16] begun to explore the gender dimension of the racial discrimination against Romani women. In Hungarian social scientific literature, Maria Neményi was the first scholar that attempted to produce an ethnographic account on what Romani women experience in the healthcare system (Neményi 1999). Later on, Judit Durst (2001) studied the formation of reproductive behaviors of marginalized groups. Her main research question was whether there is an ethnic influence on the willingness to bear children in marginalized Roma communities. She argued that ethnicity does not play a role in the number of children of marginalized Roma communities; instead their social and economic positions are the key factors in their reproduction behavior. Having raised the question how the life chances of Romani women in the first decade and a half after the political changes had altered, Béla Jánky also examined Roma reproduction behavior (Jánky 2005) by analyzing representative Gypsy data collected in 2003. Jánky focused primarily on the problems of young women, including reproduction and the knock-on effects of school and labor force-market integration.

Silverman (1981, 1996a, 1996b, 2000) is a scholar who always gives specific attention to gender issues. As a result of the dominant trend of culturalist perspective in Romani scholarship, a number of anthropologists attributed the strong sense of Roma group identity to their very status as "outsiders", pointing to the persistence of practices distinguishing Roma from *Gadje* (non-Roma) through history and in response to state policies (Okley 1983; Okley 1997; Lemon 2002). There are some references in certain anthropological studies (Okely 1997, Lemon 2002, Stewart 1995, Williams 1982) relating to specific issues, traditions and customs that particularly affect Romani women's lives in some countries or in specific communities[17]. For instance, Stewart's book, a very new and refreshing anthropological perspective at that time, covers the life of Vlach Roma under socialism in Hungary and takes issue with such problems as (sub) proletarianization, cultural transmission, gender roles and the symbolic importance of preserving an alternative 'weltanschauung' by Roma. He dedicates a specific chapter on the "shame of the body", which partly, in respect of women, their bodies and their sexuality (Stewart 1997:204-232). Paloma Guy y Blasco (1999) explained what Gitano discourses and practices have to do with the management of sexual desire, which according to her, occupy a prominent role in Gitano daily life. According to Guy y Blasco, sexual morality, sexual practice and bodily difference,

---

[16] Such gender related studies have been conducted primarily by local NGO-s and international organizations, such as the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, (EUMC 2003)

[17] See for instance Isabella Fonseca 's book which is rather a journalistic work. *Bury Me Standing, The Gypsies and Their Journey*, (Fonseca 1995)

is central to the personal identity and also to the identity and status of the Gitanos as a group (1999:2-30).

Even gender related Romani studies and ethnographies, human rights reports, fail on the one hand to theorize and address specifically the political involvement of Romani women and on the other to problematize the intersection of ethnicity, gender and class of the Roma 'movement'in spite of that the missing perspective of Romani women, particularly their stories, insights, conflicts, contradictions and victories could represent an important resource in the grand anthropological narrative, particularly in the struggle of women of color in social justice movements. In my own dissertation research, I propose to fill this gap with extensive participatory and field work in the local and transnational Roma community.

1.4.2 Race /Ethnicity, Gender and Class

In order to understand the "gendered" dynamic of the political participation of Romani women, it is worth to conceptualize what Romani ethnicity means in a social, economic and political hierarchy. I will look at questions pertaining to why Roma are distinguished from other ethnic groups in Europe and how Roma issues became 'racialized' in political, legal and academic discourses (Rekosh and Sleeper, 2004). This 'racialized' ethnic difference became an overtly expressed feeling after 1989, which activists term as "Anti-Gypsism". Roma became a target of hatred and discrimination, a group which remains Europe's most unwanted. Several human rights organizations have been pushing the notion of "Anti-Gypsism" to be recognized and addressed by relevant international and national authorities. For example the European Roma Information Office stated that "Anti-Gypsism is not only the source of discrimination and marginalization. As with the past, it kills. The number of Roma that are attacked, wounded and killed for the sole reason of being Roma, is undocumented. Romani women continue to be sterilized in a racist attempt to reduce the number of Roma, whose growth is seen as a social threat"[18]. The current racist discourses and acts against Roma may differ in form to in different countries, but their substantial content is similar. The question should therefore be raised: are we witnessing a new historical upsurge of racist movements and policies, or is it a politically motivated tactical adoption? In order to provide an answer to this phenomenon, I have traced back the theoretical dimension of racism today. As stated by Etienne Balibar:

> Racism - a true 'total social phenomenon' – inscribes itself in practices (forms of violence, contempt, intolerance, humiliation and exploitation), in discourses and representations which are so many intellectual elaborations of the phantasm of prophylaxis or segregation (the need to purify the social body, to preserve 'one's own' or 'our' identity from all forms of mixing, interbreeding or invasion) and which are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin color, religious practices)[19] (Balibar 1991: 74).

There is now a whole family of expressions and concepts attached to Roma, such as racial discrimination, racial prejudice, racial segregation and racism, which terms used together can make up a racial idiom and lead to the question of why are there such racialized acts and how were they constructed by political, legal and academic discourses. There are several

---

[18] My statement was made in the European Parliament in December 2003. "Europe's most unwanted" (2003), Public Statement by the European Roma Information Office
[19] See more elaboration on this phenomenon "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" (Balibar 1991)

sociological references in academic literature (Banton 1998; Cornell and Hartmann 1998; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Gilroy 1987; Wacquant 2002,) attempting to define and deconstruct the meaning of ethnicity and race, which need to be analyzed in light of the racial dynamic of political participation of Romani women at the local and transnational level. Therefore, I will attempt to expose how scientific discourse 'racialized' Roma issues in the forthcoming chapters.

Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias's work addressing the connection between race and class (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992). *Class*, in broad terms refers to the various economic groupings of the population. In Marxist discourse, "class" is determined by one's relation to the means of production or, more simply, one's relative control over societal resources, hence class strongly determines and demarcates levels of living. A second conceptualization of class closer to Weber's approach (see Wilson 1987) stresses income-earning capacities and standards of living, adhering to the "upper-class," "lower-class," "middle- class" typology. Usually, the class-centered debate takes, as a starting-point, the economic position of Roma. In Hungary one of the most ground-breaking studies on social exclusion and territorial segregation of Roma was written by Ladányi –Szelényi (Ladányi –Szelényi 2006). This study has some elements of intersectionality, since it attempts to demonstrate the high correlation between ethnicity and deep rooted poverty. The Ladányi János–Szelényi Iván study builds on Anglo-Saxon underclass theories, particularly the works of Oscar Lewis (1961), Gunnar Myrdal (1963) and Julius Wilson (1978; 1987).

The first wave of underclass theories used behavior as a demarcating criteria involving the cultural reproduction of structural features of poverty and dependency — single motherhood, criminality, the devaluation of education, and so on — over and above the relative absence of steady employment. Many of these issues are encapsulated by the notion of a *culture of poverty*[20], which has been animated by Charles Murray[21] among others.

Underclass theories have been widely criticized by leftist scholars (Aponte 1990; Steward 2001a, Steward 2001b; Ladányi-Szelényi 2001), because one of the main *theses* of this school is that they blame the victims for their own poverty. Even though the structural economic disadvantage of Roma has been widely supported by empirical data in Central and Eastern Europe (Kertesi 2005; Ringold at al. 2003; UNDP 2002), the correlation of ethnicity and class goes further than mere manifestations of empirical data, as Paul Gilroy (1987) offers a challenging reformulation of the links between race and class. His position can be seen as a development of Stuart Hall's view (1980) that race is as important in class formation and structuralization, as class is in race structuralization, which can be best captured by the famous and powerful phrase that 'race is the modality in which class is lived'(Hall et al.1978). Anthias and Yuval-Davis interpretation of Hall's phrase is that "class consciousness, presumably unlike race consciousness, is never at the point of being, but always in the process of becoming, and therefore requires something else (that is, race) as its representational or phenomenal form" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992:71) The

---

[20] The term "subculture of poverty" (later shortened to "culture of poverty") made its first prominent appearance in the ethnography *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (1959) by anthropologist Oscar Lewis.
[21] Charles Murray is a conservative political scientist He is best known for his controversial book The Bell Curve, co-authored with the late Richard Herrnstein in 1994 (Herrnstein, Murray 1994), which discusses the role of IQ in American society. I discuss this work in Chapter Two as an illustration of race-biological discourse which reinforcing the racist discourse in the academia.

conceptualization of the relation between race and class contributed to the development of the theorization of structural injustice and the politics of difference.

The theory that race and class are interrelated, invited the attention of feminist scholars, who took the next logical step arguing that gender, too, is an important factor in social structuralization. One of the theories that incorporated race/ethnicity, gender and class in theoretical discussions is Critical Race Feminism taking issue with the struggles of black, third world and indigenous women. Critical Race Feminism is the sub-field of critical race theory that examines the intersection between race, gender and class. It includes the concepts and theories that are used by women of color. In my research these studies are particularly interesting because they are written by women of color, indigenous women who have been oppressed and subordinated by Western academia. The concepts and theories, developed by these women can be applied or developed further in my thesis. There is a critical race feminist edited book written by women of color, which provide thick and diverse theories on human rights activism (ed. Wing 1997). I am also using anthropological literature on rural-based indigenous women's political activism which could have similarities with the predicament of Romani women, especially at the local level. Furthermore, my work embraces an interesting theoretical contribution from feminist postcolonial theorists (Spivak 1987), arguing that a dogmatic focus on racial politics inevitably elides the 'double colonization' of women under imperial conditions. Such a theory postulates 'third world' women as victims - par excellence – and the forgotten casualties of both imperial conditions and ideology, and native and foreign patriarchies (Suleri 1992: 274). Talpade Mohanty (Mohanty 1991), shows how feminists working within the social science, invoke the narrative of 'double colonization': principally to contrast the political immaturity of third-world woman with the progressive ethos of Western feminism (Mohanty 1991. 51-81). Moreover, based on Romani women experiences, in the empirical chapter of this dissertation I will theorize the hierarchical relations among Romani women from lower classes and the way they contextualize gender oppression in a different way than the elite does. Field work carried out at a local level offered an excellent opportunity to investigate how the class factor plays a significant role in access to rights and social and political activism making it possible to challenge the essentialist view that all women are oppressed in the same way.

The experiences of indigenous women, black women, third world women and post-colonial feminists resonate with the concerns and problems articulated by Romani women. These theories and discourses are used as historical references about women of color, who have been in conflict with the white gender movement and their internal patriarchy. Concepts and theories from anthropological literature about/by indigenous, African-American women and women of color, offer a unique contribution to writings about Romani women.

In addition, in the context of critical race feminism and postcolonial theories encapsulating the race/ethnicity, gender and class, there is a newly emerging feminist approach called intersectionality. The development of intersectionality started in the late 80s, as an attempt to challenge the mono-focal identity politics in the black movement (Crenshaw 1989). Hence, the application of intersectionality in Romani political activism is timely, since most Romani activists and scholars of political activism have not viewed gender as a central category of their analysis perceived exclusively through the ethnic category. However, intersectionality provides tools for further complicating our understanding of the political and social activism as a fluid interconnected process interrogating the institutional reproduction of inequality through practices and discourses. There are some early attempts of the application of

intersectionality in critical race studies, (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1983) and a bit later the term was coined by Crenshaw (1989) in legal studies. However, researchers adhering to the theory and methods of intersectionality now can be found in a wide range of contexts, including political geography (Valentine 2007), political science (Hawkesworth 2003), feminist economics (Brewer 2002), critical psychotherapy (Burman 2004; Fernandes, 2003), sociology (Yuval-Davis 2006), post-colonial studies (Arondeker 2005) and socio-legal studies (Vakulenko 2007; Conoghan 2007; Hannett 2003; Grabham 2006). Intersectionality shall provide a frame of reference and analytical tool for examining my data

1.4.3 Human rights and the role of NGOs in Eastern Europe

There has been anthropological attention given to the process of adaptation and local application of universal human rights (Cowan, Dembour and Wilson 2001). Through my research, I shall further expose the adaptation and conceptualization of human rights and gender equality at the transnational and local level. There is some current anthropological research carried out by Wilson (2001) and Rajagopal (2003) analyzing the way in which human rights concepts and institutions are mobilized and contextualized in particular political struggles in various parts of the world. The implementation of these rights-based discourses is closely attached to the theoretical discussion on 'non-governmental organizations' (NGOs). Edwards and Hulme (1995) investigated how civil society and NGOs attempt to foster human rights, gender and ethnic identity across time and space. Civil society may be understood as a set of private, voluntarily formed, non-profit oriented organizations that serve some private or public purpose as determined by its members (Fowler 1997). However, it has become evident that the concept of "civil society" means different things to differently located people. For instance, one understanding of civil society is that this is a group of organizations heavily dependant on cultural, political, and philosophical orientations.

The roots of Roma political NGO activism can be traced back to the early 20th century (Marushiakova and Popov 2004; Klimova 2002) but the first World Romani Congress held in 1971 in London is considered as the founding moment of the international Romani political activism. I shall distinguish three phases of the emerging Roma civil society based on three dominant focuses: (1) 1970s-1980s: self-determination; (2) 1990s-early 2000s: human rights violation; (3) from late 2000s: social and economic inclusion. Liberal intellectuals in the early days of the transition extolled the virtues of a strong civil society and its potential for 'democratising' the region (Forbrig, Demes and Shepherd 2007).

The most dominant era, the 1990s and early 2000s, is characterized by the human rights paradigm. Many anti-Communist dissidents, who had risked unpopularity under totalitarian regimes and had participated tirelessly in early 'democratisation' movements in Central and Eastern Europe played a key role to establish human rights NGOs with the focus on violation of Roma's human rights[22]. They believed that the vacuum left by a shrinking state sector could be filled by a dynamic civil sector, and that issues of justice should be taken up on behalf of Roma to serve the larger interest of eradicating racism and social exclusion in their

---

[22] By the mid 1990s national human rights NGOs emerged in Central and Eastern Europe; such as the Human Rights Project in Bulgaria, the Citizen's Solidarity and Tolerance Movement in the Czech Republic, the Union for Peace and Human Rights in Slovakia, and the Office for the Protection of National and Ethnic Minorities in Hungary. Their determination has led to dismissals and criminal proceedings against corrupt or abusive policemen and other officials, prosecution of those responsible for attacks against Roma, and the like. (Bárány 2002)

societies. Despite their progressive views about justice for minorities, most of these well-meaning intellectuals knew little about the day-to-day problems that many Romani people faced. Just as Romani leaders and politicians have been dependent on state structures for financial support both under communism and in post-Communist times, Romani actors within the NGO sector have also become dependent on major philanthropic donors for continuing their work.

The Open Society Institute (OSI) funded by George Soros became a hegemonic philanthropic organization in the region after 1989. The OSI provides financial and institutional support for Roma-related activities and organizations, operates its own programmes aimed at directly facilitating the Romani representation and leadership at the transnational level, and plays a key role in such international initiatives as the Decade of Roma Inclusion[23] and the EU Roma Framework Strategy[24].

For example, the leading international NGO combating specifically the human rights abuse of Roma, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) was founded with the financial support of OSI in 1996. The activities of ERRC comprise strategic litigation to reverse patterns of human rights abuse, submitting so-called shadow reports to international bodies monitoring international conventions[25]; and organizing various forms of human rights education.

There are several critiques of the Roma NGOs in the region claiming that these NGOs are parts of a mainly elite driven paternalistic leadership project effectively creating a new kind of dependency for Romani 'subalterns' within civil society. (Barany 2002; Trehan 2001, 2010; Rostas 2009) Upon the emergence of a class of urban NGO leaders, speaking mostly English and Romanes, supported by various western philanthropic organizations, Roma NGOs are also criticized for their lack of success incorporating poor or rural Romani women in their NGOs[26].

---

[23] „The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 is an unprecedented political commitment by European governments to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma. The Decade is an international initiative that brings together governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as Romani civil society, to accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way. The Decade focuses on the priority areas of education, employment, health, and housing, and commits governments to take into account the other core issues of poverty, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming. The idea of the Decade emerged from "Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future," a high-level regional conference on Roma held in Budapest, Hungary, in 2003. Prime Ministers of the first eight participating governments signed the Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sofia, Bulgaria, on February 2, 2005." Accessed on the Decade Secretary's website: http://www.romadecade.org/about (Accessed on June 05, 20011)

[24] „The EU's Roma Integration Framework Strategy will provide a framework for Member States' national Roma integration strategies or integrated sets of policy measures within their broader social inclusion policies, for improving the situation of the Roma. National Roma strategies have to concentrate on four areas: the improvement of education, employment, health care and housing conditions. The Conclusions point out that the protection of fundamental rights, notably by combating discrimination and segregation, is essential for improving the situation of Roma." Accessed on the European Commission's website : http://www.eu2011.hu/news/romastrategia-egyontetu-tamogatas-szocialis-tanacsban (Accessed on June 04, 2011)

[25] such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Rights the Child, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women within the EU or to the European Commission reviewing the accession of candidate countries with large Roma populations

[26] Similar critique has been articulated against women NGO leaders in different contexts in an edited book by Nancy A. Naples and Manisha Desai (Desai, Naples 2002).

1.4.4 Discourses of Development

At the beginning of the 90s, post-communist countries ensured generous funding for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), by which they became social agents in the field of minority issues and frequently applied and implemented technologies and techniques imported from the developed world. Arturo Escobar laid the groundwork in providing a working theoretical framework for analyzing the local effects and politics of international intervention in developing countries by exposing how development intervention by Western countries in Latin America has influenced the making of imaginative geographies such as the "Third World". Escobar's work is applicable to the study of Roma development aid in post-socialist countries, particularly in Hungary, on many levels. For Escobar, "development" is an encompassing cultural space where power differentials play a crucial role in the dissemination and implementation of knowledge (Escobar 1995:6-12). According to Escobar, money, representation and power intertwine and produce "powerful truths and ways of creating and intervening in the world" (Escobar 1995:22). Since Western donors define the nature of giving and receiving aid, they claim power in the context of such interventions. Western developmental experts conceptualize "Roma issues" via Western European cultural and political models and philosophy. Several scholars argue that development discourse reproduces a power of asymmetry (e.g. Escobar1995; Ferguson 1994; Appadurai 1990) inline with Escobar, who particularly emphasizees that development discourse and processes - originating in the global North or West- primarily, Anglo-American, industrialized nations after 1945 - not only produced the notion of "Third World", but also "created an extremely efficient apparatus for producing knowledge about, and exercising power over" this geopolitical region (1995:9). Recent studies on development highlight the fact that development processes and discourses shape the given world order, which, in many locations is closely articulated through legacies of colonialism (Bhabha 1990). Exposing development as a discourse in a Foucaldian sense and applying Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Escobar describes mainstream international development as a contextually rooted, cultural and historical project that "created a space in which only certain things could be said or even imagined" (1995:39)

During the post-Cold War, western aid to post-socialist and post-Soviet regions shared similarities on some levels to the development industry and "mechanisms of rule" cultivated by actors working in so-called Third World (Barsegian 2000). Indeed, the "Gypsy industry"[27], as Rudko Kawczynski, one of the prominent activists described the interventions of western agencies in the field of Roma development, attracted working models which were cultivated in the so-called Third World. Many international interventions expounded ideals of freedom, human rights and free market system as an entrance into the global economy.

The post-development critique (see Escobar 1995; Sachs 1992) with some modification is still relevant to apply in the social life of Roma NGOs, especially if integrated with the neo-liberal critique of NGOs (see David Harvey, 1996, 2003, 2005; Fridman 2003), which can give a unique perspective and new understanding of global impact on local communities. Escobar's main theoretical argument is that development should be seen as a discourse of power and control. (Escobar 1984) In my dissertation I shall argue that the discourse on Roma has mainly been constructed by the non-Roma, with "discourse" used in a Foucaldian sense, that is having the power to influence reality. Escobar argument coincides with Rudko Kawczynski's statement on "gypsy industry", when Escobar argues that the Third World with

---

[27] Rudko Kawczynski used this term in the article „Politics of Romani Politics" in *Partin*. It is accessible ont he internet: http://www.reocities.com/~patrin/politics.htm (Accessed on June 4, 2011)

its poverty, illiteracy and hunger as the object of Western research of "academic programs, conferences, consultancy services and local extension services […] became the basis of an industry for planners, experts and civil servants" (Escobar 1995:46). Similarly, Kawczynski argument that Roma communities became fields of research and project generating objects for 'experts'. That is, Roma became the same developmental basis of industry in Europe as the Third World has become for Western hegemony. What is common in both industries is that they never stop producing goods in the forms of new reports, research documents and projects, however rarely they involve, employ or offer real support to their objects and that their actions supposedly justify their own continued existence.

   Kathy Pinnock also used the developmental framework in Roma related work in Central and Eastern Europe. She argued that the West believed that techniques and its "application to the 'developing' world has proved to be a suitable model for those practitioners working on Roma issues in Eastern Europe embarking on policies of 'participation', 'self-help' and 'community development' " (Pinnock1999:15). Western donor agencies and policy makers in Central and Eastern Europe have largely supported NGOs working on Roma issues, in the belief that participation 'from below' can help nurture an active civil society and consolidate a genuine form of democracy. In my research, I will critically interrogate the development of "Roma NGO-ism" which was looking for immediate and popular remedies based on the adoption of the rights-based and developmental approach to problems of 'social exclusion'.

1.4.5 Identity politics

Over the past decade, I have witnessed an unprecedented production of Roma transnational ethnic identities. In the extended identity-making process the Roma and non_Roma activists united the ethnographically different Romani subgroups. The basis of their unification was the systemic discrimination or paternalistic policies of integration. As a result, this prevailing racial discrimination united Roma activists and strengthened transnational identity politics. Theories of identity politics and political representations offer a conceptual framework to understand the core issues of ethnicity- and gender-based political activism.

One of the characteristics of the social movement based on identity politics is that it frequently conflates or ignores intra-group differences. Ignoring gender and class differences within groups frequently contributes to the building up of intra-group tensions. Until recently, most political scientists and historians who have written about the Roma movement and their political mobilization neglected taking up a gender conscious perspective in their analysis.

One of the first authors on identity politics, Charles Taylor (1994), in his influential essay on *"The Politics of Recognition",* explores the emergence of recent political movements animated by the need, indeed, the demand for recognition. The importance of equality gave rise to the idea of universal human rights, while the importance attached to (ethnic and gender) identity has given rise to the politics of difference. Taylor explains the connection between identity and recognition in terms of "a crucial feature of human life" which is of "fundamentally dialogical character" (1994:32). He argues that as identity is affirmed through others' signifying recognition, recognition struggles are characteristically discursive in nature conducted in the domain of various segments of the society, such as the civil society, in the media and in the political realm. Romani women's participation and articulation of their struggle has a "dialogical character", from their interactions with the global human rights and Roma 'movement' and interdependent from the "men led" local grass-roots 'movement', to expressing their resistance.

I also have to mention that identity politics has been widely criticized in the Anglo-Saxon academic world. There numerous liberal or progressive scholars who criticize identity politics, including Eric Hobsbawn (1996), Nancy Fraser (1997) Wendy Brown (1995) or Richard Rorty (1998, 1999). However, there is a newly emerging trend in the field of minority studies in the United States, where racialized identity (is particularly by oppressed groups), become a focus in the construction of "identity politics". (see Martin Alcoff, Hames-Gracia, Mohanty and Moya, eds. 2006)

Poststructuralists have offered a great understanding on the conceptualization of identity with Michel Foucault (1973; 1979) being the most influential scholar in this area. His work underlined the production of subjects through discourses and practices linked to the exercise of power-practices through mechanisms of discipline and normalization, as much as practices of subjectification that the subject performs on him or herself. Foucault's theory has been further developed by others like Judith Butler (1990; 1993), whose point of departure from Foucault rests on the contradictions and limitations of representational politics within feminism, that is, on the fact that within this politics the category of women is produced and constrained by the very structures of power from which it seeks emancipation. With this theoretical move Butler exposed the multifaceted character of identity and its limitations, while at the same time proposing a constant questioning of representational politics through their practices.

Moreover, there are some foundational works by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) with a starting point that all identities are problematic, including collective identities associated with social movements (Mouffe 1993; Laclau 1996). Their thesis is that all identities are relational and over-determined by others relying on the articulation of a possibility for the construction of political identity. This kind of articulatory logic has been applied by the transnational Romani movement as well, which enabled Roma communities to emerge as political subjects. This has been happening through the existing relations of subordination in racialized ethnic, gender and class terms. These forms of subordination developed various discourses which allowed activists to construct a narrative of the situation as Roma in Europe using the idiom of rights. The "articulatory model" is, as Laclau and Mouffe argues, a hegemonic form of politics. Following their ideas, deeply constructed identities depend on the discursive articulations they establish. One of the questions which could arise from this logic is how the Romani movement can subvert the strategy of oppressed identity to a strategy of constructing a new political identity. In addition, it will be important to expose how Romani women articulated the gender dimension of their struggle as an integrated issue in the Romani movement or as a separate gender struggle.

Based on the above theoretical considerations, in my research it will be necessary to revisit the identity-based social movement academic approach and to understand the peculiarity of how and why the Roma 'movement' emerged, how it is conceptualized as a movement, why it takes the form it has, how these movements bring meaningful social change and what the premises are of this movement.

I need to bring together perspectives and insights of people who analyze movements at different levels, incorporating works of those classical scholars who look at large-scale patterns of contention across nations and movements (e.g., Tarow 1989; Tilly 1995) to those who study the biographies of the individuals (e.g., Kenniston 1968; Klatch 1999; McAdam 1988). The concepts and theories which were developed and used for Roma political participation, (Kovats 2001a; Barany 1998; Vermeesch 2002; Klimova 2004) also need to be reconsidered and examined through the neo-liberal, human rights hegemonic discourse, as well as from the perspective of women's participation The conceptualization of Roma and the

24

commodity of Roma issues in the 'movement' needs to be critically analyzed in the academic discourse.

CHAPTER TWO: 'OTHERING ROMA': HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LEGACIES [28]

> […] the authority of academics, institutions, and governments [...] Most important, such texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a discourse, whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given author, is really responsible for the texts produced out of it." (Said 1978:94)

Edward W. Said's foundational work on orientalism applies the Foucauldian insights that knowledge is not innocent (Foucault 1969), it is strongly connected with the operation of power. Said points out the extent to which 'knowledge' about 'the Orient', as it was produced through centuries in Europe, was an ideological auxiliary of colonial 'power'. I will argue in this chapter that the knowledge about Roma produced by academic scholarship, institutions and governments constructs the 'European Orient' even today. I will explore how historical, social and political discourses create Gypsies and how these discourses generate structures of thinking. The (mis)representation of Roma through historical, social and political discourses contributed to the creation of the dichotomy between Europe and 'others'. This dichotomy is important to the creation of the European identity in relation to the 'other' and also to maintain the European hegemony over the 'European Orient'.

The complexity and range of prejudices and racism that Romani people or rather, people *perceived to be Roma* face in contemporary Europe has only recently received critical academic attention. If someone is perceived to be Romani (or 'Gypsy'), there is little respite from the violence—physical, symbolic, epistemic[29]— that enfolds Roma people as a consequence of persistent and deeply embedded anti-Gypsyism within European cultural enclaves today (Clark 2004; Hancock 2002; Heuss 2000; Trehan 2008; Zoltan 2006). I will offer an analysis on the conceptualization of Gypsy identity and how the "othered" image of Roma is constructed historically and reinscribed in academic discourses.

---

[28] In this chapter I incorporated some parts of the article I co-wrote with Nidhi Trehan "Postcolonial racism and social justice: the struggle for the soul of the Romani civil rights movement in the 'New Europe' " (Kóczé and Trehan 2009)

[29] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, postcolonial theorist evoked the term of 'epistemic violence' which refers to the domination of western ways of understanding in contrast to non-western ways of knowledge production. The destruction and marginalization of one's way of understanding is always distorting the subaltern reality. Spivak's concept is based on Pierre Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence accounting for the tacit almost unconscious modes of cultural/social and gender domination or racism occurring within the every-day social spaces.

2.1 The legacy of the conceptualization of Gypsy identity

The history of European Romani 'subaltern'[30] has become invisible within the European mainstream historical narrative from school history books to everyday talk, or as Wim Willems put it, any "reader of European history who goes searching for Gypsies will find them only in footnotes"(1997:vii). Over the centuries, Roma have been misrepresented and offered an *otherised* identity in social and political discourse. As it has been pointed out by many authors, Romani identity has been socially fabricated and recycled into the European *imaginarium,* where Roma have come to occupy various subject positions from thieves and welfare dependents to culturally distinct exotic groups of people. (Trehan and Kóczé 2009; Clark 2004; Hancock 1997). Although European anti-Gypsyism is a contemporary 'post-modern' or 'post-colonial' concept, it is not a newly born phenomenon. They were persecuted and stigmatized in various historical, social and academic narratives and discourses(Fraser 1992, 1995; Kohn 1995). The word 'Gypsies' appears in the imagination merely as a group of social outcasts and scapegoats, or in more tolerant images, as exotic others and romantic outsiders. (Willems 1995; Trehan and Kóczé 2009)

Hence, in April 1971 Romani leaders organized the first World Romani Congress in London, where they adopted the term *Rom[31],* to describe themselves (Fraser 1992:317). Certainly, this was the introduction of a politically constructed category to change the image of Roma, having previously been overloaded by negative and romantic connotations. (Wermeersch 2006; Klimova 2005) This event was the first Romani political mobilization, a clear attempt to contest anti-Gypsyism and the stigmatized Gypsy identity. In order to understand this historical process of identity construction I need to conceptualize Romani identity through various scholars' work which can offer a "transcendental" basis for Romani political activism. I have opted to follow the conceptualization schema of Peter Wermeesch (2006), which defines three approaches to Romani identity. The first conceptualization defines Roma as a historical diaspora, the second focuses on the lifestyles and behavior and the third centers on the issue of biological kinship. In my conceptualization instead of biological kinship I will use race biological language which is more relevant in a social and political discourse.

2.1.1 Searching for a true and authentic Gypsy

The various conceptualizations of Romani identity represent a unique perspective. The first conceptualization of Roma identity labels Roma as a *historical diaspora*, namely, "a once bounded but now fractured community with common historic roots and common patterns of migration." (Wermeesch 2006:14) Weermesch refers to a number of scholars, such as David Crowe (1995), Angus Fraser (1995, 2000), Ian Hancock (1992, 1997) and Donald Kenrick (1978). Who have all supported and understood the common historical roots of Roma with

---

[30] I used the term 'subaltern', which refers to the marginalized position of Roma. It was first used by Gramsci (2001) in Italy in the 1930s. In Gramsci's reading, this term refers to certain groups who are outside formal structures of politics; it started to be commonly used in postcolonial studies in the 1980s, where it inspired an entire sub-discipline of 'subaltern studies' (Guha and Spivak 1988). More recently, the concept of *subaltern* has gained recognition amongst critical theorists, such as Nancy Fraser (1992) or even scholars and activists focusing on Romani issues, like Nidhi Trehan or Angela Kocze (2009).

[31] The meaning of Roma is human being in Romani language. Roma is both singular and plural embracing different ethnic groups, such as Gitanos, Sinti, Kalderas, etc. Romani is the adjective derived from the noun Roma. The language is called Romani language.

some specificity[32] and all of them base their argument on the linguistic connection between the Romani language and Hindi (Fraser 1995; Hanckok 2000).

The historical diaspora perspective has been mainly criticized by Judith Okley (1983) and Wim Willems (1995). Okley's concern was that there is no sufficient linguistic evidence to prove that there is a real linguistic connection between the Hindi and Roma language and hence the diaspora perspective should not be taken for granted, especially because it has the effect of putting a large number of people in the same category and alienating them from European culture (Okley 1983: 12-130). This perspective offers a good basis to portray and create an orientalistic image of Roma. The Gypsy Lore Society[33] established in England in 1888 is one of the academic communities that became a resource center to support the idea of distinctive Romani culture based on an Indian origin. Willems describes The Gypsy Lore Society (GLS) as entrenched in the idea of describing the 'true' Gypsy:

> The society has yielded a succession of writers whose importance for the development of Gypsy studies cannot be mistaken. They were, however, interested primarily in 'true Gypsies' who were assumed in social, moral and racial respects to be far superior to other travellers and in print had grown into aristocrats of the road. [.....]GLS publicists was intent on preserving the remains of Gypsy culture, searching to achieve this end as romantically inspired 'archaeologists' for the last traces of a people they saw as vanishing (Willems 1997: 172).

.

The Gypsy Lore Society's influence on wider representations of Gypsies should not be underestimated as it is widely regarded as "the main vehicle of scientific racism applied to Gypsies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century" (Acton 2004: 109). Willems also shows how the Gypsy Lore Society influenced the treatment of Gypsies in Nazi Germany as biologically-criminal non-Aryans, particularly in the work of eugenicist and criminological biologist Robert Ritter (Willems 1997: 196-292).

2.1.2 Gypsy lifestyle, behavior and customs

Following Weermesch's (2006:15) schema, the second conceptualization of identity focuses on issues of *lifestyle and behavior*. Scholars representing this school accept the existence of distinct Romani ethnicity and even agree with the common Indian origin thesis. However, their focus is not on the common origin itself, but rather on the characteristics of matters of *lifestyle, behavior and customs*. Some well-known scholars and activists, like Ian Hanckok (1991), Jean-Pierre Liégeois (1994), Andrej Mirga and Lech Mróz (1994) whose arguments also focus on common cultural practices, such as characteristics of religion, customs, rules of cleanliness, etc. One of the arguments of the representatives of this school is that Roma people have a distinct interpretation of the world which is called *Gypsyness*, *romanipé or romipen*. Certainly, according to this stance, Gypsyness is one of the essential components of Romani identity (Weermesch 2006: 15).

---

[32] The majority of these scholars view Roma as descendents of a population that traveled from Punjub region in northwest India and arrived in Europe during the thirteen century. Out of this group Ian Hanckok (2000) has a specific theory which states that the ancestors of Roma were members of Ksiattrya, i.e., the military cast, who left India with their camp followers during the first few centuries of the second millennium.

[33] Even today, the Gypsy Lore Society attempts to influence academic discourse on Roma. Their website contains some information about their activities. http://www.gypsyloresociety.org/ (Accessed on June 25. 2010.)

Romani lifestyle, as an objective category, is used in various ways. On the one hand, activists use it as a special characteristic of Gypsies which "should be respected and even promoted as a valid and legal way of life" (Clark 1999 cited in Weermesch 2006: 17). However, in most cases these sorts of academic approaches, as emphasized by Weermesch (2006: 15), "offer a preservation of stereotypical thinking about Roma as inherently nomadic and marginal". Moreover, these modes of representation simplify overall circumstances which can be clearly traced even in policy-oriented documents.

The notion of Gypsy lifestyle become a core concept in the Council of Europe's report. It was accepted in January 1993, The report on *Gypsies in Europe* (Verspaget 1993) declared that Gypsies are '*true Europeans'*. The concept of *true European* can be understood in various ways, but it certainly refers to the geographical distribution of this population in various European countries. It may also refer to some sort of inherent disposition of Roma in Europe. However, the desire to simplify their diversity and circumstances and utilize the lifestyle, behavior and customs of Gypsy diasporas often surfaces in policy-related documents. One such policy dates back to the mid-1990s when many Roma migrated and sought asylum in various western European countries. The Council of Europe released a report in 1995 signed by Geraldine Verspaget arguing that "the increase in mobility since 1990 must not conjure up pictures of a "tidal wave" of Gypsies sweeping over the West; it is merely a return to the normal mobility of Gypsies" (Verspaget 1995:13 cited in Kovats 2001). Instead of being perceived as a complex symptom of social, economic and political restructuration in Central and Eastern Europe, the document suggests that there is a traditional nomadic lifestyle which has been simply revived amongst the Gypsies. This might and should be regarded as a dangerous attempt, which might be unintentional, to normalize the abnormal under the notion of Gypsy lifestyle.

Based on the notion of special lifestyle, behavior and customs of Roma there is a growing pseudo-academic approach born out of the scientific and socio-political thinking of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These pseudo-academic views make use of a range of problematical concepts such as the "Problems of Gypsies", 'Gypsy crime', 'mentally backward' or 'socially inadaptable'. These "scientific" ideas have filtered into policy documents, medical and educational professional discourse, the political sphere and even the popular domain (Trehan 2009; Trehan and Kóczé 2009; Kohn 1995). In1878 in the ground-breaking work on 'Gypsy crime', Cesare Lombroso was the first to single out Roma as a criminal population in *L'uono Delinquente* [*Criminal Man*] describing them as a "thoroughly criminal race, with all its passions and vices" (Lombroso 2006:19 cited in Trehan 2009: 49). Probably, it was the most pervasive idea which stigmatized Roma for centuries and saturated any discourse with the innate criminality of Roma, since Lombroso was the first to characterize Gypsies as being 'so low morally and so incapable of cultural and intellectual development' (Kohn 1995:185) that no one can put up with them.[34]

Lombroso developed his ideas following Heinrich Grellmann's sensational and popularized 18th century study on Gyspsy cannibalism (Willems 1997:25), which was scrutinized and vastly criticized by Wim Willems (1997:25-26). In 1997, Willems in an extensive analysis pointed out the ambiguities around the infamous case involving allegations of cannibalism made against a group of Gypsies in the Hungarian district of Honth in the summer of 1782[35].

---

[34] The Lombroso's idea on Roma influenced the European's social, political and academic discourses. Read more about it in Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man,* (Gould 1981).

[35] The original source of the story is in the book of Karoly Vajna, *Hazai Régi Büntetések* , (Vajna 1907, pp. 251-295)

One-hundred-and thirty-three persons were involved. They were arrested because they were said to have robbed travelers, then to have disfigured and eaten them. No one had been reported missing to the authorities, however, and there were no eyewitnesses. During their hearing 53 men and 31 women admitted that they were guilty as charged. The gruesome news received prominent attention in the newspapers and during the court sessions which followed rapidly on each other's heels the accusations assumed grotesque proportions.(Willems 1997:25)

Notions like 'Gypsy cannibalism' through 'Gypsy deviant behavior' to 'Gypsy crime' were present in everyday discourses for centuries and had a huge impact on the vernacular, providing a statistical foundation for popular deep-rooted prejudices against Roma. 'Gypsy criminality' is on the one hand attributed to Romani lifestyle, behavior and culture, whilst on the other hand is conceptualized as a biological and genetic issue.

In Hungary, the notion of 'Gypsy criminality' has evolved into a current political issue espoused by populist politicians in particular. Soon after the democratic changes, in August 1992 István Csurka published an article entitled 'Setting the Record Straight' in the newspaper *Magyar Fórum* purporting authentic neo-fascist claims, such as Jewish conspiracy theory and the biological concept of racial hierarchy[36]. Csurka was a member of the *Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja* [Party of the Hungarian Truth and Life, MIÉP], one of the governing parties and as such a member of the ruling coalition, the Hungarian Democratic Forum. He regarded Roma as a socially unadoptable and biologically dysfunctional population, which does not deserve the same treatment as "normal" citizens by the state[37]. (Kohn 1995: 186-187; Kriza 2002) This rhetoric was supported by scholars in a clever guise, such as Szilveszter Póczik, criminologist and historian, representing the deviancy-oriented Romani approach. (Dupcsik 2010:244) The main thesis of this school is that Roma themselves are responsible for their own social well-being. According to Dupcsik, the representatives of this school, like Póczik, reinforce Jewish conspiracy theories. In the rhetoric of the Hungarian extreme right, Jews are coded as social-liberals. Póczik writes in a highly concealed way about how social-liberals (Jews in a coded political discourse) and the Jewish elite are using Gypsy in an instrumental manner to achieve their own political aims (Póczik 1999).

The distorted Social Darwinian concept on Roma first applied by István Csurka and supported by those that adhere to the deviancy-oriented conceptual framework, has recently been reiterated by the current extreme-right political party, *Jobbik,* currently the third largest political group in the Hungarian Parliament with a rhetoric and political activities closely reminiscent of the Nazi regime. In 2010, during the national election campaign this party reinforced the concept of 'Gypsy criminality' making it the epicenter of its ongoing political campaign and was able to gain the support of a number of public intellectuals and journalists

2.1.3 Race-biological language

In the conceptualization of Romani identity, I shall depart from the Weermesch (2006:16-17) schema. I find his concept (biological kinship) too subtle and have therefore opted to use the

---

[36] Borbála Kriza gave an overwiev of the anti-semitic and anti-gypsy rethoric of Istvan Csurka in Borbala Kriza 2002. 'Ellenségdiskurzusok: Csurka István retorikája', in (Csepeli György, Örkény Antal 2002).

[37] Imre Furman, who was one of the leading Roma rights defenders in Hungary established the Liberal Forum Foundation in 1992 within the Hungarian Democratic Forum as a reaction to the fascist article written by Istvan Csurka. http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/hirek/itthon/elhunyt-furmann-imre-jogvedo-volt-politikus.html (accessed on June 24, 2010)

concept of *race-biological language*, to demonstrate how such mainstream discourse produces yet another distorted image of Roma. The main focus of this conceptual framework rests on the idea that Gypsies are biologically and racially distinct and therefore they are inferior to mainstream "white" society. Those scholars who produce this mode of race-biological language, usually also believe in the common historical roots of this population and distinct Gypsy lifestyle, behavior and customs. In fact, the race-biological language in most cases is closely connected to the conceptual framework of Gypsy lifestyle, behavior and customs.

Some Romani political activists use the argument that Roma have intact genetic kinship in order to support the political emancipation of their group. Ian Hancock, a distinguished Romani scholar, argued that even though Roma diasporas have mixed with non-Roma over the course of their journey from India, "it has not lead to the dissolution of the Roma as genetically related people"(Hancock 1992:134-35). Through this argument, Hancock offered a critique of assimilation policies over-dominant in the socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. With his genetic kinship claim, he refuted the assimilation argument, which espouses that Roma do not constitute a separate ethnic group, but are barely vagrants or an underclass having been excluded from or isolated themselves from mainstream society (Weermesch 2006:16).

 Taking Hancock's personal involvement in transnational Romani politics into account, he endeavored to prove on an academic basis, that Roma are a distinct ethnic group with the aim of getting political recognition. Hancock bases his conception of Roma identity on common history, common cultural practices and genetic bonds. His attempts can be seen through the postcolonial term "strategic essentialism", the concept which was introduced by a distinguished US- based cultural and postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak (1987). The term "strategic essentialism" refers to the ways in which subordinate or marginalized social groups may temporarily put aside group differences in order to forge a sense of collective identity through which they band together in political movements. Spivak pointed out that even though such terms as "indigenous" people or similar labels result in problematic and unstable groupings that erase significant differences and distinctions, these acts of collective identity formation may effectively support important political ends (Spivak 1987).

The use of race-biological arguments, I would argue, contrary to the Romani identity building process, in most cases simply reinforces the inferior status of Roma. David Mayal (2004) writes extensively about how Gypsy racial identity has been constructed from the late eighteenth to the twentieth century through languages, discourses and representations. He wrote about the emergence of the concept "Gypsy-race" in the following way.

> The idea that the Gypsies formed a separate race embodies all the features of race thinking which were developed during the course of the nineteenth century. Although not always explicit, behind every description of the 'real' Romany and the 'true' Gypsy lay a belief in the notion of blood purity, the importance and permanence of acquired characteristics, and the primary significance of physical difference. Emphasis is given to the distinctiveness and peculiarity of the Gypsy people, readily identifiable from non-Gypsies by rigid, visible and clearly defined boundaries. Their separate racial identity was constructed around notions of foreign origin and distinct language, cultural and behavioral differences, their mode of earning a living and, lastly, but perhaps most centrally to the race concept and a belief in physiological distinctiveness. (Mayall 200:118)

Therefore, following Mayall's analysis about the insidious race concept, it is clear that the importance of blood ties and the notions of inherited objective characteristics are central to

this argument. This view has been supported and reiterated in a covert and overt form over the centuries.

Alongside the academically constructed race-biological language, politicians also tend to use the race argument in order to gain votes and support from those who believe that Roma are the causal factor for the entire economic and social crisis in their society. One of the most explicitly racist politicians in Central and Eastern Europe is Vladimír Meciar, the Prime Minister of Slovakia. One of his most outrageous statements was reported by the CTK News Agency, in September 1993, when Meciar addressed his party, the Movement for Democratic Slovakia, in the Eastern Slovak town of Spisská Nová Ves, and said that it was necessary to curtail the 'extended reproduction of the socially unadoptable and mentally backward population'.[38] Even though he used coded language, the immediate reaction of international human rights organizations made it clear that everyone understood his implicit reference to be the Roma population of Slovakia. I agree with Marek Kohn - who also used Meciar's rhetoric to illustrate racist political discourse - who pointed out that this offensive phrase was threefold. First, Meciar identified the problematic section of society as an ethnic group. His second point concerns the term *'socially unadoptable'* to implicate that Roma are incapable of integrating into society, therefore Roma are not part of the Slovak society. His third claim, namely, the use of the term *'mentally backward'* alludes to the race-biological component to the Roma issue (Kohn 1995:180). Also, there are plenty of examples in the domain of medical practice to show how race science, i.e. eugenics[39] influenced the way of thinking and attitudes of doctors towards Roma. While the issue of medical professionals' intervention in reproduction patterns through sterilization will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter, it is worth noting here that the concept of 'mentally backward', embedded in the race-biological argument, has been taken up by educational professionals and created an overrepresentation of Roma in the special school system catering for children with special educational needs.

2.2 The 'civilizing mission' of the Habsburgs

As I have demonstrated above, the identity construction of "Gypsy" is firmly based on the current historical, scientific and socio-political thinking. To demonstrate how historical narratives can and do construct identities, including the identity category of "the Gypsy" I shall now turn to the historical narrative of the eighteenth century, that is, of 'civilizing mission' of the Habsburg Empire, which marked the identity of Roma most significantly.

The Habsburg Empire included present-day Austria, Hungary, parts of Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, southern Poland and Ukraine, the Banat and Transylvania (Romania), Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and northern Serbia with many Romani communities living in these areas. The first serious attempts to deal with the 'problem' of the Romas or forcibly assimilate large roaming Romani communities in Central Europe date back to era of Habsburg Empire. As a reaction to Roma's lack of inclination to adhere to the rule of law and order, or to Christian norms, Charles VI (1711-40) went to the brinks and ordered the extermination of all Romas, which was, however, not necessarily enforced at a local level.

---

38 AP 6 September 1993, BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcast, RTN 8 September 1993. There is also reference on Meciar's statement in the article "Across the world, Gypsies are hated, mistreated" National Catholic Reporter, Jan 14, 1994 by Harry James Cargas Accessible on the Internet: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1141/is_n11_v30/ai_14760056/ (Accessed on June 25, 2010.)

39 Eugenics was the racist pseudoscience used by Nazi Germany to eliminate all human beings deemed "unfit," preserving only those who conformed to a Nordic stereotype. Roma were one of the groups singled out by the Nazi.

With the exception of the western countries like Britain and Portugal, who preferred to get rid of the 'Gypsy problem' by deporting them to their colonies, the 'civilizing mission' of Empress Maria Theresa (1740-80) and her son, Emperor Joseph II (1780-90), often referred to as an 'enlightened absolutist' was a more rational solution, possibly on account of the lack of colonies and also fuelled by the need to enlarge the sphere of economic contributions in a war-ravaged empire.

Empress Maria Theresa enacted four edicts concerning Roma. The first (1758) ordered Gypsies to settle, pay taxes, do services for the church and landowners, while prohibiting them from leaving their respective domicile without permission, as well as ownership of horses and wagons to reinforce the former. From the perspective of the Court, this was largely enacted as a response to the economic hardship overwhelming Europe during this period, as well as the lack of manpower, particularly peasants farming the land, on account of the series of wars that swept through the continent and particularly affected the Habsburg rule.

The second order (1761), enacted in the midst of the Seven Years War (1756-1763) ordered compulsory military service, on which military commanders were not necessarily very keen. The third order (1767) affected Roma's cultural identity and traditional communal hierarchy by banning their leaders to exercise conventional forms of authority over their communities, and prohibiting Roma to wear their traditional dress and use *Romanes*, their native language and ordered villages and settlements to register Roma under their jurisdiction. The fourth decree outlawed marriages between Gypsies and ordered children over the age of 5 to be separated from their families and placed under state supervision, mainly in foster homes, as a result of which some 18,000 children were basically abducted. However, the failure of these policies soon became apparent – explicitly by the early 19th century - which is well-demonstrated by the way Gypsy children escaped from custody back to their parents.

As demonstrated above, these measures initially appeared inclusive in nature, and included, for example the provision of land for Romani settlement, the permission to conduct artisan trades and the opening up of guild membership to Roma. In addition, similarly to decrees introduced in Spain, while *Romanies* were to be called 'new Hungarians' or 'new peasants', the use of the term 'Gypsy' was discouraged. Nonetheless, these decrees became progressively harsher (Kállai and Törzsök 2000: 9-11; Kemény 2005: 15-17)[40] with the Romani issue predominantly evolving into a police matter during the final decades of the Habsburg Empire, when a series of discriminatory laws were enacted in accordance with the public discourse which had not considered Gypsies as equal citizens.

Therefore, a conscious effort was made on the part of the Habsburgs to eliminate Romani identity from Austro-Hungarian lands, even as the Romani body was 'salvaged' and became a site of colonization.[41] This 'civilizing mission' had strong resonances with the British colonial mindset in such places as the United States and New South Wales (Australia), where indigenous children underwent forcible removal from their families and were placed in foster care (usually day and boarding schools, which was exercised in Australia right up to the 1970s), although in a much more general and widespread manner) for the expressed purpose of 'becoming civilized', with emphasis being placed on their becoming 'good Christians' but without concern for the corresponding negation of their core identity and beliefs (Buti

---

[40] Romani children were to be placed in foster homes with peasant families from the age of four, and the counties would pay the farmers directly for their maintenance costs.

[41] In some areas of Europe, it was a crime merely to be a Gypsy/Romani, and harsh punishments were put in place (including the death penalty) in order to dissuade Roma from even entering these lands. Thus, in relative terms, the Hapsburgs were perhaps relatively 'enlightened' among their contemporaries, as they at least accepted the corporeal humanity of Roma, despite viewing Romani culture as alien, deeply flawed, and in need of 'civilising'.

2004:1-4).[42] Fortunately for some Romani families living under Habsburg rule, local authorities responsible for the implementation of these decrees did not fully comply with the new regulations. In addition, investing in Romani settlements was not necessarily felt to be a desirable objective, guild membership for Roma was rejected by members who feared competition from Romani artisans. Social conflicts and financial costs surrounding the removal of Romani children from their families and placement in foster homes proved to be a significant restriction. In the end, even though the Royal Courts verified these resolutions, governing councils simply chose not to implement them in their local areas. Thus, Romani assimilation and cultural negation remained a 'failed experiment', mired at the level of legislative declaration: by the late 1780s, the 'Romani issue' was no longer of official interest to the Habsburgs, and it disappeared from the imperial agenda with the closure of the Department of Gypsy Affairs in 1787 (Kemény 2005: 15-17). Nonetheless, the policies of the time reflected the pervasive belief in Romani 'deviance' and 'inferiority' within Habsburg ruled society, a belief that continues to have repercussions for Romani communities as pernicious narratives of 'Gypsy otherness' being reproduced in contemporary European society.[43] These 'civilizing' impulses towards Romanies have been historically inscribed in the Central East European region.

---

[42] Boarding schools for Native American children had become more common in the United States by the late 1870s, ensuring the children's isolation from the 'contaminating' influences of their own peoples (Buti 2004: 4).

[43] In Hungary today, less than 15% of Romanies speak a dialect of the Romani language, which can be attributed in part to the antipathy towards the Romani language during the time of the Habsburgs.

2.3 Colonization and controversial Romani emancipation

The post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe, as a region, can be viewed as a colonised space marked by the profound influence of global capitalist forces (Chen & Churchill 2005; Gowan 1996;). This dominance is replicated in the movement for the human rights of Roma, which has been overrun by the influence of neo-liberal policy regimes over the past decade. In this context, the region is often conceived of as being implicitly 'backward' and in need of assistance by Western countries.[44] Wessely cites Norbert Elias's ground-breaking 1978 study *The Civilizing Process,* in which Elias asserts that the concept of civilisation "sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or "more primitive" contemporary ones" (Elias 1978, qtd. in Wessely 1996: 13). Moreover, Elias points out the divergence in the notion of 'civilisation', used by Western nations such as France and the United Kingdom as a self-confident appellation for their national identity; and that of *'Kultur'*, used initially in Germany and then subsequently adopted by all Central European peoples 'to define and assert the identity of nations lacking stable boundaries and the institutions of civil society' (Wessely 1996: 13). This dichotomy between civilisation and *Kultur* offers an intriguing clue as to why Roma people have been perceived differently in various parts of the region, and as to how state policy continues to reflect these differences at the national level, despite the 'civilising' tendencies vis-à-vis Roma that are pervasive throughout Europe today.

It is also important to contextualise the terms 'colonialism' and 'post-colonialism' with regard to the Romani movement. The application of the term 'colonialism' can be understood in a broader sense, not just as a specific conquest or event in the past, but as an ongoing exercise of economic, military and political power by stronger states and groups over weaker ones. The 'colony' as such is internal to the state, comprising subaltern classes and those human subjects perceived to be 'infrahuman'. Furthermore, if one looks at colonialism as a way of maintaining asymmetrical relations of economic and political power (in the same way as Edward W. Said talks about 'Orientalism' as deploying a variety of strategies whose common factor is the resultant position of superiority for Westerners vis-à-vis the 'Orient'), then there can be no doubt about the existence of a neo-colonialist attitude in relation to Romani activism within the European political landscape today.

---

[44] Furthermore, continental Europeans, particularly those who reside in southeastern Europe, are framed as people suffering from an atavistic 'backwardness', or what the historian Maria Todorova has termed 'Balkanism' (Todorova 1997). It remains to be explored how the Orientalist view of Romanies (what some prominent Romani scholars such as Ian Hancock and Ken Lee have termed 'Gypsylorism') and Balkanism are interwoven, and to what extent this creates a double burden of 'otherness' for Romani subjects.

35

2.3.1 Objectification and racialized hierarchies within the movement

A discussion of post-colonial racism and social justice *within* the Romani civil rights arena entails a painstaking engagement with various taboos that are characteristic of internal oppression mechanisms within the movement—with the 'silences' that permeate its discourse, much of which is exercised by non-Romani human rights entrepreneurs, but also by those Roma who hold power and who, in many cases, have been installed in these power positions by their non-Romani patrons. Several critical aspects of the internal power dynamics within the Romani movement are yet to be exposed as they are clearly being neglected by a self-perpetuating power structure. Many non-Romani human rights advocates working in the sphere of 'Roma rights' are convinced that they are not racist. Applying Frantz Fanon's approach to racism in our research, we might ask the same question as he did: what does racism do to people*?* Fanon's own answer was brief: racism objectifies. Here, he was following Aimé Césaire, who had previously equated colonialism with what he called 'thingification': the process by which the subjects of colonialism are reduced over time to the status of mere objects (Cesaire 2000: 42). This concept of objectification is a more complex process than merely conceiving of someone as an object. As Richard Schmitt argues,

> *[o]bjectification* is not best understood either as turning persons into things, or as depriving them of their freedom, but as a carefully orchestrated and systemic refusal of genuinely human relationship. (Schmitt 1996: 36)

Objectification is visible and pervasive in Romani affairs, and is further intensified by the dispossessed economic status of Roma and the asymmetrical relations within broader society that are its result. And, as we will see, diffuse and pernicious subtly racist practices, at least some of which can be viewed as colonial techniques, can be identified even within the Romani civil rights movement. I had several conversations particularly with Romani women activists who already discovered the tacit colonial practice even in the course of employment by the pro-Roma philanthropic organizations such as the Open Society Institute. A Romani women activist commented their own silence in following way:

> The people are scared to talk about their elegant racist acts. In fact, they expect us to be grateful that we are employed by them, [….] even though that we [as Roma] are qualified to fulfill that particular job. The organization is growing in power; they have a great influence on Roma issues on the international as well as on the national level. While the life we have here is so pitiful, full of personal interests and jealousies. Everyone is so preoccupied with their own status quo. Hardly anyone has the will to talk about taboos and look beyond personal interests. [….] Anyway, since I have been working in the Roma movement as an activist I am regularly confronted with racism, jealousy, mistrust, and strange dynamics of personal interests. When I cannot successfully confront or overcome these conditions it is always a traumatic experience. (Interview with J. T. who has been employed by the OSI, 2010.12.10)

One of the unintentional outcomes of the work of pro-Roma human rights organizations is the objectification of Romani representatives. Romani critics claim that rather than being

36

received as active participants in the human rights movement, they have become subjects for the human rights work of others—a tiny group of Romani elite notwithstanding—and have frequently been treated as 'experiments' in the hands of legal professionals and international human rights entrepreneurs. Put succinctly by a Roma intellectual Blanka Kozma, 'we are nothing but a project to them'.[45] In a rare reflexive piece on the interventions of legal professionals in the arena, human rights lawyer Barbora Bukovská (2006) notes that:

> […]litigation concentrates [the] agenda in the hands of elites—lawyers, victims [who] are often uneducated with little or no understanding of the law assume a subordinated position with regard to tactics and strategy after human rights advocates decide on litigation. Once victims are confronted with a mysterious legal procedure and complicated legal language, their "fate is no longer in their hands" as advocates as specialists automatically take over their problems. (Barbora Bukovska' speech at conference in Kairo 2006.)

The above insight about the imbalance of power in the relationship between (usually non-Romani) lawyers and their Romani clients emphasizes the subaltern position of Romani human rights victims[46] who, from the outset of legal procedures taken up on their behalf, often initiated by an NGO lawyer or researcher seeking out a victim for a specific test case for 'impact litigation' purposes, exercise little control over the outcome of proceedings, after which many will continue to live their lives in extreme poverty and exclusion. Indeed, some Romanies even risk becoming local or national scapegoats if there is a backlash as a result of litigation procedures. This is another area where, as, in my view, Bukovská (2006) correctly points out, there is a current lack of ethical responsibility on the part of human rights entrepreneurs in the region, since even basic respect for the victims is often missing during case proceedings, and very little follow-up is conducted afterwards.

A few characteristic practices of objectification mentioned by Fanon from his own experience in colonial French Algeria are worth mentioning here in relation to the Romani movement:
(1) *Infantilisation*: Roma are perceived to be, and are thus treated as, children. Fanon refers to the example of the Black French, of whom it was assumed by the dominant (white) group that they would be incapable of gaining mastery of the French language. Similarly, many Romani activists are patronized by non-Roma in the movement, who assume that the former are not as capable as the latter of professional work. Monika Horakova Romani activist, former member of the Czech Parliament commented on the infantilization of Roma:

> We are always kept in the position of the child who never ever able to become a senior. […] We always have to catch up and develop our skills continuously in order to work in an organization which supposes to work for Roma. [.….] We are good in their eyes as long as we remain in position of the little child who never contests against the parents. (M.H. 2007. 07.23.)

(2) *Denigration*: As Fanon indicated in his research, it is nearly always assumed that members of various colonized groups are 'defective'. Likewise, leading members of the Romani community who have fallen out of favor with the established power structure have been accused of being criminals or thieves, sometimes with the assistance of the same Roma

---

[45] She also mentioned how difficult it was for Roma in Hungary to assess 'who are our genuine friends, and who are the parasites'.

[46] The term 'victim' can be problematized, however, it is used here genericly in reference to a person suffering from a human rights abuse. There is a vast literature on the subject of 'victims' and victims' agency, but this is beyond the scope of this chapter.

who are beneficiaries of their patronage. Postcolonial theorist Leela Gandhi (1998), among others, has referred to the existence of a tension between colonizers and colonized and to the mutual dependency and desire contained within this relationship; this tension surely merits further exploration in connection to Romani 'yes men' or 'Uncle Toms'. Furthermore, since the funding for Romani projects generally rests in the hands of philanthropic benefactors and governments, there is a tendency not to raise public dissent. The aforementioned character attacks on outspoken Roma who have crossed this invisible line serve to marginalize them within the movement, similarly serving to stifle dissent.

One of the most courageous Romani women activist from Hungary who have been doing some important grassroots organizing has been betrayed several times by her Roma fellows:

> [….] Well, to work with Roma can become an income generation project for some of the Roma and non-Roma as well. I had to defend myself several times just because some of my Roma 'friends' become jealous of my transformative work […] They made an informal intervention with the support and encouragement of powerful non-Roma activist which caused a significant damage in the project. [she started to cry] Their false accusations and offenses against me damaged my professional and personal integrity […] they humiliated me. I have become tired of always having to defend myself and prove that I am a capable person. (V.Z. 2009.08.23)

> In short, the deep denial of these 'silenced' narratives and insights continues to persist, as well as a surreptitious process of auto-censorship, and both of these deserve further analysis in order to better our understanding of the dynamics of internalized oppression within the movement itself.

2.4 Concluding remarks

Despite the fact that the concept of race, and its use in relation to Roma or any other minority and colored groups, has been condemned in the post-Holocaust period, the idea and images nevertheless remained with us in diverse forms through historical, academic and even political discourses. These racist discourses are supported by tacit colonial techniques which preserved the subaltern status of Roma.

The political activism of Roma, along with their complex, intertwined and symbiotic relationship with the non-Roma human rights elite can be seen as patterns of domination based upon discursive legacies. Whereas Roma has an imitation of power in reality they are always in a continuous (never ending) mode of 'catch-up' and empowerment in order to justify the status quo of non-Roma dominance.

The post-colonial realities of Romani advocacy is surrounded by increasingly problematic questions of agency, subjectivity and the commodification of Romani culture and affairs, along with core issues of power and justice. Adopting Spivak's classic language, let me raise here a rhetorical question: can the Romani subaltern speak? Can the Romani subject finally create a reality for herself, and can she speak on her own behalf?

CHAPTER THREE: FORMING COLLECTIVE POLITICAL IDENTITY THROUGH POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM[47]

Until recently, most political scientists and historians who have written about the Romani "movement" and its political mobilization failed to consider in their analyses the conjunction of ethnic and gender identity, in part as a result of the traditional emphasis on forms of political struggle in which men have taken a leading part. As described by Peter Vermeesch:

> Romani movement in Central and Eastern Europe is complex and diffuse," thus necessitating a more nuanced understanding of the concept of a "movement" itself: [a movement] must not be understood as a clearly defined and bounded collection of officially recognized organizations, but as a conceptual term denoting the totality of activities carried out in the context of defending and cultivating shared identity. (Vermeesch 2006:9)

In the early days of 'transition' in the late 1980s, Romani activists, along with liberal dissidents in the newly emerging movements promoting civil rights for Roma, began to challenge the vilification of Roma as belonging to a 'criminal subculture' and to contest the prevalent 'Gypsy problem' discourse by exposing discrimination and racism on the part of both private actors and the state (Trehan 2008).

The main characteristic of the Romani "movement," in comparison to other social justice movements, is that the movement is embedded in a human rights discourse based on the wholesale adoption of a neo-liberal rule-of-law and "democratization" principles, as formulated by influential international agencies dealing with the question of Roma, such as the World Bank, and the George Soros-funded Open Society Institute (OSI). The imported discursive trend of these agencies has marked the theoretical and ideological terrain of Romani political activism (Kóczé and Trehan 2009).

Notwithstanding the contextual distinctions, however, the Roma movement does share one important trait with other social movements: the centrality of gender activism as a progressive force. In the context of Roma activism, gender equality discourse became a new political leverage and was adopted by key international Romani women activists. Yet, the transnationally imposed rights-based ideas were locally translated and adopted in a contentious mode by women activists of different generations. In this chapter I will briefly outline the emergence and evolution of transnational Romani women activism as a force always assisted by and organized around different international organizations' political agendas. The implications of this state of affairs on the trajectory of Romani projects and initiatives throughout Central and Eastern Europe will be my concern as I proceed to explore the roots of the ideological approach toward ethnic and gender identity, and attempt to answer the question of how this discursive politics informs/shapes the work of both old and

---

[47] This chapter is contingent upon my two articles. The first part is based on the article I co-wrote with Nidhi Trehan "Postcolonial racism and social justice: the struggle for the soul of the Romani civil rights movement in the 'New Europe' " (Kocze and Trehan 2009) and the second part of the chapter is built upon the extended version of my article ,"Ethnicity and Gender in the Politics of Roma Identity in the Post-Communist Countries" (Kóczé 2008)

young generations of Roma activists. Thus, a more comprehensive purpose of my present analysis is to examine, in socio-anthropological terms, how ethnicized and gendered discourse influences the social life of an oppressed group, in this case Roma, and what types of frameworks offered by human rights discourse could allow activists to claim gender equality in Romani context. However, it is still not obvious how the international spread of human rights institutions and discourses are reshaping the specific local structural inequalities of Romani women, hence the questions remains, whether human rights law is simply a strategic weapon used internationally and nationally by powerful groups to legitimize their power grabs—a window dressing for real politics—or whether it can provide a practical emancipatory tool for Roma/Romani women in their struggle to contest the structures of various external and internal oppressions that govern their life.

3.1 Emerging collective identity

One of the political responses to rising hostility, racism and violence - both officially, and in public discourses since the fall of the socialist regimes - has been the formation of a collective identity and consciousness amongst diverse groups of Roma. (Pogány 2004; Klimová-Alexander 2005; Barany 2002) In addition, this process of collective ethnic identity formation was supported by the legal and political development of minority policies in Central and Eastern Europe. For instance, in Hungary, in 1993 in the era of minority protection the Hungarian Parliament created a new legal context for the cultural autonomy and political participation of national and ethnic minorities (Act LXXVII on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities)(Kovats 2001). Similar processes were emerging in neighboring countries as well in respect of the legal and political recognition of Roma (Vermeersch 2006). Moreover, the term Roma was becoming widely accepted in international and national public and political discourses. Newspapers and documents began to adopt the term "Roma communities" or, even more commonly "Roma ethnicity". Presumably, before the political changes, local Gypsies had no trouble knowing who they were and how to talk about themselves and others including non-Gypsies. They just did it according to a very different regime of representation of sameness and difference. In the early 90s, particularly in the post-communist countries, we witnessed the unprecedented construction of ethnic difference through serious institutional practices and discourses. The newly emerging young Roma political elite became the object of politics of difference and the basis for the construction of a new political subject, Roma communities. In the field of minority studies, particularly in the United States, there is an idea which has been explored recently, namely, that identity is a resource of knowledge for social change particularly by oppressed groups[48]. Similar process is taking place that embedded in social and political transformation in the post-communist bloc, an entirely new identity regime emerged, which largely articulated the ethnicity of Roma and the concept of Roma communities. In addition, in the second half of the 90s, a politically active Romani women identity regime started to appear at various international meetings.

After the breakdown of the communist regimes at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, a considerable number of political leaders, political parties and interest groups turned

---

[48] There is a wide range of excellent works on identity politics. See for instance the edited volume *Identity Politics Reconsidered,* (Alcoff, Hames-Gracia, Mohanty, Moya 2006)

to ethnicity (ethnic identity) as a predominant frame of reference for political mobilization and identification[49]. In the case of Roma, this identity based politics created opportunities to fight against ethnic-based marginalization, discrimination and maltreatment. As a result, Roma political mobilization produced varied and sometimes puzzling outcomes. In many countries, political unification based on ethnic identity in electoral politics largely failed (Vermeesch 2002, Barany 1998), while in others in spite of some Roma activists being able to find access to parliament and governmental institutions, these people are often characterized as a first "token generation" of Roma communities. After centuries of marginalization, Roma are now gaining political attention in Europe due partly to ongoing pressure from international human rights organizations and to the EU Eastward accession. The EU powerfully put pressure on Central and Eastern European governments to improve the situation of Roma, including ratifying international minority protection standards and introducing anti-discrimination legislation (Sobotka 2001).

The above outlined recent political processes regarding Roma present a paradoxical phenomenon. On the one hand, Roma have attracted increasing political attention in terms of formal governmental and other policy initiatives, which has led to historically unprecedented levels of Roma political activity (Kovats 2003). On the other hand, however, as Agnes Daroczi suggested, "the living conditions and life chances of most Roma people in the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe (in the CEE) have actually undergone both economically and socially a dramatic and ongoing decline"[50] .
It is now well documented that Roma are one of the most pertinent victims who endured the onslaught of the political and economic transition in Central and Eastern Europe (Szalay 2005; Szelenyi-Ladanyi 2004, etc). This is most starkly manifested in their mass unemployment, long-term impoverishment, declining living conditions, as well as increased segregation in areas such as education and housing. According to inter-governmental reports released by the European Commission, the World Bank and the United Nation Development Program, Roma become victims of publicly expressed prejudice, discrimination and even physical violence more than before the post-communist transition period (cf. European Commission Report 2004; Ringold-Mitchell and Orenstein 2003;Ivanov 2002).

The development of civil society and NGOs in Central and Eastern European countries can be regarded partly as a political and ideological response to the situation of Roma. In CEE countries, one of the most active agents in the post-communist transition period was the third sector[51] addressing social and economic exclusion and human rights issues (Arato 1992). The peculiarities and contradictions of this newly emerging civil society in the post-communist transition period were widely discussed by Arato (1992). Who argues that the idea of civil society applied in Western democracies is almost incompatible with the needs of in newly emerging democracies. The difference can be partly explained by the particular histories of Western democracies and that the privileged concept of citizenship is conceptualized differently in CEE countries (Fowler 1997).
The NGO sector where Roma issues started to be addressed in the beginning of the 1990s, developed differently from Western NGOs. In CEE countries, membership-founded and voluntary based organizations are almost non-existent as the majority of projects are

---

[49] More about the identity politics in different contexts see John, Comaroff. "Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution." (Comaroff 1996)
[50] As stated by Agnes Daroczi at the workshop organized by the European Roma Information Office, Brussels, March 21, 2004.
[51] Third sector comprising public interest foundations and non-governmental organizations, (NGOs).

necessarily donor driven, and the consequent dependency seriously affects and undermines the independence of local NGOs (Trehan 2001).

Hungary is an interesting country with regards to the development of civil society and Roma NGOs. These organizations represent several issues including social, cultural and economicones, as well as women's rights. With respect to Hungary, Wizner (1999) and others pointed out the multistage interdependency of the third sector from the state, as well as donors. Heavy reliance on the state is significant not only because of the state's support of government-friendly NGOs, but also because of the way these organizations have a growing influence on state policy itself. In fact, since the late 1980s, the state has decentralized and limited its responsibilities in the economic sphere, whilst social and cultural tasks have been delegated to the private or non-governmental sector (Trehan 2001).

The special character of Hungarian Roma public and political activism also stems from the fact that in Hungary a special institutional channel was set up in 1993, namely, the minority self-government system. The political influence of this structure was analyzed by Kovats (2001) and Kállai (2005) and extensively criticized by Hungarian social scientists and activists who warned against the fact that through the minority self-government systems Roma tend to segregate their own political representation and hence fail to integrate into the general political system. However, NGOs and Roma minority self-governments at the local level usually function in a balanced mode by reinforcing and using each other's resources or sometimes competing with each other for the limited opportunities.

In 1995, three respected social scientists, Havas Gábor , Kertesi Gábor and Kemény István, also warned against the two compelling trends in the NGO sector vis-à-vis Romani issues in Hungary, arguing against 'rigid ethnic coupling' (e.g. 'Roma-specific programs), and pointed out that this ultimately results in ethnic segregation of Roma from majority society and also follows an elitist top-down structure in most organizations, whereby grants and subsidies absorbed by organizations at the top of the imaginary social pyramid may only bring highly limited, almost unnoticeable change at a local level. (Havas, Kertesi and Kemény 1995).

3.2 The rise of neo-liberal agendas

Europe, particularly its post-socialist countries, has connections to global forces that inevitably impinge on the current trajectory of the transnational movement for 'Roma rights' (Guilhot 2005; Ost 2005; Trehan 2001). Unlike these other movements, the 'Roma rights' movement emerged at a time of overwhelming neo-liberal policy consensus in post-socialist Europe, and one corollary of this development, as I shall demonstrate, was the *marketization* of human rights through the interventions of human rights entrepreneurs, particularly those affiliated with George Soros's *Open Society Institute*.

In attempting to make sense of and explain the 'neo-liberal human rights' approach to the contemporary Romani rights movement in post-socialist Europe, the following questions need to be addressed. How is the neo-liberal human rights approach manifested in the 'Romani rights' movement? What order is it (re)producing and whose interests does it reflect? What are its consequences, and are there alternatives to its current trajectory? In

employing the term 'neo-liberal human rights', I refer to the phenomenon whereby human rights concerns and campaigning operate within a global capitalist system, and thus—perhaps unwittingly— become an appendage of the global neo-liberal economic order (Chen & Churchill 2005; Guilhot 2005; Trehan 2008). More than any other single philanthropist, Hungarian-American billionaire George Soros was responsible for the support and promotion of Romani NGO initiatives through the work of the Open Society Institute (OSI), a global network of foundations.[52] The organizations funded and supported by OSI currently form the backbone of the 'movement' for the rights of Romani people in post-socialist Europe. Notwithstanding OSI's generous support of numerous progressive campaigns globally, including HIV/AIDS prevention and the re-building of democracy in the United States, I would suggest that the Romani civil rights struggle to date shows the most clearest tendency of revealing unintended consequences—in this particular case, the creation of hierarchies and divisiveness within the movement —that are characteristic of utopian approaches within the global NGO sphere today. Guilhot and Trehan argue that OSI, while attempting to create an 'Open Society' in post-socialist Europe, in fact promotes a policy agenda based on particular ideological frameworks, thus has a powerful impact on civil society in the region (Guilhot 2005; Trehan 2007). OSI's activities, which focuses on the promotion of human rights and development of subaltern Romani communities in post-socialist Europe, create and reproduce asymmetrical relations of power between Roma and non-Roma.

To a great extent, the neo-liberal approach works hand-in-hand with the dominant discourse on 'civil society' in Eastern Europe, which began to permeate the NGO sector in the early 1990s.[53] The visible absence of alternative trajectories to this approach is a result of the ideological and material dominance of American epistemic communities and human rights networks in the region throughout the 1990s (Trehan 2006). There were several cogent reasons why the former dissidents of post-socialist states believed they were compelled to adopt a language and philosophy of human rights commensurate with their Euro-Atlantic donor networks; even when they had grave doubts about the motives of their Western benefactors, with only minimal resistance to the prevalent neo-liberal paradigm of human rights. Mary Kaldor (2003) in her book criticizes the 'New Policy Agenda', which came after the Cold War, arguing that the 'New Policy Agenda' combined neoliberal economic strategy with an emphasis on parliamentary democracy. Based on her analysis the NGOs came to be seen as an important mechanism for implementing this agenda. Moreover, she claims that that contemporary NGOs have become 'tamed' and turned into the constituencies of the new social movements, having lost their initial radical edge and sharp criticism towards mainstream ideals.

The feeling of powerlessness and lack of agency on the part of eastern European activists, as well as their inability to construct alternative discourses and practices of human rights, resulted in an implicit acceptance of the model of human rights discourses informed by the contemporary neo-liberal ethos (Trehan 2006). Being aware of severe financial dependence on American-based foundations whose political orientations tend to be limited to one particular variant of 'democratization'—to wit, pro-free market and procedural democratic

---

[52] The writings of Popper and Hayek were strong influences upon Soros, who was a student of Popper's at LSE. See Guilhot (2005) for further details on Soros' ideological development. See www.soros.org for further details on the work of Open Society Institute and its affiliates.

[53] 'Civil society' generally incorporates NGOs and non-profit organizations, and broadly encompasses political parties, labor unions, workers' cooperatives, business associations, membership-serving organizations and religious bodies among other actors in society.

considerations: constitutional reform, elections, etc.—Eastern European activists seem to be unable to devise more radical means for their human rights advocacy, alternative means and methods that are not reliant on the dominant model of corporatist human rights.[54] Movements for reforms of the legal/juridical structures of the past decade in the region have been partly based on the strategic adoption of liberal rule-of-law and 'democratization' concepts as formulated by influential non-governmental organizations such as the OSI and its affiliates. According to its prevailing logic these principles are in no way incommensurate with the neo-liberal project (Harvey 2005).

The above discussed severe dependency on US based foundations and their ideologies has profound implications for the trajectory of Romani projects and initiatives throughout the region. Recently, this resulted in an interesting collusion of initiatives between the World Bank and the Open Society Institute, with one such initiative being the ongoing 'Decade of Romani Inclusion: 2005-2015', which was launched with a donors conference in Budapest in 2004. The politics surrounding this Decade initiative are instructive with Organizers failing to invite many grassroots Romani NGOs and participation being based on selective criteria, ensuring that the 'multiplicity' of human rights perspectives would remain altogether 'manageable' by its sponsors (Vesely 2005). The lack of effective resistance to the status quo also characterizes the Romani leadership—both traditional community leaders and those who represent NGOs—engaged in the human rights movement for Roma. Thomas Acton and Nicolae Gheorghe offer one compelling explanation for this:

> [I]n seeking legitimacy for their struggle, Roma politicians have no choice but to lock onto the same concepts of human rights and anti-racism that operate in international organizations and relations between existing states (Acton and Gheorghe 2001: 57).

Alternatives to the current order are yet to be explored because of the current monopoly of neo-liberal human rights, which inhibits the rethinking of Romani grassroots advocacy and emancipatory politics. Part of the reason -as pointed out by some authors- for this is the dismissal of Romani agency and resistance by elites within the movement (Bukovská 2005; Trehan 2001; Oprea 2005).

3.2.1 Romani subalterns in the NGO sector

Well-funded organizations focusing on diverse Romani communities in the region generally lack grassroots constituencies and, in many cases, cooperate only superficially with local and national NGOs. In place of a grassroots constituency for these NGOs, an elite constituency was established comprising national and international policy makers, academics and coalitions of activists (Trehan 2001). In addition, white privilege is also prevalent in the NGO world as organizations comprising Romani civil society are not immune to racialized hierarchies.[55] As I suggested in one of my previous works, 'one of biggest challenges facing

---

[54] As Canadian political scientist Richard Cox asserts 'Corporatism left those who are relatively powerless in society out of account; but being powerless and unorganized they could hardly be considered part of civil society' (1999: 7).

[55] Strategic management posts are disproportionately granted to non-Romani professionals in the field of 'Roma rights'. For a further discussion of white privilege, see McIntosh (1988).

the non-Roma who work with us is how to work for Roma rights without controlling the movement' (Kóczé 1999: 69).

The elite composition of NGO circles also influences the construction of priorities within the movement. Blanka Kozma, director of the Romani Women's Association in Hungary and one of the few Romani members of the Budapest city council, offers the following insight in relation to the planning of Roma-related NGO projects:

> [T]hese projects were not designed from our perspective, it's not about our empowerment and capacitation, it's not about our development … their main aim is not to help Romani society or to develop the situation, but to *prevent them [Roma] from going to England or America so that we are not a danger to the EU*…this was the motivation [in the past], and it continues to be to this day. (Conversation with Blanka Kozma 2008.02.12. emphasis added)

This type of radical critique rarely surfaces in mainstream literature on Roma, but it is likely to be found in the plethora of NGO/INGO publications. Nevertheless, in various discussions with Romani leaders, we have found this to be one of their foremost concerns about the movement. A concomitant development is that once elite NGOs have established their dominant position within the 'Romani rights industry', they then seek to legitimate this position by reaching out to community-based organizations and by forming alliances and 'strategic' partnerships. These partnerships are generally based on an unequal footing, as the grassroots NGOs often have a dependency funding relationship with the elite NGOs. This then exacerbates existing asymmetries within the sector as a whole, particularly in relation to Romani development or human rights projects.

In the early days of post-socialism, NGO entrepreneurs in the region and abroad believed that recruitment efforts were critical to attract people to the field of development and human rights. The objective was to enhance professionalism in the field and offering generous salaries was seen as an effective way to achieve this resulting in that the salaries of NGO workers in the region, especially within NGOs sponsored directly by international private foundations, are likely to be several times higher than those of local professionals, and higher still if one is a foreign worker (Trehan 2001)[56]. By the late 1990s, this produced the effect of attracting a large number of highly qualified professionals to the NGO sector, who would otherwise join the private sector, government jobs or academic work, hence making the 'Romani rights' sector a field with a good 'career potential'. This was one of the corrosive impacts of the marketization of human rights. The generous influx of money into the region through Western private foundations has led to an adjoining, even dysfunctional phenomenon, with many Romani intellectuals cynically referring to it as 'ethno-business' or using Rudko Kawczinsky word 'Gypsy industry'.[57] While one should certainly not lament

---

[56] For example, in Hungary, a teacher employed by the state earned $150/month on average in 2000; whilst a full-time Hungarian NGO worker based in Budapest may earn over $500/month. The salaries within some international NGOs in the region are proportionally higher (taking the cost of living and purchasing power parity into account) than those working in New York or London in similar positions.

[57] Monika Horaková, Romani Czech MP claims that 'there is too much paternalism … with too many Czechs who speak no Romani making a living by helping a people they do not understand, while Gypsies themselves go jobless': Stephen Erlanger, 'Czech Gypsies Knock Harder on the Closed Doors', *New York Times*, May 12, 2000. The 'Gypsy industry' is not solely a Third Sector phenomenon, but also encompasses the growing number of Romani-related offices and programs from culture to education to minority rights in the state

increasing professionalism within the field of human rights, serious questions must be asked when actors within the movement and the strategies they adopt begin to manifest the imperatives of a neo-liberal economic order, losing sight of the priorities of the communities and people they are meant to serve. Indeed, prominent American human rights lawyer and scholar David Kennedy suggested that reflexivity within the 'human rights community' is imperative (2004). The above section has raised issues associated with the growing institutionalization and marketization of human rights work in post-socialist Europe. I shall continue this enquiry below by looking further at the hierarchical dynamics of NGOs working in the area.

3.2.2 Donor Dependency—ideological and structural control

Some scholars have suggested that the body of projects related to Roma is part of an important survival strategy within Romani communities, an avenue for strengthening these communities' prospects for the future by offering spaces of resistance to non-Romani notions of 'integration' (Pinnock 1998). With due respect to the fields of human rights and development, I shall take a more critical view of the proliferation of the NGO sector, or what some scholars have called 'NGO-ization' (Stubbs 2007). For one thing, there is increasing resignation on the part of older Romani activists (in their 40s and above) and a tacit or even eager acceptance by the younger generation (in their 20s and 30s) of inequalities within the NGO sector as it has evolved. In my view, the profound deterioration of the socio-economic circumstances of the majority of Roma resulting from the transition to a market economy based on neo-liberal principles has forced many Roma to 'clutch at straws', leading to their participation in a wide range of 'paper NGOs' and projects in order to get a much-needed piece of the NGO funding pie (Kovats 2001; Trehan 2001, 2006a).

If Romani leaders and politicians were historically dependent on state structures for financial support, so did in post-socialist times, Romani actors within the NGO sector become dependent on major philanthropic donors for continuing their work. A pecking order of dependency has emerged in which elite NGOs and INGOs are reliant on Western philanthropy via private foundations and local Romani NGOs in turn rely on these elite NGOs for their own survival. As I explained above, most NGOs working in the field are not sustainable without foreign assistance, whilst membership-funded organizations are virtually non-existent, the majority of projects being necessarily donor-driven,[58] which however, undermines the autonomy of local NGOs and initiatives as donors subscribing to neo-liberal agendas may have different priorities from local, economically depressed communities (Trehan 2001).

Some European advocates for Roma draw parallels between their Romani communities and those in the so-called Third World (Biró 1995), but they tend to overlook the power dynamics and distortions that result from their well-meaning interventions in Romani communities. Even active Romani advocates and intellectuals within civil society are comparable to those

---

sector as well. Indeed, the EU Phare programs in the region have funding earmarked for the 'development of civil society', which includes many Romani-related projects.

[58] The lack of voluntary membership of these organizations was explained in the early days of post-socialism by the 'legitimate suspicion against voluntary action, as during 40 years [under communism] there was the practice of compulsory 'volunteering', and membership fees were deducted from salaries', *1990 Annual Report*, *Autonómia Foundation*.

in the Third World on the one hand in terms of their relatively isolated position globally, and on the other, their subalternity. Their common struggle as double minorities in the region—both dissidents and Roma—takes place on several fronts simultaneously: not only against the state, but now increasingly against structures that inhibit Romani participation in the achievement of their own emancipation, including those within civil society at large.[59] This polemic raises serious ethical questions that Romani activists have now begun to raise. To whom are Romani and non-Romani NGOs ultimately responsible? To their donors, to the Romani communities they seek to assist, or to the general public? Who decides, and who should decide, what the priorities are for the development and emancipation of Roma within the NGO sector?

Bukovská (2006) makes an interesting point with regard to the question of legitimacy, noting that many elite human rights NGOs were accepted as legitimate 'partners' by governments and intergovernmental organizations like OSCE, the Council of Europe and the European Union resulting in that Romani voices at the local or national level are being largely usurped by the power of elite human rights entrepreneurs, who have superior networking skills and easier access to global human rights sponsorship. At times, Romani representatives voice publicly their increasing frustration with the monopoly these entrepreneurs wield within the human rights sector. In a forum at the Central European University in Budapest in 2001, Aladár Horvath, then director of *Roma Polgárjogi Alapitvány* (Roma Civil Rights Foundation), a national NGO in Hungary, for instance, argued that the colonizing role is taken up by elite human rights entrepreneurs, most of whom are not Romani, in the movement:

> The Romani Movement has a long way to go. This present discussion itself illustrates how far we are from a normal situation: we have several non-Roma experts discussing the future of the movement, while we, Roma, get to say something in the end. (Horvath, 2001, Workshop on Future of the Roma Rights Movement organized by the European Roma Rights Center at the CEU)

Horvath was visibly irritated because the non-Romani human rights entrepreneurs had been asked to speak first emphasizing his own marginal position even within a social field that was supposedly representing the emancipatory interests of his own community.

Of equal importance to the above outlined problem that the majority of NGO activists are non-Roma, is that inside these institutional circles, human rights elites use their personal leverage to promote the careers of friends and family members, many of whom re-appear on various boards and/or act as trustees of domestic NGOs and INGOs as well as members of their legal advisory committees, while those of Romani origin are few and far between. Retrospectively, one can see that the 1990s was characterized by the American human rights establishment's controlling stake in the 'Roma rights' cause in Europe. By contrast, German,

---

[59] Some Romani intellectuals in the region who believe that the hierarchical structure of the NGO sector today inhibits Romani participants from participating fully in the decision-making process Certainly, the burden most Romani intellectuals carry in their attempt to represent themselves, their families, their communities and, indeed, their whole people—if this is even conceivable, let alone possible—is tremendous. See R. Kawczynski, 'The Politics of Romani Politics" *Transitions*, September 1997. Mr. Kawczynski was at that time director of the *Regional Roma Participation Program* within the *Open Society Institute-Budapest*, as well as on the board of directors of the *European Roma Rights Centre*.

French, or British human rights advocacy networks have only recently become active in this area, propelled by the European Union accession of post-socialist states (Trehan 2008).

As demonstrated above, the proliferation of US-funded NGOs, whose ideological orientations are usually burdened with preconceptions drawn from the neo-liberal paradigm (e.g. 'law as salvation'),[60] reflects the interests of those Euro-Atlantic elites who are attempting to manage—or pacify—Romani communities perceived to be dangerously marginalized and potentially unstable. This 'management of Roma' appears to be concealed within a broader framework in which progressive agendas of integration and civil rights are espoused.

However, despite the increasing number of civil rights lawsuits brought before the courts on behalf of Romani plaintiffs, the seeming rise in rights awareness in the public sphere and the media and the launch of ambitious programs for the integration of Roma over the past decade, the fundamental oversights and weaknesses of these approaches are now becoming clear. For instance, the social distance between Roma and the majority population is actually on the rise with legal interventions not always obtaining desired results for the victims and in many cases prove to be harmful for local Romani-majority relations, or court trials not always resulting in justice *per se*, since a primarily litigious approach does not address the roots of popular prejudice or the structural inequalities embedded in society. In many cases, litigation does not assist Romani victims in regaining their dignity (Zoltan 2006). Moreover, in regard to 'Romani-specific' initiatives for integration, post-socialist societies have begun to react negatively, either by suggesting that Roma are now being favored by government programs at the expense of non-Roma citizens, or by implying that affirmative-action type policies are unwarranted in the first place, with Roma being considered a particularly undeserving group.

3.3 Development of women's rights in the Roma NGO activism

Women's rights and gender issues, as parts of the human rights regime, became gradually recognized and accepted by NGOs and donor organizations in the CEE countries. Romani women activism gained impetus through the international gender discourse and the emerging civil society in the region, as Silverman also pointed out in the Bulgarian context, Romani women, "paradoxically are invisible in the sphere of state and macro politics, but are leaders in autonomous activities" (1996:12). I would like to add that Romani women, by the beginning of 2000, with the influence of the international human rights advocacy network and inter-governmental organizations (UN, CoE, EU) started to gain visibility both on the international and national level. In the late 90s there were several Romani women who became active at a transnational level, including Nicoleta Bitu, a leading member of the community, who articulated gender issues and concerns related to the Roma communities. In 1999, Bitu's report[61] was supported and adopted by the Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies of the Council of Europe.

---

[60] This is a model espoused by ERRC's former director, Petrova (2003), and one of the legacies of international human rights NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, which is closely affiliated with the Open Society Institute.

[61] This become a funding document for Romani Nicoleta Bitu „*The Situation of Roma/Gypsy Women in Europe*" Accessed on 2006.10.24 http://cps.ceu.hu/romapolicyfellowship_resources.php?cmssessid=Tf1b587168444c140a50c9af5adda001d5cf81e5048fe380d3f55b6da30b13a5

Despite this active transnational participation, very few Romani women activists are able to transmit messages on global human rights and gender equality issues within their local community. Transnational Romani women activists, still a small elite group, are usually quite detached from their local fellows as very few of them are connected to both levels making their encounter with human rights and gender equality principles transformed, negotiated or contested at different scales in diverse manner. Therefore, there are very few NGOs in the CEE countries whose scope of activities include Romani women issues.

3.3.1 The emergence of transnational Romani women's activism

A considerable number of political leaders, political parties, and interest groups turned to ethnicity as a predominant frame of reference for political mobilization and identification after the breakdown of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s. In the case of Roma, identity-based politics offered sites for political action and made it possible for them to maintain their political struggle against ethnic-based marginalization, discrimination, and maltreatment. One way in which activists hoped to find public support for their claims was by establishing ethnically-based political parties. (Veermesch 2006:102) Thus, Romani political parties gained a forefront position in the Romani "movement;" some of which even having aspirations to play a role in mainstream electoral systems. As a result of strong political lobbying, several Romani activists gained an individual party ticket to be a member of the national or the European Parliament based solely on their ethnic identity. These MPs became a strategic alliance for international Roma activism. Romani candidates who participated in the national or European electoral system had access to one of the most visible channels to promote political recognition and mainstream Roma issues in the national and the international political discourse. The effect of the Romani participation in electoral politics is, however, questioned by the fact that these members favor the ethnic basis for their political organization.

In such a context, Romani women's participation in electoral politics deserves much more academic and political attention than it has previously acquired. From 1990 to 2004, several women Romani candidates contested for political office. In the 1990 elections in Czechoslovakia, two women were elected who identified as Roma, Klara Samkova, a human rights lawyer, who was elected as a Civiv Forum (OF) representative, and Anna Koptova. Although Samkova is non-Roma, she is the wife of a well known Roma activist, Ivan Vesely, and, as such, was perceived as a Romani representative. Furthermore, Samkova publicly associated herself with the biggest Romani party, Romani Civiv Initiative (ROI). Anna Koptova was elected in 1990 for the People against Violence (VPN). Koptova is known as Director of the Legal Defense Bureau for Ethnic Minorities of the Good Romany Fairy Kesaj Foundation and also as Director of the High School for Roma of Kosice. After the Velvet Revolution and the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, only one Roma representative, Monika Horakova, representative of the Freedom Union, was elected to the Czech Chamber of Deputies. She was considered a representative of the new generation of Roma politics at the international level. In 2000, Monika Horakova, Rumyan Russinov, and myself organized Romani political leadership training in Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Hungary with a specific attention to women's representation.

In Hungary, Romani women became one of the most progressive forces in mainstream politics. There were three Roma MPs in the Hungarian National Parliament between 1990 and 1994. One of them was a woman, Antonia Hága, who had been elected from the list of the liberal party, Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), and was able to keep her seat until

49

1998. As Vermeersch put it, Hungary gained international headlines for being a country with the first two female Romani MEPs in 2004 (Veermesch 2006:114) . Lívia Járóka, who was elected directly from the list of the right-wing populist party FIDESZ to the European Parliament, is playing the most decisive role on the international level to shape the discourse on Romani women. She is a member of the Women's Rights Committee in the European Parliament, where she initiated a public hearing for several Romani women activists, experts and representatives of the European Commission in November 2005 to explore the situation of Romani women. This hearing provided a forum to discuss public policies concerning multiple forms of discrimination against Romani women. However, the second Romani MEP who took the place of Gábor Demszky, Viktória Mohácsi, has slightly different views on Romani women. Mohácsi believes in working against domestic violence and in family planning, arguing that no one should intervene in family affairs. With their different approaches to Romani women's issues, these two female Romani MEPs made some undeniable changes, the most notable of which is making the presence of Romani female politicians a norm, rather than exception, in the European political arena.

Romani women are more visible in mainstream politics, than in Roma political parties which are organized around the concept of ethnicity. While Roma have no traditional geographical support (the land) underpinning their national identity, recently there has been a proliferation of Roma political parties that base their agenda on the idea of ethnicity. They are particularly prominent in Bulgaria and Romania where there is a strong legacy of ethnic political parties. For instance, in Romania there is an ethnic-based Roma political party (*Partida Romilor*) which has existed for more than a decade now. In the last election, they changed their strategy: instead of relying on the Roma constituency alone, they established an alliance with the Social Democrats. In some countries, this form of political strategy can be construed as a form of political empowerment rather than marginalization. In the case of Macedonia, where there always was a large Roma constituency especially in the Suto Orizari municipality in Skopje, the MP, the local council, and mayor are all Roma. The need to establish a Roma-based political party in this particular neighborhood was obvious to all the political constituents.[62]

Romani politics in the movement became further diversified when English-speaking, highly qualified Romani people started to work at NGOs offering high salaries, namely, organizations supported by Western donors, such as OSI and the European Roma Rights Center, or in intergovernmental organizations, such as the Council of Europe. This group is severely criticized by the older generation of Roma elite for being favored by non-Roma constituents. Despite this criticism, these cosmopolitan, highly qualified Roma have much more influence in shaping Roma politics than the older generation. Nicolae Gheorghe notes that "there is a crisis now in Romani politics: the bright ones are drawn into work in NGOs; they are better paid, they are self-appointed, they are less accountable to the people--they are less democratic." (Roma Rights Quarterly, 2001. No. 4 :14)

Since the end of the Cold War era, in 1989 post-communist countries hosted a number of Western non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donors, from the United States to the United Kingdom, Germany and other European countries, all working on various aspects of democratic institutional development, independent media, civic and human rights advocacy, as well as the reduction of ethnic conflict. Examining the impact of the assistance of Western organizations on the Roma movement, Sarah E. Mendelson and John K. Glenn found that Western NGOs working in post-communist countries employ a status-raising strategy to improve the situation of Roma, meaning that, at a program level, they purport to improve the

---

[62] For the discussion on the productiveness of Romani political parties, see the interview with Nicolae Gheorghe, "In Search of a New Deal for Roma," (Gheorghe 2001)

education level of Roma and decrease human rights violation against them. As Mendelson and Glenn emphasize "Western funding for Roma programs in the 1990s increased [and] [f]unding has shifted from material assistance to education and human rights work."[63] Yet, this funding strategy is criticized by various scholars, including Kathy Pinnock, Balázs Wizner, and Nidhi Trehan, mostly because it enforces Western popular concepts such as "empowerment," "human rights," and "sustainability" onto the Romani population, without addressing the real needs of local communities (Pinnock 1999). On this subject, Trehan (2001:138) quoted Chidi Odinkalu, human rights lawyer of the London–based Interrights Organisation: "A number of NGOs financed directly by Western donors do not enjoy grass-roots constituency support […], thus they are not required to be accountable to any constituency, apart from a limited number of donors." Odinkalu's assessment parallels that of Nicolae Gheorghe, who also cites the unaccountability to a constituency as an anomaly of Western-supported NGOs.

Immanuel Wallerstein, in his 1995 book *After Liberalism,* connects philanthropic activity to the "democratization" of the post-Soviet block by international organizations. He points out that liberal international donors opted not to talk about human rights in their own countries, but instead started a struggle for human rights in other countries, most notably in those that were emerging from the dismantled Soviet block. According to his analysis, these philanthropic organizations were looking for new "peoples" whose rights, they thought, needed to be affirmed in the emerging "new democracies." Roma people, being one of the most discriminated and marginalized groups, became a target group for whom Western liberals felt they needed to ensure human rights. As a consequence, nowadays a host of organizations originating from Western Europe (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Medicines du Monde, and others) do not heed similar discriminations and violence "at home," but rather focus on political change in the post-Soviet countries and the plight of Roma who live in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Introduced by Western countries, human rights based discourse created a new political leverage through which Roma could present their issues as a serious form of discrimination—specifically, as perpetrated against them by the state. The language of human rights is governed by intergovernmental organizations such as the Council of Europe (COE), United Nations (UN), Organizations for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union (EU), and it pressurizes the new member states of the EU to emphasize respect for the human rights of their Roma population and to provide adequate legal remedy that would protect Roma from further and deeper levels of violation.

The framing of violence against the broader Roma population within a specific rights based discourse helped to create a receptive audience for the more specific issues of gender equality and gender-based violence in the Roma communities. The issues of gender-based discrimination became a priority for certain donors, such as the OSI, EU, and COE, all of which are still supporting and conceptualizing Romani women's rights activism in Europe.

Specific Romani women's issues were gradually identified by activists and connected to significant public discourses, such as those concerning gender, ethnicity, and public policy. Initially, Romani women's issues were framed in correspondence to general Roma problems, such as the low level of education, high unemployment rate, lack of health protection and family planning programs, lack of enforcement of existing legislation, and problems of

---

[63] Sarah Mendelson and John K. Glenn's work describe in a most persuasive way the work of the Western NGOs in post-communist countries "Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies*,"* *Carnegie Endowment Working Papers*, no. 8: *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies* (February 2000), <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/final.pdf>, 62. (Accessed April 21, 2008)

racism and violence. This approach did cast some light on the precarious situation of Romani women: it was recognized that Romani women face double discrimination, based on both their ethnicity and their gender. Nowadays, Romani women's issues are most often elaborated in terms of the uniqueness of their experience, i.e. as an experience of the forms of discrimination that are different from those suffered by Romani men and non-Romani women. Indeed, Romani women's subject positions are forged by variables at the intersection of specific ethnicity, gender, and class identities, rendering them different from the subjectivities of both their Romani-male and non-Romani fellows.

Romani women's issues first gained visibility in public discourse at a Congress on the EU Roma/Gypsies organized by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance in Seville, Spain, in 1994. One of the most striking results of this Congress was the publication of the "Manifesto of Roma/Gypsy Women," the first publicly printed material that specifically referred to the situation of Romani women in Europe. One year later, in September 1995, the Council of Europe organized the "Hearing of Roma/Gypsy Women" in Strasbourg as part of the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men. The purpose of this hearing was to identify problems and conflicts concerning equality and human rights encountered by Romani women. Although it was the first attempt by intergovernmental organizations to invite Romani women activists and to bring visibility to their issues, the report issued by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance notes that the hearing emphasized economic hardship and educational discrimination against Roma in general, i.e., it paid less attention to the specific concerns of Romani women.[64] Nevertheless, it was the first political recognition of Romani women's issues on an international level, and, as such, it allowed them to set up a network to exchange information and foster contacts with other women activists.

In 1998, OSI organized an International Conference of Romani Women in Budapest, Hungary, attended particularly by delegates from Central and Eastern Europe. The meeting was unique because it focused on sensitive issues such the tradition of Roma culture versus women's rights. It is noteworthy that, at the conference, some Romani women challenged the existing male dominated power structure in the Roma movement itself. In 1999, OSI established the Romani Women Initiative (RWI), which has since worked to develop, link, and catalyze a core group of committed young Romani women leaders, in an effort to improve the human rights of Romani women. In 2003, with the assistance of the Council of Europe, Romani women activists from 18 European countries launched the International Romani Women's Network (IRWN) with a leadership being older and more traditional than that of the Romani Women Initiative (RWI). The main focus of IRWN activities is the health of Romani women, which focus has been consistently encouraged by the Council of Europe. Under the auspices of COW, IRWN produced the landmark report entitled "Romani Women and Access to Public Health Care" in 2002. Even though all this external assistance has not substantially changed the material well-being of Romani women, it has nevertheless brought political visibility to their issues (both within Europe and internationally), in turn allowing them to develop a gender-based discourse within the Romani movement itself.

3.3.2 Dialogical Character of Romani Women's Activism

---

[64] European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) played a significant role in exposing the human right situation of Roma in Europe. Their report was instrumental. *Activities of the Council of Europe with Relevance to Combating Racism and Intolerance* (ECRI 2004),

The foundational inequalities of Romani women's participation in various political forms are linked to their gender, social and ethnic oppression. The discourses of progressive Romani women activists not only address contentious issues, such as the forced sterilization of Romani women, forced marriages, prostitution, trafficking, or lack of political representation of Romani women, but they also constitute a challenge to the broader patriarchal power structure of Romani communities and to societal hierarchy in general. Each of these discourses produces a different subject position for Romani women driving the impetus of broader and complex strategies of empowerment.

Until recently, most political scientists and historians writing about the Roma movement and the political mobilization of Roma eschewed a consideration of gender in their analysis— arguably as a result of the traditional emphasis on the forms of struggle in which men have taken a leading part. However, the "gender equality" discourse concerning Romani women is much more appreciated, at least in rhetoric, by donors and international organizations. According to postcolonial feminist scholars, such as Gayatri Spivak and Chandra Mohanty, this kind of interest is informed by a Western urge to civilize the "savage" population (here Romas), while the interested party pursues its own economic and political interests (Spivak 1988; Mohanty 1991). Hence this interest in the problems of the Romani women resonates with a dominant Western attitude to historically subaltern groups and indigenous peoples with the effect of an occlusion of Romani women's identity and activity.

In his essay "The Politics of Recognition," Charles Taylor examines the recent emergence of political movements galvanized by the need for recognition. The recognition of the importance of equality gave rise to the idea of universal human rights, while simultaneously, the new importance attached to (ethnic and gender) identity generated the politics of difference. Taylor explains the connection between identity and recognition through the notion of dialogue, claiming that the latter is "the crucial feature of human life"(Taylor 1994:32) Identity is affirmed when others signify recognition, thus recognition struggles are characteristically discursive in nature and conducted in the dialogue-based domains of civil society, such as the media or politics. I would like to propose a view of Romani women's struggle for recognition in this light.[65] The recognition struggle of Romani women has a "dialogical character" because its visibility and expression of resistance is influenced by both its interaction with the global human rights regime and its interdependence with the male-led Roma movement.

While this "dialogical character" is critical for the actualization of ethnic and gender identities, academic approaches to recognition struggles usually discuss feminist and anti-racist movements as autonomous or, at best, parallel dynamics. Thus, it should not come as a surprise that even a highly educated Roma leader could make the following statement: "Romani women have to choose between their ethnicity and their gender."[66] This example shows the lack of intersectional thinking: instead of analyzing the dialogical relationship between gender and ethnicity, the male-dominated leadership of the movement argues for the separation of these categories. Feminist intersectional theories highlight the dangers of this static approach and emphasize that racial/ethnic, gender, and class subordination do not exclude, but instead reinforce, one another. These divisional or additive approaches are particularly criticized by scholars and activists working within the context of other movements concerning women of color. Critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw thus deploys the concept of political intersectionality in a context highly relevant to my discussion. In her essay "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and

---

[65] A similar line of argumentation has been pursued with respect to the gender issues concerning Aboriginal women in Marylin Lake's "Women, Black, Indigenous: Recognition Struggles in Dialogue," (Lake 2003)

[66] It was told by Iulius Rostas, at the meeting of the Open Society Institute, Budapest, September 2005.

53

Violence against Women of Color," Crenshaw argues that "racism as experienced by people of color who are of a particular gender—male—tends to determine the parameters of antiracist strategies, just as sexism as experienced by women who are of a particular race—white—tends to ground the women's movement" (Crenshaw 1989: 139). The solution, according to Crenshaw, is not to examine race and gender oppressions separately and then patch them together (an "additive" approach), but to recognize precisely the inadequacy of these discourses when taken discretely and pursue an "intersectional" approach. In this vein, feminist intersectional theories have been recently enhanced to include class as a third category, hence the multi-tier "race-class-gender" approach becoming a decisive concept in gender equality discourse.

Applied to the Romani context, this line of enquiry recognizes that ideologies of racial violence and discrimination do not affect Romani men and women in the same way. For example, when Romani women were raped during the Kosovo crisis, the abuse was predominantly and even officially regarded *not* primarily as an attack against a woman's human rights, but against her identity as a Roma.[67] Furthermore, the plethora of testimonies collected by the European Roma Rights Center is evidence that Romani girls in particular face verbal, physical, and sometimes sexual harassment by classmates and teachers, harassment concurrently based on ethnic and sexist premises. Whereas these experiences negatively influence the education and personal development of Romani girls, the report state that teachers rarely punish these practices, and that these events elicit substantially less media attention and communal support than when they happen to white girls in the same society.

Positioned at the intersection of at least two subordinate groups (to which one may easily add the third—class), Romani women not only confront more issues quantitatively when they suffer violations of their human rights (e.g., less media attention, lack of support in both the judicial system and their community, etc.), but their experience is also qualitatively different from that of white women. Political recognition and participation related violence is a good example here. Romani women activists face multiple scales of resistance and contempt, from patriarchal attitudes within their own communities to the contempt of majority groups, from issues such as early childbearing to the broad problem of deeply rooted poverty. These are issues that rarely affect white, middle-class feminists. More importantly, however, it is the dominant human rights framework that offers Romani women legal and political tools to articulate their struggle and translate the ideas of political and social rights into their socially and culturally determined context. If they want to gain visibility and political recognition through human rights "machines," Romani activists must use the human rights discourse, a conceptual language most frequently rendered in English and most confidently used by English speaking activists.

Romani women still have room to resist and polarize this discourse, but for this to happen, they need to ethnographically investigate and analyze the process by which human rights are translated into and contextualized in local actions. The proper translation of this discourse, however, should not be exhausted in a simple act of linguistic translation, but should reach the social, cultural, and gender experiences of Romani women. The call for such a "politics of translation" highlights Romani women's need to articulate their own experiences and their own struggles in indigenous terms, specifically in terms that are distinct from those proposed by the Western human and gender rights discourse. In this context, it is useful to note that Romani women who resist the universality of feminist theory and politics sometimes develop alternative dialogues with other women of color who have already challenged Western

---

[67]This was one of the first human rights report which recognized the gender and ethnic violation of Romani women. Human Right Watch, Report "Kosovo: Rape as a Weapon of 'Ethnic cleansing,'" <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/fry/Kosov003.htm> (Accessed October 31, 2007).

feminism. This emphasis on sisterhood of women of color discloses the failure of the largely white and middle-class feminist movement to globally recognize factors of classism, racism, and modern-day imperialism as fundamental forms of *gender* oppression. There are groups such as the Black and "Third World" feminists who endeavor to recover their lost histories and their cultural production, and in this process, resist the totalizing norms of broader feminist movements. By establishing dialogues with these marginalized groups, Romani women can gain a useful basis to develop strategies for contesting the specific forms of oppression that affect them. At the same time, it is important to be aware that creating an alliance solely with women of color would reinforce the marginalization of women of color and generate an "additional discourse" instead of creating diversity or "dialogicity" within feminist discourse in general.

Finally, while challenging racism, sexism, and the universality of human rights discourse, Roma women also have to contest and deconstruct patriarchal power structures within the Roma "movement" itself. The "dialogical character" of Romani women's activism implies interdependence with the male-constituted leadership. If Romani leadership makes a statement or any intervention without paying attention to the gender dimension of the issue, then that leadership needs to be scrutinized and interrogated by Romani women. Male power—not just in the Roma community—is always dependent on the intensification of gender-based resistances. The key institutions and organizations at the international level, which are part of the Romani "movement," are led by Roma men. For instance, the President of the European Roma and Travelers Forum (ERTF), an international organization which brings together diverse Roma groups with the aim "to promote the effective exercise of [their] human rights and fundamental freedoms" and to "struggle against racism and discrimination" is a male Roma leader from Germany.[68] The most significant project for bringing visibility to Romani issues is the *Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015)*, a project initiated by the Open Society Institute and the World Bank with a political commitment from several Central and South-Eastern European Countries, such as Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia, is also male-led.[69] As an appendage to the Decade structure, there are two key institutions: the Roma Educational Fund (REF), which finances governmental educational and policy initiatives and programs for the integration of Roma in the educational system, whose president is Costel Bercus, a Roma male from Romania, and whose Deputy Director is Rumyan Russinov, a Roma male from Bulgaria, and the Roma Initiative Office (RIO), which is led by Iulius Rostas, another Roma male from Romania.[70] These examples show that the political representations of Roma in key international organizations are dominated by Roma men without any gender balance. Individual stories indicate that those Romani women who challenge the existing male power structure or compete with them are marginalized, discouraged, or betrayed by male activists. Andrea Bučková, the President of the Cultural Association of Roma in Slovakia, was a delegate in the Roma group attending the 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism. She subsequently recalled that, even though Romani women had identified three issues for the agenda—namely, involuntary sterilization, unemployment, and domestic violence—Romani leaders (all male) allowed them solely to discuss the issue of forced sterilization, and that only because an effort to control the Roma

---

[68] The Statutes of the European Roma and Travelers Forum can be found at
<http://www.ertf.org/en/statutes.html> (Accessed October 31, 2007).
[69] Read more information on the Roma Decade at the http://www.romadecade.org/index.php?content=1> (Accessed August 28, 2007).
[70] At the moment the Executive Director position is fulfilled by a non-Romani women. Read more about the *Roma Educational Fund* at <http://romaeducationfund.hu> (Accessed June 28, 2008); read more about the Roma Office Initiative at <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/about> (accessed August 28, 2007).

population is seen as a violation of general Roma rights and not necessarily that of women's human rights.[71] This type of gender-sensitive discourse is considered rebellious by many Romani activists, both men and women.

3.4 Concluding remarks

For central and eastern European countries, the disintegration of diverse ideologies of state socialism (and subsequent membership of the European Union) created a space for liberal human rights discourses and concomitant socio-legal practices. I have suggested in this chapter that these discursive human rights practices were then subsumed within a global hegemonic neo-liberal political order, thereby relegating issues of egalitarianism and social justice within civil society to the periphery. This is particularly marked in the case of the Romani civil rights movement. The collapse of socialist state structures resulted in the re-emergence of full-blown nationalism as well as the rise of ethnic visibility in the region. One casualty of the 'transition' was the incipient and fragile social solidarity between Romani and non-Romani communities that had accrued under successive socialist regimes in Eastern Europe. The resurgence of nationalism is linked to the rise of extreme violence, both physical and symbolic, towards a number of visible minority groups including Romanies, whilst the rise of 'ethnicization'—in one of its most liberal variants—took the shape of a 'celebration and preservation of cultural difference' (cf. Kovats 1998). This latter view is supported by extensive state institutional machineries, including state institutional frameworks for minorities, offices for ethnic and national minorities and various ministerial departments that specialize in social policy issues linked to Romani citizens. Although these may appear to be sites of well-meaning initiatives for social inclusion, one inadvertent result has been the consolidation of a status quo which obscures the ongoing marginalization and 'infra-humanity' of Romani Europeans, who continue to occupy the bottom rung of a racialized hierarchy, even in seemingly progressive social spaces such as the contemporary 'human rights community'.[72]

More specifically, within the movement today, the advocacy elites at the very top of the ladder tend to be Western (primarily American) human rights entrepreneurs, followed by eastern European non-Romani elites; the order then moves down to include Romani elites (urban, educated Roma) and finally, local Romani communities and their representatives (usually rural and semi-literate). Moreover, EU accession for the post-socialist countries resulted in a *de facto* centre and periphery within Europe itself, thus exacerbating the already marginal economic and political position of Roma, whose communities continue to subsist as internal colonies within Europe.

 This racialized hierarchy is not hermetically sealed as there is considerable differentiation and fluidity within it, but the basic contours of its structure continued to remain recognizable along these lines for more than twenty years, ever since the first Romani civil rights organizations were formed. I have also suggested that the autonomy of these indigenous Romani organizations is now usurped by the powerful interventions of neo-liberal human

---

[71] Andrea Bučková is leading Romani women activist from Slovakia, qtd. in: Isabela Mihalache, "Romani Women's Participation in Public Life," (Mihalache 2003)

[72] The development of the expanding institutionalization of minority policies in post-socialist Europe is akin to what Stuart Hall has termed 'multicultural drift' in the UK.

rights entrepreneurs. The postcolonial racism embedded within this hierarchy is a result, not just of material resource advantages (e.g. the dominance of those American philanthropists who have taken up the Romani cause), but also of symbolic power configurations that are rooted in 'Eastern otherness' and, in contradistinction to it, 'Western normality'. In this chapter I attempted to make sociological sense of the above, in many cases paradoxical, developments within the contemporary human rights movement for Roma today.

The struggle for the soul of the Romani movement is currently being waged on multiple fronts. One crucial task over the next century for Europeans living side by side with their Romani neighbors will be to acknowledge and humanize their common lives and realities, while the entrenched mutual apprehensions and suspicions urgently need to be overcome. For Romani Europeans, this task will only be achieved when they begin to acknowledge and challenge the neo-colonial relations they encounter as subalterns, thereby empowering themselves in the diversity of contexts that encompass their daily lives (schools, workplaces, government offices and other institutions). I emphasize *next* century because, in the spirit of W.E.B. Dubois' classic study *The Souls of Black Folk* (1905), it is clear to us that for an oppressed people, emancipation is a multi-generational struggle, and it is likely to remain so for decades, possibly centuries, to come.

The emergence of Romani women's transnational activism is assisted by international organizations that advocate human rights, particularly women's rights. These organizations uphold Romani women who have been victimized by ethnicity, gender, and class oppression, in order to expand the human rights and gender equality regime. However, the same view of Romani women offers a contradictory site for the Romani women themselves: on the one hand, they can use human rights language as a progressive tool to further their own feminist agendas, while on the other hand, they must contend with the universalizing idea of "gender equality" underscoring that language and ignoring the structurally unequal power relations specific to Romani women in the post-communist countries. In order to gain political space and recognition and to find alliances on the international level, Romani women have been forced to allow their own agendas to be influenced by certain political factors above and outside of their immediate work. On the one hand, Romani women's position can be identified through their continuous resistance against male-dominated leadership within their own movement, while on the other hand the specific "dialogical character" of Romani women's activism is informed by the movement's peculiar position between the external and internal hierarchies and by the major modes of its activity: contest and subordination.

To candidly address the multiple levels of domination faced by Romani women along the *axes* of ethnicity, gender, and social class, one would need to explore Romani women's experiences and resistance against oppression on at least three levels: the level of personal testimony, the group or community level (the social and cultural context shaped by ethnicity, class, and gender), and on the systemic level of social institutions. These levels can be extended with the transnational level to examine how neo-liberal human rights institutions have dominated and influenced Romani women's activism and what structure of resistance has been developed during the last decade. Mindful of Michel Foucault's central proposition, "where there is a power, there is resistance," we can assert that all these levels function as both sites of domination and potential sites of resistance (Foucault 1978:95). The "dialogical character" of Romani women's activism can be made more transparent and visible through the matrix of domination where axes of oppression can be most easily observed and

57

contextualized, and where the reinforcing or contradictory relationships between various levels can be detected.

CHAPTER FOUR: APPROPRIATION OF ROMANI WOMEN'S BODIES: FORCED STERILIZATION AND EARLY MARRIAGE[73]

Feminist scholarship on the body invariably links women's embodied experience with practices of power. (Davis 1997) From the sexualization of female body in advertising to the mass rape of women in wartime, women's bodies have been subjected to processes of exploitation, inferiorization, exclusion, birth control and violence. Through the history of Europe Romani women's body is emblematically positioned as a site of power-discourses justifying their "exotic otherness", inferiority, social inequality and power hierarchies based on gender and other forms of bodily difference.

In this chapter, I interrogate the issues of forced sterilization and early marriage, both of which are under-researched and under-theorized in the context of ethnic minority women. I shall argue that intersections of various inequalities constructed the European "intimate others", who become an outspokenly legitimized target of oppression, discrimination and violence. Specifically, I shall examine how these issues connect to the global women's movement, and how it has fuelled Romani political discourse.

The political recognition of the sterilization of Romani women includes multiple issues to research for activists. In the present chapter, first I shall focus on further elaborating on one of my research projects I carried out amongst Romani women activists and Romani women who have been sterilized. Coerced sterilization is a question intimately connected to the violation of reproductive rights and effective measures to control birth rates of 'undesirable' communities. In order to understand how this is possible, we must clearly recognize the pervasiveness of the ideology of eugenics in Europe which is still a hidden operation. The ideas of eugenics centered on the idea that racial qualities could be improved through control of breeding, (including forced sterilization) and that the causes of manyof society's ills were due to hereditary defects (Marks 1995). In contemporary Europe the view of eugenicists has mutated into implicit population control and also enhanced the racist discourse in European countries.

In the second part of this chapter, I shall examine the intervention of Western liberal feminist discourse on those issues identified as 'Romani women issues', in particular, early marriage. The basis of my argument will be the analysis of a number of discussions I had with Romani women actively involved in international Romani political activism, and who perceive mainstream Western liberal feminist discourse as an imperial 'white' gaze which sees Romani culture as patriarchal and backward/primitive (cf. Oprea 2004). Thus, white feminists are compelled to intervene and "save Romani women" similarly to their attempts at saving other women in the Third World. This mainstream Western liberal discourse within feminism will then be contrasted to approaches espoused by critical feminists who demonstrate the intersectionality of ethnicity, gender, class and other vectors of inequality such as age, disability, etc. To conclude I shall argue that the real question and challenge for Romani activists is how to avoid the trap of condemning their own 'culture' or better, explaining how

---

[73] This chapter is the reformulation of my article "The limits of rights-based discourse in Romani women's activism: the gender dimension in Romani politics" (Kócze 2009)

centuries of oppression against Roma have resulted in certain internalized forms of oppression which work against women, such as early marriage. At the same time, it is definitely a struggle for Romani women's voices to be heard in the public sphere, but the fundamental question is: what are the structural forces and realities which have generated the violence Romani ?

4.1 Eugenics: biopolitics in Europe

The history and the theory of eugenics should not be ignored when we discuss the coerced sterilization of Romani women. Marius Turda, who authored a book on the transnational eugenics movement, stated that: "Over the past decades, eugenics was seen as a biological theory of human improvement grounded almost exclusively in ideas of race and class" (Turda 2010:1). The practice of eugenic sterilization on various groups deemed to be 'unfit', that is on persons with mental disabilities, various Gypsy groups, sexual 'deviants', criminals and others, was discovered quite recently. By the early twentieth century, western European countries, such as Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland began to practice eugenic sterilization on the above mentioned groups[74]. The state in the process of the legalization of sterilization was summoned to intervene to not only regulate the social selection of worthy individuals, but also to legalize those procedures meant to purify society of its unwanted members. Turda (2010: 115-116) discusses extensively how advocates for eugenics talked about the biological definition of the nation whereby eugenics and biopolitical nationalism became the norm, rather than the exception in the 1940s Europe. This ideology was confirmed by a series of anti-Semitic racial laws introduced for example in Hungary and Romania between 1938 and 1942. Facing the Second World War, eugenic rhetoric became even stronger and took up a racial tone. Although there is no documentary evidence to suggest that the Holocaust was driven solely by the eugenic consideration, Zygmunt Bauman (1989) argued that atrocities committed against Jews and the Roma during the Second World War can all be reduced to modernist visions of eugenic "gardening". The links between eugenic practices and controlling Romani population through the bodies of Romani women has been a continuous effort through European history (Kenrick and Puxon, 1978, 1995; Friedlander, 1995; Trombley, 1988; Willems, 1997).

---

[74] Crowhurst Isabel and Trehan Nidhi gave an overview on the eugenic history of involuntary sterilization in the European countries. They described that how (pseudo)scientific eugenics thinking became established within European(and American)scientific discourse, the enactment of various laws on sterilization and their implementation. In Europe the first sterilization law was passed in Swiss in 1928. Subsequently, in Denmark 1929, Sweden and Norway 1934, Finland and Danzig 1935, Estonia 1936, and Iceland in 1938.The law on sterilization was adopoted 1933 in Germany which was the strongest and most visible in the public domain in Europe. In the article they exposing the coerced sterilization in western and northern Europe but also they showed this contentious practice within post WWII central and eastern European communist regimes. Eugenics concepts and thoughts become widespread in European countries which emphasize the social and national rejuvenation derived from theories of evolution and heredity. Crowhurst Isabel and Trehan Nidhi "Minority groups and reproductive rights: coerced sterilization and female genital mutilation in Europe",(Crowhurst, Trehan 2006).

4.2 Health and Gender

Across Europe, available data shows significantly higher rates of illness and mortality amongst Roma than amongst other populations.[75] According to the European Commission's (2006: 1) project summary

> [the] health status of Roma is far below the mainstream society in Europe: the life expectancy rate for Europe's Roma population is approximately 10 years lower than the overall average. The incidence of environment-related illnesses is higher for Roma than for the general population. Lack of vaccination and nutritional deficiencies are detected in the case of children.

Moreover, gender, ethnicity and class[76] have profound impact on the health status of Romani women.[77]

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that

> […] across continents and cultures, established gender norms and values mean that women typically control less power and fewer resources than men. Not surprisingly, this often gives men an advantage - in the economic, political, and educational arenas, but also with regard to health and healthcare.[78]

It is interesting to note that the WHO's approach distinguishes women's vulnerable health position from that of men, exposing an asymmetrical power structure at play. Ethnographic studies indicate similar phenomena in Romani communities, and moreover, the gendered status of women in various communities makes them more vulnerable and defenseless regarding their health status, as compared to Romani men. For instance, large numbers of Romani women suffer physical or sexual violence committed by an intimate male partner at some point in their life.[79] Some studies in Hungary suggest a trend in the underdeveloped

---

[75] Recent studies on the health status of Roma include: Delphio Consulting (2004); European Commission (2006); Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens (2003); Council of Europe – European Roma and Travelers division (2008).

[76] . Szelényi and Treiman's study, "Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989" provides data suggesting that Romani families are larger, less educated and display higher rates of unemployment than the general population. Interestingly, Szelényi and Treiman used a non-stratified, proportional random sample of the population in their survey. See http://archiv.soc.cas.cz/SSEE/SSEE.intro.html (Accessed on February 26, 2009) Sources: Ladányi János (1996: 32), cited by Rebeca Jean Emigh, Eva Fodor, and Ivan Szelenyi (2001).

[77] *Avoiding the Dependency Trap :* The Roma Human Development Report, UNDP, 2003. The report points out that between 4-5 million people in the Central and Eastern European region endure living conditions close to those of sub-Saharan Africa in terms of illiteracy, infant mortality and malnutrition. The full report is available at http://roma.undp.sk (accessed on December 22, 2008)

[78] See World Health Organization (WHO) at http://www.who.int/gender/genderandwomen/en/index.html

79 There is a reference to domestic violence in "On the Situation of Romani Women in the Republic of Macedonia" (October-November 2005). Prior to the January 2006 review of Macedonia's compliance with the UN's CEDAW, the Roma Centre of Skopje (RCS), ERRC, and OSI 's Roma Women's Initiative (RWI), with technical and financial assistance from UNIFEM's Bratislava office, submitted a parallel report to CEDAW highlighting key human rights issues facing Romani women in Macedonia. For full text see: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/macedonia_20051101/nwp_2006 0303.pdf

regions of northeast and southern Hungary where Roma are overrepresented, and where every year adolescent Romani girls are becoming mothers earlier than ten years ago (Durst 2007: 74-103; Virág 2003). The high fertility rate is explained not by cultural phenomena, but rather as an outcome of severe ethnic and social territorial segregation. There are also particular reproductive health problems, such as sterilization, miscarriages and low birthrates which - amongst Europeans - solely affect Romani women's health status.

In 2003, the Council of Europe and the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia published one of the first gender-related reports to surface in international debates, focusing on the issue of the vulnerable health status of Romani women (2003). According to the report, the main cause of the poor health status of Romani women is their severely limited access to health care. Several reports show that when Romani women do receive health care, it is usually of poor quality due to discrimination based on their ethnicity, gender and class belonging. Moreover, they are subjected to discrimination based on assumptions that Romani women's reproduction and fertility rate is higher in relation to non-Romani women[80]. The core problem here is the European perspective of the 'undesirability' of the community – perceived in less-than-human terms and as a drain on society. One can contrast this explicitly discriminatory approach, however, to pro-natal government policies in France, encouraging French, i.e. whitewomen to have children, instead of "discouraging" Roma women to do so. In other words, the question is not about high fertility, but about *whose* fertility? If we talked about white middle-class women's fertility, a rise would be praised within European societies.

However, to date there is no adequate policy attention given to Romani women's particular needs and lack of access to healthcare at the national level. There is not even a constructive discussion about demographic changes in the Roma population. If there is some concern about Romani women's healthcare issues in some areas, unfortunately it is coming from right-wing extremist groups, such as the chauvinist Hungarian political party *Jobbik* or the Bulgarian formation *Attaka* – out of fear of supposedly losing their own white nation. However, if offered the benefit of serious educational investments from early childhood to the university, a young and growing Romani population could strengthen the future workforce, i.e. the much needed tax payers for an aging Europe. Realizing this would require serious structural and policy changes – paradigm shifts - which might challenge the current neoliberal perspective where welfare systems are diminishing and/or privatized.

According to the late Tracy Smith, during the 1970s and 1980s, most studies[81] adhered to an insensitive empirical approach to Romani women's health, which tended to blame Romani 'lifestyles' and culture for health problems, rather than addressing deep-rooted structural inequalities, such as poverty and illiteracy preventing this population from accessing and receiving adequate healthcare (1997: 183-196). These kinds of studies - directly or indirectly, perpetuated the socially inferior, 'undesirable' image of Roma, without offering any substantive analysis of their social and economic exclusion which significantly impacts health. Romani women's reproductive rights were severely violated during the twentieth century European history, based on a belief that the increasing 'undesirable' Romani

---

[80] Various sources refer to the complex health problems and discrimination faced by Romani women in public health institutions (EUMC/Council of Europe, 2003,) (UNDP 2006, pp.92-93).

[81] She referred to the following studies: (Barsocas, Karayanni, .Tsipouras, Baibas, Bouloukos, Papadatos 1979) Also the work done by Thomas James D., Margaret M. Doucette, Donna Catanzano Thomas and John D. Stoeckle (Thomas, Doucette, Thomas, Stoeckle. 1987)

population poses a threat to society (Trehan and Crowhurst 2006). Therefore, currently reported human rights violations, such as the coercive sterilization of Romani women are grounded in a historical legacy of previous discriminatory policies by the European states.

The Nazi regime viewed Roma as a diseased population which needed to be sterilized in order to prevent the spread of their 'disease' by reproduction; they referred to Romani communities with the term '*ziguenerplage*' or 'Gypsy plague'. On 14 July 1933, Germany passed a law permitting the forced sterilization of Gypsies [*Zigeuner*] and others considered "undesirable" (Lewy 2000: 38). In subsequent years, Roma were subjected to forced sterilization, internment, forced labor, and eventually extermination at the hands of the Nazi regime and its local allies in Nazi-occupied territories. Even after World War II, discrimination against Romani women continued, as for example sterilization practices in the socialist bloc[82] but also in some of the Western European countries.[83]

4.3 Forced sterilization

Coercive sterilization rose high on the international agenda with the publication of the report *Body and Soul: Forced Sterilization and Other Assaults on Roma Reproductive Freedom in Slovakia* in 2003. The report cites 110 cases of forced and coerced sterilization of Romani women and reveals widespread patterns of discrimination in public hospitals, including verbal and physical abuse by medical staff, racially discriminatory standards of care, misinformation in health matters and denials of access to medical records. The report had an extensive influence on Slovak political discourse inside and outside of the country. Amongst many other developments, for example, Slovak authorities attempted to deflect attention from their responsibilities by disparaging the report and harassing and intimidating Romani women and their advocates,[84] making the report an initiator of Europe-wide discussions on the sterilization of Romani women not just in Slovakia but in many other countries as well, such as the Czech Republic and Hungary.

As already implied above, the coercive sterilization of Romani women is not an isolated phenomenon limited to Slovakia alone. ERRC (2006) also published a report on the discrimination against Roma in public healthcare with a specific chapter on coercive sterilization. Several lawsuits were initiated regarding alleged coercive sterilization of

---

[82] See further on sterilization policies of the socialist countries in the Helsinki Watch/Human Rights Watch report, *Struggling for Ethnic Identity: The Gypsies of Hungary,* (Helsinki Watch/ Human Rights Watch. 1993).. See also McCagg, W.D. "Gypsy Policy in Socialist Hungary and Czechoslovakia, 1945-1989." (McCagg 1991, pp. 31-36) and Ulc, Otto 'Integration of Gypsies' in Czechoslovakia', (Ulc 1991, pp. 107-17)

[83] Lewy (2000: 39) notes that "In Sweden, large-scale sterilizations were carried out on those accused of leading an "asocial way of life" well into the post-World War period." According to the World Council of Churches, in Norway, "[Romani] children were taken from their parents, women suffered from forced sterilization, people were named "insane" so that society could get rid of "troublemakers". See further http://www2.wcc-coe.org/ccdocuments.nsf/index/plen-4.4-en.html, accessed on 2007-05-12

[84] There is a summary of the government of Slovakia's response to "Body and Soul: Forced Sterilization and Other Assaults on Roma Reproductive Freedom in Slovakia", see full report at: http://www.reproductiverights.org/pdf/report_slovakiafolloup_0603.pdf

Romani women in the former socialist countries, including Hungary[85], the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

One of the most startling pieces of news on this subject emerged in July 2008 when it was revealed that the Hungarian authorities failed to respond to the UN's Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which in 2006, urged the Hungarian government to provide appropriate compensation for Ms. A.S. who was sterilized "without her full and informed consent":

> Ms A.S. is a Hungarian citizen of Romani origin. On 30 May 2000, a medical examination confirmed that she was pregnant. On 2 January 2001, she felt pains and she lost her amniotic fluid; this was accompanied by heavy bleeding. She was taken to hospital, where she was examined. It was diagnosed that her fetus had died in the womb, that her womb had contracted and that the placenta had broken off. She was told that a caesarean section had to be immediately performed in order to remove the dead fetus. While on the operating table, she was asked to consent to the caesarean section and she also signed a hand-written statement written by the doctor on the same page: "Having knowledge the death of the fetus inside my womb I firmly request 'my sterilization'. I do not intend to give birth again, nor do I wish to become pregnant." After this, sterilization was performed. However, Ms A.S. did not know the meaning of the word "sterilization" (Danka 2006: 32).

Furthermore, the report stated that

> she was given no information about the nature of sterilization, its risks and consequences, or about other forms of contraception. This was revealed from her testimony and the lack of any related documentation in this regard. She had lost a great deal of blood by the time she reached the hospital and was in a state of shock after learning that her fetus had died in her womb. Hospital records reveal that seventeen minutes passed between the ambulance arriving at the hospital and the completion of both operations. She only learnt that she would not be able to give birth again upon leaving the hospital when she asked the doctor when she could try to have another baby. (Danka 2006: 35).

In 2001, her attorney filed a claim for civil damages against the hospital, but the Hungarian court - in two separate instances - reached the conclusion that sterilizations, as such, are fully "reversible operations" and that since Ms A.S had provided no proof that she had suffered lasting detriment, she was therefore not entitled to any compensation. According to health experts, as well as the UN's CEDAW, female sterilizations are not fully reversible operations, in other words, there would be very little chance that Ms A.S.'s sterilization could be reversed. The Hungarian Court, in reaching its judgment, simply dismissed the expert evidence provided by public health experts and medical professionals.

Having exhausted all available domestic remedies, ERRC and the Legal Defense Bureau for National and Ethnic Minorities, a domestic Hungarian NGO, filed a joint complaint against Hungary to CEDAW concerning the illegal sterilization. In 2006, CEDAW concluded that

---

[85] According to ERRC's statement at the OSCE's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in October 2006 in Warsaw, there was "an important breakthrough at an international level in August 2006 when the UN's CEDAW condemned Hungary for violating the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in connection with the sterilization of a Romani woman without her consent in January 2001. Ms. S. had been admitted to hospital following a miscarriage and was sterilized without being provided with information she could understand concerning the implications of the procedure. CEDAW ruled that Hungary's failure to provide Ms. S. with due compensation for the act violated international human rights law." See http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2637 (accessed on 2007.05.07).

Hungary had violated the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women because of the illegal sterilization of Ms A.S. The CEDAW conclusion was based upon the arguments put forth by ERRC/NEKI stating that "sterilization is intended to be irreversible, that the success rate of surgery to reverse sterilization is low and depends on many risks." Furthermore, the Committee stated that the applicant "has a right protected by Article 10 (h) of the Convention to specific information on sterilization and alternative procedures for family planning in order to guard against such an intervention being carried out without her having made a fully informed choice."

In 2008, ERRC organized a campaign to compensate Romani women who had been sterilized. The spokesperson of the campaign stated that even though in 2006 Hungary violated the Convention, CEDAW urged the authorities to take the necessary steps and compensate the victim of illegal sterilization. Finally, in 2009 Ms A.S. was compensated by the government and received symbolic amount of money.

Meanwhile, Ms A.S. divorced from her husband, prompted largely by her coerced sterilization. She subsequently became seriously depressed, during which time she did not receive appropriate support from any advocacy organizations, not even from those who had originally advocated for her rights[86]. She desperately waited for the government's financial compensation over a long period of time, and would have simply been happy with a public apology. Before receiving any financial compensation, the Hungarian Ministry of Justice came up with the absurd idea of financing the victim's operation to reverse the sterilization performed. This idea was strongly contested by the Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs, where the gender department is located, on the grounds that this would have been an "unfair compensation"[87].

This case illustrates that even in those instances when the issue of sterilization against Romani women is recognized at the highest institutional levels, the *act of recognition itself* does not necessarily result in justice for Romani communities in Europe, nor for individuals such as Ms A.S. in this particular case.

Despite the fact that at several international conferences, meetings and workshops the issue of forced sterilization against Romani women in Europe was raised, the fight against sterilization of Romani women did not receive enough political support from gender advocacy groups, neither in Slovakia nor in Hungary. As the former director of *Poradna (Centre for Human and Civil Rights)*, a Slovakian human rights NGO lawyer, Barbora Bukovská, notes that "Slovak feminist organizations were not brave enough to defend Romani women's reproductive rights. They did not articulate this issue as a gender [rights] violation, rather they relegated it to the field of 'Roma issue'"[88].

Moreover, in Slovakia the sterilization issue was seen as a highly political attack on the Slovak nation. Many Slovak citizens protested, saying that it was not the right time to raise this issue. *Poradna's* efforts to publicize sterilization abuse were seen as potentially jeopardizing Slovakia's entry into the EU in 2004. According to Bukovská, even some Slovak feminists viewed them as 'traitors' to Slovakia. In addition, some Slovak leaders

---

[86] See Bukovská's (2006) excellent piece about the tensions and power imbalances between legal advocates and their clients from vulnerable groups.

[87] Author's interview with G.J., a Gender Officer in the Hungarian Ministry of Social and Labour Affairs, Budapest, August 12, 2008.

[88] Author's interview with B. Bukovská, Budapest, June 28, 2008.

claimed that human rights activists advocating on behalf of the Romani women were all foreigners, and thus they did not understand Slovak social reality[89].

Bukovská also noted that one of the most disturbing denials was that of the Slovak Roman Catholic Church - generally a strong advocate of pro-life positions and pro-natal policies - who were totally silent on this issue. It would have been interesting to see the Church's reaction if sterilization had been performed on ethnic Slovaks in the same manner as on Romani women.

In Hungary, the sterilization of Romani women was similarly constructed in public discourse as solely a 'Roma issue'. Hungarian feminist organizations were not even involved in the campaign organized by ERRC in July 2008 for Hungarian Romani women whose reproductive rights had been violated. Moreover, feminist organizations made no conscious effort to construct a critical approach in connection to the issue of forced sterilization as an instance of intersectional violence based on gender, ethnicity and class. Rather, they prefer to use exclusionary categories such as either gender or ethnicity, whilst ignoring the intersectional territory which would require more in-depth analysis. Certainly, this could also be a failure on the part of international elite organizations, such as ERRC, to reach out to Hungarian feminists and construct the issue of sterilization as an intersectional problem that is a violation with both ethnic and gender components.

4.3.1 Sterilization recognized by Romani men

All the cases illustrated above in human rights reports underline the reality that a specific gender dynamic, combined with deep-rooted poverty and racial discrimination, can have a devastating impact on Romani women's access to healthcare, and increase their vulnerability to poor mental health and abuse by medical professionals and state authorities.

In the past few years, there have been some developments regarding intersectional thinking in relation to Romani women, such as at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance (WCAR) in Durban, South Africa in 2001. A member of the Roma delegation attending the conference, Andrea Bucková, spoke up and exposed an internal gender dynamic within Roma:

> Romani leaders (exclusively men) were only allowed to speak about the forced sterilization, as an effort to reduce and control the Roma population, if seen as a violation of Roma rights and not necessarily women's human rights" (Interview with Mihalache, 2001).

According to Romani women participants, this was considered an insolent statement by many of the male Romani activists. Romani women's sterilization, I would argue, is predominantly about Romani women, but as minority women's bodies are also the site of ethnic cleansing (in wars, through rapes, but in this case through sterilization), it is also an assault on the Romani community as a whole as it effectively destroys future generations.

The issue of sterilization is one of the most extreme examples of gendered racial discrimination where an intersectional approach can and should be applied. Despite the fact that the male leadership did not fully support Romani women in their attempts to discuss

---

[89] By 'foreign', they were referring to the New York-based Center for Reproductive Rights, which jointly with *Poradna* published the path-breaking advocacy report.

internal oppressions or domestic violence in an official report from the Conference, the UN recognized the intersectional discrimination of Romani women as they state in the report:

> As a member of the Romani population, she has few advocates and is the target of constant hostility. She is marginalized within her community because of her minority status and within her family because of her gender. The same can be said of an aboriginal woman living in Australia, a Dalit woman living in India, a female asylum seeker living in England and so on. These women live at the crossroads of gender and racial discrimination (UN WCAR 2002).

Thus, the UN report partly responds to the claims of Romani women activists. The social, political, even economic responses connected to their disadvantage generates their subject position in their social context.

Many men in the Romani political movement hold positions which share similarities to those male Romani activists who encouraged Romani women to talk exclusively about the sterilization issue at WCAR in Durban. This resonates with the claims of Yuval-Davis and Anthias (1989) that men's interest is to control women and their sexuality which is central to the processes of nationalization and ethnicization of groups. If they allow women to talk about the internal gender fragmentation, it could destroy "Romani political solidarity", which must be the normative foundation of their own political significance. To condemn sterilization as an extreme form of discrimination is to fit it perfectly into the pan-European contested political identity-building process. This is a classical picture about women in many other national and ethnic processes as a symbolic repository of collective identity. Women bear the burden of being 'mothers of the nation', as well as being those who reproduce the boundaries of ethnic/national groups, who transmit and cultivate culture and who are the privileged signifiers of national/ethnic difference. Certainly, the sterilization of Romani women threatens the whole Romani population because it limits the reproduction of the disputed 'Romani political nation'. This tension between Romani women and men presumably comes from the fact that all activists engaged in Romani political activism base their tacit agreement and solidarity towards each other on the loyalty to their ethnicity, which is defined as the centre of gravity dominating Romani-related discourses. According to this perspective then, other critical gender issues such as domestic violence and internal (and internalized) oppressions, thus just dilute the central focus of the movement.

Another reading of sterilization can be that the state/health institutions deprive Romani men from their reproductive power. These state/health institutions render authoritative decisions about future Romani souls creating an inevitable competition with Romani men above reproductive competences. In the case of Ms A.S., for example, when her husband received the news about his wife's sterilization, he became completely depressed and later on, decided to divorce his wife. Indeed, this is not particular to Roma per se, in many other 'traditional' and oppressed communities the lost ability of the wife to procreate can easily lead to divorce.

What is noteworthy here is the power differential between a community which has been facing hostility for centuries (Roma), and the outside world and its oppressive imaginarium of them. In an oppressed group like the Roma - who have been racialized and minoritized through social and political negotiations - there is a high probability that those who are oppressed will become new oppressors in a different domain of social life. These forces of centuries of oppression(s) carried within the collective memories of a community can thus turn against themselves and the outside world, or against those in the community who are most vulnerable. Hence various types of violence and discrimination against Romani women are not cultural phenomena *per se*, rather they should be viewed as the outcomes of

manifestations of various oppressions. Although I do not wish to deny individual responsibility and one's volition *to not act* as a violent aggressor, an awareness of the hierarchical social oppression matrix in which Romani males are located is crucial to recognize. The reaction of Romani male leaders to sterilization is a defensive measure to protect their own reproductive power, and from their perspective, by doing so, they do not lose the focus of their political interventions. Ethnicity (and thus racial discrimination) is maintained as the most dominant frame and basis for political claims.

4.4 'Saving' Romani women: contradictions, contestations and challenges

Apart from sterilization, there are particular gender issues related to Romani women which receive international coverage in the media or generate political concern, mostly illustrating the 'exotic nature' of Romani culture or serving to depict it as backward, primitive, and oppressive. This kind of representation and motive is known from the colonial script of "saving brown women from brown men". This construction of brown women suggests that they are simultaneously victims of male oppression and objects of compassion by colonizers. As Loomba (1998: 218) states:

> [F]or both the colonizers and the colonized, women, gender relations as well as patterns of sexuality come to symbolize both such a cultural essence and cultural differences. Veiling, clitoral excision, polygamy, widow immolation, matriliny, or same-sex relations (to take just a few examples) are interpreted as symptoms of the untranslatable cultural essence of particular cultures.

This view purports that colored women's issues are recognized if they illustrate that their culture is distinct, alien, exotic, and oppresses women, thereby confirming the expectations of the white audience (Mohanty 1992). The issues confronting women of color which are well received by the media include the following: sati, dowry death, veiling, and arranged marriage.

I would like to provide an example from another cultural context, where internalized forms of oppression are expressed as cultural practices. *Sati*, the 'traditional' Hindu practice (more common amongst Rajputs and a few other groups) of a widow immolating herself on her husband's funeral pyre, originated as a partial response to various invasions and wars in the course of Indian history. Attitudes regarding the origins and significance of sati (meaning 'chaste') are controversial (Oldenberg 1994; Thapar 1989; Sugirtharajah 2003). However, to discern the contemporary cultural relevance of this ritual, one must be cognizant of the role of women in Hindu society, acknowledge the myths which venerated sati and interrogate its origins. Similarly, child marriages within particular Romani communities persist partly as a legacy of the several hundred years of slavery in Moldavia and Wallachia (practiced until 1865), in which context early marriage was an effective way of protecting Romani girls from molestation and rape by their owners or owners' sons (Oprea 2005b). In this way, one can better comprehend why such phenomenon exists in the first place, and whenever various communities face extreme oppression and violence, the impact on internal cultural patterns and their distortions requires interrogation.

68

This mode of representation of women of color, as formulated by Anne McClintock (1995) and Ania Loomba (1998) they suggests that Third World women offer a discursive 'site' rather than the subject of certain cultural-historical debates. Most of the time, those issues that capture the attention of society clearly legitimize the image of cultural and social backwardness of Third World peoples (Roma included), but only because discussions of these 'cultural' practices are almost never contextualized, nor is there much reflection on how, why, and what did Third World People (Roma included) react to in a specific localized social, cultural and political context. Such explanations would offer a different reading of these stories, because 'untranslatable cultural essences' are not a fixed sculptural development, but rather they have been developed in a relational or reactional mode towards their internal and external communities.

With regards to the recognition of Romani women's issues, arranged marriage, especially with an emphasis on the youth of the bride, is perhaps the most visible 'cultural phenomenon' which continues to receive the widest media attention in Europe.

In 2003, in the context of the EU accession process, the issue of *Romani* arranged early marriages gained frontline visibility in European politics as the wedding of Miss Cioaba, a 12-year-old Romani girl from Romania drew huge media attention. A heated debate emerged within the framework of Romania's preparation for EU accession, while The international media depicted the arranged marriage as an oppressive and criminal traditional act by the girl's Romani community.[90] The debate in the European Parliament was initiated by the British MEP and the EU's Special Rapporteur for Romania, Baroness Emma Nicholson, who called upon the Romanian police to "remove Ana-Maria [the Romani girl due to be married] from harm", which prompted the Romanian authorities, well aware of Romania's EU accession in 2007, mounted an inquiry (Macrae 2004). According to Macrae (2004), a journalist reporting on the story for the British press, "the effect was to encourage another episode in the vilification of Romani people". That is one way of seeing it.

In a more nuanced analysis, Oprea (2005) used the example and the occasion of the intensely publicized wedding to challenge the prevailing images of Romani women in the media and political discourse which portrays Romani women as culturally and traditionally oppressed by their communities. Oprea's point was "not to deny that Romani women [were] profoundly oppressed, but to challenge the mono-focal conceptualization of 'Romani culture' as being the sole factor affecting their experiences" (133-148).

In 2009 Romani Criss, a Bucharest-based Romani NGO, published a report on the issues of early marriages within Roma Communities in Romania,[91] contributing to establishing formal discussions on sensitive issues in the context of Roma political activism. The report distinguishes three types of marriages involving minors, arranged marriage, forced marriage and early marriage, and attempts to analyze this phenomenon through various case studies.

---

[90] 'Gypsy Child Couple Separated', 2 October, 2003; BBC online,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3159818.stm (Accessed 5 May 2007)
91 The most insightful NGO's report on early marriage. *"Are the Rights of the Child Negotiable? The Case of Early Marriages within Roma Communities in Romania"* (Bitu, Morteanu 2009). Bucaharest, supported by the UNICEF and the Romani Criss. This report was inspired by the harsh public debate on early marriage which was stimulated by the media.

Spivak (1988), a leading feminist literary and post-colonial scholar, in her writing on *sati*, the practice in India ("officially" until 1829) of widows immolating themselves upon their husbands' funeral pyres[92], argues that

> the masculine imperialist ideological formation that shaped that desire into 'the daughter's seduction' is part of the same formation that constructs the monolithic 'third world women' (1988:296).

Spivak identifies the colonial conquest as the same mechanism elaborated on in Freudian psychological analysis, characterized by a denial of guilt, scapegoating, the finding of excuses, and projection onto the Other. Instead of facing structural exclusionary forces that interplay with internal (as well as internalized) oppression, it is easier to interpret practices like sati as cultural phenomena clearly pivoting upon the colonized Other. Based on Spivak's argumentation, the manifestation of these practices is used as a pretext for "saving brown women", a huge part of colonial desires and imperialistic advances which then become masked as a "social mission" to intervene.

In 2001, Enisa Eminova, an outstanding Romani woman from Macedonia, began to organize workshops for Romani women in her community, recalled that

> […]the group had no agenda, apart from their determination to do more than talk. How about doing something practical to advance the rights of Roma women?... [O]ne tradition stood out as particularly debasing: a humiliating virginity test on a Roma woman's wedding day. (Accessible at http://advocacynet.org/resource/492. Accessed on July 23, 2009)

Later on, she conducted a research project on the virginity cult and a related campaign was supported by OSI's Network Women's Program. This project was highly criticized by Romani leaders, including traditional Romani women, with some even viewing Eminova as a traitor who made an outrageous attack on Romani culture. Moreover, some Romani men criticized Western liberal feminism for 'invading' the Romani movement by brainwashing potential Romani women leaders. [93] The fundamental question is again how Romani women's activists can talk about these issues - what kind of theoretical framework and argumentation can be used, which would not in the same instance condemn Romani culture?

4.5 Concluding remarks

It is important to expose that in the course of forced sterilization and early marriage, the European public is "otherizing" Romani women and making them either an "exotic" other or a gendered "subaltern" in our European societies.

The work 'Critical Studies of Whiteness' provides the analysis of racialized relations of dominance to make visible how the unmarked 'white' norm is constructed, instead of looking at the 'different' and 'racialized' other. According to Ruth Frankenberg "whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege", and it is simultaniously a "standpoint", a set of cultural practices that are usually invisible and not named. (Frankenberg 1993:1) The

---

[92]Read more about *sati* by Oldenburg (1994).

[93] Author's interview with S.J. on 28 July, 2006.

non-Roma "whiteness", in relation to Romani women, constructs their political and social location in European public discourse. The Romani women's sterilization illustrates the process of conjunction of whiteness and intersection of gender, race and ethnicity.

There is a wide range of feminist theoretical intervention on the body which underlay the theorization of the forced sterilization. Michel Foucault is one of the most significant theorists who contributed to the philosophical and political understanding of the body. His concern was to problematize how bodies are arbitrarily and often violently constructed in order to legitimate different regimes of domination (Foucault 1978, 1979, 1980, 1988). Through the practice of early marriage and the virginity cult of Romani women their body becomes the primary site for the operation of modern forms of patriarchical power. Following this line, Romani women embodied difference becomes the primary object for masculinist power to control and govern their bodies.

CHAPTER FIVE: STRUCTURAL AND DISCURSIVE MANIFESTATIONS OF GENDER, ETHNIC AND CLASS INEQUALITIES[94]

The first part of this chapter provides an overview on available quantitative data which demonstrates gender, ethnic and class inequalities of Romani women. With regards to the political activism of this segment of society, very frequently Romani women activists (as well as NGOs and governmental experts) are unable to use and theorize statistical evidence to expose various forms of intersectional discriminations. There are various reasons for this, including lack of disaggregated data, poor analysis of researches and lack of capacities to interpret statistical data.

Irish Marion Young argues also that the structural inequalities of gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality are inadequately perceived by the dominant paradigm of equality and inclusion (Young 2009). The discourse on equality and equal opportunity ignores the deep material differences in social position, division of labor, socialized capacities, normalized standards and ways of living that permanently disadvantage members of historically excluded groups, such as Roma. The language of equality tends to indentify equality with sameness thereby believes that the best way to pursue social and political equality is to ignore group differences, particularly in public policy.

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is, therefore, to give an account of the structural inequalities of institutional racism and sexism against Romani women. Racism as well as sexism consists of structural processes that normalize the systemic exclusion based on race and sex. I focus on different aspects of inequalities of Romani women by using statistical data. Also necessary to point out the need for further analysis of underlying social processes that create structural inequality.

Disaggregated data collection on gender and ethnicity is the necessary first step in providing a more complex analysis. It has to be noted again that, as numerous reports and policy papers on Roma issues indicated, there is a lack of disaggregated statistics on the situation of Romani women (EC 2008, 2007). Although, the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) recommends that disaggregated data should include color, religion, language, nationality, national or ethnic origin, and gender, in order to allow for investigation into the extent and nature of double or multiple discrimination,[95] there are still very few sample- based sociological surveys and studies that allow for comparisons of the situation of Romani women with that of non-Romani women, or Roma men.

Nevertheless, available data does indicate significant disparities between Romani and non-Romani women, as well as gender gaps between Romani women and men in education, employment, access to healthcare and vulnerability to violence. Hence, in the first part of the chapter I will explore the main areas where the comparative disadvantage of Romani women

---

[95] See for example, country-by-country reports of the Council of Europe European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on the situation of racism and intolerance in CoE member states, which include suggestions and proposals. Third Reports on Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, and Norway comment on the value of an intersectional approach. All reports can be viewed at: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp (Accessed March 12, 2009).

has been documented, drawing attention to the potential areas of intersectional discrimination.

In the second part of this chapter, I will review the discourses of major inter-governmental organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with a special focus on their languages and initiatives on the Romani women's issues developed in the last decade. In other words, in this section I will focus on what we may call "positive" policy initiatives addressing the situation of Romani women, and indicate how an intersectional approach would improve these policies and the policy approach to the situation of Romani women more generally. I also argue, however, that policies aimed at improving the situation of Roma/Romani women 'shrink' the potentials contained in the concept of intersectionality and most often divert from a comprehensive notion of multiple inequalities to focus only on two aspects of inequality, gender and ethnicity.[96]

5.1 Interaction of poverty and ethnicity

Data on the specific situation of Romani women in Central and Southeast Europe is still scarce, but there are examples of edifying data collections and analyses that integrate a focus on Romani women. A household survey carried out in 2000 by the Center for Comparative Research at the Sociology Department of Yale University addressed the ethnic dimension of poverty across five countries in Central Europe – Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia – in a comparative quantitative assessment of the living conditions of Roma (Ringold and Tracy 2002; Emigh and Szelényi 2001). One of the overall conclusions of this survey was that the probability of being poor was higher for Roma than non-Roma, irrespective of educational achievement and employment status. Race/ethnicity and gender are used as categories of analysis in the survey, as well as ensuing publications (Emigh and Szelényi 2001). However, race and gender are employed as separate categories, which is why the analysis speaks about "racialization" and "feminization" of poverty as two distinct, though similar, processes: the feminization of poverty is understood as an "analogous concept" to the "understanding of the racialization of poverty". The authors of the survey and of subsequent publications discuss potential links and interconnections between these processes in following way;. The authors argue that there is a classificatory struggle around gender and feminization of poverty occurs "when women are concentrated in poverty and when biological, not social, causes are proposed as the explanation of this concentration" (Emigh, Fodor, and Szelényi 2001: 7). The paper also addresses "the interaction between ethnicity and gender" in poverty and concludes that "the interaction between gender and race creates a double disadvantage for Roma women" (Emigh, Fodor, and Szelényi 2001: 22). Furthermore, the category of 'Romani women' is not homogenous. Household poverty correlates to various factors, such as the employment status of the head of the household, educational achievement of the household head, the number of children in the family, the gender of the breadwinner, and whether the household is located in a rural or urban area. Romani women who are undereducated, married at a young age, have more than one child, are unemployed, and live in rural areas face a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than

---

[96] Similarly, Lombardo and Verloo (2009) argue that across different political contexts, various social and political actors engage in trying to "shrink" the meaning of intersectionality and limit the areas in which it can be applied, to "bend" it to better fit with other issues, and to "stretch" it to meet emergent needs.

Romani women who are better educated, have one or no children, earn income, or live in urban areas. Following from this, it is quite conceivable that Romani women who experience the highest levels of absolute poverty also face greater gender-related vulnerability in their own communities.

5.2 Education

It is a widely accepted notion that equal access to quality education will increase the employment opportunities of Roma. However, numerous reports and studies highlight the remarkable discrepancies in education between Roma and non-Roma, with few studies also exploring the educational differences between Romani men and women, or those between Romani and non-Romani women (e.g. EUMAP 2007). Raising the level and quality of education is one of the primary objectives of the UN Millennium Development Goals,[97] and also one of the priorities of the Lisbon Strategy[98] with respect to improving the education and training systems in Europe by 2010.

On account of how results have continued to fall short of expectations, in March 2004, the European Council launched a mid-term review process of the Lisbon Strategy, as an outcome of which, the European Council adopted a European pact for young people, which aims to place the issue of vocational and social integration of young people and demographic dynamism at the heart of the EU's activities. In addition, as a continuation and reaction to the current economic crisis, the European Commission recently (June 2010) adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy. Improving education levels and promoting social inclusion in particular through the reduction of poverty remains high on the agenda and constitutes one of the five key priorities of this strategy, which should be achieved through the quantification of the education and social inclusion/poverty indicators.

Therefore, international engagements could encourage policymakers to set indicators, which would provide adequate descriptions of the situation of Romani women. However, as the findings of currently available studies suggest, further gender-sensitive research in this field is urgently needed.

---

[97] For more on the Millennium Development Goals, see: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/ (accessed February 26, 2009).

[98] For more on the Lisbon Treaty, signed by the Heads of State or Government of the 27 Member States in Lisbon on 13 December 2007, visit: http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm (accessed February 26, 2009). See also: Commission of the European Communities (2004).

5.2.1 Overall educational attainment

The 2006 report by the UN Development Program (UNDP), *At Risk: Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe,* offers a comprehensive socio-economic analysis of the position of this ethnic group in eight countries of the region (UNDP 2006). Among many other findings, the report compellingly summarizes the severe educational deficit of Romani women: "Three quarters of Romani women do not complete primary education (compared with one in five men from Roma communities) and almost a third is illiterate (compared with 1 in 20 women from majority communities)" (UNDP 2006: 29).

In Hungary, a country not included in the 2006 UNDP analysis, significant discrepancies in educational attainment between Romani women and men were reported by Péter Farkas (2002). Farkas measured the overall educational achievement of parents of a group of Roma students and found significant difference between the overall educational achievement of Romani women and men especially at the high school level, in vocational or grammar school. Only 5.8 percent of Romani female parents graduated from vocational school, compared with 17.5 percent of male parents who had finished vocational school.

The impact of rural-urban divisions on the educational achievement of Romani women was presented by Ferenc Babusik, who carried out his research in northern Hungary (2002). The study shows that in the region of Ózd, 37.2 percent of Romani women between the ages of 17-29 did not complete elementary school, 30.7 percent of whom lived in the city and 46.4 percent lived in surrounding villages.

Presumably, there is a similar educational pattern in other European countries as well. Given the differences between the educational experience of Romani and non-Romani girls, as well as that of Romani girls and boys, one of the urgent tasks for governments and intergovernmental organizations is to raise gender awareness among policymakers in the educational system that develop programs for Roma education. Moreover, institutions and policy-makers should integrate gender analysis in the setting of targets for enrolment levels in vocational and higher education.

Here I shall provide an example to demonstrate how development policies in the field of education lack gender perspective. In Hungary, building on the negative experience of the first round of EU Structural Funds allocation, when Roma were often left out from the groups of beneficiaries, the Managing Authority for the Structural Funds integrated a requirement – in line with the mandatory Equal Opportunity horizontal objective - that all general infrastructural and other development projects in the field of education should demonstrate how they contribute to equal opportunities. However, this initiative does not specify targets, or special attention to educational attainment of Romani girls, hence the focus is on Romani children without further attention to gender differences.

5.2.2 Literacy rates

Research carried out by UNDP on the situation of Roma in eight countries in Southeast Europe found that gender inequalities in education were "most noticeable through high illiteracy rates among women: 32 percent of Romani women are illiterate compared to 22 percent of Roma men" (UNDP 2006: 33). The same UNDP report observes that the gender gap in literacy is "far less substantial in the case of majority communities, in which male and female illiteracy rates are low and broadly comparable – two and five percent, respectively" (UNDP 2006: 33.).

Literacy rates are good indicators of the multiple disadvantages Romani women face, because the gap in literacy rates for Romani women is not only a gender, but also an ethnic one. Data from Bulgaria shows significant differences in literacy between Bulgarian Roma women and majority Bulgarian women. According to the 2001 Bulgarian census,[99] the illiteracy rate among Romani women is eight times higher than among non-Romani women in Bulgaria (18.83 percent for Romani women, compared to 2.29 percent for non-Romani women).

5.2.3 Drop-out rates

In most Central and Eastern European countries, available data on drop-out rates and the proportion of Roma pupils in the total number of pupils clearly demonstrates that the average number of years Roma children spend in school is much lower than the national average (EUMAP 2007). For example, data published in 2003 by the International Center for Minority Studies and Inter-Cultural Relations in Bulgaria shows significant disparities in drop-out rates between Bulgarian Roma, Bulgarians, and Turkish-Bulgarian pupils (EUMAP 2007: 36-37). According to this survey, drop-out rates for pupils between the ages of 15 and 19 years were: 3.9 percent among Bulgarians, 21 percent among Turkish-Bulgarians, and 42.8 percent among Bulgarian Roma. This survey also found that in the overall population the self-reported drop-out rates are higher among rural Muslim Roma (25.6 percent), as well as among Muslim Romani girls nationwide (21.2 percent) than in majority populations. These statistics provide evidence that there are further differences based on gender, religion (Muslim) and class (in rural areas, poverty rates are higher than in the city and employment opportunities are fewer) among the larger group of Roma students. An earlier qualitative study conducted in 2001 in eight settlements in Bulgaria found that Romani women were much less likely to have attended school than Romani men, with 29 percent of Romani women had never been enrolled in school or had dropped out before finishing fourth grade, while this number is only 11 percent in the case of Romani men. Romani women were also less likely to have continued on to upper secondary school (Ringold 2001: 26).

Certain practices support the withdrawal of Romani pupils from the public education system. For example, according to educational professionals, the Hungarian practice of awarding a child the status of "private student,"[100] which releases both the school and the parents from the obligation of ensuring compulsory education, is frequently used as a technical solution for getting Romani girls out of school when they marry. The number of private students can be a proxy indicator for education experiences of young Roma women in Hungary, but not in those countries where there is no such status at all, or if there is a private student's status then it is not used to refer to Roma students, particularly to young Romani girls.

The private student phenomenon in Hungary is but one example of potential intersectional discrimination of Romani girls, in which lack of more specific gender data precludes a more in-depth analysis. Unfortunately, most studies on school drop-out rates do not indicate the gender of Romani students either in the data, or in the analysis. Some ethnographic studies indicate that the opportunities for Romani girls to attend school are lower than for Romani

---

[99] The most reliable data produced by the National Statistical Institute (NSI), Census of the Population-Demographic and Social Characteristics of the Population, cited in EUMAP (2007: 40).

[100] The possibility to become a "private student" is a particularity of the Hungarian educational system. Parents can request this status for their child if the child is unable to attend school for some reason like for instance illness, involvement in professional sports and so on. The number of pupils of Roma origin among private students is disproportionately high as authorities try to keep "troublesome" Roma pupils out of the classroom or as Romani girls are kept from attending school due to marriage.

boys, much more so in traditional and socio-economically marginalized (rural) Roma communities than in socially integrated communities. For instance, in Romania a community based research which was carried out in 2005, Romani women said that they favored higher levels of education for boys rather than girls, because boys are traditionally seen as a future breadwinner of their families (Surdu and Surdu 2006: 46). Moreover, Romani mothers also explained that a girl's success in life depended very much on a successful marriage.

The above-quoted research from Bulgaria and Romania further shows that it is not sufficient to collect data on the general drop-out rate among Roma students, as there are significant further differences based on gender, ethnicity, and/or religious affiliation (such as for Muslim pupils) and class. Moreover, irregular school attendance by Romani students is a massive educational problem that may be caused by a number of social, economic and gender factors, such as illness, the expectation to fulfill household duties, early marriage and childbearing, desire to help the family by generating income, the inability of parents to provide appropriate clothing, or "hidden" school fees. All these aspects should be taken into account when educational policies address the issue of school drop-out. Even more importantly, these various factors cannot be understood merely on the basis of a general drop-out rate for the Roma ethnic group, hence further analysis and more complex approaches are required.

5.3 Labor market

5.3.1 Lack of labor market participation of Romani women

Employment is a principal means for the greater integration of Roma, with the international development community overwhelmingly agreeing on this point, as illustrated by reports concerning Roma labor market characteristics in Central and Southeast Europe released by the United Nations Development Fund (2005), or the World Bank (Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens 2005). Both studies found that unemployment rates were significantly higher among Roma than (non-Roma) majority communities. Despite the fact that, at the time, these studies were among the most comprehensive in the region, it is worth to mention that they lacked data on gender differences in Roma unemployment. Most recent studies integrate a gender perspective while researching Roma employment, or unemployment. A study carried out by the UNDP on Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe (2006) includes gender disaggregated data on each of the policy fields that it covers, including employment. Data on unemployment and employment rates by sex, which were collected for this study, show significant differences for Roma, but also for the majority population. Based on these findings, the report concludes that Romani women face a "double disadvantage" (UNDP 2006: 49).

Another report, published in 2006 by the European Commission's Expert Group on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment, *Gender Inequalities in the Risks of Poverty and Social Exclusion for Disadvantages Groups in Thirty European Countries,* underlined that there were "few available gender breakdowns of unemployment and employment conditions for the Roma" (European Commission 2006a: 109), and that the available evidence signaled "pronounced gender inequalities." The report also shows that in the Czech Republic 90 percent of the unemployed Roma individuals are women, in Bulgaria 80 percent of Roma women are unemployed and 66 percent have never held a paid job, in contrast to 34 percent of Roma men, while in Hungary, "the employment rate for Roma women is 16 percent

compared to 29 percent for Roma men, both of which rates are significantly lower than in the case of the non-Roma population (57 percent and 63 percent respectively).

Sociologist and human rights advocate Herta Tóth argued that there could be two reasons for the severe labor market disadvantage of Romani women. "Firstly," she argues that "Romani women continue to be invisible in most surveys and publications, and secondly most studies lack the gender perspective in that they continue to reproduce a narrow interpretation of 'economy' and 'work' - only focusing on the formal economy, and interpreting work as paid work only" (Tóth 2005: 1). According to Tóth, both the productive and reproductive roles of Romani women must be analyzed in order to understand their labor market position. Just as in the case of majority women, Romani women's domestic and reproductive roles are taken for granted and valued less than paid work. However, the difference is that Romani women are overrepresented among women domestic workers.

According to the 2006 UNDP study outlined above, employment rates for Romani women in some Southeast European countries are below 20 percent (UNDP 2006). The situation is very similar in Central European countries that are now EU member states. For example, in Hungary, Babusik (2004) estimated that only about 32 percent of Roma men and 18 percent of Romani women were employed in formal jobs (2004: 13).[101] In addition, the same research shows that half of Romani women are at home on childcare, or work in the household. Earlier research carried out by UNICEF in Macedonia (1997) found that 94 out of 96 Romani mothers from eight different cities were not engaged in any sort of income generating activity. From the whole group of Romani mothers that were interviewed for the research, only two Romani women ever had formal jobs, while the rest had been employed as domestic servants, or worked in the informal market without social protection (Najcevska, Petrovska-Beska, and Layhar 1997).

Research carried out for a 2005 Shadow Report On the Situation of Romani Women in the Republic of Macedonia submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women showed that out of 202 Romani women between the ages of 18 and 54 years, 51 percent were unemployed, eight percent were employed in state institutions as cleaners, five percent were employed in private firms without social benefits, four percent were self-employed with social benefits, and 34 percent were working on the black market without any social protection.[102] These findings resemble data from other studies conducted in Macedonia and elsewhere.

Research conducted in Romania[103] shows similar tendencies, with only 11 percent of 717 Romani women, interviewed during a 2005 community research study, being formally employed. According to the 2003 Romanian Statistical Yearbook, the corresponding

---

[101] Babusik's work is one of the very few representative sociological surveys in Hungary which offers data on Romani women's labor-market position.

[102] In 2005, the Roma Centre of Skopje, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), and the Network Women's Program (NWP) of the Open Society Institute, with the support of the UNIFEM regional office in Bratislava, jointly provided a shadow report to the United Nation Committee on the elimination of Discrimination against Women. The report is based on a research which was carried out by 11 Romani women researchers, which aimed to document the situation of Romani women in Macedonia. See: Roma Centre of Skopje, NWP, ERRC, *Joint Submission: Shadow Report: On the Situation of Romani Women in the Republic of Macedonia*, October-November 2005, at:
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/macedonia_20051101 (accessed March 12, 2009)

[103] The Romania research sample was composed of 717 respondents. The research was conducted in two parts: a survey of Romani women between the ages of 18 and 73, based on an 80-item questionnaire; and a series of focus group discussions with Romani women, based on a 58-item interview guide (Surda and Surdu 2006).

percentage at the national level was almost two and half times higher – 27 percent of all women were employed in 2002. Moreover, this survey showed that two-thirds of Romani women who were employed lived in urban areas and had completed secondary or higher education. In addition, from the group of employed Romani women, almost half were skilled workers and more than one third were unskilled workers. This research also revealed that 54 percent of employed Romani women said the employment was unofficial, undeclared and based only on informal verbal agreements with their employer.

During my own interviews with Romani women who have a university degree and are employed in public, private or civil sector, respondents complained several times that their salaries were lower than those of non-Romani women or Romani men in similar positions. The majority of these types of complaints were coming from the non-governmental sector. Most of the educated Romani women also reported that they faced the so-called "glass ceiling effect" at their workplace, claiming that their knowledge and work experience is not valued in the same way as that of non-Romani women or Romani men. The notion of "glass ceiling effect" implies that gender (or other) disadvantages are stronger at the top of the hierarchy than at lower levels and that these disadvantages become worse later on in a person's career (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, and Vanneman 2001). In the case of Romani women, gender disadvantages intertwine with ethnic discrimination, as well as with difficulties arising from their social class background. Most Romani women I interviewed came from impoverished families, in which their parents had low educational levels and worked as unskilled workers or were unemployed for long periods of time. These women usually represent a first generation in their extended family of university-educated Roma.

Aside from the relatively small population of Romani women with higher education, large groups of Romani women are employed in low-skilled jobs and have limited opportunities to change their work or career paths. Particularly in socially and ethnically segregated regions of Roma settlements in Central and Southeastern Europe, unemployment rates are exceptionally high – between 70 and 100 percent (Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens 2005: 38-39).

Lack of employment opportunities is often associated with low levels of education. A study published by the UNDP in 2002 on social vulnerability provides ample evidence for correlates of unemployment or labor inactivity with low levels of education. Just as a means of illustrating such links, the survey found that more than 20 percent of Montenegrin Romani women were unemployed, another 30 percent were housekeepers, while 54 percent had never been employed. Of the same sample of Romani women who were interviewed for this survey, 44 percent could not read and write. As many as 51 percent of Montenegrin Romani women had not received any form of formal education whatsoever, while only 15 percent of them had their own income, and on the average they earned 78 EUR per month, compared to 169 EUR a month earned by Romani men and 220 EUR by non-Romani women (UNDP 2002)[104]

Low educational attainment is not the only factor that negatively influences Romani women's prospects to access gainful work. Discrimination is a further obstacle for Romani women in the employment sector. According to a World Bank needs assessment for Macedonia, the name, surname and ethnicity of job seekers significantly affects decisions to hire or not to hire a particular person (Lakinska, Memedov, and Demir 2004: 20). In the case of Romani women, discrimination in hiring can be even harsher if the woman's physical appearance or style of dress indicates her ethnic belonging. Recent research from Romania provides further evidence of the multiple forms of discrimination that Romani women face in public life. Namely, a survey of perceptions of discrimination conducted on a representative sample of the population of Romania upon the request of the National Agency for Equal Opportunities

---

[104] Data on 12 Central and Southeast European countries available from the UNDP Vulnerable Groups Dataset, is available at: http://vulnerability.undp.sk (accessed February 27, 2009).

between Women and Men concluded that "in public spaces, in relation to local authorities, but also in respect of access to education and health, *Romani women*, *poor women* and *women with disabilities* are perceived as the most discriminated against groups" (NAEO 2007: 136)".

Lack of formal employment for the majority of Romani women reflects on their limited access to legal protection and social benefits. There are several EU legal provisions that offer legal protection to employed women.[105] Since the majority of Romani women from European countries are not employed, they also have little to benefit from most of the EU legal framework. If Romani women do have some of income, this is usually coming from the informal sector, which does not provide a formal employment contract, ensures no social security benefits and only highly limited labor protection for working women. The participation of Romani women in the 'grey' economy and the importance of informal jobs for the wellbeing of their families are recognized in a 2004 report commissioned by the European Commission and prepared by Focus Consultancy, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the European Roma Information Office (ERIO). This report states that "Romani women are in many instances the primary breadwinner in a family, often working at three or four jobs in the 'grey' economy in order to support families. […] Women working primarily in the grey economy are frequently excluded from a range of protections, such as maternity benefits, pensions and medical leave, and they are very vulnerable to exploitation" (European Commission 2004: 33).

The exclusion of the majority of Romani women from the protection offered under the EU equal treatment regulation may be the result of inadvertences in conceptualizing equal treatment law. Sylvia Walby, a leading theorist on gender mainstreaming, argues that "equal treatment laws take the male-pattern of life as the norm and do not tackle the deep-rooted cause of [gender] inequality" (Walby 2004). As I have shown in this brief review of available studies on the participation of Romani women in formal and informal labor markets, Romani women's experience of paid work is not compatible with that of the majority of women in the European Union. If, as Walby implies, equal treatment regulation should be reformulated to address deep-rooted causes of gender inequality, the analysis of these causes should be an intersectional one that looks at the interplay of at least gender, ethnic and class inequalities.

Equal treatment regulations should recognize the effects of structural inequalities and structural intersectionality. These effects mean that some individuals who are excluded from the system of formal employment will perhaps never have the opportunity to enter it because of their belonging to a certain ethnic group, social class, age group, gender, or disability status, which form the basis of structural inequalities. Ethnic-based, gender-based, class-based, or age-based structures of inequality are patterns of advantage and disadvantage that are durable, although they may appear permeable at the individual level (Tilly 1998). The fact that some individuals, in this case individual Romani women, succeed in crafting paths of upward mobility does not dissolve these structures of inequality. Isolated stories of individual

---

[105] The European Union has introduced a number of important regulations addressing issues of equality between women and men in the field of employment. One of the most relevant, namely, principles of equal pay for equal work or work for equal value, represents a core value of the EU, which was endorsed in the Treaty of Rome as the European Community's first legal provision on gender equality. The first equal treatment Council Directive 75/117/EC was adopted in 1975, followed one year later by Council Directive 76/207/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation. In 1979, Council Directive 79/7 EC was adopted on implementing the principle of equal treatment in social security. In 1986 two directives were adopted on the equal treatment for women and men in occupational social security schemes and on equal treatment for self-employed women and men engaged in an activity, including agriculture. Moreover, in 1992, Council Directive 92/85/EEC on the protection of pregnant workers' was enacted.

success do not dismantle the structural patterns of inequality, although they may inspire determination in other individuals.

5.4 Lack of (access to) childcare facilities

A 2004 Shadow Report on the situation of Romani and Sinti[106] women in Germany, which was submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women listed a series of factors that appeared to be linked with the limited access of these women to employment opportunities. According to the report, remote and inaccessible housing and lack of education are among the factors contributing to low employment opportunities for Sinti and Romani women (EUMAP/ERRC 2004). The report also highlights that an additional, important obstacle for Romani women in accessing employment opportunities is their being responsible for all the domestic work and childcare activities. Despite the fact that in Germany there is an accessible and readily available childcare system, presumably most disadvantaged families cannot afford the costs of these institutions amounting to approximately 110 EUR a month for public childcare, and around 690 EUR a month for private childcare (European Commission 2005: 39).

The report also highlighted that even in those countries where parents only pay for school meals, as in the case of Hungary, there are still many cases, particularly of Roma families who cannot afford these costs (European Commission 2005: 40). At the same time, in accordance with a series of Government Decrees adopted over the past decade, free meals for disadvantaged children who regularly attend school and live in families receiving child welfare benefits on a regular and ongoing basis may be provided for infants enrolled in crèches (highly limited in the case of the Roma population), kindergarten children and 1st to 6th grade primary school students by the local government, which is however, subject to relevant local regulations and local authorization issued for a period of one year (meaning that parents or guardians need to reapply to confirm their status each year).

Certainly, the high unemployment rate of Romani women cannot be explained exclusively on the basis of affordability of childcare, but its effects on Romani women is one of the elements that should be considered in rethinking access to childcare, distribution and affordability of the childcare systems. To date, despite the requirements of the EU Lisbon Strategy to increase the level of employment and despite the availability of legal protection for employed women, the weak labor position of Romani women is still not addressed in policy terms either by EU institutions, or by the national employment agencies.

---

106 Sinti, is one of the sub-ethnic Roma population in Europe. Traditionally they were nomad, today only a small percentage of the group remains unsettled. The Sinti speak the Sinti-Manouche variety of Romani, which exhibits strong German influence.

5.5 Health issues

5.5.1 Discrimination in reproductive health

Ethnographic studies substantiate the existence of gender imbalances in health in Roma communities. Available data shows higher rates of illness and mortality among Roma than the majority populations in European countries. Moreover, a number of health and gender factors put Romani women at a relative disadvantage in comparison with Roma men. For example, experts' statements and ethnographic fieldwork show that large numbers of Romani women suffer physical or sexual violence committed by an intimate male partner at some point in their life, a range of health risks affect the reproductive lives of Romani women, significant numbers of adolescent Romani girls become mothers every year and that a number of reproductive health problems are specific to Romani women, with forced sterilization still occurring as a gendered manifestation of racism against Romani women and Roma communities in some countries of Central Europe, particularly, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic.[107]

One has to recall here that the issue of the health status of Romani women was one of the first gender related topics to appear in international debates on abuses and discrimination against Roma. In 2003, upon the initiative of the CoE and European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), a report was compiled on the access of Romani women to healthcare (EUMC 2003). The report showed that Romani women suffer from poor access to healthcare and when they do receive healthcare, it is usually of poor quality due to discrimination based on their ethnicity, gender, and class belonging. Moreover, many reproductive risks, particularly from non-consensual sterilization, are caused by racial bias in healthcare institutions and efforts to slow high birth rates among Romani women, which often outpace those of non-Romani women (EUMC 2003; UNDP 2006: 92-93).

Ethnicity, gender and class interact in various ways to shape the access of Romani women to healthcare. In 2003, joint report released by CoE and EUMC recognizes that ethnicity, gender, and class disadvantages combine, but fails to acknowledge the complex ways in which they interrelate in different contexts. Crina Morteanu, a Romani activist from Romania, provides an example of segregation in maternity wards, based on her own knowledge of the phenomenon: "If you are 'dark-skinned' (*bruneta*), but you have money, you will probably be able to 'pay' your way into a normal maternity ward."[108] This example suggests that advantages on one axis of inequality (in this case, class) can "overrule" disadvantages on other axes of inequality (ethnicity). Furthermore, some violent practices that affect the reproductive lives of Romani women are deeply rooted in the historical legacy of eugenic policies in Europe and elsewhere. According to gender scholar Tracy Smith, studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s used an insensitive approach to Romani women's health, which tended to blame Romani lifestyles and culture for health problems, rather than addressing the deeply-rooted structural inequalities compounded by poverty and illiteracy,

---

[107] The following reports discuss forced sterilization of Romani women: Coercive Sterilization of Romani women (ERRC 2008),at:
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/roma/events/romawomen_20080703/errcbrochure_20080703.pdf; Final Statement of the Public Defender of Rights in the Matter of Sterilizations Performed in Contravention of the Law and Proposed Remedial Measures (Ombudsman of the Czech Republic 2005), at: http://www.ochrance.cz/documents/doc1142289721.pdf; A.S. vs Hungary, Communication 4/2004 (Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 2004), at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/decisions-views/Decisionpercent204-2004percent20-percent20English.pdf (accessed February 27, 2009).

[108] Interview with Crina Morteanu, February 2008, via email.

which prevent many Roma from maintaining adequate health (Smith 1997, see also Thomas et al 1987, Barsicas et al. 1979). Such studies directly and indirectly perpetuated racist images of Roma as socially inferior, or "undesirable," and did not give any substantial analysis about their social and economic exclusion and its significant impact on their health. The reproductive lives of Romani women, therefore, was severely violated by the racist-motivated abuse of the 20th century stemming from the ideology that Roma population is a threat to society.

5.5.2 Access to public healthcare

For many Romani women in Europe, limited access to public healthcare and social benefits are some of the greatest obstacles to wellbeing. Lack of access to social benefits and healthcare and poor health status are directly linked to unemployment, poverty, low levels of education and inadequate housing and living conditions. The Shadow Report by the Roma Centre of Skopje, NWP, and ERRC on the Situation of Romani women in the Republic of Macedonia reported that Romani women who have access to state healthcare are facing serious problems in affording the required participation fee for almost all medical exams, hospitalizations and, especially medication (2005: 28).[109] These problems are current and visible in most of the European countries where public healthcare systems are under reform. Consequently, the most vulnerable segments of society are very likely to fall out and no longer be able to afford access to health services. Despite the fact that in most cases the gravest issues of Romani women are identified as health problems, major health risks and lack of access to public health services, these issues are not addressed with targeted or mainstreamed measures by national governmental policymakers (Magyari-Vincze 2006).

5.6 Gender violence

In order to understand the complex nature and mechanisms of violence against Romani women, I suggest using an intersectional approach, instead of one that understands violence against Romani women as either racial or gendered. In the case of the trafficking of women from the Central and Southeast European countries, although there is a growing literature on the subject of trafficking, few studies are based on extensive research and estimations of the numbers of trafficked persons are very limited. Moreover, from these studies we do not know the ethnic background of the trafficked person. Since the early 1990s, women and girls have been trafficked from Central and Southeast European countries to work as forced prostitutes in the European Union. To treat this as merely a function of gender discrimination, while ignoring the ethnic, geo-political-economical and class dimensions of the problem would ultimately result in inconsistent analysis of its root causes, effects and would not yield appropriate measures. At the least, identifying the countries of departure gives an indication of the degree of gender discrimination and the political economic situation of the given country. Nevertheless, it is important to identify, for instance, why women from certain countries and from certain regions of their country make up the majority of forced sex workers in the EU countries.

---

[109] There are several exerts from interviews with Romani women who not afford to have access to health services, in the previously cited *Shadow Report* by the Roma Centre of Skopje, NWP, and ERRC (2005: 28).

We can expect that, due to the dynamics of ethnic, gender and class inequalities, Romani women's risk and vulnerability to be trafficked, abused and harassed is much higher than for non-Romani women. However, systematic research on the vulnerability of Romani women to trafficking is still missing. Such a high degree of vulnerability should be traced using analytical categories, such as ethnicity, gender, class and their intersections. The only available reports on trafficking of Romani women and forced prostitution mainly come from NGOs, but unfortunately they are based mostly on anecdotal evidence from various communities, and not on extensive research (ERRC 2006b, European Parliament 2006, Bitu 2003).[110]

Some of the most violent forms of intersectional violence against Romani women, rape and sexual torture in the context of armed conflicts are often not treated as intersectional forms of violence, but rather as manifestations of racism. The European Roma Rights Centre, for instance, documented cases of rape of Romani women during the conflict in Kosovo in the late 1990s. Throughout the conflict, rape was not only an attack against women's human rights, but also a calculated effort to annihilate the Roma community (ERRC 1999, see also HRW 2000).

Furthermore, the plethora of testimonies collected by the ERRC show intersectional discrimination in the lives of Romani girls, who face verbal, physical, and sometimes sexual harassment by classmates and teachers, based simultaneously on ethnic and sexist premises[111]. Whereas these experiences negatively influence education and personal development of Romani girls, the reports state that teachers rarely punish these practices, and that these events elicit substantially less media attention and communal support than when they happen to white girls in the same society.

An NGO report which was based on community action research carried out by a group of trained Romani women in Macedonia found that more than half of the Romani women experienced discrimination and/or related harms in the educational system. The research team conducted 237 interviews with Romani women aged 14-65, who identified themselves as Roma. According to the report, "57 [Romani women] reported cases of discrimination by their teachers, 30 experienced direct acts of harassment at the hands of their classmates, 15 reported discrimination by other school staff and 41 suffered unequal treatment by their parents, especially the selective promotion of Roma boys, and relegation of Romani girls to subordinated/subjugated roles."[112] The same study found that Macedonian Romani women were particularly vulnerable to domestic violence, with more than two-thirds of them reporting that they had endured domestic violence, most often at the hands of their husbands. The study also found that 34 of the victims had reported violent acts committed against them by law enforcement officers. According to the report, "[i]n 20 of these [34 cases], law enforcement officials subjected the women to further degrading treatment on racist grounds, usually in the form of insults about the 'Gypsy' origin of the victim".

In this case, the report was invoked by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to find evidence on discrimination and violence against Romani women. The Committee has been particularly active in the last couple of years in

---

[110] A collection of sources on Human Trafficking and Modern-day Slavery is available at:
http://www.gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Romania.htm (accessed March 12, 2009)
[111] In particular, see oral statement by the ERRC (2007) and written comments by the ERRC, Bibija, Eureka, and Women's Space (2006) on the status of Romani women, submitted to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
[112] One of the first shadow reports to the UN was prepared by Macedonian Romani Women activist. Shadow Report by the Roma Center of Skopje, NWP, and ERRC (200)5.

using NGO shadow reports to expose the degree of violence and discrimination against Romani Women and demonstrating extent of the problem of non-enforcement of existing regulations against discrimination.[113]

---

[113] Namely, the UN CEDAW's Concluding Comments on Women's Rights in Hungary (2007) express concern about the situation of Roma.

5.7 Discourses and policy responses by inter-governmental organization

As detailed in the previous chapter, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Roma transnational political activism gained momentum at the European level. In 1993, in Copenhagen the EU agreed upon a set of political criteria for EU accession, of whom one of the most cited criteria for acceding countries is respect for and protection of minorities. According to the agreement, candidate countries must have achieved "stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities" in order to become EU Member States. The Copenhagen criteria gave significant political leverage for Roma advocacy organizations to claim human rights and legal protection for Roma and put international pressure on candidate countries to fulfill the required conditions. The EU accession process strengthened the notion of gender equality, which has also been widely promoted by other inter-governmental organizations and also by Western philanthropic organizations, such as the Open Society Institute (OSI). The OSI Network Women's program had a significant role as a strategic player on the international level, which enabled Romani women's rights activists to lobby vis-à-vis intergovernmental and international agencies and also connected Romani activists to a global women's rights forum (OSI 2004: 42-49). In the last decade, Romani women issues have been stressed chiefly by intergovernmental organizations, each of whom having its own specific emphasis and understanding of Romani women's issues according to its institutional mission and framework.

5.7.1 European Union: addressing multiple discrimination

The development of gendered policies in the EU member states cannot be dissociated from the process of European enlargement and integration. Member states are required to adopt a set of gender equality legislation and policies, and so are candidate states through institutional capacity building and rapprochement vis-à-vis the *aquis communautaire*.[114]

At times, in the context of the EU accession process, specific Romani women issues gained frontline visibility in European politics. Such was the case of Ms Cioba's wedding, a 12-year old Romani girl from Romania. The debate emerged in the frame of Romania's preparation for EU accession.

At the time of the widespread media coverage and extended discussions about arranged marriages in Roma communities, I was invited by the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities of the European Parliament to speak about Romani women's issues. The issue of child marriages came up during the discussion and when MEPs asked my opinion about it, my message was that "no human rights violation can be justified as a tradition." In the same speech, I requested "that the European women's rights networks develop a more inclusive language and discourse to encompass the specific problems of multi-dimensional discrimination faced by Romani women today in Europe" (Kóczé 2003). This presentation gave a more comprehensive perspective on Romani women's issues than had appeared previously in the discussions of the European Parliament, which were narrowly concerned with early marriages.

In 2005, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM Committee) of the European Parliament initiated a background study, which explored the economic aspects of

---

[114] The *aquis communautaire* represents the set of principles, policies, legislation, practices, obligations, and objectives agreed upon within the framework of the European Union.

the condition of Romani women (European Parliament 2006b). The report gives an overview on the social and economic condition of Roma with a very limited analysis of Romani women in fifteen states: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. The report strongly emphasized the difficulty in acquiring data on Romani women issues. It states:

> The first conclusion with regard to knowledge obtained in this empirical research study on Romani women is that the available information is rather thin and uncertain, yet this is to be expected considering the overall lack of comprehensive wide-ranging data to this topic […] Social, political and economic studies on women and gender issues are not available" (European Parliament 2006:3).

The background study did not provide any solid knowledge on the situation of Romani women, nor did it challenge the gender roles of Romani women, but rather showed the general situation of Roma in the respective countries.

As a follow up to the report, the FEMM Committee called for a public hearing in November 2005 to explore the situation of Romani women. The hearing was attended by several Romani women activists, experts and representatives of the European Commission. The hearing provided a forum to discuss the possibility to pay attention in public policies to the multiple forms of discrimination towards Romani women. According to Járóka, a member of the FEMM Committee,

> members of the FEMM Committee agreed that new policies and more tangible results were required in order to overcome the obstacles faced by Roma. There was a consensus within the group that Romani women were the most discriminated against, but also the most forgotten and *invisible, minority; and that action must be taken at European-level without delay* (Járóka 2006: 4).

The 2005 hearing provided a justification for the decision to commission a report on the situation of Romani women, as initiated by Járóka. The report contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the structural position of Romani women in various European countries. Moreover, the report also challenged gender norms in "traditional patriarchal communities," which, according to Járóka, can contribute to violence against Romani women and deny their freedom of choice. Notably, violence against women was an explicit topic during the hearing, but unfortunately the report did not provide any further analysis of internal gender inequalities in the various Roma communities.

Based on the results of the Report on the Situation of Romani Women, on 1 June 2006 the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on the Situation of Roma Women in the European Union (European Parliament 2006a). This Resolution may offer a strategic tool for the European Commission to address the multiple discrimination Romani women face on the programming level and also in EU social policies. However, it would require further steps from the Commission to make this Resolution a policy reality, for example by attaching specific measures to it. To date, the Resolution on the Situation of Romani Women has not been translated into concrete action.

Specific initiatives on Romani women are part of a larger policy approach at the EU level that has become increasingly favorable to the integration of intersectional approaches. Throughout the last decade, the EU has broadened its agenda on gender equality issues and introduced the notion of multiple-discrimination. The EU has been a leading

87

intergovernmental organization to adopt and implement policies on anti-discrimination and gender equality and these policies still provide probably the most inclusive language and policy tools to address the intersectional social status of Romani women. Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) lists eight grounds on which discrimination is prohibited: sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.[115] The Racial Equality Directive,[116] the Framework Directive[117] and the Equal Treatment Directive on Discrimination between women and men in employment,[118] which was amended in 2002,[119] now provide rather diverse levels of protection for the respective grounds.

According to the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010 (European Commission 2006b),and the follow up of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007), the multiple discrimination of Romani women must be articulated and addressed in policy terms. In the following I shall argue that European initiatives should go even further and include the more comprehensive notion of *intersectional discrimination* when devising interventions to redress the disadvantages of Romani women.

Since March 2000, the EU has formulated its policies in line with the ambitious objectives of the Lisbon Strategy, which sets a framework for action until 2010. The main goals of the Lisbon Strategy are economic growth, as well as social and environmental sustainability. The Strategy seeks to increase European competitiveness by investing in a knowledge-based and highly productive society. One of the aims is to increase the overall EU employment rate to 70 percent and increase the number of women in employment to more than 60 percent by 2010. Although these rates vary throughout Europe, the targets are often met only in majority communities, while the hope that they would be fulfilled in the case of Romani women remains an illusion unless targeted programs are developed to increase the formal labor market participation of Romani women and enable them to step out of the grey economy. To that end, single-axis strategies are not sufficient as achieving the goals of the Lisbon Strategy for Romani women depends on the elaboration of more comprehensive, intersectional strategies that acknowledge and provide solutions for the multiple inequalities. After the Lisbon Strategy the EU developed a new 2020 EU strategy which "sets out a vision for Europe's social market economy over the next decade, and rests on three interlocking and mutually reinforcing priority areas: Smart growth, developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; Sustainable growth, promoting a low-carbon, resource-efficient and competitive economy; and Inclusive growth, fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion."[120] The EU 2020 Strategy is loosely connected with the recently published document on "An EU Framework for National Roma Integration

115 Treaty Establishing the European Community, Nov 10, 1997, O.J. (C 340) 3 (1997). Article 13 was originally promulgated as Article 6a of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which was signed on October 2, 1997, and came into force on May 1, 1999. Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty on European Union, The Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related Acts, Oct.2, 1997, O.J. (C 340)1 (1997).

116 Council Directive 2000/43/EC, 2000 O.J. (L 180) 22 (implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial and ethnic origin) (hereinafter Racial Equality Directive).

[117] Council Directive 200/78/EC for Establishing a General Framework for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation, 2000O.J. (L303) 16 (hereinafter Framework Directive).

[118] Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment for Men and Women as Regards Access to Employment, Vocational Training and Promotion, and Working Conditions, 1976 O.J. (L39) 40, derogation in 194N, incorporated by 1994 O.J. (L1) 484 (hereinafter Equal Treatment Directive).

[119] Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council Amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the Implementation of the Principle of Equal Treatment For Men and Women as Regards Access to Employment, Vocational Training and Promotion, and Working Conditions, 2002 O.J. (L269) 15-20.

[120] The EU 2020 Strategy should be harmonized with the European Roma Strategy. The EU 2020 Strategy accessible on the European Commission website:
http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/225 (accessed on July 06, 2011)

Strategies up to 2020 - Communication of the European Commission (5 April 2011)"[121]. This EU Framework seeks to respond to the current devastating situation of Roma. The European Commission encourages Member States to adopt or to develop further a comprehensive approach to Roma integration by using EU financial support by end of 2011. In the framework there is only one reference to gender, namely when Commission ask Member States to use the 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion which were presented at the first Roma Platform meeting on 24 April 2009[122].

The anti-discrimination and gender equality agenda of the EU came to the fore in 2007 with the roll out of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.[123] The four main objectives of the year were: rights, representation, recognition and respect. The *European Year of Equal Opportunities for All* made intersectional thinking more visible, as multiple-discrimination was a focus of the EU strategy for the year and the major theme of all activities implemented as part of this initiative in some countries, such as Romania. Although the concept was not elaborated in the plan, its use nevertheless meant the recognition of multiple differences and inequalities, which affect particular groups in the European context.

Apart from the plans for "equal opportunities for all", the European Commission's Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010 (European Commission 2006b) is another EU initiative that includes attention to multiple discriminations. The Roadmap proposes new actions and re-affirms the need to implement existing ones. The document outlines "six priority areas for EU action on gender equality for the 2006-2010 period: equal economic independence for women and men; reconciliation of private and professional life; equal representation in decision-making; eradication of all forms of gender-based violence; elimination of gender stereotypes; promotion of gender equality in external and development policies" (European Commission 2006b).The Roadmap includes a focus on intersectionality (Priority Area 1.6: Combating multiple discrimination, in particular against immigrants and ethnic minority women) and states that

> [t]he EU is committed to the elimination of all discrimination and the creation of an inclusive society for all. Women members of disadvantaged groups are often worse off than their male counterparts. The situation of ethnic minority and immigrant women is emblematic. They often suffer from double discrimination. This requires the promotion of gender equality in migration and integration policies in order to ensure women's rights and civic participation, to fully use their employment potential and to improve their access to education and lifelong learning (European Commission 2006b: 10).

In the above, "double discrimination" is used, which is one step beyond single-ground approaches (only gender, for example) and it recognizes that some groups, in this case ethnic

---

[121] The text of the Communication is accessible on: http://www.eu2011.hu/document/eu-framework-national-roma-integration-strategies-2020-communication-european-commission-5- (accessed on July 06, 2011)
[122] They were annexed to the Council conclusions of 8 June 2009. They comprise: 1) constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies 2) explicit but not exclusive targeting 3) intercultural approach 4) aiming for the mainstream 5) awareness of the gender dimension 6) transfer of evidence-based policies 7) use of EU instruments 8) involvement of regional and local authorities 9) involvement of civil society 10) active participation of Roma.
[123] See Decision on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) - Towards a Just Society (May 2006). Available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/eyeq/index.cfm?cat_id=EY (accessed February 27, 2009).

minority and immigrant women, experience multiple inequalities. However, the notion of double discrimination is narrower than the more encompassing and integrative concepts of multiple discrimination or intersectional discrimination. It captures only two axes of inequality – gender and ethnicity – and treats them as if they were separable and additive. The notion of double discrimination fails to capture how gender and ethnicity intersect and are mutually constituted.

At the same time, double discrimination has been widely used by Romani women activists as well in order to draw attention to a hitherto ignored reality. With other activists, I spoke about the double discrimination Romani women face, hoping to rally support for targeted policy responses. I used the term double discrimination, because at the time I was lacking concepts and knowledge to capture the specific subject position of Romani women, but I definitely felt that it was more than ethnic discrimination what Romani women faced and we added the gender-based discrimination. Double discrimination was already a well-known term amongst feminists who attempted to articulate gender and ethnic based discrimination. Back then, it was not a conscious decision to skip class-based discrimination, but rather just following the rhetoric which was widely accepted in anti-discrimination discourse. Class as such was not recognized in rights-based discourse, but my later training in critical race feminism has persuaded me that class can significantly change the manifestation of ethnic- or gender-based discriminations.

When I gave a speech in front of the European Parliament in 2003, my own formulation was:

> Romani women often experience discrimination based on their gender and ethnic background simultaneously; thus they face *double discrimination*. Romani women living in Europe are on the one hand targeted by majority racial hostility, and on the other hand, oppressed by their own patriarchal community (Kóczé 2003).

At that point, I also specifically requested that the European women's rights networks develop a more inclusive language and discourse to encompass the specific problems of multi-dimensional discrimination faced by Romani women in present-day Europe.

I was not the only one to urge recognition of the specific disadvantages of Romani women. European officials also offered a conceptualization of the specific situation of Romani women in the EU focusing on their double discrimination. In a speech given at the 2005 Roma Forum, Fay Devonic, Head of Unit on Equality between Women and Men, DG Employment and Social Affairs, declared that

> [w]e must eliminate all forms of discrimination against the Roma and ensure that the Roma are represented in economic, social and political life. This is quite a challenge and en even greater one if we consider that Romani women are the victims of double discrimination. A significant percentage of Romani women are unemployed. This is particularly the case for unmarried mothers, widows, victims of domestic violence. These women often live in situations of extreme poverty which makes them the ideal victims for prostitution and trafficking. These phenomena affect women in general. The fact that they belong to a minority group exacerbates the problem (Devonic 2005: 7).

In the above, Devonic acknowledges the particular social and economic situation of Romani women, and focuses even more specifically on those Romani women who are unmarried mothers, widows, or victims of domestic violence. These are also 'classical' target groups for gender equality policies. However, her focus on specific groups obscures the ways in which

the social position of the majority of Romani women is shaped by the intersections of gender, ethnicity and class. These axes of inequality operate on a social-structural level also and create a more widely present social context in which particular situations of discrimination occur. Thus, the intersections of gender, ethnicity and class are relevant not only because they configure very specific disadvantages, such as those experienced by unmarried Romani mothers, but also because they shape the wider social context of the lives of Romani women. The latter point is often overlooked, even by observers who speak about the multiple disadvantages of Romani women. For example, in the same speech quoted above, Devonic links Romani women's vulnerability to prostitution and trafficking to poverty only, arguing that Romani women "often live in situations of extreme poverty which make them the ideal victims for prostitution and trafficking" (Devonic 2005: 7).

As illustrated by the above-quoted example and confirmed by recent analyses (Lomdardo, Meier and Verloo 2009), the conceptualization of intersectionality by EU officials, and within that specifically their understanding of the situation of Romani women is limited. The EU institutions have nevertheless provided important policy frames and theoretical ideas to steer the debate towards more complex ways of thinking. Initiatives at the EU level have created a good opportunity for Romani women and pro-Romani women equality advocates to "overcome a simple bipolar logic of analysis that treats one type of inequalities as compared to another, taking what appears as the dominant one as the norm for comparison, instead of focusing on the point at which the various inequalities of race, gender, class, etc., intersect with each other" (Verloo and Lombardo 2007: 25).
Important challenges remain, however, and the road ahead to secure that Romani women can thrive as equals in the European Union is still very long. The first EU Roma Summit in Brussels, which was held on 16 September 2008, recognized that even to this day "[t]here are only a few programmes that directly address the specific situation of Roma girls and women in the Member States" (European Commission 2008: 42).

5.7.2 Council of Europe: feminizing the domain of ethnicity

The Council of Europe (CoE) was one of the very first inter-governmental organizations to become active in introducing the gender equality concept in international Roma activism. The CoE organized a hearing of Romani women in 1995, as a first attempt to raise awareness about the situation of Romani women. Young Romani activist Nicoleta Bitu, one of the participants, argues that "the hearing introduced a new dimension in the discussion about the situation of Roma women" (Bitu 1999). The meeting was convened by the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men of the Council of Europe and conveyed the message that attention to Romani women's issues needed to be integrated in the mainstream gender equality framework. This event provided a forum for Romani women to articulate their particular concerns and raised awareness about the existing gender-related resources and mechanisms at the level of the CoE.

Later on, in 1999, the CoE Specialist Group on Roma/Gypsies requested a comprehensive document on Romani women's issues, with Bitu preparing the document. The language of the report is very descriptive and was considered provocative and progressive in the field of Roma issues. The report prepared by Bitu raised several important points, such as the lack of data on the status of Romani women, lack of understanding of gender concepts by the national governments who elaborated policies aimed at improving the situation of Roma. Moreover, this pioneer paper talks about "sensitive issues," such as domestic violence,

trafficking of persons and prostitution, which had never before been discussed by Romani activists.

The CoE, in cooperation with OSCE and EUMC, also played a key role in preparing a report on Romani Women's Access to Public Health Care (EUMC 2003). At the launch of the report at a Council of Europe conference on Roma women and access to public health care (Strasbourg, 11-12 September 2003), Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of CoE, explained that one of the main emphasis of the report was on "the harsh realities Roma women face", as they are "traditionally responsible for their families' well-being and often neglect their own health" (2003). Generally, the report pictures Romani women as heroes of their communities who sacrifice their own health for the benefit of those they are caring for. However, neither the report, nor the speeches delivered at the kick-off conference placed enough emphasis on the economic injustice and racial and gender discrimination, which prevent Romani women from accessing public health care.

As a follow-up to the report, CoE supported the creation of the International Network of Romani Women (INRW) with the aim to establish bonds of solidarity with national and international organizations of non-Roma women. The understanding of INRW was that "in the final analysis, issues such as access to health care, education or the fight against discrimination are priority issues for all women, irrespective of their nationality, belief system and ethnic and social origin" (de Boer-Buquicchio.2003). At the onset of the Network, CoE supported the understanding that broad changes were needed in Roma communities, in governmental action and in the roles of Romani women:

> Romani women are today required to adapt traditional Roma values to current realities, so that Roma culture can continue to exist as a living culture. They are aware that they can no longer simply play the role of sisters, wives and mothers, but that they must also act as bridges between their community and society. As for the governmental representatives who are attending this conference today, you too must make efforts to ensure that Romani women are treated as fully-fledged interlocutors in all decisions that directly affect, the Roma community (de Boer-Buquicchio 2003).

However, as the above illustrates, CoE' policy makers treated minority and diversity issues solely as issues of culture and tradition. The shortfall of this conceptualization is that it does not emphasize the deep-rooted, social-structural causes of inequality. Romani women are seen as "mediators" between their communities and society. The "peacemakers," positions of Romani women reflect upon the traditional gender role in which they seek reconciliation, rather than justice.

The discourse at the level of the CoE did not make any reference to the social and economic differences amongst Romani women, or between them and non-Romani women and they tried to push Romani women's issues under the convenient umbrella of a universal or global womanhood, which seems both unfair and unworkable. As I have argued above, quantitatively and qualitatively, the structural position of Romani women is significantly different from that of non-Romani women. The conceptualization of Romani women's issues by the CoE is one-dimensional, particularly focusing on the ethnic dimension. The CoE discourse defines Romani women as a subgroup of the Roma population, which needs to be mobilized for the Roma cause in Europe. Romani women are centered in the private domain where cultural continuity is guaranteed along with the identity of family and Roma community. The discourse used by CoE transformed Romani women into a symbol of uniting women across different ethnic groups in attempting to forge a Roma national identity, which can override sub-ethnic divisions. Moreover, Romani women and mothers were seen as interlocutors between their communities and majority societies, a position which reinforced

stereotypical "female roles" and downplayed the need to achieve justice for Roma communities and Romani women within their communities. Although the CoE was the first intergovernmental organization that focused on the disadvantages of Romani women, their discourse did not challenge the symbolic gender boundaries, which are reproducing the deeply gendered public and private divide, the power structures and the unequal social and economic distribution both inside and outside Roma communities. In doing so, the CoE did not understand and interrogate Romani women's issues from an intersectional point of view, but rather simplistically "feminized" the domain of ethnicity.

5.7.3 United Nations: towards intersectional discrimination

A working paper prepared by Y.K.J. Yeung Sik Yuen in 1999 on the human rights problems and protections of the Roma included the first acknowledgment of Romani women's issues at an UN-level. The paper was initiated by the UN Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. In this important document, there is only one section that specifically engages with gender issues; this section refers to sexual violence and sterilization of Romani women. The same section also noted that there was information that "young Roma women are lured or forced into prostitution, ending up as subjects of international trafficking" (Yeung Sik Yuen 1999: 35). It is important that the working paper specifically highlighted issues related to Romani women, but failed to analyze the social and economical disadvantages of Romani women.

Within the United Nations system, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is one of the most active bodies on Romani women's rights. The Committee was established in 1982 to monitor compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), widely referred to as the Women's Convention. Romani women's rights advocates enjoy great access to this monitoring process. In recent years, a number of NGOs working on Romani women's issues have submitted country reports to the CEDAW Committee, which specifically analyzed the situation of Romani women. In the last few years, several shadow reports on the situation of Romani women were submitted to the Committee, as part of the reporting process of the Czech Republic, Croatia, Macedonia, Germany, Romania, Serbia, Spain, and Slovakia. These reports were prepared by ERRC jointly with local human rights and women's organizations.[124]

Despite the fact that the Committee does not have an enforcement mechanism for CEDAW, they have some political leverage in urging states to comply with international law. CEDAW Committee recommendations usually receive strong media attention[125].

In the field of reproductive rights of Romani women, the CEDAW Committee made important steps in raising the awareness of the international community about the forced sterilization of Romani women in various Central and Eastern European countries. However, the Committee has very limited power to enforce their recommendations upon these states. To date, the UN mechanism was one of the most successful and responsive avenues to advocate for Romani women's rights, especially concerning reproductive rights. The

---

[124] For the full texts of the above-mentioned countries' submissions, visit:
http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2136 (accessed February 28, 2009).
[125] To illustrate this, in August 2006, the Committee condemned Hungary for violating CEDAW in connection with the sterilization of a Romani woman without her consent in January 2001. This case was introduced in a previous chapter.

Committee can mobilize the power of public pressure in favor of its recommendations and thus keep states conscious of their legal accountability for discrimination against women. The reporting process has encouraged some states to bring their laws into compliance with CEDAW.

In 2007, Romani women's and girl's issues were taken up by the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The 51st session of the Commission, held from 26 February to 9 March 2007, hosted an interactive expert panel discussion on key policy initiatives to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. I was invited to speak at the panel specifically on the situation of Romani girls. In my speech, I emphasized and explored the systemic gendered discrimination against Romani girls and encouraged state representatives to introduce legal and policy measures to prevent their social and economic exclusion (Kóczé 2007).

The United Nations and its mechanisms and instruments provided a critical forum to connect Romani women rights to the global women issues and contributed greatly to raise awareness about Romani women's agenda amongst global women's rights advocates.

5.7.4 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: gender issues are a security matter

In 2000, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe took a first step to include a specific discussion of Romani women's issues with the elaboration of its report on the situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area (OSCE 2000). This first step was nothing more than an attempt at including Romani women's issues, since the report mentions Romani women only once, in a very short section related to the context of education and health. The report draws attention to the way in which Romani women's capacities "as intermediaries between Roma communities and healthcare providers" should be enhanced (ibid: 127). As in the case of CoE, the initial OSCE discourse constructed Romani women as "reconcilers" for the specific area of health, where gender issues are also prominent. In other words, OSCE attributed Romani women an auxiliary role of intermediating between majority societies and Roma communities without seeking justice and an end to discriminations against them.

Subsequent developments modified this perspective, and, in 2003 the Action Plan for Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area emphasized that "the particular situation of Roma and Sinti women should be taken into account in the design and implementation of all policies and programs" (OSCE 2003: 2). The Action Plan also focused on "the needs of Roma and Sinti women and children in crisis and post-crisis situation" and urged a response to these needs "by providing them with access to health care, housing and schooling" (ibid: 14) However, the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan would require a background study to identify the specific issues affecting Romani women. In the absence of a clear assessment of the situation of Romani women, the Action Plan is in danger of turning into yet another example of rhetoric commitments without implementation. As part of its activities to address the situation of Roma, the OSCE maintains a special office called the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI).

In most OSCE documents related to Roma, gender issues are conceptualized as a security matter. Security issue is a main concern of the OSCE therefore their conceptualization of Romani women issues are seen through this specific lens which reflect upon on their discourse. For example, in their language one of the focuses is that Romani women are in a "high risk" group that is vulnerable to trafficking for prostitution and other sexual services. Human trafficking as such requires an effective border security that can control the free movement of people and goods, to counter transnational crime.

In the past years, the Anti-Trafficking Program of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) sponsored research related to issues of trafficking human beings in Roma communities in the following countries: Albania, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia and Montenegro (CPRSI 2006). OSCE activities to address the situation of Romani women are rather narrowly confined to issues that are strictly connected to the OSCE mission and institutional arrangements. However, even within its narrower scope, there is still room for more efforts to address Romani women's issues and initiate research, for example, in the field of political participation of Romani women both as voters and as potential candidates.

5.8 Impact of intergovernmental activities

Most major intergovernmental organizations operating in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the wider Europe have recognized, at least politically, the plight of Romani women and the need for specific interventions. However, very few evaluations have been conducted to date to measure the outcomes of actions supported by intergovernmental organizations towards ensuring that Romani women enjoy equal rights. The European Commission and independent researchers have evaluated PHARE[126] financing for Roma programs for example, but none of these evaluations addressed the gender dimension in PHARE-funded programs for Roma.[127]

In the absence of systematic knowledge about the impact of programs for Roma on Romani women, the only concrete examples of interventions that can be cited as having had a direct impact on Romani women's lives are the (few) targeted programs.

One particular example of a PHARE-funded Roma project in Romania, which, one may argue, has a dimension of empowerment of Romani women in its implementation, is that of the health mediator. The program was initiated by the Ministry of Health in Romania, in cooperation with Romani CRISS, a Roma NGO. As a result of the success of the program in August 2002, the Ministry of Family and Health issued a decree making Roma Health Mediator an official profession within the Romanian public health system (OSI 2005: 19-20). The program decided that, in order to address the specific health needs of Roma communities, those nominated as mediators should be women (in accordance with Article 11 of Decree 619/2002 of the Ministy of Health and Family). The reasoning behind hiring women only in the health mediation program was that the purpose of the program was to achieve a specific objective, "promoting the health of women and children at the level of Roma communities". Since one of the main responsibilities of the mediator was reproductive health, the Ministry reasoned that mediators should be women. However, an OSI conducted evaluation of the work of health mediators in Finland, Romania, and Bulgaria found that

> [i]n its current manifestations, Romani health mediation does not adequately address the need of doubly marginalized groups, such as Romani women, Romani persons with mental or physical disabilities, Romani drug users, and Romani sexual minorities. Some Romanian RHMs have expressed an interest in learning how to address domestic violence, a major unaddressed health concern for Romani women (OSI 2005: 5).

In Hungary, PHARE funding supported targeted Romani women projects, which built on the revitalization of traditional roles for women. In 2001, the PHARE program funded a project that trained Romani women to work as nannies, i.e., kindergarten assistants, to improve the integration of Romani children in the education system. This program improved the employment of Romani women, especially in rural areas, and also increased the participation of Romani children in kindergarten. However, Romani women faced hostility in the institutions they were employed at. Therefore, one of the lessons learned in the context of this

---

[126] The PHARE program is one of the three pre-accession instruments financed by the European Union to assist the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe in their preparations for joining the Union.

[127] Some evaluations include: EMS Consortium (2003), Guy and Kovats (2006), and Human Dynamics et al (2006).

project was the need for an anti-bias training for employers and employees to accept active measures on the labor market and maintain an inclusive workplace for Romani women.[128]

Another example of targeted programs for Romani women was the 2003 project "Roma Women Can Do It," which was implemented by the Stability Pact Gender Task Force (SPGTF) in collaboration with OSCE. Between 2005 and 2007, the project continued in South-East European countries. The primary goal of this project related to improving gender equality politics and public service, from local to central levels of government. This project was very progressive because it was able to step away from the stereotypical association of Romani women with issues such as reproduction and care and created an image of Romani women as potential political actors that could influence their own communities and majority societies.

5.9 Concluding remarks

To conclude, early research on the situation of Roma in Europe, most of which focused on Central and Eastern Europe, and was conducted or commissioned by the international development community, was gender-blind. Gender-sensitive analyses of Roma poverty were developed in academic projects, such as the influential household survey at Yale University. More recent studies and research have integrated gender in data collection on Roma, and commonly discuss the 'double disadvantage' of Roma women. However, the systematic effort to integrate gender, ethnicity and class in data collection and analysis of the situation of Romani women is still lacking in both the academic and policy oriented researches.

To date, in European policy-making, very limited attention is paid to the structural position of Romani women. In order to create a more sensitive language, it is necessary to comprehend the differences and relationship between various inequalities. In other words, as Verloo put it, "what is needed is the development of complex methods and tools informed by intersectionality theory, and a rethinking of the representation and participation of citizens in an era of post-identity politics" (Verloo 2006: 224).

In the context of Roma programs, intergovernmental organizations, such as the European Commission or the CoE, have too often reproduced gender stereotypes and reinforced gender norms that prescribe women would naturally be responsible for solely reproduction and care. Nevertheless, it is also seen that the discourse of the role of the intergovernmental organizations can change (as in the case of OSCE) and in the years to come, we may expect a gradual integration of the concept of multiple-discrimination into policymaking and concrete actions. Initially formulated by the international women's movement at the UN's Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and by the transnational anti-racist movement at the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban in 2001, the concept of multiple-discrimination has also made significant inroads in the approach of the European Commission.

In sum, the above review of discourses and initiatives to improve the situation of Romani women taken at the level of the major inter-governmental structures – the EU, CoE, UN and OSCE – demonstrates a significant transnational political agreement on the need to address

---

[128] Parts of the Phare program were continued by the EQUAL Community Initiative (CI) in 2004-2006, such as specific support for efforts to empower disadvantaged groups, including Romani women.

97

the disadvantages of Romani women. Some initiatives have also taken shape, beyond the political commitments expressed in various conferences, reports and media statements. However, the language on Romani women used by inter-governmental organizations is limited in a way that clearly reflects upon their own institutional discourses.

CHAPTER SIX: "YOU CAN FEEL IT ON YOUR SKIN": PERSONAL ACCOUNTS BY ROMANI WOMEN IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM[129]

In this chapter, I shall explore how "Romani woman" emerges in the discursive fields of political activism at the intersection of race, gender and class. I will attempt to explore through biographical stories and personal experiences in political activism. My empirical data was derived from semi-structured interviews I conducted with Hungarian Romani women who are intent on bridging the transnational, national and local level political activism. I will also analyze how Romani women relate to their ethnicity and gender in public life. The interviews were conducted with these Romani women activists in an environment that allowed my interviewees to open up to me about their experiences as Romani women activists in a politically and otherwise hostile and discriminatory political space. My observation was that they constructed their narratives in the course of their public roles and performativity[130]. Based on the data, I argue that politics of power reproduces, reconstructs and brings into play ethnic, gender and class categories at the intersection of whose the subject the "Romani woman activist" appears through her interactions and public activities in all three spaces of transnational, national and local level political activism. Despite the fact that politics have given a symbolic voice to Romani women in recent years, they still have not received real recognition in the political sphere. Although the appearance of this symbolic voice in social discourse is an important political act, it is not sufficient for proper political realization for the Roma community. To date these upwardly mobile Romani women, who are politically active within the 'Roma movement', are underresearched and undertheorized and their experiences are absent from both as pointed out in Romani studies and feminist scholarship.

Who is speaking, from what position and with what institutional background? These are the questions that must be raised and thought through methodologically in every social research. I am aware that the analysis of the interviews I have conducted creates an asymmetric relationship between me and the interviewees and that it reflects my own perceptions. However, I shall argue that my analysis also reconstructs and gives new meaning to spoken histories through the 'power' of reconstruction which is always in the analyzer's hands.

The women I interviewed in the study can in all cases be considered as "border crossers"[131] as one interviewee also pointed out that "[…] *whatever public life, civil or even party political role offers a status-changing, social mobility opportunity for us"*. That is, Romani women activists can be considered as "border crossers" because of their true social and geographical mobility, but also in a metaphorical sense, since they have to criticize, question

---

[129] This chapter is an extended and reformulated version of my article which was written in Hungarian. "Aki érti a világ hangját, annak muszáj szólnia": Roma nők a politikai érvényesülés útján" (Kóczé 2010)

[130] I understand this as Judith Butler's term for gender performativity; this means that gender roles establish determined gender role identities through the citing of strict rules. This does indicate a kind of freedom by which the subject can construct their gender identity but the strict repetition of norms (Butler 2001).

[131] A volume edited by Boglárka Bakó and Zsófia Eszter Tóth in 2008 entitled '*Borderless women: Excluded and accepted in female society*' was published in Hungary, in which numerous excellent writings can be read about border-crossing women and women's groups. (Bakó-Tóth 2008) Border-crossing has a very broad international literature both in social sciences and feminist literary criticism. Of these the two most important mentioned by me: Higonnet 1994; Henderson 1995.

and break down the visible and invisible borders and walls power has constructed around them. Margaret Higgonet (Higgonet 1994: 2-3), a feminist literary scholar said that anyone who wishes to cross the borders must also reckon on border crossers taking part in refashioning both the borders and the structures behind the borders. All Romani women mentioned in my study as border crossers often face or have faced voiced and unvoiced social and political conventions. During the interviews they said that because of these social and political conventions they were often exposed to continual attacks. As Henderson argues, "border crossers are not met with recognition but punishment, since they have stepped onto hallowed ground" (Henderson 1995:2).

6.1 How Romani women are represented in Hungarian researches

Research on Hungarian Gypsies in the last 15-20 years has primarily examined the state of Gypsy groups in the social structure. Amongst social integration and social equality issues, the problems of socially disadvantaged Roma were most emphasized. It was "prescribed" by the present social political discourse, which places great emphasis on social integration, the acceptance of the fallen and the excluded into the society. And one of the most obvious breaks in Hungarian society, after the political changes, was the one between those who have access to knowledge and "normal" human subsistence levels, and those who were denied them. Roma people are over-represented in the latter group as they fell into the trap of deep poverty after the political changes, and were denied knowledge and basic human rights.[132] So it is no wonder if most of the social research is interested in understanding and archiving the mechanisms responsible for poverty, unemployment, regional segregation and the resurfacing of illiteracy. This research, however, lacks an ethnic, gender and class aspect, just as the so-called national mainstream research has not provided an analysis of the intertwining of these issues to date.

Those Gypsies, who, through social mobility avoid the circle of the socially deprived and disadvantaged, often do not catch the social scientist's eye. There is very little research done in which the Roma elite's or successful Roma's identities, integration strategies, are looked into.[133] In recent years the overwhelming theme of sociological research, and writing on Romani women has been their reproductive behavior. Sociology, as a scientific discipline, has always been interested in population growth, and the issue of what the demographic is for a certain national group. The Roma demographic model is very similar to that of the so-called "traditional societies" model[134], the main characteristic of which is that the proportion of births and deaths, including infant mortality, is high. Mária Neményi's study, "Pregnancy-birth-childcare – Gypsy mothers and healthcare", focuses on the lives and reproductive histories of the Romani women (Mária Neményi 1999:161). She compares four basic models in her research on the following Hungarian Roma groups: Oláh Roma, Beásh Roma,

---

[132] According to many researchers, income disparity increased after the political changes, that is within the poor and those living in "deep poverty" suffering from lack of the most basic goods (e.g. they starve, their homes are in ruins, dangerous or health threatening states). The income of this group is closely linked to labor market exclusion, which affected the Roma most drastically after the system change. Éva Havasi, a Central Statistic Office researcher, states that although the number of poor did not change between 2001 and 2003, but their income was severely encroached (Havasi 2005).

[133] Székelyi-Örkény-Csepeli-Barna 2005. Margit Feischmidt 2008; Anna Kende 2005.

[134] Warren S. Thompson demographer describes a three step process during which one type of stable population state becomes another type. The first phase refers to the demographic characteristic of traditional societies which shows a great similarity to the Roma demographic model.

Romungros and Budapest (ethnically mixed) groups. According to the findings of the study, the reproductive behavior of the Oláh and the Beásh differ culturally from the majority, while the greatest knowledge of child rearing was observed in the Budapest group.

Judit Durst studied the formation of reproductive behaviors of marginalized groups and raised the question, whether there is an ethnic influence on willingness to bear children.[135] Durst found that Roma reproductive behavior is much more dominated by the state and the fixture of a given Roma community in local social and economic structures than by Roma cultural practices. While Durst de-ethnicizes reproductive behavior for the Roma from *Lápos[136]*, Mária Neményi writes of an intertwining of ethnic and gender issues during her analyses of interviews – albeit very subtly.

Béla Jánky also examines Roma reproductivity drawing on representative Gypsy data collected in 2003. He analyzed how the life chances of Romani women in the first one and a half decades after the political changes had altered.[137] Jánky primarily focused on the problems of young women, including reproduction and the knock-on effects of school and labor force-market integration. He concluded that in those places where both the education system and the labor force allow for integration, the number of teenage mothers has dropped noticeably, while in those places where the worst education and labor force-market conditions prevail, where there is no recourse to integration, the reproductive levels and the number of young mothers have not decreased. So the more segregated and deprived a Roma community is, the greater the chance that the women will give birth at a young age and their level of reproduction will be relatively high when compared to a more integrated Roma community.

While Neményi, Durst and Jánky studied Romani women's reproductive behavior, they did not expose the interconnection between racism and the Romani female body.

Over the last few years, influenced by the '80s and '90s post-modern and post-structural[138] social theories, identity research on Roma have slightly changed. Postmodern discourses are deconstructive in as much as they seek to distance us from and make us skeptical about traditional beliefs concerning truth, knowledge, power, the self and language that are often taken for granted. Postmodern thought suggests that the criteria theories used to establish what is true or false, good or bad, are not universal and objective, but rather internal to the structures of the discourses themselves and thus they are historical and subject to change. (Baumann 1992) Accordingly, in some of the Roma related researches static and rigid identity concepts were replaced by the more diverse and dynamic postmodern concept of identity, the main characteristic of which is that identity appears through interaction with others and is subject to change continuously in time and space. The postmodern identity is not a single identity, but appears as several discursive constructs, sometimes with contradictory elements within and between them. According to the post-modern approach, the most believable identity of an individual can be studied through the "I narrative", that is, on the basis of a continually experienced and articulated individual life story. This new critical, discursive mode of speech appear concerning Roma women in the writings of Éva Kovács[139], Kata Horváth[140] and Cecília Kovai[141], as well as of Boglárka Bakó[142], who also

---

[135] Durst (2001:71) made a significant contribution on the reproductive behavior of Romani women.

[136] This is a pseudoname of the settlement.

[137] Béla Jánky, 2005a; Béla Jánky, 2005b connected the reproductive behavior of Romani women with educational and employment prosperity.

[138] Post-modern theorists such as Jean Francois Lyotard and Judith Butler changed the notion of identity to a significant degree. It made some influence on some of the researcher on Romani issues as well.

[139] Éva Kovács: Mari and her "Gypsy-ness" – or the site and force of narrative in ethnic research, a study which appeared in Tabula 9/1 in 2006. Kovács focuses on the functional indivisibility of narrative and practice. The

approaches the gender models of Roma communities through individual narratives. I shall base my argument partly on these narratives and approaches when studying the identity formation of Roma women in public life.

Éva Kovács in her most exciting and inspiring study, *Black bodies, white bodies: The Gypsy picture from the 1850s until the first half of the 20th century*, opposes social scientists' work when she argues that is just as important to problematize and analyze the position of the observer as the visual representations in social reasearch. (Kovács 2009). The (mostly authoritative) constructing role taken by social scientists in their work, their observing "glance" which girdles and describes research on Roma people, is still not so tangible at the textual level as it is at the visual level. Kovács draws attention to how 'black' bodies are feminized and masculinized in European modernity, and how these bodies are projected against white society's desires and fears. Kovács also shows, through the pictures she has chosen, how Gypsies have become the colonized groups or, to use her expression the 'primitives' of modern Europe. The author openly challenges the non-Roma artists of Eastern Europe and, more covertly, non-Roma social scientists, to change their observer positions, practice self-reflection, as Western European artists have already done in the representations of their own colonized groups. Eva Kovács also draws attention to the fact that the Central-Eastern European position will change and self-reflection will begin if the observed "Gypsy" crosses to the other side. That means that Gypsy creators and social scientists appear and "force" an about-turn with the non-Gypsy creators and researchers and their invisible privileges. Kovács' study is not only important because it maps how "Gypsy" gender and sexuality were constructed right from the 1850s until the first half of the 20th century, but also because it draws a parallel between the observable and tangible colonizing visual representation and the social scientific studies of 'Gypsy" representations driven with invisible power relations. Gypsy women in the paintings she analyzes weave social, gender, ethnic and class based identities. Kovács, hence, introduced a new perspective which resonates to the concerns of postcolonial and black critical theorists and exposes and deconstructs the gaze of the other who possesses the power of construction.

6.2 Emancipation and identity politics of Romani women

"Romani woman" as an identity category appears in both social scientific and artistic discourses. However, while in social scientific discourses, that is in all scientific and artistic writings and works centering around Roma women, they are regarded as objects of the given research, in artistic discourses, that is in artistic works and interviews, in which Roma women speak about and reflect on their own political and social emancipatory struggles, they can and

---

study introduced two theses. By the first thesis she criticizes the late modern multicultural approach, which, according to her, enforces colonial and essentialist critiques. By the second thesis, she argues that "saying and doing" & performance and the cultural deed, are all indivisible.

[140] Kata Horváth (2008) in this study the author is curious whether the discursive construction of skin color establishes the emergence of sexuality, gender, and ethnically qualified familial relations.

[141] Cecília Kovai (2006) studies the construction of gender relations, gender roles through various spoken narratives and life situations. The author argues against those cultural anthropologists who "believe that gender is an indivisible part of the individual's bodily appearance."

[142] Boglárka Bakó (2008) She is also using Romani women's narratives in her works.

do actively represent themselves and express their own experiences. In other words, while in the first, others choose the themes linked to Romani women, the second sees Roma women as active agents shaping their own discourse.

As a feminist researcher I intend to give an opportunity for Romani women to speak about their issues and construct their discourse as an active agent. In doing that, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews with twenty Romani women from Hungary (I analyzed eleven[143]) who were/are key players in Romani political activism. Some of them are active not only at a local level, but at the transnational level as well. I structured these interviews in a way that they can offer a space for these women to express their thoughts on political activism and elaborate their views on gender related issues which are silenced in the movement. Almost all interviewees (except 3) worked or work in a high position in major Roma related national/international NGOs or played a political role in Hungarian party politics. Their social class status is quite different. Many of them come from the first generation of Hungarian Roma intellectuals and ,interestingly, two thirds are married to non-roma, while the rest either remained single or found a Romani partner.

I was most concerned in my analysis with the degree of family integration, that is whether the interviewees were living in segregated or integrated communities, with their socio-economic status, with their strategies of identity formation, i.e. whether they aim to assimilate or integrate and whether they maintain traditions or try to overturn them, and with what kind of social capital they had. Another essential issue from an identity constructivist viewpoint was whether they experienced discrimination due to their race and gender identity. If they had experienced such discrimination earlier, the question was whether it had influenced their identity and political participation to a great degree. A significant factor on individual interests was whether the interviewees had husbands, partners and if they did, were they Roma or not. Another important factor I concentrated on was the way the interviewees engaged in politics. A significant difference between the interviewees was the degree to which they were drawn into public life and politics. I have analyzed the responses of the interviewees along these major themes, similarities and differences.

I also tried to create thematic units when analyzing the interviews, ones that can play an important role in the motivation of Roma women. Interview details also reflect the multifariousness of the interviewees, while the thematic organization and the analysis of the details should provide a better understanding of Roma women's public roles and what factors influenced their identity formation process. The interviews contain sociological and biographical data as well as profound psychological constructs. Through personal intervention they not only construct spoken narratives, in which Roma women activists are active agents, but also, through this personal framework, inter-group and interpersonal links.

6.3 Racial community models concerning male and female relations

Family, socio-economic status, linguistic and cultural identity of the given community plays an important role in the career histories of the interviewees. Most of them spent their childhoods in one place and only moved away from their original community to complete secondary school or higher education studies.

---

[143] Unfortunetly out of twenty only eleven women allowed to write down their stories. The rest of them were scared that their stories will be public and recognizable even with pseudoname.

Katalin's parents moved to Budapest's poorest district from the countryside, hoping that they can make a better life for the family.

> There's the family, well […] dad was wonderful […] a wonderful man. They lived for many years in a dump where we were born… effectively a few barracks… at least I know from hearsay, from my mum and dad, but don't remember it, as it was before I was three years old. […] As my dad, I always put it like this, he was the sky, while mum was the earth, but these two had nothing in common, and I remember Vaskapu street, [where] we moved into a slum flat, but, compared to before, it was a great step forward according to my parents. Granny moved in with us there.." (Interview with *Katalin* 2008.10.12)

In most cases, the grandparents lived with the family and they played an important role in child rearing. In *Mária's* case, however, only her father was a Gypsy in the family, but according to her: *"My father was integrated into her maternal family very well, as his ethnic identity did not strike her as a child".* She also talks about a tight-knit family structure, in which the mother's non-Roma grandparents played a big role.

> […] I think, I am being precise when I say that I come from a poor family. But I think I had a good childhood, that the grandparents, parents and children were really close." (Interview with *Mária* 2008.11.02)

The role of the grandparents in many cases was a key element, which had a great effect on both the identity formation of the interviewees and the way they took up public roles. The interviewees' relation to poverty, in most cases, was a beautified, surreal element, which they view through their present circumstances. From today's perspective it is not the completely verifiable socio-economic status which is important to them, but how they relate emotionally to their childhood circumstances. Those who spent their childhood in blocks in the capital, under very strict rules, see their country relatives as freedom-giving, all-embracing, accepting communities as Katalin reports:

> I was unbelievably happy at the Romungro site where I spent the summers. It was so different, you know, isolated from the Gadjos, not told in that house where… Mum always said, little one you can go outside the door, but stand at attention, as all playing must be done inside the house. But there the women came together, spoke about who would cook what, if one was ill the other one fed her children, looked after them. In that linked-up life there was only beauty, pleasure, and it stayed with me and I don't understand what we were doing here in Pest. (Interview with *Katalin* 2008.10.12)

Going back to the "real" community, which is usually located in the countryside, is always a recurring motif in most of the biographical narratives. Their past seemes to be important for the interviewees for several reasons; they consider their roots a source for strengthening their own identities, while reflecting on the rural community helps them recognize, reconstruct and make their own sense of those customs and behavioral patterns they have taken from their present non-Roma community. Their nostalgic mode of speaking about their rural community, about the solidarity amongst women, when they almost fetishize the local rural

based Romani culture, stands in sharp contrast to the marginal, rootless existence in the big cities where Romani groups are scattered and lost their cultural identity.

András Schiffer's documentary film captures this experience of those Gypsies and Gypsy families who came to Budapest in the 70s and 80s due to the expansions of job opportunities in industrial state companies. András Schiffer was a documentary film maker, who documented this era, working closely with well-known Hungarian sociologist doing a pioneer research on Roma, such as István Kemény, Gábor Havas and Zsolt Csalog. Schiffer relied on their expertise and research results to expose the profound social problems of the Roma, including the difficulties of territorial and social mobilization of rural based Roma into big cities, through such films as "Gyuri Cséplő" and "Black Train". The documentary called "Black Train", for instance, depicts the life of Romani men who had to commute weekly from small villages to their workplace in Budapest. A significant number of Roma men, especially from the country's North-East, were coming as migrant workers to help modernize the capital. This commuting, however, meant that during the week only the women were at home to run the household, care for the children and take care of the agricultural work.

Most of my interviewees have a very strong and supportive mother or grandmother figure in the center of their family and have carried her image into their political and public careers. When for instance, Erzsébet talks about her own community, she emphasizes traditional female power expresses her strong affinity with female members of her community. She also talks about how women had to take on formal and informal roles associated with power in the community, perhaps because they outnumbered local men.

> I come from a completely, openly matriarchal Gypsy community; in my village there was matriarchy, as cohesion and cooperation were key, all orphans were raised by the women and help and assistance was very strong. It worked as one huge family, control and value systems became feminized. In World War II the men were taken to work camps. Of the adult men, in a community of 84, only two remained. (Interview with *Erzsébet* 2007.04.17)

So, communities like the one in which Erzsébet was raised were based firmly in the power of Romani matriarchy. Other interviewees also reported that female members of a given community, particularly old, well-established, wise grandmothers bear significant power to influence various political and economic decisions regarding their community. Contrary to public perception, the internal "hidden" drive of extended Roma families or communities was often a very powerful Romani woman.

Ilona remembers that in her family the grandmother – who they called Granny (*Mariska Baba*) – played a key role in family relations and keeping the family together:

> My Gran skated on thin ice. She was someone who, at the time, got goods from the Soviet Union, which she then sold in various markets. She had individual buyers too, who emerged not only as buyers, but as important contacts. We could borrow money from them if we had no money in the pot. (Interview with *Ilona* 2008.01.19)

According to *Ilona*, her grandmother operated an entire support network to keep the family alive. She had not only economic ties, but also lovers outside the Roma community. One of

the customers, originally heard about Ilona's grandmother and her intellectual qualities from the local priest, who was at that time the lover of the grandmother. Usually, women in the family also become a way for social mobility As they were the ones who were able to get married to or become involved with someone from the upper class who ensured their social mobility. A strong mother-figure, therefore, could ensure the upward mobility of the interviewees and have a decisive impact on their own identity. There were cases when the female members of the family were strongly opposing the restrictive norms of the community, and through their resistance they were able to "uplift" their daughters and granddaughters. *Erzsébet* talks about how much the family by and large fought against traditions concerning girls' and women's roles when she was the first girl who wanted to go and study.

> A small war broke out between the grandmothers when I announced in 8th grade that I would be a chemist. The community stood behind me and supported my mother, on my mother's side my grandmother too, even dad, who was a bit doubtful but had the courage to allow me to the distant city where I became a grammar school and college student, but this wasn't an easy decision […] Firstly I was a girl, there are great dangers for a girl. How can a small girl 14-15 years old know how to act in every situation, to fit in, stay away from men who in general demand respect, and for girls to get married with respect? (Interview with *Erzsébet* 2007.04.17)

Generally, in my sample those women who came from matriarchal communities were much more likely to become leading figures in male dominated Roma civil rights organizations than those who grew up in a patriarchal community. Based on my interviews, matriarchy is more likely to exist in those communities that are open to the non-Roma world. Female community members can become a link to the non-Roma world through market exchange, education, house-labor (cleaning the house of the Gadje, ie. non-Roma) and sexual intercourse even. In a way, where matriarchy is the social system of the community, women have more educational opportunities and thus they are more likely to be delegated in local political activism.

In patriarchal communities, however, traditions of shutting girls away and fearing for their "honor" are always the father's responsibilities. *Júlia's* narrative demonstrates how she learned female behavioral patterns through her relationship with her father. This female role and existence, in relation to the dominant father, entails beauty and danger:

> Even as a little girl I was very feminine, as my sister was, but they really feared for us. They worried about everything, not only that we would date, but that something bad would happen […], My father always said that he works at night and sees what's going on, what women and men are like, and how they treat women.(Interview with *Júlia* 2008.02.23)

However, the good looks of the interviewees often appears as a source of strength as beauty becomes the "aesthetic capital" of the family and the individual. This is in line with the fact that historically Romani women have been represented in literature and paintings as attractive sexual objects. Accordingly, *Katalin* recounts how, after her father had become ill, her mother urged her to get married, that is, to make use of her "aesthetic capital".

> Dad became schizophrenic…Perhaps not intentionally, but my mum sacrificed me and I had to get married to a man who would earn a proper living for the family." (Interview with *Katalin* 2008.06.21)

106

This marriage eventually resulted in a disastrous crisis as education, ambition and previously imbibed roles of motherhood and wife finally came into conflict.

> I had no intention of getting married. I simply wasn't interested…I was untouched at 20… And then we got married, then I was a second year student and on July 10th my child was born. I was on maternity leave for 6 weeks from college and went back to study during the day. Well that was the first real crisis in my life [she is crying] (Interview with *Katalin* 2008.06.21)

Most of the interviewees had non-Roma husbands, while the others either did not find a partner, or divorced their husband whom they married at a young age, or had a Romani partner. Relationships with non-Roma partners played an important role in their social mobility and public careers. Those interviewees who have a non-Roma partner are generally mobile upwards as they can capitalize their husband's higher status as non-Roma. In general, non-Roma partners showed more support towards my interviewees in their public roles. In some cases, non-Roma husbands even based their own carreer on the polticial work of their Romani wife. These non-Romani men often considered to the emancipation of and showing political support towards their wife's political ambition as their life mission. However, sometimes these ambitions came more from the non-Roma husband than the interviewee herself. In other cases, the non-Romani husband comes from a liberal, cosmopolitan family, usually from a Jewish family, hence their strong opposition against discrimination and support for diversity. *Ilona,* for instance, has a Jewish husband and reports that *"[w]e feel somehow that there is an unspoken, transcended relations between us which is rooted in the extermination of the Jews and Roma during the Holocaust".* Thus, this collective memory of persecution has the potential to create a tacit alliance between Roma and Jews.

Those interviewees, however, who do not live in a relationship or are divorced much more exposed and vulnerable in their public lives. *Vilma* spoke about how one's family determines to a great degree the protection one enjoys in Roma political life.

> I was protected as I had just divorced and was in a state… Erzsébet was protected as she was a mother and wife, but there are many who were more fragile; simply because they had no partner all sorts of rumors were started about them […] (Interview with *Vilma* 2008.06.14)

Hence, as we have seen, the choice of a partner and whether the relationship is an endogamous or exogamous one has great importance for the political life of the interviewees. Those who had Roma partners enjoy much greater support from the Roma community, but choosing a non-Roma partner can mean upward social mobility. The male-female relations experienced are also an important model in the arguably masculine political life.

*Erzsébet'*s partner is not Roma, but he has worked for Roma rights for more than 20 years.

> At the beginning they accepted him there was no, what can I say, no great hassle. The truth is that I met him very early and I am not the only Gypsy in his life, he played music with young Roma, before I came along… he wanted to know the community customs, laws, the way it worked.(Interview with *Erzsébet* 2007.04.17)

Veronka, who is in her late 40s, and has not found a lasting partner says of non-Roma men that

> [f]or Gadjo men Gypsy girls, whether pretty or not, are exotic, obtainable and over-sexed. If someone has a Roma girlfriend then that, mostly, means that he can do anything with her, doesn't need to marry her, and she costs him little. .(Interview with *Veronka* 2007.04.12)

Veronka refers in her statement to the colonial relationship between non-Roma men and Romani women, in which Romani women are regarded as an overtly sexualized object. This is in line with Sander L. Gilman's analysis (1985) of how European culture of science and arts represented black and Jewish sexuality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. According to his study, this was a period when Europe was regarded the "Other" as an oversexualized, exotic object, often associated with illness. However, while representations of Jewish and black people have been at the center of postmodern and postcolonial studies and their main analytical tool of deconstruction, Roma people remain invisible and hence victims of the misrepresentations created by the non-Roma majority[144]. In the light of the above, *Veronka* was right when complaining that as long as Romani women are represented as a sexual objects in white European men's fantasies, they never will be taken as serious political actors:

> […] male dominated politics will take them either as a lover or someone as a symbolic representation of Roma who anyway will depend upon the interest of the non-Roma politicians (Interview with *Veronka* 2007.04.12)

Júlia belongs to the smaller group of my sample in so far as she married a Roma man. She emphasizes the importance of endogamous marriage for cultural reasons.

> A few of us are lucky in that we managed to find a Roma partner…only a few, I'm afraid there are just a few of us…we don't need to learn each other's customs, and two people, even if they are Gypsy and come from the same sub-culture, also have many conflicts about other things.(Interview with *Júlia* 2008.08.21)

A source of conflict *Júlia* implies here is the loyality of her partner. Júlia, despite the fact that her husband has cheated on her many times, has stayed loyal to him throughout their relationship. She says, her role as mother gave her strength to endure her husband's endeavors.

> I simply could not imagine sleeping with anyone else and then kissing my children. I would be incapable of that. I have some sort of moral boundary. Because of this I could not have done it, because of my children. (Interview with Júlia 2008.08.21)

Being a mother and wife, therefore, are closely tied to one another: they almost are subsumed in one role for Júlia. Her case shows me how women, having chosen to respect traditional patriarchal Roma norms, subject their own interests to men's desires. In Júlia's case, it did not matter how much her husband disregarded his wife and children by his decisions, "his women" still have to respect and obey his overarching power in the family.

---

[144] Junghaus Timea, young Romani art historian and Romani cultural activist elaborated her views on the cultural representations of Roma in European art history. See more about the Roma self-representation in arts by the *Meet Your Neighbours*, (Junghaus 2006)

In sum, the way as Romani male and female treated each other in the community it become a model for the interviewees. Later on in their partnership but even in their political activism they developed their gender relations based on the model which is stem from their parents or grandparents.

6.4 The pride and prejudice struggle

Most interviewees said that they had experienced prejudice during certain parts of their lives. Most of these cases were to do with the interpretation and reinterpretation of their ethnic identity and those major events and processes that had influenced it. *Erzsébet* talks of a tragic event of her past that has a determining effect on her ethnic identity even today.

> During World War II, terrors and fears came thick and fast and were not so different from the feudal, strictly controlled events of the past, so there was a relative sense of persecution. But what is sure is that it is recorded on every hovel, written in chalk on the door frame, how many there were of them. And every day they waited to see whether they came for them and took them. (Interview with *Erzsébet* 2007.04.17)

In working through these histories of war, terror and violence, given the lack of education, it was the community or family that could offer support. Most interviewees had to face the same prejudices as their parents. *Júlia* reports that she was singled out at school despite the fact that she had good grades and her family did not belong to the Gypsy community, yet her skin color was enough for attacks of prejudice.

> I was also attacked for my Gypsy-ness. For example I had no friends and was sat next to a little girl, or she was sat next to me, as one could choose, who was repeating a year, yet I was the best in the class. Or if something disappeared, they blamed me. That happened, and even in secondary school, if someone did something, and didn't own up, I was blamed. (Interview with *Júlia* 2008.08.21)

With *Júlia* there was a type of dissonance between her own subjective view of herself and her representation in the school environment. She differentiated herself clearly from fellow Roma students of lower social status, but her teacher, on the basis of her appearance painted her with the same brush she painted other Roma children. The interviewees say that, on the one hand, they got support, even shelter from their teachers and, on the other, suffered great discrimination.

> I will say I experienced both, in general, both, so when I entered nursery, that sunshine and darkness game, the proportion of people looking at you through dark glasses. Because if someone does that, with prejudice, then practically whatever you do is nothing, those two were always, somehow, in a dialogue with each other– (Interview with Katalin 2009.06.12)

Says Katalin about her contradictory environment. In most cases, the interviewees had some support in school and then in their workplace, but only as much as their white peers and colleagues were willing to provide, and only as long as they did not cross that invisible and inexpressible line beyond which no Roma is allowed to go. Most of the interviewees, however, developed strategies to rise above these obstacles and prejudices.

110

Study went well at Secondary School. They liked me but as the Baccalaureate approached, they did not encourage me to try for college and university… Probably they thought that it's quite enough for a Gypsy to finish Secondary School. The same "limited" support was present in my work too – says *Ilona* about her school experiences.

Many interviewees talked about a frustration of women and members of various minority groups experience during their careers, which is called the "glass ceiling" in Gender Studies. This is experienced in mainly by women, but other disadvantaged groups' career as invisible obstacles as well.These invisible obstacles are prejudices implicitly built in organizational structures and cultures, making it hard to combat them in whatever form they appear. Indeed, most of the interviewees often felt that their environment was condescending towards them.

Despite frustrations and never ending inner struggles, my interviewees were able to remain strong, maintaining their ties to their original community through the process of identity formation. A positive picture of Gypsy-ness and the notion of the "dedicated Gypsy" played a great role in the formation of their ethnic identity. It is similar to when Allaine Cerwonka cited in her study the words of a woman of Chinese descent, "I suddenly find myself in a position in which I can turn my "difference" into intellectual and political capital"(Cerwonka 2008:815).
 Some of the Romani women activists also made similar observations through their activism even though many of them had to face serious denigration. *Melinda*[145], for instance, a highly educated woman, shared her story about her denigration by one of her colleagues.   Her story reminded me of what Franz Fanon (1967) indicated in his research, namely, that it is nearly always assumed that members of various colonized groups are 'defective'. Likewise, leading members of the Romani community who have fallen out of favor with the established power structure have been accused of being criminals or thieves, sometimes with the assistance of the same Roma who are beneficiaries of their patronage. *Melinda* went through this stigmatizing experience and exposed her 'silenced' narratives. She said:

 I want to talk about this because now after several years I have a feeling that many of us went through the same experienc we are just ashamed to talk about it.(Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

Melinda, was confronted directly with the (neo)colonial dynamics of the NGO sector as she sought to advance the rights and visibility of her people. Although the experience damaged her life, perhaps irreparably, it enabled her to understand the colonial structure which is generated around the lives of Romani NGOs subalterns, and which serves to prove their 'incapacity' making them fulfill their 'inferior fate' in a way that is scripted by a broader white power structure.
Melinda began her work as the executive director of a newly founded strategic organization in the Romani civil rights movement, and very soon, began to confront the forces of structural exclusion. First, she was hired with a lower starting salary than other directors of similar advocacy-type organizations. When she mentioned this to her superiors, she was told by one of the key non-Romani funders that she should be happy that as an east European Romani woman she was selected to work for such an organization. The message was clear:

---

[145] The longer version of the Melinda's interview was used in my previous publication (Kóczé and Trehan 2009)

she should 'know her place', and not create such a fuss, and she should appreciate their enormous effort to provide her such an opportunity in the first place. Secondly, the founders of the organization and financiers designed an organizational structure which resulted in corrosive relations amongst the staff members. By offering two full-time positions within a small office - the executive and the deputy director positions, along with a part-time administrator - they laid the ground for a strong rivalry between the two key members of the NGO staff, both of whom were Roma. In organizations of this size, having two directorial posts tends to generate conflict rather than cooperation, and the case of this particular NGO was not an exception. *Melinda* believed there were certain intentions behind this, but could not fully comprehend why she did not revolt against it at the time. As she informed me,

> […]my tragedy was paved structurally and very little effort was needed to destroy me.[…]. One summer, when my son needed to have surgery, I decided to take him to my home country in order have the operation as the medical fees were far more affordable. Whilst in the hospital, I rang my colleagues in the office, and they began to berate me, talking to me as if I was a criminal: they demanded that I stop using the office telephone and bank card. They informed me that in my absence, they had gone through the office bookkeeping, and scrutinized all my expense receipts and bills, and they come to the conclusion that I had misused the office money. (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

When Melinda was telling this story to me she was visibly re-traumatized and crying by the act of retelling.

> Subsequently, it emerged that my colleagues (Romani men and a non-Romani women) had prepared an internal report which they sent to donors, board members, and other influential actors in order to destroy my professional reputation and challenge my integrity, thereby engineering my dismissal from the post. Needless to say, I was shocked by this attack, and became psychologically shattered. Instead of hiring a lawyer to start a legal procedure against my colleagues for violating my personal integrity, I began to internalize - as many subalterns, particularly women do - all the accusations leveled against me. (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

Based on *Melinda's* description the Board did not recognize the complex nature of the case, with all the mitigating circumstances mentioned such as her absence during the attacks against her. After several years it turned out via her non-Romani female colleague that it was an under-handed attempt to take the directorship from her at a time when she was in a vulnerable position, and indeed, not even in the country.

> […]besides my own administrative failures, I was embedded in a colonial organizational structure without adequate administrative and financial support, and this only served to solidify the power structure's own expectation of a subaltern unable to accomplish a professional job [she is crying]. (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

These unconscious and sometimes unspoken assumptions by colonizers can devastate the life of subalterns and these assumptions work as powerful 'self-fulfilling prophesies'. According to *Melinda*, it took her over five months to be able to talk about the events to her close friends and family members.

> I did not retain enough self-esteem and mental strength to legally challenge the organization and the people who had worked to destroy my professional standing behind my back. (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

Based on *Melinda's* description, after she left the organization, the Board hired a Romani man to be her successor. He was offered a significantly higher salary than she received, and in addition, the organizational structure of the office was redesigned. While on the one hand, she takes comfort in the fact that the Board eventually recognized some structural issues which were internally divisive, Melinda feels that

> I have 'paid' for this belated acknowledgment with my own dignity, which has been damaged and never compensated for. (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

The case of *Melinda,* as other cases of Romani NGO workers and political activists, show that even though these women are highly educated and privileged compared to the majority of Romani women, in reality, they are still treated as a subaltern.
Despite the fact that Melinda was completely destroyed by her colleagues, now, after several years, she thinks that:

> […]it was the greatest lesson in my life which made me and my identity stronger than before.[…] (Interview with *Melinda* 2008.04.12)

Besides all the challenging personal stories, many interviewees referred to specific historical periods as well as positive source of their identity, particularly to socialism, when the Roma had the opportunity to work,

> Socialism announced equality for Gypsies[…]They started to take it seriously and went to work… gladly, from sunrise to sunset, late at night, to pull yokes in winter, in snow, ice, despite the fact they had no proper footwear. (Interview with *Csilla* 2007.03.02)

In *Erzsébet's* case this positive experience is linked to women, the female members of her family.

> My mother's family was denounced as vagabonds, but was much more worldly and cultured than the soil-bound peasants. (Interview with *Erzsébet* 2008.12.03)

They were culturally well-informed, thus *Erzsébet* was able to be proud of them in her local community.

According to *Katalin,* working parents still found their way to progress even in difficult circumstances:

> My Dad was an electrician at Ganz-Mávag (a big and well-known Budapest company – translator's note), and Mum always took on some sort of work. (Interview with *Katalin* 2009.02.12)

If there was work, then every misery could be avoided and they tried to fit in with workplace expectations. The older generation interviewees, who were born in the 50s and 60s, undertook a sort of conscious protest, as positive Roma intellectuals. Roma intellectuals

regarded themselves as part of Hungarian high culture. Roma artists stressed, as well as white Hungarian artists did, that Roma people and their art do enrich universal cultural values.

> For me Károly Bari (famous Hungarian Roma poet) is a leading light from that time, his poetry one of the brightest stars in Hungarian poetry, alongside Attila József and László Nagy (other famous white Hungarian poets), shines and his light will never fade" - states *Erzsébet*.

The Roma identity and intellectual roles of the interviewees are not only important for their own Roma communities, but also pose a provocative challenge to the majority. Again a quote from *Erzsébet*:

> The 1972 TV show Mastermind, was the first time a national audience had heard Romanes being spoken. The country saw that a Gypsy language was capable of expressing complicated ideas and works of literature and had a wonderful musicality.

Younger Romani women, born after the 1970s, who took up public positions, are more self-determined in their ethnic identity formation, as they can draw on the already positive Roma identity politics formed by civil rights organizations. They took this further and made it visible on the national and international scene.

The formation of the interviewees' ethnic identity has partly influenced their reaction and relation to Roma and non-Roma people, and their own personality structures. Among the determining elements of their own Roma group identities were positive tropes about Roma through which they thought they could become equal to, or even more in some sense than their non-Roma environment. This was perceived as a mobile force, which can give spiritual and intellectual support at times when they are threatened.

Ágnes Daróczi, a distinguished Roma political activist and the organizer of the first National Exhibition of Self-Taught Roma Arists in Hungary in 1979, emphasizes in her public writing how proud she is of this emerging positive Roma identity.

> We must stress, in contrast, that the knowledge of modern skills and our ability to quickly react to demands of the market has always secured the survival of our people. And if those modern skills were once handed down from one generation to the next, how they can be attained only through formal education, reading and computer literacy. We must emphasize that there are several among our traditions that we need not only preserve, but teach the rest of the world. These include a love of peace, and the knack of conciliation, multilinguilism, interpersonal and trading skills, as well as the tradition of solidarity, respect and helpfulness towards the afflicted and the old. When we wanted to break into high culture with our selection of Roma visual art, we meant to attract attention to our similarity and our values through surprise and curiosity. It is time we became noticed![146] *(Ágnes Daróczi 2006:123)*

---

[146] Ágnes Daróczi wrote extensively about the "Roma visual artists in Hungary and Europe" in the *Meet Your Neighbours*, 2006, edited by Timea Junghaus,

Conclusively, Romani identity has been subverted by activist in order to establish it as source of pride and strength. In way, therefore, it has been re-interpreted by activists and artists and it became a political capital and a tool to frame identity based politics.

The framing process of constructing the Roma identity is always discursive. It depend on the representation of regimes and what kind of political expectations has to be fulfilled by the Roma. Stuart Hall (1996:443) warns us about that in the homogenizing identity making process we should recognize the "extraordinary diversity of subject positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose" in this case the category of "Roma".

6.5 Mobility, mobilization relations

Inter-generational and intra-generational mobility research, based on traditional statistical methods, generally examines the school and labor market careers of those in question, comparing them to the father's school qualifications and occupation. Generally, the degree of mobility between generations is much greater than within generations. This type of approach, however, does not account for the complex mobility process, which Roma first generation intellectuals normally experience. Furthermore, it is not only traditional mobility pointers (education, occupation) that play a role, but all sorts of psycho-social factors too, which tip the individual off the traditional career/life path of the community and family. The interviewees are, in all senses, border crossers. Most of them decided to act alone, not within the family and community, even though they rarely have got support from smaller Roma communities, or from the non-Roma local community in order to break out of the traditional lifestyle. Most of the interviewees had to struggle within and against their own family in order to get permission to start a completely different life career as opposed to the family plan. Melinda told several stories about her own personal struggles to be able to choose a different career of than community had expected of her. She particularly emphasized the conflicts she had with her father who completely disagreed with her when she left her village and started a new life in Budapest. Her father wanted to see her daughter as village women with high school education (in a family, in which no one had secondary education) who will get married soon and sustain the family. Over her comfortable village life *Melinda* chose a very lonely career in the big city where she completed her university education without family support.

In *Erzsébet's* case, her illness became to mean an access point to social mobility. Relatives judged village life as unsuitable for her and a non-Gypsy mentor appeared – a teacher – who wanted to adopt her, but her mother did not agree to the adoption. It is important that *Erzsébet* remembers the arguments of her mother, who was a resilient and powerful personality, understanding the desire of bettering oneself and supported it.

> I was the oldest child, and unfortunately at 11-12 became seriously ill, I spent more than a year away from home, in and out of a sanatorium and the doctors said to my parents they should give me up for adoption. I had a sweet Russian teacher, God preserve her, who thought a lot of me and loved me and she said to Mum that you have a lot of children, quite enough to bring up, but this one has a good brain, let me adopt her, I will bring her up to be a teacher or doctor or something, and Mum smiled and quietly and proudly said Madam! I will bring this child up to be a teacher or doctor or whatever, she's in good hands at home.

Ilona also remembers being odd, she was not only treated as such but behaved in a strange way, dressed differently than others in her generation, and mostly read when others played. She asked the postman for newspapers on credit, for which her parents had to pay.

> I was such a strange child for my family and on the Roma street, as I went against all the usual customs.

The community could also cope with those who did not tread the usual path, who were anyway unsuited – physically – for the work the others of their age did. And here we can draw a parallel with the peasant communities, where people became intellectuals because

116

they could not meet up to a community's tasks and norms. *Erzsébet's* case well supports the above as she told us that,

> "[i]t was precisely my illness that formed the consciousness in the whole community, that this child is not fated to do manual work, hard physical work, and bear many children."

Many reported, also, that their families hoped that they would fulfill their desires. In most of the cases, the parent generations of my interviewees were not able to obtain even high school diploma. Thus, my interviewees became the bearers of hope in the family. They were perceived as embodied hope for the whole community. Regardless of the struggle and fights many women had with their families at the beginning of their carrier, now that they have their college and university education and the community sees the positive outcome of this enormous social mobilization, these Romani women have become icons for the whole Romani culture within their community. *Katalin's* life is like a continuation of her father's, who was very curious, yet could not follow this through in that community, but became a very positive example for his daughter.

> […]I believe my father broke when an incurable wound developed in his soul. He really did read, he was the one who taught me to read aged 5 in the most natural way, and took me to the library, so we went to the library from when I was five. And in my family I somehow carried on Dad's line.

In order to fulfill her father's dreams, *Erzsébet*, similarly to *Katalin*, needed a non-family mentor. In both their lives, this was a teacher, who could give them advice, which their parents could not. *Katalin* would have given up studying at the point where her father's desires and imaginings petered out.

> And then my class teacher who, somehow, was totally different from all prototypical teachers, probably because there was some sort of foreign thread in her life. And this then gave her a different type of thinking. She was the one who[…] I probably would have stopped at Baccalaureate. Because in that world, that was enough, that was it. She said that I mustn't and that she had submitted the exam registration for me. She was a woman, it was a little like I was her adopted child. She had two small sons, and I was the only pupil who entered her personal life. She invited me over, I went to her summer house. I believe that this was a special position to be in.

Veronka's mother had similar restricted views, as the daughter of a mortar mixer, she could only imagine her sitting for the Baccalaureate, nothing more.

> She would have liked me to sit for my Baccalaureate, although she didn't see further education as any use. She didn't see the end, and she was right. She always said: a Gypsy will never be allowed into a good position, and the non Roma majority will always be against them.

Veronka did experience her mother's prediction, in 1981, after university, all her class-mates got a secondary school teaching position, except for her, the only Gypsy. Now she thinks that she did not give birth to a child out of fear of it being humiliated, similarly to her mother's fears.

117

The interviewees believe that their origins will affect the evaluation of their achievements less and less. Their thoughts on social mobility are best reflected in social programs, creating educational opportunity. Despite the fact that these women completed their education in an educational system which did not give credit for them for their disadvantage background, most of them believe in affirmative action in the educational system. They think that without specific support Romani students can hardly achieve university degree. These opinions correlate with the claims of a liberal NGO, where most of these women have worked and one of the most supportive tools was a specific educational scheme, that is, a specific scholarship and mentorship specifically for Romani students. Many of them address the issue of educational segregation. The purpose of their program is to reduce the concentration of Romani children in a low quality elementary school. However, they did not problematize the deep material difference and the root's cause of the deepening segregation, the social and economic context that created by neoliberal marketization.

For instance, *Erzsébet* announced a program exclusively for Roma, similar to those in working men's colleges.

> "We then demanded special programs like the ones in working men's colleges, especially for Gypsies, with scholarships, and only then will we be satisfied that a Gypsy presence can be seen at every level of the labor hierarchy. There must be doctors, lawyers, engineers among the Roma too, that is highly qualified people, so that we can see Roma in leading positions."

Some of the interviewees did not stop at their first degree but – driven by a strong compulsion to succeed – continued to study in their adulthood, while others went into higher education as adults. *Zsuzsanna* belongs to this group, having joined MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party), she continued her higher education studies.

> I joined MSZP at 18-19 years. I felt great there, I could work, was given various tasks within the party. I was preoccupied with minority issues and then was asked by the County Council's president, who was then the president of the party in Szolnok, to go as a presidential advisor and work at the County Council. I then had to think whether I would take it on, because then catering would be over, and naturally further education would change. I didn't register with the Catering School but with the Personnel Department of the University of Pécs. There was off-site distant learning in Szolnok and I graduated from there, and then, without stopping, applied for the Human Resources Political Department at Pécs which I finished in 2000, and now I am currently studying there too, that is I go there, as I must admit that I have little time for study now. I am doing a doctoral degree, it is an inter-disciplinary Phd school, the political science department. I will be a political scientist, when I'm older, and now I must write my doctoral thesis. (Interview with *Zsuzsanna* 2008.03.24)

Zsuzsanna's mobility also shows that her marriage, as an external influence, prompted her to pursue education that she could use effectively during her public career.

Most of the interviewees born before the '70s, said that they were provided with social mobility at the end of the '80s, when they came into direct contact with oppositional intellectuals. They entered a political and social micro-community, where the political careers

118

of Roma intellectuals could be developed.[147] Four of the interviewees became acquainted with each other during this period, through conversations organized by the, then, opposition. With support from the regime-changing opposition in 1989, the Phralipe Gypsy Organization was formed, which provided a framework for the political roles of regime-changing Roma intellectuals. *"This was really like the period of shafts of light in the 1950s. This was, for us, the period of light shafts"* – said *Katalin* about these years. Many friendships were forged during this time, as opposing factions were also formed.

The Phralipe was an independent Romani organization, founded by Romani intellectuals with the support of members of the Democratic Opposition. (Vermeersch 2002) It is important to note that the Democratic Opposition came into existence in the late 1970s and it was very similar to the Czechoslovak-based movement which was called Charta 77. The people who established the Democratic Opposition were left-wing intellectuals who had given up the socialist project to engage in underground mass mobilization around issues of human rights and democracy. In 1988 the Democratic Opposition formed a liberal political party called Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz). During 1988 and 1989 the SzDSz together with the other liberal and free market oriented Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ) favored a radical change in the socialist regime[148]. The Phralipe was an outpost Roma section of the SZDSZ. In sum, the Pharalipe was an important place for Roma, particularly Romani women for emancipation.

Erzsébet, who was one of the founders of Phralipe, (she is still in the leadership of Phralipe) had some sort of relationship with all my interviewees. Many of them cited her as a reference; she became a mentor to many Roma intellectuals. It was also not surprising that, among the interviewees, there were some family ties too. *Jolán,* who belongs to a younger generation, speaks about how she met *Erzsébet* and reports that it became clear that they belong to the same family community immediately at their first meeting. Jolán's career was very much affected by her relationship with Erzsébet. She started her off on journalism where she became known nation-wide.

> The journalist course was two years long, and I graduated at the same time as Secondary School. Then I met her in the journalist school, she came, Erzsébet, to lecture, whom I knew was a relative, but she didn't recognize me, and came to lecture at the college. She was the Editor of Gypsy Magazine[149] at that time. And then I went there to work, as she had found me. She took me on very quickly, I hadn't even finished the course, I didn't have the certificate, but she took me on.(Interview with *Jolán* 2010.05.23)

Apart from Roma intellectuals, interviewees were supported by non-Romas as well, especially those who were in the Szegényeket Támogató Alap (SZETA) circle. SZETA was one of the most important organizations during the regime change with a main agenda of supporting the poor. Basically, it provided an alternative social support system for the most disadvantaged families. It was established in 1979 by such oppositional leaders as Ottila Solt, Gábor Iványi and Havas Gábor. The formal students of István Kemény, who carried out the first Roma representative survey in Hungary in 1971. Kemény left Hungary in 1977 for political reasons and was living in France until the beginning of the 90s. Gaining official

---

[147] Jenô Zsigó writes about Roma intellectuals' links with opposition intellectuals in much more detail (Jenô Zsigó 2005)

[148] See more about this specific political time period by (Körösényi 1999:39-44)

[149] In 1992 the Hungarian Television (MTV) started their Roma Magazin, which was called Patrin. The Chief Editor of the program was Agnes Daróczi.

recognition for the severity of Gypsy poverty was a serious political breakthrough for Roma intellectuals based on the Kemény study. It is not surprising then that these figures signify important relationship capital, community, intellectual inspiration and spiritual aid for Roma intellectuals. *Katalin*, too, talks about Zsuzsa Ferge[150] with admiration:

> Ferge dreamed of a university. Then after that came the Social Work Department and such at ELTE (Budapest University), which were very important… There was a systematic social life, we organized very good cultural festivals in many places, which became pretty famous. (Interview with *Katalin* 2008.08.13)

Most of the interviewees sought to build connections not only with Roma intellectuals but also with the wider professional and political world. The first generation of intellectual women appeared in Roma life in two ways. The first group is comprised of those who are closely linked to the first generation self-organizing Roma intellectuals. The second group is made up of those who were chosen by political parties as their own Roma MPs. According to *Erzsébet*, those linked to first generation Roma intellectuals at the end of the 80s had the best opportunity to connect with mainstream political party work.

> All political parties accepted our challenge, they came to the discussions and, true to God, they all tried to do something in their own way. Most of them tried the same thing which they had always done, they tried to find Gypsies who best represented their idea of Gypsies. Only the Free Democrats Alliance said that, if you have a political program, then name your MPs, and we will take them into parliament and then they can represent this program. We gave them names, this was the only initiative by political parties.(Interview with *Erzsébet* 2008.07.21)

Hence, direct relations with political parties were proved to be an opportunity for dynamic mobility for Romani intellectual women, as *Mária* also reported:

> I worked at the Communist Party Committee in the 6th District of Budapest; anyway it was a very exciting period, since I was working there, when there were really serious preparations for political change. And during this time I met some fantastic people who played a serious part in preparing it all. Obviously it was no coincidence that it was at the beginning of 88 when I said that I wanted to leave the Budapest Communist Party Committee. Dr Mihály Kökény, who had just received a high position in the then formed Social and Health Ministry, helped me with this, and he got me in touch with Judit Csehák who, on April 1st 88, took over the running of the ministry, and then Judit asked me to be the deputy manager of the Information and Population Communications Department, and my job was to organize ministry affairs, reply to letters to the Ministry, more precisely to organize the replies, as we received several hundred letters a month." (Interview with *Mária* 2009.03.07)

Conclusively, the interviewees went through inter- and intra-generational mobility. In most cases, their social mobility aided their families as well as their Roma and non-Roma micro-communities. The first generation of Roma intellectual women taking up serious political

---

[150] Zsuzsa Ferge was born in Budapest in 1931. She is an economist, having worked in the field of social statistics, sociology, and social policy and became professor of Sociology at Eotvos University in Budapest in 1988. She founded the first department of social policy in Hungary in 1989. http://www.fergezsuzsa.hu/en/cv

positions, were those who were linked to political parties and not those who remained in their Roma intellectual roles.

The political careers of the second generation interviewees were also affected by close links with political party members. Relationship capital played a huge role in promoting mobility and gaining various positions.

6.6 Ethnic and gender identity politics

The most striking period in the honing of Roma identity and active participation in politics began in the 70s and 80s. Roma policy emerged as a sort of cultural political strategy. Politically active intellectuals started to publicly consider Roma history and culture as an integral part of Hungarian history and literature. Accordingly, *Erzsébet* compared Roma cultural and political endeavors with the issues of the 19th century reform age.

> We grew up loving and reading Hungarian literature, so that for us reform age poets were a part of our everyday lives. As if we have no human rights, no civil rights, if we have no right to exist as a community, and as a Gypsy minority in Hungarian life, then we must display our own culture with force.

She was the only one who was accepted in non-Roma intellectual circles as a "visible" member of the first generation, an oppositional Roma intellectual and a woman. However, during the years of political change she became marginalized. There are many reasons for her exclusion. Ilona believe:

> Erzsébet was "too strong a voice in a very masculine intellectual and political environment.[…] Her ethnic identity and Roma consciousness was stronger than this political elite could take, who found other Roma political candidates, more assimilated Roma, who suited them better.

Roma identity took on a political content; both Roma communities and their members began to integrate into their own identities. A kind of reconstruction and reinterpretation of Roma identity began in various social kinship systems. A reinterpretation of Roma identity started, for most of the interviewees when they came into conflict with others – persons, organizations, institutions - over their ethnic identity. Talking about identity, in the forthcoming chapter on my fieldwork experience I will write about my own experience as a Romani woman amongst Romani women, who had different class and educational status from me. For achieving and maintaining a status of "insider", I continually had to negotiate my status, intents, personal and political aspects of my identity.

Erzsébet came into conflict with her family when she realized that the price of mobility was exclusion from the family and the Gypsy community.

121

> […]when after about three weeks I went home, as I needed help, then it was 'Hey my girl, you are going to be a big shot! If you see me on the street, you will cross the road and deny you know me'. This was, from my Gypsy-ness point of view, the most defining moment, I don't know, a cathartic experience, as until then I had lived quietly, secretly, poorly, modestly but my grandmother told me that this behavior would lead to me denying them. From that moment on I became a conscious Gypsy girl, who proudly, with head held high, greets Gypsies on the street in Gypsy, and always admits that she is Gypsy. (Interview with *Erzsébet* 2008.03.12.)

Erzsébet's political opportunities – unlike others' – did not come from an external political party, but were created by her own political, intellectual actions. Her activist work brought respect, prestige and political positions for the Roma, through its cultural power. *Katalin*, who unlike *Erzsébet*, took a background role in the first generation Roma intellectual group, speaks about how men related to women in the group.

> Well there was Júlia, who was cleverer than everybody else, despite this she was completely put down. Then Erzsi [Erzsébet] who luckily had a husband who really supported her, in this situation she always took a protected role. Our knowledge was not knowledge.(Interview with *Katalin* 2009.09.16)

According to the interviewees, those women were the best accepted who best symbolized Roma identity and submitted themselves to the male-centric tone of the movement. Women belonging to both first and second generations, both say that within the movement there was no intellectual support or female solidarity. Most of the activists sacrificed their whole lives to the Roma movement, but did not find any alliances, were not listened to, and did not find their places on the political scene either. Within the Roma movement, male dominance reflected exactly the same male-female power relations that existed within wider political spaces.

Ilona, who belongs to the second generation, tells how a Roma male colleague wanted to take her leading position from her.

> I never imagined in my dreams that a person from my own Roma group would spend every minute just waiting to plunge a knife in my back. Now I understand this mechanism, as it is those people who are frustrated and oppressed by the majority society, who are much more likely, to direct this negative energy onto the weaker ones in their own group.(Interview with *Ilona* 2008.10.23)

This type of "united" front of the group did not leave space for inner power struggles and conflicts of interest, which came about because of class, gender, or even various cultural differences.
It is an interesting point that while the women in the Roma movement were forced to face the male domination of their own movement, Roma women outside it could emerge in mainstream politics. The mainstream political parties were more willing to accept second generation Roma women than their own Roma fellow activists. Amongst the member states of the European Union, Hungary in 2004 was to send the first Romani women to the European Parliament. Also in Hungary, Romani women were the first to take up serious political positions in the Hungarian Parliament, compare with other European countries.

Mária entered political life in the 90s, as a very high ranking civil servant. She spoke about the conflicts her female identity meant.

Well I don't think I have many stories about not being accepted as a woman. But I have some, in fact when I told a leading civil servant that it seemed from our previous conversation that he didn't really want to work with me, but then later he rang me and was said how glad he that I would work with him, so I asked him what had changed from the day before. Then he obviously wanted to say something very witty and replied: Well you know… I love Roma women and girls. Naturally this was not a very friendly answer from my point of view, in fact I felt it was very coarse. (Interview with *Mária* 2008.08.17)

Despite the fact that *Mária* is well educated, qualified and professional, and an accepted member of the civil service, her environment still treats her as a Roma woman. Her male colleagues do not acknowledge her skills, but only see her ethnicity and gender.

Jolán, who belongs to the second generation, spoke with complete honesty about how she was selected for a government strategy post, how she took advantage of her ethnic and gender identity.

> And when I came into the picture, and my boss made the offer, he did it exclusively for race and equality reasons, that is choosing me. He was looking for a person who was a woman, young, looked good, who could appear on television, it would be good if she had children and a husband, as then she could embody the family model and obviously negative feelings towards a woman are less obvious than against a man…if not a woman, then any Gypsy who looked Gypsy, as he wanted to play them to the public. (Interview with *Jolán* 2009.05.21)

In this case it was not only ethnicity and gender that was (ab)used for political reasons, but the body of the person too. The body, imbued with ethnicity and gender, is interpreted in such a way as an instrument of power, as decided from above. Of course everybody can become instruments and "token Gypsies" to the powers that be, but the question is whether that instrumented person can validate their community's interests or not.

Roma women in public and political life did not only tell their own stories, but also reflected on one another's stories. *Júlia* reported how national politics did not recognize the very people who play the greatest role in the struggle for Roma emancipation.

> Look, there is Erzsébet, fantastically clever, absolutely charismatic, a completely political animal and she is not where she should be. And we know that, those of us close to her. She is not where she should be, but then what Roma woman is where she should be. No one is where they should be in Gypsy affairs, instead Hungarian women are taking our place in Roma affairs. (Interview with *Júlia* 2008.11.20.)

Vilma, who spoke about a national political career, felt it was important to mention the woman who did not get as much recognition as her.

> I feel very sorry for her, she lost the most, as she invested the most. I did not lose a lot, as I didn't invest that much. And she really sacrificed her whole life for it and was very talented too. Her mentality is different, she represents another view, but one that is important to express too. (Interview with *Vilma* 2008.12.20)

There were few Romani women in public life, who had good relationships with each other, yet they did acknowledge each other. In most cases it was not the ally, but the opponent they saw (or politics made them see) in each other. They recognized that their identity politics

could only be successful if they experience and maintain their differences and consider them not as a threat for either Roma movement or mainstream politics.

6.7 Concluding remarks

The diversity of Roma political life is, it seems, determined by the following factors: the social status of communities and families, the male-female power relations experienced during childhood and adulthood, the male-female relations practiced in the given families and relationships, relations to identity constructs of Gypsy-ness and gender, the response of the environment, individual motivation and stimulating professional and friendly relationships.
Most of the interviewees took on a life-changing role both in their families and in the Roma community. They went against the fate and lifestyle, for which their family's socio-economic situation and ethnic identity had predestined them.
In most of the stories the key catalyst in social and political mobilization was the overarching problematic of 'fighting within and against' the system of oppression. Many of them had to fight against the norms of their own family and community and to challenge the existing and persistent racial hierarchy.

In my study through the experiences of Romani women, I analyzed the processes of political public roles, which establish discursively the gender and ethnic identity of Roma women activists on the political platform. If we consider Judith Butler's arguments that identity is established by a process of candidature, in which the nominator defines the "other", it appears that, for Romani women in public life, gender and ethnicity definitions are external compulsions established by candidates competing in the political arena. This external compulsion determines the arena of the candidates, who slot into a gender and ethnic hierarchical matrix. The best example of this was, the case of those second generation Romani women who were simply chosen by politics. To take Judith Butler's thought process a bit further, the identities of the candidates are brought into play through the repetition of fixed discourses. The candidates start to believe in their gender and ethnicity, formed according to their expectations, and act accordingly. Naturally, gender and ethnic identities can be reinterpreted and the rules of the nominator can be questioned through repeated expectations. In turn, repetition based on expectation, a series of ritual systems and continual acts, establishes social gender performativity. I would like to extend here Butler's logic further by arguing that not only social gender but also ethnicity can establish itself through performative acts. This type of performativity appears in cases where Roma women stand for a particular political idea, according to the expectations of political parties, or of their own Roma community leaders.

Conclusively, politics, as an external ordering principle, creates, brings into play and simultaniously treat the category of "Roma woman activist" as an instrument, the sum of categories of gender and ethnicity, and it acts as a background to the class-definition of individuals.
In a complex analysis of Roma women's public life activities, I followed an intersectional concept, which shows both the inequalities of the ethnic, gender and class differences, and the situations created by them, which, in most cases, obstruct, while in exceptional cases, support the political validation of individuals. The writings of feminists of color show us how to recognize those diverse situations, subjective positions from which various groups – in certain cases Roma women – view the truth, and their public and political activities. Black

124

feminist criticism reveals the sexist and racist dimension of oppression and its silencing mechanism. Post-colonialist and black feminist literature helped me to understand hierarchical and instrumentalized relations, which characterize the relationship between Roma women and mainstream politics. Politics, for structural reasons, needs women and Gypsies. That is why it gives voice to those who manifest, on its behalf, these categories. (This considered as an achievement by activists.) The second generation of Romani women could slot into this addressing process much more easily than the first generation, which were organically linked to the Roma emancipation movement.

Those Romani women who were selected by politics for its own interests, began to manifest a sort of "token Gypsy" role. This emergence of a "token Gypsy" role or "symbolic voice" was an important and, at the same time, unavoidable, step to recognition in leading political spheres. Who can and for how long remain in these roles depends on the preparedness of the given individual, their links to the community, and to the political grouping which brought them into the political arena on the grounds of their ethnicity and gender. (These roles are not static, in fact Romani wome can shape it.) The question for the future is whether these women will have the strength and courage to cast their own political roles and change these powers.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CHANGING WOMEN'S POSITION FROM A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE[151]

In this chapter, I will be presenting my research findings based on participant observations, participatory feminist research and my working experiences for more than two years with Romani women in a small city in North Hungary, Szikszó[152]. After several years of researching transnational networks of Romani women I had the opportunity to interrogate the reconfiguration of the two key historical binaries of global/local. As a Romani researcher as well as a feminist, I was interested in gaining a better understanding of the ways in which the "global forces, connections and imagination" (Burawoy 2000: 28) reconstruct and reproduce the different axes of difference at the local level. In order to gain a better understanding, I initiated feminist participatory research with local Romani women activists, the result of which was then used as a tool by the local Romani women group to expose their subordinated position at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and class as well as the structures of inequalities that shape both the local and the wider social and economic context.

This specific locality was only one segment of my overall research "fields", as my research was "multi-sited" (Marcus 1995) and my overall methods were also multiple. My project is neither "village ethnography" nor a broad quantitative survey. The concept of multi-sited ethnography is based on the idea that the world is in constant change and that global processes have significant local implications. According to anthropologists, the concept of field sites has changed and widened and has become more flexible and even more vague than it once was (Appadurai 1996; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). The changing and widening nature of the "fields" is influenced by the factors ("global forces, connections and imagination") which are problematized by Burawoy. In my chapter I will focus mainly on the global forces at the expense of others. According to Burawoy we "create a picture of the "global" economy, polity, and culture as composed of forces constituted beyond our sites" (Burawoy 2000: 28). However, the global forces in the everyday life of a small disadvantaged town like Szikszó make themselves felt through various institutional mediators that transmit and translate the interests and values of the global forces in concrete local practices. The locality is simply subordinated to institutional forces that seem beyond human control. Long-term unemployed workers, "welfare mothers", forced prostitutes, defenseless TESCO cleaners experience global forces through such transmitting channels as degradation, exploitation and individualization. These powers dominate them and force them to submit to the local/global order. In this chapter I will argue that global forces, economic trends, concepts and ideas inevitably influence the local existence and political activism of Romani women.
In this regard, my dissertation relies on the work of Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Mohanty (1997) as they also argue for analysis that intertwines "the global and local". Feminist

---

[151] This chapter uses the data which produced my comparative research. It was carried out in 2009-2010 supported by the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs. The research report was published in May 2010. Angéla Kóczé. "Nehéz sorsú asszonyok feketén fehéren: Roma nők munkaerő-piaci és megélhetési lehetőségei két kistérségben" (Women with a tough fate in black and white: labor market and income-earning opportunities of Roma women in two micro-regions) in Kutatási Beszámoló, (Kóczé 2010)

[152] After one month of my involvement with the local Romani women I had a work opportunity to stay longer in the field as I could afford from 2008 January . I also wore a different hat as a community facilitator representing a consurtium of the Roma NGO and a Consultancy Firm.

geographers and Third World feminist scholars argue that a more effective approach to globalization would aim to address "the manifestations of the global in local" (Eschle 2001).

7.1 Context of my fieldwork

I have already described in Chapter One how I found Szikszó as my fieldwork location. It is a small rural town with 5,637 inhabitants in the North-Eastern region of Hungary, which has suffered the deepest crisis of ill-adjustment during the course of systemic economic, social and political transformation over the past two decades[153] (Ladányi 2009; Szalai 2002). In the new era, the market oriented criteria have dominated all the Roma developmental objectives and Roma integration policies brought deteriorating living conditions for the majority of Roma. This part of the country has witnessed the greatest financial instability, economic insecurity and social tensions.

During the era of state socialism, this region of Hungary used to be the stronghold of mining, heavy industry and collective agriculture, and concomitantly, was also a bastion of the proletariat. With the country's transition to market economy, the earlier economic domains of relative prosperity and pride have turned into reservoirs of decline and widespread frustration, which together, have generated a massive migration of the well-trained and better-off groups of local communities. The region's statistics clearly reflect the vacuum it fell in after the collapse of the old regime. The educational attainment of the adult population is well-below the national average[154]; the rate of unemployment is more than twice as high as the rate of unemployment in the country as a whole[155] (the rate of unemployment being 80-100 percent among adult Roma in many of the most deprived localities); per capita income falls short of the national indicator by 18 percent; furthermore, figures assessing the extent and degree of poverty reveal widespread intergenerational transmission of destitution, as well as massive social segregation; indices of morbidity and mortality are lagging far behind

---

153 In order to grasp the roots of the town, some historical context is needed. The first written accounts of Szikszó date back to 1280, to three charters dated by Ladislaus IV the Cuman, who closes the documents with the following: Dated in Zekzou, feria tertia proxima post dominicam judika MCCLXXX. Recently, however, historians argued conclusively that "Zekzou" in the above document is in fact not the same settlement as the Szikszó of Hungary today. Hence, as far as we know, in 1308 Charles Robert issued a charter in "Zykzo". At this time, "Zykzo" was still part of the Aba family's land, but in 1391 it was already in the possession of Sigismund I, when it was first referred to as a royal city. The city began to flourish and grow around this time and the building of its Gothic church, still standing today, started. The city's favourable geographical location also contributed to its development as it is near the main roads leading to Košice [Hungarian: Kassa] and Kraków [Hungarian: Krakkó]. Szikszó was already a major wine-producing town in the time of Mary of Anjou. The fact that Szikszó is still located along a main road today provides the opportunity for a number of Roma families to sell fruit to travelers in summer (Ádám 1980).

154 Considering the adult population, the regional ratio of those with no more than primary level education is 27 percent over the national average.

155 In fall 2009, the index for the region was 23 percent, while the corresponding national ratio was 10 percent. It is worth adding that 57 percent of registered unemployed individuals have been on the dole for more than one year.

respective national data[156] (with shocking figures for Roma whose life expectancy remains 12-13 and 10-12 years behind the country's average for men and women, respectively); finally, statistics show high and increasing numbers of reported criminal offenses[157], namely, squatting, acts of burglary and drug-abuse committed by suspects identified as Roma.

The crisis of the post-communist social structure and the antagonistic attitudes of the urban middle and upper classes fearing status degradation are the main factors in rousing conflict mainly between Roma and non-Roma inhabitants. As a consequence of the prevailing conflicting drives and clashing interests, an ethnically and socially highly segmented establishment has emerged, severely depriving the poor, and especially Roma, of equal access to social and educational services and institutions. This research-based framework is characterized by social exclusion where ethnic-based marginalization prevails in all fields of daily life, from employment through to housing and legal assistance, including access to public transportation, communication, critical areas of welfare provisions and basic healthcare needs.

In the region of Szikszó, the proportion of Roma people far exceeds the national average (10.8%) as nearly 20-25% of Hungary's Roma population lives here[158]. Research shows that poverty, social, ethnic and economic exclusion is concentrated in underdeveloped micro-regions predominantly inhabited by Roma people. (Virág 2006; Ladányi 2005)

---

[156] The national ratio of infant mortality is 10.6 per thousand for this region, which is more than 60 per cent above the national index of 6.6. Furthermore, life expectancy at birth falls short of the corresponding national figures by 2 years for men and 1.1 year for women, respectively.

[157] In this region, the index for perpetrators caught per 100.000 inhabitants is 19 percent above the corresponding figure for the country as a whole.

[158] These statistical figures are based on the census data of KSH (Central Statistics Office – National Census in 2000 and 2001)

Figure 1: The 33 most disadvantaged micro-regions (including Szikszó's micro-region) in Hungary.
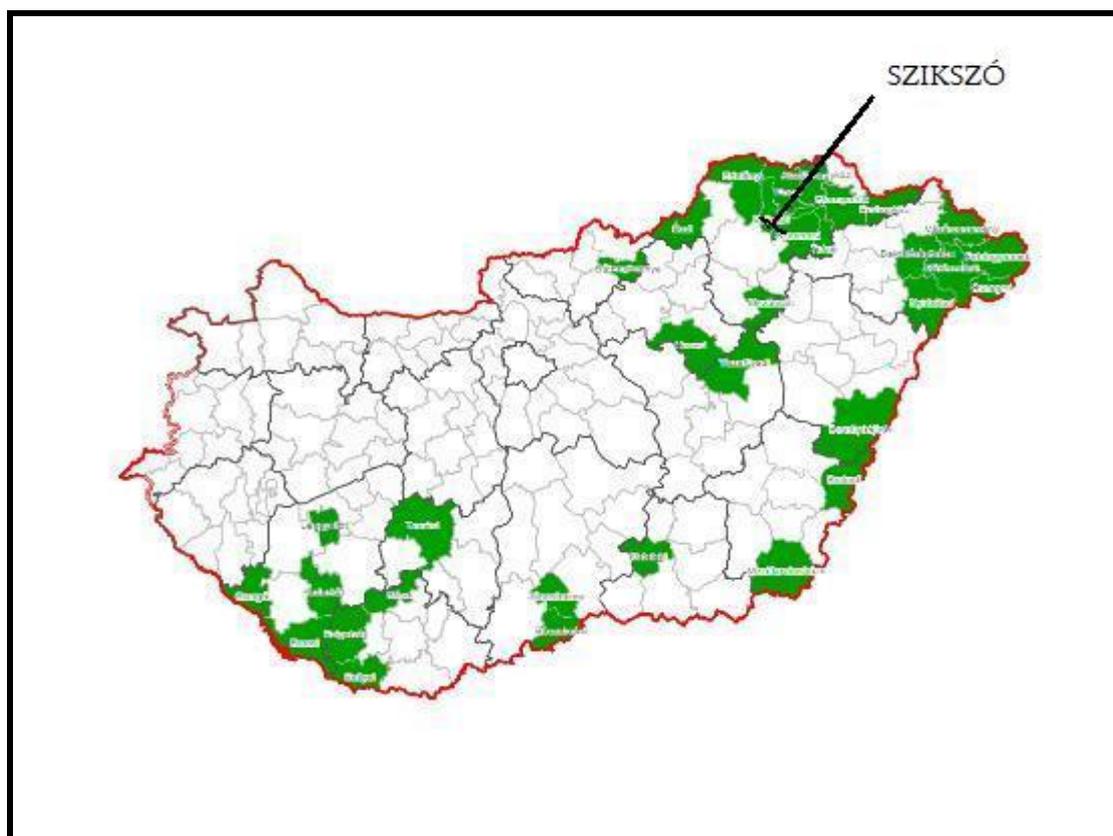
Source: Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Center for Regional Studies

This map clearly shows that those micro-regions that are economically underdeveloped also have the highest proportion of Roma population (marked with dark green). Amongst Hungarian researchers and policy makers there is a widely accepted false conceptualization which euphemistically calls this process "spontaneous segregation"[159]. The analytical link Hungarian researches seem to miss is the connection between global economic and social restructuring and spatial segregation[160]. After the regime change, the dominant global and national neoliberal economic actors and social processes marginalize and dislocate communities of color (Harvey 2005; Escobar 2008), particularly Roma in the post-communist countries (Ladányi - Szelényi 2002). The uneven social, economic and territorial

---

[159] Even one of the fundamental university text books (Definitions of Social Politics) at the Sociology and Social Policy Departments in Hungary, talks about "spontaneous segregation" as a normal social process. The textbook provides the following example: when the educated middle class families leave the inner city to the suburb, those who are left behind will be an ethnic and socially homogeneous group (Zombori 2009).

[160] Lynne Haney (Haney 2000) wrote a study on the *"Welfare in Hungary"*. She argues that the scholarship on the economic transition, privatization and democratization is less cautious about the impact of the liberal state. All these concepts are embedded in the global and go uncontested and celebrated by most scholars. Similarly, in Hungarian scholarship discussions on economic restructuring and spatial segregation does not reveal the impact of global forces. It is rather kept on the level of region or micro-region.

129

development in Hungary created "*internal colonies*" where disadvantaged people, within which Roma are overrepresented, were locked into a "ghetto" or, in other words, into socially and economically deprived spaces. This kind of ethnic and social territorial segregation evokes the notion of *homo sacer* used by political philosopher Giorgio Agamben (1998). He says when men are reduced to bare life they are no longer covered by any legal or civil rights. Agamben theorizes the excluded as the surplus or by-effect of the production of governable identities. These people can be seen as non-human, therefore relegated to the zones of exception, where the sovereign law does not apply, and where they can have only "bare lives". Many Roma ghettos in North Eastern Hungary can be conceptualized in Agambeian terms where people have lost their labour productivity, and the market oriented economy considers them no more than a surplus population.

The main reason I chose Szikszó for my fieldwork is that considering its social and economic characteristics, it is one of the most underdeveloped and depressed micro-regions in Hungary[161]. In the early nineties, due to the closure of large industrial companies, particularly in Miskolc, which is located just 10km from Szikszó, people lost their jobs in great numbers, and only a few jobs were created in the following years. This region shows in the most tangible way the contradiction of economic liberalization and globalization. The political democratization did not offer better lives for the majority of the local population. The new liberal market has generated some new sources of accumulation and unprecedented wealth for a tiny elite, but it did so within the context of growing inequalities throughout the entire region, including the town of Szikszó. The local mayor articulated this trend very explicitly:

> The dream of European accession, economic growth, peace and democracy has been shattered. In its place, there is depression, populism, anti-Gypsism and deteriorating personal security. We are caught in a vicious circle of repression, unemployment, ethnic conflict, falling living standards, social unrest and political backlash. (F.J. Mayor of Szikszó. 2010.02.12)

Based on the latest data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH), 5,637 inhabitants live in Szikszó's 2,212 households. The age distribution is the following: 21.1% of the population is under the age of 18; the 18-59 age bracket accounts for 59.8% of the population, whilst the final group is composed of the population above the age of 60, representing 19.2 %. In Szikszó, 13.8% of the total local population aged 18-59 is unemployed. Amongst the unemployed population, 67.1 % qualify as long-term unemployed and almost half of this group, 49.1%, have only elementary school education. According to an estimate made by the notary in the local government, approximately 70% of unemployed are Roma. Even though there is no official statistic on the number of Roma in Szikszó, according to the estimates of local Romani leaders and the local government, their proportion is around 40%[162]. The features of the global economic restructuring have a tangible

---

[161] Government Decree 311/2007 (XI. 17.) designated the economically, socially and infrastructurally most underdeveloped 33 micro-regions. Szikszó is identified as one of the most underdeveloped micro/regions on this list.

[162] The local census from 1930-1940 shows that while the number of Hungarian population of the town was remarkably stable since the end of the fourteenth century, the number of Roma increased significantly particularly after 1990 due on the one hand to the social and geographical restructuring of the country (Ladányi 2006) and on the other to the increasing birth rate amongst the Roma population. Szikszó's Jewish population was either deported during the Second World War or they left, none of them returning after the war.

manifestation in this location in so far as organized and formal employment and labor contracts are suffering a dramatic decline, there is a lack of investors, loss of economic and natural resources, there are cutbacks in local social provision and a drastically growing parity between the tiny elite and the majority of people who are living in deep and long lasting poverty.

Figure 2: The map of Szikszó (Gypsy Row and the Chinatown are indicated).
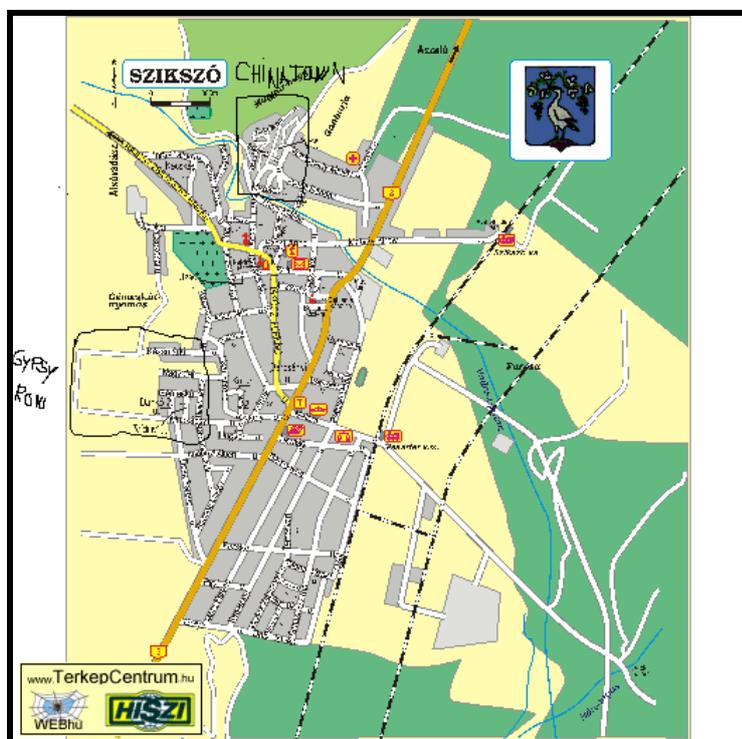
Source: www.terkepcentrum.hu

The vast majority of Roma live in two parts of the settlement (one in the western area and one in the northern area). The first is dubbed as "*cigány sor*" (Gypsy Row) and is located at the western periphery of the settlement. The second district is called "Chinatown" and is located at the northern periphery of the settlement. Both areas are considered to be ethnically segregated by the local non-Roma inhabitants even though their perceptions about the two neighborhoods are slightly different. "Chinatown" is considered ethnically more mixed than "Gypsy Row". The name of "Chinatown" indicates the distinguished exotic features of the people, who are seen as absolutely "other" compared to non-Romas. This district is located beyond the main road, across the *Vadász* runnel, which serves as a symbolic boundary between the civilized and non-civilized parts of the town. Both Roma districts in the settlement are linked by narrow lanes to the main street.

Based on my observations, even though it is tolerated that Roma should pass along the main street, they are likely to provoke suspicion that may lead to verbal or even physical threats. This trend has been fortified by the presence of the *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard), a

Hungarian extremist right-wing paramilitary group. They have strong support in Szikszó and as I mentioned in Chapter One, the report on the Gárda's demonstration attracted my attention to this particular place. It has become a tacit rule that Roma can never visit private homes. Occasionally, limited communication may take place over the fence, but for a "*gypsy*" to be invited inside a non-Roma home is highly unusual. Everyone in the settlement is expected to respect the symbolic borders between Roma and non-Roma based on unequal power relations.

Both Roma districts in Szikszó can be characterized as places with limited infrastructure and homes of low social status residents. There is no sewage system or running water in these areas, and even electricity is switched off in many households. The "Chinatown" is located on the hilly parts of the settlement and is bordered by a forest encompassing the neighborhood. Even today this extensive forest is the only possible source of the much-needed firewood for many Roma families despite the fact that privatization in the early 1990s outlawed wood gathering. At this point, it is important to note that even amongst local Gypsies there is a refined classification system rendering them in the category of "decent Gypsy" and "backward" or "criminal Gypsy". The few "decent Gypsy" families live in integrated neighborhoods with non-Roma, but their houses are distinctly different from the non-Roma houses on the main street of Szikszó. The houses of "decent" Romas are painted with harsh colors (pink, bright yellow, red, etc.) and decorated with plastic flowers and some antique objects from peasant households. These families are mainly (il)legal metal traders or earning their living with dealing in clothes, fruit, vegetables and even Christmas trees. They markedly differentiate themselves from those who live either in the "Gypsy Row" or in "Chinatown" primarily by using the same exclusionary discourse against the "backward" or "criminal Gypsy" as non-Roma people do. That is, despite the fact that these "decent Gypsies" do not live in the same street with "backward Gypsies", they still feel the need to distinguish themselves on the discursive level even though many of them could "pass" as a non-Roma inhabitant, especially for me or any other outsider visiting the town. However, it is important to emphasize that every local culture has its own cultural perception enabling the inhabitants to identify Roma, especially in those cities or towns where Roma live in a ghetto like Szikszó's "Gypsy Row," forming in most cases an ethnically homogenous micro-society.

When I first came to the town in 2008 September-October I primarily looked for those Romani women who organized the Roma protest against the *Magyar Gárda* in August. To find *Mária*, the main organizer of the counter demonstration proved an easy task as it seemed that everyone knew where she lived. I went to her home situated in an integrated neighborhood, an old fashioned peasant house. It is a typical integrated Roma house totally rebuilt by *Mária's* husband, a non-Romani man, whose family also lives in Szikszó. So, she invited me to their house. The two school-aged children were at school and her husband, who was employed by the local council as a public worker, came back just for lunch. I saw that normally members of the family took their shoes off in front of the entry hall before walking over the clean carpet. The walls of the hall, which functioned as a dining room, were painted with harsh colors. In the middle of the hall was a coffee table with a fake leather sofa and armchairs around. In the centre of the table there was a bouquet of plastic flowers in the glass vase. She invited me to take a seat and have a chat over a cup of coffee.

In the first introductory conversation with her we came very close to each other, which certainly influenced my research as well as my work as community facilitator in Szikszó. She was involved in the participatory research and later on she became the president of the Romani Women Association, which was established with my assistance. So, *Mária* provided

numerous contacts and also specific insight about the local Roma community which has significantly enriched the context of my fieldwork

7.2 Anti-Gypsism versus constructing politicized ethnic identity

In her late thirties in 2008, at the time of my first visit to Szikszó, *Mária* was a member of the local Gypsy self-government. She is a very strong, sporty woman with an emancipated appearance. *Mária* described how she became involved with local Gypsy self-government and how she became an activist in an NGO called Roma Civil Rights Movement as follows:

> My relatives belong to the wealthiest Roma family in the town and they were always respected by the non-Roma community. We accepted the norms and values of the *gajos* (non-Roma) (*Mária* 2008. 09.21)

However, no matter how her family was accepted and respected by the non-Roma community, the appearance of extreme right groups in Szikszó put them in the homogenized category of Gypsy. Her family's integrated Roma identity was threatened by the anti-gypsy discourse being legitimized and advocated by the local extreme right group as well as by the conservative political parties and members of the protestant church as she put it: "This trend was strengthened in 2008 when the "Hungarian Guard [*Magyar Gárda*] was invited by the local deputy Mayor, basically to fight against "gypsy-criminality."

The "*Magyar Gárda*" revitalized throughout the country the old racist concept of "*gypsy-criminality*," which portrays Roma as a culturally and genetically criminal group, regardless of their social and economic position. This concept has become popular in this local context as well maybe due to the dramatic decrease in the social and economic positions of the majority of the local population in the last several years and the subsequent trend of making the local Roma the scapegoats for the negative effects of economic and social restructuring.

> August 2008 when many local non-Roma acquaintances, neighbors supported the "Hungarian Guard" [Magyar Gárda] was a turning point for me and for my extended family too. This was the first time when we felt that we are no better than any Roma from the "Gypsy Row". Basically me and some of my aunts and sisters from the family started to organize the protest against the *Gárda*. We had to do it, otherwise our children will be constantly threatened in the school. (*Mária* 2008. 09.21.)

Mária believed that if they did not protest against the *Magyar Gárda*, the local non-Roma would feel legitimized in their discriminatory acts against Roma. As it is demonstrated by her words, the arrival of the *Magyar Gárda*, and the subsequent Roma demonstration against them was an illuminating moment when many "decent" Roma realized that in the town they are treated in the same manner regardless of their upward mobility. This realization created solidarity amongst Roma, drawing a symbolic boundary between the Roma and non-Roma and politicized their ethnic identity.

133

Since my research mainly focuses on the political activism of Romani women and the manifestation of intersectionality of ethnicity, gender and class at the local level, it was important to make it clear to *Mária* as well as to all other participants of my research that although I am primarily a researcher, I would still like to offer my community services. I also learned from my previous failure that while working in a Roma community as an "alien insider", I cannot simply observe interactions and processes without generating and contributing to some social changes regarding gender and inter-ethnic relations in the community. Between September 2008 and December 2010 almost every week I spent one to three days in Szikszó. I developed a very close relationship with *Mária* as well as other Romani women. *Mária*'s respected position within the Roma community and in the settlement, gave me access to and insight into various materials and people. She was also what anthropologists often call a key informant. We spent many hours together taping conversations about the pressures and pleasures of being a Romani activist, being a working mother and the only woman in the local Gypsy self-government. *Mária* has a high school degree, hence she is considered as one of the most educated Roma in the settlement.

During the course of my fieldwork, a few important actions with high and long lasting impact also took place. I helped *Mária* and seven other Romani women establish a Romani women's NGO called SZIROM (Short for Szikszó's Romani Women's Association, and meaning 'petal' in Hungarian). We also negotiated with the local mayor and the director of the elementary school to employ Romani women as teaching assistants. Five Romani women were hired, which has had a great impact on the school's relation with Romani parents and in turn significantly decreased school drop-out rates. Moreover, I helped them submit several applications to create quality educational services and employment opportunities for the Roma community. I would also emphasize that SZIROM offered a space and social platform to mobilize the community. For instance, very recently there was a serious flood in Szikszó destroying several Roma and non-Roma houses and damaging hundreds of others. SZIROM was the only local NGO able to distribute humanitarian aid to Roma and non-Roma victims. Romani women offered help even to victims known to support the *Magyar Gárda*. Due to the generous work of these Romani women after the flood, inter-ethnic relations have started to change, formal and informal boundaries loosened, manifested in "street talk" and information exchange between Roma and non-Roma. Basically, through all these actions, particularly in the school and also during the flood, local Romani women engaged in redefining the common sources of solidarity. Although they are marginalized because of their ethnic, class and gender location in the settlement, they were still able to create an opportunity to establish conscious bonds among people in the entire local community.

7.3 Participatory research to generate social change

During my fieldwork, I conducted many conversations with Romani women activists about various issues regarding their social position and location of their politics. I wanted to transfer knowledge and information to help them conceptualize their gender relationship and understand their subject position at the intersection of multiple forms of oppression. These kinds of discussions inevitably exposed the concept of intersectionality and gradually offered a new understanding of their marginal position in the context of global economic and territorial reconstruction.

I agree with feminist scholars who believe that research should challenge inequalities and focus on benefits for women (Cancian 1992; Gluck and Patai 1991). As described by Cancian (1996:188), "[p]articipatory research is a radical type of activist social research in which the people being studied, or the intended beneficiaries of the research, have substantial control over and participation in the research." Even though Romani women did have an active participatory role in my research, the evaluation of the data was exclusively controlled by myself.

As a by-product of my fieldwork I had the opportunity to conduct a feminist comparative research project with the involvement of the core group of SZIROM Romani women who I worked closely with. This research process enabled them to construct and shape their activist language to expose their intersectional inequalities and advocate for social change. The research consisting of both quantitative and qualitative analysis compared the social and labor status of disadvantaged Romani and non-Romani women in the selected two micro- regions of *Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén* (BAZ) County and Pest County. Szikszó was integrated in this research as the *Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén* County[163] settlement. (I chose these two micro-regions for the reason that the structures of the settlements in the two micro-regions are comparable, however one is in an underdeveloped region while the other is located in an economically more developed region.)

We distributed questionnaires in 248 households aiming to include all members in the given households, and received altogether 1250 individual responses. We conducted 20 deep-structured interviews with Romani women, non-Romani women and Romani men, as well as an additional 20 structured interviews with local policy- and decision-makers. Moreover, in each county we conducted two focus group discussions, one with Romani men and another with Romani women. As unfortunately the scope of this dissertation does not allow for a full analysis of the whole research, I will only present the part of the research which focuses on the manifestations of intersectionality at a local level in the case of Romani women. In order to illustrate their position, I use the rhetoric of the voice of my subjects, that is, I have tried to stay faithful in the translation of the original reports and statements of the Romani women. I will provide excerpts from the interviews to give a voice to Romani women who are seldom heard in mainstream academia or gender related scholarship.

Romani women from SZIROM were trained to acquire research skills. During the preparatory phase of the research, there were several issues that needed to be discussed, many of which were related to their feelings of incompetence. My aim was to make them conscious of their issues and relate personal problems to the unequal distribution of power and opportunities in the community and society. I valued their personal experience and feelings, which is an important contribution to this research. They also used the process of filling out questionnaires and conducting interviews with other Romani women as a networking opportunity. In the course of conducting 101 household-questionnaires and 20 interviews in Szikszó together with the interviewees we identified the issues and problems raised by Romani and non-Romani women. Our discussions enabled these Romani women to validate

---

[163] This research was supported by the Ministry of Social and Labor Affairs. The research report was published in May 2010. The research team consisted of Fruzsina Albert, Bea Dávid, Éva Havas, Angéla Kóczé. The research manager and the team leader was Angéla Kóczé. "Nehéz sorsú asszonyok feketén fehéren: Roma nők munkaerő-piaci és megélhetési lehetőségei két kistérségben" (Women with a tough fate in black and white: labor market and income-earning opportunities of Roma women in two micro-regions) in Kutatási Beszámoló, (Kóczé 2010)

their commonsense knowledge about their situation, identify specific problems and boost their self-esteem and ability to speak out.

In my dissertation, as I mentioned earlier, I will only be focusing on the part of this research closely related to one of my research questions, namely exploring how intersections of ethnicity, gender and class are manifested at the local level. The quantitative data on Szikszó shows the same trend as the BAZ County data. Since statistically the official count of the number of households in BAZ County is more reliable than the local data from Szikszó, I used the overall tendencies in BAZ County.

The main focus of the research is to examine the link between gender and ethnicity through an analysis of the above described questionnaires and interviews. The class issue is not relevant in the sample because the Roma and the non-Roma groups belong to the same social strata. Nevertheless, the groups of Romani women from SZIROM belong to a somewhat higher social class than the women in the research sample. The Romani women who actively participated in the research project served as a reference group for the women in the research sample. This class difference created an interesting dynamic amongst Romani women in the sample and in SZIROM. As a result, the women from SZIROM become more conscious of the plight of the Romani women who live in the "Gypsy Row" and in the "Chinatown".

7.3.1 Territorial difference

In the research, the income of 248 households in the two micro regions of Borsod-Abaúj and Zemplén (BAZ) and Pest counties is analyzed in detail. The data clearly shows that the general income disparity between the two micro-regions is almost one to three. (See Table 1) In BAZ County, the average monthly income for non-Roma people was 29,000 HUF, whilst in the case of Roma people it was 23,600 HUF in the year. The similar discrepancy equally prevailed in Pest County, i.e. 39,000 HUF and 23,200 HUF respectively. Not the same! The income of Roma, therefore, does not alter on the grounds of where they live.

Table 1. Household incomes of small areas and ethnic differences (N=1250)

	Average monthly income per person		
	Non-Roma household	Roma household	Income disparity
BAZ County	29,000	23,600	5,400
Pest County	39,600	23,200	16,400

*on the basis of data from 248 households interviewed

Source: own research data, 2009

The income disparity analyzed is well reflected in the social sphere too. The real and symbolic difference between Gypsies and "Peasants" (non-Roma) living in BAZ Country was more traversed than in Pest County where Roma are funneled into slums and ghettos. The invisible walls of a discursive ghetto within the social narratives about local Roma are kept alive by well-known schematic prejudices and stereotypes. The most spectacular example of this discursive and extra-discursive ghetto-building is when the Pest County decision makers completely ignored those streets where Roma lived when it came to decisions on human and infrastructural development. The leader of the local Gypsy Minority Council[164] said:

> The political leaders of our city refurbished all the old buildings; they made several road constructions, they build several new buildings with the European Union's money […] only these three streets remained untouched where most of the people are Roma. We, as a Gypsy Minority Self-Government did not have any power over where the money should go. There are very few non-Roma who have no relatives and we accepted them as our family members. As you see, it is really hard to drive into this place in an emergency car or for anyone else. (B.G. president of the local Gypsy Minority Council)

> Although it turned out during several discussions with officials from the local authority that the city had an integration plan to develop this neighborhood, local financial restrictions did not allow these interventions.

---

[164] The elaboration of Act LCCVII of 1993 (Act on National Minorities) on the rights of national and ethnic minorities was one of the main components of codification after the political changes at the beginning of the 1990s. Facilitating the establishment of a collective cultural autonomy, based on the personal principle through the system of minority self-government, is the key aim of the Act on National Minorities. This legislation established the local and national institutional system of minority self-governments, which is unique in Europe. There are several scholars who critiqued the system of Gypsy self-government system in Hungary, such as Martin Kovats (1998), Peter Vermeersch (2000), Ernő Kállai (2005). The main controversies were related to the questions of legitimate representation, the financial basis of the system, and the inability of the minority self-government system to tackle the roots of the social and economical exclusion of Roma.

Figure 3: Romani neighborhood in a settlement located in Pest county

.

At the beginning of this research, I imagined that the position of Roma and Romani women is better in more prosperous regions than in disadvantaged areas, but this notion was refuted by data relating to the deprivation and life histories Roma women narrated.

As indicated in Table 2, the index of deprivation between Roma and non-Roma in BAZ County was 0.2 (3.1-2.9), whereas in Pest County it was 0.6 (3.1-2.5), hence there is no apparent disparity between Roma based on the place of residence.

Table 2. Index of deprivation (0-5)

Persons	BAZ	Pest
	County residents	
Non Roma	2.9	2.5
Roma	3.1	3.1

Source: own research data, 2009

The wider the income gap and deprivation between Roma of similar status and non-Roma was, the smaller the 'crossover' seemed to be between various ethnic groups. In BAZ County, where the 'crossover' was much greater between Roma and non-Roma, a higher number of respondents said that they had a non-Roma spouse or partner. In BAZ County, one of the members of the Roma woman's focus group was a blonde blue-eyed woman who smiled when answering the question "What does it mean to be Roma?" and said:

> Well this is a difficult situation, as I am not Roma. But I have lived with my husband, who is Roma, for seventeen years – this shows what I think about the Roma. (K.Zs. 34 year old non-Romani woman married to a Roma man. 2009.02.12.)

In the male focus group in Pest County there was also a man who was not of Roma descent, but via his wife both he and the community regarded him as Roma, which he considered "a mark of respect". He added that if he were in a group of Roma men they would say that he was "the most Gypsy" among them, referring to traditional male Roma behavior. A woman living in another mixed marriage said that it is important to respect gender roles within the family.

We live in a different way. I like being a Gypsy; there are many like us among Hungarians. We are proud. We live as we must. There are disadvantages at school. My husband is Hungarian; the two families found it fairly difficult to accept that we are together. This has now calmed down. […] We respect what is all right for woman and what is not. We respect each other. We do not undress in front of each other if we bathe. I don't believe any of my relatives or children have ever seen me naked or in a swimming costume. Absolutely not. We do not undress in front of them. (37 year-old woman with two children living in a mixed marriage)

At the same time, in Pest County where the income disparity and the deprivation index shows a greater difference between Roma and non-Roma we found fewer mixed marriages. Table 3 shows that, as opposed to 9.8% in BAZ County, this figure was only 6.8 % in Pest County.

Table 3. Marriage Types by County (N=1250) (%)

Type of Marriage	BAZ	Pest
Non-Roma marriage	32	40
Roma marriage	58	53
Mixed marriage	10	7
	100	100

Source: own research data, 2009

Fewer mixed marriages may also refer to the very limited scope of "common" social arenas where Roma and non-Roma can meet. One of the regular topics during the roundtable discussions I had with my subjects was that I noticed that in places where Roma live in a segregated way, it is chiefly the men who have the opportunity to enter the "common" social arena, rather than the women.

Women living in a segregated area have much less chance of leaving their closed communities, since no matter how harmful the ghetto walls are, they offer a sort of protection. A thirty year old woman living on child support (raising seven children altogether) said that she would gladly work beside her duty of looking after the children, but her husband thinks that "if I go off somewhere to work, then I will cheat on him…" Men's fear is fed by an everyday phenomenon, a form of overt and concealed, non-violent and violent prejudice, which Roma suffer. This husband simply wants to protect his wife from the vicissitudes of the outside world. I interviewed non-Roma who had no close relations, neighborly, friendly or other with Roma. Although the non-Roma interviewees tried to hide their prejudice against Roma, which may feed Roma people's above fear, eventually these prejudices came out during the interviews.

I wouldn't be pleased if they were in my family. Really. I am not a racist, but they have their own families, and I have my family and somehow I can't imagine the two together. And this is not exclusively with Gypsies or Roma, it is the same with all nationalities. Let's say with a Negro. Or anything. I believe that I am Hungarian, so my partner, mate should be Hungarian, or my children's partners. So if one of them would come home with such a partner, I don't know what I would say. (B.K. 38 year-old non-Roma woman)

The uneven global geographical developments (Harvey 2005) impacted the Hungarian economic, social and political geography as well, diversifying the social and economic inequalities which reflected upon the internal territories of the country. Furthermore, even in a developed micro-region such as Pest County there is an internal logic of local social, economic and territorial structures maintaining the symbolic and material ethno-racial

exclusion. Based on the social and ethnic based exclusionary logic, there are some districts inhabited by managers, well-educated or even active low-skilled labor force. Additionally, there is another neighborhood, 'Tabán'[165] which is negatively distinguished and virtually ring-fenced from the rest of the inhabitants, and serves as a warehouse for its primarily Roma population (approximately 97%) that no longer have any political or economic potential. Interestingly, as we have seen, the deprivation index (3.1) of Roma is similar in the wealthy Pest County and the under-developed BAZ County micro region. These results refute the "trickle-down theory"[166], which says that if the top income earners invest more into the local economy and its business infrastructure, more jobs will be available for middle and lower class individuals, including Roma people. The mantra of the Hungarian neoliberal economists in the last two decades[167], the "trickle-down economic effect" would not have caused such a drastic social and spatial difference both in wealthy and vastly underdeveloped regions, micro-regions and cities between top income earners and low-class poor Roma people, trapped at the bottom of the spatial order in polarized Hungarian localities.

7.3.2 Gender dimensions of the 'ghetto' existence

There are considerable regional differences between the numbers and proportions of Roma people in Hungary. Around one-third of the Hungarian Roma population lives in Northern Hungary and in the northern part of the Great Alföld with a major population concentrating around Budapest and the southern part of Transdanubia, while their number is low in the western part of Transdanubia and in the southern part of the Great Alföld.

Many Hungarian Roma live in villages and 40% live in locations with a population of less than 2,000, the most disadvantaged rural settlements. The government estimates that about 96,000 – 100,000 people currently live in some 500-550 segregated settlements.[168] Most of these areas, predominantly inhabited by Roma, are small villages or outside of their administrative boundaries and lack basic infrastructure and adequate living standards. According to the research of Ladányi and Szelényi, in 2000 11.6 percent of the Roma population lived in gypsy "ghettos" [Hungarian: "cigánytelep"], 22.5 percent lived in areas populated predominantly by Roma people, 22.0 percent in areas populated predominantly by non-Roma people of lower classes and 39.9 percent in areas where neither Roma nor poor non-Roma people were in majority (Ladányi-Szelényi 2001). In the course of the past two decades, densely populated, devastated urban slum districts have started to spread in and around the larger cities in Hungary. However, the concentration of entrenched Roma poverty in Hungary has remained a rural rather than urban phenomenon.

The notion of 'ghetto' is used rather as an image of social and ethnic based spatial isolation severely hampering both social and territorial mobility. I am aware of the several meanings of 'ghetto,' which has a different image in the United States than in Hungary. There are some

---

165 'Tabán' is the name of the segregated neighborhood located in the center of the town in the micro-region of Pest county.

166 Agion and Bolton write extensively about the development of a theory of trickle down. (Aghion and Bolton 1997)

167 After the system change, such neo-liberal economists and politicians got into positions of power as for instance László Békesi, the Minister of Finance of the system changing government in 1989 and 1990 and also of the coalition government in 1994 and 1995, or György Surányi, chairman of the Hungarian National Bank in 1990 and 1991 and between 1995 and 2001.

168 This information was written by the Hungarian Government in Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Third periodic reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, Addendum, Hungary, 28 September, 2005

fundamental sociological accounts on urban marginality, such as Wilson's (1987) *The Truly Disadvantaged*, which emphasize the role of the economy, and Massey and Denton's (1993) *American Apartheid*, which stresses the importance of racial segregation. Moreover, Wacquant's (2008) *Urban Outcast* highlights the spectrum of racially ordered and market-oriented state policies that "have aggravated, packed and trapped poor blacks at the bottom of the spatial order of the polarizing city." (Wacquant's 2008: 4)   Even earlier studies like Kenneth B. Clark' (1965) *Dark Ghetto* gave the most unstinting and authentic account of the social dynamics, social psychology and pathology of black ghettos.[169] As Kenneth B Clark puts it "the objective features of the ghetto are over-crowdedness, bad housing, high child mortality, crime and disease. Subjective features are offendedness, hostile feelings, despair, lethargy, self depreciation and it's opposite, a kind of 'to hell with it' behavior." (2008:31) In the Hungarian academy, the concept of 'ghetto' has been imported from the American social science' literature and is used uncritically, particularly by scholars and human rights activists who advocate for racial equality of Roma.(Ladányi-Szelényi 2004; Virág 2006)

In Hungarian "Gypsy Rows" we met many young girls who, in their despair, took up self-destructive behaviors, including substance abuse, which typically meant that they sniffed glue and drank alcohol in front of everybody. The children, however, with whom we had a few spontaneous discussions about their future plans in the slum district, all denoted one profession: the girls would be hairdressers, while the boys wanted to be policemen, that is, they all wanted *"to help others"*. When we asked them about how they think one should live and behave, both girls and boys said that they would never "sniff glue" and smoke ("drink coffee yes" – added a little girl). Glue sniffing equally affects girls, as well as boys. These cheap narcotics offer a means of escape for the youth of ghettos, or create an illusory world for them, in which they can experience that they are important, which is not conveyed through any other source.

> Well, I was born a Gypsy, I have nothing, and I am uneducated. With such a curse I am pointed at and looked down on everywhere, I am not even considered a human being. There is nothing to live for, just glue. There is nothing to strive for. I cannot count on any other pleasure, only that which is in the plastic bag. (SZ.K. 20 year-old woman in the slum district 2009.07.23).

Despite the fact that drug abuse is a fairly visible problem in the slum, no civil organization or authority deals with it. As far as they are concerned, it is a ghetto business. The girls who come under the influence of drugs or alcohol are more prone to become victims of sexual violence, trafficking and prostitution. According to one older woman in the slum, "these girls are taken by whoever wants them. Nobody protects them."

The compound effects of racism, sexism, and poverty that comprise the social environment of many Romani women effectively discourage them from taking a stance against internal gender oppression, lest they should suffer personally and stigmatize their families and communities even further. During my research I conducted interviews with several women who were talking about local prostitution and girls trafficking in which Romani men (as it is described by women, usually men who are either family members or close to the victims)

---

[169] This book is published in Hungarian too. Kenneth B.Clark's Dark Ghetto-Dilemmas of Social Power published in Hungarian in 2008 by the Education Social Services Company in Budapest.

were taking a leading position either as smugglers or pimps[170]. A 30 year old Romani woman, who survived trafficking for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation, voiced her experiences as follows:

> I suffered a lot in my childhood. I felt ashamed about it, I never ever wanted to talk about the fact that my husband forced me into prostitution. [She is crying] My husband was a drug and alcohol addict and in order to sustain his addictions I had to sell my body every day. Finally, he sold me to the pimps who took me to Germany. (B.Z. 30 year old Romani woman 2009.10. 23.)

Later on she was rescued by her family and went on to live with her relatives.

There are several unexposed stories like this whereby Romani women become victims of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. Despite the fact that in Hungary there is no statistical data on how many Romani women become victims of prostitution and trafficking, estimations of law enforcement offices and of women NGOs show grave numbers. An activist of a Budapest based women's NGO told me that "25-30% of sex workers in Zurich and Amsterdam are Hungarian women, of which 80-85% are Roma. She also told me that based on discussions with NGO activists in Zurich and Amsterdam, the majority of women in prostitution are victims of sex trafficking and/or exploitation.

---

[170] There are several studies and researches that show family involvement in trafficking and prostitution amongst the most marginalized communities. For example, involvement of parents selling their own children has been reported in Bangladesh, Thailand, Sub-Saharan Africa, among others. See Tom Obokata, *Trafficking of Human Human Beings from a Human Rights Perspective*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2006.pp.46. See also Irena Omelaniuk, Trafficking in Human Beings United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development, Population Division Department of Economic and Social Affairs United Nationa Secretariat. Available at http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/ittmigdev2005/P15_IOmelaniuk.pdf (accessed on 2011.02.01)

7.3.3 Framing forced prostitution and trafficking

The phenomenon of forced prostitution and trafficking are poorly discussed topics even amongst Romani women activists. At the transnational level, however, there are different approaches towards Romani women in forced prostitution. The first approach is mainly used by the conservative groups in the Romani movement, trying to keep this issue exclusively as an internal affair. The second approach is used by the progressive groups in the Romani movement, particularly some of the highly educated women who want to expose it as intersection of poverty, gender and also ethnicity. One of the questions which arise at this point is what the focus should be in the discourse of Romani women's trafficking and forced prostitution. Should this issue be framed as a cultural narrative or as a chain of consequences of global engendered economic restructuring? If it is constructed as a cultural narrative, then it will be defined by non-Roma, particularly extreme right wing groups, as a *"Roma Cultural Pathology Paradigm"* (RCPP*)*. In this particular case I used the terms "paradigm" and "narrative" interchangeably to underscore the fact that the assumptions of this paradigm are typically relayed through political stories and narratives in such discursive spaces as the media, everyday discussions and elsewhere.

This narrative provides coherence and easy translation to understand the subaltern position of Roma, but at the same time, it removes the responsibility of the decision makers, politicians, or even scholars. The term itself *"Roma Cultural Pathology Paradigm"* resonates to the *"Black Cultural Pathology Paradigm"* which derives from the literature on the Black family disruption, black ghetto and from the literature on culture of poverty (Kenneth B. Clark 1966; Alexandre-Floyed 2007). Within RCPP discourse, trafficking and prostitution are natural consequences of an essentialized set of backward, deviant, self-destructed Romani culture, while the effects of historical and contemporary racism and economic inequality which disproportionally affect Roma communities all over the region are ignored. Therefore the social crisis of Roma people is explained solely as a consequence of Roma cultural pathology. Faced with this essentialist, inherently racist discourse, many Romani women in the movement remain silent about trafficking and prostitution in order to avoid participating in the discourse of the devaluation of Roma culture.

There are a few Romani women activists, including myself, however, who frame forced prostitution and trafficking as the effects of the global engendered economic restructuring which created an enduring social inequality in a most tangible way based on race, gender and class. Our arguments are based upon the literature on the critiques of globalization and neo-liberalism. The causes and consequences of globalization are subjects of intensive and continuing debate among scholars. I agree with those who think that globalization is a gendered phenomenon in so far as it positions and affects men and women differently and it produces a new mode of gender relations, power, racism and inequalities (Hawkesworth 2006). One of the prime features of globalization today is "the spatial extension of social relations across the globe" (James 2004:29). Beyond the global financial flow, free trade, deregulation, decentralization, privatization, globalization is characterized by sexualized, racialized and class based social division which reflect those pervasive inequalities that are sustained by the mechanisms of global economic restructuring (Harvey 2003). In the present global political economy many marginalized women, including Romani women who have no education, no job and very limited opportunities to join the "fast-track", are left behind. However, there are numerous studies as well, that expose another face of the globalization

about the women migration from the Third World to do "women's work" in affluent First World countries (Ehrenreich and R. Hochschield 2003). It is important to note that migrant women from poor countries often do not come from the poorest classes of their societies[171].

Nonetheless, the growing business of transnational sexual trafficking will always find these vulnerable women, including Hungarian Romani women, who are pushed out of the legal political economy into a specific social and geopolitical position, from where the most accessible job is to provide sexual services. During my field work I never heard any story about Romani women who went to Western European countries to be employed in more prestigious jobs, such as a nanny or housekeeper. Based on their narratives this is not a free choice, but rather a force either by the exploitive male members of their communities or alien smugglers, or by grave financial circumstances, such as unpaid mortgages and loans. I frequently encountered stories about Romani women who went to the Netherlands to earn money by providing sexual services to cover the family debt and expenses. The impossibility to talk about prostitution within Roma communities is well captured by the concept of Gerald Sider (1993) "the struggle within and against it". Based on my observations and conversations with several Romani women, many of them are struggling to expose these sensitive issues, yet at the same time, try to keep loyal towards their own community. The question still remains: even if they are excluded by structural forces but are there any cultural forces which hold them back from social integration?

I am inclined to base my argument on the new explanatory framework developed by William Julius Wilson (2009) where he unites structural and cultural forces. Wilson (1987, 1996) in his previous books always prioritized the dominance of the economy and "tended to discuss culture as if it were solely a by-product of structural forces" (Wilson 2009:133). When talking about the situation of Roma, Hungarian progressive, mainly left-liberal scholars also focus on the structural conditions with most of the attention on racialist structural factors such as institutional discriminations and segregation. Conservatives tend to emphasize cultural factors in an essentialist way interpreting Roma culture and tradition as a set of static and frozen norms, behavior and belief system which is not compatible with the mainstream Hungarian society.

Wilson's understanding of cultural forces is different from most of the above mentioned scholars' conceptualization on the field of Roma studies. He says that "cultural forces may contribute to or reinforce racial inequality" (Wilson 2009:14) and distinguishes two types of cultural forces:

> (1)national views and beliefs on race and (2) cultural traits-shared outlooks, modes of behavior, traditions, belief systems, worldviews, values, skills, preferences, styles of self-representation, etiquette, and linguistic patterns-that *emerge from patterns of intragroup interaction in settings created by discrimination and segregation and that reflect collective experiences within those settings* (Wilson 2009:14-15). (emphasis added)

Wilson argues that "more weight should be given to structural causes of inequality, despite the dynamic interrelationship of structure and culture" (Wilson 2009:135). Through the

---

[171] Indeed, many immigrant maids and nannies are more educated than the people they work for. For example, many female migrants from the Philippines and Mexico have high school or college diplomas and have held middle class- albeit low paid-jobs back home. Andrea Tyree and Kathrine M. Donato, „ A Demographic Overview of the International Migration of Women", in International Migration: The Female experience, ed. Rita Simon and Caroline Bretell (Totowa, N.J: Rowman Allanheld, 1986)

dominant cultural lens, Roma are perceived as a stigmatized population, which influences the internal, to use Wilson's term, '*meaning-making*' and '*decision-making*' process. In this sense culture (in a relational and broad sense) mediates the impact of cultural forces such as racial segregation and entrenched poverty.

Also, if one wants to expose the issue of prostitution and trafficking, one inevitably has to take into account the intersection of class with gender and ethnicity. Class as a sociological category is scarcely conceptualized in transnational Romani rights based movements, even though class significantly alters the social existence of the local Roma communities. I am aware of the fact that within the European legal framework class is not recognized as a ground for discrimination, hence any attempt at the conceptualization of class represents a problem of distribution of public resources such as access to educational and equal payment and strongly connected to social and economic inequalities. Erik Olin Wright (1997) whose work is essential in this regard explained racism and sexism as non-class oppressions translating into class oppressions[172].

> Marxists would generally expect that social groups that are significantly oppressed through non-class mechanisms will tend to be especially exploited within class relation. This can be either because the non-class oppression affects the access of groups to the resources which matter for class, or because of direct discriminatory mechanisms within class relations themselves. In either case, it would be predicted that non-class oppressions will be translated into class oppressions so that women and racially oppressed groups should be overrepresented in the working class and underrepresented in the most privileged class locations. (Wright 1997: 542)

According to Wright, therefore, class is a more complex, intersectional category that already subsumes the categories of gender and race. Wright's approach, then, gives privilege for class and does not give a substantial recognition of the structural function of other inequalities such as gender and race. His stance clearly opposes the stance of social feminism that argued against traditional ideas of patriarchal oppression with the objective of creating gender equality on the basis of "*sameness*", or in other words, creating an international "*sisterhood*", regardless of class and ethnic differences to stand up against patriarchal regimes. Socialist feminists thus also moved away from socialist labor movements that regarded gender either as a non-issue or a deviation from class struggle. (Weedon 1999:17) Radical feminism, on the other hand, developed throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s as a response to black and Third World women's critiques of white Western feminism. It fundamentally questioned the theoretical frameworks and the political practice of both liberalism and traditional Marxism. Rejecting the liberalist rights based paradigm, they argued that "liberalism cannot be achieved by a theory and practice which make the provisions for the rights of abstract individuals, irrespective of social class, race and gender relations." (Weedon 1999:20) Moreover, radical feminists argued against Marxism as well stating that "women's oppression cannot be reduced to class oppression and epiphenomenon of the economic and social structures of the capitalist mode of production." (Weedon 1999:20) It is also important to note that while all forms of feminism use the term 'patriarchy', in radical feminism it rather refers to a system of domination. Gloria Andalúzia

---

[172] Erik Olin Wright writes extensively about the complexity of class oppression in *Class Counts: Comparative studied in class analysis* (1997).

(1987; 1990) goes even further when she suggests that the oppression of women and men of color affects not only their material social position, but also their physical, intellectual and emotional lives.

Conclusively, I shall take a radical feminist perspective, from where I shall be able to distinguish several systems of domination such as dominations based on gender, ethnicity or race and class which pervade all aspects of social life. So the class is one of the systems of domination which interact and intersect with other forms of domination. In the case of prostitution and trafficking of Romani women, their low social and economical class position intersects with other social forms of inequalities reproducing their vulnerable position in global economic restructuring. Moreover, when it comes to sexual and racial violence, and class exploitation, Romani women are increasingly defenseless and unprotected. The ethnically segregated localities and "Gypsy Rows" enclose them and offer a very limited social and economic position from where social mobility, at least without substantial institutional support, is impossible.

In sum, local Romani women political activists are urged to frame forced prostitution and trafficking. If they remain silent about it, then it will reinforce the belief that women are not forced into prostitution; sexual violence is simply part of their work, and further, that some women are made for that. The local women in Szikszó who participated in the research still kept silent about prostitution.

7.3.4 Women in key positions: "Mother goes, asks for credit – gets money for us"

A large body of feminist literature argues that women's extreme poverty hinders their role as primary care givers of the family. Furthermore, as women typically are more concerned with issues related to their community than men, female poverty goes beyond the family and affects the community as well[173]. Child rearing, housework, cooking, washing or cleaning strengthens the traditional role of women within the family. In families living in dire poverty, women play a key role, even if they seem not to or, indeed, if their occupation does not invoke any respect. In households where the men have no work, women's role is upgraded as the child benefit becomes 'the women's benefit'. Maternity benefit, child benefit and all types of social benefits are regarded as the women's thing. Additionally, these are all regular, 'secure' and reliable sources of income, and in part, are the very the reasons why poor families show the greatest respect for female pensioners. My observation in the field is that several households are sustained by the old or disabled person in the family who draws social benefits.

> Representatives of local institutions believe that managing the family is the duty of Romani women and, indeed, my observations show that Romani women are increasingly more willing to work to relieve their families' poverty. As one local employer told me, "Roma women want to work, as there is a complete crisis (firewood, bills), they all come but there is not even enough for the fire." (F. Z. Local employer 2009. 08.12)

---

[173] Roksana Bahramitash (2005) in her book on *Liberation from Liberalization: Gender and Globalization in Southeast Asia,* writes extensively about how women's roles have changed under the expansion of market economy in Southeast Asia. Based on my research findings, Romani women in the underdeveloped region are impacted similarly.

I met a social worker who told me that Romani women are willing to do practically 'everything':

> The women go for money too […] the women go for water, food […]- What do the men do? They are at home. They watch TV. Great men, [she is using a sarcastic tone] the men are not there, the women work, go through rubbish. (V.Z.Church social worker 2009.09.21.)

The leader of the Gypsy Self-Government pointed out something very important stating that in their view, the traditional family model has been changing.

> […] the traditional family model as such does not exist today. It is a thing of the past. The low position of women no longer persists in the Roma community (B.Z. President of the Gypsy Self-government 2009.09.22.)

During my field work this image about Romani families was reinforced by women as well.

> In the old days the roles between men and women were divided, now these roles are increasingly blurred. In the old days it would be weird for a Roma man to sweep, wash-up or do any sort of housework, as this was all women's work. But now things start to change. My husband does housework, but my father wouldn't have done any, as that was mum's work. Many more Romani women go to work than before. They live much freer lives than when I was a child. Now more tasks fall to the woman than before. Today a woman must be a mother, and also go out to work and do the house work. I think women work much more than men nowadays. We are under economic pressure. (K.B. 37 year-old married Roma woman with two children)

The decline of male employment has a negative impact on household income as well as on the prestige of the men who have lost their workplaces and therefore their source of income, especially since the key income provider now tends to be the woman, as she is the one who can receive child benefit. With the global economic restructuring there has been a change in the nature of employment and work, i.e. a tendency towards less-skilled, low-waged jobs, increasingly with casual employment arrangements (Standing 1999). In addition to that, the deregulation and privatization have eroded the collective bargaining, power of labor and the financial and other insecurities of female employees have been increased (Bahramitash 2005). Those very few Romani women who are employed by multinational companies as low skilled workers have a very fragile employment status. Also, the fact that women can now join the labor market has created problems regarding their role as caregivers, since the paid work outside and the lack of men's participation in housework activities has ultimately decreased the attention given to children in family. This phenomenon is also typical even in more developed countries, such as Australia (Broomhill and Sharp 2004). The feminist literature usually refers to this problem as the 'double day' of women. Most Romani women who have to endure a 'double day' also have to play a 'double role' in the family, becoming the "head of the household" these days.

During my field work I also had several discussions with Romani children about certain issues such as gender roles in the family. On one occasion, I asked them whether they as

children notice if their family is struggling financially, and if so how. According to them one of the unmistakable signs of lack of money was when *"there is no milk for our little brother/sister in the fridge"*. Even though, I did not ask them what happens if there is no milk, they immediately added *"mum goes out, asks for credit – gets money for us"*

Provision for the family, and especially for the children, plays a central role in the narratives of many Roma women as this is the model they inherited from their own parents, and all of them count on some sort of family shortfalls. However, when they have to get new clothes or money for class excursions, or even buy food for children they can do everything just to fulfill their kids' expectations.

> Basically, I give things up, I try giving all that I can to the girls, and in fact that's my reason for living, so that they have everything and they don't feel that they lack anything. (T. K. 35-year-old Romani woman 2009.10.23.)

Nearly all Romani women have a job supplement, or earn their entire income in the informal economy. Various studies show that in fact, female employment in the informal economy has increased with globalization (Bakker 1994). However, it is important to consider that employment in the informal sector is irregular, unregulated, and usually ensures very low wages. In addition, it provides less opportunity for training and advancement as well as it excludes the entitlement to an old-age pension. Many Romani women reported that their income is either supplemented or exclusively comes from some informal or casual work, such as melon picking, market trading or doing household chores for peasants.

> Officially my income is 76,000 HUF. My husband doesn't work now. He has been unemployed for five months. I used to get benefits but had to give them up when I started working. We get child benefit for the two children. About 100,000 HUF comes in a month. Sometimes we have no money by the end of the month, so we have to be careful. I always try to pay the bills first, the rest we share out. My husband gets wood from the local wood traders. There are companies that deal with clearing woods and when they clear a wood, then my husband goes and takes the branches from the slender trees. This is not regular work, if they cut wood for a week then my husband clears the wood for two weeks, then they go on. This is three times in the winter. He doesn't get payment for it, but may take as much wood as he needs. In the summer we pick melons. What we make in those two and half months we put away for winter. This is great security for us.(K.M. 37 year-old married Roma woman with two children 2009.10.23.).

One of the key features of the neo-liberal economic impact is the decline of social services. (Harvey 2005; Faux 2006) Since women are traditionally responsible for the welfare of the families, therefore the state with the lack of social and health services puts an additional burden on women's care-giving roles. The state structural adjustment policies mainly operate through the withdrawal of substantial amounts of money from local social, health and educational institutions, transferring costs from the public sector to individual households. Based on the interviews and discussions with Romani women I learned that these structural adjustment policies require more unpaid and invisible labor from Romani women. One of the Romani women from the "Gypsy Row" complained that

148

[…] my mother had a stroke and she could not speak and walk anymore. We have no money to put her in a rehabilitation institute therefore I had to give up even my seasonal job in order to be with her."(B.I. 43 years old Romani woman 2009.10.13.)

In the last decade reduced public expenditure and increased poverty has intensified women's work not only inside the household but also in the community. Many Romani women in the community had to provide social care for old relatives who had no chance to access any state or private care. Many women recounted stories about how they have been squeezed out from social services and about several doctors in the local hospital who (ab)use public services for private clients and patients. Thereby the most developed infrastructure in the public hospital is used by private clients.

They think [in the hospital] that Roma are second class citizens therefore we should get the second class services as well. (B. Z. 36 year old Romani woman 2009.10.21.)

One of the other issues differentiating Romani women from non-Romani women is that Romani women often have to take loans from a private persons or financial institutions to solve the financial problems of the household. In the non-Roma households this is the man's job.

My electricity bill is huge, as the electricity pole is tied to the caravan. Everything is run on electricity: heating, lighting. I cook with gas. The children have a car, the insurance must be paid, gas cylinders cost 5,000 HUF a month […] I have an overdraft at the bank, four years ago in Budapest I worked in a hotel and I took a bank loan for 100,000 HUF. I couldn't pay it back as I had to come back here. I put my youngest son in my mother-in-law's care, but she couldn't cope. I had to come home, as the child was a minor. I had neither work nor money. I didn't know how to pay back the debt. (44 year-old Roma widow with two children K.V. 2009.10.21.)

Romani women have to come to an agreement with the various credit agencies, provident agents, or even usurers to whom they are indebted. Everyday anxieties, the struggle for survival and recognition, all have a direct link to psychotic, neurotic and psychosomatic illnesses. Regardless, the health status of the women the perspectives of their children depends upon them.

.

7.3.5 The pathology of exclusion

The social and physical exclusion of Roma, their lack of civil rights and increasing poverty all have the potential to ruin both their physical and mental health (Vokó, 2002). Data collected in 2004 indicates that the health status of Roma living in slum conditions, as well as their socio-economic situation can be linked to their low income status (Vokó et al., 1993, 2006). According to this health survey, the health status of those living in slums is twice as bad as that of the general population, which can be explained by the lack of medical facilities and poor social conditions in these areas. The correlation between health deterioration and the poor social position and income of Roma people is especially strong. The households of the

149

Roma who were interviewed in this study were highly affected by long-term illness or disability in the family, i.e. they are officially declared disabled. On the basis of surveys conducted in slum districts, providing for these family members is solely the female family members' responsibility.

Table 4
Ratio of households where there is a long-term illness/disabled person in the family, i.e., they are officially declared disabled, %

	BAZ County		Pest County	
	Non-Roma	Roma	Non-Roma	Roma
Ratio of households with ill/disabled persons	25	40	32	40
Disability status	13	28	18	36

Source: own research data, 2009

Apart from physical deterioration, it is very important to also consider psychological problems. Racism, disdain, condescension may all exert potentially adverse effects on the development of personality and spiritual well being. Despite the fact that we did not include symptoms of depression in our questionnaire, it is worth mentioning that during my field work a pronounced number of Romani as well as non-Romani women suffered from various psychoses and neuroses. At this point, we should refer to a health survey conducted by György Gyukits and his colleagues in 1998 on Roma and non-Roma women between the ages of 15-24 (Gyukits et al. 2000). They established that there was a significant difference in the range of depression between non-Roma and Roma women. 9.3% of the examined Roma women suffered from serious depression, compared to 2.1% of the non-Romani women. 50% of Roma women suffered from some sort of depression compared to 25% for the non-Roma. Suicide attempts were 12.1% for Roma women while only 5.6% of the non-Roma women reported having attempted suicide[3]. These are interesting research results and the recognition of depression and its medical treatment is not sufficient in either Pest County or BAZ County. As Table 5 shows, it is possible that in the case of this segment of society, the struggle to survive on a daily basis consumes Roma people's energy to such an extent that they have neither time, nor money to deal with their mental health problems.

Table 5. Psychological and mental health incidence according to ethnicity and area (%) (N=1250)

In the last 4 weeks have you often felt that	BAZ County		Pest County	
	Non-Roma	Roma	Non-Roma	Roma
… you are full of energy	21	25	41	24
.. . calm, at peace	33	39	38	31
… happy	36	52	48	33
… so broken and sad that nothing can cheer you up	32,5	44	37	25,5

---

[3] The study shows that there is no significant difference between the depression suffered by Roma and non-Roma women with the same level of education. Gyukits, Ürmos, Csoboth, Pruebl. (2000): Incidence of depression symptoms in young Roma women LAM 10 (11-12): 911-915.

… very upset	60	74	57	70
… exhausted	66	69	48	51

Source: Own research data, 2009

Interestingly, however, Romani women are happier than non-Romani women, particularly in the depressed region. 52% of the Roma respondents from BAZ County reported being happy compared to 36% of non-Roma respondents. It seems that Romani women subjective happiness is higher and they have a better strategy to cope with social and economic deprivation than non-Romani women.

Based on my observations, many Romani women's happiness has been fostered by their children. They are forced to be happy and optimistic as they consider it to be important for their children. As one respondent succinctly put it, "My future is my children. I have to survive everything and I have to be strong and happy." (34 year old Romani woman with three kids)

In sum, the pathology of exclusion can reinforce the powerless and defenseless position of the marginalized people regardless of their ethnicity. However, happiness and mental well-being show differences between Roma and non-Romani women. The differences can be explained also with macro-economic changes. Romani women have been trained to be financially deprived, socially excluded and marginalized for generations. This experience constitutes their collective memory, however non-Romani women's downward mobilization becomes fortified by the recent macro-economic restructuring which has a significant impact on their mental well-being.

7.3.6 Struggle in the educational system

The sample of income was drawn from the lowest 5 percent of the population, that is from the typical social status of both Roma and non-Roma women. Despite the fact that Roma people belong to the lowest social classes in Hungary, there is a significant difference in their level of education (Table 6). In BAZ County, 43% of the non-Roma women had a maximum of 8th grade education, while for the Roma women this was 81%. In Pest County the difference was even sharper with 38% of Roma women having attained 8th grade, while 92% of the non-Roma women only had lower primary education. The next level education we looked at was the proportion of secondary education and vocational certificates, in which case we found even greater differences. In BAZ County, 57% of non-Roma women had a certificate and baccalaureate, while this was 19% for the Roma women. In Pest County, 62% of non-Roma women had completed secondary or vocational education, while only 8% of the Roma did.

Table 6. The highest level of education of the interviewees according to locality and ethnicity (%) (N=1250)

	BAZ County		Pest County	
	Non-Roma	Roma	Non-Roma	Roma
Under 8th grade	19	42	5	59
8th grade, without skills	24	39	33	33
Max. 8th grade (with no	**43**	**81**	**38**	**92**

151

further education)				
8th Grade with skills	31	12	26	6
Baccalaureate	26	7	36	2
School certificate – baccalaureate	**57**	**19**	**62**	**8**

(Average age of sample: 36 years)

Source: Own research data, 2009

Several reasons can be found behind the significant discrepancy in education indicators for Roma and non-Roma women. The first is partly attributable to segregated schools and their educational inequalities. Secondly, the discrepancy may be partly due to the various forms of open and hidden discrimination present in the Hungarian educational system from kindergarten to university. Thirdly, some of the Romani girls and women told me that sometimes their educational opportunities are hampered by early marriage or by their own families to whom they have to provide social services.

A Romani woman explained the educational difficulties of their children in the following way:

My children didn't even reach 8th grade, not one of them. They completed 6th grade as there were lots of problems with the teachers. The girls were thrown into a remedial school, which was a Gypsy-only school before. This is why they didn't finish, as the teacher was very strict, hit them, tugged their ears and beat them. The Gypsy children were all thrown together, nobody bothered with them. They were not paid attention to, the teachers were not nice to them, they held the Hungarian children's hands but not theirs, the Gypsies couldn't hit the Hungarian children, only each other, the Hungarians would tease them but not the other way round. When the children went to nursery school one of the Hungarian children bit my daughter and my daughter was punished. I went to the Local Government to tell them what happened and they investigated the case, and saw that my daughter had been hit and yet she was told to stand in the corner. Then they explained to the nursery teacher that this was not allowed, but it did no good, as there is the "G" on our foreheads, wherever they go, however well they are dressed." (B.K. 53 year-old married Roma woman with two children. 2009.10.23.)

In the present school system humiliation and discriminatory practices are prevalent based on ethnic identity and skin color, which increasingly de-motivates Roma/Romani women in their studies or even discourages them to finish primary school. This collective experience can be transformed into bias against the educational system. Stigmatization diminishes self-confidence and self-assurance, which, in turn, in most cases leads to school failure.[174] At the same time Roma, both women and men, interviewed in the study considered it important for their children to study, despite the problems they encounter.

---

[174] An important contribution to school stigmatisation is Mária Neményi's study „Minority identities examined by social psychology. Roma children's identity strategies", a synopsis of which can be downloaded from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences homepage.
http://www.mtaki.hu/docs/080611_12/rovid/nemenyi_maria_kisebbsegi_identitasok.pdf (Downloaded May 19 2010)

All three of my children have completed 8th Grade. Marika went to the hairdressing school, Misike is a waiter and Zsolt goes to college to study social work. Zsolti wouldn't have so many skills if we hadn't been pushed. They were brought up strictly. Well my eldest boy works in America, as an animal carer. Well, we just spoke with them on the phone and they work in a plaster factory…the girls they are 16-17 years old but aren't married. There is time for them to get married, let them study, studying is good at any cost." (K.B.53-year-old married Roma woman with six children, 2009.12.08.)

When it comes to education, it is often said that girls give up school to get married and have children. For older Roma women this practice is often accompanied by great poverty. Many reported that they had no shoes, clothes and, due to the division of labor in the family, the eldest girls had to look after the little ones and had no time to go to school.

I have an older sister and an older brother. My father was a drunkard; my mother had to work, so my older sister was taken out of school. She must have been in 5th or 6th grade; she looked after us and did everything. Everybody knew in the family what she did. I had nothing to do, just to study. I went home from school and studied by candlelight, that's it. My older sister was the one who couldn't go to school as she did everything at home. My older brother and I regularly went to school. My older brother became a stonemason. I went to school 101 in Miskolc and learnt weaving and spinning. And then I gave it up as I ran off with my husband. I was seventeen then. (B.K. 44 year-old Roma widow with two children 2009.12.08.)

During my fieldwork I met a middle-aged Romani woman who is in the process of finishing elementary school. Her story provides a rich insight into why it is important to study even at this age:

I attended the first three grades and didn't really like it. The truth is that we got married at a young age. I established a family when I was 15 years old and then the children came[…] and then you can't really go to school. I gave birth at 16. I had completed three grades, and now I am going to finish 6th. Now I have got to the point where I can fill out a cheque, read a letter and that's great. Since then I have got storybooks to practice reading. I can count money. I couldn't fill out forms. And now it's very good that I don't need that' oh please come here, fill this out as I can't and I can't pay it in'. Now, I go over and fill it out and pay it in myself."(V.I. 53-year-old married Roma woman with six children 2099.10.12.)

In deep and constant poverty girls have to work and compensate for the shortcomings of the state welfare system. Many Romani women and girls talked about obstacles in their childhood like having had to help at home, and act according to the expected female roles in the family. All this invisible female work prevented them from studying further.

I finished primary school and technical school when I was older, and with good results, since I worked alongside and had children too. My mother didn't allow me to finish primary school […] as I had to take care of my younger sisters and brothers and also I had to work with my mother in the peasant household […] if she had allowed me to perhaps it wouldn't have been like that. (K.B. 47 year-old married Roma woman with four children 2010.02.06.)

An old Romani woman from the "Chinatown" of Szikszó, who became a skilled worker as an adult said that: "*at the time – against my father's will – my mother stopped me from studying; girls must work around the house, or look after the younger children."* Two younger women, both of them in their thirties, with many children, said that at the time their parents would have supported them to continue their education, but in the end they started families early, before finishing primary school. One of them said regretfully that her eldest (a 16 year-old)

daughter could not go to school for shorter or longer periods of time, because she had to look after her father, who had cancer, as well as her younger children.

7.4 Concluding remarks

My fieldwork has enabled me to explore how macro-economic forces shape the local social and economic context and how these structures influence the contextualized ethnic, gender and class inequalities of Romani women in a specific local position. It was shocking to witness the dominance of the global economic restructuring whereas the global market decides and evaluates the relevance of certain regions and locations. In the northern periphery of the country free market has brought prosperity to a tiny elite operating as the engine of the growth and failed to address the entrenched poverty[175] that disproportionally effects people of color, women and children. In addition, particularly, Roma/ Romani women belong to the high-risk group in this region. My fieldwork location has been ignored by major economic investors who could significantly change the employment rate in the region. There are some relatively small local and multinational enterprises offering a few work places for Romani women. One of the main arguments in favor of neo-liberalism has always been that it has led to greater employment opportunities for women. Yet, what we see is that even if a few Romani women have been employed as low-skilled workers in TESCO, this opportunity does not considerably improve the income of households, only serves to create new problems in the family.

As the research demonstrates, there are great differences between Romani and non-Romani women living in difficult circumstances, especially regarding their education and employment opportunities and their health status, which, in most cases, is linked to their racialized ethnic identity and also their collective cultural experiences that imprint their attitude towards institutions. The structural inequality further maintains the exclusion from the social and economic attainment of Roma, especially Romani women. My research findings show as well that the dysfunctional education system facing tremendous problems does not promote social mobility, instead unwittingly produces and reinforces class, gender and ethnic based inequality and racial difference. Meanwhile, the educational system is the only means for social mobility for Romani women. In the lives of those Romani women who have become local leaders and politically active members of local NGOs, school played an important role in their mobilization and activist career.

The traditional role of Romani women as primary caregivers of the family is ignored in national economic calculations even though it is an important part of the social and economic life of societies. Romani women not only produce the future labor pool and tax payers, but they also take care of them. In the context of a declining welfare state, the traditional role of Romani women in the family and in the community should be valued and appreciated as these women invest their physical and mental energy and financial resources into supporting their children and members of the community who need help. (Ehrenreich and Hochschield 2003)

Feminism gives a new consciousness, language and line of argumentation for local Romani women activists. It is important to note that those Romani women who joined the newly

---

[175] Karl Polanyi (1944) criticized the self-regulating free market system in his work, *The Great Transformations.* He argues that throughout human history, the market has been part of human society as a subordinate institution. According to him, at the end of the eighteenth century, a new social structure based on the self-regulating market emerged, and it gave precedence to the market as a separate institution from the society. Hardt and Negri (2000) and Harvey (2005) argue that there was a major shift toward neo-liberalism in the late 1970s, with a stronger emphasis on the free market, which was imposed by international agencies.

established local Romani NGO all come from integrated, "decent" Romani families. So, even at the local level the "elite Roma" are the most mobilizable for political action. Their participation in the research process offered a voice of rhetoric to construct their language and talk about their issues. Indeed, Romani women are often the object of political and policy-making debates, or even of academic scholarship, rather than participating subjects of decision making or academic discussion. I truly hope that my fieldwork does not serve solely my academic interests, but it has also generated some local change.

Conclusion: Revisiting Romani women's political activism and social struggles

The aim of this dissertation has been to explain and analyze through empirical material the manifestations of gender, ethnicity and class in contemporary Romani women's life. To narrow my study, I have focused on transnational and local (particularly Hungarian) Romani women's political activism and social status, from the structural through the discursive and biographical level. I aimed to go beyond the superficial representation of women's activism, by describing the complicated relationship and intercations among donors, NGOs, other Roma and non-Roma activists, and also within their groups.

With the above outlined concerns in my mind, I undertook an empirical research project at the transnational level (mapping the various Roma networks and international resource centers) and at the local level (Szikszó, Hungary). As part of my research, I closely observed "women's issues" at the transnational and the local level, as well as discourses and activities through which they promote "Romani women's rights" and "human rights and democracy" under the banners of "empowering Romani women".

At the outset of my study, I formulated some research questions and relating hypotheses which have been tested in the scope of my research. Here, I will summarize and reiterate the main questions, arguments and findings of my study.

1. *How are intersections of ethnicity, gender and class manifested at the local and transnational level in respect of Romani women activism and social position? How are transnational and gender discourses translated and modified in the specific local community?*

Hypothesis: There is a marginalized new (gender equality) discourse in the emerging Roma movement which is generated at the transnational level. The gender and human rights discourse will be transformed, translated and sometimes contested by local activists in a specific community. Moreover, the gender equality discourse can strengthen the political participation of Romani women, as well as be used as a political commodity by political parties and international organizations.

My research findings support the first hypothesis that there is a newly emerged gender equality discourse, designed and used by Romani women who have access to the transnational level. The emergence of Romani women's transnational activism is assisted by international organizations that advocate human rights, particularly women's rights. In order to gain transnational political space and recognition and to find alliances on the international level, Romani women have been forced to allow their own agendas to be influenced by certain political factors above and outside of their immediate work. Based on my findings I argue that international organizations advocate for victimized Romani women in order to expand their scope of control and contribute to the human rights and gender equality regime. However, the same view of Romani women offers a contradictory site for the Romani women themselves: on the one hand, they can use human rights language as a progressive tool to further their own feminist agendas, while on the other hand, they must contend with the

157

universalizing idea of "gender equality" underscoring that language and ignoring the structurally unequal power relations specific to Romani women in the post-communist countries.

On the one hand, Romani women's position is identified through their continuous resistance against male-dominated leadership within the Roma political activism that, in most cases, is animated by global actors, such as the EU, CoE and OSI. My study also shows the specific "dialogical character" of Romani women's activism, which is informed by their peculiar position between the external and internal hierarchies: contest and subordination.

Romani women's social position in Central and Eastern Europe is demonstrated in a few, mainly policy oriented researches commissioned by international organizations such as the UNDP, CoE and OSI. These researches partly answer my first question that intersections of gender, ethnicity and class are manifested regarding Romani women's social position in lack of education (low literacy rate, lack of access to higher education, overrepresentation amongst drop-outs, etc), lack of employment (which strongly correlates with the low educational status as well as with lack of access to childcare facilities), poor health conditions and gender violence. These policy oriented researches available demonstrate Romani women's structural position.

My research illustrates that academic research projects still lack the systematic effort to integrate gender, ethnicity and class in data collection and analysis. To date, in European policy-making as well as in the academic literature there is very limited knowledge on the structural position of Romani women. I agree with Mieke Verloo that in order to create a more sensitive language, it is necessary to comprehend the differences and relationship between various inequalities. In other words, as Verloo put it, "what is needed is the development of complex methods and tools informed by intersectionality theory, and a rethinking of the representation and participation of citizens in an era of post-identity politics" (Verloo 2006: 224).

Nevertheless, following my first hypothesis, my study fails to demonstrate in depth how the transnationally constructed gender and human rights discourse is transformed, negotiated and contested at the local level by Romani women activists. It is due to my long and deep immersion in local activism which still requires more time (alienation and distancing myself) to process my ethnographic data and critically reflect upon my role. I consider the empirical chapter 7 as my starting point of the forthcoming ethnography about how transnational and local encounters, local NGOs and activists become commodities of transnational organizations.

However, it is hoped that my empirical chapter illustrates convincingly how macro-economic forces impact the local social and economic context and how these structures influence the contextualized ethnic, gender and class inequalities of Romani women in a specific local position. The comparative household research demonstrates that there are great differences between Romani and non-Romani women with similar social status. The structural inequality further maintains the exclusion from the social and economic attainment of Romani women. My research findings also show that the dysfunctional education system facing tremendous problems unintentionally produces and reinforces class, gender and ethnic based inequality and racial difference. Meanwhile, based on the findings, the educational system proves to be the means for Romani women's social mobility. In the lives of those Romani women who have become local leaders and politically active members of local NGOs school played an important role in their mobilization and activist career.

158

2.   *How do class differences amongst Romani women affect their access to rights and political activism?*

Hypothesis: The local conceptualization of human rights and translation of gender equality principles supposedly depends on the class belonging and translation capacities of activists.

My research supports the second hypothesis because within Roma political activism today, the human rights and policy advocacy elites at the very top of the ladder tend to be Western (primarily American) human rights entrepreneurs, followed by Eastern European non-Romani elites; the order then moves down to include Romani elites (urban, educated Roma) and finally, local Romani communities and their representatives (usually rural and semi-literate). So as my research demonstrates, the social status and geographical position of Romani women influence their capacity to access political activism and internalize the human right and gender equality discourse. So, even at the local level the integrated "elite Roma" respond most eagerly to the call of human rights and they are the most active in political action.

Indeed, Romani women are often the object of political and policy-making debates rather than participating subjects of decision making. This was one of the reasons why I chose a feminist participatory method to include Romani women in knowledge production. Based on my observation, the participatory research process offered a voice of rhetoric to the local integrated Romani women to construct their language and talk about their issues.

Based on my interviews with educated Romani women, I observed that many of them appropriated the language of feminism, which gives a new consciousness and line of argumentation for Romani women activists.

To talk about the capacity of translating the human rights and gender equality discourse, based on my findings this translation is mainly done by the non-Roma human rights elite. This creates a paradoxical, complex, intertwined and symbiotic relationship with the Roma elite demonstrated by the interviews with Romani women activists. The patterns of domination are based upon discursive and structural legacies. Whereas Roma have an imitation of power, in reality they are always in a continuous (never-ending) mode of 'catch-up' and empowerment in order to justify the status quo of non-Roma dominance. Furthermore, the postcolonial racial hierarchy is a result not just of material resource advantages (e.g. the dominance of non-Roma who have taken up the Romani cause), but also of symbolic power configurations rooted in 'Eastern otherness' and, in contradistinction to it, what is called 'Western normality'.

3.   *What kind of personal trajectories determine Romani woman to be activists, to fight for human rights and gender equality*?

Hypothesis: Unfair treatment, discrimination and violence against Romani women determine involvement in local and transnational activism based on class.

159

My research finding modifies my last hypothesis, since those Romani women are more likely to be active in political activism that have a higher status even though they are least discriminated compared to those who are politically passive and face harsher discrimination in their life. Based on my interviews with educated Romani women, their political life is determined by the following factors: the social status of communities and families, the male-female power relations experienced during childhood and adulthood, the male-female relations practiced in the given families and relationships, relations to identity constructs of Gypsy-ness and gender, the response of the environment, individual motivation and stimulating professional and friendly relationships. They witnessed their Romani fellow's and sometimes experienced racial and gender violence, that encourage them to seek social justice through political activism.

Most of the interviewees took on a life-changing role both in their families and in the Roma community. The Romani women activists whom I meet during my research went against the fate and lifestyle for which their families' socio-economic situation and ethnic identity had predestined them.

In most of the stories the key catalyst in social and political mobilization was the overarching problematic of 'fighting within and against' the system of oppression. Many of the interviewees had to fight against the norms of their own family and community and to challenge the existing and persistent racial hierarchy.

One of the findings of the study shows the less known matriarchic face of some Roma communities, where women have an important role in sustaining and protecting their families. The interviews reveal the internal narration about the intimate and supportive solidarity amongst Romani women. However, women's stories also expose some unspoken, invisible oppression that they encounter through social and political activism. The women's narratives also explain that for an oppressed people, emancipation is a multi-generational struggle, and it is likely to remain so for decades, possibly centuries.

Perspectives

Stepping back to consider the broader view of Romani women's political activism and social struggle shows many similarities with indigenous, third world and colored women activists. My study offers a comparative framework for further research to understand both the specificities and the differences among the situations of racially-marginalized women groups in other countries and continents.

This area is under-researched and lacks theoretical conceptualization. The approach I have opted to take bridges empirical and theoretical gaps in the study of sociology and anthropology, particularly in respect of Roma groups on the social and political periphery. As a researcher in an embryonic phase, however, in an expanding research field within sociology and anthropology, my work makes seminal contributions to the area of gender studies, human rights and ethnic studies.

My contributions are also envisioned in the cognate areas of post-socialist and transition studies in Europe, critical 'race' theory and post-colonial studies. I hope that my work promises to raise the profile of the research field by diminishing the marginalized position of Roma within the social sciences as a whole.

Bibliography

General Works

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1991. Writing against Culture. In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, ed. Richard Fox. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press: 137-62

Abu-Lughod, Lila. eds. 1998. *Remaking women: feminism and modernity in the Middle East*. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press

Acton, Thomas. 2000. *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle Commitment in Romani Studies*. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press

_____. 2004. 'Modernity, Culture and "Gypsies": Is there a Meta-Scientific Method to Understand the Representation of Gypsies? And do the Dutch Really Exist?' in N.Saul & S.Tebbutt.*The Role of the Romanies*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press

Acton Thomas. and Gheorghe Nicolae. 2001. 'Citizens of the world and nowhere: minority, ethnic and human rights for Roma'', in W. Guy ed. *Between Past and Future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Ádám, István eds. 1980. *Szikszó. Egy abaúji község története. Szikszó*. (Manuscript)

Alcoff, Linda Martin, Michael Hames-Gracia, Satya P.Mohanty and Paula M.L. Moya, eds. 2006. *Identity Politics Reconsidered*. New York: Palgrave MacMillian

Alexander-Floyd, Nikol G. 2007. *Gender, Race, and Nationalism in Contemporary Black Politics*. Palgrave Macmillan

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo sacer: sovereign power and bare life*. Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press

Aghion, Philippe and Bolton, Patrick. 1997. "A Theory of Trickle-Down Growth and Development". *Review of Economic Studies* The Review of Economic Studies Ltd. 64 (2): 151–172

Altorki, Soraya and Camillia El-Solh. 1988 *Studying Your Own Society: Arab Women in the Field*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press

Andalúzia, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/la Frontera The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinster/ Aunt Lute Books

_____. 1990. *Making Face, Making Soul. Haciendo Caras. Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminist of Color*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books

Angel-Ajani, Asale and Victoria Sanford eds. 2006 *Engaged observer : anthropology, advocacy, and activism.* New Brunswick, N.J. : Rutgers University Press

Anthias, Floya, and Nira Yuval-Davis. 1983. Contextualising Feminism: Gender, Ethnic & Class divisions, *Feminist Review*, No. 15, November 1983:62-75.

_____.1989. *Women, Nation, State*, Basingtoke : Macmillan

Anthias, Floya and Nira. Yuval-Davis eds. 2005. 'Child Marriage a Cultural Problem, Educational Access as a Race Issue? Deconstructing Uni-dimensional Understanding of Romani Oppression', *Roma Rights*, July 2005, European Roma Rights Center.

Anthias, Floya, and Nira Yuval-Davis, in association with Harriet Cain. 1992. *Racialized boundaries : race, nation, gender, colour, and class and the anti-racist struggle*. London : Routledge

Aponte, Robert. 1990. Definition of the underclass: a critical analysis. In H. Gans ed. *Sociology in America,* Newbury Park: Sage, CA, 117-137.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy' in M. Featherstone eds. *Global Culture*. London: Sage, pp. 295-310

_____. 1996 Modernity at large : cultural dimensions of globalization, Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press

_____. 2006. *Fear of small numbers : an essay on the geography of anger.* Durham: Duke University Press

Appadurai, Arjun. eds. 1997 *The Social life of things : commodities in cultural perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Arato, Andrew. 1992. 'Social Theory, Civil Society and the Transformation of Authoritarin Socialism' In *Citizenship in Europe,* eds V.Gathy and J.Jensen, pp. 116-146, Szombathely, Hungary

Arondeker, Arjeli. „Border/Line Sex: Queer Postcolonialities, or How Race Matters Outside the United States. „ *Intercensions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 7, no. 2 (2005):236-250

Autonómia Foundation. 1990. *1990 Annual Report*. manuscript

Babusik, Ferenc. 2002. *Az ózdi régió cigány népessége. A romák esélyei Magyarországon.* Budapest: Kávé Kiadó.

_____. 2004. *A szegénység csapdájában. Cigányok Magyarországon – szociális-gazdasági helyzet, egészségi állapot, szociális, és egészségügyi szolgáltatásokhoz való hozzáférés.* Budapest: Delphoi Consulting.

Baca Zinn, Maxine, 1979. "Field Research in Minority Communities: Ethical, Methodological, and Political Observations by an Insider," *Social Problems*, Vol.27, No.2 (December 1979).

Bahramitash, Roksana. 2005. *Liberation from Liberalization: Gender and Globalization in Southeast Asia.* Zed Books

Bahun-Radunovic, Sanja and V.G. Julie Rajan eds. 2008. *The Intimate and the Extimate: Violence and Gender in the Globalized World*, Ashgate Press,

Bakker, Isabella ed. 1994. *The Strategic Silence: Gender and Economic Policy*. London: Zed Books

Bakó, Boglárka. 2008. Zsuzska, a rossz. Egy kis közösség cigány női normái egy cigányasszony történetén keresztül. In Bakó Boglárka–Tóth Eszter Zsófia szerk. *Határtalan nők. Kizártak és befogadottak a női társadalomban.* Budapest: Nyitott Könyvműhely, 129–151.

Bakó, Boglárka and Tóth Zsófia Eszter eds. 2008. '*Borderless women: Excluded and accepted in female society*' Nyitott Könyvműhely Kiadó KFT

Banton, Michael. 1998. *Racial Theories.* Second Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Barany, Zoltan. 1998. "Ethnic Mobilization and the State: The Roma in Eastern Europe." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21:308-327

_____. 2001. "Romani electoral politics and behaviour", *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe (1)*: 1-13.

_____. 2002. The *East European gypsies : regime change, marginality, and ethnopolitics* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press

Barsegian, Igor. 2000. When Text Becomes Field: Fieldwork in "Transitional" Societies. In: H. G. De Soto and N. Dudwick, eds. *Fieldwork Dilemmas: Anthropologists in Postsocialist States*. Madison, WI:U. of Wisconsin Press: 119-129.

Barsocas, Christos S., C. Karayanni, P. Tsipouras, E. Baibas, A. Bouloukos, and C. Papadatos. 1979. Genetic Structures of the Greek Gypsies. *Clinical Genetics* 15:5-10.

Balibar, Etienne and Immanuel Wallerstein 1991. *Race, nation, class: ambiguous identities* London: Verso

Banton, Michael. 1998. *Racial theories*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1989. *Modernity and Holocaust* Cambridge: Polity Press

_____. 1992. *Mortality, immortality, and other life strategies*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press

Bell, Hooks. 1989. "Violence in Intimate Relationships," in her *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist. Thinking Black* Boston: South End Press, 84–91.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1990. *Nation and narration* London : Routledge

Bitu, Nicoleta. 1999. The situation of Roma/Gypsy women in Europe. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Reference: rom/mgsrom/doc99/MG-S-ROM (99) 9e (September 17, 1999).

_____. 2003. *The Situation of Roma/Gypsy Women in Europe*. Roma Women Association-Romania. http://www.romawomen.ro/reports_pages/the_situation_of_roma_gypsy.htm (accessed March 12, 2009). http://cps.ceu.hu/romapolicyfellowship_resources.php?cmssessid=Tf1b58716844 4c140a50c9af5adda001d5cf81e5048fe380d3f55b6da30b13a5 (Accessed on 2006.10.24)

Bitu, Nicoleta and Crina Morteanu. 2009. *"Are the Rights of the Child Negotiable? The Case of Early Marriages within Roma Communities in Romania"*. Bucaharest, UNICEF and the Romani Criss.

de Boer-Buquicchio, Maud. 2003. Conference Presentation, Roma Women and Access to Public Health Care. Strasbourg: Conference of the Council of Europe (September 11-12, 2003).

Brewer, Rose. et al., 2002. 'The Complexities and Potential Theorizing Gender, Caste, Race and Class' *Feminist Economics* 8(2): 3-18.

Brah, Avtar. and Phoenix, Ann. 2004. Ain't I A Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 5(3): 75-86.

Breines, Winifred. 2006. *The Trouble between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement.* Oxford University Press

Brown, Wendy. 1995 *States of injury: power and freedom in late modernity* Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press

Broomhill, Australia Ray and Rhona Sharp. 2004. 'The changing breadwinner model in Australia: a new gender order?' , *Labour and Industry* 15(2): 1-24.

Brydon-Miller Mary, Patricia Maguire and Alice McIntyre eds. 2004. *Traveling companions : feminism, teaching, and action research.* Westport, CT: Praeger

Bukovska, Barborá. 2006. "*Dignitati Memores, As Optima Intenti...?* Some Reflections on Human Dimension of Human Rights Work", conference paper, Human Rights and

Public Interest Law Fellows Retreat, (unpublished) January 26-29th, 2006, Cairo, Egypt.

Burawoy, Michael. 2000. *Global ethnography : forces, connections, and imaginations in a postmodern world.* Berkeley: University of California Press

Burawoy, Michael and Katherine Verdery eds. 1999. *Uncertain transition : ethnographies of change in the postsocialist world* Lanham, MD : Rowman & Littlefield

Buti, Antonio. 2004. 'The Removal of Indigenous Children from their Families – US an Australia Compared', *University of Western Sydney Law Review*, rev. 6.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity.* New York: Routledge

_____. 2001. *Problémás nem.* Budapest: Balassi Kiadó.

Butler, Judith and Maureen MacGrogan eds. and Introduction, Linda Singer. 1993. *Erotic welfare : sexual theory and politics in the age of epidemic.* New York : Routledge

Cahn, Claude. 2002. *Roma Rights: Race, Justice and Strategies for Equality*, New York: IDEA Press

Cancian, Francesca M. 1992. Feminist science: Methodologies that challenge inequality. *Gender and Society, 6*(4), 623-642

Cape, Jonathan. 1995. The Race Gallery: The Return of Racial Science. Random House.

Cerwonka, Allaine. 2008. "Traveling Feminist Thought: 'Difference' and Transculturation in Central and Eastern European Feminism." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 33(4):809-832.

Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) and Poradna. 2003. *Body and Soul: Forced Sterilization and Other Assaults on Roma Reproductive Freedom in Slovakia.* Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR) and Poradna. http://reproductiverights.org/sites/crr.civicactions.net/files/documents/bo_slov_part1_0.pdf (accessed February 27, 2009).

Césaire, Aimé. 2000. *Discourse on Colonialism.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chen, Tina Mai and David Churchill. 2005. "Neoliberal Civilization and the Economic Disciplining of Human Rights: Converging Models in the United States and China," *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 10 (Spring 2005)

Clark, Kenneth B. 1965. *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power.* Harper

Clark, Colin. 2004. 'Severity has often enraged but never subdued a Gipsy': the history and making of European Romani stereotypes'. In N.D.B. Saul and S. Tebbutt eds. *The Role of the Romanies: images and counter-images of Romanies/'Gypsies' in European Culture.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes : travel and translation in the late twentieth century.* Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press

Clifford, James and George E. Marcus eds. 1986. *Writing culture : the poetics and politics of ethnography : a School of American Research advanced seminar.* Berkeley : University of California Press

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1998. Its all in the family: Intersections of gender, race and nation. *Hypatia* 13(3): 62-92

Comaroff, John. 1996. "Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution." In P. MacAllister and E. Wilmsen, eds., *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*. University of Chicago Press.

Commission of the European Communities. 2004.Progress Towards the Common Objectives in Education and Training: Indicators and Benchmarks. Commission Staff Working Paper Brussels: CEC SEC(2004)73 (January 21, 2004). http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/indicators_en.pdf (accessed February 29, 2009).

Conoghan, Joanne, 2007, 'Intersectionality and UK Equality Initiatives' *South African Journal of Human Rights* 23(2):317-54

Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) and Anti-Trafficking Programme (ATP), OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). 2006. Position Paper: Awareness Raising for Roma Activists on the Issue of Trafficking in Human Beings in South-Eastern Europe. Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR. http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2006/04/18692_en.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Committee. 2000. General Recommendation No. 25: Gender related dimensions of racial discrimination. Geneva, Switzerland: UN Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (March 20, 2000).

Coquillon, Erzulie and Lykes M. Brinton. 2007. „Participatory and Action Research and Feminism". *In Handbook of feminist research : theory and praxis* / ed. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications

Cotter, David A., Hermsen, Joan M. Ovadia, Seth, Vanneman, Reeve, 2001. The Glass Ceiling Effect. *Social Forces* - Volume 80, Number 2, December 2001, pp. 655-681

Cowan, Jane K. Marie-Benedicte Dembour. and Richard A. Wilson. eds. 2001. *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press.

Cox, Robert. W. 1999. "Civil Society at the Turn of the Millenium: Prospects for an Alternative World Order" *Review of International Studies*, 25 (1), 7.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1994. Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence against Women of Color. In: Martha Albertson Fineman, Rixanne Mykitiuk, ed. *The Public Nature of Private Violence*. New York: Routledge: 178-193.

_____. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989):139-167.

_____. 1991 "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43 (July 1991): 1241-1298

_____. 1994. "Intersectionality and identity politics: learning from violence against women of colour." In M.A. Fineman and R. Mykitiuk, eds., *The Public Nature of Private Violence*. New York: Routledge, pp. 178-193.

_____. 2003. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color", In *Identities: Race, Class, Gender and Nationality,* ed. Alcoff, L.M. and Mendieta, E., Blackwell Publishing, 175-201

Crowe, David M. 1996. *A history of the gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* London : I.B. Tauris

Crowhurst, Isabel. and Trehan Nidhi. 2006. "Minority groups and reproductive rights: coerced sterilization and female genital mutilation in Europe",in *Women's Reproductive Rights*, editors, H. Widdows, I.Alkorta and A. Emaldi, London, Palgrave

Danka, Anita. 2006. "In the Name of Reproductive Rights: Litigating before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women", *Roma Rights Quarterly,* issue: 4, pp. 31-37

Daróczi, Ágnes. 2006. Roma visual artists in Hungary and Europe In *Meet Your Neighborus,* OSI Arts and Culture Network Program, OSI, Budapest, pp. 123.

David, Angela. 1981. *Women, Race and Class,* Great Britan: Cox and Wymann Ltd

Davis, Kathy. 1997. "Embody-ing Theory: Beyond Modernist and Postmodernist Readings of the Body", in Davis, K. ed., *Embodied Practices: Feminist Perspectives on the Body.* London:SAGE Publications Ltd

Deckha, Maneesha. 2004. "Is Culture Taboo?: Feminism, Intersectionality, and Culture Talk in Law" (2004) 16:1 *Canadian Journal of Women and Law* 14.

Delphio Consulting. 2004. *Cigányok Magyarországon – szociálisgazdasági helyzet, egészségi állapot, szociális és egészségügyi szolgáltatásokhoz való hozzáférés.* Budapest, p. 47

Devonic, Fay. 2005. *Role of the European Commission in ensuring a better integration of Romani women in the labour market and in improving their status in society.* Speech at Forum EP-Roma: Equal opportunities for Romani Women. Brussels

(June 28, 2005).
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/speeches/2005/fd_280605_en.pdf
(accessed February 27, 2009).

Donato, Kathrine M. and Andrea Tyree. 1986. „ A Demographic Overview of the
International Migration of Women", In *International Migration: The Female
experience.* eds. Rita Simon and Caroline Bretell. Totowa, N.J: Rowman
Allanheld

Dubois, William Edward Burghardt. 1905. *The Souls of Black Folk*. London: Constable

Duclos, Nitya. 1993. ' Disappearing Women: Racial Minority Women in Human Rights
Cases' *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 6: 25-51.

Dupcsik, Csaba. 2010. Folyamatosságok és változások a magyarországi Balkán-képekben In:
Orbán J. ed. *Kelet-nyugati Passzázsok, I. A kulturális különbözőség poétikája és
politikája.* Pécs: Jelenkor Kiadó, (manuscript)

Durst, Judit. 2001. „Nekem ez az élet, a gyerekek" – Gyermekvállalási szokások válto-
zása egy kisfalusi cigány közösségben. *Századvég* 3. 71–92.

_____. 2007. "Több a kára, mint a haszna: születésszabályozás a 'gettóban'"
Demográfia [Hungarian journal], 50. évf. 1. szám, pp. 74–103.

Edwards, Michael and Hulme David eds. 1995. *Non-governmental organisations:
performance and accountability: beyond the magic bullet.* London: Earthscan

Ehrenreich, Barbara. and Hochschild, Arlie Russel. 2002. *Global woman: Nannies, maids
and sex workers in the new economy*. New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company,
LLC., 2003 New York : Metropolitan Books

Elias, Norbert. 1978. *The Civilizing Process,* Oxford: Blackwell, 1994

Emigh, Rebecca Jean, Eva Fodor, and Ivan Szelenyi. 2001. The Racialization and
Feminization of Poverty? In: Rebecca Jean Emigh and Ivan Szelenyi, eds.
Poverty, Ethnicity and Gender in Eastern Europe during the Market Transition.
Greenwood Press. See http://archiv.soc.cas.cz/SSEE/SSEE.intro.html (Accessed
on February 26, 2009)

Emigh, Rebecca Jean and Ivan Szelenyi, eds. 2001. *Poverty, Ethnicity and Gender in Eastern
Europe during the Market Transition*. Greenwood Press.

Eschle, Catherine. 2001. *Global democracy, social movements, and feminism* Boulder, Colo. :
Westview Press

EMS Consortium. 2003. Thematic Review of the European Union Phare assistance to Roma
minorities. Interim Evaluation of Phare Support Allocated in 1999-2002 and
Implemented until November 2003. Report ZZ/MIN/03082. Commissioned by the
European Commission.

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/revised_minorities_thematic_raw_161204_en.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP). 2007. *Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma* I. Monitoring Report, Budapest and New York: Open Society Institute/EUMAP.

EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program/European Roma Rights Center Shadow Report (EUMAP/ERRC). 2004. *Shadow Report on the Situation of Sinti and Roma Women and Girls in Germany.* Provided to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Commenting on the Fifth periodic Report of the Federal Republic of Germany, Submitted under Article 18 of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

European Commission. 2003. The Social Situation in the European Union 2003. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

_____. 2004**.** *The Situation of Roma in an Enlarged European Union* commissioned by the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

_____. 2005. *Reconciliation of work and private life: A comparative review of thirty European Countries*, 2005, European Commission, DG for Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

_____. 2006a. *Gender Inequalities in the Risks of Poverty and Social Exclusion for Disadvantages Groups in Thirty European Countries.* European Commission, DG for Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

_____. 2006b. Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social committee and the Committee of the Regions - A Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 - COM(2006)92 final.

_____. 2007. *Tackling Multiple Discrimination – practices, policies and laws.* European Commission, DG for Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

_____. 2008. *Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunities: A Renewed Commitment. Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion*. Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion. Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM(2008)420.

European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ERCI). 2004. *Activities of the Council of Europe with Relevance to Combating Racism and Intolerance* (2004/7) (Strasbourg: ECRI, February 2004), 58

_____. 2004. *Third Report on Belgium*. CRI(2004)1. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/XMLcri/ENGLISH/Cycle_03/03_CbC_eng/BEL-CbC-III-2004-1-ENG.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2004. *Third Report on Germany* CRI(2004)23. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Germany/DEU-CbC-III-2004-23-DEU.pdf (in German) (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2004. *Third Report on Norway*. CRI(2004)3. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. In Norwegian) http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Norway/NOR-CbC-III-2004-3-NOR.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2005. *Third Report on Austria*. CRI(2005)1. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/XMLEcri/ENGLISH/Cycle_03/03_CbC_eng/AUT-CbC-III-2005-1-ENG.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2005 *Third Report on France*. CRI(2005)3. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. http://hudoc.ecri.coe.int/XMLEcri/ENGLISH/Cycle_03/03_CbC_eng/FRA-CbC-III-2005-3-ENG.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO). 2008. *Pay Developments – 2007*. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/eiro/tn0804019s/tn0804019s.pdf (accessed February 26, 2009).

European Roma Information Office. 2003. *"Europe's most unwanted"* - public statement by Kóczé Angéla, unpublished

European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). 2003. *Breaking the Barriers-Romani Women Access to Public Health Care,* Luxemburg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European Parliament (EP). 2006. Roma Women in the EU: European Parliament Resolution on the Situation of Roma Women in the European Union P6_TA(2006)0244 (2005/2164(INI)). European Parliament. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P6-TA-2006-0244+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN (accessed March 12, 2009).

European Roma Rights Center (ERRC). 1999. Roma and the Kosovo Conflict *Roma Rights* 2/1999.

_____. 2006a. *Ambulance not on the way: The Disgrace of Health Care for Roma in Europe*. Budapest: European Roma Rights Centre.

_____. 2006b. ERRC Statement at OSCE HDIM: Romani Women's Rights. On the Occasion of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Human Dimension Implementation Meeting. Warsaw (October 3, 2006). http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2637 (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2006c. United Nations: Hungary Coercively Sterilised Romani Woman. UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Condemns Hungary for Violations of International Law. Budapest: ERRC.

_____. 2007. Oral statement on the situation of Romani women in Hungary. Prepared in the context of the 39th Session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/pdf/39_oral_statements/Hungary_ERRC_oral_statement.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) et al. 2008. *Security a la Italiana: Fingerprinting, Extreme Violence and Harassment of Roma in Italy*. Brussels: Open Society Institute. http://www.soros.org/initiatives/brussels/articles_publications/publications/fingerprinting_20080715/fingerprinting_20080715.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), Bibija, Eureka and Women's Space. 2006. Written Comments. Concerning the Republic of Serbia. For Consideration by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 38th Session. http://www.errc.org/db/02/27/m00000227.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

Eurostat. 2002. *European Social Statistics : Income, Poverty and Social Exclusion*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Escobar, Arturo. 1984. "Discourse and power in development: Michel Foucault and the relevance of his work to the Third World". *Alternatives* 10: 377-400.

_____. 1995. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of The Third World,* Princeton: Princeton University Press

_____. 2008. *Territories of difference : place, movements, life, redes*. Durham: Duke University Press

Evans, J.Monica. 2000. " Black Women, Outlaw Culture and the Rhetoric of Rights", *In Critical Race Theory,* Edited by Delgado, R. And Stefancic, J., Temple University Press, 500-514

Fagan, Colette, Peter Urwin, and Kathryn Melling, eds. 2006. *Gender Inequalities in the Risks of Poverty and Social Exclusion for Disadvantaged Groups in Thirty European Countries*. European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

Fanon, Franz. 1967. *Black skin, white masks*. New York:Grove Press

Farkas, Peter. 2002. A roma tanulók iskolai sikerességének és a roma kisebbség helyzetének javítását szolgáló eszközök és a Nemzeti Fejlesztési Terv. *Uj Pedagogiai Szemle* 11.

Faux, Jeff. 2006. *The Global Class War: How America's Bipartisan Elite Lost Our Future— and What It Will Take to Win It Back*. New York: Wiley.

Feischmidt, Margit. 2008. A boldogulók identitásküzdelmei – Sikeres cigányszármazásúak két aprófaluból. *Beszélő,* 13 (11): 96–116.

Ferguson, James. 1994. *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. U. of Minnesota Press.

Fernandes, Fátima. 2003. A Response to Erica Burman' European Journal of Psychotheraphy, *Counselling and Health* 6 (4):309-16

Fonseca, Isabel. 1995. *Bury Me Standing, The Gypsies and Their Journey*, Vintage Books

Forbig, Joerg, Pavol Demes and Robin Shepherd. 2007. *Reclaiming Democracy: Civil Society and Electoral Change in Central and Eastern Europe.* The German Marshall Fund

Fordham, Signithia. 1996. *Blacked Out: Dilemmas of Race, identity, and Success at Capital High.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Forgasc, Davic ed. 2000. *The Gramsci reader: selected writings, 1916-193.5* New York : New York University Press

Foucault, Michel. 1969. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Routledge, 1972.

_____. 1973. *The Birth of the Clinic. An Archaeology of Medical Perception.* London: Routledge.

_____. 1978. *The History of Sexuality*, Volume1. New York: Pantheon

_____. 1979. *Discipline and Punish.* New York: Vintage Books

_____. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected: Selected Inerviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977.*New York: Pantheon

_____. 1988. *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984.* New York: Routledge, Chapman, Hall.

Fowler, Alan. 1997. *Striking a Balance: a Guide to Enhancing the Effectivness of NGOs in International Development.,* London: Earthscan.

Fox, Jonathan. 2001. "Patterns of Discrimination, grievances and political activity among Europe's Roma: A cross-sectional analysis', *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (1): 1-25,

Frankenberg, Ruth. 1993. *The Social Construction of Whiteness: Women, White Women, Race Matters.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Fraser, Nancy. 1995. Recognition or Redistribution? A Critical Reading of Iris Young's Justice and the Politics of Difference. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 3 (June 1995): 166-180.

_____. 1997. *Justice interruptus : critical reflections on the "postsocialist" condition.* New York : Routledge

Fraser, Sir A. 1992. *The Gypsies*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

_____. 1995. *The Gypsies* Wiley-Blackwell

Fridman, Jonathan. ed. 2003. *Globalization, The State, and Violence,* Walnut Creek: Altamira Press

Friedlander, Henry. 1995. *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Gay y Blasco, Paloma. 1999. Gypsies In *Madrid: Sex, Gender and the Performance of Identity*. Oxford. Berg.

Ghandi, Leela. 1998. *Postcolonial theory : a critical introduction*. New York : Columbia University Press

Gheorghe, Nicolae. 2001. Interview: "In Search of a New Deal for Roma." *Roma Rights Quarterly*, No. 4 (2001): 14-17.

Gheorghe, Nicolae and Andrzej Mirga. 1997. *The Roma in the Twenty-First Century: A Policy Paper*. PER Report. Princeton: Project on Ethnic Relations <http://www.per-usa.org/21st_c.htm>.

Gilman, Sander L. 1985. *Difference and pathology: stereotypes of sexuality, race, and madness*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

Gilroy, Paul. 1987. *There Aint't No Black in the Union Jack,* London: Hutchinson

_____. 2004. Between Camps: Nations, Cultures, and the Allure of Race, London: Routledge.

Gluck, Sherna Berger and Daphne Patai. 1991. *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral. History*. London: Routledge

Goldston, James. 1999. Controversy flares over Gypsy lists in Czech Schools. *Associated Press* (3 November).

_____. 2001. Race and Ethnic Data: A Missing Resource in the Fight against Discrimination. In Andrea Krizsan, ed. *Ethnic Monitoring and Data Protection The European Context*. Budapest: Central European University-INDOK.

Gowan, Peter. 1996. 'Eastern Europe, Western Power and Neo-Liberalism', *New Left Review* I: 216.

Gottfried, Heidi. 1996. *Feminism and social change : bridging theory and practice.* Urbana : University of Illinois Press

Gould, Stephen Jay. 1981. *The Mismeasure of Man,* W.W. Norton, New York,

Grabham, Emily. 2006. 'Taxanomies of Inequality:Lawyers, Maps and the Challegenge of Hybridity' Social and Legal Studies 15 (1):5-23.

Grewal, Inderpal and Caren Kaplan. 1994. *Scattered hegemonies : postmodernity and transnational feminist practices.* Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, c1994

Guilhot, Nicolas. 2005. *The Democracy Makers: Human Rights and International Order*, New York City: Columbia University Press.

Gunning, Isabelle. R. 1998. "Cutting through the Obfuscation: Female Genital Surgeries in Neoimperial Culture.'' *Taking Visions: Multicultural Feminism in a Transnational Age,* ed. Ella Shohat, New York: MIT Press, pp. 203-224.

Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1997. *Anthropological locations: boundaries and grounds of a field science*. University of California Press

Guy, Will. 2001. "Romani Identity and Post-Communist Policy." In *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Edited by Will Guy. 3-32. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press

Guy, Will. ed. 2001. *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe.* Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Guy, Will and Martin Kovats. 2006. *EU-funded Roma programmes: Lessons from Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic*. Minority Rights Group International.

Gyukits, György. et all. 2000. Incidence of depression symptoms in young Roma women. *LAM* 10 (11-12): 911-915.

Gyukits, György. et all. 1998. *Roma and non-Roma women between the ages of 15-24* (manuscript*)*

Hall, Stuart. 1980. "'Cultural Studies: two paradigms'". *Media, Culture and Society* **2**: 57–72.

_____. 1996. 'New Ethnicities' in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies,* Edited by David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, Routledge, London and New York

Hancock, Ian. 1991. ' The East European roots of Romani nationalism', in D.Crowe and J. Kolsti eds. The *Gypsies of Eastern Europe,* New York:ME Sharpe

_____. 1997. 'The Struggle for the Control of Identity', *Transitions* 4, 4 September.

_____. 2002. *We are the Romani people = Ame sam e Rromane dz□ene*. Paris, France: Centre de recherches tsiganes ; Hatfield, Herdfordshire, UK : University of Hertfordshire Press

Haney, Lynne. 2000. "Feminist State Theory: Applications to Jurisprudence, Criminology, and the Welfare State." *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 26. 2000.

Hannett, Sarah. 2003. 'Equality at the Intersections: The Legislative and Judicial Failure to Tackle Multiple Discrimination' *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 23:65-86.

Haraway, Donna Jeanne. 1991, *Simians, cyborgs, and women : the reinvention of nature.* London : Free Association Books

Hardarson, Omar. 2006. People outside the labour force: Female inactivity rates down. *Statistics in focus* 18/2006. Eurostat.

Harding, Sandra. 1987. Feminism and methodology. *Sandtsocial science issues.* Published Bloomington : Open University Press

Harding, Sandra. 1991. "Feminist Standpoint Theory", In *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's* Lives. Ithaca: New York: Cornell University Press, 119-163

Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2000. *Empire.* Harvard University Press

Harley, Sharon and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn eds. 1978. *The Afro-American Women: Struggles and Images.* Baltimore: Black Classic Press

Hartsock, Nancy. 1998. "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Grand for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism". In *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited and Other Essays*, Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 105-132

Harvey, David. 1996. *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

_____. 2003. *The new imperialism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

_____. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism,* Oxford University Press

Havas, Gábor, Kertesi Gábor and Kemény István. 1995. 'The statistics of deprivation-the Roma in Hungary', *The Hungarian Quarterly* 36, 3:67:80 Summer.

Havasi, Éva. 2005. A transzferjövedelmek szerepe a szegénység csökkentésében. *Esély,* 4. 66–86

Hawkesworth, Mary. 2003. 'Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender:Toward a Theory of Race-Gendered Institutions' *American Political Science Review* 97 (4): 529-50

Hawkesworth, Mary E. 2006. *Globalization and feminist activism*. Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield

Helms, Elisa. 2003. Women as Agents of Ethnic Reconciliation? Women's NGOs and International Intervention in Post- war Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Women's Studies International Forum* 26(1) January-February: 15-33.

Helsinki Watch/ Human Rights Watch. 1993. *Struggling for Ethnic Identity: The Gypsies of Hungary.* New York: Human Rights Watch.

Henderson, Mae G. ed. 1995. *Borders, Boundaries and Frames. Essay in Cultural Criticism and Cultural Studies*. New York–London: Routledge.

Herrnstein, Richard and Charles Murray. 1994. *The Bell Curve.* Free Press

Hesford, Wendy.S. and Kozol, Wendy. eds. 2005. *Just Advocacy? Women's Human Rights, Transnational Feminisms, and the Politics of Representation*, Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Heuss, Herbert. 2000. 'Anti-Gypsyism' is not a new phenomenon. Anti-Gypsyism research: the creation of a new field of study', In T. Acton ed. *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Higginbotham, Evelyn B. 1992. 'African-American Women's History and the Meta-language of Race', *Signs: Journal of Women Culture and Society ,* vol.17, no.2:251-74

Higonnet, R. Margaret ed. 1994. *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hill Collins, P. 1990. *Black feminist Thoughts*, Routledge

Hobsbawm , Eric. 1996. 'Identity Politics and the Left' *New Left Review* I/217, May-June 1996

Hollo, Lanna with Sheila Quinn 2006. *Equality for Roma in Europe: A Roadmap for Action*. European Roma Information Office, European Roma Rights Centre, Interdisciplinary Research Cell in Human Rights, Migration Policy Group, and Open Society Institute.

Hooks, Bell. 1989. *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Boston: South End Press.

_____. 1995. *Feminism: A Transformational Politic*. In: Paula S. Rothenberg, ed. *Race, Class and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, 3rd edition. St. Martin's Press: New York.

Horváth, Kata. 2008. „ Passing": Rebeka és a Meleg Büszkeség Napja: A bőrszín diszkurzív korlátairól és lehetőségeiről. *Beszélő,* 13 (7): 116–124.

Human Dynamics Consortium, et al. 2006. Support for the National Strategy to Improve
Roma Conditions. for Improving the Situation of Roma. Final Report. Project
Reference Nr: EuropeAid/114833/D/SV/RO.
http://www.sgg.ro/docs/File/UIP/doc/RaportFinalTrainingPHARE2002_EN.pdf
(accessed March 12, 2009).

Human Rights Watch. 1994. *Lynch Law: Violence against Roma in Romania*, 6, 1,
November.

_____. 2000. Kosovo: Rape as a Weapon of 'Ethnic cleansing.' Human Rights Watch.
http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/fry/Kosov003.htm (accessed March 17, 2009).

Ivanov, Andrej. ed. 2002. *Avoiding the Dependency Trap: the Roma in Central and Eastern
Europe, a Regional Human Development Report*, United Nations Development
Programme, UNDP Regional Bureau, Bratislava

Imre, Anikó. 2005. 'Whiteness in Post-Socialist Eastern Europe: the Time of the Gypsies, the
end of Race', in Alfred J. López ed. *Postcolonial Whiteness: a critical reader on
race and empire*, New York: SUNY

Jacqui, Alexander M. and Chandra Mohanty. 1997. *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies,
Democratic Futures* New York, Routledge

James, Paul. 'The Matrix of Global Enchantment.' In Manfred B. Steger ed. *Rethinking
Globalism.* Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 27-38

Jánky, Béla. 2005a. A cigány nők társadalmi helyzete és termékenysége. In Nagy Ildikó–
Pongrácz Tiborné–Tóth István György szerk. *Szerepváltozások: Jelentés a nők és
férfiak helyzetéről 2005*.Budapest: TÁRKI – Ifjúsági, Családügyi, Szociális és
Esélyegyenlőségi Minisztérium, 136–149.

_____. 2005b. Gyermekvállalás időzítése a cigány nők körében. *Beszélő,* 10 (1): 110–
134 http://beszelo.c3.hu/cikkek/a-gyermekvallalas-idozitese-a-cigany-nok-
koreben

Járóka, Lívia. 2006. Romani Women's Rights at the European Level. *Roma Rights* 4.

Junghaus, Timea ed. 2006. *Meet Your Neighbours*. OSI Arts and Culture Network Program,
OSI, Budapest

Kaldor, Mary. 2003. *Global civil society : an answer to war.* Cambridge, UK : Polity Press

Kállai, Ernő. 2005. *Helyi cigány kisebbségi önkormányzatok Magyarországon*, MTA Etnikai-
nemzetiségi Kisebbségkutató Intézet - Gondolat Kiadói Kör, Budapest

Kállai, Ernő and Erika. Törzsök eds. 2000. *A Roma's Life in Hungary,* trans. T. Wilkinson,
Bureau for European Comparative Minority Research (BECMIR), Budapest,
Hungary.

Kawczynski, Rudko. 1997. "The Politics of Romani Politics." *Transition.* September 1997. 24-29.

Kemény, István. ed. 2005. *Roma of Hungary*, trans.A. Gane, New York, Columbia University Press. Social Science Monographs, Boulder, Colorado, Atlantic Research and Publications, Inc., Highland Lakes, New Jersey.

Kemény, István, Janky Béla, Lengyel Gabriella. 2004. *A magyarországi cigányság 1971-2003* Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó

Kennedy, David. 2004. *The Dark Sides of Virtue: Reassessing International Humanitarianism*, Oxford, Princeton University Press.

Kende, Anna. 2005. „Értelmiségiként leszek roma és romaként leszek értelmiségi": Vizsgálat roma egyetemisták életútjáról. In Neményi Mária–Szalai Júlia szerk. 2005. *Kisebbségek Kisebbsége: A magyarországi cigányok emberi és politikai jogai.* Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, 376–409.

Kenniston, Kenneth. 1968. Young radicals: Notes on committed youth. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World

Kenrik, Donald. ed. 1999. *In the Shadow of the Swastika: the Gypsies During the Second World War,* Hertfordshire: Collection Interface, Centre des Recherches Tsiganes, University of Hertfordshire Press,

Kenrick, Donald. and Grattan Puxon. 1995. *Gypsies under the Swastika.* Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Kertesi, Gábor. 1995. "Cigány foglalkoztatottság és munkanélküliség a rendszerváltás elött és után." (Gypsy employment and unemployment before and after 1989). *Esély,* No. 4

_____. 2005. A *társadalom peremén : romák a munkaerőpiacon és az iskolában.* Budapest: Osiris

Kertesi, Gabor and Kézdi Gabor. 1998. *A cigany nepesseg Magyarorszagon (The Roma population in Hungary).* Budapest: Socio-Typo.

Klatch, Rebecca E. 1999. A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s. University of California Press

Klimova-Alexander, Ilona. 2005. *The Romani voice in world politics : the United Nations and non-state actors.* Aldershot, Hants, England : Burlington, VT : Ashgate

Klinker, Philip.A. and Smith, Rogers.M. 1999. *The Unsteady March, The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in America* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

Kóczé, Angéla. 1999. 'Taking control of our identity', *Roma Rights* 3: 69

_____. 2003. *Double Discrimination Faced by Romani Women in Europe*. Presentation by Angela Kocze, EP Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee hearing, European Parliament. Brussels (November 26 2003). http://cps.ceu.hu/roma_womens_employment_resources.php (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2004. "Roma Women Face by Double Discrimination", European Roma Information Office, Manuscript

_____. 2007. *Key policy initiatives to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.* Written Statement, 55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. New York (February 26-March 9, 2007). www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw51/panel1/Angelapercent20Kocze_FINAL.pdf (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2008. Ethnicity and Gender in the Politics of Roma Identity in the Post-Communist Countries. In Bahun–Radunovic, Sanja–Rajan, V.G. Julie eds. *The Intimate and the Extimate: Violence and Gender in the Globalized World.* Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Press, 175–189.

_____. 2009 "The limits of rights-based discourse in Romani women's activism: the gender dimension in Romani politics" In: *Contemporary Romani Politics in Europe: recognition, mobilization and participation,* ed. N. Trehan and F. Sigona, London: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2009. pp. 135-159

_____. 2009. *Missing Intersectionality: Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Current Research and Policies on Romani Women in Europe.* with contribution from Raluca Maria Popa, Policy Papers, CEU Center for Policy Studies, CEU Press,

_____. 2010. "Aki érti a világ hangját, annak muszáj szólnia": Roma nők a politikai érvényesülés útján", In Feischmidt Margit ed. *Etnicitás: Különbségteremtő társadalom,* Budapest: Gondolat-MTA Kisebbségkutató Intézet. pp. 208-224

Kóczé, Angéla ed. 2010. *Kutatasi Beszamolo,* Budapest: MTAKI

Kóczé, Angela and Nidhi Trehan. 2009. "Postcolonial Racism and Social Justice: The Struggle for the Soul of the Romani Civil Rights Movement in the 'New Europe.'" In *Racism, Post-colonialism, Europe* ed. G. Huggan, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009, pp.50-77

Kohn, Marek. 1995. *The Race Gallery: the Return of Racial Science*, London: Jonathan Cape.

Kondo, Dorinne 1986. Dissolution and Reconstitution of Self: Implications for Anthropological Epistemology. *Cultural Anthropology* 1(1):74-88

Körösényi, András. 1999. *Government and Politics in Hungary*. Budapest: Central European University Press, Osiris

Kovács, Éva. 2006. Mari és az ő „cigánysága" – avagy a narratíva helye és ereje az etnicitás kutatásában. *Tabula* 9 (1): 41–52.

_____. 2009. Fekete testek, fehér testek. A „cigány" képe az 1850-es évektől a XX. század első feléig. *Beszélő,* 14 (1): 74-92

Kovai, Cecília. 2006. Nemek határain. Pár gondolat a nemekről és a hatalomról. In Prónai Csaba szerk. *Cigány Világok Európában.* Budapest: Nyitott Könyvműhely Kiadó, 196–208.

Kováts, Martin. 1998. *The development of Roma politics in Hungary 1989–1995* PhD dissertation, University of Portsmouth

_____. 2001a. „ The emergence of European Roma policy", *In Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe,* ed. Guy W., Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 333-350.

_____. 2001b. "The Political significance of the first national Gypsy self-government, *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (1): 1-24,

_____. 2003. 'The politics of Roma identity: between nationalism and destitution', OpenDemocracy.Net, see http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1399.jsp

Kriza, Borbála. 2002. Ellenségdiskurzusok: Csurka István retorikája. In Csepeli György–Örkény Antal eds. *Gyûlölet és Politika,* Budapest:Minoritás Alapítvány, 232–253.

Krizsán, Andrea, ed. 2001. *Ethnic Monitoring and Data Protection: The European Context.* Budapest: Center for Policy Studies wit the Human Rights Information and Documentation Center (INDOK).

Kumar, Nita. 1988. *The artisans of Banaras : popular culture and identity, 1880-1986.* Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press,

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics.* London: Verso.

Laclau, Ernesto. 1996. *Emancipation(s).* London: Verso

Ladányi, Janos. 1996. "Romák Közép-Kelet-Európában" *Társadalmi Szemle*, vol. 4, p. 32.

_____. 2002. *Residential Segregation among Social and Ethnic Groups in Budapest during the Post-communist Transition. Of States and Cities. The Partitioning of Uban Space.* Oxford University Press, Oxford,. 172–182. old o.

_____. 2009.: Társadalom- és térszerkezeti átalakulások Magyarországon a piacgazdasági átmenet időszakában. Helyünk a világban – alföldi válaszok a globalizáció folyamataira. MTA RKK ATI, Békéscsaba .

Ladányi, János és Szelényi Iván. 2000. *Az új szociáldemokrácia lehetőségei és korlátai az átalakuló közép-európai társadalmakban. Kritika* 7

_____. 2001a. Van-e értelme az underclass kategória használatának? *Beszélő* 2001 november, 94-98

_____. 2001b. A roma etnicitás társadalmi konstrukciója Bulgáriában, Magyarországon és Romániában a piaci átmenet korában. *Szociológiai Szemle*, 2001, 4. sz. 85-95.

_____. 2004. *A kirekesztettség Változó Formái*, ,Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó

_____. 2006. *Patterns of Exclusion: Constructing Gypsy Ethnicity and the Making of an Underclass in Transitional Societies of Europe*. New York: Columbia University Press

Lake, Marylin. 2003. "Women, Black, Indigenous: Recognition Struggles in Dialogue." In *Recognition Struggle and Social Movements: Contested Identities, Agency and Power*. Edited by Barbara Hobson. 145-160. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Lakinska, Divna, Zaklina Memedov, and Ljativ Demir. 2004. *Needs assessment for the Roma Education Fund.* Macedonia: World Bank.

Lavie, Smadar, Kirin Narayan and Renato Rosaldo, eds. 1993 *Creativity/Anthropology* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Lewy, Guenter. 2000. *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lemon, Alaina. 2002. *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romani Memory from Pushkin to Postsocialism*

Lewis, Oscar. 1959. *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* New York: Basic books

_____. 1961. *The children of Sánchez : Autobiography of a Mexican family.* New York : Vintage Books

Lewy, Guenter. 2000. *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, Oxford: Oxford UP.

Ligeois, Jean-Pierre. 1994. *Roma, Gypsies, Traveller.* Stationary Office Books

Lombardo, Emanuela, Petra Meier, Mieke Verloo Abingdon eds. 2009. *The Discursive politics of gender equality : stretching, bending, and policy-making*. Oxon ; N.Y. : Routledge

Loomba, Ania. 1998. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* London : Routledge,

Lykke, Nina. 2003. Intersektionalitet – ett användbart begrepp för genusforskningen. *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* 1:47–56.

_____. 2005. Nya perspektiv på intersektionalitet, problem och möjligheter. *Kvinnovetenskaplig* 2-3:7-17.

_____. 2010. *Feminist studies: a guide to intersectional theory, methodology and writing*. New York: Routledge,

MacAllister P. and E. Wilmsen eds. 1996. *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*. University of Chicago Press.

Macrae, Callum. 2004. *The Observer Guardian*, Bucharest (Sunday May 30, 2004). http://observer.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,6903,1227799,00.html (accessed March 12, 2009)

Marcus, George E. 1995. Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography In: *Annual Review of Anthropology* Vol. 24: 95-117 (October 1995)

Marcus, George E. and Michael M.J. Fischer. 1986. *Anthropology as cultural critique : an experimental moment in the human sciences.* Chicago : University of Chicago Press

Maguire, Patricia. 1987. *Doing participatory research: a feminist approach. Amherst*, MA: Center for International Education, School of Education, University of Massachusetts.

Magyari-Vincze, Enikő. 2006. *Social Exclusion at the Crossroads of Gender, Ethnicity and Class: A View of Romani Women's Reproductive Health*. Budapest: Center for Policy Studies, Central European University and Open Society Institute. http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00003117/01/vincze_f3.pdf (accessed February 26, 2009).

Markowitz, Lisa. 2001. Finding the Field: Notes on the Ethnography of NGOs. *Human Organization* 60 (1):40-46.

Marks, Jonathan. 1995. *Human Biodiversity*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruytener

Massey, Douglas.S. and Nancy. A. Denton. 1996. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of Underclass.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Massey, Doreen B. 1994. *Space, place, and gender.* Cambridge (UK) : Polity Press

Marx, Anthony W. 1998. *Making race and nation : a comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press

Mayall, David. 2004. *Gypsy Identities 1500-2000. From Egipcyans and Moon-men to the Ethnic Romany*. London, New York: Routledge.

McADam, Dough. 1988. *Freedom Summer.* New York: Oxford University Press

McIntosh, Peggy. 1988. '*White privilege and male privilege: a personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies'*, paper no. 189, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, USA.

McCagg, William D. 1991. Gypsy Policy in Socialist Hungary and Czechoslovakia, 1945-1989. *Nationalities Papers* 19(3): 313-36.

McCall, Leslie. 2005. "The Complexity of Intersectionality" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society,* 3(30), pp. 1771-1800.

_____. 2005. The Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 3(30): 1771-1800.

Mendelson, Sarah, and John K. Glenn. 2000. "Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies." *Carnegie Endowment Working Papers*. No. 8: *Democracy Assistance and NGO Strategies in Post-Communist Societies* (February 2000). <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/final.pdf>.

Merry, Sally Engle. 2001. 'Changing rights, changing culture'. In Cowan, Jane K. Marie-Benedicte, Dembour, and Richard A.Wilson eds. *Culture and Rights: Anthropological Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press pp 31-55.

_____. 2001 "Women, Violence, and the Human Rights System." Pp.83-98 in *Women, Gender, and Human Rights: A Global Perspective*. Margery Agosin, ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press. Translated (2002) as Las Mujeres, La Violencia y el Sistema de Derechos Humanos. Translated by Moises Silva. Revista de estudios de genero: La Ventana. Universidad de Guadalajara. II (15): 64-92.

_____. 2005. *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice*. Univ. of Chicago Press.

_____. 2006. 'Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle', *American Anthropologist*, March 2006, Vol. 108, No. 1, pp. 38-51

_____. 2006. *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Mihalache, Isabela . 2003. Romani Women's Participation in Public Life. *Roma Rights Quarterly* 4/2003. http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=1359 (accessed February 26, 2009).

Mills, C. Wrighth. 1959. *The Power Elite*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade 1991. 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses' In *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, edited by Mohanty, C.T.-Russo, A.-Torres, L., Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press

_____. 1992. "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience," in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. Michele Brrett and Anne Phillips. Stanford University Press

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres (eds.) 1991. *Third World women and the politics of feminism.* Bloomington : Indiana University Press

Morrison, Toni. 1992. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and Literary Imagination.* Cambridge, M.A: Harvard University Press.

Mouffe, Chantal. 1993. *The return of the political*. London : Verso

Mutua, Makau wa. 2002. *Human Rights: a political and cultural critique*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Mroz, Lech and Lech Mrâoz. 1994. *Cyganie: Odmiennosc I Nietolerancja*. Publisher: Wydawn. Nauk. PWN

Myrdal, Gunnar. 1963. *Challenge to Affluence*. Random House

Nagy Hesse-Biber, Sharlene ed. 2007. *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. SAGE Publications, Inc

Najcevska Mirjana, Violeta Petrovska-Beska, and Aloui Layhar. 1997. *Situation Analysis of Romani Women and Children in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.* UNICEF.

Naples, Nancy A. and Manisha Desai. eds. 2002. *Women's activism and globalization : linking local struggles and transnational politics*. New York : Routledge

National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (NAEO). 2007. *Multiple Discrimination in Romania.* Bucharest: NAEO.

Neményi Mária 1999. *Csoportkép Nőkkel*. Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó

_____. 1999. Testükbe zárva. A termékenységgel kapcsolatos női szerepviselkedések fiatal roma nők körében. In: Uő.: *Csoportkép nőkkel*, 159–214. p. Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó

Obokata, Tom. 2006. *Trafficking of Human Beings from a Human Rights Perspective*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers

Okley, Judith. 1983. *The Traveller Gypsies*. Cambridge University Press,

_____. 1996. *Own or Other Culture*. Routledge

_____. 1997. Some Political Consequences of theories of Gypsy Ethnicity. In A. James et al. eds. *After Writing Culture.* Routledge

Oldenburg, VeenaTalwar. 1994. "The Roop Kanwar Case: Feminist Responses" In *Sati, The Blessing and the Curse: The Burning of Wives in India* J.S. Hawley, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 101-130.

Omelaniuk, Irena. 2005. *Trafficking in Human Beings* United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development, Population Division Department of Economic and Social Affairs United Nationa Secretariat. Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/ittmigdev2005/P15_IOmelaniuk.pdf (accessed on 2011.02.01)

Open Society Institute. 2002. *Bending the Bow: Targeting Women's Human Rights and Opportunities*. New York: Network Women's Program, Open Society Institute.

Open Society Institute (OSI), Network Public Health Program. 2005. *Mediating Romani Health: Policy and Program Opportunities*. New York: Open Society Institute.

Oprea, Alexandra. 2003. The Erasure of Romani Women in Statistical Data: Limits of the Race-versus-Gender Approach. EU Mapping and Advocacy Program Online Journal. http://www.eumap.org/journal/features/2003/april/romastats (accessed March 12, 2009).

_____. 2005a. "The Arranged Marriage of Ana Maria Cioba, Intra-Community Oppression and Romani Feminist Ideals: Transcending the 'Primitive Culture' Argument" *European Journal of Women's Studies* 12(2): 133-148.

_____. 2005b. "Child Marriage a Cultural Problem, Educational Access a Race Issue? Deconstructing Uni-Dimensional Understanding of Romani Oppression" *Roma Rights* on theme of 'Rights and Traditions', 2/2005, Budapest: ERRC

Open Society Institute (OSI). Network Women's Program. 2002. *Bending the Bow, Targeting Women's Human Rights and Opportunities*, New York: Open Society Institute.

Open Society Institute (OSI) Network Public Health Program. 2005. *Mediating Romani Health: Policy and Program Opportunities*. New York: Open Society Institute.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). 2003. Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the SOCE Area. Decision No. 566 of the Permanent Council at its 479th Plenary Meeting (November 27, 2003). http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2003/11/1562_en.pdf (accessed March 17, 2009).

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities. 2000, *Report on the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area*. Hague: OSCE.

Ost, David. 2005. *The Defeat of Solidarity:Anger and Politics in Postcommunist Europe*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press

Petrova, Dimitrina. 1999. 'Human Rights in the Aftermath of Kosovo', *Human Rights Dialogue series*, Carnegie Council on Ethics in International Affairs (CCEIA), New York City.

Petrova, Dimitrina. 2004. Ethnic Statistics. *Roma Rights Quarterly* 2.

Phillips, Anne. 1999. *Which Equalities Matter?* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Pinnock, Katherine. 1998. 'Social Exclusion and Strategies of Inclusion: Romani NGOs in Bulgaria', *Seminar on New Directions in Romani Studies*, University of Greenwich, 11 June, 7-8.

_____. 1999.*'Social Exclusion' and Resistance: A Study of Gypsies and the Non-Governmental Sector in Bulgaria 1989-1997*. Phd thesis, University of Wolverhampton

Póczik, Szilveszter. 1999a. *Magyar és cigány bűnelkövetők a börtönben. Egy kutatás tapasztalatai.* Budapest: OKRI

Pogány, István. 2004. *The Roma Cafe: Human Rights and the Plight of the Romani People,* London: Pluto Press.

Polanyi, Karl. 1944. *The Great Transformations.* Rinehart & Company, Inc.

Popov, Vesselin and Elena Marushiakova (2004) 'The Roma —a Nation without a State? Historical Background and Contemporary Tendencies', *Mitteilungen des SFB 'Differenz und Integration' 6: Segmentation und Komplimentarität. Orientwissenschaftliche Hefte* 14: 71-100.

Prónai, Csaba. 1995. *Cigánykutatás és kulturális antropológia.* Budapest/Kaposvár: ELTE/CSVMTKF.

Prónai, Csaba., ed. 2000. *Cigányok Európában 1. Nyugat-Európa.* Budapest: Új Mandátum

Puxon, Grattan and Donald Kenrick. 1995. *Gypsies Under the Swastika.* Hatfield: Univ. Of Hertffordshire Press

Rajagopal, Balakrishnan. 2003. *International Law From Below: Development, Social Movements, and Third World Resistance.* Cambridge University Press.

Rekosh, Edwin and Sleeper Maxine. eds. 2004., *Separate and Unequal: Combating Discrimination against Roma in Education,* A Source Book, Public Interest Law Initiative, Budapest

Revenga, Ana, Dena Ringold and William Martín Tracy. 2002. *Poverty and Ethnicity A Cross-Country Study of Roma Poverty in Central Europe.* Washington : World Bank

Ringold, Dena. 2001. Education of the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe: Trends and Challenges. In: Christina McDonald, Judit Kovacs, and Csaba Fenyes, eds. *The Roma Education Resource Book.* Budapest, Open Society Institute: 17-41.

Ringold, Dena, Mitchell A. Orenstein and Erika Wilken. 2003. *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle,* Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2005

Roberts, Helen. ed. 19981. *Doing Feminist Research.* USA, Routledge and Kegan Paul Inc.

Roma Centre of Skopje, Network Women's Program of the Open Society Institute, ERRC. *Joint Submission: Shadow Report: On the Situation of Romani Women in the Republic of Macedonia* (October-November 2005). http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/macedonia_20051101 (accessed March 18, 2009).

Romanian National Institute of Statistics. 1994. *Romanian statistical yearbook 1993* Bucureşti : Comisia Naţională Pentru Statistică

Rorty, Richard. 1998. *Truth and progress.* Cambridge : Cambridge University Press

_____. 1999. *Philosophy and social hope.* London : Penguin Books

Rosaldo, Renato. 1993. *Culture and Truth: the Remaking of Social Analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Rostas, Iulius. 2009. 'The Romani movement in Romania: institutionalization and (de)mobilization'. In *Romani politics in contemporary Europe : poverty, ethnic mobilization, and the neo-liberal order*, edited by N. Trehan and N. Sigona. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 159-186

Sachs, Wolfgang ed. 1992. *The Development dictionary: a guide to knowledge as power*. London: Zed Books.

Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism*. Vintage Books

Said, Edward W. and Ranajit Guha eds. 1988. *Selected Subaltern Studies*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press

Satterthwaite, Margeret. 2005. Crossing Borders, Claiming Rights: Using Human Rights Law to Empower Women Migrant Workers. *Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal* 8.

Schmitt, Richard. 1996. 'Racism and Objectification: Reflections on Themes from Fanon', in L. Gordon and R. White et al. eds. *Frantz Fanon: A Critical Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Schultz, Debra L. 2005. An Intersectional Feminism of Their Own: Creating European Romani Women's Activism. *Journal for Politics, Gender, and Culture* 4(8/9) Summer/Winter.

Shaw, Jo. 2005. *Mainstreaming Equality and Diversity in European Union Law and Policy.* www.law.uvic.ca/demcon/documents/Shaw_Jo (accessed March 12, 2009).

Sigona, Nando and Nidhi Trehan eds. 2009. *Romani politics in contemporary Europe : poverty, ethnic mobilization, and the neo-liberal order.* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan

Sider, Gerald. 1993. Living Indian Histories: The Lumbee and Tuscarora People in North Carolina University of North Carolina Press

Silverman, Carol. 1981. Pollution and Power: Gypsy Women in America. In *The American Kalderash: Gypsies* in *the New World,* ed. M. Salo. Hackettstown, N.J.:Centenary College Gypsy Lore Society

_____. 1996a. ” Music and Power: Gender and Performance among Roma (Gypsies) of Skopje, Macedonia”. *The World of Music* 1:63-76.

_____. 1996b. ‘ State, Market, and Gender Relationships among Bulgarian Roma, 1970-90’, *East Newsletter of the East European Anthropology Group*, Autumn 1996, Volume 14, Number 2

_____. 2000. ' Macedonian and Bulgarian Muslim Romani Women: POwer, politics, and creativity in ritual', In *European Roma Rights Center Newsletter*, Number 1. 2000

Simhandl, Katrin 2006. “Western Gypsies and Travelers” – “Eastern Roma”: the creation of political objects by the European Union’, *Nations and Nationalism* 12, 1, 2006: 97-115.

Smith, Dorothy E. 1987. *The everyday world as problematic : a feminist sociology.* Boston : Northeastern University Press

Smith, Tracy. 1997. Racist Encounters: Romani ‘Gypsy’ Women and Mainstream Health Services. *The European Journal of Women’s Studies* 4: 183-196.

Sobotka, Eva. 2001. “The limits of the state: Political participation and representation of Roma in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia”, *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (1): 1-24,

Spivak,Gayatri Chakravorty. 1987. ‘French feminism in international frame’, in *Other Worlds: Essay in Cultural Politics*, Methuen, New York, (134-53)

_____. 1988. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg, eds. *Marxism and the Interpretation* of Culture. Chicago: Uni of Illinois Press p.271-313.

Standing, Guy. 1999. *Global labour flexibility: seeking distributive justice.* Palgrave Macmillan

Stewart, Michael. 1997. *The Time of the Gypsies,* US, Westview Press

_____. 2001a. The Development of Communist Policy towards Gypsies and Roma, 1945-1989. A Case Study, In W. Guy ed. *Between past and future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Hertfordshire University Press.

_____. 2001b. Underclass, Race and 'the Roma' in Post-communist eastern Europe, in C. Hann ed. *Postsocialism: Ideas, Ideologies and Practices in Europe and Asia*, Routledge.

Stubbs, Peter. 2007. ' Community Development in Contemporary Croatia: Globalization, Neoliberalization, and NGO-isation'. In. Dominelli, L., ed. *Revitalizing Communities*. Aldershot, Ashgate Press, pp.161-74

Sugirtharajah, Sharada. 2003. Imagining Hinduism: a postcolonial perspective, London: Routledge.

Suleri, Sara. 1992. *The Rhetoric of English India.* Chicago:University of Chicago Press

Surdu, Mihai and Laura Surdu. 2006. *Broadening the Agenda: The Status of Romani Women in Romania*. Budapest: Open Society Institute.

Szalai, Julia. 2002. A társadalmi kirekesztődés egyes kérdései az ezredfordul Magyarországán. *Szociológiai Szemle* 2002/4. 34–50

_____. 2005. " A jóléti Fogda", in *Kisebbségek Kisebbsége*: A Magyarországi Cigányok Emberi és Politikai Jogai, Ed. By Neményi Maria és Szalai Julia

Székelyi Mária–Örkény Antal–Csepeli György–Barna Ildikó 2005. *A siker fénytörései*. Budapest: Sík Kiadó.

Tarrow, Sidney. 1989. *Struggle, Politics and Reform: Collective action, Social Movements, and Cycle of Protest.* Cornell Studies in International Affairs, Western Societies Papers, Itacha , NY: Cornell University Press.

Taylor, Charles. 1994. 'The Politics of Recognition, In *Multiculturalism,* ed. Amy Gutmann. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press

Thapar, Romila. 1989. 'Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity' *Modern Asian Studies,* 23: 209-231 Cambridge UP.

Thomas, James D., Margaret M. Doucette, Donna C. Thomas, and John D. Stoeckle. 1987. Public Health, Disease, Lifestyle and Consanguinity in 58 American Gypsies. *The Lancet* (15 August): 377-379.

Tilly, Charles. 1995. *Popular contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press Merry,

_____. 1998. *Durable Inequality.* Berkley: University of California Press.

Todorova, Mariia N. 1997. *Imagining the Balkans.* Oxford: Oxford UP.

Tong, Diane. ed. 1998. *Gypsies: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, New York, London: Garland.

Tóth, Herta. 2005. *Romani Women's Unemployment in Hungary Research-based Assessment and Recommendations.* Budapest: Center for Policy Studies, Central European University.

Trehan, Nidhi. 2001. 'In the Name of the Roma? The Role of Private Foundations and NGOs'. In: Guy, W. ed. *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe.* Hatfield, University of Hertfordshire Press.

_____. 2005. 'Roma Rights- Human Rights', paper presented at the workshop organized by the Romaversitas, unpublished.

_____. 2006a. 'Neo-liberal human rights entrepreneurs as a new power elite: the (un)intended consequences of the 'Romani rights movement' in eastern Europe', *Conference on C. Wright Mills and "The Power Elite"*, Columbia University, New York City, 14th April 2006, unpublished *mimeo*.

_____. 2006b. 'Racialising hegemony within the marketplace of Romani emancipation in Europe', *Conference on White Terror/(Post)Empire*, London School of Economics & Political Science, 19-20 May 2006, unpublished *mimeo*.

_____. 2008. *Human Rights Entrepreneurship in Post-Socialist Hungary: From 'Gypsy Problem' to 'Romani Rights'.* PhD thesis, London School of Economics. (unpublished)

Trehan, Nidhi and Angela Kóczé. 2009. "Racism, (neo)colonialism, and social justice: the struggle for the soul of the Romani movement in post-socialist Europe" *Racism Postcolonialism Europe*, eds. G. Huggan and I. Law, Liverpool: Liverpool UP.

Trehan, Nidhi and Nando Sigona eds. 2009. *Romani politics in contemporary Europe : poverty, ethnic mobilization, and the neo-liberal order*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan

Trombley, Stephen. 1988. *The right to reproduce: a history of coercive sterilisation* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Turda, Marius. 2010. *Modernism and Eugenics,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ulc, Otto. 1991. Integration of Gypsies' in Czechoslovakia. *Ethnic Groups* 9(2): 107-117.

United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (UN CEDAW) 39th session (23 July – August 2007) see: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/cedaws39.htm (accessed on 2011.07.30)

United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI). 2001. *At the Crossroads of Gender and Racial Discrimination. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.* Durban, South Africa (August 31 - September 7, 2001). http://www.un.org/WCAR/e-kit/gender.htm (accessed February 26, 2009).

United Nations Development Programme. 2002. Avoiding the Dependency Trap. Bratislava: Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, United Nations Development Programme.

_____. 2003 *Avoiding the Dependency Trap :* The Roma Human Development Report, http://roma.undp.sk (accessed on December 22, 2008)

_____. 2005. *Faces of Poverty, Faces of Hope: Vulnerability Profiles for Decade of Roma Inclusion Countries.* Bratislava: Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, United Nations Development Programme.

_____. 2006. *At Risk: Roma and the Displaced in Southeast Europe.* Bratislava: Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, United Nations Development Programme. http://europeandcis.undp.org/home/show/A3C29ADB-F203-1EE9-BB0A277C80C5F9F2 (accessed February 26, 2009).

United Nations World Conference Against Racism (UN WCR) 2002. At the Crossroads of Gender and Racial Discrimination' accessible on the internet at: http://www.un.org/WCAR/e-kit/gender.htm (accessed on 2011.07.30)

Vajna, Károly. 1907. *Hazai Régi Büntetések*

Vakulenko, Anastasia. 2007. "Islamic Headscarves" and the European Convention on Human Rights: An Intersectional Perspective' (2007) 16 *Social & Legal Studies* 183

Valentine, David. 2007. *Imagining transgender : an ethnography of a category*. Durham : Duke University Press

Verloo, Mieke. 2002. The Development of Gender Mainstreaming as a Political Concept for Europe. Paper presented at: Conference Gender Learning, Leipzig (September 6-8, 2002).

_____. 2006. Multiple Inequalities, Intersectionality and the European Union. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 211-228.

Verloo, Mieke and Emanuela Lombardo. 2007. Contested Gender Equality and Policy Variety in Europe: Introducing a Critical Frame Analysis Approach. In: Mieke *Verloo, ed. Multiple Meanings of Gender Equality: A Critical Frame Analysis of Gender Policies in Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press.

Vermeersch, Peter. 2001. "Advocacy networks and Romani politics in Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (1): 1-24,

_____. 2002. *Roma and the Politics of Ethnicity in Central Europe:* Comparative Study of Ethnic Minority Mobilization in the Cech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia in the 1990s, PhD Dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

_____. 2006. *The Romani Movement: Minority Politics &Ethnic Mobilization in Contemporary Central Europe*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books

Verspaget, G. Josephine. 1993. On Gypsies in Europe, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, ADOC6733, 1403-7/1/93-4-E, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 7 January

Virág, Tünde. 2003. "Gettósodó térség" *Kritika* 2003. április.

_____. 2006. A gettósodó térség. – *Szociológiai Szemle,* 2006/1.

Vokó, Zoltán. 2002. A lakosság egészsége. In: Boros J., Németh R. és Vitrai J. eds. *Kutatási Jelentés OLEF2000*. Budapest: Országos Epidemiológiai Központ.

Vokó, Zoltán., Kósa Zs., Széles Gy., Kardos L., Kósa K., Németh R., Országh S., Fésüs G. and Ádány R. 2006. *A roma telepeken élők egészségének felmérése*. Előadás a NETT XV. Naggyűlésén, Siófok. (unpublished)

Wacquant, Loïc. 2002. 'From Slavery to Mass Incarceration: Rethinking the 'race question' in the US', in *New Left Review* 13, January-February 2002

_____. 2008. *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Polity Press.

Walby, Sylvia. 2004. The European Union and Gender Equality: Emergent Varieties of Gender Regime. *Social Politics* 11(1): 4-29

_____. 2007. Complexity Theory, Systems Theory and Multiple Intersecting Social Inequalities. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 37(4): 449-47.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1974. *The Modern World System*, part one and two. New York: academic press

Ware, Vrone. 1991. *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History* New York: Verso

Ware, Vrone. and Les Back. 2001. *Out of Whiteness: Color, Politics and Culture* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Warkentin, Craig. 2001. *Reshaping world politics : NGOs, the Internet, and global civil society.* Lanham, MD : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Wedel, Janine R. 2004. 'Studying Through' a Globalizing World: Building Method Through Aidnographies. In: Jeremy Gould and Henrik Secher Marcussen, eds. *Ethnographies of Aid: Exploring Development Texts and Encounters*. Occasional Paper 24. Denmark: Roskilde University Centre, International Development Studies: 149-173.

Weedon, Chris. 1999. *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference.* Blackwell Publisher

Wekker, Gloria 2004. Still Crazy After All Those Years ... Feminism for the New Millennium. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 4(11): 487-500.

Wessely, Anna. 1996. 'The cognitive chance of central European sociology', *Replika special issue, 'Colonisation or Partnership? Eastern Europe and Western Social Sciences'* (Hungarian social science quarterly), eds. M. Hadas and M. Vörös.

Willems, Wim. 1997. *In search of the true Gypsy: from enlightenment to final solution* Trans. D. Bloch. London: Frank Cass.

Williams, Patrick. 1982. 'The Invisibility of the Kalderash of Paris: Some Aspects of the Economic and Settlement Patterns of the Paris Suburbs. *Urban Anthropology* 11(3-4): 315-345

_____. 2003. *Gypsy world : the silence of the living and the voices of the dead.* Chicago : University of Chicago Press

Wilson, Ricgard. 2001. *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univesrity Press

Wilson, Richard A., Jane K. Cowan and Marie-Bénédicte Dembour eds. 2001. *Culture and rights : anthropological perspectives.* New York : Cambridge University Press

Wilson, W. Julius. 1987. *The truly disadvantaged : the inner city, the underclass, and public policy* Chicago : University of Chicago Press

_____. 1996. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*, New York: Alfred A.

_____. 2009. *More than just race : being black and poor in the inner city.* New York : Norton & Company

Wing, Adrien Katherine. 1997. *Critical Race Feminis,* a Reader, New York: New York University Press

Wizner, Balázs. 1999. The *Develpopment of the Romany National Movement in Hungary*, MA Thesis, Central European University, Budapest

Woodiwiss, A. 2006. ' The law cannot be enough: human rights and the limits of legalism', in S. Meckled-Garcia and B. Cali eds. *The Legalisation of Human Rights, multidisciplinary perspective on human rights and human rights law,* London: Routledge

Wrench, John. 2006. *'Racism, Postcolonialism, Europe'*, Conference keynote address, University of Leeds, June.

Wright, Erik Olin. 1997. *Class Counts: Comparative studied in class analysis.* Cambridge University Press

Yeung Sik Yuen, Y.K.J. 1999. *The Human Rights Problems of the Roma*. Working Paper prepared by pursuant to Subcommision Resolution 1999/109. Fifty-second session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

Young, Robert. 1990. *White Mythologies: Writing History and The West*, New York and London: Routledge

Young, Iris Marion. 2009. ' Structural injustice and the politics of difference' in I*ntersectionality and Beyond: Law, power and the politics of location,* Edited by Emily Grabham, Davina Cooper, Jane Krishnadas and Didi Herman, Routledge-Cavendish, Taylor & Francis Group a GlassHouse Book

Yuval-Davis, Nira 2006. Intersectionality and Feminist Politics, *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3):193-209.

Zoltán, Florina. 2006. *'Citizens or Denizens? The future of Romani integration in Europe'*, panel presentation, London School of Economics' Centre for the Study of Human Rights and Central London Europe Group (CLEG), June.

Zombori, Gyula. 2009. *A szociálpolitika alapfogalma.* Hilscher Rezső Szociálpolitikai Egyesület

Zsigó, Jenő. 2005. Feltárni és megnevezni az elnyomások direkt rendszerét. In Neményi Mária–Szalai Júlia szerk. 2005. *Kisebbségek Kisebbsége: A magyarországi cigányok emberi és politikai jogai.* Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, 7–43.

Materials published via the internet

Center for Reproductive Rights "Body and Soul: Forced Sterilization and Other Assaults on Roma Reproductive Freedom in Slovakia", see http://www.reproductiverights.org/pdf/report_slovakiafolloup_0603.pdf

Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. 2004. Hungary, Communication 4/2004 see at: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/decisions-views/Decisionpercent204-2004percent20-percent20English.pdf (accessed February 27, 2009).

ERRC. 2008. Coercive Sterilization of Romani women see: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/roma/events/romawomen_20080703/errcbrochure_20080703.pdf; (accessed on 2011.07.30)

Neményi, Mária. „Minority identities examined by social psychology. Roma children's identity strategies", a synopsis of which can be downloaded from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences homepage. http://www.mtaki.hu/docs/080611_12/rovid/nemenyi_maria_kisebbsegi_identitasok.pdf (accessed May 19 2010)

Ombudsman of the Czech Republic. 2005. Final Statement of the Public Defender of Rights in the Matter of Sterilizations Performed in Contravention of the Law and Proposed Remedial Measures. See at:

http://www.ochrance.cz/documents/doc1142289721.pdf; (accessed on 2011.05.30)

References to various media sources

BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcast, RTN 8 September 1993. "Across the world, Gypsies are hated, mistreated"

BBC News. 2003. Gypsy Child Couple Separated. *BBC News* (October 2). http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3159818.stm (accessed February 27, 2009).

Bíró, András. 1995. 'The Prince, the Merchant, the Citizen….and the Romany', *Magyar Hírlap* (Hungarian Daily), 30 May.

Cargas, Harry James. 1994. Across the world, Gypsies are hated, mistreated. *National Catholic Reporter*, Jan 14, 1994 http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1141/is_n11_v30/ai_14760056/ (Accessed on June 25, 2010.)

Kawczynski, Rudko. „Politics of Romani Politics" *Partin*. http://www.reocities.com/~patrin/politics.htm (Accessed on June 4, 2011)

Mihalache, Isabela. 2001. Interview with Isabela Michalache, Budapest, Romani Women's Participation in Public Life, November 2001, accessible at http://www.romawomensinitiates.org

MR1 Kossuth Rádio. 2010. Elhunyt Furmann Imre jogvédő, volt politikus. http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/hirek/itthon/elhunyt-furmann-imre-jogvedo-volt-politikus.html (accessed on June 24, 2010)

Varró, Szilvia. 2008. Szikszó a gárda demonstrációja után. *Narancs* XX. évf. 32. szám – 2008.08.07 http://www.mancs.hu/index.php?gcPage=/public/hirek/hir.php&id=16844http://www.mancs.hu/index.php?gcPage=/public/hirek/hir.php&id=16844 (Accessed on July 12, 2010)

Vesely, Ivan. 2005. "Where are the Romani organizations?" *Transitions Online*, February 3, see http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=101&NrSection=2&NrArticle=13467 access?

Stephen Erlanger, 'Czech Gypsies Knock Harder on the Closed Doors', *New York Times*, May 12, 2000.

Mentioned websites

On the Roma Decade: http://www.romadecade.org/about (Accessed on June 05, 2011) and http://www.romadecade.org/index.php?content=1> (Accessed August 28, 2007).

On the EU's Roma Integration Framework Strategy: http://www.eu2011.hu/news/romastrategia-egyontetu-tamogatas-szocialis-tanacsban (Accessed on June 04, 2011)

On the Gypsy Lore Society: http://www.gypsyloresociety.org/ (Accessed on June 25. 2010.)

On Open Society Institute and its affiliates: www.soros.org (Accessed on June 05, 2011)

Statutes of the European Roma and Travelers Forum http://www.ertf.org/en/statutes.html (Accessed October 31, 2007).

On the Roma Educational Fund at <http://romaeducationfund.hu> (Accessed June 28, 2008);

On the Roma Office Initiative at <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/about> (accessed August 28, 2007).

On the World Health Organization (WHO) at http://www.who.int/gender/genderandwomen/en/index.html (Accessed on June 05, 2011)

On the Millennium Development Goals, see: http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/ (accessed February 26, 2009).

On the Lisbon Treaty: http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm (accessed February 26, 2009).

On Europe 2020 economic strategy: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications_en.asp (Accessed March 12, 2009).

On Zsuzsa Ferge, Hungarian sociologist: http://www.fergezsuzsa.hu/en/cv (accessed February 26, 2009).

On the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 - Communication of the European Commission (5 April 2011): http://www.eu2011.hu/document/eu-framework-national-roma-integration-strategies-2020-communication-european-commission-5- (accessed on July 06, 2011)

Databases, Collection of related materials

Data on 12 Central and Southeast European countries available from the UNDP Vulnerable Groups Dataset, is available at: http://vulnerability.undp.sk (accessed February 27, 2009).

A collection of sources on Human Trafficking and Modern-day Slavery is available at: http://www.gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Romania.htm (accessed March 12, 2009

Decision on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) - Towards a Just Society (May 2006): http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/eyeq/index.cfm?cat_id=EY (accessed February 27, 2009).

CEDAW Reports: http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2136 (Accessed on June 25. 2010)

APPENDIX 1

Additional information is provided below about the women whose quotations are included in the empirical chapter six. The additional information may help to contextualize some of the quotations; however it still provides limited information in order not to protect the actual identity of the women.

(Pseudo)name	Description	Interview date(s)
Csilla	Csilla is in her late thirties. She is a member of the Roma Minority Council. She graduated from a teacher training college.	2007.03.02
Erzsébet	Erzsébet is in her fifties. She is still the president of the oldest Roma NGO in Hungary. She has a university degree.	2007.04.17 2008.03.12 2008.07.21 2008.12.03
Ilona	Ilona is in her early forties. She is active in different NGOs. Also she was approached several times by political parties to run for national election. She has a university degree.	2008.01.19 2008.10.23
Jolán	Jolán is in her early thirties. She has played an important role in NGO politics as well as in party politics. She has a college degree.	2010.05.23 2009.05.21
Júlia	Júlia is in her late fifties. She was active in Roma political activism until she married a Romani husband. She has a university degree.	2008.02.23 2008.08.21 2008.11.20
Katalin	Katalin is in her early fifties. She is divorced and is a single mother with two children. She became disappointed in Roma politics in her thirties. She has a university degree.	2008.10.12 2008.06.21 2009.06.12 2009.02.12 2008.08.13 2009.09.16
Mária	Mária is in her early fifties. She got involved in politics in her early thirties. Later on she became a senior leader in a profit oriented organization. She has a	2008.11.02 2009.03.07 2008.08.17

	university degree.	
Melinda	Melinda is in her late thirties. She has been working in various international NGOs. She has a university degree.	2008.04.12
Veronka	Veronka is in her late 40s and is single. She is the president of the Roma Minority Council. Also she was the first explicit Romani feminist in the early 90-s in Hungary. She has a university degree.	2007.04.12
Vilma	Vilma is in her early fifties. She got involved in party politics in her late twenties. She has a university degree.	2008.06.14 2008.12.20
Zsuzsanna	Zsuzsanna is in her late forties. She got involved in party politics in her thirties. She was a high ranking official in the government supported by her party. She has a university degree.	2008.03.24