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Historical and Ethnographic Background: Gypsies, Roma, Sinti

The region of Central and Eastern Europe, as described there, includes the countries from the former socialist block - the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, as well as the new states which have emerged from former Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia), and the Soviet Union (the European part – Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Moldova, Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia).

Before the changes in 1989-1990, the name "Roma" was used as an endonym (an internal community self-appellation) in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (except for former Yugoslavia). This name was not widely popular and did not have an official status. In order to be faithful to the historical principle we use the word Roma only for the period after 1989. In all other instances we use the term "Gypsies".

We think that "Gypsies" is wider in scope than "Roma" and we also use it to include the Gypsy communities who are not Roma or who are considered to be "Gypsies" by the surrounding population but they do not wish to be considered as such and preferred various other identities.

The Number of Gypsies in the Central and Eastern Europe

Nobody knows exactly how many Gypsies are living in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. There are no reliable statistical and demographic data about the distribution of the Gypsies and their respective internal subdivisions in each Central and Eastern Europe country. There is only a significant amount of imprecise and fluctuating data. So far no model has been created for possible data verification, it is only possible to combine data from different censuses with personal observation and subject them to critical analysis, but the results of this approach are only approximate.

The problem is a complex one and touches upon the problems of preferred ethnic awareness (the deliberate or genuine show of another, non-Roma identity) of many Gypsy groups in these countries who do not want to be considered as Roma, others do not wish to declare their ethnic identity for fear of repressions, still others often cannot understand the questionnaires, and often the censuses are performed by people who consciously or unconsciously change the information obtained.

We would say that the official statistical censuses reflect about one-third of the real number of Gypsies in each country. In some instances the discrepancies can be even more drastic. We can give a number of relevant examples, such as the fact that during the census in the Czech Republic in 1991 32 903 people declared themselves as Roma, while experts estimate that their number is about 10 times higher. According to data of the National Institute of Statistics of Slovakia the number of Roma in 1999 is 83 988 while experts estimate that it is about 500 000. In the 1992 census in Romania 401 087 people declared themselves as Gypsies while different estimates give their number as varying between 800 000 and 1 500 000, and some think that it can even be 2 500 000. In the 1992 census in Bulgaria 313 396 people declared themselves as Gypsies while according to the unofficial census of the Internal Ministry their number is between 500 and 600 thousand, according to expert estimations the number is 700-800 000, and according to the statements of Roma leaders it exceeds one million. In the 1981 census in Yugoslavia 1471 people declared themselves as Gypsies in the Republic of Montenegro while in the 1991 census no one declared himself as a Gypsy.

Similar examples can be cited for other East and Central European countries as well, but even without them it is clear that numbers cannot be precise and all-inclusive. There are different expert estimations on the number of Gypsies in each country and the region as a whole. For the whole region the minimal number obtained from national censuses is 1 500 000. The maximum number from different estimations (including estimation of Roma leaders) is about 6 300 000.

On the whole we can only summarise the fact that the Gypsy population in each country of the region is different in numbers - in some of them (Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic) they are 5-10 % while in others (the countries of the former Soviet Union) they are less than 1 %.

In order to understand the historical destiny, the ethno-social structure and ethno-cultural features and contemporary problems of the Gypsies in the Central and Eastern Europe countries, we have to consider the following two circumstances:

1. Gypsies are a specific ethnic community, an "intergroup ethnic community" which has no analogue in the other nations of Europe. The Gypsy community is divided into a number of separate (and sometimes even opposed to one another) groups, subgroups and metagroup units with their own ethnic and cultural features, and often their problems are completely different in nature and thus not susceptible to generalizations.

2. The past centuries of cultural and historical context of Gypsy life as well as the contemporary social, economic and political situation in the different countries are extremely important. The region has a complex historical destiny and the present day situation differs from one country to another, all of them reflecting powerfully on contemporary Gypsy life. Therefore all analysis of the Gypsy situation must always be differentiated according to the specifics of each country (or group of countries).

For lack of space we will present only briefly the scheme of the overall picture of Central and East European Roma. Since the Sinti in this region are too few in number, only a few families in certain countries (Russia, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia), we will speak mostly about the Roma without the need of making a special distinction between them and other Gypsies.

Here we will try to explain both the complex subdivisions of Roma and also their historical experience which has played such an important part not only in moulding group perceptions of their own identity but also in determining of their fate.

Gypsies in the history of the region and their internal structure

The Gypsies constitute a specific ethnic community within South Eastern Europe. The first evidence of the presence of Gypsies in Europe is on the territory of the Byzantine Empire. The large-scale settlement of Gypsies in Balkan lands can be traced back approximately to the period of 11th - 13th c., some earlier contacts are also possible (some authors are inclined to think that Gypsy presence in these lands began in the 9th century). Numerous historical sources have recorded the Gypsy presence in Byzantium, their entry into Serbia, Bulgaria, Wallachia and Moldova. In the 14th and 15th c. Gypsies gradually penetrated the other countries of Europe and in the 16th and

17th centuries quite a large number of Gypsies were settled permanently in Central and Eastern Europe and feeling the impact of the surrounding social and political environment.

The picture of Gypsy presence in Central and Eastern Europe changed with each change in state borders followed by an exchange of Gypsy groups from neighbouring countries. This situation was also influenced by the mass Gypsy migrations during the different periods of history. The most important historical migrations in modern times are:

- The end of slavery in Wallachia and Moldova and the following scattering of Gypsies all over the world, known as the "great Kelderara invasion" (the second half of 19th to the first half of 20th c.);

- The open borders of former Tito Yugoslavia, which led to the "Yugoslavian wave" of Gypsy migrations of the 60's and 70's of 20th c.;

- The end of the so called socialist period in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the subsequent changes leading to the "third wave" of Gypsy migrations from the beginning of the 90's, also including Roma refugees from former Yugoslavia in recent years (at first mainly from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and now from Kosovo as well).

The internal migrations within countries are another influential factor. For example, after W.W. II Gypsies from Eastern Poland moved to the newly added Western territories in large numbers, at the same time Gypsies from Eastern Slovakia were moving to the Czech territories which have been vacated by the German population, and later (including during the separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia) they moved to the industrial areas. Within Yugoslavia Kosovo Gypsies settled in the richer regions of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia as early as the 60's and 70's, and this process has become more active with the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

Gypsies community (or communities) in Central and Eastern Europe can be classified on the basis of various criteria such as their language, lifestyle, boundaries of endogamy, professional specialization, time of settlement in the respective country, etc. All these criteria reflect on Roma self-consciousness and identity, and give the complete picture of the present state of Roma community. This is by no means a static picture, it used to be different and will yet be different in other periods of history.

Gypsies have been settled for centuries on the Balkans (in our case specifically in the countries of former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania). The Gypsy

communities who speak the Romani dialects of the Balkan dialect group are the oldest Gypsy settlers on the Balkans, and the Gypsies speaking the dialects of the Old Vlax (or South Vlax) dialect group are the descendants of a big wave of migration from Wallachia and Moldova, who scattered in mass all over the Balkan Peninsula in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Balkans have a relatively well-preserved variety of the different groups and metagroup communities who practice Islam or Christianity. Some of them converted from one religion to the other in different periods of history. The most general distinction between these communities is the distinction between Muslims (*Xoraxane Roma*) and Christians (*Dasikane Roma*), who are divided into more or less autonomous groups within each community. The groups are differentiated at various hierarchical levels (i.e. the lead in Roma identity structure can be on the level of the two major subdivisions or on the level of separate subdivisions).

Examples for such subdivisions differentiated on various levels according to various features are:

Among Balkan dialect group - the *Arlia*, *Kovači*, *Tamari*, *Slovenska Roma*, *Dolenska Roma*, etc. in the countries of former Yugoslavia, *Erlia*, *Burgudži*, *Futadži*, *Fičiri*, *Drindari*, *Kalajdži*, *Košničari*, etc. in Bulgaria, *Arlia*, *Mečkara*, etc. in Albania.

Among South Vlax – the *Gurbeti*, *Džambazi*, *Bugurdži*, *Crnogorska Čergarja*, *Bosnenska Čergarja*, *Kaloperi*, etc. in the countries of former Yugoslavia; *Džambazi*, ‘Thracian’ *Kalajdži*, *Vlaxorja* (*Vlaxički*, *Laxo*), etc. in Bulgaria; *Kaburdži*, *Kurtofi*, *Čergara*, etc. in Albania.

A relatively smaller number of Gypsies belong to groups who penetrate these lands primarily at the time of the Great Kelderara invasion and who speak the Romanes of the New Vlax (or North Vlax) dialect group. Today they live primarily in Bulgaria and Serbia. This community is most often generalised as *Kardaraša*/*Kaldaraša*, in some places also as *Laješa* or *Katunari* [i.e. Nomads]. A very popular self-appellation is *Rrom Ciganjaka* (meaning “true Gypsies”). There are in-group / subgroup subdivisions within this group (such are for example *Zlatari*, *Tasmanari*, *Žapleš*, *Dodolania*, *Lajneš*, *Njamcoria* in Bulgaria), and their family and kinship subdivisions.

The numerous community of *Rudara/Ludara* or *Baňjaši/Bajaši* inhabits the whole Balkan Peninsula. They are also called *Kopanari* [cradle-makers], *Koritari* [trough-makers], *Vlasi* [Wallachians], *Karavlasi* [black Wallachians], etc. by the

surrounding population. The *Rudari* in Bulgaria have preserved a certain extent of intergroup subdivisions based on professional features, (such as *Lingurari* [spoon-makers], *Ursari* or *Mečkari* [bear-trainers], and on regional features (e.g. *Monteni*, *Istreni*, *Thracieni*, etc.). Instead of *Romanes* they speak their own dialect of Rumanian.

The *Rudara* belong to that part of Gypsies on the Balkans, who have forgotten their mother tongue and some other ethnic and cultural characteristics and tend to change their ethnic identity - they are bearers of the phenomenon of "preferred ethnic awareness". The *Rudara* often present themselves as true *Vlaxs*, *old Rumanians*. Some of them are undergoing a process of searching for their own (non-Rumanian and non-Roma) identity.

Other numerous Muslim Gypsy communities are also undergoing processes of identity change. Most of them speak Turkish or are bilingual (using both Turkish and *Romanes*) and pretend to be Turks - mostly in Bulgaria and in Eastern Macedonia. In other instances the preferred community is the Albanian one in Kosovo and Western Macedonia. With preferred Albanian identity are also part of the Albanian speaking *Aškali* in ex-Yugoslavia. Similar in content though with different manifestations are the processes of accepting the identity of the surrounding population, such as in the groups of the so-called *Džorevci* [mules] in Bulgaria or *Gjorgjovci* in Serbia.

The processes of searching for and demonstrating of a different, non-Roma identity acquire qualitatively new shapes for the *Egjupti* in Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia, as well as the *Jevgi* in Albania, who tend to present themselves as *Egyptians* and insist to be recognised as an Egyptian minority. Recently similar processes of search of the new, own, non-Gypsy identity could be observed among *Aškalia* in Kosovo as well.

In Rumania the mosaic of Gypsy groups is also rather diverse and has not been studied completely yet.

To a great extent this mosaic is determined by the division of the Gypsies in different categories during their period of slavery in the Danubian principalities (Wallachia and Moldova). With time the ancestors of the *Vatraši* category (from "vatra" - fireplace, i.e. settled, domestic slaves), called also "kherutno" (i.e. those who lives in houses) have lost their group distinctions and have become the big metagroup community with partially preserved regional or professional specifics. Most of them

are only Rumanian speaking and many of them demonstrate preferred Rumanian identity. Only small part of them speak *Romanes* as well.

Relatively preserved are the other groups, most of whom are descendants of the *Lejaša* category. They used to be nomads and paid an annual tax to their hosts (the prince, boyars, or monasteries). Such relatively well-preserved groups and subgroups in Rumania (Wallachia, Moldova and the later on annexed territories of Transylvania, Banat, Maramuresh, Dobrudzha) are *Kăldărari*, *Zlatari*, *Čurari*, *Gabori*, *Kazandžii*, *Aržentari*, *Korbeni*, *Modorani*, *Tismanari*, etc. belongin to the North Vlax Dialect group and *Ursari*, *Spoitori*, who are linguistically classified to the Balkan dialect group) and others. The Rumanian speaking *Rudari* (or *Aurari*) also are a large community who also used to have a special status at the time of slavery, and only small part of them have preserved their own language (speak *Romanes* as well). In Dobrudzha there are *Turkish* or *Tatar* speaking Muslim Gypsies with the respective preferred identity. Transylvania is the home of a significant number of Romani speaking *Rumungri* (*Roma Ungrika*) who are internally differentiated according to the regions and speak Carpathian ir Central Dialekt of *Romanes*, and Hungarian speaking *Rumungri* with preferred Hungarian identity.

In Central Europe the variety of Gypsy groups is relatively smaller than the one on the Balkans and in Rumania. In Slovakia more than two-thirds of the Gypsy population have been settled for centuries, mostly *Slovenska* (Slovak) *Roma* (divided into *Servika Roma* and *Bergitka Roma*), speaking Carpathian dialects of *Romanes* and *Ungrika Roma* or *Rumungri*, most of whom speak only Hungarian, and some of whom have a preferred Hungarian identity. This is also the home of *Vlašika* or *Olah* (Wallachian) *Roma* (their number there is less) from different subdivisions - *Lovara*, *Bougešti*, *Drizdari* and others. The *Vlašika Roma* are former nomads, representatives of a wave of Kelderara invasion, who have preserved their north-Vlax dialects of *Romanes*, related to *Kalderara/Kalderaša* on the Balkans. Small communities of Rumanian speaking *Bajaši* or *Koritari*, who are related to *Rudara* on the Balkans and *Bojaš* in Hungary, are settled in Eastern Slovakia.

The situation in the Czech Republic mirrors the situation in Slovakia because during the Second World War the local *Czech* and *Moravian Roma* and *Sinti* were almost entirely annihilated in Nazi concentration camps. Only a few families of Czech and Moravian Gypsies have survived the Holocaust. Most of them have lost the language and most elements of their ethnic culture. After W.W. II the country was

repopulated by Gypsies who came from Slovakia (primarily from the region of Eastern Slovakia).

In Hungary predominant are the settled *Rumungri* who have forgotten their mother tongue and a considerable part of their ethnic and cultural characteristics. One may also encounter Romani speaking groups of *Rumungri*, though they are less numerous (mostly in Eastern Hungary), as well as an insignificant presence of *Slovenska Roma*. Lesser in number are the *Vlašika Roma* or *Olah* Gypsies with internal subdivisions into *Lovari*, *Kelderari*, *Čurari*, *Drizari*, *Posotari*, *Kherara*, *Čerhara*, *Khangliari*, *Colari*, *Mašari*, *Bugara* and others. The community of Rumanian speaking *Bojaša* (the analogue of the *Rudara* on the Balkans) also live in Hungary. Their subdivisions are *Ardelan*, *Muntian*, *Titian*, etc.. Among some of them there is an on-going process of development of Roma identity.

Poland is a country with a relatively smaller number of Gypsy population. In the regions which used to be parts of the former Russian Empire live the *Polska* (Polish) *Roma*, former nomads who are now scattered all over Poland. Their community includes also the so called *Xaladitka* (or *Ruska*) *Roma* bordering the former Soviet Union, as well as their relatives *Sasitka* (German) *Roma* near the border with former Prussia. *Bergitka Roma*, who have been sedentary for centuries, live along the Polish-Slovak border, and the groups related to them live on the other side of the border. Some *Kelderara* and *Lovara* are scattered throughout the country. In Poland in recent years there are a lot of Rumanian Roma (who have come mostly from Transylvania) who are now more numerous than the local Roma.

Related Gypsy communities are predominant in the European countries of the former Soviet Union. Their distinction is not particularly strict and it is often determined by their historical destiny. The biggest among them is the community of the Orthodox *Xaladitka* or *Ruska* (Russian) *Roma* with their territorial subgroup subdivisions such as *Vešitka*, *Smoljaki*, *Piterska Roma*, *Bobri*, *Uralci*, *Toboljaki* etc. Closely related to them are the *Polska Roma* (also called *Xaladitka Roma*) in Lithuania, and *Litovska* [Lithuanian] *Roma* in Lithuania and Belarus (with various subdivisions - *Beni*, *Fandari*, *Lipenci*, *Pinčuki* and others), most of whom are Catholics. They are also related to the *Lotfika* (Latvian) *Roma* (called sometimes also *Čuxni*, i.e. Finns) living in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and having their territorial subdivisions such as *Kurzemnjeki*, *Vidzemnjeki* and *Laloro* (Estonian Gypsies), who are Lutherans.

Next in numbers is the Gypsy community of the so-called Ukrainian Roma with self-appellation *Servi/Servuria*, whose dialects are defined by some linguists as proto-Vlax. They settled in Eastern Ukraine and the Southern parts of Russia as early as the middle of the 16th century migrating from Wallachia and Moldova. Now they are scattered all over Russia.

Relatively numerous are the Gypsy communities who are representatives of the Balkan dialect groups who migrated from the Balkan peninsula in the 18th c. These are the *Ursara* in Moldova and South Ukraine. Related to them linguistically are the *Kırımıtika/Kırımıltka Roma or Krimurja* (Crimean Gypsies), living in the Crimea, South Ukraine, South Russia and Northern Caucasus. They have a number of subgroup and clan subdivisions - *Čornomorludes*, *Kubanludes*, *Gezlevludes*, *Barginja*, *Ariki*, etc. The Community of *Dajfa/Tajfa* in Crimea, who are today Tatarian speaking, come to these territories probably also from Balkans or Asia Minor in times of Ottoman empire.

A considerable number of representatives of the north-Vlax dialect groups live in those lands too, such as *Vlaxi/Vlaxuria*, smaller communities of *Kišinjovcuria or Kišinjovcı* live in Ukraine and Russia too and *Čokenaria and Katunaria* in Moldova. The communities of *Kelderara* (with preserved internal subdivisions, such as *Vungri*, *Serbiaja*, *Bugari*, *Moldovaja*, *Dobrožaja*, *Grekuria*, etc.) and *Lovara* (with subgroup subdivisions *Ungri*, *Prajzura* and others), who arrived in Russia mainly through the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, are scattered in small family and kinship groups throughout the former Soviet Union.

The *Servika Roma* and *Rumungri* settled in the Transcarpathian Ukraine long time ago. Some of *Rumungri* are Hungarian speaking. Rumanian speaking Gypsies (*Besarabci*, *Lingurara*, *Vlaxija* and others) are also living in Moldova, the Ukraine and Russia.

Besides the *Sinti* (from the subdivisions of *Prajzi*, *Pojaki* and *Esterxaria*) other non-Roma Gypsies are also living in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Armenian speaking *Boša* as well as individual families of Asian Gypsies *Karači* from Azerbaidjan can be seen today mainly in the bigger cities of the former Union. In recent time a mass labour migration towards Russian cities of Gypsy-like groups called *Ljuli*, self-appellation *Muğat*, from Central Asia is observed.

The internal subdivision of the Gypsies can explain the seemingly contradictory facts. Some of these subdivisions, such as the *Rumungri* in Central

Europe, have lost their language and their ethnic culture and Roma identity to a great extent and many among them are socially marginalised, while other subdivisions have preserved their language and traditional ethnic culture quite well, including the internal self-government institutions (such as *Kris* of *Olah* Gypsies in Central Europe, *Mešariava* of *Kardaraša* in Bulgaria, *Davija* of the *Krimurja* in Crimea, *Sendo/Sjondo/Sudo* of the *Ruska/Polska* Roma). These differences inevitably reflect on the way of life. For example, the Roma in Southern Poland live in separate villages and have acute social and economic problems, while in the rest of the country Roma are scattered among the surrounding population, they are considered wealthy and their problems are of an entirely different nature; why we observe the existence of "Gypsy ghettos" in some Bulgarian cities where people live on the brink of human existence, while only a few kilometers away, in some Bulgarian villages and small towns, the biggest house belongs to a Roma family who are the richest people.

The internal subdivision of the Gypsies reflects in their group, subgroup and preferred identity. Parallel with this the most of the Gypsies in Central and Eastern Europe have established a qualitatively different new level in the complex structure of their community identity. This is the feeling of belonging to the nations in each respective country (variants of this feeling are the examples of adherence to the ideas of Yugoslavism, Czechoslovakism or the united nations of the Soviet Union, the so-called Soviet Nation). The presence of such a level in the structure of their identity as a result of attaining of a certain level in the development of their civic awareness seems somewhat paradoxical as compared to the Gypsies in Western Europe and the US. However, this fact becomes easily accounted for in the light of the turns of their historical destiny and their belonging in the social life of the countries and regions where they have been settled for a long time and have felt the impact of different types of policies. This reflects on their relations with the surrounding population and the internal development of their ethnic community.

The models of the policy towards Gypsies

The ethnic and cultural specifics of the Gypsy communities, as well as the models of attitude towards them by the authorities and the surrounding population, were formed within state formations where the Gypsies lived after their arrival in Europe - in the Byzantine Empire at first and then in its heir, the Ottoman Empire for those Gypsies

who remained on the Balkan peninsula. The Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Russian Empire became the homes of those Gypsies who continued their migration. The situation of the Gypsies who remained in the principalities of Wallachia and Moldova (relatively autonomous ones, though with a nominally vassal status in respect of the Ottoman Empire) is more specific. The situation of the Gypsies in these historical state and political formations throws some light on the origin of their inequalities and their different status in the Central and Eastern Europe states which later emerged on their basis.

There is a wealth of historical information about Gypsy presence in Balkan lands during the period of the Ottoman Empire. A great number of Gypsies came to the Balkans together with the Ottomans (14th c.) either as participants (serving the army) or as accompanying population. The issue of the civil status of Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire is a rather complicated one as Gypsies had a special place in the overall social and administrative organization of the Empire. Despite the populational division into two main categories (the faithful vs. gentiles), Gypsies had their own, rather specific dual status outside these two categories. Gypsies were differentiated according to the ethnic principle (something quite unusual for the Ottoman Empire) with no sharp distinction between Muslim and Christian Gypsies (for tax and social status purposes). As a whole Gypsies were actually closer to the subordinated local population, with the exception of some minor privileges for Muslim Gypsies (Gypsies who worked for the army were more privileged). Nevertheless, Gypsies were able to preserve a number of ethnic and cultural characteristics such as nomadic lifestyle, some traditional occupations, etc. Processes of their sedentarization in towns and villages were active. As early as the 15th c. there were settled Gypsies on the Balkans who did agricultural work in the villages and unqualified work and services in the towns. A new type of semi-nomadic lifestyle emerged as well (Gypsies with a winter residence and an active nomadic season within regional boundaries). Most certainly, these processes did not include all Gypsies, nevertheless they were very active. A large part of the Gypsies on the Balkans live predominantly in ethnic neighbourhoods, which originated as a pattern of settlements in as early as the days of the Ottoman Empire and created a specific Balkan Roma ethnic culture.

The Gypsy groups on the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire felt the powerful influence of the period of Enlightenment when the attempts to integrate them in the macrosociety started. The main aim of the state policy at the time was to

transform Gypsies from predominantly nomadic people with no civil status into settled, tax-paying, equal subjects of the Empire. We have to note the importance of the decrees of Empress Marie-Therese from 1761 and 1767 and the decree of Emperor Joseph II from 1783, which were the beginning of the so-called "new policy" towards Gypsies. The purpose of this policy was to make Gypsies (the very name "Gypsies" was forbidden and replaced with "new peasants", and "new Hungarians" on Hungarian territory) abandon their nomadic way of life for a permanently settled agricultural one; they were no longer allowed to speak their language and were obliged to dress like the surrounding population; Gypsies received new non-Gypsy names, they were granted rights and the respective responsibilities before the law, including the responsibility to pay taxes; state and religious education were made compulsory for Gypsy children, they had to be separated from their parents at the age of four, no longer to maintain any relations with their parents, to be brought up in peasant families, and after the age of 10 to be enrolled in state schools to learn trades, etc. The ultimate goal of the logical sequence of measures was the annihilation of the Gypsy community as such and the complete assimilation of the Gypsies. The final results of this policy, however, were considerably different from the outlined goals and their consequences are now manifest in the countries which emerged from the Empire - the formation of separate Gypsy settlements outside populated areas (called *kolonia* in Hungary, *osada* in Slovakia and Poland, *tabor* in Transcarpathean Ukraine), loss of mother tongue and basic ethnic and cultural characteristics of most Gypsies in Hungary and the Slovak Republic.

The situation of the Gypsies in the Russian Empire is quite different. There they usually were not the targets of special attention and stayed out of the reach of state politics, except for some inconsistent attempts in the 18th and 19th c. to apply Austrian-Hungarian legislature to Gypsies (ban on nomadic life, compulsory sedentarisation in the villages, denied access to the big cities, etc.). However, these attempts failed, such as the failure to build special Gypsy villages in Bessarabia; the ban on nomadic life turned out to be inapplicable in the vast territories of the Russian Empire, and others. After a short time the authorities themselves ceased any Gypsy-oriented activities. The lack of a consistent Gypsy oriented policy and the relatively small number of Gypsies as compared to the total population of the empire to a great extent were the reasons for the preservation of their community identity and ethnic culture. Until the end of the Russian Empire most Gypsies lived as nomads or semi-

nomads, scattered all over the vast territory of the empire, except the Gypsy musicians in the big towns or the settled Gypsies in certain regions (such as the Crimea and Bessarabia).

Gypsies were given slave status soon after settling in the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldova. There they were divided into several categories: slaves of the crown, of the monasteries and of the boyars, as well as the already mentioned distinction into *Vatrași* or domestic slaves (mostly of boyars or monasteries), and *Lajași* (mostly slaves of the crown). The latter were nomads who were relieved of compulsory settlement after paying an annual ransom and allowed to be nomads and exercise their traditional occupations. Gypsy groups belonging to this category preserved their active or latent nomadic attitudes and thus became a source of migration waves until modern times. Many Gypsies from the principalities emigrated to the Ottoman Empire as early as the 17th and 18th c. The so-called "big Kelderara invasion" began as a result of social and economical changes in modern times and its peak was after the abolition of Gypsy slavery in Wallachia and Moldova in the wake of the Crimean war. It led to new waves of Gypsy groups coming to Europe in the second half of the 19th c. which changed the inter-ethnic stratification of the Gypsy community in Central and Eastern Europe.

The above description outlines the historical formation of the basic patterns of development of the Gypsy community and the attitudes of the macrosociety, including the special politics of state institutions in Central and Eastern Europe towards it. Here we can distinguish several basic patterns - the pattern of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (in countries of the contemporary Czech republic, Slovakia, Hungary, parts of Rumania and Poland), the pattern of the Ottoman Empire (Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina), of the Russian Empire (Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, the Baltic countries, parts of Poland) and the unique specifics of Wallachia and Moldova (a result of the specific slavery of the Gypsies). These cultural and historical patterns are extremely resilient in the present day conditions.

These patterns can be characterized in the following manner:

1. Ottoman Empire pattern: preserved civil status of the Gypsies, which, however, is lower than that of the surrounding population. The ultimate goal of the pattern is status quo, with open possibilities for voluntary assimilation.

2. Austro-Hungarian pattern: patronage, strong state interference in Gypsy life, purposeful policy of the so-called "civilizing attitude" and others. The ultimate goal of the pattern is complete forceful assimilation.

3. Russian Empire pattern: non-interference in the internal life of Gypsies and lack of any consistent policy for their integration.

Certainly, these patterns are not absolutely pure in themselves, they occur in different variants which are specific for each and every country in Central and Eastern Europe, for some countries in particular (such as Croatia) or regions (such as Transcarpathian Ukraine), which, due to changes in state borders, were included in different cultural and historical regions in the different historical periods. Rumania, whose present day territory includes the former principalities of Wallachia and Moldova and parts of all the three big empires (Transylvania, Dobrudzha, Bukovina), is another specific case.

These basic patterns had a considerable influence on the state policy of the new ethnic and national states in Central and Eastern Europe, which emerged in the 19th and 20th c. There they were viewed through the lens of new state nationalism of the Central and Eastern Europe countries and Gypsies in general were considered to be a relatively less important problem compared to the implementation of the major "national ideals", i.e. the governments of these countries did not regard having a special "Gypsy policy" as their priority and this policy was always subordinate to the major national ideas and priorities (for example, the Gypsy policy in Bulgaria has always been determined by the predominant attitude towards the Turks; in Slovakia by the attitude towards the Hungarian minority; in Hungary the determining factor is the attitude towards the Hungarian minorities outside of Hungary, etc.).

In the region of Central and Eastern Europe we can distinguish two basic patterns of the relations of the surrounding population and its institution (the corresponding states) towards Roma:

- "Traditional" pattern, typical for the preindustrial age. This pattern has diverse manifestations in particular cultural and historical regions. There the Gypsies, though "alien" as a category and according to their detached status, determined by ruling world-perception schemes of the period, are an inseparable part of the society and the common cultural environment, with their own place in it. The Gypsies are not perceived as an integral (let alone equal) part of the macrosociety and they do not have any particular problems, since "they know their place" and do not aspire to

change it. This explains to a great extent why the Gypsies today constitute a relatively high percentage of the population of a number of countries or regions, especially on the Balkans (including Wallachia and Moldova) where the social structures and pre-industrial patterns are more or less preserved, unlike the destiny of their brothers and sisters in Western Europe.

- "National" pattern, appeared in the beginning of the Enlightenment and gradually became dominant in the era of modern national states (including the so-called "socialist era"). The attitudes towards the Gypsies in this era are subordinated to the idea of the ethno-national state, they are considered a threat a priori (most often a potential one). This is the source of the general attitude towards them as humans of a second rate category, whose only perspective is to be "integrated", i.e. annihilated as a distinctive community and finally - assimilated completely (or in specific historical periods of time physical annihilated). The Gypsies living in these conditions are influenced by the processes of change in the macrosociety and are trying to change their social status, to seek ways for their total emancipation as a community within the respective ethnic nation. This Gypsy reaction encounters the counteraction (in various forms) of the society and the state institutions. These processes are still active today, especially in some countries or regions of Central and Eastern Europe, where the processes of national (and respectively state) development are far from being completed.

The development of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and their "Gypsy policy" was influenced by the political order, which existed in the near past, more specifically the "socialist era". The politics of the socialist countries regarding the Gypsies were to a great extent similar and coordinated. The best example is the forced sedentarisation - in 1956 the Soviet Union issued a sedentarisation decree, in 1958-9 it was repeated in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Poland (where the process of sedentarisation was prolonged and a new special law for mandatory residence was passed in 1964). In Rumania, Yugoslavia and Albania the processes of mandatory sedentarisation took place a little later, in the 60's and 70's, due to the specifics of their history. The implementation of the decree in each country followed a different route - for example in Czechoslovakia the authorities made the nomads stop traveling in the place they were when the decree was issued and the authorities determined where and how they were to settle, while in Bulgaria the Gypsies were

moving from one place to another in search of more comfortable villages until the end of the 70's.

Roma in the socialist countries did not have a status equal to that of the other minorities. On the basis of Marx's and Lenin's definition of the hierarchical development of human societies - tribe, nationality, nation - the "Gypsies" were thought to be a community still below the level of required development which could not be considered as a nationality, even less a nation. And since they had no country, they were only regarded as an ethnic group and thus were deprived of the rights of some minorities who were recognized as nationalities.

There is a short initial period of encouraging the development of Gypsy ethnic community and culture in all socialist countries, followed by prohibitions and restrictions which were more thorough in some countries (Rumania, Bulgaria), while in others (the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Hungary) the ostentatious presentation of selected cultural elements still remained (mostly music and dances). Some socialist countries occasionally encouraged the creation of "Gypsy cultural and educational organizations" which were later dissolved and their active members often persecuted. A resistance to the ethnic and cultural specifics of the Gypsies, which were then proclaimed a capitalist relic, was gradually becoming universal in the region. Because of the considerable number of Gypsies in most countries (except Russia and Poland), they were regarded as a demographic threat, a population with high birthrate who could destroy the ethnic balance of the surrounding population.

A general trend was the attempt to make Gypsies equal citizens of their countries and if successful, the attempt was expected to bring about the desired complete assimilation in the future. In each country of the region this attempt had specific forms of realization. The traditions inherited from earlier periods determined the subtle nuances in the policy of "enforced assimilation" in each region and its consequences for the present day status of Roma in these countries. In the countries of former Austro-Hungary "Gypsies" were regarded as a social problem first and foremost and the policy regarding Roma was mostly one of patronage, while in the other countries the "Gypsy" related problems were of primarily ethnic character, with a touch of religion on the Balkans.

After the changes in Central and Eastern Europe the specialised Gypsy state policy (including the lack or imitation of one) remained mostly within the parameters of the specific cultural and historical region. The changes in the ideological

foundations of this policy (for example the recent exchange of the concept of socialist internationalism with the concept of civil society) did not bring any tangible changes in the attitude of the macrosociety towards the Gypsies and in the main emphasis of the state Gypsy policy. In this respect the centuries old historical patterns of attitude towards Gypsies (both of the society and the state) turned out to be quite resilient in Central and Eastern Europe without any particular hope for change in the foreseeable future.

Trends in the development of the Roma community

The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, however, should not be perceived only as a passive object of experiments of social engineering throughout the different periods of history. The numerous and diverse influences (economic, political, ideological and others) of the macrosociety where the Roma live, did have an imprint on the development of their community. This development is uneven, multi-directional, sometimes even contradictory, but it has three main trends, which are related to each other and influence one another.

1) Internal development of the community. This is an inherent trend in community development. The Roma community, like any other community, is not a static formation - either in terms of its ethno-social structure or in terms of its ethno-social features. Its internal evolution leads to ongoing major changes in its overall structure - subgroup subdivisions are established from which new Roma groups arise; at the same time there are active processes of obliteration of internal group distinction and emergence of metagroup unity of different hierarchical ranges. This contemporary development of the Roma community, after the fall of the old empires and the emergence of new states in Central and Eastern Europe in 19th and 20th c., is to a great extent limited within their own boundaries which leads to the emergence of the above mentioned new level of Romani identity (within the respective nation).

2) Development of the community as part of the respective nation. This is a relatively new process typical of the new era. It was first manifested in the end of the 19th c. and the first half of the 20th c. These processes were particularly influenced by the so called socialist era, and it would not be far-fetched to say that this period was a key factor for the development of the Roma community. The state policy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which stimulated and supported the

development of the Romanies as a community, was in most cases rather limited in duration and contradictory when applied in practice. It rapidly gave way to the established national patterns of attitudes towards the Gypsies. Nevertheless, thanks to this policy and its combination with the overall social and political context, created and guaranteed the existence of a number of opportunities for relatively equal Roma participation in social life and the development of their civil awareness. The end results of these processes for the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe are quite different compared to the destiny of their brothers and sisters all over the world. Here we can encounter many thousands of Romanies with relatively good education, and quite a few with prestigious jobs - teachers, medical doctors, lawyers, military officers, journalists, artists, scientists... Thus a new type of Roma *elite* was created with new dimensions and values, which is very different from the traditional Roma *elite*. The both types of *elite* exist parallel to one another. The members of the new type of *Roma elite* (including their children), despite a number of weaknesses, now are an important factor in the overall community development, though they should not be considered the only and leading representatives of the community.

3. Development within global Roma nationalism. This is the relatively latest trend of development of the Roma community, born in our century. Since the birth and the first steps of the organised Romani movement, the representatives of the community from Central and Eastern Europe (or immigrants from this region) have been its main moving and leading force. This trend in community development gradually constructs its new national ideology with a strong emphasis on certain ideas - such as the use of the general name of Roma for all Gypsy subdivisions, an aspiration to all-Roma union and denial of the right of existence of Roma with preferred or new, non-Roma identity, new dimensions in the dichotomy Roma - Gadzhe with an emphasis or imitation of confrontation between the two sides, a new view of Roma history and a powerful emphasis on the Holocaust; the standardisation of Romanes (the Gypsy language); and others. A very thin layer of the so-called "international Roma" or "professional Roma" has come in existence. Some of these people are now in the process of rediscovering their forgotten Romani ancestors (who in some cases could even be imaginary ones). They are not bound to a specific country, but to an international institution or non-governmental organisation and have carried their work to a global level (often without the support of the Romanies in their own country).

The development of this third major trend in Central and Eastern Europe at present is rather contradictory. It is influenced by many factors, such as the infiltration of new ideas after the collapse of old regimes, the crisis of the period of transition in the countries of the region, the crisis in inter-ethnic relations, All-European integration, favouring of Roma from human rights movement and its strong lobby within international institution, rapidly developing “Gypsy industry” of the non-governmental sector and others. Because of the complexity of these processes, we cannot predict the development of this trend, but there is no doubt that its relative place in the overall development of the community will keep growing in the near or distant future. Moreover, the very development of Roma nationalism will hardly be possible without the active presence of the Roma from Central and Eastern Europe, who are a decisive factor for its success (in terms of their numbers and qualities).

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The described three main tendencies in the developing of the Roma community constantly cross themselves, they move from one to other and like this they enriches by themselves. Formatted during the “Socialist epoch” new Roma elite in Eastern Europe fed the developing of the global Roma nationalism and promoted significantly it’s level (this was also clearly seen on the last congress of the International Romani Union in Prague, where the Eastern Europe Roma dominated). And the developing of the Roma nationalism in global measures and it’s international and human rights lobby gave self-confidence and affirmed the ambitions for independent participation it the political life of Romanies in many countries in Eastern Europe (this tendency was clearly shown during the last years). The representatives of the “traditional” elite of the Roma community (mainly the *Kalderaša* and other relative to them groups) are becoming more and more active in the Roma movement (on national, and international level). The processes are also influenced by many “outer” factors, connected to the given situation in the different countries in Eastern and Central Europe, and by the common processes of European integration and world globalization as well, and on this stage it is quite hard to foresee what particular dimensions will they have in closer or in more distant future.

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