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The roles of Hungarian Roma intellectuals in the
educational integration and social inclusion of the Roma

Theses of doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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1. Objectives and hypotheses of the research

In the course of the survey, I carried out a scientific study of the role and identity of the Roma intellectuals in Hungary, especially with regard to their participation and ideas in the educational integration and social inclusion of the Roma.

The relevance of the survey is given by the following factors:

- 1) The importance of mutual knowledge of majority and minority culture
- 2) Emphasizing the role of Roma intellectuals in the integration of Roma society in the communication of the current, ruling political elite
- 3) Regarding the current social policy processes, it is also worthwhile to deal separately with the social role opportunities of Roma graduates and their culturally rooted phenomena.

Today in Hungary, the Roma are exposed to two primary effects: on the one hand, the increase in social drawback and the ethnicization of public thinking, legal culture and institutional mechanisms. The serious social processes that followed the change of regime put the Roma in a fundamentally new situation, as a result, the social isolation, backwardness and marginalization of the Roma population is increasing again, school segregation is growing on an increasing scale. This process is still typical today, which suggests that the system of conditions and tools for compensating for disadvantages and ensuring opportunities has not been found, yet. As another component, we can highlight that a mix of social and ethnic dimensions can be observed in policies and not just in public opinion. Experience has shown that this greatly reduces the possibility of a solution in attempts to formulate and eliminate problems.

- 4) Most social science research on Roma focuses on learning about the disadvantaged, marginalized Roma society. There are just a few researches on the intellectuals of Roma society and they also focus on learning about the process of becoming an intellectual, the action dimension does not appear in them. Educational aspects of the research topic:

One of the most serious issues in today's education is the drop-out rate of disadvantaged (mostly Roma) students and the failure to compensate for disadvantage.

- Examining the role of Roma intellectuals in the educational integration of Roma is a relevant educational issue

- The role of Roma intellectuals in the process of social catching up and educational integration is emphasized on the expectation-horizon of political elites
- The social effectiveness of this activity cannot be judged without a systematic knowledge of the views, pedagogical principles and practice of the examined Roma intellectuals.
- Due to spontaneous segregation and ethnic re-stratification, kindergarten- and school segregations are appearing in Hungary in an increasing proportion, In some areas, only Roma children attend these institutions, even if the Roma population is not yet in the majority of the settlement

An important educational goal is to examine the role that Roma intellectuals, especially those with pedagogical qualifications, play / can play in the operation of these segregated institutions.

The topicality and significance of the research is given by the fact that no nationally comprehensive, complex study has been conducted on this topic before. Although research on Roma intellectuals in Hungary can show increasingly serious professional results, the combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods does not characterize the approaches, they are primarily a special, narrow group interview studies.

1.2. Research hypotheses

- 1) The intellectual roles of the graduate Roma intellectuals and those currently studying in higher education are determined by the special situation of minorities in Hungary and they want to meet the role expectations of the majority society.
- 2) A state of "permanent liminality" becomes a defining feature of the identity of Roma graduates, which refers to their situation in the process of becoming intellectuals, they move away from their community of origin as a result of the social/mobility process, but they do not become accepted by the members of the majority professional community and the wider majority community, so their life situation is characterised by a persistent state of in-betweenness, often accompanied by a traumatised state. I believe that the American anthropologist Victor Turner's theory of liminality offers an interpretative framework for understanding this phenomenon.
- 3) I assume that their ideas about the roles of Roma intellectuals significantly define their problem interpretations, their susceptibility to different solutions, their actions in the local space.

- 4) In my view, the generally held theorem in the literature that the Roma intellectuals is moving away from the Roma society that issued it should be interpreted as a consequence of a process of social mobility / civilization, rather than a conscious departure from Roma identity.

Expected results of the research:

- 1) It paints a comprehensive picture of the internal structure of Roma / Gypsy intellectuals, their perceptions of their roles, their ideas about Roma culture, their role in the social and educational integration of Roma, the components of their ethnic identity and its development process.
- 2) The acquired scientific knowledge can be used to formulate social policy decisions and policies.
- 3) The research results can contribute to the development of the self-image of Roma intellectuals.

2. Theoretical-methodological framework

2.1.Theoretical aspects

During the analysis of the investigated problem I rely on the theory of interpretive anthropology. The trend associated with the name of Clifford Geertz says that culture exists through interpretation, but these interpretations are not produced by the researcher but by the “natives” of that culture. In the present study, Roma intellectuals create interpretations of Roma intellectual roles and regard their own intellectual roles. These intellectual participants consider themselves to be of Roma origin and have an undertaken Roma identity, this is the common point in them. But their ideas about “Roma culture” and the roles of Roma intellectuals are expressed in a specific perspective. From what point of view, a given participant sees his or her own culture and intellectual role opportunities is determined by his or her socioeconomic status and socio-cultural embeddedness. As each participant views the same entity from different perspectives, it follows that the interpretations given about it are also different. As a result, the interpretations about Roma culture and the role of intellectuals are very diverse and different of the Roma graduates involved in the study. The culture and role readings that emerge from these do not come together into a single whole. Rather, what happens is that intellectual participants paraphrase it from different perspectives: what they call Roma culture and what ideas they have about Roma intellectual roles. In the conception of the interpretive approach, we cannot

distinguish between better and worse interpretations among the interpretations of the natives of culture, there is no value relationship between the interpretations. The purpose of interpretive analysis, called “dense description,” is to explore and identify interpretations during the study. By juxtaposing interpretations of a given entity, the researcher strives to form as complete a picture as possible based on the views of the participants involved in the research. Thus, in the course of the study, we research the meanings, the meaning context that is made up of the different interpretations of each participant. The picture of intellectual role perceptions is composed of the totality of interpretations. It is important to emphasize that the fact that the researcher herself is a Roma intellectual, who has a relationship with the Roma culture and has a special relationship with the Roma intellectuals involved in the research, plays an important role in the interpretation. Here, therefore, we must also reckon with the fact that the researcher has an interpretive relationship with the participants and, through this, with the interpretations they form. Based on the above theoretical considerations, I assume that there is no unified intellectual role used by Roma intellectuals today, because the image formed about it and the relation to it is thematized by the socio-cultural embeddedness of the individual, the personality, the literacy, the nature of the work activity, the relationship network of the individual and all these together. This determines who says what and what roles he/she thinks can be assigned to the Roma intellectuals. These interpretations do not provide a clear definition of the expected and implemented intellectual role interpretations. The interpretations are divergent, so the elements and connection points of a plural network of interpretation can be read from it. These interpretations are sometimes mutually exclusive, otherwise they overlap. The dynamics of these create the discourse field where the debate about it takes place.

In the last 20-25 years, social science research on Gypsies in Hungary has primarily examined the place of Gypsies in the social structure. Through the issues of social integration and equal opportunities, the problems of underprivileged Roma have emerged with the greatest emphasis. This is “prescribed” by the current social policy discourse itself, which places great emphasis on social integration, the social inclusion of the underprivileged and the excluded. Gypsies who were still able to take advantage of the low opportunities of social mobility and thus left the underprivileged, socially deprived status, are in most cases excluded from the focus of social research. There are only a few researches on the identity and integration strategies of the Roma elite or successful Roma. In my doctoral dissertation, I attempt to apply cultural anthropological and educational approaches together in a comprehensive study of Roma intellectuals. In my approach, the concept of social integration has a special significance. I emphasize two

dimensions of the cultural anthropological approach: emphasizing the importance of the applied method, I consider the practical value and usability of the scientific knowledge acquired during the research to be extremely important. I could not try to present the extensive anthropological studies of Roma culture in full, so I only touch on the aspects of the research results on Roma identity that can be related to the examined topic.

From the point of view of educational science, the key role of education in social integration will be the focus of research in relation to Roma graduates.

Nowadays, it is an increasingly common process for an integration professional to be a member of the affected community. The resulting perspective can be important for the success of professional work. For the most part, the Roma have remained the target group for social integration to this day, but today, through the expansion of the circle of Roma intellectuals, they can increasingly be considered as social actors who are themselves shapers of the integration process. For this reason, I consider comprehensive research on the roles of Roma intellectuals to be of paramount importance.

The development of the conceptual framework of the analysis decisively determines the method of the study and the results obtained. If we were to base our research on the well-established definition of intellectuals used today in the narrow sense, it would mean an examination of the intellectuals of just a few dozen elite Roma. They are the ones who appear before the public as opinion formers of the Roma intellectuals and also present themselves to the public. They are the ones who realize the classic intellectual role: producers of ideology and culture. Their elitist conception of intellectuals excludes all other participants, even experts, from the notion of intellectuals.

My dissertation cannot undertake a systematic presentation of intellectual definitions, but since the concept of the role of the intellectual plays a decisive role in the research, we need to address some of the components of the discourse. Although the meaning of the concept of intellectuals varies considerably, there are some key factors that divide the positions formed. One of the most important components concerns the role of intellectuals in public life. In his famous essay (*Science as a Profession*), Max Weber made it clear that a scientist cannot subject his vocation to either ideology or authority, thus making it clear that for him science must be value-neutral and away from public life. A commitment to values is formulated as an intermediate path, which is coupled with an observational intellectual role, and active participation in public life is not part of it. In contrast to Max Weber's conception, the role of intellectuals in the service of political ideas and the political behaviour of intellectuals is articulated. The fault line is clearly

ideologically based. In the comprehensive examination of the Hungarian opinion-forming intelligentsia, Kristóf Luca defines the intelligentsia as the totality of social roles. She agrees with the notion fully accepted today that intellectuals cannot be defined solely on the basis of an institutional criterion (e.g., a degree). A possible consensual definition identifies the intelligentsia as a social role whose essential component is the creation, transmission, and dissemination of culture and knowledge. She sees the creation and transmission of values, norms, ideologies and symbols as another important social role.

Intellectual sociology describes possible intellectual roles in three terms: the professional, the term intellectual means the intellectual and moral elite of the intelligentsia, characterized by a strong socially critical attitude, the intellectual role perception does not consider the intellectuals to be professionals. Intellectuals exclude them from the concept because they do not engage in the production and dissemination of ideas and values, which in their perception is a crucial feature of intellectual roles, which, by definition, includes a strong ideological commitment.

In her book, Kristóf Luca organizes today's Hungarian intelligentsia into 4 main categories, more precisely, it classifies the actors into ever-narrowing categories of the concept of the intelligentsia. The broadest definition of the intelligentsia includes everyone who does intellectual work and is a highly educated person, a narrower conception now considers only those involved in the production of culture to be intellectuals, whose main feature is a broadly interpreted work. They are virtually identical to those previously defined as experts. A much narrower group includes those who consider public participation to be essential, who can be classified as intellectual literati, and the narrowest circle of critical intellectuals, where public participation presupposes a socially critical attitude in all cases. From the beginning of the 19th century, the intellectuals of the less civilized countries will have a special mission: to promote the modernization of society, to achieve its transformation. The undertaking of this modernization mission becomes a marked feature of the Eastern European intelligentsia. The concept and roles of minority intellectuals in scientific research have not received sufficient attention so far. It was primarily the role of representatives of literature and art that aroused interest.

Regarding the roles of intellectuals in social history, it is important to highlight that research suggests that intellectuals played a special role in Central and Eastern Europe. According to Kligman, one of the characteristics of the post-socialist transformation is the development of

the ethnic character of poverty, as he puts it: in Central and Eastern Europe, poverty has a Roma image.

In the early 2000s, projects related to collective university or research unit applications were launched, which are related to prominent personalities in Roma research. Basically, the researchers are from sociology and education. From then on, it became a marked trend that a series of doctoral dissertations were written on the topic of the Roma intelligentsia, here also the aspects of educational science, sociology and mental hygiene became dominant (Katalin Torkos, Ágnes Lukács, Kinga Szabó Tóth, Judit Kármánné Szabó). These studies identify these life paths with successful, prosperous Gypsy / Roma metaphors, even though the picture drawn of the narrow intelligentsia seems much more nuanced than success would be the main feature. Although in terms of social mobility, it is possible to talk about success through coping, therefore, however, many persons who become intellectuals pay a heavy price, as the research results show it exactly. Serious identity problems, the “neither here nor there” (Katalin Torkos), a deteriorating mental state, which becomes a very significant problem, especially for Roma women who become intellectuals (Judit Kármán). This can be observed primarily among women living in Budapest. Many of them are divorced, their social relations have narrowed.

Regarding the methodological approach of the previous studies, it can be stated that basically a survey with non-statistical sampling or an interview survey is carried out. The joint application of quantitative and qualitative research techniques is only applied in the work of Judit Sz. Kármán. The first studies on the topic can be characterized by the presentation of successful Roma intellectual life paths in interview volumes. Here the life path considered successful becomes important in itself, its presentation and existence are the goal of the research, therefore the scientific analysis of these life paths does not take place. This type of approach has been popular ever since, with several volumes of interviews about such successful life paths being published in the last ten years, two in recent years. The range of people with whom these interviews are conducted is very diverse: sometimes successful politicians, Roma artists, sometimes successful college students. Portrait films about successful Roma intellectuals in recent years can be considered as a new genre. In the mid-1980s, scholarly studies of Roma intellectuals began, still examining the issue in the successful Roma category. The value-saturated concept has long been the defining conceptual framework for research. Katalin Forray and András T. Hegedűs conduct a study among successful Gypsy groups and successful Gypsy women (1985) Csepeli-Székely-Örkény examines whether it is possible to preserve and transfer Gypsy identity in the case of intragenerational mobility (2001).

The first comprehensive study of Roma students in higher education examined students supported by the Hungarian Gypsy Public Foundation in the research project entitled “Roma-Gypsy students in higher education” (2003) is related to the activities of Katalin R. Forray. Previous research has identified several factors in the lives of successful graduates that have contributed greatly to graduation: the orderliness of the family background, the role of parental expectations, the supportive nature of the school environment. Research confirms that in the case of Roma graduates, the time to obtain a degree is very often delayed, they enter higher education much later, skip years several times, and often study at a correspondence course, already as a family worker. The institutionalization of the scholarship support system (Romaveritas, Roma Vocational College Network, Roma Education Fund) has helped to create the financial stability necessary for learning, so nowadays this trend is no longer so decisive.

3. Methodology and results of the questionnaire research

The biggest difficulty of the questionnaire research was the selection and reaching of the persons to be involved. Since ethnicity is based on self-declaration and protected data, there cannot be any and there are no public lists and databases on which the researcher can base the selection. A particular methodological difficulty was the lack of a list of persons who could be involved and the fact that it could not be drawn up due to respect for the rights of the individual. The research fully guaranteed anonymity during the questionnaire survey. In selecting the range of people involved in the questionnaire research, my main aim was to indirectly address and invite as many people as possible to participate in the research. Basically, there were two ways to get in touch with people who already considered themselves to be of Roma origin (I only included those in the research who consider themselves Roma on a self-reported basis) or who were now pursuing higher education. The Romaveritas and the Roma Vocational College Network participate in an institutionalized way in the training of Roma intellectuals and in strengthening their social role. The Roma Education Fund also helped expand the subjects of the questionnaire research by sharing and promoting information. These institutions may have a list of students who will receive a scholarship from them, but once they contain personal information, it cannot be passed on for research purposes. However, they were of great help in drawing the attention of stakeholders - whether in the case of their former or current students - to the research on their various Internet interfaces (used very actively by the affected population). This significantly increased the number of respondents to the questionnaire. At the same time, in most cases, these are with a student status, which would not have allowed us to

make more general connections. The other platform where I promoted the research and the questionnaire is the Roma internet community (mostly closed) groups, where presumably a large number of Roma graduate intellectuals are present. My initiative may also have been successful because I had a personal relationship with these institutions as a former Roma college student, on the other hand a former REF scholarship holder and a participant in the sessions of the Romaversitas Sunday group. On the other hand, in the case of closed Roma community (facebook) groups, I myself have been a member for several years. The UCCU Foundation also helped to reach as large a group of respondents as possible by publishing my call and a link to the questionnaire. In this case, too, a strong personal connection and attachment is typical, as I have been the volunteer coordinator of the UCCU Foundation for years. It is important to note that these organizations made the online questionnaire available to all their students and the community groups shared a link to it. The expansion of recruitment was also greatly aided by the fact that Roma intellectuals with a high reputation among the Roma community published a link to the online questionnaire on their own community page and personally asked their Roma intellectual acquaintances to complete it. The expansion of the circle of respondents was also greatly advanced by the fact that a significant number of non-Roma intellectuals and researchers conducting research on Roma topics - who have a wide range of knowledge in Roma intellectual circles - considered the research important and shared the link of the questionnaire. Since I am a member of the alumni facebook community group of both REF and ROMVER and Roma colleges, I sent the link of the questionnaire in a separate messenger message to the members of the closed facebook groups with an accompanying text. In the first phase and then in the last phase of completing the questionnaire, I resent the personal messenger message in case no feedback was received on the completion. As a result of the hundreds of messenger messages, a large number of questionnaires were completed, which significantly advanced the achievement of the largest possible number of respondents. As a result, only a very small proportion of the respondents belong to my personal acquaintanceship.

Overall, there was no need to extend the deadline for completion. 355 people completed the questionnaire. The range of respondents is naturally not considered representative. In the course of the analysis, I only tried to give a complex picture of the characteristics of the respondents on the basis of the large amount of data received on the socio-cultural relations of the respondents, their Roma intellectual roles, their ethnic identity and their social role. The aim could only be to get a picture of the respondents, but this cannot be generalized to the whole Roma intelligentsia in Hungary. That wasn't my goal. My goal was to get a comprehensive

picture of those in the sample, based on a database of significant and complex data and attempt to capture patterns using interviews taken as part of qualitative survey. The questionnaire survey paints a comprehensive picture of the basic variables that determine the composition of the study population and the attitudinal and action dimensions that emerge from the answers formulated in the questions.

On the one hand, the analyses of the given population served to provide a reliable system of criteria for the selection of interviewees, but beyond that, the data from the questionnaire, which dealt with very complex issues, provided a good opportunity to outline the profile of Roma graduates or currently graduating. In summary, the study population can be captured along and as a link between the following parameters. Sixty percent of those who have already graduated or are in the process of graduating are women. In the case of belonging to the Roma community group, significant differences can be observed for the three groups in terms of the proportion of men and women. In the case of the Oláh Roma group, the proportion is 29 per cent for men and 71 per cent for women. The proportion of men in the Beas community is even lower than that of the Oláh Gypsies, at only 24 percent. Thus, women make up three-quarters of the Beas community (76 percent). It follows from these two data sets that the male-to-female ratio will be well balanced for the Romungro group. In the language of numbers: of the 231 Romungro respondents, 103 are men and 128 are women. Thus, 45-55 percent of them appear in the group. If we examine the distribution of the survey sample by county, then we have to separate the place of residence of the issuing / source medium and the current place of residence. In terms of current residence, Budapest is home to almost a third of all respondents (94 people), followed by the largest share in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county (38 people), 34 people in Szabolcs-Szatmár Bereg county, 27 people in Hajdú-Bihar and 25 people in Baranya. Two thirds of the survey sample (72 percent) live in Budapest and the 4 counties mentioned. The statement of the settlements of origin indicates that they are mainly located in the mentioned 4 counties. This can clearly be related to the uneven territorial concentration of the Roma population in Hungary. Nationwide, Roma intellectuals come from areas where the Roma population has the largest proportion. The data clearly illustrates a mobility process. One of the components of this is that a large number of Roma graduates settle in Budapest, on the other hand, as a parallel process, those living in former villages move to larger cities after graduation, in most cases to the county seat. Based on the distribution by place of residence, we found that in the case of Roma linguistic / cultural groups, most of the Beas live in the village in terms of proportions, this is one third of all Beas graduates, while in Oláh Gypsies it is 28 percent, in the village. 19 percent

of the Beas live in Budapest, 24 percent of the Oláh Gypsies, and 29 percent of the Romungroes. The data received on the issue of the parents' Roma origin show a very high proportion of Roma-non-Roma mixed marriages. Almost a third of the 355 respondents (96 people, 27%) had either a mother or a father non-Roma spouse. Mothers of Roma graduates are less likely to choose a non-Roma partner than their father.

16 per cent of those in the sample grew up in a part of the settlement inhabited exclusively by Roma, but their current living environment can only be considered segregated as 6 percent. Most of them move to the predominantly non-Roma part of the settlement. In fact, the proportion of mixed settlements is not increasing either, but the proportion of people living in the predominantly non-Roma part of the settlement has increased to 52 percent, from the previous 35.

Examining the training areas of the sample, it is clear that a significant internal transformation process has started in the case of the training areas for each age group. Among the Roma who graduated, the fields of training have diversified and there is a high emphasis on those that previously did not seem accessible to Roma youth.

4. Main results of the interview survey

Out of the 355 people who filled in the questionnaire, 35 participants were selected during quota sampling, with whom I conducted narrative life-course interviews. During the selection, I considered the basic variables emerging from the questionnaire research, along which homogeneous subgroups were formed from the heterogeneously composed population. Thus, the interviewees were selected on the basis of gender, age, Roma origin, level of education, type of residence and variables / attributes of the field of training and also according to their proportion in the given subgroup. Due to the epidemiological situation, the vast majority of the interviews were conducted online in the form of a video call. In the case of the interview survey, I asked for a statement of consent in all cases, but during the presentation of the research results I also ensured the unrecognizability and unidentifiability of the person, although this was not requested by several people. From a research ethics point of view, I definitely considered this to be followed. In all cases, the interviews were recorded as audio recordings, with the prior consent of the interviewee, and then the one and a half - 2-hour interview texts were transcribed verbatim. In the systematic analysis of the vast text documentation, my main aim was to develop a coherent category system. With this, I made an attempt to capture patterns of a population

with a very heterogeneous composition and divergent perceptions. The dissertation presents and interprets the patterns that emerge from the narratives of life history and their main characteristics along the established categories. I support the interpretations with quotes from interview excerpts.

I present the research results in a thesis-like manner below.

The presentation and analysis of the interview texts were realized in the following structure:

1. Characteristics of the issuing / originating community

1.1. Linguistic identity of the issuing / originating community

Three groups emerged from the study of the linguistic identity of the interviewees. The first group includes interviewees who speak Romani or Beas, the second group includes interviewees in whose community of origin only the parents or grandparents speak the language, and finally the last group consists of interviewees whose community of origin neither parents nor grandparents speak the language. The three groups that emerged were mainly determined by the interviewees' belonging to the Roma linguistic / cultural group.

1.2. Characteristics of the elements of the issuing community of origin assigned to Roma culture

In addition to the linguistic identity of the interviewees, we asked separately if they remembered customs that they themselves attributed to Roma culture. Three distinct groups emerged from the narratives of the interviewees in this regard.

1.3. Attitudes towards institutionalized learning / schooling

In terms of the formation of intellectualism, we thought it was crucial to discuss separately the relationship of the community of origin to institutionalized learning and the attitude towards education in general. In examining the institutionalized learning relationship, we distinguished four groups that emerged from the narratives of the interviewees. These are the parenting attitude that supports learning (1), the parental attitude that supports learning but the community of origin that rejects learning (2), the parental attitude that supports ambivalent learning (3), and the parental attitude that does not support learning (4).

2. The identity component

2.1. Formation of identity strategy

This section of the chapter is devoted to examining separately whether there has been a change in the identity strategy of the community of origin in the case of the interviewees when they

became adults and intellectuals. If so, what external factor has changed. From the narratives of the interviewees, 6 different groups emerged and the common characteristics of belonging to each linguistic / cultural group were much less dominant in this issue. In the analysis, similarly to the previous chapters, I present the factors that trigger the change of identity along the groups emerged from different narratives.

2.2.Mating strategies

The discussion of the mating strategy in a separate subchapter is justified by the fact that mating can have an impact on the formation of the identity strategy. During the interview process, the interviewees themselves brought in the narratives of mating when they talked about living and developing their own identity. Based on the interviewees' findings on mating, we were able to distinguish two groups, the description narratives of the interviewees belonging to these groups showed common characteristics. One of the groups consisted of interviewees who preferred the Roma / Gypsy couple mating strategy, and the other group included those interviewees who did not insist to the Roma / Gypsy couple in their mating strategy. The views of the different groups of interviewees are related to gender, Roma cultural traditions in the community of origin and, to a lesser extent, belonging to a linguistic / cultural group.

2.3.Mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion

The discussion of exclusion-inclusion mechanisms was justified by the fact that it is discussed in the chapter on identity comparators of interviewees, because experiencing and processing this for the interviewees as a whole was emphasized in their narrative about living their Roma identity. In most cases, the interviewees reported exclusion in public schools, suggesting that while it is likely and the interviews confirm that they were affected by exclusionary atrocities in other areas, this was the most important arena for them to experience exclusion.

2.4.Dimensions of identity commitment

We considered it extremely important to ask the interviewees separately what they think about assuming their Roma identity. The results showed a strong correlation with discriminatory atrocities and the severe social situation of Roma / Gypsy society. This is because less than half of the interviewees choose their identity for themselves as the significant part of their personality. Most of the interviewees generally accept their Roma identity due to the reduction of prejudices against the Roma in the majority society or the encouragement of a underprivileged Roma society.

3. Roma intellectual role perception

3.1. Reasons for graduation/career choice

The results showed that for the vast majority of interviewees, the reason for choosing a career was significantly influenced by a negative attitude towards Roma, more specifically the exclusion or inclusion suffered in childhood and the current severe marginal situation of Roma.

3.2. Relationship with organizations supporting the formation of the Roma intelligentsia

Using the interview technique, we concluded that their joining to these organizations influenced their Roma intellectual role or, in the case of the younger generation, their ideas about their future role.

3.3. Their ideas about their own intellectual role

Discussing the views of the interviewees on this was one of the main issues of the dissertation. Their perception of their Roma intellectual roles is also crucially related to the marginal situation of Roma society, the exclusion experienced in childhood and later adulthood, and the role expectations of the majority and community of origin.

3.4. Role expectations of the professional-social community in relation to the Roma intellectuals

In their narratives, the vast majority of the interviewees emphasized the role expectations expressed by the professional and social community. In connection with the role expectations of the professional and social community, two groups emerged, the circle of Roma intellectuals (1.) identifying with the role expectations of the professional / social community and the circle of Roma intellectuals (2) rejecting the role expectations of the professional / social community.

3.5. Ideas about the effectiveness of the role played in the integration of Roma society

After the majority of the interviewees reported in connection with the role expectation of the professional and social community that they mainly expect Roma intellectuals to solve the serious marginal situation of the Roma and this was also reported by interviewees who rejected or were critical of organizations supporting the formation of Roma intellectuals, we discuss in a separate chapter how they themselves view the effectiveness of Roma intellectuals in the field of Roma social integration. Based on the narratives, we discuss the issue according to the subgroups formed on the basis of the opinions of the interviewees.

4. Summary

My dissertation is applied social science research, I examined the relationship between the self-image and the field of action of Roma intellectuals. The main question focused on what factors determine perceptions of the role of the intellectual and the actual field of action. The primary goal of the survey was not to examine the narrow Roma political elite that formed opinions. The applied social science approach justified a broader interpretation of the concept of the Roma intelligentsia, which limits the study population by obtaining a higher education degree. The research shows that Roma graduates do not always hold actual intellectual roles, however, if my research had focused only on the narrow Roma elite intelligentsia, the internal division, different role perceptions, divisions and fault lines of Roma graduates would not have been visible.

The research confirms that among today's Roma intelligentsia, social participation is intensified in intellectual role interpretations. I point out three key components of this: 1. The support institutions providing scholarships direct Roma young people to an intellectual career where they necessarily come into contact with the "Roma issue", social science training (sociologists, social workers, cultural anthropologists), pedagogical training (kindergarten teachers, teachers), who are expected to play a role in segregated kindergartens and schools. 2. The majority society - explicitly or implicitly - expects Roma graduates to actively contribute to solving social "problems" related to Roma, and in many cases expect extremely serious social problems to be solved and handled by Roma graduates. 3. the internal motivation of the Roma to become intellectuals is to take part in the rise and modernization of their "own people", in many cases regardless of the field of education in which they obtained their degree. This missionary consciousness has become an essential element of the intellectual role of the Roma graduate.

The hypotheses formulated in the course of the research were confirmed in the light of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

My first hypothesis assumed that the roles of the graduate Roma intellectuals and those currently studying in higher education were determined by the special situation of the Roma minority in Hungary and intended to meet the role expectations of the majority society. In the course of the analysis, it became clear how in various ways the experience of minority identity and the formation of a positive self-image were realized. Completely independent of belonging to the Roma community, for those in the sample, the main dimensions of experiencing identity are exclusion, prejudice, and the discrimination they experience. Therefore, the negative

attitude of the external social medium, the endangerment of ethnic self-identity, is the shaper of this identity. The experience of belonging to a stigmatized minority is such a characteristic that is only especially significant in the case of the Roma in Hungary. The moral imperative of wanting to do things for the Roma plays a primary role in intellectual perceptions, which is also expressed as a clear expectation in the direction of the expectations of the majority society.

In the second hypothesis, I assumed that the graduates' ideas about the roles of Roma intellectuals significantly define their problem interpretations, their susceptibility to different solutions, their actions in the local space. The results of the questionnaire survey and the narratives described in the interviews point in the same direction in this context as well. Intellectual role perceptions are shaped along several components, but there is a common view that they decisively determine the field of action of each participant.

The research results clearly refute the generally formulated literature on Roma intellectuals, which assumed or considered justifiable that the Roma intellectuals are distancing themselves from the Roma society that issued them. In practice, this meant that successful Roma, graduate Roma intellectuals, assimilated into the majority society in exchange for their professional success, as part of this, not only did they move away from their former community of origin, but Roma culture no longer provided them with a basis for identification. The finding also assumes that the loss of ethnic identity of successful Roma as a result will strengthen the one-sided image of the majority society about Roma. There is no Roma middle class because graduates are assimilated, so Roma continue to be the ones who they are, poor. The research results clearly refute this simplistic interpretation. It can be clearly seen from the interviews what difficulties the intellectuals must face if they are wishing to take on the role of intellectuals. The feeling of “I don't belong here, but I don't even belong there” is really a striking feature. However, it has not been clearly demonstrated that graduating Roma are moving away from their former cultural milieu. Findings in the literature were made in the early 2000s and related to the first and second generations of the Roma intelligentsia. We can consider the intellectuals who make up the Roma elite, as an exception, who, as part of their political careers, took on the protection of the rights of the Roma and worked to ensure their equal opportunities. In the case of the generation over 45 years of age included in the research sample - which represents almost a third of the population - we find no trace of denial of identity, distancing from Roma culture. In the case of the young generation, this is definitely not the case. There is a growing tendency in the strategies to cope with the endangered identity to form a positive self-image, to rediscover the Roma identity, to take it proudly. They are forced to do so because even if they deny their

Roma identity and try to hide, it does not work at all, as the majority society still considers them Gypsies on the basis of their racial characteristics. However, it also emerges from the interviews that an acculturation process can indeed be observed among graduates in terms of living standards. However, this should be interpreted as a consequence of a process of social mobility / citizenship rather than a conscious diverge from Roma identity. Comprehensive research on Roma graduates is of paramount importance not only in terms of intellectual roles. The results of the study suggest that a small proportion of them do not consider themselves to be Roma intellectuals, nor do they play such a role. It is important to point out that this large number of Roma graduates play a key role in the social integration of the Roma, their acceptance by the majority society through the middle class, but it does not intend to directly promote it through their activities.

List of Publications related to the dissertation

Klára Gulyás

2020 A cigányok reprezentációjának változásai. A romák történetének megjelenítései címmel tudományos előadás a Változás és változtatás:kihívások és válaszok interdiszciplináris megközelítésben című online konferencián. 20202. november 18. Szervező: Miskolci Egyetem BTK Kulturális és Vizuális Antropológiai Tanszék.

2020 Roma szegregátumok szociális városrehabilitációja: Makó Honvéd városrész példája. In: Péti, Márton; Schwarcz, Gyöngyi; Ress, Boglárka (szerk.) Multidiszciplináris tanulmánykötet a Kárpát-medence és magyarságának egyes társadalmi, gazdasági, környezeti jelenségeiről és kihívásairól. Budapest: Nemzetstratégiai Kutatóintézet 65-71.

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