**Central European University**

**Course Name: Roma identity in the XXIst century: from oppression to mobilization**

Number of credits: 2

Semester /Academic year: Fall 2017-2018

Instructor:

Iulius Rostas, Assistant Professor, Chair of Romani Studies

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**Goal of the course**

The aim of the course is to equip students with knowledge about key issues related to Roma identity and movement and develop skills to analyze narratives on Roma.

**Description of the course**

How many Roma are there? Who is Roma and who is not? These questions shaped the narratives on Roma by governments and scholars soon after Roma’s arrival in Europe. To date, answers to these questions vary depending on the position of authority of those who investigate them. However, very few existing narratives acknowledge the role and knowledge produced by Roma themselves, including their answers to the questions above.

This course will explore Romani identity and movement, as well as forms of oppression against Roma such as Antigypsyism, by using analytical tools that move beyond the dominant discourses on Roma. The course will analyze the above notions using critical social theories and literature on social movements.

The course will also link the above concepts by analyzing how Antigypsyism influences the formation of Roma ethnic identity; how Roma history becomes racialized; and how the process of “othering” with regard to Roma shapes. Linked to the above, the course will explore how Antigypsyism explains forms of Roma mobilization and how categorizations and narratives about Roma, promoted by non-Roma leads to Romani mobilization of Roma social actors.

Students will acquire knowledge on Roma identity, history, and diversity; will understand the main concepts related to identification/categorization of Roma and social movements; and will familiarize themselves with critical issues in ethnic and racial studies, including Romani Studies. Students will also appreciate the democratic values of equality, tolerance, privilege, and respect for diversity in society.

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**Course** **requirements**

Students will be expected to attend all classes and read in advance the required readings. As the course consists of short lectures followed by discussions and group work, students are expected to participate during the classes. Students will have to write an essay at the end of the course. The students’ evaluation will consists of the following:

attendance - 10%

class participation - 15%

assignments – 25%

final essay - 50%.

**Structure**

The course will consist of 12 meetings organized in three clusters. The first cluster focuses on key concepts on identity, the second cluster analyses these key concepts in relation to Roma, and the third cluster is centered around ethnic politics and mobilization.

*Cluster I*

**Meeting 1** **Who is Roma? Who is not?**

Instructor will present the course objectives, structure, and requirements.

The class will explore the different methods of ethnic identification and/or categorization and the social processes around identity. The impact of categorization methods on self-identification and the narratives on Roma will also be discussed.

Readings:

Jenkins, Richard (2000) *Categorization: Identity, Social Process and Epistemology*, in Current Sociology, July 2000, Vol. 48(3): 7-25.

Hancock, Ian (1997) *The Struggle for the Control of Identity*, in Transitions Vol. 4, No. 4 September 1997.

Additional Readings

Surdu, Mihai; Kovats, Martin (2015) *Roma Identity as an Expert-Political Construction*, in Social Inclusion (ISSN: 2183-2803) 2015, Volume 3, Issue 5, Pages 5-18

Ladanyi, Janos; Szelenyi, Ivan (2001) *Social Construction of Roma Ethnicity in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania During Market Transition*, in „Review of Sociology”, 2001, Vol. 7, nr. 2, p.79-89.

**Meeting 2** **Romani Identity between Ethnicity and Race**

The class will present concepts of race and ethnicity and their relevance in the case of Roma. Components of identity, what are ethnicity and race and types of identity will be discussed.

Readings:

Nicolae Gheorghe and Iulius Rostas (2015) *Roma or Ţigan: The Romani Identity – Between Victimisation and Emancipation*, in Roma Rights 1 2015: In Search of a Contemporary Roma Identity: In Memoriam - Nicolae Gheorghe

Jaspal, Rusi; Cinnirella, Marco (2012). *The construction of ethnic identity: insights from identity process theory*. Ethnicities, 12(5), 503-530

Additional Readings:

McGarry, A. (2013) *Romaphobia: the last acceptable form of racism*, London: ZED Books, 2016, chapter 3 Romani Identities: How Romaphobia distorts Romani Identity, pp 85-126.

Cohen, H. E. (2009) *The Components of Ethnic Identity: A Cross-Cultural Theory and Case Study of Jewish Student Activists*. In Shmuel Wygoda and Israel Sorek, Educational Eclectics, Jerusalem: Mandel Foundation, 2009.

Assignment: Each student will prepare one page presentation on the concepts of ethnicity and race.

**Meeting 3** **Identity and Culture**

The class will debate the link between identity and culture and will identify the challenges in using the concept of culture in connection to identity. Cultural relativism and essentialisation as a way to reinforce oppression of different groups will also be discussed.

Readings:

Nagel, Joane (1994) *Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture*. Social problems 41.1 (1994): 152-176.

Oprea, Alexandra (2005) *Child Marriage a Cultural Problem, Educational Access a Race Issue? Deconstructing Uni-Dimensional Understanding of Romani Oppression*, in Roma Rights 2, 2005: Rights and Traditions.

Additional Readings:

Karoly, Mirjam (2005) *How to Talk about This to the 'Outside'?*, in Roma Rights 2, 2005: Rights and Traditions.

**Meeting 4** **Roma and Historiography**

The class will analyze the representation of Roma in history books and the attempts by Roma intellectuals to build counter-narratives to these representations using specific examples from different countries.

Readings:

Liebich, Andre (2007) *Roma Nation? Competing Narratives of Nationhood*, in Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, Volume 13, 2007 - Issue 4

Hancock, Ian (2002) *We Are the Romani People*, University of Hertfordshire Press, chapter 6.

Additional Readings:

Aladár Horváth.(2006) *Gadjo Nation, Roma Nation* . Roma Rights Quarterly 2-3:53-58.

*Cluster II*

**Meeting 5** **Discrimination**

The meeting will focus on the definition of discrimination in its different forms: individual, institutional and structural. The class will discuss the relations among these different discrimination as forms of oppression. The students will be able to recognize the forms of discrimination and analyze the consequences as experiences of oppression for marginalized groups.

Readings:

Goldston, A. James (2001) *Roma rights workshop in Italy: new developments in Anti- Discrimination Law*, Roma Rights, 10 April 2001.

O'Higgins, Niall (2010) *“It's not that I'm a racist, it's that they are Roma”: Roma discrimination and returns to education in South Eastern Europe*, International Journal of Manpower, Vol. 31 Issue: 2, pp.163-187.

**Meeting 6** **Segregation, Patriarchy and other forms of Oppression**

The class will define and discuss segregation as a specific form of discrimination, patriarchy as a form of dominance and other forms of oppression faced by Roma.

Readings:

Ryder, Andrew; Rostas, Iulius; Taba, Marius (2014) ‘*Nothing about us without us’: the role of inclusive community development in school desegregation for Roma communities*, Race Ethnicity and Education, 17:4, 518-539.

Kóczé, Angéla (2015), *Speaking from the Margins*, in Roma Rights 2 2015: Nothing About Us Without Us? Roma Participation in Policy Making and Knowledge Production

Brooks, Ethel (2015), *The Importance of Feminists and ‘Halfies’ in Romani Studies: New Epistemological Possibilities*, in Roma Rights 2 2015: Nothing About Us Without Us? Roma Participation in Policy Making and Knowledge Production.

Additional Readings:

Rostas, Iulius (2012) *Ten Years After: A History of Roma School Desegregation in Central and Eastern Europe*, Budapest: CEU Press, Conclusion, pp.

**Meeting 7** **Antigypsyism: origins and definition**

The class will explore the intellectual origins of antigypsyism and the attempts to define it.

Readings:

End, Markus, (2012) *History of Antigypsyism in Europe: The Social Causes*, in Hristo Kyuchukov (ed) New Faces of Antigypsyism in Modern Europe, Prague: Slovo 21.

Martin Holler (2014) *Historical Predecessors of the Term “Anti-Gypsyism”* in Jan Selling, Markus End, Hristo Kyuchukov, Pia Laskar and Bill Templer (eds) Antiziganism- What’s in a Word?, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, including comment by Herber Heuss, p 82-99

Additional Readings:

Alliance against Antigypsyism, *“Antigypsyism – a reference paper”,* July 2016, available at: <http://antigypsyism.eu/>

**Meeting 8** **Antigypsyism: content and manifestations**

The class will discuss the concept and will analyze examples of situations when the concept is relevant.

Readings:

Van Baar, H. (2014) *The Emergence of a Reasonable Anti-Gypsyism in Europe*. In: When Stereotype meets Prejudice: Anti-Ziganism in European Societies, Timofey Agarin (ed.) Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2014, 27-44

McGarry, A. (2013) *Romaphobia: the last acceptable form of racism*, London: ZED Books, 2016, chapter 1 Romaphobia: Marginalization and Stigmatization in Europe, pp 1-41

Assignment: Students will receive two group assignments on antigypsyism in academia. Each group will have to read a text and identify ideas and formulations that might be regarded as manifestations of antigypsyism.

*Cluster III*

**Meeting 9** **Mobilization, Participation and Romani Politics**

The class will analyze the growing mobilization of Roma in their struggle for equality in European societies. The institutions developed by Roma, leadership style and major challenges will be analyzed during the meeting.

Readings:

Gheorghe, N and Mirga, A (1997) *The Roma in the Twenty-First Century: A Policy Paper*. Princeton New Jersey - Project on Ethnic Relations

Rostas, Iulius (2009) *The Romani movement in Romania: institutionalization and (de)mobilization*, in Nidhi Trehan and Nando Sigona (eds.), Romani Politics in Contemporary Europe: poverty, neo-liberalism, and ethnic mobilisation, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Additional Readings:

Mcgarry, Aidan (2008) *Ethnic Group Identity and the Roma Social Movement: Transnational Organizing Structures of Representation*, in Nationalities Papers, Volume 36, 2008 –Issue 3.

Assignment: Two groups will present arguments for and against Roma participation through civil society organizations.

**Meeting 10** **Romani Movement or Romani Movements?**

The meeting will serve as an opportunity to discuss the Romani movement in the context of existing conceptualization of social movements within academia.

Readings:

Charles Tilly & Sidney Tarrow (2015) *Contentious Politics Second Edition Fully Revised and Updated*, OUP, chapter 7 Social Movements p 145-169

Tilly, Charles (1993) *Social Movements as Historically Specific Clusters of Political Performances*. Berkeley Journal of Sociology 38 (1993): 1-30. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41035464.

Additional Readings:

Meyer, David S., and Whittier Nancy (1994) *Social Movement Spillover*. Social Problems 41, no. 2 (1994): 277-98.

Peter Veermersch (2006) *The Romani Movement: Minority Politics and Ethnic Mobilization in Contemporary Central Europe*, New York: Berghahn Books.

Assignment: Students will prepare for a debate on the plural nature of Romani mobilization: Romani Movement or Romani Movements?

**Meeting 11** **The future of Romani Movement**

The students will discuss their visions on the future of Romani movement.

Readings:

SIDNEY G. TARROW (2011) Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics Revised and Updated Third Edition, CUP. Conclusion: the future of social movements Pages 259-274

Brooks, Ethel C. (2012) *The Possibilities of Romani Feminism*. Signs 38, no. 1 (2012): 1-11.

Mirga-Kruszelnicka, Anna (2015), *Romani Studies and emerging Romani scholarship*. In Roma Rights 2 2015: Nothing About Us Without Us? Roma Participation in Policy Making and Knowledge Production.

Assignment: Students will receive the final paper topics and will have 72 hours to complete it.

**Meeting 12** **Feedback on final papers**