STUDIA UBB MUSICA, LXII, 1, 2017 (p. 155 – 183)
(RECOMMENDED CITATION)
DOI:10.24193/subbmusica.2017.1.12

THE ROMA MUSICIANS OF MAGYARPALATKA AS PRESERVERS OF TRADITIONS

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SUMMARY. Serving the community through playing music as a role, gradually was filled by gipsy musicians in the Carpathian basin, between the 18th and 20th century. Playing music became a profession and came in hand with a high reputation in society. Through performing music, the gipsy musicians had a tighter contact with the local population as well as they could rise above other ethnic gipsies of the society. Their integration however is not complete. They guard and keep their original native language and operate separately as "gipsy musicians". In the central part of the Great Plain the methods for teaching music were rather different. Most gipsy families passed on their skills and knowledge to the next generation within the family, most of them self-taught, and followed the learning by doing principle. These families' children were given an instrument into the hand as early as possible, (possibly by the age of 5 or 6) and as soon as they were able to play a few melodies, they followed the bands to different occasions to play alongside them. Following this path, children of musician families learnt the followings at the same time: ability to play an instrument, to be a good chamber musician, correct behaviour in different situations, norm system and their role and place in the community. By the age of 15, they could lead a band (violinists only) on smaller occasion and could earn their living. The fine motor skills used in the instrumental playing can be inherited and also learnt. These skills were integrated on a psychological, biological and social way, into the professional, family and social life of the gipsy musicians. It is very important to mention the learning by hearing self-educating method, as the main used method for learning music and learn to play an instrument. The gipsy musicians used it during their childhood as well as in the later stages of life. This complex way of learning was absolute key factor to their employment and their chance to earn money. The musicians of Magyarpalatka served their own village's musical need as well as most of the surrounding areas too, let there be Hungarians, Rumanians or gipsy communities. The music played in their heads, grouped by ethnicity or

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personal preference of the villagers. They always knew perfectly well to whom what and how to play or perform. The bands regularly played in several (4 or even 8) villages, therefore the music was somewhat given and taken between different communities. As the musicians were delivering a service to the people, the musicians would never identify themselves with the costumers (the majority of the population around them), but they could get emotionally attached to them through entertaining people by playing their music. Although the musicians were a separate group of people from the common peasants, they had a vital social role in the village life. (The relationship was with each served group mutual.) The gipsy musicians were highly sought after, therefore it was quite natural to pass the profession on to the next generation, for example in Magyarpalatka, we know of 68 professional musicians through five generations! These musicians were extremely popular especially during the 20th century and so a great legacy of them was left in the area for the next generations. (This dynasty was not the only one with such impact; there were many others within the Carpathian basin.) The current generation of this dynasty - due to the globalisation which involves the whole world - has been reduced to the absolute minimum, despite of their ability to accommodate to any circumstances. The profession of musicians went through a transformation of status. Through modernisation, music becomes more and more machine like, due to urbanisation the small villages loose most of their population who cannot employ the local traditional musicians. However the musical material keeps on living in dance houses (ceilidh events), and through performances thanks to the revival movement. This keeps the current traditional musicians employed, reinforces the local culture and identity, it makes the younger generation to study and polish the traditional folk music and dance.

Keywords: passing on, Magyarpalatka, gipsy musicians, the profession of musicians, socialisation, self-taught, ethnicity, group, accommodation / adaptation, mediate

Part I

Making music has always been regarded as somewhat eccentric. There were times when it was a shameful, humiliating and indecent occupation or, conversely, a prestigious profession earning people's respect. However, irrespective of the opinions society has formed of musicians, constantly changing musical tastes pose a serious challenge to those wishing to play music since what is expected of them by the audience or the „market" in general is not bound by any aesthetic or artistic considerations, thereby imposing a restriction on the freedom, values and traditions of

performance. That is why different social groups tend to become musicians in different historical periods. Roma musicians have occupied a prominent place among these groups since about the 18th century.

Roma Musicians

"Those who made their living by performing music for others, had, from time immemorial, come from the periphery of society, were despised and remained strangers… Roma musicians were also strangers originally and, as is well-known, became instrumental musicians not only in Hungary but also, to the same extent, in Romania, the Balkans and Turkey. Many of them, although to a lesser extent, started to work as musicians elsewhere, too."[2]

As was common in all of the Hungarian language territory from the 20th century, the musicians of Magyarpalatka also separated from a peripheral Roma group. They were Hungarian Romas, also called Romungros[3], who had arrived in the first wave of immigrants and therefore were almost fully assimilated. They mostly forgot their language. The history of how musicianship became a Roma trade dates back to a remote past.[4]

The movements used by them in playing an instrument (motor skills) can be inherited and learnt. Roma musicians also undergo psychological, biological and social integration in their special professional and family communities.[5]

The Learning Process

Roma musicians began to teach their children to play an instrument in a more or less identical way. Choosing an instrument could have been influenced by the following factors:

- the child started to learn to play his father's instrument;
- they chose an instrument either he or his father took a liking to;
- they chose an instrument that was missing and therefore needed in the father's band;
- the child began as a contrabass player, then went on to play the viola, and, finally, the violin if he was talented and hard-working enough.

[2] Bálint Sárosi: Hungarian instrumental folk music, 1996: 13-14.
[3] Csongor Könczei: How did Kodoba change into Codoba? The appearance of secondary identities in a family of Roma musicians from Mezőség 2009: 3.
[4] A short history of how musicianship became a Roma trade; Appendices
[5] On motor skills; Appendices

Roma musicians do not generally talk much about any musical pre-training, although this may also result from some sense of pride – they do not need to practice too much to be the member of a band. What remains a fact, however, is that they acquired most of their skills through self-instruction. After having learnt a few tunes they were taken to dancing events and were made band players from the age of five or six. (There are several stories about children sleeping under the "gypsy bench".) When they turned twelve or fifteen, they were allowed to play for money and could perform at minor events on their own (without another *prímás* [first violinist] or viola player [*kontrás*]. The whole process then could be evaluated as one of socialization[6] - young musicians could acquire not only instrumental skills and a number of different tunes but also what it means being a musician in the broadest sense of the word, i.e. attaining norms of behaviour in practice and in its entirety. Most of the musicians could also play accompanying instruments, which derived from the process of learning as well as from situations in which changing instruments was inevitable partly because of helping out other groups or replacing someone who was missing, not to mention the natural aspiration for every musician to be able to play another instrument.

Self-instruction, or learning by ear is of pivotal importance, this being the working method from early childhood and remaining the automatic one later on. (Imitation-based learning is the most instinctive anyway). Self-taught musicians can be generally said to have much better musical memories, so they are more sensitive and receptive to music and learn more quickly. (This can be compared to a more intensive working of a sense of organ replacing or supporting another weakened or missing one.). This skill of theirs has developed to a degree that they can remember a tune on hearing it for the first (or second) time. This remarkable musical memory enables them to recall a melody heard on TV or the radio very quickly and any time in the future, a key factor of their adaptation strategy and of the way handing down the trade of music to Roma people.

[6] "Socialization is considered to be a social and cultural process in which the participants are in interaction and carry out a complexity of behavioral and oral activities. During the interaction process individuals being integrated into and by a given culture and/or society experience patterns and norms through these activities, which influence their personalities and attitudes in a way that they should be able to come up to the given social group's expectations. Such a way of "knowledge acquisition", which is based on interaction with others, is called social learning by sociology. This type of learning is built on the imitation of models and patterns, by which individuals can obtain knowledge, abilities and states of mind that are useful, or at least acceptable for society… In the process of socialization norms governing one's behavior are internalized and become part of one's character, which is radically different from *pretension* or *hypocrisy* in its everyday sense." (Varga Sándor 2009: 7, *my translation*)

Picture 1

Passing the Inheritance

From the left: two first violinists (*prímás*)
Márton Kodoba and his son Florin Kodoba
Photo by Tamás Henics, 2002 Budapest

The Musicians of Magyarpalatka as Disseminators of Folklore

Magyarpalatka is a small village of 1218 inhabitants, situated in the internal Mezőség area. The population, as in all the other nearby villages, consists of three nationalities: Romanian, Hungarian, and Romani. Concerning their religions, Romanians and the Romani are Orthodox believers, whereas the Hungarians are Calvinists. Roma musicians used to be Calvinists with Hungarian having been their mother tongue, but they have got integrated into Romanian religion.

"Mezőség, the region in the middle of Transylvania, has preserved most of the Renaissance and Baroque heritage, and, developing it, has shaped a peculiar Transylvanian style of dance and music. Hungarian new styles and other foreign influences reached it only later and were adopted after a thoroughgoing selection. It was here that the coalescence and interaction of Hungarian, Roma and Saxonian cultures had achieved the highest level of integration of Transylvanian music and dance. The constant exchange of dances and songs in the Mezőség area has led to a complete merger of Hungarian and Romanian peculiarities and resulted in a real bilingualism of music and dance."[7]

"In the Mezőség area, as far as folk dance music is concerned, there is a considerable amount of common Hungarian-Romania tune repertoire which I view as something belonging to and used by both ethnic groups regardless of origin."[8]

The musicians of Palatka serve the Hungarian, Romanian and Roma inhabitants of their own village and of the nearby settlements alike. The music in their memories is broken down to ethnicities as well as to individuals. They have always been perfectly aware of what to play for a particular person at a particular time. As they regularly visit different villages, they also convey music from one place to another. They frequently produce "tunes of their own" by creating a new variant from the songs picked up here and there. The village dwellers do not object, as a rule, to tunes coming from outside and accept them relatively easily, thereby unifying the musical material. By such a fusion the three different cultural groups, strongly divided in other respects, have come to a musical "unity".

The musical interaction of different ethnic groups and villages and their peculiar musical tastes have brought about a kind of coalescence in which Romanian, Hungarian and Roma tunes are hardly separable. It is rather just the stylistic features of one or the other ethnic group or their rural or urban characteristics that can be identified in them. "…Through their musical and dancing skills they are both mediators between different cultures and creators."[9] All this has resulted in an amazing mixture of ethnic and local features in their music, as shown by observations coming from outsiders: a Hungarian from Hungary will find Transylvanian music Romanian, whereas

[7] György Martin: Dialects of Hungarian folk dance. In: Hungarian Ethnography VI. Folk music, folk dance, folk games 1990: 434-5, my translation.

[8] István Pávai: Aspects of the relation between folk culture and national culture in Transylvania. In: Studies in Folk Music, Kriza books 3.1999: 155, my translation.

[9] Csongor Könczei Correlation between musical and dance improvisation. In: Annals of the Kriza Ethnographic Society, ed. by Dóra Czégény and Vilmos Keszeg 2000: 300, my translation.

a Romanian person from the Regat (the territory of the Old Romanian kingdom) will judge Transylvanian Romanian music Hungarian, i.e. Transylvanian music is "over-Romanian" for a Hungarian and "over-Hungarian" for a Romanian. According to Bálint Sárosi there are no conspicuous stylistic differences in the repertoire of musicians who belong to various ethnic groups but perform in the same area: "This means that playing music for two peoples having co-habited for a long time in a territory inhabited by mixed population is not analogous to speaking two languages."[10] An additional feature of musicians is their role both as preservers of traditions and innovators.

We do not have the lyrics of too many dance music tunes, since they have not come down to us. That may be the reason why their localization is not so important. The musicians – but mostly their wives – knew a number of Romanian and Roma song texts, though they usually related the melodies to particular individuals. The lyrics of tunes linked to festivities and significant events of life, however, were commonly known and often sung by the musicians themselves.

Their dances carried the features of several villages, and, having attracted great attention everywhere, they must have served as examples to follow.

Thus, the cultural divide between ethnic groups, social layers and villages is given a new interpretation, is rearranged and washed away. Sooner or later, the transmission of tunes and dances results in their being transformed into tradition.

Events that Occur with Musical Service

Musicians were hired to perform at balls, dances, festivities and significant events of life. Apart from these occasions there were spontaneously initiated parties. They also played at the invitation of neighbouring villages. In a village, there could have lived several families of Roma musicians, who regarded the nearby settlements without Roma musicians as important sources of income. Settlements without Roma musicians generally had Hungarian musicians but they were not the exclusive musical entertainers of the given community.

Dances organized for children, the *kicsi tánc* 'dance for the little ones' and other festive occasions also provided an excellent opportunity for handing down traditions. The children of the good dancers could also enter

[10] Bálint Sárosi: A multilingual band of Roma musicians in Transylvania. In: Hungarian folk dance music, ed. by Márta Virágvölgy and István Pávai 2000: 353.

into closer contact with the musicians, which strengthened their commitment to dance folklore and enabled them to exert an influence on the upcoming generations' songs, dances and related customs. They also played an important role in shaping and transmitting traditions and strengthened their local connections, thereby gaining a prestigious position in the community.[11]

During the 19th-20th centuries, five generations – 68 musicians altogether – left their artistic trade to their successors in Magyarpalatka.

Picture 2

The Socialization of Juvenile Musicians

Florin Kodoba playing the violin, Rémusz Radák playing the viola

[11] For the traditional methods of learning dances see Sándor Varga: Dancer – musician relations in the Mezőség region. In: Dance traditions – preservation and continuation, ed. by Gábor Barna, Eszter Csonka-Takács and Sándor Varga, 2007, Sándor Varga: On the traditional and institutionalized forms of dance learning. In: Folk review, 2009, Sándor Varga: Examples of the relation between dancers and musician in the Belső-Mezőség area, 2010.

Picture 3

Emeric Molodovan (viola), Márton Kodoba (first violin), Márton Kovács, nicknamed "Puki" (double bass), with the children to be seen in the top photo in the background
Source: Miklós Teszáry 1986, Vajdakamarás

Part II

Dynasties of Roma Musicians of Magyarpalatka

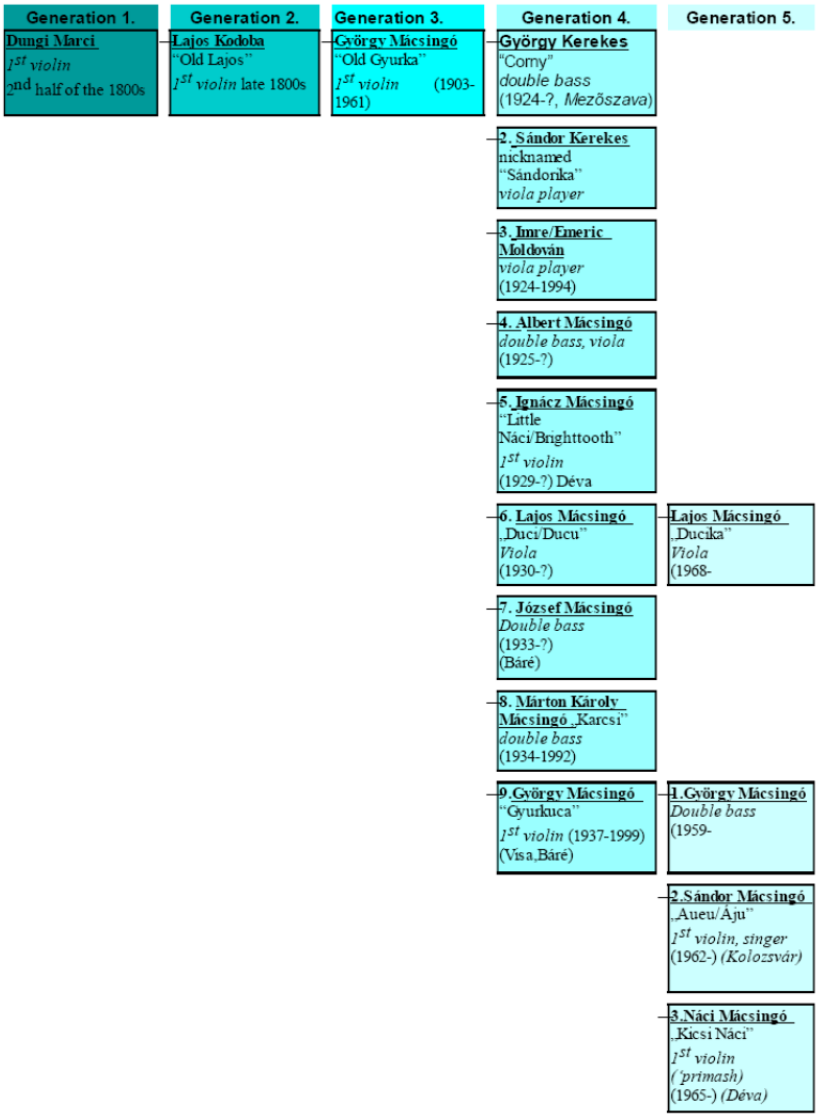
The musicians of Palatka have always been considered to be outstanding, which is proved by the fact their names and family relationships have been commonly known, so have their professional skills by which they are ranked. That is why their descent can be well traced on the basis of the memory of the locals as well as the community of musicians, the records of the Reformed Calvinist Church and the wooden grave-posts in the cemeteries. The musicians were called "Gypsies" (Romas) in the village, which meant that the local Romas were almost exclusively musicians (or their relatives). This classification also referred to the place they occupied in the social hierarchy.

The musicians of Magyarpalatka that are known to us can be divided into five generations. Table *1/a, b* features musician Romas, their wives and daughters only, so it is obvious that there are plenty of musicians in the fourth generation, i.e. from about the 1940s. Not all of these musicians worked in Magyarpalatka, but it was their place of origin. During the third and the fourth generations – with overlaps between them, of course – there were even five or six bands working at the same time, apart for occasional formations consisting of weaker or less popular musicians. Now, with the fifth generation on stage, only one or two bands can be assembled. There are representatives of the third and the fourth-generation even among the musicians of today, as has always been the case. According to András Jánosi, string music flourished in villages between 1930 and 1990.[12] It can be concluded from the changing number of bands that there must have been a a growing claim for village string music from a about the 1920s. It was the 40s that saw the largest number of Hungarian musicians and the highest demand for them. Before that time, there may have been fewer musicians living in Palatka, and as for the present, what can be witnessed is a decrease of interest in this branch of culture.

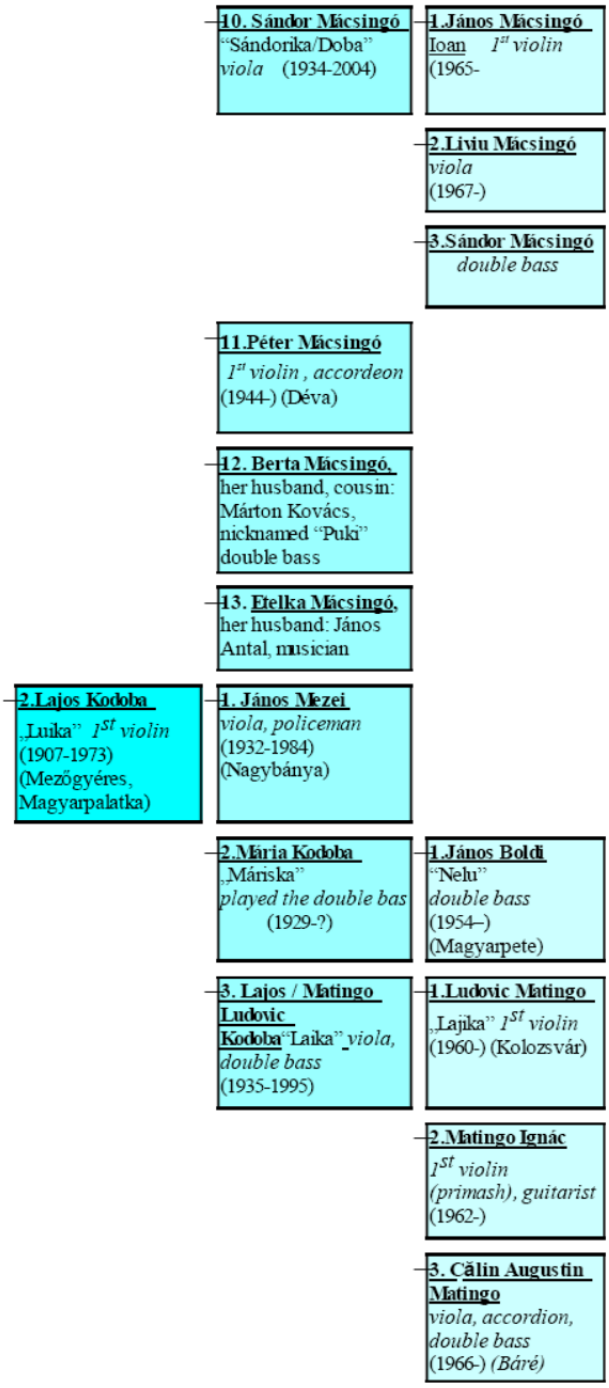
[12] András Jánosi, ed. Folk Music from Magyarpalatka, text of the sleeve of the CD recording Béla Kodoba and his band, 1995

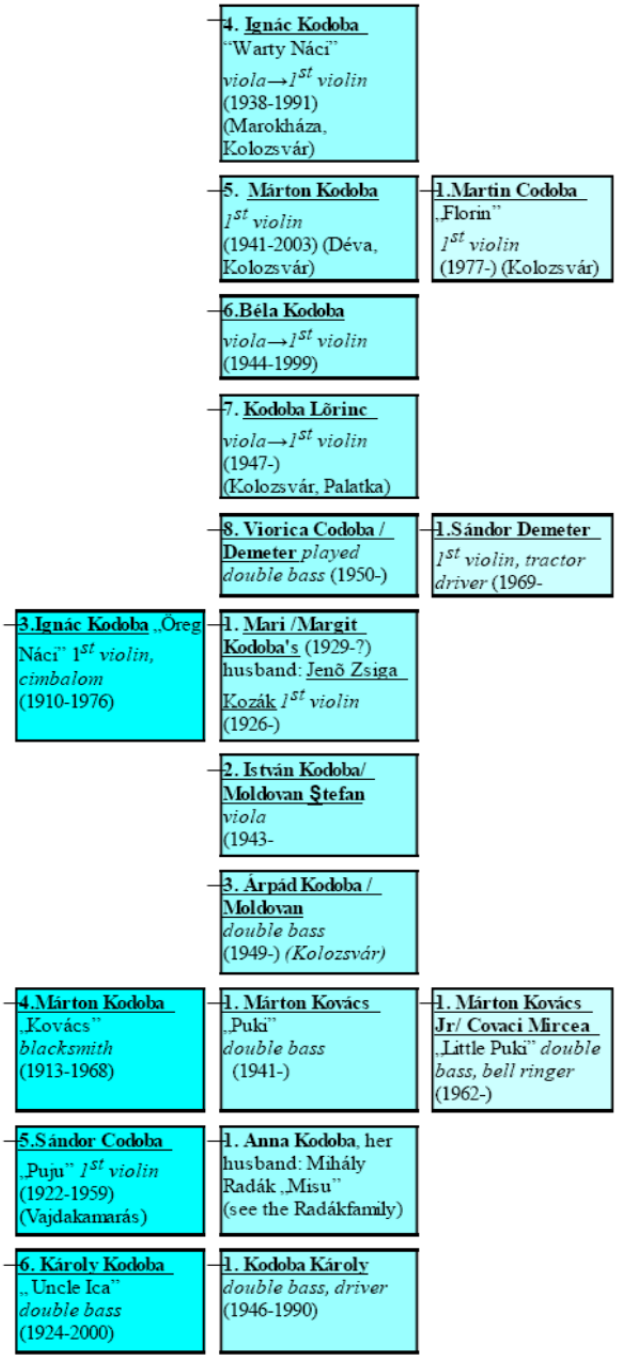
Table 1 a, b

Dinasties of Roma Musicians of Magyarpalatka[13]
a, the Kodoba Family

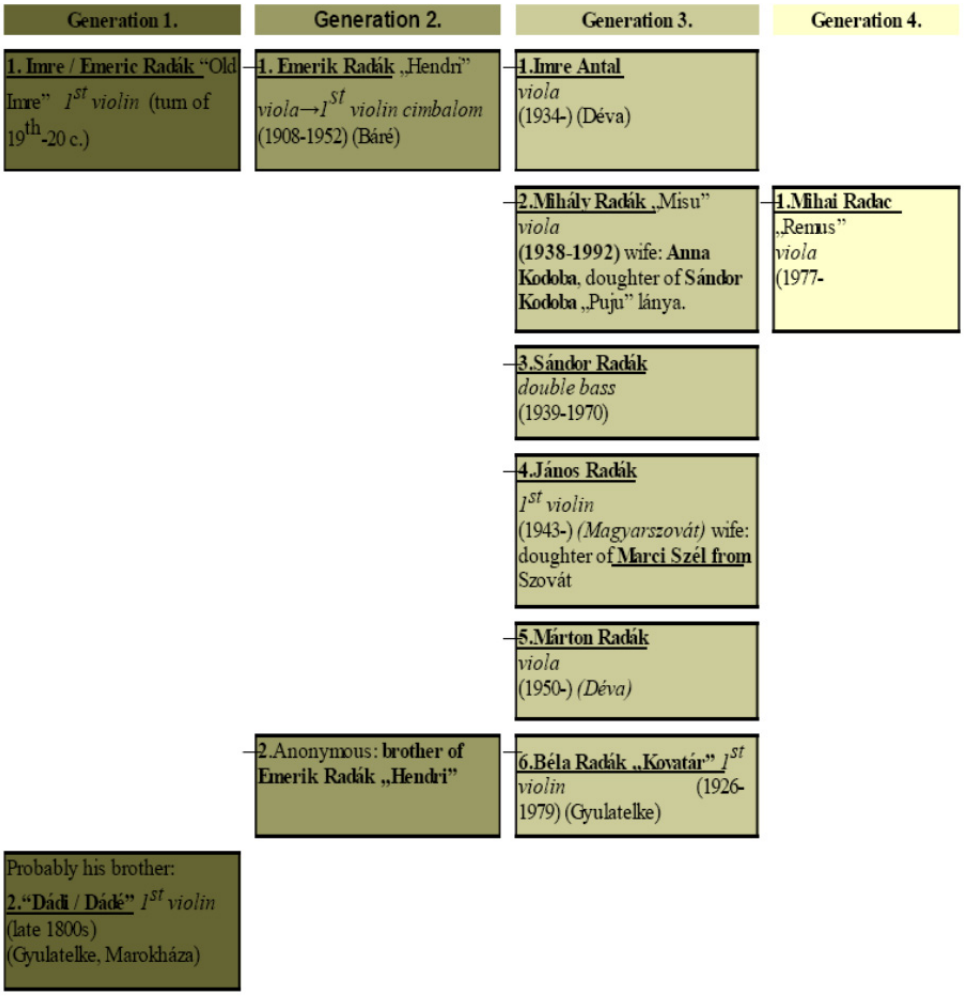


[13] Made on the basis of data supplied by Norbert Busai, Csongor Könczei, Sándor Varga, Dániel Varró and myself.


10. Sándor Mácsingó
"Sándorika/Doba"
viola (1934-2004)
1.János Mácsingó
Ioan 1st violin
(1965-
2.Liviu Mácsingó
viola
(1967-)
3.Sándor Mácsingó
double bass
11.Péter Mácsingó
1st violin , accordeon
(1944-) (Déva)
12. Berta Mácsingó,
her husband, cousin:
Márton Kovács,
nicknamed "Puki"
double bass
13. Etelka Mácsingó,
her husband: János
Antal, musician
2.Lajos Kodoba
„Luika" 1st violin
(1907-1973)
(Mezőgyéres,
Magyarpalatka)
1. János Mezei
viola, policeman
(1932-1984)
(Nagybánya)
2.Mária Kodoba
„Máriska"
played the double bas
(1929-?)
1.János Boldi
"Nelu"
double bass
(1954–)
(Magyarpete)
3. Lajos / Matingo
Ludovic
Kodoba"Laika" viola,
double bass
(1935-1995)
1.Ludovic Matingo
„Lajika" 1st violin
(1960-) (Kolozsvár)
2.Matingo Ignác
1st violin
(primash), guitarist
(1962-)
3. Călin Augustin
Matingo
viola, accordion,
double bass
(1966-) (Báré)


4. Ignác Kodoba
"Warty Nácí"
viola→1st violin
(1938-1991)
(Marokháza, Kolozsvár)
5. Márton Kodoba
1st violin
(1941-2003) (Déva, Kolozsvár)
1.Martin Codoba
„Florin"
1st violin
(1977-) (Kolozsvár)
6.Béla Kodoba
viola→1st violin
(1944-1999)
7. Kodoba Lõrinc
viola→1st violin
(1947-)
(Kolozsvár, Palatka)
8. Viorica Codoba / Demeter played double bass (1950-)
1.Sándor Demeter
1st violin, tractor driver (1969-
3.Ignác Kodoba „Öreg Nácí" 1st violin, cimbalom
(1910-1976)
1. Mari /Margit Kodoba's (1929-?)
husband: Jenõ Zsiga Kozák 1st violin
(1926-)
2. István Kodoba/ Moldovan Ştefan
viola
(1943-
3. Árpád Kodoba / Moldovan
double bass
(1949-) (Kolozsvár)
4.Márton Kodoba „Kovács"
blacksmith
(1913-1968)
1. Márton Kovács
„Puki"
double bass
(1941-)
1. Márton Kovács Jr/ Covaci Mircea
„Little Puki" double bass, bell ringer
(1962-)
5.Sándor Codoba
„Puju" 1st violin
(1922-1959)
(Vajdakamarás)
1. Anna Kodoba, her husband: Mihály Radák „Misu"
(see the Radákfamily)
6. Károly Kodoba
„Uncle Ica"
double bass
(1924-2000)
1. Kodoba Károly
double bass, driver
(1946-1990)

b, the Radák family



Important pieces of information that can be drawn from the family trees are:

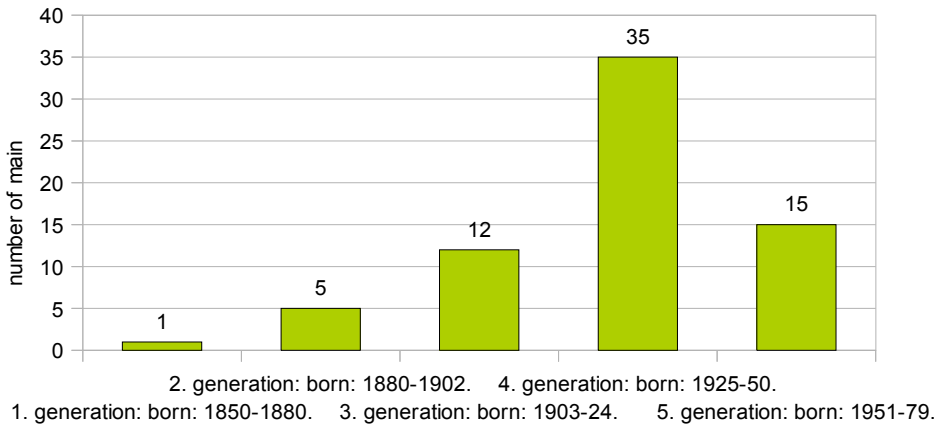
- data on their movements;
- habits of marrying into other families of musicians;
- ways of adaptation to different musical tastes;
- fluctuation of band members.

Their movements (changing places of residence, etc.) can be seen as swarming out of a central community of Roma musicians. A musician was usually invited to play for the same public in another village (or villages), and constant commuting often made resettling necessary. For Romas without landed property or cattle this did not cause too much trouble. All that these independent and flexible people had to do was to gain the confidence of a village community and to accept their cultural and social customs. Their marriage habits were also in favour of moving places. Roma musicians usually married into families of other Roma musicians, thereby having a better chance of getting a job, creating a continuity of the trade as well as setting up professional connections. A prospective husband frequently played music together with the woman's father or brothers. For example, Imre Radák "Hendri" played the viola for Lajos Kodoba, his father-in-law. During the fifties, Ignác Kodoba, "Old Náci" played music together with "Hendri", then, in the sixties, with his son-in-law, Zsiga Kozák, a 1st violinist (primash) from Budatelek. Mihály Radák, "Misu", a viola player, married Anna Kodoba, daughter of the 1st violinist (primash) Alexandru/ Sándor Codoba "Puju". The 1st violinist Márton Kodoba's wife was the granddaughter of a primash called Boca Nicodin, from Mócs. The 1st violinist György Mácsingó "Gyurkuca"married Veronika Pap, daughter of Pop Alaxandru "Kovatar", a primash and a trough scooper (covatăr = trough scooper). She occasionally played the double bass. In 1957, he went to live and perform with his father-in-law in Visa. Mácsingó Berta, the daughter of György Mácsingó, "Old Gyurka", also a 1st violinist, married Márton Kovács "Puki", a double bass player. Another daughter of his, Etelka Mácsingó, married a musician called János Antal.

The diagram below can be illustrative of how many Romas chose the musical profession:

Figure 1

The Percentage of Roma Musicians of Magyarpalatka over Five Generations (1850-1979)



(diagram made by the present author)

The dynasties of musicians were the most populous between the 40s and 60s (i.e. when young people had reached 15/16).

The diagram may give an overall view, but, unfortunately, it cannot present when the demand for music in villages was the highest, for there are not enough data available to, demonstrate it. We should be informed on how active an individual musician was at a given point of time, i.e. how regularly he could work as a professional musician and how much income such occasions could have provided.

Thus, what the diagram above represents is not the level of demand for musicians at a point of time. All that can be inferred from it is when there was a sudden increase or decrease in the number of Romas learning music, but these trends cannot be related to specific years either. Besides, none of the data charted refer to how long vivid interest in music had been maintained. The question of how promptly the Roma community responded to the musical claims of the nearby villages also remains open. We have no knowledge of whether the popularity of learning music was generated or influenced by improving prospects of employment and we cannot tell whether an individual, starting to learn music because it was a popular profession,

could guess if it would remain so when he reached an age and perfection that made him capable of earning his living. What follows from this is that it is important to make a distinction between the demand for the profession and the popularity of musical studies, including the importance of transmitting musical inheritance. The process of transmission does not necessarily mean a conscious and long-term planning of one's career; it is rather an instinctive form of learning how to adapt to social conditions, which is based mainly on imitating certain patterns. Parents do not usually train their children to become musicians, it is rather the children that take up the profession pursued by their parents.

The income that could be made through making music would be an important issue of how to map the fluctuating demand for the profession. It would, however, also be necessary to have exact data on how active individual musicians were at a given period of time.

A third important factor might be the forms of occupation that did not fit in with the traditions (tours abroad, performances in Hungary, "dance houses" from about 1980), which were common but their influence cannot be estimated because no data are available on the amount of money raised or on the frequency of such occasions.

The diagram, however, clearly demonstrates the intensity of the growth of popularity of the musical profession. There were 5-6-year-olds put to work although they began to be paid from about 12 to 16. What, however, was generally decided at a rather early age was who might be trained to be a musician? A tremendous increase in the number of trainee musicians can be observed between the 20s and the 50s. Unfortunately, this has been reduced to almost nil, as there is just one child, the son of a "primash", who is learning to play music.

Studying the diagram, one must also take into account how long musicians were or could have been active. Sometimes there were as many as three generations represented in a band. They could play music until their death, but by now the situation has radically changed: there is hardly any demand for musicians still alive and only few of them do actually play because it is really difficult to make a living by being a musician. It should also be noted that all of them were equally popular. There were more or less permanent groups that were invited more frequently, others, however, could not have been so fashionable, therefore the decrease in the number of musicians could not have been so abrupt as represented by the columns.

Working and Resettling in Nearby Villages

The settlements with the largest communities of Roma musicians are Kolozs (Cojocna), Magyarszovát (Suatu), Mezőszopor (Soporu de Cîmpie), Magyarfráta (Frata), Nagysármás (Sărmaşu), Feketelak (Lacu), Buza (Buza), Cege (Ţaga), Szék (Sic), Bonchida (Bonţida), Visa (Vişea).

Palatka musicians regularly performed in Mezőkeszü (Chesău, a village with Hungarians in the majority), Mezőgyéres (Ghirişu Român, with Romanians in the majority), Visa (Hungarian majority), Magyarszovát (Hungarian majority), Mocs (Mociu, Romanian majority) and Vajdakamarás (Vaida-Cămăras, Hungarian majority), but they were also frequently invited to weddings in Apahida (Apahida, Romanian majority), Marokháza (Tăuşeni, Romanian majority), Kötelend (Gădălin, Romanian majority, Magyarpete (Petea, Romanian majority), Mezőszava (Sava, Romanian majority), Légen (Legii, Romanian majority), and Botháza (Boteni, Romanian majority. In Magyarkáján (Căianu) it was the Romanians that offered them employment and Ignác Kodoba had been to Fejérd (Feiurdeni) in the Borsa Valley several times.

The territory of the groups of villages that are situated in about 40kms from Palatka covers the centre of the Mezőség region, which has cultural features distinct from the western, northern, eastern and southern sections of the same area. These differences can be observed in the dance types, styles of dance music and in the similarities and dissimilarities in the order dances are performed at an event.

As mentioned before several members of the third – and most populous – generation moved to the neighbouring bigger musical centres or richer settlements, mainly to Báré (Bărăi, Romanian majority) and Magyarszovát and continued their musical career there. Gyurka Mácsingó “Gyurkuca” married a girl from Visa but moved to the more affluent Báré to seek better employment, so the descendants of the Mácsingó family are mostly Báré musicians. Several of those from Palatka went to live in Kolozsvár, Gyulatelke, Mezőszava, Visa, Báré, Vajdakamarás, Mezőgyéres, or even Déva, some of them are still living in these settlements. The main reason for changing villages could have been marriages or better chances of finding employment either as musicians or in any other job that allowed them make some extra money by playing music at home or in Palatka.

The map below features the region the Magyarpalatka musicians have worked in (i. e. their “market”) together with the villages of their resettlement. Musical centres are indicated in bold, settlements where Magyarpalatka Roma musicians have been employed are set in italics. The

settlement names underlined refer to places they have regularly been invited by the local communities to play at their weekend dances. Resettlements are marked in red, the nearby market towns are printed in green. The circle diagrams next to the settlement names show the ethnic composition of the given community on the basis of statistical data from 1941[14] (blue: Romanian, red: Hungarian, green: Roma, other).

Map 1

The region Magyarpalatka musician performed in during the 20th century

(Carried out by the present author)

[14] Árpád Varga E.: The ethnic and denominational statistics and census datas of Transylvania between 1850-2002 Laszlo Teleki foundation ProPrint Budapest – Csikszereda *http://varga.adatbank.transindex.ro/*

Scarcely ever did any bands but the Palatka musicians perform in the small villages to which they were invited, since these had hardly any bands of their own. There often were several ensembles (of different descent) attending the settlements at the periphery of the range of the musical centres. The map clearly shows that all the music centres are situated a longer way from Palatka than from one another (since Palatka people resettled in Báré, too), which allows to conclude that theirs was the most popular band in the neighbourhood. The boundaries of their circle of influence is relatively well indicated by the adjacent musical centres. The settlements most frequently visited by them had a Hungarian majority, those they played in less frequently were villages dominated by Romanians. Déva and Brassó do not figure in the map, because some of the Palatka people went there to do seasonal work in agriculture, although after some of them had been employed as musicians, they resettled in these towns, too. Unfortunately, no reliable data are available on the proportion of Romanian and Hungarian invitations. Even the road network of Mezőség is based on present-day maps, although it may not have influenced the level of employment to any remarkable extent. It was common for the musicians to walk or to take a cart to the other settlements of the region.

The immense popularity of the Palatka musicians during the 20th century is obvious, as they left their marks both in time and space. It is, however, to be added that there were several dynasties of the same kind in the Carpathian basin, but, because of processes of globalization and modernization, their number has been considerably reduced, despite their flexibility and ability to adapt to new conditions, which means that the profession has undergone a change in its general status. What we witness is an overall dominance of routine. Owing to urbanization, village communities are falling apart and are no longer in the position to support musicians. Folklore, however, survives and traditions are protected by the revival movement as well as on the stage or, eventually, in dance houses, offering job opportunities to musicians still active, strengthening local culture and identity and making the young generations study the traditional forms of music and dance.

Appendices

3. A Short History of How Romas Came to Be Associated with the Musical Trade

The Romas' inclination to play music is evidenced by a regulation issued by Emperor Joseph II as early as 1782. It stipulates that Romas are not allowed to play any music before they finish their work in the fields. A census of that year shows that of the 43,787 Romas living in Hungary at that time 1,582 were musicians. Pursuing different branches of craftsmanship (shoeing-smith, nail-smith, gunsmith, gunpowder maker, firework-maker, bullet-maker, tinker, copper-smith, trough-maker, loam-maker, maker of Jew's harp, knives, stamps and needles), Romas capable of playing musical instruments could easily learn songs favoured by a given village community. Musicians came primarily from the first wave of Hungarian Romas and formed a few famous bands. Panna Cinka, János Bihari and János Lavotta were widely known and acclaimed first violinists of the time.

Even then, the music they played was not their own but that ordered by their employers. In their language, they do not even have a noun to mean 'art', which is closely related to the fact that for the several millennia of their history they have never formed a national, political or economic entity, and, as far as culture is concerned, they have always served other nations' requirements. This ability to unconditionally adapt themselves to any circumstances was the main support that made Romas musicians.

Since their first mention in about the 16th century, when they were kept by the Turks as slaves, musicians have separated from other Romas. In the beginning, up to the end of the 18th century, making music could have been a secondary source of income. Censuses from that time suggest that several trades were practised simultaneously, such as blacksmith and musician, musician and horse-dealer, etc. Towards the end of that century, music bands had multiplied in towns, and Romas also wandered about the country as singers. The public, however, expected more from stroller musicians than accompaniment to their singing. They were also supposed to entertain their audiences with dances, mummery and bear's dances, a kind of continuation of what medieval jesters did in royal courts. It was not, therefore, uncommon that lords or the public, eager to be entertained, humiliated Roma musicians, who, in contrast to Hungarian mentality, took all this in good part.

It was László Czegei Vass who had made the first mention of a Roma musician playing in a village pub as early as 1716, which suggests that Roma musicians appeared in the villages as early as in the circles of nobility. A statistical survey of 1782 registers 1,582 Roma musicians in Hungary.

After the Reformation the Church raised even stricter objections to dances than before and declared them directly sinful. Needless to say that such a judgment influenced public opinion condemning the musical trade as inferior. However, Romas turned a deaf ear to laws and rules, which offered a large scope to dances musical entertainment in general. They were not too much bothered by ecclesiastical disapproval, since they were not devout believers, besides, being a musician meant a rise in the social hierarchy and opened up a way to accommodating themselves to society. These considerations could also have been instrumental to the musical trade having become a most attractive career for them by the end of the 18th century. Their musical talent derived from their capability of adapting to the ever-changing circumstances as much as to the preservation of traditions which had been handed down from generation to generation. It was their performing rather that creative that they stood out with.

Those working for lords were supposed to be familiar with the German, Italian, French, Polish and the Hungarian repertoire. Besides, they had the opportunity to play at public places of entertainment, such as restaurants of towns and village pubs.

The emergence of the verbunk (German werbung) is connected to the recruitment of soldiers during the reign of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. Recruiting young men was accompanied with music and dances that had already been known to village people before. Today the word “verbunkos” refers not only to a type of dance but also a whole period of musical history (1800-1860), although the term itself came to be used only later. Roma musicians joined the Hungarian musical tradition at a time when it was absorbing the greatest number of foreign elements. At that time, musicians were either Romas, playing folk music mostly, and German or Czech musicians playing in churches, theatres and symphonic orchestras as employees of aristocrats. The West European polyphonic patterns and harmonies were picked up and imitated by Roma ensembles. Consequently, it was vitally necessary for them to learn from their rivals as well as take over their repertoires in order to adapt themselves to musical traditions. Their excellent musical memory notated music (and the capability of reading music at all) unnecessary for them. They learned music and acquired novelties quickly. Not being bound to written notes liberated the player’s attention and provided a wider scope for showing his skills, which meant a considerable advantage over the rivals. They stood out with their swiftness of performance and straining for effect as well as with their ability to cater for the musical tastes of their audiences, a feat requiring a good knowledge of human nature.

They spoke good Hungarian as early as the 18th century, and by the end of the same century, the musical profession had become the most prestigious among the Romas.

The Revolution and War of Liberation of 1848/1849 brought about a great victory for the Roma musicians. They were enlisted in the battalions as recruiting musicians, whose task was to rouse the soldiers to enthusiasm during a fight or entertain them in times of rest. It was not only in the battlefield that they were present. They also accompanied their lords to the sessions of the national assembly. After the fall of the fight for independence the grief of lost liberty found its expression on their violins and gave comfort to Hungarians. All these situations provided employment and a source of income for them. By the turn of the 19th-20th centuries, nearly every village had one, some of them even more Roma music bands, who could and had to cater for the musical tastes of not only the village dwellers but also those of higher social circles. That was the way the music and dances of the upper classes were continuously transmitted to the peasants. In Transylvania, there lived and worked a number of Roma musicians, who made use of the opportunity to continue earlier traditions even after the "verbunk" style reshaped musical tastes. For example, in certain parts of the region inhabited by the Székely the tradition of monophonic music or bordun accompaniment. In the Mezőség and Kalotaszeg areas Roma bands consisting of three members were formed which played harmonized music, but their harmonies did not follow the functional Viennese patterns and remained simpler, resembling the earlier modal harmonies. This allowed them to play ancient, even pentatonic, melodies in a manner adapted to the former style. The same Roma bands in villages preserved the tools and styles of dance music improvisation in a form more perfect than the string and dulcimer Roma bands referred to above.

After the Austrian-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 the Romas became the musicians of the gentry (the former nobility), of the civil workers of municipalities and of the bourgeoisie, which can be considered to have been a dividing line between urban and rural Roma musicians. Their respective repertoires also showed enormous differences. Urban musicians were gradually distancing themselves from the Hungarian "verbunk" style and were beginning to play "magyar nóta" (i.e. a form of 19th century Hungarian popular songs, one of a number of styles collectively referred to as *Gipsy music*), waltzes and operetta hits, due to external demands raised mainly by the middle and upper classes.[15]

[15] Bálint Sárosi: Gipsy (Tzigane)music Edition Gondolat Budapest 1971.

In the Horthy era Romas could not find permanent employment, so they made their living as day labourers, craftsmen and musicians.[16] During the 2nd World War Romas were detested and hundreds of thousands of them were murdered in Hitler's concentration camps. There also prevailed, however, a romanticized image of them as sensuous and freedom-loving people, not fitting into the norms of bourgeoisie society.[17]

The changes after 1945 meant survival and escape from extermination, however, they also suffered heavy economic losses. The disappearance of the former consumers dealt a blow to the market of their musicianship and other traditional Roma trades. Consequently, the historical capital they had accumulated through hard work and ordeals vanished all of a sudden. The economic and political power of the former ruling classes was obliterated by the land distribution begun in the spring of 1945. Members of the poor peasantry and farm labourers were given plots but the Romas were excluded, notwithstanding the fact that more than a third of them had worked as agricultural day labourers before. True, most of them did not even claim any land.

The proletarization of the 50s and 60s brought about the debasement of Roma musicians. According to a 1968 survey, the number of Roma musicians in employment was 3670, with about the same number of those employed in part-time jobs.[18]

Professional Roma musicians of the 60s played popular songs by known composers as well as excerpts from operettas and even classical music rearranged for their particular set of instruments, not to speak of current pop hits.[19] What they aimed at was to find as much employment as they could. Providing musical accompaniment for dance ensembles opened up new perspectives for them. This kind of repertoire survived into the decades after the 2nd World War. In addition, it was the Roma bands that offered the only opportunity of entertainment in small towns and villages. The communist state solved the Roma problem by declaring that it did not exist in Hungary, so it was not supposed to be discussed any more. They also got jobs like any other Hungarian citizen, which provided a certain degree of social safety. However, they were not acknowledged as an ethnicity with their own culture, they were considered as average members of the society of socialist Hungary. Roma musicians, however, were judged differently. They

[16] Zsuzsanna Bódi: Gipsy professions in Hungary (Edition Naput Budapest 2011).
[17] Bálint Sárosi: Gipsy (Tzigane)music Edition Gondolat Budapest 1971.
[18] István Kemény: From full time employment to unemployment and to the unforeseen economy (Ethnic research magazine year 9 volume 4. 2000).
[19] László Vannai: The traditional music of Szatmar region and its education at primary special art school level (Dissertation at Teachers College Nyiregyhaza from year 2007).

were positively discriminated and obtained passports and visas even to the ”West”, i.e. the US, West Germany, France or the Soviet Union. Their task was to advertise the country and spread this slice of our culture, which was frequently and falsely identified with genuine Hungarian folk music.[20] They earned a good living abroad and raised a considerable amount of Hungary’s foreign currency reserves. In the mid- and late 50s, it was common for Roma bands as employees of a state-run cooperative or state-financed professionals to play in restaurants or to provide musical accompaniment for folk dance ensembles. Their work was coordinated by a state organization called “National Entertainment Centre”. Every restaurant was obliged to hire a Roma music band directed by this office. Consequently, Roma musicians playing in restaurants or employed in any other jobs, enjoyed considerable privileges. When Saturday was still a working day, state-employed musicians got a day off to allow them to play at weddings usually held at weekends. They also did their best to seek education, earning college or even university degrees.[21]

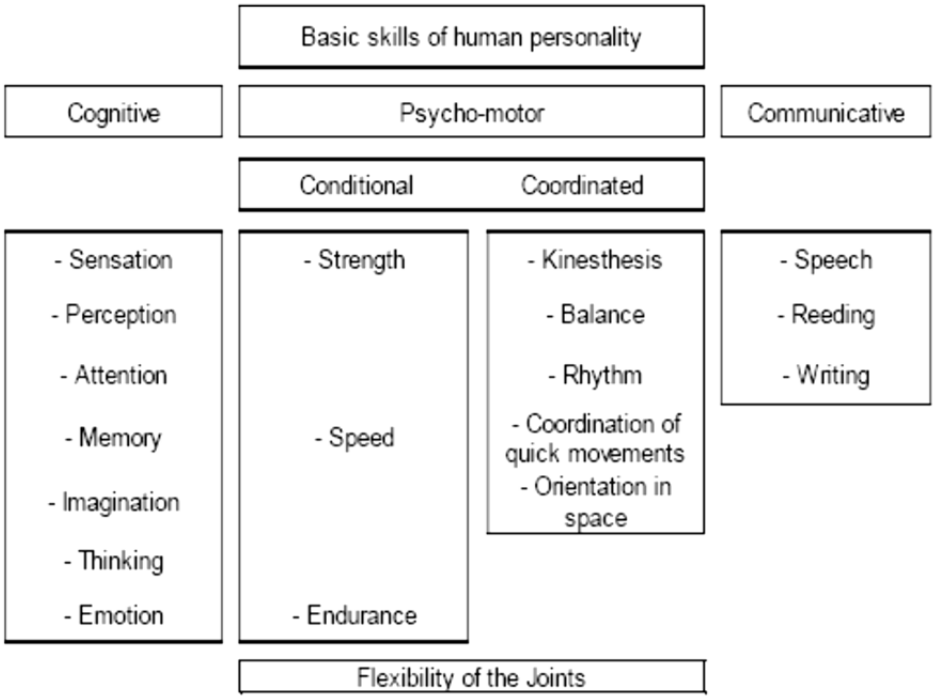
The change of the political system in 1989/90 put an end to this practice. Roma musicians were gradually forced to give up their positions at restaurants as the latter were being privatized. They were not protected by state-run institutions any more, but musical tastes had also changed. They were replaced small groups consisting of a keyboard player, a drummer and a singer who were able to perform beat, rock and disco alike.[22] Many of the Romas tried to adapt themselves to this new style, but the changes were too quick for them to be able to break away from the traditions maintained by successive generations. The dance-house movement that was beginning to emerge in the 1970s required so many revival musicians that threatened the existence of Roma musicians even as providers of accompaniment to dance events.[23] It was the Transylvanian Roma bands that became the primary representatives of revival, whereas Roma musicians were almost totally ousted from villages in Hungary. In towns some of them remained as special attractions for foreign tourists. All these deplorable events left thousands of Roma musicians unemployed after the political changes, which posed a challenge for the first time that even this extremely flexible ethnic group, endowed with remarkable adaptability skills, failed to face.

[20] Béla Baranyi: "I was never considered to be a gipsy, but an artist" the gipsy music of the past today. (in.: Amaro Drom (12) 20-21. 2002)
[21] László Vannai: The traditional music of Szatmar region and its education at primary special art school level (Dissertation at Teachers College Nyiregyhaza from year 2007).
[22] Attila Retkes: The mournful successors of Pista Danko (Magyar Hirlap 5.10.2004.).
[23] László Vannai: The traditional music of Szatmar region and its education at primary special art school level (Dissertation at Teachers College Nyiregyhaza from year 2007).

Today more and more Roma musicians have no other choice but look for other sources of living. What is most problematic is the lack of expertise, since they have inherited nothing but musicianship for generations and have never had any training in any other field. Despite all this, even today there are an enormous number of young talents, who are turning to classical music or jazz, and those coming from families of restaurant musicians are joining or have already joined the revival movement. Music will probably remain the main point of professional orientation for the Roma, in view of the simple fact that several generations have handed down their art to the following one. What can, however, be assumed is that musical genres other than the traditional ones will also come into play.

4. Motor Skills

"Motor skills are either inherited (innate) or learned components of intentional movements. They are divided into two main groups: coordination skills and skills and conditioned skills. The movements and components of performance that fall into these categories evolve – at least to a certain limit – with the changes of environmental conditions during the process of ontogenesis and can be developed with consciously and systematically applied stimuli, i.e. training. … Motor skills appear in a complex system called action, in which further components are present, such as psychological, biological and other environmental factors. Consequently, action includes and integrates biological, psychological and social content produced by the personality of an individual…



[24]

The development of different movements essentially means a change in behaviour provoked by environmental conditions (action), which emerges through individual experience and practice. More exactly, developing motor skills involves the acquisition of actions and series of actions leading to new skills and the raising of those already acquired to a higher level. All this is effected the interplay of action and cognition, which contains elements like formation, improvement, consolidation, application and retention…

In assessing achievements in movements, special importance is attributed to skilfulness as a complex capability of cooperation whose result generally appears in some special activity (e.g. one can be a skilful skier, dancer or tennis player…

The ability to coordinate one's behaviour allows adaptability to changing environments and effectiveness of one's actions, e.g. the ability to orient oneself in time and space, the complex ability to give responses and to conform to a situation, the ability to act and take decisions in time.

[24] Tibor Király – Zsolt Szakály: Developing movements and motor skills in childhood, 2001, 120, my translation

According to Nádori's definition[25], "the coordination of movements means the regulation of the dynamic impulses, i.e. a series of muscle contractions appearing in performing a particular technique." (Polgár Tibor – Szatmári Zoltán 2011.)

Translated from Hungarian by Pál Lieli & Adam Römer

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[25] László Nádori: Theory and methodology of training,1991, my translation.

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