

ture even decades after they have been forgotten by the Bulgarians. In the past, as well as in the present, the two cultures are both the subjects and the objects, and mutually take advantage of each other.

The contacts and relationships between the Roma/ Gypsies and the others are especially intertwined in the sphere of entertainment. The taming and training of animals, music, dance, or prostitution are specific activities that place the Gypsies in a specific spot on one side of the social norm and on another – in their own community. With many of their specific activities, the Gypsies fill a gap in the economy infrastructure to a certain extent and in a specific way. They provide specific labour and services, some of which are very limited, and some – seasonal, and some have slowly died out due to the changes in the socio-economic environment and lifestyle. And other types of services, like maintaining public hygiene, have become popular among the ethnos, due to the urbanization and the expansion of the cities. Some of the services are provided only by the men, others – by both men and women. Children are sometimes taken as helpers too.

Although the Gypsies/ Roma live in a comparatively closed society within the populated area of their residence, in many cases they become inseparable part of the everyday joys and problems of the others. And here, again, the Gypsy male is alone in a male company, but in other situations is accompanied by his wife.

No matter how rigid the social gender relationships in the Gypsy/ Roma community are, modern times dictate that they implement some changes. More and more young men and women, while preserving their ethnic identity, try to seek their new place in the society and to take on a road different from what the generations before them could take. More and more, they find meaning in education in order to have a more prestigious profession; they start to create families with equality between the partners. Adapting to the new conditions, and hence distancing themselves from the traditional way of living, the young women begin to taste the intrinsic human rights unknown to them in the past – the right to love and be loved, and the right to have a life choice for their own future.

In the last decades, gender relationships in the Roma ethnos have combined patriarchy and contemporariness....