

## 11.2. Why the doors are not open for us? Finnish Romani Music, Gender (Masculinity) & Difference

*Kai Viljami Åberg*<sup>275</sup>

### A b s t r a c t

The society of the Finnish Kaale (Roma) is essentially patriarchal, but the position of men within it – and thus the construction and expression of masculinity – varied depending on age, marital status, family bloodline, name and reputation and set of values (e.g. religious, secularism). Thereby there are many meanings in Romani music and the construction of gender in music depend the multiple contexts of Romani music (which comprises musical genres beyond mainstream culture). In this paper – based on my intensive fieldwork among the Roma more than 25 years - I will demonstrate how musical identities are regard as continuously changing and adapting phenomena. Thereby also for Roma, identity has always been constructed in relation to hegemonic powers such as nationalism, regionalism, patrons of the arts, socialist ideologies and European Union officials (Silverman, 2012, p. 55). Identities vary according to the opportunities of the situation and areas of culture concerned, and they are bound to the contexts within which they constructed. The earliest documentation of Finnish Romani music emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in both scholarships and the arts. Anyway, through the Romani history, Finnish region has been a crossroad between the East (Russia) and the West (Europe). Different musical cultures and styles have flow together. Because the new ethnic landscape and migration from Eastern Europe (mainly from Romania and Bulgaria), the new trend is kind of hybrid style of Romani music mixing different styles together. Thereby the role of Romani music from different origin is important for the “global Romani identity” process. In this paper, I question some of the “taken-for-granted” conceptions and consider an alternative to the existence and practices of Romani music (Finnish, Russian, migrants from South-eastern Europe, like Romania and Bulgaria) in Finland. I ask, what kind of musical and music cultural communication the Roma from different countries have with the Finnish Roma (in historical, cultural and social contexts).

**Keywords:** *Finnish Roma, Romani music, masculinity and identity.*



## 1. Introduction

The music of the Finnish Roma has always been marginalized and this oral tradition has lived only among the Romani people. Nowadays this music – mainly traditional songs – carry belief systems, norms and values that can be view as a political movement by the underground artists as their way to counter against to the hegemonic culture of popular music. In generic sense, hegemonic - also in a musical sense – is the way in which a ruling group establishes and try to maintain their rules as a part of larger project to dominate others.

The society of the Finnish Kaale (Roma or Gypsy) is essentially patriarchal, but the position of men within it – and thus the construction and expression of masculinity – varied depending on age, marital status, family bloodline, name and reputation and set of values (e.g. religious, secularism). Thereby there are many meanings in Romani music and the construction of gender in music depend the multiple contexts of Romani music. Thereby in this paper – based on my intensive fieldwork among the Roma more than 25 years - I will demonstrate how musical identities are regard as continuously changing and adapting phenomena. Hence also for Roma, identity has always been constructed in relation to hegemonic powers such as nationalism, regionalism, and patrons of the arts, socialist ideologies and European Union officials (Silverman 2012: 55). Identities vary according to the opportunities of the situation and areas of culture concerned, and they are bound to the contexts within which they constructed.

The approach of my paper is ethnographic, which based on intensive field work during the long period 1994 – 2018 among the Roma. What comes to the gender identity, and especially masculinity, analyses also draw upon my own experiences as a male musician performing different genres of Roma music, like traditional songs, global Gypsy music, religious music, such as Pentecostalism and popular music performance by the Roma.

## 2. A brief history of the Finnish Kaale (Roma)

Finland has perhaps the most homogeneous Romani population in Europe, with the *Kaale* population comprising groups of the Roma who arrived through Sweden as early as the sixteenth century. In the nineteenth century, this group was strengthened by Russian Romani immigrants who have since merged with the Finnish *Kaale* (Pulma, 2006, p. 215; 2012; Åberg, 2015). The Finnish Roma, nowadays about 10,000–12,000 in all, led a traditional way of life; there are also 3,000 Finnish Roma who live in Sweden, mainly in the Stockholm area (Markkanen, 2003, p. 262; Åberg, 2015). The process of estimating the numbers of Roma in Finland is a problematic one. These problems are rooted in the general difficulties associated with counting so-called “ethnic minority groups, and mobile communities” (Clark, 2006, p. 19). During the 1990s, Finland became more multicultural than ever before. The growing number of foreigners coming to the country raised discussion about human rights, tolerance and discrimination. However, there is still very little information about the old minorities, such as the Roma, in the teaching materials of the comprehensive school, in materials for different occupational groups, or even in teacher training (Markkanen, 2003, p. 264–265; Åberg, 2015).

### 3. *Fieldwork and the Influence of Masculinity on the Material*

Over the past few years, I have from time to time alternately distanced my subject of research and brought it closer to myself. In other words, I have taken new positions as a researcher in order to see the material in a new light. The notion of masculinity has been one of the positions that has guided interpretations. There are many reasons for this issue. Historically, ethnomusicological fieldwork often focused on the musical contributions of men, in line with the underlying assumption that male-dominated musical practices were reflective of musical systems of a society as a whole. Despite the historical trend of overlooking gender, modern ethnomusicologists believe that studying gender can provide a useful lens to understand the musical practices of a society. Considering the divisions of gender roles in society, ethnomusicologist Ellen Koskoff writes (2014, p. 19): “Many societies similarly divide musical activity into two spheres that are consistent with other symbolic dualisms”, including such culture-specific, gender-based dualisms as private/public, feelings/actions, and sordid (provocative)/holy. In some cultures, music comes to reflect those divisions in such a way that women’s music and instrumentation is viewed as “non-music” as opposed to men’s “music”. These and other dualities of musical behavior can help demonstrate societal views of gender, whether the musical behavior support or subvert gender roles.

During my academic studies, gender was discussed to only a small degree, if at all, in textbooks and courses on fieldwork. Most of our written guides to field research – Hood, Nettle, Merriam, Goldstein - did not mention gender at all (Babiracki, 1997, p. 123). In some of my courses, the gender of the researcher was discussed in terms of access, rapport, and role expectations. Anyway, the identity I chose for myself in the field and the identities of others that I thought I had chosen were not always the same (or so I think now). I also want to underline that gender was only one of many factors that shaped my experiences. Age, status, “race”, education, physical appearance, political ideology, concepts of the individual and the group, and many other factors contributed, all of them interconnected.

Interpretations of the culture of Finnish Roma have addressed masculinity mostly with focuses marked by feminism: men are regarded as ranking high in the hierarchy of the community, with women placed lower than the male, their head. Despite attempts to deconstruct the notions of gender in Romani culture through the concept of identity, interpretations have often led to the repetition of traits and features associated with gender at an earlier stage. Masculinity is defined as how things should and need to be, with considerations of how men meet the culturally specific norm of masculinity. Taken to its extremes, masculinity is defined as something that most men cannot fulfil.

Interestingly, though research has sought, in particular, the experience and voice of women through the writing subject (the researcher). In the light of present knowledge, especially when provided ethnographically this alterity of women can also be regarded as produced by the researchers themselves. Unlike femininity, masculinity presents itself, from the perspective of gender identity, as a stable, indivisible and given property that has lost its grip and “reins” in the increasingly faster pace of modernization. The fault of these perspectives and arguments is that the defining of gender has not been considered in relation to other systems of distinction and power, such as ethnicity (Butler, 1990).

Owing to the small amount of research concerning Finnish Romani music

or musical culture, the domain of culture has only been given the focus of gender issues. The aim of research and interpretations of Romani music appears throughout to have been to show that gender does not reach beyond the range of influence of cultural identity. Present writings on Romani music have dispelled gender to be part of the marginality of the Romani community. On the other hand, elderly people have been the main interest of folkloristically oriented musicology. In the old situation of gender relations, for example, women were regarded as having maintained the culture of verbal expression. Elderly women, in particular, are markedly present in compilations of folklore material (Vakimo, 2001, p. 34), although the majority element in the basic activities of Finnish Romani musical culture often consisted of young people. Previously, the relicts of an ancient and disappearing culture were sought among the so-called ageing population in the case of Finnish Romani songs. Present studies show that people adept and versed in heritage do not have to be sought among the elderly. The strong orientation of young people towards singing points to the presence of a living musical heritage.

Nonetheless, everyday beliefs concerning gender have an indistinguishable effect on our everyday actions and, by extension, on fieldwork. In my own fieldwork among Finnish Roma, roles attached to age and gender were at first sight relatively fixed and created through mutual definitions: the interviewer or recorder was a middle-aged male of the Finnish majority, or as the interviewees often noted among themselves a “kaaje” or “gaajo”, Romani for a “white man” [i.e. of the majority population]. These definitions of the identity show how gender is always associated with other factors of identity, such as age, personal appearance or cultural background. Age and gender are thus grounds of classification that are associated with each inseparably but in a transforming way.

Maintaining my assigned male identity while documenting and participating in Romani communal song events proved more difficult. At times their expectations of me and my behaviour conflicted with my need to be a researcher. Singing occasions are highly gendered events. The roles of men and women are clearly defined in the singing situations. In a fieldwork situation where there are both men and women, singing is mainly a form of men's entertainment, although women and children can be present at the event. This remains the situation in storytelling in Hungary where Romani men's storytelling is a community event. In singing situations men take seats at the front and women either stand behind them or sit down in separate groups. If there are many men in a singing situation, the singing is rarely a “solo performance”. I was expected to join the men's gatherings. Even though it was a role I gladly accepted and thoroughly enjoyed, it also precluded documentation of the event and conversation with others – particularly women – in attendance. I decided to alternate male and female roles in these situations: singing and playing the guitar with the men on some occasions, and talking with the women at other times. It occurs to me now that my crossing of gender boundaries, mixing of gender roles, and creation of new roles (the ungendered researcher) may have contributed to my perceptions of the equality of men and women in the Romani communal singing situations.

Some of the trips I made alone, and some with my family, friends or colleagues. The differences between the journeys I made alone and those with my family are of interest methodologically. When I was alone, I was included in the young unmarried groups, and was expected to take part in their activities,

especially their away-from-home activities. It was on those occasions that I learned a lot about Romani attitudes towards sex and honour. In general, I was expected to behave not unlike the Romani males of my generation. When my family was with me, we were considered to be more of the parent generation, which involved my being with other married Romani men, talking, and my wife being with the women, participating in the general household chores in which the females normally engage in households, whether they are of the family or are just visiting. Normally in the fieldwork situations, such as other social gatherings, i.e. funerals, birthdays etc. men and women will always split into their separate gender groups.

Roma on the whole do not expect non-Roma to know about their culture and their cultural norms and values, and as these are very complex and multitudinous it is inevitable that a non-Roma breaks the norms many times daily. Usually Roma do not mind that at all, as they are very aware of and understanding about the enormity of the differences between their culture and the general Finnish culture, and do not expect that a non-Roma should follow their normative way of life. This is interesting in itself, and in line with observations which have been made about other minorities, namely that they are more able to see the point of view of the majority than the majority can tolerate the view of the minority (Grönfors, 1977, p. 169). It is sometimes easier as an outsider to approach a particular topic because one is not assailed with divided loyalties, socially and culturally conditioned assumptions, or ingrained expectations. And because of my position not simply as an outsider, but as a foreigner, it was possible for me to ask the most basic and direct questions without causing offence or seeming to challenge elements of a belief system. This study, therefore, is also in many ways my study and inevitably with coloured interpretations (as many scholars in both the humanities and social sciences now recognize). I have, however, tried to balance this outsider's view with an insider's perceptions, particularly in relation to musical experience, most importantly through the inclusion, in the members' own words, of their interpretations of particular phenomena.

The significance of my own gender for the way in which the materials were compiled mainly depended on who were present at the interviews. On the other hand, the choice of locale was also pertinent to my research theme. In some situations, interviews and the playing of music were more called for in places suited to group interviews, while on other occasions a less disturbed and "more neutral" setting proved to be more suitable. The categories of age associated with my gender involved highly varying meanings depending on the situation. It was often the case in group interviews that the oldest men behaved as if they had all the power and as a male researcher, I found it hard to gain a grasp of the singing culture of young people, especially young women. A similar phenomenon has been observed to function in the opposite order: women researchers have found it hard to approach male interviewees. In traditional Romani research, grounds for this would most likely be sought from normative structures associated with respect and shame, with repeated reminders of how the lives of young people in Romani culture are regulated by a complex network of prohibitions, regulations and silence (Markkanen, 2003; Viljanen, 2012). On the other hand, as a male fieldworker I maintained the traditional gender division in the research situations, with males actively taking the initiative and women as passive recipients. In other works, I first went to talk with the males in the interviews. These eldest persons, however,

often proved also to be the most active interlocutors. I thus applied gender-associated norms, just like other participants in the situation, in order to establish an everyday order of things.

A noteworthy aspect of fieldwork is associated with orientation and the world of experience at the individual level. A joint conversation always requires to some degree experience shared by the speaker and the listener, in order for the parties to understand each other in general. I naturally had more shared experience with the men than the women. It has been suggested that shared memories make people born around same time a social generation, bound not only by similar age but above all by shared experiences.

Music and different musical practices, such as playing instruments, singing and dancing were present in many ways in my ethnographic study. The various contexts of music and their ethnographic analysis show that masculinity is not a stable analytical category but instead becomes signified and provides significations in different ways in musical context, in different situations of time and place. Alternating in this way, masculinity readily avoids signification. By considering the male category in various musical contexts, we can see the major differences between different persons defined as males and how masculinity is merged with other categories of identity and alterities.

#### 4. *Early studies of the Roma and the impact of masculinity*

First, I have to ask why we non-Roma are so interested about the Roma - this is not only question about the Roma but any minorities as well. We know that majority cultures have in fact influences the development and expression in all of cultural identity of minority in Finland as well as elsewhere, sometimes more than the minority themselves and members of the majority have wished to believe; either this has not been recognized or it has been ignored (Kopsa-Schön, 1996, p. 251). What comes to Finnish Romani music tradition the reason has partly also been research tradition. Roma, like other "alien cultures" and communities have been studied from the perspective of divergence. Definitions and categories are repeatedly created by which ethnic communities and minority cultures can be distinguished from one another. Not so often has been examined the influences by which various communities mold one another. For me one explanation is Roma exoticism or as I sometimes want to call it "orientalism inside the Europe".

The research tradition of the Finnish Romani music has always hidden the message of gender – or earlier sex – that Romani music communicates. General Finnish Folklore including music research was the property of old men: women were absolutely outsiders in this tradition. That is one reason why the earliest archive material of Romani songs, is totally male-dominated and the songs of the women were neglected. This comes very near to the ideology of musical creativity: It seems that the conceptualization of creativity as fundamentally masculine brings it reduction of women the role of muse. In 1970, Pauline Oliveros, a composer of experimental music, published a brief article in *New York Times* addressing the question, why there have been no great women composers: she replies that women historically have been taught to despise activity outside of the domestic real as unfeminine. It is understandably, because the conceptualization of creativity as a truly masculine phenomenon was widespread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; musicians



as well as other artists, scholars, critics and scientists all sought to explain how a creator could only ever be a man. In addition, we must keep in mind that culture of the Finnish Roma is strongly masculinity.

## 5. *Romani exotism*

We know that the image of the Roma has gradually spread via literature to other genres, the visual arts and music in nineteenth century. In music, Romani stereotypes were applied to a major degree in both stage music and in entertainment for courts and the bourgeois middle classes. A connection with the world was actualized especially in Romani music and dance as all-encompassing freedom and as the authentic, natural, fiery and colourful characteristics of stereotypical “Gypsiness” as the Hungarian composer and piano virtuoso Franz Liszt (1811–1886) described the Romani music that he heard and its manner of performance as deeply emotional, with its free chains of modulation, large intervals, oriental ornamentations and rhythms that gain pace.

The virtuoso, artistic and colourful (emotional and fiery) character of Andalusian flamenco made the Romani entertainers of Southern Spain representatives of Spanish culture as a whole (Lindroos & Böök, 1999, p. 37). Romani entertainers quickly became popular all over Europe. It is interesting in these historical contexts of research of Romani music is that in that time, nationally focused Finnish musicologists faced a difficult question with regard to the Roma of whether or not their musical traditions belonged to Finnish folk music. Material in the folk poetry archive of the Finnish Literature Society suggests that the definition primarily concerned the language of the songs. Rhyming stanzaic folk songs known in Finnish as “sleigh songs” (*rekilaulu*) and sung in Finnish by the Roma were included among Finnish folk music, while songs in the Romani language were not considered to be folk music (Blomster, 2012, p. 292).

In the 1960s the democratization of society was reflected in the first attempts to organize among Finnish Roma, although national unity in politics did not initially give Romani actors room in which to operate. In these political processes, representatives of minorities and the political system jointly formulated definitions of the ethnic and cultural nature of minorities (Pulma 2012). In the study of Romani music, this was evident at the national and international levels as various projects for collecting traditional music (Jalkanen & Laaksonen, 1972). When the existence of the Romani language and Romani music was recognized at the political level and their significance began to be given more and more publicity, research began to focus national forms of “Gypsy music”. Political and especially cultural “leftism” defined the study of minority and Romani music, the purpose being to study things previously unexplored, and the disenfranchised.

## 6. *The cultural contexts of the Romani music as a catalysator for ‘otherness’*

The music have heavily connect with the codes of moral of human being and the environment. Also, the Finnish Romani songs tells the story about morality, often asking or searching the meaning and purpose of human being life, seeking for authenticity, suggesting the social order, and seek to challenge

the ways in which we interact with the problems of present through sharing the peoples experience in the past. Known as conservative, the Finnish Roma try to keep the special characteristic of their culture as pure as possible; the strict behavior rules – norms and values – seems to be more authentic and ideal among the Finnish Roma than elsewhere in Europe. We can look this ideal model of behavior in next table, or as I call it “Table: the rules of the game”:

The “rules of the game” can be grouped under next seven prohibitions and obligations:

<b>Prohibition</b>	<b>Obligation</b>
1. Young versus old	respect for elders
2. Men versus woman	respect for men
3. Woman, mother and children	ritual cleanliness – women’s body
4. Utensils, clean places, clothes	ritual cleanliness – woman’s body
5. Control and movements of the body	ritual cleanliness – woman’s body
6. Illness and death	ritual cleanliness – unclean
7. Roma and non-Roma	maintain ethnicity

Table 11.2.1 Romani’ seven prohibitions and obligations

As mentioned before, all ritual cleanliness rules or we can talk also about taboo rules, are to be considered in relation to the traditional social structure and with the respective of religion. The belief in the uncleanliness of the female body is based on a patriarchal order of society (prohibitions 1 -5). The Finnish Kaale use much stricter *Mahrime* –rules than the Kalderas’ do, a little bit same kind as the Sinti or Manouche Roma have. You have to respect always and everywhere older people, especially man. Ritual cleanliness means in musical contexts, that there is no dancing, because the body movement may refer to sexuality, no sexual lyrics – except using methafors – no sexual dressing or musical styles connecting sexuality, like rock or pop genres. That is one reason why the popular music performance by the Roma is very conventional, like old dance music, tango and walz. All rules are manifest in practise as avoidance, silence, respect and shame; rules are based the main symbolic classes in Roma society, respect for elders and ritual cleanliness. Also, the Romani language is good example of strength of ethnic identity.

## **7. Musical influences**

Romani music researcher Bálint Sárosi (1980, p. 864 - 865) represents a modern approach to Romani music, although most of his work is based on Hungarian material. Sárosi recognized that even in Hungary there is no single Romani style and that a universal definition of Romani music is not relevant (Pettan, 2002). Sárosi claims that, in a limited sense, the concept of “Gypsy music” refers to Romani folk music but in a broader sense to all genres of music performed and produced by Romani artists (Pettan, 1996, p. 43). Despite some criticism (Radulescu, 2003, p. 79), I agree that Sárosi’s latter definition is useful in the sense that it moves the focus of examination of the music from around the narrow theme of originality to processes of identification, making us ask what music the Romani consider their own and why. This definition also



points in the right direction in the sense that researchers have observed that the Roma tend to co-opt the melodic language of the local majority wherever they live (in Finland e.g. Jalkanen, 1972; 1976; 1996; Blomster, 2012; Åberg & Blomster, 2006; Novak-Rosengren, 2012; Åberg, 2015).

The musical models for the widespread layers of *rekilaulu* ("sleigh song") and romantic songs in traditional Romani tunes in Finland come from Finland and surrounding areas. The melodic models for the *reki* songs favoured by the Roma have mainly been two and four-lined songs from the Finnish folk repertoire, so-called *reki metre* songs.

ESISÄEPARI      Esisäe                      Jälkisäe

Ei nyt e-nää, ei nyt e-nää ke-sä-mar-jat au-ta

JÄLKISÄEPARI

Mi-nun kul-tain rak-ka-us on ruos-tu-nut kuin rau-ta

**initial couplet**      Not any more | not any more | will summer berries | help  
**final couplet**      My dearest's | love is | rusted like iron<sup>276</sup>

Figure 11.2.1 - Reki (Rhyming song) Rhythm

Like Finnish *reki metre* folk songs, Romani *reki* songs also combine seven beats in the sung text with eight beats in the melody, creating the *reki* song form. The most important single criterion for identifying *reki metre* is the end of the second and fourth lines, which conclude with an accented poetic foot preceded by an unaccented beat. This also obtains in the *reki* style songs of the Romani as a rule. The following song provides an example of a *reki metre* verse:

**RUUNA SE JUOSTA ROIKUTTELLEE**

2. Lippusuitet minä laitan  
 äkäselle ruunalle  
 että sitä passais vaihatella  
 vaikka parisniekoille.

Figure 11.2.2 – 'Ruuna se juosta roikuttellee' ('The Gelding Trots Along')

1. *The gelding trots along*  
*And the runners under the sleigh creak*  
*Run, run, God's creature*

**276** The provided translations emphasize the literal meaning of the song lyrics.

*Without any cares.*

*2. I will put the finest reins*

*On that skittish little gelding*

*So he could pass for sale*

*Even to the gentlefolk.*

Although no one knows the origin of *reki metre* singing with any certainty, foreign counterparts do exist, such as the erotic/satiric *schnaderhupfel* dance songs present in the German language area in the early Middle Ages, the Swedish *enstrofing*, and the Russian *chastúshka*, which were initially especially popular among young people. Essentially no differences exist in the phrase structure and basic tonality of the Roma and general Finnish *reki* songs. Almost without exception, *reki* songs in the Roma repertoire are in the so-called natural minor scale, progression cycles based on the repetition of couplets, which begin and end with the tonic of the scale. A pentatonic scale (Sarosi, 1971, p. 27) functions as the melodic deep structure of the tunes, which arises from the pentatonic movement of the motif thirds of the melodic frame due to the tension of the tonic and minor seventh interval (Blomster, 2006, pp. 105 - 106).

## **8. Russian romances**

The models for the romances favoured by the Finnish Roma are also to be found in Finnish folk music. While the models for *reki metre* Romani songs are old Finnish folk melodies, the influences on the romances come from the East, from Russia (Blomster, 2006, p. 114). The first professional Romani choir in Russia was founded by Count Alexei Grigoryevich Orlov in 1774, and the “Gypsy choir institution” came into being as an outgrowth of Romani exoticism of the Romantic Period in the mid-nineteenth century, later becoming a nationally significant phenomenon (Kutenkov, 2003, p. 72 – 75; Sarosi, 1971, p. 43). Political and cultural interests were operating in the background. Russian military operations in Crimea and the war with England and France that resulted created an atmosphere in which Slavophile nostalgia rose to its high point. Disdain for foreign nations, especially France, received additional impetus from traditional soirées in which Slavophilia was emphasized in both dress and art. This nationalistic shunning also extended to music, with one counterweight being the domesticated, court-approved Gypsy choirs. The popularity of Gypsy choirs permeated all of Russian society from the restaurants and cabarets to the court in St. Petersburg (Blomster, 2006, p. 114).

After the outbreak of the First World War, the repertoire of Russian restaurants, cabarets, and variety shows became even more Russian. All German, Hungarian, and Austrian performers were cut and replaced with Russian performers and groups. A central factor for the spread of romances was also the Bolshevik Revolution, as a result of which Russian romances momentarily became an international phenomenon (Hirn, 1997, p. 281-285). Although individual tunes spread from ear to ear through formal and informal contacts, sheet music publishing in the twentieth century also had a significant impact on the adoption of the romance repertoire as part of Finnish light music. The recording and sheet music publishing house Fazer began publishing a series of some one hundred romances translated into Finnish and Swedish in 1919, based on the St. Petersburg Davinghoff Gypsy romance series (Blomster, 2006, p. 115–116).

When one investigates the interfaces between Finnish Romani traditional songs and the melodies of the Russian romances, the use of a sixth interval is the most apparent feature (so-mi and do-la intervals). Thus, the models for the two main melody types of the Romani repertoire, the modal *reki* style and the tonal romance style are found in both the Finnish *reki metre* folk repertoire and a tradition of romance singing that is a fusion of disparate elements (Blomster, 2006, p. 116 - 118). It is interesting that the archaic special characteristics of Romani song, such as glissando-rubato (cBelisova, 2002, p. 13), the use of a vibrato based on slow, broad intonation, and trilling embellishments have been preserved to this day. Mechanical rhythmicness based on metric accompaniment has diluted the ornamental features of traditional music but has not erased them.

Because the ethnic landscape and migration from Eastern Europe (mainly from Romania and Bulgaria), the new trend is kind of hybrid style of Romani music, like Romani hip hop, Balkan Beat, Sinti or Manouche jazz or flamenco mixing different styles together. Anyway, the role of Romani music from different origin is important for the "global Romani identity" process.

## 9. Conclusions

The earliest documentation of Finnish Romani music emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in both scholarships and the arts. Anyway, through the Romani history, Finnish region has been a crossroad between the East (Russia) and the West (Europe). Different musical cultures and styles have flow together. The traditional Finnish Romani music consist many elements from multiple space of different music styles, like Finnish folk music, Swedish folk music, Russian folk music and romances etc. Looking the historical context, the role of the music has always been important to the Roma for many reasons, but vice versa at the same time, also the Roma gave part of their tradition to the main population.

Even the Roma's music-culture seems to be a land of men's world, I reject, like Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie (1990, p. 328) the commonplace idea that there is some sort of 'natural' sexuality which music expresses, arguing instead that "the most important ideological work done by music is the *construction* of sexuality depending the musical genre, and the context where music is performance". I also argue that analysis of lyrics is inadequate to show how music constructs sexuality, and that a full account must also discuss musical sound. Like Frith and McRobbie, I also argue that music participates in the social construction of gender, in part by creating vivid, gendered musical images of sexual experience. Thereby changes in musical style and form have generally been reflections of changes in society and also gender (Blacking, 1995, p. 49).

Singing the songs, playing the music, or discussing their contents is not just a reproduction of traditional way of life however, for the songs tend to acquire different meanings in the musical practices of very varied everyday contexts. They are a means of maintaining the sense of community, of underlining gender identity or of drawing a boundary with the dominant population. In this way, Roma songs have served as a forum for Roma to discuss the values and the norms, such like gender roles, of importance to them. Many descriptions concerning traditional music performance are usually described in masculine terms, but these performances have a culturally respected

place also for women. These songs carry all kinds of meanings, according to the context in which they are sung. Changes in gender identity are possible because the community boundaries are sufficiently elastic to take in cultural innovations that do not necessarily support the traditional cultural foundations of the community. Society is heterogeneous to permit changes brought about through the shift in gender identity. Thirdly, I argue that as in traditional Roma music, women singer escapes patriarchal definition. In the same time, they threaten in some ways to break out of definitions of femininity by challenging women's alienation from Roma's musical practises.

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