**Course description**

**Background**
As the area of the world with the largest percentage of Roma, Central and Eastern Europe and fSU provides a testing ground for understanding this often misunderstood people. And yet scant academic research is conducted on issues relating to Roma and their presence is hardly felt in the academic curricula of the region (outside of criminology courses). Bringing together world class scholars in the field, this course will show how it is possible to conduct important and productive research in this area, how to integrate Roma issues into teaching programmes, and how a richer and deeper understanding of Roma changes ones perception not just of  'Gypsies'  but of ourselves and the societies we live in.

**What will be the content of the course?**
In order of appearance: Sir Angus Fraser, author of The Gypsies, the standard history of the Roma, will explore the mechanisms of Roma survival over 6 centuries. Ian Hancock, linguist and leading Roma politician, will consider the implications of Indian origins for Roma today. Victor Friedman, the foremost Romany linguist in the world, who has long been actively involved in developing Romani as an official language in Macedonia, will lecture on the nature of minority languages and difficulties in standardisation of such languages. Thomas Acton, the world's sole professor of Romani Studies, who has written about English Gypsies for over thirty years, will explain the contrasts in Roma politics in eastern and western europe. Zdenka Jarab, historian will show how Hapsburg policies shape the experience of central European Roma today. Alaina Lemon, the only academic to live with Russian Roma, will show how stereotypes affect policy decisions and how Roma internalise or reject certain images.  Judith Okely, author of the controversial thesis that English Gypsy culture is an indigenous, not a foreign culture, will introduce a speficifically antropological theory of culture. Janos Ladanyi, renowned urban sociologist, who has also been in the forefront of campaigns to prevent ghettoisation in modern Hungary, will argue that Roma issues can best be treated as a social, not an ethnic problem. Michael Stewart, the first academic (social anthropoligist) to live with and write a monograph on east european Roma will both provide the overall framework through the course and lecture on variations and transformations in Roma cultures across the world.
When discussing Roma the tendency is still to generalise and to homogenise. Through the wealth of documentary evidence and the wide range of often conflicting opinions you will be introduced to on this course, you will develop a sense of the variety in Roma cultures and the reasons for this variety.

**Who will benefit from the course?**
Graduates of any discipline in the social sciences and humanities whose work concerns them with economic and social transformations in the region, ethnic conflict, racism, educational and social policy. The course level will be advanced-introductory. While the course is primarily aimed at encouraging young academics and those who are thinking of taking up an academic career to integrate Roma issues in their future research and teacing, it will also be of help to government officials, NGO workers and others who deal with Roma professionally.

**How will you be taught?**
Each teacher will give an equal number of lectures and seminars. During the seminars students will be expected to make presentations and participate in round-table discussions. Most evenings, therefore, students will have some preparatory work for the next day. Some evenings films will be shown, on others discussions will be organised with prominent activists. The course will include a short field trip to introduce students to the variety of Roma experience in Hungary and projects aimed to alleviate poverty. In the final week students will have the chance to develop a short teaching or research programme incorporating the material from the course. A reading pack will be sent out to students in advance of the course and all students will be expected to have read and studied the texts contained therein before the course.