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Romani V.

Papers from the Annual Meeting of the Gypsy Lore Society, Graz 2011

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Pavel Kubaník, Helena Sadílková, Jan Červenka

Romani language competence and intergenerational transmission in the Czech Republic

Foreword

In September 2011 the Annual Meeting of the Gypsy Lore Society was hosted by [spi:k] - Sprache, Identität, Kultur in cooperation with the Plurilingualism Research Unit of *treffpunkt sprachen* / University of Graz. For three days international researchers from various disciplines gathered in Graz to discuss findings, research approaches and challenges with respect to Romani Studies. The conference marks another highlight in the long-standing activities on Romani Studies of the Austrian [romani] Project and once more distinguished Graz as an internationally renowned centre for Romani Studies. The Austrian [romani] Project was established at the University of Graz in the 1990s and since 2009 has been continued both in the work of the association [spi:k] - Sprache, Identität, Kultur and in the research activities of the Plurilingualism Research Unit of *treffpunkt sprachen* at the University of Graz.

As the title of the present volume indicates, this book is a continuation of four volumes of collections of papers on Romani Studies that appeared in the series *Grazer Linguistische Studien. Romani V*, however, is different in several respects. First of all, the present volume is an issue of the newly founded publication series *Grazer Romani Publikationen* (GRP). The new publication series GRP will bring forward both collections of papers as well as monograph-length publications. Due to the research emphasis on Romani linguistics at the University of Graz, the series will have a focus on linguistic works, but Roma-related contributions from other fields are also welcomed. Secondly, the volume *Romani V* is different from its predecessors as the contributions in this volume were peer-reviewed by an international committee of reviewers.

The volume *Romani V* reflects the diversity of papers presented at the Graz conference as the contributions in this volume come from various disciplines and cover both empirical and theoretical approaches. The strong research focus on Romani linguistics at the University of Graz also shows in the thematic composition of the volume, as five out of nine papers discuss linguistic or sociolinguistic aspects of Romani.

Kimmo Granqvist opens the book with a historical linguistic article about Finnish Romani. In his contribution Kimmo Granqvist analyses the changes that Finnish Romani underwent in the 19th century on different levels, addressing the impact of Swedish as a contact language as well as the even stronger influence of the Finnish-speaking environment.

Zuzana Bodnárová gives an overview of the present linguistic situation of Vend Romani in Hungary. In her article, which is based on recent long-term field work, she highlights a number of interesting features of this dialect group, such as the use of Hungarian or Romani ethnonyms among Hungarian Vend Romani speakers.

Michael Beníšek's contribution, which is also based on recent linguistic field work, analyses a North Central Romani variety spoken in the Transcarpatian region. With his contribution, Beníšek is the first to pay thorough attention to a Romani variety of this region.

Pavel Kubaník, Helena Sadílková and Jan Červenka provide insight into language maintenance and language shift among Romani speech communities in the Czech Republic in their article. They present results from a long-term research project dedicated both to Vlax Romani speakers and Northern Central Romani speakers.

Sofiya Zahova also applies a sociolinguistic approach in her paper on the link between language and ethnic identity among Romani communities in Montenegro. Her research results show that the traditional perception of these concepts is challenged by the ethnic and religious heterogeneity of Montenegro.

Volha Bartash raises questions of identity in her paper about Romani identities in contemporary Belarus. She focuses on the meaning of and identification through kin names among Romani communities and points out that identity shifts do not happen independently but are a response to changed social circumstances.

Alexander Chernykh's contribution is dealing with calendar feasts and rites, in particular Easter, of the Kalderash Roma in Russia. In this ethnologic contribution he describes the importance of Easter and its organising character for the social life among the Kalderash community in the city of Perm.

Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov give an extensive overview of historic and present Romani migrations in their paper. In doing so, they discuss different migration patterns of Roma and how they influence the perception of Roma in the general public.

The last paper in this collection is by Stefan Benedik, Wolfgang Göderle and Barbara Tiefenbacher and discusses theoretical concepts of Ethnicity and Race Studies which might be promising for approaching discussions about Romani belonging.

We hope that this interdisciplinary collection of papers will provide an interesting and informative read to scholars of Romani Studies and beyond.

Barbara Schrammel-Leber
Barbara Tiefenbacher

Kimmo Granqvist

Finnish Romani during the nineteenth century

Abstract

Roma have been arriving in Finland in small groups from the middle of the 16th century onwards. From the linguistic point of view, the 19th century is particularly interesting as a transition period, during which Finnish became the linguistically dominant language of the Roma, while their competency in Romani varied. Knowledge of Swedish had been largely lost among the Roma by the end of the century. Finnish Romani of the 19th century is also well documented by a series of manuscripts and printed publications, including Arwidsson's notes (1817), published in Bugge (1858), Kemell's notes (1830s), Jürgensen's and Schmidt's notes (1860s), Reinholm's notes (1860s), Lindh's manuscript of an ABC reader (1897), and Thesleff's song manuscripts (end of the 19th century) and dictionary (1901).

In this paper, I present a timeline of diachronic changes that took place or were initiated in Finnish Romani during the 19th century. The majority of these changes are attributed to internal language erosion, but there were also interesting competing tendencies, possibly indicative of interaction between different Roma groups in Finland (e.g. job vs. jou, vare- vs. čimoni, sommas vs. sommahe etc.). Attested changes in Finnish Romani attributed to contact of speakers of Romani with Finnish was mostly phonological and lexical. Finnish morphological markers occurred to a limited extent.

1 Background

Roma began arriving in Finland in small groups from the middle of the 16th century onwards. At the turn of the 17th century, a fairly stable number of Roma has been documented to have lived in Finland. Attempts to settle them were made during the 17th century. By the end of the 17th century, the Roma had spread out from the coastal regions into the entire region from Ingermanland to Ostrobothnia (Panu Pulma, p.c. June 15, 2011). However, a large-scale movement of the Roma to Karelia (eastern Finland) first took place at the end of the 18th century (Miika Tervonen, p.c. July 20, 2010). A few Roma families are known to have arrived from Sweden at the turn of the 19th century (Miika Tervonen, p.c. July 20, 2010). The migration routes of the Roma to Finland have been under debate: Thesleff (1901, 1904), for instance, has argued that all Finnish Roma migrated to Finland via Sweden, while Miklosich (1872–1880, iii: 36) and Vehmas (1961: 53) suggested that they arrived from Russia. The possibility of several different migration routes has been argued by Kopsa-Schön (1996: 60). There

is also evidence that some Roma families have their roots in, for example, Russia, Poland and Hungary.

The Romani dialect spoken by the Finnish Romani belongs to the northwestern group of the northern meta-group. The northern innovation center is located in the German-speaking areas of northwestern Europe (Matras 2002: 9). Finland constitutes a geographically isolated periphery because it is located far from the innovation center, and the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia constitute natural boundaries. Political boundaries varied during the 19th century. Finland belonged to the Kingdom of Sweden until 1809. In the Treaty of Hamina, signed in September 1809, Sweden was compelled to cede large territories to the Russian Empire including Finland, the Åland islands and large parts of Västerbotten. The newly created province, the Grand Duchy of Finland, remained a part of the Russian Empire until December 1917. Visits of Roma from eastern and central Europe have nevertheless been documented almost yearly between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century (Miika Tervonen, p.c. July 20, 2010).

Signs of attrition were present as early as at the end of the 18th century: These included in particular errors in numerals (*ennia* 'seven', *desso jek* 'nine') (Valtonen 1968: 22). Dramatic changes took place during the 19th century, related to Early Romani option selections (e.g. *s/h* alternation and the loss of the indefinite markers *vare-* and *čimoni*) and language-internal erosion. The structural influence of Finnish on Romani is visible from the latter half of the 19th century.

No other close contact language has had such a deep influence on FR as Finnish: Finnish loan words have been found since Ganander: *jouka* 'group' < Finn. *joukko*, *korvos* 'ear'. < Finn. *korva*, while the extent of lexical borrowing from Finnish has remained surprisingly limited. Only about 8% (approx. 170 words) of the documented lexicon originates from Finnish (Valtonen 1968: 181). This may be attributed to the secret language functions of Finnish Romani, but possibly also to the inability of speakers to adapt Finnish loanwords. This is particularly true concerning adjectives, since the only fully adapted primary adjective of a Finnish etymon seems to be *vieko* 'sly'; the rarely used adjectives *kultale* 'golden' and *kyyrynkyme* 'hunched up' are not adapted. Finnish influence comprised large-scale phonological imposition and the replication of Finnish morphosyntactic patterns or pattern transfer (Matras / Sakel 2007). Phonological imposition is very common in languages, and it has a psychological and motoric basis (Walsh / Diller 1981: 18; van Coetsem 1988: 27–8; Köpke 2004: 10). Finnish has supplied most of the abstract grammatical structure such as the syntax, including word order and the principles of case licensing. Contact with Finnish has caused a number of typological changes in Finnish Romani. Categories and oppositions not found in Finnish have been lost. Germanic influences, on the other hand, have been predominantly phonological (including the partial quantity-sensitivity of Finnish Romani, the sound change *š* > *x* (e.g. *šeel* > *xeel* 'hundred')) and lexical.

During the 19th century, Finnish became the linguistically dominant language of the Roma. At the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, Romani was no longer the true colloquial language of the Roma; their actual mother tongue was already Finnish (Thesleff 1899: 472). Active knowledge of Swedish was largely forgotten, but Swedish loan words remained in use (Thesleff 1899: 472). Not many Roma children acquired Romani naturally in their childhood, but they learned it as they grew up. There was general mastery of Romani among Roma adults in the 19th century (Thesleff 1899: 472; Vuorela / Borin 1998: 60; Borin 2000: 75).

2 Sources

The history of Finnish Romani linguistics dates back to the end of the 18th century. A number of the written documents have been available since 1779 with an interval of a few decades (see Table 1). Many of these are simple word lists compiled by amateurs and only comprise a few dozen to a couple of hundred words. On the other hand, the most extensive ones provide detailed grammatical paradigms, hundreds of sample phrases, and large glossaries of 2,000–7,000 lexical entries.

Table 1 The earliest sources of Finnish Romani.

Year	Source
1779	Kristfrid Ganander's (1741-1790) prize essay Undersökning om De så kallade TATTERE eller Zigeuner, Cingari, Bohemiens, Deras Härkomst, Lefnadsätt, språk m.m. Samt om, när och hwarest några satt sig ner i Swerige?
1817	Adolf Ivar Arwidsson's (1791-1858) notes (published in Bugge 1858)
ca. 1830	Klaus Juhana Kemell's (1805-1832) word list (published in Thesleff 1901)
1860	Lydia von Essen's and Lydia Bergroth's glossary (unpublished)
ca. 1860	Data conveyed to Miklosich by Jürgensen and Schmidt (published in Miklosich 1872-1880)
ca. 1860	Henrik August Reinholm's (1819-1883) notes (partly published in Thesleff 1901)
1890-	Arthur Thesleff's (1871-1920) collections of Roma songs (unpublished)
ca. 1890	Herman Hagert's letter to Arthur Thesleff (unpublished)
1897	Adam Lindh's (1864-1902) abc book manuscript (unpublished)
1899	Arthur Thesleff's article "Finlands zigenare. En etnografisk studie." *Finsk Tidskrift* 46: 386–398, 466–477.
1900	Arthur Thesleff's rejection letter to Adam Lindh (unpublished)
1901	Arthur Thesleff's dictionary *Wörterbuch des Dialekts der finnländischen Zigeuner*. Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicae XXIX: 6. Helsinki: Finnische Litteratur-Gesellschaft.

Kristfrid Ganander (1741–1790), who was a chaplain in Rantsila in northern Finland, compiled a dictionary draft for Finnish Romani, and a 46-page essay on the Finnish Roma and their language. The draft of the dictionary is lost, but the manuscript of Ganander's essay *Undersökning om De så kallade TATTERE eller Zigeuner, Cingari, Bohemiens, Deras Härkomst, Lefnadsätt, språk m.m. Samt om, när och hwarest några satt sig ner i Swerige?* is preserved in the archive of the Swedish Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities. The Swedish Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities used to annually organize an essay competition on poetry, eloquence and history. In December 1779, the Roma and their origins and language were selected to be the theme of the competition. The essay comprises 34 paragraphs, the majority of which discusses the history and ethnography of the Roma. Linguistically invaluable are paragraphs 22–32, which are the first notes on the language spoken by the Finnish Roma. The essay included a 150-word glossary and nearly 60 phrases. Ganander's language material has been extensively studied by Etzler (1944), Joki (1956) and most thoroughly by Valtonen (1968: 16–27).

Adolf Ivar Arwidsson (1791–1858) was a historian, university teacher, writer and journalist who is better known for striving to improve the position of Finnish at the University of Turku. He also took notes on the language of the Roma he had met in 1817 in Padasjoki, where he was born. Arwidsson's notes were published by Bugge (1858) as part of his paper "Vermischtes aus der Sprache der Zigeuner," which was included in the journal *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Sprachforschung*. Arwidsson' notes were more concise than Ganander's but they comprised fairly complete declination and conjugation examples in addition to lexical material (for a more detailed account, see Valtonen 1968: 28–32). K. J. Kemell (1805–1832) compiled a glossary of Finnish Romani. After his death, the glossary was burnt as an ungodly work, but later in 1901 Thesleff created his own dictionary based on the concept of Kemell's glossary. A small Finnish Romani glossary was compiled by Lydia von Essen and Lydia Bergroth in 1860. The manuscript is housed at the Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki. Jürgensen and Schmidt provided data on the lexicon of Finnish Romani to Miklosich, who published them; these data were also included in Thesleff's (1901) dictionary. Henrik August Reinholm (1819–1883) was actually an archeologist and folklorist who made extensive notes on the Roma and their language when he was working as a prison preacher in Viapori and at a spinning house in Turku. Reinholm's notes can currently be found in two folders (number 87) entitled *Finlands zigenare* at the Finnish National Museum. His extensive but mixed data comprising numerous informants from different regions in Finland, as well as texts, grammatical paradigms and multiple glossaries, were compiled into a glossary containing grammatical notes on nominal and verbal inflections and approximately 2,000 words, which were also included in Thesleff's (1901) dictionary.

Arthur Thesleff (1871–1920) has been regarded as the most famous name connected with the study of Finnish Roma (Valtonen 1968: 46). Most of his work was,

however, ethnographical or sociological. His accomplishments in Romani linguistics remained his unpublished collection of Roma songs in the 1890s (the manuscript is at the University Library in Helsinki), his description of the linguistic situation of the Roma at the end of the 19th century, and of course his dictionary, *Wörterbuch des Dialekts der finnländischen Zigeuner* (1901), which was the first printed dictionary of Finnish Romani. It concentrates mostly on the sub-dialect spoken in western Finland, where he did most of his fieldwork and where the glossaries he used were collected. Because of the tighter contacts of the speakers of the Romani of western Finland with Swedish, it contains numerous Germanic (Scandinavian) loans, but few borrowings from Finnish. The dictionary, nevertheless, covers almost the entire known lexicon of Finnish Romani.

The preface of A. Lindh's "Mustalaiskielinen aapinen" bears the date 30 October 1893, but the book was never printed. Lindh had submitted his manuscript to the Senate to be published, but it was rejected in 1900 by Thesleff, who had been appointed as a referee. Herman Hagert's letter to Arthur Thesleff in 1893 probably contains the first documented sentence that has been written in Romani by a Finnish Roma: in the letter he regrets that he has not yet been able to send five marks to Thesleff.

In the three sections that follow, I will first discuss Early Romani option selections, language-internal innovations and innovative simplifications, and finally contact-induced changes that took place in Finnish Romani during the 19th century.

3 Early Romani option selections

In this section I will discuss two historical changes in Finnish Romani as cases of *in situ* option selection of inherited (Early Romani) variation: *s/h* alternation and the choice of a specific indefinite marker. Finnish Romani has undergone a diachronic change from mostly having *s* in morphological paradigms into a dialect in which *s* and *h* alternate in the present tense of the copula *s-/h-*, in paradigms of lexical verbs, and in instrumental cases of nominal, but not in the preterite of *s-/h-* and interrogative pronouns. *s* was common in the present tense *s-/h-* in the early sources of Finnish Romani, c.f. Ganander *Ap-i kulwa-sin* (pro *hin*) *joh* 'on-ART floor be.PRS.3SG he = he is on the floor', *Fedider so sint* (pro *hin*) *tel-o bolib-a* 'best what be.PRS.3SG under-ART sky-NOM.SG = the best that is under the sun', *O-chaben sin* (pro *hin*) *arre ja chaa* 'ART food be.PRS.3SG inside go eat = the food is inside, go and eat' (but *M-o dad hi* (pro *si(n)*) *mol-o* 'my-M.SG father be.PRS.3SG dead-M.SG = my father is dead'); Reinholm *Sin* (pro *hin*) *Raj ap-o bolib-a* 'be.PRS.3SG lord on-M.SG heaven-NOM.SG = there is a king in heaven'. Similarly forms of lexical verbs mostly had *s* in the early sources, cf. Ganander: *tu drapaw-eis-a* (pro *drabaveha*) 'you read-PRS.2SG-FUT = you read' and *so*

louw-es-a (pro *rouv-eh-a*)*?* 'what cry-PRS.2SG-FUT = why are you crying?'; Arwidsson *tu bachh-es-a* (pro *baǩǩeha*) 'you want-PRS.2SG-FUT = you want', *ame bachh-as-a* (pro *baǩǩaha*) 'we want-PRS.1PL-FUT = we want', forms in *h* were rare: Ganander *ame drapaw-eh-a* (pro *drabavesa*) 'we read-PRS.1PL-FUT = we read'. But Thesleff's (1901) paradigms of *s/h* only comprised forms in *h*. Similarly his paradigms of lexical verbs had *h* systematically in both his future (*phurjuv-ēh-a* 'get old-PRS.2.SG-FUT', *phurjuv-āh-a* 'get old-PRS.1PL-FUT') and first potential (*phurjuv-ēh-as* 'get old-PRS.2SG-CND', *phurjuv-āh-as* 'get old-PRS.1PL-CND'). In the instrumental cases of nominals the change *s* > *h* is still today far from complete. While *h* is nowadays dominant, *s* tends to be retained in the instrumentals of abstract nouns, and in pronouns (Matras 1999).

The specific indefinite marker *čimoni* 'something' (NW dialects, Tenser 2008: 275) was also lost during the latter half of the 19th century: Its last documented occurrence is in Reinholm's notes from the 1860s: *l-ial ɯimuni* 'get-PRF.2SG something = have you got anything?'. Modern Finnish Romani uses solely *tši. vare-* (< Romanian *oare*, NE, central dialects, Tenser 2008: 275) belonging to the Early Romani legacy was most probably lost in Finnish Romani at the beginning of the 20th century. Reinholm has *ap o drom laɯ-am-es vare ɯén* 'on ART way meet-PRF.1PL-REM each other = we met each other on the way.' Thesleff (1901), Jalkio (ca. 1930), and Kronqvist (ca. 1940) mention *varekaj* 'somewhere', but in newer sources only *tšeeni* (< **kaj-ni*, NW dialects, Tenser 2008: 275) occurs.

4 Language-internal erosion

4.1 Phonology

A fortition *v* > *b* (*ov* > *job* 'he', *abijav* > *bijab* 'wedding') has been attested in Finnish Romani (cf. Reinholm's notes: *nab* 'name'). Arwidsson's (1817) notes suggest that a fortition *v* > *f* might also have occurred in some idiolects as he mentions the form *tschaf* 'son'. In some 18th and 19th century sources *v* remained unchanged: Ganander *tschaw* – (OBL.SG) *tschaw-es* 'son', *me chamm-a-teh cha-w* 'I want-PRS.1SG COMP eat-PRS.1SG = I want to eat'; Kemell *o tschav* 'son'; Jürgensen / Schmidt (ca. 1830) *šov* '6.' The lenition *v* > *u* has been documented in Finnish Romani since the latter half of the 19th century: Reinholm's notes have *laau* 'word.' A similar lenition is described in all modern sources.

The final *-r* was lost in the ablative ending *-tar* > *-ta* and in the comparative suffix *-ider/-eder* > *-ide*: Arwidsson has *djeinestar* 'from the man', but Reinholm's notes *khangariatta* 'from the church'; Ganander *barwalider* 'richer', *fedider* 'better'; Reinholm *tern-ēder koni* 'young-CMP SUP = youngest', but also *phuuride* 'parents'.

4.2 Nominal morphology

A number of changes that simplified the structure of Finnish Romani were completed during the latter half of the 19th century. The oppositions of thematic status and gender exhibited signs of erosion. This is already manifested in Kemell's glossary and Reinholm's notes containing examples such as *i spinnib-os-k-o* 'ART.F spinning-OBL.SG-GEN-M.SG = of spinning' (pro *o spinnibosko* or *i spinnoboski*) and *ak-ala kouv-est-a* 'that-OBL.SG fight-OBL.SG-ABL = of that fight' (pro *akala kouvata(r)*, as *kouva* is an athematic feminine). The intra-paradigmatic leveling suggests the decline of athematic morphology and the expansion of OBL.SG formants of *o*-masculines (similarly Granqvist / Pirttisaari 2003). This tendency is similar to the ones documented in German Sinti and the Romani of Wales (Elšík 2000: 23–24; Matras 2002: 81–85).

Both deverbal and denominal abstract nouns are derived using the same suffix *-ba* (*-i-ba* with a binding vowel, e.g. *rakkiba* 'speech', *dukkiba* 'illness', *looliba* 'redness'). A similar suffix *-pa* has been documented in other Scandinavian Romani dialects in Sweden and Norway (Rejsende), though in a small number of lexicalizations (Peter Bakker, p.c. Feb 3, 2003). The suffix *-ben* only forms deverbal nominalizations, is unproductive and combines with only a few primary verbs. Abstract nouns in *-ba* inflect regularly (e.g. *duurib-a* 'distance', *-os-*, *-i, -on-*). The case paradigm bears a resemblance to Polska Roma, in which the oblique is regular (*durepas-* 'distance-OBL.SG') (RMS). The loss of the suppletive suffix *-mnas-* in the oblique of abstract nouns was an early development in Finnish Romani. Only a few traces of it are found in 19th century sources (e.g. Reinholm *dzi-mnas-k-i dii-a* 'life-OBL.SG-GEN-F.SG time-NOM.SG = life time'; Thesleff (1901) *bidžimnaskīro* 'lifeless', *bipimnaskīro* 'not drunk', *chamnaskīro* 'bread', etc.).

Even the case system of nouns and adjectives underwent simplification. The vocative was lost: Ganander has the example *tschawa!* 'boy!', and Reinholm's notes contain *phala!* 'brother!'. Vocative forms are still included in Thesleff's (1901) case paradigms both in the singular and in the plural, but in the plural they are identical to nominatives. A locative-dative merger was characteristic of the 19th century, cf. Reinholm: *angla man-ge* 'front-of me-DAT = in front of me', *Devel phen-i-as pesk-e sikkib-os-k-e ʉāv-e-ne jakkes* 'God say-PRF-3SG REFL-DAT learning-OBL.SG-GEN-PL son-OBL.PL-LOC so = God told so to his disciples', *nōd-i gud-ādar = déol-e-ne* 'grace-NOM.PL God-ABL = heaven-OBL.PL-LOC = by the grace of God'.

The oblique case of adjective attributes was still retained during the latter half of the 19th century, but tended to be lost in some of the sources already as early as the beginning of the 20th century, cf. Reinholm (ca. 1860): *sav-e oldr-a-ha*, 'what-OBL age-OBL.SG-INSTR = at which age', *do-uva ʉerr m-e minsib-os-ke* 'it-NOM.SG do my-OBL memory-OBL.SG-DAT = do this to my memory', but Jalkio (1914): *dil-o čaav-es-ke* 'crazy-M.SG guy-OBL.SG-DAT = to the crazy guy', *ciĥk-i ğint-a-ha* 'good-F.SG feeling-OBL.SG-INSTR = with a good feeling'.

Reinholm's notes provide a single example suggesting that subject clitics similar to those in Sinti might have been retained in Finnish Romani during his time: *kaj dja-l-a lo?* 'where go-PRS.3SG-FUT CLIT = where does he go?'. But Reinholm's sentence seems to be a *hapax legomenon*: No earlier or later document contains examples of subject clitics.

The simplification of the possessives began during the 19th century with the replacement of the short reflexive pronoun *po* by the genitive *pesko/pengo*, by analogy with the 3rd person pronouns *lesko/lengo*. Reinholm's notes still contained the example *soske sikjav-él-a pess te rakkav-el i rom-a p-i ɯibb?* 'why teach-PRS.3SG-FUT REFL. OBL.SG COMP speak-PRS.3SG ART Rom-NOM.PL REFL-F.SG language = why do the Roma learn to speak their language?', but no later source mentions the short form. The true 1st and 2nd person possessive pronouns (*maro/mo*, *tiro/to amaro*, *tumaro*) remained in use in conservative idiolects until the 1970s, but have by now been substituted by the regularized genitives of personal pronouns (*mango*, *tukko*, *amengo*, *tumengo*), probably following the Finnish model (cf. *minun*, *sinun*, *meidän*, *teidän*, which are genitives of personal pronouns).

Finnish Romani used to have the inherited four-term demonstrative system, but the fourth term *kava* 'specifically that' was lost during the latter half of the 19th century. Reinholm, for instance, gave the example *ak-ala kouv-es-ta* 'this-OBL.SG thing-OBL.SG-ABL = about this thing', and Thesleff's song texts: *lovav-en-a k-ale dakke bujder-ja* 'promise-PRS.3SG-FUT this-NOM.PL hit lover-NOM.PL = they promise to hit, the lovers', *Caj-en-g-e k-ale brun-a phou-a* 'girl-OBL.PL-GEN-PL this-NOM.PL brown-PL eye-brow-NOM.PL = the brown eyebrows of the girls'. The three-term system that resulted (*dauva* 'this', *kouva* 'that', *douva* 'it') is identical with the Finnish one (*tämä* 'this', *tuo* 'that', *se* 'it'). Notably, Finnish Romani still retains at least three uninflected demonstrative pronouns (*(a)da* 'this', *(a)do* 'it', *(a)ka* '(specifically) that'; *(a)ko* 'that' is unattested).

4.3 Verb morphology

Even more dramatic changes took place in the domain of verb morphology, which was subject to a major restructuring during the 19th and the early 20th century. During the 19th century the simplification of the past tense system occurred: first, an imperfect-conditional merger yielding the loss of the old synthetic imperfect and the development of the modern synthetic conditional of Finnish Romani, and second, a preterite/perfect-pluperfect merger. The conservative synthetic imperfect was still found in 19th century sources, e.g. Arwidsson *bachh-av-as* 'want-PRS.1SG-REM = I wanted', Reinholm *harahal djabb-ás* 'for-a-long-time sing-PRS.1SG.REM = I sang for a

long time', but by the latter half of the century it had mostly lost its temporal meanings and was increasingly used to express contrafactivity: Reinholm *josko dján-ás* 'if know-PRS.1SG.REM = if I knew', *jou djabb-el-as te mins-il-as* 'he sing-PRS.3SG-REM if remember-PRS.3SG-REM = he would sing, if he remembered'. Thesleff (1901) no longer called this form an imperfect, but a potential, reflecting its modal rather than its temporal function.

Synthetic past tense forms such as *djabb-id-om-(as)* 'I sang/have sung/had sung' now corresponded morphosemantically to three past tenses, those found in Finnish and modern Finnish Romani. Based on Reinholm's glossing we have:

a) Preterite: *me dján-id-om-as* 'I knew', *me dje-ijom-as* 'I went', *pusch-t-omm-as* 'I asked'.
b) Perfect: *me presa-d-omm-as bút* 'I pay-PRF-1SG-REM lot = I have paid a lot'; *l-ial ɥimuni?* 'have you got anything?', *vänta-d-amm-as bar-i dí-a* 'wait-PRF-1PL-REM big-F.SG time-NOM.SG = we have been waiting for a long time', *mang-iom-as* 'I have prayed', *-piiom-as* 'I have drunk'.
c) Pluperfect: *d-īas karrié tingar-is* 'give-PRF.3SG shot beggar-NOM.SG = had shot dead a beggar', *ɥudd-as* 'had put clothes on', *p-ies p-es-k-i vet-a* 'drink-PRF.3SG REFL-OBL.SG-GEN-F.SG mind-NOM.SG = had befuddled his mind'.

The tense system was complemented by an analytical perfect and pluperfect from the end of the 19th century. In the earliest sources the new analytical tenses consisted of the auxiliary *s-/h-* 'to be' and an athematic participle of the matrix verb, e.g. *voj s-am han-ime ta lis-ime* 'oh be-PRS.1PL long-ATEM.PTCP and suffer-ATEM.PTCP = oh, we have longed and suffered' (Thesleff's song texts, 1890s), *doi me s-am sakk-a gar-ime* 'there we be-PRS.1PL all-PL hide-ATEM.PTCP = there we are all hidden' (Oskari Jalkio's texts, 1910s). The preterite of the matrix verb was used (similar to modern Finnish Romani) at the beginning of the 20th century, e.g. *jou s-as ĥun-jas* 'he be-PRF.3SG hear-PRF.3SG = he had heard', *Rai s-as au-l-o* 'lord be-PRF.3SG come-PRF-M.SG = the Lord had come' (Oskari Jalkio's texts).

Perfective stems underwent minor reassignments in particular in favor of the marker *-d-* (the most unmarked one). The regular (FR stems in *-n* generally belong to the *-l*-class) forms *rann-iom-as* 'write-PRF-1SG-REM' and *džan-iom* 'know-PRF-1SG' co-occurred with the modern forms *rann-id-omm-as* and *džaan-id-om* in Reinholm's sample sentences. On the other hand *muk-t-e* 'leave-PRF-3PL' occurred instead of the modern forms *muk-l-e/muk-n-e*; variation in modern sources suggests that even *pek-t-e* 'roast-PRF-3PL' was probably used along with *pek-l-e/pek-n-e* (Koivisto 1994). There was yet no sign of perfective forms in *-as* in the 3SG of verbs of motion and of the verb *meer-* 'to die', only the participial preterites *au-l-o/ā-l-o* 'came', *djél-o* 'went', *peil-o* 'fell' and *mól-o* 'died' were used. The data are scarce, but it seems likely that the

forms *aujas*, *džeijas*, *perdas* first emerged during the 20th century. On the other hand *dīas* 'gave' and *li(j)as* 'got' were used as active preterite forms; *dīlo* and *līlo* functioned as passive participles, e.g. in Reinholm's notes *man-ge h-in diil-o sār o dɥjoor* 'I-DAT be-PRS.3SG give.PRF-M.SG all ART power = all power is given to me', *līlo* 'gotten.' In the 2PL, three forms competed: those in *-en* (by analogy to the 2PL present concord marker, Matras 2002: 145), e.g. Reinholm *tume s-enn-as* 'you be-2PL-REM = you were', Thesleff (1901) *dījen* 'you gave'; those in *-an* e.g. Thesleff (1901) *dījan* 'you gave'; and those adopting the 3PL form (as in modern Finnish Romani), e.g. Reinholm *tume slip-pu-din-e auri* 'you let-PRF-PL out = you got out'.

5 Contact-induced changes

Finnish Romani took most of its currently attested phonological shape during the 19th century. The most obvious phonological features attributed to the contact with Swedish are the selective palatalization of *k*, *kh* and *g* before the front vowels (*ker-* > *tšeer-* 'to do', *kher* > *tšeer* 'house', *gili* > *džiili* 'song'), the prosodically conditioned gemination competing with vowel lengthening (*buti* > *butti* 'work', *tato* > *tatto* 'warm'), and the *š* > *x* sound change. While the first two phenomena are present even in the earliest documents of Finnish Romani, the geographical (eastward spread) and lexical diffusion of the *š* > *x* sound change can be followed based on written sources from the 19th century and later spoken language materials. In modern spoken Finnish Romani *š* only remains in a few frequently used lexical items, such as *beššˑ*-'to sit', *biš* 'twenty', *deš* 'ten', *tšišˑko* 'good', etc.

The intensive contact of the Roma with the Finnish-speaking population and the increasing linguistic dominance of Finnish manifested themselves in the form of Finnish loanwords and the large-scale imposition of phonological principles from Finnish. These include long vowel diphthongization, vowel harmony, svarabhakti vowel, and the polarization of Romani consonants missing from or marginal in Finnish.

Long vowel diphthongization is originally a feature of eastern Finnish dialects. The areas in which long vowels occurring in Finnish dialects were diphthongized are indicated in Map (1) by Kettunen (1940). These areas largely coincide with the areas which were inhabited by the Roma at the end of the 18th century (Map (2)). All opening diphthongs in Finnish Romani originate from long vowels:

a) *aa* > *ua*: Ganander *raani* > *ruani* 'lady'
b) *ee* > *ie*: Kemell: *o djiskiero* 'hearts', *scheliskiero* 'captain', *zantakiero* 'sergeant', *stopakiero* 'corporal', *schielo* 'cold', *i Diechtani* 'sister-in-law' etc.; Reinholm *aptiekka* 'pharmacy', *sarrakiero* 'breakfast', *sterdibongiere* 'harness', *traadi-*

boskiero 'driver', etc. (but Ganander *moschero ~ moscheero* 'rural police chief', Reinholm *eego* 'own', *eegiba* 'property')

c) *oo* > *uo*: Reinholm: *o tschuoro* 'poor', *fuorta* 'soon', kuoro 'blind', *gruopa* 'grave', *puorta* 'gate' (but *gropos* 'hole')

d) *öö* > *yö*: Reinolm: *byöni* 'prayer', *i hyösta* 'autumn', *työmi* 'reins' (but *löörda* 'Saturday').

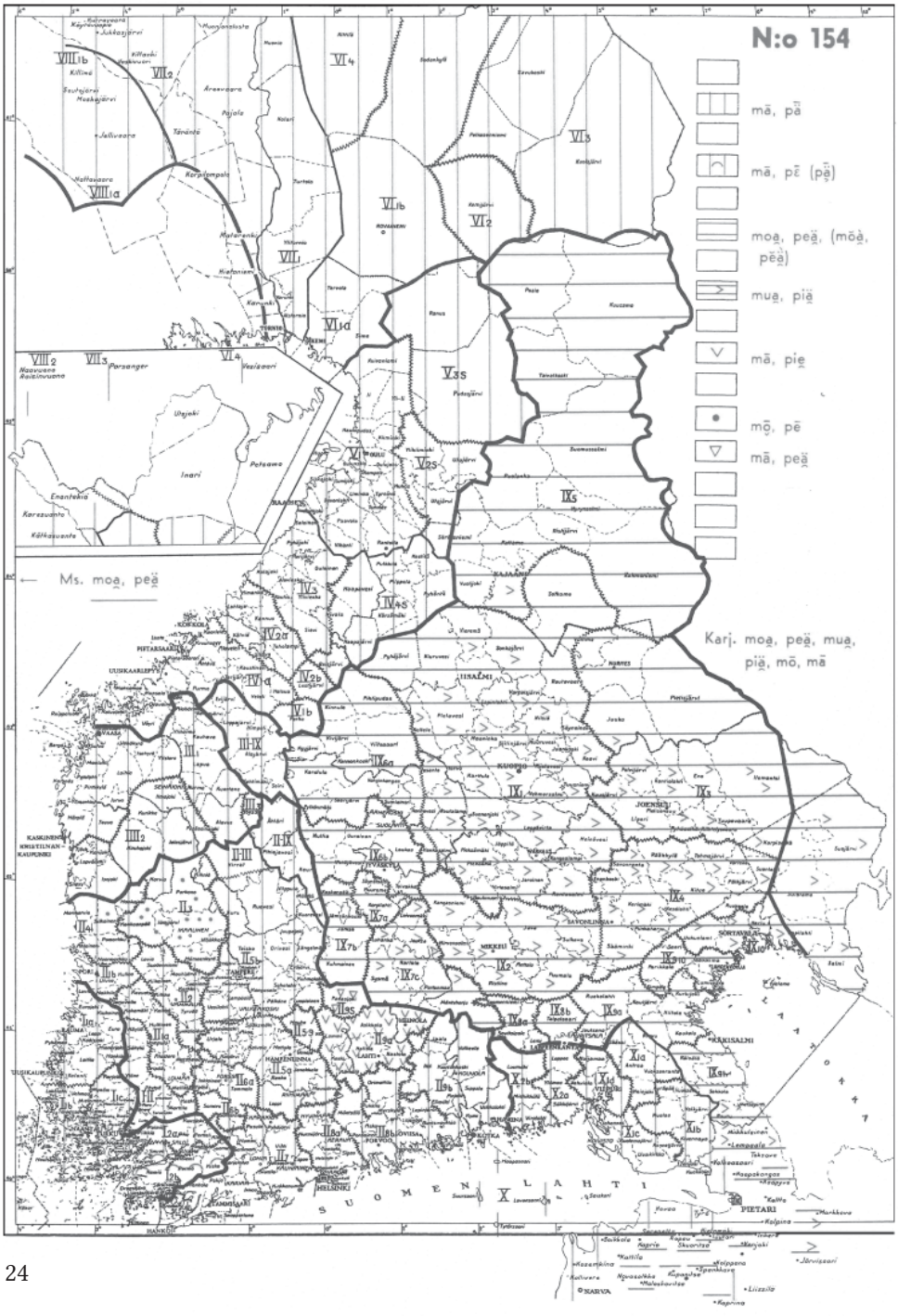
The closing diphthongs *ē* > *ei*, *ō* > *ou* (similar to Sinti) were still retained in a number of lexical items during the second half of the 19th century (cf. *beiro* 'boat', *djeino* 'man', *peiza* 'by foot', *seilo* 'unbroken', *speilos* 'mirror', *bouri* 'daughter-in-law', *douri ~ doria* 'ribbon', *joun* 'they', *koulo* 'soft', *kouri* 'there', *louna* 'to borrow' and *pouri* 'tail' in Reinholm's notes), but were already largely monophthongized at the time when Thesleff collected his data. The closing diphthongs probably protected these lexical items from undergoing the type of long vowel diphthongization that was induced by the contact with Finnish dialects, because *beero* 'boat' and *boori* 'daughter-in-law', for instance, would have otherwise became *biero* and *buori* analogically with *apotek* > *aptieka* and *čhoro* > *tšuoro*.

Another phenomenon partially adopted in contact with Finnish is vowel harmony: Finnish Romani has three vowel sets similar to Finnish: front vowels {y, ö, ä}, back vowels {u, o, a} and neutral vowels {i, e}; suffix harmony is optional and register-dependent, unlike in Finnish. Suffix harmony was absent in Ganander's and Arwidsson's data, but was attested in Kemell's (*o byggös* 'barley', *riinä* 'art'), and Reinholm's notes (*deu-les-ko hamyör-ä* 'God-OBL.SG-GEN picture-NOM.SG = picture of God', *hyästä* 'autumn', *lyiä* 'voice', *pärnäsä* 'pillow', *ämrä* 'pail').

Similarly, the epenthesis of a svarabhakti vowel (a vowel copy process that optimized the syllable structure, and was adopted from Finnish dialects in the Savo regions (eastern Finland), Ostrobothnia, and Häme) was probably not yet adopted at the beginning of the 20th century. Reinholm's notes contain a number of examples indicating that the Finnish phonological rule was already well established in the Romani system: *barvalo* > *barăvalo* 'rich', *balval* > *balăva* 'wind', *berga* > *belĕga* 'hill', *barkatiko* > *barăketiko kacht* 'pine'.

Polarization of some Romani consonants into their closest Finnish-like equivalents was an early phenomenon in Finnish Romani: signs of devoicing of voiced stops (*b* and *g* do not occur with genuine Finnish words, *d* is normative but not fully integrated (Karlsson 1982: 58)) can be found in all sources on Finnish Romani since Ganander: *gulva* > *kulwa* 'floor', *grai* > *krai* 'horse'.

Map 1 Long vowel diphthongization in Finnish dialects (Kettunen 1940).



The contact with Finnish did not yet have any large-scale effects on Romani morphosyntax during the 20th century. Stand-alone definite articles (*o*, *i/e*, *e*) were regularly retained in Ganander's, Arwidsson's and Kemell's notes, and nearly everywhere in Reinholm's notes, but only sporadically in Thesleff's song texts. They were lost according to Bourgeois (1911), and likewise in Oskari Jalkio's texts in *Kiertolainen* (1907–1914); they have been documented, however, in a number of idiolects as late as the 1960s (Valtonen 1968: 158–159). Stand-alone definite articles still occur sporadically in some of the most conservative idiolects: the following ones are examples from spoken Romani collected at the beginning of the 21st century: *o drom* 'the way', *o džis* 'the heart', *o tšetl-i* 'ART container-NOM.PL = the containers', *o var-e tšaij-e* 'ART other-PL girl-NOM.PL = the other girls.' Remnants of the definite articles are found in the prepositions *apo* 'on(to)', *aro* 'in(to)' and *kajo* 'towards'.

Inflecting Finnish Romani was vital and retained its morphosyntactic frame during the 19th century. Finnish cases were occasionally used, as Reinholm's examples *khamatcshur-jia h-in buut ar sakk-o aho-ss'* (inessive) 'strawberry-NOM.PL be-PRS.3PL lot in every-M.SG aho-INESS = there are a lot of strawberries in every meadow', and *me s-om dukad-e daan-e-hin* (Illative) 'I be-PRS.1SG ill-PL tooth-NOM.PL-ILL = my teeth hurt', show. Similarly comparatives in Finnish *-mpi* (*nuorempi* 'younger') are found in Reinholm's notes, e.g: *ternekha mpi* = *ternēder koni* 'younger'.

A typological change of Finnish Romani from a preposition language into a postposition language began in all likelihood during the latter half of the 19th century. Prepositions are exclusively used in Ganander's, Arwidsson's and Kemell's notes. One example can be found in Reinolm's notes *d-ā m-o dʉībe ʉa-k-i eestä* 'give-PRS.1SG.REM my-M.SG life girl.OBL.SG-GEN-F.SG for = I give my life for the girl', in which the Finnish postposition *eestä* (*edestä*) takes a genitive complement calquing the Finnish structure *tytö-n edestä* 'girl-GEN.SG for = for the girl.' Postpositions were, however, not generalized in Finnish Romani until the 20th century.

6 Summary

To conclude, I present two tables. Table (2) (see p. 26) summarizes features of Finnish Romani that were lost, or the process of their loss was initiated, during the 19th century (in some case already at the end of the 18th century). For most of the lost features, the latter half of the 19th century constitutes a *terminus ante quem*. On the other hand, some of the changes that began during the 19th century were not completed until the end of the 1960s or the beginning of the 1970s. Most notably, prepositions were still used by some speakers in the 1960s. As for the instrumentals of nouns, the Early Romani option selection between *s* and *h* in morphological paradigms is not complete

unlike in the verbs. The locative is productive only in a small number of conservative idiolects, and even in them is largely fossilized. Table (3) summarizes innovations in Finnish Romani that emerged during the 19th century. All innovations were induced by the contact of Finnish Romani with Finnish. There, their relative order follows quite well the scale that concerns the significance of features based on the domain of language (Chambers / Trudgill 1998: 99). Lexical borrowings from Finnish have been documented since Ganander's prize essay. Evidence of imposition of phonological principles also dates back to Ganander. Contact-induced changes affecting the morphosyntax (the use of Finnish case markers, comparatives in *-mpi*, postpositions instead of prepositions) are not documented before the latter half of the 19th century.

Table 2 Lost features in Finnish Romani.

Lost feature	First source indicating the loss	Last source showing the old feature	Modern Finnish Romani
s in morphological paradigms: *sin, si* present tense of lexical verbs	Ganander (1780)	Reinholm (ca. 1860)	*h* in morphological paradigms: *hin* present tense of lexical verbs
fortition *v* > *b*		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	lenition *v* > *u*
ablative in *–tar*		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	*-ta*
comparative in *-ider/-eder*		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	*-ide*
vocative		Ganander (1780)	nominative
reflexive pronoun *po*		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	*pesko*
čimoni		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	*tši*
subject clitics		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	–
synthetic imperfect		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	synthetic conditional
synthetic pluperfect		Reinholm (ca. 1860)	analytical perfect and pluperfect
demonstrative pronoun *kauva*		Thesleff's song texts (1890–)	*dauva, (a)da, (a)ka*
s in INSTR.SG of nouns:	Reinholm (ca. 1860)	(still in use in some nouns)	*s/h* in INSTR.SG of nouns
locative	Reinholm (ca. 1860)	(still in use in conservative idiolects)	nominative, locative in conservative idiolects
oblique of adjectives	Jalkio (1907–1914)	Temo (ca. 1970)	nominative
prepositions	Reinholm (ca. 1860)	Valtonen (1968)	postpositions

Table 3 19th century innovations in Finnish Romani.

First source	Innovation		
Ganander (1780)	Finnish loan words	**LEXICON**	**= LEXICAL < PHONOLOGICAL < GRAMMATICAL** (Chambers / Trudgill 1998: 99)
Ganander (1780)	diphthongs from long vowels	**PHONOLOGY**	
Arwidsson (1817)	svarabhakti vowel		
Arwidsson (1817)	vowel harmony		
Arwidsson (1817)	*š* > *x*	**MORPHOSYNTAX**	
Reinholm (ca. 1860)	use of Finnish cases		
Reinholm (ca. 1860)	comparatives in *–mpi*		
Reinholm (ca. 1860)	Finnish clitics		

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Zuzana Bodnárová

Overview of Vend Romani in Hungary[1]

Abstract

The present paper attempts to provide an overview of the linguistic situation of Vend Romani, a South Central Romani dialect spoken in western Hungary, which is seriously endangered by language shift to Hungarian. It especially deals with the ethnonyms used by the speakers, the geographical spread of the dialect and several sociolinguistic issues such as the status of the language and the impact of mixed marriages on language transmission. The data come from sociolinguistic and dialectological field research on Vend Romani in western Hungary, carried out by the author during 2010 and 2011.

1 Introduction

In spite of the fact that the number of both academic and non-academic papers on the Roms and Romani language has multiplied in the last few decades in Hungary, very little attention has been paid to the Vend Romani group and the dialect that they speak. Even the entire area where the Vend Roms live or how vital their dialect in fact is precisely remains unknown to this day.

This paper attempts to provide an overview of the linguistic situation of Vend Romani (henceforth VR), which is a South Central Romani dialect spoken in Hungary. The paper pays special attention in the beginning to the Romani and Hungarian ethnonyms used by the speakers. Secondly, it deals with the number and geographical distribution of the speakers. Thirdly, it reviews the extent of documentation of the VR dialect. The paper also touches upon several sociolinguistic issues such as the status of the language and the impact of mixed marriages on language transmission. The data come from sociolinguistic and dialectological field research on VR in western Hungary, carried out during 2010 and 2011, with its focus on the documentation and description of the dialect.

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2 Ethnonyms

It is essential to point out that the term "Vend Roms" is used here only as a working term for lack of any other suitable term, and despite the fact that the Roms, "Vend", are often not even aware of this designation. Nowadays the name "Vend" is known as an ethnonym for ethnic Slovenes living in *Vendvidék* 'the land of Vends' in Hungary, which is a small region in the Vas county, bordering Austria and Slovenia. There also used to be Hungarian Vends in the Zala and Somogy counties, due to the migrating Slovene families from the regions of Prekmurje (now part of Slovenia) and Vendvidék in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Vends living in these two counties have now been almost entirely assimilated into the Hungarian-speaking majority (M. Kozár 1999). In all of these counties, we can also find a significant number of Vend Roms. Thus the exonym, Vend Roms, reflects a historical connection between this Romani group and the surrounding population of ethnic Slovenes.

The name "Vend Roms / Gypsies" was introduced into Hungarian scholarly literature by Vekerdi (1984, 1985, 2000). Nonetheless, I have not attested the wider use of this term among the Vend Roms. Some of them were familiar with the term, but considered it an exonym. Others had heard of it from elder members of the group whilst others were acquainted with it most likely through existing literature.

According to Vekerdi (1984), the Vlax Roms employ the term *vendicko rom* for this group; similarly, Rézműves uses the term *vendetiko rom* in the introductory part of her paper, which was written by the author herself in Vlax Romani: *Šunďan aba pal o Šlajferitika roma, pal o "Šlajferďa"? Maškar* ***o vendetika roma*** *kade akharen odole romen kon "širdakri", vasonki buti keren.* 'Have you heard about the "Šlajferitika roma", about the "Šlajferďa"? Amongst the Vend Roms, the grinders and tinkers are called this way' (Rézműves 2000).

Most speakers refer to themselves as *köszörüs* 'Grinder' or *köszörüs cigány* 'Grinder Rom' in Hungarian, which reflects the most common traditional occupation of this group. The speakers use these ethnonyms even if the traditional occupation of their family was not knife-whetting: some Vend Roms used to be, for example, tinkers, umbrella repairmen, basket weavers, horse traders or holders of shooting-galleries or carousels. However, in the Vas county – the border region with Slovenia and Austria – the designation "grinder" is used by other Romani groups as a derogatory word with a very negative connotation, equivalent to uneducated or hick. Therefore, this term is not connected to a certain Romani group, but rather to individuals. In this county, the VR speakers call themselves both *muzsikus (cigány)* 'Musician (Rom)' and *magyar cigány* 'Hungarian Rom' in Hungarian. It is worth noting that most Vend Roms had been semi-itinerant until recently, connected with their most common traditional profession of grinder and tinker. According to collective memory, the families were moving only within the

borders of Hungary, but later on they gradually began to settle down. This took place some 56 years ago.

The lack of a common endonym is one of the reasons why the neutral term Vend Roms is being used in this paper. It is also worth noting that the term Grinders is also used to refer to the Sinti[2], both by the Sinti themselves and by other Romani groups. There are also the commonly used Hungarian terms, *szintó* 'Sinto' or *német cigány* 'German Roms', besides the name Grinders, for this group. However, we only sporadically find the Sinti in territories where the Vend Roms live. So far, no locality has been attested to where a significant number of these two Romani groups would coexist.

The Vend Roms refer to themselves as *rom* 'Rom' in the singular and *róma* 'Roms' in the plural when they speak Romani. The informant of Rézműves (2000) uses the term *šlajferitiko rom* or *šlajferi* as a Romani name for the group, which comes from the German word *Schleifer* 'grinder'. This designation was passively known to the speakers. In addition, I have recorded the Hungarian loanword *keseriši* for 'grinders' several times.

Most of the Vend Roms primarily use the endonym *Róma* in everyday communication, whilst using the loanwords, *šlajferi* or *keseriši,* when they have to separate their own group from other Romani groups. Similarly, they call the dialect they speak *romani čhib / čhip* 'Romani language' in Romani and *köszörüs nyelv* 'Grinder language' or simply *cigány nyelv* 'Romani language' in Hungarian. To compare, they call the dialect spoken by the Vlax Roms *(v)lahitiki / lácki čhib / čhip* (< Hungarian *oláh* 'Vlach / Romanian') 'Vlach language'; and they call the language of the Boyash either *kopanášitiki / kopanácki čhib / čhip* (< Greek *kopána* 'trough') or *koritárcki čhib / čhip* (< South Slavic *korito* 'trough') 'language of the trough makers'.

3 Vend Romani and its documentation

VR is primarily an oral language. Use of the dialect is limited to the family circle and neighbourhood contacts. It does not have any standard form, and so far there has not been an initiative focused on the standardization of VR on the part of the Hungarian authorities and/or policy makers. Neither has there been such an initiative from the side of the Vend Roms themselves.

Although there are only a few published texts in VR, they have been written in three different writing systems. None of them, however, is based on the

2 See the part on classification models of Romani groups.

Hungarian alphabet. We cannot find VR being used in mass media or the education system.

Exact data on the number of VR speakers does not exist, as the results published in the Hungarian Population Census[3] from 2001 do not differentiate between varying Romani groups. The coexistence of the Vend Roms with other Romani group(s) within most municipalities acknowledges the fact that the census data is not sufficient to state their number with certainty. Vekerdi estimated the number of speakers to be around a few hundred (Vekerdi 1984: 5, 2000: 14).

The majority of the speakers of VR are middle-aged or elderly. They are generally Romani–Hungarian bilinguals. Some of them are even trilingual in another contact language such as Slovenian or German. The number of these localities where the youngest generation has some competence in Romani ranges between five and ten, as the language shift towards Hungarian already took place in most of the localities a few decades ago.

The status of VR is relatively low. The speakers have a generally negative attitude towards the dialect they speak. Some of them share the opinion of the Vlax Roms that their dialect is not a "pure Romani language", as it contains a number of Hungarian loanwords. Therefore, many speakers were not even sure of their own competence in Romani. In some cases, the speakers were even ashamed to acknowledge that they speak Romani, since for many of them the Romani language is a symbol of "gypsiness" in a negative, stereotypical sense. They generally link competence in Romani with poverty, backwardness or a lack of education. This is well illustrated by the answer I got several times when asking around for speakers of VR: "we are not **such** Gypsies". A similar situation arose when I was speaking in Romani with an elderly couple and their son entered the room. He said to those present in Hungarian: *Most mit cigánykodtok itt?* 'Why are you behaving like Gypsies?' The prevailing negative attitude towards the language is likely to be one of the reasons why the language transmission from generation to generation is in decline.

Documentation of VR is poor. There are two brief grammatical descriptions of the dialect. The first is the well-known grammatical description by Joseph Habsburg from the 19th century (Habsburg 1888). In his grammar, the VR dialect is called Transdanubian and it is compared with other Romani dialects of Hungary. The second one is a few pages' description by József Vekerdi (1984). It is not clear whether his data is only based on the story which follows the short description of some selected grammatical features. The tale was translated from Hungarian by a native speaker from the Somogy county. The grammatical description is also followed

3 See http://www.nepszamlalas2001.hu (1.7.2013).

by a short dictionary definition of those words which differ from other Romani dialects. In addition, there is a longer multidialectal dictionary by the same author (Vekerdi 2000). Vekerdi indicates the dialectal affiliation of the words, which are translated into Hungarian and English. There we find the so-called Romungro dialect and the VR dialect. Both of them belong to the same South Central dialect group (e.g. Boretzky 1999; Matras 2002).

There are very few published texts in VR. In 1985, a collection of tales and stories from Vekerdi was published in different Romani dialects (Vekerdi 1985). We can find here the same tale as in the paper from 1984 and the Romani translation of a part of the same tale from another informant from the Somogy County. There are four tales published by Glaeser, which were recorded in Tolna County (Glaeser 1999). The story-teller, however, used to live in the Vas county. In this paper, Glaeser compares some selected grammatical features of VR with Roman, the Romani variety spoken in Austria. Six VR tales were published from a village in the Somogy county by the ethnologist Melinda Rézműves in the last decade, where orthography proposed by Courthiade is used (Rézműves 2006). The tales are also available in audio format. There is a brief VR text on the customs of Vend Roms published in a magazine by the same author (Rézműves 2000).

In the year 1999, a collection of Romani songs and stories were finally published on ten CDs collected throughout Hungary and Romania (Bari 1999). It is noteworthy that 20 of the performers are called Sinti by the author, and four of the texts are in the VR dialect. I went to these localities where Bari recorded the aforementioned short stories and song and managed to verify that the local Roms do not in fact call themselves Sinti, but Grinders. This confusion of names most likely originates from the ethnonym Grinders, which is used both by Sinti and Vend Roms as was previously discussed. However, they constitute two different Romani groups and they speak two mutually unintelligible Romani dialects.

4 Geographical distribution of the speakers

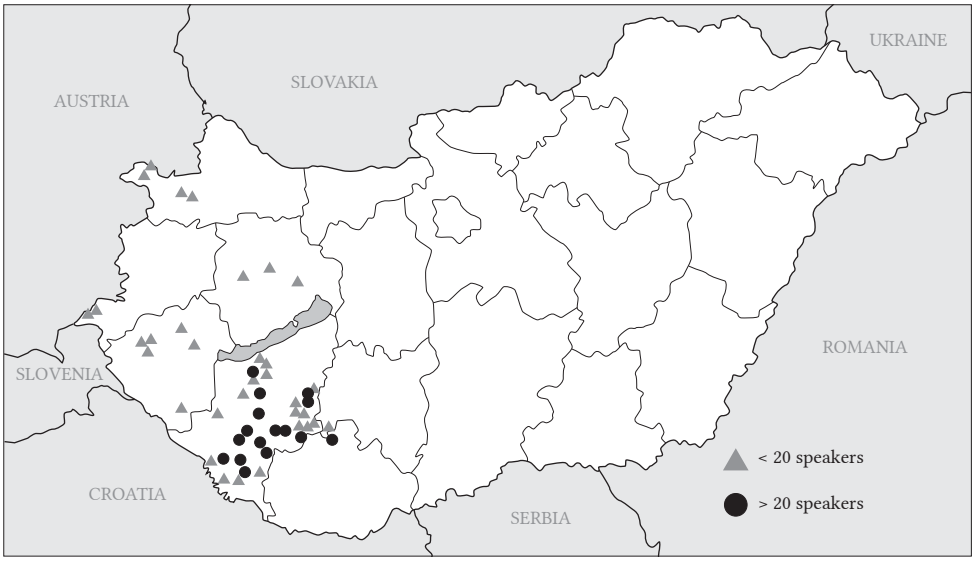
The speakers of VR live in western Hungary, in the traditional region of Transdanubia. The presence of VR speakers has been attested in the following counties of the region: Baranya, Tolna, Somogy, Zala, Vas, Veszprém and Győr-Moson-Sopron (Map 1) (see p. 34). Roughly 70–80 percent of the speakers live in the southern Transdanubian Somogy county. Thus, it can be considered as the centre of the Vend Roms. The remaining 20–30 percent of the speakers are spread across the other counties. Speakers of related dialects are also found in the border regions to Slovenia and Austria (e.g. Matras 2002; Halwachs 2002; Štrukelj 1980).

Map 1

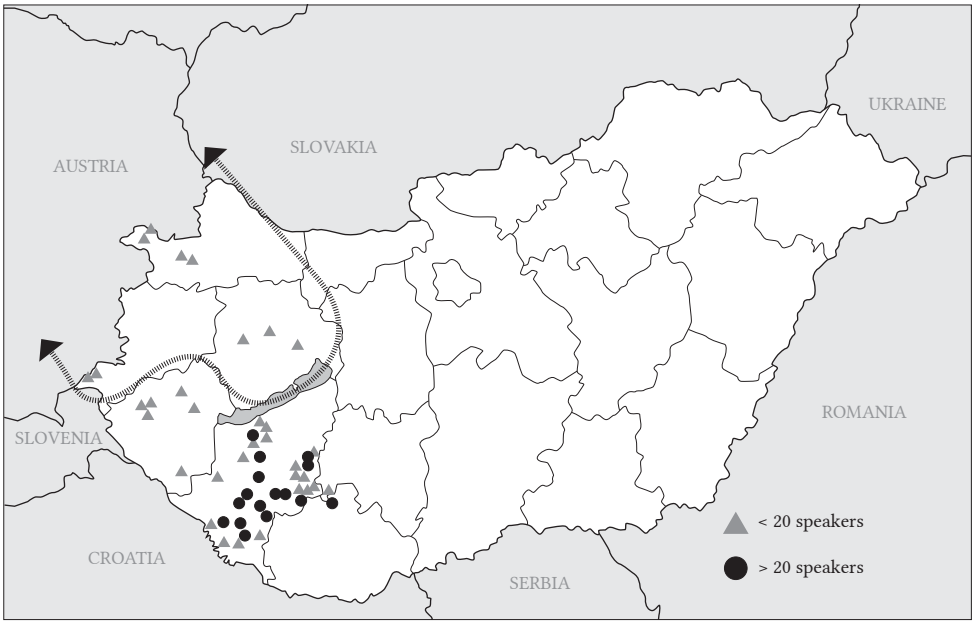
The localities with VR speakers are indicated on Map 2. The total number of these localities is somewhere between 60 and 80. The grey triangles mark localities with less than 20 speakers, while the black dots represent localities with more than 20 speakers. Some triangles indicate the presence of the very last speakers, sometimes even the last speaker or the last semi-speakers. Thus, the dots represent only those localities where at least one VR speaker lives. In fact, there are only a few localities with Vend Roms but with no speakers left. It indicates that the language shift to Hungarian is a relatively new phenomenon of the last few decades. The number of speakers decreases as one moves towards the north from the Somogy county. In northwestern Hungary we mostly find language islands with only a last few speakers.

On Map 3, the grey line splits the Transdanubian region into two areas. The Vend Roms in these areas generally do not maintain any social relationships. In many cases they do not even know of their mutual existence. It is typical in the northern area that the Vend Roms maintain contacts with the Burgenland Roms of Austria, who traditionally speak a closely related dialect. This is not typical for the southern area. However, the Vend Roms of the southern area frequently mentioned that they had "German Roms" (Hungarian SG *német cigány*) among their ancestors, which could mean either Roms from the region of Burgenland in Austria or Sinti. Some others mentioned "Yugoslavian Roms" (Hungarian SG *jugoszláv cigány*) among their ancestors. It is likely that "Yugoslavian Roms" came from Slovenia, as there is no evidence that there are any speakers of related dialects in other former Yugoslavian states.

Map 2

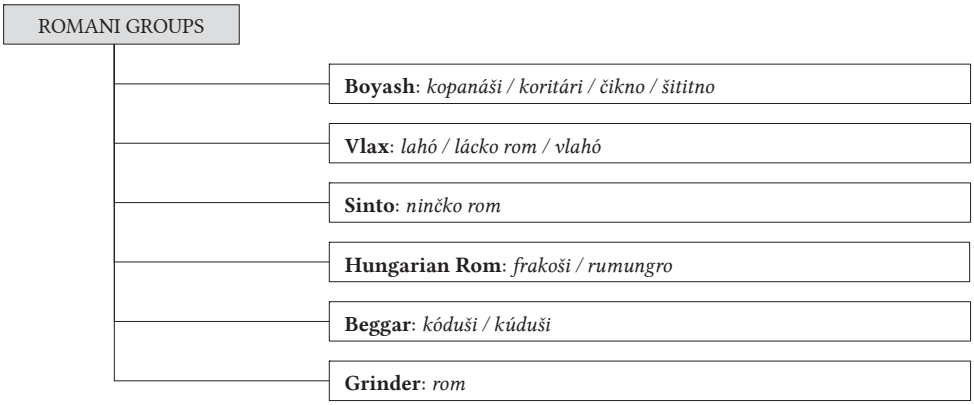

UKRAINE
SLOVAKIA
AUSTRIA
ROMANIA
SLOVENIA
CROATIA
SERBIA
< 20 speakers
> 20 speakers

Map 3


UKRAINE
SLOVAKIA
AUSTRIA
ROMANIA
SLOVENIA
CROATIA
SERBIA
< 20 speakers
> 20 speakers

5 Classification models of Romani groups

Diagram 1 Classification model I. (SG masculinum)



There are two classification models of Romani groups used by the Vend Roms themselves which I have found in the field. Both of them slightly differ from other classification models used in Hungarian scholarly literature. The most widespread model we can find is in south-western Hungary (Diagram 1). According to this model, the Vend Roms perceive the existence of six different Romani groups:

The **Boyash**. They speak an archaic Romanian dialect (e.g. Borbély 2001). The Vend Roms call the members of this group *beás* 'Boyash', or more rarely *oláh* / *oláj* 'Vlach'[4] or *teknős* / *teknővájó* 'trough maker' in Hungarian. In Romani they use the designation *kopanáši* (PL *kopanášťa* / *kopanášja*, < Greek *kopána* 'trough'), except for some localities in Zala county, where the designation *koritári* (PL *koritárďa* / *koritárja*, < South Slavic *korito* 'trough') is used. The widely used Romani designation *čikno* (PL čikne) 'greasy' is rather a comical name for the Boyash, as well as the locally used name *šititno* (PL *šititne*, < Hungarian *sötét* 'dark') referring to certain attributes.

The **Vlax Roms**. They speak the Vlax dialect of Romani (e.g. Vekerdi – Mészáros 1974). The Vend Roms call them *kolompár* (< Hungarian *kolomp* 'cowbell') in Hungar-

4 In southern Transdanubia the Boyash are called *oláh* / *oláj* 'Vlach', while the Romani group otherwise known as Vlach Roms are called *kolompár* 'cowbell makers' in this region (cf. Vekerdi 1985).

ian, whose designation is well-known to all Romani groups in southern Transdanubia. In Romani, they use the names *lahó* (PL *lahój*), *lácko rom* (PL *lácke róma*) derived from the Hungarian *oláh* 'Vlach'; and *vlahó* (PL *vlahóvďa*) derived from the Slavic *vlach* 'Vlach'.

The **Sinti**. They speak the north-western dialect of Romani – or at least they spoke it in the recent past (e.g. Mészáros 1980). To the Vend Roms the Sinti are known under the same Hungarian professionym *köszörüs* 'Grinder'. They are seldom called *német cigány* 'German Roms' in Hungarian. Sometimes the Sinti are perceived as the same Romani group as the Vend Roms, especially in families with some Sinti ancestors. To differentiate between the Vend Roms and Sinti, the informants used the designation *ninčko rom* (PL *ninčke róma*) for the latter group. Some of the informants differentiated between "real" and "fake" Grinders, but there was no agreement as to which group merits the designation "real" Grinders.

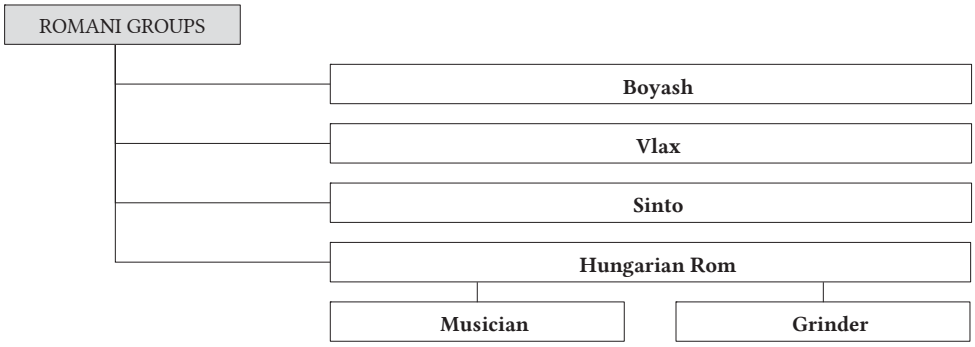
The so-called **Hungarian Roms**. They have been Hungarian monolinguals for the last few generations, and according to informants, their only traditional occupation was performing music. The Hungarian designations used for this group are *magyar cigány* 'Hungarian Rom', *muzsikus* (*cigány*) 'Musician (Rom)', *úri cigány* 'Noble Rom', and *rumungró* (< Romani *rom+ungro*) 'Hungarian Rom'. There is also a humorous Hungarian name *rúdugró* 'pole-vaulter' used by the Vend Roms, which rhymes with the designation *rumungró*. The Vend Roms call the members of this group *frakoši* (PL *frakošťa* / *frakošja*, < Hungarian *frakk* 'tail-coat') or rarely *rumungro* (PL *rumungri*, < Romani *rom+ungro* 'Hungarian Rom') in Romani.

Apart from the Hungarian Roms, the Vend Roms distinguish another Hungarian monolingual group: the **Beggars**. The most commonly mentioned attributes of Beggars included the lack of language competence, and adobe brick making as a traditional occupation, which was occasionally supplemented by begging. This group is called *kódis* (< Hungarian *koldus*) 'Beggar' in Hungarian, and *kóduš* / *kúduš* (PL *kódušťa* / *kódušja* / *kúdusťa* / *kúdušja*, < Hungarian dial. forms of *koldus*) 'Beggar' in Romani. The name refers to the former activity of begging, which is by no means connected to the present occupation of the group. This ethnonym could be – but not necessarily – pejorative, depending on the locality. In the Hungarian scholarly literature, this group is treated as the same as the Hungarian Roms, as both of the groups have been Hungarian monolinguals for several generations.

And finally, our target group called **Vend Roms**. In south-western Hungary, the VR speakers refer to themselves with the Hungarian self-appellation *köszörüs* 'Grinder', or with the Romani ethnonym *rom* 'Rom'.

The second classification model is found in north-western Hungary (Diagram 2). The group of Beggars is missing here, but we find the Boyash, the Vlax Roms and the Sinti. This second model differs from the first in that the group of Musicians is not perceived as a separate group. Thus, there are Musicians who still speak Romani, the same dialect as the Grinders. The common name used for both professional groups is Hungarian Roms. However, there is a very widespread opinion at least in Transdanubia that the Hungarian or Musician Roms can only be monolingual in Hungarian, a concept which a Musician/Hungarian Rom from north-western Hungary would most directly oppose. Overall, in Hungary, there is very little awareness of the presence of Vend Roms and the Romani dialect they speak. The people are generally aware of the Vlax Roms, the Boyash and the Hungarian monolingual Roms. Very little is known about the Vend Roms or Sinti, on the other hand.

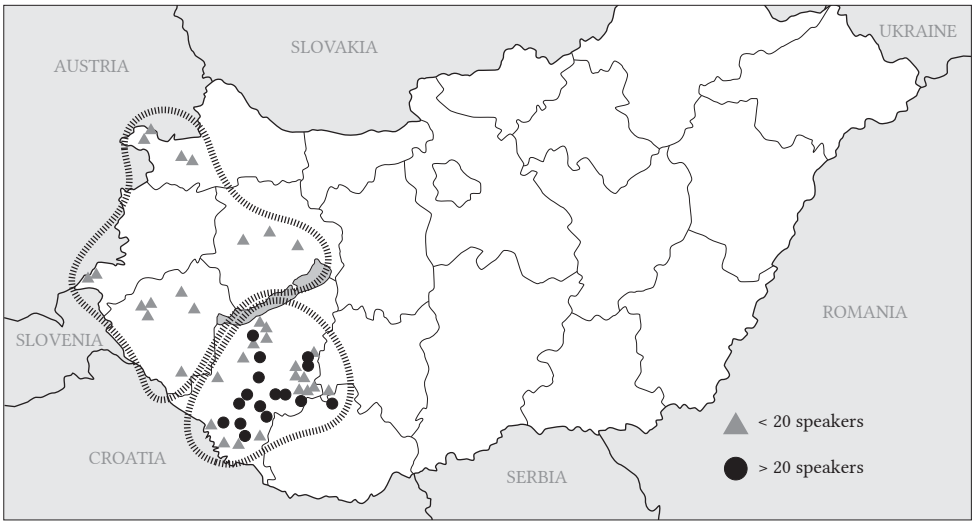
Diagram 2 Classification model II.



Map 4 shows the division of Transdanubia into two distinct areas. The difference between them is in proportion to the number of certain Romani groups living there. In the southern area, we find the majority of Boyash in Hungary. Especially in the Somogy county, they are larger in number than compared with the Vlax or Vend Roms. As mentioned above, the same county might be designated as the centre of Vend Roms. There are only a few communities of Musicians and very few Beggars and Sinti, rather individuals than whole families.

In the northern area (Map 4), the number of Vlax Roms and Musicians, or the so-called Hungarian Roms, is highest. However, as mentioned before, in some part of this area – namely in Győr-Moson-Sopron and Vas county – the Musicians are not considered as a different Hungarian monolingual Romani group. The Boyash, the Sinti and Beggars are few in number in this region.

Map 4



There is another distinction between the two areas. In the south, which in general terms represents the territory of the Somogy county, the Vend Roms are distinguished into different "tribes" or subdivisions within their own group. In Romani they generally use the Hungarian loanwords *fajta* (Hungarian *fajta*) or *banda* (Hungarian *banda*) for the word "tribe". The most common *fajta* / *banda* are the *boboši* (PL *bobošťa*, < South Slavic *bob* 'bean'), *žukláši* (PL *žuklášťa*, < Romani *žúkel* 'dog'), *tócko* (PL *tócke*, < Hungarian *tót*, the exonym of the Slovenes, and later on of the Slovaks), the less common are the *prahoši* (PL *prahošťa*, < South Slavic *prah* 'dust'), *patováši* (PL *patovášťa*, < Romani *patavo* 'foot-rag'), *feňó* (PL *feňój*, < Hungarian fenyő 'pine tree'), etc. The Vend Roms of the northern region are not aware of the existence of these "tribes". Nowadays, this system does not have much significance for the Vend Roms.

Regarding intergroup marriages, the information presented here is based on my own observation. In southern Transdanubia, Vend–Boyash marriages are the most frequent. According to the informants, such intergroup marriages were frequent in the past as well, even Vekerdi made a note of this in his paper from 1984. Marriages between the Vend and the Vlax Roms are much less frequent in this region.

In the northern area, the most frequent are the Vend–Sinti and Vend–Musician marriages. Marriages of the Vend Roms with the Vlax Roms or the Boyash are rare. The latter can be explained by the low number of Boyash in the region.

Finally, in the whole of Transdanubia, marriages with *gáže* / *gádže* / *górďa* 'Non-Roms' such as Hungarians, ethnic Germans or Slovenes are typical. In all types of mixed marriages, the parents generally speak only Hungarian with the children.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I have compared the ethnonyms presented by Vekerdi and Rézműves with the ones I have encountered during my fieldwork. As a result, I have found that it is more appropriate to continue the tradition of using the term "Vend Roms" because of its neutrality. I have reviewed also the Hungarian and Romani ethnonyms used to refer to different Romani groups, which are in part unknown in scholarly literature. And finally, I have been able to determine the approximate number of localities where VR is spoken, which had been unknown to date.

The Vend Roms live scattered across a relatively large region, which could be the result of their recent semi-itinerant way of life. The process of settling down could be one of the main reasons why relations between the small in number VR communities began to break down. Consequently, it has likely resulted in an increasing number of intergroup marriages. These facts, together with the negative language attitude of the speakers and their invisibility in Hungary, play a significant role in the process of the language shift towards Hungarian. Thus it can be asserted that VR is a moribund language.

Abbreviations

PL – plural
SG – singular

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Michael Beníšek

Serednye Romani: A North Central Romani variety of Transcarpathian Ukraine[1]

Abstract

The North Central Romani (NCR) dialect continuum, which has its core in Slovakia, is known to reach as far eastwards as Transcarpathian Ukraine. Yet so far there has never been a study on Transcarpathian NCR, nor has there ever been a study on any other Romani dialect in the Transcarpathian region. This paper, based on the author's fieldwork research, attempts to fill this gap.

The introductory sections present the general linguistic situation of the Roms in Transcarpathian Ukraine, as well as a more detailed account of the dialectology of local NCR. It is shown that there are four traditional localities where NCR is still spoken in Transcarpathia, all of which are situated in a western area close to the Slovak border. The easternmost locality is Serednye, whose Romani variety therefore represents the eastern margin of the dialect continuum, occupying an important place in NCR dialectological research.

The main part of the paper is a brief outline of the Serednye Romani variety. While the focus is placed on a description of morphology, selected lexical, phonological, and syntactic features are also mentioned. The outline shows that Serednye Romani is a conservative Eastern NCR dialect, although there are some unique innovations, as well as contact-induced changes triggered by the North Slavic and Hungarian influences. The present paper is the first study of a Transcarpathian Romani dialect in any language and the first sketch in English of a North Central Romani variety spoken in its traditional location in central-eastern Europe.

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1 This paper is based on the author's own field research on Transcarpathian varieties of NCR, which he has been conducting since 2007. The intensive research of the Serednye variety was carried out in August 2010. The main tool was the elicitation of a linguistic questionnaire LQCR (Elšík 2008–2010), carried out with a male consultant in his late twenties, who was born in the village, has lived there all his life, and whose parents and grandparents were also natives of Serednye. Along with the elicitation, approximately three hours of narratives and conversation with the consultant, members of his family, and other Roms in Serednye were recorded. I am grateful to the consultant Leonid Surmaj for his hospitable reception and willingness to share his native language knowledge and to Viktor Elšík for a continuous discussion on Romani linguistics-related topics, innumerable pieces of insightful advice, and comments on the manuscript. Some findings presented in this paper were discussed at the Annual Meeting of the Gypsy Lore Society in Graz, September 1–3 2011 ('Romani of Serednye. A report on a Transcarpathian Romani variety'). The paper has been written as a part of the research project 'The Linguistic Atlas of Central Romani' funded by the Czech Science Foundation [GAČR P406/11/0818].

1 The Roms in Transcarpathian Ukraine

The Transcarpathian province or Transcarpathia (in Ukrainian: *Zakarpats'ka oblast'* or *Zakarpattja*) is the westernmost region and an administrative unit (*oblast'*) of Ukraine, where the country borders the central-eastern European countries of Slovakia and Hungary. It was only after World War II that the region was politically united with the rest of present-day Ukraine. For centuries, the territory of Transcarpathia was part of the Hungarian Kingdom (until 1919), followed by a short period of Czechoslovak rule (1919–1939). Therefore, the region is, in many respects, close to central Europe, including the local Romani population, which is related to those living in Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania.

Transcarpathia is the area with the highest percentage of Romani people in Ukraine. In the 2001 census, the Romani population in the whole of Ukraine amounted to 47,587, of which 14,004 lived in the Transcarpathian province (ERRC 2006: 11), accounting for 29.4 percent of all Ukrainian Roms. Although the actual number of all Roms in Ukraine may be higher, the census clearly shows a comparatively high proportion of the Transcarpathian Roms in Ukraine. Despite this, the Roms in Transcarpathia have never attracted much scholarly attention and, until recently, no linguistic research on the local Romani has been conducted.

Contrary to expectations, however, most Roms in Transcarpathia do not speak Romani. According to the 2001 census, only 20.5 percent of the local Roms have Romani as their mother tongue, compared to 44.69 percent in the whole of Ukraine (Braun et al. 2010: 16, 24). Most Roms in Transcarpathian Ukraine speak Hungarian as their first language (62.4 percent according to the census). These Roms largely inhabit the south-western lowland adjacent to the Hungarian border, which is an area inhabited by the largest Romani population in Transcarpathia. Two of the most demographically significant Romani localities (the cities of Mukachevo and Berehove) are inhabited by Hungarian-speaking Roms. The third linguistic group are the Roms who speak local Ukrainian (Rusyn) dialects, constituting 16.7 percent according to the census. The majority of the Rusyn-speaking Roms dwell in mountainous areas, e.g. in the far north-western town of Velykyj Bereznyj, in many villages of the Perechyn district, and elsewhere. Finally, there are a number of Romanian-speaking Gypsies, who have traditionally earned their livelihood as trough-makers. They are referred to as *Voloxy* by the local population, being related to the *Beaş* of Hungary and Slovakia. One of their main localities is the hill village of Poroshkovo, located in the Perechyn district.

As for Romani, two dialect branches can be encountered in Transcarpathia: North Central Romani (hence NCR) and North Vlax Romani. Speakers of the former

group live in the west in an area adjacent to the Slovak border. This dialect branch is the subject of the next section, and ultimately of this paper. Speakers of North Vlax Romani inhabit the southern Transcarpathian towns of Vynohradiv, Korolevo, and Khust, and some areas along the Romanian border up to the eastern district of Rakhiv. It is known that a considerable number of Vlax Roms in Transcarpathia are Lovaris, but there are more Vlax groups, and little is known about most of them. Some may be akin to the Romani population of Transylvania (cf. Čerenkov 2008: 494).

2 North Central Romani in Transcarpathian Ukraine

Although the presence of NCR in Transcarpathian Ukraine is known (cf. Matras 2002: 9), the Transcarpathian NCR dialects have long remained undocumented. Čerenkov (2008: 497) refers to three localities where NCR is currently spoken in Transcarpathia: Uzhhorod, the provincial capital situated right on the Slovak border; Perechyn, situated about 20 kilometres to the north of Uzhhorod; and Serednye, located about 20 kilometres to the east of Uzhhorod. A fourth locality should be added to these three: Khudl′ovo, which is approximately seven kilometres northwest of Serednye. In the past, NCR certainly was much more widespread in the region, since the present-day Hungarian- and Rusyn-speaking Roms in western and central parts of Transcarpathia are likely to be descendants of NCR speakers who underwent a language shift to their respective languages. In certain localities, such as Rus′ki Komarivtsi and Velykyj Bereznyj, the local Roms are explicitly said to have formerly spoken the same Romani as encountered in Uzhhorod and Serednye.

Until WWII, before Transcarpathia was annexed by Horthy's Hungary and later by the Soviet Union, the Roms residing in western Transcarpathia had close affinities to the Roms now living in easternmost Slovakia. They commonly intermarried with the Slovak Roms and an awareness of their Slovak affinities is still part of their identity. They also spoke (East) Slovak, which is reflected in the substantial East Slovak influence on their Romani. It is common that elderly Roms still can speak East Slovak.

Even the Transcarpathian NCR dialects are very close to those found in the far-eastern Slovak districts, together forming a clear dialect continuum. Given the shared features, it would be possible to speak of a common Eastern branch of NCR, which would include the dialects of easternmost Slovakia and Transcarpathian Ukraine, and perhaps even those of south-eastern Poland (Subcarpathian Voivodeship) and the Lviv province of Ukraine. Such common features are, among others, the form of the past copula (*e*)*sas* (contrary to (*e*)*has* further to the west) and the infinitive based on the 2/3PL.

Still, the varieties spoken in each of the four localities are not identical. While the variety encountered in Uzhhorod differs most out of all of them, it is, on the other hand, in many respects closer to the dialects spoken in Slovakia. The varieties of the remaining three localities – Perechyn, Khudl′ovo, and Serednye – share common innovations that do not appear in Uzhhorod, such as regressive assimilation in the genitive suffix *-koro* (cf. 7.2) and a remarkable metathesis in perfective marking of *d*-verbs (cf. 10.3). There are also some distinctive phono-lexical and morpho-lexical forms shared, such as *lem-* 'to hit' (vs. *dem-* in Uzhhorod), *murdar-* 'to kill' (vs. *mundar-* in Uzhhorod), *nango* 'naked' (vs. *lango* in Uzhhorod), and *somnak* 'gold' (vs. *somnakaj* in Uzhhorod). Thus, it seems that there are two main dialect groups of NCR in western Transcarpathia: Uzhhorod Romani and a group that can tentatively be called Perechyn-Khudl′ovo-Serednye Romani. Within the latter group, the variety spoken in Perechyn is closest to that of Uzhhorod, probably due to the intensive contact the Perechyn Roms have had with the Uzhhorod Roms. Furthermore, the varieties of Khudl′ovo and Serednye share some innovations that do not appear in Perechyn, such as the presence of an adverbial suffix *-ān* (cf. 11.2). Still, while Khudl′ovo and Serednye are very close varieties, they are not identical. Besides a variation in the lexicon, there are minor grammatical differences as well. For example, in Serednye the factual complementiser ('that') is Hungarian-derived *hoď*, while in Khudl′ovo we find local Slavic *ož*.

The easternmost locality of NCR in Transcarpathia is Serednye (*Serednje* in Ukrainian, *Seredňa* in Romani). Interestingly, Serednye lies close to the eastern border of the erstwhile Uzh County (*Ung vármegye*) of the Hungarian Kingdom, which covered the current territories of western Transcarpathia and south-eastern Slovakia. Therefore, there is an overlap between the historical county border and the language border of the local Roms. This language border is in fact one of language maintenance, since the Roms immediately to the east of Serednye, i.e. those who live at the territory of the former Bereg County, do not speak Romani.[2] This does not mean, however, that Serednye is the easternmost locality where NCR is spoken altogether – there are more eastern localities of NCR in the Lviv province of Ukraine (according to my research), not to mention the outlying Plaščuny in parts of eastern Ukraine and Russia (cf. Cherenkov 2005). I also do not take into account the Transylvanian dialects, which are sometimes considered North Central (e.g. in Boretzky 2007), although substantiation of such affiliation is still missing. Serednye only represents the eastern margin of a dialect continuum stretching from Slovakia.

2 However, neither the Roms living in the southern parts of the erstwhile Uzh County – in both the Ukrainian and Slovak parts – nor the Roms in the northern mountainous part of the historical county speak Romani. The former speak Hungarian, while the latter are Rusyn speakers.

3 The Roms in Serednye

According to an estimate by Braun et al. (2010: 48), there were around 700 Gypsies living in Serednye in 2001, which accounts for 20 percent of all inhabitants of the small town. My observation is that the number now might be slightly higher, but probably does not exceed 1,000. The Roms in Serednye do not live in the village itself but in a separate settlement, which is approximately two kilometres away from the part inhabited by the Gaje. The settlement, officially recognised as "Ivanivka", is called *tāborňa* in Romani, from the Hungarian or Slavic *tábor* 'camp'. Apart from some Roms who have married into the community from neighbouring villages, only the local Roms, whose forefathers must have settled there no later than the 19th century and probably much earlier, live there today.

The Roms in Serednye simply call themselves *roma* without any further attributes. If they are asked to provide a more precise sub-ethnic self-identification, which usually takes place when they come into contact with foreign Gypsy groups outside of Transcarpathia, they say that they are *ungrika* or *vengerska roma* ('Hungarian Gypsies'), which clearly expresses their secondary linguistic and ethno-cultural identification. As for exonyms, the Serednye Roms are called *gāvutune roma* 'rural Gypsies' by the Roms in Uzhhorod, but this term may refer to the Roms in rural areas around Uzhhorod in general, and not specifically to those in Serednye. Conversely, the Serednye Roms call the Uzhhorod Roms *fōroťikane roma*, originally 'urban Gypsies', which now refers to the Roms in Uzhhorod only, since in Serednye the word *fōros* (originally 'town') has acquired the specific meaning of 'Uzhhorod' and cannot refer to any other town. In reference to other towns, their respective names are used, e.g. *munkāčis* 'Mukachevo' (from Hung. *Munkács*), *kijevs* 'Kiev', and *ľivovs* 'Lviv'.

Amongst the Serednye Roms, Romani is a vital and thriving language. It is the primary and almost exclusive tool of communication across all generations and the first language that is learnt by children. Other languages are acquired later and more gradually, during childhood and adolescence, and it is common that adult Roms are at least quadrilingual; apart from Romani, they also speak Ukrainian, including the local Rusyn dialect, Russian, and Hungarian. Interestingly, Hungarian is mainly used in communication with other Roms from outside Serednye who do not speak Romani, which, in a sense, makes Hungarian a secondary ethnic language. The Slavic languages, on the other hand, are connected with the non-Romani population, although quite recently they have gained some functions in religious sermons and Pentecostal services performed within the Romani settlement.

4 Lexicon

Serednye Romani is quite conservative with regards to its vocabulary, even though there is a substantial amount of North Slavic and Hungarian loanwords. There are a number of old words that are generally rare in NCR but common in Serednye, such as *paruv-* 'to exchange' and *sīr* 'garlic', as well as words uncommon in Eastern NCR, e.g. *nav* 'name'. In this section, I will discuss some aspects of kinship terminology to illustrate the complexity of the vocabulary, followed by brief notes on some cryptic names and a unique verb.

At least four historical layers can be recognised in the kinship vocabulary: indigenous Indo-Aryan words supplemented by pre-Greek loanwords, Greek loanwords into Early Romani, East Slovak loanwords, and the most recent loanwords from East Slavic. The oldest layer involves *čha* 'son' (< **čhavo*; OBL.SG *čhas-*, PL *čhave*), *čhaj* 'daughter', *phral* 'brother', *pheň* 'sister', *bōri* 'daughter-in-law', *džamutro* 'son-in-law', *sastro* and *sasuj* 'father- and mother-in-law'. The second layer of Greek kinship terms is represented by a single noun *papus* 'grandfather' (PL *papuja*), while *baba* 'grandmother' (PL *babi*) belongs to the third layer of East Slovak borrowings, as do the words for 'uncle' and 'aunt', *ujcus* and *cetka* respectively. Eventually, the most recent layer of East Slavic loanwords is represented by a general word for 'family' *simjá*, as well as by the designation 'cousin', which is expressed along the East Slavic pattern employing the attributive loan-adjective *dvojuridno*, e.g. *dvojuridno phral* 'male cousin' (cf. Ukrainian *dvojuridnyj brat*), *dvojuridno pheň* 'female cousin'.

As for the terms 'mother' and 'father', the situation is more complex, since there are two words for each meaning, both of which are commonly used side by side. 'Mother' is either *daj* (from Iranian) or Slavic *mama*, 'father' is either *dad* (probably Indo-Aryan) or *apos*, which is of Hungarian origin, but occurs in local Slavic as well. Both nouns – older and recently borrowed – are inflected for all cases (e.g. genitive *dadéskoro* ~ *apóskoro* 'father's'), except the vocative, where only the recent borrowings are used (*mamo* and *apo* respectively). Thus, it seems that the borrowed forms were first used in addressing and only later they spread into other referential contexts, so that now they commonly compete with the older words. This assumption is confirmed by the situation known from Slovak varieties of Eastern NCR, where, as a rule, only the loanwords *mamo* and *apo* are used in the vocative, while in other cases *daj* and *dad* retain their position.

Besides the word *gādžo* 'non-Gypsy', which is said to be potentially understood by outsiders, there is a cryptic noun used in reference to non-Gypsies *gōro* (PL *gōre*). Similarly, the police are cryptically called *mujale*. The word for 'friend' is *cimboras* (PL *cimbora*) from the Hungarian *cimbora* 'chum'.

Serednye Romani has two functionally different verbs for 'to throw'. The basic verb is *čhiv-*, which is common in the whole NCR group. Alongside this, there is another verb *icard-*, which has an intensive meaning 'to throw with force, to hurl', attested in

reference to throwing a stone; cf. example (Table 1) below. It seems to be a compound of the verb *d-* 'to give' (cf. the imperative *icarde*), but the exact etymology is unknown to me. A similar verb *card-* of the same meaning occurs in the dictionary of East Slovak Romani by Hübschmannová et al. (1991: 60, 337, 386), marked as a "regional form".

5 Phonology

A significant feature of the Serednye phonology is its distinctive vowel length, as evidenced by a minimal pair *bar* 'stone' vs. *bār* 'fence'. All vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/ have their long counterparts, which may differ not only in quantity, but also in their quality. Noteworthy is the long counterpart of /o/, which is pronounced rather as a closing diphthong [oʊ̯]. All long vowels are indicated by a macron.

The language maintains all Early Romani voiceless aspirated consonants /čh/, /kh/, /ph/, /th/ with the addition of an aspirated palatal plosive /ťh/ [cʰ], which increases the number of aspirated consonants to five. The palatal plosive /ťh/ has developed from a palatalised aspirated velar in words such as *ťhil* (< **khil*) 'butter', *ťhiľav* (< **khilav*) 'plum', and *diťhol* (< **dikhjol*) 'is seen, seems', but not, e.g., in the verb *khiňol* 'rests, relaxes'. As most other Eastern NCR dialects, Serednye Romani has a series of palatal consonants /ť/ [c], /ď/ [ɟ], /ň/ [ɲ], and /ľ/ [ʎ].

Stress is generally predictable. It is placed on the penultimate syllable, independently of the length (cf. *páťav* 'I believe', *ándréndar* 'from eggs'). In nouns of East Slavic origin, it may remain on the syllable stressed in the donor language (e.g. *simjá* 'family'). There are some other exceptions to penultimate stress, which will be addressed further on. Only the irregular stress placement will be indicated by an acute accent.

6 Article

Forms of the definite article are typically North Central; cf. Table 1.
Table 1

	NOM	OBL
M.SG	*o*	*le*
F.SG	*e*	*la*
M/F.PL	*o*	*le*

7 Nominal structures

7.1 Nominalisation

The common nominalisers are the abstract suffixes *-(i)be* and *-(i)pe*, displaying apocope of the nasal, which resurfaces in the plural (*guľ-ipen-a* 'sweets') and in the oblique (*kam-ibn-as-tar* 'from love'). Although *-(i)be* still seems to prevail in deverbal nouns as *-(i)pe* does in deadjectival ones, there are many exceptions to this rule, confusing the original state of affairs, cf. e.g. deadjectival *nasvaľibe* 'illness' and deverbal *murdaripe* 'killing, murder'. The Romani etymon **xaben* 'food' does not exist in Serednye. Instead, there is a nominalised infinitive *texan* (< *te xan* 'to eat'; cf. 10.4), which is declined as a regular oikoclitic (thematic) noun (OBL.SG *texanes-*, PL *texana*). Another abstract suffix is *-išāg-os* from Hungarian, which is applied to the xenoclitic (athematic) bases – verbal (*ričišāgos* 'shout', from *ričin-* 'to shout') as well as adjectival (*šmelišāgos* 'courage', from *šmelo* 'courageous'). Even here, however, the situation is not straightforward, as there are nouns in *-išāgos* based on inherited verbs (*giľavišāgos* 'singing'), as well as nouns in *-ipe* derived from borrowed adjectives (*zdravipe* 'health', from *zdravo* 'healthy' of Slovak origin; **sasto* is missing).

Besides the suffix *-in*, which derives names of trees (e.g. *akhorin* 'nut-tree', *ťhiľavin* 'plum-tree'), there is a mysterious derivational suffix *-uň* in a feminine noun *drākhuň* 'vineyard', PL *drākhuňa* (cf. *drākha* 'grapes'). I am not aware of any attestation of this derivation in any other Romani dialect.

Eventually, the noun meaning 'cheek' has a peculiar form *čhamola* (cf. *čham* in other dialects).

7.2 Inflection

The inflection of nouns and adjectives is well preserved, conserving all cases of Early Romani and displaying the common NCR picture. The characteristic traits involve the overt plural marking of consonantal masculine nouns (*vast-a* 'hands') with the exception of temporal nouns following a numeral (*oxto berš* 'eight years'), reduction of the palatalised class of consonantal feminine nouns by their re-affiliation to the non-palatalised class (*suv-a* 'needles', as *džuv-a* 'lice'; cf. Elšík 2000), the maintenance of *-s* in nominative endings of xenoclitic masculine nouns (e.g. *babňik-os* 'womanizer', from Russ. *babnik*), the use of the locative in *-te/ -de* as a prepositional case of pronouns, and the instrumental/comitative marked by *-ha* (SG) and *-ca* (PL). The genitive marker is unreduced *-ker-*/ *-ger-*, which displays regressive assimilation in the masculine concord forms *-kor-o*/ *-gor-o*. It is always unstressed, so that the stress in genitive forms falls on the antepenultimate syllable (e.g. *ňilajéskoro* 'of summer').

Adjectival modifiers exhibit number and gender concord with their heads, but only partial case concord (NOM vs. OBL), as in most Romani dialects. Other conservative features of adjectival inflection are the oblique feminine singular marked by *-a* and the Greek-derived xenoclitic inflection in the nominative (*zdrav-o* M/F.SG, *zdrav-a* M/F.PL 'healthy'). In the oblique, xenoclitic adjectives may lose the adaptation marker *-on-*, cf. *mīr-a perš-a māčha* my-OBL.F.SG first-OBL.F.SG fish:ACC.F.SG 'my first fish' (direct object), although the marker appears in non-nominative substantivised forms of xenoclitic adjectives (*dujt-on-es* second-ADAPT-ACC.M.SG 'the second').

7.3 Comparison of adjectives

As is typical of NCR, there are comparative adjectives in *-eder*, e.g. *kuč* 'expensive' > *kučeder* 'more expensive'. Comparative formation is fully productive, as it may occur with borrowed roots as well, e.g *rado* 'glad, content' (from Slavic), *radeder* 'more content'.

The superlative is formed by prefixing the comparative with *jek-*, which probably reflects the Hungarian superlative prefix *leg-*, contaminated by the Romani numeral *jekh* 'one'. Furthermore, the superlatives in *jek-* are frequently strengthened by an additional superlative prefix *maj-*, which is borrowed from Rusyn, so that double superlative marking may occur: *maj-jek-phur-eder phral* SUPERL-SUPERL-old-COMP brother 'the eldest brother'.

8 Pronominal forms

8.1 Personal and possessive pronouns

Table 2 presents the nominative, accusative, and genitive (possessive) forms of personal pronouns. The possessive forms are given in the M.SG concord forms, which are affected by regressive assimilation in the third person (i.e. e.g. *lésker-* > F *léskeri* but M *léskoro*).

Table 2

		SINGULAR			PLURAL		
		NOM	ACC	GEN	NOM	ACC	GEN
FIRST		*me*	*man*	*mīro*	*amen*	*amen*	*amāro*
SECOND		*tu*	*tut*	*tīro*	*tumen*	*tumen*	*tumāro*
THIRD	M	*ov*	*les*	*léskoro*	*on*	*len*	*léngoro*
	F	*oj*	*la*	*lákoro*	*on*	*len*	*léngoro*

8.2 Reflexives and reciprocals

Reflexive and reciprocal constructions are encoded distinctly. Reflexive markers, which express referential identity with the subject in the third person only, are analytic *pes* (SG) and *pen* (PL). A reciprocal marker is *jekjekhāvres*, displaying the reduplication of the initial syllable; cf. (1). The reflexive and reciprocal pronouns display regular nominal inflection (e.g. DAT *peske* 'to himself/herself', *penge* 'to themselves', *jekjekhāvreske* 'to each other').

(1) *on* *igen* *kamen* *jekjekhāvres*
they very like:3PL each_other:ACC
'They like each other very much.'

8.3 Demonstratives

Table 3 shows forms of the demonstrative pronouns and related deictic adverbs 'here'/'there' and 'from here'/'from there'. There is a four-way deictic system, distinguishing between proximate and remote distances and, within each distance, between the non-emphatic and emphatic reference ('that' vs. 'that over there'). The non-emphatic remote demonstrative *od-* is also used as a deixis-neutral and anaforic pronoun 'it'. All demonstrative pronouns have final stress. The adverbs (*k*)*ade* 'here' and (*k*)*oďa* 'there' express both orientation categories stative and directive. The separative adverbs (*k*)*adārik* and (*k*)*odārik* are also used in a perlative function 'this way' and 'that way' respectively.

Table 3

	PROXIMATE		REMOTE	
	NON-EMPHATIC	EMPHATIC	NON-EMPHATIC	EMPHATIC
M	*adǎ*	*kadǎ*	*odǎ*	*kodǎ*
F	*adí*	*kadí*	*odí*	*kodí*
PL	*alá*	*kalá*	*odalá*	*kolá*
HERE/THERE	*ade*	*kade*	*oďa*	*koďa*
HENCE/THENCE	*adārik*	*kadārik*	*odārik*	*kodārik*

Furthermore, there is another demonstrative set in *ok-* (M.SG *okǎ*, F.SG *okí*, PL *okalá*), which has two rather lexicalised meanings. First, it is used as a determiner of other

specific referents ('the other'), e.g. *okí sēra* 'the other side', *okalá bešen* 'the others are sitting'. Second, it points to 'last' in temporal phrases, e.g. *okā́ berš* 'last year', *okalé beršéskoro jiv* 'last year's snow'.

8.4 Indefinites

Specific indefinites are marked by *vare-*, negative indefinites are marked by Slavic *ňi-*. Both prefixes are added to interrogative forms, e.g. *ko* 'who' > *vareko* 'somebody', *kaha* 'with whom' > *varekaha* 'with somebody'. The interrogative pronominal adjective 'which' *sav-o* is reflected in a reduced form *-s-ó* in the indefinite adjectives, e.g. 'some' M.SG *varesó* (< **varesavo*), 'none' F.SG *ňisí* (< **ňisavi*), PL *varesé*, *ňisé*. The negative pronouns *ňič* 'nothing' and *ňigda* 'never' are completely borrowed forms, probably from East Slovak. The marker of free-choice pronouns is East Slovak *xoč-* (*xočkana* 'wherever'), except the adjectival 'whichever', for which the Russian loanword *ľubo* is used.

9 Numerals and quantifiers

9.1 Cardinal numerals

In Serednye, the Romani numerals are commonly used, even for the higher numbers. The basic cardinal numerals 1-9 are all inherited from Early Romani (*jek(h)*, *dūj*, *trīn*, *štār*, *pāndž*, *šov*, *efta*, *oxto*, *ēňa*) as are 10-50 and 100 (*deš*, *biš*, *tranda*, *saranda*, *penda*, *šel*). The numerals 60-90 are complex (*šovārdeš*, *eftavārdeš*, *oxtovārdeš*, *ēňavārdeš*), while 'thousand' is *ezeros* (PL *ezera*) from Hungarian. As in most dialects, 11-16 are formed with the help of a connector *-u-* (*dešujekh* 11) and 17-19 without a connector (*dešefta* 17). The additive connector in 21-29 is *-thaj-* (*bišthajštār* 24). Both *-u-* and *-thaj-* are exclusively numeral connectors, which do not occur in another part of grammar. Units above 30 are joined by means of the common phrasal conjunction *the* (*tranda the jekh* 31, *šel the šovārdeš the jekh* 161).

9.2 Quantifiers

As for paucal quantifiers, there are distinctive words for absolute 'few, little' and relative 'a few, a little'. The former is *frima* (*igen frima pāňi* 'too little water'), which is of Greek origin (cf. Boretzky / Igla 2004: 206). The latter meaning is conveyed by *kapka* (cf. (2)), which originates from a West Slavic noun meaning 'drop'.

In addition, there is a diminutive *kapkica* 'a wee bit, a little bit' (*kapkica gulo* 'a little bit sweet').

(2) *xana* *kapka* *texan*
eat:FUT.2PL a little food
'Will you eat a little food?'

Other quantifiers involve inherited *ajci* 'so much' (to interrogative *keci* 'how much'), *but* 'much, many', *sa* 'everything', *sávoro* 'all', and borrowed *cēlo* 'whole', *dosta* 'enough', *nemigen* 'not so much', *pāra* 'a couple of', *sako* 'each, every', and approximative *vaď* 'approximately, about' (e.g. *vaď jek kurko* 'about one week').

The quantifiers *frima* and *but* form synthetic comparatives and superlatives as adjectives (cf. 7.3). While *frimeder* 'fewer, lesser' is a normal comparative in *-eder*, *but* has two competing irregular comparative forms *buter* and *butereder* 'more', the latter of which displays double marking (*but-er* > *but-er-eder*).

10 Verbal structures

10.1 Copula

Forms of the copula are typically Eastern North Central. Table 4 presents five inflectional subparadigms of the existential verb 'to be': the present indicative, past, present subjunctive, future, and irrealis ('would have been'). In the present indicative, the third-person copula may be marked for number and gender to show agreement with the subject: *hino* (M.SG), *hiňi* (F.SG), *hine* (M/F.PL).

Table 4

		PRES.IND	PAST	PRES.SUBJ	FUTURE	IRREALIS
SG	FIRST	*som*	*somas*	*avav*	*avá*	*ūľomas*
	SECOND	*sal*	*salas*	*ēs*	*ēha*	*ūľalas*
	THIRD	*hin*	*esas*	*ēl*	*ēla*	*ūľahas*
PL	FIRST	*sam*	*samas*	*avas*	*avaha*	*ūľamas*
	SECOND	*san*	*sanas*	*ēn*	*ēna*	*ūľanas*
	THIRD	*hin*	*esas*	*ēn*	*ēna*	*ūlahas*

10.2 Verbal derivation

Two salient categories of verbal derivation are the iterative (frequentative) and the aktionsart. Morphological iteratives, which denote repeated, customary, or multiple action, are extremely common and highly productive. They are formed by *-ker-*, i.e. by a formerly transitivising affix (cf. Matras 2002: 124f.), inserted between a root and personal endings, e.g. *tav-ker-as* cook-ITER-1PL 'we cook a lot/we regularly cook'. In the case of borrowed verbs, the iterative marker follows the general adaptation marker *-in-*: *siv-in-ker-el* smoke-ADAPT-ITER-3SG 's/he regularly smokes' (from Hung. *szív* 'to breath in, to smoke'). The iterative may also occur with intransitive verbal derivations, such as deadjectival inchoatives, in which case the suffix follows the derivation marker, as in:

(3) *ov* *igen* *nasvaľ-uv-ker-l-as*
he very ill-INCH-ITER-3SG-REM
'He was repeatedly very ill.'

Although the meaning of most iteratives is predictable, certain iterative verbs seem to be lexicalised in that they may express specialised concepts, e.g. *mor-* 'to wash' > *morker-* 'to wash laundry'.

As is common in most Romani dialects in contact with North Slavic, Serednye Romani makes extensive use of Slavic aktionsart prefixes. An example is *othov-*, which results from *thov-* 'to put' prefixed by Slavic *od-* 'away', displaying assimilation and simplification of a consonant cluster (< *odthov-*). Its basic meaning 'to put aside' has been extended into the meaning 'to hide' at the expense of the common NCR verb *garuv-* (in other dialects *garav-*), which no longer occurs in Serednye.

Similar to aktionsart prefixes, adverbs employed as 'coverbs' can also modify the meaning of a verb, e.g. *kid-* 'to gather' plus *tēle* 'below' may give the meaning 'to take photos', as in (4). In contrast to aktionsart prefixes, adverbial modifiers of verbs do not entail the material borrowing of forms.

(4) *kide* *amen* *tēle*
gather:IMPER.2SG us below
'Take photos of us.'

10.3 Inflection

Serednye Romani displays the typical NCR pattern of non-perfective inflection in that it employs the so-called 'short' (zero-marked) subjunctive forms in the present

indicative as well (*dživel* 's/he lives'), while the 'long' forms in *-a* are restricted to future marking (*dživela* 's/he will live').[3] The imperfective past tense and conditional are marked by the remoteness marker *-as* (*dživelas* 's/he lived, s/he would live'; for the category of remoteness in Romani cf. Matras 2002: 152ff.). The remoteness marker displays an obligatory fusion with the person agreement marker in the first singular *-ás* (*dživás* 'I lived, I would live' < **dživavas*).

There are two salient features related to perfective inflection: the presence of two 3SG subject suffixes and the unusual perfective marking of *d*-verbs.

As for subject agreement markers of perfective inflection, suffixes typical of NCR occur; cf. Table 5. The perfective stem is palatalised except for the 3PL.

Table 5

	SG	PL
FIRST	*-om*	*-am*
SECOND	*-al*	*-an*
THIRD	*-a*/*-as*	*-e*

Note that two 3SG subject suffixes may occur: besides the plain *-a*, which is typical of Eastern NCR, there is the conservative *-as*, which maintains the consonantal ending of the suffix (cf. Elšík / Matras 2006: 81 for a survey of the subject markers in Early Romani). Both endings are used interchangeably, irrespective of valency, and both are productive, as they may occur with borrowed verbs; cf. e.g. *gēľa* along with *gēľas* (inherited intransitive) 's/he went', and *maľinďa* along with *maľinďas* 's/he put make-up on' (borrowed transitive).

Another noteworthy feature is the unique perfective marking of the so-called *d*-verbs, i.e. of historical compounds of the verb *d-* 'to give', such as *čumid-* 'to kiss', *kid-* 'to gather', *xud-* 'to catch, to get'. In NCR, the perfective stem of the verb 'to give' itself is the conservative *d-in-*, and the marker *-in-* is still reflected in perfective stems of the complex *d*-verbs: *-in-* (*čumid-in-*) in Western NCR, reduced to *-n-* (*čumid-n-*) in Eastern NCR. In Serednye, a metathesis of the root consonant *-d-* and the perfective marker *-n-* has taken place, leading to remarkable perfective stems, such as *čumind-* (e.g. *čuminďa* 's/he kissed'), *kind-* (*kinďas* 's/he gathered'), *xund-* (*xunďal* 'you got'). Note that those *d*-verbs that historically are not compounds of the verb 'to give' do not participate in this perfective formation, e.g. *phand-* 'to close', PFVE *phanl-*.

3 Cf. Matras (2002: 157) and Boretzky / Igla (2004: 137f.) for a cross-dialectal discussion of short vs. long verbal forms and for attempts at historical explanations.

10.4 Non-finite forms

The perfective participles of borrowed verbs are formed by the Greek-derived suffix *-ime* (e.g. *tapošime* 'trodden', from Hungarian *tapos* 'to tread'). The suffix has been extended to the inherited root in *bikime* 'sold', due to the formal resemblance of the verb *bikin-* 'to sell' to borrowed verbs. The participles in *-ime* are indeclinable in Serednye.

The language has maintained the adverbial participles (gerunds) in *-indos*. Although they are not fully productive, several gerunds are commonly used; e.g. *rovindos* 'while crying', *terďindos* 'while standing'.

In common with Eastern NCR, Serednye has the infinitive based on a generalised 2/3PL subjunctive verbal form, which is introduced by a non-factual complementiser *te* (5), i.e. Type C in Boretzky's (1996: 11–13) classification of innovative infinitive constructions.

(5) *tu* *mušines* *te* *džan*
you have_to: 2SG COMPL go:2/3PL
'You have to go.'

10.5 Negation

In the present and past tenses, there are single negative existential verbs in the third-person *nāne* 'isn't, aren't' and *nesas* 'wasn't, weren't' respectively. In all other cases, there is a general negator *na* used throughout all moods, i.e. in the indicative, subjunctive, and imperative (6). The special prohibitive marker **ma* has been lost.

(6) *na* *icarde* *kolé* *bareha*
NEG throw:IMPER.2SG that:OBL.SG.M stone:INST
'Don't throw that stone.'

11 Adverbs and prepositions

11.1 Temporal and local adverbs

Temporal adverbs involve forms that are common in Eastern NCR, such as *īdž* 'yesterday', *adāďive* 'today', *tajsa* 'tomorrow', *tosāra* 'in the morning', *rāťi* 'at night, in the evening', and complex forms *palīdžéskoro* 'the day before yesterday' and *paltajsáskoro* 'the day after tomorrow'. Season expressions are *jevende* 'in the winter' (*jevend* 'win-

ter') and *ňila* 'in the summer' (*ňilaj* 'summer'); both may also be used to refer to 'autumn' and 'spring' respectively. Other temporal adverbs are *kanāke* 'now', *māsovar* 'at another time', *pališ* 'then, after that' (subsequent meaning), *akor* 'then, at that time' (simultaneous meaning), and *mindig* 'always', both latter being Hungarian in origin.

Local adverbs of stative and directive orientation include *andre* 'inside, inward', *anglal* 'in/to the front', *palal* 'in/to the back', *opre* 'above', *tēle* 'below', *pāšes* 'nearby', *dūr* 'faraway', *avri* 'outside, outward', and *maškāral* 'in/to the middle'. The latter adverb may also function as a preposition local (*maškāral o gav* 'in the middle of the village') as well as temporal (*maškāral o ďives* 'in the middle of the day'). The word for 'everywhere' is *vīgig* from the Hungarian *végig* 'up to the very end'.

Ablative ('separative') adverbs are homophonous with normal ablative forms of deadverbial adjectives, e.g. *anglunestar* 'from the front' (cf. *angluno* 'front'), *palunestar* 'from the back', *oprunestar* 'from above', *telunestar* 'from below', *maškarunestar* 'from the middle', and even *avrunestar* 'from outside' (**avral*) and *duralestar* 'from faraway' (**dural*). The erstwhile separative adverbs in *-al* have either been shifted into categories of other orientation (cf. Elšík / Matras 2006: 273ff. for a detailed discussion on this topic) or lost altogether.

11.2 Adverbs of manner

An example of an inherited manner-adverb is *sigo* 'quickly, fast', which has an extraordinary comparative form *siregeder* 'quicker, faster' (SUPERL *majjeksiregeder*). In some respect, *siregeder* resembles *butereder*, which displays double marking, though there is no plain **siger* as there is *buter*. Moreover, *siregeder* exhibits a metathesis of the root velar and the rhotic of the following suffix: *sig-er(eder)* > *sireg(eder)*.

Another monomorphemic adverb is *jēva* 'in vain; gratis, free of charge', which is probably cognate with Vlax *ivja* (cf. Boretzky / Igla 2004: 207). The form *jēva* is also the base of an adverbial derivative *jēvavalo* 'gratuitously, for no reason', as in:

(7) *mārde* *les* *jēvavalo*
beat:PFVE.3PL him gratuitously
'They beat him for no reason.'

Deadjectival manner-adverbs are derived either by *-es* or by means of the Hungarian suffix *-ān*. In NCR, as in Romani in general, the adverbs are derived by the suffix *-es*, so that such adverbs are homophonous with the accusative forms of adjectives. In Serednye, *-es* is common with multisyllabic bases only, such as *šukāres* 'beautifully', borrowed *jednakones* 'equally, in the same way' (*jednako* 'equal, same'), and complex *fōroťikanes* 'in an Uzhhorod manner, in the Romani speech of Uzhhorod'. In the case of

monosyllabic bases, *-es* is not productive, being limited to some fossilised forms, such as *čāčes* 'really'. The most common and the only productive suffix of adverbs derived from monosyllabic bases is *-ān*. The suffix must have been initially introduced into Romani through borrowed Hungarian adverbs, some of which still occur (e.g. *ritkān* 'rarely'). Later on, the suffix was extracted from Hungarian loan-adverbs to become a productive adverbial marker and as such it began to replace inherited *-es*. Thus, in the present-day language, most adverbs in *-ān* have Slavic bases, e.g. *cixān* 'silently' (*cixo* 'silent'), *častān* 'often', *podlān* 'badly', *tuňān* 'cheaply', and the suffix is common even with most inherited (monosyllabic) bases, e.g. *čōrān* 'poorly', *ūčān* 'high', *žūžān* 'cleanly'.

11.3 Prepositions

Prepositions are commonly used. Examples of inherited prepositions are inessive/directive *are* 'in, into' (*are kočma* 'in/to the pub', *aro fōros* 'in/to Uzhhorod') and separative *andal* 'from' (*andal o than* 'from the bed', *andal late* 'from her'). An example of a common, borrowed preposition is temporal *posľi* 'after' of Rusyn (or Russian) origin (*posľi kajso drom* 'after such a journey', *posľi o dīlos* 'in the afternoon', *dīlos* 'noon' < Hung. *dél*). Note that most NCR dialects do not encode temporal 'after' distinctly from the local posterior relation 'behind', using the inherited preposition *pal* for both. In Serednye, on the contrary, *pal* is restricted to marking the local relations only.

12 Conclusion

Serednye is a small town (officially *selyšče misʹkoho typu* 'urban-type settlement') in the Transcarpathian province of Ukraine. In its vicinity, there is a settlement of long-settled Roms, who speak a North Central Romani variety. The variety is part of a small cluster of NCR dialects spoken in the west of Transcarpathian Ukraine. These dialects represent a continuation of East Slovak Romani dialects, with which they had been undergoing parallel development until WWII. Serednye is the easternmost locality of the dialect continuum stretching from Slovakia.

It has been shown that Serednye Romani does not diverge substantially from being a prototypically Eastern NCR variety. It is comparatively conservative in terms of both lexicon and grammar, which correlates with the relative social and physical isolation of the community, as well as with the high linguistic vitality. Still, there are certain innovations, some of which have come about as a result of contact with various languages that have played a role in the Serednye Romani community over the last one hundred years, viz. Hungarian, East Slovak, Ukrainian (Rusyn), and Russian.

Abbreviations

ACC accusative
ADAPT adaptation of borrowed roots
COMP comparative
COMPL complemetiser
DAT dative
F feminine
GEN genitive
IMPER imperative
INCH inchoative
IND indicative
INST instrumental
ITER iterative
M masculine
NCR North Central Romani
NEG negative
NOM nominative
OBL oblique
PAST past tense
PFVE perfective
PL plural
PRES present tense
REM remoteness
SG singular
SUBJ subjunctive
SUPERL superlative

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Romani language competence and intergenerational transmission in the Czech Republic

Abstract

The article deals with the question of language maintenance and language shift among the Roma in the Czech Republic. It focuses mainly on the differences in these two processes among the two most distinctive groups of Romani speakers in the Czech Republic: Vlax Romani speakers and Northern-Central Romani speakers. While Vlax Romani seems to be being transmitted to the following generations, a language shift is occurring among the latter group of speakers. This process has been observed in the group for decades, however this article presents the first attempt to base existing assumptions on extensive data, collected during our research from 2007-2010. The first part of the article presents the information on the current competence in Romani among the youngest generation of potential speakers together with a discussion of the methodology our estimate is based upon. The second part focuses mainly on language use and intergenerational transmission of the language as well as on certain attitudes related to the topics of language maintenance and language shift.

1 Introduction

It is estimated that approximately 200,000 Roma currently live in the Czech Republic (Kalibová 1999: 107). The Romani population in the CR is largely composed of families of post-war migrants from different regions of Slovakia. The autochthonous Romani population of the Czech lands (i.e. Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) was almost completely annihilated during the Second World War (Nečas 1999).

The Romani population that started to arrive in the Czech lands and settle there after 1945 included several sub-ethnic groups. The largest proportion of them represented most probably the so-called Slovak (65-75%) and Hungarian (15-20%) Roma (Hübschmannová 2002: 27), i.e. sedentary groups of Roma, long-term inhabitants of rural Slovakia in particular. The Vlax Roma, i.e. travelling Roma who were forcefully sedentarized in communist Czechoslovakia only in 1958/9, were also a part of the post-war migration (10-15%) (Hübschmannová 2002: 27). The migration as such can be characterized in general as a movement from originally rural Slovak areas into mostly urban localities in the CR. Importantly, the frequency of contacts with the non-Romani population has increased in the new

localities as a result of mixed housing, compulsory employment and school attendance (Hübschmannová 1979).

Like in Slovakia, Roma in the CR are housed mostly (but not exclusively) in concentrations. These concentrations came into existence mostly in Czech and Moravian industrial towns/regions both as an answer to postwar state incentives in search of a work force, and as a result of spontaneous chain migration (migrants arriving at places already populated by members of their family/community). The process of housing segregation was later reinforced by local housing policies and most recently by private estate owners – resettlement of poorer inhabitants (often Roma in particular, rather dramatically hit by post-1989 economic transformations) from privatized apartments into alternative housing in one locality characterized the period after 1989. The process of the creation of Romani housing concentrations (the scope of which differs in the CR from single houses/apartment buildings inhabited by a larger number of, or exclusively by, Romani families to mostly Romani streets or town quarters) was thus partly spontaneous, recently more frequently forced by outside players (Socioklub 2002; GAC 2006).

At first glance, it might be inferred that the formation of Romani housing concentrations mentioned above enabled also the establishment of niches that would support the use of Romani. However, larger social networks were not necessarily established in the new Romani concentrations in Czech lands. Two factors work jointly against the establishment of such networks: the origin of the migrants in different (and distant) source localities and the different social status of individual Romani alliances in the locality. Despite the (possible) absence of social networks among different groups of Romani migrants living in one Czech locality, a given group of migrants might remain a part of wider social network for example including Roma originating from the same source locality but living in different Czech (and Slovak) localities. Such wider "trans-territorial" bonds might/might not lose their strength under different circumstances (length of settlement in the CR, economic importance of such bonds, etc.) The character of contacts inside such a trans-territorial network can influence language use, or the retention of competence in Romani in particular (see an interesting example in an otherwise disputable text – Budilová / Jakoubek / Baudiš 2006: 27-29).

We can expect that some of the Roma newly arriving into the CR after 1945 had no competence in Romani, however, it can be assumed that most of those Roma migrating into the Czech lands spoke Romani (which was also the language of their primary socialization). The Slovak and Hungarian Roma would speak one of the dialects of Northern- or Southern- Central Romani, the Vlax Roma the Lovari dialect of Vlax Romani. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, changes in the use of Romani were already documented among the group of the speakers of the Central dialects (Slovak and Hungarian Roma), however.

Describing the practice of the use of Romani and non-Romani in the Slovak localities, Hübschmannová (1979: 39-41) talks of diglossia (in Fishman's definition of the term; see Pintér 2010 for the discussion on the adequacy of the use of the term for Romani) with Romani being the code of internal communication among the Roma and the majority language (e.g. local dialects of Slovak, Hungarian, Ruthenian or German, depending on the locality) being the code for communication with non-Roma. Children would learn the local majority language only at the time when their contacts with the non-Roma increased. (The knowledge of more than one non-Romani code can be expected to have been frequent as well.) Hübschmannová also further documents the post-war development of changes in the functional division of the Romani and non-Romani codes in the Czech environment: younger speakers of Northern-Central Romani use Czech (or a newly developing Romani variety of Czech, the so called Romani ethnolect, see Bořkovcová 2006) to communicate (with each other) in non-Romani as well as in Romani environments (Hübschmannová 1979: 44). Šebková (1995: 8) develops the observation further. According to her, the first generation of migrants in the Czech lands as a general rule speaks Romani, the second generation largely only understands it, while the third generation no longer knows the language at all. Other researchers share the assumption of a gradual language shift towards Czech inside the groups of Central Romani speakers as well (Neustupný 1992; Elšík 2003; Nekvapil / Neustupný 2003).

Certain typological conditions influencing the position of a language within an ethno-linguistic group and in bilingual communities frequently leading to a language shift have been described (Fasold 1984: 216-217; Fishman 1997: 56-65). They include, among others: migration, industrialization, school system, political pressure, prestige of languages involved, etc. A number of these conditions apply to the situation of Central Romani speakers in the CR, whose language shift is mainly explained by:

i) the aforementioned migration and urbanization of the previously rural communities and the following dissolution of tight relationships inside their enlarged family networks (Hübschmannová 1979, Šebková 1995, Neustupný 1992);
ii) the increase of contacts between Roma and non-Roma partly leading to the integration of Roma or at least promoting their aspiration to do so (Hübschmannová 1979);
iii) the effect of assimilation politics employed by the Czechoslovak communist government targeting (among other aspects of Romani culture and tradition) the use of Romani in particular (Hübschmannová 1999).

General overviews of the level of competence in Romani across European countries (Liégeois 1994; Bakker / Kyuchukov 2000) estimate the proportion of Romani speakers in the CR to be between 50-65% of the total local Romani population – without distinguish-

ing between the different dialect (sub-ethnic) groups – as can be seen below. A more recent report on the situation of the Romani communities in the CR from 2005 mentions a questionnaire survey (that reportedly reached 77,571 "members of Romani communities") that estimates Romani is used in 55% of Romani households (Úřad vlády 2005: 12).[1]

While language shift is documented among the Central Romani speakers, it is not recorded to have occurred inside the Vlax Roma community residing in the CR, in spite of the fact that the Vlax Roma migrated to new localities in the CR as well and faced similar assimilation pressure. In our opinion the difference is caused mainly by the smaller size of the Vlax Romani community, by the difference in the character of their social networks that were/are not exclusively locally based, and by their different approach to the non-Roma, who are not considered by the Vlax Roma to be a more prestigious group. Until now, detailed data on the Vlax Roma in the CR as a separate Romani group were included only in very few studies (Davidová 1995; Davidová 2000; Stojka / Pivoň 2003; Hajská 2005) and no further extensive linguistic research has been conducted among them. Some initial linguistic data were also gathered in our research in the previous years.

2 Current competence in Romani among Romani children in the CR

From 2007-2010, we conducted a series of research projects on the situation of Romani in the CR, using different research methods. This article concentrates on one of the core parts of the research - the evaluation of competence in Romani among the youngest generation of potential speakers of the language (conducted from 2008-2009). We explain the data gathered during this phase of the research in the context of later questionnaire data survey (conducted in the final phase of the research project in 2010) that focused mainly on the current use of the language and the background of its transmission. It is important to emphasize that our questionnaire data represent self-reported data. It would be desirable to more thoroughly observe actual language behavior, as the respondents may be influenced by various discourses (mainstream Czech discourse, attitudes towards multilingualism, etc.)

Observations from the qualitative fieldwork (2007-2010) will also be used in the article to illustrate the quantitative data presented. Despite our involvement in

1 The report does not include any further details either on the research methods used or on the structure of the sample.

the development of the methodology as well as in the fieldwork research itself, we try to take a critical stance towards the methodology described and used in order to emphasize all substantial limits of our results. Respecting the dialectal differences among the Roma in the CR, the article will relate to the speakers of Northern-Central and Vlax Romani dialects.[2]

2.1 Methodology

Our estimate of the level of competence among contemporary school-aged children is based on the evaluation of language behavior of Romani pupils during a "Romani language contest" that we organized in 2008-2009 for more than 1100 pupils in 64 schools from 44 Czech and Moravian municipalities. The schools were selected according to the number of possible participants – we preferred schools where the numbers allowed us to form group(s) of approximately ten pupils to be tested in one or more session(s). The localities were selected in order to present a geographically balanced sample. The contest included a series of simple competitions moderated – if possible, given the level of understanding on the side of the pupils – in Romani. The participants were asked to choose appropriate antonyms for different words, to complete Romani sentences and to fill in a listening comprehension test. The pupils were scored according to their performance, with the highest scorer receiving a prize. The individual competitions were preceded by short introductory interviews with the pupils. Other interactions with the pupils (or among them) during the session (re-organization of the setup of the classroom, conversations with and among the pupils) were also monitored. Two researchers (students and alumni of the Romani Studies Seminar; the authors of the article were present as research pair members in almost half of the sessions conducted) were present during the session, dividing amongst themselves the task of moderating the session, monitoring language behavior of the pupils, and recording the results and observations. In addition, each session was audio-recorded from the moment of the entrance of the pupils into the classroom until the last pupil left after the contest session.

When evaluating the children's level of competence, the scores from the competitions were made supplementary to the impressions from the observations of interac-

2 Throughout this article, the term "Northern-Central Romani speaker(s)" will be used in opposition to the term "Vlax Romani speaker(s)" to identify the two dialect groups. The term "Northern-Central Romani speaker(s)" subsumes all respondents from the Northern-Central Romani background, while the level of their actual competence in the dialect (which differs from full to no competence) will be indicated only where appropriate. (See page 67 for the discussion of the possibility to apply the results also to the speakers of Southern-Central Romani.)

tions and conversations. The researchers indicated the level of competence in Romani for the individual pupils right after the given contest session was finished, using a four-point scale: 1 – fully competent speakers; 2 – partially competent speakers (i.e. understand Romani but have difficulties with speaking); 3 – speakers with limited competence (i.e. have problems with understanding and rather limited speaking competencies); 4 – pupils with no or very basic competence in Romani (i.e. understand some basic words/phrases for example). The given scale was understood only as offering basic landmarks to direct the researchers' evaluation – the real competence in Romani of any given pupil is spread along a continuum for each of the individual language skills, and it is therefore very difficult to be described fully using a non-simplifying, ready-to-use scale.

The evaluation was later correlated with the pupils' scores in the competition including the participation in the conversations using Romani and/or Czech (the use of Czech in appropriate reactions indicating passive competence in Romani, for example) as well as with the audio recording of the whole session. The performance of the pupils was also consulted with their teachers/headmasters (or teachers' assistants) in order to compare their usual behavior and level of participation,[3] to discuss their general competence in Czech and in Romani (to see to what extent teachers are informed about the language background of the pupils), etc. Additional background information was gathered from the pupils themselves during introductory conversations (relating primarily to their parents' competence and use of Romani).

We chose to set up the research as a contest to motivate the children to use the maximum of their Romani (including passive competence – as they could participate while speaking Czech as well). The chosen method made it possible to evaluate the use of Romani in a comparable context for a large number of children and thus enabled us to base the estimation on the current competence in Romani among children on a statistically relevant sample without being limited to (mere) declarations on its use and competence.

The method however has significant limits (see Kubaník 2010: 31-37 for a detailed discussion): The estimate is based on very brief communication between a pair of researchers and a group of children previously unfamiliar to each other and the results depended on the willingness/readiness of the children to show their competence in (a certain dialect of) Romani in a context designed by us, moreover it took place in a school environment in which children are (mostly) discouraged to use Romani.

We tried to compensate for these limits by engaging a smaller group of researchers (including as often as possible the authors of the article as those who de-

3 We have come across children (competent speakers of Romani) described by their teachers as slow in understanding or passive during classroom activities (both was explained by the teachers by limited mental capacity of the pupils) who took a very active role in the contest itself (scoring rather highly) as well as in the communication with the researchers. Potential language barrier problems were thus made more visible to the teachers themselves.

signed the methodology) whose growing experience with moderating the contest could help engage the children in showing their knowledge of Romani to a greater extent than in an interview. The results nonetheless present again only an estimate (however grounded in the real time experience with each individual child in the sample) which we thus try to approach critically.

The individual competitions were prepared in both Northern-Central and Vlax Romani, the researchers moderated the sessions mostly in Northern-Central Romani, and we worked with the presumption that the children themselves would ask for the use of a different Romani dialect. This was unproblematic among the Vlax Roma. Vlax identity is regarded as (more) prestigious and the Vlax Roma are thus more ready to stress and act upon (the shared experience of) the cultural border dividing Vlax and "non-Vlax" Roma. Such a clear distinction and/or the readiness to stress it is however less present among the (former) speakers of the Northern- and Southern-Central dialects. Only one girl in the sample identified herself as Southern-Central Romani speaker, and we can expect that more speakers of this dialect participated without being identified or identifying themselves as such. We are, however, confident that Northern-Central Romani speakers dominated our "non-Vlax" sample. We therefore relate our findings exclusively to the Northern-Central dialect of Romani but point out that they are most probably relevant to the situation of Southern-Central Romani in the CR as well since it is largely supposed that (the changes in) the vitality of the two Central dialects are comparable.[4]

2.2 Results of the competence test

In this section, the data from the competence test is presented. More general interpretations are developed based on the level of competence and age as an important influencing factor (gender is disregarded as it has been found to play no important role in the analysis of the data).

2.2.1 General results by dialect group

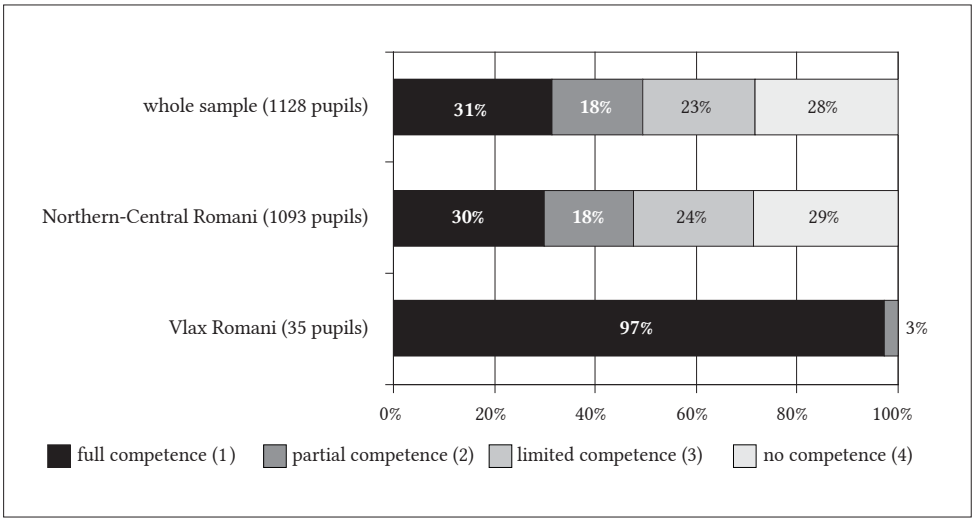
The following graph (see next page) presents the results of the test of competence in Romani. Within the consulted sample of 1168 pupils, the researchers did not clas-

4 We omit the use of the term "Central Rom" (Elšík 2003: 43) as it might lead to the underestimation of the possible differences between the situation of the two dialects (and their speakers) so far un-researched. We on the other hand share reservations as to the suitability of the terms "Slovak" and "Hungarian" Roma as a proxy to the identification of the two dialect groups (Elšík 2003: 45-46) which leads us to the omission of the term "Slovak" and "Hungarian" Roma in the discussion of our findings despite the fact that such a short-cut would seem to solve our terminological difficulties (see footnote 2).

sify 40 of these pupils, leaving us with a total of 1128 children tested and classified according to their competence in Romani. The graph presents results for the whole sample, including both children from the Northern-Central and Vlax Romani dialect background, as well as the results for each of the two groups separately.

Vlax Romani speakers seem to be under-represented in the sample to a considerable extent. This might be caused by i) the methodology of the selection of localities and schools; ii) a proportion of the Vlax Roma among the Romani population in the Czech Republic lower than has been estimated.

Graph no. 1.: Competence in Romani related to dialect group



The results for the Vlax Romani speakers prove the assumption of high competence in Romani. 97% of the pupils (i.e. 34 out of the 35 Vlax Romani speakers tested) were classified as fully competent in Romani, only one of them as only partially competent (i.e. still having a rather solid knowledge of the language). The vitality of Vlax Romani is further documented in other aspects of the research as well (see below).

The results for the group of children with a Northern-Central Romani background show considerable loss of the language. Bearing in mind certain limits of the methodology used, the relative representativeness of the sample allows for the statement that among the present-day children of school age from the Northern-Central dialect group, we can expect a maximum of approximately one-third to be fully competent speakers of Romani.

When seen from the perspective of the post-war history of the Roma in Czechoslovakia, these results might be commented upon as "positively" surprising. In addi-

tion to the consequences of the post-war migration from Slovakia, the approach of the communist state towards the Roma was marked, beginning in the late 1950s, by assimilation pressure (until at least the late 1970s) with effective assaults on the use of Romani in public and in the private sphere.[5] The legacy of these policies include the seemingly overwhelming acceptance of the pressure to suppress the use of Romani especially at home, in communication with children, documented in particular among the group Northern-Central Romani speakers as well as the generally low status of Romani (among this group), which was actually gradually deprived of the status of a language as such during communism.

Attention should also be drawn to another one-third part of the sample – more than one-third of Northern-Central Romani speakers who at least understand Romani to a different extent (categories 2 and 3 merged together) and a certain percentage of whom can even speak the language, though they do have certain difficulties in doing so. The considerably high proportion of individuals with passive knowledge of Romani – a feature that is characteristic not only for the children but of the (especially younger) adult Northern-Central Romani speakers in the CR, opens the door for specifically designed policies involving, for example, more extensive use of Romani within radio broadcasting programs reserved for the Romani national minority, etc.

The results, however, urge us to consider the Northern-Central (and most probably also the Southern-Central) dialect of Romani in the CR as potentially endangered: it seems that only one third of contemporary Romani children can be expected to transmit the language in the future. Furthermore, the level of competence does not mean that Romani is the first/strongest/most commonly used language of the children classified as fully competent, although all of these factors are interconnected and as such are important for further transmission of the language.

2.2.2 The factor of age in the development of (full) competence in Northern-Central Romani

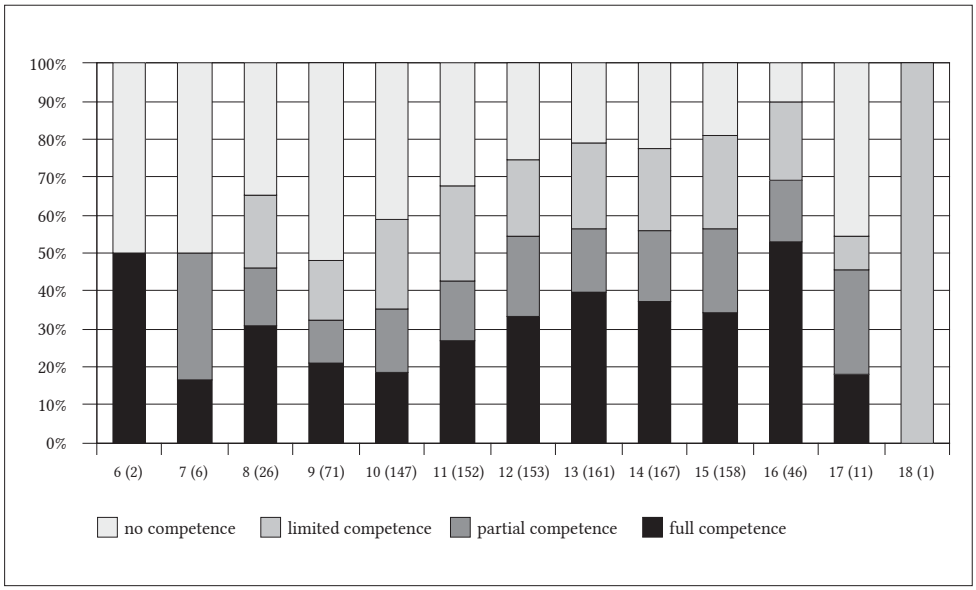
The survey shows a rather strong link between the age of the children and their competence in Romani. For the presentation of the data presented below the Vlax Romani speakers were excluded. All statements in this section relate exclusively to the situation of Northern-Central Romani (and, by the extension already discussed, to Southern-Central Romani).

The distribution of competence among the age groups of 6-18 years of age is presented in the following graph. Age groups of 6, 7, 17, and 18 years of age were

5 For the description of the development of the policies towards the Roma in communist Czechoslovakia, see esp. Pavelčíková (2004), Guy (1998: 26-28, 32-34, 50-55). For the debate on the effects the assimilation pressure has had on the Roma, see esp. Hübschmannová (1976: 335; 1999: esp. 23-27, 62-63; 2006: 36-38).

strongly underrepresented while the age groups of 10-16 years of age were among the highest represented. For the real numbers of children in the individual age categories see the horizontal axis: the first number indicates the age, the following number enclosed in brackets indicates the actual number of pupils of that age in the sample.

Graph no.2.: Competence in Northern-Central Romani related to age



The data suggest that competence in Northern-Central Romani is directly proportionate to age. This observation gives grounds to two opposing interpretations as far as the transmission, acquisition and, finally, the future situation of this dialect of Romani in the CR is considered. It might be also the case that the two interpretations touch on a different tendencies existing simultaneously and competing with one another.

The first interpretation draws our attention to the frequency of children with no/weaker competence in Romani, which is higher among younger children. It can be argued that the data illustrate a turning point in the trans-generational transmission of Romani: it is increasingly not being transmitted to the younger generation, which is why there is a growing number of younger children with no/weak competence in Romani.[6] When this tendency is projected into the future, one could expect the nearly

6 This interpretation was proposed by Peter Bakker during the presentation at the GLS conference in Graz, September 2, 2011. We are grateful for his having drawn our attention to this possible line of reasoning.

complete disappearance of competence in Romani among the groups of school-aged children, and, as time progresses, even in future generations.

As it will be shown later in the article, the tendency, among Northern-Central Romani speakers to marginalize the use of Romani in family/community surroundings is clearly detectable. The research presented here is not the first to mention this fact (see the introduction). However, no comparable data are available that would allow us to show whether the results of our research indicate a growing disappearance of Romani speakers in the younger generations.[7]

The other interpretation of the data presented in graph 2 concentrates rather on the higher frequency of children with full competence in Romani among the older age groups. Seen from this perspective, the data seem to indicate that (full) competence in Northern-Central Romani in the CR is being/can be acquired over a longer period of time.

This assumption is further supported by data from the complementary questionnaire survey that we have conducted in selected Czech and Moravian localities in 2010: 60 respondents out of a total of 300 stated they have learned Romani while of school age, another 20 remarked they have learned Romani even later. The size and specificities of the sample urge us to approach the numbers with certain reservations, they however support the relevance of the presented interpretation.

Other observations made in communication with Roma further confirm this view. We will provide just two examples: one observation was made in the family of one of the participants of the "Romani contest". The boy (aged 13) was classified as fully competent, and was observed using Romani even during our visit at his home. However his uncle, living in the same household, remarked the boy was unable to speak any Romani a few years ago. Another example can be presented to illustrate complex language attitudes that are built around and work with the age factor: a Romani man in his twenties (who has grown up in a bilingual environment) mentioned his grandmother recently scolded him for using Czech too much, which she considered to be a shame for a man of his age, and urged him to use Romani more. The episode relates primarily to the actual usage of Romani, but it also reveals possible pressures inside the individual family/community that make the youngsters use/improve their Romani.

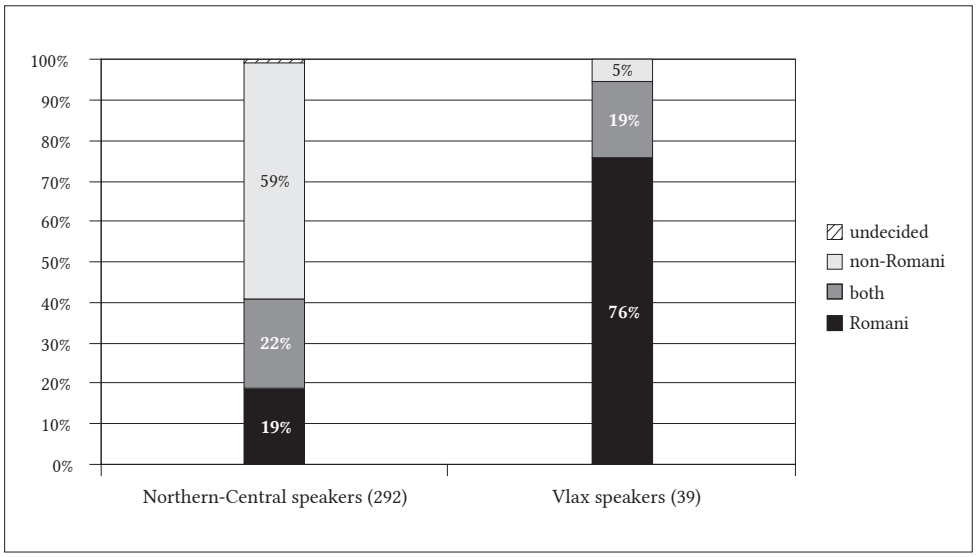
There also seems to be a shared opinion among the speakers of Northern-Central Romani in the Czech Republic that teaching their children Czech (i.e. speaking to them in that language) is of utmost importance and – in the end – only a matter of priority, while the children can become fluent in Romani over time.

7 Only two locally grounded estimates have been published by Hübschmannová (Hübschmannová 1979). She tested the competence in Romani among small groups (up to 40) of children in Prague and Rokycany (western Bohemia), using a methodology based on individual interviews.

The school or rather the shared awareness that children might have "problems in the school" if they have lower competence in Czech caused by their having been brought up in Romani, was frequently presented as the main reason why adult speakers of the language ceased to speak Romani to their children. In our opinion, at least three factors combine in making this statement rather frequent: i) internalization of the opinion as the legacy of communist assimilation; ii) past as well as recent personal experience with "problems in school" connected to insufficient knowledge of Czech; iii) an easy (and easily understandable) explanation of the rather complex mixture of stereotypes, experience, arguments, attitudes, and emotions that all play a role in the final set-up of the language environment in which the children are raised.

The level of accommodation of the opinion that children should be (for whatever reason) socialized in the majority language among the Northern-Central speakers as opposed to the Vlax Romani speakers is illustrated in the following graph. The total of 292 Northern-Central Romani speakers (with a varying level of competence in the language) and 39 Vlax Romani speakers were asked the question in the 2010 research.

Graph no.3.: [What language(s) should Romani parents teach their children first?] - related to dialect group



While Czech is the declared preferred language for the primary socialization of children among the Northern-Central Romani speakers (59%, i.e. 163 respondents), Vlax

Romani speakers seem to predominantly agree on the use of Romani for the purpose (76%, i.e. 28 respondents). The use of mixed code was supported by 22% speakers of the Northern-Central dialect. It is important to notice that the graph only illustrates the attitude towards language use in a particular time. A large part of the Northern-Central sample (180 out of 263 who answered the question, i.e. 68%) claimed they have learned Romani before they reached 6 years of age and most of the Vlax respondents (30 out of 39 people, i.e. 87%) claimed the same for Czech.

Some Northern-Central speakers explained that they intentionally eliminate Romani from direct communication only with the children and Romani thus remains present in the language background (to what extent is a different question), possibly ready to be taken upon in later years.

It should also be pointed out that the acquisition of the community language over a (longer) period of time is to be found among other minority/regional languages/dialects around the world (including other Romani dialects). It also conforms to a clear trend as far as other minority languages are considered in the Czech context in particular (Marián Sloboda, personal communication).

2.3 Language use

In this section, some of the data gathered during the survey carried out in 2010 will be further presented in order to elaborate on the already discussed issues of inter-family language transmission of Romani and its use generally.

The data from the initial surveys (Kubaník / Červenka / Sadílková 2010: 22-24) showed a gradual decline in the use of Romani with each younger generation. While our respondents (124 people) claimed their grandparents were prevalently using Romani in communication with their children (i.e. the parents of our respondents), only 11 respondents from a total of 106 who already had children claimed to be using mostly Romani with them. In the scope of 5 generations, more frequent usage of Romani has been always assigned to the older generation.

In the 2010 survey, we compared language use as declared by our respondents (with their parents, siblings and partners; the sample for each question covers 196, 200 and 180 respondents respectively) with the migration generation[8] of our respondents (Červenka / Kubaník / Sadílková 2011: 17-21). The results indicate: i) the decline in the use of Romani in each new generation born in the CR; ii) the more distinctive decline of the use of Romani in communication among partners of comparable status and age

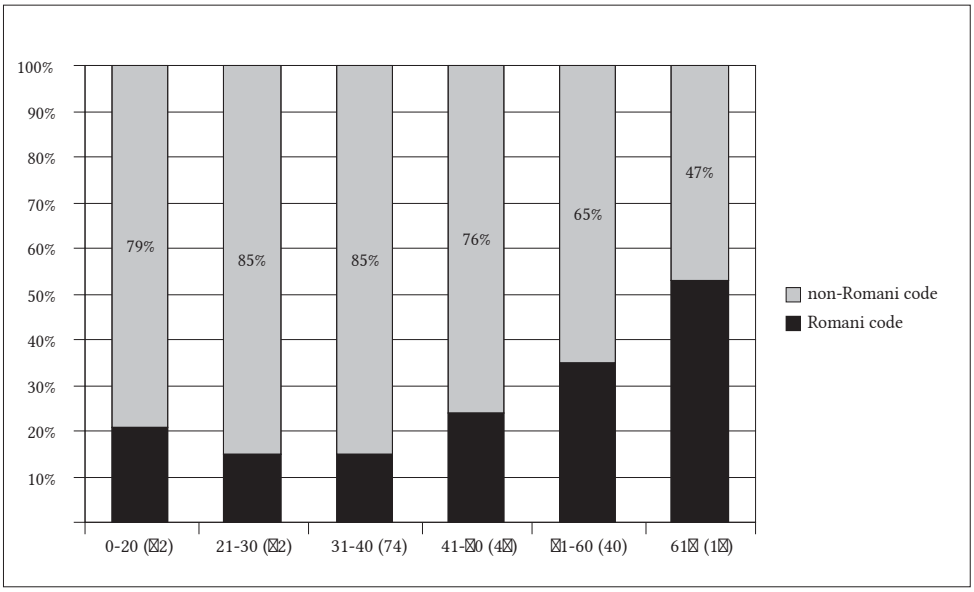
8 The first migration generation includes Roma who were born in Slovakia and came to the Czech lands, the second migration generation includes the first generation of the Roma born in the Czech Republic in the newly arrived families. Each migration generation can comprise people of different age.

(i.e. among siblings and partners as compared to communication with parents); iii) certain use of the non-Romani code already in the first and second migration generation. For example, 26 of 70 respondents from the second migration generation claimed they had been addressed by their parents in a non-Romani code. Although the rest of the respondents declared as usual communication in both codes (30 respondents) or mostly in Romani (14), it is likely that language shift process has already begun among first migration generation, some members of which might have stopped using Romani with their children.

On the other hand, this has not prevented the children from acquiring full competence in Romani. As one of our respondents (40 years, 2nd migrant generation) described, although his parents were not speaking Romani with him much, the language had been used during visits of grandparents and also in the (Romani) neighborhood. He therefore has acquired the language naturally. It is the absence of community life that in his view leads to lesser use of Romani and lower degree of competence in the language nowadays.

This leads us to the question of the extent to which Romany is currently used irrespective of the different communication partners. The graph below summarizes the answers from 278 Northern-Central speakers divided into six age groups (the number in brackets indicates the actual number of respondents in the given age groups; the size of the oldest group is too small for any interpretation).

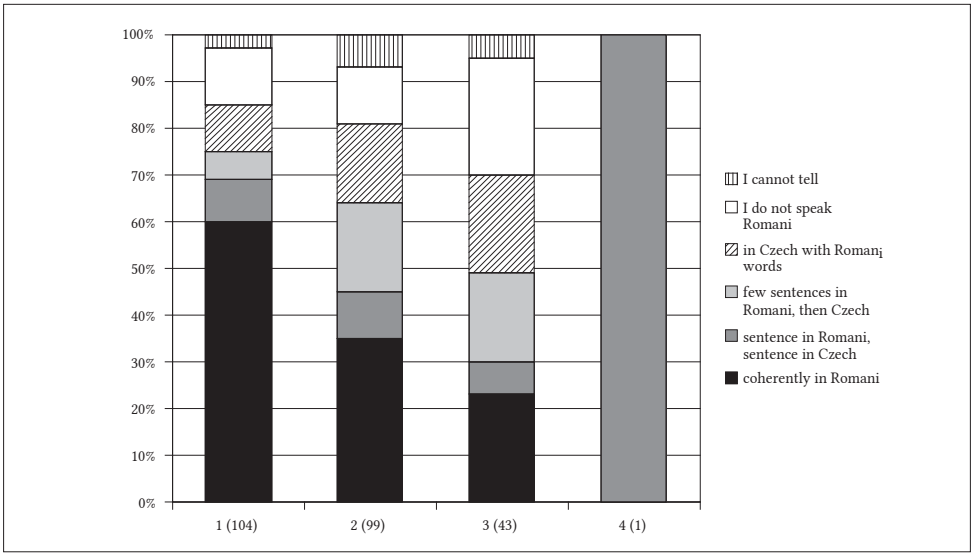
Graph no.4.: [Which language do you speak the most?]- related to age groups



Although our sample is small, the trend indicated in the graph is not accidental in our opinion. Most respondents claimed they use a non-Romani code more often than Romani in their daily lives. The indicated use of Romani rises with age, however, in each age group, including the older generations, there is a higher proportion of Roma who reportedly use a non-Romani code most (besides the oldest age group in the sample). Regrettably, we do not have information on the character of daily contacts of our respondents. The answers therefore might indicate a higher degree of contacts with non-Roma, especially within younger age groups. It is also highly probable that within the group of Northern-Central speakers there is already a large proportion of Roma who are either not able to use Romani or prefer not to use it, which in turn influences language behavior of competent Romani speakers.

The reported "use of Romani" can also include different types of use of the language, varying from the mere insertion of Romani words into Czech sentences and code-switching to complex and coherent Romani utterances (for a general overview see Winford 2003: 101-167, for comments on the situation in different Romani communities see Matras 2002: 241-2 or Fosztó 2007: 108-110). When asked about the character of their communication in Romani, our respondents (247 Northern-Central speakers answered the question) could use a scale ranging from "(I speak) coherently in Romani" to "(I speak) Czech with Romani words". Their answers were organized according the migration generation of the respondents (columns 1-4), coloring indicates the different "modes" of the use of Romani.

Graph no.5.: [In which mode do you speak Romani?]- related to migration generation



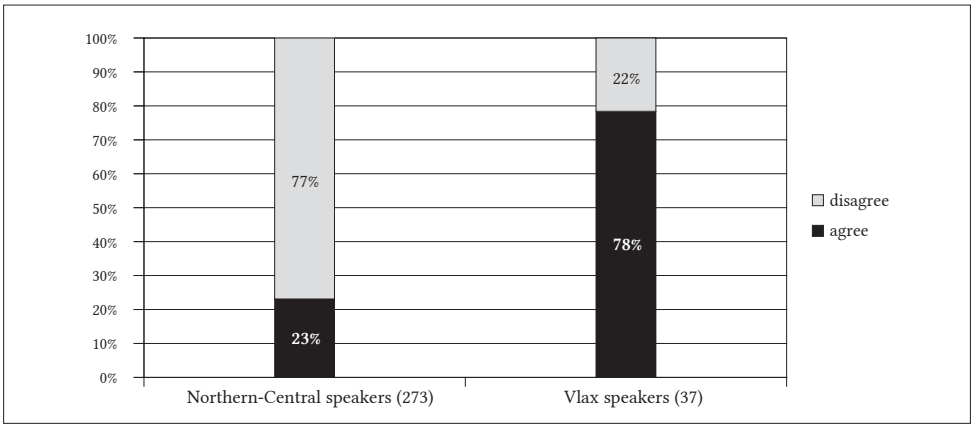
The results suggest a shift in the style of using Romani. A substantial part of respondents in each migration generation claimed to speak Romani coherently, but their proportion degreases in each subsequent generation (64 – 34 – 10 respondents in migration generation 1, 2, 3 respectively). By contrast, there are more speakers in 2nd and 3rd migration generations who use sentences or even only words in Romani as a part of their communication held generally in Czech.

2.3.1 The future of Romani in the Czech Republic

The ongoing change in the use of (Northern-Central) Romani has been so far presented using our respondents' answers to questions that did not directly address the change itself. Do our respondents reflect upon this change? There seems to be an agreement among Northern-Central speakers that Romani is currently being used less than before. When we asked the respondents whether Romani in their own localities is being used more or less than it had been used 20 years ago, 80% out of 238 respondents from Northern-Central group agreed it is currently used less. Furthermore, 63% of our Northern-Central respondents (175 out of 279) were convinced that in 20 years' time Romani will not be spoken at all in the particular locality or that it will be spoken far less than today. It is not surprising that the view of future of their dialect is quite the opposite among Vlax respondents – only 8 of 39 of them (21%) expect some decline in the use of Romani in their town within their group in the next 20 years.

The same dramatic contrast between the answers of the Vlax and Northern-Central respondents is reflected in another key question on relation between language and identity.

Graph no.6.: [Do you agree with the following statement: A Rom who does not speak Romani is not a Rom.?] - related to dialectal groups



While Vlax speakers mostly agreed that they do not consider someone who does not speak Romani to be a Rom, the majority of Northern-Central speakers claimed the language is not important in considering the identity of a Rom. This statement can be interpreted as reflecting the situation in reality where Northern-Central speakers more frequently than the Vlax speakers meet/communicate with Roma who do not speak Romani. But it is possible to argue as well that Romani is not viewed within the group (at least at this time and according to our data) as the key feature of their Romani identity (and therefore language shift may not be evaluated as an important problem; see also Neustupný 1992). According to Fishman (1997: 5) the most important condition for language survival is a "unifying and encompassing vision of 'being Xman-via-Xish', i.e. of using the traditional own-ethnicity-associated language for purposes of ethnic self-definition and association". This particular attitude among the Northern-Central Romani speakers towards their language thus strengthens the general process of language shift that can be expected to proceed further unless some change in attitude rises. The other possible scenario is also the creation/adoption of a specific ethnic associated code. It seems that we can witness this process currently taking place among (former) Northern-Central Romani speakers in the CR. This includes, for example, the usage of certain parts of Romani language (specific intonation, words, phrases) within Czech utterances as identity markers (Kubaník / Červenka / Sadílková 2010: 31). The use of specific intonation in Czech is already very near to the use of Czech itself for ethnic identification of Roma. According to Romani scholars who have contact with Romani migrants from the CR in the UK, some families actually use Czech as their identification language in the English-speaking environment, which however does not mean they would cease to identify themselves as Roma. Rather than being an example of ethnic identification via "non-ethnic" language we can interpret this attitude as another example of the small importance of language for the ethnic identification of (former) Central Romani speakers in the CR. Like in the case of other Romani groups (Halwachs 2001) former Central Romani speakers in the CR seem to have undergone a language shift without losing their ethnic awareness.

3 Conclusions

Assimilation (and not just language assimilation) of different ethno-linguistic groups seems to be a common trend in the CR (Nekvapil / Neustupný 2003). The situation of Northern-Central Romani as described in this article is not unexpected – it has been indicated in the past. Our study enables us to support these opinions with data.

In general we can state that in the youngest generation of Northern-Central Romani speakers in the CR, at most one-third are fully competent speakers. We can

see intergenerational decline in transmission and use of the language and there seems to be a shift in the mode in which Romani is used. Moreover, attitudes towards the importance of the language are often unfavorable for the transmission.

On the other hand, our data also show that Romani is still acquired in a number of families/neighborhoods, although sometimes over longer periods of time. There is still a substantial part of young Roma who at least understand Romani to a certain degree. We should underline that the proportion of competence in Romani as presented in our data is valid only for the younger generation – there exists at least one (older) generation of competent Romani speakers in most communities of Northern-Central speakers in the CR.

Although a language shift can already be detected in the language use of some members of the first post-war migration generation, its dynamics are more complex than the previously described simple shift in three generations. There are also important exceptions from the general picture of language shift on the level of the whole Romani community in particular localities or particular families.

As far as Vlax Romani speakers in the CR are considered, it seems that the younger generation is still acquiring Romani as their first language and that Romani still maintains a strong position in daily use inside the community, although some exceptions to this rule can be found as well.

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Sofiya Zahova

Gypsies/Roma in Montenegro: Group identity and the role of language

Abstract

This article presents a general picture of the groups with Roma/Gypsy origin in Montenegro and focuses on their identity narratives. I am interested in the perceived identity markers that are used to differentiate groups (Barth 1969). In this context of identification and differentiation, special attention is paid to the role that language plays as an identity marker because among all Gypsy/Roma groups, with both Romani and non-Romani identity, the mother tongue common for the communities' members is one of the most significant markers. The article also demonstrates that in most cases, speaking the language of the surrounding population is related to identity shift, as a declaration of another ethnic/national affiliation or the creation of a new (Egyptian) ethnic identity. Not speaking the Romani language is not necessarily related to a lack of Romani identity, and there is a clearly articulated Romani identity without actual use of Romani as a means for communication.

1 Introduction

In 2006 Montenegro became the last federal republic of the former socialist Yugoslavia to declare independence. Its path to sovereignty and creation of a new state went hand in hand with the dynamics of its majority and minority populations' identities (Zahova 2013). Despite the country's small size and population (620,145 people[1]), Montenegro today has a diversity of Gypsy groups living on its territory. The political processes in both Montenegro and the region before and after the Kosovo War conflict brought lots of changes in the definition, perception, and self-perception of Gypsy/Roma groups in Montenegro. Similarly to other communities' identity-processes, the end of the 1990s can be considered as a watershed in the identity development of the Gypsy groups. The Montenegrin state has paid significant attention to the development and protection of the status of so-called *populacija Roma, Aškalija i Egipćana* (population of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, abbreviated to RAE), a name that became popular with its use in official documents after the 1999

1 *Population of Montenegro by sex, type of settlement, ethnicity, religion and mother tongue, per municipalities*, Release No. 83 of 12 July 2011. Podgorica: Statistical Office of Montenegro, 3.

war in Kosovo, recognizing different communal identities of a similar (Gypsy) origin (Marushiakova et al. 2001; Nedeljković 2005).

According to criteria such as time of settlement, ethno-cultural characteristics and group identity, there are three main groups observed and recorded in ethnological or other research focused on Gypsies in Montenegro. The first group is *Kovači* (blacksmiths, called *Arlija* by the Romani-speaking group of Montenegrin *Čergarja*), who have inhabited the territory of Montenegro since the time of Ottoman rule on the Adriatic cost or in the cities inland, who prefer to declare another ethnic or national identity. The second is the group of *Roma-Čergarja*, identified by the surrounding population as *Gabelji*, in earlier periods also as *Gurbeti*, who had been travellers for some centuries in Montenegro, before settling in the 1960s. And the third group of Roma are the *Roma-Muslims*, who have been migrating to Montenegro since the end of the 1940s. Since the 1980s they have settled in the larger cities and among them are family branches that identify themselves as Egyptians. Earlier research in the 1970s and 1980s recorded the exonym *Madžup* as an endonym of the group (Lutovac 1987). To these groups we should add the refugees from Kosovo who migrated to Montenegro after 1999: Roma or *Roma-Muslims* speaking different dialects of Romani, *Egyptians* and a couple of *Aškali* families. The refugees' influx led to the emergence of new identities and new terms to denote the groups. It also brought identity changes among the communities settled in Montenegro before the 1990s.

According to the national census from April 2011, there are 6,251 Roma in Montenegro (over 1.01% of the total population) and 2,054 Egyptians (over 0.30%).[2] According to experts and NGOs there might also be several thousand refugees with Roma and Egyptian identity, reaching 13,000-15,000 (Delić 2008) or even a very doubtful estimate of 21,000 (Vukadinović 2001: 521) that continually migrate to neighbouring countries and western Europe. An unofficial census implemented jointly by the National Council of Roma and Egyptians of Montenegro and the Statistical Institute of Montenegro showed that the total number of citizens and residents declaring Roma, Gypsy, Aškali, or Egyptian identity is 9,934[3], but this number does not include those who live in the diaspora or who declare a preferred identity – Albanian, Muslim/Bošnjak, or who identify themselves as Montenegrins only by their citizenship.[4] Both the old settled groups and the newly arrived refugees live in the Montenegrin cities that are municipal centres. According to this data, there are 7,110 Roma, 2,498 Egyptians, 109 Aškali and 48 Muslims. They live in Podgorica (5,748), Nikšić (1,001), Berane (669), Ulcinj (550), Tivat (425), Bijelo Polje (369), Bar

2 *Ibid.*, 17-18.

3 *Baza podataka RAE populacije u Crnoj Gori.* 2009. Podgorica: Monsat, 13.

4 According to my estimates the number is not less than 3,000.

(309), Herceg Novi (299), Budva (189), Kotor (123), Rožaje (112), Cetinje (86), Pljevlja (42), Danilovgrad (12).[5]

The article presents a general picture of the groups with Gypsy origin in Montenegro with a focus on their narratives as recorded during my ethnographic field studies in Montenegro that took place in June 2008, August 2009, and December 2010. I focus on the ethno-cultural markers on which the groups build their identities and differentiate between the other groups (Barth 1969). In this context of identification and differentiation, I pay special attention to the role that language plays as an identity marker for each group and how it is exploited by the interlocutors in the context of their identity versus the identity of the other groups. For all Gypsy/Roma groups, with both Romani and another identity, the mother tongue common for the communities' members is among the most significant markers of identity and one of the most exploited arguments in their identity narratives. The article also demonstrates that, in most cases, speaking the language of the surrounding population is related to identity shift, as a declaration of another ethnic/national affiliation or the creation of a new (Egyptian) ethnic identity. Not speaking the Romani language, however, is not necessarily related to a lack of Romani identity. There is a clearly articulated Romani identity without actual use of Romani as a means for communication.

2 Old settled Kovači

Contemporary Montenegro is comprised of three regions that are clearly distinguished by their different political and cultural developments throughout history. These are the northern area of Sandžak (Novi Pazar, part of the Ottoman Empire until the beginning of the 20th century), the central parts of Old Montenegro and Seven Highlands, which had developed under the tribal political and territorial system and the Montenegrin coast, which was controlled by the Republic of Venice, with the Bay of Kotor area under Venetian and Austrian rule (as part of Dalmatia) and the Southern part controlled by the Ottoman Empire (Andrijašević / Rastoder 2006). The first written records about Gypsies are found in the Ottoman archives about the Adriatic coastal towns ruled by the empire at that time. The first reliable data about settlements in the inland towns of Montenegro date from the 17th century. At the end of the 15th and beginning of 16th century, building of a fortress commenced in the town of Novi (today Herceg Novi), including a 'Gypsy *sandžak*' that was purposely moved from another part of the empire (Vasić 1975: 513, 563; Zirojević 1981). Under Ottoman

5 *Ibid.*, 7-14.

rule, in places like Nikšić, Podgorica, Skadar, Žabljak, Pljevlja, Novi, Bihor, Ulcinj, etc. crafts were developed and served the Ottoman army for building fortresses, repairing works, and the manufacturing of guns, clothes and pottery. In some of these cities Gypsies were separate groups with special status (Vasić 1975: 562-563; Petrović 1976). Researchers of this period state that although the number of Gypsies was not high, they did have special status as Gypsy-*Muslims*, who were exempt from taxes (Zirojević 1981: 233), a practice recorded in other parts of the empire (Marushiakova / Popov 2001a).

According to all available ethnographic studies, craftsmanship was not typically considered to be a prestigious occupation for Montenegrin men; it was 'under the dignity of the person' and as such was called a 'Gypsy job'. Thus, all craftsmen recorded in Montenegro throughout the 18th and 19th centuries were Gypsies (Edreljanović 1911: 459). Valtazar Bogišić, who also contributed an article on Gypsies in Montenegro (in the so-called Old Montenegro or the part inland from the coast and Sandžak of Novi Pazar), stated that there were 500 Gypsies at the end of the 19th century. The name that was used for them is *majstori* (craftsmen), *mestri*, sometimes *jegjuupak*, which according to Bogišić is etymologically similar to the word *Gypsy* and derived from '*Egypt*' (Bogišić 1874: 405). In its research on traditional culture, the school of south Slav anthropogeography also provided records about the Gypsies as a separate group of people (Jovićević 1911: 611; Dučić 1931). Those who had been traveling seasonally among the Highlands of Old Montenegro were depicted as *Gabelji*, *Kalajdžii* or *Cigani*, while those who were researched in cities (Bar and Ulcinj) were called *Cigani*, despite the fact that they had declared another identity (Barjaktarović 1979; Vukmanović 1984-1985; Lutovac 1987).

Although the surrounding population referring to them as Gypsies and the neighbourhood where they have been living for centuries being called Gypsy *mahala*, the group rejects the ethnonym '*cigani*' or '*madžupi*'. At the end of the 19th century, when the first census was implemented, the group chose to present itself with a name after their craft – *Kovači* (blacksmiths) and some families were even allowed to change their Muslim family names to the name derived from the family craft (Kovačić), a name still retained by some members of the group in order to distance themselves from their Gypsy origin. There are many individual families with such origins (for example in Berane, Bijelo Polje, and Nikšić) who have almost completely merged into the surrounding population and are not considered as members of the group described here. Despite the fact that the surrounding population still remembers and speaks about their Gypsy origin, they are completely integrated into the local communities, which stresses the fact that with time this Gypsy group has proved to be very successful in business and respected in personal relations. Mixed marriages with Orthodox Montenegrins and the local Muslim population are common, while the cases of marriage with members of the group from Bar and Ulcinj (where the

group is numerous, lives compactly, observes the group endogamy, and speaks Albanian) appear to be more unsuccessful and often end in divorce.

As a group all *Kovači* demonstrate a consciousness of the old settlers who came to Montenegro 'even before the Montenegrins'. The *Kovači* on the Adriatic coast have stories about settlements from the past, 'probably from the sea', while those living in the cities within the state's territory tell stories about ancestors (a Muslim family) that migrated to the place where they live now in order to avoid a blood revenge, which is a very common element in family stories among all ethnic groups in the region. The inner-group division is made according to the kin and old members of the group know all family names after the founder of the group comparatively well. The kin names are Begzić, Bajramović, Čobić, Adžemović, Burdaković, Asović, Baharović, Elezović, Šuntić, Malezić, Kasumović, Pilević, Omerović, Kobašić, Malić. They are probably around 5,000, living in separate mahalas in Ulcinj, Bar (in the old city called Stari Bar) and Rožaje, while in the other cities such as Podgorica, Nikšić, Pljevlja, Bijelo Polje, or Berane, their old neighbourhoods are already part of the city centres and they live scattered in different neighbourhoods of the city, although some still own houses in the old mahala.

By the end of the 19th century, they had become known traditionally as blacksmiths and gradually became engaged in factories. Since the 1970s, when opportunities opened up for guest workers, many men migrated to western Europe, where they have been practicing the same occupations as they did in Montenegro (drivers in companies, car mechanics, plumbers, etc.).

All ethnographic records note the endeavour of the group to distance themselves from the Gypsies and demonstrate another identity: They tended towards a new *Kovači* identity at the beginning of the 19th century in cities with an Orthodox majority, Albanian identity in the cities with an Albanian majority (Ulcinj), then towards a Muslim identity since 1974 when the new Yugoslavian Constitution defined 'Muslims' as one of the constituent nations in Yugoslavia (Bersch 1977). In the last few years as a result of the recognition of Egyptians as part of the RAE population, and the activities of Balkan Egyptian organizations supporting the Egyptian movement in Kosovo and Macedonia (Zemon 2001), the process for the emergence of a new Egyptian identity started among the group and several members of the *Kovači* group registered NGOs 'to serve the community's needs to demonstrate and support Egyptian identity'.

In both past and present times, identity-distancing as an ethno-cultural marker can be accounted for. The preferred identity depends on the place of living and different factors and variables such as the surrounding population, in front of whom the identity is declared, etc. The processes of constructing a non-Gypsy identity or choice of preferred identity is known from other Gypsy groups on the Balkans, especially among long-settled groups that have lost their language and now speak the language

of the population that used to be a majority or is a majority in their surroundings as a mother tongue. Such groups are Turkish-speaking Gypsies in south Bulgaria or east Macedonia declaring a Turkish identity (Marushiakova / Popov 2006), *Djorgovtci* in Serbia and *Djorevci* in Bulgaria declaring the respective majority identity (Zlatanović 2006), or groups who follow a third path of creating a brand new identity, such as the 'Balkan Egyptians' in Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, and recently also in Montenegro (Marushiakova / Popov 2012).

The ethnonym is thus fluid and is usually common for the community in a certain city: in Bar Muslims or "old settlers" (*starosedeoci*), in Ulcinj Albanians, Podgorica Muslims, old-settlers or Montenegrins, etc. The surrounding population usually respects the groups' wish to distance themselves from other Gypsies and calls them *kovači* or *majstori*. The groups' identity is built on claims of an origin of old settlers, who came and settled before the Orthodox population (thus, in Bar the Gypsies call themselves *starobarani* - old population of Bar); demonstration of strong respect to the Muslim faith and religious rules such as avoiding alcohol, respecting Muslim holidays, praying and visiting mosques, are observed. The *Kovači* group oppose the ethno-cultural characteristics common for the Gypsies with whom they believe to be 'wrongly mixed'. The boundaries with the Gypsies/Roma are built by stressing the differences, above all the lack of a Romani language and traces of its existence among *Kovači*. They argue that the fact that the group has never spoken the Romani language proves their non-Romani origin:

'Roma are people with whom we do not have anything in common. The most specific thing for us is that we do not speak Romani language. If we had ever been Roma or Egyptians, something from this language – Romani or Egyptian – should have remained as proof in our language. But in our language, there is not a single word and it has never existed, that is why they have no reason to equalize us with Roma or Egyptians.' (Stari Bar, June 2008).

The few group members who declare Egyptian identity claim that their ancestors spoke the language of the Egyptians, but the language was gradually lost 'even in Egypt'. According to my interlocutors in Bar and Ulcinj, remnants of the Egyptian language was the diminutive of the word 'pharaoh' (*faraonče*) with which grandfathers used to address their grandsons and all children in the community.

It is difficult to say when the Romani language of the group was lost, but it must have been centuries ago since nineteenth-century statistics, archives, and ethnographic research record that they spoke the language (and its local dialect) of the majority in their environment. In earlier periods, in the cities under Ottoman rule, they spoke Turkish and were still speaking it in the first half of the twentieth century, not as their mother tongue, but as a language of communication (Vukmanović 1932: 209). Some interlocutors of the groups with Roma identity (both *Čergarja* and Roma-Muslims) that have been in contact with *Kovači* claim that they understand Romani,

but do not want to use it in communication. However, this may be interpreted only as an expression of other Gypsy groups that *Kovači* are in fact also Gypsies.

Following the language importance, markers of identity for *Kovači* are built upon their differences from the Roma and the fact that they do not celebrate the common 'Gypsy holiday' of May 6th (*Djurdjevdan*). According to my interlocutors, they do not drink alcohol, while their counterpart Gypsies drink and even sing at funerals; Gypsies buy their brides and perform rich and elaborate celebrations, while *Kovači* have never done this, being more dissent, calm, and restrained in comparison to the Gypsies. As a rule their mother tongue is the same as that of the surrounding population and the group thus tends to declare the identity of the surrounding population.

3 Čergarja

While the *Kovači* group inhabited the parts of contemporary Montenegro that were under Ottoman rule, there is no record of the presence of settled Gypsies in the lands of Old Montenegro and Seven Highlands that were only partly or temporarily ruled by the Ottomans. According to oral stories of both Montenegrins and Gypsies, nomadic Gypsy groups had been coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina to serve the Montenegrins with cattle breeding at their stock camps during the summer season. 'Čergarja' is an exonym derived from the word 'čerga', a hand made cloth-carpet used for making the nomads' traditional tents, with which the group is associated. They are nomadic or semi-nomadic Roma whose traditional livelihood was smithery for the men and fortune telling and begging for the women. Most of the families migrated to Germany and Italy during the time of Socialist Yugoslavia, where they presented themselves as Yugoslavs (today as *Crnogorska Roma*, *Crnogorcurja*). This group is called *Gabelj* or 'our Gypsies' by the Montenegrins since they are the only group that travelled among the tribes' territory of Old Montenegro (Jovićević 1911: 677; Erdeljanović 1911: 459). Montenegrins also know the family and kins' names of the *Čergarja* in their region relatively well.

The nomadic Gypsies are called differently by the surrounding population – the term Gypsy is used very rarely, *Čergari* and *Gabelj* are the most common names today; *Gurbet* and *Kalajdžii* were also used in the past, while the group calls itself *Roma*, *Sanžak Roma*, or *Crnogorska Roma*. Today the ethnonym *Gurbet* has completely disappeared, but some elders of my informants, when asked who the *Gurbet* are, say that this name refers to them ('*akava sam amen*'), while others believe that *Gurbet* are those Roma who originate from Kosovo and were travelling in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s from Kosovo to Montenegro to trade. *Gurbet* is not used any more at any level of identification, while *Gabelj* is. *Gabelj* in Albanian, as *Gurbet* in Serbian, is used

to define nomadic and semi-nomadic Roma groups. *Gabelj* is also used for craftsmen who made wooden carts as 'gabelj' means a car's wheel.

In the past, *Čergarja* would remain near the stock camp for several days and repair what was needed – pots for milk, agricultural items, etc., while the women begged and told the future with cards and coffee grounds (foretelling is still practiced by a few old women in the cities). The time when Montenegro became permanent territory for their nomadic routes is not well documented, but there are reliable data from 1912, while before that year they were seasonally travelling from St. George's Day (6th May) to St. Ilia's Day (2nd August), after which they would go back to the cities in Sandžak, Kosovo, and Bosnia – Novi Pazar, Peć, Prizren, Mostar, Gebelj, Sarajevo (Lutovac 1987). Only a few of the older men have memories or narratives about relationships with members of the same Roma group in Bosnia, and those of them who live in the northern part of Montenegro have relatives and intermarry with the community in Novi Pazar, i.e., the Serbian part of Sandžak.

Since the 1960s Montenegrin *Čergarja* have settled in houses at the outskirts (2-3 km away) from the main cities, this being a natural effect of the lack of a professional niche for their craft owing to industrialization and urbanization. Since then they have 'shifted' to repairing umbrellas and general unskilled labour (Barjaktarević 1962). A decade later, in the 1970s, they formed a migratory wave to Germany and Italy, where they presented themselves as Yugoslavs. Some migrated back temporarily to Montenegro and collected secondary iron items, while the women traded clothes or household items. A few families practiced regular begging in Montenegrin cities today because this niche has been occupied by Roma refugees and by seasonal migrating Roma from Serbia or Romania. The migration to western European countries was so massive that entire neighbourhoods of Roma left their homes in the 1970s and 1980s and now rent them to the Kosovo Roma refugees.

Although they have Muslim family names (first names are both Muslim and Christian), the group would define itself as belonging to the Muslim religion in the past but they practice customs that are closer to Christians today ('*amen sam dasikane roma*', '*amen sam ki dasikani rig*'). In family and calendar celebrations, Orthodox Christian customs and practices dominate. They conclude marriages between the kins or within their kin, since kin groups are quite extensive and only marriages between first cousins are avoided. The group's boundaries are held by blood belonging to a kin and respect for certain socio-normative rules considered as specific only for the group and not typical with the other Roma, with whom they believe they share the same Roma origin.

Women from the Selimović kin explained: '*Amen sam pravi srpski cigani, dasikane roma*' [We are true Serbian Gypsies, Orthodox Roma]. Ramović from Podgorica think that the real *Čergarja* tradition is Muslim, but it has been kept only by similar groups living in Bosnia. They consider that *Madžupurja* are those Roma who speak Albanian and not Romani: 'We call [them] *Madžupurja*, because they speak Albanian,

while we are *dasikane roma*, since we speak *daskine[s]* and *romane[s]* only'. *Madžup* is also used as pejorative term for a person from the *Čergarja* group that does not behave as 'our Roma' – for example girls who want to wear jeans instead of skirts. The *Kovači* group is called *(H)arlija*, also considered Roma, but '*aver nacija*', since they are also engaged in crafts. For the *Roma-Čergarja*, Egyptian is a completely new ethnonym popularized recently and they relate it to Kosovo refugees and those speaking Albanian.

Čergarja speak the Gurbet dialect of the Romani language, which belongs to the Southern Vlax varieties (Matras 2002; Boretzky 2003) or to Old Vlax dialects spoken by the descendants of a big wave of migration from Wallachia and Moldova, who scattered in mass all over the Balkans between the 17th and 18th centuries (Marushiakova / Popov 2001b). The dialect shows a consistent use of *h*-forms in declination and conjunction paradigms. A typical feature for the dialect are *seha* (he/she was) for the past tense of the verb 'to be', reflexive *po,* and demonstrative *(a)kava/gava*, negation with *ni*, *dej* for mother. It is similar to the Gurbet dialect of the Bosnian *Xoroxane Roma* (described in Lapov 2004) and to the dialect features of the Bosnian Gurbeti described by Tcherenkov (Tcherenkov / Laederich 2004: 408). The Montenegrin Gurbet variety has some typical Serbian markers such as the palatalized *g* and *d*, *t* and *k*, and it possesses lexical borrowings from Serbian (*rado* for work, *sveto* for world, *uvek* for always), as well as some words from Balkan Turkish.

The group still remembers that their grandfathers knew Turkish and were travelling in the lands of the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting to note that some of my interlocutors who came in contact with groups that have a practice of traditional law court, which Montenegrin *Čergarja* observed abroad, name it either as *romano kris*[6] or use the term but adapt the expression as a masculine noun, since the word 'court' in the environment's language is masculine (*sud* in Serbian) and add a terminal -i- typical of masculine noun borrowings of European origin: *romano krisi*. I portrayed the legal procedure of the *krisi* during field research in the region in August 2009: A nephew had stolen €10,000 from his aunt's house, and simulated a fire accident, claiming that the money had been burnt. The aunt's family was discussing how to convince and press her brother's family to return the money, and her daughter-in-law, who had been living in Germany, suggested that the two families organize several people to solve the case in the form of *romano krisi*, as she had observed other Roma doing in Europe. She explained:

'Our ancestors did not have a court system, they had never known about it, but we learned this in Germany. You make a court [*romano krisi*], for example, we can call people from Berane [where members of the same group live] and whoever is

6 The same form, *romano kris* has been also depicted among other groups that experience the influence of the surrounding languages, in which the noun 'court' is masculine - see details in Marushiakova / Popov (2007).

guilty shall pay… there is a certain period within which you have to pay. Otherwise you have to pay in blood.' (Bijelo Polje)

They consider their language 'particular' and 'more difficult' for the other Roma. When communicating with Romani speakers from other groups, they either use Serbian/Montenegrin for the language of communication or, as my young interlocutors say, 'try to adapt' to the dialect of the others.

4 Roma-Muslims with Kosovo origin

Different groups of Roma who migrated from Kosovo in the 1940s and 1950s declare themselves today to be 'Roma' or 'Roma-Muslims' or even 'domestic Montenegrin Roma'. Over the past decade, several families among them have declared Egyptian identity. The group of Roma-Muslims who settled in Montenegro after 1946 as part of the inter-republics' labour migrations, had earlier identified themselves as 'Madžupi' or 'real Madžup' (to differentiate themselves from the group of *Kovači*, also called 'madžup' in Albanian). Some families of the group migrated temporarily at first, during the period between the two world wars, as traders of household items. After the industrialization and urbanization of Podgorica and Nikšić in the 1950s, many families of workers and builders from Peć, Priština, Djakovica and their surroundings settled first in camps and afterwards into newly built neighborhoods (Lutovac 1987; Delić 2008). Apart from the work in factories and the public cleaning services, many Roma-Muslims are doing petty trade with items and clothes. Many of these men and their families also took advantage of the labour migration to Western Europe in the 1970s.

The group's exact place of origin from Kosovo no longer signifies their identity, since they consider themselves part of the urban population of Kosovo-Roma origin and form more or less one community settled in common neighbourhoods. The community maintains its borders and identity with family and kin ties within Montenegro, in Kosovo, and in western Europe. These Roma are tri-lingual – they speak Romani, Albanian, and Montenegrin and although the Romani language is one of the markers of their identity, Albanian is the language of everyday communication for family and public life in the majority of families. All of the elder members of the group understand and can respond in Romani, but sometimes with difficulty as they have not practiced it for a long time or prefer to respond in Serbian/Montenegrin. For the generation of 30- to 40-year-olds, Romani is the marker of identity despite the fact that they do not practice or understand it. A family of Roma, who migrated in the 1960s and live in different cities on the Adriatic coast, dealing with petty trade and industrial labour, pointed out that they remember their grandparents speaking Romani,

but without any reasonable explanation, the family gradually shifted to speaking Albanian at home, 'regardless of this fact, we are Roma'.

Roma-Muslims claim that all languages (Albanian, Romani, and Montenegrin) are equally used depending on individual preferences. Even the fact that they speak primarily Albanian is stressed upon as a marker of identity and the older members would say: 'Once we settled, we started to speak Albanian more widely in order to differentiate ourselves from the Serbian Orthodox population. But our language is Romanes', 'We have been here since 1948 and we have always communicated between ourselves in Romani, but we use Albanian, since we come from the region where Albanian is spoken'; however, all who came in the period from the 1950s-1980s are Roma, know Romani, and speak it fluently. They admit that there are many Roma who speak only Albanian but still they are 'ours, Roma-Muslims' and 'Romani is part of our tradition'. Speaking about their language of communication, Roma-Muslims interviewed claim that they 'speak Romani insufficiently, know Turkish and Serbian, but speak Albanian primarily, while the Roma here, the *Čergarja* do not know Albanian'.

Konik is a neighbourhood in the periphery of Podgorica where Roma settled throughout the 1950s, 60s, and 80s, after their arrival in the capital of the republic, then named Titograd. The neighbourhood is inhabited not only by Roma, there are Muslims, Albanians and (refugee) Serbs from neighbouring countries. The Kosovo refugees' camps Konik 1 and Konik 2 are situated at the outskirts of the Konik neighbourhood. One Roma-Muslim sheikh in the Konik neighbourhood, who had settled there with the first families in 1948, expressed common sentiments with the Roma-Muslims about the relation between language and identity among the groups from Kosovo:

'In the past we called those who were not willing to speak Romani *Madžup*, they said "oh, we are not Roma, we are *Šiptar*" and now these *Madžups* call themselves Egyptians… For the true Roma in Romani *Rroma* is used, we say *So san tu? Kasko san tu?* and *Me sem Rom!* and *Sode čhavore si tut? Deš*, *Panč*, *Štar*. But when you ask them *Tu san Rom?* they pretend that they do not speak it. These are people who do not know in which direction they are going. And all of us, the Montenegrin Roma, have not forgotten the Romani language, there is not a single person who does not speak the language. We all know Romani and speak it between ourselves. Oh, of course there are differences – my wife (the former one) would say *pani*, while I say *paj*.' (Interview with Šalja Bajruš, Podgorica, Konik, August 2009.)

Nowadays, the Kosovo-originating Roma who settled in Montenegro as labour migrants between the 1950s and 80s identify themselves as Roma-Muslims and Montenegrin Roma to stress both the Muslim religion as opposed to the other Roma (*Čergarja*) and their citizenry identification and support for state independence. The two Muslims holidays – Ramazan and Kurban Bajram – are exposed as the strongest markers of ethno-cultural identity, along with Djurdjevdan, and the other holidays – Serbian New Year on January 13th and St. Sava Day on January 27th. The Roma are

aware that they have 'borrowed' some holidays from the surrounding population, but this also does not reflect on their identity.

For the families declared as Roma-Muslims, Egyptian is a new name that emerged in Montenegro only after the 1999 Kosovo conflict. Roma consider Egyptians and Aškali as two definitions of one community which in fact is Roma, but as a result of its centuries of work at Albanian houses and properties has become Albanianized and lost its language due to the influences of mainstream Albanian culture and life. Thus, Roma do consider Egyptians as a separate community already with whom they share the same origin and certain cultural characteristics – peacemaking institutions, ways of conducting marriages, sometimes language, etc., and do not forbid marriages with them. The Roma-*Čergarja* on the other hand are considered to be those who 'speak non-stop Romani', who 'until today speak only Romani language'. Roma-Muslims quote phrases heard from *Čergarja* such as *So hi?* (What's going on? What's up?), *Ka pekav tut!* (I'll bake you! used as an idiom that can be translated as 'I'll beat you', 'I'll be done with you', depending on the context), *De vorba!* (Talk!), but not comprehensible for the other Roma since their 'language is particular', 'very hard' and 'there is a big difference with our language'. *Čergarja* are also called *Gurbets* (*Grubetja*) by the Kosovo Roma, as opposed to *ćisto Xoraxaj Rom* (pure Turkish, meaning Muslim Rom), used for identification of the Roma-Muslims.

5 Groups among refugees

With the Kosovo war many Gypsies migrated as refugees and some of them settled temporarily or for a longer period in legal or illegal camps in the bigger Montenegrin cities. Among them we distinguish refugees declaring Roma-Muslim identity – the most numerous groups come from neighbourhoods or villages in the region of the cities Djakovica (Gjakova), Peć, Priština, Gniljane, their mother tongue is Romani, and they consider it an important ethno-cultural marker, regardless of dialect differences. They speak Albanian and Serbian also, and some of the families are characterized on the basis of language and ethno-cultural characteristic, such as groups among Roma-Muslims: *Arlija*, *Gurbet*, *Kovačurja/Kovači*, etc. Settled in camps near Roma houses built before the 1980s, they maintain certain contacts with Roma-Muslims from Kosovo, with whom they share the same place of origin.

The second ethnic identity among refugees is Egyptian. Egyptians families are mostly from villages in the region of Peć, Istok, Djakovica, Priština. They are Muslims and speak Albanian as their mother tongue. The active movement of NGOs that was also supported by a series of international documents has encouraged the community to declare its Egyptian identity. For the Roma that live in ordinary houses and who

were settled several decades ago, the families in camps are defined simply as 'refugees' (*izbeglice*), regardless of their ethnic identity, religious affiliation, and origin. The older settlers in Roma neighbourhoods consider the groups living in the camps as one community and do not distinguish between Egyptians and Roma. On the other hand, the Egyptians try to distinguish themselves from the Roma – they do not focus on their origin but on their current ethno-cultural characteristics.

The refugees with Egyptian identity emphasize three main issues that according to them are different from Roma: language, religion, and behaviour. The Albanian language is still considered the most important signifier:

'The tradition of Roma and Egyptian is almost one and the same, for me there is no big difference, still the only difference is the language. They speak Romani, while we speak Albanian and we do not know a single word in Romani. Neither did our old people ever speak Romani, never! In the past it was even harder to communicate with and marry them, now it's easier.' (Konik camp, August 2009)

Egyptians point out that if some relationship with Roma existed, they would speak the Romani language. They explain that they have always known that they are Egyptians, but were not allowed to express their true identity and were either Yugoslavs or Albanians because of pressure and fear from the majority in Kosovo. Egyptians consider themselves superior to Roma and also point out that they have never declared Roma identity. Both the Roma and Egyptians see Aškali as a sub-group or another name for Egyptians, while for the Roma Aškali is one of the names for Egyptian and means 'right hand of the Albanians'. For the Egyptians themselves, Aškali means 'true Egyptian' (*has Egipćan*).

Refugees with Roma identity consider the Egyptian community to be a political invention or new name for an old community earlier known to them as *Madžup, Arlija,* or *Aškalija* (depending on the use in different regions of Kosovo), 'but each of them knows Romani'. Egyptians are pejoratively defined by Roma as *chibale* (used for Albanian speakers) and 'Albanian servants', they are accused of losing their own (Roma) culture and adopting the foreign (Albanian) culture, thus, becoming without identity.

6 Conclusion

Influenced to a great extent by the widely shared concept in the region of the language as flag and signifying ethnic and national identity (Friedman 1999; Greenberg 2004), all the groups defer to their mother tongue as the argument for ethnic/national belonging. For example, for the groups who do not perceive or experience Roma identity, the fact that they are non-Romani speaking is the main pillar on which they build their identity, since the other significant groups are the Roma/Gypsies. These groups

tend either to identify with another community, depending on which language they speak (Albanian, Slavic speaking Muslim/Bošnjaks) or they opt for a comparatively new ethnic identity (Egyptian) in which again the language has an important role and the group's new identity-narrative starts with the argument: 'We've never spoken Romani, therefore we are not Roma/Gypsies'. Despite the fact that the group of *Kovači* and Egyptians do not to speak Romani and have another identity, the Romani-speaking groups do claim that they understand the language, but simply do not want to speak it, thus, including them in the 'imagined community' of the Roma and denying them the right to a separate identity.

Among the Roma-Muslims settled in Montenegro in the second half of the twentieth century, we see two dimensions of the language issue: one of language as a means for communication and the other of language as an identity marker. Whereas their Roma identity is related to identification with the Romani language as 'our language', 'our tradition', most of them do not speak Romani and use primarily Albanian for communication, which does not weaken their Roma identity. Therefore, as Marushiakova and Popov conclude (Marushiakova / Popov 2012) there is no direct correlation between the loss of the Romani language and the changes in the Roma/Gypsy identity. The Albanian-speaking group of Roma-Muslims, settled in Montenegro in the second half of the 20th century has the same origin as the groups who came to Montenegro after 1999, but they have not experienced the impacts of the political process and national developments in Kosovo in the last decades, like those who came as war refugees, and for whom the Albanian language is related only to their place of origin but not to another ethnic identity (Albanian, Egyptian).

On the other hand, under the influence of the Balkan Egyptians movement and the institutionalization of the terms Egyptians and Aškali in the abbreviation RAE used by states in the region after 1999, processes of building borders between Roma and Egyptians from Kosovo have started. In this process, one of the core markers was the language and that is why refugees with Roma-Muslim identity are not inclined to use Albanian as means of communication, whereas the other Roma-Muslims do. Refugee Roma-Muslims insist on identification and practicing the Romani language and speaking Romani at home, since they do not want to be wrongly classified as Egyptians because they use Albanian. This language is presented by the Egyptians as their mother tongue and is the major, and sometimes single, marker that differentiates them from other groups of Kosovo origin.

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Volha Bartash

"From which Roma are you?", or "Where are you from?" Gypsies' identities in contemporary Belarus[1]

Abstract

This article discusses the models of self-appelation which are currently used by Belarusian Roma to identify their roots.[2] The paper begins by introducing the outcome of the author's fieldwork in Roma communities. As the study has elucidated, "traditional" ways of identification with a kin and/or a subgroup are used by Belarusian Roma alongside new territorial names. Identification models vary from one generation to another. While patronymic names are principally used by elderly people, the young are more inclined to identify themselves with a certain territorial community. The author suggests that the identity change goes hand in hand with social transformation. The second part of the article focuses on social processes among Belarusian Roma since their final sedentarization in the middle of the 20th century.

1 Introduction

"From which Roma are you?" For Belarusian Roma of the older generation this is a question of particular importance. The respondent is expected to identify the group and the lineage in which he/she was born. However young people often find difficulties in replying – not all of them know their parents' kin's names exactly. Youth communication usually begins with the question "Where are you from?" Most of the group names which have recently appeared are also derived from toponyms.

Which social processes accompanied the identity change among Belarusian Roma? That was one of the key research questions of my Ph.D. project. I conducted my fieldwork in nine Roma communities in Belarus in 2005-2010. According to the data of the recent census (2009), 7 079 Roma live in Belarus. Most of them dwell in the capital and in border regions. My project covered the Roma community in Minsk, two village communities (*Haradzilava, Krasnaje*) and five towns with Romani populations of up to

1 I wish to thank Dr. Clare Rowan, University of Frankfurt/Main for proofreading of this paper.

2 In this article I refer to the groups who have been living in Belarus for centuries. I do not examine the identity change among the fewer *Lovary, Krymy, Mugat* or *Kelderary* who have migrated to the Republic more recently. Abbreviations: Bel. = the Belarusian language; Rom. = the Romani language.

200 people (*Ružany, Ašmjany, Sluck, Petrykaŭ, Slonim, Maladzečna*). To gather data on Roma's identities, I used mainly interviewing techniques. The informants were asked to name their *rodo* (kin) and *nacija* (nation), the terms used by Belarusian Roma to identify their roots. Other questions, that aimed to investigate the intergroup relationships, were:

- Do you know what the name of your *rodo* means?
- What do you remember about your ancestors? Were they sedentary or nomadic? If nomadic, where did they travel? When has your family settled?
- Could you explain the differences among Romani *nations*? Which Roma live in Belarus?
- What contacts do you have with *other* Roma?
- How long have you lived in this place? Which Roma live here? How often do you meet with your neighbors? Are there any people whom you avoid?
- If you had an opportunity to move to another place, would you use it? If yes, why?
- Please imagine that you marry off your son/daughter. Whom would you invite to the wedding? Whom definitely not, and why?

When answering the above questions the informants heatedly discussed the issues they were concerned with – the differences among Romani *nations*, intergroup communication, the attitudes of the young towards Romani traditions, and many others. To study the opinions of the young people, I interviewed them separately.

2 Traditional patterns of self-identification of Roma in Belarus

My survey has revealed that the majority of Belarusian Roma still identify themselves with a certain kin group; at least thirty kin names are used. To explain what a kin name is, the informants often employed the expression *amari priroda* (Rom. 'our nature'). It is remarkable that most of these names have been borrowed from the languages of the surrounding populations, mainly from the Belarusian language. They can be grouped etymologically:

- *patronyms* - *Bazylevye* (from Bazyl'), *Andrėjki* (from Andrėj);
- names which indicate the former lifestyle of a group - *Čabančiki* (Bel. 'shepherds'), *Xolodorė* (Rom. 'soldiers');
- theriomorphic names - *Kobany* (Bel. 'boars'), *Petuški* (Bel. 'cocks'), *Lisy* (Bel. 'foxes'), *Bakrė* (Rom. 'lambs');
- pejorative names - *Galošy* (Bel. 'rubbers'), *Mikroby* (Bel. 'microbes'), *Manjuki* (Bel. diminutive of 'liars').

This typology is rather preliminary. Modern interpretations of kin names often do not permit conclusions regarding their origins. Some interpretations combine several motifs. One story narrates the origins of the kin group called *Judy* (Rom. 'the Jews'): "When I was a little girl there was an old man. His nickname was *Jud*. He was a Rom but he looked like a Jew. And all his family were "like the Jews". They were not very clean, untidy, even slobs. When they were nomadic, they were dirty and they are dirty now. Nomadic Roma used to stay near rivers or dug wells, therefore they were clean. But the *Judy* didn't wash. They stank of sweat. They were like the Jews. A competent man can always tell a Jew from the others by smell" (Bartash 2010: 25-26).

The process of segmentation of large kin groups into new subdivisions has been never interrupted and is still in progress. Most of the old and strong lineages such as *Bėrniki, Udejki,* and *Filjanty* do not remember the meaning of their names or their ancestors beyond the third generation. Sometimes the original name of a group changes greatly in accordance with regional pronunciation, e.g. *Budavy – Buldavy – Buldavjonki*; *Bėrniki – Bėrnjaki*. This complicates the interpretation of patronymic names. However a kin name whose meaning can be easily grasped testifies that the history of the lineage is not very long (Bartash 2010: 26).

Besides kin names, Gypsies in Belarus often identify themselves as *Polska Roma* ('Polish Roma'), *Ruska Roma* ('Russian Roma'), *Litovska Roma* ('Lithuanian Roma') or *Lotfitka Roma* ('Latvian Roma'). The informants associate these names with their "motherlands" from which they had once migrated to Belarus. "It is where our roots are", is the most common opinion. Nonetheless, most Roma in Belarus are presently inclined to identify themselves as *Belaruska Roma* ('Belarusian Roma'). A descendant of sedentary Roma from the South says: "We are *Belaruska Roma* because our family has been living here from time immemorial. Our grandparents and great grandparents dwelled in this place".

Some authors emphasize that the name "Belaruska Roma" is more recent than "Polska Roma" and "Ruska Roma" (Marushiakova / Popov 2003: 290). Apparently, these names appeared in different periods and are closely connected to the history of the region. At different times Belarus was in political union with Lithuania (1253-1569), a part of the Polish Kingdom (1569-1795) and a part of the Russian Empire (1795-1917). In 1921-1939 it was partitioned into a "western" and "eastern" section, divided between Poland and the USSR. This last partition still lives in the collective memory of the population, including Roma, and is underlined by religious differences – Catholic West and Orthodox East[3]. In the Interwar period the ancestors of those who call themselves *Polska Roma* travelled through "western" Belarus and were Catholics. The *Ruska Roma*, on the other hand, were Orthodox and travelled in the regions close to

3 Like in other countries, Roma in Belarus follow the religion of the majority. Most Belarusian Roma are Orthodox Christians, some of them are Catholics and, more recently, Protestants.

Russia. Many Roma from "western" Belarus immigrated to Poland before World War II; some of them were repatriated as "native Poles" in the 1950s. The *Xaladytka Roma* have already become proverbial in Romani Studies. Repatriated as *Polska Roma* from Belarus, they are called *Xaladytka* (Rom. 'Russian') in Poland. Likewise, Roma from Belarus often introduce themselves as *Polska Roma* in Russia.

Present distinctions among the above groups are not very important from the ethnographical point of view. Moreover, these groups are no longer endogamic. Nonetheless, their communication is still complicated by invisible boundaries. Each group discourses upon the others' lifestyles, rating their purity and respectability. Noteworthy is that the distinctions among Roma are regarded as being equal to the "*Gadje*'s (non-Roma) nations". The informants usually explain: "Like there are *Gadje* of different nationalities - Russians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, there are Lithuanian, Russian, Polish Roma".

It is remarkable how Roma perceive their heterogeneity, even at an unconscious level. Writing about Roma-Pentecostals in Buenos Aires, Carrizo-Reimann cites a narrative which traces Roma's origins to six sons of Abraham and his third wife Ketura. Apparently, the story represents a free interpretation of the Bible (2011: 171-172). While Ketura is seen as an adequate ancestor by Argentinian Roma, Belarusian Roma, influenced by the Pentecostal movement, assign this role to the second Abraham's wife Hagar. In both cases the foremother and/or her children are banished. However the plot surrounding Hagar and Ishmael is, certainly, not enough to explain the heterogeneity of Roma. Recently folklorized interpretations outside the Pentecostal community are more likely to overcome this imperfection. This story was told to me by non-Pentecostal Roma in the village of *Krasnaje*: "One Romani woman (her name was Hagar) was a mistress of one Egyptian king. She had become pregnant; therefore the king's Jewish wife banished her. The Jewess was sterile and hated Hagar because the *Romni* (Rom. 'Romani woman') was able to give a birth to the king's son. The same took place all over the world. Then those pregnant women met and settled between two rivers – *Tsyn'* and *Han'*. Other Roma came from them. They invented their own language so they were not understood by others. The Roma left that place after a war had begun. They met some people. The people asked them: "Where are you from?" The Roma didn't understand anything and replied with the names of the rivers: "*Tsyn'! Han'!*" That is why they are called *Tsyhany* [Bel. 'Gypsies' – *V. B.*] by non-Roma." This narrative represents an astonishing example of a new myth being composed out of the Bible story, supplemented by the speculations of Roma about their exoethnonym and Indian origins (the reader is referred to Marushiakova / Popov 2000 for a more elaborate detailed discussion of modern Romani myths).

It seems that building internal hierarchies is an essential characteristic of the Roma community. When one kind of division becomes less important, new ways of segmentation and competition appear.

3 New territorial names and social changes in Romani communities

At present "traditional" patterns of self-identification are used by Belarusian Roma alongside new "territorial" names – e.g. *Slucka Roma* ('Roma from Sluck'), *Minska Roma* ('Roma from Minsk'), etc. This paper suggests that the emergence of the latter should be considered as a long-term effect of sedentarization. Though a part of Belarusian Roma had been sedentary for centuries, the majority of them finally settled in the middle of the 20th century. The Soviet decree of 1956 ordered them to take up permanent residences; however many Belarusian Roma continued travelling until the middle of the 1960's and even later. As Marushiakova and Popov caution (2003), the role of force in the sedentarization of Soviet Roma is sometimes exaggerated. Indeed, sedentarization was forced in the sense that the natural economy to which the traditional lifestyle of Roma had been linked was destroyed by the involvement of the rural population in collective farming; however it was not violent. At least, to date I have not come across any evidence of violence towards Roma in the BSSR (Belarusian Soviet Socialistic Republic). That is how senior informants replied to my questions: "Nobody forced us. The authorities came to *tabor*s ['nomadic groups' – *V. B.*] and politely informed us about the decree. They placed houses at our disposal. There is nothing more to say – it was not violent" (see also Bartash 2009).

The transition to sedentary life, nevertheless, had an important impact on the social structures of Roma, although Belarusian Roma have never been completely nomadic. The term "seasonal travelling" proposed by Matras (2000) is more suitable to characterize their former lifestyle. In a region with severe winter, travelling the whole year round would be impossible. During the winter Roma were sheltered by farmers at their cottages. Their summer travelling was rather short-distanced and covered the regions which were more or less culturally and linguistically homogenous. The usual services offered by the Roma (horse-dealing, fortune-telling, healing) demanded knowledge of the language and culture of their clientele. The distinctions among Romani groups are, to a large extent, the result of living in diverse cultural surroundings.

Notwithstanding the Roma's intention to settle by extended families, it was not always possible owing to different reasons. Hence, territorial communities have mixed Romani populations. Roma occupy separate districts of the cities, trying to limit contact zones with other populations. The Roma - *Gadje* relationships depend greatly on regional specifics. As a rule the parties live together quite peacefully when they have some previous experience in intercommunication. A *Romni* (Rom. 'Romani woman') from the town of *Ašmjany* says: "My parents were sedentary. Everybody here remembers them. During the war [World War II – *V. B.*] they were partisans; the locals often sheltered them at their houses. So nobody is afraid of

having contact with us. Belarusians are good people. Sometimes it is easier to communicate with them than to communicate with some Roma. They willingly agree to help, even with money. I have many friendships among them." By contrast, relations are rather stressful for both parties in places where Roma settled only after 1956. In the town of *Ružany*, for instance, the local population condemns the authorities for letting houses to the Roma. The Roma, on their side, blame the *Gadje* for their inhospitality and unfriendliness: "People are very malicious in *Ružany*. If you are a Rom, nobody will help you. Even the women are aggressive here. They do not want to greet us. Wild people…"

Local communities of Roma are based on the principles of solidarity, mutual support and co-operation. As throughout the world, Roma in Belarus perceive their environment as a source of their income, or their clientele. Romani women are often employed in the informal sector, earning their livelihoods by reselling clothes to villagers. They co-operate to organize shopping tours to Ukrainian and Russian markets and co-ordinate sales in neighboring villages. Older women raise money by fortune-telling and healing *Gadje*. Likewise, the men co-operate in groups to obtain temporary employment (unloading cargo, seasonal building and farming works). Effective communication networks allow Roma to be informed about social subsidies, housing and employment opportunities. Regional Roma communities are independent social organisms which have their own potestary institutes. All internal disputes are settled by the Romani Court (institute of traditional law) for which local leaders serve in the capacity of judges.

The increase of intergroup marriages is one of major recent tendencies in Roma family relationships. "All families in *Sluck* have intermarried already", says an informant from the town of *Sluck*. This tendency entails another – marriages between second and even first cousins. Small local communities with one or two hundred members cannot offer a big choice to young people. Moreover, the natural population increase is rather low; most families have two or three children.

The members of one territorial community usually have comparable incomes, which, surely, maintain their solidarity. Material inequality between city and village Roma, conversely, is growing. City residents have much more educational and employment opportunities. It would be strange to argue that nomadic Roma did not know material inequality at all, but it seems that it was rather insignificant. The informants like to emphasize that earlier there were other criteria of wealth – "horses, large pillows, carpets". The Soviet economy also did not allow for considerable stratification. At present, when prosperity depends on individual opportunities, many relationships are complicated by material distinctions. Senior Roma regard the loss of confidence and hospitality as attributes of modern city life. A *Romni* from a small town says, concerning her overnight stay in the capital: "We had to spend a night in Minsk at our relatives' place, but I wouldn't like to have such experiences

anymore. Everything was so expensive in their house; their boy had a golden chain on his neck. But it was a shame how they received us. We had to go to a grocery store to buy some food".

Ethnic self-identification of Roma largely depends on the context. Thus the informants underscore their citizenship, speaking about their rights (e.g. "I am a native Belarusian but they do not want to employ my daughter"). Many scholars stress that the way Roma identify themselves depends greatly on the interviewers. Indeed, Roma often do not report themselves as "Gypsies" to census takers (Silverman 1988; Barany 1994). The Belarusian census of 2009 found a decrease of the Romani population – 7 079 Roma in comparison with 9 927 and 10 762 people in 1999 and 1989, respectively. This tendency certainly fits the overall falling birthrate in the country. Nonetheless, a considerable number of native Romani speakers can be found among other nationalities. 564 Belarusians, 39 Russians, 31 Ukrainians, 21 Poles, 9 Lithuanians, 9 Moldavians and 1 Azerbaijani have indicated Romani as their mother tongue. My survey encountered a person identified as Azerbaijani. She was born in Azerbaijan in the family of an Azerbaijani and a Romani woman from Belarus. At the age of eighteen the girl came to Belarus for a guest visit, fell in love with a local Rom and married him (by elopement). Their family speaks Romani and observes Romani traditions. However the woman demonstrates some frustration regarding her ethnicity. She says: "I do not know who I am – an Azerbaijani or a *Romni*. Perhaps, this is not so important".

To conclude, Roma's identities are flexible enough to mirror not only their own history and social structure but also the history of the region they populate. Recent identity change among Belarusian Roma goes hand in hand with social transformation which can be considered as a long-term effect of their final sedentarization.

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Calendar feasts and rites of the Kalderash Roma in Russia: Easter[1]

Abstract

This article is based on field research at the Ruvoni Kalderash camp and examines the Easter cycle ritualism of the Kalderash Roma. Due to their nomadic lifestyle and traditional craftwork, the calendar of the Kalderash Roma is closely connected to community, clan and family relationships, and based on the Orthodox liturgical calendar. The most important and greatest feast of the calendar is Easter. Easter celebrations start with the Roma going round houses to congratulate their neighbours. The participants should visit every house in the camp to wish happiness, health and prosperity to the family, while the hosts provide some treats for them. Women often go round houses after men. In the afternoon people get together with their relatives and friends, and start having parties. The second day is dedicated to entertaining guests. According to the tradition godchildren should give presents to their godparents on this day. Having lost a number of rites and customs, feasts of the folk calendar today continue to fulfil their function of uniting the ethnic group. Romani rites of going round houses, welcoming guests and feasting together support family relationships and social ties in the camp.

1 Introduction

Calendar feasts and rites are one of the core components of the ethnic culture that reflects economic, domestic, folk, mythopoetic and ethnolinguistic customs of a people (Tolstaya 2005: 9). It is due to this fact that the issue of festive calendars has drawn the close attention of ethnographic research scientists throughout the history of the science. Different ethnic groups of the Roma in Russia are also characterized by their unique systems of festive and ritual culture. This article is based on field research at the Ruvoni Kalderash camp (Chernykh 2003). It examines folk calendar feasts customary to the Kalderash Roma in Russia.

The research at the Ruvoni Kalderash camp was carried out in Perm between 2002 and 2008. The location of the camp within the city, the duration and comparative regularity of field visits allowed quite a mobile study of camp life. In the field the researchers observed work days and holidays of the Roma in the camp, interviewed

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respondents on the characteristic features of Romani culture, recorded folk texts, and filmed feasts and rites. In the course of their fieldwork, the researchers had the chance to witness all the feasts of the calendar cycle and some family rites, such as weddings and christenings. Due to the duration of the field research and the level of trust, a considerable amount of material was collected that revealed almost all aspects of the traditional culture, its past and present, including distinctive characteristics of calendar feasts and rites. This article is based on personal observations of Easter celebrations at the Ruvoni Kalderash camp in 2003 and 2005, as well as video footage filmed during fieldwork. Records of interviews make it possible to better define and interpret a large number of customs and rites. Most of the examined rites continue to be observed broadly in the camp at present.

2 The Ruvoni

The Ruvoni are a part of the Moldovan branch of Kalderash Roma. There are still a number of legends told about the times when one camp or another would move to Russia. According to Zambila Kulai, the eldest woman in the Romani camp (born in 1914), her father's camp came to Russia from Moldova in 1923. Grancho Butso (born in 1941) recollects his parents' stories about one of the Ruvoni camps moving to Russia from Moldova in the 1930s and nomadising around the Ukraine, Belarus and Western Russia. It was only in 1979 that the Roma of the Ruvoni Kalderash camp chose Perm as their permanent residence, having lived in Irkutsk for a few years previously. Having spent the winter in Aktyubinsk, the camp moved to Perm and stayed in the Chaikovsky residential area. At the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the Roma of the Ruvoni Kalderash camp settled down in the neighbouring area – Yaroslavsky. As the elderly point out, it is only in Perm that the Ruvoni have aggregated almost completely to unite families that used to live in different cities.

At present there are over 100 Ruvoni Kalderash families living in Perm, with the total population of the camp amounting to 600 people. Residential density of the camp in the two areas on the outskirts of the city facilitates social ties and cooperation within the community. The Roma have built their own houses, positioned similarly to the traditional layout of tents in a nomadic camp, with relatives building their houses next to each other.

Due to their nomadic lifestyle and traditional craftwork, the calendar of the Kalderash Roma in Russia has not been based on any customs associated with economic activities as opposed to agricultural peoples of eastern Europe (Demeter / Bessonov / Kutenkov 2000: 104-105; Chernykh 2003). Therefore, the content of their festive culture is determined by their community, clan and family relationships. There

is a vast array of rites and beliefs related to ancestor worship in their folk calendar. The Kalderash in Russia are Orthodox Christians, and their traditional calendar is based on the Orthodox liturgical calendar. The Roma observe holy days and festivals of the Orthodox liturgical calendar with the great feasts including Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and Dormition of the Theotokos. The ideology of most Romani feasts is founded on their pursuit of family well-being and prosperity of the community. Despite the Christian nature of the feasts, most of the rites are based on folk customs.

Having developed in the territories of south-eastern Europe and travelled around Russia for a long time, Roma customs interacted actively with those of their neighbours: Romanians, Moldovans, Ukrainians, and Russians. Interethnic borrowings from neighbouring peoples in different historical periods can also be seen in their calendar ritualism. The last century of Romani settlement in Russia has brought a significant number of innovations to the folk calendar system. As Russian-Romani bilingualism developed, both Russian and Romani festival terminology came into use. Furthermore, the names of some festivals are preserved and used in the Russian language only. Another reason for innovations was the establishment of a national system of public holidays in Russia (New Year, Labour Day (1st May), Victory Day, etc.), which were also included in the modern system of the folk calendar of the Roma in Russia.

3 Easter in the Kalderash Roma calendar system

The cornerstone of the Kalderash Roma calendar system is Easter (*Pascha* in Russian or *Patradi* in Romani), with its date set by the Orthodox liturgical calendar. There are a lot of testimonies proving the significance of this feast in the yearly cycle. It is often this date that is used for counting years; the Roma would say: "It must already be three Easters since then." There are some special rites for children who celebrate Easter for the first time. They have their foreheads coloured with Easter egg dyes and the people would emphasize that this is his/her first or second Easter. There are a number of peoples in Russia and eastern Europe that associate Easter with the beginning of a new yearly cycle as well (Tolstaya 2005: 13; Zelenin 1991:392).

A lot of customs and rites of the Easter cycle are connected to the pre-Easter period. The last week of the Great Lent is considered the most austere time of the year. As a rule, the Roma would lay special emphasis on the first and last weeks of the seven-week-long Lent as the time of abstinence from forbidden foods. Nowadays they also try and follow this observance, even more so as the Great Lent is regarded as the most important lent of the year. They particularly try to observe it in families with younger children: "Yes, those with kids observe the lent for the children to be

healthy. Single people don't have to do it; neither do the old folks." During the Holy Week (*Strastnaya Nedelya*) Wednesday and Friday were considered the most austere and important days when the family would only have one meal a day: "We only have one meal on Holy Wednesday and Holy Friday and have nothing else to eat till the next day." Lenten food on those days used to be prepared according to custom as well. It would usually consist of boiled potatoes served with sunflower seed oil and unleavened breads called *Bokoli*. It was mandatory to serve pickled cucumbers and tomatoes. They could have some sweets as well, usually jam and halvah. The table was laid "to wish health to the children and the whole family", therefore vodka was an obligatory part of it. As they said "There has to be a bottle of vodka, we can't wash the food down with water or drink water to health, but we must wish happiness and health." Wine was never served at the Easter table: "We never celebrate this feast with wine, because it is God's blood and it is a sin."

There were a lot of restrictions and rules to be followed during the Holy Week, which were to bring wealth and prosperity to the family: "One should never ask for anything during the Holy Week, no food, no salt or pepper. God forbid you ask anything on these days. You should have everything of your own during the Holy days to prosper."

Holy Thursday is known in the Russian calendar as "Clean Thursday" (*Chistiy Chetverg*) and most of the daily and ritual activities carried out on this day are associated with symbols of cleansing, both of man and house. It was obligatory to clean all living premises and wash clothes. It was also required to take a bath (go to the *banya*) and put on clean clothes on this day. There were a number of magical actions performed on this day intended to ensure well-being in the coming year. They included counting and moving coins to secure prosperity and circling around the house or tent on Wednesday night. Circles around the house could be done in different ways. It could be the woman of the house going around it with a broom, sweeping around and away from the house. Another option was for the people to do circles and fumigate the area with herbs burning in an incense-burner. Those actions had a protective symbolic meaning and were intended to protect the living premises.

Since the pre-Easter period was regarded as a special sacred time, some objects used in rites of this period were endowed with magical powers that they were supposed to preserve for further use in medicine and magical practice. As such, special powers were given to Holy Thursday salt left on the table on the eve of the feast, and water brought from the spring or from the church. These objects are known to be used in medical magic: "Take some holy water brought on the Clean Thursday before Easter, and some Holy Thursday salt. Take some crushed dried eggshell pieces from Easter eggs. After a while, boil everything together, cast a spell and give it to the sick; they say even those at death's door get better…" Another thing endowed with magical powers was a floor cloth or duster used to clean the house. It was also to be kept and

used to treat people: "We use a floor cloth to wipe the corners. So I'll wash the floors, then take a floor cloth, wipe the corners and put it away. Then I can take it and dab it on a sore back or on the legs when they hurt." Customs of the pre-Easter period are kept and still observed in the camp.

Rites of Great and Holy Thursday or Clean Thursday are well known to the peoples of eastern Europe. However, they have been most widely spread among Eastern Slavs, forming one of the developed ritual systems of the Easter cycle (Zelenin 1991: 390-392).

During the Easter cycle the Roma would commemorate the dead more than once. There is an old custom to commemorate the dead before Easter that only old residents can remember. At present they no longer commemorate the dead before Easter, while all the other customs and rites of the pre-Easter period examined in this article are still observed broadly. A day or two before the feast people used to make a fire of hay, straw and dry grass on a meadow not far from the encampment premises. Every family would normally make a fire of their own, inviting their deceased ancestors "to get warm". These pre-Easter remembrance fires are not known in Russia, although they used to be common in south-eastern Europe among Romanians, Bulgarians, and certain groups of Serbians (Agapkina 2002: 46; Vrabie 1970: 270-279).

On the second Tuesday after Easter they observe the Orthodox Radonitsa commemorating the departed. The Roma call it "Little Easter" (*Tsigni Patradi)*. This is the day to go to the cemetery and visit the graves of deceased relatives. They always bring coloured eggs kept purposely after Easter to the cemetery. It is also possible to commemorate the departed at home. Nowadays the Radonitsa commemoration of the departed has become the main part in the complex of Easter remembrance rites.

Preparations for the feast start the day before or early in the morning. The actual feast begins on Easter morning. Unlike other groups of Orthodox Roma in Russia, the Kalderash Roma do not generally go to church services to celebrate. On feast days they would only go to church for a child's christening, usually on the second day of the feast.

The main events in the feast preparation are colouring Easter eggs and laying the table. Since coloured eggs are an attribute of Easter and the festive table, people say: "Decorating eggs is a must for Easter; you exchange eggs or hand them out". Eggs are coloured using various methods. In the old days they used to be coloured mostly with onion skins; today commercial dyes are used.

Decorated eggs are obligatory for a festive table on Easter. According to the Roma there should be at least three of them: "You can have as many more eggs as you like, but no less than three." On the first day coloured eggs are there on every table and the host gives one to each guest. However, despite the custom of exchanging Easter eggs there is a restriction on eating them: "You mustn't eat eggs on the first day of Easter, it's all right on the second day." Not only are they a decoration for the feast,

coloured eggs are also a part of numerous rites. When people exchange Easter eggs their hands change colour to bright red. They would often rub Easter eggs on each other's hands and on their children's foreheads and cheeks intentionally, so the red colour of hands and children's faces on the first day of Easter has become a symbol. These Easter egg customs are not common among neighbouring peoples in Russia, but they are widely spread in south-eastern Europe including other Romani groups. One of the decorated Easter eggs is placed next to or near the icons in the house and kept throughout the year until the next feast. It is supposed to protect the house as well.

On the first day of Easter adults start preparing the festive table at dawn. The table is laid for all the three days of Easter and cleaned only when the feast is over. In times past, travelling Roma used to cook festive meals over an open fire and lay a small table in tents. Nowadays they still believe their happiness in the coming year depends on the way they lay the table. One of the wishes often given on these feast days is "Let us have such a table every day." Today at the festive table there are both dishes of traditional Romani cuisine such as cabbage rolls (*Sarmali)* and a sweet pie (*Sivyako)*, and modern Russian cuisine including beet salads, fresh vegetables, roasted chicken, smoked sausage, and fruits. They do not place spoons or forks on the table, with just one or two as an exception. One of the main requirements of the table layout is plenty of beer: The bottles are placed all around the table to make sure that the table as well as the coming year is not "dry".

In the morning they also start going round houses to congratulate the neighbours. In the past when the Roma led a nomadic lifestyle they did the same, except it was not permanent houses but tents that they went round. There are no strict guidelines for this custom. It starts with children visiting relatives and neighbours in the morning. They give good wishes to the hosts and get treats in return, along with the mandatory Easter eggs.

The most important event of the first Easter day is the men of the camp, from teenagers to the eldest men, going round houses. It is considered important to visit every house with Easter congratulations, and particularly see those people you are at odds with. Sometimes all the men get together in a group of over 100 or divide into two groups moving in different directions of the encampment. In the latter case the two groups are not supposed to meet: One of them would take a different route. Men start from the house of the camp leader, *Baro*, and proceed by visiting each house one by one.

The host does his best to be the first one out of the group to enter his house to greet the visitors. They do not stay in the houses for long: They exchange Easter eggs with the hosts and take a bottle of beer from the table without opening it to leave in the next house. They have a drink as a gesture, keeping in mind that there are more houses to go to, with festive tables laid as well. The mission here is to greet the hosts and give congratulations, which are long proverbial sayings wishing happiness, pros-

perity, health, and wealth to the family. These wishes are intoned and believed to have an impact on the future of each person, family and the whole community.

On the feast day, every house in the camp is visited and there is a table laid in each of them except in those of mourning families. Families mourning their dead only lay a modest table and they are do not entertain guests or feast.

In the afternoon, it is the women's turn to go round houses. It is not such a solemn rite as that of the men. Not all women take part in it, and they do not go around the whole camp; they generally avoid the houses where men are feasting.

While the first day of Easter is spent reuniting the community, the second day is devoted to family. The most important custom of this day is visiting godparents, bringing them good wishes and presents. There are certain guidelines to be followed. It is the whole family that go to pay a visit together; if there is a baby whose godparents are being visited, the main role is played by his or her parents. Having approached the house everybody cries out a loud "Hooooray!" Men are usually presented with shirts, and women get headscarves or material for a skirt or a blouse. These presents are usually wrapped around a bottle of beer: it is a must, a present so the feast cannot be "dry". Having received the presents, the godfather should give his godchild a piece of bread and salt to wish them a happy and wealthy life.

One person can have several godparents and they should all be visited during the day. They often get a lot of presents – you might see a man wearing three, four, five or even more new shirts put on top of another, all gifted by his godchildren.

In the afternoon of the second day of Easter people start having parties. Roma get together with their relatives and neighbours, move from one house to another, sing and dance. Today they often sing karaoke. There are no karaoke songs in Romani; therefore they have to translate Russian songs into Romani.

The second feast day is also the time for the christening of newborns. If that is the case, parents go to the Orthodox church with the baby and godparents, and after the service they get together at the festive table to celebrate the event.

The third day of the Easter week is the final one. There are no special rites on this day. Roma spend it with their friends and relatives enjoying the festive food, singing and dancing. In the evening the table should be cleared. The next morning the camp returns to their routine life. Men leave for work, children go to school, and women go to the city to tell the fortune of the passers-by.

Easter is primarily a community holiday for the Kalderash Roma. The laws of the camp have always been of utmost importance to Roma. Due to dispersed settlement, ethnic self-preservation has only been possible on the basis of stable social institutions. It is the community — the Roma camp — that has allowed the camp to continue existing as a small ethnic island in a huge industrial city. And it still does. The Kalderash Roma believe that community principles secure their ethnic future. Communal feast traditions play a part in maintaining inter-community communication

and social bonds, and contribute to their internal stability. Until today a significant number of traditional calendar feasts are observed in the camp. Roma still observe Christmas, Easter, Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and Dormition of the Theotokos. At the same time a lot of ritual elements no longer exist, and only the oldest residents can still remember them. Children no longer go round houses at Christmas (a rite called *Kollida*); people do not observe the Day of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker; neither do they tell stories during the Nativity Fast. Having lost a number of rites and customs, feasts of the folk calendar today continue to fulfil their function of uniting the ethnic group. Romani rites of going round houses, traditions of welcoming guests and feasting with family, friends and neighbours support family relationships and social ties in the camp.

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Elena Marushiakova & Vesselin Popov

Roma migrations vs. Gypsy nomadism

Abstract

In recent years the topic of Roma migration from eastern European countries towards western Europe has become popular in the public domain, although these migrations have been taking place for decades. In the 1990s, wars and ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia were considered to be the main reason for these migrations and the subsequent discrimination against Roma in eastern Europe was also given as an explanation. At the beginning of the 21st century, after most of the countries in this region had joined the European Union, the hard socio-economic living conditions of Roma in eastern Europe in times of transition became another reason for migration. Most recently, especially in connection with the expulsion of Roma from France and Italy, the migration of Gypsies/Roma from eastern to western Europe is explained by their nomadic lifestyle.

In this paper these issues are analysed in connection with the question of identifying and determining the main subject in Gypsy/Romani Studies, as well as in connection with contemporary politics, where one finds a collision between two different approaches (or their combination under different forms), based on constructivist and primordialist points of view. The definition of the Gypsy/Roma community based on these approaches leads to stressing the social characteristics or their commonly shared origin, history, language and culture. This paper discusses the methodological problems that occur in Romani Studies based on these two different discourses and on their combination.

1 Introduction

In recent years the topic of Gypsy/Roma[1] migrations from the east toward western Europe (and North America as well) has increasingly come to the forefront of public attention. This topic is discussed under different auspices, most often human rights,

1 The authors have not used the word 'Gypsies' as it is accepted in many western European countries, meaning nomad communities regardless of their ethnic origins and identity. Here the word is used as implied in the region of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern (CESE) Europe as envisaged in this text, i.e. as a name for a clearly defined and distinctive ethnic community, the so-called 'inter-group ethnic formation', (Marushiakova and Popov 1997: 47-48) designated in various countries by similar names – *Cigáni, Cikáni, Cyganie, Čigonai, Čigāni, Cigany, Ţigani, Çingeneler, Αθιγγανοι, Цигани, Цыгане*, etc., whose ancestors had migrated from the Indian subcontinent to Europe more than a millennium ago. So the authors' usage of the word 'Gypsies' coincides with the 'Gypsy II', as described by Matras (Matras 2004: 55-56). The majority of the Gypsies living in CESE Europe are from the subdivision of Roma, i.e. in this case both appellations (Gypsies and Roma) could be accepted as synonyms.

but also in the form of public scandals and the fear of mass migrations of eastern European Gypsies, which will overflow to countries of the rich West. The classification of Gypsy migration presented here is based in view of their historical development, which however does not mean a linear reading of the issue's history. Revealing the nature of the processes of the Gypsy migrations has a leading place in this analysis.

These migrations are driven by the demand for collective strategies in response to ongoing political changes. The analysis is based on observance of the different reactions of eastern European Roma communities to the modification of the European context. The researched processes appear to be more or less non-coherent in practice (as the Gypsy communities are heterogeneous and since the situation in various countries is more or less different), and even may acquire opposite directions in specific cases. In spite of this incoherence and controversy it is possible to deduce general trends in the development of Gypsy migrations in contemporary Europe, as will be presented here.

2 Main migration waves in the history of Gypsies

After their arrival from India in Europe and their stay for several centuries, migrations have formed a repetitive pattern (Matras 2000: 34) in Gypsy history. One can distinguish between some large and several smaller migration waves, when Gypsies crossed the state borders, dispersed into new territories and reclaimed new social and economic spheres. The first of the large migration waves started at the beginning of the 15th century, when several Gypsy groups penetrated western Europe. This migration wave is a case of successful acquisition of new territories by one nomadic community, who searched for new economic niches (successfully – in spite of the strong and sometimes even brutal resistance from governments and local authorities). The reasons for this first large wave of migration of Gypsies from east to west were economic as a whole, and it was de facto a search for a 'better quality of life' (Matras 2000: 33), despite attempts at being assigned (at least in the beginning) a religious-political motive, e.g. the stories about their alleged state called 'The Little Egypt', which they left because of Ottoman invasion, etc. (Marushiakova / Popov 2006: 10-11).

The second large migration wave was during the second half of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century, when Europe was entered by nomadic Gypsy groups, originating from what is today Romania and the adjoining regions of Austro-Hungary (Marushiakova / Popov 2006: 11-14). This mass resettling of Gypsies, originating from Walachia and Moldavia, is usually explained as a direct consequence of their liberation from slavery in both principalities and received freedom of movement. As later

research shows, the end of slavery for Gypsies in Moldavia and Walachia was indeed an important factor, but it is not the beginning, nor the reason for the large Gypsy migrations (Fraser 1992: 131-143; Marushiakova / Popov 2004: 169-170; Marushiakova / Popov 2009: 89-124). It may sound paradoxical, but the large migrations after the end of slavery were rather an escape from freedom and the embracement of new citizen obligations and responsibilities, which nomadic Gypsies, who had preserved a closed community, but with a low level of social integration into surrounding society, were not able to take on. In fact the second wave of migrations was based mainly on socio-economic reasons, while political factors, such as the abolition of slavery and lifting of passport controls at the borders for those who left Austro-Hungary under Emperor Franz Joseph's decree from 1865, only regulated the time frames of the processes (Marushiakova / Popov 2004: 169-170).

The first two large waves of migration were about movement of nomadic populations, which led to a peripatetic way of life or so-called service nomadism, which is very different from other types of nomadism such as the hunter-gatherer's, pastoral, trans-human and equestrian nomadism, etc. It is typical for service nomadism to have constant intertwining between nomadic and settled ways of life and to be dependent on the resources created by the settled population. The mobility of service nomads is expressed through continuous cyclical migration, usually in familial groupings that search for economic niches wherever possible to pursue their service occupations. In situations of uncertainty, the communities of service nomads move their abode and thus the access to and the availability of resources in order to maintain their existence. These are the determining factors for group mobility and for the scale and direction of travel (Marushiakova 2004: 322-340; Hayden 1979: 297-309; Marushiakova et al. 2008).

In time the processes of integration of nomads into society, availability of new sources of income, appropriate political and socio-economic situations, campaigns for sedentarisation of nomads, the reduction of their freedom of movement through state borders, etc. have resulted in a loss of importance of nomadism as a distinct way of life for many Gypsy communities. Thus they gradually lost their potential for pushing a new wave of migration.

The nature of the third wave of migration in comparison with the first two waves is different. Its bearers are not the communities of former nomads, but the representatives of a settled population. The third migration wave begins during the 1960s and continues even today (Reyniers 1999). Some authors differentiate (chronologically, geographically and typologically) or segment it into separate migration waves (Klimova / Pickup 2000: 13-118). Seen from the distance of time the authors prefer to talk about one common migration wave, characterised by its non-homogeneity and different main characteristics over the years. This text is devoted to this migration wave, which is presented and analysed below.

3 The third wave of migration. Modern times.

3.1 Migrations of Balkan Gypsies

This migration wave started with the mobility of Yugoslav citizens (including Roma) during the 1960s and especially during the 1970s when Tito's Yugoslavia opened its borders (formally in 1968) and encouraged its citizens to work in western Europe.

It continued after the crash of the socialist system in eastern Europe in 1989-90, when Roma communities first migrated initially as asylum-seekers. Later this migration wave continued as labour mobility to escape from economic hardships in the countries in transition. It intensified after the fall of visa obligations especially for Romania and Bulgaria. This migration wave was started by Gypsies from the Balkans as its main bearers, but with a certain delay and less volume it also included Gypsies from other eastern European countries (Uherek 2007: 750).

The specific case of the former Yugoslavia is also part of this migration wave. After the collapse of the country, large groups of Roma migrated westwards as refugees as a result of the subsequent wars and ethnic cleansings.

These are not the typical migrations, they rather match the traditional forms of labour mobility already characteristic for the Balkans in the times of the Ottoman Empire. This kind of labour mobility is called 'gurbet'. With this notion the Ottoman administration designed a specific category of the population, ethnically diverse, who were working and living for certain periods of time (usually one working season, depending on the type of the labour activity) far from their homes, with their families left at their place of origin. Ottoman sources list Gypsies with the names *cingene* and *kıptı* and sometimes with the term *gurbet* too. (Marushiakova / Popov 2001)

This model of labour mobility, more or less modified, was preserved in the Balkans during later historical periods and has also been adopted by the Roma. The first to work in western Europe within the frames of this model were Yugoslav citizens (the 'Gastarbeiter'). At first they stayed within the frames of 'gurbet' model and did not terminate their connections with their homeland, where their family members remained. The 'gurbet' migrants returned home periodically, they helped their relatives, and even built themselves houses in their homeland for retirement. Gradually, however, and mainly after 1972, when Yugoslav Gastarbeiters received permission to take their family members with them, large numbers of those working in the West resettled permanently together with their families and legalised themselves in the corresponding countries, i.e. they turned from mobile workers into migrants (Marushiakova / Popov 2008: 100-111).

All Gypsies from the former Yugoslavia migrated at that time as Yugoslav citizens (i.e. as an integral part of the macro-society in which they lived), and in the

beginning the policy of western governments towards them was the same as to all other 'Yugoslavs'. Thus the policy towards Gypsies remained within the frames of the mainstream approach, without separating them as a specific community that differs from all other ethnic and/or religious communities living in Yugoslavia. During the 1970s, under the influence of 'external' factors, their separation as a differentiated community which requires a special policy, started. One such case was a programme in Sweden that ended in failure. Its aim was to show a successful model of social integration of Gypsies, under which 300 families of Lovari migrants from Yugoslavia were attracted from Italy (Marta 1979).

At the end of the 1980s in Germany, a public campaign started under the active influence of human rights organisations in order to legalise the statute of Gypsy migrants from Yugoslavia, however not as Yugoslav citizens, but as a separate community (Matras 1998: 56-64; Matras 2000: 41-45). This campaign was accompanied by protest marches, hunger strikes, and even several court cases at the Federal Court of Justice in Karlsruhe. The initial idea of the human rights organisations, insisting on a special approach towards Gypsies (already called in the politically correct way Roma and Sinti) was to prove that they were a discriminated against minority in their homelands, where their human rights had been constantly violated. Such a thesis, however, could not be accepted without doubts, particularly when the policy of Yugoslavia was under question. Yugoslavia had already been declared as a country at the First Congress of what was later called the International Romani Union in London in 1971 – a positive example and model for imitation for all other European countries (Marushiakova / Popov 2005: 439-440). Thus a new argument was invented: Gypsies are *a priori* bearers of a specific type of culture, connected to their nomadic way of life. For them their civic status is not the determining one, but their traditions, they are '*de facto* stateless' and that is why they should be approached differently to other Yugoslav citizens (Matras 1998: 43, 49-64).

In fact, the majority of Gypsies from the Balkans, who were for a long period of time part of the Ottoman Empire (contrary to the principalities of Wallachia and Moldova that were only vassal states with internal autonomy) are settled. Even those who were nomads (that are in their majority newcomers to the land of the Sultan from Wallachia and Moldova, arriving in two main migration waves during the 17th-18th century and in the 19th-20th century) should be characterised only as semi-nomads because of their specific way of life with permanent winter settlements and an active nomadic season (in contrast to the Gypsies in western Europe who travel in their majority for the whole year). More importantly, the Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire had the status of citizens (in a socio-political sense), something the Gypsies in western Europe were only granted in the 19th and 20th century (Marushiakova / Popov 2001: 47-48). With the benefit of hindsight, Gypsies in the Balkans have had a high level of social integration, which is also preserved in the newly independent

succession states, at least in comparison to their brothers and sisters from western Europe. From this point of view the attempts to declare the Gypsies from Yugoslavia 'eternal nomads' and to make them the subject of special policies are absurd. The curiosity of the whole situation is underlined by the open mail, distributed by the *Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma*, an organisation of Sinti who were nomads and whose majority lead a nomadic life to this day. In this mail the representatives of the Sinti insisted on being treated as 'normal citizens' and did not want to be separated as 'travellers'. To render the case completely *ad absurdum*, one of the main plaintiffs (J. D. – Rom from Yugoslavia) asked for an extension of the case at just the moment when the decision of the Federal Court was expected, because he needed to go to Yugoslavia where he was building his family house. The most urgent task for the supposedly 'eternal nomad', who was meant to go to court in order to defend the cause of the 'nomads' for a special policy, was to build his own family house. This is a sign that his self-perception is that of a settled person who would like to live a settled lifestyle and not as a nomad.

3.2 Migration of Gypsies from eastern Europe in the time of transition

The situation of Gypsy migrants in western Europe significantly changed after the crash of the socialist system in eastern Europe in 1989-90. The theme of violated human rights of minorities and the discrimination of Gypsies (by then called Roma according to the newly accepted, considered politically correct terminology) in eastern Europe gave new political dimensions to the attempts of Gypsies to migrate from these countries, trying to receive political shelter in different countries in western Europe (as well as in the USA and Canada) due to persecution in their home countries' communities. These migrations (or attempts at migration) are uneven in scale, chronology, and country of origin and heading, and are dependant on different circumstances, such as for instance the attempts of Gypsies from Bulgaria and Romania to receive political asylum in Germany in 1991-1993; the emigration of Gypsies from Poland and the Baltic states to Great Britain during the late 1990s; the emigration of Gypsies from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (the name of the last country was until recently kept quiet) to Canada, which assumed larger and larger proportions after 1997; the migration of Gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia to Great Britain in 1997 and later; the wave of Gypsy refugees from Slovakia to Belgium and Finland during 1999-2000; the arrival of groups of Gypsies from Bulgaria in Norway (Klimova / Pickup 2000; Kovats 2002: 12-34; Bognar 2002: 181-196; Kotvanova / Szep 2002: 58; Sobotka 2003: 79-121; Guy / Uherek / Weinerova 2004) as well as recent cases of Gypsies arriving in Canada from the Czech Republic in 2009 and from Hungary in 2011 and 2012.

The countermeasures in western Europe against these migration currents were carried out with different means. At the beginning, the attempts were to solve the issue entirely; here the example of Romanian Gypsies seeking to emigrate to Germany is especially indicative. For a short period of time at the beginning of the 1990s Poland became a huge transit point for these Gypsies who looked for ways and possibilities for legal, or very often illegal, transfers towards the West. Their numbers were at a large scale - from 50,000 to 100,000, and sometimes even larger numbers were claimed. The situation was especially critical during the summer of 1992, when in August the world press agencies reported that 200,000 (the number is clearly exaggerated) Romanian citizens, mostly Gypsies, assembled around the Oder river and tried to illegally cross the Polish-German border.

The German authorities took urgent measures. In Bucharest in September 1992 an agreement between Germany and Romania was signed, which settled the 'reciprocal' (sic! – authors' note) return of the citizens from both countries that were residing illegally. On November 2, 1992 the first aircraft with 18 illegal Romanian emigrants from Germany landed at Bucharest airport. By the end of 1992 approximately 130,000 Romanian citizens, mostly Gypsies who had resided illegally and asked for asylum in Germany, were repatriated in this way. The last such flight with Romanian citizens (Gypsies) from Germany was in August 1993, after which the issue was considered solved.

The fact that the wave of Gypsies from Romania and Bulgaria towards Germany from the beginning of the 1990s was almost entirely stopped by Germany's legislative-administrative measures, which limited the waiting time for decisions on asylum cases and cut down financial support for candidate-political emigrants, is not mentioned very often.

In this respect the example of Gypsy asylum seekers from Slovakia in Belgium during 1999-2000 is especially illustrative. The Belgian authorities conducted several repatriations of Gypsies, re-introduced the visa regime with Slovakia, but in the end the decisive step for the cessation (or at least for radical limitation) of the wave of Gypsy migration from central Europe to Belgium was the abolishment of the financial support for the candidates for political asylum and guaranteeing only of food, accommodation and medical services at the beginning of 2001.

It is very hard to doubt that when speaking about Gypsy migration (or attempts at migration) from east to west in the 1990s, the majority of cases is labour migration (or attempts at it), because of the economic crises and shortages during the period of transition in eastern Europe towards the 'rich West', sometimes hidden behind political and ideological reasons and human rights phraseology.

The case of the former Yugoslavia is more specific when, as a result of the following wars and ethnic cleansings after the collapse of the country, large groups of Gypsies migrated westwards. The first migration currents occurred at the beginning

of the 1990s when many Gypsies headed towards Italy during the Bosnian war. The migrations from Kosovo after the NATO intervention in 1999 and the subsequent ethnic cleansing carried out by the local Albanians, when between 120,000 and 150,000 Gypsies (according to the now accepted terminology – Roma, Egyptians and Ashkali) were forced to leave the province and to escape to Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, were particularly large (Andjelković et al. 2000; Marushiakova et al. 2001). Many of them managed to reach western Europe, where they are under the continuous threat of being deported back to Kosovo, despite the fact that the international forces there are unable to assure their safety.

3.3 Gypsy migrations as a form of trans-border labour mobility

The Gypsy migrations from the last, third, wave should not be lowered to cases of requesting political refugee; examples of such an approach can sometimes be observed in academic writing (Sobotka 2003: 79-122). Although in some cases (as with refugees from the former Yugoslavia) these migrations can also acquire quite large dimensions, this is only the tip of the iceberg. Alongside the cases of asylum seekers, some 'hidden' processes are also ongoing and they are much more significant in their range. These processes of labour mobility started in the mid-1990s, when large parts of eastern Europe's population went to different western European countries (including Greece). Even before the establishment of the Schengen system and the fall of visa obligations especially for Bulgaria and Romania, the processes of trans-border labour mobility had adopted mass form, especially for some countries. In contrast to the 1970s, the ones heading west now worked illegally or semi-legally, and filled the deficits for cheap labour in different areas such as agriculture, building, certain social services, etc. During this initial period of time, these illegal or semi-legal forms of labour mobility repeated the well-known historical patterns of the so-called 'gurbet' from the time of the Ottoman Empire. The preferred countries are manifold, as is the orientation of the migrants from separate countries of eastern Europe and the ways of legalisation, but in any case the Gypsies have their own place in this common migration wave, which encompass all of Europe.

The local authorities in many countries of western Europe *de facto* encourage this labour mobility, turning a blind eye to it, and only sometimes, to tranquilise public opinion (e.g. demonstrative repatriation of groups of illegal emigrants, mainly those with a criminal record, which is done several times a year), demonstrate with actions of ostentation their fight against it, while sometimes trying to legalise it (at least partially). There are some signs (for example the increasing number of cases of permanent settling of whole families in the West and their legalisation) for a

gradual transition from labour mobility to real migration. The Gypsies from eastern (and mostly from south-eastern) Europe are a significant part of these new migration waves towards western Europe.

The real dimensions of this 'hidden' labour mobility, turning already into migration, are hard to define, and the lack of exact data has served as a good excuse for its conciliation for a relatively long period of time, thought to be a public secret (in the East and in the West). The reason for this is the continuing dependency of western European market structures on immigration workers, despite increasing and persistent unemployment (Sobotka 2003: 105), which explains why in many cases the local authorities preferred not to see it. This mobility became firmly present in the public space only in connection with the current economic crises, increased nationalism around Europe and finally because of the populist support for expulsion. This firstly 'hidden' and later 'visible' labour mobility has up until now been extremely important for the countries in transition from eastern Europe (and mainly for Bulgaria and Romania, countries that suffered enormously from the transition), where significant amounts of the money flow (around one third according some estimations) comes from abroad, from citizens who work in foreign countries and financially support their families back home. It is difficult to find even a single family in Bulgaria or Romania (including among Gypsies) whose more close or distant relatives are not working abroad and it is equally hard to find a village, town or Gypsy group who have not sent labour migrants to foreign countries.

Different western European countries implement various policies towards Gypsies who arrive from eastern Europe. In most cases the approach is mainstream, the same as to all other citizens of the respective countries, but there are some exceptions. In Italy in the 1980s, as a result of active lobbying from NGOs mainly linked to the church (above all the Opera Nomadi), the Gypsy nomads received rights to lead a nomadic way of life and to be placed in proper 'halting camps' (Picker 2010: 156-157). This was supported by quasi-scientific analyses, which 'proved' the very specific character of Roma communities, which makes it impossible for Roma to live together with the surrounding population, and a radical solution was found, which affected the Roma migrants too. All Gypsies – migrants, Yugoslav war refugees (according to different estimations around 50,000 to 150,000 persons) were automatically declared to be 'nomads' and according to this criterion they were exempt from the programmes for integration of other refugees and migrants and were directly accommodated in 'camps' (temporary camping sites, built near large towns for the communities or local nomadic Roma, Sinti and Camminanti). Placing the Gypsies from Yugoslavia, who in their majority have in fact been settled for centuries with a high level of social integration, many of them with a good education and social positions, into absolutely unknown conditions of life for such a long time, with a new generation rising with no knowledge of other social and cultural realities, has in the end led to probably one

of the most striking cases of mass de-socialisation in Europe during the last decades, the results of which will be very hard to overcome (ERRC 2000). In the 1990s the first Romanian Roma also arrived in Italy (around 2,000 people) and were, just like those Roma migrants arriving after them, also settled in the *campi nomadi*.

After 2001 the Gypsies living in camps in Italy were joined by new large groups of Gypsies, migrants from eastern Europe (predominantly from Romania). Their settlement in camps, however, does not come from their desire to preserve their nomadic way of life. In fact they are not wandering, but live in one place permanently which they choose for economic reasons. They use this possibility in order to save more money to build expensive houses in their homeland. At the same time, in other contexts, e.g. in some places in Spain, the Gypsies from Romania (including close relatives living in camps in Italy) live in in rented flats, in 'normal' city conditions.

After the spring events of 2008 in Italy, there has been a fast rise in anti-Gypsy attitudes in Italian society. These attitudes are directed towards Gypsies in camps. The numerous Gypsies from eastern Europe, who as labour migrants from their home countries are leading a different way of life, are invisible as Gypsies to society and are not affected by these attitudes.

Luckily for the Gypsies from eastern Europe, the case of Italy is more of an exception than a rule for western Europe. To some extent the situation in France is similar to that in Italy, however the picture there is much more diverse. In most cases Gypsy migrants there are not separated, but, and often, some of them (mostly from Romania and more rarely from Yugoslavia or other eastern European countries) are accommodated in camping sites for *voyageurs*, both voluntarily or as directed by the local authorities. In some cases they are even given trailers as donations. In the case of France the majority (but not all) of the above mentioned Gypsies who are settled in camping sites are successors of the ex-nomadic groups (settled one, two or three generations ago) or even communities who have never discontinued their semi-nomadic way of life. In this case one could speak about a process of 're-nomadisation', which softens the markers of desocialisation attached to it. In other western European countries, the cases of the adaptation of Gypsy migrants from eastern Europe to the conditions of life of the local Gypsy nomads are mostly exceptions (e.g. Belgium, the Netherlands). One can also speak about a special approach towards Gypsy migrants in many cases in Great Britain, where some Gypsy migrants (mainly from Romania and Slovakia) are subject to the care of local authorities and NGOs, in spite of the fact that they are not considered nomads. Roma, mainly from Romania again, are sporadically building illegal camps or shantytowns on sites all over Europe, which are periodically razed by the authorities. Here again the choice of living place is not because of nomadism, but for economic reasons. The last case the authors witnessed in March 2012 is from Spain around Seville (San Juan de Aznalfaracha), where around 400 Romanian Roma from groups of Kelderari and Spoitoari were living in illegal settlements under

the care of local NGOs. At the same time in the same region an unknown number of Argentari from Romania and Bulgarian Roma are living in rented flats.

If one looks at the differences between mainstream and special/targeted policies towards Roma migrants in western Europe in terms of social efficiency, the conclusions are clear – much more serious problems arise where a special policy is the leading one. This is said not to completely deny the need for concrete policies and projects in the form of special policies towards Gypsy migrants, but if they are to really contribute to the good of their beneficiaries, they must always be subordinate to the principles of the mainstream policy or be a bridge towards it. In other words, they should be designed and implemented with the clear presumption that they are made only to force the necessity of them existing in the first place to disappear in the near future.

In summary one could say that the majority of eastern European Gypsy migrants in western Europe (excluding the cases of asylum seekers and refugees from the former Yugoslavia) migrate as a composite (though in some extent separate) part of the overall migration waves of citizens from their countries of origin. They, as a whole, repeat to a large extent the same basic strategies of labour mobility. Within the frames of these flows, however, they preserve a certain distinction as a community (mainly on group, regional or settlement level), which they preserve and develop when settled in the West.

4 Mapping Gypsy migrations on a European scale

Migrations of Gypsies from eastern Europe are massive, but internally differentiated according to various criteria – countries of origin, as well as to the internal structure of Gypsy communities in the respective countries and larger cultural and historical regions of belonging. The picture presented below is quite schematic, but it represents the general tendencies in these migrations, while leaving space for further refinement.

The Gypsies from the former Yugoslavia migrate (with the tendency or at least the wish to settle in the new countries) mainly in two directions. Some head along the already established routes of Yugoslavian *Gastarbeiters* – towards Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. In these countries they are absorbed into the already settled and integrated Yugoslav Gypsy communities. Large numbers of Gypsy refugees from the Yugoslav wars (mainly Roma, *Egyptians* and *Ashkali* from Kosovo) are also heading towards Germany, but because of the unclear status and the constant dangers of repatriation, their integration into German society is arduous and complicated. Other large numbers of Gypsies from the former Yugoslavia migrate towards Italy, where,

for the above described reasons, they encounter great difficulties in their social integration and their future in general remains unclear and insecure.

Gypsies from Bulgaria, as a whole, follow the main flows of trans-border labour mobility of the remaining part of the general Bulgarian population. The majority of them head to Mediterranean countries, above all to Greece (Gabărski 2008), Spain (Slavkova 2008) and Portugal, as well as to Cyprus, Italy and France. Some Muslim Gypsies from several regions join the flows of ethnic Turkish migrants towards the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. A specific case are the Gypsies from the region of Dobrich, who have already been trading seasonally at markets in Poland for two decades. (Erolova 2010: 52-56) The majority of Gypsies from these migration waves are an inseparable part of the established Bulgarian migrant communities and in the eyes of the surrounding population in the new countries they are invisible as a separate ethnic community. There are few exceptions to this rule, such as the begging Bulgarian Gypsies from region of Pazardzhik and Peshtera in Bordeaux, the flows of Bulgarian Gypsies with Turkish identity from the Stolipinovo neighbourhood in Plovdiv to Dortmund and Duisburg, etc.

The situation of migrating Gypsies from Romania, who are in the majority of cases a target of public scandals in western Europe, is different. Many of them, in particular those with a preferred Romanian identity, follow the patterns of trans-border migration of the mainstream Romanian population and are an inseparable part of this general trans-border mobility, mostly directed towards France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. Their distinction from ethnic Romanians as a specific Gypsy community is invisible for the surrounding population in their host countries. Large numbers of Romanian Gypsies, however, mostly the former nomads, are heading towards Italy and France, and recently also towards Great Britain and Ireland, while in smaller numbers they migrate to Nordic countries. There they are using centuries old tactics for earning their living – they are begging on the streets of large towns. Because of this way of earning their living and the traditional dress of the women they are visible in the eyes of the surrounding population, thus they are transformed into a generalised stereotyped image of Gypsy migrants as a whole.

The case with parts of Gypsy communities from Transylvania on the other hand is specific. They are living in regions with predominantly Hungarian ethnic surroundings or in regions where representatives of the German minority used to live. These Gypsy communities migrated for seasonal work to Hungary or Germany, utilising their long-established relations with the Hungarian or German population (Vajda / Pronai 2002: 12-34; Sobotka 2003: 105).

As a whole, the migrations of Gypsies from central Europe are more limited in comparison with Gypsies from south-eastern Europe. Gypsies from Hungary (as well as the remaining inhabitants of the country) are relatively less active in trans-border labour mobility. The absolute opposite to this is the situation with Gypsies from Slo-

vakia. In the vast majority of cases the labour migrations of Slovak Gypsies started already during the time of socialism and is now also directed towards the Czech Republic (indeed the vast majority of Gypsies in the Czech Republic are Slovak, many of them, mainly from older waves of migration, have Czech citizenship). The Gypsies from the former Czechoslovakia migrated mainly towards Great Britain, as well as to Germany, Belgium and Scandinavia. Some of the Slovak Gypsies migrated also to neighbouring Austria (Tiefenbacher et al. 2011: 27-50). Many of the Gypsy migrants from the former Czechoslovakia are invisible for majority, but others, because of the high level of social marginalisation, became visible to the surrounding population. The cases of Roma migrations from the Czech Republic towards Canada and the USA became famous, mainly because of the issue of introducing visa obligation for Czech citizens (because of this migration).

The labour migrations of Gypsies from Poland and from the Baltic states (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) towards western Europe are relatively fewer in numbers. Some of these Gypsy communities migrated to Great Britain in the early years after the political changes. Some of the Gypsies from Poland are working in Germany. Others are street musicians in large European cities. Some of the Gypsies from the Baltic States migrate (even though it might sound strange) towards the east, into the Russian Federation. Similar is the situation in the Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, where the majority of labour migrations are also directed towards the Russian Federation and only a small number of Gypsies from western Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova repeat the patterns of trans-border labour mobility that is typical for Poland and Romania (it is not only typical for the Gypsies from these countries, but for the majority population too).

Part of the Gypsy migration from the countries of eastern Europe is directed to other, richer countries from the same former socialist bloc, so e.g. Gypsies from Kosovo, Bosnia or Macedonia move to Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro, the Gypsies from Moldavia, Ukraine, Belarus to the Czech Republic and Poland, from the independent republics of the former Soviet Union towards the large cities in the Russian Federation. However, the last ones remain mostly invisible and are only very rarely the subject of the attention of researchers, NGOs, the media and politicians.

The topic of Gypsy migrations towards the West sporadically appears to be at the centre of public interest in their respective home countries too. This happens mainly in cases when their citizens are involved in public scandals in the West or even more if they are referred to in the western European media as ‘Gypsies’. Romania and Bulgaria, being countries that are especially concerned with their public image in western Europe, are especially sensitive towards the topic of Gypsy migrations. Standard public reactions in such cases are statements that Gypsies are to blame for the bad name of Romania and Bulgaria. This, in the end, only fosters and worsens the existing anti-Gypsy stereotypes and negative attitudes in their countries of origin.

5 Roma/Gypsy identities in the new European realities

In order to fully understand the nature of this third wave of migration one important fact must be kept in mind: the multidimensional structure of Roma/Gypsy identity. Everywhere in the world Gypsies have always existed at least in 'two dimensions', or in two coordinate planes – both as a separate community (or more exactly 'communities') and as a society (in particular as its ethnically-based integral part within the respective nation state) (Marushiakova 2008: 468-490). In some cases, the principal level in the structure of their identity is the community, or even group identity, and in other cases the most important one is their civic, societal identity. From this perspective, a relatively small fraction of Roma migrants from eastern to western Europe perceive and experience themselves primarily as a community and accordingly on this basis they develop their strategies for economic activities, modes of action and practices, in the new Euro-realities, which are close to their age-old peripatetic traditions of adaptation to the surrounding world. Other, much larger groups, experience themselves primarily as part of their countries of origin, and accept the overall national strategies of trans-border labour mobility, without utilising another context, and their realisation in host societies is relevant to the local economical realities to which they adapt.

Therefore, eastern European Roma migrants in western Europe, as shown above, in their majority migrate as a composite (although in some cases and to some extent separate) part of the overall migration waves of citizens from their countries of origin. They, as a whole, share to a large extent the same basic strategies of labour mobility. In other words Roma migrate not as a separate ethnic community (as was the case during the first and second migration wave) but as part of the society of their home countries. Within the frames of these flows, however, the level of their identity as a separate community persists and is continued also when settled in the West.

In the new European realities the development of the Gypsy community acquires new and wider spatial dimensions that transcend the existing state borders. Large proportions of existing Gypsy groups migrate in various forms from eastern Europe to various countries in western Europe mostly intending a short term stay there, but gradually some of them settle permanently. At this stage the relations (including through marriage) among the members of the groups persist, but it is not difficult to forecast that the development of the processes of segmentation and consolidation of the groups will certainly acquire new dimensions that will find their expression in group (and subgroup and meta-group) identities, i.e. eventually, after a few decades, the overall tableau of the mosaic of Gypsy presence in European Union will have completely changed.

Regarding the development of the community as a part of the respective nation, there are two possible directions of future development, initial signs of which can already be observed: integrating the Gypsies into the migrant communities of their country of origin without severing the permanent contacts with it, or assuming the slow path of integration into the adoptive nation where they have settled to live (preserving in both cases their ethnic identity as 'Gypsies'). These processes correlate with the development of a preferred ethnic identity that can also be directed towards either of the above-mentioned options (but unlike them be accompanied by a loss of the ethnic identity as 'Gypsies'). The processes of creating new identities happen to be the hardest to forecast at this stage because they depend on a variety of factors.

The basic trends in the development of Gypsy/Roma identities as outlined are constantly intersecting, overlapping and thus enriching one another. The processes of the development of the Gypsy community are influenced by a number of 'external' factors related to the specific situation in the various countries in eastern Europe, and the common processes of European integration and globalisation. Hence at this stage it is very difficult to predict what specific dimensions the Gypsy/Roma identities will acquire in the short and in the long term.

6 Perspectives for development of the Gypsy migrations

Present-day predictions of the perspectives for development of the Gypsy migrations from eastern to western Europe are difficult. To date it looks like they have almost reached their peak, and it is not clear if there is potential for new, extensive development. The majority of potential Gypsy/Roma migrants from eastern Europe to the West have already realised their living strategy for trans-border labour mobility and the lifting of the visa regime for western Balkan countries will hardly lead to any drastic problems because large parts of the Gypsies from this region have already been regularly travelling to the West for years. The severe economic crisis and exacerbation of ethnic tensions, however, can change the situation.

However changes of another kind can be expected too, namely a gradual termination of the connections with the Gypsy migrants' countries of origin, as well as their legalisation and permanent settling in their new countries in western Europe.

As shown above, the policy towards them also has a strong influence on the perspectives for development of the Gypsy migrations. Often, in cases when the migration is visible, the exoticising Roma approach is built on it, which addresses them as existing only in one dimension (as the Gypsy community). A common misconcep-

tion is that the Roma have no homeland and move easily between different countries because they are all persecuted and discriminated against everywhere. This statement is based on individual cases and situations, but is not generally valid. Often omitted is the fact that Gypsies always existed in another dimension too – as an integral part of the respective society. Therefore it is quite natural for them, especially in the modern era, to have consciousness of belonging to the respective nation state, which they perceive as their homeland. This is also the reason why most of the Roma migrants from any country, even from Romania, build their new houses or sometimes even palaces in their homelands (model, known at the time of *Gastarbeiters* from Yugoslavia) with the money earned in the West.

Actually how Roma from eastern Europe will be perceived and treated in the West and how this will influence their migrations and the development of their communities depends not so much on the level of integration achieved in their home countries, but primarily on the approach towards them in the host countries. In many cases the policy towards Roma is a typical example of the orientalist approach (in the sense of Edward Saïd), which is not built on existing realities, but on the basis of an own idea about them (in this case based on prejudiced outsider interpretations of Roma as eternal nomads).

The reasons for this perception of contemporary Roma communities in western Europe are diverse, including the significance of the terminology used, which in recent years can often also be a political issue. The designation of diverse Romani communities in the languages of majority societies in the region of eastern Europe is quite similar – *Cigáni, Cikáni, Cyganie, Čigonai, Čigāni, Cigany, Ţigani, Αθιγγανοι, Цигани, Цыгане,* etc. is usually translated into English as 'Gypsies'. This however, in the opinion of the authors, is not an adequate translation. In the English-speaking world, including the scholarly jargon, the term 'Gypsies' is often used to signify diverse nomadic communities regardless of their ethnic origins and identity. In all of eastern Europe the *Cigáni, Cikáni, Cyganie*, etc. are definitely not communities characterised exclusively by their way of life, they are a clearly defined and distinct ethnic community.

In the public discourse of the entire region a clear idea about the Gypsies as a separate, clearly defined ethnic community with common origins has existed for centuries, i.e. everyone here knows 'who they are'. Therefore, problems in this respect can only arise from the identification of certain individuals, outside the social environment in which they were born and bred, but not with regard to the community/communities on the whole. In eastern Europe the *Cigáni, Cikáni, Cyganie, Ţigani, Цигани, Цыгане*, etc., similarly to any other community of that kind, are considered only in primordial terms, and in an ethnic discourse (as any other ethnic community). In other words, one is born a *Ţigan* (or *Cigán*, or *Cikán*, or other similar local appellation), one cannot become a *Ţigan*, and one remains a *Ţigan* for life (same as one's ancestors).

The reason for this lies in the fact that in the prevailing majority of cases the ideas of constructivism and civil nation in their finished form have been reduced to the concept of the nation state in eastern Europe. This nation state in practice considers itself as one ethno-nation (after the breakdown of Yugoslavia and the USSR, the Russian Federation is the only exception in this regard). That is why all of the newly created nation states (from the 19th century to date) turn their gaze primarily to the past, and initiate a process of an active involvement of this past in the national-historical mythology. In this part of the world, history is not just a science, but rather a part of national mythology, to a considerably higher degree than elsewhere. There, every nation resurrects and projects its own version of the 'glorious past' to the contemporary world even to this day. In the individual countries the process of creating the new ethno-national community, following a civil-nation state-building model, in the end adopts a primordialist format.

All this forms the base of the distinction and the increasingly growing confrontation between the East and West in the social sciences, mostly visual in European Ethnology and Western (Anglo-Saxon) Anthropology, including in the field of Romani Studies. Historically in eastern Europe, in the conditions of ethno-national states and mostly under the influence of Herder's ideas on 'Volksgeist', the scholarly interest was directed primarily towards the 'own' people, own history and ethno-cultural traditions, while in the large colonial empires (notably Great Britain) the interest was primarily directed towards the 'others', towards exotic peoples living outside metropolises. Even though Gypsies are largely a European people, their romantic image in the public consciousness enables them to fit into the paradigm of the Anglo-Saxon anthropology. Both scientific traditions proved to be extremely resistant to change and still maintain their dominance in the respective regions of eastern and western Europe, however the Anglo-Saxon approach has dominated globally (Marushiakova / Popov 2011: 51-68). The oldest academic organisation devoted to Romani Studies, the Gypsy Lore Society, was established in the Anglo-Saxon academic traditions and this approach continues to dominate today, which is reflected in the status of the GLS. The GLS website says: "Its [i.e. the GLS's] goals include promotion of the study of Gypsy, Traveler, and analogous peripatetic cultures worldwide."

In the last few decades a new scientific discipline has appeared in the field of Romani Studies, which can be defined as an attempt to establish a 'pure' Roma science, with Roma authors (or authors who self-identify as Roma), which opposes and confronts above all the 'old Gypsylorism'. Attempts to develop the so-called 'native/indigenous science' in modern times is something well known, but in this case something else is interesting – consciously or not, modern 'Roma science' literally repeated the ideological approach and the way of development of eastern European Ethnology (and in particular the primordialist approach leads in comparison to constructivism). Therefore, a key issue for this type of research (scholarly or quasi-scholarly) are the

problems related to the origin of the Roma, and the attempts of some scholars to define 'who the Gypsies are' are often perceived as attempts of the 'others' to be 'in charge of their identity' (Hancock 2010: 274), and thus to endanger their position in society.

In more general terms, nowadays, when identifying and determining the main subject of Gypsy/Romani Studies there is a collision between two different approaches (or their combination in different forms), based on constructivist and primordialist points of view. The determination by different authors of the Gypsy/Roma community, based on these approaches leads to stressing their social characteristics (most often nomadic/peripatetic way of life and/or on their social marginalisation) or their commonly shared origin, history, language and culture.

Returning to the question set in the beginning about the dichotomy of contemporary Roma migration versus Gypsy nomadism, it appears that this opposition is actually the individual manifestation of a more general and fundamental problem connected to the various approaches towards Roma communities as such. This difference in approach determines different academic and activists' definitions of the Roma community (service nomads, peripatetic community, diaspora, minority, European trans-borders minority, up to the nation without a state) and also a different vision about directions of their future development. These issues however, are not (and cannot be) a purely academic problem. A common phenomenon is the ultimate dependence on and interconnection of the scientific approach (and respectively of the research results) with factors that are 'external' to science (in this case of major socio-ideological paradigms). Science is not and cannot be an island of 'pure objective knowledge'; it always develops according to the general socio-ideological context, and always, at least to some extent, depends on it. These differences in approaches are the main reason for the oscillations of the policy towards Roma on a national and European level, which led to the present paradoxical situation.

On one hand, European politicians today are seemingly far removed from the old imageries, which depict Gypsies (known already under the politically correct umbrella appellation 'Roma') as eternal, carefree wanderers or as opportunists cashing in on the possibilities offered by a particular regime. Needs as regards to education, health, employment, housing and citizenship have been acknowledged within the frames of the so-called mainstream approach, common for all citizens of United Europe. On the other hand, one is constantly confronted with proposals, decisions, practices and implementations, etc., which definitely put Roma in the category of a community without a homeland and not belonging to any European nation state with a very specific culture, differing from all other European populations. This is evident from published documents of European institutions targeting Gypsy communities. During the past two decades, because of aspirations for imposing the considered politically correct appellation 'Roma' as the umbrella term for several highly diverse communities including for all representatives of one large heterogeneous community with hierarchically structured

internal subdivisions, we are witnessing unsuccessful attempts to escape from old stereotypes and to define who the Roma are.

From this perspective, the terminological evolution which can be found in publications of the European institutions (primarily the Council of Europe and later the European Commission too) is symptomatic. In 1987 the Council of Europe published a book by Prof. Jean-Pierre Liégeois, entitled 'Gypsies and Travellers'; in 1994 its second revised and supplemented edition was published under the title 'Roma, Gypsies, Travellers'; in 2007 the third edition appeared, now under the name 'Roma in Europe' (Liégeois 1987, 1994, 2007). At the same time, ever more documents by these two European institutions gave a terminological clarification of what 'Roma' meant, usually with each document offering its own interpretation. It is enough to quote the last (for now!) two such 'official' definitions in order to obtain an idea about their lack of relevance to the objectively existing realities.

The recently adopted European Framework of National Roma Inclusion Strategies stated: "The term 'Roma' is used – similarly to other political documents of the European Parliament and the European Council – as an umbrella term which includes groups of people who have more or less similar cultural characteristics, such as Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage, etc. whether sedentary or not …" (An EU Framework 2011). This definition is misleading because Roma who live in central and eastern Europe share 'more or less similar cultural characteristics' with the surrounding majority population much more than with other groups such as *Sinti, Travellers, Kalé, Gens du voyage,* etc.

No better and no more precise is the definition in the Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the Rise of Anti-Gypsyism and Racist Violence against Roma in Europe. Adopted on 1 February, 2012: "The term 'Roma' used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as 'Gypsies' (Declaration 2012). The word 'Gypsy' is used here in the old sense of nomadic community. This, together with the persistent stereotype about Roma as eternal nomads, is even better illustrated in the French translation of the same definition: "Le terme Roms utilise au Conseil de l'Europe designe les Roms, les Sintes (Manouches), les Kale (Gitans) et les groupes de population apparentes en Europe, dont les Voyageurs et les branches orientales (Doms, Loms); il englobe la grande diversite des groupes concernes, y compris les personnes qui s'auto-identifient comme Tsiganes et celles que l'on designe comme Gens du voyage." The authors can only speculate as to how this definition can be used as a base for actual policies, due to the fact, among others, that in eastern Europe there are large groups who do not identify themselves as 'Gypsies' but the surrounding population considers (and treats) them as such. These definitions illustrate that it is not clear even to this day 'who the Roma are' on the level of European institutions and the approach towards them is mostly within the framework of centuries-old stereotypes.

The legitimate question which logically arises from all this is whether it is possible at all to have a successful realisation of national and supranational policies, including in the fields of migrations and mobility if it is based on strategies and programmes without a clear main target group.

Hence the policies, programmes and projects that are offered are de facto based on special approaches towards Roma and are based on the principle of mediation with nomadic populations, rather than on equal participation, and in practice detach and segregate Roma from other European populations and, in the case of migrations and mobility, dissociate them from all mobile Europeans.

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Stable concepts in shifting contexts? Promising theoretical approaches to discussions of Romani belonging in Central Europe

Abstract

In recent years Romani migrations from post-communist countries to the 'West'[1] were and still are represented as a threat in public and media discourse. Thus, the presence of migrating Romani men and women is being discussed publically in several European states. These debates focus particularly on the supposed identities of members of Romani communities and on 'traditional' stereotypes, which go along with these. When analysing these perceptions it emerges that Romani identities are perceived as homogenous and stable. In our contribution we are suggesting a trans-disciplinary analytical approach towards these ethnic ascriptions by applying concepts drawn from Postcolonial Studies, Critical Whiteness Studies and Transnational Studies. As these theories and approaches have recently been applied to studies on ethnicity, making use of them with regard to Romani belonging seems to be promising.

1 Introduction

"On the 1st of May the gates to Austria will open up for hundreds of thousands of Eastern European Roma. (…) What, if only a small proportion of them starts their wanderings collectively?" (Magenschab 2011: 2–3)[2]

These words were printed in an article in an Austrian newspaper in February 2011. The references made by this coverage were evident, given that it was launched just one day after the Austrian province of Styria passed a universal ban on begging. If begging is assumed to be a threat already, how terrible will the situation become when all those Romani women and men 'flood' the Austrian labour market? In these lines, the predominant conditions for 'western'-European perceptions of Romani mi-

1 In this contribution, we use inverted commas to highlight quotidian terms which refer to concepts or notions that we consider to require academic reflection. On the contrary, double apostrophes mark direct quotations.

2 Original quote: „Am ersten Mai öffnen sich für Hunderttausende Roma aus dem Osten die Tore nach Österreich. (…) Was tun wenn nur ein kleiner Teil der Roma kollektiv auf Wanderschaft geht?"

grations are already outlined: Ideas like an East-West-distinction, masses of potential migrants, Romani people as 'naturally' migrating are shaping not only public discussions, but also the framework relevant for policy-makers and NGOs. In this specific case the author was not only publicly present as the speaker of a former Austrian federal president, but also as a historian and renowned biographer. He depicts the menace Romani migrants would pose to Austria (and especially its labour market) upon the country's opening according to EU-law and uses stereotypes of "roving spirit" and "kins and clans" (Magenschab 2011: 2–3). These are well-known images. They are directly relating to stereotypes deriving from Central Europe's modern history, as for instance the poor eastern migrant or the industrial city as a space of potential problems (Hödl 1994).

Current press coverage and political debates revisit these and other images in different ways, most prominently among them is the talk of a vague 'East' as a potential threat: When Eastern and Central European countries joined the European Union in 2004, the Austrian public was relatively unaware of 'potential' Romani migrants. Only extreme right politicians from the FPÖ (Austrian Freedom Party) voiced concerns regarding "Roma invading Vienna" (Zara Rassismus Report 2004: 9). Less than ten years later statements of conservative and even social democratic politicians identified the Romani migrant as a source of national threat (Benedik 2010: 160–161). In particular in regulating the issues of begging, various local parliaments responded to the 'problem' of alleged masses of Romani women and men moving (typically temporarily) to Austria (see http://bettellobbywien.wordpress.com/). The notable shift from the far right to the political centre illustrates the evident potential of specific racism against Romani people.

In the following contribution we will present some theoretical considerations that we believe to be fruitful as approaches when researching Romani migrations within a trans-disciplinary framework. By doing so, diverse concepts from different academic backgrounds will be discussed in the light of their adaptability for the examination of Romani belonging especially within Central Europe. Since the 19th century academic research in this specific field of study has given ample attention to seemingly traditional forms of mobility labelled nomadism or vagrancy. However, contemporary Romani Studies adopt a more classical understanding of this movements, mostly based on social science concepts. As in public debates, scholars conceptualise movements in particular as once and forever and visualise a "wave" from post communist countries to the so-called 'West' (Guy 2001). As we will argue, some tendencies combine these approaches with traditional concepts and thus reinforce the idea of stable Romani identities. However, a focus on a broader variety of identifications and various forms of actual movements – but also on their public depiction – could prove more accurate. Therefore, concepts and terminology established in Transnational Migration Studies, Critical Whiteness Studies and Postcolonial Studies, to mention but

a few, seem to be promising. When dealing with Romani migrations and ethnicities, they allow a differentiated discussion of 'race'/'ethnicity' (as will be shown later).

2 Migrations as a subject matter in Romani Studies

Academic knowledge on Romani migrations has changed acknowledgably over the past few years. In a remarkable effort, scholars from various disciplines and backgrounds presented case studies on how different European regions treat Romani migrants. Additionally, they examine migrants' positions between countries of origin that often do not perceive them as their citizens and receiving countries that sometimes try to get rid of them at a high cost. Some recent studies have challenged this dichotomist image of eastern countries of origin and western countries of immigration in analysing return migrations as well as regions of origin (Grill 2011). However, some research on Romani migration – either financed governmentally or by NGOs, – is aiming mostly at the development of strategies for political action (FRA 2009). Still, the conditions for more theoretically grounded research are improving.

Furthermore, Romani researchers have recently raised their voice as academics who challenge the scientific community's often paternalist and racialising dynamics. A telling example is the sociologist Elizabeta Jonuz's monograph on the Yugoslav Romani community in Germany published in 2009. Jonuz interviewed former labour migrants (*Gastarbeiter*) and thus brought up a topic neglected both by the public and in academia (major research projects in Austria carried out on Gastarbeiter migration did not take Romani communities into consideration, see Lichtenberger 1984). In her analysis the author draws upon concepts such as transnational migration. Links like these allow studies on Romani migration to connect to the state-of-the-art in Migration Studies. Additionally, it challenges the common mere ethnicisation by nationalising them as (former) citizens of Yugoslavia and (current) citizens of Germany (Jonuz 2009). Adding up the rising visibility of Romani scholars and the increasing awareness towards theoretical reflexion another major question in studies of Romani migration has become more evident recently. Discussions within the scientific community suggested to disintegrate current movement from the framework of historic forms of vagrant lifestyle. Yaron Matras emphasised this necessary differentiation by stating that Romani men and women migrated "despite their lack of nomadic traditions" (Matras 2000: 32). These different approaches in academia are often shaped by national history and research traditions. Only now has it been revealed that it was not ethnic differences, but socio-economic conditions, that led to one or the other form of movement. Notable international events and networks are trying to meaningfully foster communication between academics involved in these traditions. The Refugee Research Centre at the University of Oxford

with its interdisciplinary project *Mapping Contemporary Roma Mobilities in the EU* was proving to be to be a decisive impetus for this development in first introducing the key term mobility from theoretical considerations and second highlighting the need for solely academic and analytical approaches to the topic:

"For once, the policy agenda and its implicit and explicit priorities – how to stop the 'tidal wave' of Roma invading the West – did not dictate the terms of the debate, but became an object of analysis, something that needs to be scrutinised, and ultimately deconstructed. Why is Roma mobility perceived and constructed as a threat?" (Sigona / Zetter 2010: 4).

3 Introducing 'Romani-ness'

In speaking about belonging in general and ethnicity in particular, academic precision calls for a term to denote the reference, such as 'Britishness', 'Frenchness' etc. The Romani language provides an analogously fitting word, *Romipen*[3] (which could be translated as Romani identity). So far the term has been mostly used to describe the features of Romani identity from the community's point of view. Accordingly, *Romipen* is especially used in political and activist texts (ERTF Charter on the Rights of the Roma) as well as in ethnographic literature. However, the Czech scholar Milena Hübschmannová broadens the possible usage of the term in a paper published in 1998 where she defines it as a hybrid term that contains not just characteristics from inside the community, but that refers also to the perception of others (Hübschmannová 1998). Following this idea, *Romipen* can be used in different ways: It can promote empowerment or nationalisation, but also serve as a vehicle for discrimination if seen as the common ground on which a group of 'others' is constructed from the outside. However, this extension would overlook and potentially harm the concept's exclusively positive connotation. Having this potentially counter-productive effect in mind as well as the so far lacking response from Romani communities, its introduction as an analytic term has to be reconsidered.

It is thus questionable whether a combination of perspectives from inside and outside the community in a Romani term is appropriate. On the other hand, Romani belonging cannot be studied outside its performance in a process of ethnicisation or racialisation (Brubaker 2010). There is no standpoint from which an essence of 'Romaniness' (nor of 'Britishness' or 'Polishness') could be identified. Ascriptions

3 As we are familiar with the variety of East Slovak Romani we 'borrowed' the term from this variety. Other forms are *Romanipe* or *Romanipen*.

that determine whether a person or a group is seen as 'ethnically' Romani or not are shifting and highly contingent on contexts. Romani belonging depends utterly on the contexts in which it is claimed, attributed, rejected or re-narrated (Zettelbauer 2012: 223–227). Romani belonging requires the act of claiming or attributing in order to make an impact, so consequently both the contents and thus certain processes of self-ascription or ascription by others respectively might be of interest.

Romani belonging might even go under different names or be hidden behind a vast number of codes – particularly when ascribed from outside. This becomes clear when the term "Roma" is substituted by terms such as "beggar" ("Bettler") (Tiefenbacher / Benedik 2012: 224), "mobile ethnic minorities"[4] (End et al. 2009: 10), "Gypsies" or "*Zigeuner*" and "nomads" (Sigona 2005), to mention but a few. Currently it has become quite common in English-speaking academia to use the denomination "Gypsy or Romani people" for persons who claim forms of Romani belonging for them also when examining Central or Eastern Europe. This trend towards homogeneity becomes visible in a terminology emanating from the idea of a 'Gypsy Diaspora' , initially coined by e.g. political and human-rights activists (Gay y Blasco 2002). As Gay y Blasco proves, the adoption of this idea of a worldwide community of 'Gypsyness' is effectively neglecting notable differences. The notion of a globalised 'ethnic minority' does not fit to the diversity of self-perceptions and may even prove contradictory in this context. This can be underlined by the following example: A Hungarian- and Slovak-speaking Romani man in Austria was asked by a Romani speaker whether he was Romani or not. When he answered in the affirmative the questioner expected him to speak Romani, which he could not. As a consequence, the Romani speaker refused to accept the non-Romani speaker as a fellow Romani man. However, in his Slovak region of origin Romani 'ethnicity' is ascribed not on a linguistic basis (Hungarian is shared by everyone as the first language) but on the grounds of local knowledge that is transferred from one generation to the next (Tiefenbacher / Benedik / Szénássy 2011: 32). Thus Romani 'ethnicities' must not be misunderstood as stable entities, but rather as something constructed differently in different contexts.

Terminology turns out to be even more challenging when it comes to history, as we cannot proceed on the assumption of a seamless transition from a historical group presumably determined by nomadism (called '*Zigeuner*' or likewise) to a current group called 'Roma', as has been widely accepted by the scientific community since the social historian Leo Lucassen presented his provocative thesis (Lucassen 1996). However, Claudia Breger has shown convincingly that Lucassen's rejection of ethnicity as a factor in the complex attribution of '*Zigeuner*' belonging finally led to

4 The term "*Mobile ethnische Minderheit*" ("mobile ethnic minority") has become important in Germany's political and especially administrative debates (but not in other German speaking countries) in recent years. (cf. End et al. 2009: 10)

understating racialising argumentations in the production of this group. 'Racial' as well as 'ethnic', social and further contents of historical '*Zigeunertum*' are integrated in different recent conceptions of Romani 'ethnicities' (Breger 1998: 3). At the same time these processes of integration must not be assumed to be linear or even causal.

4 The academic invention of the 'Gypsy'

Homogenisation has a long-standing tradition in the scientific identification of Romani people, which can be traced back at least to the enlightenment. Still, it seems to have been possible until around 1900 to cast off a Romani belonging. Up to that point it was also appropriate to heal the 'Zigeuner' of his or her 'Zigeunertum' by means of education (Ufen 1996). At the same time, members of the British upper class disguised themselves as 'Gypsy' (Epstein Nord 2006), in order to rid themselves temporarily of their civilized and bourgeois selves. In these performances it became clear that the adapted belonging was precarious although skin-colour was not rendered as an absolute 'racial' marker but rather as a variable trace of the romantic explorer's social behaviour: "It was strange to sit here in Turkish disguise, and burned brown as a Gypsy by the sun, enjoying intellectual intercourse after a week with semi-savages" (Shuko 1916: 135, quoted in Ashplant 2005: 80). In sentences like these Robert Macfie, one of the most important secretaries in the early history of the Gypsy Lore Society, refers to central boundaries of modernity, that strikingly overlap with the production of being Romani. In his narration of 'Gypsy culture' he emphasises binary divisions such as those between nature and culture, savage and education, 'Gypsy' and mankind. As Ashplant claims, the desire of western European academics for the eastern 'semi-savage' is linked to the longing for a romantic escape of upper-middle-class values (Ashplant 2005: 78–82). It is evident that notions of body and gender are highly relevant in this specific context and for the conceptualisation of the 'Gypsies' generally. The radical difference between 'Gypsies' and 'Europeans' has been embodied and sexualised in Central Europe since the enlightenment (White/Black, clothed/naked, flesh/carrion). The popularisation of these divisions harks back to the German scholar Grellmann, who spread not only a narrative of origin (India) which was later to become dominant but who also combined the already established assumption of social differences with an early modern racialisation (Löw 1999: 65–66; Ufen 1996). For the perception of Romani people as 'savage' in modernity it became central to describe them as originally Indian, the conceptualisation of a homogenous Romani 'race' relied on the inscription in a world beyond Europe.

For the history of Central European constructions of Romani belonging it is furthermore central to acknowledge the enormous repercussions of the national socialist treatment of so-called 'Zigeuner'. The (often strategic) entanglement of racialising and socially excluding narratives of differentiation was characteristic first in radical discourses and measures of persecution and murder (officially mainly under the term 'Zigeunermischlinge' (mixed-blood 'Gypsies')) (Mindler 2011). After 1945 it was impossible for surviving victims to gain reparation-measures as they were officially seen as having been punished as 'anti-socials' and not as having been racially persecuted according to the official perspective of the Austrian Republic (Strutz 2011). The racialisation of deviance has changed its pattern and course several times since the 18th century. Dealing with Romani belonging requires thus the understanding of the practices they encompass as a reading of different historical processes of determination and negotiation on the border between 'civilized' and 'savage', which shows that racialised distinction does not necessarily depend on 'racial features' (Ufen 1996). On the other hand, it is important to recognise that any form of racism is as well being put forward by social inequality, capitalism, sexism, heteronormativity and further narratives which produce difference.

5 Essentialist and biological understandings: 'Romani-ness' between 'Race' and 'Ethnicity'

As has been elaborated above, we understand Romani 'ethnicities' as a product of – among others – racialising ascriptions. Whether based on negative or positive premises, they illustrate the need for an interdisciplinary reinvestigation of concepts of 'ethnicity' and 'race'. As we already pointed out, it is actually the contexts 'ethnicity' emanates from that should be of prior interest to scholars, as the presumption of an 'essential' and unchangeable core of Romani identity leads nowhere.

'Skin colour', 'ethnicity', 'race', 'origin', 'descent' – ethnicising/racialising concepts can be denominated by a broad range of words, though they do not refer to comparable, even less identic ideas. At the same time, definitions of 'ethnic' affiliation are neither stable nor comprehensive, quite unlike the naturalisation/biologisation of essentialisms since modernity would let assume (Bednarz-Braun / Heß-Meining 2004: 68–71). Hence, 'ethnicity' is shaped by the ambivalence between the alleged self-evidence of a model and an insecurity hidden under its surface. This may explain why even the extensive and lately rather ambitious scholarly literature in that field seems to avoid definition. Yet critical and reflected positions implicitly promote the idea that 'ethnicity' would be somehow self-explaining.

It is exactly this vagueness that contributes to the influence of racialising/ethnicising strategies and markers. Based on scholarly debates, skin colour was always at the centre of attention due to its "seemingly natural, unmediated quality" (Harris 2009: 4). It remains to be emphasised as a central feature of 'ethnicity' and 'race' until today. Thus, even in academic perspectives 'ethnicity' is seen as a given, rather than as a constructed category of perception. "Skin color seems to be just there – a natural fact" (ibidem). Premises that derive from the adoption of biological concepts are indispensable for the understanding of 'ethnicity' as a 'fact' and have predominated also in the human and social sciences for long time. Thus it is not surprising that the idea of a common, shared 'identity' of a 'coherent' people is most influential up to the present day, although it is nothing else than a powerful illusion for any community, within or outside Central Europe (Brubaker 2010). The already outlined problematic assumption of a worldwide 'Gypsy diaspora' becomes obvious in this light. Beyond the outline of cultural and social commonalities lies the (implicit or explicit) assumption of an anthropological or even biological common ground that legitimises these perspectives (Gay y Blasco 2002).

However, more fluid understandings of 'ethnicity' have been elaborated and broadly discussed since the impact of the *Cultural Turn*. The British sociolinguist and community-researcher Roger Hewitt refers for instance to the extreme broadness of practices, codes and rationalisation patterns associated with 'ethnicity', which allows the imagination of a coherent community in the first place. According to Hewitt these categories go hand in hand with the idea of 'minorities' and oppression, which are the core discourses behind the nationalist movements of the 19th century (Gellner 2009: 85–96). In particular the example of the current international *Romani Movement* illustrates the ongoing appeal that the application of such specific artifacts of knowledge can still have. In these ethno-emancipatory processes of the 21st century, the production of commonality in terms of language, history and culture as well as the emphasis of a possible common past of oppression still plays a central role (Vermeersch 2007: 12–27).

When debating these varying references of ethnicising/racialising concepts, the situations within Central Europe vary considerably from the traditions in English-speaking countries. Unlike in the English-speaking world, the word 'race' is not put to use in most Central European languages. Instead, either 'ethnicity' or 'nationality' is employed. This is due to the specific history of the term that is regarded as inseparably linked with its utilisation in National Socialist ideology and practice (Daum et al. 2005: 7). Still, avoiding the term particularly in academia does not go without shortcomings. As Marion Müller has proven, the term 'ethnicity' is very often used as a synonym for 'race', being in its core as biologistic and naturalising as the term used before (Daum et al. 2005: 7).

For analytical approaches this is problematic because it can be seen as euphemistic and interferes with critical and precise terminology. This is a rather important point of criticism that has to be discussed thoroughly as scholarly discourse has very

often prolonged and legitimised patterns of discrimination in particular in the context of Romani issues. Nevertheless we consider it important to have a terminology at our disposal that is as precise as possible. This requires an appropriate language, and often 'race' is the word that describes structures of publicly articulated arguments most accurately in Central European discourses. A close examination of the diversity of concepts that intersect along ideas of 'ethnicity'/'race' is the first step towards a critical contextualisation and destabilisation of its concepts. For instance, it has become a common practice to hide references to Romani people in the Czech/Slovak discourse behind the phrase of "naši spoluobčané" ("our fellow citizens"), in Slovakia even behind the word for "osada" ("settlement") (Tiefenbacher / Benedik 2012: 220). Both codes are commonly seen to refer to 'ethnic' division, although they indeed refer to concepts of národnost/národnosť (nationality), which is clearly based on the notion of racialised groups. Differences like these are relevant because they have not been touched by deconstruction so far. Modernity rendered those seemingly self-evident entities as essential, as claimed by Angela P. Harris: "Color, like race, situates peoples along the path of History: More white is more European, and more European is more refined; […] Color, like race, also situates us within the discourse of Science as a practice that can tell us who we really are […]" (Harris 2009: 5).

Milena Hübschmannová elaborates on hierarchical ascriptions like these, when she points out that Romani pupils are labelled as 'black'. The derogative nicknames often link to colour, such as "black mouth", "black hose", "black shoe polish" (Hübschmannová 1998). Moreover the Czech scholar also gives examples of how far this ascription from 'outside' has influenced the self-perception of the Romani community to which even sayings in the Romani language point: e.g. "Joj sukar sar papin" ("She is beautiful like a goose") (Šebková 2000: 14) – and geese are imagined to be white; or vice versa: "džungalo sar kalo Rom" ("ugly as a black Romani man") (Hübschmannová 1998).

The second result (besides essentialisation and naturalisation) in the ascription of 'ethnicity'/'race' is its homogenizing effect. To underline this tendency, we would like to quote a definition on which the documentation of Romani residential places in Slovakia in 2004 was based. The study itself (*Atlas rómskych komunit*) was commissioned by the *Office of the Governmental Plenipotentiary for Romani Issues* and the definition of 'being Romani' was as followed:

"The Romani community was defined as a group of people that is defined by the majority as Roma, based on anthropologic characteristics, cultural belonging, the way of life – lifestyle, living space and subjectively perceived as different – and this in a positive as well as in a negative way".[5] (N.N. http://www.romovia.vlada.gov.sk/3554/list-faktov.php)

5 Original quote: "Rómska komunita bola definovaná ako skupina ľudí, ktorú majorita subjektívne definuje ako Rómov na základe antropologických znakov, kultúrnej príslušnosti, spôsobu života – životného štýlu, životného priestoru a rovnako subjektívne vníma túto skupinu ako odlišnú, a to v pozitívnom ako aj negatívnom zmysle."

This statement implies that all Romani men and women in Slovakia have the same features and characteristics based on which they can be identified and put in a 'Romani box'. Whatever the self-affiliation of the people counted might be, by using this approach for research it was not taken into consideration.

Academic debates that were aimed at the contestation of 'race'/'ethnicity' have reacted to their imagined homogeneity by focussing on heterogeneities in the occurrence of 'ethnicity' as an aspect of social/cultural communication. These works have shown that the ascription of 'race' is neither linear nor unambiguous, and racialised communities are both complex in their structures as well as frequently subject to changes. This development occurs alongside a growing differentiation in the respective academic debates. For instance American social scientists have laid an emphasis on how multi-layered racialising ascriptions are, as by distinguishing between colorism and racism (Harris 2009: 1). This differentiation appears to be of relevance for the discussed subject, as Romani belonging is perceived extremely differently in different cultural, political and social contexts. An interesting example that should be brought up again here is the aforementioned alleged connection between migration and begging in the Austrian city of Graz. There, the words "beggars" and "Roma" are used as synonyms in public discourse and the act of begging serves as a sufficient 'ethnic' marker, regardless of skin colour (Benedik 2010: 79–80). These heterogeneities and pluralities contest the dominance of seemingly biological features in the production of Romani women and men. Additionally, it opens up the question whether this could refer to historical societies as well. To sum up, we do not consider it acceptable to use Romani belonging as an essentially 'ethnical' concept, but we suggest its appeal and content to be analysed. It is fundamental to show that the visibility of 'race'/'ethnicity' strongly depends on the standpoint from which an analysis is made.

6 Performing 'ethnicity': Considering shifting identifications

Using Romani belonging as an analytical category requires considering fluidity. This destabilisation has been brought forward particularly by theoreticians in Cultural Studies. "It is exactly this fluid chaos that we find in the multiplicity of urban 'ethnicities' where apparently coherent cultural scenes are also superimposed, one upon another, and no single, holistic shape is discernable." (Hewitt 2010: 190 (first published in 1992)). Although this analysis is 20 years old it appears still applicable to recent research questions, given that the framing of the research object is adapted, as shown in the recent statement by Pieter M. Judson, who is not as much proposing a turn

away from holistic conceptions rather than demanding its consequent recognition: "If we place persons of ambiguous or indeterminate national identity at the center of our analysis […], then the nationalist becomes the exception and we would produce a different type of history." (Judson 2012: 32).

Scholars that reformulated the notions of identity, among whom Stuart Hall takes the most prominent role, mainly triggered the fundamental shift behind this reconsideration. Hall introduced the provocative concept of *New Ethnicities,* which allows the coherent linking of various research areas with regard to Romani belonging, as for instance: The sphere of 'minority' mobilisation as well as administrative political speaking, the conditions of racialisation, the intersection of various categories of difference, the relevance of heterogeneities and ambivalences, etc. (Hall 1997: 50–59). It may seem surprising that this theoretical framework still proves to be more promising for an examination of 'ethnicities' ascribed to Romani people than bold concepts of *Situational Ethnicities.* Unfortunately, these concepts got stuck behind a *Performative Turn* and only superficially refer to a plurality of identifications (Okamura 1981; Van Rahden 1996 and 2000). Especially when dealing with the Central European and/or experiences of migration, the possibility of various belonging, dependent on situations and communicational/performative options available, becomes evident. For instance, migrants of Burgenland-Romani origin have frequently migrated to Vienna in order to lose their Romani identification in labour and friendship-networks, but may still pick it up for communication with family, friends and acquaintances in Burgenland. Thus, belonging is performed or not performed based on the situation of encounter and possible consequences of its usage.

Also with hindsight to recent research it appears decisive to look at appropriation, coding, and attribution of racialised 'identities', though contesting 'race' and 'identity'. Alongside the 'identity' controversies of the 1990s a critical use of the concept or the putting into use of alternative concepts has been established. Analysis of Romani belonging could be also linked to these debates.

In feminist scholarship, which will be discussed in detail below, the most urging questions following Hall were aiming at the link between essentialisms and certain racialising markers, such as skin-colour. Thus the conflict results from a remarkable contradiction: On the one hand, academics stress criteria of 'identity' when examining them while trying to deconstruct them on the other. Possible ways out of this dilemma are indicated in specific fields of research: Existing studies open up for alternatives, when they describe for instance members of 'white' urban youth who appear in their performance, behaviour and language, thus "the whole battery of cultural signals", as 'blacks', and denominate them as "transvestites" (Hewitt 2010: 193–194). These persons were thus given the marginalising stigma of the 'stranger', though at the same time this shows the possibilities to adapt, shift and perform 'ethnicities'.

The orientation towards performance and appropriation of 'identity' is not bound to a disciplinary background: Many social scientific and cultural studies ap-

proaches allow its adaptation, as it permits linking to community, experience, education and 'ethnicity' as classical fields of interest in social scientific research as well as the raising of issues such as power, meaning, performativity and codes, which is closer to the central focus of cultural studies. In the recent literature it is particularly the sociologist Rogers Brubaker and his concept of *groupism* that offers a link for different approaches. Brubaker not only deconstructs a traditional understanding of citizenship and 'ethnicity' and emphasises the extreme instability of these categories, but allows for the scrutiny of the act of ethnicisation and the permanent (re)production of 'race'. It is no longer looked upon as an *a priori* existing membership to an 'ethnic minority' which would be different from a normative 'majority population', but at the (situationally-dependent) production of such borders. Negotiations of belonging are often not given sufficient attention in Romani Studies which might be due to what Brubaker calls "the tendency to treat ethnic groups as substantial entities" (Brubaker 2010: 34). These theoretical positions are indispensable to an anti-essentialist controversy on Romani 'ethnicities' as they invalidate criticisms whereupon a constructivist understanding of 'race'/'ethnicity' would ignore the persistency and everyday experience of 'ethnicity' by reference to the ahistorical character of the inherent stability of 'ethnicity', which can only work as long as it is not connected to specific contexts.

7 Intersectionalities and reflections on the power of academic knowledge

As has already been mentioned above, racialisation is a process that involves various categories of difference. It is easily possible for perspectives on Romani migrants to highlight the connection between 'ethnicity', education or social position. In her pioneering works, Aiwa Ong discovered that Asians in the US were racialised according to their social position either as 'black' or as 'white' (Bednarz-Braun / Heß-Meining 2004: 60–61). Intersectional theory suggests sidestepping the hierarchisation of separate concepts. Thus the categories 'race', class and gender can be understood as fundamentally structuring modern societies. Rada Iveković suggests the conceptualisation of social interaction as a pattern that produces not but strictly hierarchically-structured grid positions. As a consequence, she claims a racialisation of gender and a gendering of 'race'/'ethnicity', connected to a hierarchical positioning on maps that are not produced independently from each other but in close interaction, involving strong interdependencies (Iveković 2005: 19–38). Iveković explains this hierarchisation as a stabilisation of dichotomies, which are inherently instable as they contradict the complexity of everyday experiences. Hierarchisation secures this process by the implementation of compli-

mentary ascriptions between the 'self' and the 'other'. Already in the early 1990s this theory was interpreted in a way that rendered the 'other' as a mere projection and thus pulled down the borders between the imagined dichotomic poles (Iveković 2005: 22–25).

In the framework of feminist philosophy differences within allegedly homogenous 'ethnic groups' were brought up and thoroughly discussed. The subsequently developed theories on difference have been marginalised in recent controversy in favour of distinctive features produced by 'race'/'ethnicity'. When relating to 'race' as a category that social actors employ in order to attain goals such as beauty, desirability, financial and political influence, differences within supposedly unambiguous groups are again omitted. Essentialising markers (skin-colour for instance) push distortions, paradoxes or situational dependencies to the back of the mind. Postcolonial theories offer a way out of this dilemma as they traditionally deal with questions of resistance and suppression. Furthermore, they allow a more complex perspective on the role of academia in these processes of racialisation, marginalisation and dynamics of silencing (De Certeau 1980; Rabasa 1987).

To sum up, we consider questions of Romani belonging as closely linked to that of unequal power-relations negotiated and communicated by groups each inscribed in dimensions of 'race'/'ethnicity', class and gender, but also age and formal education. The German publicist Roswitha Scholz suggests that the approaches we elaborated on here could be of decisive importance to an examination of Romani cultures, as the potentials of this field have so far been not utilised extensively:

"Since the 1990ies there have been plenty of discussions about hybrid identities, i.e. those in-between identities of migrants, members of ethnic minorities who are shifting between minority- and majority-culture, in postcolonial and anti-racist debates, however these issues are not at all brought up in debates about Roma."[6] (Scholz 2009: 36) .

Thus, we consider it utterly important that scholars make their own standpoints and positions in this context clear, although one can analogise the positions suggested by Critical Whiteness Studies only to a limited extent: Although European Whiteness scholars have called for studies on Romani people as European Non-Whites (Hacker / Bosch 2005: 11), there are major obstacles in its adaption. Whereas the roots of Whiteness Studies date back particularly to the deconstruction of a 'White' science by 'Black' Scholars in the Anglo-Americas of the 1960s, (the rare) interventions of this kind by members of the Romani movement have not (yet) contributed to challenging existing premises in Romani Studies (Ladner 1998). This lack immediately stresses the question for the position of the agent that was asked in Postcolonial Studies. In terms

6 Original quote: „Ist in den postkolonialen und antirassistischen Diskursen seit den 1990er Jahren auch viel von hybriden Identitäten die Rede, das heißt von Dazwischen-Identitäten von Migrant_innen, von Angehörigen ethnischer Minderheiten, die sich zwischen Minderheits- und Mehrheitskultur bewegen, so findet sich Derartiges im Diskurs um Roma kaum."

of methodology this renders Romani people visible not only as mere informants, but as relevant (thus powerful) agents within processes of production of academic knowledge. However these approaches still do not change anything about the distribution of power in academic examinations of Romani people. Thus, we emphasise that instead of idealising/romanticising the subaltern it remains important to establish a closer look at those liminal zones where the clear borders between oppression and empowerment, examiner and examinee, subject and object but also interviewee and informant are rendered questionable.

8 Conclusion

The purpose of the present contribution is to give an overview of theoretical concepts and methodological considerations deriving from Cultural Studies and Social Sciences that seem to be promising for further discussions of Romani belonging in Central Europe. As we have pointed out, Romani Studies have not only been reacting to changing frameworks of identities and politics of belonging within Romani communities, that have been challenged extensively as a result of recent political and social upheavals and new migratory exchanges. Additionally, major shifts of academic paradigms, particularly the so-called *Cultural Turns*, offered various possibilities for significant advancements of interdisciplinary academic exchange of these issues. The biggest effort to achieve this goal is the establishment of a common ground in terminology and theory, to which different disciplines and methodological approaches to current and historical contexts alike may connect. Thus, we suggest that the acknowledgment of processes of racialisation in the discussion of Romani communities might be seen as a promising approach to understand the complex and often ambivalent questions of belonging and ascription in regard to Romani belonging.

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