

Albanian roma language

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In this article, unlike the problems analyzed in other articles on Roma issues, a set of linguistic and cultural traditions of unquestionable value, we will address another issue: the language of the ethnic groups.

Analysis and interpretation of facts, phenomena or historical language problems rely on a rich material, as documented by Albanian and foreign scholars, but also by recording data collecting materials.

Studies in the field of linguistics namely those in the field of sociolinguistics, the idea that language has a track record is not new.

If we refer to Father Justin Rrota "The language is contained by the people" there comes the affiliation of the Roma people. It is true that language is one of the key indicators, but not the decisive one. Even Romany as a defining element of the community to which we speak, is presented as a dialectal varieties variety of dialects. This variety is noted in part on the level of the common language. Speaking about full unification dialectal traits, there is much more accessible satisfactory in terms of the distribution of this population anywhere in the world. Although these speaking variants, the communication is achieved between members within the community. Roma everywhere although speaks Roma dialects with changes. This is the element that keeps them in a community.

Romany, the language spoken in over 50 countries, will be recognized as a migration of thousands of kilometers, before 1000 years, from North India to Europe, then in other continents, it is a case of special interest, since summarizes some of the following features:

- Secession in the XI century of Romanes speaking community from its territory of origin.

- Long periods of speakers mobility, mobility caused by the successive persecutions and expulsions.
- Saving almost a century along the ancient language of a position with a minority, which is spoken everywhere.
- Contact with a large number of local languages, in many cases in the form of local talk too old.

Roma are the heirs of a language called romisht, practiced by most of them, but which remains in the range of a distant memory by most, especially those who came from the west of Europe, Gitans (gypsies from Spain) in the Iberian Peninsula and Gypsies in England.¹ According distribution in different parts of the world differ among themselves,

- Roma group. Eastern Roma, who live especially in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, but also in the West and the U.S., speak romishtes form that is closer to the Indian prototype;
- Sinto Group or Manush in France, especially in Germanic Europe and in France who speak a form of roma language germanised;
- Group navigation(Gitans = gypsies) of the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America, who have already lost the use of romishtes and kept only a few dozen words, to use the local language, especially the Anduluzisë Catalan and Spanish, as a kind of dictionary argotik.

Of course, all are of Indian origin and came to Europe from Asia Minor and the Balkans.²

This language has retained many features of grammar and the average modern Indian languages, and about a thousand roots, which were added to the Persian root 70, 40 Armenian, Greek 220 local borrowings and a number of European countries. Ripped off for more than five centuries from its trunk (from Kanauhi, northern India), as a result of the removal of Roma in Europe and mainly in the Southeast, Romany has not moved in parallel with its trunk, and also languages around places where they lived, in view of lexical enrichment, the rate of language development.³

¹ M. Courthiade, language policy of a national minority with locations scattered in different countries: the case of the Romani language. p.3

² M. Courthiade, is there INALCOA policy language, Romani Baxt, p.2

³ M. Courthiade: Origin of the Roma nation, stories and legends, bulletin documentation center for human rights, vëll.8, No. 3, Tirana, 2002.

As quoted above, the Roma were distributed in all countries of the world, settled in the Balkans, namely found refuge in Albania. What happened to our country? Here's some information about them.

According to various sources state, the population includes a Greek minority, concentrated in the south of the country, the Macedonian focused mainly in the Southeast, and the Montenegrin, which is mainly concentrated in Shkodra. These groups are regarded as national minorities in Albania. While other ethnic groups such as Roma and Aromanians who have lost contact with their country of origin, are considered in Albania as cultural or linguistic groups.⁴

These rule sets are assimilated with the majority of the local population. Regardless of their ethnic adapter, all these groups of people enjoy administratively Albanian citizenship. They are linguistic community composition entering the nation. Until 1960 the Albanian Roma had nomadic life. So stated also in the "protection of minorities and their rights in Albania". During the 50-year period, Roma could not get out of control of the regime, move from one province to another, which urbanised bringing in cities or agricultural enterprise. With demographic changes, many Roma families have come from other cities and districts of Albania and are mainly concentrated in the suburb of Tirana. Tirana, as the capital of Albania, provides greater opportunities for trade in particular, which has been and remains the main activity of Roma. However, their habitats are different, according to the census conducted by the Association of Democratic Union of Roma in Albania. The three tribes: *kabuxhinj*, *meçkarë*, *çërgarë* are concentrated in the main cities of Albania. The latter one jointly with the names of the tribes have treated in another article.

Something must be explained, the fact that Roma are not equal with the Egyptians, who are integrated with the Albanian people and are fully assimilated by it. But Roma speak dialects and slang.

*"Our language has been moving like us in many ways"*⁵, says a poem in the Romani primer language.

It has come with Roma from India and from there it was spreaded to the whole world with them. All Roma are known from proximity or distance thanks to the Roma language.

⁴ Geographic Atlas of the population of Albania, ethnic and religious structure, 2006, p .98.

⁵ M. Courthiade, amare ipurstik hibaqiri Agence de Communication Occitane, Besiers / Béziers, 1992.

Millions and millions of Roma in Europe talk a very clean and precise romishte. Even those who do not speak romisht, they are left to different words or remember old Roma persons who still use this language.

As any other language, it also presents a variety of dialectal variants and dialects. The term "variety dialectal or" idiom "is used to denote specific way of speaking to a small group of Roma, while the term" dialect "is reserved for the main divisions of the Romany language dialect. We are going to give here an overview of the structure of this language.

"Three layers of Roma dialect" language contained in a dialectologic structure of Romani dialects are:⁶

A. The authentic Romani dialects

As a result of the lifestyle of the speakers, which has been for a long time wandering, dialectical division by geographical area does not fit the description of the dialectologic structure, the romishtes.

Preferably a breakdown, by three layers of evolution, each with its geographic reach:

1. I of layers or *balkan - carpatho - ballto*, which is archaic, particularly from the phonological standpoint:

In the dialects of the Balkan dialects layer of Roma in Albania are part the kabuxhisht, meçkarisht, erlishtja and t'hare-gomisht and mohoxherisht in Kosovo.

2. II Layer or *gurbet* or *gurbet-cergar* where the main dialect is gurbetisht (Serbia, Kosovo and Bosnia in some areas)

- *Çergarisht* Talk-Montenegro, Bosnia and in some areas of the country, where otherwise it is called *Shkodranishtja* And *xhambazishtja* in Macedonia and *filipixhishtja* in Greece.

3. III Layer or *kalderar-lovari* where is included widespread dialect kalderisht almost throughout Central Europe, Scandinavia, USA.

But between these layers, there are also pogadilects also distinguished by the name of "pogadisht", which is spoken in England and presented as characteristic of their type.

B. And finally separated too early from layer I, the subgroup *carpatho-baltic*, are distinguished dialects *Sinto-Manush*- Germany, Italy and France.

⁶ M. Courthiade, *ibid* p. 15-17.

Modern linguistics has proven that a full unification is not achieved, especially in terms of distribution of speakers of this language through several states. It's enough to approach different dialects between them so as not to have trouble idioms in the communication. So the languages maintains their character, only gradually eliminating elements that prevent Roma language intercomprehension in space.

So, in the analysis of scientific studies on ethnic language of a population, the language is one of the key indicators, but not the most crucial one. But as we saw in this element of the community we are talking about it's crippled, or rather this community have no specific language in the Balkan Peninsula. According the settlements where these members of this population lives they speak the language of that country or migrated to a close pass of the Balkans. Thus, for example, in Macedonia, the cities of Ohrid, Struga, Resje and speak Albanian Tosk dialect, while the area of Debar and Shkodra speaks gheg dialect. Likewise, in Elbasan. In Kicevo, in Prelep and a part of the Manastir area they speak Macedonian, and the rest as in most of Eastern Macedonia, speak Turkish. In Serbia all the persons prefer to speak Serbian, but in the area of Kosovo and Metohija, the native language is Albanian. In all these countries the members of this community are bilinguist, so thry live in conditions of bilingualism or a part of them are polyglots (many languages).

Let us remember that Romany faced for several years a new environment with all the "lexical shock" that the latter one presented. We can say that any renewal or discovery of an object can be the case even of a borrowed foreign word. Eg the word "churi" that means pocket knife, traditional of a Roma man, but also has taken the meaning of "table knife", it's used in almost all layers of Roma speaking.

However, Albania's meçkar Roma, use the word "churi" only when referring to the old object (the man pocket knife), borrowing for the second meaning the word point (from albanian knife) in this speaking Roma layer. Also the word "caro" which means plate, an old Indian word, it's not known anymore, but only to the old meçkar, since this word has left the meaning, in terms of plate in Western languages, the word server, plate, from albanian plate (the latter one originary from Italian). If both objects and both words survive near each other we can talk here about lexical richness. If the old object disappears and takes with him the lexemes that names it, obviously we are dealing with a language and cultural loss.

Roma language anywhere is influenced by the population language in the environment in which they live or have lived. But the dialectal features, the various borrowings from the languages of particular groups are the elements which determine the division between them, which is impossible not to be under a bilingual effect. But language is not a barrier to communication.

It can be proved that any Roma group is defined by the language or the dialect and this language characterizes it as a group. Meçkars, kabuxhinjt and çergar have their own dialect. As we can change profession and the way of life also it can even change the language of a Roma group to another. And it's not just the case of the language of people around, but also with another rom dialect. The study of nowadays have reached such conclusions that they can use their language as a tool for autoisolation in contact with the surrounding community when they don't want to be understood. In cities where they are concentrated, especially in Elbasan, Tirana, Pogradec, Bilisht, Berat in Peqin in meetings that we had with Roma traders, in particular discourse situation turns out that they fit well enough where they work and live using the Albanian language. But when they want not to be understood they use the roma language.

Here's what our landlord Xhemal Mustafa claims, in a roma family, born in Pogradec and focused in Elbasan:

"...neighborhood seller, means a young Roma, can find out everything, but there are times when she do not understand people, she uses signs, according to the respective denominations. "

So, roma have learned naturally the albanian language, just as a necessity in the daily communication process and as a result of contact with other members of the non - roma communities.

But this is not the general situation, because there are some cases that have learned Albanian in school, especially in a time period of 50 years after the development of the country. Xhemaliu is one of those who owns albanian very well, but also greek, turkish, jugoslavian even a little arabic. But in the family they speak only romisht.

But what evidence the studys about the written roma language? Until now we have dealt in it in a colloquial stage. It is true. But we can say paradoxically that writers are they who build the language based on elements inherited from linguistic heritage and analysis of data and linguists, which currently play an important role in the verification of the existence of language, based in one or more linguistic norm. Many factors have played a role in arguing this fact, mainly

separation of where they live today, as in the communist era, the majority of Roma writers, were considered the best cases of groups within the state and not as a multiterritorial nation or transborder.

In these conditions, their vision was most often the province and Roma people fits spontaneously to the prevailing language rate.

Manus Leks, philologist and translator from Moscow, who in his infancy had a solid idea and quickly requested a interdialectal rate. It is true that an international literary magazine, subtitled *Loli phabaj*, Or "*Red apple*" attempted to be published around 1970, but only managed three numbers. Others, most enjoyed until 1990, with local publications, although all they were aware of European reprints common Romani. Once the opening of borders offered this opportunity, mainly Rajko Djuric and Ali Krasic in Yugoslavia, Tera Fabianova in Czech Republic, Sali Ibrahimi in Bulgaria and Jeta Duka in Albania and others attempted to publish and circulation prewar authors.

An interesting example in Yugoslavia opened the way to numerous studies. Young Roma joined together in the 70s and 80s in Skopje - Pristina to read in a common language and share poems, which were oppressed in typewriters with carbon paper to have as much copies. It is clear that they do not follow any rule and these fragments called "*lila* " (letters) serve more as memory books and public reading, rather than written text. Some publications, such as those in Macedonia by Muharram Serbezovski keep this character in Roma language, when Croatian translation is done very carefully. As in most languages where the standard of writing reveals most of the production is poetry, because a limited vocabulary fails completely to follow a strong message. However, a creation in the field of prose began to be published on one side with an author from Yugoslavia, Ali Krasic and by the other side many youngs began to publish their writings, which emerged in the magazine "*Romano gendalos*" or "*Roma mirror*" in Prague. However it should be noted that the protection and preservation of this language was not always the object in Roma associations programs. Thus, the association of Pre - war gypsy in Romania had the program to destroy the Roma language to exempt their children from a very special stigma. In 1933 was held the first Gypsy Congress in Budapest. While in the postwar period unlike the pre - war period, starting mainly from the 60s-, being language moved progressively as a key to Roma identity, not only between the speakers, but also between countries or countries

where the language was almost gone, as was Spain. Like for any community, this approach is manifested by a series of attitudes that demand a symbolic language without using up the final defense of a local form, passing in an international development aspirations in the roma language.

Many questions posed, not as clearly formulated: *Which roma language? Why such a dialect and not another? Howmany are they? What do they express? In which circumstances oral or written? etc..*

The first World Roma Congress organized in London in 1971 proclaimed the equality of dialects and decided not choosing a privileged dialect as the basis of a common language and a language central choice concepts formulated as:

"No dialect is higher than others. However we need a normalized central dialect that we could use in congresses and international press. "

Also, the Congress released a first draft script and created a linguistic commission of Roma Union. This process served as a starting point for all subsequent developments that were crucial from 1971 to 1990 for the processing of what is called " Summary language ".

One of the main arguments is that if there is a shortage of foreign vocabulary, which has intervened in every roma word, the old base is in an unprecedented unity. Often called the old *prebalkanic* base, although it is built before the arrival or before the contacts with the balkans.

We compared this common source of human prebalkanic stem in that is the same for everyone, but that spins and decorated differently in different countries, which are associated with European loans.

In a climate of a controversial affirmation members of a common language evolve rapidly committee under the language and political diasistem concept, which means: a graph is based on a common set of rules or norms of a specific reading for each talk that allows the realization of its spelling, confronting and affective load respected speakers in dialectical heritage and bringing language to the level of writing. This method finished in the Fourth World Roma Congress in 1990 in Warsaw. The congress was realized through the adoption of a common script for all dialects, but above all an analysis of this protocol so that it alphabet to transcribe all varieties of pronunciation. This method that was called "codification" established a code of graphic text with

its functionally protocol of the different dialects. This identification is faced though in four linguistic boundaries:

- a. Changes are not always written in a restrictive common when:
eg equivalence of one dialect to another is a series of closed as contentious problem;
representative forms are tried as options in the "language of the collection." Eg
nilaj-layer 1 = wine-layer; nihaj layer 2, 3 = wine
mukhel-layer 1 = leave
mekel-layers 2 and 3 = leave
- b. Sometimes it is about interdialctal equivalent from different diasinonims roots. For the same purpose they have been adapted before, but in synchrony hypothesis often stated that diasinonims have close meanings. But at this stage distinct language, they become synonymous in common language, as they absorbed either semantic or stylistic way.
E.g:
Men and reap = neck (but gutup "chin")
Zukel and rikono = dog
Xudel and xutrel = catch, get, arrive, etc..
- c. Loans can not be reduced to a common written (graph) (only if we need help from the ideograms). The acceptable solution that progressively blocks the communication with a roma word is coming from other dialects and sometimes through borrowings and neologisms.
Eg stomako-kuzum stomach or replaced with kunzum from balt dialects;
The same thing with: thumbuk "big box" instead of various local borrowings.
Neologisms examples:
Dis rig "East" (dis "sun goes" + regen "place")
Somagi (chord) son-of-ogi + common spirit, etc.).
- d. Some dialects are so far removed from common roma language, that it is impossible to enter into the process of deciding the language of the summary. It is the case of dictionaries of the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula, as well as some peripheral dialects *kaab* of Finland, *romhoivat* Northern Italy, *sintet* Germanic countries and Piedmont etc.. These idioms can not be taken into consideration in the process of

changing interdialects, but can behave as material elements of the dictionary. The solution was left to decide how the speakers are positioned in relation to the abstract language.

These examples give us an idea of the main methods applied for enrichment of roma language and its modernization: the reactivation of old elements with or without semantic adaptation, generalization of waste dialect, internal derivatives, loans etc.. We do not analyze here all these classical methods, because they are general; there is a further an important literature on their detailed operation in roma language.

In contrast with codification that was decided on the plan of the graphics principles (text) and interdialects finished reading, vocabulary issues should be considered in any detail, because they represent the majority of the language situation. In the administrative plan, this has latter expanded its activities in the framework of "groups and operations research in roma linguistics " set out "*Rromani Baxt* " with the support of CRT, which funded from 1992 to 1996 on the budgets of the European Commission (DG 22: Education, training, youth), meetings of its members and the exchanges between them, and a part of the publication. Number of associates amounted to 35 which generally were almost all roma intellectuals. Jobs and results were approved by the World Roma Congress (Prague 24 to 28 July 2001). The commission became "a commissariat of languages and linguistic rights." This decision takes one and separate the contents of this progress, whose slogan was: "*We are a nation* ". Many roma researchers, mainly linguists are concerned by recent developments in roma language and the danger of extinction of the main dialectal forms.

Fernandez - Vest (2000: 14) rightly addressed the question:

" The roma language experience can help in a realistic review of the classification of the languages in danger? If such dialects focus towards a common linguistic form either single or multi-form, eliminating foreign elements and disturb communication channels, gaining the ability to express meanings that exceed the home, may well consider that these variants are lost languages, dead or killed. The museal ⁷ zproach is not stable, it is

⁷ With this perspective the Museum of Comparative Sociology center of Vienna has designed in 1994, adopted by UNESCO, a ban on writing or modernization of Romany considering any changes to undermining the cultural heritage of humanity. Through its observed rate of rejection of such a project versus speakers located in

important to review it in a dynamic perspective that corresponds to the language used by all "deviations" and that could complicate it.

One of the criticisms made by gipsy critics on summary writing is that one what made it difficult to identify the dialect written to facilitate communication.

Some journals agree to publish a summary of language shifts (eg gypsy studies in France), most insist on the exotic side (foreign) and spice of borrowings and letters (grafive) foreign. Thus, in Italy, was published a primer on the basis of the speech "*romhorvat*" characterized by the replacement of more than half of roma vocabulary (by inserting numbers, body parts, etc..), croatian words. Several families use that mix of language, while no primer is not published in roma "normal" language spoken by 70,000 people in Italy.

Also two "codifications" (identification) are carried out in Austria: one for the speech - *lovari* - (with graph - *writing* - czech) and one for the speech of Burgenland, (with graphs - *writing* - german), by determining the difference between them while making illegible one or another language speakers. These rates indicate that roma are not qualified to teach a particular alphabet and since they refer to, have tens "language" in Europe with different alphabet and roma are entitled to tens of "language" with multiple roma graph (writing).

Finally, we can not leave without mention the great scientific study work of Dr. Marcel Kurtiade (Marccel Courthiade) residing in France, who with primer and Romisht-albanian dictionary, Albanian-romisht has laid a strong foundation for learning of all the albania's roma everywhere to write their language. Not only, but all the relevant linguistic analysis about this language indicates that this language is moving towards integration, not assimilation.

Also, historical and linguistic studies have advanced the scientific and historical truth of the existence of the roma people, as a vital nation and with a wider culture.

pazgjerueshme forms of thought, if only to abandon their native language to the needs of modern life. For each cause, although it is possible to express years with a vocabulary of some 300 lexemes, this should not in any case constitute a defense strategy against bringing a new vocabulary and new concepts etc.. This breakthrough is imminent as Roma Europeans etc..

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