

BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN TEXTUALITY: THE *LILA* OF THE YOUNG RROMANI POETS IN KOSOVIJA

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Until recently, the worldwide aspiration of endowing one's language with a written form seemed alien to the Rromani people. The few attempts at writing by Rromani authors — first in the 20s in the Ussr, then in the 70s in various countries — were far from mirroring the vividness of the Rromani language and folk culture, and rather surprisingly the Rroms ranked on this account among the last ethnic groups in Europe without a written language, beside the Lemkos, Istrians, Bobostans, Meglenites, Pomaks etc... However the salient difference between the former and latter is that, while the other groups, geographically very restricted, have only a faint ethnic consciousness and are vanishing, the Rroms - who number several millions and are dispread in numerous countries, are deeply aware of their identity and strongly attached to their language. This can be exemplified by statements like *Rrom biandilôm, Rrom ka merav* "I was born a Rrom, I will die a Rrom", *Kaj te za, isi Rroma* "Any place you go to there are Rroms" *Kon lažàla pe čhibathar lažàla vi pe ratesθar/diaθar* "Who is ashamed of his language is ashamed of his blood/mother" *Sa i phuv ušadam/ a pale Rroma achilam* "We walked around the earth and still Rroms we remained (a verse by Gási) *Sa o Rroma phrala* "All the Rroms are brothers", etc...

Generally speaking, the Rroms' affection for their mother tongue is expressed at two levels: the *rromani čhib* as a whole and the tribal idiom. It is well know fact that Rroms of different countries can pretty easily understand each other, even if each of them is speaking his own dialect, as long as the conversation deals with domestic topics, but that intelligibility is drastically lost as soon as one enters upon subjects of modern life (administration, justice, agriculture, military etc...), due to the different origins of the borrowings which express it. The communication allowed to a certain extent by the commonality¹ of language, along with some other specificities, often has the symbolic function of identifying the partner as *amaro manus* "our folk" — even in the extreme cases when the commonality is reduced to a couple of similar sounding words, which both sides pick up carefully to extol it as an evidence of kinship (e.g. Turkish Rroms with Manush in Germany). This identification of "our man" covers more or less the gazo/rrom distinction, since the status of non Rromani-speaking Rroms (Kalé in Spain, Kaale in Finland, Gypsies in England, Màngo in Yugoslavia etc...) depends rather on occasional moods and personal feelings, than on any objective elements.

The other, lower level of self-definition is the tribe (*fisa, sòrta, vica, ràca, nàcia, vèra, endani* or *endaĵ etc...*) with its specific idiom; it can on occasion be dissociated from the rest of the Rroms almost as sharply as the Rroms as a whole are put in opposition to the non-Rromani world. This paradoxal disjunction happens not only between settled and wandering groups, but also between any two groups and if somebody endeavours to recall that "all Rroms are brothers", he should not be surprised then to be replied sometimes *Phrala ? Ža ker phraliĵa lenĵar!* "Brothers ? Well, just try to make brotherhood with them!" Nevertheless, as in all human communities from the family to the nation, the internal solidarity is usually stronger than internal discrepancies and prevails when the existence of the allogeneous surrounding is taken under consideration. More often than an ethnic dissociation from other groups, one can hear depreciatory words about their idiom: *So phari čhib isi len! Amari si po lokhi/gudli!* "How heavy/difficult is their language! Ours is easier/sweeter!" Even if a couple of words differs in two closely related dialects, v.g. *foro/diz* "city", *šukar/lačhes* "well", this can be enough to

¹ The commonality *T* between different linguistic varieties (dialects of a language or various languages) may oscilate between 100% and 0%; it is better expressed by the "dialectometrical distance" *d* between these linguistic varieties, which is drawn from *T*. As a result of a series of comparisons in several linguistic fields, $d < 1$ has been retained as the distance between two idioms which are dialects of a common language, while $d > 1$ expresses the distance between two separate languages (non-Rromani examples : the lexico-statistical distance between unified Albaian and the northern dialect [geg] is $d = 0,4$ U; the distance between literary Turkish [öz türk] and Kosovian Turkish is $d = 0,8$ U; the distance between Italian and French is $d = 3,6$; the distance between Bulgarian and Macedonia [both literary] is $d = 1,2$ U; the distance between Rromani and Hindi is $d = 4,92$ U; example with far related languages : Rromani-Serbo-Croatian $d = 29,6$ U. The distance between all Rromani dialects of Kosovia oscillates between $d = 0,02$ and $0,18$ U, while at the European level, most dialects stand between 0 and $0,70$ U of each other, with the exception of common Rromani/Sinto(circa 1) and common Rromani/Spanish Caló (over $1,8$ U).

make both sides assert that they cannot understand each other, whereas nobody would question the possibility of understanding each other between speakers of far more or less noticeable commonality of language operates as a symbolic evidence of the ethnic links.

Besides contempt toward other dialects, one can encounter the opposite reaction as well: extolling one of them as more genuine. This happens especially when Rroms of a group, settled for a long time in a country, feel that many words of the local language have overrun their native Rromani and, at hearing an outsider group speaking, they believe that the elements they cannot identify are *ćacē rromane lava* "true Rromani words" — whereas usually these are borrowings from the language of the host country of this group². It is however clear that both reactions (praising the purity of one's own dialect as well as putting a mythic ideal Rromani in the linguistic space of another tribe) paradoxically express the same yearning for raising the value of the mother tongue.

In addition one can also run across disparaging judgements by Rroms about their own language, or more exactly about its social status: *Kon ka mangel amari ćhib? vi kon ka mangel amen?* "Who will appreciate our language? and who will appreciate us?" *O gāze and-o autobūsā pućhen amen "Sosqe na vakeren sar sa o avera ?" — ama me vakerav rromanes me manuśenćar hem and-o autobūsā, hem and-o dukānā* "The Gadjes in busses ask us "Why don't you speak as everybody else?" - but I keep speaking Rromani with my folk in busses and shops as well"³. Answering a professor who had asked him how the Rroms write their language, a Gurbet from Korća (Albania)⁴ replied with little logic: "How could we write it? It is a stolen language! (i.e. made of loan-words of all kinds)". All these persons change their mind as soon as they see and touch publications written, even partly, in Rromani and one is impressed by the joy of poorly literate people deciphering Rromani words in books and commenting "What a good thing!". Thus it would be radically wrong to maintain that the Rroms never tried to write their language due to lack of affection for, or interest in, it or more romantically because, as I was once told by a journalist, "they refuse to chain their language, free as a wild melody in the wind, into chapters and paragraphs"... Another evidence for this is the warmth young Rroms show when hearing about all projects of schooling in Rromani, of Rromani ABC books (the word *alphabet* is widely used in this meaning), etc...

The reason why the first texts by Rromani authors appeared so late should not be ascribed to any cultural indifference or to an incapacity of the language, but merely to the socio-economical conditions of Rromani life. It would be beyond the scope of this paper to analyse all the factors which delayed the emergence of a Rromani written literature., but some of them can be mentioned: first of all the daily struggle for bread, the position at the bottom of the social "chain of dependency", contacts mostly with illiterate people, the continuous need of defence against the socio-racial prejudices of the "host" peoples, the lack of hierarchical structure larger than the tribe and of a space of reference⁵, a quite

² This can be exemplified by words like *rrugil = rugisarel* "to pray" or loan-translations like *devlesqi gurumnćerri* "fire bug" (*Pyrrhocoris apterus*) which are of Romanian origin (a *ruga*, *vaca domnului*) but regarded as genuine Rromani in some parts of Yugoslavia.

³ The same person told me that one of her neighbours is so *bare-godćeqi* "arrogant, haughty" that she speaks *gaćikane* even home and everybody calls her *kali gaći* "black gadgee". It would be of the utmost interest to gather such data and analyse them in sociolinguistic terms.

⁴ Although till now there are not yet Rromani schools or cultural institutions in Albania (which can be easily explained for objective reasons: lack of a Rromani literary language, lack of experience and of specialists in this field in the country as well as abroad, priority of more vital needs such as self-sufficiency of the country in food, public health etc...), the Labour Party of Albania conducts a consistent antidiscriminatory policy, which is not to everybody's taste. In this respect, the chapter devoted by the former Albanian leader Enver Hoxha to the Gypsies and his personal friendship with them (in *Vitet e Vegćelisē*, Tirana 1983, which was radiobroadcasted a couple of times; a French translation was published in *Etudes Tsiganes*, Paris 1984/1) was a valuable contribution with great influence on public opinion, as I could notice. It is worth mentioning that in Albanian areas, the fate of the Roma was comparatively happier than in most European countries, which has been ascribed to various factors : the well-known Albanian tradition of hospitality, the humanism of the Moslem tradition, the tolerancy of the *millet* system but also more objective factors such as the specific repartition of the Rromani population in Albania, the still strong rural tradition of main areas, the sound economic fonction of the Rromani in remotod villagesetc... Be that as it may, this made easier the Rrom's participation to the political and cultural life.

⁵ Lately, the "discovering of India" by Roma leaders makes up for a "fatherland", at least in mythic terms, which explains the infatuation of many young educated Roma, especially in Yugoslavia, for the *Baro Than* "Great land", its mythology and even its political leaders — who were all in excellent terms with Tito.

understandable aversion for administration, which has been historically used mainly to crush them but is today a necessary link for the access to books, schooling, decent jobs etc... These are some of the objective reasons which prevented the Rromani culture from enlarging itself with a written expression.

Be that as it may, these obstacles are at present gradually being surmounted and in recent decades Rroms of different countries have begun to write "educated" literature, especially poetry. Quite surprisingly the first attempts in these field were advanced by Gadges, who wrote some translations and even original lyrics (not a lot) in Rromani as early as the turn of the century. The first attempts of written Rromani literature were developed in the pre-war Ussr by Rromani authors like Herman, Dudarova, Pankov, Satkiewić, Hrustalō, Rom-Lebedev, Bezliudsko etc... After WW2, one may regard Papuša's (Bronisława Wajs) verses as the first real step toward written literature, although they rather pertain to oral improvisation and would have disappeared at least as personal creations if the author had not been decided by Ficowski to write them down and mail them to him. The case of the several Rroms, from Slobodan Berberski to Bari Karoly, whose poetry is composed in non-Rromani languages, is not relevant to our purpose. The emerging Rromani literature in Hungary and Slovakia presents very peculiar features and is worth a study by itself. Currently Yugoslavia is the country where the movement has the broadest and most interesting development. One can distinguish there two trends which differ on both literary and social levels: an elitist one, in Serbia and Voivodina, which practically amounts to one poet's name: Rajko Djurić and a more diffuse and popular one, in Kosovia and Macedonia, which is represented by dozens of young writers.

Rajko Djurić's first book, which he doesn't acknowledge any more (*O Rrom rodel than telav kham* "The Rrom is looking for a place under the sun" — 1967) was characterised by a plain, almost prosaic form and a content rather set forth than suggested; in some respect, it ushered in the "poems" of the second trend, although it differed deeply from them by its lack of folk element and its stronger engagement for the defence of Rromani people and culture. Rajko Djurić is a Gurbet (one of the main tribes) educated among Serbians; he is a sociologist and a philosopher. He has written on occasion about history and politics. He has a responsible job in the main Yugoslav daily newspaper *Politika*. All this may explain why, from his second book onwards, he introduces into the Rromani language the patterns of Yugoslav or even cosmopolitan modern poetry rather than developing the genuine Rromani Spirit — even if he does consciously insert elements from Rromani folk culture and also from Indian mythology : "Human fate and Rromani fate are but variants of each other" — he says. As a result he is more read and esteemed abroad than in the poor Rromani neighbourhoods...

The other trend (in Macedonia and Kosovia) stands probably far lower than Djurić in artistic terms, but it is definitely more interesting for ethnological and historical research. While the former represents a jump from folk culture to modern, and even avant-garde poetry, the latter may be followed in all intermediate stages of its transformation. This is of particular interest since we have few documents of such a process in the history of world literatures. Namely, in languages with an ancient written tradition, the links between the two kinds of textuality have been considered of poor value and subsequently not preserved. In languages which have recently acceded to a written form, the intermediate stages often are also missing because the first authors have studied in other languages, often abroad in countries of ancient written tradition and usually directly import foreign patterns into their own culture while coining its written form (in a way which recalls Djurić's proceeding). This first step is usually followed by an eventual renationalisation of the culture.

A distinct case is represented by languages the written forms of which have been fixed artificially by translators of the Bible, who often lack sufficient care for, and knowledge of, the language but leave the Holy Scriptures as a reference support for further writing. Here again the imposition of an external norm replaces a progressive evolution.

On the contrary — and this is of special interest not only for Rromology but also for persons who study the genesis of non-collective literature — one can observe in Kosovia, and to a lesser extent in Macedonia, practically all the stages of the birth and development of a written individual poetry. Some of the most representative items chosen among the plentiful material gathered in Kosovia are presented here in order to exemplify the early stages which link an emerging written literature to its oral background. This evolution can be observed at five levels:

1) Material support. Rašidi's "Mother's Death" was scrawled on an old address-book page, while Ćakatòli showed some aesthetic concern in the front page of his first note-book. He used eventually a type-writer, as do also Binak and Osmani, who issued several copies of what they call *lila* (v.infra) by means of tracing paper: roughly typed sheet of paper, just clasped or bound in a note-book cover. As for Jašarević, Gàši and others, their samizdats count from 30 to 50 pages and look like real booklets; this is the last step before regular edition.

2) Manner of use. No doubt Rašidi's "Mother's Death" would have sunk into the pool of anonymous folk literature if the author had been illiterate and had not wished to help his memory by means of a written text. Rašidi is also the author of less traditional poems, that he wrote down for himself in note-books in order to read them in family or fellowship meetings. This is the outstanding feature of this "written oral literature": the overwhelming majority of these texts is intended for oral transmission by recitation or reading. The written form is just a secondary support and this is true even when it looks like a regular booklet. In this last case the diffusion may amount to several dozens of copies, but is considered but a complementary device. This situation cannot be maintained for long, because the memory gets weaker when it knows it can rely on a written aid the role of which will keep increasing. On occasion oral diffusion may include radio-broadcasting.

3) Spelling. The most primitive authors, such Rašidi, Osmani, Ćakatòli as a beginner, used the Croatian script which in fact fits poorly to the phonological system of Rromani. Zekir, Demiri and others even tried to write in Serbian Cyrillic characters. Later on two tendencies emerged: one is the use of a variant of the *Rromano Kongrèso* spelling, as Binak does while the other is the use of the *Rromani Maškarutno Lekhipen* "Interdialectal Spelling"⁶, a polylectal system of writing, which originated in Kosovia.

4) Content. The content of the poems underwent a considerable evolution from pieces like Rašidi's "Mother's Death", which in no way differs from the Albanian epic, altogether narrative and impersonal, to verses where the voice of the author sets forth his most intimate feelings in a more and more individual way; as one can see from the examples, the fate of the Rroms is a frequently chosen topic.

5) Form. In contrast to the content, one can hardly speak of an evolution of the form, from the oral tradition to the primitive written poetry, at least in this area, where both are characterized by extremely loose formal rules, if any: no rhymes, no rhythmical regulation (in contrast to East European Rromani folk poetry, for example). Instead of that, when asked about formal norms, young Rromani poets usually mention the following: the sentence must fit with the intonation, which seems for them of the utmost importance, even more sometimes than the text itself; they do not hesitate to twist words, insert extra syllables or use incorrect grammatical forms for the sake of a "better sound"; many insist that some words or groups of words have to recur at intervals. One gets the impression that these "rules" are still so unconscious, diffuse and loose that the authors can not formulate them and they follow a feeling inherited from the oral literature they could hear and also from the only other "literary" genre most of them know: the hits of light music, which flourishes in Yugoslavia in Rromani as well as in other languages: songs by Esma, Šaban, Ramće, to mention but some among the most famous names... All this characterizes oral textuality (or even music), which shows again that at this early stage the written text is secondary to the spoken one.

As a further link between the two kinds of textuality, one can mention here the existence of a feedback process from written to oral culture: Rašidi's uncle Islam, an exceptional tale-teller, has

⁶ In other words, the *Lekhipen*, instead of being a mere transcription of the trivial realisation of a particular idiom, renders in writing the deeper basis which is common to all dialects; this is achieved by means of a common spelling of the consistent interdialectal correspondences, while the transition to the strict pronunciation level is governed by a set of reading rules (only a few for each dialectal variety); which bridge most of the dialectal divergences and therefore render in reading the genuine sounds of the given dialect. Thus the use of the *Maškarutno lekhipen* brings the different dialects closer to each other in writing than they would have been if written in a phonetic script. As a result, it preserves in writing the mutual intelligibility of oral communication because it renders only the relevant and meaningful phonological features and drops those features (sandhi, etc...) which are just a matter of occasional pronunciation and would "break" on the paper the interdialectal understanding of the spoken language.

embodied in his repertoires numerous elements from written sources, including school readers: the tale of the two apples is an example. Similarly, it is clear that Rašidi's text "Barbara" is his personal reinterpretation of Jacques Prévert's "Barbara", to which he had access through a translation into a local language: unfortunately he missed the basic meaning of the original poem and retained only a handful of images linked to a love affair.

The developing of a written language demonstrates the speakers' will to use modern devices to expand one's culture. It also creates the need for new words to express new things and acts. It is worth examining the solutions employed by the Rroms of Southern Yugoslavia.

All of them dream of real Rromani books, which they call *rromane libre*, *knige* or *knjige* (Albanian, Macedonian and Serbo-Croatian loanwords). Rroms who feel the need of a genuine Rromani word often use *lil*, lit. "paper", although the meaning is at the same time too indeterminate and, at least among "poets", nowadays specialized for the roughly typed sheets of paper, just clasped or bound in a note-book cover, which they put in circulation and read in meetings and cultural clubs. Proposals like *lilali* or *lilutni* were some time in use, while the Indian borrowing *pustak* (fem.) can be heard more and more often along with three different alterations: mainly *pustik* but sometimes *pusti* and *pust* as well (all fem.) The identity of the *-ik* and *-i* endings is regular (cf. *čhurik* = *čhuri* "knife") whereas the change of *pusti* for *pust* can be explained by the common plural *pustă*, the link between these three forms and *pustak* is still unclear. These words are broadly used in Skopje and on occasion in Prishtina, Titograd and Belgrad; they may have been brought by Rroms who have visited India or just picked up from Indian phrase-books — this kind of contact and subsequent borrowings is not to be neglected.

Since there is no native word in Rromani⁷ either for "to read" and "to write" (local loan-words are in use: *čitil*, *čitinel*, *ledzonel* "to read", *škruiinel*, *pišinel*, *jazël*, *jazdinel*, *ramosarel*, *xramonel*, *ukuinëla*, *irinel* etc... "to write"), some of them found original solutions: *drabarel* which means "to tell people's fortune out of the palm of the hand" is widely used by a beautiful analogy with the meaning "to read", especially in Skopje, where Šaip Jusuf was the first to print it (although it was probably used before)⁸. In Kosovia *drabarel* "to read" is in concurrence with the Albanism *gilabel*, properly "to sing" overextended to "to read" after archaic Albanian *këndon* which had both meanings. As a result *gilabno* (fem. *-ni*) means "singer" and "reader", while *drabarno* means "reader", "fortune teller" and "herb-dealer" (in fem. for the two later). The Indian *lekh-* for "to write", introduced as *lekhel* is often heard as a false causative *lekhavel*, which is perhaps better as it allows to form the nomen agentis: *lekhaj* "writer" (after *rašaj* "priest" > *rašavel* "to preach", *raj* "lord" > *ravel* "to manage", etc... For "writer" one encounters also *xramondo* (which stands on Găši's visit card: RROMANO XRAMONDO) and *gaj* or *gajak(o)* of unclear origin.

A semantic distinction was attempted in Prizren between the two dialectal variants *anav* for "name" and *alav* (written *allav*) for "word", more usually rendered by loan-words like *svăto* or *lăfi* (pl. *lăfa*, *lăfura*, *lăforă*). Most linguistic terms are borrowed from the international modern terminology (*silăba*, *vokăla*, *fonëma*, *gramatika*, etc...) or coined from Rromani stems (as for the articulatory points of phonemas: *danduno* "dental" < *dand* "tooth" *paldanduno* "alveolar" > *pa-* "after", *manušuno* "uvular" — the uvula is *o manuš e krlesqo*, *voštuno* or *vuštuno* "labial" < *vošt* or *vušt* "lip", etc... but also *anavni* "substantive" probably feminine under Serbo-Croatian influence : *imenica* etc...) In Prishtina I first came across the pair *muršikano* "male" and *zuvlikano* "female" used by Rroms musicians for "voiceless" and "voiced". One can be puzzled when hearing *alfabëta* with the meaning "primer, ABC books".

The amazingly vivid development of a written Rromani culture in Kosovia and Macedonia is not a coincidence. It can be related to the considerable concentration of Rroms of almost all main tribes in

⁷ One should not forget that other language do not have either native words for writing and reading. For instance, the English verb "to write" comes from *writan* "to scratch marks with something sharp", and "to read" is *raedan* "to advise, to discern" (cf. Germ. *reden*). "To read" and "to count" are varieties of the same stem in most Slavic languages (ex. Russian *hitat*; "to read" and *shitat*; "to count"). In no European language "to write" or "to read" appear as a primary verb (Latin *lego* "to gather", Greek *diabazw* < Anc. *diabibazw* "to carry over, to carry through", Alb. *lexoj* < Latin, but Geg dialect of Alb. *knoj* "I read" < Latin *canto* "to sing" — under Church Slav. influence etc... for only popes would formerly read — and sing at the same time, when saying mass). Even "to spell" in English had a magic meaning..

⁸ Finnish Rromani distinguishes *drabarel* "to tell fortune" and *drabavel* "to read (books, letters etc...)"

this area, which has the highest percentage in Europe: some 2,2% to 2,3% officially, but more likely some 8 or 10%⁹. Rromani groups there are compact, to be counted in thousands in most cities and in tens of thousands in Skopje, with the so-called "Gypsy capital" of Šutka. The nonpareil dynamism of the Albanian culture after World War II certainly influenced many young Rroms in Kosovia as a model and an incitation to *vazden i rromani kultūra* "raise the Rromani culture" for most Rromani poets there are of Albanian tradition as evidenced not only by their names, but also by the fact that their second language is Albanian and by the Albanian words and themes in their poetry. The progress of literacy among the Rroms, thanks to Tito's educational policies, played a decisive role here: it should be pointed out that written Rromani appeared with the very first completely literate generation — this fact evidences the affection the Rroms have for their language. Albanian intellectuals, mainly dr Rexhep Qosja and dr Rexhep Ismaili, have been sincerely interested in this evolution.

The phenomenon I have attempted to describe here is still weak due to the fact that it relies upon the Rroms themselves, as private persons with quite modest pecuniary resources and literary education. Nevertheless the sincere interest of many a Yugoslav official for Rromani matters allows us to hope that one day this interest will be embodied in concrete facilities which are beyond the reach of the Rromani population if not supported by the State: in both material and moral respects (mass-media, cultural institutions and seriousness in working out and popularizing a scientifically grounded implement of communication, which can be based on the so-called *Maškarutno Lekhipen*). A series of realizations (one hour of Rromani weekly in eight schools in Kosovia, several hours of radio-broadcasting, one to three Rromani books a year, a Rromani theatre company in Skopje, many records and cassettes, the 15-minute weekly Rromani TV-transmission *Anglunipen* in Prishtina etc...) attest that this hope is not vain. On the other hand, the publication of the first prose book (*Çergarenqe jaga* by Ali Krasnić, a short stories volume, Prishtina 1981) as well as sporadic self-edited periodicals (like *Rromano alav* "Rromani word" or *Rromano drom* "Rromani Road" — not to mention *Krlo e Rromenqo* "Voice of the Rroms" and the international *Loli phabaj* "Red Apple") show that Rromani written literature has grown well beyond the genre every emerging literature first cultivates — poetry — and that it is only a matter of years before great Rromani writers will be able to bring their contribution to the best of modern world culture.

A FEW SAMPLES OF RROMANI POETRY FROM KOSOVIDA

<p>MERIBE E DIAQO <i>Gafur Rašidi</i></p> <p>O Dev!la Tu bare!a Ked zàna an-o maripe o phrala an-o Kosovo Enia phrala A o dèšto o purano Vebia Molinël i daj e Devles Te del olaqe o Devël jakha hem parne phakha te /eñni an-o Kosovo Te dikhël enia phralen Hem e deštone e purane Vebia O Devël dindã la jakha hem o phakha Hem o phakha bare hem parne Urandã an-o Kosovo Ked ali odothe Arakhlã olen mule Enia phrala ònia kòple Kotar-o kòple ònia šuže grasta</p>	<p>THE MOTHER'S DEATH</p> <p>Oh God You great (one) When the brothers go to the War at Kosovo-Polje Nine brothers And the tenth Vehbi the eldest The mother prays to God That God gives her eyes and White wings to fly to Kosovo-Polje To see nine brothers And the tenth Vehbi the eldest God gave her eyes and wings And wings big and white She flew toward Kosovo-Polje When she got there She found them dead Nine brother nine spears By the spears nine beautiful horses</p>
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⁹ Whereas there were 168,197 self-declared Roma in Yugoslavia in 1981, most serious sources (Documentation Française) quote the estimation of 750,000, that is to say almost four times more; therefore the number of Roma in Kosovia and Macedonia, which are officially 34,126 and 43,223 could possibly reach 150,000 and 190,000; however one can suppose for different reasons that fewer Roma declared themselves non-Roma in high density areas than elsewhere and the real Rromani population is probably intermediate, not exceeding 90,000 and 120,000 (some 6% of the total population)

<p>Uzal-i olenθe ènia xolāme ruva Odothe i daj zorale-vilosqiri hine Kotar-o zoralipa jasva na mukhlā Oj dolindā enia šuže grasten Dolindā enia xolāmen <i>laven</i> Dolindā enia sokolen Oj irandā pe khere O drūmo dur Te dikhen ènia <i>udovice</i> ked ali khere Roven ènia borā Roven ènia čorrole Roven ènia šuže grasta Roven ènia xolāme zukēla Odothe i daj zorale-vilosqiri hine Kotar-o zoralipa jasva na mukhlā Pučhel i daj e borā Oj borile So dël vika e Vebiasqoro zèlenko? Te nane bokhalo sinko!? De le harri čar Šaj trušalo da De le harri pani Vakèri e bare čhavesqiri rromni O sasuj!one daj!e e Vebiasqiri Nane ni bokhalo ni trušalo Ole sikadā o Vebia kotar-o sabah ži k-o akšāmi Čar te čamčèri dromal Odothe i daj zorale-vilosqiri hine Kotar-o zoralipa jasve na mukhlā Letind,, duj gavrānā ratvale anèna o vasta e Vebiasqere Pučhël i sasuj e borā Oj borile Ava k-i daj Šaj li te penžare o vasta e Vebiasqere O daj!e Odola o vasta e Vebiasqere K-o vast i angrustik so ničai hiam Me penžarav i angrustik me rromesqiri O jasva laθar žan Lël i daj o vasta Mi phabaj zèleno phabaj Kaj barilān mo čhavo te mere odothe Laqoro vilo pharrilo E vasteça p-o kolin oj muli Pal-o phrala i daj geli Živdo vilo pharrilo enia čhavenqe Hem e deštonesqe E purane Vebiasqe.</p>	<p>Close to them nine angry wolves There the mother was strong-hearted Because of her strength she shed no tears She took nine beautiful horses She took nine angry lions She took nine falcons She returned home The road was long Till nine widows saw her back home Nine brides are crying Nine orphans are crying Nine beautiful horses are crying Nine angry dogs are barking There the mother was strong-hearted Because of her strength she shed no tears The mother asked the bride Oh bride Why is Vehbi 's dapple horse neighing? Might he not be hungry, child? Give him some grass Maybe he is thirsty too Give him some water The eldest boy's wife says Oh mother-in-law, Vehbi's mother He is neither hungry nor thirsty Vehbi showed him from morning to dusk Grass to chew along the road There the mother was strong-hearted Because of her strength she shed no tears Two bloody crows came flying They bring Vehbi's hands The mother-in-law asks the bride Oh bride come to mother Can you recognize Vehbi's hands Oh mother These are Vehbi's hands On the hand: our wedding ring I recognize my husband's ring The tears run from her The mother takes the hands My apple, green apple Where did you grow up my child to die there Her heart burst With the hands on her chest she died After the brothers went the mother too The live heart burst for nine sons And for the tenth Vehbi the eldest.</p>
<p>TE ŽANE <i>Bejta Binak</i> Tu manuše!a dural kaj ave Žan p-e kaj phuv kaj san tuj uštave But manuš lače mudardile Kaj te avel adivesutno dive</p>	<p>MAY YOU KNOW You man coming from afar Know that on this earth which you are trampling on Many fair people were killed To allow today's day to come</p>

<p>Pherdo baxt, kamipe thaj phralipe</p> <p>Kal laçhimàta kaj san tuj dikhe Našti aven khatinthe maj laçhe Se len kerda o phralipe hem o jekhipa</p> <p>Droma voša sa so san tuj dikhe Kerde e va e zutale Sa e manušenqe so sa thaj so si zuvde</p> <p>Kustik kustikaθe Me dadesqo dad me dadesqe Mo dad manqe me me çhavesqe Amanèti mekha kaj kal laçhimata Te na peren an avresqe va.</p>	<p>With happiness plenty, with love and brotherhood.</p> <p>These good things you are looking at Cannot be better elsewhere Because they were made by brotherhood and unity</p> <p>Roads, woods, everything you are seeing Were made by clever hands Everything for people who were and are living</p> <p>From generation to generation My grand-father to my father My father to me I to my son We leave a holy will and testament to protect all these good things from falling into foreign hands</p>
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<p>BIZ-O THAN <i>Agim Çakatòli</i></p> <p>3an o pampùrã but dur Na zanen kaj zan Pale avëna but paše Odori akari than našti arakhen</p> <p>3an k-o bare drùmã Bare drùmã angl-i pesθe dikhen Uzal-o stànica açon Pale dur našaldõn</p> <p>Nane len than Kotar-i stànica k-i stànica açon Po than našti arakhen Pi stànica roden.</p> <p>An-o šarime pampùrã - but tikne çhave Prnange, trušale, bokhale, pharravde šejença bešëna</p> <p>An-o šarime pampùrã bešëna Kotar-i bokh rovëna Na zanëna pampurença kaj zàna</p> <p>O pampurovòze e çhavença but cidëna Bokhale trušale e çhaven so dikhëna O çhave na zanëna O šarime pampùrã kaj zàna Dive p-o dive Akana da but cidëna A pampurenqe stànica našti arakhëna Na zanëna kasθe açhovëna</p>	<p>WITHOUT A PLACE</p> <p>The trains go very far They do not know where they go Again they come very close this way that way they cannot find a place</p> <p>They go on long trips Long trips before them they see At the stations they stop Again far off they are lost</p> <p>They have no place From station to station they stop their place they cannot find They look for their station</p> <p>In the colourful trains - many small children Barefoot, thirsty, hungry, with torn clothes they sit</p> <p>In the colourful trains they sit Out of hunger they cry They do not know where they go with the trains</p> <p>With the children the passengers suffer much That they see the children hungry, thirsty The children do not know Where the colourful trains go Day by day Now too they suffer much They cannot find the train stations They do not know where they stop</p>
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<p>ROVEN DAD!E ROVEN <i>3evad Gàsi</i></p> <p>Rovël dad!e rovël o cikno çhavrrro</p>	<p>THEY WEEP FATHER THEY WEEP</p> <p>He weeps father he weeps the little child He weeps father over the red sun over the cold water</p>
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<p>Rovël dad!e e lole khamesqe e ÷udre pajesqe Çhuço çaro çarël o çavirro Ivend nakhlo dad!e tato dïve alo Lolo kham naj sar sa baro Naßen dad!e, phiren dad!e, Rroma dad!e Rroma dad!e pharo drom crden Çik p-o drom çêrge açhavël Gras pal-o gras, bal pal-o bal Pnro pal-o pnro Kòkala puranenqe p-e droma mekhlam Jasva p-e lenþe çhordam Phura pe bala putarde Devlesqe pe va vazle Gilençar çexrainen akharde Brénd dël dad!e dël Giv gälbeno barol dad!e barol Çoren bòbo çhavrrre çoren P-i bari jag bòbo peken peken Rromane gila dad!e gilaben Phiren dad!e phire, Rroma dad!e Rroma Sa i phuv dad!e uştadam a pale Rroma dad!e açhïlam Roven dad!e roven, Rroma dad!e Rroma Rromna, çeja, çhavrrre, roven rovèna Pe bare khamesqe Pe bare jagaqe Rromane gilenqe Rromane dromenqe</p>	<p>The child he licks an empty dish Winter passed away warm days came The red sun is not big as it was They set out father they wander father the Rroms The Rroms father travel a hard road The mud stops the camp on the road Horse after horse, hair after hair foot after foot We left on the highway our ancestors' bones We shed tears over them Old Rromnis untied their hair They raised their hands toward the heaven With songs they called out the stars It is raining father raining The golden grain is growing father growing The children steal corn they steal Over a big fire they roast the corn Rromani songs father they sing They wander father wander the Rroms father the Rroms Over all the earth we wandered about and still father Rroms we remained They weep father they weep the Rroms father the Rroms Rromani women, maids and lads weep, they are weeping Over the great sun Over the great fire over Rromani songs over Rromani roads</p>
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<p>BARO ÇHAVORRO <i>Lumnia Osmàni</i></p> <p>Jertisar manqe Se sem Baro çhavorro/chejorri Şaj ni Le ma kan Vakãrav 'qe Ma dikh ma Şaj te Kamlisavav</p> <p>Korri naj sem Kana Dikhe ma Sem Kana tïro Dikhipe Phir-hasavol Hem o asaïpe hasavol Mo muj Zuvdisavel</p> <p>Vakãrav Jertisar manqe Kamav tut</p>	<p>BIG CHILD</p> <p>Forbid me that I am a big child maybe you don't understand me I am speaking to you don't look at me I may fall in love</p> <p>I am not blind when you look at me I am when your glance wanders and smile is lost my face lives again</p> <p>I tell you forbid me I love you</p>
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<p>Šaj Ni-kamav tut Kamav ja Ni-kamav Jekh si von Bi daraqo Phralutne Čhordon An jekh.</p> <p>Sode Ni-kamav tut But vi maj but Kamav tut Ma vakār Ka hasavol E devlesqi-kuštik Šaj ka Vakārav 'qe Kamav tut.</p> <p>Me, baro Čhavorro Rodav Tíro Phir-hasardo Dikhipe Irimaça E devlesqe- Kuštikaça Ka kerdol Iksici Ni k-avav Mamaj čhavorro K-avav Kamlisardi Rromni</p>	<p>maybe I hate you I love or I hate no difference without limit kins blend in one.</p> <p>How much I hate you more and more I love you do not say the rainbow will disappear maybe I shall tell you I love you.</p> <p>I, a big child am looking for your wandering glance with the return of the rainbow a wonder will happen I won't be any more child I shall be a woman in love.</p>
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