

ROMA AND ROMANI IN AUSTRIA

With the recognition as a »Volksgruppe« (≈ officially recognized minority) in December 1993 the Austrian Roma, which include the Sinti, became entitled to, among others things, have their language taught in school and to use Romani in other formal domains.

Against the background of the differences between the various groups that the Austrian Roma consist of and the fact that the Austrian authorities treated them, to some extent, as one homogeneous group it was almost impossible for them to make use of these rights.

1 THE AUSTRIAN ROMA

The Austrian Roma population is heterogeneous in many respects: the groups differ from each other in their socio-cultural background, their current socio-political status, etc.¹

Reliable sources estimate that at least 25.000 Roma are living in Austria today. Among them, at least five larger Roma groups can be distinguished. Organized, according to their duration of residency in contemporary Austria these five groups are:

- *Roma of Burgenland*
- *Sinti*
- *Lovara*
- Vlach-Roma from the Balkans: *Kalderaš, Gurbet, ...*
- Muslimic Roma from the Balkans: *Arlije, ...*

1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PARAMETERS

Those Roma who have immigrated to Austria from the Balkans and from the former communist countries of central and eastern Europe since the end of the eighties are not considered in the afore mentioned listing. Due to existing social bonds, part of these Roma have joined those groups which have immigrated since the sixties as work immigrants. This subgroup is also not recognized demographically, as is the case for the Roma who have come to Austria from countries such as Slovakia, Hungary, Romania etc. In table 1 they are considered under the title »various«:

Table 1 – demographic parameters of the different groups

	BGLD.ROMA	SINTI	LOVARA		BALKAN-VLAX-GROUPS		ARLIJE	VARIOUS
			LOVARA I	LOVARA II	KALDERAŠ	GURBET		
A	Hungary	S.Germany Czechia	Hungary (Slovakia)	Hungary	Serbia		Macedonia	Balkans E.&C.Europe
	15 th century	~ 1900		1956	1960s +		late 1980s +	
B	East-Austria	cities	Vienna area					cities
	rural (urban)	urban						
C	Roman Catholic +			Orthodox		Muslimic	various	
D	autochthonous			allochthonous			illegal	

A COUNTRY OF EMIGRATION & TIME OF IMMIGRATION

The Roma residing in Austria the longest are the Burgenland-Roma who started to immigrate to Austria from central Hungary in the late 15th century and since then have not left the western Hungarian-Pannonic area.

The immigration of the Lovara during the late 19th century and of the Sinti around the turn of the century may be considered an internal migration: the Lovara as well as a great part of the Sinti

1 It is to be noted that the concept of heterogeneity mentioned in the following is not to be considered specific for the Roma in particular, neither for other minorities, but is a general concept in the context of each larger ethnic group. However, the aspect which differentiates the Roma from other groups is that there are only a few if any generally valid and accepted cultural parameters at all. Such cultural parameters could bridge the differences in the sense of a nearly standardised or standardised »high culture« and homogenise the differences on a paramount level.

immigrated from areas of the Austrian Hungarian monarchy of that time. The one group came from Hungary and from Slovakia and the other from Bohemia and Moravia, the present Czech Republic. A few Sinti families also immigrated from south Germany. Other Lovara fled to Austria in 1956 during the so-called »Hungarian Uprising«.

In the course of the work migration during the sixties further Roma immigrated from the former Yugoslavia: the Kalderaš and the Gurbet came from Serbia and the Arlije immigrated from Macedonia.

The immigration of Roma from ex-communist countries and from the former Yugoslavia, which increased in the late eighties, is not recognised demographically – as previously mentioned. However, it is quite possible that this might be the largest group, doubling the previously mentioned total of 25.000. As stated, such considerations are more or less well founded speculation.

B CURRENT RESIDENTIAL AREA

Today the bulk of Austrian Lovara and immigrants from the Balkans are residing in the greater Vienna area. Sinti groups are mainly living in cities, their number decreases when going from the eastern to the western side of Austria. Also most of those immigrants who have entered Austria in the late eighties are found in cities, mostly in the greater Vienna area.

Only the great majority of the Burgenland-Roma are residing in rural areas or in small towns. However, it should be distinguished between those who declare themselves as Roma and those who merely have Roma ancestry. The members of the second group, who do not declare themselves as Roma, have migrated from Burgenland to eastern Austrian cities, Vienna in particular, since the fifties. Today they are largely assimilated to the majority population, who in most cases do not know their ancestry. Therefore they cannot really be considered Austrian Roma which is the reason why they are excluded in the above mentioned number of the Austrian Roma population.

C RELIGION

Generally, the religion of the Roma is the religion of the majority population in the respective country of emigration. Up to now the participation in younger Christian religion communities has been of minor importance in the context of the Austrian Roma.

Nearly all Burgenland-Roma and Lovara are Roman-Catholic, corresponding to the Hungarian origins and to the Austrian environment. The majority of the population of both countries is Catholic. Within the Sinti there are Protestants as well as Catholics.

The religion of the immigrants from the Balkans, as well as of the later immigrants, corresponds to the majority religion of the country of origin. The Kalderaš and Gurbet immigrated from Serbia are Orthodox, Arlije are Muslim, etc.

The religious affiliation of the Roma mainly defines their celebration culture. In the case of the Austrian Roma this celebration culture reveals among others a separating element, not only due to different calendars. The only exception was a *Djurdjevdan* pilgrimage to a Catholic pilgrim place in the middle of the nineties. Besides Catholics also Orthodox and Muslims have taken part in this event – probably without the Catholic priest being aware of these circumstances.

D SOCIO-POLITICAL STATUS

A further separating element to be considered is the different socio-political status of the single groups. According to Austrian legislation an officially recognised minority (Volksguppe) is defined by a common language, a closed settlement area and by the concept of being autochthonous. Autochthonous or long-settled are those groups which have been residing on Austrian territories for generations. This refers to the Burgenland-Roma, the Sinti and the Lovara who immigrated at the end of the 19th century.

The Lovara who fled from Hungary in 1956 and generally are of Austrian nationality, on the contrary, are considered allochthonous. The same refers to the Kalderaš, the Gurbet, and the Arlije who came as guest workers, as long as they have Austrian citizenship or a residence permit.

In practice, the distinction between autochthonous and allochthonous is not made thoroughly. Due to common cultural grounds and due to the similarities between Romani varieties the allochthonous status of the later arrived Lovara as well as of the Kalderaš and Gurbet is questioned. That is the reason why these groups are considered equal by liberal authority representatives and enjoy part of the rights of an officially recognised minority. This grey area between autochthonous and allochthonous also include the Arlije.

The immigrants from the ex-communist countries and from the former Yugoslavia of the late eighties and of the nineties are excluded from the rights of officially recognised minorities as they are granted neither Austrian nationality nor have a valid residence permit. From the point of view of the

authorities they are residing in Austria on an illegal basis and consequently they do not have any rights in relation to the status of officially recognised minorities.

1.2 EMOTIONAL PARAMETERS

Demographic parameters are of minor importance in relation to the co-existence of the Austrian Roma. The living together or the co-existence is a result of the mutual attitudes of the single groups. It is true that part of these views and attitudes are based on demographic parameters, but they are mainly determined by emotional parameters. Table 2 gives an overview concerning this.

Table 2 – emotional parameters of the different groups

	BGLD.ROM A	SINTI	LOVARA I	LOVARA II	KALDERAŠ	GURBET	ARLIJE	VARIOUS
E	Austrian / native				Non Austrian = Balkans / foreign			foreign
F	sedentary <i>RomUngro</i>	»nomadic / original«					sedentary <i>Xoraxane</i>	
G	inferiority	superiority						
H	±	+	-				+	
I	-		- / ∅		∅			

E FEELING OF BELONGING TO

As far as the concept of the feeling of belonging to a group is concerned, the same distinction line is observed as in the case of the rest of the population. It is distinguished between Austrians and non-Austrians (= immigrants from the Balkans).

This distinction between native and foreign does not really correspond to the socio-political distinction between autochthonous and allochthonous. The Lovara who arrived in 1956 are considered native, which possibly depends on the former common existence of Austria and Hungary and relatively long residency in Austria.

Kalderaš, Gurbet and Arlije are considered a foreign element within the Austrian population despite the formal integration, the Austrian citizenship or a permanent residence permit. Being considered as a foreign element influences self definition. The Roma who have come as guest workers since the sixties feel foreign despite their formal integration that has occurred.

This differentiation between Austrian and non-Austrian corresponds to the ethnic scale of values established and passed on from the time when Austria was a monarchy. This scale of values considers the Germans and – in a minor sense – the Hungarians being the reigning peoples in contrast to the Slavs being the reigned people. Even if a part of the eastern Austrian population at least has Slavic roots, this scale of value still determines the living together of groups from different origins and different ethnic feeling of belonging to. This does not only refer to the majority population but also to the Roma population.

The Roma who have arrived most recently, since the end of the eighties, are very often considered as foreigners by the Roma who previously immigrated as guest workers. They see them as economic refugees who take advantage of the social benefits. This opinion does not differ from the one within the major part of the Austrian population.

Summarising the emotional parameter – feeling of belonging to – it results from the origin of the respective Roma-group or the social status of the majority population of the country of emigration, as seen by the Austrian population. The criterion 'feeling of belonging to' does not completely correspond to the socio-political status of the individual Roma-groups, however it does correlate with it. The difference in status of the individual groups established by the authorities correspond with those embedded in the understanding of the majority population, as well as to the internal differentiating criteria between the Austrian Roma. This fact has a negative influence on the efforts of emancipation.

F ROMANIPE

A further emotional parameter, which to a certain extent is defined by the folkloric-romantic image of the Roma by the *Gadže* (non-Roma), refers to the criterion originality or better to say to the »true Roma«, the *Romanipe*. The main characteristic of this parameter to be considered is the dichotomy of nomadic and settled. Long-settled Roma are considered by those who consider their situation in correspondence with the nomadic tradition, as assimilated and therefore do not correspond to the customs and traditions passed on.

No Roma group which feels to be representing and to be conserving the true Roma is nomadic. Only the memory of a partially service-related nomadism working as blacksmiths, horse-traders, musicians etc. is more present for this group than for others. This image is related to a claim for self-sufficiency expressed in the fact that the Lovara, the Kalderaš and also the Gurbet try to be independent from the *Gadže* as far as possible. They prefer professional independence and, as a consequence, avoid being dependent on wages, if at all possible.

Within the Austrian Roma society the Arlije, as well as the Burgenland-Roma, are considered settled and therefore at least as partly assimilated. The denomination *Rom-Ungro* used for Burgenland-Roma is pejorative and implies a major loss of *Romanipe* besides the long-settlement. *Xoraxane*, the name used for Arlije by other Roma, means 'Muslims, Turks' so to say long-settled, Muslimic Roma in the Osmanic western-Rumelian cultural tradition.

G SELF-ESTEEM

The parameter *Romanipe* is tightly connected with the self-esteem, the feeling of self-value of the individual groups. Apart from the Burgenland-Roma all other groups living in Austria feel superior to the others, the others implying also the *Gadže*.

The result of this feeling of superiority are social values which differ from group to group. Only the position of the Burgenland-Roma at the end of the single value scale is fixed. This position of the Burgenland-Roma emerges from their settled form of existence and from their related loss of *Romanipe* – as seen from the point of view of the other Roma. As a consequence of this kind of judgement by the other groups, the Burgenland-Roma feel in a position of inferiority. They feel as a »half-cast« or mixed breed. This judgement was even reinforced by the experiences made during the Nazi regime. On the one hand this feeling of inferiority was strengthened by the fact that the Nazis themselves considered the Burgenland-Roma as half-casts of Roma and the scum of the majority population and as a consequence they were valued as »especially worthless life«. On the other hand the feeling of inferiority was increased by the fact that the Burgenland-Roma were severely confronted with the genocide which led to the destruction of the social structure which has not been restored even to now. That is why the Burgenland-Roma are stigmatised in a double sense: the majority population consider them as gypsies and within the Roma society they are considered assimilated.

Also the Sinti have been largely confronted with genocide, but their position is quite different: generally, they feel superior to all other Roma and are keen on clear disassociation from them. It is to be presumed that this behaviour derives from the fact that the Sinti have been present in the central European and German-speaking area for a long time. This situation may be compared to that of the Jews in the years between the two World Wars who lived in Germany and Austria for a long time and who disassociated themselves from the eastern Jews who at that time immigrated. Similarly, the Sinti like to disassociate and distance themselves from the new-immigrants from the east. This point of view has led to various problems at the end of the eighties, with the rise of the emancipation movement, as well as in the course of official recognition as a minority. Sinti threatened Roma associations which by their denomination also supported the Sinti to take legal steps if they don't cancel the name Sinti from their denomination. Furthermore, the Sinti were only a little willing to participate in the opening towards the majority population, being a consequence of the emancipation movement and the official recognition movement. Among others this has led to the fact that the Sinti are included in the denomination Roma. Furthermore, the Sinti are only marginally interested and involved in the activities regarding officially recognised minorities. There is no association looking back on a comparable continuity such as the Roma associations. It is also to be said that the Sinti associations always represent one family or clan in the respective region or respective city in which the association is situated.

The three Vlach groups – Lovara, Kalderaš and Gurbet – feel superior to the Sinti and Arlije as well as to the Burgenland-Roma. It is clear that the first place on the value scale is taken by the own group, the second place is given to the other Vlach groups followed by the Sinti and the Xoraxane, the last place on the value scale given to the Burgenland-Roma. Even if other Vlach groups are considered relatively close and sometimes also equal, there is no real feeling togetherness but only of living side by side. Also within the Viennese association *Romano Centro* – possibly the only association in Europe – which represents various groups among those, there are also the three Vlach groups, there is only a feeling of side by side of the single persons belonging to the various groups. Up to now there has been no recognised sense of an equal togetherness or a common support of activities and projects.

As far as the self-value of the Arlije is concerned, they also feel superior to all the others, however this sense of superiority does not lead to a discriminating feeling of superiority. Due to different socio-cultural backgrounds – such as Muslim in contrast to non-Muslim, etc. – the Arlije regard all other Roma, among those also the Sinti, as *gadžikane Roma*, implying Christian Roma who do not belong

to them or who even cultivate different customs and different traditions. The Vlax-Roma are regarded by the Arlije also as *čergarja* 'tent-Roma' on the grounds of their nomadic traditions. The Arlije, however, disassociate themselves by conserving the tradition being settled and by living, in part, integrated in the urban population and in the majority population.

H ATTITUDE TO EDUCATION

The attitude of the individual groups regarding education is closely connected with the above mentioned grade of integration or with the grade of assimilation in the case of the Burgenland-Roma, and correlates with the differentiation between »nomadic« and »settled«, except in relation to the Sinti.

The »settled« Arlije are open towards public educational institutions and most of them do also make use of them, which means that they encourage their children to train in a profession or to get a higher school education in order to increase the chances in view of a higher socio-economic status within the majority population. This positive attitude towards education of the Arlije is most probably closely related with the higher grade of integration of Muslim Roma in the mostly Muslim majority population. This higher grade of integration is distinct from other Roma groups of the Balkans.

The attitude of Burgenland-Roma as far as education is concerned, is split into two groups. The group of those few who try to enable their children a better education in most cases are themselves quite well integrated on a socio-economic level. The education of the great majority, however, who can be found as a stigmatised fringe group on the very end of the social value scale, in the most cases is limited to the obligatory school education. The concept of school formation itself is not really rejected, but the opinion that also »educated gypsies« do not have any or very restricted opportunities to escape from the dreary socio-economic situation is widely spread. This sad socio-economic situation is to be attributed, among others, to the previously mentioned feeling of inferiority of the Burgenland-Roma.

Regarding the Sinti, it is impossible to express a general statement. There are families within which there are teachers or people who have concluded a university degree and there are families who attribute to education a low importance. In summary it may be noted that the attitude of the Sinti concerning school education does not significantly differ from the attitude of the majority population.

The importance attributed to school education by the Vlax-Roma is relatively low, even if there are noticeable differences regarding different families. The opinion, however, that it is a duty towards the government to send the children to school, even if the frequency of attendance in the school is more irregular than regular, is widely spread. The concept of school education and training is neither regarded as an opportunity to economic wellbeing nor a chance for social integration. Education and training are part of the world of the *Gadže* and consequently are only of minor or of no relevance for the life of the Roma. Exceptions from this attitude are most likely found within families or individuals cultivating close contact with the world of the *Gadže* either because they are living on the fringe or outside of the Roma society or because they have intense social contact with the *Gadže* in their role as active members of an association. In these families also the girls who due to the socio-culture passed on are attributed a minor role, may gain a good school education.

Furthermore it is to be noted that the problem of education is one of the most urgent topics of the Austrian Roma associations. The association *Romano Centro* in Vienna, as well as the association *Roma* situated in Oberwart, offer the service of assisting Roma children with learning. Such activities help to install a contact between parents and the school and therefore contribute to transforming the negative attitude towards education to a positive one in relation to the Vlax-Roma and the Burgenland-Roma.

I ATTITUDE TOWARDS GADŽE

The attitude towards the *Gadže*, the majority population, varies within the single Austrian Roma groups. A sort of cautious or indifferent acceptance or rejection of the *Gadže* are closely related to the duration of residence in the central European cultural area of the individual groups. While the Roma, who have immigrated from the Balkans during the second half of the 20th century, affront the majority population in a cautious but also relatively indifferent manner, the Burgenland-Roma, the Lovara and the Sinti who in most cases have been residing for centuries in Central Europe semi-trust the *Gadže*, whereas it can be said that the Sinti partly cut themselves off from the majority population. The Lovara who immigrated in 1956 are to be positioned between cautious indifference and rejection.

The current attitude towards the *Gadže* of the individual groups primarily depends on the experiences made in relation to the respective majority population. While immigrants from the Balkans often tell about a relatively good relationship with the population, although they are considered a stigmatised fringe group in the country of emigration, the Roma who have been living in the central European area for centuries have always been discriminated outsiders gaining little or no acceptance

by the majority population – apart from the folklore and stereotype which placed them in a romantic image. The negative peak of discrimination and persecution was the genocide during the Nazi-regime with which the Burgenland-Roma, the Sinti and the Lovara in particular were confronted with. Also the Roma residing in Serbia have been confronted with the Holocaust, but in contrast to Austria the Serbian majority population was only slightly if not at all involved. In Austria the population not only accepted the internment and of the Roma but part of the population also supported it actively. As a consequence, only a few hundred of about 8,000 Burgenland-Roma survived the concentration camps. The social structure of all three groups – Sinti, Lovara and Burgenland-Roma – was nearly completely destroyed by the Holocaust and represents a sort of cesura influencing the relationship to the majority up to now. Furthermore, stigmatisation and discrimination have not come to an end with the end of the Nazi-regime.

The fact that the negative attitude and the mistrust of the Roma towards *Gadže* increase in proportion to the duration of residence in the central European area should encourage the Austrian population to reflect.

It should be mentioned that the single Roma groups are affected in different ways by stigmatisation and discrimination. The history of exclusion and of persecution, however, is the most apparent common ground and the relating element of the various groups of the Austrian Roma as well as of the whole Roma society in the European area.

Despite these relating elements – the history of exclusion and persecution – the Austrian Roma groups are living side by side rather than living together. Although people from different groups have married, there is no regular contact between the individual groups. Apart from the meetings of a few active members of the associations happening from time to time, there is nearly no inter-group contact and consequently only little solidarity. The reason for this phenomenon may be attributed to the fact that they have been living for centuries as fringe groups. On the one hand it is true that it is easier for a discriminated minority to survive in small groups, on the other hand, however, a marginalized group of a population barely has any influence in the political and economic power, which consequently prevents them from developing larger social communities.

2 AUSTRIAN ROMANI

Following and contrasting Karl Kraus who has stated that the only separating element between Austrians and Germans is their common language, it could be said that the most apparent socio-cultural common element of the Roma is manifested in the various linguistic varieties.

Romani is a heterogeneous cluster of varieties with a homogeneous lexical and morphological core and without a standardised language. The missing of such a standard, however, is the result of the existence of the Roma as a fringe group. Only those societies who dispose of the necessary means of power for creating political, economic or cultural centres develop a linguistic standard which manifests itself as a standardised language in the respective region of influence due to the given network of power. As the Roma have been denied such opportunities to create such centres of power, it has been impossible that a generally accepted standardised Romani would evolve.

As a consequence, the Austrian Roma population also is linguistically inhomogeneous. Table 3 shows an overview of the linguistic heterogeneity of the Austrian Roma, the table including descriptive as well as emotional parameters.

Table 3 – linguistic parameters of the different groups

	<i>BGLD.ROMA</i>	<i>SINTI</i>	<i>LOVARA I</i>	<i>LOVARA II</i>	<i>KALDERAŠ</i>	<i>GURBET</i>	<i>ARLIJE</i>
K	CENTRAL	NORTHERN	VLAX				BALKAN
L	Hungarian (Bgl.d.Croat.) German	German	Romanian Hungarian German		Romanian Serbian German		Turkish Macedonian (SerboCroat.) German
M	– (+)		–		+ (–)		–
N	++	+	±		∅		–
O	mixed R.	∅	pure Romani				
P	–			∅	+		

K CLASSIFICATION

The classification of Roma varieties into four groups corresponds to the current status of scientific research which is explained together with the criteria of differentiation used for the four variety groups among others in Bakker/Matras (1998) and Bakker (1999). The Austrian Romani is composed of varieties of all four groups;

Burgenland-Romani together with the south west Hungarian Vend variety and the north east Prekmurje variety forms the Vend group of the south central varieties of Romani to which also the so-called Rom-Ungro varieties of Hungary and Slovakia are to be attributed.

Rómanes or Sintitikes, as their Romani variety is called by the Austrian Sinti, is part of the Sinti-Manuš-subgroup of the northern varieties of Romani.

In contrast to the Lovara and the Kalderaš varieties which are part of the northern Vlax, the Romani variety of the Gurbet is to be attributed to the southern Vlax.

The Romani variety of the Arlije is considered a Balkans or a southern Balkans variety, whereby it is to be mentioned that according to Boretzky (1999: 22) the Romani spoken by the Arlije in Macedonia and in Kosovo is a »major dialect with quite different varieties« (»Großdialekt mit recht unterschiedlichen Varianten«).

L CONTACT LANGUAGES

The vertical listing of the contact languages (in line L) corresponds to the sequence in time of the different linguistic contact situations. Besides this chronological classification of the more recent strata of borrowing of the single Austrian Romani varieties this listing also shows the potential multilingualism of the respective group of speakers. The potential multilingualism is of concern as the complete spectrum of linguistic competence in the case of the Kalderaš only and to a limited extent the Gurbet is observed as group specific characteristic. Also in the case of the Arlije the maximum to be found is tri-lingualism, including Romani, Macedonian and German. As far as the Burgenland-Roma, the Sinti and the Lovara are concerned, only the members of the elder generation are bilingual – Romani and German. Tri-lingualism – Romani, Hungarian, German – is observed within the Lovara only in exceptional cases. The same is to be said in relation to the Burgenland-Roma in this case Hungarian may be exchanged for Croatian.

All Austrian Romani varieties have in common a German influence which, however, is effected differently in relation to the duration of residence in the German speaking area. The language with most German influence is Rómanes or Sintitikes followed by Burgenland-Romani and Lovara-Romani, whereby in relation to Lovara-Romani there are differences between both sub-groups: the Romani spoken by the Lovara immigrated in 1956 is less influenced by the German in comparison to the variety the Roma immigrated during the 19th century. In the case of the Kalderaš and the Gurbet the German influence is of little importance. There are only a few interferences observed as German is mainly spoken within the younger generations and occurs primarily in the form of code-switching.

It seems of little relevance in this context to discuss the German influence regarding the individual varieties of Romani as well as to discuss the structural differences of the Austrian Roma varieties, as well as of the four groups of varieties. An overview of the multilingualism and the use of language practised by the individual groups is given in table 4 explaining and summarising the linguistic repertoires of the different groups:

Table 4 – linguistic repertoires of the various groups

		BASILECT	MESOLECT	ACROLECT
BGLD.-ROMA	O	GERMAN Romani	GERMAN (Hungarian or Croatian) [Romani]	GERMAN
	Y	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN [Hungarian or Croatian] [Romani]	GERMAN
SINTI	O	GERMAN Romani	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN
	Y	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN
LOVARA	O	GERMAN Romani	GERMAN (Hungarian) Romani	GERMAN

	Y	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN (Romani)	GERMAN
KALDERAŠ & GURBET	O	(German) Serbian ROMANI	(German) Serbian Romani	(German) SERBIAN
	Y	German Serbian ROMANI	German (Serbian) Romani	GERMAN
ARLIJE	O	(German) MACEDONIAN Romani	German MACEDONIAN (Romani)	German Macedonian
	Y	GERMAN Macedonian (Romani)	GERMAN Macedonian (Romani)	GERMAN

O older generation(s)
Y younger generation(s)

Basilect: diatypes of the social microcosm (family, friends, etc.)
Mesolect: diatypes of the social macrocosm (acquaintances, colleagues, etc.)
Acrolect: public diatypes (institutions, schools, media, etc.)
Diatype: functionally defined linguistic variety

SMALL CAPITAL primary diatype
() infrequent use;
[] very infrequent use
italics (Lovara) only valid for the Lovara who immigrated in 1956

M VIVID LINGUISTIC SURROUNDINGS

The criterion of the linguistic surroundings is in close relation with the language use. A living or functioning linguistic surrounding may guarantee the passing on of the language and the conservation of the language, consequently. The vitality of the single Romani varieties emerges from their functionality and is therefore defined by the position within the collective repertoire of the single group of speakers.

In general, the following information can be obtained from table 4: the younger the speaker and the more public the situation, the stronger the dominance of German. Aside from the repertoires of the older members of the most recently immigrated Kalderaš, Gurbet and Arlije, only German functions as acrolectal diatype. In other words, German is the primary variety used for the public domain.

German diatypes dominate throughout the whole repertoire of the Sinti, the Roma of Burgenland and the Lovara of both age groups, as well as of the Arlije of the younger generation; German varieties are either the primary or the only diatype in the repertoire layers and, consequently, in all linguistic domains. On the one hand, this is related to the duration of stay of the individual groups and subgroups in the Austrian German speaking area. On the other hand, this is also connected to the relatively high degree of assimilation, which is the only argument that applies to the Lovara who immigrated in 1956 and the younger generation of the Arlije. The high degree of assimilation, however, is determined primarily by language use specific to certain domains. An indication for the degree of assimilation is, above all, the dominance of German in the basilect or its use as intimate variety in the social microcosm.

The internal communication of the Kalderaš and Gurbet is dominated by Romani. It is the primary basilectal diatype and also functions as mesolectal diatype in the case of contacts to other Kalderaš or Gurbet and other Vlax Roma. The reasons for this are the, for the most part intact, social structure and the ties within extended families and clans that go far beyond national boundaries.

Family ties and an intact social structure are also the primary parameters for the use of Romani among the Lovara that immigrated in 1956. In families where ties still exist and where ways of living together that have been handed down are still valid, Romani is still being used as an intimate variety. If family ties are missing, Romani is rarely used for internal communication, if at all.

A similar situation exists for the Lovara who immigrated in the past century, the Roma of Burgenland and also the Sinti. Wherever the break caused by the genocide, that is the loss of the social structure due to the murder of the grandparent generation that was supposed to pass on cultural and linguistic knowledge, has been overcome and the original social structure has been restored, Romani is still being used as an equal basilectal diatype besides German. Among the Sinti

and the Lovara, who primarily live in urban areas, the situation varies from family to family. Among the Burgenland-Roma who have stayed in the rural areas of Burgenland, there are a few »speech islands« where Romani is used as equal basilectal diatype besides German.

For the Arlije, Macedonian is not just a means of communication with other guest workers and the *Gadže* in the country of origin, but also a »linguistic bridge« between different generations. As a consequence, Macedonian has replaced Romani as an intimate variety. The younger the speakers, the more Romani loses its significance in the repertoire. Macedonian is the common language of the generations and thus a group constituting factor. Most of the time, Romani just functions as internal means of communication of the older generation and partly also when in contact with other Roma from or in the country of origin.

If it is neglected that Romani is generally reduced in relation of domains as it does not play a significant role within the public context, in case of the Kalderaš and the Gurbet only a functioning linguistic surrounding is worth mentioning. In the case of Burgenland-Roma, Lovara and Sinti Romani as an intimate variety is of minor importance, in relation to the Arlije its role as an in-group-marker is more or less lost.

N LANGUAGE AS IDENTITY FACTOR / LANGUAGE ATTITUDE

Due to the break in the passing on Romani as an identification factor is of minor importance for the Austrian Arlije. This function of identity-founding was taken over by Macedonian.

For the Kalderaš and the Gurbet, the two groups with a certain continuity within the passing on of the language, Romani constitutes a natural part of the ethnic awareness. As identity marker, however, it is not of special or major importance. It is one among other equal factors, the sum of which are the ethnic awareness.

In the case of the Lovara the situation is two fold: on the one hand it is especially the members of the older generations who emphasise the importance of an own language for the understanding and the identity of the group, on the other hand these words mostly remain words without being realised to pay lip service. In general, Romani is not handed down to the younger generations. Part of the young Lovara is already assimilated linguistically, their linguistic competence of Romani is only a passive one, if at all.

The situation of the Sinti is similar. Part of the younger generation is monolingual, German-speaking.. In contrast to the young Lovara, *Rómanes* or *Sintitikes* constitutes an identity factor for these young people who are assimilated in linguistic terms. This situation is most probably to be seen in relation to the attitude towards languages of the Austrian Sinti: For them *Rómanes* constitutes a tabooed in-group-marker, which may not be »revealed« to the *Gadže*. This way of thinking resulting from the Holocaust trauma is also partly found within elder Lovara and Burgenland-Roma, but not to such an extent and the consequences are different in relation to the Sinti. Kalderaš and Gurbet, and the still linguistically competent Arlije do not consider Romani as a sort of »protective language«. They do not feel any resentment against the *Gadže* who are interested in their language and who like to learn their language.

As far as the Burgenland-Roma are concerned, their Romani variety is the primary identity marker, even so for the members of the group who consider their linguistic competence limited or only passive. This attitude towards the language is the result of the self-organisation through which representatives of the Burgenland-Roma have come into touch with members of other Roma groups. The fact that Romani dominates the group internal communication within these other Roma, has caused that the Burgenland-Roma have felt the decrease in the use of their language as a loss. This was the reason why linguistic activities became of major importance within the cultural work, whereby the group-specific Romani took over the role of the primary identity factor.

It is outstanding in this context that the importance of Romani as identity factor increases in parallel to the decrease in the use of the language and to the related linguistic competence. The Arlije are excluded from this tendency as there has taken place a sort of change in language which may be more easily explained and understood with more acceptance and grade of integration in the country of origin.

O ROMANI-QUALITY

The attitude or the conviction regarding the quality of the own Romani variety correlates with the feeling of self value of the individual groups and therefore corresponds to the above mentioned differentiation between the feeling of superiority and the feeling of inferiority.

The Vlach-Roma consider their Romani variety as »the most original and most pure« variety. In contrast to the Gurbet and the Kalderaš constituting relatively homogeneous groups not only an inter-group differentiation but also an intra-group differentiation based on the different moments of

immigration is observed as far as the Lovara are concerned: The one immigrated in 1956 consider their way of speaking a »more pure« Lovara-Romani than the Romani spoken by those that arrived around the turn of the century. The most apparent linguistic difference between both groups is to be seen in the respective part of borrowings from the German. The number of German loans is higher in the case of the one who have immigrated earlier. In the case of the group which has arrived later the number of Magyarisms is much higher. This part of Hungarian elements is considered part of the own language, of Romani, in the German speaking surroundings

The feeling of inferiority of the Burgenland-Roma mentioned previously causes them to also consider their language an inferior one in relation to other Romani varieties. The fact that the Burgenland-Roma have passed centuries in the German speaking area of the south western Hungarian area and therefore their language is strongly influenced by German, they themselves consider their language as a mixed language. Apart from this, also the Hungarian influence is well known which, however, is considered as being part of Romani. This is easily explained considering the German speaking surroundings in particular.

The Sinti are well aware of the strong influence on Rómanes by German, this, however, does not influence their linguistic awareness. As they disassociate from the Roma in general, Rómanes too too is in no qualitative relation to Romani varieties of the Roma, even if they are well aware of the lexical common feature with these varieties.

P SOUTH-SLAVIC LATIN WRITING

The attitude in relation to the use of the south-Slavic Latin writing in the context of Romani writing (summarised in line P of table 3) correlates with the emotionally determined parameters of the feeling of belonging to (line E in table 2). Those Austrian Burgenland-Roma, Sinti and Lovara, who have been living in Austria for a century, who consider themselves as Austrian, reject the south-Slavic Latin writing strongly, which – in linguistic terms – would best combine with Romani. The non-Austrian foreign element of this convention in writing is the diacritica which has been refused being a Slavic element and therefore an inferior one.

The Kalderaš and Gurbet who have been stigmatised immigrants from the Balkans and who feel like foreigners despite their formal integration are very open and positive-minded in relation to this kind of writing, although some of the elder among them have learned the alphabet in Cyrillic writing.

The Lovara immigrated in 1956 who are used to the diacritica due to their origin are in the grey zone between refusal and acceptance. If there is any, the refusal is less strong and does not include this excluding component as known from other opponents of the south Slavic Latin writing.

3 ROMA & SCIENCE

At the beginning of the collaboration of Roma and science in 1993, the members of the Austrian Romani project have not at all been aware of the heterogeneity of the Austrian Roma society shown, the separating lines and the differences. Without the openness to accept the socio-cultural differences of the single groups and the resulting divergent attitudes, the project could have never been realised in such a way. Both sides had to go through difficult moments of learning and experiencing which then have founded the basis of a successful collaboration.

It was important to distance the homogeneity demands by which the Roma are confronted with by national authorities and by international organisations. In part, homogeneity is also represented by Roma-intellectuals and by Roma representatives working on an international level in relation to authorities and organisations. On a political level, this may be an advantage because it legitimates the respective demand for being represented and because it shows the necessary stress attributed to the topic. For the single Roma groups, however, it is a disadvantage: it is easier to administer homogeneous groups and therefore they correspond with the interests of the authorities. If the authorities and organisations are shown an image of a European homogene or even of a national homogene Roma society, the authorities do not reflect and ask about that situation and accept it willingly as it really simplifies their task to realise the duty of the majority population in relation to the Roma. A further consequence of such wrong ideas of homogeneity is that wrong activities and financial support measures are initiated which do not correspond to the actual needs of a the single Roma group.

3.1 ROMANI & CODIFICATION

The Austrian Romani project is neither a purely scientific academic project nor a folkloric must of language conservation, but it is a scientifically grounded project conducted on behalf of individual Roma groups which is meant to encounter the language death and which wants to contribute to the preservation of the culture and the identity of the Roma.

Apart from the necessary knowledge concerning heterogeneity of the Austrian Roma and the problem arising from the homogeneity requirements, it was absolutely necessary to all scientific collaborators to avoid each kind of »scientific arrogance«. Right from the start it has been important to be open, to approach the task without prejudice and without any pre-established concepts – so to say – but to approach all tasks in an ingenious way and to react to each situation in an intuitive manner. Only by adopting such an approach it is possible to obtain relatively authentic and descriptive results and to avoid the problem of the »self-fulfilling prophecy«. Furthermore, it is necessary to accept the Roma who participate in the project and to consider them experts in relation to their mother-tongue and to take into consideration their ideas regarding the writing, standardisation and realisation in the teaching etc. up to a certain extent. As far as the integration of certain groups is concerned, it is absolutely necessary to allow the participation of as many members of the Roma groups as possible and not just a few representatives of them.

The Romani project has started with the codification of the Burgenland Romani threatened by extinction. The beginning of the codification was meant to be the writing and as today's experience shows it, incorrect steps were taken. On the grounds of the idea to homogenise the language and considering it a politically necessary step to create a common writing, the representatives of the Burgenland-Roma were ready to use the south-Slavic Latin conventions for their writing. Only when the circle of Roma people participating in the project was extended it became clear that the main part of the Roma preferred a writing on the basis of the German language. This way of thinking regarding the writing was supported by a relatively extended study regarding a spontaneous writing approach. The reason why German was chosen as the basis for writing is the wish to disassociate clearly from other Roma groups and from other minorities of the Burgenland which are Croats and Hungarians. The fact that the younger generation of the Burgenland-Roma in particular was taught the German alphabet supported the previously mentioned idea.

If there was not an extension of the members of the Roma groups which – honestly was not an easy step – the writing would have been realised according to the method which scientifically and maybe also politically was considered the best, but developments in view of the main problems and main desires to preserve the language would not be achieved at all. This experience has made clear just how important it is to take a large group for the acquisition of information in order to obtain results that are practicable. It is true that one-person-studies are of high scientific value, for the realisation of the results in the context of a whole group they might, however, constitute a problem.

The difficulty to integrate a large number of people in studies has also been observed by ethnologists and anthropologists at the same time. In the context of field research, representatives or the representative of a group is met and only after a while the outsiders follow. Both groups of people have their interests, which partly do not correspond to the interests of the group as a whole. This is mainly true for the outsiders who expect from their participation in the project to gain a higher intra-group prestige. That is the reason why they try to prevent the contact between the scientists and the other members of the group. It was the most difficult task for the work with the single groups to overcome this blockage without risking that these the first informants would lose their face.

The question of writing in view of the collaboration with a Sinti group in a larger town in Austria may be described as follows: in this case too, it was the wish to disassociate from the non-Austrian-Slavic, increased by the fact that the German alphabet was learned, to lead to the creation of writing conventions according to the German model. Additionally, there is the wish to disassociate from the Burgenland-Roma: the Sinti use in their writing among others the letters <z> and <w> which do not exist within the conventions established for Burgenland-Romani; for expressing the diphthong /a/ they write <ei> instead of <aj> as also shown in example 1:

example 1

<i>BGLD-ROMANI</i>	<i>RÓMANES</i>	ENGLISH
<i>cidel</i>	<i>zerdel</i>	'to pull'
<i>nevo</i>	<i>newo</i>	'new'
<i>tschaj</i>	<i>tschei</i>	'girl, daughter'

This way of writing does not correspond to the internationally common conventions, it corresponds, however, to the requirements and ideas of the Sinti concerned. They want to hand down *Rómanes* to their children without causing any sensation. As very often it happens that only the parents and the children, but not the grand-parents are living in the same house the handing down of the language from generation to generation is at risk. This is the reason why it would be helpful to have written materials in order to encounter this development. As a lot of Sinti – as mentioned before – regard *Rómanes* a tabooed in-group-marker it is not in the interest of the proponent to disseminate their materials outside the sub-group. This way of thinking, however, is respected by the scientific members of the project team.

As far as the Lovara are concerned, a writing in accordance with international convention has been chosen. There are two reasons for this decision: on the one hand there are no family ties at all, rendering impossible that common decisions are taken and on the other hand the Austrian Lovara are part of an internationally largely extended group and therefore it seems worth producing written materials which are understood not only by the small group of Lovara living in Austria but by all of them.

The collection of texts *Tusa ande akhoren khelos ...* published at the end of the last year is written in a way of writing according to international standards. The tellers of the single stories belonging to the group of Austrian Lovara immigrated at the end of the 19th century refuse this kind of writing with the argument that the writing does not correspond to the Austrian Lovara. An Austrian writing is considered a writing which corresponds to the German example and which also considers sub-group specific phonetic realisations, as shown in example 2. In this example a spontaneous writing approach is confronted with the codification in correspondence with the south-Slavic Latin:

example 2

Spontaneous writing	Codification
<i>Eg derno Rom Romnasa dej eŧta Schaworensa dradellas besge Grastenza dej Wurdonenza katar o jeg Gaw ga o aver. Won pachtale sas dej batschage, ge won slobodo sas. Lengi Luma sie i Mall dej eh Puvwa. Won garingodi sie Kehre. De sar oh Dad ih Tschiblowa chutilel dej drabosge tradel, chulawel ih dorni Dej besge Triene Schejangen schugar gale pall, dej won tschilaben benge Romane pure tschila.</i>	<i>Jekh terno Rom Romnasa taj eŧta ŧavorenca tradelas peske grastenca taj vurdonenca katar o jekh gav ka o aver. Von baxtale sas taj pačake, ke von slobodno sas. Lengi luma si i mal taj e phuva. Von karingodi si khere. De sar o dad i čiplova xutilel taj traboske tradel, xulavel i terni dej peske trine ŧejangen ŧukar kale bal, taj von gjilaben penge romane phure gjila.</i>

The collaboration with the Lovara is an essential basis for a successful collaboration of Roma and science: if there is no self-organisation supported by the majority of the respective Roma-group, it is nearly impossible to reach results which are acceptable for the majority of the group. A successful self-organisation requires that there are individuals who are generally accepted and that there is an organisational centre, an association or similar within the group. If these conditions are not fulfilled, as is the case within the Austrian Lovara, no satisfactory results are achieved in relation to the realisation of the results of the codification. On the contrary, the linguistic awareness arisen by the project causes that not only the variety spoken within the group is attributed the level of a »pure Romani« but also the idiolect is considered such. That does not endanger the mutual understanding of the individual speakers but a group variety which is agreed on, not only from a written but also from a lexical and grammatical point of view is generally impossible.

The ideas regarding the creation of a writing mentioned above is valid for the lexical and the grammatical description, too. Group-specific characteristics are to be considered in the respective codification as also the sub-group-specific characteristics are to be taken into consideration. When taking account of the variety it is guaranteed that a possibly large group of speakers is able to identify with the result of the codification. This implies to walk on a tightrope between group-specific and sub-group-specific characteristics but also between collective and individual or idiolect-related characteristics. In this process, the Romani as a whole must not be omitted; this aspect within the process of codification requires that a certain control from outside is exerted by an expert of Romani who, however, is not involved in the current works.

3.2 ROMANI & SCHOOL

Each codification of Romani implies that, in future, Romani education in school too is held, this, however, is meant to be a middle-term or long-term goal. According to the principle »a language which is taught in school only is a dead language« the main emphasis of the collaboration with the individual groups is laid on the conservation or the creation of a vivid linguistic surrounding. The most important contribution, the primary socialisation of their children in Romani, is to be fulfilled by the Roma themselves. Interest in the language and the culture shown from outside and relating activities within the group as a consequence may positively influence the decision to use Romani in intra-group communication and when talking to the children as the value of the Roma culture and the Romani is underlined and emphasised upon. This aspect is of increasing importance as the Roma in central and western Europe are subject to high pressure to assimilate on the grounds of economic reasons and the children are brought up monolingual, in the language of the majority population. This monolingual education is reasoned with the argument that the opportunities of the children to participate in the society of wellbeing would increase. If the own culture and the own language do have a positive image

the probability for a functioning linguistic surrounding increases which, as a consequence, increases the continuity in the passing on of the language.

The basis for a vivid linguistic surrounding is that Romani is used as an intimate-variety for the intra-group contact. Table 4 shows that within no Austrian Roma group this is completely realised. The fact that the German language has inserted even in informal domains is a result from the changed living conditions. Nowadays, ethnic and social stigmatism are not to be equalled to the concept of isolation. Also fringe groups participate in the modern information society. The Roma are exposed to monolingual German speaking media as is the majority population. It is impossible to break this dominance of the majority language. It is worth trying to expand the Romani in its dimensions of functionality and to establish it as a language of media, to a lesser extent than the majority language, of course. A precondition for such an expansion is the codification – writing and grammatical as well as lexical description of the individual Romani varieties. The basis for such a process of codification in general is the collection of the tradition stories, of songs and of the »oral history« of the individual Roma group. In most cases these are the first texts which are available in printed form and which are used within the media. If the process is stopped at this point, Romani remains restricted to the folkloristic-traditional context and the opportunities for a functional emancipation in relation to the majority language are not used. A precondition for this emancipation is the approach of the Roma to the media. The collateral conditions for the production of newspapers as well as for the production of radio and TV programmes have to be elaborated and offered whereby the institutions of the majority population are required. The idea that »we produce newspapers and programmes for you and about you« is not to be followed, but instead the idea that: »how can we help you with the production of your own newspapers and programmes?«. In terms of content, the first media productions will be based on group-specific cultural aspects. As there is the risk – as stated previously – that the whole process stops on a folkloristic tradition-related level it is necessary to expand, in terms of content, as soon as possible and to deal, for example, with other Roma group's political and socio-economic questions as well as with other minorities. This kind of expansion in terms of content causes the lexical expansion of Romani. In this context, care must be taken that the expansion does not merely consist of borrowings from the majority language but uses the existing linguistic substance wherever possible. It is to take into account that there are lexemes which are already given in other varieties. This could easily contribute to a process of homogenisation of Romani in relation to lexical internationalisms.

It should be mentioned in this context that the use of Romani in the media may only take place in consideration of the heterogeneity of the single groups, because otherwise the newspapers and programmes are produced only for interested *Gadže* and maybe for the minority of international Roma politicians. If the interest in the media products of the own group would cause an interest in the newspapers and programmes produced by other groups this could mean a contribution to a process of natural linguistic homogenisation, which should not be underestimated.

Possibly the most important aspect of part-emancipation in terms of media of Romani is the integration of young people in this process. Their integration could take place either in the production – young people are attracted by modern technology – and also in terms of content so that topics regarding the culture of young people is covered by the group-specific intimate variety.

This aspect should also be taken into consideration when teaching materials are created. As Romani is of small or of no economic value it is not enough for young people that Romani is positively regarded, it has also to be interesting. The bases for this positive aspect are, among others, the internal and external appreciation of the Romani as well as its use in the media. Based on these considerations teaching Romani in schools could be quite interesting if modern means of communication such as computers, for example, are used. The technology prestige may be used in order to increase the language prestige.

Education in Romani, in schools, makes sense only – as mentioned previously – if there is a well functioning linguistic surrounding and if, at the same time, the image of Romani is increased by its expansion in its functional dimension and by its use in modern media.

Taking into account the considerations and strategies presented so far, the question remains open, if individual Romani varieties or if Romani can be used as a language of instruction in schools. Furthermore if the efforts taken in the framework of the Austrian Romani project help to avoid the language loss in the context of individual Austrian Roma groups, also remains open. One thing is clearly shown by the work done up to now: the codification and realisation works have caused some interest in their own culture as well as an increase in the self-estimation by young Roma who have participated in the project. This may be seen as a contribution to their social integration. In our point of view, this result already justifies the means used for this purpose.