

## 1 Lovara

*Lovara* ('horse traders' ← hung. *ló* 'horse' + the plural of the nomina-agentis-suffix /-ari/)<sup>1</sup> belong to the Vlax-Roma. They are called Vlax-Roma or Walachian Roma, because – like other Vlax-Roma groups – they were slaves or bondmen in Moldavia and Walachia – a part of today's Romania – for centuries.

The Lovara living in Austria today, came in two waves of migration: the first group migrated in the second half of the last century from Hungary and Slovakia, the second group during the so-called »Hungarian Uprising« in 1956. Today, there are no close ties to Lovara groups in Slovakia anymore, whereas contacts to relatives in Hungary are, to a certain extent, still intact, primarily among the immigrants of 1956.

### 1.1 History

As mentioned in the introductory statement, the Roma group of the Lovara is part of the bigger group of the Walachian or Vlax-Roma, who ended up in slavery or bondage on their migration to the north eastern Balkans – Walachia, Moldavia and also Transylvania. As late as in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century slavery and bondage were abolished.<sup>2</sup> Set off by poverty due to landlessness, among other things, this led to the second wave of migration of the Roma from the Balkans to the rest of Europe and later also overseas. First of all, the groups later called the Lovara migrated to the Hungarian sphere of influence. In the 80s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they most likely started to come over today's Slovakia to western Hungary, the area that is the North of Burgenland today.

This is confirmed by conscriptions of the western Hungarian comitat Wieselburg which show that larger groups of migrating Roma were staying in the comitat from the beginning of the 1880s on. In the Seewinkel towns of what is today northern Burgenland – Frauenkirchen, Deutsch Jahrndorf, Wallern, Nickelsdorf, Illmitz, St. Andrä, Apetlon, Zurndorf, Andau, Tadten etc. – horse traders offered their animals for sale. So-called »trough maker gypsies« (Olah-Cigan) also migrated from central to western Hungary, present day Burgenland, until World War I. They also were Vlax-Roma who, like the Lovara, travelled with their horse wagons in the summer months and offered their services and goods. From 1909 on, the authorities took ruthless action against these groups. They should either be forced to settle or be driven out, whereby both ways of taking action were based on the law. In order to prevent them from moving on, their draft animals and wagons were taken away from them. They could only buy horses or donkeys when granted permission by the police.

After the fall of the Austrian Hungarian Monarchy and the founding of the Republic of Austria following World War I, the Lovara residing in Burgenland – which has been an Austrian state since 1921 – and in neighboring states became Austrian Roma. As such, they were exposed to an increasing stigmatisation and discrimination in the period between World War I and II, which culminated in the Nazi genocide.

The destruction of the settlements preceded the genocide in the concentration camps. At the end of the 1930s some Lovara families resided in Burgenland, some in Vienna. Among the old settlements in Vienna, such as the »Ringelseplatz« in Flo-

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1 A derivation from the Romani lexeme *love* 'money' goes back to the field of folk etymology.

2 In 1842 the »slaves of the state« were released in Moldavia, in 1844 die Moldavian Roma slaves and bondmen of the church, in 1847 those of the Walachian church, in 1848 the slaves of Transylvania were set free, until, finally, slavery and bondage were generally abolished in 1864.

ridsdorf, the »Hellerwiese« and the »Wankostätten« in the 10<sup>th</sup> district, where big families lived, it was the »Wankostätten« that served the Nazis as assembly camp before deportation. The »Wankostätten« was destroyed after the deportation. The other places as well as the homes and settlements in northern Burgenland were demolished and re-built after the war. Only a few of the survivors returned to the villages in northern Burgenland. The larger majority tried to gain a foothold in the big city and, to a certain extent, took up its old professional mobility again: some made their living as second hand or carpet dealers. Their former, in the period between the two wars still most frequently practiced profession, the horse trade, lost its significance within one decade after the war. Frequently, the authorities of the Second Republic did not recognize the Lovara as victims of the concentration camps.<sup>3</sup> For a long time, they were denied the help and compensation that other internees of the concentration camps were granted. After all, Roma and Sinti did not have a lobby in post-war Austria that would have stood up for their rights.

The genocide brought about by the terror regime of the Nazis has to be viewed as major break: extended families and, consequently, the social structure were destroyed, and since that time the Lovara have not had an ancestral area of settlement anymore. As a consequence, there has been less contact among the families to this day, and individual families have developed various strategies of survival with regard to the majority culture. It is stressed by the people concerned that they hardly ever meet in bigger groups, except maybe at funerals or at Christmas; only a few individuals and families meet on a regular basis.

In 1956 a second group of Lovara came – as has been mentioned in the beginning – during the so-called »Hungarian Uprising« to Austria. Like the Lovara of the first wave of migration, most of these immigrant families settled in the larger Vienna area.

## 1.2 The current situation

Today the Lovara mostly live – as has been mentioned – in eastern Austria, primarily in Vienna. Only a few are to be encountered in western Austria. The social structure, which was still intact among the first immigrants before the war, has vanished almost completely. The extent to which traditions are upheld varies from family to family, and so does the continuity in the use of Romani. Through adaptation to the majority society, the way of life and the social situation have changed to such an extent that only traces of the typical extended family structure and the characteristic family ties of the Roma are left. Consequently, children grow up with the majority language. Thus, the handing down of their language has been interrupted in most cases. Furthermore, the young are interested in the culture and language of their parents and grandparents to a small degree only.

Generally, the members of both Lovara groups are socially established, that is, they participate in the general prosperity and live – if their current situation is viewed according to appearances and from the perspective of the average Austrian citizen – in financial security and under well-organized circumstances.

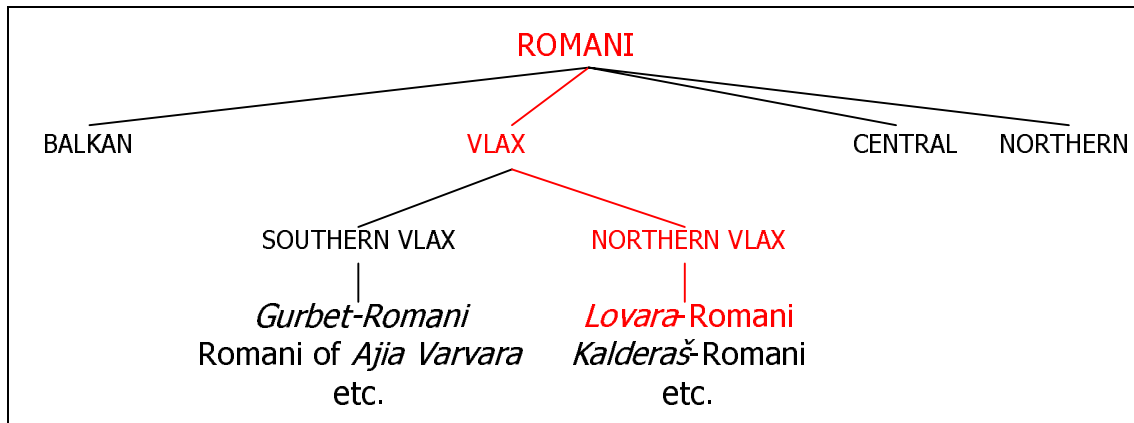
## 2 Lovara-Romani

Lovara-Romani belongs to the Vlax varieties and ranks among northern Vlax within this group. The term Vlax can be traced back to the Romanian influence on these

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3 Refer to the biographies and memories of Ceija Stojka (1988, 1992), Karl Stojka (1994) and Mongo Stojka (2000), among others.

Romani varieties, because of the fact that its speakers were forced to spend a long time in Walachian slavery and bondage, as has been mentioned before. As far as Lovara varieties in particular are concerned, many of the Romanian characteristics were replaced by Hungarianisms or Magyarisms as a result of the migration to Hungary and the rather long stay in the Magyar cultural area after the abolition of slavery or bondage.



## 2.1 Some characteristics of Lovara-Romani<sup>4</sup>

Various features of Vlax varieties are either not existent or can no longer be found in Lovara-Romani. As opposed to the Kalderaš varieties, there are no centralized vowels that are derived from Romanian.<sup>5</sup>

<i>Romanian</i>	→	<i>Kalderaš-R.</i>	→	<i>Lovara-R.</i>		English
<i>a gîndi</i>	→	<i>gîndisarel</i>	→	<i>gindij</i>		'to think'

The voiceless, aspirated as well as the voiced affricate of Romani have shifted to fricatives. A further shift to palatalized fricatives – as in Kalderaš varieties – has not taken place:

<i>Romani in general</i>	→	<i>Lovara-R.</i>	→	<i>Kalderaš-R.</i>		English
<i>/dʒ/</i>	→	<i>/ʒ/</i>	→	<i>/j/</i>		
<i>džanel</i>	→	<i>žanel</i>	→	<i>žanel</i>		'to know'
<i>/tʃʰ/</i>	→	<i>/ʃ/</i>	→	<i>/ç/</i>		
<i>čhuri</i>	→	<i>šuri</i>	→	<i>šuri</i>		'knife'

Another phonological characteristic is the shift between the diphthongs /aj/ and /ej/ in absolute final position, which, as the following examples three to five show, on the one hand, is not realized consistently with inherited words, and, on the other hand, does not occur with loan-words from German at all:

4 The characteristics are described in detail by Cech/Heinschink (1999a). Among others, Pobožniak (1964), Hutterer/Meszaros (1967) and also Matras (1994) offer further descriptions of Lovara-Romani.

5 In this and all following comparisons the Romani variety of the Kalderaš who immigrated from Serbia and live in Austria today is used.

<i>daj</i>	> <i>dej</i>	'mother'
<i>šaj</i>	> <i>šej</i>	'girl'
<i>raj</i>		'gentleman'
<i>rašaj</i>		'priest'
<i>cajto</i>		'time'

In contrast to Kalderaš and other Vlax varieties that show the verbal adaptation marker /-isar-/, in the Lovara variety the affix /-in-/ dominates. Although the affix /-isar-/ is known, it is not used. Both, Lovara and Kalderaš varieties have shortened forms in the present indicative conjugation of recent loan-verbs:<sup>6</sup>

	Lovara-Romani		Kalderaš-Romani	
	full form	contracted	full form	contracted
1.pers.sg.	<i>traj-in-av</i>	<i>traj-ij</i>	<i>traj-isar-av</i>	<i>traj-iv</i>
2.pers.sg.	<i>traj-in-es</i>	<i>traj-is</i>	<i>traj-isar-es</i>	<i>traj-is</i>
3.pers.sg.	<i>traj-in-el</i>	<i>traj-ij</i>	<i>traj-isar-el</i>	<i>traj-il</i>
1.pers.pl.	<i>traj-in-as</i>	<i>traj-in-as</i>	<i>traj-isar-as</i>	<i>traj-is</i>
2.pers.pl.	<i>traj-in-en</i>	<i>traj-in</i>	<i>traj-isar-en</i>	<i>traj-in</i>
3.pers.pl.	<i>traj-in-en</i>	<i>traj-in</i>	<i>traj-isar-en</i>	<i>traj-in</i>

*traji / trajil* ← rom. *a trăi* 'to live'

As far as verbs are concerned, another feature worth mentioning is the high productivity in the forming of causatives. It happens through suffixion of the morpheme /-av-/ which partly takes place through reduplication of the stem-morpheme:

*xal* → *xaxaval* → *xaxavaval*      'to eat' → 'to feed' → 'to have fed'

The Magyarisms, the Hungarian influence, shows most clearly on a lexical level:

<i>dego</i>	← hung. <i>dög</i>	'carcass'
<i>fojovo</i>	← hung. <i>foljó</i>	'river'
<i>fogaša</i>	← hung. <i>fogás</i>	'trick'
<i>indulij</i>	← hung. <i>indul</i>	'to set out'
<i>kinosij</i>	← hung. <i>kínoz</i>	'to struggle, to torture oneself with'
<i>kivanij</i>	← hung. <i>kíván</i>	'to desire'
<i>tista</i>	← hung. <i>tiszta</i>	'clean, pure'
<i>vedra</i>	← hung. <i>véder</i>	'bucket'
<i>vonato</i>	← hung. <i>vonat</i>	'train'
etc.		

With regard to German interferences, there are differences between the varieties of the two Austrian Lovara groups. Despite the small general influence of the German language, the variety of the group that immigrated in the last century shows, for example, a devoicing of the final consonant, the variety of the immigrants that came later does not. Furthermore, it is characteristic for the group residing in Austria for the longer period of time to show a higher affinity toward loan-translations, as the following comparison of the questions 'How are you?' demonstrates.

<sup>6</sup> Due to a further shift /-iv#/, /-il#/ > /ij#/ the first and third person singular of Lovara-Romani have become the same. Besides, the 1. person plural *trajinas* is not contracted.

older group:	<i>Sar žal tuke?</i>	'How are you?' (= Loan-translation from German)
younger group:	<i>Sar san?</i>	'How are you?' Literally: 'How are you?'

## 2.2. Writing system

As far as the writing system is concerned, unsolvable problems have been encountered in the course of the project (so far). The members of the group that has been living in Austria since the last century want the writing system to follow the German example. The Lovara that came in 1956, however, prefer a writing system abiding to Hungarian conventions. Furthermore, it has to be considered that Lovara varieties are spread all over the world. On an international level, the writing system of Romani varieties following the example of the south slavic Latin writing has begun to be accepted as the generally most adequate way. The writing system used to present the outcomes of the project and for the purpose of this description follows the example of the south slavic Latin writing system —which is most widely spread internationally and in the academe.

The following excerpt demonstrates the discrepancies between these conventions and the (spontaneous) writing system after the German example preferred by the members of the first Lovara immigrants:

<i>SPONTANEOUS WRITING</i>	<i>CODIFICATION</i>	TRANSLATION
<i>Waregana sar dut diklem, me aba dut tschi pisderdem. Pendem mange, sar la gamav, schugares me la de ingrav.</i>	<i>Varekana sar tut dikhlem, me aba tut či bisterdem. Phendem mange, sar la kamav, šukares me la te inkraV.</i>	'I have not forgotten you since I first saw you one day. I told myself how much I loved her and that I was going to treat her well.'

The following tables present an overview of the phoneme inventory of Lovara-Romani and show what codification has been chosen. Phonemes and graphemes that are found primarily in Hungarian and German loans have been marked by shading:

### Vowels

high	front	unrounded	/i/	<i>
high	front	rounded	/y/	<ü>
high	back	rounded	/u/	<u>
central	front	unrounded	/e/	<e>
central	front	rounded	/œ/	<ö>
central	back	rounded	/o/	<o>
low			/a/	<a>

/.../ = Phonemes; <...> = Graphemes

### Diphthongs

/aj/	/uj/	/oj/	/ej/	/aʷ/
<aj>	<uj>	<oj>	<ej>	<au>

## Consonants and affricates

	lab.	dent.	dentoalv.	alv.	pal.	vel.	uvul.	glot.
plosives vl.	/p/	/t/				/k/		
	<p>	<t>				<k>		
plosives vl. asp.	/p <sup>h</sup> /	/t <sup>h</sup> /				/k <sup>h</sup> /		
	<ph>	<th>				<kh>		
plosives voiced	/b/	/d/				/g/		
	<b>	<d>				<g>		
affricates vl.		/ts/	/tʃ/					
		<c>	<č>					
fricatives vl.	/f/	/s/	/ʃ/			/x/		/h/
	<f>	<s>	<š>			<x>		<h>
fricatives voiced	/v/	/z/	/ʒ/		/j/			
	<v>	<z>	<ž>		<j>			
nasals	/m/			/n/	/ɲ/	/ŋ/		
	<m>			<n>	<ɲj>	<ng>		
liquids/vibrants				/r/			/R/	
				<r>			<rr>	
liquids/lateral				/l/				
				<l>				

### 2.3 Sociolinguistic situation

Whereas older people (over the age of 50) are generally still fully proficient in their language, language proficiency among the young depends on an intact social structure and the passing on of traditions within the families. If social ties are existent to a small degree only – as in most extended families of the Lovara – traditional values are not handed down anymore and, consequently, Romani is not passed on to the younger generation.

Originally, the repertoire of the Austrian Lovara that immigrated from Hungary was trilingual, that of the immigrants from Slovakia, which also belonged to Hungary in those times, even quatrilingual: Romani / German / Hungarian and Slovakian, whereby Hungarian and Slovakian lost their acro- and partly also their mesolectal functions after World War I.

#### Repertoire between the two wars

Acrolect	<b>GERMAN</b>
Mesolect	<b>GERMAN</b> / <b>Romani</b> / (Hungarian) / [Slovakian]
Basilect	German / <b>ROMANI</b> / [Hungarian]

Basilect..... Diatypes of the social microcosm used in private / informal domains within the family, when in contact with friends, etc.;

Mesolect..... Diatypes of the social macrocosm used in partly public / informal domains when in contact with acquaintances, at work, etc.;

Acrolect..... Public diatypes used in public / formal domains when in contact with authorities, at school, etc.

Diatype..... functionally defined linguistic variety

SMALL CAPITAL . primary diatype

()..... infrequent use

[ ]..... very infrequent use

Romani functioned as basilectal intimate variety, and a regional variety close to standard Austrian German was the acrolect. Besides the Romani used when in contact with members of other Lovara clans, mesolectal diatypes were varieties of German, Hungarian and – as has been mentioned before – partly also of Slovakian.

Of the second group of immigrants, only those over 50 are trilingual today – Romani / Hungarian / German –, whereby a basilectal bilingualism – Romani / German – has developed. Romani is used with members of other clans or other Vlach-Roma. When in contact with relatives and friends from the country of origin, Hungarian is also used. The primary mesolectal diatype, however, is German, which also dominates in the acrolect. Varieties of German function as primary diatypes in all domains among teenagers. Some of them have only passive proficiency in the original intimate variety anymore. As far as the language use is concerned, their repertoire is practically monolingual.

Repertoires of the immigrants of 1956

	Older people (over the age of 50)	Teenagers
Acrolect	<b>GERMAN</b>	<b>GERMAN</b>
Mesolect	<b>GERMAN</b> / <b>Romani</b> / (Hungarian)	<b>GERMAN</b> / [ <b>Romani</b> ]
Basilect	<b>GERMAN</b> / <b>ROMANI</b>	<b>GERMAN</b> / ( <b>Romani</b> )

Older members of the first group of immigrants generally have a bilingual repertoire. Members of the younger generation of this group only have a passive knowledge of Lovara, if at all, and are, consequently, de facto monolingual.

Repertoires of the first immigrants

	Older people (over the age of 50)	Teenagers
Acrolect	<b>GERMAN</b>	<b>GERMAN</b>
Mesolect	<b>GERMAN</b> / ( <b>Romani</b> )	<b>GERMAN</b>
Basilect	<b>GERMAN</b> / <b>Romani</b>	<b>GERMAN</b> / [ <b>Romani</b> ]

From 1997 to 1999 the *Codification of the Romani variety of the Austrian Lovara* was carried out as part of the Austrian Romani project in order to counteract the imminent language death outlined in the depiction of the sociolinguistic situation. Meanwhile, the Austrian Lovara variety has been codified: the grammar has been described and a dictionary as well as two text books have been made. A didactic realization of this codification, which would have to include the encouragement of the lively linguistic context necessary<sup>7</sup>, is not possible at the time being. There is a cultural center, the Viennese association *Romano Centro*, but there are no generally respected personalities within the group, nor teenagers interested in their own culture. This has to do with the only partial reconstruction of the social structure after the holocaust, but also with the small numbers, the lack of a built-up area of settlement and – as a consequence – with the assimilation in the German speaking majority population. The hope that the codification could trigger activities to maintain the language has not come true. If the surrounding circumstances should change, however, the results of the codification offer a basis for teaching Romani in the future.

7 Lovara-Romani is used in the newspaper and the radio broadcasts of the association *Romano Centro*. If the cultural activities of the families Stojka as well as Nikolić-Lakatos – that are also initiated by the association *Romano Centro* to a large extent – are considered, the lively linguistic context necessary for a future didactic realization is given for the most part.

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