

1 Introduction

1.1 Brief introduction to the history of Roma, Boyash and Rudari migration

“Gypsies” have been settled in Central and Eastern Europe since the 14th century and, depending on the duration and intensity of contact, have been influenced by the Romanian culture and language to different extents. A distinction is made between groups, which have Romanian influences in their Romani due to their dwelling in a Romanian-speaking environment, and other groups who have lived in a Romanian-speaking environment for so long that they have been linguistically completely assimilated. The members of the first group speak a Romani variant and describe themselves in their own language as Roma (SG.M *rom*, SG.F *romni*; M.PL *roma*, F.PL *romnia*). Their Romani language has traces of Romanian, not only in its vocabulary, but also in the morphology. Those who remained in Ro-

manian-speaking areas and in some cases mixed with Romanians, whether they live within or outside Romanian territory, today speak an archaic dialect of Romanian and call themselves *băiași* in the northern part of their distribution area and *rudari* in the southern part. Whether *băiași* (Boyash) or *rudari* (Rudari), these groups have been classified historically and anthropologically as being Gypsy or Roma. The Boyash and Rudari reject this denomination delivering arguments which differentiate them from the (other) Roma groups. One of the strongest arguments supporting their otherness is their language, which preserves no traces of Romani. This study seeks to provide a contrastive comparison of the two subgroups of the Boyash in Hungary: the **Munțeni** and **Argeleni**.

Economic circumstances resulted in the Roma being forced into slavery and serfdom, first of all in Wallachia and sub-

sequently in Moldova and Transylvania. The majority of those Roma who did not fall into serfdom were declared *robi* (bondsmen). The social status of the *robi* varied, depending on whether they worked for members of the lower nobility, great landowners or monasteries. As they became increasingly dependent upon their lords, they were also forced to adopt a sedentary way of life. The *robi* could be given away or sold at any time and most of them were bitterly poor and experienced oppression and exploitation on a daily basis. The diary of the German traveller and hermit of Gauting (FONSECA 1996: 248-249), as well as the childhood recollections of the Romanian writer Mihail Kogălniceanu (HANCOCK 1987: 16-17), offer a valuable insight into the cruel conditions in which those Gypsies who were kept as slaves were forced to live, and not only in the Danube Principalities and Transylvania (for today's antiziganism see HAUPT 2006).

For the *robi*, the 18th century was marked by extensive sedentarization measures. In 1724, Charles VI (1711-1740) registered all Gypsies in the Kingdom of

Hungary and in Transylvania and attempted to persuade them to adopt a sedentary lifestyle, convert to Roman Catholicism and to pay a Gypsy poll tax. Maria Theresia (1740-1780) and Joseph II (1780-1790) introduced further measures, including the prohibition of marriages within the group, the obligation to learn a trade and recognition of eligibility for conscription (WOLF 2004: 145). The more radical sedentarization measures introduced in the early 19th century finally led to greater sedentarization, although among certain segments of the population state pressure to adopt a settled way of life tended to encourage their nomadic lifestyle even more (WOLF 2004: 145). Serfdom was gradually abolished in two stages in 1837 and 1856 (FRASER 1998: 227-230). Direct exploitation was replaced by a system of day-labour contracts. In 1844 many of the Gypsies who had been owned by the church or the Austro-Hungarian Crown were liberated and four years later the provisional government decreed that all Gypsies were to be freed. However, it was only twelve years later that the Romanian landowners (Rom. *boieri*) gave their assent.

As a number of historical sources contain references to gold washers in the 18th century (FENEȘAN 1967: 55-64; WILSDORF 1984), it may be presumed that the Boyash probably lived in the Apuseni Mountains (Rom. Munții Apuseni), in particular in the Ore Mountains (Rom. Munții Metaliferi, Hung. Erdélyi Érchegység), in the Mühlbach Valley (Rom. Valea Sebeșului) and in areas of Little Wallachia (Vâlcea) or Greater Wallachia (Argeș) (WOLF 2004: 145). Gold washers alone had the right to, “pan the sands from the rivers and mountains for gold” (KOGĂLNICEANU 1840: 17). This brought the Rudari and Aurari a higher social status than other tax-paying Gypsies. As a consequence, the Rudari, Aurari and Lingurari advanced socially and were among the “most educated”, with some of them already living in houses during KOGĂLNICEANU’S (1840: 18) lifetime. Their specialist professions meant that they were in greater demand and enjoyed greater respect than other Roma groups. However, as “gold production declined during the 18th century, workers were no longer needed” (WEIGAND 1908: 174).

Following the liberation of slave Gypsies in 1856 under the ruler of Wallachia, Barbu Știrbei, who supported the emancipation of Gypsies belonging to private persons, and after efforts made by Alexandru Ioan Cuza as the ruler of the United Romanian Principalities (1859) to remove the last traces of bondage, the situation of the former slaves deteriorated, because, unable to ply their old goldsmiths’ trade, they had to change their occupation. Being compelled to abandon gold panning, the Romanian-speaking Roma took up basket weaving and woodworking (MIHOK 2000: 174), occupations for which they are still known today. This was accompanied by a migration movement, which has gone down in history as the “second wave of Gypsy migration” (ZAMFIR/ZAMFIR 1993: 82-83), and which was initially directed towards regions such as southern Transylvania, followed by Central Europe, especially Hungary, eastern Slovakia (PAPP 1982: 4-5; LÁSZLÓ 2001), Bulgaria, and eastern Serbia (Timok Valley). From here they moved on to other regions further south such as

Greece. Isolated cases of migration were also registered in Turkey, Bosnia, Ukraine and Russia, as well as southern Poland.

Once they arrived in Hungary, there was no better fate in store for them. One of the most important documents revealing the attitude of the authorities toward the Roma of Hungary at the time is a census initiated by Károly Hieronymi, the minister of the interior, on 19 November 1892. The census was undertaken with the purpose of putting an end to the Gypsies' way of life, as they were constantly moving around the country. However, the census was not confined to the nomadic Gypsies, but also included those who had already been assimilated into wider society (KÉMÉNY 2000: 106). Language, faith, family, and other aspects were also surveyed.

Hungary occupies a special place in the configuration of Roma groups, their identity and group affiliation. According to KÉMÉNYI (2000: 105), Hungarian Gypsies can be divided today into three main linguistic groups, each with its own specific lifestyle: Magyar-speaking Ro-

munos, the Magyar- and Romani-speaking Vlach Gypsies, and the Romanian- and Magyar-speaking Boyash Gypsies. MARUSHIAKOVA (2004: 38-42) also identifies three main Roma groups in Hungary. The largest in number is *roma ungrika* or *romungro* (71%), who settled on the territory of Hungary as early as the 16th and 17th centuries, and who, with a few exceptions, have lost their mother tongue, Romani, and now speak Hungarian. They identify themselves as Hungarians or *cziganyok* (i.e. Gypsies). The second group consists of *olah roma* (Vlach Roma, 21%), who emigrated during the 19th century from the present-day territory of Romania and speak a variant of Romani with several Romanian (especially lexical) influences. The third group (6%) is the Boyash (Hung. *beás*), speakers of archaic Romanian dialects, who today live in the regions of Baranya, Tolna, Zala, Somogy, and in the vicinity of Budapest (KÉMÉNY 2005: 73-81).

The idea that the Boyash are a homogeneous population can no longer be sustained. Like the Marburg ethnologist BLOCK (1936: 110), we assume that they

are miscegenated descendants of the Gypsy miners and gold workers, the sedentary (Romanian) population and escaped state and monastery slaves, although less subject to state laws and probably with the possibility of interethnic marriages. This would explain why the physiognomy of the Boyash on the whole differs from that of other Roma groups and why members of the same family can be found with lighter and darker complexions. In view of Maria Theresia's prohibition of marriages within the group, the occurrence of this visible sign of miscegenation is hardly surprising. Both this miscegenation, as well as the migration of the Boyash and Rudari to many places in east and southeast Europe, happened too long ago for people today to remember where their ancestors came from. Since the forefathers of the Boyash were engaged in gold washing and working, one can assume that they learned these skills from the Romanians. This would explain why they lost the Romani language at an early

date and became monolingual speakers of Romanian.

Today, the Boyash population is spread over eastern Slovakia (around Košice), Ukrainian Transcarpathia (Verhnja Vižnicja, Poroškovo, Mirča), Hungary (the southern Hungarian comitate along the southern border), large parts of Romania (with the main areas of settlement in the southern Romanian plains and southern Transylvania), the Republic of Moldova, Croatia (mainly Slavonia, Međimurje), Serbia (eastern and central Serbia, the Vojvodina, and there chiefly in the Bačka, s. FLORA 1969: 14), Bosnia (eastern parts of the country around Tuzla, Brčko District, Sarajevo), north and northeast Bulgaria (e.g. Varna, Zlatarica), the Republic of Macedonia (Bitola), Greece (especially Thessaly, Alexandria, Zefyri, KAHL 2011: 196-197), and, according to PETTAN (2002: 182), also in Kosovo to where they migrated from Serbia. Due to their deportation in World War II (ACHIM 2007: 95) they can also be found in Transnistria.

1.2 The Baranya region in southern Hungary

Baranya or Baranja (Hung. Baranya; Croat./Serb. Baranja; in German rarely referred to as Komitat Branau) is a geographical region between the Danube and the Drava rivers. The county of Baranya lies in southern Hungary, on the border with Croatia, with the river Drava forming part of its southern border, and the river Danube its eastern border. The capital of Baranya County is Pécs.

During its long history, the region of Baranya was part of the Roman Empire, the Hunnic Empire and a historical administrative unit within the Kingdom of Hungary. In 1526 the county was occupied by the Ottomans, becoming part of the Ottoman Empire until it was liberated in 1689. After the Ottoman retreat, large groups of Croats migrated from Bosnia into Slavonia and Baranya. This population is today known as the Šokci (Croat./Serb. *Šokci*, Hung. *Sokácok*), a collective term for the South Slavic Catholic refugees speaking Štokavian dialects from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia and Ragusa in the Otto-

man era. At the end of the 17th century, Baranya was captured by the Habsburg Empire (resp. Habsburg Monarchy, Austrian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire). After World War I, it was occupied by Serbian troops and after the Treaty of Trianon administrated by the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and by Hungary. Today, the region is divided between Hungary and Croatia with the major part lying in Hungary. In Hungary, the region is part of Baranya county (Hung. *megye*), and in Croatia part of Osijek-Baranja county (Croat. *Osječko-baranjska županja*). The northern part of the county is a hilly region (Mecsek Mountains, up to 682 metres) with many forests. The central areas extend up to the Baranya Hills and the Villány Mountains. The eastern and southern parts are flat.

Baranya has the largest number of minorities in Hungary, being home to 34% of the German minority and 32% of the South Slavic minorities in Hungary. In 2011, the population of Hungarian Baranya numbered 386,441, including 315,713 Hungarians (86.54%), 22,150 Germans (6.07%), 16,995 Roma (4.66%) and 6,343

Croats (1.74%). A rest of 3,600 (0.99%) are indefinable. Half the county's population lives in the county town or in its immediate vicinity, while 22% of the population lives in villages that have fewer than 1,000 inhabitants.

1.3 The language of the Boyash – Arġelean and Munĉan

With regard to the language spoken by the Roma groups that reached Hungary during various periods, the 1892 census (KÉMENY 2000: 108-111) shows that 38% had Hungarian as their mother tongue, 30% were Romani-speaking, and 24% were Romanian-speaking. The other Roma spoke Slovak, Serbian, German, Croatian, etc. In 1971, following long-standing state efforts to “magyarize” them, the results of the census were as follows: out of a total of 320,000 Roma, 71% (224,000) were Hungarian-speaking, 19% (61,000) were Romani-speaking, 7.6% (25,000) were Romanian-speaking, and 0.2% spoke other languages (KÉMENY 2000: 110). It is worth noting that after 1971, the ethnic sub-groups of the *Munĉeni*, *Arġeleni*,

and *Tiszani*, who speak an archaic dialect of Romanian, formed the majority of Roma in the southern rural areas of Baranya and Somogy close to the Croatian border. However, according to the 1994-1995 census, the linguistic panorama of the Munĉeni and Arġeleni Boyash has changed considerably since then. In the year 2000 only 5.6% still spoke archaic Romanian (KÉMENY 2000: 112). Under these conditions, the bilingualism of the Romani-speaking Roma and the Romanian-speaking Roma has undergone major changes, meaning that these languages are only used functionally, in the private domain within the family, as an affective language, while Hungarian is the language of the public domain. Another factor that triggered the process of monolingualism was the elimination of Roma settlements called *cumpáni* (Arġ./Munĉ.) between 1965 and 1985.

At the beginning of the century, the Boyash lived in isolation, in settlements in the woods outside villages, which contributed to the preservation of their native language. Between the world wars, the measures taken by the government

brought the Boyash from these isolated settlements named *culibe* (Munĉ.) or *cuvérze* (Arĝ.) closer to villages, inevitably bringing them into contact with the Hungarian language. Official business (with doctors, lawyers, mayors)

could only be conducted in Hungarian. Practising religion was no longer possible either without knowledge of the Hungarian language, because there were no Munĉeni or Arĝeleni Boyash priests in the new settlements (KÉMENY 2000: 113).