The Earliest Known Text in Balkan (Rumelian) Romani:
A Passage from Evliya Çelebi’s Seyâhat-nâme

Victor A. Friedman and Robert Dankoff

The Romani glossary collected by Evliya Çelebi in 1668 in Gümülcine (Greek Komotini) in what was then Turkey in Europe and is now Greek Thrace predates Marsden’s material — the oldest Rumelian data known to Paspati — by over a century. The glossary is published here along with Evliya’s text on the Romani-speaking population of Gümülcine and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Evliya’s Seyâhat-nâme was known to early contributors to the Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society only in a truncated and unreliable translation. The material here is thus being published with translation for the first time. The glossary is accompanied by interpretation and commentary and a brief dialectological analysis.

Although the earliest known texts in Romani date from the mid-sixteenth century (v. Miklosich 1874[1874], Kliyver 1910, Gypsy Lore Society 1930, Cortiade 1986), they were all apparently recorded in Western Europe. Paspati (1973[1870]:3) reports that Marsden (1785) is virtually the only author before him to have recorded any Romani in the dialect of Rumelia, in a text dating from c. 1783 (cf. Pott 1964[1844]:16, Sampson 1911). In this article, we are publishing a text that antedates Marsden’s by over a century, the Romani entries of Evliya Çelebi’s Seyâhat-nâme ‘Book of Travels’. According to Evliya, the specimens were taken down in 1668 in Gümülcine (Greek Komotini, Bulgarian Gjumjurdzâna), which is now the capital of Greek Thrace.

Evliya’s voluminous work contains specimens of a variety of the Turkic and non-Turkic languages and dialects that he encountered in his travels from 1640 to 1684 and runs to 10 volumes, of which Books I and II were translated and published by Hammer (1846, 1850). These are referred to by Halliday (1922) and Hasluck (1948). It is in Book VIII, however, that Evliya describes the Roms of Gümülcine and gives examples from their dialect.

In view of the particular interest of this text for Romologists, we are publishing Dankoff’s translation of the relevant prose sections of the Seyâhat-nâme, his transcription of the Romani vocabulary and its Turkish translation, his translation of the Turkish, and Friedman’s commentary on the Romani.

First we give Evliya’s prose on the Roms, then the vocabulary, which Friedman comments on entry by entry. This is followed by some comments on the dialectology of the text. The Arabic script has been transliterated according to the standard transcription used for Ottoman Turkish. Following each of Evliya’s Romani entries, and the Turkish gloss (with English translation), Friedman gives a version with the most likely form the word or phrase actually had. Where necessary, this is supplemented with a literal translation and, where there is a significant difference from Evliya’s Turkish, with an idiomatic translation. For the sake of simplicity the same Ottoman transcription has been followed for the “normalized” Romani as Dankoff uses for the Turkish. The following table gives the differences between the Turkish orthography and the Romani alphabets proposed at the First (1971) and Fourth (1990) World Romani Congresses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ottoman</th>
<th>Romani: 1st Congress</th>
<th>Romani: 4th Congress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>dż</td>
<td>z or ẓ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ç</td>
<td>ķ</td>
<td>ķ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ş</td>
<td>ş</td>
<td>ş</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>j or haček</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Victor A. Friedman is professor of Slavic and Balkan linguistics, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. Robert Dankoff is professor of Turkish, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL 60637.
The following sets of sounds can correspond to a single Arabic symbol: a/e (a), e/i (i), u/o (u), k/g/ng(n)/ny(n)/gy (k). This is taken into account and ambiguities are commented on where necessary.

Texts from other authors are cited in the original transcription. The following common grammatical abbreviations are used:
1 first person
2 second person
abl ablative
acc accusative
aor aorist
instr instrumental
loc locative
nom nominative
obl oblique
pl plural
pres present
sg singular

Evlifa Çelebi on the Gypsy Language of Komotini in 1668

The following translation is based on the autograph manuscript, Bağdat Köşkü #308, which includes Books VII and VIII of the Seyahat-nâme. Reference is to folio and line number. Also cited in the notes are book IX, Bağdat Köşkü #306, and book X, İUTY 5973. Other page numbers (without a or b) refer to the Istanbul printed text, 10 vols., 1886-1938.

VIII 208a.26 - 208b.5 (86-87) Concerning the Gypsies (qavvm-i qababița).

Ever since the days of the Pharaohs the original home of the Gypsies (çinganeler) of Rumelia has been this town of Gümülcine. In fact when the Gypsies (qavvm-i ferâ‘îneler) take an oath among themselves they swear “by Egypt and by our Gümülcine.” As for the Gypsies of Anatolia, their original home is the town of Balat in the sancaq of Menteşe. Even now Balat is the name of the quarter where the Gypsies settled when Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror transferred them from Balat to Istanbul. To be sure, Sultan Mehmed also transferred to Istanbul some Gypsies from this Gümülcine. But the Anatolian and Rumelian Gypsies (qipltîler) did not get along well. The Rumelian Gypsies celebrated Easter with the Christians, the Festival of Sacrifice with the Muslims, and Passover with the Jews. They did not accept any one religion, and therefore our imams refused to conduct funeral services for them but gave them a special cemetery outside Eğri Qapu. It is because they are such renegades that they were ordered to pay an additional tax for non-Muslims (xarâc). That is why a double xarâc is exacted from the Gypsies. In fact, according to Sultan Mehmed’s census stipulation (tahrîr), xarâc is even exacted from the dead souls of the Gypsies, until live ones are found to replace them. Finally the Rumelian Gypsies returned to their old hometown of Gümülcine, while the Anatolian Gypsies from Balat remained in the Balat quarter of Istanbul as quasi Muslims and as musicians and dancers. So the beg of the Gypsies [i.e., the official in charge of collecting the Gypsy xarâc] sometimes resides here in Gümülcine. For there are numerous Gypsies (qipltîler) in the vicinity of the town, whether singers and musicians, or counterfeiters and thieves. Every people (qavvm) has its Gypsies, as does every one of the Christian nations (millet-i neşârî). But the Gypsies in the vicinity of Gümülcine are notorious brigands.


The various peoples spread over the seven climes have their various languages. But each people also--by God’s command--has its Gypsies, who speak the languages of the countries where they are settled. However, the Gypsies of Balat in Anatolia have their own peculiar language. And also these Gypsies (qipltîler) of Gümülcine have their own peculiar dialect. The Gypsies (Bu qavvm) in this region and throughout the Ottoman domains originated in Egypt, when Moses battled with Pharaoh on the shore of the Red Sea near the Sinai desert and 600,000 of Pharaoh’s soldiers--along with his magicians and diviners and the tools of their trade--drowned in the whirlpool at the place known as the Strait of Qolundur. Moses put a curse on the people of Pharaoh who were
not present at that battle. As a result of the curse they could not remain in Egypt but were scattered abroad, condemned to wander from clime to clime and from town to town, hungry and homeless, dwelling in the mountains and the valleys, and raiding and thieving.

209b.28-31 (92) In the time of Moses the people of Pharaoh split into two groups. One group, consisting of several hundred thousand who escaped drowning in the Red Sea at the Strait of Qolundur, fled to Rum, as mentioned above. The other group, who were neither on the side of Pharaoh nor on the side of Moses, are known as Copts (qavm-i qibfi). Moses was not angry at them; but rather he blessed them, and today they are the much-respected Coptic people of Egypt.

210a.22 - 210b.14 (94-95) But the "Copts" -- i.e., the Gypsies -- in Rum, because of Moses's curse, live in contemptible and squalid circumstances, and even their dead must pay xarâc. It was concerning this group -- while they were still soldiers in Pharaoh's service -- that God revealed the verse "from every stubborn tyrant." Truly they are tyrannical, good-for-nothing, thieving, irreligious people -- they pretend to be Muslims but are not even infidels!

Their language. [This section has been shifted to the end of the expository prose after 210b.7]

210b.7 They (qavm-i ferâ'ine) have thousands of other such naughty expressions. For they are always quarreling among themselves, day and night, and cursing each other out with obscenities. They commit murder for the sake of a penny. Or else they insist on bringing their case to the pasha or to the Shariah court, and when it is adjudicated the dispute turns out to be over a penny or less. For that reason Gypsy legal claims are not heard. The Copts in Egypt, on the other hand, never utter an impolite word. Even the Anatolian Gypsies of Balat are upright citizens compared to these Rumelian Gypsies (qiptîler); I have given an account of their language above in vol. ----.7

These Gypsies (qabâbîta) too have twelve dialects, one uglier than the next -- may God save His servants from their wickedness. But the world traveler must have some inkling of their dialects as well, and so I have recorded it here despite the impropriety of some expressions. Don't blame me; for these Gypsies made my liver bloody and my eyes red with tears.

Vocabulary

VIII 210a.26

yk 1 yekh
duwy 2 duy
tirin 3 trin

Marsden gives Trin. The use of $i$ to break up the initial cluster $tr$- is characteristic of Turkish phonotactics. (Cf. Lăzărescu-Zobian:1983:312). In the case of Romani, it is also possible that Evliya simply misheard the cluster, but see the next entry.

'ișta'r 4 [i]ștar

Marsden gives Shtiar. Paspati records ishtâr as well as shtâr. As in the preceding numeral, we have here a consonant cluster that is inadmissible in initial position in Turkish. Unlike the preceding example, however, this one is apparently attested in Romani and is therefore potentially an example of the influence of Turkish phonotactics on the dialect in question. In view of this fact, we cannot altogether eliminate the possibility that such influence was also present in the Gümûlcine Romani pronunciation of the numeral 3.

p'nç 5 panç
șuw 6 şov

Paspati records sho as well as shov. Marsden has Shove.

'aftay 7 eftâ[y]

Paspati has only eftâ, likewise Marsden Eftâ. The final $y$ is peculiar, but this may be a diphthongization of the type observed by Heinschink (1989:107) in the dialect of the Basket-weavers of Izmir (cf. below).
'uwxtuw 8 oxto
'ankah 9 enya

Presumably this dialect has a palatal or jotated /n/ and final stress, as is quite common in the Balkan dialects. Marsden gives Enia. (Cf. notes on transcription).

daș 10 deș

fira'huwn ism-i Allâh name of God firahun

Here Evliya adds: “one of their gods -- God forbid -- was Pharaoh (Fir'âvn); one group called him fira'huwn.” The following series of entries all ending with hun are commented upon as a group at the end.

ha'ma'n huwn ulu pêygambar great prophet haman hun
zayy'n huwn ulu pâdişah great sultan zeyyan hun
dulkaw huwn ulu gari pâdişahi great sultan of women (?)
dulke hun
kuluwsh huwn ulu evliyalar great saints kuluse hun
miysa' huwn Mûsâ pêygambar prophet Moses misa hun
haruwn huwn Hârûn pêygambar prophet Aaron harun hun
maşa'b huwn baba pêygambar father prophet mesab hun

The entries ending in hun all appear to be non-Romani. The proper names of Pharaoh, Haman, Moses, and Aaron are all from the Koran. Haman is associated with Pharaoh in Koran 28:63; 29:39; 40:36-37. It is perhaps worth noting that this hun occurs in some specimens of Hindi prayers and songs that Evliya heard from entertainers in Funcistan and from the Indian “Banyan” communities settled in Suakin, Massawa, and elsewhere on the Red Sea coast, although in Hindi hun is the copula.

manruw ekmek bread manro

‘Comb-makers’ for whom the reflex of original /nd/ in medial position in substantives is consistently /nr/.

pa'ñkiy şu water panyi

Paspati has Sedentary pani vs Nomad pai. In Gilliat-Smith, pai is found in all the Vlah and some Non-Vlah dialects, while pani is limited to certain Non-Vlah dialects. Marsden records Pagnee. Here <nk> probably represents a palatal /ń/. This could be related to the Greek palatalization of /n/ and /ń/ before /ń/. Additional data (cf. below) indicate that the absorption of intervocalic /ń/ by /ń/ was in process. The palatal mutation of these sonorants before /ń/ as in Greek, and their loss in some cases as in Albanian suggest the possibility of an areal (language-contact) origin for the phenomenon in Romani.

ma's et meat mas/maş?

The palatal here is problematic. Paspati and Gilliat-Smith record mas for all dialects. On the other hand, Paspati (1973[1870]:38) notes occasional /s/ for etymological /s/ among the Nomads of Rumelia, e.g. in sho'si for so isi ‘qu'y a-t-il?’, and also comments that like the Greeks, the Sedentary Roms have difficulty with /ş/ whereas the Nomads, who are almost constantly speaking Turkish, do not. The form could thus be a result of hypercorrection. Moreover, Erzherzhog (1902) records maš from a Rumanian dialect. Cf. Hamp (1987).

duwduwum qabaq gourd dudum

$əx lahâna cabbage šax

ma'ncan ca'nas guzel pahiçan fine eggplant
man canyanas 'me-acc you-had-known' = you had known me [?]
mancan canas/kanas 'food-acc-pl you-know/we-know'=you/we know food/meals [?]

The Romani word for eggplant recorded by Paspati, badliçan, is borrowed from Turkish. Greek is melidzâna but regional pronunciation would be [mél'indzâna]. There is also the Balkan
Turkism (from Italian) *manca* 'meal, food', but we do not expect an inanimate with the accusative case marker (albeit they do occur). Perhaps this is a peculiar or garbled form combining Greek 'eggplant' with Balkan 'food, meal' to produce *mancancanes*, but then Evliya's entry does not appear to contain any of the Romani words corresponding to Turkish *güzel* 'fine, beautiful'. It is possible that his informant was pulling his leg here. As Sampson (1911) has pointed out, there are numerous straightforward Romani vocabulary lists in the middle of which an ordinary term is glossed with a Romani obscenity. For example, Miklosich (1974[1878]:38[280]) quotes *chamrimintsch* literally 'eat my cunt', and *kari*, literally 'prick', as the Siberian Romani terms for 'aunt' and 'uncle'. If the pointing were different, I would suggest something with *minc/minç* 'cunt' (instr. pl. *mincenza*[r] in some Rumelian dialects).

**kara’l peynir cheese** keral

Many of the modern Balkan dialects now have *kiral*, although Paspati records *keral*.

**siqah incir fig** sika

Paspati records *kheli*. The term recorded by Evliya is borrowed from Greek.

**šuw karaz šuwpy kanka’n nišlersin ne şatđañ** What are you doing, what did you sell? so keres so bikengyan

There are three features worthy of note here: 1) the 2nd sg pres marker, 2) the second vowel in the stem *biken-* and 3) the consonant marking the aorist stem formant, here -g-.

1. The 2nd sg pres ending in Romani is -es(a), that of the 1 pl pres -as(a). Elsewhere Evliya writes <s>, e.g. des 'give/hit/fight'. Moreover, final <s> occurs in *gis* 'day', *oles* 'him', *kakes* 'uncle-acc', but *baleme* 'Greek-acc'. It is possible that there was some sort of tense/lax alternation occurring. This could also account for the <p> if it is not simply a mistake in pointing (cf. *puye* below).

2. Paspati records the stem as *bikar-* in the present, *bikir-* in the participle, and *biken-* in the aorist, gerund, and causative. Etymologically, the stem is *bikin-* which is the stem that shows up most consistently in the Balkans.

3. Evliya's <n> most likely represents n + palatal stop. The Romani aorist is based on the participial stem, which in this case ends in -d. Mutation to a palatal stop [d] or [ɟ] due to jotation in the aorist was characteristic of the Sedentary Roms in Paspati's time. Nomadic would be *bikendan*. In Gilliat-Smith's groups, only the Non-Vlah Sofia Ervides (= Macedonian Arlija) have this feature. Likewise in modern Skopje, Arlija is distinguished from both Džambaz and Burgudži by the presence of a stop or affricate.

**šuw qaramtunw šuw karaz eyi xoş ya sen nišlersin** Good, fine, and what are you doing?

šukar am[a] tu so keres 'well, but you what do'

Note also that this sentence and the preceeding one form a typical Balkan exchange. --So keres? --Şukar! is the Romani version of a standard Balkan greeting exchange and functions as the equivalent of How are you? (How do you do?) -- Fine! (Very well, thank you!) (Greek: --Ti kanis? --Kalá!, Macedonian --[S]tjo pra[v]i? --Arno!, Romanian --Ce mai faci? --Bine!, Albanian - - Çka po bën? --Mire!). The same inquiry is made by the second speaker to the first in conformity with the etiquette of such interchanges. Note that the first speaker reinforces the greeting with the functional equivalent of 'How's the market?' ('How's business?').

**'aqiy qa’y karaz istic isleyi-yürüz** Well, we are working

Given the uncertainty of Evliya's word divisions, the relative vagueness of the Turkish, and the richness and variation of Romani demonstrative pronouns and exclamations, there are a number possible interpretations of the first two words of the Romani. Among these possibilities are the following:

ake kay keras = Behold [that] which we-do
aka kay keras = this [is that] which we-do
ak aka keras = Behold this we-do
ak kaka keras = Behold this we-do
akaka keras = This we-do
Note the 2 sg questions with 1 pl responses. This entry resembles one of the typical Serbian replies in this type of dialogue, viz. radimo ‘we are working/we work’.

nuwkiy křz ne išlersin What are you doing?
buki keres ‘work you-do’

Evliya’s <n> is clearly a mistake in pointing, the dot should have been below rather than above the letter, which would have given <b>. In Paspati, buki is marked as Nomad. This form is another example of the shift of a dental to a palatal stop ([t] or [k]), in this case before /i/, the older form being buti.

‘uwrda’ pa’rda’ karaz ufaq defek išleyi-yürüz We are doing this and that
hurda-murda (?) keres ‘Odds-and-ends we-do’

Cf. Turkish (from Persian) hurdemürde ‘trifles’, cf. Romani xurdo ‘little, small’. Gilliat-Smith reports xurdimáta-murdimáta ‘odd and ends’ in the Pärpulía ‘Gimlet-maker’ Non-Vlah dialect. Loss of /x/ is characteristic of the Bulgarian dialects of the Gümülcine region and could have influenced the shape of this expression. The difference between /mu/ and /pa/ is problematic, but in view of the Turkish gloss and the Romani possibilities, this is the best I can do at the moment.

caba’ bikan var şat Go sell
cu, be, biken! or caba, biken!

The imperatives of a-stem verbs such as ‘go’ are subject to considerable variation. We could thus have a vocative particle be or a lengthened imperative. (See below).

şuw by kanka’n ne şatdini What did you sell?
só bikengyan

buwl bkn kuwm cedpe göt şatdim (begging your pardon) I sold ass
bul bikingyum ‘ass I-sold’

This jotated aorist with a back rounded vowel in the 1 sg identifies this dialect unambiguously as Non-Vlah in Gilliat-Smith’s terms and as Sedentary in Paspati’s. Vlah dialects are characterized by a mid-front vowel in 1 sg aor (bikindem), and Nomad dialects do not have jotation (bikindom). Although the 1 sg aor is /o/ in many dialects, including the Sedentary described by Paspati, the ambiguities in Evliya’s pointing also allow for /u/ as a possible interpretation. The form as it stands here is identical to modern Macedonian Arilja.

qana’štah diya’n kime göt verdim To whom did you give ass?
kanešte diyan ‘whom-loc you-gave’

Paspati gives nominative kon and locative (Paspati’s dative 1) kaste (Sedentary)/kaste (Nomad). What we have here appears to be a transitional stage between the older Sedentary and the innovating Nomad. The interchange of locative (-te) and dative (-ke) is quite common in this context.

The shape of the aorist, which involves the shift of palatal /i/ to /y/ (older dinyum > diyum) is again Non-Vlah and Sedentary (cf. Pärpulia and Kalaidji dióm in Gilliat-Smith, also modern Skopje Burgudži diyum). Here we are dealing with the later phenomenon of a palatal /i/ that has been completely absorbed by the element that caused its palatalization in the first place. This represents a further development of the process that gave the older palatal /i/ in the word for ‘water’.

yak qa’l ba’lamah diyum bir kāfiłere verdim I gave it to a certain infidel
yekh kalb balame diyum ‘one false Greek-acc I-gave’

According to Paspati, the term kalb tchingiané was used by Muslim Roms in referring to Christian Roms. Note that dav bule with the old locative of bul ‘ass’ is an idiom meaning literally ‘butt-fuck’ (Paspati 1973 [1870]:583, although it can also refer to vaginal intercourse, especially a tergo) and takes an accusative object. On the other hand, the verb ‘give’ can also take an accusative to indicate the indirect object as in de man ‘give me [something]’. The sentence is thus potentially ambiguous. In view of the preceding
two or three sentences, one would expect a literal interpretation of 'I gave it to a dirty Greek', but without that context, one could just as easily translate the phrase 'I hit/fucked a dirty Greek'.

da'uwuw las karah da'ya' puwpah  ben sikeyim bunun handasını
Let me fuck this one's mother
dav oleskere daya buye 'I-give his mother-acc ass-[old loc]' I fuck his mother

The form <puwpah> should undoubtedly be read buye. The first <p> is a mistake of mispointing (three dots for <p> instead of the one for <b>) or of Evliya's perception of a very tense [b]. The second <p> is merely a mispointing of three dots for the two of <y>. (Cf. the following example, where the <y> is correct). Gilliat-Smith gives dai 'mother' as Non-Vlah, vs Vlah dei, but the pointing in Evliya is not unambiguous.

da'maytah paya' puwyah  sikeyim ben de seniőn qiz qarındașını
And let me fuck your sister
da me[y] te phe[n]iya bu[i]lye = 'and I your-oobl sister-acc ass-obl-loc'


Note the shift of both palatal /ň/ and palatal /ň/ to /ŋ/ in this dialect. Gilliat-Smith reports phejasa 'sister-instr' but buljasa and dav bulē for the Vlah Kalburdji 'Sieve-maker' dialect. The Non-
Vlah Kalaidji 'Tinner' dialect loses palatal /ň/ and /ň/ in the aorist as does the Sedentary dialect on occasion. The shift of /ň/ to /ŋ/ before a mid front vowel in buye is unusual (but cf. Mulcahy 1990).

na'na' yiylah ca'uwuw qadintuw ma'  'ayb degil midir çekiş
söğüşirsiňiz Isn't it shameful that you are quarreling and swearing at each other?
nanay lacavo ka den tumen 'not shameful that give/hit-2-pl you-
pl-nom/acc'

The form nanay is characteristic of Non-Vlah dialects, including Arlija. Vlah and some Non-Vlah dialects have nai. The

use of 'give' to mean 'hit' and with the personal pronoun as a reciprocal meaning 'fight' is well attested.

şar tana' das tuw't  ya nice çekişmeyeyim And why shouldn't I
quarrel?
sar te na das/des tut 'how that not we-hit/you-sg-hit you-acc-sg'

There is a clear discrepancy here between the Romani and the Turkish. Given the pointing the Romani could either mean 'how could you not fight' (des) or 'how could we not hit you' (das). The Turkish çekişmeyeyim would be in Romani te na dav man.

şaruw kiys 'awla' aqwul şila' her gün gelir baňa söger Every
day he comes and swears at me
Sar o g[y]lis av[e]la akušela 'all the day comes swears'

In the word for 'day' we have another example of dental > mellow palatal before -i. Marsden has Deeves. The palatal and the vocalism of 'day' are Vlah (Gilliat-Smith Vlah givės vs Nom-
Vlah diės) and Nomad (Paspati Nomad diės/dis vs Sedentary
divės, cf. also buki vs buti cited above).

The form avla (< avela) could represent the elision characteristic of some Arlija dialects, Evliya's perception of a reduced, unstressed /e/, or a mere accident of pointing. Gilliat-Smith reports initial a- in certain verbs, including 'swear at' as characteristic of Vlah.

cay 'ica'w 'uwlas qa'w qa'kis  var götür oni enfendiye Go take
him to the master
cay iyav oles k-o kakes 'go bring him to the uncle'

Note the plain imperative meaning 'go'. The verb meaning 'bring' is appears to be transitional between a form recorded by Paspati, anghiarav (imperative anghiar), and one reported by Uhlīk, iğav (imperative iğav). Etymologically, the verb is derived from an- 'bring, lead, carry' via the participle ando/andid/ ande and causative formation. This verb appears to be subject to considerable dialectal variation (cf. Cortiade 1989:208-209).
'ica'w kuwm mar karkuwm 'uwlas  götürdüm doğdürüdüm onu I took him and had him beaten  
igayvgym mar-kergyum oles 'I-brought beat-I-did him-acc'  

1 sg aor as above.

muws 'ca'wkan 'uwlas  çünkÎ götürdü'n doğdürüdün onu Because  
you took him and had him beaten  
em os  igaygym oles 'and since you-sg-brought him'

The second part of the Romani, which would have corresponded to the Turkish ‘[and] you had him beaten’, must have been omitted. Apparently <muws> is supposed to correspond to Turkish çünkî ‘because, for, as since’. I suggest here the possibility that the Romani is from em (< Turkish hem ‘and’; the dropped h and use as a single conjunction is well attested in Balkan Romani) + Greek ὅς ‘as, since’.

xabâ ma’ minca’ta’r  yeyesîn benim amîmdan Why don’t you eat my cunt?  
xa, be, [xabâ] me mincatar ‘Eat my cunt-abl’

The verb ‘eat’ is an a-verb like ca ‘go’ (see above).

şuwş katah xal murowm timînç  cânim nicîn yesîn benîm qocam senîn amîndan cânim My dear, why should my husband eat your cunt?  
soske te xal mo rom te mine ‘why that eats my-nom husband your-obl cunt’

Note the final devoicing in minç.

tana’ xala’ ma’xal mabuw ya’ta’r  eger amîmdan yemezse yesîn götürmenden If he doesn’t eat my cunt let him eat my ass  
te na xala me (mincatar te) xal me bu[i]yatar ‘if not eats my-abl cunt-abl that] eats my-obl ass-abl’

On the basis of the Turkish and the preceding sentences in the discourse, it appears that part of the Romani (indicated in parentheses) was omitted. Note again the change /l/ > /y/ in buyatar.

Comments on the Dialect of Gümülcine 1668

Romani dialects present a number of problems for structural analysis, and for both synchronic and diachronic classification. As is often the case with nomadic groups or groups including significant nomadic populations, inter-dialectal contact and borrowing can render the identification of native as opposed to borrowed features problematic at best. To this is added the paucity of older texts and the small number of synchronic studies in comparison with the large number of dialects. Older materials must be approached with considerable caution as their collectors were not always consistent in transcription and, as was mentioned earlier, were sometimes deliberately fooled by their informants (cf. Sampson 1911, 1927). Paspati (1973[1870]) distinguished two main European Romani dialects in Rumelia: Nomad and Sedentary. Gilliat-Smith (1915-16) makes a primary distinction between what he calls Vlah and non-Vlah, the terminology being based on the relatively large number of Romanian loanwords in the former group of dialects and their absence from the latter.10 Paspati (1973[1870]:12) reports that the Sedentary Roms have borrowed many Greek and Turkish terms where the Nomads have preserved native Romani. Gilliat-Smith’s distinction is still widely used for distinguishing two groups of Romani dialects in the Balkans, although it may not in fact be the shibboleth it was once thought to be. Thus, for example, two of the principal Romani dialects of Skopje--Arlija and Džambaz--are classed as Non-Vlah and Vlah, respectively, and also correspond more or less to Paspati’s Sedentary and Nomad.

Within the context of the available classifications of Romani dialects closest to Gümülcine in space and time, viz. Paspati’s of 1870 and Gilliat-Smith’s of 1915-16, the dialect described by Evliya seems to be a Non-Vlah Sedentary type (cf. also Messing 1986). This is as might be expected, given Evliya’s description of these Roms as settled in the major population center of Western Thrace. Nonetheless the dialect does display some Vlah or Nomad
features. These problems have two possible interpretations which are not mutually exclusive. 1) The features in question are parallel innovations in different dialects and therefore not diagnostic. 2) Certain features are in fact characteristic of an older dialectal division and subsequently members of each of these two groups came into contact and converged in other respects. The following table summarizes the most salient features from Evliya’s vocabulary and their classification according to Paspatis (1973[1870]) and Gilliat-Smith (1915-16), where S = Sedentary, N = Nomad, V = Vlah, and NV = Non-Vlah:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>G-S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jotated aor</td>
<td>bikengyan</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l sg aor -um</td>
<td>bikingyum</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l, n &gt; y</td>
<td>buyatar, diyum, pheya</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negation</td>
<td>nanai</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek loan</td>
<td>sika, [(e)m]os?</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nd &gt; nr</td>
<td>manro</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l, n &gt; l, n (y) /-- i, é</td>
<td>pangi [?], buye</td>
<td>N?</td>
<td>V?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t, d &gt; k, g</td>
<td>-- i</td>
<td>buki, gis</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ivé &gt; i</td>
<td>gis</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>V?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s - š</td>
<td>maš</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>V?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbs in a-</td>
<td>akęšela</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most striking overall feature in the Gümülcine dialect is the tendency to jotation and palatal mutation. These types of phenomena occur in the other Balkan languages and dialects, which suggests language-contact as a motivating factor. Of particular importance for Romani is the chronology of the loss of intervocalic /n/ before stressed /i/. According to the data reported by Marsden a century later, palatal /i/ could still be heard in the word for ‘water’ in Rumelia. To this can be added relative conservatism in the treatment of older /nd/ and innovation in the use of pre-verbal a-. Although the backing of palatalized dentals to dorso-palatal in the lexical items buki and gis is identified as Nomad and Vlah, Sedentary and Non-Vlah dialects have precisely this type of change for jotated dentals in the aorist. It is possible, therefore, that the isogloss for the former overlaps with that of the latter. Despite the small size of the corpus, the combination of features in the material recorded by Evliya from the Romani dialect of Gümülcine suggests that the basic dialect divisions based on Paspatis and Gilliat-Smith are in need of modification or revision.

Notes

Acknowledgments. I would like to thank Eric P. Hamp of the University of Chicago for his helpful suggestions concerning the interpretation of the Romani data.

1 I am discounting Hodgson (1973), since both of the magical formulae which he cites are evidently taken from Leland (1891):100, 111, where they are described as contemporary rituals, not gleanings from ancient manuscripts.

2 For more on Evliya’s languages see Dankoff (1989).

3 The use of a haček over a vowel indicates that the preceding consonant is jotated in some dialects but not in others, e.g. in the aorist.

4 The term ‘Gypsy’ is being used to translate the following words and phrases used by Evliya: 1) čingane (plural činganeler), Modern Turkish čingené. This is the most common word corresponding to ‘Gypsy’ and the one that Evliya uses throughout his text except where otherwise noted; 2) qipti (Turkish plural qiptiæer, Arabic plural qababa) used for both ‘Copt’ and ‘Gypsy’; 3) qavm-i ferā′înerler ‘people of the pharaohs’.

5 Pointing in the text, by a later hand, is wrong; for the correct form see X 9b.2.

6 The form in the text, min kull cebbār anid, is not an exact quotation. The printed text substitutes Koran 14:15 ve-xahe kull cebbār anid (And every stubborn tyrant went for nought); but Evliya could also have been thinking of 11:59 ve-ttebe′ii kull cebbār anid (And they followed every stubborn tyrant) or 50:24 elgiyā fi chehennem kull cebbār anid (Throw into hell every stubborn tyrant).

7 Blank space; cf. IX 72a.12f. (146), description of Balat, no mention of Gypsies or their language.

8 X 422a.12 (908), 422b.3 (909), Q339b.27 (963). For the Banyan communities, see X 436a.15 (939), 438b.10f. (944), 442b.3f. (953).
Gilliat-Smith uses the spelling Vlach. See the commentary for more on these classifications. Paspati (1973[1870]:13) reports that the Nomads refer to the Sedentaries by the term Laxos ‘Wallachian [Vlah]’, among others. However, the Nomad dialects appear to be closer to those Gilliat-Smith classes as Vlah. None of the dialects described by Paspati, however, has the front vowel in the 1 sg aor (-em) that appears to be an essential characteristic of the Vlah dialects.

References cited

Miklosich, Franz. 1884 [1874]. Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Zigeunermundarten I-II. Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der DDR.
Miklosich, Franz. 1894 [1878]. Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Zigeunermundarten IV. Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der DDR.
Sampson, John. 1911. Jacob Bryant: Being an analysis of his Anglo-Romany vocabulary with a discussion of the place and date of collection and an attempt to show that Bryant, not Rüdiger, was the earliest discoverer of the Indian origin of the Gypsies. Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society 2, 4:163-94.