

**The Earliest Text in Balkan (Rumelian) Romani:
A Passage from Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahāt nāmeḥ*
(written with Robert Dankoff)**

1. Introduction

Although the earliest known texts in Romani date from the mid-sixteenth century (v. Miklosich 1874, Kluyver 1910, n.a. 1930, Cortiade 1986), they were all apparently recorded in Western Europe.¹ Paspatis (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 1844:16, Sampson 1911). In this article, we are publishing a text that antedates Marsden's by over a century, viz. the Romani entries of Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahāt nāmeḥ* 'Book of Travels'. According to Evliya, the specimens were taken down in 1668 in Gümülcine (Greek Komotiní, Bulgarian Gjumjurdzina), 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).² 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 interest of this text for Romologists, we are publishing here Prof. Dankoff's translation of the relevant prose sections of the *Seyahāt nāmeḥ*, his transcription of the Romani vocabulary and its Turkish translation, his translation of the Turkish, and my commentary on the Romani.

The order of the material is the following: First, Evliya's prose on the Roms, then the vocabulary, which I comment on entry by entry. This is followed by some comments on the dialectology of the text. The Arabic script has been transliterated in bold face according to the standard transcription used for Ottoman Turkish. Following each of Evliya's Romani entries, and the Turkish gloss with its English

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 v. Dankoff (1989).

translation, I give a Romani version, in small caps, of the most likely form the word or phrase actually had. If there is a significant discrepancy, I supplement this with a literal translation and, where there is a significant difference from Evliya's Turkish, with an idiomatic translation. For the "normalized" Romani I follow the orthographic practice in the republic of Macedonia. Table 1 gives the differences between the Turkish orthography and the Romani alphabets currently in use in the Republic of Macedonia, where Romani is an official language, and the International Romani alphabet used by many publications sponsored by the European Commission, European Union, and World Romani Congress (v. Friedman 1995b for details):

Ottoman	Macedonian Romani	International Romani
c	dz	ʒ
	c	
h	s	,
x	h or x	x
y	j	j or hacek (iriklo) over following vowel ³

Table 1: *Orthographies*

The following sets of sounds can correspond to a single Arabic symbol: a/e (**a**), e/i (**ī**), u/o (**ū**), k/g/ng(ñ)/ny(ɛ)/gy (**k**). I have taken this into account and commented on the ambiguities where necessary. Texts from other authors are cited in the original transcription.

2. Evliya 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 *Seyāhat-nāme*. Reference is to folio and line number. Also cited in the notes are book IX, Bağdat Köşkü #306, and book X, İÜTY 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 (*qavm-ı qabābıfla*). Ever since the days of the Pharoahs the original home of the Gypsies (*çinganeler*) of Rumelia has been this town of Gümülcine. In fact when the Gypsies (*qavm-ı ferā'inelər*) 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

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

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 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 Egri Qapu. It is because they are such renegades that they were ordered to pay an additional *xarāc* (tax for non-Muslims). That is why a double *xarāc* is exacted from the Gypsies. In fact, according to Sultan Mehmed's census stipulation (*tahrîr*), *xarāc* 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 *xarāc*) sometimes resides here in Gümülcine. For there are numerous Gypsies in the vicinity of the town, whether singers and musicians, or counterfeiters and thieves. Every people (*qavm*) has its Gypsies, as does every one of the Christian nations (*millet-i neşārā*). But the Gypsies in the vicinity of Gümülcine are notorious brigands.

209a.27 - 209b.1 (90-91) *The peculiar language of the Gypsies of Rum.* 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 of Gümülcine have their own peculiar dialect. The Gypsies 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.⁴ 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 qıbfî*). Moses was not angry at them, but rather he blessed them, and today they are the much-respected Coptic people of Egypt.

⁴ Pointing in the text, by a later hand, is wrong; for the correct form see X 9b.2.

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 *xarāc*. It was concerning this group — while they were still soldiers in Pharaoh’s service — that God revealed the verse “from every stubborn tyrant.”⁵ Truly they are tyrannical, good-for-nothing, thieving, irreligious people — they pretend to be Muslims but are not even infidels!

Their language. [This section is given in §3 and has been shifted to the end of the expository prose after 210b.7]

(210b.7) They 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 it 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; I have given an account of their language above in vol. ——. ⁶ These Gypsies too have twelve dialects, one uglier than the next — may God save His servants from their wickedness. But the world traveller 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.

3. Vocabulary (VIII 210a.26)

yk	1	JEKH
duwy	2	DUJ
tirin	3	TRIN

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

‘iṣta’r	4	[I]ṢTAR
----------------	---	---------

Marsden gives *Shtiar*. Paspapti records *iṣtār* as well as *ṣtār*. As in the preceding numeral, we have here a consonant cluster that is inadmissible in initial position in

⁵ The form in the text, *min küll cebbār ‘anīd*, is not an exact quotation. The printed text substitutes Koran 14:15 *ve-xābe küll cebbār ‘anīd* (And every stubborn tyrant went for nought); but Evliya could also have been thinking of 11:59 *ve’ttebe’, küll cebbār ‘anīd* (And they followed every stubborn tyrant) or 50:24 *elqiyā fi cehennem küll cebbār ‘anīd* (Throw into hell every stubborn tyrant).

⁶ There is a blank space in the manuscript; cf. IX 72a.12f. (146), description of Balat, no mention of Gypsies or their language.

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 Gümülcine Romani pronunciation of the numeral 3.

p'nç	5	PANČ
şuw	6	ŠOV

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

'aftay	7	EFTA[J]
---------------	---	---------

Paspati has only *eftá*, 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	ENJA

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

daş	10	DEŠ
fira'huwn	<i>ism-i Allāh</i>	'name of God' FIRAHUN

Here Evliya adds: "one of their gods — God forbid — was Pharoah (*Fir'avn*); 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	<i>ulu peygamber</i>	'great prophet'	HAMAN HUN
zayy'n huwn	<i>ulu pādişāh</i>	'great sultan'	ZEJJAN HUN
dulkah huwn	<i>ulu qarı pādişāhi</i>	'great sultan of women' (?)	DULKE HUN
kuluwşh huwn	<i>ulu evliyālar</i>	'great saints'	KULUŞE HUN
miysa' huwn	<i>Mūsā peygamber</i>	'prophet Moses'	MISA HUN
haruwn huwn	<i>Hārūn peygamber</i>	'prophet Aaron'	HARUN HUN
maşab huwn	<i>baba peygamber</i>	'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 28:6,38; 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.⁷

manruw	<i>ekmek</i>	'bread'	MANRO
---------------	--------------	---------	-------

Paspati gives Sedentary *manró*, *marnó* vs Nomad *mandó*, *maró* but also records *manró* from Nomads. Gilliat-Smith has *maró* from all the so-called Non-Vlax

⁷ 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).

groups and *manro* or *marno* from the Vlax groups.⁸ He records *manro* only from the Grebenári ‘Comb-makers’ for whom the reflex of original /ɲd/ in medial position in substantives is consistently /nr/.

pa’nkiy *ʃu* ‘water’ PANJI

Paspati has Sedentary *pani* vs Nomad *pai*. In Gilliat-Smith, *pai* is found in all the Vlax and some Non-Vlax dialects, while *pani* is limited to certain Non-Vlach dialects. Marsden records *Pagnee*. Here <nk> probably represents a palatal /ń/. This could be related to the Greek palatalization of /n/ and /l/ before /i/. Additional data (cf. below) indicate that the absorption of intervocallic /n/ by /i/ was in the process taking place. The palatal mutation of these sonorants before /i/ 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’ʃ *et* ‘meat’ MAS/MAŠ?

The palatal here is problematic. Paspati and Gilliat-Smith record *mas* for all dialects. On the other hand, Paspati (38) notes occasional /š/ 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 /š/ 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).

duwduwm *qabaq* ‘gourd’ DUDUM

ʃa’x *laḥana* ‘cabbage’ ŠAX

ma’nca’n ca’nas *güzel paḥican* ‘fine eggplant’ ?

MANDŽANGJANAS ‘me-ACC know-2+SG+PLU’ = you had known me [?]

MANDŽAN DŽANES/DŽANAS ‘food-PL+ACC know-PRES+2+SG/1+PL’ = ‘you/we know food/meals [?]

The Romani word for eggplant recorded by Paspati, *badlican*, is borrowed from Turkish. Greek is *melidzána* but regional pronunciation would be [melíndzána]. 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 Evilya’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, e.g. Miklosich (1978:38[280]) quotes *chamrimintsch* literally ‘eat my cunt’ and *kari* literally ‘prick’ as the Siberian Romani terms for ‘aunt’ and ‘uncle’. If the pointing

⁸ Gilliat-Smith uses the spelling *Vlach*. See the commentray for more on these classifications.

were different, I would suggest something with *minc /minç* ‘cunt’ (INS PL *mincencă[r]* in some Rumelian dialects).

kara’l *peynir* ‘cheese’ KERAL

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

siqah *incir* ‘fig’ SIKKA

Paspatis records *khelí*. The term recorded by Evliya is borrowed from Greek.

şuw karaz şuwpy kanka’n nişlersin ne şatdıñ

‘What are you doing/What did you sell?’

SO KERES SO BIKENGJAN

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

1. The 2SG 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. Paspatis records the stem as *bikn-* in the present, *bikin-* 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 <nk> 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 ([dʲ] or [ǰ]) due to jotation in the aorist was characteristic of the Sedentary Roms in Paspatis’s time. Nomadic would be *bikendan*. In Gilliat-Smith’s groups, only the Non-Vlax Sofia Erlídes (= 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.

şuw qaramtuw suw karaz eyi xoş ya sen nişlersin

‘Good, fine, and what are you doing?’

ŞUKAR AM[A] TU SO KERES ‘well, but you, what do you do’

Note also that this sentence and the preceding 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!” (Grk —*Ti kanis?* —*Kala!*; Mac —*Š[t]o pra[v]iš?* —*Arno!*; Rmn —*Ce mai faci?* —*Bine!*; Alb —*Ç’ka po bën?* —*Mirë!*). 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 işte işleyi-yürüz

‘Well, we are working’

AKE KAJ KERAS = Behold [that] which do-1+PL

AKA KAJ KERAS = this [is that] which do-1+PL

AK AKA KERAS = Behold this do-1+PL

AK KAKA KERAS = Behold this do-1+PL

AKAKA KERAS = This do-1+PL

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, the first two words of the Romani could have any of the interpretations given above.

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 kr'z ne işlersin

'What are you doing?'

BUKI KERES 'work do-PRES+2+SG'

Evliya's <n> is clearly a mistake in pointing, the dot should have been below rather than above the letter, which would have given .

In Paspati, *buki* is marked as Nomad. This form is another example of the shift of a dental to a palatal stop ([t̪] or [k̪]), in this case before /i/, the older form being *buti*.

'uwrda' pa'rda' karaz ufaq defek işleyi-yürüz

We are doing this and that

HURDA-MURDA (?) KERAS 'Odds-and-ends do-PRES+1+PL'

Cf. Turkish (from Persian) *hurdemürde* 'trifles' and Romani *xurdo* 'little, small'. Gilliat-Smith reports *xurdimáta-murdimáta* 'odd and ends' in the Páplurlia 'Gimlet-maker' Non-Vlax 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/ remains problematic.

caba' bikan var şat

'Go sell'

DŽA, BE, BIKEN! or DŽABA, 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 şatdĩñ

'What did you sell?'

SO BIKENGJAN

buwl bkn kuwm edepde göt şatdım

'(begging your pardon) I sold ass'

BUL BIKINGJUM 'ass sell-AO+1+SG'

This jotated aorist with a back rounded vowel in the 1 sg identifies this dialect unambiguously as Non-Vlax in Gilliat-Smith's terms and as Sedentary in Paspati's. Vlax 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 Arlija.

qana'štah diya'n *kime gõt verdiñ*

'To whom did you give ass?'

KANESTE DIJAN 'whom-LOC give-AO+2+SG'

Paspati gives nominative *kon* and locative (Paspati's dative 1) *kaleste* (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 /ń/ to /y/ (older *dinyum* > *diyum*) is again Non-Vlax and Sedentary (cf. Párpulia and Kalaidji *dióm* in Gilliat-Smith, also modern Skopje Burgudži *diyum*). Here we are dealing with the later phenomenon of a palatal /ń/ that has been completely absorbed by the element that caused is palatalization in the first place. This represents a further development of the process that gave the older palatal /ń/ in the word for 'water'.

yak qa'l ba'lamah diyuwm *bir kãfirlere verdim*

'I gave it to a certain infidel'

JEKH KALB BALAME DIJUM 'one false Greek-ACC give-AO+1+SG'

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 'butt-fuck' 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'wuw las karah da'ya' puwpah *ben sikeyim bunuñ anasını*

'Let me fuck this one's mother'

DAV OLESKERE DAJA BUJE 'give-PRES+1+SG his mother-ACC ass-LOC'⁹ = I fuck his mother

The form <puwpah> should undoubtedly be read *buye*. The first <p> is a mistake of pointing (three dots for <p> instead of the one for) 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-Vlax, vs Vlax *dei*, but the pointing in Evliya is not unambiguous.

⁹ The locative marker here is archaic and non-productive. It is limited to adverbs and fixed expressions.

da'maytah paya' puwyah *sikeyim ben de senüñ qız qarındaşıñı*

'And let me fuck your sister'

DA ME[J] TE PHE[N]JA BU[L]JE = and I your-OBL sister-ACC ass-LOC

Heinschink (1989:107) reports the forms *mej* and *tuj* [= *mey*, *tuy*] in the dialect of the Basket-weavers of Izmir who emigrated from the Salonika region of Aegean Macedonia in 1920.

Note the shift of both palatal /ń/ and palatal /l/ to /y/ in this dialect. Gilliat-Smith reports *phejasa* 'sister-INS' but *buljása* and *dav bulé* for the Vlax Kalburdji 'Sieve-maker' dialect. The Non-Vlax Kalaidji 'Tinner' dialect loses palatal /l/ and /ń/ in the aorist as does the Sedentary dialect on occasion. The shift of /l/ to /y/ before a mid front vowel in *buye* is unusual (but cf. Mulcahy 1990).

na'na' yiylah ca'wuw qadintuw ma' *ayb degil mıdır çekiş söğürsiñiz*

'Isn't it shameful that you are quarreling and swearing at each other?'

NANAJ LADŽAVO KA DEN TUMEN 'not shameful that give/hit-PRES+2+SG you-SG+NOM/ACC'

The form *nanay* is characteristic of Non-Vlax dialects, including Arlija. Vlax and some Non-Vlax 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 tuwt *ya nice çekişmeyeyim*

And why shouldn't I quarrel?

SAR TE NA DAS/DES TUT 'how that not hit-PRES+1+PL/2+SG you-SG+ACC

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' 'aquw şila' *her gün gelir baña söger*

'Every day he comes and swears at me'

SAR O G[J]IS AV[E]LA AKUŞELA 'all the day comes swears'

In the word for 'day' we have another example of dental > mellow palatal before -í. Marsden has *Deeves*. The palatal and the vocalism of 'day' are Vlax (Gilliat-Smith Vlax *givés* vs Non-Vlax *diés*) and Nomad (Paspati Nomad *diés/dis* vs Sedentary *divés*; 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 Vlax.

ca'y 'ica'w 'uwas qa'w qa'kis *var götür onu efendiye*

'Go take him to the master'

DŽA IGJAV OLES K-O KAKES 'go bring him to uncle-ACC'

Note the plain imperative meaning 'go'.

The verb meaning ‘bring’ appears to be transitional between a form recorded by Paspatis, *anghiarav* (imperative *anghiar*), and one reported by Uhlik (1983), *igavav* (imperative *igav*). Etymologically, the verb is derived from *an-* ‘bring, lead, carry’ via the participle *ando/andi/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 dögdürdüm onu

‘I took him and had him beaten’

IGJAVGJUM MAR-KERGJUM OLES ‘buy-AO+1+SG beat- do-AO+1+SG him-ACC
1 SG AOR, as above.

muws ‘ca’wkan ‘uwlas çünki götürdüñ dögdürdüñ onu

‘Because you took him and had him beaten’

EM OS IGJAVGJAN OLES = and since bring-AO+2+SG him-ACC

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 *çünki* ‘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 *ōs* ‘as, since’.

xaba’ ma’ minca’ta’r yeyesiñ benim amımdan

‘Why don’t you eat my cunt?’

XA, BE, [XABA] ME MINDŽATAR ‘Eat my cunt-ABL’

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

şuwş katah xal muruwm timinç cānum niçün yesin benim qocam seniñ amımdan cānum

‘My dear, why should my husband eat your cunt?’

SOSKE TE XAL MO ROM TE MINDŽ ‘why that eat-PRES+1+SG my+NOM husband
your-OBL cunt’

Note the final devoicing in *minç*.

tana’ xala’ ma’xal mabuw ya’ta’r eger amımdan yemezse yesin götümden

‘If he doesn’t eat my cunt let him eat my ass’

TE NA XALA ME (MINDŽATAR TE) XAL ME BU[L]JATAR ‘if not eat-PRES+3+SG
my-OBL [cunt-abl that] eat-PRES+3+SG 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 /í/ > /y/ in *buyatar*.

4. 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 bor-

rowing 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). Paspatis (1870) distinguished two main European Romani dialects in Rumelia: Nomad and Sedentary. Gilliat-Smith (1915/16) makes a primary distinction between what he calls Vlax and non-Vlax, 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 Paspatis (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 Dzambaz — are classed as Non-Vlax and Vlax, respectively, yet they correspond more or less to Paspatis's Sedentary and Nomad.

Within the context of the available classifications of Romani dialects closest to Gümülcine in space and time, viz. Paspatis (1870) and Gilliat-Smith (1915/16), the dialect described by Evliya seems to be a Non-Vlax 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 Vlax 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, and 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. Table 2 summarizes the most salient features from Evliya's vocabulary and their classification according to Paspatis (1870) and Gilliat-Smith (1915/16), where S = Sedentary, N = Nomad, V = Vlax, and NV = Non-Vlax:

¹⁰ Paspatis (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 classifies as Vlax. None of the dialects described by Paspatis, however, has the front vowel in the 1 SG AOR (-em) that appears to be an essential characteristic of the Vlax dialects.

FEATURE	EXAMPLE	P	G-S
jotated aorist	bikengyan	S	NV
1 sg aor -um	bikengyum	S	NV
Í, í > y	buyatar, diyum, pheya,	S	NV
negation	nanai	S	NV
Greek loan	sika, [(e)m]os?	S	—
ɲɖ > nr	manro	S	V
l,n > Í, ɛ (> y) /__ í,é	pangi [?], buye	N?	V?
t ,d > k, g/__ í	buki, gis	N	V
ivé > í	gis	N	V
s ~ ş	maş	N	V?
verbs in a-	akuhela	—	V

Table 2: *Romani dialectal features*

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 /ɛ/ could still be heard in the word for ‘water’ in Rumelia. To this can be added relative conservatism in the treatment of older /ɲɖ/ and innovation in the use of preverbal *a-*. Although the backing of palatalized dentals to dorso-palatals in the lexical items *buki* and *gis* is identified as Nomad and Vlax, Sedentary and Non-Vlax 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 Paspati and Gilliat-Smith are in need of modification or revision.

Friedman and Dankoff 1991