1.   Introduction

On 17 January 2001 a tri-weekly, trilingual Romani-Macedonian-English newspaper began publication in the Republic of Macedonia. The publication, named "Roma Times" in explicit imitation of prestigious English-language newspapers ("New York Times," "London Times"), represents a significant event in the use of Romani in the Macedonian public sphere. It is the first Romani print-media periodical to appear regularly and with such frequency in that country. As it happened, Macedonia became involved in an armed ethnic conflict less then two months after the newspaper began publication. Roma Times is thus a multi-faceted reflection of Romani language use in the public sphere and a Romani perspective on significant historical events. At the same time, the trilingual nature of Roma Times (articles are in Romani, Macedonian, and English) reflects different potential audiences and viewpoints. This paper examines the Roma Times in terms of both form and content, analyzing the content, perspective and language-choice of the paper's overall news coverage as well as some linguistic aspects of the Romani-language articles.

1.1 Demographics

In multiethnic societies such as the Republic of Macedonia, in which collective rights and access to resources are based on ethnic and/or linguistic identity, numbers become an instrument of claims to legitimacy and power. Although such practices have been in place since the socialist period, a more recent example is the Ohrid Framework Agreement (13 August 2001), which resulted from the armed conflict of that year and served as the basis of subsequent constitutional amendments, and according to which the distribution of public administration jobs, political representation, and enrollment in higher education are explicitly tied to proportional membership in "communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia," whose numbers are to be determined by census. The result of tying access to resources to census figures is that representatives of every ethnic group routinely claim that their group is undercounted and cite figures higher than the official ones. Added together, these claims surpass the total number of inhabitants of Macedonia without even counting the Macedonians. The point is clearly not one of statistical accuracy but rather of claims to political power and hegemony (Friedman 1996a).1 It was such claims that led the Council of Europe to pay for and supervise an extraordinary census in Macedonia in 1994 (see Friedman 1996a).2

In order to place "Roma Times" in the context of the constituencies it is attempting to address, it is therefore appropriate to discuss the ethnic and linguistic structure of Macedonia as represented by census figures and other sources. Tables 1 through 5 give various statistics pertaining to Romani language and nationality in the Republic of Macedonia. The ethnic structure of Macedonia by declared nationality (*narodnost*) according to the extraordinary census of 1994, is illustrated in Table 1. Table 2 illustrates the fact that self-declared nationality can show fluctuations that are due to political climate rather than birth rate (cf. the figures for 1971 and 1981 and the discussion below). Table 2 also illustrates the fact that declared nationality and declared mother tongue are not isomorphic categories. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the problem of conflicting statistics from unofficial sources. Publications giving unofficial figures do not give any indication of the methodology by which the figures were arrived at.3

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A particularly sensitive issue rarely addressed in such unofficial claims is whether the difference between official and unofficial figures is due to the undercounting of the total population or to the declaration of members of one nationality that they belong with another, and if the latter is the case, which nationalities' numbers are to be proportionally diminished. One concrete example is Strumica, where the number of declared Turks is roughly equal to the number of Roms estimated by Romani non-governmental organizations (Friedman 2002).
2The claims were associated with the ethnic Albanian minority and its implied threat of the potential spread of the war that was already in progress elsewhere in former Yugoslavia. The Council of European proposed enumerating only the Macedonian and Albanian ethnic groups, a proposal that was firmly rejected by the Macedonian government. The census was a statistical success but a political failure. Although certified by the Council of Europe as conforming to the norms of census taking, ethnopolitical actors representing various minorities in Macedonia rejected its results and continue to use larger figures in public debate.
3Friedman (2002) is an exception. The estimates given there are extrapolated by the non-governmental organization workers on the basis of the numbers of families they have had contact with or are aware of in the district.

Declared Nationality (*narodnost*)	1994	%
Macedonians	1328187	67.0
Albanians	441104	22.9
Turks	78019	4.0
Roms	43707	2.3
Vlahs	8601	0.4
Serbs	40228	2.0
Muslims	15418	0.8
Bulgarians	1682	0.1
Greeks	368	0.0
Egyptians	3080	0.2
Bosniacs	6829	0.4
Yugoslavs	595	0.0
Others	9797	0.4
Total	1909136	100

Table 1: *The Ethnic structure of the Republic of Macedonian according to the 1994 census*
Source: Antonovska et al. 1996.

Declared Nationality	Romani Mother Tongue		
	1953	1981	1994
Macedonians	277	316	94
Albanians	70	1697	@
Turks	70	94	11
Roms	**16456**	**36399**	**34955**
Vlahs	0	2	0
Serbs	41	14	@
Muslim	*1	308	20
Yugoslav	2	530	0
Other	173	1280	0
Total	17089	37780	35120

Table 2: *Romani as declared mother tongue by nationality*
Source: Antonovska et al. 1996
@ = under 10
[* = figure unavailable]

	1994 Official Census				
	nationality	mother tongue	% of Romani Speakers	Demir &Demir %	Romani NGO estimates (nationality)
Demir Hisar	0	0	0	*	*
Brod	1	0	0	*	*
Debar	1103	2	0	0	2,000
Ki…evo	1401	130	7	0	3,000
Bitola	1688	325	19	0	
Negotino	146	41	28	0	*
Kavadarci	478	132	28	1	*
Ohrid	48	15	31	0.5	*
Gostivar	2138	817	38	3	3,000
Ko…ani	1104	481	44	0	
Kruöevo	27	15	55		*
Struga	120	70	58	0.5	*
Gevgelija	53	33	62	*	*
Berovo	662	431	65	100	7,000
Radoviö	43	30	70	0	*

1Muslim was not a nationality category in 1953.

Resen	112	82	73	*	*
Tetovo	2428	1789	74	100	5,000
Valandovo	26	20	77	50	*
Strumica	239	185	77	0	6,000
ätip	1463	1146	78	*	*
Prilep	3569	3036	85	12	5,000
Del…evo	624	539	86	100	*
Veles	505	464	92	7	*
Kriva Palanka	552	510	93	89	*
Kratovo	135	131	97	100	*
Kumanovo	3121	3063	98	100	7,000
Vinica	885	881	99	100	*
Skopje	20979	20691	99	99	*
Sveti Nikole	43	45	104	*	*
Probiötip	14	16	114	100	*
TOTAL	43707	35120	80.35%		

Table 3: *Distribution of declared Romani nationality and declared Romani mother tongue and contrasting percentages by pre-1996 administrative district*
[* = figure unavailable]
Sources: Antonovska et al. 1996, Demir and Demir 2000, Friedman 2002[1]

Barany (2002:136)	60,000
Bakker and Kyuchukov (2000:40)	215,000
Roma Times (20.21 June 2001:10)	220,000-260,000
Other[2]	100,000

Table 4: *Unofficial estimates of the Romani population of Macedonia*

The influence of legal recognition on self-declaration in connection with Romani identity can be seen from Table 2 in the fact that while the 1971 census recorded 24,505 Roms as 1.5% of the population of the Republic of Macedonia, the 1981 census recorded 43,125 at 2.3% of the population. This increase is not attributable either to natality nor to mechanical growth (migration) but rather to the fact that official recognition of Roms as an ethnic group, begun in the late 1960's, was finally established at the federal level in the 1974 constitution, which incorporated in a single document the individual changes that had been enacted at the republic level during the previous decade. The 1991 census recorded 52,103 (2.6%) but the extraordinary census of 1994 recorded only 43,707 (2.3%). This was due in part to a different methodology, namely citizens living abroad for more than one year were not included in the official results of the 1994 census but were included in 1991. Other factors, however included mechanical decrease owing to migration either for economic or security reasons (e.g., fear of violence or military conscription) as well as problems related to undercounting, mechanical error (data input), stigmatization, and falsification.[3] It should be noted that the 1994 census was supervised by statistical experts from the Council of Europe who certified that level of mechanical error as being within the range of international norms, and whose observers attempted to assure that census takers recorded the answers that were given. On the census forms, questions concurring nationality, language, and religion allowed the censused individual to declare whatever s/he chose and required the census taker to record the answer in the blank space provided. Given both the stigma attached to Romani identity and the pressure on Muslim Roms (91.6% of those declaring Romani nationality),[4] to declare themselves as Albanian or Turks -- these being not only determined by the pressures of the political relevance of increased numbers but also by traditional paths of upward mobility (cf. Friedman 1997a) -- there is considerable difference between official figures and unofficial estimates (see Tables 3 and 4).

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[1]Note that in two cases the number of those declaring Romani mother tongue exceeds the number of those declaring Romani nationality, resulting in figures of over 100%. Districts marked with an asterisk were not listed in Demir and Demir (2000).

[2]This figure is one that the author has heard cited at various meetings in Washington DC.

[3]I am indebted to Matt Salo for pointing out that variety of factors that complicate the problems of achieving an accurate census.

[4]Of the remainder, 2.1% declared some form of Christianity (1.8% Orthodox) and 6.3% were atheists, unspecified, unknown, or undeclared.

1.2 Romani and International Non-Governmental Organizations

The association between ethnic and linguistic numbers, on the one hand, and claims to legitimacy, power, and resources, on the other, is not only inherent in the legal structures of the Macedonian Republic -- both in the Ohrid Framework Agreement and in the constitution, which includes articles and amendments naming ethnolinguistic constituencies (Article 79 and Amendments 4 and 12) and specifying conditions for official language use (Article 7 and Amendment 5) and language use in schools (Article 48 and Amendment 8) -- but is also reproduced and transformed by local and international actors outside the government sector, particularly international non-governmental organizations. In the case of Romani rights in Macedonia, for which "Roma Times" serves as both an illustration and an advocate, it is worth noting that international NGOs -- a presumed audience of the English-language articles in "Roma Times" -- have reproduced the contestations and marginalizations that were part of the Macedonian scene before their arrival following the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991.

Representative of the position of Romani in these discourses is the difference between the International Crisis Group (ICG), on the one hand, and the Open Society Institute (OSI) and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). The ICG is, as its name implies, a policy-oriented NGO that focuses on regions in conflict. It has been particularly active in the Republic of Macedonia since 1997, producing numerous reports and briefings on various policy-oriented topics, including specific recommendations to the international community. The armed conflict of 2001 between ethnic Albanian insurgents (and mercenaries) and Macedonian government and paramilitary forces was a major focus of international attention, and, as happened during the extraordinary census of 1994, foreign observers' attention to the multiethnic complexity of Macedonian society was reduced to a binary opposition between Macedonian and Albanian (see Friedman 1996a). Just as was the case in 1999, when the plight of the Roms (and Turks, and Gorans, and others) caught between Serbs and Albanians in the Kosovo war was usually ignored in the international press and created problems that remain unresolved (Burg 2001:16), so too the concept of ethnic rights becomes transformed into simply Albanian rights in various international documents, and official census statistics are used as part of the justification. Thus, for example, a recent ICG report contains the following dismissive formulation: "As ethnic Macedonians never cease pointing out, there are other ethnic groups in Macedonia besides the 'big two' [Macedonians and Albanians --VAF]. However Turks, Serbs, and others make up barely a tenth of the total population according to the 1994 census. As in other parts of the Balkans, these small minorities have no territorial claims and, therefore, do not represent a primary source of conflict" (ICG 2002:2).1 Such formulations have the ironic effect of implying that minority rights are the privilege of large minorities and the problems of small minorities are not worth attention unless they can threaten the integrity of the state.

By contrast, organizations such as SFCG and the OSI have engaged in funding various projects some of which reflect the same sort of binarism (e.g. Borden and Mehmeti 1998), but others of which are aimed at other ethnic groups, particularly the Roms (e.g. SFCG's multi-lingual children's television show "Our Neighborhood" or Petrovski and Veli…kovski 1998). Likewise, the Project on Ethnic Relations also attempts to focus on a variety of problems of inter-ethnic-relations, including those of the Roma (e.g., Burg 2001). In examining the ethnic relations that PER chooses to focus on, it is noteworthy that for Macedonia the two groups chosen are the Albanians and the Roms, i.e. the largest and most problematic group, on the one hand, and the most transnational and at the same time marginalized group, on the other.

2. Dialect and Standard
2.1 Classifications

Matras (2002) makes the point that Romani dialectal classification involves relative rather than absolute membership and must therefore be described in terms of shared isoglosses. He identifies three "diffusion centers," which correspond roughly to three of the four branches of Romani currently used in many modern dialectological classifications: 1) Southeastern Europe [South Balkan], 2) West-Central Europe, and 3) Vlax [Romania, north Balkan]. In a Macedonian context, there is a basic opposition between Vlax and South Balkan, and within South Balkan between two types labeled South Balkan I and a more divergent South Balkan II (see Boretzky 1999, 2000a, 2000b). Although each of these dialect groups is characterized by a variety of subdivisions, especially when former Ottoman Europe is taken as the unit of territorial context, if we take the current borders of the Republic of Macedonia as the defining factor we can identify three dialects that represent the three major divisions: Arli (South Balkan I), Bugurdñi (South Balkan II), and Dñambaz (Vlax). Historically, the Arli dialect is closest to other long-

1Note that Roms, who are more numerous than Serbs, are grouped with "others." Note also that Serbs in northern Macedonia were in fact a source of potential conflict throughout the 1990's when the Former Republic of Yugoslavia refused to recognize its border with Macedonia as international. Aside from the implicit conflation of armed conflict with access to human rights, the connection of territorial claims with "source of conflict" is belied by events such as the Romani riots in Plovdiv in 1998 and 2002 (Buechsenschuetz 2002).

settled dialects spoken in most of Ottoman Europe (Rumelia), while Bugurdñi is more characteristic or regions such as Kosovo, Moesia, and Strandña (Boretzky 2000a). The Dñambaz dialect seems to be characteristic of a group that maintained a peripatetic life-style into the twentieth century.

One of the features of Romani dialectology that frequently poses problems for external attempts at taxonomy is the applicability of glossonymic labels. Thus, for example, Arli is the Macedonian form that occurs in Bulgaria as Erli and derives from Turkish *yerli* 'local' (implying settled). Bugurdñi is a trade-name from Turkish *burgucu* 'gimlet-maker' which dialect shows clear historical relations to trade-name dialects like Drîndari 'mattress-stuffer' (from Bulgarian) and Kalajdñi (from Turkish) 'tinner', but is also known as Rabadñi (from Turkish *arabac2* 'cart-driver') and Kova…ja (from Slavic kova… 'blacksmith'). Dñambaz (Turkish *cambaz* 'horse-dealer, acrobat') is known elsewhere as Gurbet or Gurbet…i 'migrant worker', etc. While an exhaustive description is beyond our scope, some diagnostic features perceived as typical by speakers themselves are given in Table 5.1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Arli	buti	maro	pani	dindjum	agjar	devlea	on, ola	o	miro, mlo, mo
Bugurdñi	buci	maro	pani	diyom	kidjal	devlesa	on, ol	o	moro, mro, mo
Dñambaz	buk!i	manro	pai	diyem	gëja	devlesa	von	e	moro, mo
English	*work*	*bread*	*water*	*I gave*	*thus*	*with God*	*they (m. f)*	*the (Npl)*	*my (m)*

Table 5: *Examples of salient Romani dialectal differences*
Key: 1. palatalization of dentals before front vowels; 2. reflexes of inherited *ndÚ; 3. palatalization and loss of /n/ before stressed /i/; 4. preservation or loss or rounding in the first singular simple preterit (aorist, perfective); 5. distinctive lexical items; 6. preservation or loss of intervocalic /s/ in grammatical endings; 7. form of the third person plural pronoun and presence versus absence of a gender distinction; 8. shape of the nominative plural definite article (merger either with masculine nominative singular /o/ or oblique /e/); 9. shape of possessive pronouns.

Other features include the distinction vs neutralization of two types of /r/ (tap/trill or trill/uvular), treatment of /x/ and /h/ (distinction vs free variation or elimination), (the former more characteristic of Dñambaz or Vlax dialects in both cases), reduction of unstressed vowels (especially in South Balkan II), Romanian versus Turkish vocabulary (Vlax vs Non-Vlax), and the palatal mutation of velars before front vowels (stronger South Balkan I). All of these features have implications for the representation of standardization in published texts, including "Roma Times." The problems of competition, variation, and consistency are continual processes that continue to be manifest to different degrees (see section 3.4).

2.2 Numbers

The importance of numbers for emerging literary standards is also reflected in the fact that codification efforts can be influenced when a given dialect is spoken by a majority.2 In the case of Macedonia, the fact that Arli is the majority dialect everywhere except Tetovo has led to its firm establishment as the basis of the emerging Romani literary standard in Macedonia, despite the fact that the earliest language activists are native speakers of Dñambaz or other Vlax-related dialects. Table 6 illustrates dialect and language use among Roms in Macedonia.

1Thus, for example, the Arli of Skopje, which is numerically the strongest Romani dialect in Macedonia, differs in significant respects from some other Arli dialects, e.g. that of Prilep or the Erli of Bulgaria. The fact is worth noting, but the details need not concern us here.

2A classic example of this is the fate of literary Croatian. In the early nineteenth century, intellectuals who were involved in the elaboration of Croatian were centered in Zagreb, in the heart of the Kajkavian dialect area, itself linguistically closest to Slovenian. The majority of Croats, however, spoke Stokavian dialects, which is the Southern West South Slavic branch to which all dialects spoken by Serbs belong. This was a crucial factor in the decision of Croatian intellectuals to abandon their pursuit of a Kajkavian-based literary Croatian and join forces with Serbian intellectuals for a common Serbo-Croatian literary language. It is worth noting that even under the modern circumstances of the break-up of Yugoslavia and the renewed pursuit of a literary Croatian separate from Serbian, the dialectal base remains Stokavian. Numbers are not an absolute factor, however, and can be trumped, e.g., by politics. Thus, although the number of Geg (north) and Tosk (south) Albanian speakers is roughly the same within the Republic of Albania, all Kosovar and Montenegrin Albanians and most Macedonian Albanians speak Geg dialects. Nonetheless, in 1968 the Albanians of former Yugoslavia abandoned their cultivation of an independent Geg-based Albanian norm and adopted the Tosk-based norm of Albania itself for the sake of national unity. In this case, a minority dialect was adopted by a larger minority for political reasons. (See Friedman 1999a.).

	Arli	Bugurdñi	Dñambaz	Mac., Alb., Turk.
Berovo	100	0	0	0
Bitola	0	0	0	100/T
Brod	*	*	*	*
Debar	0	0	0	100/A
Del…evo	100	0	0	0
Demir Hisar	*	*	*	*
Gevgelija	*	*	*	*
Gostivar	1	1	1	97
Kavadarci	1	0	0	99/M
Ki…evo	0	0	0	100/M
Ko…ani	0	0	0	100/T
Kratovo	100	0	0	0
Kriva Palanka	89			11/M
Kruöevo	*	*	*	*
Kumanovo	85	10	5	0
Negotino	00	0	0	99/M
Ohrid	0.5	0	0	99.5/A
Prilep	12	0	0	88
Probiötip	100	0	0	0
Radoviö	0	0	0	100/T
Resen	*	*	*	*
Skopje	89	5	5	1
Struga	0.5	0	0	99.5/A
Strumica	0	0	0	100/T
Sveti Nikole	*	*	*	*
ätip	*	*	*	*
Tetovo	15	80	5	0
Valandovo	50	0	0	50/M
Veles	5	2	0	93/T
Vinica	100	0	0	0

Table 6: *Dialect of Romani or other language used by Roms for in-group communication by percentages for pre-1996 municipal divisions*
[* = figure unavailable]

Despite the Arli dialectal base, however, "Roma Times" also reflects more of the Vlax-type features of some of the editorial staff than some earlier publications (see section 3.4).

3. "Roma Times"

In examining "Roma Times" as both a sociolinguistic and political artifact, I wish to concentrate here on overall choice of language, i.e. percentage of use of each of the three languages, and specific choice of language, i.e. the content of what is presented in each of the three languages. although I will make a few remarks on form of language, i.e. choices among systemic dialect features for the Romani texts. I will save a more detailed analysis of linguistic form for a later work.

3.1 Language choice

In terms of overall language use, I surveyed selected issues during the first eighteen months of publication from January 2001 through June 2002. The figures given in Table 7 below represent the official policy of percentages of materials in each language as stated in issue No. 2 and the actual percentages for that issue, ten issues later, the fiftieth anniversary issue, fifteen issues after that, and finally issue No. 200. These figures are for the total content of the paper. Appended to these is a figure for the language of front-page headlines for the first fifty issues and selected issues thereafter, totaling 215 headlines.

	Policy	No.2	No.12	No.50	No.65	No.200	Headlines (215)†
Romani	60	51.5	53	42	25	27	75

| Macedonian | 30 | 41 | 41 | 49 | 71.5 | 68 | 20 |
| English | 10 | 7.5 | 6 | 9 | 7.5 | 5 | 19 |

Table 7: *Percentages of language use in Roma Times*
(Out of 55 Issues; 1-42, 44-46, 49-50, 52, 54, 62-66, 200)
†14% of headlines were bilingual in Macedonian and Romani

The figures in Table 7 reflect changes in policy oriented toward the newspapers intended readership. As can be seen from this table, at no time did the percentage of Romani actually reach the target of 60%, nor did the percentage of English ever reach 10%, rather Macedonian usage was always significantly higher than the stated goal of 30%. As can also be seen from Table 7, a radical shift in editorial policy, which occurred immediately after issue No. 50, resulted in a significant drop in Romani-language content and a corresponding increase in Macedonian-language content. This shift was realized primarily by the introduction of the practice of reproducing most news stories bilingually in Macedonian and Romani. Thus, for example, in issue No. 200, out of sixteen pages, two were entirely in Romani, four entirely in Macedonian, six bilingual Romani-Macedonian, one bilingual Macedonian-English, and three had majority Macedonian-language content.

By contrast, the language choice in headlines was overwhelmingly Romani, and moreover 41 of the 55 issues surveyed contained an English-language headline on the front page, which gives English-language representation in headlines a disproportionately high visibility vis-Ë-vis its actual usage in the newspaper.

The apparent motivation for the change in policy was the relative literacy of the newspaper's intended audience. The rate of illiteracy among Roms is more than four times higher than the national average (Antonovska 1997:37-45), and given the small number of Romani-language classes available in schools,1 literacy in Romani is even more restricted.

Ethnic affiliation	Total population over 15	Illiterate	Approximate percentage
Macedonian	1014468	40698	4%
Albanian	289416	31168	11%
Turkish	51521	5988	12%
Romani	28862	6993	24%
Vlah	7146	540	8%
Serbian	33699	1918	6%
Other/Undeclared	28970	1815	6%
Total	1454082	86415	6%

Table 8: *Percentage of Illiterates by Declared Ethnic Group*
(Source: Antonovska et al. 1997)

The newspaper thus broadened its orientation from being a source of information and advocacy to being a source of potential language acquisition among for Roms (and, of course, potentially also non-Roms) who can read Macedonian but are not comfortable reading Romani. It is worth noting that Romani-language television programming, which began in 1991 at fifteen minutes twice a week and is now available at more or less any given time on at least one of four channels (MTV2, BTR Nacional, Shutel, TVKumanovo,) was subtitled in Macedonian during the mid-1990s but is now unsubtitled, a practice which suggests that proficiency in passive comprehension of the kind of Romani used in TV news programming has increased.2 The reasons for the subtitling could be construed as various. Not only is there considerable variation among the Romani dialects of Macedonia, to which can be added the fact that more people consider themselves to be of Romani nationality than have Romani as their mother tongue (confirmed by census figures), but also the kind of vocabulary and syntax required for reporting news and similar programming was not, until recently, used in Romani. The use of a large number of neologisms, therefore, contributed to the need for subtitles. Whereas in the past Roms would complain to me that they could not understand the language of news reports, the elimination of subtitling can be taken as an indicator that this type of language use is acquiring larger currency.3 Arguably, "Roma Times" is attempting to do the same for the written word.

3.2 Headline Content

1Various figures have been reported, but the total does not appear to be greater than five.
2I wish to thank Elsie Dunin for pointing this out.
3By contrast, Macedonian friends would often claim that they could understand the Romani news owing to the large number of Macedonian borrowings.

Looking at the overall content of headlines, we find a distribution not unlike that of language-use policy. Of the 215 headlines examined, 57% were concerned with news of specific relevance to Romani issues, 39% with Macedonian news, and 4% with news whose content related to Yugoslavia or Kosovo. The Romani content headlines varied both in subject matter and according to the language they were in. The only non-English language headline in the sample that reported a story unconnected with former Yugoslavia was a Romani-language report of a disastrous earthquake in India (No. 6). There were also three sports headlines (22, 24, 26), one dealing with a Southeast European political initiative, and one for Easter.1 English-language headlines were, with a single exception, teasers for the English-language feuilletons that constitute almost all the English-language content of the paper. (One of the later pages includes, in Macedonian, names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers of the various embassies and consulates of Skopje, bus schedules, telephone numbers for city services, airlines offices, and the like, and, in English, information on major sight-seeing attractions, car rental agencies, hotels, and, occasionally, events such as exhibitions and movies.) The English language content was concerned with the history and culture of the Romani people, focusing on specific issues such as the (mis)treatment of Roms by various governments during World War Two, the current conditions of Roms in Serbia, Romani rights in the context of various European organizations, Romani traditional holidays, etc. The two exceptions to this were a speech delivered by the newspaper's editor, Zoran Dimov, at a roundtable on Roms in relation to conflict and crisis (No. 31). The speech was reproduced in its entirety in English on page one and in Macedonian on page eight. The one other news-specific English-language headline in our sample (No. 51) concerned security threats Roms continue to encounter in Kosovo. News from Yugoslavia and Kosovo was invariably reported in Romani.

Headlines in Macedonian tended to focus on security issues, international support for Romani rights, and human rights abuses directed at Roms. Headlines with Macedonian content were generally concerned with the security situation, political pronouncements by party leaders, and economic and social welfare problems, particularly labor strikes and the pension system.

3.3 Story Content

Language use in both headlines and stories occasionally reflected different perspectives depending on language, or used language as an index of ethnicity. This, for example, issue No. 45 had two major content headlines: The Romani headline read: *Jali i Makedonija si ko praga e maökardizutno (gragjansko) mariba?* 'Is Macedonia on the threshold of civil war?' while the Macedonian headline read *Makedonija e vo vojna!* 'Macedonia is at war!'. At the time of publication (7-8 May 2001), the Macedonian prime minister Ljup…o Georgievski was attempting to have parliament declare a state of war or martial law, which would have allowed him to claim extraordinary powers, something parliament was extremely reluctant to do. The Romani-language article contained the usual reporting of fighting and ethnic tensions that were the daily fare of the Macedonian-language press at that time. The Macedonian-language article was not an article at all. Rather, the teaser headline directed the reader to a page that reproduced those articles of the Macedonian constitution concerned with declaring martial law. It is also worth noting that during the period of low-grade civil war, there was a stark diversion between the Albanian and Macedonian language presses.

The Macedonian-language press concentrated on reports of military action, mutilated corpses of soldiers killed in ambushes, and angry denunciations of western and Albanian politicians and the international media. The Albanian-language press concentrated stories about humanitarian disasters, police beatings of innocent civilians and theft of Albanian property, the funeral of a seven-year-old girl killed by a bomb, and angry denunciations of Macedonian politicians. On 30 May 2001, however, the president of the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences leaked to the Macedonian newspaper "Ve…er" a map proposing an exchange of territory and populations with Albania and Kosovo. The districts around Tetovo and Gostivar would go to Kosovo, Debar to Albania, and the Macedonians would get the western shores of Lakes Ohrid and Prespa. All these regions are mixed but each has a majority, plurality, or significant number (defined by Macedonian law as at least 20%) of the other's ethnic population. It raised a huge furor in all the media of Macedonia regardless of language, and all the press, regardless of language and political orientation denounced the plan.2 On 12 June, the president of the Academy, Georgi Efremov, resigned. Otherwise the two presses had almost no articles in common.

"Roma Times" in this respect reflected the point of view of the Macedonian-language press. In this respect, it conformed with the Romani political position of siding with the majority vis-à-vis the largest minority. It is important to note that throughout the nineties, Albanian claims in Macedonia have not been framed so much in

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1Ramadan, and in particular Bajram, did not occur during the sample period but would also have occasioned a headline.
2Denunciations sometimes took different tones, however, ranging from accusations of attempting to commit national suicide to complaints that the details were unsuitable.

terms of minority rights as in terms of creating a binational state. Albanian politicians have never attempted to include concerns of other minorities in their agendas (in fact, they have rejected the label minority),1 and have been accused of pressuring other minorities to give up their identities in favor of Albanian. It is most certainly the case that some Roms choose Albanian identity to avoid the stigma of Romani identity. Moreover, the Egyptians (*Gjupci*) of western Macedonia and Kosovo, who have an ethnonym identical to a common exonymic term for Roms (cf. English *Gypsy*, Turkish *K2pt2*, Greek *Ghyftos*, Albanian *Evgjit* and *Magjup*, Aromanian *Yiftu*, Serbian/Croatian *JeMup[ac]*, all ultimately from earlier Greek *[e]gyptos* 'Egypt[ian]') but who have a separate identity, are, in Macedonia, two-thirds Albanian-speaking.2

3.4 Notes on Form: Dialect Features

In terms of actual language usage, i.e. dialect choice, orthography, neologisms, etc., "Roma Times" represents a complex combination of tendencies. On the one hand, the relative predominance of the Skopje Arli dialectal base continues, e.g., the use of compound pasts in *sine*, lexical *agja[a]r* 'thus', absence of original intervocalic /s/ in inflectional endings, third person pronouns in *o-* rather than *jo-* or *vo-*, plural definite article *o* rather than *e*. On the other hand, a number of Dñambaz or other Vlax forms that were giving way to Arli during the course of the nineties (cf. Friedman 1985, 1995, 1996b, 1997b, 1999b) occur again in "Roma Times" together with Arli ones, e.g. copulatives in /l/ as well as /n/ masc. *talo* vs *tano,* 1 singular preterit endings in *-em* as well as *-um* lexical *javer* as well as *aver* 'other', forms with and without /h/, e.g. Bahtalo Herdelezi (No. 45) vs Bahtalo Erdelzi in (No. 44) 'Happy St. George's Day'. Moreover, there has been, in some respects, an editorial decision to favor some forms of native origin over colloquial forms of later origin, e.g. *thaj* for 'and' rather than Turkish *[h]em*, which is mostly restricted to quotations from people being interviewed. The situation is in this respect reminiscent of the Albanian press in Macedonian in the early nineties, when Geg was used in quotations from local residents embedded in articles written in the Tosk-based standard of Albania that had been adopted by Albanians of former Yugoslavia in 1968-72. In the case of Romani in Macedonia, the overwhelming majority of speakers use Arli, but many of the intellectuals involved in publishing are speakers of Dñambaz. The question of a unified versus a diversified dialectal base has been raised in Macedonian Romani intellectual circles (see Friedman 1995). Although certain markedly Arli or Skopje Arli features are clearly established in print usage, other issues continue to be a source of variation. In this respect, "Roma Times" reflects a trend that can be found in other Macedonian Romani-language publications as well. Whereas during the course of the 1990s, a relatively consistent consensus was gradually emerging, in more recent years, with the increase in publications in various genres (bureaucratic, political, religious, educational, periodical, literary) the consensus has been opened to new variations. If developments from the nineties and on the international scene are an indicator, it is likely that a new consensus will emerge or re-emerge.

4 Conclusion

Macedonia has a history of producing important firsts in the use of written Romani (see Friedman 1999b), and "Roma Times" in terms of the frequency, regularity, and durability of publication has become another such first in the realm of periodicals and news media. Both directly (in its linguistic form) and indirectly (in its linguistic content) it reflects the situation of Romani in Macedonia today. Romani language standardization and usage as well as Romani social concerns are still emergent in the public sphere. Standardization is not an act but a process. It takes place over time through usage and acceptance. This in turn suggests modifications to the cyclical process of language planning discussed in Radovanoviƒ 1992 (but cf. also Radovanoviƒ and Bugarski 2002). Radovanoviƒ describes ten stages of language planning -- 1) Selection, 2) Description, 3) Prescription, 4) Elaboration, 5) Acceptance, 6)Implementation, 7)Expansion, 8) Cultivation, 9) Evaluation, 10) Reconstruction -- in a cycle which can move from stage 10 to stages 1, 2, 3, or 4. I would argue however, that at any stage, a process can cycle back to the preceding one, and this is precisely what is occurring in Romani in Macedonia as manifested by "Roma Times" (cf. also Friedman 1998). The emerging consensus of the nineties has been replaced by a new diversity. At

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1"For almost 20 years, Macedonian authorities have not announced the exact number of Albanians. Officially they claim that Albanians represent about 23% of the population of the Republic. [...] But other sources speak of a larger number of Albanians. One can say without fear that they represent not less than 35% of its [Macedonia's] population. As a consequence, the Macedonians represent only 55% of the population, including here those who consider themselves Bulgarian (the others are Serbs, Turks, and Roms). With such a significant importance, the Albanians cannot in any sense be considered as a minority but as participants, equal to the Macedonians, in their common state" (ASHSH 1998:44).

2The remainder declared Macedonian mother tongue ion the 1994 census. Mother-tongue appears to correlate with religion (Albanian for Muslim and Macedonian for Christian) and locality.

the same time, "Roma Times" reflects the fact that as Roms become more visible in pursuing their concerns and interests in Macedonia, there is a situation in which, for political reasons, a smaller minority caught between a majority and a larger minority has found its interests better served by alliance with the majority (cf. Friedman 2002). This is turn has implications for international NGOs, especially those connected in some way to human rights, which must take these factors into consideration as they attempt to influence the course of events in sovereign states. The Romani-language press, therefore, as represented by "Roma Times" provides a variety of interesting case studies both for theories of language planning and theories of socio-political development.

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