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FIELD: PHILOLOGY**

**DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**  
**„THE IDIOM OF RROMANI PEOPLE IN POIANA-TURDA**  
**AND**  
**THE INFLUENCE OF ROMANIAN LANGUAGE ON IT”**  
**(SUMMARY)**

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Our research starts from the premise that the description of peculiarities of an idiom of Rromani people, in every geographic space and in every time, can contribute decisively to the general knowledge of the system of Rromani language.

Our research is based on a *corpus of texts* which I prepared by myself, gathering live linguistic materials. An *on-the-spot investigation* was deployed, mostly, in the community of Rroma people living in the quarter named Poiana in the Turda city, Cluj prefecture, Romania.

For the research on the field, we established the „general quarter”, at the Silaghi Ștefan family, whom we give a word of thanks to, on these lines too. The successor of a „aristocrat” family, in the social structure of the communities - namely, the successor of a family of *bulibasha* (chieftain of a Rroma clan) -, Mr. Silaghi is recognized today as the leader of community. Many of my informants came in to the house of Silaghi family. The advantage of gathering the linguistic material in the Silaghi’s house consisted in the fact that, once they had understood the system of my research, the family members, especially the father and the son Ștefan Jr., were intervening, explaining to them by their language what I was waiting from them exactly (as structure of speeches) and very important work, they translated with exactitude in the two language, by case. We determine clearly that we ourselves know the Transylvanian Carpathian dialect and we communicated directly with the providers of the linguistic structure in case.

Practically, hundreds of gathered texts were resulted, which I confronted by many times with language document, as much as there are, offered by divers grammarians, school books, anthologies of songs, poems, fairy-tails and stories, with lexicographic instruments.

The principal research instrument for gathering material were *interview*, *managed organization of dialog* and *questionnaire*. The simplest questionnaire, noted by myself in writing (with free space to fill answers), but addressed orally, was of the type, „Cum se spune în limba rromani...?” (How to say ... in Rromani?) The question may look rudimentary for a modern linguist, but dialectologues know that such questions should not lack in dialogs on the field, and in that cases, represents the most efficient modality of getting expected answers. The informants do not like sophisticated questions because they don’t understand and they have impression that I may hide traps, that they are put in a humiliating situations etc. Besides them, many stories and songs listened from locals helped us. I recorded them and I analyzed them with association with results of the intermediators.

In consideration of the monographic treatment of the idiom of Turda zone, principles, methods and instruments of work which I uses, at first, that of the *descriptive grammars*. In the case of Rromani, the researcher is obligated to use methods and procedures of research of

*historic grammar* and of *dialectology*. By traditionalism or endemically, by richness of etymological strata, but also of the grammatical structures superposed from a historic step to the other, by the geographic dissolution and by the mobility of caused by nomad lifestyle, numerous facts of language can be understood and interpreted only by the instruments of diachronic linguistics and of the geographic linguistics. The method of linguistic statistic was used too, in the simplest variation, of course, for establish a percentage of etymologic strata of the actual idiom spoken by Rroma in Poiana-Turda.

Concerning to the particularities of the Carpathian Rromani idiom spoken in Poiana-Turda, besides the other Rromani idioms, compared in Chapter 4, or even with other Rromani dialects, which don't appertain to Carpathian dialect, we can present the following things:

1. In phonetics, we alert the existence of phoneme  $\varepsilon$  [ $\varepsilon$ ] (open-mid front unrounded vowel). As I showed in Chapter 3, this phoneme appears, usually, where *-a-* appears in the other Rromani dialects, generally. For example, the word of Poiana idiom *dej* „mother”, *čhej* „daughter, girl”, *šej* „be possible”, *he* „and”, *te* „and, also” are, in other dialects, generally, *daj* or *dej*, *čhaj* or *čhej*, *šaj* and *haj* and *t(h)aj*. It is possible that, in the referring works, there is the phoneme [ $\varepsilon$ ] noted by *e* [*e*], which is a phoneme difficult to be distinguished from  $\varepsilon$  [ $\varepsilon$ ] in speech. But, concerning to Poiana idiom, we can not ignore the difference between these two phonemes because, in the nominal flexion, at some words, these two phonemes make the opposition singular-plural. For example, the noun borrowed from Greek *èrme* „cabbage”, is, in plural, *èrme*.

This  $\varepsilon$  appears also in the nominal flexion, in the Sociative-Instrumental case, in m. sg., for example, *le grastehe* „with the hourse”, *le rromehe* „with the Rrom”. Here we observe phonetic assimilations, or the neutralization of phonemes. The oblic case of these nouns, in sg., is *grastes-* and *rromes-*. In S.I. *-sa* is attached to the end and, changing *s* to the intervocalic *h*, just like as other Carpathian subdialects, becomes, at the first step, *grasteha* and *rromeha*. After that, paroxiton *e* assimilates with the final  $\varepsilon$  and the result is *grastehe* and *rromehe*.

The same phenomenon is observed also in the verbal flexion, in pers. 2 sg.: *maresa* „you will hit”, *maresas* „you ware hitting”, usual forms of Rromani language, in the Carpathian idiom of Turda, are: *marehe* and *marehes*.

2. The sound change *-skr-* to *-str-*, in the masculine nouns sg., in the genitive case, is the characteristic of the Carpathian idiom of Turda. In Rromani language, the genitive has flexion which exist also at the adjectives with three endings *-o* (m. sg.), *-i* (f. sg.) and *-e* (m. and f. pl.). In the masculine nouns, in sg., *-kr/o*, *-i*, *-e*, *-e* is attached to the oblique theme; for example, *rromes-kr/o*, *-i*, *-e*, *-e* „Rrom's, of the Rrom”. In Carpathian idiom of Turda, there is the variation *rromes-tr/o*, *-i*, *-e*, *-e*. This phenomenon is observed also at *čhastr/o*, *-i*, *-e*, *-e*, sycopated form of *čhavestr/o*, *-i*, *-e*, *-e* „boy's, of the boy” or at other declination of nouns, for example:

*tramastr/o*, -i, -e, -e „your (with honorific sense)”. The variation *-estr/o*, -i, -e, -e at G. m. sg., is observed only in the Szabó, Géza, 2000, *Magyar-Czigány Szótár, Cigány-Magyar Szótár*, Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca): Komp-Press Korunk Baráti Társaság. The author of this dictionary does not precise the place where he had gathered the words, but, according to the publisher, the author was living in Cluj, at time of compiling the dictionary, and, by analyzing the noted words, we observe the similitude with the Turda idiom, therefore probably he gathered the words from somewhere, near Cluj. So, *-str-* in genitive is not a particularity only in Poiana-Turda, but also around Cluj.

3. Concerning to a theoretical base of Courthiade for classification of Rromani dialect, the sound changes  $[t^h] > [ɛ] (> [ʃ])$  and  $[dʒ] > [z] (> [ʒ])$ <sup>1</sup>, we have to call attention that in the Carpathian idiom of Turda these sound changes happen only partially. They hold  $[t^h]$ , but  $[dʒ]$  remained as  $[ʒ]$ . Courthiade classifies Rromani dialects in the two big categories, namely, O-superdialects and E-superdialects; after that, he call the one which has the phonetic alterations  $[t^h] > [ɛ]$  și  $[dʒ] > [z]$  „O- or E- dialect with mutation” and the another one „O- or E- dialect without mutation”. This theory shows that, usually, the alterations happen in the same time. But, in the case of the Carpathian idiom of Turda, which had not been described until now, only one of these two alterations happens. So, we can call it just „O-dialect with partial mutation”.

4. The desinence of vocative for noun in pl. *-lec* is totally particular. In other dialects, it appears with the form *-le(n)*. This desinence *-lec* is not found in cited works. According to the community leader, the desinence of vocative pl. *-lec* is used by the „Roma in this zone”, referring, probably, to the region situated „around Turda or in Cluj prefecture”.

5. The addition of suffix *-ke* to the adverb of place is a particularity in this idiom; for example: *kode* „there” vs. *kode-ke* „exactly there”, *khere* „home” vs. *khere-ke* „exactly home”, *avri* „outside” vs. *avri-ke* „exactly outside”, *opre* „upwards” vs. *opre-ke* „exactly upwards”. This *-ke* makes precise a place and it has the demonstrative sense. It is evident that it comes from the proto-European root *\*kō-*, *\*kē-* „this; here”<sup>2</sup>, which appears also at the other Rromani words : *kaj* „where”, *kado* „this”, *kathe* „here” etc. It is used just like in French *celui-ci*, *celui-la*, *ces jours-ci* etc., but it is attached to the adverb, in Turda idiom.

6. Concerning to syntax, we observe that, when the genitive is used as supplemental predicative element, it loses adjectival quality and it does not any more decline. It is used adverbially, with the ending *-o*, which is identic as the adjectival ending of m. sg. Here is an example with „without something”, which is explained with the prefix *bi-*:

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<sup>1</sup> Courthiade, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Pokorny, 2005.

*O phral hin bilovengro.* „The brother is with no money”.

*E phen hin bilovengri.* „The sister is with no money”.

*O phrala hin bilovengre.* „The brothers are with no money”

*O phnă hin bilovengre.* „The sisters are with no money”

When the genitive *bilovengr/o, -i, -e, -e* is used, at the head of the phrase, as SPR, it has not flexion:

*Bilovengro, o phral žilăs peske and-o orăși.* With no money, the brother went to town.”

*Bilovengro, e phen žilăs peske and-o orăși.* „With no money, the sister went to town.”

*Bilovengro, o phrala žile penge and-o orăși.* „With no money, the brothers went to town.”

*Bilovengro, o phenă žile penge and-o orăși.* „With no money, the sisters went to town.”

7. In oblique cases, the genitive decline only then when it is before the modified word:

*o grast le dadestro* „the father’s hourse” (N.) > *le grastehe le dadestro* „with the father’s hourse” (S.I.)

*le dadestro grast* „the father’s hourse” (N.) > *le dadestre grastehe* „with the father’s hourse” (S.I.)

*e môtôr la rromnăkri* „the wife’s car” (N.) > *la motoraha la rromnăkri* „by the wife’s car” (S.I.)

*la rromnăkri môtôr* „the wife’s car” (N.) > *la rromnăkră motoraha* „by the wife’s car” (S.I.)

8. Concerning to the lexicon of the Carpathian idiom of Poiana-Turda, as I showed in Chapter 5, Romanian language influences the most, at present. But, as the following three synonyms for „train”: *geděši* (from Hu.), *vônato* (from Hu.) and *trêno* (from Rum.), or the word „snail”: *ćegebigo* and *ćebebiko* (from Hu.) and *mêlko* (from Rum.) show, we observe that before Hungarian language influenced it much. There are also some words which are not found in Rromani dictionaries, for example, *càlo* which means „thread, wire” or *niròši* „river”. Usually, the origin of the words can be found in Hungarian. But I didn’t find possible words corresponding to these two words.

The influences of Romanian language on this idiom are observed in following aspects:

1. In phonetics, Romanian language did not influenced the Carpathian idiom of Turda. The consonant [dʒ], which I mentioned about before, did not remain in Rromani language in Turda and it changed to [ʒ]. The speakers avoid the consonant [dʒ], even when they use loanwords



from Romanian which contains [dʒ], for example: *înceleţinel* [ɪntseleʒinel] „to understand”, and not [ɪntseledʒi-], as it sounds in Romanian. Besides this exception, the particular phonemes of Romanian appear only in loanwords and the phonetic contamination of these two languages is not observed in the idiom of Turda.

2. In the lexicon of the Carpathian idiom of Turda, the strong influence of Romanian language. As I told before, in lexicon of the idiom of Turda, words from Romanian are the most, between loanwords. As these variations show: *gedèşi* (from Hu.), *vònato* (from Hu.) and *trèno* (from Rum.); *égebigo* and *ébeebiko* (from Hu.) and *mèlko* (from Rum.); or *angar* (Rromani) and *karbùno* „carbon”, the penetration of Romanian words are increasing, continually, in the young generation, which do not know old words or loanwords from Hungarian, used in old generations.

3. In the morphology of loanwords from Romanian, an interesting thing is observed: words, of the type *artìsto* (sg.)-*artiştă* (pl.) „artist, artists”, where the palatalization of consonant -s- appears, shows clearly that the speakers add the desinence of pl. -a to the plural form of Romanian. Also Romanian nouns of neuter are the same: *cort*, *corturi* are, in the idiom of Turda, *kòrto*, *kòrtură* „tent, tents”. But we have to know that there is also the reduced form of pl. *kòrte*.

4. At the nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs, the use of Romanian loanwords is partial, namely, in many cases, they have other variations besides the Romanian loanwords, except new words and new concepts (*hotel*, *telefon*, *elefant* etc.). For example: *ébeebiko* (from Hu.) vs. *mèlko* (from Rum.) „snail”, *angar* (Rrom.) vs. *karbùno* (from Rum.) „carbon”, *baro* (Rrom. „big” with extended sense) vs. *lùngo* (from Rum.) „long”, *sig* (Rrom.) vs. *rèpedon* „rapidly”, *şukar* (Rrom. „beautiful” with extended sense) vs. *încèton* „slowly”, *xatârel* (Rrom.) vs. *înceleţinel* (from Rum.) „to understand”, *sigârel pes* (Rrom.) vs. *grăbinel pes* (from Rum.) „to hurry”. But, concerning to conjunctions, if Romanian words are used, the older words do not be anymore in use, for example: *dàke* „if” (in other dialects *te* is used), *òri* „or” (in other dialect *vaj*).

5. In comparative grade, the adverb *maj* which comes, evidently, from Romanian language, like in other dialects influenced by Romanian. In the superlative the particularity of the idiom of Turda is observed, namely, the use of pronominal demonstrative adjectives *éel* (m. sg. and m. and f. pl.) and *éea* (f. sg.), which come all from Romanian. As I explained in Chapter 5, the speakers use *éel* of the m. sg. also in m. and f. pl., just like as the definite article of m. sg. *o* is used also in pl.

6. The desinence of vocative for feminine nouns, which ends in consonant, is -o or -ô: *phen* „sister” > *phenô!* „sister!”, *éhej* „daughter, girl” > *éhejo!* „daughter, girl!”. This desinence is observed in other dialects too, probably, they come from Romanian. The desinence -lec, which

appears in pl., which I wrote about before that it is a strange, comes probably from *-ți*, the verbal desinence of pers. 2 pl. from Romanian, which is attached also to the Romanian interjection *haide!* The vocative is used, in most cases, together with the interjections *hàjda* and *hàjdac*, in the idiom of Turda, for example: *hajdac, rromalec!* „come on, Rroma!”.

7. Also the suffix *-jak* is particular, though it appears only the names of playing cards. *Enájak* „Nine“, *oxtójak* „Eight“, *eftájak* „Seven“ are resulted, by adding the Romanian suffix *-ică*, by following process: *eftá-ikă* > apocope: *eftáik(a)* > synthesis: *eftáiak*.

8. Syntactically, the Romanian influence appears at the relative proposition. When the relative pronoun is accusative, in the secondary proposition, the complement is repeated by the personal pronouns in accusative, just like in Romanian.

9. The replacement of the synthetic form by analytic construction with preposition is observed in all dialects. The Carpathian idiom of Turda adopted the preposition *de* from Romanian and they use, combining it with Rromani prepositions: *dănde* < *de ande* „from“, *jekh prèteno dăn' lengro* „one of their friends“, *dĩ pe* < *de pe* „about“, *dĩ maške* „between“.

10. The possible variation, which is not common in the idiom of Turda, but recorded from an informant, the synthetic form of accusative with the preposition *pe* sounds a romanism: *dikhaw p-o rroma* instead of *dikhaw le rromen* „I see Rroma“.

11. The idiom of Rroma of Poiana-Turda offers an interesting image of the actual study of Rromani language, generally, with all its diastatic, diatopic, diachronic phenomena. It is a living and dynamic sample of inter-human verbal communication, which come from antiquity and is adapted in the century of globalization.

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