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NOTES ON THE GENESIS OF CALÓ AND OTHER  
IBERIAN PARA-ROMANI VARIETIES

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**0. Introduction**

This paper deals with the different varieties of Romani spoken in or originating in the Iberian peninsula, especially Caló (Spanish Romani). Iberian Romani is taken as the collective name for the varieties of Romani spoken on the peninsula. These are now all reported (perhaps unjustly) to be extinct or close to extinct. The argument presented here is therefore based on publications rather than fieldwork. Virtually all the material published shows the complete loss of the inherited grammatical system and an adoption of the grammatical system of the host region.

Below, I present data which may help uncover the genesis of Caló. First, I discuss the mixed Romani dialects in general (section 1) and some historical factors related to the Gypsies in the Iberian peninsula (section 2). Then, I briefly discuss the place of Iberian Romani among Romani dialects (section 3). Next, I discuss some structural features of Caló, in order to assess the nature of the mixture in Caló (section 4), and provide some data on the other Para-Romani dialects of the Iberian peninsula (section 5). After that I briefly mention the social functions of Caló (section 6). Furthermore, I discuss the oldest sources of Iberian Romani in order to assess the possible origin (section 7). With these historical, historical-linguistic, structural and classificatory facts in mind, a hypothesis is formulated concerning the genesis of the Iberian Para-Romani dialects, in particular Caló (section 8).

As yet, there has been no attempt to explain the genesis of Caló itself, save in some more general overviews. These were based only on a limited number of sources.

### 1. *Para-Romani languages*

Until today, about ten varieties of Romani have been identified which have a Romani lexicon but which have lost the native grammatical system. Instead, these dialects use the morphosyntax of the surrounding languages (see Bakker & Van Der Voort 1991 and especially Boretzky & Iglá 1994). These are called Para-Romani languages, a term originally coined by Marcel Cortiade. They roughly display the following characteristics: the vocabulary is Romani (hence basically Indic), but nearly all the phonology, morphology and syntax are non-Romani. Although all Romani dialects borrow heavily from the languages of the host country, no cases are reported of languages with a Romani grammatical system and a non-Romani lexicon. Until now, Para-Romani languages have been described, documented or mentioned in the literature in connection with the grammatical systems of Swedish, Norwegian, German, Catalan, Portuguese, English, Basque, Spanish, Greek, Persian, Turkish, and Armenian. All these varieties must be seen as languages in their own right, and not as dialects of Swedish etc. or Romani.

Several theories have been put forward to account for the genesis of these dialects, ranging from saving a dying language by preserving the lexicon, through gradual massive grammatical borrowing, the conscious creation of a mixed language, relexification to language intertwining - the combination of one lexicon with the morphosyntax of another language. Not all of these are mutually exclusive, but the debate on their genesis is still going on.

The Para-Romani language of the Spanish part of the Iberian peninsula is relatively well documented. Both speakers and outsiders have written down and published vocabularies or grammatical studies of this language. Almost all of this, however, is in languages other than English. This study will introduce this language to an English speaking audience.

The language is generally called *Caló* [kalo] in the literature. Undoubtedly the Romani word *kalo* "black" is the source. It is used both as an ethnic self-designation and as a name for the language. Speakers also call it *Romano* (Quindalé 1867: 49), a nominalized adjective derived from the noun *Rom* 'Gypsy, man' with the Romani suffix *-ani/-ano*.

*Caló* as a Para-Romani language should not be confused with other languages and slang varieties which are also called *Caló*. All these languages have in common that they are cryptolectal or in-group languages embedded in Spanish structures. This name for non-Romani languages is reported from places as far as California (Polkinhorn *et al.* 1983). Although such cryptolectal languages may have borrowed some words from Romani or Gypsy

*Caló*, they will not be discussed here. When we mention *Caló* in this paper, it refers exclusively to the Gypsy language of that name, as spoken by people of Gypsy descent in Spain, Portugal and South America.

As a Para-Romani language, *Caló* is particularly interesting for three main reasons. First, there is a lot of material, covering two or perhaps even three centuries. There is no other Para-Romani dialect documented over such a long period of time.

Second, in contrast to most other Para-Romani languages, *Caló* also makes abundant use of cryptic devices, apparently meant to conceal the meaning of the communication from outsiders.

Third, apart from *Caló*, which has an (Andalusian) Spanish grammatical system, there appear to be several other varieties of Para-Romani languages which came about under contact with languages of the Iberian peninsula, viz. one with a Catalan grammatical system, one with a Portuguese grammatical system (in Brazil), and one with the non-Romance language Basque. These varieties all seem to be derived from one branch of Romani as they all share some lexical particularities apparently not shared with other varieties of Romani (see section 4).

### 2. *Gypsies in the Iberian peninsula*

If the description of "Egyptian" acrobats and jugglers by the Byzantine writer Nicephorus Gregoras indeed refers to Gypsies, the first Gypsies may have reached the Iberian peninsula in the first decades of the fourteenth century (Fraser 1992: 48). The earliest undeniable reference to Gypsies dates from 1425; when a group was granted safe-conducts in Aragon and Asturia (Fraser 1992: 76). They are first mentioned in Andalusia in 1462, in Portugal in the first decades of the sixteenth century, and in Navarra in the 16th century. Since then there has been a continuous presence of Gypsies on the peninsula.

The number of Gypsies today in the Iberian peninsula is estimated at between 300.000 and 700.000. They live in both urban and rural areas, with major centres in Madrid and Andalusia. For all of them (with the exception of some newly arrived groups), the dominant and first language today is Spanish, particularly the Andalusian dialect. Many Gypsies know at least some *Caló* words, but even the most knowledgeable speakers may not know more than fifty or a hundred words (McLane 1977, 1985). There seems to have been an ungoing decline of the languages for a long time, resulting in a large-scale shift to Spanish, with an occasional *Caló* word.

### 3. *Lexical classification of Iberian Romani among Romani dialects*

As any other language, Romani consists of dialects. These are grouped into clusters of dialects, but there is no single accepted classification. In general, these classifications are based on three factors: internal sound developments in words inherited from Indic and Persian languages, shared or different grammatical features and the main source languages of borrowed items (hereby excluding the language of the host country). The first two are of course common in any dialect classification, but in the Spanish case the grammatical system is lost and hence cannot be used. The use of borrowed items is rather typical of Romani dialectology alone.

On grounds of the lexicon (phonological peculiarities of inherited words and source language of the borrowings), Caló and the other Iberian dialects have been classified differently (Kaufman 1979, cf. Hancock 1988). There are a few words used in the Iberian dialects of Romani which deviate in certain ways from all other varieties. This means its classification as a different branch seems justified. The clearest cases are the following:

- (1) The word for "boy" and "girl" are *raklo* and *rakli* in Romani, but *lakri* in the Basque Country, *lacrollacrin* in Brazil, *lacro* and *lacri* in Caló.
- (2) The words for "father" and "mother" are *dad* and *dai* in common Romani, but *bato* and *bata* in Brazil, *bato* and *bati* in the Basque Country, *bato* and *bata* in Caló, *bato* (and *dai*) in Catalonia.

Further research may reveal other such Iberian similarities. On the grounds of the lexicon, different classifications have been proposed. Most researchers classify Iberian Romani as relatively isolated among Romani dialects: Kaufman (1979) makes it a separate branch of European Romani, on a par with the Northern, Balkan, Vlach, Greek and Zargari dialects. Kenrick (see Hancock 1988) classifies Iberian Romani as a Balkan dialect on a par with Vlach and southern Balkan Romani. Boretzky (1992) shows that Caló has a significant number of words in common with the Northern dialects, in particular Sinti and Angloromani. Iberian Romani, therefore, seems to be historically a separate branch, most closely related to the Northern dialects and non-Vlach Balkan dialects.

### 4. *Some Romani and Spanish derived features*

Caló is not a spontaneous ad-hoc mixture of Romani and Spanish. The Spanish part (at least in the 19th century) differs from the varieties of Spanish spoken locally, and in some cases Spanish is not spoken locally (e.g. in

Portugal, see below). In some cases, Gypsies speak archaic varieties of a language, e.g. the variety of Catalan spoken by the Gypsies near Perpignan in North Catalonia. In this section, I will present some of the differences.

#### 4.1. *Andalusian features*

The Spanish component of Caló is not ordinary standard Spanish but rather the Andalusian dialect. This is true to a certain extent for all sources of Caló, not only in Andalusia but also in Madrid. Apparently, Caló found its origin in Andalusia, from where it spread to other areas. In Portugal, for instance, Calão has an Andalusian Spanish rather than Portuguese base. Also, Caló retains some archaic features lost in modern Spanish. For instance, old Spanish *ende* "since", modern Spanish *desde*, Caló *ende* (Keller 1892). A Catalan influence is also suggested in words such as *matejo* "self", Catalan *mateix*, Castilian *mismo*.

Andalusian Spanish differs from standard Spanish in a number of points.

- a) Spanish /ʎ/ (orthographic 'll') is pronounced [j].
- b) final consonants tend to be dropped, even those of grammatical endings (for instance plural -s).
- c) The phonemes /s/ and /θ/ are to an extent in free variation.
- d) /d/ and /g/ between vowels are often dropped, e.g. Spanish *asadura*, And. *saura*, Spanish *pasado*, And. *pasao*. This is also found in other Spanish dialects.
- e) 'confusion' between (some?) /r/ and /ʎ/. Spanish *el*, And. /er/ or /el/.
- f) alternation (some words) Cast. /h/, And. /f/.
- g) prothetic morphemes *a-*, *des-*, *en-*, *es-*.

The fact that we find these Andalusian features in all Caló varieties, suggests that they came into being in Andalusia and later spread to other parts of the Iberian peninsula. (For details, see Boretzky 1992: 32). Catalanian Romani shows many conservative phonological features independent from Castilian (Boretzky 1992: 29-34).

#### 4.2. *Phonology*

The phonology of Caló is Spanish; all Romani words are adapted to the phonology of Andalusian Spanish. This means that Romani phonemes not existing in Spanish are lost in Caló. For instance, in Caló there are no aspirated stops. Romani aspirated stops become unaspirated stops in Caló (except /th/ which becomes /č/). It is clear, however, that the aspirated stops were still used when the Gypsies arrived on the Iberian peninsula. The

aspirated /th/ of Romani became /č/ rather than /t/, for instance *chem* /čem/ 'land' < Romani *them*, *chute* /čute/ Romani *thud* 'milk' (Boretzky 1992). Further, the voiced affricate /dž/ became /č/ in Caló and /v/ became /b/, etc., following Spanish phonology.

One of the features of Caló inherited from Romani is its stress pattern, or at least some aspects of it. Whereas Spanish words rarely have stress on the final syllable, this is commonly so in Romani and Caló (inherited from Romani). See for instances the stress markers in example (1) below. This may give Caló a distinct flavour.

Phonotactic constraints seem, at first sight, to be the same in Caló and Spanish, in that the syllable structure is identical. However, there are exceptions as well: in Caló there are words ending in *-m*, but these do not seem to exist in Spanish. A recent study suggests that the phonotactic constraints of Spanish and Caló are not completely identical. This thought-provoking study by Dietz and Mulcahy (1988) compares the combination of letters in a Bible chapter in Castilian and Caló. They conclude on the basis of statistical evidence "that Caló and Castilian differ greatly in the way they form and distribute basic linguistic particles" (i.e. 'letters' or perhaps, by implication, phonemes). For example, in the samples of the same text in Spanish and Caló versions, the phoneme /č/ (the digraph "ch") was counted 2.056 times in the Caló text and only 242 times in the Spanish text, a difference of nearly 850 % (Mulcahy & Volland 1986: 144 n. 4).

How can we explain this? There are several possibilities. With very few exceptions, Caló phonemic structures are possible in Castilian. This is to be expected, since the Romani words are adapted to Spanish phonology. It may be, however, that the frequency of certain combinations of phonemes differ in both languages because the lexicon of Caló remains basically Romani and follows some non-Castilian features of Romani. For instance, Romani /c/, /č/, /čh/ and /th/ all became /č/ in Caló, which could explain the high proportion of /č/. In fact, this is what the results of Dietz & Mulcahy's study suggest.

Whatever the explanation is, we agree that Caló cannot simply be a 'Gypsified' version of Castilian (Dietz & Mulcahy 1988: 15).

#### 4.3. Morphology

Caló uses Spanish derivational affixes, such as the diminutives *-ico*, *-ito*, the superlative *-ísimo*, the adverbial ending *-mente*, etc.. Apart from that, it

uses a number of prefixes (apparently without any meaning) to verbs, such as *a-*, *en-*, *de-*, *des-*, some of these derived from Andalusian Spanish.

Inflection is also Spanish. For instance, it has the nominal plural inflection *-s* and whole verb paradigms from Spanish. In Caló, all verbs are conjugated according to the class of Spanish verbs ending in *-ar* which is the most regular and unmarked class. This class is also used for borrowed verbs in Spanish. From this point of view, the Romani verb in Caló behaves like a borrowed verb in Spanish.

Although Caló morphology is so close to Spanish, it does preserve some Romani morphemes, productively or not. A small number of these are used in Caló. First, there is the suffix *-pen*, forming abstract nouns from verbs and adjectives. Second, there are the gender suffixes *-i* (F) and *-o* (M) used with adjectives in Caló and nominalized adjectives. Whereas the nouns with these endings in Romani are probably lexicalized forms, if they were used with adjectives they would probably still be productive. Third, there are also instances of the noun plural suffixes *-ia(s)* for feminine nouns and *-e(s)* for nominalized adjectives, followed by the Spanish plural suffix *-s*.

Some authors also use Romani case endings, probably only non-productively. In any case, these inflected pronouns are not used like one would expect considering their function in Romani: Caló uses datives or genitives with subject function, and this is ungrammatical in Romani. There are several instances of the case marker *-ha* for the comitative/ instrumental case, as in *romi-ha*, *dal-ha*, *sila-ha*. One finds the *-ha* endings for instance in Sinti and Balkan and central dialects. It is undoubtedly related to the Caló preposition *sar* 'with' and the Romani instrumental case *-sa(r)*<sup>1</sup>.

There are more 'frozen' Romani morphemes in Caló: many Caló verbs have the Romani personal conjugation markers *-av* and *-el* between the verb stem and the Spanish conjugation. They are derived from the Romani first person singular ending and the third person singular ending respectively, but they do not function as such. To these, Spanish inflection is added. Quindalé (1867) mentions a semantic difference between verbs with the *-el* element and those without, based on the same root. Those with *-el* denote a more intensive action, e.g. *chinar* "to cut", *chinelar* "to harvest"; *querar* "to do", *querelar* "to execute". This is an innovation in Caló; it does not exist in either Spanish or Romani. Caló apparently makes use of Romani inflection to denote 'aspect' or 'Aktionsart'.

Gender assignment in Caló deserves a special study. Here, I will just present some observations. Both Romani and Spanish distinguish masculine

and feminine nouns. Assignment of gender of nouns in Spanish is partially based on the semantics (especially with animates), partly on the phonological structure of the stem, especially the final vowel or consonant. In Caló, this is also the case. Quindalé (1867: 51) says that words ending in a consonant or in the vowels *-ó*, *-e*, *-o*, or *-u* are masculine, whereas words ending in *-í*, *-a*, or *-i* are feminine.

#### 4.4. *Lexicon*

McLane (1977, 1985) recorded a few hundred words considered Caló by the Gypsies of Guadix and other parts of Andalusia and Spain. He calculated (1985: 188) that 68 % of the lexical items in his corpus are of Indic (hence Romani) origin and 22 % of Spanish origin (many of those distorted). We also find the usual sources of non-Indic words in Caló from the pre-European layer of loan elements present in all Romani dialects, such as Armenian, Persian, Greek and Slavic languages. Boretzky (1992), using a wider vocabulary, detected words from Slavic languages, in some cases specifiable as South Slavic, Czech or Polish (Caló *dosta* "enough" < South Slavic *dosta*; Caló *kornes* "laced boot" < Czech *škornje*; Caló *stajnia* "horse-stable" < Polish *estanja*). There are also a few Hungarian words in Catalanian Romani, such as *arany* "silver" < Hungarian *aranj* and *cin* "colour" < Hungarian *szín*. Many of these words, however, are not specific to Caló; in fact they can be found in other Romani dialects as well. Boretzky further identified a number of words which Caló has in common with the Sinti and Angloromani dialects (Boretzky 1992: 16), so called 'northern dialects'. Further there are words taken from Germanía (Spanish Cant) in Caló (see below 6.3).

It should be mentioned that Iberian Romani also seems to have Greek and perhaps Persian) words not attested in other Romani dialects. A few others have been identified as Arabic (e.g. *(j)azari* "ten" < Arabic *?ašara*; Moroccan variety). Overall, the Caló lexicon is highly aberrant among Romani dialects because of the singular phonological development, the cryptic devices used (see below) and the relatively large number of words of unknown origin.

#### 4.5. *Word Order*

Word order is the same as in Spanish.

#### 4.6. *Innovations*

Although there is a clear Romani component and a clear Andalusian Spanish component, there are also elements which are neither. I focus on two of these: the use of innovative place names and the use of cryptolalic formations.

##### 4.6.1. *Place Names*

Local place names are among the first elements to be used by immigrant groups when using their native language in the land of immigration. Nevertheless, the Gypsies in Spain did not (always) do so. They formed new place names, many with unclear etymons (see below), instead of adopting Spanish place names. This list of place names is extracted from Sales Mayo (1870).

Some Caló place-names:

- Barcelona: *bajari* (Sales Mayo 1870:8)
- (Barcelonés: *bajanó*) (Sales Mayo 1870:8)
- Extremadura: *chim ye manró* (Sales Mayo 1870:24)
- Granada: *meligrana* (Sales Mayo 1870:47)
- Guadalquivir: *len baró* (Sales Mayo 1870:43)
- Habana: *bobaní* (Sales Mayo 1870:13)
- Jerez: *borbóreo* (Sales Mayo 1870:13)
- Judea: *bordajía* (Sales Mayo 1870:13)
- (Judio: *bordajú*) (Sales Mayo 1870:13)
- Londres: *llundun* (Sales Mayo 1870:45)
- Madrid: *madrilati* (Sales Mayo 1870:13, 45)
- Sevilla: *safacoro* (Sales Mayo 1870:13)

Some of these are clearly circumscriptions, such as *len baró* "big river" for Guadalquivir, and *chim ye manró* "and of the bread" for Extremadura. Others are distortions of the existing place names, such as *madrilati* for Madrid and *llundun* for London. Some of them are cryptolalic formations, such as *Bobaní* for Habana. It is a pun on Spanish *haba* "bean" and Caló *bobi* "bean": one part of the word is replaced by the Romani word with the same meaning (see below for other distortions of this type).

This indicates that speakers intended to make their speech unintelligible to outsiders by avoiding borrowing, and instead making up new words. We find the same phenomenon with place names in Angloromani (Hancock

1984a). However, it is not typical only of Para-Romani dialects: the inflected dialect of Finland and the Sinti dialect in Germany also have cryptic forms for place names.

#### 4.6.2. Cryptolalic formations

Cryptolalic formations are not limited to place names. Wagner (1937-1938) discusses a score of these cryptolalic forms for a variety of words. Usually, when a Spanish word contains a syllable which is also an existing Spanish word, then the small word is translated into Romani. For instance, the Spanish name for "March" is *Marzo*. This word contains the sequence *mar*, identical to the Spanish word *mar* "sea". In Caló, the sea is *loria* (Romani *dorjav*), hence *Marzo* becomes *Loriazo*. Another example is the Caló word for "namesake". In Spanish it is *tocayo*. This resembles very much the Spanish verb *tocar* "to touch". The Caló verb *bajamb-ar* means "to touch", so the Caló word for "namesake" becomes *bajambayo*. Another example, mentioned by Keller (1892: 171) is Caló *sardenar* "to condemn", from Spanish *condenar*, both first syllables meaning "with". A final example is the word for "die, dice" in Caló. The Spanish word is *dado*, which happens to be homophonous with the Spanish word for "given" (past participle). In Caló, "given" is *diñao*, the past participle form of the verb *diñar*. The Caló noun for "die" is therefore also *diñao*.

Cryptolalic formations like these may be devices to keep the language unintelligible to outsiders, such as those who learned some of it (see above). Such processes are common in secret languages.

#### 5. The four Iberian Para-Romani languages

Caló is not the only Para-Romani dialect of the Iberian peninsula. In Bakker (1991) I showed that the Romani dialect of the Basque Country was (or is) a mixed dialect like Caló, a Para-Romani dialect or an 'intertwined' language. It has a Basque grammatical system and a Romani lexicon. It is therefore structurally different from Caló, especially since Basque is not an Indo-European language.

It is less known that Catalonia also had such a mixed language, with (again) a Romani lexicon and a Catalan grammatical system. This differs from the Catalonian Romani dialects described in Ackerley (1915), which show a reasonably intact Romani grammar (as the only dialect of the peninsula). There are a few texts in a novel in Catalan concerning Catalonian Gypsies that are written in Catalonian Para-Romani. The following text is

illustrative. The text and its Catalan translation are both from Vallmitjana 1908 (as cited in Leblon 1982: 63). The analysis and interpretation are mine<sup>2</sup>.

<i>Catalonian Para-Romani</i>	<i>Catalan in source</i>
De la mutzi d'un aranuí	De la pell d'un gat
van nyisquerbá un dicaló	ne varen treure un mocador
un busnó en diquelava	un home s'ho mirava
panant: Quin sambanbanó	dient: ! Que es bonic!

"They go to take of a neckerchief made of a cat's skin. A non-Gypsy saw it, saying: How beautiful!"

#### Interpretation:

<i>De la mutzi d'un aranuí</i>	<i>Van nyisquerbá un dicaló</i>
of the skin of-a cat	they-go take-off a neckkerchief
<i>un busnó endiquelava</i>	pan-ant: <i>Quin sambanbanó</i>
a non-Gypsy see-3.PAST	say-ing: what beautiful

The Romani-derived words are *mutzi* (< R. *morthi* "skin") *dicaló* (< R. *diklo* "neckerchief"), *nyisquerba* (< R. (*n*)*ikalav* "to take off"), *busnó* "non-Gypsy" (< R. *buzno* "goat"), *endiquelava* (< R. *dikhel* "he sees"), *panant* (< R. *penel* "he says"). The words *aranuí* and *sambanbanó* are of unknown origin.

The Gypsies in Portugal are reported to have spoken (or speak) a variety close to Caló, though slightly influenced by Portuguese (Coelho 1892). These Gypsies must have come to Portugal from Andalusia. In the following example from Coelho (1892: 9), the Calão example has Spanish rather than Portuguese function morphemes such as the verbal inflection and the possessive pronoun *mi* vs. *meu*, the personal pronoun *yo* vs. *eu* and the question word *quien* vs. *quem*:

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| (1) Ai! mi patarró maró, a quien me combisaré yo? | (Calão)      |
| Ai! meu pae morreu, a quem me encommendarei eu?   | (Portuguese) |
| Ai! mi padre morto, de quien me confiaré yo?      | (Spanish)    |
| Ai my father dead, to who REFL rely 1.SG.NOM      |              |
| "Ai my dead father, on whom can I rely?"          |              |

Gypsies in Brazil spoke (or speak) a Para-Romani language with a Portuguese grammatical system and a Romani lexicon. Moraes (1885, 1886) gives only a handful of songs, totalling twenty lines, in his study, all discussed by Sowa (1889). I will give one of those here as an illustration. The text and the English translation are from Sowa, the interpretation is mine:

<i>Brazilian Para-Romani</i>	<i>English source</i>
Quando, ó dâe, tu merinhaste mança tambem merinhou em tanto nachadipem de mença tudo jalou	When thou diedst, O mother, I too died, - into such a forlorn condition Have I wholly gone

*Interpretation*

Quando, ó dâe, tu mer-inh-aste when, o mother, you die-?-2.PST em tanto nachadi-pem in such ill-ness	mança tambem mer-inh-ou me too die-?-1.PRES de mença tudo jalou of me totally go-1PRES
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Here the content words are also Romani: *dâé* (< R. *dai*), *merinhaste* (< R. *merel* "he dies"), *mança* (< R. *manca* "with me"), *nachadipem* (< R. *nasul* "evil" or *nasvalo* "ill", plus abstract noun suffix *-pe(n)*), *mença* (< R. *manca* "with me"), *jalou* (< R. *džal* "he goes"). The *-inh-* suffix is unclear. It may be related to the *-in-* element found in some words in Caló between the (Spanish-derived) stem and the inflection, which is also used in other Romani dialects and which may be derived from Greek (Boretzky & Iglá 1991: 37-38).

Did the four varieties of Iberian Para-Romani (Basque, Spanish, Catalan and Brazilian) come into being independently or was the vocabulary transferred from either of them to the others?

There are several indications that they did come into being independently. All dialects use case-inflected (with Romani case-ending) pronouns as the unmarked pronoun. The intriguing thing is, that all dialects use different cases: Portuguese/ Spanish Caló uses the dative (sometimes the locative), Basque Romani the nominative and Brazil the comitative. There is not enough data on the Catalanian dialect, but two other European Para-Romani dialects use again different cases: Scando-Romani of Sweden uses the ablative and

possessive, and Angloromani the locative. These results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: *Personal pronouns in some Para-Romani dialects.*

Andalusia:	mangue	< mange	DAT
	menda	< mande	LOC
Portugal:	mangue ?	< mange	DAT
Basque C:	me	< me	NOM (also once: amenge DAT)
Brazil:	mença	< manca	COM
Britain:	mandi	< mande	LOC
Sweden:	mannder	< mandar	ABL
	mero	< miro	POSS

It is unlikely (but not at all impossible) that the people who had already lost the Romani grammatical system would adopt a different grammatical system when moving to a different region. The Portuguese Gypsies in any case preserved the Spanish grammatical system with no shift to Portuguese. The fact that the pronouns are taken from different inflected forms, also points to an independent development: once lost, the other pronouns could not have been recovered. It is further apparent that the forms selected for the root of the verbs (imperative or first or third person singular) are not parallel in the different languages (although there is not enough data from Catalonia).

This strongly suggests that these dialects came about independently - except for the Portuguese Para-Romani, which is an extension of Andalusian Caló.

## 6. *Social functions of Caló*

In a number of aspects Caló is unusual from a sociolinguistic point of view. First, it is considered a secret language. This it has in common with a number of other Para-Romani dialects (cf. Kenrick 1979 for Angloromani). Second, Caló, unlike other Para-Romani languages, was known by many non-Gypsies as well. Many people with first hand knowledge of the language have noted this. I discuss this below (6.1). Third, the language has been called 'close to extinct' during the past century and a half. This is also discussed below (6.2). Finally, there is a strong interaction with secret languages such as Germanía (Spanish Cant). There are many cases of mu-

tual borrowing and it is often hard to keep the two languages apart. This is discussed in (6.3).

#### 6.1. *Caló known by non-Gypsies*

Many sources claim that non-Gypsies living near Gypsies also spoke Caló. This was the case in the 19th century and, also, in the late 20th century. Brown (1922) remarked: "In no other country is a knowledge of Gypsy as widespread as among the inhabitants as in Spain." The people who knew Caló were local inhabitants, including policemen. One of the most recent field-researchers, Merrill McLane notes the following: "There are also poor Castilians who know more Caló than many Gypsies" (1977: 304). He also states that "Caló has long been used by Gypsies and non-Gypsies in trading horses, mules and burros" (McLane 1985: 190).

It is not surprising that languages of marginal groups also contain Caló elements, such as the language of the non-Gypsy nomads, the Quinquis, and different varieties of slang and argot such as Germanía:

#### 6.2. *Caló a dying language?*

The Caló language was already considered close to extinct in 1843, when Borrow wrote that Caló was "at the last stage of its existence" (cited in McLane 1977). Comments like these have appeared ever since, such as, for instance, Colocci (1888: 289), who wrote:

As to their language, the greater part of the Gitanos at the present day speak Spanish, and they employ the Spanish phraseology, only substituting some *Caló* words, and modifying some Spanish words with the terminations *saro-sara* and *une-una*. (...) The true Caló still exists, in the precise sense of the word. But only a limited number of these words are now used; the rest is Castilian. Each individual Gitano knows only a small portion of it. Nevertheless, in my conversations with Gitanos, above all with those of Sierra Morena, and, in particular, with their old people, I have collected - here or there - some hundreds of words, which, perhaps, I shall one day publish.

This sounds already very similar to what McLane wrote almost a century later, when he stated that the language is "in its final step towards extinction" (McLane 1977: 303). It therefore seems that this language has been languishing for a long time. It is dying because the words are less and less used and increasingly forgotten and replaced by Spanish words.

#### 6.3. *Germanía and Caló*

Germanía is the most important secret language of Spain. Its grammatical system is that of Spanish, and its lexicon stems from various sources. Some words are distorted Spanish or words from foreign languages (including some from Romani), but the bulk of the vocabulary seems to be of unknown origin. I am not aware of an etymological study of Germanía. George Borrow stated that, "[b]y far the greatest part of the vocabulary [of Germanía] consists of Spanish words used allegorically, which are, however, intermingled with many others, most of which may be traced to the Latin and Italian, others to the Sanscrit or Gitáno, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, Greek, and German languages" (Borrow 1843: 117). In this it is similar to the Cant in Britain.

The name 'Germanía' is a distorted form of a foreign language's name, as is often the case with this type of secret languages (for example Dutch 'Bargoens' < Burgundy; Danish 'Keltring' < Celtic; German 'Rotwelsch' < Welsh or Walloon).

In all sources of Caló, we find Caló and Germanía words in the same texts and vocabularies. It seems that the two languages were, from a very early date, used in similar situations, influencing one another. In older texts in Germanía we already find a few Caló words, i.e. words of Romani origin. In Hill (1945) Germanía texts from 1609 are quoted which already contain some Romani words. The oldest sources for Caló also contain a number of Germanía words. Hill's (1921) word list (see 7.1), supposedly from the 17th century, contains Germanía words like *piño* for "teeth" (Caló *dañi*, Romani *dand*) and *gumarra* "chicken" (Germanía *gura*, Caló *cañi*, Romani *kaxni* or *khajni*).

The earliest published Caló materials, those published by Bright (1818), also contain a number of Germanía words.

#### 6.4. *Variability: function words in different sources*

As any language, Caló is not a homogeneous language, neither in time nor in space. There are words which are strictly in regional usage, and there are also differences in what is taken from Spanish and what from Romani. This can be illustrated by the function words. Table 2 shows a number of function words from different sources. The first three are the English words and their Spanish and Romani equivalents. The other columns indicate a selection of sources and what words are given in these sources for the function words discussed.



Table 2. Some function words in several Caló sources. (preliminary overview)

ENG	SPA	ROM	1818 BR.	1841 BORR.	1848 CAMP.	1853 JIM.	1870 SALES	1900 TINEO	1915 PABANO
(do)not	no	na	no	no	yes, yeque	ne	na, ne	na(nai)	ne
a	un	yekh	un	yes	yes, yeque	yes	ta	yes, yequi	ta, y
and	y	thaj	.	y	.	.	per, pre?	y, ta	per, pre
by	por	.	.	per	per	per	pa	per, pre	pa, somia
for	para	.	.	pa, somia	pa, somia	pa	on	pa, somia	on
in, on	cu	and	en	an, on	an, on	on	me, mangué	an, on	ru
me, I	me/yo	me, mänge	.	.	.	nu	na, ne	me?	ne
nor	ni	na	.	me, nu	.	.	e	na	e
of	de	.	de	e	.	e	ya	e (PL es)	dor
of the M	del	.	del	.	.	dor	ya	ya (PL yas)	ya (PL yas)
of the F	de la	.	de la	.	.	ya	ya	ya (PL yas)	yesqui/e
one, some	uno/a/s	.	.	yesque/i	yesque/i	yesque/i	yequé, yes	yequé	o
or	o	vaj	.	.	.	.	o	o	sos
that	que	sos	que	sos	sos	sos	sos	sos	o, or
the M	el	o/e	o, or	.	.	or	o, or	o, or	a
the F	la	e/i/la	la	a	a	a	a	a	ar, as
the PL.F	las	e/o	las	ar, as	ar, as	ar, as	os, ler	ar, as	ler, os
the PL.M	los	e	los	os, ler	os, ler	ler, os	á or	ler, os	aor
to the M	al	.	al	.	.	.	.	.	.

(BR = Bright; BORR = Borrow; CAMP = Campuzano)

All the functional elements are of Romani or Spanish origin except for the italicized forms *somia* for "for" and *nu* for first person singular, both of which are of unknown origin.

One result is clear: the sources show no evolution from a more Romani-oriented variety towards a more Spanish-oriented variety. The first text (Bright 1818) has almost exclusively Spanish function words, whereas later texts have more function words from Romani. In fact, the number of Romani-derived function words used in sources after 1850 is greater than before 1850, contrary to what one would expect, if Caló is seen as a gradual evolution away from Romani towards Spanish. This could result from regional differences, however, or increasing purism.

For the final analysis, all sources should be studied, and in a more thorough way than was possible within the scope of this paper.

### 7. The oldest sources of Iberian Romani

If we want to explain the genesis of Iberian Romani, we have to look for the earliest sources. As yet, no exhaustive historical research has been done concerning mentionings of the Gypsies' languages. However, there are a few early remarks about the language of the Gypsies in Spain.

Already in 1608 the Spanish writer P. Martín Delrío, in his book *Disquisitionum Magicarum* said that the language of the Gypsies "was a vernacular invented by them to replace their native tongue, which they had forgotten" (cited in Spanish in Pabanó 1915: 179)<sup>3</sup>.

One early source claims that the Gypsies around 1600 were fluent in Greek. This may point to a previous presence in a Greek speaking area, presumably not long before. It also seems that the Gypsies lost their language quite early and, then, may have completely replaced it with Caló within 150 years after arrival in Spain. More historical research is needed here.

If we look at the two earliest sources of Caló (or Iberian Romani in general), we see that these two earliest sources already show a complete hispanization of the language. I will discuss both of them in some detail.

#### 7.1. Anonymous word list 17th century

The oldest source is a word list found in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid by John M. Hill and published early this century (Hill 1921). It is called *Lengua egipciaca; y mas propio: Guirigay de Gitanos* [The Egyptian language, more properly, jargon of the Gypsies]. Hill seems to suggest that it

dates from the 17th century, but he does not indicate how he arrived at this conclusion.

The list contains 61 words, almost all of them clearly Romani. Although there are no phrases in the list, it is also clear that the Romani inflection is not inherited. Indeed the words have inflection: verbs end in *-ar*, and plural nouns end in *-s*, both in the Spanish and in the Caló columns. There are also some shared derivational endings in both sections, such as *-ador* (or rather its Andalusian form *-aor*) for a person who performs an action. Although there are some Romani grammatical morphemes, these are most probably lexicalized forms, such as *gachó* and *gachi* for "servant" and "maid", with the Romani masculine and feminine endings. The *-o* and *-i* endings are productive in Romani proper for adjectives, but not for nouns and we only find them used on nouns in this list. The same for *puxó* and *puxy* for "old man" and "old woman" respectively. The *x* is probably a misreading for *r*, since the Romani source word is the adjective *puro* (M), *puri* (F). If this list is really from the 17th century, it means that without any doubt there were already completely hispanicized varieties of Romani by then.

### 7.2. Bright

The first dated publication concerning Caló, and the first one which contains sentences, is Bright's European travel account. In an appendix, he compares the Gypsy languages of Hungary, Britain and Spain (Bright 1818: lxxviii-xcii). Bright gives roughly 150 words and some 25 sentences. In view of the fact that Bright's book is so hard to obtain, his text material is presented in an appendix to this paper.

Bright did not collect the material himself, but he received it from one of his friends (Bright 1818: ix). In the word list many plural nouns end in *-s* and verbs in *-ar*. More important, he gives a number of sentences which clearly show that it is Caló we are dealing with and not Romani with inherited inflection.

The proportion of Spanish and Romani lexical elements used here differs considerably from one sentence to another, as we see comparing (1) and (2), in which Spanish elements are italicized.

- (1) ochanaba mangué *loque chile* (Bright, Caló)  
 know-3 1SG that-which tell-2SG  
 "I know not what you tell me" (Bright, English)  
 (Romani *džanav* "I know", *man-ge* "to me", *chile* ??;  
 perhaps *džilav* 'I sing'?)

- (2) *gillate de mi que no te pueda indicar* (Bright, Caló)  
 go-2PL.IMPER from me that NEG you can-3 see-INF  
 "get out of my sight" (Bright, English)  
 (literally: "go from me (so) that he cannot see you")  
 (Romani *gel-em* "I went", *dikh-av* "I see",  
 with Andalusian *in-*; cf. 4.1.)

In short, there is no doubt that in 1818 Caló was already the mixed language known from later sources. It even has the Romani dative form used in all grammatical cases, as in the later sources (see also section 5).

### 7.3. Inflected Romani in the Iberian peninsula

There are few sources of inflected Romani from the Iberian peninsula. Apart from the inflected dialect of Catalonia, there are only two brief texts recorded in the Basque country in the 19th century, in a period when all the other sources from the Basque Country already show that the mixed variety was spoken (cf. Bakker 1991). As these were songs and prayers, they can be expected to have been preserved longer. This indicates that the inflected language as a means of communication was lost early outside Catalonia. The texts from the Basque Country will be given in appendix 2.

## 8. The genesis of Caló

No hypotheses have been formulated as to the genesis of Caló. We would like to know, however, when, why and how Caló came into existence. Was it a gradual or a sudden process? Was it conscious or unconscious? Under what circumstances did it happen?

The lack of hypotheses concerning the genesis of Caló contrasts with the study of Angloromani and Scandoromani. For the first, there has been a debate, notably between Donald Kenrick and Ian Hancock, as to the genesis of this language.

The differences between the two positions can be summarized as follows. Hancock believes that Angloromani was consciously created by Gypsies and British outlaws in the 16th century and that Angloromani co-existed with inflected Romani for a long time (Hancock 1984a, 1984b). Kenrick, however, believes it was a gradual development taking place mostly in the 19th century, whereby more and more English grammatical elements were integrated into Romani (Kenrick 1979). Hancock's ideas were followed up in

his paper on Scandoromani (Hancock 1992). A third hypothesis was formulated by Boretzky & Iglá (1994), in a comparative study on Para-Romani dialects. They suggested a reversal of language shift, at a point when the youth had shifted to the language of the host country, but could still rely on the older generation to conserve the Romani lexicon.

These hypotheses were based on parallel cases, not in Caló itself. Caló is sometimes mentioned in these studies. Hancock (1984a) also mentions Caló in his papers on the genesis of Angloromani, showing many parallels in functional and structural features. On the one hand this is no proof in itself, since each case must be studied individually. On the other hand, the parallels are strong and the facts unusual, so that a comparison is justified.

In the foregoing we presented (among others) the following facts concerning Caló:

- The Gypsy population in the peninsula has been relatively settled for many centuries.
- The Spanish elements show archaic features.
- The Spanish elements show Andalusian features.
- Already in 1609 they were reported to have lost their own language.
- Around 1600 they were reported to speak Greek.
- In the earliest source of Iberian Romani (17th century?) the language was already thoroughly hispanicized.
- The earliest source of Romani contained already Germanía lexical items.
- Germanía in the early 17th century hardly contains Caló words.
- The function words show no evolution from more Romani oriented towards more Spanish oriented varieties.
- Caló contains distorted Spanish items.
- Caló was also known by quite a few non-Gypsies.

This is compatible with an early genesis of Para-Romani, i.e. relatively soon after the arrival on the peninsula. If Hill's date for the word list is correct, Iberian Romani was already a Para-Romani language in the 18th century and, if Delrío can be trusted, already around 1600. A few facts can be used as arguments against a gradual development, especially the early sources and the non-evolution of function words.

Nothing in itself gives convincing evidence for either of the hypotheses. Nevertheless, an early genesis (16th century) seems most likely, considering the conservatism of some Spanish elements, Delrío's remark and the nature

of the early sources. It may have been a conscious creation, perhaps related to an attempt at the reversal of language shift.

### 9. Conclusions

On the Iberian peninsula and Latin America, at least four Para-Romani languages have come into being, most likely independently of one another. *Caló* combines Iberian Romani vocabulary with Andalusian Spanish grammar, *Errumantxela* in the Basque Country combines Iberian Romani vocabulary with Basque grammar, around Barcelona an unnamed variety came into being combining Catalan grammar and Iberian Romani, and in Brazil a Portuguese grammar variety came into being. The Para-Romani variety of Portugal is derived from Spanish *Caló* and is called *Calão*. An early genesis for Caló is suggested by some archaic Spanish remnants, pointing to conservatism on the part of its speakers. Perhaps the language already existed in the 16th century, several generations after the arrival in Spain. Regional differences remained, some being closer to Spanish, others to Romani, as far as the use of function words is concerned. Only in Catalonia the inflected language survived into the 19th century, apparently beside a Para-Romani variety.

Further research on Caló is needed on a number of subjects. An etymological dictionary is badly needed, as well as a critical assessment of the sources, including the question who took over what from whom. Moreover, a thorough grammatical study is also needed, whereby both the Spanish and Romani source dialects should be taken into account.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Boretzky (p.c.1993) has observed that in some Balkan dialects (notably Arli) both *-har* and *-ha* are used beside one another, and the Gurbet dialect of Romani has the suffix *-sar*, and he thinks that the preposition *sa(r)* and the case ending *-sa(r)* existed side by side for a longer time (as with most of the other prepositions/ case endings). Caló shows traces of this.

<sup>2</sup> I thank M. López Abellán for his help with Catalan.

<sup>3</sup> Pabanó wrote: "decía que era un habla inventada por ellos para suplir su idioma nativo, que se les había olvidado" (Pabanó 1915: 179). In a superficial search in Delrío's voluminous work, I was not able to locate the exact page for this quotation.

*Appendix 1*

THE CALÓ SENTENCES FROM BRIGHT (1818).

Spanish-derived elements are italicized.

<i>Las ducais me marel-an</i>	Trouble kills me
<i>Vastel-a-te cate</i>	Sit by me
<i>ochanaba mangue loque chile</i>	I know not what you tell me
<i>prastarela</i>	run! run
<i>no orobeles mi dai</i>	Do not weep mother for my health
<i>por la estipen de la mangue</i>	
<i>Apande umd el bundal</i>	Shut the door
<i>Abele umd acoté</i>	Come hither
<i>Naguese umd</i>	Go! begone
<i>Endineme un prajo</i>	Give me a cigar
<i>Abele umd a jamar</i>	Come to eat
<i>Voy a sobelar</i>	I am going to sleep
<i>Se va a romandiñ-ar</i>	He is going to marry
<i>Naguemos a jonjobarle</i>	Let us go and deceive him
<i>Amcabado umd</i>	You are a thief
<i>Abela la pani</i>	It rains
<i>Esta chai es lili</i>	This girl is very wild
<i>Haber el boqui de un dever terero</i>	To be very hungry
<i>Que engispo?</i>	What do I see?
<i>Se ha endiñado el parné a la chai</i>	The money was given to the girl
<i>Gillate de mi que no te pueda indicar</i>	Get out of my sight
<i>No se gille umd</i>	Do not leave me
<i>porque terelo ir de esta cocorri</i>	I fear to go hence alone
<i>En el chen de los chindoquendos</i>	In the country of the blind
<i>el que avela un sacai es un clai</i>	he who has one eye is a chief
<i>Romandiñate con este chavo</i>	Marry this fellow
<i>Malos menguis te jamelan</i>	May the devils eat you
<i>Mal fen tengas tu cuerpo</i>	(curse)
<i>Mal fen tengas</i>	(curse)
Gitano Song:	
<i>Del estaribel me sacan</i>	They take me from the prison
<i>Montadito en un juné</i>	mounted on an ass
<i>Yme van acurrubando</i>	and flog me

*Por las calles catorré*

through the streets

Utterance:

*Chavo gillate.*

Be off boy.

*que vienen los Dorais á cogerte*

The officers are coming to take you

*Date con los carcos en el Buerengi*

Give your shoes against your breech

*Appendix 2*

The two texts below were taken from Cénac Moncaut (1855: 345), whose informant was somebody named Sansberro. Sansberro is one of the *Cascarots* in Ziburu (Ciboure), a fisherman's village on the northern Basque coast, close to Donibane Lohitzun (Saint Jean de Luz). The *Cascarots* are said to be descendants of marriages of Gypsies with Basques (see Webster 1889). The first text is a Catholic prayer.

(Source text)	(French in source)	(Romani)	(my translation)
Leba Tusquet	Au nom du Père	Le Batoske	For the Father
Echa Bisquet	Et du Fils	e chaves-ke	For the Son
Le Apelinguet	Et du Saint-Esprit	le apenicè-ke	For the Holy Spirit
Taberamente	Ainsi soit-il	t'avel amende	That he comes to us

This short text contains a few words typical of Iberian Romani: *bato* for "father" (Romani *dad*). The word *apelinguet* for "Holy Spirit" is unclear, but it may have to do with *peniče* (written *peniche*), the Caló form for 'Holy Spirit', presumably derived from Greek *pneuma*. The interpretation of the second text is more complex, since the translation does not seem to fit the text and it contains some words which are hard not clear.

(source text)	(source translation)
Ustí, ustí, chajori	Regardez, regardez, cette fille,
mindre foucar moyorré	Avec sa jolie figure,
Samendé caracolenge	Qui va chercher des escargots

(Romani interpretation)  
ustí, ustí, chajori  
minre, sukar muiore-  
sa, amende caracol-enge

(corrected translation)  
stand up, stand up, little girl  
of me, with a pretty little mouth  
to us for snails

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## ROMANI LEXICAL ITEMS IN COLLOQUIAL ROMANIAN

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### 0. Introduction

The subject of Romani borrowings in Romanian generally touches upon different areas of past and present Romanian colloquial speech. It concerns the language of the youth (school children and students) as well as that of soldiers, historical argot and contemporary slang, so-called vulgar language, and the language of newspapers in Romania from the end of the 1800's and into the 1930's. In this contribution I deal with the adaptation of Romani words into Romanian and their semantic developments and stylistic changes. I focus on the question which Romanian words originating from Romani are still in use today, by whom, and with which semantic content, and attempt to find out whether the users of these borrowings are conscious of their origin, and whether the words they use are applied only in certain circumstances.

### 1. The status of Romani in related literature

Sfîrlea (1989) points out that there is a regrettable gap in Romanian sociolinguistics: there is no analysis of the effect of linguistic contact between Romanians and the national minorities according to age groups. Steinke (1989) notes in his article on Romanian *Sondersprachen* (i.e. marginal or special languages) that there is no dictionary which reflects the current state of the Romanian *Sondersprache*. The lack of such a book is all the more noticeable in that the major dictionaries hardly even touch the *Sondersprachen*.

In a ninety-two page essay, Graur (1934) deals with Romanian words which had their origins in Romani. He illustrates these words with examples taken from the literature and the press. One of the main sources drawn upon is the humorous weekly *Veselia* (i.e. "Happiness"), published since 1891. Graur points out that the authors of these articles and books tried to create a