



# Boyash Studies: Researching “Our People”

Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković / Thede Kahl /  
Biljana Sikimić (eds.)

Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković / Thede Kahl / Biljana Sikimić (eds.)  
Boyash Studies: Researching “Our People”

Valeska Bopp-Filimonov / Thede Kahl / Larisa Schippel (Hg.)  
Forum: Rumänien, Band 40

Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković / Thede Kahl / Biljana Sikimić (eds.)

# Boyash Studies: Researching “Our People”

**F** Frank & Timme  
Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur

Umschlagabbildung: The occupation of wood carving has given the name of Lingurari (Romanian for spoon carvers) to many Boyash/Rudari. This Ludar, as the Boyash/Rudari are called in Zlatarica (province of Veliko Tärnovo, in Bulgaria), is working in the yard of his house (Photo: Thede Kahl, May 2009).

Abbildungen auf den Seiten 73, 208, 209, 213, 351 © Thede Kahl

Für die großzügige Unterstützung zur Drucklegung dieses Bandes danken die Herausgeber Herrn Bert Wilden (Regensburg).

Gefördert mit freundlicher Unterstützung des *Kultur- und Bildungsvereins der Banjaschi „Oamenii Nostri – Naš Narod“* (Wien).

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung der Kommission „Vanishing Languages and Cultural Heritage“ der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und des Balkanromanistenverbands.



ISBN 978-3-7329-0694-9

ISBN E-Book 978-3-7329-9296-6

ISSN 1869-0394

© Frank & Timme GmbH Verlag für wissenschaftliche Literatur  
Berlin 2021. Alle Rechte vorbehalten.

Das Werk einschließlich aller Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt.  
Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlags unzulässig und strafbar.  
Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

Herstellung durch Frank & Timme GmbH,  
Wittelsbacherstraße 27a, 10707 Berlin.  
Printed in Germany.

Gedruckt auf säurefreiem, alterungsbeständigem Papier.

[www.frank-timme.de](http://www.frank-timme.de)

# Table of Contents

ANNEMARIE SORESCU-MARINKOVIĆ, THEDE KAHL, BILJANA SIKIMIĆ Boyash Studies: Towards a New Paradigm. Editors' Introduction .....	9
---	---

ELENA MARUSHIAKOVA AND VESSELIN POPOV Who Are "Oamenii Noștri" (Our People)? Rudari, Lingurari, Boyash and Their Identities .....	37
---	----

## **PART I:**

### ***THE DREAMS WE DREAM...***

#### **BOYASH IDENTITY, OCCUPATION AND CUSTOMS**

ILEANA BENGĂ Dreaming of a Way to Ritually Heal a Cultural Illness. Oneiric Diagnosis and Ritual Compulsion in the Rudari Healing <i>Gurban</i> from Southern Romania .....	75
--	----

BOGDAN NEAGOTĂ The "Healing Gurban" at the Rudari from Vâlcea Region, Romania. An Ethnographic Description .....	99
--	----

SÎNZIANA PREDA Non-transactional Identity: The Rudari, Descendants of the Dacians .....	131
---	-----

MAGDALENA SLAVKOVA Everyday Pentecostalism in a Rudari Family .....	161
--	-----

## Table of Contents

OLHA KOLOMYYETS

The Transcarpathian “White Roma”: An Ethnomusicological Perspective .....	179
--	-----

THEDE KAHL

The Rudari in Greece .....	193
----------------------------	-----

## PART II:

### *THE WORDS WE SPEAK...*

#### BOYASH LANGUAGE

ANNA ORSÓS

The Boyash in Hungary: Linguistic Situation, Language Education and Teacher Training .....	215
---	-----

MÁTYÁS ROSENBERG

The Language of Boyash Communities in Central and Eastern Hungary .....	229
--	-----

VASILKA ALEKSOVA

Observations on the Dialect of the Rudari in Several Settlements in Bulgaria .....	261
---	-----

PETAR RADOSAVLJEVIĆ

The Current State of Boyash Romanian in Croatia .....	283
---	-----

TODD L. PRICE

To Boyash or Not to Boyash: The Influence of the Croatian Language in Bible Translation among Ardeleni Boyash in Medjimurje, Croatia .....	311
--	-----

HRISTO KYUCHUKOV

Language Development of Boyash-Speaking Children in Croatia .....	331
---	-----

**PART III:**

***THE ROADS WE TRAVEL...***

**BOYASH MIGRATION, ROUTES AND PERSECUTION**

DANIJEL VOJAK

**Suffering of Boyash in the Independent State of Croatia**

**During World War II ..... 353**

MELODY J. WACHSMUTH

**Counter-storytelling in Croatia:**

**Roma Oral History During Croatia's Homeland War ..... 379**

MIRCEA MĂRAN

**The Boyash of the South Banat (Serbia).**

**History and Identity ..... 409**

SHEILA SALO

**The Ludar of Huerfano County (Colorado) ..... 425**

MARIJANA PERIČIĆ SALIHOVIĆ, BRANKA JANIĆIJEVIĆ,

NINA SMOLEJ NARANČIĆ, TATJANA ŠKARIĆ-JURIĆ

**Following Uniparental Genetic Traces:**

**Origin and Migration Routes of Boyash Roma Living in Croatia ..... 443**

**The Authors ..... 461**





ANNEMARIE SORESCU-MARINKOVIĆ, THEDE KAHL,  
BILJANA SIKIMIĆ

## Boyash Studies: Towards a New Paradigm. Editors' Introduction

### What's in a Name?

The Boyash or Bayash are an ethnic group living today in scattered communities in the Balkans, Central and Eastern Europe, but also the Americas, and numbering anywhere between half a million and one and a half million members. What brings the disperse communities of Boyash together is their Romanian mother tongue, (memory of) traditional occupation, common historical origin, and the fact that the majority population considers them Roma. Ever since the first written accounts about them, in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Boyash have been a puzzle for researchers: considered Gypsies, they do not speak Romani; rejected by Romanians, they link their history to old Romanian rulers; one and the same ethnic group, they are known under more than two dozen names; slaves in Wallachia and Moldova until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they preserve archaic Romanian customs and rituals, long forgotten in Romania; fiercely contesting their Roma origin, they were faced with deportation and killed in the Holocaust.

The Boyash are known under a wide variety of names, probably more varied than any other ethnic group in Europe. Terms usually used to refer to them in different countries are: *Băieși* and *Rudari* in Romania, *Beás* in Hungary, *Romi Bajaši* in Croatia, *Karavłasi* in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Rudari* in Bulgaria, *Volokhy* in Ukraine, *Banjaši*, *Rumunski Cigani* or *Vlaški Cigani* in Serbia, *Lingurari* in Moldavia etc. Both *Boyash* and *Rudari* (with their regional and phonetic variations) make reference to their supposed original occupation, mining, while *Cigani*, *Volokhy*, *Karavłasi* etc. are ethnonyms connecting them to the Roma or to Wallachia, the Romanian province

considered their place of origin. As woodwork is thought to have been taken up by the community after mining and gold washing, they are referred to by a large range of professionyms connected to woodwork, such as: *Lingurari* (spoon makers), *Copanari* (tub makers), *Fusari* (spindle makers), *Coritari/Koritari* (tub makers), *Albieri* (trough makers), *Rotari* (wheel makers), *Corfari* (basket weavers). *Ursari*, *Mečkari* (bear trainers) or *Majmundži* (monkey trainers) in Bulgaria are also included into the wider group of Rudari from this country.

These names function both as exonymes and endonymes, depending on the community. Many Boyash declare themselves Romanian (as is the case in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine), others opt for a Roma identity (parts of Hungary, Croatia).

As the ethnonyms and professionyms used both by the members of the group and by outgroups are disconcertingly numerous, researchers usually opt for an encompassing name, even though it might not always correspond to the one used for the particular community in question. In English, the commonly accepted name for the ethnic group is *Boyash* (with the phonetic variant *Bayash*). However, this is only an umbrella term employed by academics to refer to these groups, many of which do not use or even know the term. Even if, for simplicity's sake, we use *Boyash* in the title of the volume, the authors of the 18 chapters use their preferred terms: *Boyash*, *Beyashi*, *Rudari*, *Ludar*, *Volokhy* etc.

Apart from this, extensive fieldwork in the past 20 years leads us to consider a further distinction: Boyash, north of the Danube, Rudari, south of the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube, and Lingurari, west of the Carpathians. The Boyash, who live in Croatia, Hungary and northwest Serbia, speak varieties mainly related to those of Transylvania and Banat, do know the institution of the Gypsy court, most of them are Christian Catholics and maintain few elements of traditional Romanian culture. The Rudari living in southern Romania, Bulgaria, southern and eastern Serbia use the Romanian varieties of Muntenia and Oltenia; some of them practice the ritual blood sacrifice called *Gurban*; most of them are of Christian Orthodox faith, preserve elements of traditional Romanian culture to a greater extent and have no remembrance

of the institution of the Gypsy court. The Lingurari<sup>1</sup> are to be found in the province of Moldavia and the Republic of Moldavia, as well as in some former Soviet republics, they use the Moldavian variety of Romanian, and most of them are Christian Orthodox (Sorescu-Marinković 2009: 9).

The following chapters offer numerous examples supporting our theory, circumscribing several terminological areas: *Rudari* is the term used in Bulgaria, southern Romania and Greece, *Boyash* (with its phonetical local variations) in Croatia, Ukraine, Hungary and northeastern Serbia. Apart from that, *Ludari* is used in the United States, and *Volokhy* in Ukraine.

Today, following the labor mobility the Boyash of the Balkans have been involved in during the last decades, a new diaspora is emerging in Western Europe. With it, a new, transborder identity of the Boyash takes shape, and a new name: *oamenii noștri/daj noștri* (our people).<sup>2</sup> It remains to be seen whether this proves to be a solution for encompassing different Boyash groups into a wider community.

## A Community Imagined by Researchers?

As the term *Boyash* is a convention, we must ask whether the people the term designates do indeed form an overarching transborder community or not. In other words, we have to find out whether the community itself is imagined or real.

Benedict Anderson's concept of the nation as imagined, presented 30 years ago in his iconic *Imagined Communities* is insufficient for our purposes. As he put it, every nation "is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1983: 49). Yet nations form only one of a multiplicity of possible 'imagined communities', even if one remains close to all of Anderson's own definitional criteria. All communities are imagined, thus to be

.....  
1 More about Lingurari in Marushiakova/Popov in this volume.

2 See Marushiakova/Popov in this volume.

distinguished not by their falsity or genuineness, but by the way in which they are imagined.

As for the Boyash, opinions are divided. Some researchers consider the boundaries of Boyash groups confined by the borders of the states where they live in,<sup>3</sup> thus excluding an all-encompassing Boyash community. Others believe that *mental networks* of the Boyash connect them, in spite of physical distance and state borders, in a *transborder continuum* (Sikimić 2006). However, inevitably, the further away Boyash communities are from each other, the more distorted and faint the perception or real knowledge about each other becomes (Sorescu-Marinković 2008: 206).

Given intense sedentarization in most communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the second half of the last century, it was little probable that Rudari in eastern Bulgaria knew about, let's say, the Boyash in northern Croatia, or had any sense of belonging to the same community. Today, with the advancement of social networking, it is not excluded that they are, or feel, as members of the same virtual Boyash community (Brändle 2018). Thus, the Boyash community might be more real today than 50 years ago.

Two processes which shape imagined communities, and to which communities relate are *collective remembering* (the memory of a common past) and *collective forgetting* (forgetting the very fact that the common past is, to a great extent, invented). However, the processes shaping the Boyash as an imagined community are rather *collective creating* and *recreating* of the past. Lacking historical documents to prove their existence in a certain place at a certain time, or lacking the scientific interest to make them part of big history, the Boyash create and recreate their history, based on myths, legends, and pseudo-historical information (Marushiakova / Popov 2000, Sorescu-Marinković 2010).

Legends thus created set the beginnings of the community back in time, more than historical documents show, or link its history to important moments in the history of the surrounding people. The Karavlasi in Bosnia consider themselves descendants of the Serbian king Karadjordje, or Black George

.....  
3 See Marushiakova / Popov in this volume.

However, the researchers themselves do not form a community. Even if aware of other scholars of the same topic, knowledge was rarely shared, partly due to the language gap, as many studies were published in the national languages of Central and Eastern European researchers, in minor publications with little visibility, hardly accessible.

This volume, therefore, brings together researchers of different countries studying the Boyash, trying to set the coordinates for this new transborder field of study. Whether or not the community of researchers will play a role in shaping awareness of the Boyash themselves about belonging to a community remains to be seen.

The first scholarly accounts about the Boyash date from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and are exclusively connected to their traditional craft: wood-carving. In 1818, English doctor Richard Bright, in his *Travels from Vienna through Lower Hungary*, published in Edinburgh, describes settlements of the Boyash near the river Drava:

Their place of residence consisted of 18 to 20 huts, at different distances, placed in an irregular circle round the dwelling of their chief. [...] Each of these huts is inhabited by three, four, or five individuals, who sit on their haunches before the fire, and eat, drink, and sleep upon the bare ground. The whole number of the colony was, we were informed by the ruler, 16 men and an equal number

4 See Preda in this volume.

of women, all married. [...] Their chief and almost sole occupation, when not employed in carrying letters, or on other business of the same kind, by the lord of the estate, is the manufacture of wooden troughs, bowls and spoons, which they make with surprising rapidity (Bright 1818: 553–554).

Fifty years later, the group's engagement in traditional wood processing also sparks the interest of a Hungarian Unitarian Pastor, who publishes a short newspaper report about *Broom and Spoon Maker and Thief Gypsies* (Jánosfalvi 1863). In 1890, Croatian pedagogue and ethnographer Ferdo Hefeľe writes a two page article about the *Koritari* in Croatia, who live in small wooden houses lined with clay, identify as Romanians, and strongly oppose being linked to Roma. Their main occupation is trough making, which was the reason for their settling in the vicinity of poplar forests. Apparently, they arrived in the Croatian lands a long time ago, from the Romanian principalities, as a result of fierce competition on the market of wooden products (Hefeľe 1890).<sup>5</sup>

In the same year that Hefeľe published his observations, Croatian forester Stjepan Harkonyi, writing about the forests of the Slavonian Podravina area, mentioned the same *Koritari* and their way of life (Harkony 1890). He described the wooden products they carved, their primitive tools and techniques, as well as marketing methods. He also noticed their social isolation, precarious living conditions and incapacity to objectively value their labor, only rarely exchanging their products for money, but for food. Two years later, Hungarian scholar Fehér Zoltán offers a similar *Sketch of Trough Maker Gypsies* in Hungary, published in *Gyakorlati Mezőgazda* (Practical Farmer) (Fehér 1892).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, these Romanian speaking communities outside Romania finally also caught the interest of Romanian authors. 1906 saw two reports on the Romanian language speakers in Bosnia and Herzegovina: a leaflet of Isidor Ieșan, *The Romanians from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Past and Today* (Ieșan 1906), and the longer *Romanian Colonies in Bosnia*, by ethnographer Teodor Filipescu (Filipescu 1906). Both quote Hefeľe's article on

.....  
5 More in Vojak in this volume.

the Koritari in Croatia “as though ashamed to formulate such a delicate issue”:<sup>6</sup> the issue of Romanian speaking Roma.

Ieșan and Filipescu confirm the existence of these groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, describe their way of life and discuss their identity. Called by the surrounding population Karavłasi, they live near, or even in, the forest, their main occupation being woodcarving. Their life is marked by the rhythm of the seasons; during the winter, they settle down, while in summer part of the community remains at home to process wood, while the other, especially elderly women, travel with the finite products from village to village, to exchange them for food, rarely for money.

Filipescu's study was translated into Serbo-Croatian and published in the Austro-Hungarian journal *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja* in Sarajevo. This was followed by a critical review of Ieșan's and Filipescu's books by Serbian ethnologist Tihomir Djordjević in the *Journal of Gypsy Lore Society* (1908), in German. The review was published in Serbian a year before (1907), and followed Djordjević's interest in the “Romanian Gypsies” about whom he also wrote in his doctoral dissertation on the Roma in Serbia, published in 1903 in Budapest (Gjorgjević 1903), and in a series of other studies.

At about the same time, German linguist Gustav Weigand drew attention to Romanians living in Bosnia and Croatia (Weigand 1908). A few years later, Hungarian ethnographer Aladár Kovách describes the *Primitive Buildings in the County of Tolna* made by “Vlach trough makers”, who are “fellow citizens of Hungarians from the Romanian ethnic and national group” (Kováč 1912).

In 1922, Romanian archaeologist and ethnographer of Roma origin Constantin S. Nicolăescu-Plopșor writes the first account about Southern Romania's Rudari's ritual of *Gurban*, highlighting the differences between Roma and Rudari, among which: Rudari do not speak Romani; they process wood, while Roma only process metal; some Rudari celebrate *Gurban*, which is not known by any Roma community; Rudari do not follow the rules and customs present in the Roma communities (regarding marriage, family relations, Gypsy court

6 See Hedeșan 2005 for a detailed overview of the Romanian authors dealing with the Boyash in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



etc.); their traditional attire is not connected in any way to that of the Roma, but rather to that of the Romanians in Oltenia or the Banat.

In 1934, two more papers on the Boyash are published: one in Serbo-Croatian, in a forestry journal, dealing with the “Koritari Gypsies” (Beč 1934), the other one, in Hungarian, about the “Vlach Gypsies” (Gunda 1934). In the latter one, entitled *Trough Maker Gypsies and Their Work*, Hungarian ethnographer Béla Gunda offers probably the first collection of Boyash words from Hungary, denoting especially tools and wooden products.

Only three years later, in 1937, Romanian linguist Emil Petrovici conducted field research in Čokešina, western Serbia, to complete the questionnaire for the *Romanian Linguistic Atlas*. Having read that official state statistics had registered 400 Romanians in the village, he was surprised to see that they were “too dark”. After identifying their traditional occupation, and correlating this with similar previous findings, he labeled them as Romanized Gypsies, intentionally putting *Romanians* under quotation marks in the paper he published a year later in the *Dacoromania* journal, to underline the fact that they were not authentic: *The “Romanians” of Western Serbia* (Petrovici 1938).

The features of the Romanian variety spoken in Čokešina led Emil Petrovici to conclude that the Koritari had arrived on the Balkan Peninsula from southwestern Muntenia and southeast Oltenia, where they had been completely Romanized. Although they did not preserve the memory of coming from Romanian territories, that date could not be more than one century past, judging from a Romanian language history perspective (Ibid.: 228).

Emil Petrovici’s paper was a turning point for research in this field. By discovering and describing unknown archaic varieties of the Romanian language, as well as the migration paths of groups that preserve and use them, he opened up new opportunities of studying the history of the Romanian language. Additionally, the idea that the speakers of these Romanian varieties are Roma widened the research in Romani ethnography and history (Hedeşan 2005).

In 1944, Romanian ethnographer Ion Chelcea published a 200-page book meant to solve the “enigma” of this community: *Rudari. Contribution to an ethnographic “enigma”* (Chelcea 1944). To solve the riddle of these woodcarvers, speakers of archaic Romanian, this marginal and underestimated social category, Chelcea held that Rudari are equally distant from Romanians as they

are from the Gypsies. Seeing their diffusion in the Balkan Peninsula and beyond as a result of what he coined “wood nomadism”, Chelcea concluded that Rudari were a separate people, independent, of unknown origin.

The 1950s saw the publication of three important studies on the Boyash. Serbian ethnologist Persida Tomić first mentioned the ritual trance of the Boyash in Central Serbia (Tomić 1950). The second study, also by a Serbian ethnologist, described in detail the *Karavlas* and their traditional occupation in Bosnia (Pavković 1957). The third was one of the first attempts to categorize the Romanian speaking Boyash in Hungary linguistically (Erdős 1958).

The 1960s saw Serbian ethnographer Mirko Barjaktarović describing the ‘Gypsy oasis’ of Apatin (Bačka region, northwestern Serbia), inhabited by Boyash (Barjaktarović 1964), where he did research between 1960 and 1962. Bulgarian ethnographer Vasil Marinov, making a few *Observations on the Daily Life of the Gypsies in Bulgaria*, also wrote at length about the Rudari (Marinov 1962). Three decades after Petrovici’s groundbreaking research, Romanian linguist Ion Gheție reinterpreted the linguistic material from Čokešina (Gheție 1968). Analyzing phonetic tendencies, Gheție pointed to a different migration path of this ethnic group, which included a longer sojourn in Banat in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, on their journey to the west, where they borrowed several characteristics of local vernaculars.

In the beginning of the 1980s, French-Romanian language teacher Papp Gyula published the first description of the Romanian language spoken by the Boyash in Hungary and compiled the first Boyash-Hungarian dictionary (Papp 1982a, b). Ethnomusicologist Katalin Kovalcsik followed with gathering Boyash folklore, and suggested a reclassification of the existing Boyash groups in Hungary (Kovalcsik 1988).

The last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw even more research on the Boyash published, marking the beginning of what is now called Boyash Studies.

Katalin Kovalcsik published several Boyash folk song collections and studies (Kovalcsik 1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1996). Romani studies scholar Anna Orsós presented a collection of Boyash stories (Orsós 1998), a Boyash-Hungarian and Hungarian-Boyash dictionary (1997, 1999), and a Boyash language book for foreigners (1994). Linguist Andrea Szalai tried to highlight the borders of Boyash ethnic identity in Hungary, focusing on language use (Szalai 1997).

In Serbia, an almost 900-page collection of ethnographic reports on the Roma in Vojvodina, published in 1997, described systematically all Boyash settlements in this region (Lazić 1997).

In Bulgaria, Romani studies scholars Elena Maruhshiakova and Vesselin Popov started their research on Rudari (Marushiakova/Popov 1993, 1998). Ethnologist Maksim Mladenov focused on the spread and origins of these communities, including them, however, into the Vlach population (Mladenov 1995).

At the same time, Romanian dialectologist Ion Calotă published his older doctoral dissertation on the speech of Rudari from Oltenia (Calotă 1995). He considered Oltenia the native land of these Romanian language speakers from Serbia, and explained the various elements in their language belonging to different varieties with the thesis that the Rudari had not come from Romania with a unitary language, but with a mixture of dialectal traits, a consequence of their itinerant life.

Within the framework of research for the *New Romanian Linguistic Atlas*, Romanian dialectologist Nicolae Saramandu published linguistic observations and transcribed interviews with the Boyash, recorded in 1994 in three settlements in Medjimurje (northern Croatia). Saramandu compared the vernacular of the Boyash with those of Koritari (as presented in Petrovici's 1938 study) and of Rudari (according to Calotă's 1995 investigations from Romania), concluding that all "Romanian speaking Gypsies" speak a "relatively unitary idiom, explained by common origin, geographic factors and historical circumstances under which they adopted the Romanian language" (Saramandu 1997: 109). Saramandu also mentioned that, even if called Gypsies (pejoratively) by Croats, they considered themselves Romanian.

In the late 1990s this community was also first described in Romanian historiography. Viorel Achim, in his by now iconic *Roma in Romanian History*, published first in Romanian in 1998, described frequent shifts of Roma groups from Romania to the territories on the other bank of the Danube and mentioned the Boyash in south Hungary, who speak Romanian and originate from the goldsmiths in Banat and western Transylvania. Serbian documents also record many cases of Romanian speaking Gypsies, coming from Romania and settling in Serbia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century (Achim 1998).

## Where We Stand

The last years have seen a real explosion of interest in this community and numerous papers on the Boyash mainly from Bulgarian, Croatian, Hungarian, Serbian and Romanian authors formed the backbone of the emerging discipline, Boyash studies. A marginal topic until now, at the crossroads between Romani and Romanian studies, the Boyash studies are today an interdisciplinary field dealing with the experiences of the Boyash over time, in Romania and all the places where they have settled. The new discipline draws on older studies and reports, combining aspects of sociology, history, anthropology and linguistics.

Boyash studies already make up a scientific corpus of several hundred works. This new field owes its establishment and development to individual authors, but also to research clusters in several countries. Even if in some cases these researchers do not work in the same institution, they are united by a common research topic and the same national scientific tradition.

In Romania, anthropologist Otilia Hedeşan was probably the first to re-orient the researchers' interest to the Boyash communities outside the country, by authoring several papers and a book about the Boyash in eastern Serbia (Hedeşan 2003, 2005, 2007). The Rudari communities in Bulgaria were visited by Romanian anthropologists Stelu Şerban and Ştefan Dorondel (Şerban 2007, Dorondel 2007), followed by ethnographers Emil Țîrcomnicu and Lucian David (Țîrcomnicu / David 2012).

Angela Costescu dedicated her PhD thesis to the ethnic identification of the Rudari and Boyash in Romania, but it is yet to be published (Costescu 2015). Ileana Benga and Bogdan Neagota, also present in this volume, have been following the traces of Rudari of southern Romania and the specificities of their *Gurban* ritual for years (Neagota 2014, Neagota / Benga 2016).

In Bulgaria, the advancement of Boyash studies is led by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov, who also tackled the groups of Rudari within their wider and all-encompassing research of Roma in Bulgaria and Europe (Marushiakova / Popov 2001, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016). Ethnologist Magdalena Slavkova belongs to the same school, being mainly interested in Rudari transborder migration and religious conversion (Slavkova 2005, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2017).

Apart from ethnological aspects, the linguistic features of Romanian varieties spoken by Rudari in Bulgaria have also been researched by Bulgarian linguists (Assénova / Aleksova 2008). Marushiakova, Popov, Slavkova and Aleksova are all present in this volume.

In Hungary, initial research on the Boyash was continued by Anna Orsós, from a language policy perspective (Orsós 2015). Szalai Andrea focused on Roma language diversity in this country (Szalai 2006). Linguist Arató Mátyás added the dialectological perspective to the linguistic research, extending his field work from Hungary to the Boyash communities of eastern Slovakia (2013, 2015).

Hungarian linguist and historian Attila Landauer studied the relocation of the Boyash of Tiszafüred and Poroszló to the territory of present-day Hungary, primarily by using civil registers, and wrote about lifestyles, habits, trades, and linguistic change in their communities (2009, 2010). A monograph dedicated to the varieties of the *Boyash in Hungary* was published in 2019 by Thede Kahl and Ioana Nechiti at the Austrian Academy of Science (Kahl / Nechiti 2019).

In Croatia, Boyash studies were advanced by linguist Petar Radosavljević, who published several linguistic papers and his PhD dissertation on the Romanian varieties spoken by Boyash in Croatia (Radosavljević 2007, 2010, 2012a,b). He also co-authored a Boyash dictionary together with Ivana Olujić (Olujić / Radosavljević 2007), while Klara Bilić-Meštrić looked into educational policies aimed at the Boyash in Croatia (2015).

The Boyash in Croatia are today also studied by scholars of Roma history (Vojak 2004, 2013), as well as by physical anthropologists, also present in this volume.

In Serbia, linguist and anthropologist Biljana Sikimić initiated large-scale field research on the Boyash communities in the Balkans. She introduced the concept of *transborder Boyash continuum* (Sikimić 2006), and launched the idea of establishing Boyash studies as a separate discipline. Apart from authoring several papers on this ethnic community (Sikimić 2002, 2003, 2005b), she is the initiator and editor of the 2005 essay collection *The Boyash in the Balkans. Identity of an Ethnic Community* (Sikimić 2005a). Published in Serbian, this book first brought together Boyash scholars from all over Europe. A thematic issue of the *Piramida* journal followed, *The Boyash in South-Slavic Context*

(Sikimić 2011), published in Romanian, and numerous other papers on the Boyash (Sikimić 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017).

The Boyash were also the center of several other essay collections, most of which were edited or co-edited by Sikimić: *Kurban in the Balkans* (Sikimić / Hristov 2007), *The blood sacrifice. Transformations of a ritual* (Sikimić 2008), *The Romance Balkans* (Sikimić / Ašić 2008), *The Change of Roma Identity, Culture and Language Conditioned by Planned Socio-Economic Integration* (Varadi / Bašić 2012).

Part of the same research team of the Institute for Balkan Studies in Belgrade, Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković took research on the Boyash further, looking into myth and identity construction (2010), customary law (2013), and intangible cultural heritage (2018).

Apart from these more or less consolidated national research communities, several other scholars dedicated part of their work to Boyash research: Jens Bengelstorf (2009) wrote about the ethnicity of Rudari and Boyash in South-eastern Europe, Thede Kahl (2011) and Ioana Nechiti (Kahl / Nechiti 2012) pointed to their culture and language, Corinna Leschber (2008a,b) analyzed the code-mixing phenomena frequent in their speech, Dorin Lozovanu (2012) tried to establish their linguistic identity within the framework of Romanian speaking communities outside Romania.<sup>7</sup>

## This Volume

This volume has several aims. On the one hand, it marks two centuries of scholarly interest in the Boyash, and signals the establishment of Boyash studies, by bringing together researchers from different fields (anthropologists, historians, linguists, ethnographers, demographers, sociologists, folklorists etc.), summing up existing literature on the Boyash and bringing fresh research to the forefront.

.....  
7 Given the ever growing number of researchers already involved in this new field of study, this is far from being a complete list of authors interested in the Boyash topic.

On the other hand, by being published in English, the volume is intended to bridge the language gap which has so far delayed the spread and development of this new discipline in Western Europe and the United States. As most studies on the Boyash published in the last 20 years were written in the national languages of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, even access of researchers from the region was limited, who could not easily follow the advancement of the field in neighboring countries.

The volume opens with *Who Are "Oamenii Noștri" (Our People)? Rudari, Lingurari, Boyash and Their Identities*, by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov. This introductory text outlines the territorial distribution of the Boyash communities, focusing on the diversity of their names and identities in different countries. Special attention is given to the contemporary development of these identities, influenced by two main factors: 1) the rapidly growing interest in the "Roma topic" by different actors, and initiatives and actions conducted by the so-called Gypsy industry, and 2) Roma mass migration from Central and Southeast Europe to Western Europe.

The book is divided into three thematic sections. Part One, "*The Dreams we Dream...*" *Boyash Identity, Occupation and Customs*, includes six chapters that address Boyash identity from an ethnographic, ethnological and anthropological perspective. Six chapters following in Part Two, "*The Words We Speak...*" *Boyash Language*, look into the language of the Boyash, using tools and methods characteristic of sociolinguistics, dialectology, and applied linguistics. The final five chapters of Part Three, "*The Roads We Travel...*" *Boyash Migration, Routes and Persecution*, sum up what history, oral history and genetic anthropology tell us about paths Boyash have taken during their distant or recent history.

**The first part of the volume** starts with two chapters on the Rudari in Romania. *Dreaming of a Way to Ritually Heal a Cultural Illness. Oneiric Diagnosis and Ritual Compulsion in the Rudari Healing Gurban from Southern Romania*, by Ileana Benga, and *The "Healing Gurban" at the Rudari from Vâlcea Region, Romania. An Ethnographic Description*, by Bogdan Neagota, present the *Healing Gurban*, specific to the Rudari communities, as a ritual that brings together different cultural strata, permuting various cultural forms and practices, and

an expression of the religious creativity of this group. Ileana Benga presents cultural prescriptions of cleanliness and abstinence commanded in the state of dream, and discusses the profile of the *Gurban* ritual as *incubatio* aiming at healing what she terms a "cultural illness". Bogdan Neagota explores the magical-religious ideology behind the *Gurban*, and its corresponding sacrificial rituality, performed, within the communities of Rudari from Oltenia, at different dates of the spring calendar.

Sinziana Preda, in *Non-transactional Identity: The Rudari, Descendants of the Dacians*, analyzes the discourse on the ethnic and occupational identity of the Rudari in Bechet, a small Romanian harbor town on the Danube, bordering Bulgaria. She identifies elements that gather the interlocutors together in a symbolic and real community: the legitimation through an endonym, the belief they originate from an ancient population, the memory of their specific occupation and endogamy.

The last three chapters of the first section take us to Bulgaria, Ukraine and Greece, and challenge the classical definition of the Boyash or Rudari, regarding their traditional occupation and religion. *Everyday Pentecostalism in a Rudari Family* by Magdalena Slavkova addresses the issue of recent religious conversion to Pentecostalism among the Rudari, usually Christian Orthodox in Bulgaria, and subsequent drastic lifestyle changes and constant negotiation within the family. Olha Kolomyets, in *The Transcarpathian "White Roma": An Ethnomusicological Perspective*, shows that Ukrainian Volokhy relied not only on woodcarving for a living, but also on music. Their musical repertoire is used as a source of historical information for the author and it encompasses a diversity of styles, of different origins: Romanian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Roma and Hungarian. The last chapter, *The Rudari in Greece* by Thede Kahl, refers to sizeable groups of Rudari which have lived for over a century in several towns in Macedonia, Thessaly and Central Greece. This contribution is based on oral history accounts in which Rudari describe how their forebears came to Greece around 1900, identifying Constanța and Brăila as their place of origin.



**The second part of the volume** centers on the mother tongue of the Boyash in Bulgaria, Hungary and Croatia, setting landmarks for the further study of the language of these communities outside Romania.

The first two chapters deal with the language spoken by the Boyash in Hungary, the country with the most coherent educational policy for the Boyash. Their language was introduced in education, Boyash language courses can be attended up to university level, numerous publications in Boyash have been printed in the last 30 years etc. In *The Boyash in Hungary: Linguistic Situation, Language Education and Teacher Training* Anna Orsós investigates the current linguistic situation, focusing on education and language policy, and advancing the idea that Boyash is a “transitional language”. Orsós shows that Boyash was spoken exclusively in family settings until the end of the 1980s, the beginning of Boyash literacy starting only at the end of the 1990s with the establishment of Ghandi High School. Mátyás Rosenberg, in *Language of Boyash Communities in Central and Eastern Hungary*, moves the focus from education and language policy to dialectology. This chapter presents findings of recent dialectological field research conducted in a Boyash community of terminal speakers, challenging the existing definitions of the group and highlighting the great language variation among different communities.

The third chapter offers a few *Observations on the Dialect of the Rudari in Several Settlements in Bulgaria*. Vasilka Aleksova presents linguistic findings on the Romanian variety spoken by the Rudari in Central Bulgaria, to challenge the current definition of their language as an archaic Romanian dialect. Aleksova holds that the Rudari vernacular reflects an older developmental stage of several Romanian varieties, which mirrors the route they followed from Transylvania to south of the Danube during their migration.

The next three chapters focus on the language of the Boyash in Croatia. Petar Radosavljević, in *The Current State of Boyash Romanian in Croatia*, proposes a polycentric approach to Romanian, and discusses the current state of Boyash Romanian in Croatia, describing linguistic features of the three varieties spoken here, and the rising influence of the Croatian language. He bases his analysis on Boyash periodicals and leaflets, school books and religious publications. Todd L. Price, in *To Boyash or Not to Boyash: the Influence of the Croatian Language in Bible Translation among Ardeleni Boyash in*

*Medjumurje, Croatia*, offers more information about religious publications, namely about the current efforts of translating the Bible from Croatian into Boyash. Price continues where Radosavljević stopped, exploring areas in which Boyash has given way to Croatian, such as numerals and kinship terms, but also religious terminology, which influence the translation process, where decisions must be taken as to when Croatian loanwords will enjoy wider understandability among modern speakers than older Boyash words, which are fading from contemporary usage.

The last chapter of this section, *Language Development of Boyash-Speaking Children in Croatia* by Hristo Kyuchukov, discusses the bilingualism of kindergarten Boyash children in Croatia, on the basis of the “Theory of Mind Test”, adapted to measure their linguistic knowledge. The results show that a good command of the mother tongue helps children better understand social relations, intentions and predictions.

**The third part of the volume** opens with two chapters on dramatic moments in the history of Boyash in Croatia: the Second World War and the interethnic conflicts of the 1990s. Daniel Vojak shows, in *Suffering of Boyash in the Independent State of Croatia During World War II*, on the basis of unpublished archival documents from the Croatian State Archives, how the pro-fascist government of the Independent State of Croatia declared Roma, including Boyash, “undesirable” and a “socio-political problem” and greatly limited their civil rights and freedoms. Mass arrests and deportations of Roma began in 1942, and the Boyash were sent to the Jasenovac concentration camp, where most of them were killed. Melody Wachsmuth, in *Counter-storytelling in Croatia: Roma Oral History During Croatia's Homeland War*, describes the experience of Boyash in the Baranja region during the war of 1991–1995. The oral history accounts of the Boyash are set in the larger context of the war, contrasting images of the Roma in popular memory and in the media. The chapter contributes to a more heterogeneous history of the Roma experience during the war, and discusses the complicated identity nexus in which Boyash groups in Croatia navigate today.

Mircea Măran, in *The Boyash of the South Banat (Serbia). History and Identity*, shows how, after the adoption of legal acts on the liberation of the Gypsy/

Roma slaves in Wallachia and Moldova (1855–1856), different groups, including the Boyash, migrated from today's Romania to other countries of Southeast and Central Europe. Part of them settled in the Banat. What Măran does is to shed light on their intricate history and migration routes.

The last two chapters widen the perspective of the Boyash – one in space, beyond the boundaries of Europe, the other one in space and time, following their migration routes by genetic traces. Sheila Salo, in *The Ludar of Huerfano County (Colorado)*, focuses on Ludari from Bosnia, traveling as showmen in the United States after emigrating to the New World in the early 1880s. Drawing on primary sources, Salo sketches the group's history in the United States, emphasizing settlement patterns and economic organization. The detailed history of a Colorado Ludar family, ca. 1896 to 1940, describes mechanisms of adaptation to the new environment. The closing chapter of the volume, *Following Uniparental Genetic Traces: Origin and Migration Routes of Boyash Roma Living in Croatia*, by a group of geneticists (Marijana Perić Salihović, Branka Janićijević, Nina Smolej Narančić, Tatjana Škarić-Jurić), challenges traditional methods of Boyash study, which rely mainly on linguistic evidence and historic documents. The Croatian scholars use DNA analysis for a more precise story of Boyash migration, using parental genetic history through mitochondrial DNA and Y-chromosome lineages. They rely on DNA samples from several hundred Boyash in Croatia, which were analyzed for uniparental markers, to identify two main layers of gene pool: ancestral (Indian) and recent (European).

## Perspectives

Although established relatively recently, Boyash studies are already challenged to keep up with their subject of research. A Boyash diaspora is emerging in Western Europe, and has started using their native idiom for online communication. Thus, the paradigm of Boyash studies might evolve around the task of monitoring the development of this new identity and script. In the same time, the discipline must fill in the existing gaps, so as to enable the creation of a fluid historical narrative for the Boyash. As such, Romanian archive doc-

uments on the liberation of Gypsy slaves or on the Holocaust are still waiting for researchers to decipher them and write the history of the Boyash.

Finally, the discipline should also trace the Boyash intangible cultural heritage, as attempts to preserve it have yet to be made. Wood carving, clay oven making, *bajta* house building, the ritual of *gurban*, the Boyash judicial governance system are only some of the practices, skills, artifacts, and cultural spaces which form the cultural heritage of the Boyash worldwide, but which are not yet found in any registry.

## References

- Achim, Viorel 1998. *Țigani in istoria României*, București: Editura Enciclopedică.
- Anderson, Benedict 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.
- Arató, Mátyás 2015. Dialektológiai terepmunka Kelet-Szlovákia beás közösségeiben. In: *Horizontok és dialógusok. IV. Romológus konferencia – tanulmánykötet. Gypsy Studies – Cigány tanulmányok 35.* (Cserti Csapó T., ed.), Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Bölcsészettudományi Kar Neveléstudományi Intézet, Romológia és Nevelésszociológia Tanszék – Romológiai Kutatóközpont, 36–48.
- Assénova, Petya, Aleksova, Vassilka 2008. Observations sur la 'romanité balkanique' en Bulgarie. In: *The Romance Balkans* (B. Sikimić, T. Ašić, eds.), Belgrade: The Institute for Balkan Studies, 161–172.
- Barjaktarović, Mirko 1964. Oaza vojvođanskih Cigana, *Rad vojvođanskih muzeja* 12–13, 191–204.
- Beč, Jovo 1934. O Ciganima koritarima, *Glasnik udruženja šumarskih zvaničnika* XIV/6, 177–184.
- Bengelstorf, Jens 2009. *Die "anderen Zigeuner". Zur Ethnizität der Rudari und Bajeschi in Südosteuropa*, Leipzig: Eudora-Verlag.
- Bilić-Meštrić, Klara 2015. Bajaški jezik i identitet – Komodifikacijske i objektifikacijske prakse u obrazovanju. Studija slučaja. In: *Obrazovanje za interkulturalizam – Položaj Roma u odgoju i obrazovanju* (V. Mlinarević,

- M. Brust Nemet, J. Bushati, eds.). Osijek: Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera, 295–307.
- Brändle, Mario 2018. *Daj Nostri in Vorarlberg. Eine sich wandelnde Community im Fokus der Sozialen Arbeit*, MA dissertation, Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences.
- Bright, Richard 1818. *Travels from Vienna through Lower Hungary*, Edinburgh: A Constable and Co.
- Calotă, Ion 1995. *Rudarii din Oltenia, Studiu de dialectologie și de geografie lingvistică românească*, Craiova.
- Chelcea, Ion 1994. *Rudarii. Contribuție la o "enigmă" etnografică*, București: Casa școalelor.
- Costescu, Angela 2015. *Autoidentificare și heteroidentificare etnică în cazul rudarilor și băieșilor*, PhD dissertation defended at the "Babeș-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance.
- Djordjević, Tihomir 1907. Dve rumunske knjige o Rumunima u Bosni i Hercegovini, *Srpski književni glasnik* XVIII/5, 377–380.
- Dorondel, Ștefan 2007. Ethnicity, state and access to natural resources in the southeastern Europe. The Rudari case. In: *Transborder identities. The Romanian-speaking population in Bulgaria* (S. Șerban, ed.), București: Paideia, 215–239.
- Erdős, Kamill 1958. A magyarországi cigányság, *Néprajzi Közlemények* 3, 152–173.
- Fehér, Zoltán 1892. Karcolat a teknővájó cigányokról. *Gyakorlati Mezőgazda* 9.
- Filipescu, Teodor 1906. *Coloniile române în Bosnia. Studiu etnografic*, Cu 20 ilustrațiuni și o hartă etnografică, București: Academia Română, Tipografia Göbl.
- Filipescu, Teodor 1907. Karavlaška naselja u Bosni, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja* XIX, Sarajevo, 77–101, 215–241, 335–357.
- Gheție, Ion 1968. Contribuții la istoria trecerii lui *ea* la *e* (*leage* > *lege*). Prezența lui *ea* în Muntenia la începutul secolului al XVIII-ea, *Limba română* XVIII/6, 501–508.
- Gjordjević, Tihomir 1903. *Die Zigeuner in Serbien I–II, 1903–1906, Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn*.

- Gunda, Béla 1934. Teknővájó cigány és munkája. *Néprajzi Értesítő* 26/1–2, 57–60.
- Harkonyi, Stjepan 1890. Šume u slavonskoj Podravini. *Šumarski list* 1/6, 241–254.
- Hedeşan, Otilia 2003. Myth and/or Shamanism. Case Analysis: Păuna of Treşnjeveica. In: *Roma Religious Culture* (D. Đorđević, ed.), Niš, 84–93.
- Hedeşan, Otilia 2005. Jedan teren – Treşnjeveica u dolini Morave. In: *Banjaši na Balkanu. Identitet etničke zajednice* (B. Sikimić, ed.), Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 13–106.
- Hedeşan, Otilia 2007. *Mă razumeşti, fata mea... Note de teren pe Valea Moravei*, Bucureşti: Paideia.
- Hefele, Ferdo 1890. Koritari, *Vienac* 22/46, 742–743.
- Ieşan, Isidor 1906. *Românii din Bosnia şi Herţegovina în trecut şi prezent*, Comunicări făcute Academiei Române în şedinţa den 19 nov. 1904 adăugate şi întegite, Arad: Tipografia George Nichin.
- Jánosfalvi, Sándor István 1863. A seprűs, kalános és tolvaj cigányok, *Vasárnapi Újság* 141.
- Kahl, Thede 2011. Die Zigeuner und das Rumänische. Zur Sprache und Kultur der Vlach-Roma, Bajeschi und Rudari. In: *Die Sprachen der Roma in der Romania* (M. Doppelbauer, G. Kremnitz, H. Stiehler, eds.), Wien: Praesens Verlag, 190–223.
- Kahl, Thede, Nechiti, Ioana 2012. Aschenputtel bei den Bajeschi und Rudari. Vergleich zweier Märchen anhand von Feldaufnahmen in Ungarn und Griechenland. In: *Südosteuropäische Romania: Siedlungs-/Migrationsgeschichte und Sprachtypologie* (W. Dahmen, G. Holtus, J. Kramer, M. Metzeltin, W. Schweickard, O. Winkelmann, eds.), 191–226. Tübingen: Narr.
- Kahl, Thede, Nechiti, Ioana 2019. *The Boyash in Hungary. A Comparative Study among the Arġeleni and Munċeni Communities*. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences. <[https://austriaca.at/8233-7\\_theboyashinhungary\\_complete.pdf](https://austriaca.at/8233-7_theboyashinhungary_complete.pdf)> (retrieved May 10, 2020).
- Kováč, Aladár 1912. Kezdetleges épületek Tolna vármegyében. *Néprajzi Értesítő* 13/3–4, 226–232.

- Kovalcsik, Katalin 1988. A beás cigány népzene szisztematikus gyűjtésének első tapasztalatai. In: *Zenetudományi dolgozatok*, Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Zenetudományi Intézet, 215–231.
- Kovalcsik, Katalin 1993. A beás cigányok népzenei hagyományai. In: *Cigány népi kultúra a Kárpát-medencében a 18–19. Században* (Barna G., ed.), Salgótarján: Mikszáth Kiadó, 231–239.
- Kovalcsik Katalin 1994a. *Florilye dă primăvară. Tavaszi virágok. I. kötet*. Pécs: Gandhi Közalapítványi Gimnázium és Kollégium.
- Kovalcsik Katalin 1994b. *Florilye dă primăvară. Tavaszi virágok. II. kötet*. Pécs: Gandhi Közalapítványi Gimnázium és Kollégium.
- Kovalcsik, Katalin 1996. Roma or Boyash Identity. The Music of the Ardelan Boyashes in Hungary. *The World of Music* 38/1, 77–93.
- Kovalcsik, Katalin, Orsos, Anna, Arató, Máttyás 2013. A beás nyelvjáraskutatás előzetes tapasztalatai. In: *Romológia "akkor és most" – romológusok második szakmai konferenciája. Konferenciakötet. Gypsy Studies – Cigány Tanulmányok 30.* (Arató M., Cserti Csapó T., eds.), Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, Bölcsészettudományi Kar, Neveléstudományi Intézet, Romológia és Nevelésszociológia Tanszék – Romológiai Kutatóközpont – Wlislöcki Henrik Szakkollégium, 47–65.
- Landauer, Attila 2009. Adalékok a beás cigányság korai történetéhez. In: *Írások a magyarországi beásokról* (Landauer A., Nagy P., eds.), Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Gazdaság- és Társadalomtudományi Kar, Cigány Néprajzi és Történeti Egyesület, 79–96.
- Landauer, Attila 2010. A ticsánokról – kutatás közben. Adalékok a beás cigányság poroszlói és tiszafüredi történetéhez. In: *A cigány kultúra történeti és néprajzi kutatása a Kárpát-medencében* (Deáky Z., Nagy P., eds.), Budapest: Magyar Néprajzi Társaság; Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem, 281–291.
- Lazić, Veselin (ed.) 1997. *Cigane moj: Romi u Vojvodini*, PČESA (1997).
- Leschber, Corinna 2008a. Romanian–Serbian code-mixing phenomena. In: *The Romance Balkans* (B. Sikimić, T. Ašić, eds.), Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 247–260.
- Leschber, Corinna 2008b. Die Rudari in Serbien: Feldforschungen zu Sprachgebrauch, Spezifika, Sprachmischung, Archaismen, Grezüber-

- schreitungen. In: *Tradition und Identitäten in Südosteuropa. Festschrift für Gabriella Schubert*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 338–351.
- Lozovanu, Dorin 2012. Romanian-Speaking Communities Outside Romania: Linguistic Identities, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 2/6, 569–572.
- Marinov, Vasil 1962. Nablyudenie varhu bita na tsiganite v Bulgaria. *Izvestiya na etnografski institut s muzey* 5, 227–271.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 1993. *Tsiganite v Bulgaria*. Sofia: Club '90.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 1998. Bear-Trainers in Bulgaria (Tradition and Contemporary Situation). *Ethnologia Bulgarica* 1, 106–116.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 2000. Myth as Process. In: *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle. Commitment in Romani Studies* (T. Acton, ed.), Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 81–93.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 2001. Historical and Ethnographic Background: Gypsies, Roma, Sinti. In: *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe* (W. Guy, ed.). Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 33–53.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 2012. A Contemporary Picture of Romani Communities in Eastern Europa. *Information Fact Sheets on Roma Culture*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <<http://romafacts.uni-graz.at/index.php/culture/introduction/a-contemporary-picture-of-romani-communities-in-eastern-europa>> (retrieved June 6, 2019).
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 2013. 'Gypsy' Groups in Eastern Europe: Ethnonyms vs. professionyms. *Romani Studies*, 23/1, 61–81.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin 2014. Identity and Language of the Roma/Gypsies. In: *The Palgrave Handbook of Slavic Languages, Identities and Borders* (M. Nomachi, T. Kamusella, eds.). London: Palgrave, 39–54.
- Marushiakova, Elena, Popov, Vesselin (eds.) 2016. *Roma Culture: Myths and Realities*. München: Lincom Academic Publishers.
- Mladenov, Maksim 1995. Vlashkoto naselenie v Bulgaria (razprostranenie, proizvod i toponimiya). *Balgarska etnologiya (izvanreden broj)*, 7–27.
- Neagota, Bogdan 2014. Patologie magică și ritualitate iatrică în complexul 'Gurbanului' rudăresc. Morfologie și istorie. In: *Cultura populară la români*.



- Context istoric și specific cultural* (C. Bălosu, N. Mihai, eds.). Cluj-Napoca, Craiova: Presa Universitară Clujeană, Editura Universitaria, 237–289.
- Neagota, Bogdan, Benga, Ileana 2016. The Healing Gurban. On the trace of the Rudari from Southern Romania, *Transylvanian Review* XXV/1, 74–94.
- Nicolăescu-Plopșor, C. S. 1922. Gurbanele, *Arhivele Olteniei* I/1, 35–40.
- Olujić, Ivana, Radosavljević, Petar 2007. Mali rječnik bajaškoga. In: *Dru-gi jezik hrvatski: poučavanje hrvatskoga kao nematerinskoga jezika u predškoli i školi s posebnim osvrtom na poučavanje govornika bajaškoga romskoga: priručnik s radnim listovima* (L. Cvikić, ed.). Zagreb: Profil, 111–126.
- Orsós, Anna 1994. *Beás nyelvkönyv kezdőknek. Pă lyimbá bájásilor*. Kaposvár: Csokonai Vitéz Mihály Tanítóképző Főiskola.
- Orsós, Anna 1997. *Beás – magyar kézisztár. Vorbé dă bájás*. Kaposvár: Csokonai Vitéz Mihály Tanítóképző Főiskola.
- Orsós, Anna 1998. *Fátá ku păru dă ar – Az aranyhajú lány – Beás cigány népmesegyűjtemény* II. kötet. Pécs: Gandhi Gimnázium.
- Orsós, Anna 1999. *Magyar – beás kézisztár. Vorbé dă ungur*. Kaposvár: Csokonai Vitéz Mihály Tanítóképző Főiskola.
- Orsós, Anna 2015. *Cigány/roma nemzetiségi oktatás: Kutatási beszámoló*. Pécs: PTE BTK NTI Romológia és Nevelésszociológia Tanszék.
- Pavković, Nikola 1957. Karavlas i njihovo tradicionalno zanimanje, *Članci i građa za kulturnu istoriju istočne Bosne* I, 103–126.
- Papp, Gyula 1982a. A beas cigányok roman nyelvjarasa. In: *Tanulmányok. A cigány gyerekek oktatásával – nevelésével foglalkozó munkacsoport vizsgálataiból* (E. Varnagy, ed.). Vol. V. Pécs.
- Papp, Gyula 1982b. Beás – Magyar szótár. In: *Tanulmányok. A cigány gyerekek oktatásával – nevelésével foglalkozó munkacsoport vizsgálataiból* (E. Varnagy, ed.). Vol. VI. Pécs.
- Petrovici, Emil 1938. “Români” din Serbia occidentală, *Dacoromania* IX, 224–236.
- Radosavljević, Petar 2007. Romi Bajaši u Hrvatskoj – govornici rumunjskog dijalekta. In: *Jezik i identiteti* (J. Granić, ed.), Zagreb – Split: Hrvatsko društvo za primijenjenu lingvistiku, 505–515.

- Radosavljević, Petar 2010. *Jezik Roma Bajaša na teritoriju Republike Hrvatske*. PhD Dissertation. University of Zagreb – Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Radosavljević, Petar 2012a. Particularități ale structurii fonologice și morfologice în graiurile băieșilor din Croația, *Philologica Jassyensia* VIII/2 (16), 247–258.
- Radosavljević, Petar. 2012b. Pogled na bajaške dijalekte u Hrvatskoj. In: *Promene identiteta, kulture i jezika Roma u uslovima planske socijalno-ekonomske integracije : zbornik radova sa naučnog skupa održanog 6–8. decembra 2010*. (T. Varadi, G. Bašić, eds.). Beograd: SANU.
- Saramandu, Nicolae 1997. Cercetări dialectale la un grup necunoscut de vorbitori ai românei: *băieșii* din nordul Croației, *Fonetica și dialectologie* XVI, 97–130.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2002. Đurđevdan kod vlaških Roma u selu Podvrška, *Kultura* 103–104, 184–193.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2003. Banjaši u Srbiji iz balkanske lingvističke perspektive, *Aktualni problemi na balkanskoto ezikoznanie*, Sofia, 114–129.
- Sikimić, Biljana (ed.) 2005a. *Banjaši na Balkanu. Identitet etničke zajednice*, Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 249–275.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2005b. Linguistic Research of Small Exogamic Communities: the Case of Banyash Romanians in Serbia, *Jazyki i dialkety malyh etničkih grupp na Balkanah*, Biblion Verlag, Sankt-Peterburg – München, 257–266.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2006. Transborder ethnic identity of Banyash Roma in Serbia. <[http://www.inst.at/trans/16Nr/14\\_4/sikimic16.htm](http://www.inst.at/trans/16Nr/14_4/sikimic16.htm)> (retrieved June 6, 2018).
- Sikimić, Biljana (ed.) 2008. *Krvna žrtva. Transformacije jednog rituala*. Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU.
- Sikimić, Biljana (ed.) 2011. *Piramida I/2*, Novi Sad (Băieșii în contextul sud-slav).
- Sikimić, Biljana 2013. U potrazi za jezikom: Banjaši iz Sonte. In: *Društveno-humanistički ogledi. Eseuri socio-umaniste; zbornik u čast Lia Magdu* (L. Spariosu, ed.), Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet Univerziteta u Novom Sadu, 186–197.

- Sikimić, Biljana 2014. Romanians in Serbian Banat: Dynamic Epistemology. In: *The Multilingual Society Vojvodina. Intersecting Borders, Cultures and Identities* (T. Kamusella, M. Nomachi, eds.), Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, 51–73.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2015. A fi rom și a vorbi românește în Serbia. In: *Condiția romă și schimbarea discursului* (V. Mihăilescu, P. Matei, eds.), Iași: Polirom, 91–120.
- Sikimić, Biljana 2017. Tradicionalne bajte i okućnice Roma u Podunavlju. In: *Stanovanje Roma u Srbiji. Stanje i izazovi* (T. Varadi, Z. Vuksanović Macura, eds.), Beograd: SANU, 229–252.
- Sikimić, Biljana, Hristov, Petko (eds.) 2007. *Kurban in the Balkans*, Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies.
- Sikimić, Biljana, Ašić, Tijana (eds.) 2008. *The Romance Balkans*, Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies.
- Slavkova, Magdalena 2005. Rudari u istočnoj Bugarskoj i evanđeoski pokret. In: *Banjaši na Balkanu: Identitet etničke zajednice* (B. Sikimić, ed.), Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 277–294.
- Slavkova, Magdalena 2007. *Tsiganite evangelisti v Bulgaria*. Sofia: Paradigma.
- Slavkova, Magdalena 2010. Challenging Boundaries: Contemporary Migratory Patterns of Bulgarian Rudari. In: *Balkan and Baltic States in United Europe: Histories, Religions and Cultures* (E. Anastasova, M. Kõiva, eds.), Sofia: Paradigma, 188–197.
- Slavkova, Magdalena 2013. Rudarite – rekonstruirane na identichnostta. In: *Etnichnost, religiya i migratsii na Tsiganite v Bulgaria* (Y. Erolova, M. Slavkova, eds.), Sofia: Paradigma, 187–229.
- Slavkova, Magdalena 2017. Personalizing the Romani Evangelical Faith. In: *Languages of Resistance: Ian Hancock's Contribution to Romani Studies* (H. Kyuchukov, W. New, eds.), Vol 5, Muenchen: Lincom GmbH, 318–325.
- Sorescu-Marinković, Annemarie 2008. The Boyash in Croatia: Romanian Vernaculars in Baranja and Medjimurje. In: *The Romance Balkans* (B. Sikimić, T. Ašić, eds.), Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 173–225.
- Sorescu-Marinković, Annemarie 2010. “Nous venons des Carpates, des Carpates indiennes, de Russie”: Gérer une identité traumatisée – le cas des

- Bayaches de Serbie. In: *Mémoire et histoire en Europe centrale et orientale* (D. Baric, J. Le Rider, D. Roksandić, eds.), Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 217–226.
- Sorescu-Marinković, Annemarie 2013. The Court of the Bayash: Revising a Theory, *Romani Studies* 5, Vol. 23/1, 1–27.
- Sorescu-Marinković, Annemarie 2018. Rudarii și patrimoniul cultural imaterial. In: *Patrimoniu și patrimonializare* (E.R. Colta, ed.), București: Editura Etnologică, 174–194.
- Szalai, Andrea 1997. A beások. Az etnikai identitás határai a nyelvhasználat tükrében, *Kritika* 12, 7–9.
- Szalai, Andrea 2006. Egységesség? Változatosság? A cigány kisebbség és a nyelvi sokféleség, *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 103, 163–204.
- Șerban, Stelu 2007. Politics against ethnicity. The case of Rudari from Varna district. In: *Transborder identities. The Romanian-speaking population in Bulgaria* (S. Șerban, ed.), București: Paideia, 241–276.
- Tomić, Persida 1950. “Vilarke” i “vilari” kod vlaških Cigana u Temniću i Belici, *Zbornik radova* 1, Beograd: Etnografski institut SANU, 237–262.
- Țîrcomnicu, Emil, David, Lucian 2012. *Sărbători și obiceiuri. Răspunsuri la chestionarele Atlasului Etnografic Român. Rudarii românofoni din Bulgaria, vol. III, regiunea Varna*, Editura Etnologică: București.
- Varadi, Tibor, Bašić, Goran (eds.) 2012. *Promene identiteta, kulture i jezika Roma u uslovima planske socijalno-ekonomske integracije*, Beograd: SANU.
- Vojak, Danijel 2004. Romi u popisima stanovništva iz 1921. i 1931. na području Hrvatske. *Migracijske i etničke teme* 20/4, 447–476.
- Vojak, Danijel 2013. *U predvečerje rata: Romi u Hrvatskoj 1918–1941*. Zagreb: Romsko nacionalno vijeće – Udruga za promicanje obrazovanja Roma u Republici Hrvatskoj “Kali Sara”.
- Weigand, Gustav 1908. Rumänen und Arumunen in Bosnien, *Jahresbericht des Instituts für rumänische Sprache* 14, Leipzig, 171–197.



## Who Are “Oamenii Noștri” (Our People)? Rudari, Lingurari, Boyash and Their Identities

**Abstract:** This first chapter outlines the territorial distribution of the Boyash communities, focusing on the diversity of their names and identities in different countries. Special attention is paid to the contemporary development of these identities, which has been influenced by two main factors over the last few decades: 1) the rapidly growing interest in the “Roma topic” of different actors, and initiatives and actions conducted by the so-called Gypsy industry, and 2) Roma mass migration from Central and Southeast Europe to Western Europe.

### Introduction

In many countries of Southeast and Central Europe, Latin America, The United States and Canada and, in the last few decades, also in many Western European countries, there are Romanian-language communities known under different names – mostly *Rudari* (or *Ludari*), *Lingurari*, and *Băieși* (with different phonetic variants), as well as a number of other names that will be discussed later. What unites all these communities is their common historical origin, their traditional occupations (production of various wooden wares), as well as the fact that the surrounding population considers them to be ‘Gypsies’ (‘Țigani’, ‘Cigany’, ‘Gypsies’, ‘Gitanos’, ‘Ciganos’ and similar names in local languages). However, these communities themselves (with some exceptions emerging in recent decades) reject their designation as ‘Gypsies’ and, more recently, as ‘Roma’. Their own community identities, however, can be quite varied and internally complex in various dimensions, including complicated structures at different hierarchical levels (local, ethnic, national and global).

## Origin and Migration

In order to understand these Romanian-speaking communities, we have to examine their origin and historical migrations. They originate from the Danubian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia where the so-called 'Gypsies' (Țigani) were slaves from the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. There were three main categories of such slaves depending on whether they belonged to the Prince (slaves of the Crown), to the Orthodox monasteries, or to the Boyars (Noblemen). The Gypsies of the Prince were mainly nomadic, while the Gypsies of Monasteries and Boyars were mostly settled. The Crown's Gypsies were divided into four basic categories, namely: 1. *Rudari* (ore miners) or *Aurari* (gold prospectors), also called *Băieși* in Transylvania; 2. *Ursari* (bear trainers); 3. *Lingurari* (spoon makers); 4. *Lăieshi* (itinerant gypsies). There were also two kinds of Orthodox monastery and Boyars Gypsies, namely, *Lăieshi*, who were nomads, and *Vatrashi* (Domestic Servants, from the Slavic *vatra* 'fireplace'), who served in households and tilled their masters' land (Kogalnitchan 1837: 12–13, 15; Achim 1998: 31–85; Marushiakova / Popov 2009: 90–96).

As can clearly be seen, the origin and direct relationship of the Romanian-language speaking communities concerned and the respective categories of slaves (*Rudari/Aurari/Băieși* and *Lingurari*) in the Danube Principalities can hardly give rise to any doubts. The issue of the ethnic dimension of these categories is more complicated. In Romanian historiography, there used to be a popular theory that proclaimed, more or less categorically, the non-Roma (non-'Gypsy') origin of the *Rudari/Aurari/Băieși* and *Lingurari* whereby they are descendants of an ancient non-Roma local population who acquired 'Gypsy' ethno-cultural traits (Achim 1998; Chelcea 1944ab, 1968; Calotă 1995; Șerban 2002). Genetic studies, conducted in recent years, however, have proved their common Indian origin with Roma and other 'Gypsy' communities (Klarić et al. 2008).

Many of the descendants of the *Rudari/Aurari/Băieși* and *Lingurari* slave categories migrated outside the two principalities during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, spreading all over Europe, with some reaching the Americas. However, a significant number continue to live in contemporary Romania. In present-day Romania, these Romanian-speak-

ing communities use different self-appellations, but generally speaking, in Oltenia and Muntenia they are known as *Rudari*, in Moldova as *Lingurari*, and in Transylvania as *Băieși* or *Beás* (Chelcea 1944ab, 1968; Calotă 1995; Kovalcsik 2007; Marushiakova / Popov 2012; Alexa-Morcov 2012; Costescu 2012; 2013), although the boundaries of these territorial limitations are becoming increasingly blurred. These communities are detached from one another and in most cases only publicly declare themselves to be ethnic Romanians, but at the same time they keep their community identities reflected in their respective self-appellations, each retaining (or at least endeavouring to preserve) its endogamy boundaries (including towards other communities of the same type).

*Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* in Romania nowadays tend to declare themselves to be “descendants of the ancient Dacians”, “the oldest Romanians”; and from here emerges the conclusion that they are “the real Romanians”. The confirmation for all that they find in their numerous and diverse myths and legends, e.g. about their Dacian “lost kingdom”, or they explicate their Dacian origin through their traditional occupations (“we are the real Dacians because, like us, they have eaten from the same wooden utensils as we continue to produce”).

However, the surrounding population in Romania even nowadays continues to perceive *Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* as ‘Gypsies’ (Țigani), or even as a distinct community, which is connected to the Roma and occupies the same social position. This is not completely without reason: members of the *Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* communities only rarely participate in Roma political and civil movement, but still some of them became members of Roma political parties and Roma NGOs. Furthermore, on 28 February 1990, the *Partidul Unit Democrat al Romilor, Rudarilor și Lăutarilor din România* (Democratic Party of Roma, Rudari and Lautari in Romania) was established, headed by Octavian Stoica, which in the March 1990 elections received 21,847 votes (0,16%) (Popescu / Hannavy 2002). It is not clear what the *Rudari*’s contribution to this party was, but judging by the result it was hardly significant.

In contemporary Romania, there are also other Romanian-speaking communities, which should not be mistaken for the aforementioned communities,



and which are also considered to be ‘Gypsy’ (Țigani) by the surrounding population. They are descendants of the *Vatrashi* slave category and are known by various names, e.g. *Vatrashi*, or *Kherutne Roma* (i.e. those who live in houses in *Romanes*), *Kashtale Roma* (‘Wood Roma’ in *Romanes*, but a similar appellation is used also in regards of *Lingurari*), or ‘Țigani de mătase’ (‘Silk Gypsies’ in Romanian) (Burtea 1994; Cherata 1994, 1999; Marushiakova / Popov 2012). They have lost their group distinctions and have become a large meta-group community with partially preserved regional or local features. Most of them show preference for a Romanian identity, but recently, as more attention has been paid to *Roma* issues, many of them “re-discovered” their Roma roots and are actively involved in Roma political parties and NGO’s, and publicly pronounce their Roma identity. Although these communities are sometimes grouped together with the *Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* (e.g. under the common name *Kashtale Roma*), in reality *Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* clearly distinguish themselves, including through endogamous practices and taking on a separate identity.

A similar situation and similar processes of identity changes among the Romanian-speaking communities which are perceived as ‘Gypsy’ by their surrounding population can be observed also in those parts of the former Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which are currently within the borders of other countries. Such is the case with the historical region of Bukovina, which was part of the Principality of Moldavia, later seized by Austria, and after World War I passed from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Romania. In 1940, the Soviet Union annexed northern Bukovina, which is today located in Ukraine, the Chernivtsi region. The Romanian-speaking ‘Gypsy’ (‘Țigani/цигане’ as the surrounding population calls them) communities living there demonstrate Romanian ethnic identity, but among them there are no communities of *Rudari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás*.

The situation is different in the eastern region of the Principality of Moldavia, between the rivers Prut and Dniester, known as Bessarabia, which in 1812 was annexed by the Russian Empire. In order to increase the population of the rather sparsely populated southern steppe regions of Bessarabia (known as Budjak), the Russian Empire appealed to everyone who wanted to work and live under its authority, no matter if they came from the Russian Empire

or from elsewhere. The Empire offered them a number of incentives, such as loans, free land, tax exemption, as well as inclusion in a Black Sea Cossack army, which led to new additional privileges (Анцупов 2000).

In the process of colonization of Budjak, settlers from different countries and nations established their ethnic villages there, such as Bulgarians, Albanians, Czechs, Germans, Jews, Swiss, etc., including Roma, and among them “the most numerous groups in Bessarabia were the Lingurari” (Зеленчук, 1979: 59). As a result, the two ‘Gypsy’ villages of Faraonovka and Kair (Russian spelling of Cairo, today the village of Krivaya Balka) emerged. These villages were established by former nomadic *Lingurari* who lived in the wooded massifs in the region of Orgeev (today Orhei) (Егунев 1864: 115; Анцупов 2000: 65–74). Currently, these two villages are in Ukraine, and the local Romanian-speaking communities have a “pure” Moldovan identity, i.e. they have been assimilated and have no (or at least they are unwilling to share publicly) memories of their former community identity (*Lingurari*), and the surrounding population no longer consider them as ‘Gypsies’.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, small *Lingurari* groups migrated within the Russian Empire in the region of Ukraine and southern Russia.

In Ukraine, “Gypsies” producing wooden spoons (i.e. *Lingurari*) lived in the Podolia region, in Ukraine (Трофимов 1913: 25–27, Александрович 1922). In the 1930s the Soviet state organized for them two artels for woodworking (ГАРФ: 74–75). It is not clear what the fate of this small community was during World War II, after which they no longer lived in this region.

At present, the heirs of the *Lingurari* (circa 20 mixed families) live in the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation. They have almost completely lost their former mother tongue and are generally Russian-speaking; most of them have mingled with local Roma (mainly from *Kishiniovtsi* group), adopted a Roma identity, and only some of them preserve the memory of their forefathers’ community identities (Смирнова-Сеславинская 2014: 156).

In the late 1940s, after World War II, part of *Lingurari* who were living in southern Russia migrated to the then Georgian SSR. There they mingled with other migrants, firstly with those who migrated in the 1930s from the then Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic with administrative centre Tiraspol and later, in the 1970s also with migrants from the then Moldovan

SSR. There are currently 40–60 families (some of them from mixed marriages) living in independent Georgia, in the city of Tbilisi, who have partially retained their Romanian language; although the surrounding population considers them ‘Gypsies’, their declared ethnic identity is ‘Moldovans’. They have not preserved the memory about their former community identity and categorically refuse to be included in the activities of the modern Roma NGO sector (Marushiakova / Popov 2016a: 98).

Between the two World Wars Bessarabia became part of Romania and in 1945 it was annexed by the USSR and made into the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. In the Soviet times, some *Lingurari* migrated from Moldova to other Soviet republics. Currently, a small number live in Ukraine in the vicinity of Irpen near Kyiv, and also in different places in the Russian Federation (e.g. Republic Komi, and region of Tver) (Marushiakova / Popov 2003: 289–310). There they stick to their Moldovan ethnic identity and have largely lost their community identity of *Lingurari* (or it is only remembered by older generations).

When the USSR broke up in 1991, the Republic of Moldova became independent. At present, two distinct Romanian-speaking communities live there whom the population consider as ‘Gypsies’ (*Țigani*). These are *Vlaxia* (descendants of the *Vatrashi* slave category), and *Lingurari* (Marushiakova / Popov 2001a: 33–53; 2003: 289–310; Duminică 2007: 294–303). Both communities have a publicly declared preferred Moldovan ethnic identity. Today, some individuals from the communities of *Vlaxia*, however, in connection with the topicality of the Roma issues and in relation to the numerous NGOs and various international organizations’ projects, are actively involved in Roma activities and consequently demonstrate a Roma identity. With the *Lingurari* the picture is much more complex. There is historical evidence that *Lingurari* lived in a number of villages, such as Bursuc, Huzun, Stejăreni, Leordoia, Lucășeuca, etc. Their heirs today insist on their Moldovan ethnic identity and deny any relationship with Gypsies (*Țigani*), including even their community identity of *Lingurari*.

In two other villages, however, namely in Parcani and Schinoasa, which are also largely populated by *Lingurari*, in recent years the NGO sector and international organizations have been implementing various ‘Roma’ projects.

There the *Lingurari* accept without any resistance the label 'Roma' given to them by donor organizations, even though in informal conversations they deny any connection to Roma. Furthermore, their representatives are actively involved in the activities of the Roma NGO-sector, such as Dumitru Danu, president of the Social Movement of the Roma from the Republic of Moldova, and Gheorghe Mărtin, president of the Social-Cultural Society *Tradiția Romilor*.

From the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, parts of the Romanian-speaking communities in question migrated initially to the neighbouring territories (at that time the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire). The first such migrations started in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and at least from this period there is written evidence about them. Already in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it is known that *Beás* live in Transylvania (Zsupos 1996), and probably also at that time some of them have settled in the lands of present-day Serbia as part of the general migration flows of population of Wallachia and Moldavia south of the Danube.

It is not completely clear when the first migrants from these communities arrived in the lands of present-day Bulgaria, but on the ethnographic map of European Turkey, prepared by Guillaume Lejean, the region of Vratsa is marked by the presence of a Romanian-speaking population (Lejean 1861). Today in this region there are two villages, Mramoren and Lilyache, inhabited by *Lingurari*. It is also certain that in the 1860s and 1870s in the region of Stara Zagora already live 'Linguri Mechkari' (Bear Trainers), which is something quite common for the local population (Кънчев 1983: 218), i.e. at least a few decades since their settlement there have already passed.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *Rudari/Ludari*, *Lingurari* and *Băieși/Beás* resettled not only in different territories within both empires and the new independent states established in their place, but also in some countries of Western Europe, North and South America (Fraser 1992: 226–238; Marushiakova / Popov 2006).

## Geographical Distribution and Contemporary Identities

The review of contemporary identities of the Romanian-speaking communities in question shows their great diversity in different countries and regions.

Nowadays in Bulgaria there are communities of Romanian-speaking *Rudari* (or *Ludari*). The older self-appellation, *Aurari*, is also remembered, although comparatively rarely, by elderly members of the community. This could be seen from a legend we recorded in 1990s in the village of Yagodovo, in Plovdiv region. This legend explains not only the origin of the self-appellation *Aurari*, but also the traditional occupation of the community:

“Once, before the Bulgarians united into one state, on these lands roamed a tribe, our tribe. They came from Romania. And the craft they brought from there, and it was – washing gold from the rivers. Because of this they were called *Aurari* (Gold Washers) ... When the gold was exhausted in one river, they moved to another river. The rivers flow along the forests. The people of our tribe did not have vessels, so they made bowls from wood. When there was not enough ‘luda’ (from Slavic *ruda* ‘Ore’ – *authors note*), they were making wooden bowls and spoons for sale because they saw it was profitable. Over the years, the gold in the rivers was over, and then they began to deal only with wood, but their old name remained – *Rudari*.” (Marushiakova / Popov 1995: 29).

According to their traditional occupations, the community uses other self-appellations too, namely *Lingurari* (‘Spoon Makers’ in Romanian) and *Ursari* (‘Bear Trainers’ in Romanian), *Kopanari* (‘Wooden Bowls Makers’ in Bulgarian), *Fusari* (‘Spindles Makers’ in Romanian), *Kashukchi* (‘Spoon Makers’ in Turkish), etc. The community is divided according to their home regions into *Monteni*, *Intreni*, *Kamchieni*, *Dobrudzheni*, *Tratsieni*, etc. (Petulengro 1915–1916: 1–109; Rațiu 1940: 18–24; Йонов 1995; Marushiakova / Popov 1997: 89–103; 1998: 106–116; Славкова 2005: 277–294).

*Rudari* in Bulgaria live almost entirely in villages and in some small towns (former villages), spread over almost the whole of Bulgaria, in separate (but in most cases not clearly detached) neighbourhoods. Without

being a comprehensive one, we can provide the following picture of the settlements in which compact *Rudari* communities live, according to the existing territorial administrative units (in brackets are the names of villages or towns): region Vidin (Archar); region Montana (Boychinovtsi); region Vratsa (Mramoren, Lilyache, Drenovo, Harlets, Leskovec, Byala Slatina); region Pleven (Koynare, Iskar, Krushovitsa, Gorni Dabnik, Dolni Dubnik, Sadovets, Gradina, Cherven bryag); region Lovech (Aleksandrovo, Letnitsa); region Gabrovo (Dushevo Shumata, Yavorets, Polsko Kosovo); region Veliko Tarnovo (Krusheto, Zlataritsa, Strazhitsa, Kamen, Byala cherkva, Vinograd, Orlovets, Polski Kosovets, Kozlovets, Khotnitsa); region Ruse (Vetovo, Smirnenski, Khotantsa, Tetovo, Kosharna); region Razgrad (district Getsovo of Razgrad, Dryanovets, Kharsovo, Kubrat, Savin, Belovets, Brestovene, Golyam izvor, Osenets); region Targovishte (Zdravets, Podgoritsa, Roseno); region Shumen (district Matnitsa of Shumen, Tsani Ginchevo, Nikola Kozlevo, Markovo, Kosovo); region Dobrich (Obrochishte, Odartsi, Batova, Bobovets, Bezvoditsa, Stozher, Rositsa, Shabla, Karapelit, Tervel, Bezmer, Dabovik, Kolartsi, Kochmar); region Silistra (Kozyak, Mezhdzen, Alfatar, Nova Cherna, Popina, Golesh, Kaynardzhia); region Varna (Aksakovo, Suvorovo, Ignatievo, Izvorsko, Lyuben Karavelovo, Vaglen, Boyana, Valchi dol, Beloslav, Devnya, Zhitnitsa, Velichkovo, Avren, Dolen chiflik, Staro Oryakhovo, Grozdyovo, Osenovo, Pchelnik, Kazashka reka, Trastikovo, Yarebichna, Dalgopol); region Burgas (Kameno, Kableschkovo, Dolno Ezerovo, Troyanovo, Balgarevo, Rudnik); region Yambol (Straldzha); region Sliven (Tvarditsa, Shivachevo, Brestovene, Zlati voyvoda, Mishkarovo, Korten, Tsenino, Asenovets, Bryastovo); region Stara Zagora (Yagoda, Obrochishte, Yulievo, Zimnitsa, Svoboda); region Haskovo (district Tchernokonevo of Dimitrovgrad, Aleksandrovo, Krepost, Nova nadezhda, Lyubenovo); region Plovdiv (Rozino, Yagodovo, Yoakim Gruevo, district Lyubenovo of Parvomay, Vinitsa); region Pazardzhik (Vetren dol); region Sofia (Pravets, Dolna banya, Etropole); region Sofia City (districts Kremikovtsi and Botunets of Sofia). The regions of Smolyan and Kardzhali are not permanently inhabited by Rudari. Several families of Rudari live in region Pernik (city of Pernik), region Kyustendil (Bobov dol), and region Blagoevgrad (Rila and Yakoruda).

The members of this community speak about themselves most often as *Vlasi* (Wallachians) or *Rumâni* ('Romanians' in Bulgarian) (Marushiakova / Popov 2001ab; 2014a Marushiakova et al. 2001; Dorondel 2007; Şerban 2007), and even, though reluctantly, as *Rumânski Cigani* ('Romanian Gypsies' in Bulgarian). The surrounding population considers them all 'Gypsies' or 'Romanian Gypsies', but there are some exceptions, when they are perceived as *Vlasi* (Wallachians), e.g. in one police report from 1930s the community is defined "Vlasi vretenari" (Wallachian spindle makers), i.e. this report reflects their publicly declared identity (ДА: 37).

Over the past few decades, the *Rudari* community in Bulgaria have been striving to develop and enrich their identity. They presented themselves as "true Walachians" or "the most ancient Romanians". One of their popular legends, which can be heard in many places in Bulgaria, in a number of more or less similar variants, claims that the origin of the *Rudari* lies in their own ancient Kingdom of Dacia, located in the Balkans. Following its destruction, some Dacians crossed the Danube and laid the foundations of the Romanian people, while a smaller segment, the direct ancestors of the *Rudari* of today, remained in what later became Bulgaria; in another versions, the Dacian kingdom was placed in the lands of present-day Romania, and after its collapse the ancestors of the *Rudari* have settled in the Balkans (Marushiakova / Popov 2000: 86–87). More recently, other etiological legends have emerged among the *Rudari* that link their origin to the ancient Thracians (Sorescu-Marinković 2011a: 52–53). This is probably due to the strong increase of the popularity of the Thracian historical heritage in the Bulgarian public space in recent years.

This *Rudari* identity development in Bulgaria is not unidirectional. They have not always opted for Romanian identity. In some cases, the *Rudari* try to link their origin to important moments in early Bulgarian history. This tendency is present in the ideology of the political party *Democratic Movement 'Rodolyubie'* ('patriotism' in Bulgarian) registered in 1998. According to its leader Ivan Kostov, it is a party of the *Rudari* community and the ethnonym *Rudari* is not derived from Slavic *ruda* ('ore'), but from Slavic *rod* ('extended family' or 'clan'). As one of our informants said, 'we are descendants of the first old Bulgarian clans who settled in these lands together with Khan Asparukh