

The Romani voiceless palatal fricative *ʃ* in Iberian Romani dialects¹

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Abstract

The object of this paper is to analyse a rather puzzling question posed by the treatment of Common Romani *ʃ* (and also of an earlier *ʒ*, in the very few examples of this sound) in the Iberian (Para-) Romani dialects. I shall centre my attention on (Para)-Romani dialects in contact with Romance Languages. Data from Basque Romani will be left for further research.

Keywords: Romani; Iberian Romani dialects; Spanish Romani; Catalan Romani; Portuguese Romani; *caló*.

Resum. *La fricativa palatal sorda romaní ʃ en els dialectes romanís ibèrics*

L'objectiu d'aquest article és analitzar el problema força desconcertant que planteja el tractament del romaní comú *ʃ* (i també d'un anterior *ʒ*, en els poquíssims exemples d'aquest so) en els dialectes (para-)romanís ibèrics. Centrarem l'atenció en els dialectes (para-)romanís en contacte amb llengües romàniques. Les dades del romaní basc seran deixades per a una recerca posterior.

Paraules clau: romaní; dialectes romanís ibèrics; romaní espanyol; romaní català; romaní portuguès; *caló*.

Summary

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1. When I began to work on Iberian Romani, professor José Fortes lent me his own exemplar of Wolf's *Wörterbuch der Zigeunersprache*. This anecdote shows perfectly two main traits of his personality: endless curiosity for all the languages and an extremely generous spirit. May this modeste work on Spanish Romani serve as a tribute to his memory.

1. Data

The (Para)-Romani dialects in contact with Iberian Romance languages are Spanish Romani (*caló español*), Catalan Romani (*caló català*), Portuguese (Spanish-based) Romani (*calão*) and Brazilian Romani (*calon*). For all these languages we have both historical and current documentation, with the exception of Calão, of which the only source known to me is the well-known book by Adolfo Coelho *Os ciganos de Portugal* (COELHO 1892). This latter source shows Calão to be a Para-Romani dialect mixed with Spanish rather than with Portuguese; the Portuguese traits present in this dialect are clearly superficial and secondary.

1.1. Spanish Romani (*Caló*)

In Spanish Romani, C(ommon) R(omani) *š* becomes a fricative velar /x/, converging therefore with the original CR *x* sound.² The evidence comes from all the attested periods of Spanish Romani: in a Spanish Gypsy vocabulary in Manuscript 3929 (Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid: ADIEGO 1998), which can be dated to the middle of the eighteenth century, we find *guinges* ‘horns’ (pl.) from CR *šing*, with a spelling <gu> identical to that used for *guiñar* ‘to exonerate’, from CR *xin-*, with etymological /x/.³ The vocabulary clearly reflects a southern pronunciation of Spanish: confusion of final *r/l*, loss of intervocalic *d* in *beus* ‘stockings’ < *bedos*, Romani *bedo* ‘thing’,⁴ aspiration of final *s* in *ojarages* < **os alares*, literally ‘the breeches’, so it is possible that <gu> represents here an articulation closer to /h/ (cf. note 2 below), also typical of the Spanish spoken in Andalusia and neighbouring areas.⁵ Later documentation, ranging from Conde’s vocabulary (ca. 1800) to present-day fieldwork, corroborates this treatment of *š*.⁶ The following examples come from my own fieldwork among Gypsies from Andalusia and other areas in southern Spain:

/araxáj/ ‘priest’ < CR *rašaj*
 /baroxí/ ‘cold’ < CR *baró šil* literally ‘big cold’.
 /bréxe/ ‘years’ < CR *berš* ‘year’
 /brixínda/ ‘rain’ < CR *brišind* ‘rain’
 /nax(el)ár/ ‘to go, to leave’ < CR *naš-el* ‘to flee’
 /paxató/ ‘clock, watch’ < CR *bašavdó, bašav-el* ‘to sound’
 /traxáta/ ‘fear’ < CR *traš* ‘fear’
 /xeró/ ‘head; face’ < CR *šeró* ‘head’
 /xucál/ ‘pretty’ < CR *šukar* ‘pretty’
 /xun(el)ár/ ‘to hear; to see’ < CR *šun-el* ‘to hear’

2. In southern Spanish, and consequently in the Caló spoken there, this sound /x/ is articulated as a laryngeal fricative /h/, though this is irrelevant to the present discussion.
3. On the spelling <gu>, see ADIEGO (1998: 11).
4. No etymological explanation was given in ADIEGO (1998) for *beus*. I think that this etymology is sound.
5. For all these phonological traits of southern Spanish, see LAPESA (1981: 500-508).
6. For Conde’s vocabulary, I follow my own unpublished edition of the manuscript conserved in the Library of the Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid).

š becomes /s/, not /x/, before a consonant, but the tendency to aspirate *s* before consonant in southern Spanish helps the conversion to *h* (converging then with /x/ > /h/, cf. supra) or the assimilation. However, the written testimonies, although they come from Andalusia, systematically present *s*. Note in Conde: *mistós* ‘well’ < CR *mištó(s)*; *cas* ‘stick’ < CR *kašt* ‘wood’; *postin* ‘skin’ < CR *poštín*; *basnó* ‘cock’ < *bašnó*, etc. The testimonies from the Caló spoken in northern Spain, where *s* is neither aspirated nor assimilated in this position, clearly favour of *s* as the outcome of *š* before a consonant. Gordaliza gives examples from the Gypsies of Palencia (Castile): *basnó*, *mistó*, *mistós*, and Román from the Gypsies of Valladolid: *bašñi* ‘hen’, *castí* ‘wood’, *mistó*, *mistós*, *nastí* ‘no’ (< CR *našti*). Curiously, for ‘firewood’, Gordaliza gives *caister*, *caistí*, where the sequence *is* may be the outcome of *š*. This point merits further research.

In general, *š* becomes *s* in word final position as well, but again the aspiration (or simply loss) of the final *s* in southern Spanish may be the final result. Conde offers clearly *manús* < *manuš*, and the vocabularies mentioned above that were compiled among non-southern Gypsies point also to *s*: ROMÁN (1995) gives *manús*, *ques* ‘silk’ < CR *keš*; *bes* ‘wood, forest’ < CR *veš*. This different treatment of *š* in absolute final position vs. *š* > *x* in word internal position produces an inner-paradigmatic alternation *s* / *x* in *manús* vs. *manujea* / *manuxeal*, a fossilized form of vocative attested by Conde. In cases like *breje* / *brêxe* / ‘year’ from *breš* < CR *berš* we must assume an analogical pressure from other forms of the paradigm that led to *š* > *x* accompanied by the addition of a paragogic vowel, as in other cases of final consonants. A similar explanation can be suggested for *deque* (BORROW 1841) ‘ten’ < CR *deš*. Less clear is the form *doj* ‘fault’ (BORROW 1841) < *doš*, but in this case, it alternates with a variant *doji* that can be explained in the same way as *breje*. We can conclude that *š* in final position became *s*, but an outcome *j* was not impossible, above all due to analogy.

1.2. Portuguese Romani (Calão)

In Calão, as reported by COELHO (1892), *š* also becomes /x/ or a very closely related sound. Coelho uses both <j> and <h> to reflect it. His use of <j>, which in Portuguese represents a different sound (a palatal-alveolar fricative /ž/), to represent /x/ can be deduced from his statement that he uses Spanish spelling given that “the principal basis of the language of the Gypsies of Portugal is Spanish” (COELHO 1892: 7, n. 1). Coelho also uses <j> to transcribe the words with etymological /x/: *jalar* < *xal*, or the Spanish loanwords (*junioluncho* < Spanish *junio* / *xunjo*). The use of <h> is very limited, and serves equally for etymological *x* and for *x* resulting from *š*: cf. *her* / *xer* / ‘donkey’ < CR *xer* and *hil*, *hir* / *xil* / *xir* / ‘cold’ < CR *šil*. Occasionally, /x/ appears reflected as /g/: *eragar* ‘father’ (in the sense of ‘priest’) < CR *rašaj*. Also from etymological *x*: *guer* ‘donkey’ (vs. *her*, cf. supra) < CR *xer*.

Other examples of /x/ < *š* in Calão: *ejero* ‘head’ < *šeró*; *jocar* ‘pretty’ < *šukar*; *jojy* ‘hare’ < *šošoj*; *junar* / *junelar* ‘to hear’ < *šun-el*; *najar* / *najelar* ‘to flee’ < *naš-el*.

The treatment of *š* before a consonant in Calão is also the same as in Spanish Caló: *castende* ‘stick’ < CR *kašt*; *mistó*, *mistós* < CR *mištó(s)*. In *manú* ‘man’, the loss of final *s* must be assumed.

1.3. Catalan Romani (Caló català)

In Catalan Romani of all the attested periods, from the first documents dating from the 1830s to the present-day forms collected by Escudero, myself and others, *š* follows the same treatment as in Spanish Caló: it becomes *x*. Secondly, it may appear as *k* and occasionally also as *g*.

Here are some examples given by JAUBERT DE RÉART (1835): *trakhuno* / trəxunó/ ‘frightened’ < CR *trašutno* (cf. *trašutno* ‘frightened’ in Bugurdži Romani and *traštuno* ‘anxious, fearful’ in Sinte, *RomLex*⁷); *khel* /xel/ ‘hundred’ < CR *šel*. With *k*: *kuko* /kukó/ ‘thin’ < CR *šukó*; *kukar* ‘pretty’ < CR *šukar*. With *g*: *garo* /gəró/ ‘head’ < CR *šeró*. In Jaubert de Réart, the final *š* appears systematically as /x/ (secondarily /k/: *dekh* /dex/ ‘ten’ < CR *deš*; *manukh* < CR *manuš*; *bikh* /bix/ ‘twenty’ < CR *biš*; *pakh* /pax/ ‘half’ < CR *paš*; *pacprale* /pak-pralé/ (pl.) ‘cousins’ (lit. ‘half-brothers’) < CR *paš* ‘half’ + *phral* ‘brother’.

Before a consonant, *š* appears as *š*: *mischtó* /miš'to/ well’; *guschsté* /gušté/ ‘nails’ < *angušté* ‘fingers’, cf. Sinte *gušto* ‘finger’ (FORMOSO-CALVET 1987).

In Juli Vallmitjana⁸, *š* also appears as *x*, *k* and apparently on occasion as *g*; however, the inconsistent and ambiguous spelling used by this author makes it difficult to establish whether <g> is representing /x/ or /g/ (in fact, /ɣ/ in intervocalic position); in any case, Vallmitjana says expressly that the sound /x/ existed in Catalan Romani:⁹ *cuco* /kuko/ ‘thin’ in *Cuco-magó* /kuko-mač'ó/ (‘salt) cod, literally ‘thin fish’¹⁰ < CR *šukó*; *garó* (/gəró/ or /xəró/?) ‘head’ < CR *xeró*; *aragai* /əɾəxáj/ ‘priest’ < CR *rašaj*; *gil* /xil/ ‘cold’ < CR *šil*; *nagelà* /nəxələ/ ‘to flee’ < CR *naš-el*; *nagatdó* /nəxəddó/ or /nəɣəddó/ ‘done for, doomed’ < CR *našavdó*.

Before a consonant, the data are scarce and unclear: *mištó* appears as *mistó* / mistó/, but Vallmitjana offers *caix* /kaš/ ‘stick’ for CR *kašt*.

In final position, *š* becomes *x*, as in JAUBERT DE RÉART (1835). The sole clear example in Vallmitjana is *traj* /trax/ ‘fear’ < *traš*, but we can also deduce this treatment from the form reported for ‘half’, *pap*: it is clear that Vallmitjana (or his informants) obtained this form from *pap baró* /pəbbəró/ ‘half five-pesetas coin’, *pap bari* ‘half ounce of gold’, both from *paš baró* (m.), *paš bari* (f.) ‘half large one’. The assimilation makes sense if the original pronunciation was /pax bəró/, /pax bəri/: an assimilation /šb/ > /bb/ is most unlikely from the point of view of Catalan phonology (cf. *peix bullit*, pronounced as /peš buljit/, without assimilation).

7. *Romlex* is the *Romani Lexicon Project*, hosted by the University of Graz and coordinated by Yaron Matras, Dieter W. Halwachs and Peter Bakker (<http://romani.uni-graz.at/romlex/>).

8. For an inventory of the works of the Catalan writer Juli Vallmitjana (1873-1937) that contain Catalan Romani materials, see ADIEGO (2012: 306-308).

9. “Cal fer constar que’ls gitanos pronuncien la *j* a la castellana” (VALLMITJANA 1908: 244 “it must be stated that the [Catalan] Gypsies pronounce *j* as in Castilian”).

10. Cf. Catalan *bacallà sec*, Spanish *bacalao seco* for salt codfish (in Spanish *seco* = ‘dry, thin’).

2. Evaluation

The change *š* > *x* in Spanish Romani has a straightforward explanation from the point of view of the phonological history of the Spanish language: Old Spanish had two palatal fricatives, the voiceless *š* (spelled as <*x*>) and the voiced *ž* (spelled as <*j*>, and <*g*> before *e/i*). These sounds were present in Spanish at the time when the Gypsies arrived in the Iberian Peninsula (the fifteenth century), but during the sixteenth century both sounds evolved into a voiceless velar fricative /*x*/ (spelled *j*, *g*), a process that culminated in the first third of the seventeenth century (LAPESA 1981: 379; CANO 2005: 839): *dixo* /dišo/ > *dijo* /dixo/; *gente* /žente/ > *gente* /xente/, etc. Due to its increasing contact with Spanish, Spanish Romani might well have undergone a parallel process *š* > *x* under the influence of this latter language; moreover, this change could be favoured by the previous existence of this sound in Spanish Romani, which already had an inherited /*x*/. Regrettably, we have no examples of Spanish Romani that might show the situation before the change *š* > *x*: the *Aucto del Finamiento de Jacob*, the first attestation of Romani in Spain and datable precisely to the period during which Spanish /š/ was changing to /*x*/, offers no information on this point. The next document at our disposal, the vocabulary of the Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, clearly belongs to the period after this change, and by this time *š* has become *x*.

However, this very straightforward, sound explanation for the Spanish Romani change of *š* to *x* as the result of linguistic contact cannot be applied to the parallel change *š* > *x* in Catalan Romani. This change is absolutely paradoxical: in Catalan a sound *x* has never existed, and conversely, a sound *š* has existed without interruption from Old Catalan (in Medieval times) to Modern Catalan. The influence of Catalan ought to have worked in the opposite direction, preventing the move from *š* to *x*. In fact, the examples of Catalan Romani where *k* appears instead of *x*, both in forms with inherited *x* and in forms with *x* < *š*, must be interpreted as the result of linguistic contact with Catalan, where also the Spanish loanwords with sound *x* can appear adapted using *k*: we find *maco* /maku/ from Spanish *majo* /maxo/ and, occasionally, *quefe* /kefə/ for Spanish *jefe* /xefe/. The increasing contact of Catalan with Spanish has meant that Spanish loanwords –and also Calo ones!¹¹– are pronounced /*x*/ (so for instance /xefe/ < *jefe*), but the sound *x* continues to be alien to the phonological system of Catalan. Therefore, *š* > *x* in Catalan Romani seems an unmotivated and unnatural change.

3. Possible Solutions

3.1. A Proto-Iberian-Romani change?

A first solution that we can envisage is to assume that the move from *š* to *x* took place in a period prior to the differentiation of the Iberian Romani language that reached the Peninsula in the fifteenth century. This solution has the advantage of simplifying the scenario: instead of assuming two parallel and independent proces-

11. Specifically /*x*/alar ‘to eat’, from Catalan (or Spanish) Romani /xələ/, /xalár/.

ses of the same change in Catalan Romani and in Spanish Romani (one of which, moreover, is difficult to explain) the change occurred only once. Certainly, this interpretation loses the interesting explanation of $\check{s} > x$ in Spanish Romani as a contact-induced change, and places this change in a nebulous pre-Iberian period without offering any explanation for it. It can be argued that a similar change has taken place, for instance, in Finnish Romani: *dox* ‘fault, error’ < *doš*; *xěro* ‘head’ < *šeró*; *raxxal* ‘priest’ < *rašaj*, etc. (for these forms, see VALTONEN 1972: ss. vv.).

But this hypothesis encounters an insurmountable obstacle: the evidence of Calon, the Brazilian Para-Romani dialect. Until recently, our knowledge of Calon was limited to the information contained in two books by Moraes Filho, *Cancioneiro dos ciganos* (MORAES FILHO 1885) and *Os ciganos no Brasil* (MORAES FILHO 1886),¹² analysed by Rudolf von Sowa in an article published in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* (SOWA 1888).¹³ Today, we also have the important work of Fábio José Dantas de Melo, whose MA and Doctoral dissertations focus on the study of Calon spoken in the Goiás State in the central part of Brazil (MELO 2005, 2008). Also interesting, but much more limited in terms of the volume of data offered, is the dissertation by Florencia Ferrari (FERRARI 2010), an ethnographic study in which linguistic aspects occupy a rather modest place. MELO (2005) is particularly interesting, because he offers a phonetic transcription of words and phrases in Calon, thus supplying a more precise image of Calon than that provided by Moraes Filho (and von Sowa). A simple joint overview of Moraes Filho’s and Melo’s materials allows us to conclude beyond any doubt, and in spite of the time lapse between the two works, that we are dealing with the same language, a Para-Romani dialect with Romani vocabulary and Brazilian-Portuguese grammar.

As von Sowa stated in his article, Calon “has a close connection with that of Spain” (SOWA 1888: 70), although he was very cautious about quantifying this connection. In my opinion, there is no doubt that Calon is an Iberian Romani dialect, as it shows clear affinities with the rest of Iberian dialects. Of course the mixed nature of these dialects means that lexical isoglosses are practically the only tool available for comparison, but some correspondences are very significant:

- *babanão*, *babanin* (MORAES FILHO 1886), [baba'nõ], [baba'nĩ] (MELO 2005) ‘pretty (m./f.)’, cf. also *babalin/babanin* (FERRARI 2010): cf. Catalan Romani *bómbəno*, *bámbəni* ‘pretty (m./f.)’ (ESCUADERO-ADIEGO 2001); also attested in TRUJILLO (1844) as a Spanish Romani word with the meaning ‘stupid’ (*bambanó*). Outside Iberian Romani, I know only the form *babbanó* ‘good’ in the Romani spoken in Calabria (SORAVIA 1977: 94).
- *balúnas* (MORAES FILHO 1886), *batuni* [sic] (FERRARI 2010) ‘trousers’. Cf. Catalan Romani *baloune*, *bolouni* (see ACKERLEY 1914-15: 123), *esbaluni* (Vallmitjana), *balónas* (ESCUADERO-ADIEGO 2001). Spanish Romani *balunés* (BORROW 1841), *baluñé* (TRUJILLO 1844); well attested in current Spanish Caló: *balunes* (MCLANE 1998), *balumes/balunes* (GORDALIZA 2001), *balúne*^s

12. The two books have been re-printed in a single volume: MORAES FILHO (1981)

13. The original linguistic information on Calon in Oliveira China’s study on the Brazilian Gypsies (CHINA 1936) is very limited and irrelevant to the present discussion.

- (Adiego¹⁴), *balunes/balunis* (MONTROYA-GABARRI 2010: 182). Calão *balunes* (COELHO 1892).
- *bato* (MORAES FILHO 1886) [^h'batʃi], [batu] (MELO 2005) 'father': Already in Sentmenat (*báto*, ADIEGO 2002). Cf. Catalan Romani *battou* (Tathe apud ACKERLEY 1914-15), *bátu* (ESCUDERO-ADIEGO 2001), *batus* (pl.) 'parents' (Vallmitjana); Spanish Romani *bato en bato varó* 'grandfather' (Conde) *bato*, *batú* (TRUJILLO 1844), *bato*, *batu* (BORROW 1841), etc. Calão *bato* (COELHO 1892). Current in present Caló: *bato*, *batu*, *patu* (Adiego), etc.
 - *jundunar* 'soldier' (MORAES FILHO 1886), [ʒũdí 'naru] 'guard' (MELO 2005):¹⁵ cf. Catalan Romani *khundunari* /xundunári/ (JAUBERT DE RÉART 1835), *kundinári* (ESCUDERO-ADIEGO 2001); Spanish Romani *jundunar* /xundunár/ (Conde, BORROW 1841), *jondunal* (TRUJILLO 1844) 'soldier', and recently *xundunár* 'police, Civil Guard' (Adiego), *jundunal*, *jundunar* /xundunál/, /xundunár/ 'Civil Guard' (GORDALIZA 2001), *jundunar/jundurur* (MONTROYA-GABARRI 2010: 178), etc. Calão *hundunal*, with 'aspirate h', as COELHO (1892) expressly points out.
 - [^h'kãʒa] 'hatred': cf. Spanish Romani *conche* 'anger' (BORROW 1841), *xónče* 'hatred' (Adiego).
 - [kuru'piʃi] 'rice': already in Sentmenat (*corpitza*, ADIEGO 2002); cf. Catalan Romani *urpitçà* /urpicá/ (Vallmitjana), Spanish Romani *corpichi* (BORROW 1841), *corpiche*, *arcopiche* (TRUJILLO 1844). And in recent sources: *corpicha*, *curpichí* (GORDALIZA 2001), *corpicha/curpicha* MONTROYA-GABARRI (2010: 171).
 - *cascanão* (MORAES FILHO 1886) 'miser'. Catalan Romani *kaskənó* 'miser' (ESCUDERO-ADIEGO 2001); Spanish Romani *cascañé* 'avaricious' (BORROW 1841).
 - *caximbra* (MORAES FILHO 1886) 'tavern'. Catalan Romani *catxim* /kəçím/ (VALLMITJANA 1908: 249) 'guesthouse'; Spanish Romani *cachima* 'store' (TRUJILLO 1844) *cachimani* 'brandy-shop, tavern', *cachimbo* 'house' (MCLANE 1998).
 - *ternacal* 'brave, courageous' (MORAES FILHO 1886). Spanish Romani *ternejal* 'brave' (TRUJILLO 1844), *ternejá* 'brave' (BORROW 1841), Calão *ternegal* 'brave' (COELHO 1892).

Besides lexical isoglosses, certain derivative and inflectional traits also place Calon in the field of Iberian Romani: In Brazilian Calon we find the suffix m. -/unčo/, f. -/unča/ for the adaptation of loanwords, as in Spanish Romani: *Pedruncho* < *Pedro*; and cf. BORROW 1841, s. v. *uncho* "a particle, which the Gypsies of Estremadura are in the habit of affixing to Spanish words, in order to prevent their being easily understood, e.g. *favoruncho* 'favour', *gozuncho* 'joy', etc." And for the adaptation of foreign verbs, Calon seems to use *-i-sar-*, the typical suffix used

14. Adiego makes reference to the vocabulary, still unpublished, that I collected during my fieldwork mentioned above.

15. On the initial sound, see below.

in Spanish and Catalan Romani: *paguisardar* ‘to pay’ (< *pagar* + *i-sar* + *d*),¹⁶ cf. perhaps Sentmenat, if *supirerasa* is an error for *supise/arasa* (ADIEGO 2002: 83).

The most relevant aspect of Calon to the present discussion is that in this Iberian Romani dialect *š* did not change into *x*. The evidence for the conservation of *š* is overwhelming; here only some examples will be mentioned. I use MELO (2005), where the forms are represented in phonetic transcription:

[ʃe'ro] ‘head’ < CR *šeró*.

[ara'ʃari] ‘father (priest)’ < CR *rašaj*

[ʃu'ko] ‘lean’ < CR *šukó*. Cf. supra examples.

[bri'ʃidu] ‘winter, cold, rain’ < CR *brišind*. Spanish Romani *brijindal* ‘rain’ (BORROW 1841), *briginda* ‘rain’ (TRUJILLO 1844), *brijindela* ‘rain’ (MCLANE 1998), /brixinda/ ‘rain’ (Adiego).

It is also interesting that the rare sound *ž*, which in Spanish Romani (Calão included) and Catalan Romani becomes *x*, is also conserved in Calon. The clearest example is the verb ‘to wait, to expect’, which in Spanish Romani appears as *ujarar* (TRUJILLO 1844), *ugarar* (Conde), but in Calon has the form [uzax'da] < *užar-d*, the preterite of CR *užar-el* (in different Romani dialects: Crimean, Prekmurski, East Slovak, Hungarian Vend, Romungro, Veršend). Moreover, Calon allows us to postulate an original *ž* for the word for ‘soldier’ in Iberian Romani: as we have seen above, the Calon form recorded by Melo is [zūdi'naru], vs. the Catalan Romani and Spanish Romani (plus Calão) forms, which have initial *x*.¹⁷

The sounds *š* from *š* and *ž* from *ž* coexist in Brazilian Romani with *x/k* coming from CR *x*:

[istʃira'kaj]¹⁸ ‘shoe’ < CR *tirax*

[xa'bēgi] ‘soap, food’ < CR *xabén* ‘food’

[xaj'ax] ‘to eat’ < CR *xa-* ‘to eat’

[kaʃa'xdax] ‘to burn’ < *xačar-* ‘to burn’ in northern Romani dialects (BOREZKY-IGLA 1994: 223): Catalan Romani: *se cacharela* ‘it burns’ (ROCHAS 1876: 299), *kəčərá* ‘to burn’ (ESCUADERO-ADIEGO 2001). Spanish Romani *jacharar* ‘to burn’ (Conde, BORROW 1841, TRUJILLO 1844), also in current-day Spanish Romani: *jacharar* (MONTROYA-GABARRI 2010:184).

16. As Matras (apud FERRARI 2010) points out, in Calon the verbs –conjugated in Portuguese, given the mixed character of the dialect– are systematically formed on the Romani preterite stem.

17. This rules out the etymology suggested by FUENTES CAÑIZARES (2010: 185) for *jundunar* (from *xindó* in the sense of ‘bastard’).

18. MELO (2005) gives the form [istʃira'ka i ʃinu'yi] ‘sapato, sandália’ (‘shoe, sandal’) and [istʃira'ka i ba'ri] ‘bota’ (‘boot’), but very probably these sequences should be interpreted as [istʃira'kaj ʃinu'yi] < **tiraxáj ʃinoři* lit. ‘little shoe’ and [istʃira'kaj ba'ri] < **tiraxáj bari* lit. ‘big shoe’. For *tiraxaj*, cf. Spanish Romani *tirajai* pl. ‘shoes’ (BORROW 1841). The singular *tirax* is also attested in Calon: *tiraques* (pl. on **tiraque*: MORAES FILHO 1886), *istiraque* (FERRARI 2010:333).

3.2. Catalan Romani from Spanish Romani? (cf. BORETZKY 1992, ADIEGO 2002)

The testimony of Calon, then, provides decisive arguments against postulating a Proto-Iberian-Romani change of *š* (and *ž*) to *x*. This change must have taken place after the constitution of a Portuguese Romani as a separate dialect. This dialect was later transferred to Brazil,¹⁹ it apparently disappeared in Portugal, where it was replaced by Calão, a variety of Spanish Romani.

To go back to Catalan Romani, it is clear that the explanation of the presence of *x* < CR *š*, *ž* as a Proto-Iberian-Romani change must be ruled out. After also dismissing an internally induced change—a very remote possibility—we formulate the following hypothesis: *Catalan Romani, as we know it from 1830 to the present, in fact derives from (a variety) of Spanish Romani.*²⁰ That is to say, this Romani dialect does not come directly from the Romani spoken by the first Gypsies arriving in Catalonia in the fifteenth century, but it has been transferred from Spanish-speaking areas to Catalonia after the sixteenth century, when the change of *š* and *ž* took place both in Spanish and in Spanish Romani. Once transferred to Catalonia, although phonetically influenced by Spanish, this dialect was still a non-mixed variant, as the conservation of verbal inflection in JAUBERT DE RÉART'S (1835) corpus shows. When it became a Para-Romani, mixed language, the grammatical part was provided by the new contact-language, Catalan.

From a historical point of view, this hypothesis gains support from the policies in force in Catalonia regarding Gypsy populations: like the rest of the countries in the confederation known as the Crown of Aragon, until the eighteenth century Catalonia systematically expelled Gypsy people, as the legislation shows (see the excellent work by GÓMEZ ALFARO 2009 for an exhaustive collection of legal texts), whereas Castile favoured forced assimilation, alternating with some attempts at extermination (LEBLON 1993). Although the enactment of laws against the Gypsies by the Catalan Parliament during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries questions the effectiveness of this policy, there must have been large-scale displacement of Gypsies from and to Catalonia. The neighbouring Spanish-speaking kingdom of Aragon followed the same policy, and so it is conceivable that Aragonese and Catalan Gypsies moved back and forth inside these areas and also to areas of Castile. The presence of apparent Catalan loanwords in the Caló spoken in Castile: *cornil* 'rabbit' < cat. *conill*; *orenyes* 'ears' < cat. *orelles* (Caló from Palencia, GORDALIZA 2001); *cuina* 'kitchen' < cat. *cuina*; *cigañis* 'figs' < Cat. *figa*²¹ (Caló from Logroño, MONTOYA-GABARRI 2010: 174) could be attributed to these population movements.

When Catalonia lost its political institutions after its defeat in 1714, the Castilian policy of assimilation and obligatory sedentarization was applied in all parts of Spain. Perhaps it was at this point that the dialect that we know as Catalan

19. The migrations of Portuguese Gypsies to Brazil, either voluntary or forced, have been studied in detail by CHINA (1936); see also the recent works by Elisa Maria Lopes da Costa (COSTA 2005) and by Ricardo Corrêa Teixeira and Frans Moonen (in TEIXEIRA 2008: 15-32) among others.

20. Cf. BORETZKY (1992: 30).

21. Note the suffix for loanwords *-anji-*, typical of Catalan Romani.

Romani became properly established in Catalonia. The testimony of Sentmenat's vocabulary may be crucial: in my edition and analysis of this very important document for the history of Romani in the Iberian Peninsula, I discussed its position between Spanish Romani and Catalan Romani, and I also considered the problem of $\check{s} > x$ that is the focus of the present paper. Now, I am convinced that, as already suggested by BORETZKY (1992), present-day Catalan Romani comes directly from Spanish Romani, and that Sentmenat's vocabulary should not be situated in a sort of limbo, but is, in fact, an example of this Catalan Romani arising from the Spanish Romani that came to Catalonia during the first decades of the eighteenth century.

All the traits present in Sentmenat's vocabulary are consistent with this view. Phonologically, it coincides with the first documents of Catalan Romani from the nineteenth century: $\check{s} > x$ together with $th, tj > ts$, final $v > f$, fortition expressed via gemination, etc. The verbal morphology is also still Romani, as in Catalan Romani of the nineteenth century. But Sentmenat's vocabulary also shows the presence of Spanish loanwords (*cielos, cuñado*) and the informant seems to have been interviewed in Spanish, not in Catalan. More complex scenarios such as those suggested in ADIEGO (2002) are obviously possible, but perhaps it is preferable to consider Sentmenat's vocabulary not as an exceptional confluence of varied circumstances, but merely as the oldest manifestation of Catalan Romani, a dialect that arrived in Catalonia from a Spanish-speaking zone not long before Sentmenat had the opportunity of recording it.

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