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### Liquid sounds in the Gypsy language<sup>1)</sup>

1. At the outset we must stress that there now exists no single and uniform Gypsy language, but a great many of dialects more or less similar to one another. Their common source is the Old Indian language, while the medial stages are not known exactly. Since we possess no historical monuments concerning the Gypsy people, their original abodes, emigration to Iran and further migration movements towards Europe, all these facts must be concluded from linguistic particulars. The oldest monuments of Gypsy language reach back to the XVI<sup>th</sup> century. The form of the language of those times does not differ very much from that which we meet nowadays. Its whole development from Old Indian till now is based only on hypotheses deduced from its analysis and comparison with the modern Indian languages. This analysis shows us that the Gypsy language developed its peculiarities, in a considerable measure, beyond the area of its native country and, as every colonial language, retains more archaisms than the present Aryan languages of India. On the other hand it underwent changes under the influence of various languages of the countries through which Gypsies passed. These influences were the stronger, because Gypsies, as a nomadic tribe, created no culture and left no literature in the course of centuries. When they adopted products of culture, they accepted, together with new things, alien

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<sup>1)</sup> Abbreviations: Rom. = Romani, Gypsy language in general; Skr. = Sanskrit; Pkr. = Prākṛit; Hi. = Hindī; Bg. = Bengali; Kāśm. = Kāśmīrī; Eur. = European; Arm. = Armenian; Syr. = Syrian.

words. It is to be supposed that they behaved in a similar way in their original country India. There also they were a wandering people.

In the literary languages of modern India there are two groups of words. To the one group belong words the present form of which arose from Old Indian as a result of the operation of the phonetic laws, these are *tadbhava* words; the other, the so called *tatsama* words, are derived from Sanskrit as the standard literary language of India.

Gypsies did not produce any literary language and so they did not borrow *tatsama* words consciously from Sanskrit, but nevertheless they accepted different words from the languages of more educated social groups. This explains many inconsistencies of Gypsy phonetics, as well as the fact that it is difficult even now to denote exactly the birth place of the Gypsy language, because it proves to have many characteristics in common with various dialects of modern India.

The Gypsy's nomadic way of life brought about still other results, important for the phonetics of their language. The phonetic changes in a language are the consequences of inaccurate inheriting of the language by successive generations. The quick development of these changes is restrained by the influence of community and especially by its product, the literary language. The influences of the school and press remove the peculiarities of dialects, and the literary language standardized in writing prevents quick changes in pronunciation. All these factors were lacking in the development of the Gypsy language. Originally Gypsies had, it is true, a strong tribal organization, in consequence of economic conditions, however, they were obliged to divide into smaller and smaller groups and, as a result of the fact that there was scarcely any communication between these groups which were constantly coming into contact with new communities, new dialects were formed. They have no common language which could make possible mutual understanding among them and therefore the number of Gypsy dialects is now unlimited.

2. The above facts explain many phonetic peculiarities of Gypsy language also in the sphere of the so called liquid sounds.

These sounds, viz. *r* and *l* have a special situation in the human speech. They stand on the confines between consonants and vowels, and are classified accordingly into one phonetic system or another. Both of them appear in all Indo-European languages. Only the Indo-Iranian group had not the sound *l*, but it appeared in later evolutionary stages of this group. Both sounds may have various shades according to the place and way of articulation. Each of these sounds easily becomes changed into the other. Finally they are sounds most frequently concerned in metatheses and dissimilations.

3. In Sanskrit both the sound *r* and the sound *l* are represented. They may be either consonants or vowels. *r* is very frequent in Vedic dialect and is a continuation of Indo-European *r* or *l*. *l*, on the contrary is rare, it appears rather in classic Sanskrit, probably because of the growing influences of forms of the popular language. The Sanskrit *r* was a cerebral sound; Indian grammarians make no mention of trembling of the tongue during its pronunciation. As to the sound *l* they reckon it among dentals. In Vedic dialect we find also another kind of this sound namely the cerebral *l*, appearing instead of *ḷ* or *ḷh*.

4. Sanskrit as a dead language was not able to develop further. However, it was still used as the language of literature and learning, and its sounds were pronounced according to the fixed phonetic rules. On the contrary folk dialects, the Prakrits, show many phonetic changes. The supposition is that the cause was here the influence of different linguistic substrata. Folk Indo-Aryan languages never formed a uniform language and therefore their phonetic changes are not always identical. It is difficult, however, to ascertain which of the known Prakritic dialects is the basis of the present Gypsy language. It is because the Prakrits were handed down to us when they had already been used as literary languages for a long time. Nevertheless they prove to have some features in common which the Gypsy language has also. Among the phonetic changes the following refer to liquid sounds: vocalic *r* and *l* disappear changing to the vowels *a*, *i*, *u*, or consonantal *r*, *l* preceded or followed by a vowel. *r* becomes *u*

mostly when neighbouring with labials, e. g. Skr. *prcchati* 'aks', Rom. *pučhel*. The consonantal *r* and *l* are retained when they stand between two vowels or at the beginning of the word. In eastern dialects (Magadhī), *r* changes to *l*, *rāja* > *laja* 'king'. Gypsy language does not follow this rule and keeps its *r*, *ray* 'master'. *l* becomes *n* or *ṇ* sporadically. This change comes in different Gypsy dialects.

Through the simplification of consonantal groups a considerable number of the sounds *r* and *l* disappeared in Prakrits, and thus:

*rka, kra* > *kka*, Skr. *varkara* 'kid', Pkr. *vakkara*; Skr. *cakra* 'circle', Pkr. *cakka*;

*rga, gra* > *gga*, Skr. *mārg-* 'to seek', Pkr. *maggai*; Skr. *grāma* 'village', Pkr. *gāma*;

*jra* > *jja*, Skr. *vajra* 'thunder', Pkr. *vajja*;

*rṇa* > *ṇṇa*, Skr. *kaṇṇa* 'ear', Pkr. *kaṇṇa*;

*rpa, pra* > *ppa*, Skr. *sarpa* 'serpent', Pkr. *sappa*;

*rba, bra, bhra, rbha* > *bba, bbha*, Skr. *garbha* 'embryo', Pkr. *gabbha*, Skr. *bhrātar* 'brother', Pkr. *bhādā*;

*rta, rtha, tra* > *tta, ttha* or *ṭṭa, ṭṭha*, Skr. *kīrti* 'glory', Pkr. *kitti*, Skr. *artha* 'affair', Pkr. *attha*;

*rda, dra* > *dda, ḍḍa*, Skr. *gardabha* 'ass', Pkr. *gaddaha*.

The same concerns consonantal groups, containing *l*. It disappears in them,

*lka, kla* > *kka*, Skr. *śukla* 'bright', Pkr. *sukka*;

*lga* > *gga*, *lpa, pla* > *ppa*, Skr. *alpa* 'little', Pkr. *appa*;

*lba* > *bba*, Skr. *kilbiṣa* 'fault', Pkr. *kibbiṣa*;

*lma, mla* > *mma*, Skr. *mleccha*, 'non-Aryan', Pkr. *mēccha*.

In the modern Indian languages double consonants are reduced to single ones and the preceding vowel is prolonged, Hi. *rāt* 'night', Pkr. *ratti*, Skr. *rātrī*. Together with the prolongation of the vowel very often comes nasalization. This is frequent in the speech of common people. Hence we have forms: Hi. *māṅṇā* 'to beg, to ask', Pkr. *maggai*; Hi. *nīṇḍ* 'sleep', Pkr. *niddā*.

The above transformations concern also Gypsy language. Here also simplification of consonantal groups appears, with the exception of *-tr-*, *-dr-* in the middle of the words and initial *tr-*, *dr-* *pr-*, *bhr-*. These groups on the whole underwent no assi-

milation. That is why in Gypsy dialects we have on the one hand the forms: Eur. Rom. *bakaro*, *bakro* 'sheep', Hi. *bakrā* 'goat'; *mang-* 'to beg, to ask', Hi. *māṅgnā*; *gav* 'village', Hi. *gānv*; *kan* 'ear', Hi. *kān*; *sap* 'serpent', Hi. *sānp*; *khabni* 'pregnant', Pkr. *gabhinī*, Hi. *gābhin*, on the other forms with the unchanged consonantal group containing *r*: Syr. Rom. *potrā* 'son' beside, Hi. *pūt*, Pkr. *putta*, Skr. *putra*; Arm. Rom. *terin* 'three', Syr. Rom. *tārān*, Eur. Rom. *trin*, beside Hi. *tin*, Pkr. *tiṇṇi*, Skr. *trīṇi*; Eur. Rom. *drakh* 'grape', Syr. Rom. *idrāk*, beside Hi. *dākh*, Skr. *drākṣa*; Eur. Rom. *phral* 'brother', beside Hi. *bhāi*, Pkr. *bhādā*, Skr. *bhrātar*.

This characteristic feature distinguishes Gypsy dialects from all dialects of Central and Southern India. Only North-Western dialects, viz. Kāfirī and Dard keep the Old Indian consonantal groups unchanged. On these grounds Miklosich and later Pischel and Grierson concluded that the original country of the Gypsies was North-Western India. Turner<sup>2)</sup> maintains that Romani is in principle a Central Indian dialect which was early transferred to the North-West. But another explanation is also possible, that the dialect of the Gypsies arose from the mixing of several dialects with various phonetic peculiarities.

5. The diminished number of liquid sounds caused by simplification of consonantal groups is recompensated by the rising of new ones. This tendency showed itself already in the period of Old Indian. There are words in Sanskrit in which a certain fluctuation between *ḍ* and *ḷ* is observable, e. g. *nala* — *naḍa* 'reed'; *biḍala* — *birāla* < *bilāla* 'cat'; *guḍa* — *gula* 'molasses'. From the Vedic dialect one may mention fluctuation between *ḍ* and *ḷ*. The tendency to the exchange of the intervocalic *ḍ* > *ḷ* is distinct in Prakrits. Individual dialects, however, behave differently in these changes. In principle intervocalic tenues become mediae, dentals become cerebrals and these very often change further to the cerebral *ḷ*. In northern dialects *ḷ* was a dental sound, not a cerebral one; Skr. *krīḍati* 'plays', Pkr. *kṛḷai*. *ḷ* and *r*

<sup>2)</sup> Turner R. L., *The position of Romani in Indo-Aryan*, 1926.



interchange very often because they have the same place of articulation. The same inclination to the transition from dentals and cerebrals to liquids may be seen in Gypsy dialects. Most probably, however, this transition took place beyond the area of India because individual groups of Gypsy dialects developed independently. But since Gypsy dialects were written down very late, they were subjected to the influences of different languages and as they were written down often not by linguists but occasional collectors, their parallels to the intervocalic dentals and cerebrals, and to the initial *ḍ* do not prove to be strictly regular. These changes took place probably in the countries of Iran and therefore it is possible that the influence of Iranian languages also worked here. We know similar case in Persian language, where the lateral sound *l*, unknown in the Old Iranian period of the language, arose from the group *rd*; Persian *dil* 'heart', Avestan *zərəd*, analogical to Eur. Rom. *yilo*, Skr. *hṛdaya*.

6. In Iran also the division of Gypsies into two groups took place<sup>3)</sup> — the southern group the representatives of which are Syrian Gypsies and the northern group to which Armenian and European Gypsies belong. In these three groups of dialects parallels to the Sanskritic dental and cerebral consonants are as follows: in Syrian dialect *ṭ* in the middle of the word remained unchanged, *ālōs* 'flour', while in Armenian and European dialects it became *r*, Arm. Rom. *arav*, Eur. Rom. *aro*, Hi. *aṭā*. The Sanskritic *t* has in Syr. Rom. the shape of *r* and in northern dialects *l*; Syr. Rom. *bar* 'brother', Eur. Rom. *phral*, Arm. Rom. *phal*, Skr. *bhrātar*, Hi. *bhā*.

To the Sanskritic *ḍ*, *d*, *dh*, in the middle of the word corresponds in all Gypsy dialects *l*, Skr. *krīḍati* 'plays', Syr. Rom. *kelār*, Arm. Rom. *khelel*, Eur. Rom. *khel-*, Hi. *khelnā*; Skr. *madhu* 'honey', Arm. Rom. *mahl*, Eur. Rom. *mol* 'wine'; Skr. *guḍa* 'molasses', Syr. Rom. *gulda* 'sweet', Eur. Rom. *gulo*.

The Sanskritic initial *ḍ* remained *d* in Syrian dialect, Eur. Romani changed it to *r*, and in Armenian dialect every *d* and *ḍ*

<sup>3)</sup> Sampson J. *The dialect of the Gypsies of Wales*, Oxford, 1926, § 85.

became *l*. Hence we have: Skr. *ḍoma* 'the name of a wandering tribe', Syr. Rom. *dom*, Arm. Rom. *lom*, Eur. Rom. *rom* 'man, Gypsy', but beside these also Armenian forms: *las* 'ten', Skr. *daśa* Syr. Rom. *das*, Eur. Rom. *deš*; Arm. Rom. *lui* 'two', Eur. Rom. *duy*; Arm. Rom. *lekheḷ* 'to see', Eur. Rom. *dikh-*, Skr. *ḍṛś*, Hi. *dekhnā*; Arm. Rom. *leval* 'God', Eur. Rom. *devel*, Skr. *devatā*.

In European dialects *r* which arose from cerebral sounds had a cerebral character, different from *r* continuing the Sanskrit *r*. B. Gilliat-Smith<sup>4</sup>) who was the first to point out the difference, marked this sound by *r̥*. The difference in pronunciation of these two kinds of *r* is observed by the Balkan Gypsies especially in Bulgaria. Generally, however, the pronunciation of liquid consonants in Gypsy dialects is under the permanent influence of the analogical sounds in the dominating languages.

7. The process discussed above of the transformation of dentals and cerebrals into *r* and *l*, although accomplished already beyond the boundaries of India, has its parallels in modern Indian dialects. It continues linguistic tendencies which appear in Prākritis. Hi. *talaya* 'pond', corresponds to the Prākritic forms as Ardha-Māgadhī *taḷava*, Jaina Māhārāṣṭrī *taḷāga*, Māhārāṣṭrī *taḷāa*, Apabhraṃśa *talāyu*. All these forms arose from Skr. *taḍāga*. But already in this form in the lenization of the cerebral sound in the middle of the word we see the influence of folk dialects. The original form was *taṭāka* 'lake, pond'.

Gujarātī *kōḷō* Apabhraṃśa *kōlau*, Skr. *kroḍaka* 'breast', Eur. Rom. *koli(n)*.

Hi. *solah* 'sixteen', Apabhraṃśa *sōḷaha*, Skr. *ṣoḍaśan*.

Hi. *gyarah* 'eleven', Apabhraṃśa *ēgyaraha*, Skr. *ekādaśan*.

Likewise the transition *l > n* is known in modern Indian dialects, Hi. *non* 'salt', beside *lon*, Skr. *lavaṇa*, Apabhraṃśa *loṇa*, Eur. Rom. *lon*, Syr. Rom. *lōn*, the dialect of Karači Gypsies *noḷ*.

In Bengālī and Oriyā the folk pronunciation of the initial *l* is in almost every case *n*. The name of the town Lucknow, Skr. *Lakṣmaṇapura*, is in Bengālī *nakhaur*. Also the interchange

<sup>4</sup>) JGLS, n. s. IV, pp. 292—296.

of the sounds *r* and *l* is very frequent in modern dialects of India, e. g. Bihārī (folk form) *phar* 'fruit', instead of *phal*. We meet the same in Kāśmīrī.

8. The only endeavour to explain the phonetic transition from dentals and cerebrals to liquid *r*, *l* was made by Benfey<sup>5)</sup>. He describes this process as follows: after the dental sounds there often stands a parasitical *r* under the influence of which the dental becomes cerebral. Then this new sound takes up the whole consonantal group and changes it to *r*; and as *r* is in a close relation with *l*, it may finally take the shape of this consonant. This description though literally quoted by Miklosich<sup>6)</sup> and B. Gilliat-Smith<sup>7)</sup> is strikingly naive. Although we are still unable to explain exactly the causes and mechanism of the phonetic changes, in this case, however, we can point to the nature of this process. In all the changes discussed we observe the advancing decline of the force of the expression in pronunciation of this sound. Tenuis *t* changes to media *d*. The tendency to cerebralization, by which term we understand the curving of the tongue with its tip towards the top of the palate, appeared very likely as a result of the contact with people who had quite different system of articulation. Since cerebral sounds are considerably widespread in Dravidian languages, we suppose that they were just these languages that gave the different substratum. In consequence of the gradual progress of Aryans from North-Western to South-East India the influence of this substratum grew. This fact is confirmed even by Indian grammarians. Patañjali says that the increasing spread of the sound *l* near *r* or instead of it is a non-Aryan (*mleccha*) feature. In Prakrits we observe the simplification of consonantal groups and further decline of the force of expression. The extreme stage is represented in the Māhārāṣṭrī dialect where intervocalic consonants completely disappear, Skr. *mṛta* 'dead', Ardha-Māgadhī *maḍa*, Māhārāṣṭrī *mua*. Gypsy dialects do not go so far. The intervocalic *d* though

<sup>5)</sup> Gött. Gel. Anz. 1855.

<sup>6)</sup> *Über die Mundarten und Wanderungen der Zigeuner Europas IX*, Wien.

<sup>7)</sup> JGLS n. s. IV, p. 292.



weakened, survives as *r* (in Syrian Romani) or *l* (Eur. Romani). We can imagine the mechanism of this change if we consider that *r* in Old Indian was not a trembling sound. Strictly speaking this is only a supposition but a probable one, because Indian grammarians, who described the phonetic characteristics of the sounds in Sanskrit very accurately, do not mention the trembling of the tongue when they are speaking about the phonem *r*. If we shift the tongue from the alveolar position towards the soft palate to pronounce the strong cerebral *ṛ*, the tongue does not touch the palate exactly, and a gap arises between them. This is just the position which the tongue occupies in pronouncing *r*. The fluctuation between *r* and *l* is still the characteristic feature of some modern Indian dialects. Gypsies have this sound even now in some Balkan dialects, the prove of which is the diversity in marking it, e. g. *hanro* — *hanlo* 'sword'. This sound marked *r* is similar to the cerebral *ṛ* and *ṛh* in Hindī and Bengālī.

9. It was in such a stage that the Gypsies brought their language when they came to Europe. In consequence of further development and under the influence of surrounding languages changes continue to follow. *r* arose in many cases from the Sanskritic group *nd*, *nḍ* and this nasal sound remained as anusvāra. This nasalization, however, is inconsistent, it comes in one dialect and does not in another, not always according to etymology. Sometimes in one dialect the double form is used, e. g. in Lovari dialect *maro* — *manro* 'bread'. The first is the colloquial form, the other an emphatic one. Both are derived probably from Skr. *maṇḍaka* 'a kind of baked dough', Arm. Rom. *malav*. Where the form with the nasal is the only one, between *n* and *r* there appears the dental sound *d*. Its rising may be explained by the mechanical activity of the organs of the speech alone, namely owing to the early closure in the mouth there arises for a moment a position typical for a voiced dental sound *d* as a link between *n* and *r* (*mandro*). No process of this kind took place in Sanskrit and, as it is frequent in European languages, Greek *ἀνδρες*, French *gendre*, Polish *Hen(d)ryk*, we may suppose that it arose in Gypsy dialects under the influence of the surrounding languages (Greek, Slavonic). This supposition seems to be confirmed

by the fact that the largest number of forms with the group *ndr* is to be seen in the dialects of Polish Gypsies, *mandro*, *yandro* 'egg', *kandro* 'thorn', *xandro* 'sabre', *mindro* 'my'. An analogical case may be observed with the group *mr*, which develops in *-mbr-*, Eur. Rom. *ambrol* 'pear', from Persian *amrūd* or Skr. *āmrāta*. The insertion of a dental appears also in the group *-sr-*, Eur. Rom. *bistrel* 'forgets', Skr. *vismarati*, Pāli *vissarati*. The group *-sr-* is the result of the dropping out of *a*. The concurrence of these consonants is met in Sanskrit, while in Prakrits an assimilation in *-ss-* follows. In modern Indian languages in consequence of disappearance of vowels and after the adoption of *tatsama* words the group *sr* is represented again. The avoidance of this group in Gypsy languages is caused by the influence of languages in which it is not tolerated. Most probably it is the influence of Slavonic languages. In the dialect of Welsh Gypsies beside the form *bister* another without *t* is in use — *biser* (< *bisr*).

The sound *r* influenced by surrounding languages may undergo various further modifications. In Slavonic countries, where the vocalic *r* exists, Gypsy dialects also possess *r*, Czech Rom. *brli* 'bee', *krmo* 'worm'. This new *r* has no connection with the Sanskritic *r*. The form *krmo* is by no means derived from Skr. *krmi* because we have *kimi* in Prakrit; it is borrowed from Persian *kirm*. In the Czech dialect of Romani we see also the prolonged *r*, *čoro* 'poor', *xřixil* 'pea'. In Ruthenian and Russian dialects *r* is sometimes palatalised, *rat* 'night', *rašay* 'priest'.

In the dialect of Welsh Gypsies we have the voiceless *r*; it is marked by Sampson *r*<sup>8)</sup>. It appears only in one word *rod* 'to seek' and is compared with Skr. *ṛhūṇḍh*, Hi. *ṛhūṇḍnā*. Probably, however, it was not the original Sanskritic aspiration that caused the loss of the voiced character of *r* but the influence of Welsh phonetics, because the word *rod* appears almost in all continental dialects with the voiced *r*. In the Welsh dialect of Romani we have also the transition *r* > *ž*. In this case again we have only one example: *žož* 'strength, force', general Romani *zor*, from Persian *zōr*, and therefore the connection between this change and the facts in the

<sup>8)</sup> *Op. c.*, § 1.

dialect Šina in North-Western India, where likewise *r* became *ž*, is doubtful. It is rather the influence of English pronunciation where *r* is not rolled, and the group *dr* for instance is pronounced in a way similar to *dž*. In the Russian dialect there is an example of the voiceless character of *r* and its transition to a spirant, *pšat* 'brother' < \**prhal* < *phral*.

The disappearance of *r* is very frequent. The causes of this disappearance are not always the same. The widest range of this process may be seen in the so called Vlach dialects, where *r* in the middle of the word is dropped out as the second element of the consonantal group, *ando* < *andro* 'inside', *pe* < *pre* 'on', *lesko* < *leskro* 'his', *lako* < *lakro* 'her', *lengo* < *lengro* 'their', *pinžarel* < *prinžarel* 'recognises'. We cannot, however, decide whether the causes were here evolutionary tendencies already inherited in India, namely simplification of consonantal groups in Prākrits, or if it was the influence of the surrounding languages. The latter possibility is more probable. In other cases the disappearance of *r* is not so frequent. In the Welsh dialect we have the disappearance of *r* if it is followed or preceded by the vowel *i* or the consonant *y*, *bakičo* 'lamb' (< *bakričo*), *payas* 'joke' (< *peryas*). *kial* 'cheese' (< *kiral*), *lindi* 'sleep' (< *lindri*). In consequence of the palatalization *ri* > *ři* > *i* (*y*). *r* followed by a consonant also shows the tendency to disappear, Welsh Rom. *kedō* < *kerdo* 'made', *kokorō* < *korkoro* 'alone' *kela* < *kerela* 'does'. Though the double form *korkoro* — *kokoro* comes also in continental dialects, the greatest number of examples of this disappearance come from England. The cause is here the weak pronunciation or the muteness of the English *r* before consonants.

The prosthetic *r* appears only in the Welsh Romani, *ručō* 'high', the continental form *učō*, *vučo*.

In German dialects *r* appears sometimes in the forms of the instrumental ending in *-sa*, *-ca*, making *-sar*, *car*. It arose in consequence of clear pronunciation of the German *r* which closely resembles *a*.

10. Articulation of the sound *l* undergoes similar modifications. Gypsies had already adopted the fluctuation between *r* and *l* in India.

Among Slavonic people, especially Polish and Ruthenian, we see in Gypsy dialects the hard *l*, marked *ł*, Russian Rom. *pšat*, Polish Rom. *rakłoro* 'little boy'. Since the Polish *ł* becomes more and more a non-syllabic *u* (*u*), in the dialect of Polish Gypsies we also have the same pronunciation, which leads even to the complete disappearance of *u*, therefore we have the forms: *rakoro*, *jukoro* 'doggie' (< *jukuoro*). In Polish Romani dialects we meet *ł* instead of *l* even before front vowels, *teske* 'to him'.

The palatalization of *l* has also a wide range. Generally it has two degrees. The first is the transition *l* > *l'*, chiefly before the vowel *i*. The other is the complete disappearance of the lateral element *l* and its transition to *y*. Both these changes are most probably the result of the influence of European languages, but it is necessary to note that in India they are not unknown either. In Kāšmīrī *l* before *ü*, *y* (denoting palatal sounds) changes to *j*, *ly* > *y* > *j*, *kral* 'potter', *kröjü* 'potter's wife'.

The form *l'* we may observe in Slavonic countries and the complete disappearance of *l* (*ly* < *y*) in Germanic ones; Polish Rom. *mułas* 'died', German and English Rom. *muyas*.

The disappearance of *l* before the consonantal group may also take place, Welsh Rom. *pāpalē* < *palpale* 'again'.

Similarly to the voiceless *r*, *l* may also lose its voiced character when neighbouring with voiceless consonants. In Gypsy dialects the strong aspiration at the beginning of the word leads to the loss of the voiced character of consonants. Examples of the voiceless *l*, as well as *r* are to be found only in the Welsh Romani (*l*<sup>9</sup>): *lat* 'to find', *loko* 'light'. But as the corresponding examples in other dialects have the voiced *l*, it is probable that in this case we have also to do with the influence of the Welsh language (*ll*).

The double *l*, which is often noted in the dialects of the Gypsies in Germany, has no phonetic but only orthographical value. According to the German orthography it denotes only the short character of the preceding vowel, *dinēllo* 'stupid', *birēllin* 'chamber' (< *pirali*).

<sup>9</sup>) Sampson, *op. c.*, § 1.

11. In consequence of the similarity of their articulation *l* and *n* interchange very often, especially when followed by the vowel *i*, Eur. Rom. *lindra* 'sleep', Skr. *nidrā*, Pkr. *nidda*, Hi. *nīnd*, Kāśm. *nēndār* (*tatsama* word); Paspatis notes in the Syrian dialect of Gypsies the form *nendir*. In the Eur. Rom. form the Sanskritic group *dr* is retained and a nasal sound appears before it as in Kāśmīri and then the initial *ni-* becomes *li-*, as a result of dissimilation.

Often the exchanges *l* — *r* — *n* cannot be embraced in phonetic laws, they are to some extent spontaneous. They are arising on psychological ground. These exchanges are frequent in colloquial speech in consequence of inaccurate articulation. It is so called mispronounce. These processes which we classify as metatheses, dissimilations, and assimilations, fix themselves in the general language comparatively seldom, because the social language performs the function of a standard. They appear rather in the speech of common people than in the literary language. In Gypsy dialects the written standard is lacking and therefore every mispronounce, which we call an error, may be adopted as a correct expression in the language, when an individual using it parts with the larger group of his countrymen and establishes his own family. He hands down to following generations individual features of his own language as dialectical characteristics. We must, however, take into account still another point in this matter. We do not always get our knowledge of Gypsy dialects at first hand but more frequently from material noted by collectors. Since they do not know the language with which they are dealing, exactly, they make mistakes and hand them down as the characteristic features of the language.

The material is here abundant and so I give only a few examples: in the Lovari dialect the word expressing a greeting is *droboytu* and sometimes *dobroytu* 'good morning, welcome'. A Gypsy asked by me what difference there was between these two expressions, replied that the first form sounds better in Lovari, though he knew that the word is of Czech origin (from *dobře jitro*). Perhaps he felt the analogy with the words containing the unchanged Sanskritic initial group *dr*: Eur. Rom. *drak* 'grape' Skr. *drākṣā*; *drab* 'medicine', Skr. *dravya*; *drabar-*



'to tell fortune', and formed the pronunciation according to them. Often also another motive governs these changes. Romani is used sometimes as a secret language unintelligible to the uninitiated. Gypsies distort certain words consciously in order not to be understood by undesirable persons. This refers especially to borrowed words.

Another example: Skr. *nidāgha* 'heat, summer', has in Gypsy dialects parallels: Greek Rom. *nilay*, Hungarian and Czech Rom. *linay* (metathesis), German Rom. *niyall* (metathesis *y* — *l*), English Rom. *lilay* (assimilation), Lovari *milay* (dissimilation).

Skr. *bhrātar* survived also in different shapes: Greek Rom. *pral*, *plal*, English, Armenian Rom. *phal*, Russian Rom. *pšal*, Spanish Rom. *plal*, *plan*. The dialect of the Gypsies in Spain in consequence of their close intercourse with the native people entirely conformed its own phonetics to that of the Spanish language, e. g. Eur. Rom. *raklo* 'boy', is in their dialect *lakron*.

We must say, however, that metatheses and dissimilations, especially of liquid sounds, existed already in the Prākritic dialects, Māgadhī *dīhara* < *dīraha* 'long', Skr. *dirgha*, Ardha Māgadhī *rahassa* < *harassa* 'short', Skr. *hrasva*. They appear also in modern Indian dialects, Hi. and Bg. *non* 'salt', Eur. Rom. *lon*, dialect of Gypsies in Iran *nol*; Hi. and Bg. *bilār* 'cat', Skr. *biḍala*. So we see that the Gypsies already brought the tendency to those changes from India and then increased it because they had no standard literary language of their own. On the other hand their language conformed to the patterns of different languages of the world.

12.\* The picture of the liquid sounds in the present Gypsy dialects illustrates clearly the situation of these dialects and allows us to draw conclusions as to their future fate. These dialects, though they retain clear tendencies to the Indian form of development, for lack of any cultural support will adapt themselves more and more to the surrounding influences till they perish completely.

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