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THE BAYASH IN CROATIA:  
ROMANIAN VERNACULARS IN BARANJA  
AND MEDJIMURJE<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** In the Balkans, apart from the Romanian communities historically inhabiting the countries which border on present-day Romania, the Romanian language is also spoken by other groups, one being the Bayash — small Roma-like communities speaking different vernaculars of the Romanian language and dispersed throughout Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, with smaller numbers in Macedonia, Greece, Ukraine, Slovakia and Slovenia. They do not speak Romani and the vast majority are bilingual, actively using their native vernacular and the idiom of the local community in which they live.

This paper offers an anthropological linguistic perspective on the Bayash from Croatia, namely on the communities from Baranja and Medjmurje, on the basis of the material audiorecorded in 2006 during two sessions of fieldwork researches. The linguistic material recorded in Baranja amounts to almost 20 hours. There we visited three Bayash settlements (Darda, Beli Manastir and Torjanci), whose inhabitants are divided into *Munteni* and *Ardeleni*, on a mainly, but not exclusively, linguistic basis, with the *Munteni* group being much better represented and their *Muntean* idiom having a great influence on the *Ardelean* one, spoken in Torjanci. The linguistic material from Medjmurje (recorded in the locality of Kuršanec) is more reduced than the one from Baranja, but the main linguistic comparison in the paper is between the *Muntean* vernacular from Baranja and the *Ardelean* one from Medjmurje.

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Making use of anthropological linguistic and perceptual dialectology methods, we tried to determine the existence of a Bayash continuum along the River Drava in Croatia and also to assess the degree of tolerance and flexibility of their language system, which has developed for centuries without the normative instances of the Romanian language, in a permanent contact with the surrounding Serbo-Croatian dialects.

**Key words:** Bayash, Romanian vernaculars, perceptual dialectology, anthropological linguistics

## 1. The Bayash of the Balkans

In the Balkans, apart from the Romanian communities historically inhabiting the countries which border on present-day Romania (Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary, the Ukraine), the Romanian language<sup>2</sup> is also spoken by other groups, one being the Bayash. The Bayash are small Roma-like communities speaking different vernaculars of the Romanian language and dispersed throughout Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria, with smaller numbers in Macedonia, Greece, Ukraine, Slovakia and Slovenia. They do not speak Romani and the vast majority are bilingual, actively using their native vernacular and the idiom of the local community in which they live.<sup>3</sup> The terms used to refer to the Bayash in different countries may vary greatly (see Sorescu Marinković 2008b), the word *Bayash* being in many cases only a construct employed by academics to refer to these groups, many of which do not use or even know the term.<sup>4</sup> These *other* groups of Romanian language speakers, “hidden, marginal and problematic”, as Hedeşan (2005: 17) puts it, have intrigued Romanian researchers from almost all the humanities (anthropologists and classic ethnographers tending to predominate), from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onward,<sup>5</sup> despite the fact that the actual volume

<sup>2</sup> I will leave aside Aromanian, Meglenoromanian and Istroromanian and focus solely on Dacoromanian (which, in the following, for the sake of brevity I will simply label ‘Romanian’) and its dialects.

<sup>3</sup> For details about the Bayash in the Balkans, see Sikimić 2002, 2005a; in Serbia, see Petrović 1938, Hedeşan 2005, Sikimić 2005b, c, 2006a, b, c, e, Sorescu Marinković 2005, 2008a, b; in Croatia, see Saramandu 1997, Radosavljević 2007; in Hungary, see Orsós 1997; in Bulgaria, see Dorondel 2007, Şerban 2007, Assénova/Aleksova in these proceedings; in Slovakia, see Agócs 2003; in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Filipescu 1906 and Sikimić in these proceedings; in Romania, see Chelcea 1944, Stahl 1990, Calotă 1995, Kovalcsik 2007.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed sociolinguistic discussion on exonyms versus endonyms see Vučković 2008. In Bulgaria both members of the community and academics use the term *Rudari*.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed analysis of the existing literature in Romanian see Hedeşan 2005: 16–24.

of studies has never been impressive. Today, with the advance of Romani studies, we are witnessing a general interest in the Bayash in most of the Balkan and European countries where they live, with political studies tending to prevail over humanistic studies.

## 2. The Bayash in Croatia

The Bayash and their language in Croatia have not engaged the interest of scholars until recently. However, their presence has been mentioned sporadically, but for more than a century, by linguists and ethnographers who remarked the presence of these intriguing ethnic groups in nearby Serbia or Bosnia. The ethnographer Teodor Filipescu, in an early 20<sup>th</sup> century study about Romanian colonies in Bosnia, asserts that the *Karavlahs* (Rom. *Caravlahii* or *Coritarii*) from Slavonia (north-eastern Croatia) must have arrived there around the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and settled in the Požega and Bjelovar-Križevac region (see Map 1), after crossing Transylvania, Banat, Serbia and Bosnia (Filipescu 1906: 210). However, it seems that the first one to have mentioned the group of *Koritari* in Slavonia was Ferdo Hefeľe, in an article published in the Zagreb magazine *Vienac*, no. 46, in 1890 (quoted by Filipescu 1906). Only a couple of years after Filipescu, the linguist Gustav Weigand draws attention to the Romanians living in Bosnia,<sup>6</sup> and also mentioning those from Croatia. In 1938, the Romanian linguist Emil Petrovici, talking about a group he called “the ‘Romanians’ from western Serbia”, mentioned again the existence of this community in Croatia, “in the provinces on the rivers Drava and Sava” (Petrovici 1938: 244). Almost thirty years later, the Serbian ethnographer Barjaktarović, in his description of the “Gypsy oasis” of Apatin (north-western Serbia),<sup>7</sup> which he had researched between 1960 and 1962, also mentions that Romanian Gypsies are to be found in Croatia, in the villages of Darda, Bolman and Karakaš (Osijek–Baranja county), and in Dalj in Slavonia (Barjaktarović 1964: 191).

Up to this date, the only solid linguistic study of the Bayash in Croatia is that of the Romanian dialectologist Nicolae Saramandu, who in 1996 studied dialects in the Bayash community of Medjimurje, in the extreme north of the country, near the border with Hungary and Slovenia,

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<sup>6</sup> At that time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

<sup>7</sup> Barjaktarović mentions that the Apatin Gypsies, around 190 houses, declare themselves Romanian, but in informal conversations say they are Gypsies. The settlement is divided in two, *Ardiljeni* and *Munčeni* (according to his phonetic transcription), like in Sonta and Bogojevo, based on a distinction between vernaculars, the author providing a contrastive index of lexemes used by the two groups (Barjaktarović 1964: 193).



Map 1. Croatia and its counties.

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Istria county                | 11. Virovitica – Podravina county |
| 2. Rijeka county                | 12. Osijek – Baranja county       |
| 3. Karlovac county              | 13. Sisak – Moslavina county      |
| 4. Zagreb county                | 14. Brod – Posavina county        |
| 5. Krapina – Zagorje county     | 15. Vukovar – Srijem county       |
| 6. Varaždin county              | 16. Lika – Senj county            |
| 7. Međimurje county             | 17. Zadar county                  |
| 8. Koprivnica – Križevci county | 18. Šibenik – Knin county         |
| 9. Bjelovar – Bilogora county   | 19. Split – Dalmacija county      |
| 10. Požega – Slavonsija county  | 20. Dubrovnik – Neretva county    |
|                                 | 21. The City of Zagreb            |

in the localities of Pribislavec, Čakovec and Kotoriba (see Map 3). The author, after briefly introducing the communities, their economic situation, social organization, physical aspect and ethnic identification of the inhabitants, compares their vernacular with those of the *Coritari* (as presented in Petrovici's 1938 study) and of *Rudari* (according to Calotă's 1995 investigations from Romania), concluding that all the "Romanian speaking Gypsies" today speak a "relatively unitary idiom, which is explained by their common origin, by geographic factors and by the historical circumstances in which they adopted the Romanian language" (Saramandu 1997: 109). Saramandu goes on to identify the region the Bayash had inhabited in Romania before they started moving towards their present settlements and the main directions of migration, and at the end offers a corpus of 33 short texts – phonetically transcribed fragments excerpted from the discussions with the interlocutors.

In 2007, one more article about the Bayash from Croatia and their language was published, signed by the young Croatian linguist Petar Radosavljević. Although the study is not exhaustive, it makes a good point in discussing contrastively the *Muntean* and *Ardelean* vernaculars spoken by the two main Bayash groups in Croatia. Radosavljević 2007 draws attention to some phonetic and morphologic characteristics of these vernaculars, but in contrast to Saramandu 1997, who used his own field recordings from Medjimurje, he uses, as an *Ardelean* corpus, the Catholic Catechism translated into “Bayash” (Miljak 2005), while the *Muntean* corpus is represented by audiorecordings made as part of a project of the *Open Society Croatia (Otvoreno društvo Hrvatska)* Institute, in which the author took part (Radosavljević 2007). Unfortunately, he does not mention the localities where the recordings took place.

Nonetheless, in present-day Croatia, it is mainly sociologists and educational specialists who engage in Romani studies. This is the reason why solid linguistic, dialectological or ethnological research about the Bayash is so rare, as ethnolinguist Biljana Sikimić notes in an oral exposé in 2006.<sup>8</sup> The above-mentioned sociologists and education specialists note that large Roma groups arrived in Croatia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from Romania, and that their members “belonged to the *Koritari* Roma, were manufacturing wooden products and inhabited the regions of Medjimurje and Podravina” (Hrvatić 2004: 370). But a lack of linguistic knowledge also led the same author to make unfounded statements, such as that the Bayash idiom from Croatia<sup>9</sup> is a Romani dialect. However, other authors note that the Bayash in Hungary are “Roma who settled here from Romania at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and speak a variant of the Romanian language” (Nikšić 2004: 392), and, further, that groups of Bayash also inhabit Croatia, namely Medjimurje and Baranja.

Although, as we can see, relatively little is known about the language of the Bayash in Croatia, the year 2005 saw one of the Romanian idioms spoken by the Bayash in Croatia published in its own alphabet for the first time in the form of a Catholic Catechism (Miljak 2005). Preparations for a Bayash dictionary were also scheduled to start in 2004. A system for transcribing Bayash vernaculars has emerged, based on the

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<sup>8</sup> *Banjaši u Hrvatskoj: rumunski, ljimba d'bjaš ili ciganski jezik?* [The Bayash in Croatia: Romanian, Bayash language or Gypsy language?], presented at the international symposium *Banatul: Trecut istoric și cultural* [The Banat: Historical and cultural past], held in Novi Sad, Serbia, in 2006.

<sup>9</sup> The term used in the Croatian studies dealing with the Bayash is *ljimba d'bjaš*, spelled according to the rules of Croatian orthography.

orthographic rules of Croatian as used in some periodicals which host this kind of text. However, as in the case of other unstandardized languages, wide oscillations in the use of certain verbal forms along with bad orthography is noticeable in these publications, due to the lack of a norm and knowledge of the language structure (Radosavljević 2007: 513).

## 2.1. Fieldwork material

This contribution is based on field research which took place between 18 and 20 May 2006 in Baranja,<sup>10</sup> a geographical region of eastern Croatia between the rivers Danube and Drava. During this short field trip, three Bayash settlements were visited: Darda, Beli Manastir and Torjanci (see Map 2). The inhabitants of Darda and Beli Manastir say of themselves that they are *Munćani* and Orthodox by religion. Their own guesstimate puts their number at 3,000. They also claim that their original settlement was Novi Bezdán (Rom. *mai bătárnă țágănie* ‘the oldest Gypsy settlement’). It seems that from Novi Bezdán they moved to Bolman and from there spread out to their current settlements: Darda, Beli Manastir, Jagodnjak, Kozarac, Čeminac. The inhabitants of the small village of Torjanci on the Hungarian border say of themselves that they are *Arđel’eni*,<sup>11</sup> Catholics by religion and that they number around 120. According to the statements of those we spoke to, the original settlement of *Arđeleni* was Orešanci, but in the mid–20<sup>th</sup> century they were moved to Bistrinci, on the periphery of Belišće, and to Valpovo. There are many members of various Evangelist churches in both groups, mainly Adventists and Jehovah’s witnesses. The traditional occupation of both Bayash groups was manufacturing wooden objects, chiefly spoons, troughs and tubs, but it seems that the women, unlike most of the women from the Bayash communities

<sup>10</sup> The field trip was organized by a team of researchers from the Institute for Anthropological Research in Zagreb, Croatia, who carried a series of studies as to assess key characteristics of living conditions and health in the Bayash Roma population in Baranja and identify possible demographic and socio-economic sources of variance in self-reported health and reproductive profile (see, for example, Škarić-Jurić et al 2007) and to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude for inviting us to join them, for their generosity and constant support. As well, we are greatly indebted to all our interlocutors, who happily accepted us in the community and helped us carry on our research. Two ethnolinguists from the Institute for Balkan Studies in Belgrade were also engaged in this research: Biljana Sikimić and Annemarie Sorescu Marinković.

<sup>11</sup> In the followings, for the sake of brevity and in order to avoid unnecessary cumulation of different phonetic variants for these two groups, we will only use the terms *Munteni* and *Arđeleni*. The distinction *Munteni-Arđeleni* is also a linguistic one, as we will show in detail later on.



*Map 2. Part of the region of Baranja, with the contemporary Bayash settlements marked in black.*

in Serbia, have never made spindles. They also produced charcoal and bricks and lately even wickerwork (Sikimić 2006: oral exposé).

During our fieldwork research in Baranja, we interviewed mainly older members of the Bayash community and audiorecorded all interviews (the material, amounting to around 20 hours, is preserved in the audio archive of the Institute for Balkan Studies from Belgrade). Most of the interviews were semi-directed, the conversations generally aimed at reconstructing the traditional culture, but we also made use of a dialectological questionnaire and at the same time recorded the free conversation of the participants, in order to have as much samples of free speech as possible.

This study makes additional use of the almost 3 hours of audio recordings from a one-day field trip to the Bayash community of Kuršanec in Medjimurje, on 20 January 2006,<sup>12</sup> a decade after Saramandu. The Bayash here live in a satellite settlement completely isolated from the town which they call Lug, and most of them struggle on the verge of subsistence. They are all Catholics, have strong connections to other

<sup>12</sup> With the help of the Croatian ethnologist Toni Marušić, whom I wish to thank once again for introducing me to the Bayash community, for his invaluable help in carrying out the research, and precious first-hand information about the settlement.



Map 3. Part of the region of Medjmurje, with the contemporary Bayash settlements marked in black.

Bayash communities in Medjmurje, in Hungary and even – rarely – in Serbia. They estimate their number as being 900. As opposed to the Bayash in Baranja, who do not use this term to refer to themselves, they say of themselves that they are *Băiași*,<sup>13</sup> calling the language they speak *l'imbă dă băiaș*. Their traditional occupation is also the manufacture of wooden products, but this seems to have vanished today; most of them are unemployed and many of them collect and return plastic bottles as a means of subsistence. Both the Bayash in Baranja and in Medjmurje make a clear-cut distinction between their group and the Roma, to whom they refer to as *Lăcățari*, calling their language *Lăcățareășce*.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly enough, only the Bayash in Medjmurje have the institution of

<sup>13</sup> This term is known and partly used in the Serbian Banat and western Serbia, near the border with Croatia, but is almost completely unheard of south of Danube.

<sup>14</sup> This terms are also used by the Bayash in Bačka while referring to Romani speaking Roma.



Romani kris, which they call *l'eže dă băiaș*, also common in Hungary, but unknown to the Bayash in Serbia.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.2. An attempt at mapping

The mapping of the Bayash settlements from Croatia is a very problematic attempt, obstructed by all sorts of limitations which we will discuss below. In spite of the hindrances, we have drawn a preliminary network of Bayash settlements in Croatia,<sup>16</sup> based on our research in Baranja and Medjmurje. This network was conceived following the *snowball sampling* principle, starting from the initial data found in the ethnographic studies to get to the community and then using the information provided by the members of the community to build upon and develop it. All this information was obtained with the use of perceptual dialectology, relying upon the subjective attitudes of the Bayash towards the language of their community and of other Bayash communities they know. This snowballing followed the *mental continuity* of the Bayash communities, which exists in spite of the physical distance between them (Sikimić 2005b: 249).

Speaking of limitations, it should be said that on the one hand, data from the older ethnographic studies can hardly be taken as a reference point for modern research. The dissolution or reduction of rural settlements mainly due to the persecution of the Roma in the Second World War, the dislocation of village communities and the consequent movement of the Bayash to urban areas where they tend to form peripheral satellite neighbourhoods, the fact that those to whom we spoke avoided providing us with micro-toponyms when asked about the places the Bayash communities live and offered macro-toponyms instead, all this makes any attempt at mapping Bayash settlements a most difficult task. Furthermore, today the Bayash do not appear as a separate community from the Roma in Croatia. The official censuses provide only data on the Roma in general, without regard for sub-categorization or spoken language. Thus a subjective attitude towards the Bayash communities in Croatia and their language, fragile though it may seem as a method, coupled with an attempt to obtain as exact a localization as possible of the settlements the speakers mention, were the main means used to sketch an approximate inventory of contemporary Bayash settlements.

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<sup>15</sup> We base this conclusion on our personal research, so we must admit it might not be a definitive or accurate one.

<sup>16</sup> For a list of Bayash settlements in Serbia, see Sikimić 2005a: 10–12.

The column on the left of Table 1 gives the places where the Bayash still live today. Some of these are followed by the Romanian name used by the Bayash instead of the Croatian toponyms, in brackets and marked with \*. In some cases, we have not been able to identify the place and used only the Romanian toponym mentioned by the speakers. This first column was formed only using the data we collected personally, and not combining it with other sources which, we must admit, might have drastically changed the register of localities. One must notice that, the more distant the places the interlocutors speak about, the more macro-toponyms they tend to use. Micro-toponyms are obtained only from interlocutors from Medjimurje and Baranja, but they are not crossed. Following this logic, if we were to use data obtained in other identified Bayash centres, like, for example, Slavonija, we would have achieved a clearer and more precise register of Bayash settlements around those centres. We must also add here that, in spite of the fact that perceptive onomastics or anthropological geography does not take into account the new state borders, the information obtained in Baranja about places inhabited by Bayash in Bačka was extremely precise (not shown in the table).

The next three columns of Table 1 give the places which had a predominantly Bayash population up to World War II. This evaluation was made mainly from lists of Roma Holocaust victims from Croatia, reprinted in *The History of the Roma Holocaust* (Djurić & Miletić 2008). As on these lists of executed persons there is no mention of Bayash, all of them being treated as Roma, the method we used to ‘reconstruct’ the Bayash settlements along the Drava river and in Croatia in general was onomastic. Two categories of family names were considered — Hungarian, mainly characteristic of the *Ardeleni* group of Bayash (Oršoš, Kalanjoš, Lakatoš, Balog, Horvat, Bogdan etc), and Serbian ones, chiefly characteristic of the *Munteni* group (Djurdjević, Djordjević, Petrović, Kostić, Mišković etc)<sup>17</sup> — and then we tried to determine in which localities the majority of the victims went by these names. The result was astonishing and, at the same time validated our assumption: the ‘map’ we obtained was that of River Drava counties (Bjelovar–Bilogora, Koprivnica–Križevci, Osijek–Baranja, Medjimurje, Varaždin, Virovitica–Podravina and Vukovar–Srijem counties), which goes to show that a Drava Bayash

<sup>17</sup> Names characteristic of the Romani speaking Roma in Croatia are: (H)udurović, Šajn, Šajnović, Fan, Parapatić (Poropatić) etc. Skok suggests the following etymology: *Poropatić* < Rom. *fără pat* (‘without bed’), one of the remains of the lost language of the Istroromanians (ERHSJ s.v. *Čiribiri*). The fact that the surname *Poropat* can be also found in nowadays Romania opens up a whole series of questions and makes Skok’s hypothesis at least fragile.

continuum, like the Danube or Sava Bayash continuum in Serbia, really existed in the past, even if this is today barely perceptible. We are aware that this method might not be entirely accurate, but believe that it can offer at least a sketch of the past distribution of Bayash in Croatia.

If we are to compare the data provided by Djurić & Miletić 2008 with information from other sources, our hypothesis proves right. Hefele, in 1890, noticed that *Koritari* live close to Sava and Drava, mentioning the settlements Peteranac, Gušće, Stružec and Lonjsko polje (Filipescu 1906: 239–240); the first three can be also found in Table 1. The only paradox is that, as far as Peteranac is concerned, Hefele collected folk texts from interlocutors with Hungarian surnames (Balog and Bogdan), while the execution register only mentions Djordjević's, thus *Munteni* according to our theory.

<b>Past and present Bayash settlements in Croatia</b>			
Inhabited today	Inhabited in the past		
	<i>Munteni</i>	<i>Ardeleni</i>	Roma and Bayash together
<b><i>Bjelovar – Bilogora county:</i></b>			
Bjelovar	Bjelovar Dežanovac Djurdjići Ivanovo Polje Jakopovac Kapelski Kašljavac Kobasičari Mala Pisanica Malo Korenovo Medjurača Nevinac Nova Rača Pavlovac Predavec Prespa Sokolovac Utiskani Veliki Grdjevac	Ćolarevo Selo Čazma	Daruvar Narta Velika Pisanica Veliko Trojstvo
<b><i>Brod-Posavina county:</i></b>			
Slavonski Brod			
<b><i>Koprivnica-Križevci county:</i></b>			

Ludbreg	Cubinec Križevci Miholec Peteranec Zamladinec	Koprivnica Djurdjevac Donjara Lijepa Greda Molve Podravske Sesvete Popovec Kalnički Reka	
<b><i>Osijek-Baranja county:</i></b>			
Beli Manastir Belišće Bilje Bistrinci (displaced from Orešanci (*Rašanŭ) in the middle of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century) Bolman (*Bulmanu) Čeminac Darda (*Tarda) Jagodnjak Kozarac Novi Bezdán Torjanci (*Turianŭ) Valpovo	Aljmaš Bistrinci Bočkovac Dalj Harkanovci Ivanovci Josipovac Osijek Podgorac Selci Djakovački Valpovo Viškovci Koška Kučanci Nard		Dopsin Kapelna
<b><i>Medjimurje county:</i></b>			
Donja Dubrava Kotoriba (*Cuturiba) Kuršanec (*Lug) Goričan Macinec Orehovica (*Oraviŭa) Pribislavec (*Pislouŭ) *Strimouŭ *Șcarie		Čakovec Donje Brezje Kotoriba Macinec Strukovec	Martin na Muri

<b>Požega-Slavonija county:</b>			
	Budimci	Bujavica	
<b>Sisak-Moslavina county:</b>			
Dubica Garešnica Kutina Novska Sisak (the out- skirts called Capraške Poljane) Slatina		Donja Gračenica Gornja Jelenska Gušće Jasenovac Krapje Kratečko Kutina Lipovljani Piljenice Puska Stružec Velika Kraljeva	Lonja
<b>Varaždin county:</b>			
Trnovec (*Târnouț)	Vidovec	Trnovec Bartolovečki	
<b>Virovitica-Podravina county:</b>			
Djurdjevac Pitomača Virovitica	Crnac Slavonske Bare	Naudovac Sopje Starin Virovitica	
<b>Vukovar-Srijem county:</b>			
	Gunja Podgajci Posavski Stari Mikanovci Šiškovci		
<b>Zagreb county:</b>			
		Martin pod Okićem Novo Čiče Velika Gorica	

Table 1. Past and present Bayash settlements in Croatia.

What can be deduced from this table? First of all, the picture resulting from this ‘double mapping’ — one present, one past — shows a

visible reduction of Bayash settlements along the River Drava. Today, the most populated regions are the two counties located at either end of the river in Croatia: Baranja and Medjmurje. This is only a seeming paradox. If we take a closer look at the history of the region around the middle of the last century, we can understand why the Bayash managed to survive in these two counties. In 1941, Yugoslav Baranja was occupied by Hungary and returned to Yugoslavia only in 1944; between 1941 and 1945, Medjmurje was under Hungarian occupation. Thus, these two regions did not belong to the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* – NDH) in 1941–1944, the period when most of the executions were carried out in the extermination camp at Jasenovac. Even if Table 1 also registered executions of Bayash from these regions (according to the data provided by Djurić & Miletić 2008), it might be that they were residing in places other than their native ones.

Secondly, we can see that the *Munteni* Bayash group was better represented in Bjelovar–Bilogora, Osijek–Baranja and Vukovar–Srijem counties, closer to the Serbian border, while the *Ardeleni* prevailed in Medjmurje in the extreme north of the country near the Hungarian border. Even if Zagreb is not part of the Drava continuum, the presence of Bayash groups (*Ardeleni*) there is easily explainable by the fact that, as an important urban centre, Zagreb attracted large groups of population at all times throughout history. According to Table 1, Sisak–Moslavina county also hosted relatively large groups of *Ardeleni*, whose original settlement might have been the northern region of Croatia, maybe Medjmurje. These groups might have moved in search of work to Sisak, which features both the largest metallurgical factory and the largest oil refinery in Croatia. This movement of population might have taken place sometime before World War II, but the lack of any written documents makes us believe it could have happened either before or later.

### 2.3. What the statistics say

The complexity of the various endonyms (ethnonyms and professionyms) of the Bayash, as well as the strong mimicry they practice as a social strategy for acceptance, plagues much of the research. It is almost impossible to obtain even an approximate figure or a picture of geographical distribution from the information and figures provided by official censuses, where the Bayash do not appear as an ethnic minority. However, if we correlate the official statistics with knowledge of the origin and language of this group, as well as possible ways of self-designation, we get a possible estimate of the dimension of the group.

*Development of the population in Baranya* (Ćurčić & Kicošev 1993) contains the results of different censuses in Baranja from 1910 to 1992, with the ethnic structure of this region. Thus, we can see that in 1910 out of a total of 20,757 inhabitants of Baranja (before the division of the province between Hungary and Yugoslavia), only 2 were Romanians (although the number of 'others' was as high as 8,725). General state statistics of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the census of 31 January 1921, however, revealed that out of the 49,173 inhabitants of Baranja, 452 were Romanians and their distribution was as follows: Bolman — 253, Darda — 50, Jagodnjak — 48, Novi Bezdán — 33, Torjanci — 60. These statistics, together with claims by the speakers (in the lack of any other historical or statistical document) that their original settlement was Novi Bezdán, from where they moved to Bolman and then onward, might point to the fact that they arrived in Baranja somewhere after WWI. The following census of 1953 is irrelevant for establishing the dynamics of the Bayash population: Romanians do not appear anymore, while the number of 'others' is very small. Nevertheless, the 1981 census comes with a new column: Gypsies. In the case of bigger settlements such as Beli Manastir or Darda, it is difficult to assess the number of Bayash (Beli Manastir — 48 Gypsies, 248 'others', Darda — 5 Gypsies, 294 'others'), but as far as Torjanci is concerned — a small settlement of only 509 people in that year — the figure of 132 Gypsies (and 15 'others') is more than relevant. As our research indicates, in Torjanci today the 'Gypsy' population is formed exclusively of Bayash, who live in a satellite settlement in the vicinity of the village proper, with no connection to the Croatian population after the ethnic conflict between the Serbs and Croats during the '90s, which preceded Croatia gaining independence and in which the Bayash were on the Serbian side, despite being Catholics.

Figures in the recent 2001 Croatian census can help to map Bayash 'centres' there. According to ethnicity, there are 475 Romanians and 9,463 Roma in Croatia (out of a total of 4,437,460 inhabitants). Of course, the Roma are a large category which also includes Romani-speaking Roma, but wherever the influence of Roma NGOs is strong, the Bayash declare themselves to be Roma. The largest number of Romanians can be found in the Osijek-Baranja county (223), where there are also 977 Roma. As for the county of Medjmurje, there are only 37 Romanians and 2,887 Roma (Croatian census 2001 — section ethnicity). This data supports our own observations from Medjmurje, where the Romanian identity of the Bayash hardly exists. However, the results of the census by mother tongue give a new insight in the 'Bayash question'. In the county of Osijek-Baranja, 342 people speak Romanian as their mother tongue, while 711

speak Romani (which approximately coincides with the ethnicity of the population), in Medjmurje 156 people speak Romanian and there are 2,751 Romani (the same situation), but in the county of Slavonski Brod – Posavina, where there are only 12 Romanians, 334 people declared that Romanian is their mother tongue (the number of Roma in this province is 586, of which 312 claim that Romani is their mother tongue – according to the Croatian census 2001 – section mother tongue). Thus we may assume that in the Slavonski Brod – Posavina county there is also a large Bayash community.<sup>18</sup> In Serbia at least, during our fieldwork research, one of our work hypotheses almost always proved to be right: If the official statistics show Romanians in a locality where members of the Romanian or Vlach minority are not supposed to be, Bayash live there, usually in a much larger numbers than those given in the statistics.

Other Croatian statistics on the Roma population alone differentiate among Roma groups according to the language they speak: *Romani chib* and *ljimba d' bjaš*. Thus, a field study from 2004 shows that *ljimba d' bjaš* is more widely spread than *Romani chib* in the following counties: Sisak–Moslavina: 10.6 – 3.3, Varaždin: 16.1 – 1.4, Brod–Posavina: 9.0 – 3.8, Osijek–Baranja: 14.5 – 2.8, Medjmurje: 38.7 – 2.3 (Mišetić 2005: 350). The author further differentiates among these language groups, saying that the members of the dialect group *Romani chib* are followers of Islam and are usually to be found in the counties of Istria, Zagreb and on the Adriatic Sea shore, as well as in the city of Zagreb, being more inclined to migrate and having richer migratory experiences, while the dialect group *ljimba d' bjaš* are mostly Christian (Catholics with some Orthodox) and usually live in the Medjmurje district, generally in the continental northwest part of the country and in eastern Croatia; most live in their place of birth, showing a reduced tendency to migrate (Mišetić 2005: 351).

As we have seen, official censuses in Croatia give a total number of over 9,000 Roma. However, estimates suggest a significantly larger figure of between 30,000 and 40,000 (Škarić-Jurić et al 2007: 709), the discrepancy being due mainly to ethnomimicry. As for the Bayash, the estimates put them at around 3,000 in Baranja, 5,000 in Medjmurje and between 10,000 and 13,000 in the entire Croatia.

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<sup>18</sup> Some Croatian scholars, unaware that the first language of a great part of the Roma population is Romanian, cannot explain the large number of Romanians registered by the censuses and of Roma “becoming” Romanians, as they put it, other than as a “census error or a miscalculation in the statistical analysis of census data” (Pokos 2005: 265).



## 2.4. Construction of identity

Saramandu, using data obtained from his dialectological research in 1996 in Medjimurje, asserts that even if the Croats call them Gypsies, the Bayash consider themselves Romanian because Romanian is their first language and because they do not know Romani (Saramandu 1997: 99).<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, our anthropological and linguistic field research in January 2006 amongst schoolchildren and the younger population in the Bayash settlement of Kuršanec showed no awareness of the local vernacular as a clearly Romanian language, nor any clear idea of Romania as their country of origin. This attitude on the part of the younger generation can be explained by the fact that modern Croatia has no border with Romania and no ethnic Romanian minority (except for very few and very specific ethnic groups of Istroromanians). Thus, in time, consciousness of their Romanian identity (if it ever existed) faded and gradually vanished (for more details see Sorescu Marinković 2007). Perhaps a more logical hypothesis is that it did not exist, as the places they had come from were probably, back then, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We must also mention here the powerful impact of Romani NGOs, which support and encourage the Bayash to declare themselves as Roma. However, most of the Bayash from Medjimurje use the self-designation *Băiași*, as do those from Hungary. Nikšić, talking about the latter, noticed that “it is interesting that the Hungarian Bayash call themselves neither Roma, nor Gypsy” (Nikšić 2004: 392) — and we might add ‘nor Romanian’ — assuming a completely Bayash identity.

As opposed to this group, even if the Bayash in Baranja are organized in Roma NGOs and many of them declare themselves at official censuses as Roma, they call their language *româneșce* (Romanian) or *țigăneșce* (Gypsy), leaving, however, the question of their identity open in discussion with the researcher.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, within this macrogroup, the distinction between the two dialect groups *Munteni* and *Ardeleni* is there and forms the basis for identification.

<sup>19</sup> However, we think that Saramandu’s findings may be plagued by the fact that in Pribislavec he only had one informant from whom he obtained all the 17 texts given at the end of his paper. Based on these texts, we suspect that his informant, aged 34 at the time of the field research, is probably one of the local ‘pro-Romanian’ activists (as opposed to ‘pro-Roma’ or ‘pro-Bayash’, the Bayash community being a fragmented one at an organizational level) who had recent contacts with Romania, his use of Romanian neologisms being difficult to account for otherwise.

<sup>20</sup> As we can see from the first transcript at the end of the paper.

### 3. The language of the Bayash in Croatia

Saramandu, after showing the differences and similarities between the vernacular of the Bayash from Medjimurje, *Coritari* in Serbia (using Emil Petrović's material from 1937) and *Rudari* in Romania, concludes that the former originate in south-eastern Crişana, north-eastern Banat and south-western Transylvania, which is the zone where the main transition idiom within the *Crişean* dialect is spoken. In this area, the palatalization of *t* and *d* and also the pronunciation of the palatals *k'* and *g'* is the same, namely the affricates *ć* and *đ*. Furthermore, *ć* can appear as a result of palatalization of *p* in some words, such as in *ćept* (Rom. *piept* 'breast'),<sup>21</sup> *ćáptân* (Rom. *pieptene* 'haircomb'), and *m* becomes *mí* in *amíáză* (Rom. *amiază* 'afternoon'), *a mńóu* (Rom. *al meu* 'mine', pron) (Saramandu 1997: 109). Saramandu also suggests that the Bayash in Medjimurje arrived in their present habitat by crossing Banat, Serbia (Vojvodina), eastern Bosnia and eastern Croatia (Slavonija) (Saramandu 1997: 110).

Filipescu, back in 1906, claimed that at least some of the Karavlahs in Slavonia were emigrants from Banat and Transylvania. His arguments were their Hungarian names and the fact that they were speaking the *Bănăţean* dialect (Filipescu 1906: 210).

In the following, we will focus on the distinction between the *Munteni* and *Ardeleni* Bayash in Baranja, and then present a few phonetic, morphological and lexical characteristics of the Romanian vernaculars spoken by the Bayash in Baranja and in Medjimurje.

#### 3.1. Baranja: *Munteni* and *Ardeleni*

The *Munteni-Ardeleni* distinction among the Bayash is mainly a linguistic one, but it can also point to the religion of these two groups, as we have seen before. If we consider it a linguistic distinction, we must stress that these vernaculars do not overlap with present-day Romanian dialects, as mapped by the Romanian linguists. Even if the *Munteni* group preserves some dialectal features of the vernaculars spoken today in the Romanian region of Muntenia, and the *Ardeleni* have linguistic features in

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<sup>21</sup> The standard Romanian equivalent is in brackets, followed by the English translation. However, we must always bear in mind that we cannot compare contemporary Romanian, be it standard or dialectal, with idioms which lost contact with the Romanian spoken continuously in Romanian lands more than 200 years ago, and which developed in a Slavic language environment. The only valid corpus for such a comparison would be Romanian linguistic material from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

common with idioms from Transylvania,<sup>22</sup> their vernaculars also present many other features common to different dialectal regions in Romania. Because of their nomadic way of life,<sup>23</sup> the Bayash ‘picked up’ numerous linguistic features from the regions they passed through on their way to the present settlements, and only a detailed linguistic analysis can account for the route they followed.<sup>24</sup>

As far as the *Munteni* and *Ardeleni* from Baranja are concerned, the separate migrations scenario is more likely than the *in situ* differentiation scenario. It is clear that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century a Bayash continuum existed along the main river basins, regardless of the state borders of that time. Their geographical disposition followed the logic of *river continuums*, where they could find water and the wood they needed for their traditional occupation. In Serbia, the south-Danube continuum has already been accounted for (Sikimić 2005a, 2005b). The Bayash must have formed a River Drava continuum, from Baranja to Medjmurje, even if this is no longer obvious today because of large population dislocations and recent migrations, as we have shown at the beginning. Sikimić also speaks of a *Bayash Catholic continuity* north of the Danube and along the River Drava, a continuity which “bears witness to a bygone common territory before the changing of the borders in central Europe, something that happened several times during the 20<sup>th</sup> century” (Sikimić 2006c: 107). Catholic Bayash in Serbia live east of Danube in the region of Bačka, in the settlements: Bački Monoštor, Apatin, Sonta, Bogojevo, Vajska, Plavna, also in Slana Bara (a satellite settlement of Novi Sad) and Adorjan (near the river Tisa) (idem: 106). After the Serbo-Croatian conflicts of the 90’s, many Bayash families from Baranja (today’s Croatia) moved to Bačka (today’s Serbia) and thus contributed even more to mixing the already complicated map of this community. The *Munteni* of Apatin are only very recent settlers from Darda, as our fieldwork research from Apatin (still unpublished) shows. Torjanci (in fact a community displaced from Orešanci) might also have had connections with Bayash groups from

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<sup>22</sup> We must say here that there is no *Ardelean* dialect mapped by Romanian dialectologists, this zone (Ardeal, also known as Transylvania) being the region where several dialects of the Romanian language meet.

<sup>23</sup> We should not underestimate the role the different armed conflicts played when it comes to ‘Bayash nomadism’, which was not only an idyllic ‘wood nomadism’, as Chelcea 1944 puts it, or a willfully assumed way of life, as many authors are inclined to believe. For more details on this issue see Sikimić in these proceedings.

<sup>24</sup> Petrovici also noticed that the *Coritari* in Čokešina (Western Serbia) do not speak a unitary language, but one characterized by a mixture of dialectal features, “which can be explained by their nomadic life” (Petrovici 1938: 229).

present-day Hungary, but this has not been retained in the memory of today's generations.<sup>25</sup> The inhabitants of Torjanci, because of their relative isolation and very small number, are under the strong influence of the *Muntean* idiom spoken by the surrounding villages. It must be stressed that the Drava continuum was on both sides of the river, and therefore in present-day Croatia and Hungary.<sup>26</sup> It can be speculated that the *Munteni* group (of Orthodox religion) formed a wedge between the *Ardeleni* (Catholics) of Baranja and those from Bačka, but only historical evidence and extensive fieldwork research in Hungary can bear out this hypothesis.

It must be mentioned that the vernacular of the *Munteni* group is a mixed idiom *par excellence*, possessing archaic Romanian characteristics, intermediate phases, lexemes from different Romanian dialectal areas and from the regional Baranja idiom they speak. It is likely that this group lived for an extended period in the south of Romania, where the *Muntean* dialect is spoken. As for the Slavic idiom spoken in the region of Baranja, which is inhabited by both Serbs and Croats, see Miloradović 2000 for a detailed discussion. In the followings, when referring to this particular contact idiom, we will call it the 'Baranja Slavic contact idiom', and for etymological purposes, use the abbreviation 'Sr./Cr.', unless indicated otherwise.

### 3.2. Medjimurje

Although our recorded material from Medjimurje amounts to only three hours, we were still able to sketch the main phonetic and morphologic features of this Bayash group. Most of the phonetic features characteristic of the Bayash in Medjimurje have been already noticed and described by Saramandu in his study (Saramandu 1997). We must again point out that we visited only one settlement (Kuršanec), thus our findings cannot be generalized to include the region because of the differences which exist between the Romanian vernaculars spoken in the various villages, so even if we use *Medjimurje* as a cover term, it must be borne in mind that we are referring only to this settlement. A note must be made here: as in Baranja, the contact idiom is not the literary Croatian language, but the local variety, namely the Kajkavian dialect (remote enough from the one used in Baranja), and spoken chiefly in the northern and western

<sup>25</sup> This border was established in 1918, Baranja having shared the fate of Banat in being divided between three states.

<sup>26</sup> Knowledge about a territorial Bayash continuity in the Balkans is still quite limited in the literature, in spite of the existing knowledge of the territorial disposition of the Bayash alone (see Sikimić, oral exposé).

parts of Croatia (for a description of this dialect see Brozović & Ivić 1988: 90–99).

### 3.3. Some linguistic remarks on the Bayash vernaculars from Baranja and Medjmurje

In view of the fact that there is only one published linguistic study that mentions the Bayash of Baranja (Radosavljević 2007), we would like to draw attention in what follows to some peculiarities of the idiom spoken by the *Munteni* in Baranja, in a contrastive manner with that used by the *Ardeleni* in Medjmurje, and at the same time to assess the degree of tolerance and flexibility of their language system. Even if a triple linguistic comparison (the *Muntean* vernacular from Baranja, the *Ardelean* vernacular from the same region and the *Ardelean* vernacular from Medjmurje) would represent a momentous one, we will not focus here on the *Ardeleni* group in Baranja, as the material recorded in Torjanci is very reduced and their vernacular is strongly influenced by the neighbouring *Muntean* vernacular and by the big number of *Munteni* Bayash, who overcomes by far the *Ardeleni*. Even if we focus mainly on the *Muntean* vernacular spoken in Darda and Beli Manastir, whenever the collected material allows it we will resort to examples from the *Ardelean* vernacular from Medjmurje. As well, in order to compensate the lack of Baranja *Ardelean* material, we will include lexemes from Torjanci in Table 3.

We must point out that during our research we have mainly used the qualitative method of linguistic anthropology, so the linguistic material we obtained was not always complete, nor was systematic use made of the dialectal questionnaire.

#### 3.3.1. Phonology<sup>27</sup>

The differences between the two vernaculars — the *Muntean* Bayash from Baranja and *Ardelean* Bayash from Medjmurje — are most obvious at phonological level. One of the main phonetic differences between them is the lack of palatalization of dentals — *dinte* ('tooth'), *frúnte* ('forehead'), *déget* ('finger') — and labials — *piépten* ('haircomb') — in Baranja (a characteristic of standard Romanian too), as opposed to the palata-

<sup>27</sup> In this paper, due to reduced technical possibilities, we used a simplified system of phonetic transcription. We have consequently marked the stressed syllables, the palatalization of consonants; the *ø* and *ɛ* were used to signalize the open character of these vowels, which come from an initial diphthong; *e* was used to mark an intermediary sound between *e* and *i*. In the transcripts at the end of the paper the stressed syllables were not marked anymore, in order for the texts to be easily readable.

lization of dentals and the treatment of the affricate consonant in words such as *žéžet* (Rom. *deget* ‘finger’)<sup>28</sup> in Medjimurje.

As far as consonantism is concerned, we can notice in Baranja the disappearance of initial *v* in words such as: *urbim/orbim* (Rom. *vorbim* ‘we speak’), *órbă* (Rom. *vorbă* ‘word’), *reádnicǎ* (Rom. *vrednicǎ* ‘diligent’ adj, sing, fem), or even of whole sequences starting with *v*: *ńic* (Rom. *voinic* ‘little boy’), while in Medjimurje one can observe the opposite phenomenon, namely the appearance of the prothetic consonant *s* at the beginning of some words, such as *scáldǎri* (Rom. *cáldǎri* ‘buckets’). While in Baranja the palatal element is anticipated as in *óik’* (Rom. *ochi* ‘eye’) and *róik’a* (Rom. *rochia* ‘dress’ n.), in Medjimurje the palatal *k’* is transformed into *ć*: *óc* (Rom. *ochi* ‘eye’), *ćámǎ* (Rom. *cheamǎ* ‘(he/she) calls’), *ćar* (Rom. *chiar* ‘even’, adv), *uráci* (Rom. *ureche* ‘ear’). Both in Baranja and in Medjimurje, the ‘depalatalization’ of labials can be noticed: *mélu* (Rom. *miel* ‘lamb’) in Baranja, *fěrbǎ* (Rom. *fiarbǎ* ‘boil’ vb, conjunctive, III) in Medjimurje, for example.<sup>29</sup> In Medjimurje, the pronunciation of initial *h* in words starting with a vowel was recorded: *hásta* (Rom. *asta* ‘this’ pron, fem), *huşćunít* (Rom. *ostenit* ‘tired’),<sup>30</sup> as well as the palatalization of *c* into *k’* when followed by a medial vowel: *k’it* (Rom. *cât* ‘how much’), *k’ítre* (Rom. *cǎtre* ‘towards’).

Another phenomenon characteristic to both regions is the very high frequency of phonetic accidents, the following examples, however, being taken from the vernaculars of the Bayash in Baranja — metatheses: *uneáua* (Rom. *nuiáua* ‘stick’), *pitvíi* (Rom. *piftii* ‘aspic’), *bǎtǎrni* (Rom. *bǎtráni* ‘old’ adj, pl, masc); dissimilations: *lúntǎ* (Rom. *nuntǎ* ‘wedding’), *laínte* (Rom. *nainte* ‘before’ adv); assimilations: *mǎmíca* (Rom. *nimica* ‘nothing’), *mǎmílea* (Rom. *nimenea* ‘nobody’).

As far as vocalism is concerned, the main tendency in Baranja, to put it bluntly, is to make diphthongs of certain vowels in certain positions, while in Medjimurje the opposite occurs and diphthongs are turned into monophthongs. Thus, in Baranja we notice the diphthongization of stressed *e* when followed by a syllable containing *e* (> *i*) or *i*: *meárge* (Rom. *merge* ‘walks’ vb, present, III, sg), *vreáme* (Rom. *vreme* ‘time’), *l’ámńe* (Rom. *lemne* ‘wood’), *feáte* (Rom. *fete* ‘girls’), *zeácilea* (Rom.

<sup>28</sup> Recorded by Saramandu as *žéžít* (Saramandu 1997: 102).

<sup>29</sup> Also observed by Saramandu in words such as: *fer* (Rom. *fier* ‘iron’), *ferb* (Rom. *fiarb* ‘boil’ vb, pres, I, sg), *perd* (Rom. *pierd* ‘lose’ vb, pres, I, sg), *ver* (Rom. *vier* ‘boar’), *zber* (Rom. *zbier* ‘cry’ vb, pres, I, sg) (Saramandu 1997: 103).

<sup>30</sup> But as Saramandu also noticed, its pronunciation is individual.

*zecilea* ‘tenth’ nr, masc), *biseárică* (Rom. *biserică* ‘church’),<sup>31</sup> and the diphthongization of stressed *a*: *veárză* (Rom. *varză* ‘cabbage’), *freát* (Rom. *frați* ‘brothers’). On the other hand, in Medjimurje, the stressed *a* is pronounced *ɛ* in words such as *vérză* (Rom. *varză* ‘cabbage’)<sup>32</sup>, while non-stressed *a* transforms into *e* in the word *áie* (Rom. *aia* ‘that (one)’ pron, fem).<sup>33</sup> In Baranja, the closing of non-stressed *o* to *u* may also be observed: *cupíl* (Rom. *copil* ‘child’), *culác* (Rom. *colac* ‘bread-like cake’), and the unexpected phenomenon of reduction of the stressed diphthong *oa*: *sócră-sa* (Rom. *soacră-sa* ‘his mother-in-law’), *jócă* (Rom. *joacă* ‘play/dance’ vb, present, III, sg).

A characteristic feature of the Medjimurje Bayash vernacular is also the monophthongation of the diphthong *oa* > *o*, as in: *móre* (Rom. *moare* ‘dies’ vb, present, III, sg), *nóstră* (Rom. *noastră* ‘our’ pron, fem), *omórá* (Rom. *omora* ‘kills’), *jórdă* (Rom. *joardă* ‘stick’), and *ea* > *ɛ*, as in: *vorbém* (Rom. *vorbeam* ‘(I/we) spoke’), *sfăté* (Rom. *sfătea* ‘(they) spoke’). The only diphthongization we recorded in Medjimurje was that of stressed *u* > *oa*: *joárá* (Rom. *jură* ‘(he/she) swears’), but the quality of the diphthong can vary from person to person.

In the same vernacular we registered the closing of non-stressed *o* to *u*, as in: *luvéšte* (Rom. *lovește* ‘(he/she) hits’), *bucozát* (Rom. *botezat* ‘Christianized’ adj, masc), *burásc* (Rom. *borăsc* ‘(I) puke’), as well as the closing of final non-stressed *e* to *i*, as in *béri* (Rom. *bere* ‘beer’).

A predominant feature of the Bayash vernacular in Baranja is stressing the labial character of *o* or *u* alone or in the diphthongs *uă*, *ua* and *oa*: *štivút* (Rom. *știut* ‘known’), *dóvă* (Rom. *două* ‘two’ fem), *ghivóc* (Rom. *ghioc* ‘shell’), *vólă* (Rom. *oală* ‘pot’), *lăvúta* (Rom. *lăuta* ‘violin’), *vóia* (Rom. *oaia* ‘sheep’).<sup>34</sup>

Finally, we must also mention the pronunciation of final *u* in non-articulated nouns, as in *mélu* (Rom. *miel* ‘lamb’),<sup>35</sup> in Baranja, and, in

<sup>31</sup> Petrovici noticed the same phenomenon with the Bayash in western Serbia (Petrovici 1938: 228–229).

<sup>32</sup> Saramandu recorded the standard pronunciation *várză* (Saramandu 1997: 105).

<sup>33</sup> Also attested among the Bayash in Hungary (see Orsós 2003).

<sup>34</sup> There is evidence of this phenomenon in the Romanian Banat and also in the Hungarian Banat (for the latter see Marin & Mărgărit 2005: LVII–LVIII). Petriceicu-Hasdeu, back in 1886, in his monumental encyclopaedic dictionary of the Romanian language, which unfortunately remained unfinished, in the entry *băiaș* (pl. *băieși*), also mentioned that the Gypsies “or even non-Gypsies” from Banat and Hațeg who manufacture wooden products (spindles, spoons, troughs, shovels etc.) “mistake *v* with *ű*, for example they say *ziva* instead of *ziua* (‘day’), *űa da* instead of *va da* (‘will give’, III, sg)” (Petriciceu-Hasdeu 1976: 396).

<sup>35</sup> Also noted in Čokešina by Petrovici in the word *albu*, without the definite article (Petrovici 1938: 229).

Medjimurje, the dropping of the last syllable in the word *acá* (Rom. *acasă* ‘home’ adv) and the transformation of initial *î* into *i*: *încă* (Rom. *încă* ‘yet’ adv).

### 3.3.2. Morphology

#### 3.3.2.1. The verb

Unlike other Bayash groups studied in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, which, under the influence of the local idioms, lost most of the past tenses and only preserved the past simple, the Bayash from Baranja preserved, in addition to the past simple, the imperfect (past progressive), which is very frequently used in their speech. Even the questions of the researcher, formulated in the past simple, are answered in the imperfect:

*Au făcút* (make, vb, past simple, III, pl) *și cărbúni din lemn?*  
*Da, făceásă.* (make, vb, imperfect, III, pl)

The imperfect, extensively used, has two synthetic forms: the usual one and a hybrid, deviant form, made from the usual one + the particle *-să*:

*făceá* — *făceá-să* (make, vb, imperfect, III, sg or pl)  
*duceá* — *duceá-să* (take, vb, imperfect, III, sg or pl)  
*jucá* — *jucá-să* (play, vb, imperfect, III, sg or pl)  
*erá* — *erá-să* (be, vb, imperfect, III, sg or pl)

We have only recorded this variant of imperfect in the third person, singular or plural, but this does not mean it is not in use in the first and second person. The two forms of imperfect (with and without the particle *-să*) have almost the same frequency and can be found even in the same sentence, with the same function:

*Niveástili, feátili dáspleteá páru, máre a fost, ș-așá să l'egásă* (tie, vb, imperfect, III pl, impersonal + *-să*) *în păr, în c-amândouă cosáțe să l'egásă, áia, plantíci, în păr. Așá și ireá* (be, vb, imperfect, III sg, impersonal) *mánt'e mândreátă. Fórte mândră ireásă* (be, vb, imperfect, III sg, impersonal + *-să*) *omladína. C-amândouă părț făceásă cosáțile-álea, páru, ș-atúncea plantícili-álea l'egá-n* (tie, vb, imperfect, III sg, impersonal) *păr.*

The wives, the girls would unplait the hair, long hair, and **would tie** their hair like this, they **would tie** in both tails, that, ribbons, in the hair. Before **it was** beautiful. The youth **was** beautiful. They would make tails on both sides, the hair, and then **would tie** those ribbons in their hair.

It must be noted that the productivity of this hybrid form is remarkable, for borrowed verbs from the Baranja Slavic contact idiom are also creolized with its help:



*E, atúncea bătrâanii nóști-n mîltă rînduri a fost bălț, mári bălț, ápă, șî-pucá péști și duceá pân sáte sã vîndă. E, da iále **prosásă** (< Sr./Cr. *prostiti* ‘beg’, vb, imperfect, III, pl + -să).*

But our old men, back then there were ponds, large ponds, water, they would catch fish and walk through villages to sell it. And they {the women} would beg.

*Șî atúncea pandúri-i dásă l’ámne, lucrá el svašta la pandúri, pázá șî vácili, șî **obilázásă** (< Sr./Cr. *obilaziti* ‘go around’, vb, imperfect, III, sg + -să) [ilénii]...*

Then the forest rangers would give him woods, we would work everything for the foresters, he watch over the cattle and go around the [ilenii]...

*E-atúnci când a inít p-urm-acásă el dâncoló, el cu áia **să baveásă** (< Sr./Cr. *baviti se* ‘engage in’, imperfect, III sg + -să) *cât éu ștú.**

Then, when he came back home, he was engaged in that, as far as I know.

Even if this ‘deviant’ variant of the imperfect (with the particle -să) might have us believe that it is an analogical form of pluperfect (past perfect), created from a ‘normal’ variant of the imperfect, its function in use, mainly denoting an action that was happening, used to happen, or happened regularly in the past and was on-going, still indicates that it is an imperfect.

Sikimić 2005d discusses the use and function of another verbal particle, -ră, in the idioms of the Bayash in Vojvodina (Serbia). These vernaculars are characterized by a high frequency of the suffixal particle -ră in the morphology of the verb (especially perfect and present), whose use is optional and which has no evident functional or stylistic utility: “*Care cum vreau-ră.* [Which how want-ră.] *Ce vreau duce-ră.* [What want take-ră.] *Care cum vrea.* [Which how wants.]” (Sikimić 2005d: 158–159). The use of this particle was extremely localized in Romania (a zone around Bucharest) and has no correspondent among other Bayash idioms in Serbia, being preserved only in those localities which are not under the influence of more prestigious Romanian vernaculars or of the mass media in Romanian, which would ‘correct’ this deviation (Sorescu Marinković 2008b). Analogically, the above-mentioned ‘deviant’ variant of the imperfect might have existed at a certain period in a limited area of Romania, but it has not been recorded by dialectologists. It is highly improbable that the Bayash made such innovations in the relatively short period of time they spent in Croatia.

The preservation of this ‘deviant’ form might have been supported by the existence of imperfect and aorist in the Baranja contact idiom (imperfect forms: *čitah, čitaše, čitaše, čistasmo, čitaste, čitahu*; aorist forms:

*pročitah, pročită, pročită, pročitasmă, pročitaste, pročitășe*). Analogically to many other similar phenomena from Balkan linguistics, it might be that the frequent *-șe* endings of aorist and imperfect in the third person singular and plural, as well as the fact that Romanian does not make any distinction between perfective and imperfective verbs, helped to preserve and intensify the use of these forms,<sup>36</sup> but we must admit that we are far from offering a definitive solution to this question.

In Baranja, we also noted great instability of conjugation, which goes as far as to create a new paradigm, on the basis of a new infinitive, most often formed by analogy with the third person singular:<sup>37</sup>

*iștém* ('we are') > *iștí* ('to be'), instead of standard Rom. *fi*  
*știém* ('we know') > *știá* ('to know'), instead of standard Rom. *ști*  
*audém* ('we hear') > *audea* ('to hear'), instead of standard Rom. *auzi*  
*lă* ('takes') > *la* ('to take'), instead of standard Rom. *lua*

At the same time, there is great variation and instability of the forms of the verb *to be* in the present, where *Bănățean* and *Muntean* forms are mixed:

*mi-s/mi-sc* ('I am')  
*iáști* ('(you) are')  
*îi, iáște* ('(he/she) is')  
*îs, iștém* ('(we) are')  
*iștêț* ('(you) are')  
*iáște, îs* ('(they) are')

In Baranja, past tense forms for the third person, singular and plural, are made with the auxiliary *a*, as in Muntenia, as opposed to other dialectal areas where the past tense is formed with *o* and *or*: *a făcút* ('(he/she/they) made/did'), *a mers* ('(he/she/they) went'), *a lucrát* ('(he/she/they) worked'). We can also notice the identity of the third person singular and plural past tense forms of the verb, a feature characteristic to Muntenia, as well as the identity of the third person singular and plural, for the present verbal forms.

<sup>36</sup> As Lindstedt notices, "a strong second language of a bilingual individual may and does influence the first language even when it is used in a monolingual setting" (Lindstedt 2005: 240) and, as a consequence, "even complicated subsystems, such as the Balkan verb system with several past tenses, can be retained if there is sufficient structural overlap between the languages" (idem: 205).

<sup>37</sup> Also encountered in the Romanian vernaculars spoken in Hungary. For this comment and many of the following explanations I am greatly indebted to dialectologist Maria Marin, from the "Iorgu Iordan — Al. Rosetti" Institute of Linguistics in Bucharest, who read the transcripts, used in this paper and made useful suggestions.

A common feature of both Baranja and Medjmurje vernaculars is that many verbs from the local contact idioms are inflected with the help of Romanian affixes. However, in Medjmurje, verbs borrowed from Croatian are inflected in a different manner than in Baranja and in the Bayash communities of Serbia:

Medjmurje	Baranja & Serbia	
să iavlěšće	să iavěšće	< Sr./Cr. <i>javljati/javiti se</i> (perfective and imperfective forms) ‘send word, give a sign of oneself’, vb, refl, present, III, sg or pl
închinăcelím	(în)chitím	< Sr./Cr. <i>kititi</i> ‘ornament’, vb, present, I, pl
pantelěšće	pan(m)ćěšće	< Sr./Cr. <i>pamtiti</i> ‘remember’, vb, present, III, sg or pl
să slavalěšće	să slăvěšće	< Sr./Cr. <i>slaviti</i> ‘celebrate’, vb, refl, present, III, sg
să poiavlě	să poiăveá	< Sr./Cr. <i>pojaviti se</i> ‘appear’, vb, refl, imperfect, III, sg

Table 2. Serbo-Croatian verbs accommodated to the system of Romanian language in Medjmurje, Baranja and Serbia.

It might be that the differences in inflection between Medjmurje, on the one hand, and Baranja and Serbia, on the other, more exactly the *-l-* particle which appears in the Croatian verbs accommodated to the system of Bayash vernaculars, represent an influence and a reflex of Kajkavian phonetics of the verb (see Brozović & Ivić 1988: 91–97).

In Medjmurje we also noted the frequent use of the imperfect (see Transcript 4 at the end of the paper), even if the Kajkavian dialect spoken there practically does not make use of the imperfect nor of the aorist.

In Medjmurje we encountered the use of the infinitive as direct object, as well. It must be said that no such a construction was registered among the Bayash in Baranja or Serbia, ‘*da + present*’ being preferred instead. This might be due to the influence of the local Kajkavian dialect, where the infinitive is used in situations where Serbian and its dialects prefer the ‘*da + present*’ construction: *nu šćii sfătí* (‘you can’t talk’), in Medjmurje, as opposed to *nu šćii să sfăćěšć*,<sup>38</sup> in Serbia.

<sup>38</sup> This is only a presumptive example, because *nu šćii să sfăćěšć* can hardly be heard in Serbia, where the verb *vorbi* (‘to speak’) is used instead of *sfătí*. The former is characteristic of *Muntean* vernaculars, while the latter for *Ardelean* ones.

The reduction of the infinitive in Romanian, which is by no means total, is usually considered a Balkanism (Steinke & Vraciu 1999: 120), however Assenova 2002 believes that not the lack or narrowing of the infinitive must be considered a Balkanism, but the substitution of the infinitive in an identical way in all the Balkan languages with subordinate constructions which alternate with the infinitive and assume its functions, until finally they replace it. The same author makes the following note: “The replacement of the infinitive with analytical constructions in Serbo-Croatian completes the pattern of a typically Balkan area of an unequal distribution: a compact center of full (or almost full) replacement of the infinitive (Bulgarian, Greek, Aromanian) emerges, and moving away from that center toward the north and northwest, the infinitive construction becomes progressively more widespread” (Assenova 2002: 319). Thus, the preservation of the infinitive with the Bayash from Medjimurje can be explained as the influence of the contact idiom, the Kajkavian dialect, which is far away from the above-mentioned center of replacement of the infinitive.

### 3.3.2.2. The article

In Baranja, nouns in the genitive are declined by the use of both preposed and postposed genitival article, which, in standard and dialectal Romanian, is an *either-or* option:

*múchea lu săcúrii* (Rom. *muchea securii* ‘the sickle’s handle’)  
*múma a lu feátii* (Rom. *mama fetei* ‘the girl’s mother’)  
*múma a lu ficióru lui* (Rom. *mama feciorului* ‘the groom’s mother’)

Petrovici, during his 1937 fieldtrip among the Bayash in Čokešina, also noted this type of genitive — *burícu a lu zăžitului* (‘the fingertip’) — among others, such as: *dósu mînîi* (‘the backhand’), *ósu-al úmirului* (‘the collarbone’), *mucu-al íîîi* (‘the nipple’), *gura lu cămășîi* (‘the skirt’s collar’), but made no comment on it (Petrovici 1938: 231).

For the indefinite article singular, masculine and feminine (Rom. *un* and *o*), the archaic Romanian variants *unu* and *una* are used (this phenomenon has also been registered in other regions inhabited by Romanians outside Romania):

*úna vreáme* (Rom. *o vreme* ‘a period’)  
*úna órbă* (Rom. *o vorbă* ‘a word’)  
*únu cupíl* (Rom. *un copil* ‘a child’)  
*únu cal* (Rom. *un cal* ‘a horse’)

In Medjimurje, this archaic form of the indefinite article is used only sporadically, much more rarely than in Baranja:

*úna sórá* (Rom. *o soră* ‘a sister’)

### 3.3.3.3 The adjective

In Baranja, we recorded the use of the adjective *alt/alta* (‘another’, masc and fem) with the meaning of ‘next, second, following’, in the expression:

*álta zî* (Rom. *a doua zi* ‘the next day’)<sup>39</sup>

As for the degrees of comparison of adjectives (and adverbs), we must mention the formation of the comparative of superiority with the help of the element *dă*, as in the Aromanian, Istroromanian and Meglenoromanian dialects,<sup>40</sup> an archaic feature of the Romanian language (today, in standard Romanian, *decât* totally replaced *dă*):

*mái bătárn dă míne* (‘older than me’)<sup>41</sup>

The superlative of superiority is formed, as in Istroromanian, in the same way as the comparative of superiority: with the help of the adverb *mai* plus the positive form of the adjective (or adverb), but the stress is not on the adjective (or adverb) anymore, but on *mai* (Caragiu Marioțeanu 1975: 200):

*mái bătárn* (‘the oldest’)

The Romanian vernaculars spoken by the Vlachs of north-eastern Serbia, which belong to the Dacoromanian dialect, also preserve this form of superlative.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.3.3.4. Other

Both in Baranja and in Medjmurje, frequent use of the particle *god/god’/gode/godea/gođ* (< Sr./Cr. *god* ‘ever’) is noted, mainly (but not necessarily) with adverbs and (undetermined) pronouns, which emphasizes the indefinite value:

<sup>39</sup> This might also be due to the influence of the Croatian language, where the two are expressed with the help of the same word: *drugi/druga/drugo* (‘second, following, another, next’).

<sup>40</sup> For details on the formation of degrees of comparison in these three dialects, see Caragiu Marioțeanu 1975; for the present state of the degrees of comparison and their use in Aromanian, see Bara, Kahl & Sobolev 2005: 126.

<sup>41</sup> This example was recorded in Darda.

<sup>42</sup> For a detailed discussion on the formation of degrees of comparison in the Balkan languages, see Assenova 2002: 117–123.

*ce góde-o záce* ('whatever he might say')  
*pánã god nu sã plãteáscã mult ban* ('as long as they don't pay a lot of money')  
*cáre god* ('whoever')

The use of this particle in the speech of Romaniaphone populations is nothing new, being also registered in other regions inhabited by Romanians who live in a Slavic or Hungarian environment, such as the Romanians in the Serbian Banat, the Vlachs in northeastern Serbia or the Romanians in Hungary, as well as in the Romanian vernaculars spoken in the Romanian Banat (Boldurean 2007: 500 gives examples of the use of this Slavic element in the Banat dialectal literature).

### 3.4. *Munteni vs Ardeleni*: a lexical comparison

In Table 3, we give a list of lexemes recorded in the Bayash communities in Croatia we have visited so far (similar to the one Barjaktarović published in 1964). We have grouped together the *Muntean* localities Darda and Beli Manastir in Baranja, because the lexical differences between them are minor. Even if we believe that the *Ardelean* vernacular spoken in Torjanci (Baranja) is under the strong influence of the neighbouring *Muntean* one, we also included in the table lexemes registered here, for a possible lexical comparison with the *Ardelean* vernacular from Kuršanec (Medjimurje). Some of the words were obtained as answers to the linguistic questionnaire, which, as we mentioned before, was only sporadically used, while other terms were mentioned in spontaneous conversations. Due to inconsistency in using the questionnaire, some of the terms are missing.

<b>Kuršanec (Ardeleni)</b>	<b>Darda and Beli Manastir (Munteni)</b>	<b>Torjanci (Ardeleni)</b>	
o țără	oleácã / leácã	–	'a little'
bęri	pívã	–	'beer'
cliștári	par	–	'glass'
nóuru	cériu	–	'sky'
ínã(i)mã	ímãna	ímãna	'stomach'
poplãn	–	iórgan	'comforter'
l'ip'idóu	cearșáp	l'ipidóu	'bed sheet'
ródã	bãrzãncã	cucustríc	'stork'
udvár	avlié	udvár	'courtyard'
sřãtí	*urbí	–	'speak'

cánva	mán̄te / curán̄d	–	‘long ago’
bírcă	mélu	mel	‘lamb’
–	vóia	bírcă	‘sheep’
înapóii	îndărát	–	‘(in the) back, behind’
cucurúz	porómb	cucurúz	‘corn’
–	golómb	porómb	‘pigeon’
oblóc	pingér	oblóg	‘window’
țúcur	șechér’u	țúcur	‘sugar’
scoṅ	scáunu	–	‘chair’
urán̄di	súdnițile	–	‘the Fates’
omórá (pórcu) (pres, III, sing)	înjunghiái (pórcu) (imperf, I, sing)	–	‘slaughter (the pig)’
–	iabucítă	părădíca	‘tomato’
băiáš / țágán	țágán / rumán	–	‘man / husband’
băieșáță / țágáncă	țágáncă / rumán̄că	–	‘woman / wife’
băișášce	țágán̄este / román̄este	–	the language they speak

\*We recreated the infinitive.

Table 3. Lexemes registered among the Bayash in Baranja and Medjmurje.

We observe a fairly clear distinction between south-Romanian (or *Muntean*) and north-Romanian (*Ardelean*) lexemes, the former being in use mainly in Darda and Beli Manastir, the latter in Medjmurje and the small *Ardelean* village of Torjanci.

Apart from this, we should also draw attention to some Romanian archaisms, such as *custá* ‘to live’ and *cust* ‘life’ (used both in Baranja and in Medjmurje)<sup>43</sup> and *mán̄te* ‘before, long ago’ (used only in Medjmurje). The verb *custá* (< Lat. *consto, -are*) represents, on the territory of Romania, an archaism encountered in old texts from the north (Moldova) and south-west (Banat) and used today only dialectally in Bihor and the Apuseni Mountains. As for *mán̄te* (< Lat. *magis ante*), this form is found in Maramureș north of the River Tisa, but also among Romanians in Hungary and in the Istroromanian dialect.

<sup>43</sup> Not shown in Table 3, because it has the same form in all the communities studied.

Due to close contact with the Serbian and Croatian dialects and to the fact that all Bayash are bilingual, the Romanian vernacular they speak encompasses many words from the contact idioms which are often (though not always) accommodated to Romanian phonology and phonotactics, as, for example: *șechér'u* (< Sr./Cr. *šečer*), *avlíe* (< Sr./Cr. *avlija*), *ródă* (< Sr./Cr. *roda*).

We can also observe the use of regionalisms from the Baranja Slavic contact idiom in Darda and Beli Manastir, for example: *iabucíță* (< *jabučica* 'tomato'), used mainly in the region of Slavonia.

Even though they have not preserved the tradition that they came from Hungary, the language of the Bayash in Medjmurje is characterized by the presence of Hungarian words, as, for example: *ișcola* (< Hung. *iskola* 'school'), *udvár* (< Hung. *udvar* 'courtyard'), *chișártóu* (< Hung. *kísértet* 'phantom').<sup>44</sup>

In Medjmurje we have recorded the word *urándi* ('Fates') also specific to the Bayash in Hungary (Kovalcsik 2007: 118). In Serbia, only the terms *ursători* and *ursodice* are in use.

### 3.5. Perceptual dialectology

Perceptual dialectology, one of the sub-areas of investigation in 'folk linguistics', was the method most employed by our research team in the Bayash communities. In view of the dearth of any linguistic studies, the opinions of ordinary people belonging to these communities about the distribution of language varieties in their own and the surrounding speech communities may be a good starting point for further linguistic investigation and can provide a sketch of an approximate network of Bayash communities. Sometimes, people's approximations confirm what we suspected or expected of a certain dialect or idiom, but in some cases there are surprising divergences from professional results or suppositions. The dialect boundaries, as they are perceived by the Bayash in Croatia, do not always overlap with the observations of the linguists and it is quite intriguing to find out why, and whether the folk can be wrong or whether we have missed something.

As we said before, the differences between the Baranja localities Darda and Beli Manastir, on the one hand, and Torjanci, on the other, are minimal from the dialectological point of view, but the inhabitants of these localities emphasize their membership of two different groups, a distinction based in their subjective perception of speaking two different

<sup>44</sup> Radosavljević also noted the presence of Hungarian lexical elements in the speech of the Bayash from Medjmurje (Radosavljević 2007: 512).



Romanian vernaculars: *Muntean* and *Ardelean*.<sup>45</sup> As in most cases when asked to detail the actual differences between groups and/or vernaculars, people refer only to lexical differences. Thus, a participant from Darda mentioned the following lexemes which individualize the two vernaculars: *avlie* ('yard'), used in Darda, a *Muntean* term, as opposed to *udvár* (used in Torjanci, thus an *Ardelean* one), *cicl'a* — *lúntră* ('boat'), *şechér'u* — *ţúcur* ('sugar'), *víno-ndăráť* — *víno-napóí* ('come back'), with the observation that in Darda *napóiu* means 'food for pigs'.<sup>46</sup> Another participant from Beli Manastir points to other terms that differ in the two vernaculars, namely *cuřát* ('knife') in Beli Manastir as opposed to *bríscă* in Torjanci and *marámă* ('headscarf') as opposed to *chingióuă*, while a man from Torjanci points in turn also to lexical differences but giving other terms: *troácă*, as used by the community in Torjanci, as opposed to *álbie* ('trough'), used by the *Munteni*, *porómb* — *golómb* ('pigeon'), *cucurúz* — *porómb* ('corn').<sup>47</sup>

The Bayash in Croatia, and from all over the Balkans, are aware of the existence of other Bayash communities in their surroundings and elsewhere, and despite physical distance have various connections with them, thus forming a *mental network*, or *mental continuity* (Sikimić 2006e). This mental continuity is a trans-border phenomenon, as new borders are drawn in the Balkans and massive transplantations of whole Bayash settlements

<sup>45</sup> Willy Diercks, commenting on the linguistic-geographic daily knowledge (the 'mental maps') of his subjects, argues that: "Dialect boundaries, as parts of a filter that contributes to the delimitation of close surroundings, are particularly dependent on the dialect competence of the speaker/listener and on his or her ability to perceive linguistic differences. This ability to perceive linguistic differences, however, is not primarily associated with dialect competence. It is partially based on personal experience with various dialects but also includes popular opinions about the linguistic area (identifying words, identifying sounds). The concepts which are handed down and sanctioned by the group are of great importance. For example, it is possible to discover opinions of a neighboring region which refer to previously existing economic differences between the two areas — differences, for example, which, through advances in agrarian technology or political intervention, no longer exist. The opinions survive longer than the actual existence of the cause of the attitude toward the neighbor's language/dialect; the language cliché stays the same" (Diercks 2002: 52–53).

<sup>46</sup> *Otherness* is most of the times also marked by pointing to differences in the ways of speaking or pronunciation.

<sup>47</sup> Emil Petrovici considers this to be a key-term which indicates the Muntean origin of the Romanian speaking *Coritari* from western Serbia: "Even if they haven't kept the tradition that they came from Muntenia, they cannot have left the Romanian lands too long ago. Thus, they use the word *porombi* (plur. tant.) for 'corn'. As corn started being cultivated in Muntenia towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century these Gypsies must have still been in the places where they had been Romanized" (Petrovici 1938: 228).

take place into the countries of Western Europe. However, the further away the Bayash communities are, the more distorted and faint the perception or real knowledge of the vernaculars spoken by them. For example, the Bayash from Medjmurje talked about *Bulmani* and *Munteni* as two different groups, but did not know exactly where they live, nor could they point to specific differences in their vernaculars. Some of the participants expressed the opinion that *Bulmani* and *Munteni* are two names for the same group, others said there are two different groups, both of which live “beyond Zagreb”. As for the *Bulmani*, some said they don’t know either *Lăcătăreșce* (Gypsy), nor *Băișășce*, but speak a mixed idiom, others just said that they can’t speak proper Bayash (again, the ethnonym *Băiaș* is only common to those from Medjmurje). Saramandu’s informants from Pribislavec (Medjmurje) also mention the *Bulmani/Bulumani* and *Munceni* living in the Sisak — Maslovačka county, Baranja and Slavonija, saying that their language is closer to that of the Romanians from Bosnia and Vojvodina, and so to the language spoken by the researcher (Saramandu 1997: 116–119). His informants distinguish three groups whose first language is Romanian — *Băieși*, *Munceni* and *Bulumani* — but cannot explain the differences between the last two. It is interesting to note how, at a distance of less than 300 km, the gentilic derived from the toponym *Bolman* has lost its meaning, but lived on and came to denote a particular group of Bayash which, in fact, does not exist as a separate entity. As the *Munteni* from Baranja say, their original settlement was Bolman — hence the gentilic which, in fact, is synonymous with *Munteni*.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, many times the perceptions of other groups of Bayash living at great distances are not distorted and coincide with the researchers’ observations. Thus, the Bayash from Baranja say that those from Bosnia, *Karavlasî*, speak the same vernacular as theirs (*isto ca șî nôi*), while the differences between the Romanian spoken in Baranja and in Medjmurje are significant and impede communication, this being the reason why they refer to Croatian. Furthermore, one participant from Darda even said that they cannot properly communicate in Croatian either, because those from Medjmurje “have their own language, Kajkavian”.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Lacking an umbrella ethnonym to encompass all the Bayash groups, toponyms are frequently transformed into gentilics which are further used as a substitute for ‘people speaking the same language as ours’. A participant from Kuršanec, for example, speaking of her daughter who married in Serbia into a Bayash community, calls the Bayash community living there *Crușuvl’eni* (meaning ‘from Kruševac’, even if they do not actually live in Kruševac proper but in the villages in its surrounding).

<sup>49</sup> See section 3.2. before for details on the Kajkavian dialect of the Croatian language.

When asked to provide detail on the Romanian idiom spoken by the Bayash in the far north of the country, he said that they *mai mult ardeléni vorbeáște* ('speak more Ardelean'), as do those from Hungary and also from Torjanci. But, as mentioned before, the vernacular spoken in nearby Torjanci is strongly influenced by the *Muntean* vernacular spoken in the surrounding localities and does not differ significantly from it, the exceptions being mainly lexical. In their turn, the Bayash from Medjimurje also said they can understand those from Hungary and are in contact with them, some of them even mentioning that they came from Hungary. It is important to notice that even when the participants could not point to specific linguistic differences between idioms, they would say that the community they were asked about speaks *almíntrilea* ('differently') or even that every village has its own vernacular (*în tot sátu almíntrilea*). It appears that almost each and every village has its own idiom, which differs only slightly from the ones surrounding it but is perceived as different by the members of the local community. This is also supported by Saramandu, who noticed differences in pronunciation between the *cumpaéne* in Medjimurje.<sup>50</sup> In Serbia, idiom mixing is so pronounced that reliable linguistic conclusions can only be drawn by analyzing the idiolects of the interlocutors (Sikimić 2005d: 158), which might also be the case in Croatia, but further investigation is needed.

There exists a set of variables according to which the researcher is 'evaluated' and 'categorized' by the participant, such as social status, age, gender and place of origin (Sorescu Marinković 2007). The language or dialect spoken by the researcher is, especially in the Bayash environment, another important factor according to which the members of the community try to 'build up' the researcher, as "perceptions of dialect are, in essence, nothing more than perceptions of people" (Martínez 2003: 39). In Medjimurje, it turned out that similarities between the vernaculars we and our interlocutors were speaking were more important than differences in defining my identity, in 'humanizing' me, in the proper sense of the word, because *Băiaș* among the Bayash in Medjimurje and *Ţágan* among those in Baranja mean the same thing, that is: 'human, man/woman'. Thus, after a discussion about Bayash and *Munteni*, I asked them: *Ió ce sânt, munteáncă sáu băieșáță?* ('What am I: Muntean or Bayash woman?') *Băi-*

<sup>50</sup> Saramandu believes that these differences are due to the isolation that exists between the *cumpaéne* of Croatian Bayash, which, in his opinion, are "relatively closed communities" (Saramandu 1997: 100). Our opinion differs: as we have shown before, the Bayash communities are connected by a strong *mental continuum*, thus the existing differences are not due to isolation, but to the different places of origin of these groups in the Romanian lands.

*eșăfi. Să nu fii măritată atunce n-ai fi băieșăță.* ('Bayash. If you were not married, you would not be Bayash woman.') *Dar cé-aș fi?* ('What would I be then?') *Fătă.* ('Girl.') Questions I was asked in Medjmurje, such as: 'Is everybody in Romania Bayash?', have their equivalent in Baranja, but with much less frequency: *E máre țâgănie-n România?* ('Are there many Gypsy quarters in Romania?') However, in Baranja I was once included in the other dialectal group, the *Munteni*, by an *Ardelean* participant from Torjanci, from my way of speaking: *Ti bi bila Munceniță.* ('You would be a *Muntean* woman.')

#### 4. Conclusions

**4.1.** If we are to determine the place of the *Muntean* vernacular spoken in Baranja in the Bayash vernaculars of the Balkans we can find similarities with those from Serbia, south of the Danube. Thus, it would not be too venturesome to say that vernacular belongs to the Bayash Sava continuum, while the one spoken in Medjmurje belongs to the Bayash Drava continuum. However, this division is very approximate and the recent dislocations of the population and migrations have caused major changes in the ethnic profile of the region. It would be interesting to see what lies in between these two geographical extremes, Baranja and Medjmurje, and what Romanian vernaculars are spoken by the Bayash in the other regions of Croatia, even if, as we have mentioned before, these communities were greatly affected during WWII, some of them scattered away, others completely exterminated. Thus, in their place might have settled Bayash colonists from other regions of Croatia, Serbia or Bosnia.

**4.2.** As regards the Romanian vernaculars spoken in Baranja, we may observe that the lack of normative instances and contact with the Croatian language allowed them to develop in a direction which is partially unknown to the other Romanian dialects in Romania. Furthermore, the 'norm' of this linguistic system is very flexible and tolerant, the system being extremely elastic and permitting the parallel coexistence of more units with the same function.<sup>51</sup> In normal communities, the expectation is that adults act as brakes on the innovations produced by children so that analogical and other deviant forms are corrected and do not persist. In the case of dying, pidgin and some minority languages it may be that children have greater scope to act as norm-makers due to the fact that a great deal of variability exists among the adult community (Romaine

<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, the reduced material from Medjmurje does not permit us to make the same statements about the vernacular spoken there.

2001: 372). At the same time, the absence of corrective pressure or a model has made it possible to preserve some archaic characteristics which in Romania have already disappeared. It is not out of place to say that today only dialectological investigations conducted outside of Romania, in Romaniaphone communities, can offer an accurate image of the Romanian dialects, or of what they might have transformed into were it not for the normative power of the standard Romanian language.

**4.3.** The Bayash of Croatia, like those of the Balkans, form an authentic community of practice. Even if they are scattered all over the country, their group cohesion is relatively strong. Additionally, their remarkable group endogamy has been pointed out repeatedly. They can marry hundreds of kilometers away, in communities which inevitably speak an understandable, but nonetheless different idiom. Because of this, they need a very high communicative competence which can only be attained by a relaxing of the linguistic rules and putting understanding between the members in the first place. The *Munteni* group is aware of the fact that their idiom is different from that of the *Ardeleni* and they stress this all the time, pointing to the features that are different. However, this does not lead to exclusion, but to a widening of their lexicon and the enhancement of their communicative competence, the most important being understanding between members of the community, not the linguistic rule.

### Transcripts:<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> The system of transcription, as mentioned before, will be a simplified one, for the texts to be easily readable. We have only marked the stressed syllables in the linguistic parts of the paper proper. The researchers' questions are put in brackets and are preceded by the initial of their name: A — Annemarie Sorescu Marinković, B — Biljana Sikimić, T — Toni Marušić. As for the interlocutors, in order to protect their identity, women were marked with W, men with M and boys with B. If there were more interlocutors we added figures to these letters (e.g. W1, W2, M1, M2 etc.). We must notice that the pronunciation is not consistent with any of the interlocutors. In the first column, where the original recording is presented, we marked the words or fragments in Croatian in *Italic*, but in the English translation, in the second column, we used all the toponyms and anthroponyms in Croatian, regardless of the original. We used the following graphic markers, meaning: [\*\*\*] — completely incomprehensible, [word] — unintelligible word, [-] — pause, {...} — essential explanation, in the English text, which lacks in the Romanian one or the meaning in the original text is not complete without it, /reaction/ — interlocutors' or researchers' reactions. Last but not least, we must express our gratitude to Biljana Sikimić, who carefully listened to all the recordings, read all transcripts, made very useful suggestions and transcribed the fragments in Kajkavian.

**1) Darda, 18 May 2006:**

(B: Și când s-au născut țigani  
aici? În sat.)

M: Mulț ai, mulț ai, mulț ai,  
aici a fost tri frați, aicea, în Darda,  
aici-n Zlatnița, ca *bivša* Zlatnița  
când *gode*-a fost.

(A: Trei frați?)

M: Tri frați. Steva, Iova și  
mai unu... Nu mai știu cum îl  
cheamă, am uitat *već*. Ei tri frați. Și  
dân ăia tri frați aicea s-a... Atuncea  
dân Bulman *isto*, Bulmanu ș-asta  
*isto* a fost. E, da. Tri frați, da, a fost  
ș-aici s-a născut it ș-atuncea  
s-a-născut *dabome* și dân *Bačka*,  
dân Monoșturu *Bački* și dân, dân  
Turianț și... Bine, Turianțu ei n-a  
fost mai atuncea, știi, el a fost  
Bulmanu. A, da. Aia mare *naselje*-a  
fost acia. Țăgănie mare-a fost.  
Mante, acuma noi zăcem țăgănie că  
zăce ei toț că țăgăni ș-atunci [\*\*\*]  
că țăgăni. Ce *gode*-o zăce ei să  
iștem, noi am iști. Nu putem, nu  
știem ce iștem. *Da ri* iștem rudari,  
*da ri* iștem...

(B: Băieși.)

M: Băiaș! E, nu, nu știu, nu  
știu.

W: Io gândesc că iștem  
români, nu?

M: A nu știu. Matematica  
noastră e româneasă, nu? Da cum  
zăce că iștem români, atuncea nu ne  
priznăiască români.

W: Pa alta ce noi iștem râ-  
mâni, da custăm în *Hrvatska*, al nu  
ni priznăiaște România, zăce *bar*  
așa că nu ni priznăiaște. *Al nikad*

(B: When have the Gypsies  
settled here? In the village.)

M: A lot of years ago, there  
were three brothers, here, in Darda,  
here in Zlatnica, former Zlatnica.

(A: Three brothers?)

M: Three brothers. Steva,  
Iova and another one... I can't  
remember his name, I forgot it.  
Three brothers. And from those  
three brothers... Then from Bolman  
the same, Bolman was the same.  
Yes. Three brothers, yes, they  
settled here and then married  
{girls} from Bačka, from Bački  
Monoštor and from Torjanci...  
Well, Torjanci did not exist back  
then, you know, it was Bolman. It  
was a big settlement. A big Gypsy  
settlement. Before, now we say  
Gypsy settlement because  
everybody says they are Gypsy and  
then [\*\*\*] Gypsy. Whatever they  
tell us to be, we would be. We  
can't, we don't know what we are.  
Are we Rudari, are we ...

(B: Bayash.)

M: Bayash! Well, no, I don't  
know, I don't know.

W: I think we are Romanians,  
right?

M: But I don't know. Our  
mathematics is Romanian, right?  
But if we say we are Romanians,  
Romanians do not recognize us.

W: It's different, we are Ro-  
manians, but live in Croatia and  
Romania doesn't recognize us, or at  
least it's said it doesn't recognize

noi n-am mers încolo s-audem *da li* ne priznăiaște or nu ne priznăiaște, aia lumea zăce că nu ne priznăiaște. Șî noi îs rumâni. *Ali* custăm în *Hrvatska*, nu? Mai curând a fost asta *pod Jugoslavijom*, acu îi *Hrvatska*. *Ali* noi știem... noi aia limbă ce zăce romii, noi a lor limbă nu știem mămica, ni una orbă.

M: Ni n-am știut, ni nu știem, nu prișipem, iaște care știe.

W: A dă râmâni *već* știem. Râmânaște orbe. *Ali* zăce că nu ni priznăiaște Râmânia, *da u stvari* noi n-am mers încoloi, dântre noi mămilea să-ntrebăm să știem *da li* ni priznăiaște. Aia nov [auți] zăce că nu ni priznăiaște, nu vrea să ne prihvătească. *Al možda* șî vrea. Noi n-a mers mămil dântre noi să-ntrebăm.

M: La námț iștem țigoineri, la ăia iștem iară gipsi, la ăștialanț iștem *Cigani*, *pa ne znaš kome se da opredeliš*, *nemam pojma*, nu știem să ne-opredelim să zăcem asta-i limba noastră și țara noastră. Noi n-avem țară. Noi iștem așa, *nacionalna manjina*. Da *nacionalna manjina* io nu știu, n-am poimă cum. Nu știu, io gând'esc că n-ar trebuia să iștem *nacionalna manjina* c-a noastră-i orbă rumânaască orbă. Acuma ce noi îș l'acă prănesâm *više srpski ili hrvatski*, *to je đe živiš tako i razgovaraš*. Pricepi tu acuma ce zăc?

(A: Da, pricep.)

us. But never have we travelled there to hear whether they recognize us or not. It's only people talking. We are Romanians. But live in Croatia, right? Before it was under Yugoslavia, now it's Croatia. But we don't know the language Roma speak, at all, not a single word.

M: We didn't know it and we don't know it, we can't understand it, there are people who can.

W: But we understand Romanian. Romanian words. But they say Romania doesn't recognize us, but, in fact, nobody went there to ask, to know whether they recognize us. They [\*\*\*] say they don't recognize us, they don't want to accept us. But maybe they do. Nobody went there to ask.

M: For Germans we are Gypsies, for the others we are again Gypsies, for those we are Gypsies, you don't know whom to commit to, I have no idea, we don't know to commit and to say this is our language and our country. We have no country. We are a national minority. But I don't know in which way national minority, I have no idea. I don't know, I believe we shouldn't be national minority, because our language is Romanian. But now we speak more Serbian or Croatian, you speak the language of the country you live in. Do you understand now what I'm saying?

(A: Yes, I do.)

M: E, pa.

W: Ei vrea s-audă cum a fost mante la noi lumea, cum s-a naselit lumea.

M: La noi a fost *tradicija* almintrilea. *Pravo ono* rumânaşce a fost. Ardil'anii şî muncanii. Nouă zâce muncanii, da-n *Bačka* ardil'anii. Pa da. [ – ] Da, da. [ – ] Nu ştiu să zâc alta.

(B: Sânt şi ard'eleani aici la *Baranja*?)

W: Care cum s-a-nsurat ş-a vinit dân altilea sate, dân Apatin, dân *Bačka* şî iaşte ardil'ani, *ali* mai mult noi iştem muncani. Dă noi să zâce că noi iştem muncani. Acuma alta care cineva s-a-nsurat, s-a măritat, şî mai p-urmă încoce are porodiţă, cupii, *i to je ondak nastanjeno*. Nu e atuncea aia dâncoce. *Ipak* aia-i *došljaci*, ce-a vinit dân altă parte.

M: Nu orbeaşte *ni* tot satu *jednako*. Bulumanu *već* almintrilea ol'acă aia orbă. Darda *već* almintrilea.

## 2) Darda, 18 May 2006:

W1: Ş-atuncea lunta când e la noi, nu? La noi, ce şciu, nu şciu cum la voi lunta, *ali* la noi merge şî prosaşti pă fată... Soră, spuŃ tu?

W2: Spune *samo* tu.

W1: Merge şî prosaşte pă fată, ş-atuncea să pogodeaşte cât. *Na primer, sto kila* dă pâne, *dvaest*

M: Well, good.

W: They want to hear how it was before here with us, how people settled here.

M: We had a different tradition. It was a real Romanian one. *Ardeleni* and *Munteni*. We are called *Munteni* and those in *Bačka* *Ardeleni*. Well, yes. [ – ] Yes, yes. [ – ] I don't know what else to say.

(B: Are there *Ardeleni* also here in *Baranja*?)

W: If they got married and came from other villages, from Apatin, from *Bačka*, and there are also *Ardeleni*, but more *Munteni*. It's said we are *Munteni*. It's different if they got married here and have family and children, it means they have settled. It's not the same. Still, it means they are newcomers, they came from somewhere else.

M: They don't speak the same everywhere. In Bolman it's already different. Darda already different.

W1: Then the wedding with us, right? With us, what do I know, I don't know how the wedding is with you, but with us they go and propose to the girl... Sister, will you describe?

W2: You go on.

W1: They go and propose to the girl, and then they strike a bargain about it. For example, a



*litara* dă rachiu, asta-şa *samo* zâc *najmanje*, *al to*, *to sve najviše* merge, nu? Atuncea cinci-şasă porci, cinci-şasă, aştea, voi, nu? Ş-atuncea culacii, tortil'i, nu? Salatiţa, tot aia, ş-atuncea viñe şi ceare pã fatã şi puñe *rok* în care datung, în care zî lunta aia, nu? E, atuncea a lu feati luntaşi, pozivaci, pã cine cheamã, la ea vini. Ş-a lu ficiorului, toţ sã sastãneaşce la fata aia. Ş-atuncea acia faci una ca vecera, nu, faci mâncari, bea, cântã, ş-atuncea cu muzicã o lã pã fatã pân la uşã. Acuma fata trebu sã sã scot-afarã. E, da *neki*, care mai bătãrn om, bariacu îl puñe pã uşã, îl îñtapã pã uşã bariacu, şi al'bia cu banii, al'bia-n jos, apã-nuntru. Şi toţ mora sã vârleascã bani mărunt în apa aia. E, da pã nivastã nu slobodi-afarã. Pânã *god* nu sã plãteascã mult bañ. E-atuncea când vine... Aia *dugo* ei sã chiţcheaşce, nu dã fata, la noi aşa luntã.

W2: Sã pogodeaşte.

W1: Pogodeala. Cât zãce ăsta mai bătãrn Ńãgan, *na primer ako zãce sto jevra ili petsto jevra ili iljadu jevra, primer*. Când *mi damo iljadu jevra* atuncea fata mear-acas. Asta zãce: Nu pot sã-ţ dau io Ńie-atita, io-ţ dau Ńie, *na primer, dvesto jevra*. A, pa nu poţ sã-mi dai tu mie *dvesto jevra*, fata nu merge, fata rãmãñe la noi pãnã *god* nu-mi dai *iljadu jevra*. E, atuncea ăsta lã şi scote *iljadu jevra*, atuncea aia ca

hundred kilograms of bread, twenty liters of brandy, and I'm giving the smallest figures, but everything is the biggest, right? Then five-six pigs, five-six oxen, right? Then the wedding cakes, right? The salad, everything, and then they come and propose to the girl and set a term, what date, the day the wedding will take place, right? Well, then, the girl's guests, her wedding callers, those she chooses to invite, they come to her. And the groom's, they all meet at the girl's. Then here they have dinner, eat, drink, sing, then accompany the girl with music to the door. Now they have to take the girl out. But a man, the oldest, puts the flag on the door, sticks the flag on the door, and puts down the trough with water and money inside. And everybody must throw coins in the water. But they don't let the bride out. As long as they don't pay a lot of money. When that happens... They haggle for a long time, they don't let the girl go, and this is the wedding like with us.

W2: They agree upon.

W1: The agreement. How much this oldest Gypsy says, for example if he says a hundred euros or five hundred euros or a thousand euros, for example. When you give me a thousand euros, then you can take the girl home. This one says: I can't give you that much, I'll give you, for example, two hundred euros. Well, you can't give me two hundred euros, the girl is not going, the girl stays with us until you give

bariacu ăla cu bota aia să lă și muzica cântă șă fata merge. Da tu, soră-mea, poț spuni mai bine. Că io [mă-mpletesc și d-ai-așa].

W2: Pa bine-ai zăs. Iaca, când să prosaște, aia *prosto, ali* când să fură fata, atuncea-i mai almintrilea. Când prosaște pă fata, atuncea așa cum ea zâce, merge și să pogodeaște cât carne, pâne, tot să pogodeaște. *U stvari nekad* face *zajedno, nekad* face *posebno*. Ș-atunci când vine rându și duce pă fata aia dă la ea d-acasă, o duce pân sat, *okolo*, cu caii. Fucă câtă cinci-șasă cucii. *Ili* carli, cum mante ireasă. Caii, câtă doi cai: doi negri, doi vânăț, doi roșii, doi al'bi, zavișaste li parește care mai mândre cai, care păru ăla, coma aia mare. Ș-atuncea l-închiteaște cu mărâmi dă cașmir, cu flori, cu rujite l-închiteaște. Și în cucii'l'e-al'ea șade deverușili. Iaște șasă deverușe, iaște novă deverușe. Și nivasta-i a zeacilea, nu? Dovă, dovă deverușe, tote câte dovă, alini are *jednako*. Lungi, ca și nivasta. *Ali boja drukčije*. Dovă roșe, dovă vânăte, dovă vearde, dovă galbine. Și are buchetu-n păr și a lor deverii cu featili-alea *isto*, are *isto* buchetu în pânșari, ei su gătiți în ruvă năgră, cămașă albă...

W1: Cravatna la gât...

me a thousand euros. Well, then this one takes out a thousand euros, then they take off that flag with that stick and the music plays on and the girl walks. But you, my sister, you can tell better. Because I [\*\*\*].

W2: You told everything right. Look, when one proposes, that's simple, but when the girl is stolen, then it's different. When they propose to the girl, then it's as she says, they go and agree on how much meat, bread, they agree upon everything. In fact, sometimes they make it together, sometimes separately. Then when the time comes and they take the girl from her house, they drive her through the village, all around, with horses. They pull five-six carriages. Or carts, as before. The horses, two by two: two black, two brown, two red, two white, it depends, the nicest horses, which have that big hair, big mane. Then they adorn them with Cashmere scarves, with flowers, with roses. And the bridesmaids sit in those carriages. There can be six or nine bridesmaids. And the bride is the tenth, right? Two by two bridesmaids, they wear identical gowns. Long, like the bride. But the colour is different. Two are red, two blue, two green, two yellow. And they have a bouquet in their hair and the groomsmen with these girls the same, they also have the bouquet in their pocket, they wear black costumes, white shirts...

W1: And a necktie...

W2: Și țâpela mândru ágră ca și mante cum ireasă, nu? Cu știț, c-așa c-acu *ponovo* ce să duce. Și-atuncea ei șade în carle-alea unde mai mândru, unde pișchirile-alea mândre albe, și cașmirurl'e-alea, acia șade *omladina* care su mai mândre gátiț.

W1: Și nivasta.

W2: Și nivasta cu muzica. În unu *posebno* nivasta și *đuvegija* cu muzica. Și-atuncea mearge car dăpă car pân leate [?]. *Ali* laintea lu carli lora, unu copil, care mândru, care tânăr, el șade pã unu cal. Calu-ála, *isto* pãstã el iaște *ćilim* unu, *ćilim* unu pãstã el pã ce el șade. Nu e *sedlo*, *nego ćilim*. Și-închitit cu pișchire, calu ála. Și cu flori. Și cupilu ála tânăr *isto* gátiț în ruvã nágrã...

W1: Și muzica.

W2: Și el are *zastava*, bariacu, ș-în sus pã *koplje* măru.

W1: Măru-n sus pã *koplje*.

W2: Și el mearge lainte, mearge, *primer*, dânceoce pânã la [comb-ela] ș-încolo stã. Pânã nu vine carli. Așa cã el carli-al'a nu slobode sã meargã laintea lui, el îi *stalno* lainte. Și cât-ol'acã l-întorce calu ála, jocã.

M: Pã doamna asta știe, și-n Sârbia așa, *isto*.

W1: Cum *godea* cântã muzica, așa cã calu ála jocã. *Sa strane* mearã calu ála și jocã.

W2: And nice black shoes, as it was before, right? With a peak, it's modern again. They sit in those carriages where it's the nicest, where there are those white and nice towels and those Cashmeres, here the best dressed youth sit.

W1: And the bride.

W2: And the bride with the music. In a special carriage there is the bride and the bridegroom with the music. And then carriage after carriage. But before their carriage, a boy, a nice and young one, he rides a horse. And on that horse there is also a rug, he sits on it. There is no saddle, but a rug. Adorned with towels, that horse. And with flowers. And that young child is also dressed in black...

W1: And the music.

W2: And he has that flag, and on the spear the apple.

W1: The apple up on the spear.

W2: And he goes ahead, he goes for example from here to [that van] and there they stop. Until the carriages appear. So he doesn't allow those carriages to go ahead him, he always goes in front. And he turns that horse over a little bit, he dances.

M: The lady knows, it's the same in Serbia.

W1: The horse dances on the music. It goes on the side and dances.

W2: Îl jocă pă cal. Calu jocă.

W2: He makes the horse dance.

W1: Atuncea limuzinili, dâpă carli-al'a ce-nchitite cu tânereamea aia, cu nivasta și cu *đuvegija*, atuncea colona cu limuzânili. *Isto-nchitiț*. Iaște lume și tânără și mai bătrână, *svakako*. Atunci când vine-n *centar*, acia stă, *ili* icea, *primer* baș ici la noi a stat...

W1: Then the limos, behind those adorned carriages, with that youth, with the bride and the bridegroom, then the convoy of limos. Also adorned. There are both younger and older people, all sorts. Then when they arrive in the center, they make a halt here, for example here at us they made a halt...

W2: La bisearică.

W2: At the church.

W1: Unde-acu dugheana asta aici a stat, încolo stă și muzica cântă, da *omladina* pă *cesta* jocă. Atunci *isto* la bisearică *već* unde să cunună, *da li-n* opștină *ili* în bisearică încolo *isto* stă.

W1: They made a halt right in the place of this store, they stop and the music plays on, but the youth dance in the street. Then the same in the church or wherever they get married, in the townhall or in the church, it's the same.

### 3) Beli Manastir, 19 May 2006:

M: Ici a fost casa lu pandurului, nu? A lu lugarului a fost. Și-acu el scriasă cart'e, n-avut pă cine trimeat'e. *Nego-l* trimetea pă ăla, aide, șáz în car și du cartea asta la ăsta și la ăsta. Și-așa, atuncea făcea [albiașchii], făcea l'amne, metere, în cubicuri, nu?

M: Here it was the house of the forest ranger, right? The forester's house. And now he wrote a letter, didn't have anybody to send it with. But he would send that one, come on, get in the cart and take this letter to this and that. Like this, and he would also make [\*\*\*], he would cut wood, cubic meters, right?

(B: Da, da.)

(B: Yes, yes.)

M: Făceasă l'amne și vin-deasă, cu-aia custasă. Da bătrânili noște, babă-mea ea veasă trastă, pă spat'e, ea mărgeasă la námț, în Lașcapalba, în *Novi Čeminac*, în Sairiciu și mărgea și lucra pă la lume. E, atuncea bătrânii noști-n

M: He would cut wood and sell it, he earned a living like that. But our old women, my grandmother, she had a big bag, wearing it on her back, she would go to the Germans, in Lașcapalba, in *Novi Čeminac*, in Sairiciu, and work for

multă rânduri a fost bălț, mari bălț, apă, și-puca pești și ducea pân sate să vindă. E, da iale prosasă.

(B: Îhm, îhm.)

M: Pă trastă, nu?

(B: Da.)

M: Cum să spun, bătrânii noșt-a fost păduraș.

(B: Îhm.)

M: Pân păduri, nu?

(B: Îhm.)

M: Bine, aia, *to*, bătrânii, nu noi.

(B: Bătrâni, bătrâni, da, istoria.)

M: În pădure, noi *većim* în pădure-am custat. A io mi-s în pădure și făcut.

(B: Coliba?)

M: E, iac-aicea-n rât, la *Jagodnjak*. Io nu mi-s făcut în sat, *nego* baș la Benta la pădure. Încolo mi-s făcut eu. Tat-meu el lucrasă, ăla ce Ț-am spus, pân a fost lumea vie, el lucra la panduri, el a fost pismănoș. Și atuncea panduri-i dasă l'amne, lucra el *svašta* la panduri, păza și vacili, și obilăzasă [ilenii] și... Cum să spun, a fost el [\*\*\*] sluga lu pandurului, nu?

people. But our old men, back then there were ponds, large ponds, water, they would catch fish and walk through villages to sell it. And they {the women} would beg.

(B: I see.)

M: With the bag, right?

(B: Yes.)

M: How should I put it, our forefathers were people of the woods.

(B: I see.)

M: In the woods, right?

(B: Yes.)

M: Well, our ancestors, not us.

(B: The ancestors, the ancestors, the history.)

M: In the woods, we have lived in the woods most of the time. I was also born in the woods.

(B: In a hut?)

M: No, here in the swamp, in *Jagodnjak*. I was not born in the village, but right in Benta, in the woods. That's where I was born. My father worked, as long as he lived, for the forest rangers, he was litterate. Then the forest rangers would give him woods, we would work everything for the foresters, he would watch over the cattle and go around the [\*\*\*] and... How should I say, he was [\*\*\*] the forester's footman, right?

#### 4) Kuršanec, 20 January 2006:

W: *Ali așa căn mure șineva, postoji aie că să iavleșce, acă. Auz ševa ca signalu, ca znacu. Io am vāzut. Io am mers isto-napoiu-stă, cum s-o făcut sara, dok ide devet sati, io točno am vāzut-u c-așa șădeș ę, cu l'ip'idou mare, în cap. Io nu șciu šine era aia, nu șciu šine era aia, a baș o murit Mira lu Indre-n zāl'e-l'e. Io cu ę vorbēm. Še, zāc, faš tu aiše? Nīmīc nu-m zāše. Iarā zāc io: A še faš aiša? Nu șcii sfāti, zāc, nu șcii vurbī<sup>53</sup>? Šī șcii še e, pā miń m-a suzburāt peļ'e, m-am spāriet ceva, m-am întors dā chitri ę, pā fugā am al'ergat înontru, în casā, la el. Am spus a lui. A el n-o vāzut. Am mers cu el afar să vadā, nu vād pā nimea, zāše. Aie io numa sāngur-am vāzut. Mare.*

(T: A unge ast-a fost, aici?)

W: *Aiś. Aiše, dā-napoi. Odma otraga. Za ovom kućom, otraga. Da. E, onda su bili strahi. Men se sve koža ježila. Bežala sam vnutri. Pa znaš da nisam imala više da govorim nit reč. Nisam mogla kazati ništa od straha. E, vidiš. Znači, postoji aia, postoji duh.*

(T: Ţi-i frică?)

W: Pă, pa cum nu.

B: *Mene je bilo strah, odjedamput vam se netko pojavi na cesti i naprimjer, pričate s njim.*

W: But when somebody dies, it can be that something appears to you. You hear something like a signal, like a sign. I saw it. I went out in the back, in the evening, it was nine in the evening, I saw her sitting with a big bed sheet over her head. I don't know who she was, but Indre's Mira had just died those days. I was speaking with her. What are you doing here? No reply. I repeat: What are you doing here? Can't you talk, can't you speak? And you know what, I got goose-pimples all over, I got scared, I turned away from her and rushed into the house to him. I told him that. He didn't see it. I went outside with him to see her, I don't see anybody, he says. It was just me who saw it. It was big.

(T: Where was that, here?)

W: Here. Here, in the back. Right behind. Behind this house, yes. Well, that was scary. I got goose-pimples all over. I ran inside. You know I didn't want to say any word anymore. I couldn't utter a word, that's how scared I was. You see. It means that somethnig exists, some apparition.

(T: Are you scared?)

W: How could I not be?

B: I was also afraid, out of nowhere something appears on the road and, for example, you talk to it.

W: *A ja sam govorila [\*\*\*].*  
 A aia ai măi auzât, chișărtou, șcii  
 še-i aia chișărtou?

(A: Chișărtău? Nu.)

W: Chișărtou. Aia-i foc. Așa  
 mare para, focu.

(A: A, îhm.)

W: E, aia e.

B: Chișărtou?

W: Chișărtou, da. Ala-i cân  
 mure kad nije dete kršćeno. Znaš?  
 Židov. Dok umre. Onda se to  
 pokaže. To je chișărtou sã zãše p-a  
 nõstrã. Ako ideš pravo na njega on  
 te uzima i s puta i vodi te, što bog  
 zna kamo, di luta. Ako ideš direktno  
 u njega. Uvek moraš stati na mesto  
 dok ti se on makne, ta vatra. Ta  
 vatra. Onda imaš prednost da ideš.  
 A da ti ideš direktno na onu vatru,  
 ne daj bože. To ti je jako opasno.  
 Onda moj tata je zalutal, znaš da  
 skoro kaj nije došiel vnútri vu vodu,  
 tu peskaru veliku, a on je hodal na  
 posal. To se najčešće događa dok je  
 bila, za vreme magle, dok je vani  
 velika magla. Da, onda se to  
 događa. A on je bil, na posel je išel,  
 u pet sata ujutro. Delal je v  
 Varaždinu. To mu se pojavilo na  
 putu. On je stal na mesto, pa kaže,  
 išel pri njeg je, al nije on mel strah,  
 nikad. On je takav bil, kad je v  
 polnoći nekam išel. Već je stari  
 čovek bil. Išel bi negde i rekel. Sam  
 si je spominal, onda je, tam se je  
 zadržal neko vreme, evo ti ta vatra  
 dalje, dalje od njega. Gleda za onu  
 vatru. Tak je veliki plamen bil /she  
 shows with her hands/. Dalje, dalje,  
 dalje, onda je on išel ravno.

W: I spoke [\*\*\*]. But have  
 you heard of *chișărtou*, do you  
 know what *chișărtou* is?

(A: *Chișărtău?* No.)

W: *Chișărtou*. It's a fire. A  
 big flame, a fire.

(A: Oh, I see.)

W: Yes, right.

B: *Chișărtou?*

W: *Chișărtou*, yes. When a  
 nonbaptized child dies. Do you  
 know? Jew. When it's dying. Then  
 it appears. It's *chișărtou* in our  
 language. If you go straight to it, it  
 sweeps you off the road and takes  
 you away, God knows where,  
 where it wanders. If you go straight  
 to it. You must always stay where  
 you are until it goes away, that fire.  
 That fire. Then you are free to go.  
 But if you go straight into that fire,  
 God forbids! It's very dangerous.  
 Then my father lost his way, you  
 know that he almost stepped into  
 the water, into that big place for  
 digging sand, he was going to his  
 workplace. This happens mostly  
 when the weather is foggy, when  
 there's a lot of fog outside. Yes,  
 then it happens. He went to work, at  
 five o'clock in the morning. He was  
 warking in Varaždin. It appeared to  
 him on the road. He stopped on the  
 place, he said, it was walking in  
 front of him, but he was never  
 afraid. That was him, when he was  
 going somewhere at midnight. He  
 was already an old man. He would  
 go somewhere and said. He  
 understood (himself) and then he  
 spent there some time and that fire

Chișărtou-i ăla. Jâdof copilul. O murit *al* nu-i bucozat. *Nekršćeno dete bilo. Ili dete ili odrasli koji nije kršćen i to se pojavi. Da.*

(A: Și cine vede focu ăla, chișărtou? Muierile numa?)

B: Care *god. Nije važno.*

W: *Bilo što. Ili muško ili je žensko, uglavnom nekršćeno koji je. Îl poče viđe tođ, îl poče viđe cari umblă așa p-acolo. Ali svako večer. Io când eram în ișcolă dă umblam, umblam în hasta ișcolă, io în toță sara mama îm viňa și tata înainće, că io avem u kasnim satima, viñem șesti razred. Io viñem, avem mulći șasuri, sedam sati po neki put sam znala imati, a zimski doba, već je noć. Mama și tata viñe-nainće la miñe. Ali mama și tata uvek îl viđe, nu să-ndura să-m spuii še-i aie. Ali uvek întrebam: Mamă, še-i aie? Nu să-ndura să-m spuie. Să nu mă baže-n frică, că po neki put nu-m puće să-m vie-nainće, sângură viñem io aca. Când avem šest sati, șćii, sângură viñem. Mi-i mare frică, de-ie nu-m spuňa ei mie še-i aie. Ali uvek să poiavle aie pă căra-rea asta baș. Da. Cum îi, peskara asta, șćii. Kak je ova peskara. Uvek na istom mestu.*

moved away from him, further and further. He gazes at that fire. It was a big flame like this /she shows with her hands/. Further, further, further, then he went on. That's *chișărtou*. A Jewish child. It died, but was not baptized. It was a non-baptized child. A child or an adult person who was not baptized. That can also happen. Yes.

(A: And who can see that fire, *chișărtou*? Only women?)

B: Anybody. It's not important.

W: Whatever. Be it male, be it female, but non-baptized. Everybody can see it, people who pass by can see it. But every evening. When I was a pupil, going to school, to this school, my mother and father would come every evening to meet me, because I would have classes till late, I was in the sixth grade. I would come, I'd have a lot of classes, sometimes even seven, and in winter it's already dark. My mother and father would come to meet me. Mom and dad would always see it, but didn't have the heart to tell me what it was. But I would always ask: Mom, what is that? She wouldn't have the heart to tell me. Not to get afraid, because sometimes they couldn't come to meet me, so I had to turn back home alone. When I had only six classes, you know, I would turn back home alone. I was very scared, that's why they didn't want to tell me what it was. But it would always appear on this very road.



(A: *Ș-îl vedăț șî voi.*)

W: *Șî io-l viđem. Întrebam pă mama: Șe-i aia focu-la, șîne fașe nopća foc? Nu-i níme, nu-i nímic aie, zâșe. Nu mă băga-n frică. Ali ei sfățe. Dășpre zăuă, cân să scula. A io auzem cum sfățe ei. Mama șî tata. Vorbe: focu-la. A io puňam io formă, mă culc, n-aud. E, cân mă sculam: N-am auzăt iu, mardoilor, zâșem. Marđoală, am auzăt io, tu pă miňe mă minșúneii? /she laughs/ Șcii še-i minșúneșć? Minț.*

(A: *Da, da, lagati.*)

W: *Tu pă miňe mă minșúnei. [Ba c-acu] șćiu še-i aie. Acu taș, că nu-i nímic aie, ím zâșe mama. Nu-i nímic aie.*

Yes. On these places where you dig sand up, you know how they look like. Always in the same place.

(A: And you would also see it.)

W: I would see it too. I would ask my mom: What's that fire, who lights a fire in the evening? It's nobody, it's nothing, she would say. Not to scare me. But they would talk. In the morning, when they would wake up. And I would overhear. Mom and dad. They would say: that fire. But I would just pretend to be asleep, not to hear. Well, when I wake up: I didn't hear anything, jokesters, I would say. You, jokester, I heard you, are you trying to lie to me? /she laughs/ Do you know what *minșúneșć* means? To lie.

(A: Yes, yes, to tell a lie.)

W: You're lying to me. [But now] I know what it is. Now you shut up, it's nothing, my mom would reply. It's nothing.

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