

Second Migration

compiled by the editors

Migration Routes of the Vlax Roma | Arrival in Western Europe | The Americas | The Wanderers' Reception in the Target Countries

➤ *In the mid-19th century, a second migratory movement took place, which changed the Romani population worldwide. Kalderaš, Lovara and other Romani groups from Central and South-Eastern Europe moved east- and westward and even reached America and Australia. This second migration, so-called after the first wave of the migration of Roma in Europe around 1400, was caused by far-reaching social changes, particularly the abolition of slavery in Wallachia and Moldavia, and emerging industrialisation.*

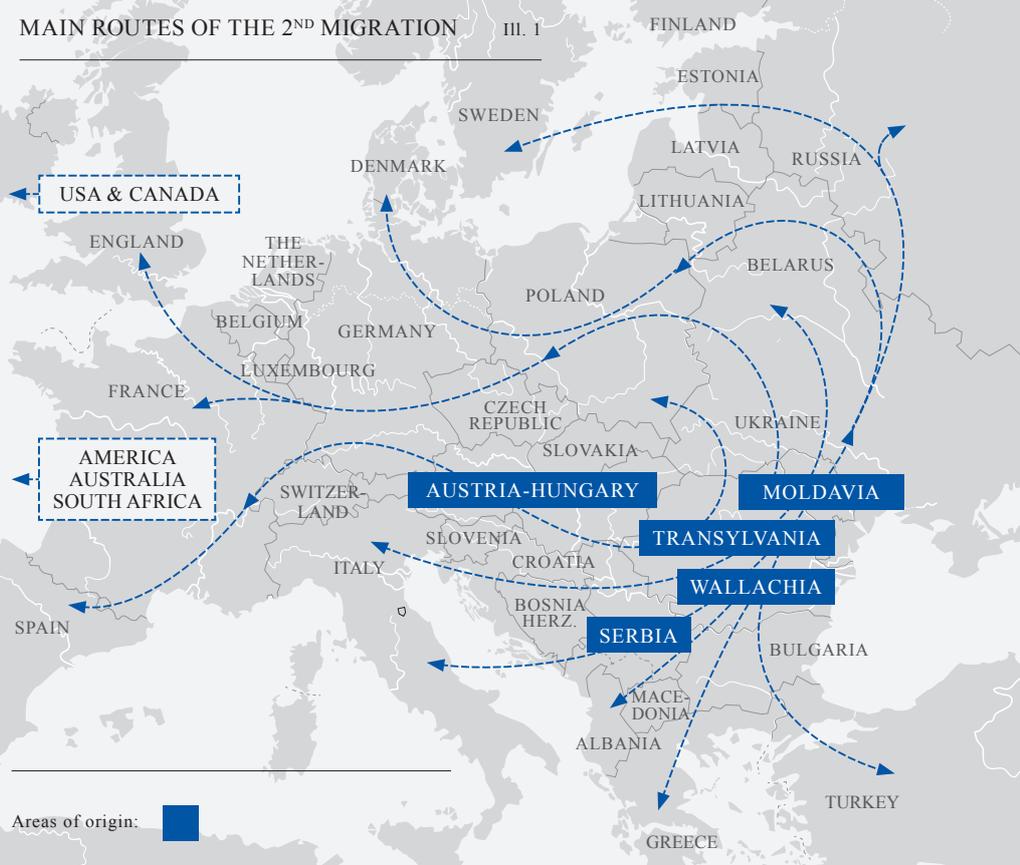
INTRODUCTION

In 1857, one year after slavery had been completely abolished, there were 33,267 now free Romani families in Wallachia; 6,241 of them had been slaves of the state, and 12,081 slaves of the Church. 14,945 families had belonged to the nobility. In Moldavia, there were an estimated 20,000 families. If every family consisted of an average of five people, then approximately 250,000 Roma lived in the two principalities. In the whole of Central and South-Eastern Europe, there was a Romani population of considerable strength.

Political, economic and social revolutions caused emigration from that region from around 1850 onwards. National emancipatory movements, wars, the industrial revolution as well as the increasing attractiveness of target countries like the United States were the reasons for people of all ethnic groups to leave their areas of settlement. The Roma were not more "willing to emigrate" than other population groups. But the abolition of slavery in Moldavia and Wallachia opened up new territories in their urgent search for new economic niches. [Ill. 2]

Mainly, the Roma emigrated from the border areas of Moldavia

MAIN ROUTES OF THE 2ND MIGRATION



and Wallachia, as well as from the neighbouring regions of Bessarabia, Western Transylvania, Banat and North-Eastern Serbia. Later on, there is evidence of the emigration of Roma from almost the whole Balkan Peninsula, and, consequently, from

Hungary and from Slovakia. Mainly Vlax Roma, but also Roma from other groups moved eastward to Russia, and northward to Scandinavia, to Western Europe, Northern and Southern America, and even to Australia. [Ill. 2]

“VLAX” ROMA

The term “vlax” (pronounced: vlach) has been used since the 20th century for Roma whose language shows a strong Romanian influence. The Vlax Roma comprise, among others, the Kalderaš, Lovara, Gurbet and Džambaz Roma. The Vlax Roma are considered as triggers and upholders of the Second Migration. In many target countries, they kept themselves apart from the already settled Roma and made up a new stratum within the Romani population.

Science, as well as the self-image of Vlax Roma, often considers them as more “traditional”, archaic groups than those which maintained a predominantly Indo-Aryan language and culture. Angus Fraser, a historian specialised in British Roma, however, has drawn our attention to the fact that these assumptions cannot be considered proven.

III. 2



III. 3

Kalderaš women on the march in England, 1911. (from Fraser 1992, p. 232)

JOHAN DIMITRI-TAIKON'S WAY TO SWEDEN

“Carl Herman Tillhagen can tell about the origin of the Swedish Taikoni, the family of the great story teller Johan Dimitri-Taikon:

Up until the year 1906, Taikon or Milosch, his Gypsy name, seems to have stayed mainly in Russia, which he knows from Baku in the southeast to Archangelsk in the northwest. In the same year, he travelled on to the Balkans, and to Poland and Finland. He seems to have been, in passing, also in Italy, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany. A few years before World War I he visited Sweden, where he travelled about for many years. He spent the last 30 years in Sweden exclusively, where he earned his and his family's living as coppersmith, fairground artist and musician. Since 1942 he and his entourage have stayed in Sweden every year during the winter.”

III. 4 (translated from Vossen 1983, p. 61)

MIGRATION ROUTES OF THE VLAX ROMA

The Romanian Kalderaš are considered as the most mobile group of Roma. As slaves, they belonged to the state, that is, they had already been (partly) nomadic and had exercised their profession by roaming certain regions. The Kalderaš left the area on two main routes. One led them northward, the other to the Balkans, particularly to today's Serbia; from there, many Roma moved farther west. The migration of the Kalderaš and other groups in the Balkans is not documented, particularly as far as its beginnings are concerned. Most probably it took place relatively late towards the end of the 19th century. There is, however, a lot of evidence for the northbound route.

In 1860, the first Kalderaš reached Krakow, which at the time was on the territory of Austria-Hungary. Being Austrian citizens, many Roma from

Transylvania and Banat had Austrian travel documents at their disposal. The Russian Romani specialist, Lev Tcherenkov, mentions that the Kalderaš are still being called “Ostrijaki” (Austrians) by the settled Polska Roma today. Some new immigrants in Poland tried to achieve a dominant position among the already settled Roma; the Kwiek family even founded a dynasty of “kings”.

Many Kalderaš and Čurara moved on from Poland to Russia and Scandinavia. Išvan Demeter, one of the first Romani immigrants in Russia, said decades later that his family emigrated mainly because of the high dowries for women. The Demeters travelled through Russia, reached Manchuria and later stayed in Central Russia. Išvan's father and his family even reached Algiers. Išvan Demeter's group was no isolated case. Most Kalderaš in France, for instance, had not arrived before 1870, but immigrated later from Russia. Their dialect shows words from Russian colloquial speech, which is a clear sign that

they must have stayed in Russia before. [III. 4]

Many Kalderaš and Čurara moved on towards Scandinavia. Consequently, Išvan Demeter's relatives settled not only in France, Italy and Germany, but also in Sweden. The family names also prove that many Scandinavian immigrants had stayed in Russia first.

In the mid-19th century, the Lovara settled within today's Hungarian borders, in Transylvania and Banat. In a first wave of migration, in 1860-70, the Lovara moved from Hungary to Czechia and Slovakia, and then on to Germany. Some of them followed the army in the Austro-Prussian war and settled in Czechia before they eventually came to Austria. Others went to Poland and later to Russia. The wanderings of the various Lovara groups came to an end only in 1914, after the outbreak of World War I; it was a temporary end, because already during the Hungarian Uprising in 1956, numerous Lovara came to Austria again.

PRAISED DEXTERITY, GRANDIOSE PRICES

“While they were in Britain they brought a touch of oriental splendour to drab city waste-grounds. The women, with gold coins woven into their hair-plaits and strung around their necks and bosoms, presented a formidable spectacle, quite different from that of their English counterparts in their finery [...]; and the men, in baggy trousers tucked into top-boots, brightly coloured shirts, and coats and waistcoats with rows of huge buttons of silver (some as large as a hen’s egg) were just as resplendent. Much of the men’s time was spent in seeking out copper vessels to repair in factories, breweries, hotels, restaurants, and the like: their dexterity and workmanship were widely praised; their grandiose prices were just as widely deprecated.”

III. 5 (from Fraser 1992, p. 231 ff.)



III. 6

Kalderaš tents at Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, London in August 1911. (from Fraser 1992, p. 231)

IMMIGRATION TO COLOMBIA

In 1998, a Colombian Rom gave an account of his predecessors’ immigration:

“The European Roma emigrated to Central America, from Central America they emigrated to Southern America, they came to Peru, they came to Brazil, they came to Colombia. [...] They emigrated via Panama, from Panama they crossed the Atrato and they started in Antioquia [...] in the plains of Bogotá, on the coasts, in different parts. According to the Colombian Roma, those born here in Colombia, 150 to 160 years have passed since then. Because my grandfather died at the age of 75, he had already been born in Colombia, my grandmother, deceased, too, had also been born there.”

III. 7 (translated from Deman, Katharina (2005) Untersuchung zur Grammatik der Romani-Varietät der Kumpanja in Bogotá/Kolumbien. Graz (Phil. Diss), p. 11)

ARRIVAL IN WESTERN EUROPE

Some Roma came with Austrian passports, probably from Transylvania, via Germany and Belgium to France in 1866, but they were soon deported back to Belgium. In 1867 the Kalderaš travelled around France in groups of 30, 40 and even 150 people in open horse carriages. [III. 4]

In 1868 the Kalderaš reached England. They set up their tents in the London suburbs, but were not received in a friendly way by the English Roma. In the same year, Kalderaš-coppersmiths ap-

peared in the Netherlands. Their tents and wagons, as well as the contrast between their poor clothes and the openly shown silver and gold, left a great impression on the population. In their thousands, they flocked to the tent camps, and the Roma could even demand an entry fee. In the early 1870s Roma came to France from Italy and Germany – via the Balkans or Russia. They also attracted masses of visitors. In Germany, in 1867, and in the Netherlands in 1868, bear trainers appeared for the first time; they were Ursari Roma of the Gulabavich, Lazarovich or Mitrovich families. In 1886, 99 Kalderaš arrived in Liverpool. They came from

Greece, the European parts of Turkey, from Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. The following year they left the country again. In 1885-7 and 1907-8 the Ursari stayed in Southern Scotland and Northern England. In particular, however, it was the Lovara who, via Germany, reached England at that time. The media and the police led campaigns against the Roma with German passports. Similar actions were taken in France, Germany, or Switzerland. Between 1911 and 1913, Kalderaš-families called Choron, Kirpach, Demeter or Maximoff travelled about in Britain in trains with their tents, which attracted great attention. [Ills. 3, 5, 6]

THE AMERICAS

Only a few Roma who reached Great Britain stayed there. Most of them went to America, being a part of the great European wave of emigration. The Roma

who had been deported there in the 16th and 17th centuries had left almost no traces. The new arrivals, however, caused countries like Argentine or the USA to issue entry bans for Roma in the 1880s.

In the beginning, from 1850 onwards, it was mainly British “Romanichels” who moved to the United

States. In time, a new group emerged, standing apart from the rest of the population, which specialised in itinerant trades like horse dealing, copper smithing or basket weaving. In the 1880s, the immigration into Northern and Southern America changed drastically. More and more Southern and

Central Europeans came to the US, coming from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, from Italy, Turkey, Greece, Russia and Romania. Among them were numerous Roma, such as Rudari from Bulgaria in 1882 and groups of Hungarian-Slovakian musicians in 1883; the latter formed the core of the “Bashaldé”, today known as musicians in the whole of the USA. The Rudari were circus performers, artists

and animal trainers with monkeys and bears. They declared themselves Austrians, Serbs or Turks, which virtually included the whole Balkan area in the understanding of that time. Also, a Romani group from the Serbian Mačva, today called the “Mačvaja”, reached the States. Many Roma came to the States via Cuba, Canada, Mexico or Southern America, from where it was easier to immigrate. [Ill. 6]

The Romani population of Latin America counts approximately 2.5 million people today, and almost perfectly mirrors the migratory movements since 1850. The biggest groups are again the Kalderaš and Lovara, as well as the formerly Spanish Calé. Sinti living on the continent are an evidence of immigration between the world wars, and prove that the migration of Roma had only temporarily come to an end in 1914.

THE WANDERERS' RECEPTION IN THE TARGET COUNTRIES

In most Western European countries silence had reigned concerning the Roma. This changed abruptly with the new arrivals and eventually led to problems also for the well-established, settled Roma. The Netherlands' authorities, for instance, began searching feverishly for ways to get rid of the immigrated Roma, which became more and more difficult in view of the increasingly rigorous immigration regulations in the neighbouring countries, particularly Germany. The local Sinti often suffered from the increasingly hostile climate.

In the 1850s, more rigorous anti-“Gypsy” laws were also passed in Bavaria. At the end of the century this caused the settled Roma – mainly Sinti – to disappear almost completely from public consciousness, while travelling groups, who were mainly considered Hungarians or homeless Germans, grew more and more suspect. It was generally believed that they used horse dealing and music as a disguise for begging, stealing and other crimes.

In Austria-Hungary, just like in the German Empire, the migration caused substantial changes in the “Gypsy policy”. The immigration was seen as an “invasion” by the authorities, which again led to a step-by-step intensifica-

tion of laws. Massive restrictions on their travellings, stronger regulation of their professions and first attempts to register the Roma took away their basis for livelihood, which pre-programmed troubles with the rest of the population.

In England, there were several draft bills which were to put the lives of Roma under the state's control for educational purposes. However, parliament rejected these laws in their intended, rigorous form. In Serbia, “nomadising” was prohibited, in France, “Gypsies” were registered as early as in 1907, in Sweden a general ban on the immigration of Roma was ordained, Argentina had already done so in 1884, followed by the USA in 1885.

CONCLUSION

The second migratory wave of Roma drastically changed the Romani population in many countries. In Latin Ame-

rica or Australia the Romani population was only founded by this very migration wave. Even though the winding paths of emigration could be reconstructed for several groups and many single families,

and even though the migration's main route could be traced, we are far from adequately portraying this complex migratory movement. Its interconnecting, complete history is yet to be explored.

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