

History of Flamenco

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Basic Influences

- Andalusian folk music
- Gitanos' interpretation of Andalusian music
- Romani elements introduced into this interpretation

Highlights of Andalusian History

- 206 BC – 560 AD – Roman Spain (province of Baetica)
- 500 – 711 – Vandal and Visigothic rule
- 711 – Moorish invasion – Moorish Spain lasted until 1492
- 718-1492 – Reconquest:
 - 1065 Toledo
 - 1252 Sevilla
 - 1492 Granada

Post-Reconquest

- 1425 First arrival of Gitanos
- 1478 Inquisition Established
- 1492 Expulsion of Jews
- 1502 Forced Conversion of Moors
- 1613 Expulsion of Moriscos
- 1499-1793 Official persecution of Gitanos

Roma History

- **430-443** 10,000 *Luri* musicians sent from India to Persia
- **820-834** *Zotts* settle on the banks of the Tigris – Guerilla warfare between *Zotts* and Baghdad
- **1001-1026** *Sindh* and the *Panjab* are invaded Ghaznivid troops - *Rajput* warriors are defeated, some enslaved, some dispersed
- **1000-1100** Roma reach Byzantium
- **1200-1300** Accounts of *Athinganoi* in Greece
- **1300-1400** Roma in Eastern Europe
- **1400-1500** Roma in Western Europe

How do we know they are from India?

- 1760 – A Hungarian theology student in Leiden discussed Sanskrit with visiting Malabar students. He recognized similarities between Sanskrit and the little bit of Romani that he knew.
- August Pott (1844) - the first serious comparative study of Romani. He concluded that all dialects of Romani derive from a single language. He also noted that Romani was a language of its own, and not a version of thieves' jargon.

Cognates

Sanskrit

ghāsa

dhāv

bhrātr̥

mānuśa

Romani

khas

thov-

phral

manuś

‘hay’

‘wash’

‘brother’

‘man’

Gitanos in Spain

- **1425** King Juan II of Aragón conferred a passing permit to Juan and Tomás "Counts of Egypt Minor" (which referred to Greece).
- **1462** Two "Egyptian" counts well-received in Jaén, Andalucía.
- **1480** More Roma "Captains" arrive via Mediterranean, from Greece
- Distinction between "Egyptians" and "Greeks" commented on in 1618 – distinctive dress and occupations

Southern Migration

- An alternative Hypothesis: Gitanos arrived in Andalusia much earlier, migrating through N. Africa, during the Moorish period.
- Accounts for the name “Egyptian” and references to “pharaoh” .
- Would account for physical and cultural differences between Gitanos and other Roma.

Against a Southern Migration

- Few Gypsies in N. Africa (except Spanish speaking Gitanos in Morocco – recent arrivals from Spain)
- Middle Eastern Gypsies (in Israel, Egypt, etc.) are Domari, not Romani – perhaps Domari descended from Zotts, while Roma descended from Rajputs.
- The Southern Migration hypothesis would predict that Gitanos are Domari, not Romani

Linguistic Evidence

- Systematic sound correspondences between Domari and Romani:

	Domari	Romani	
b:ph	bis	phus	‘straw’
w:b	wal	bal	‘hair’
m:v	nam	nav	‘name’
s:š	siri	šero	‘head’
d:r	dom	rom	‘husband’

Caló Evidence

- Caló – Mixed language of Gitnaos
- pus ‘straw’
- bal ‘hair’
- nao ‘name’
- jero ‘head’ (note š > h during 17th century)
- rom ‘husband’

Loanwords

- Romani and Domari have different loanword vocabularies.
- Romani has several loanwords from Iranian (e.g. *baxt* ‘luck’), Armenian (*grast* ‘horse’), and Greek (*drom* ‘road’).
- Domari has loans from Persian (e.g. *kangri* ‘wagon’) and Arabic (a large part of the vocabulary).
- Of their Persian loanwords, Romani and Domari share only about 10-15% (Hancock 1995).

Loanwords and Caló

Caló

Romani

bají

baxt ‘fortune’ (from Persian)

grasté

grast ‘horse’ (from Armenian)

dron

drom ‘road’ (from Greek)

Sound correspondences and loanword vocabulary shows that Caló is based on Romani, not Domari.

What is Caló?

- A mixed language: Some Romani vocabulary, Spanish grammar
- camelo, camelas, camela, camelamos, camelan
- Fluent speakers use perhaps 100-200 Caló words – the rest Spanish

Mixed Language

- A 17th century inscription already has considerable Spanish influence (e.g. *-ar*, *-ador* suffixes)
- Gitano song from 1818:

Del *estaribel* me sacan
Montadito en un *juné*
Y me van *acurrubando*

They take me from the prison
Mounted on an ass
and flog me

More Caló Verses

- George Borrow published 101 (out of 1000 collected) verses in Caló – with varying amounts of Romani vocabulary

*Me costuné la chori
Para chalar a Laloró
Al nacar de la pañi
Abilló o busno
Y el chuquel a largo me chibó*

I got on my mule
To go to Portugal
Going over the water
The payo came
And set his dog on me

- Modern verse Caló verse (cantiñas estribillo):

*Te camelo
Pero de lache
No te lo peno*

I love you
But out shame
I don't tell you

Fake Caló

- *Los de la Afición* – early 19th Century movement of non-Gitano enthusiasts that adopted Gitano language for epic poems:

Man camelo libanar	I want to write
Pa enjalle on chipi Cale	For posterity in Caló
Saro lo sos chundeó	Everything that happened
On caba Foro bare	In that great city

Why Gitanos are Different

- The cultural differences between Gitanos and other Roma is a consequence of 300 years of official persecution.
- Physical differences can be attributed to more inter-marriage with non-Roma than in other Roma communities.

Persecution

- 1492 (Reyes Católicos) Gitanos were given 60 days to settle and take trades – penalties included 100 lashes, exile, slit ears, and slavery.
- 1539 (Carlos I) 3 months to settle – afterwards, any traveling Gitano, in a group of 3 or more, would be sent to the galleys for 6 years.
- 1560 (Felipe II) Any male traveling sent to the galleys; women wearing traditional dress were whipped and banished.

Persecution

- 17th century debate over whether to expel all Gitanos or force settlement
- 1610 law dispersed Gitanos among cities of 1000 or more inhabitants – they were to intermarry and cease being Gitanos.
- Settlement chosen because the State was busy expelling the Moriscos.
- Denial of Gitano ethnicity – they were Gitanos by choice, dyed their skin, and made up their language

Persecution

- 1633 (Felipe IV) Banned Gitano language, traditional occupations (e.g. Horse dealing), music and dance, traditional dress.
- They were to leave areas where they lived together and should assimilate with the rest of the population.
- The word 'Gitano' was not to be used. Punishment included galleys and slavery.
- Organized militias hunted for Gitanos
- 1643-1748 – debate over whether churches could offer sanctuary to Gitanos – concluded that they couldn't

18th Century

- Various laws requiring registration of Gitanos, forbidding the possession of arms (death penalty)
- Ownership of horses prohibited
- May not live together
- May only practice cultivation

The Great Gypsy Round-up of 1749

- The Bishop of Oveido convinced Ferdinand VI to carry out a radical final solution – the execution of all Gitano offenders, and incarceration of all of the rest.
- Implementation was problematic – the number of prisoners was untenable and local non-Gitanos protested.
- Ferdinand rescinded the order and allowed all ‘honest Gypsies’ to be released.

The Law of 1783 (Carlos III)

- While ‘Gitano’ was still not an ethnic label (and should not be used), ‘ex-Gitanos’ were allowed to settle freely and access to all professions (provided they denounce all distinguishing characteristics)
- This allowed for considerable freedom of movement.

How did Gitano Culture Survive?

- Many Gitanos settled in towns, particularly in Andalucia, where the laws of persecution were ignored
- With the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1613, the economy suffered from a diminished labor force
- Gitanos filled this niche – some of the vacated Morisco professions, such as horse-dealing and blacksmithing, were traditional Gitano trades.
- Other trades included masonry, butchering, rope-making, and agricultural labor.

Gitanos Apoblaos

- Local authorities sometimes provided special passes and ‘Old Castilian’ certificates for Gitano families in recognition of military service, or because they were economically useful.
- Bustamonte, Rocamora, Montoya, and Flores families procured ‘Old Castilian’ status in 1602, because of their military service in Flanders. They became known as ‘flamencos’ .

Theories on the Origin of 'flamenco'

- Flamingo
- Felag-mengu 'migrant farmers'
- Flemish
 - a. because of ostentatious character of Carlos V's Flemish soldiers
 - b. Because of the Gitano families who had Flemish service records
- Applied to Gitanos before it was applied to the music

The Emergence of Flamenco

- First references to *cante gitano* in late 18th century – coinciding with the end of official persecution.
- First singers mentioned:

Tio Luis de la Juliana (1760-1830)

El Planeta (1785-1860)

The Flamenco Triangle

- Most *cante gitano* comes from the area of Lower Andalusia – a triangle between Cádiz, Jerez, and Sevilla
- This area had the largest Gitano population in the census of 1784-5.

Possible Origins

- Gitano interpretations of Troubadour ballads (*romances*, *corridos*, *tonadas*)
- Gitano Interpretations of folksongs (*seguidillas*).
- Interpretations of religious songs (*saetas*).
- Gitano songs sung for themselves, or for hire (e.g. professional mourners: *playeras* < *plañir* and ballad songers: *toná* < *tonada*)
- ‘Hermetic’ period (Mairena y Molina); *cante gitano*, sung at home, was all that was left intact from the centuries of persecution (Leblon).
- Payo interpretation of *cante* and *baile gitano*.

Corrida Gitana - Agujetas

Cuatrocientos sois lo míos
los que comen de mi pan
y nunca los he repartío
de mañana se repartirán

Doscientos pa los caminos
doscientos vais p'el arrabal
y doscientos venís conmigo
para con mi tio hablar

You are my 400
that eat my bread
I've never split you up
but tomorrow I will

200 on the road
200 to the walls
200 with me
to talk with my uncle



Tonás – Rafael Romero

No te rebeles serrana
Aunque te maten tu gente
Tengo echao juramento
De pagarte con la muerte

Vinieron y me dijieron
Que tú hablas mal de mí
Mira mi buen pensamiento
Que no lo creí en tí

Don't disobey, girl
Even though your people kill you
I've sworn
To pay you with death

They came and told me
That you talk badly of me
But I am so good
That I didn't believe it of you



Cabales – El Chaqueta

Desde la Polverita
Hasta Santiago
Las fatiguitas de la muerte
Me arrodieron

From Polverita
To Santiago
The pain of death
Surrounded me



Saetas

- 'Darts' songs sung during Holy Week
- From the street or from balconies
- Sung to the floats of Christ or the Virgin
- Represent some of the oldest song forms

Saeta - Antonio Cortés

A paso lento camina
pero es tan grande el dolor
me lo coronan de espinas
y la sangre le cae
por su carita divina

Slowly He walks
But His pain is great
They crowned Him with thorns
And the blood falls
Down His face

Saeta - Antonio Cortés



Soleares

- Oldest forms from Triana
- Perhaps evolved from Polos
- El Planeta was described as ‘El Rey de los Polos’ – these were accompanied with a variety of instruments
- Only one style remains
- Soleá Apolá – similar to Triana styles of Soleá

El Polo – Niño de Almadén

Carmona tiene una fuente
Con catorce or quince caños
Con un letrero que dice:
“Viva el polo de Tabalo”

Todo el mundo le pide a Dios
La salud y la libertad
Y yo le pido la muerte
Y no me la quiere dar

Carmona has a fountain
With 14 or 15 pipes
And a sign that says:
“Long live the Polo of Tabalo”

Everyone asks God
For health and liberty
But I ask for death
But He won't give it to me



Soleá Apolá - Camarón

El espejo donde te miras
Te dirá como eres
Pero nunca te dirá
Los pensamientos que tienes

The mirror where you look
Will tell you how you look
But it will never tell you
Your thoughts



Cantes Camperos

- Country songs that are probably the best indication of the nature of the Andalucian folk music that Gitanos adapted.
- Originally without accompaniment, several resurrected by professional singers and sometimes put to guitar

Trilleras - Bernardo el de los Lobitos

A esa mula de punta
le gusta el grano
aligera y no comas
que viene el amo

That lead mule
Likes the grain
Hurry and stop eating
The boss is coming

La mula Golondrina
sudando va
que se cree que la trilla
se va a acabar

The mule Golondrina
Is sweating
It thinks the wheat
Is running out

Esa yegua lunanca
tiene un potrillo
con una pata blanca
y un lucerito

That crooked mare
Has a colt
With a white hoof
and a star



Bamberas – La Niña de los Peines

Entre sábanas de Holanda	Between Dutch sheets
Y colchas de carmesí	And red coverlets
Está mi amante durmiendo	Sleeps my lover
Que parece un serafín	Looking like an angel



Alegrías/Cantiñas

- Developed from waltz-like *Jotas de Cádiz*
- Developed in early 19th century after Peninsular war – many references to Napoleon.

Cantiñas/Romeras - Pericón

Baluarto Invencible
Isla de León
Donde se rindió
el coloso Napoleon Bonaparte
Allí perdió su vitoria
Y en Waterloo

Con las bombas que tiran
Los farfarones
Se hacen las gaditanas
Tirabuzones

Invincible Fortress
Isle of Leon
Where the colossal
Napoleon Bonaparte surrendered
There he lost his victory
And in Waterloo

With the bombs that are thrown
The artillery shells
The women of Cadiz
curl their hair

