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A note on early debate on the origins of the Romani language

Abstract

This article presents the brief remarks of Filip Vesdin (Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo) on the origin of the Roma and their language in his work *Viaggio alle Indie Orientali* (1786), together with the reactions of the translators and editors of his work to his remarks. Vesdin advocates the theory of the Indian origin of the Roma, although he is mistaken in his belief that the Roma migrated from India after Timur's conquest of Delhi in 1398. He also connects the Romani language with the Old Indo-Aryan language, and considers Romani a Sanskrit "dialect". Vesdin based these conclusions on his observation of similarities between Romani and Hindustani words in Heinrich Grellmann's word list. In comments accompanying the translation of Vesdin's book into French, Anquetil-Duperron criticises the idea of the kinship between Romani and Old Indo-Aryan. In the translation of Vesdin's work into English, Johnston (1800) agrees with Vesdin and Grellmann, quoting William Jones. This paper outlines the fundamental difference in Vesdin's and Anquetil-Duperron's approach to the idea of linguistic kinship, the history of language, and philology. Vesdin is a pre-modern forerunner of historical and comparative linguistics, unlike Anquetil-Duperron, who opposes the historical approach by highlighting broader cultural issues.

Keywords: Filip Vesdin, Anquetil-Duperron, Romani, linguistic kinship

Filip Vesdin (1748 – 1806), Croat from Lower Austria known by the monastic name Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo, is widely accepted as one of the pioneers of Indology. He was born in Hof am Leithagebirge (Croatian: Cimov) in Lower Austria, on the border with Burgenland.¹ In 1768, he joined the Carmelite order at the monastery in Linz; he completed his studies of theology and philosophy in Prague in 1773. In this same

¹ His Croatian origins came to light in the 1960s during the preparation of all available data on Indian influences and works of Indology in the Croatian and Yugoslav cultural and academic tradition. The data was collected and displayed in an exhibition entitled *Yugoslavians and India*, held in 1965. The exhibition was accompanied by a valuable and highly informative catalogue (Jauk-Pinhak et al. 1965). The church register in his birth place of Hof am Leithagebirge records his baptism on 25 April 1748, where the names of his parents and grandparents disclose his Croatian origins. (cf. Müller 1888: 263–264; Jauk-Pinhak 1984a: 129, ft. 1; Slamnig 1991: 4). According to Matišić (2007: 44–49), Vesdin considered himself German in his diaries, but this characterization is primarily linguistic. Matišić (ibid.) shows examples of Slavisms in Vesdin's German, while Vesdin notes examples of Croatian diminutive forms of the name Anna (Anicka, Ance, Anka), which Vesdin says occur "among us" (*apud nos*), in *De Latini sermonis origine* (p. 18).

year, he arrived at the Missionary Seminary of St. Pancratius in Rome. The *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* sent him on a mission to the Malabar Coast, in what is now the state of Kerala in southern India. Vesdin landed at Pondichéry in 1776, and finally arrived in Verapoly in November 1776. He served in the Malabar mission for 13 years (1776–1789), first as Vicar General, and then as Apostolic Visitor, and finally as a Rector of the Verapolitanean Seminary. He mastered several languages at an early age: his mother tongue of Croatian, then German, Hungarian, and Latin.² As his manuscript legacy testifies, he was fluent in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. On his journey to India, he learned English, and probably Dravidian Malayalam; in India, he learned Sanskrit (cf. Matišić 2007: 13–15).

When he returned to Europe, he became a professor of Oriental languages at the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*. Vesdin wrote two Sanskrit grammars in Latin: *Sidharubam seu grammatica Samscrdamica* (Rome, 1790), and an improved *Vyacaranam seu locupletissima Samscrdamicæ linguae institutio* (Rome, 1804). These were the first two printed Sanskrit grammars in Europe. Vesdin's most popular work was the travelogue *Viaggio alle Indie Orientali* (Vesdin 1796), which was translated into German, English, and French.³

Although Vesdin's works were initially widely read and accepted, the founding of Indology as a scholarly discipline is traditionally attributed to the circle of British officials and scholars stationed at Fort William near Kolkata. Very soon after the publication of Vesdin's works, in collaboration with Indian scholars, they began to publish more reliable Sanskrit manuals and translations that quickly overshadowed Vesdin's pioneering endeavours.⁴ His works comparing languages he considered related have been less studied; but they are no less important to the history of linguistics, especially the comparative and historical approaches. Here we can mention the work *De antiquitate et affinitate linguae Zendicae, Samscrdamicæ, et Germanicæ dissertatio*, printed in Rome in 1798, in which Vesdin compares Sanskrit first with Old Iranian and then with Germanic languages,⁵ and *De Latini sermonis origine et cum orientalibus linguis connexione dissertatio*, in which he compares Sanskrit with Latin.⁶ Both works contain extensive lists of words that Vesdin considered etymologically related, and these lists of words are certainly among the most successful parts of these two studies. Studies by Andrijanić (2017) and Andrijanić & Matović (2019) show that Vesdin recognised etymologically related words in different Indo-European languages in a large number of cases (Sanskrit, Latin, Avestan, and Germanic). Vesdin intuitively relied on the similarities in the form of the words together with semantic similarities to confirm the match.⁷ This fact is important, because Vesdin draws his conclusion on the kinship of the Romani language with Sanskrit based on the lists of Romani and Hindustani words in Heinrich Moritz Gottlieb Grellmann's *Historischer Versuch über die Zigeuner*.⁸

2 According to Wetzl (1936: 4), Vesdin knew German, Croatian, Hungarian, and Latin from an early age.

3 Matišić 2007 contains a reliable general account of Vesdin's life with an emphasis on the period just before his journey to India. For a comprehensive account of Vesdin's life, see Wetzl 1936; for a reliable general overview of his scholarly works, both printed and in manuscript, we recommend Slamig 1991.

4 A highly appropriate assessment of Vesdin's position in the history of Indology was provided by Ernst Windisch: "Können wir den Paulinus auch noch nicht zu den eigentlichen Philologen rechnen, so kommt er diesen doch näher als irgend einer seiner Vorgänger." [If we cannot count Paulinus among the true philologists, he comes closer to them than any of his predecessors.] (Windisch 1917: 22)

5 For details, see Andrijanić & Matović 2019.

6 For details, see Rocher 1961; Jauk-Pinhak 1984b; Andrijanić 2017.

7 For more on Vesdin's language comparison methodology, see Van Hal 2005.

8 *Die Zigeuner. Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksale dieses Volks in Europa, nebst ihrem Ursprunge*. Dessau/Leipzig 1783.

Vesdin recognised that some languages such as Sanskrit, Latin, Avestan, and Germanic are genetically related, i.e. that they originated from a common ancestral language. Vesdin was also convinced that Malayalam is related to Sanskrit; however, Malayalam is a Dravidian language. The reason why Vesdin believed Malayalam had developed from Sanskrit is most likely because he learned a version of the Malayalam language whose vocabulary was highly Sanskritised. Vesdin also speculated on the form of this proto-language, and concluded that the proto-language must have been a rudimentary form of Sanskrit (Vesdin 1802: 10). For the discussion here, it is important to note that Vesdin's insights into the similarity of languages and the methodology by which he compares them (which is quite rudimentary) still enabled him to accurately judge the origins of the Romani language.

In his *Viaggio alle Indie Orientali* (Rome, 1796), Vesdin devotes a few passages to the origins of the Roma people and their language.⁹ This seems to be Vesdin's only work that touches on the Roma and their language.¹⁰ At the time Vesdin wrote *Viaggio*, two works were published that systematically show the kinship of the Romani language and Hindustani and argue that the Romani came from India: Johann Christian Christoph Rüdiger's ground-breaking study *Von der Sprache und Herkunft der Zigeuner aus Indien* (1782),¹¹ and Grellmann's *Historischer Versuch über die Zigeuner* (1783). Earlier European scholarship maintained the theory of the Roma's Egyptian origins,¹² although some earlier authors also note the possible Indian origins of the Roma.¹³ The earliest European sources on the Romani language are lists of Romani words and expressions from the 16th century.¹⁴ Rüdiger's study was the first to systematically explain and present arguments for the Indian origins of the Roma; the works of Pott (1844) and Miklošič's twelve part study scientifically proved them.

This paper will present what Vesdin says about the Roma and their language in *Viaggio*; it will also describe how the passages in which he discusses them are treated by the translators and editors of *Viaggio*. Vesdin's book was well received; just two years after it was published in Rome, a German translation prepared by Johann Reinhold Forster was published in Berlin¹⁵ Forster's German translation was in turn translated into English by William Johnston in 1800,¹⁶ and a French translation was published in Paris based on the Italian original in 1808.¹⁷ All three editions contain numerous notes and comments, the most extensive of which are the com-

9 Pott (1844: 2, 19) takes note of Vesdin's remarks on the Romani language, but without indicating in which of his works these remarks can be found. On p. 19, Pott even paraphrases a sentence from *Viaggio* in which Vesdin considers Roma a Sanskrit dialect.

10 Vesdin mentions the Roma people and their language in Chapter 3 on p. 28, pp. 258–260, and p. 268.

11 Rüdiger's discussion can be found on pp. 37–84 of *Neuester Zuwachs der teutschen, fremden und allgemeinen Sprachkunde: in eigenen Aufsätzen, Bücheranzeigen und Nachrichten 1* (Rüdiger 1782).

12 Grellmann (pp. 190–215) features an extensive presentation of the Egyptian theory among older authors.

13 Christian Wilhelm Büttner (1716–1801) is the first to position the Roma (or Romani) on the "Hindustani-Afghan" (language?) branch in his 1771 book on writing systems. Before Rüdiger, Slovak scholar Samuel Augustin ab Hortis (1729–1792) also argued for the Indian origins of the Roma people (Adiego 2020: 71–73).

14 The earliest attestation of Romani words in Europe can be found in Johannes ex Graefing's list from 1515. Further lists were compiled by Andrew Borde (1542), Johan van Ewsum (died in 1570), and Bonaventura Vulcanius from 1597 (*De Nubianis erroribus, quos Itali Cingaros appellant, eorumque lingua*) (Cf. Adiego 2020: 50–59).

15 *Des Fra Paolino da San Bartolomeo Reise nach Ostindien. Mit Anmerk. von Johann Reinhold Forster*, Berlin, Vossischen Buchhandlung, 1798.

16 *A Voyage to the East Indies*, London: J. Davis, 1800.

17 *Voyage aux Indes orientales. Par le P. Paulin de S. Barthélemy, Missionnaire*. Traduit de l'italien Par M***, Avec les observations de MM. Anquetil du Perron, J. R. Forster et Silvestre de Sacy; Et une dissertation de M. Anquetil sur la propriété individuelle et foncière dans l'Inde et en Égypte. I–III. Paris: Chez Touneisen fils, 1808.

ments of Anquetil-Duperron (supplemented by Silvestre de Sacy), who devoted the entire third volume of the French edition to the notes and comments. In these notes, a discussion of the origins of the Roma takes place, which I will present in this paper.

In the third chapter of the first book of the *Viaggio* (p. 28), in which he deals with the geographical description and history of northern India, Vesdin speaks of Central Asian conquests into northwestern India; in the context of Timur's conquest of Delhi in 1389, he mentions that the Roma, whom Vesdin calls *Zingari*, fled from north-western India as a result of persecution by the Indians. According to Vesdin, they belonged to a tribe (*tribù*) called *Parreas* that inhabited the province of *Tatta*.¹⁸ *Parreas* is the general name for the lowest social classes, "pariah". The word "pariah" comes from the Tamil *paraiyan* "drummer", referring to a South Indian community of musicians who are at a very low level on the social scale. Vesdin's *Tatta* refers to the city of Thatta in Sindh in present-day Pakistan. After Timur's persecution, Vesdin's *Zingari* wandered through Scythia (central Eurasia), from where they arrived in Hungary and settled all over Europe. Vesdin's note about the Roma route from India is short, but it does not come from Grellmann, the main source of Vesdin's knowledge about Romani. Grellmann (1787: 273) is convinced that the Roma came via Egypt, where they must have spent some time. Vesdin does not follow Grellmann in this case, and the idea of a route through Scythia—for which he offers no references—may be Vesdin's own.¹⁹

There is no additional note in Forster's German translation of Vesdin's passage on p. 28, which mentions the origin of Roma people. However, in William Johnston's English translation (Johnston 1800: 41), we see an extensive note conveying the opinion of Sir William Jones (1746–1794), a judge at Kolkata and one of the founders of Indology, Oriental studies, and comparative linguistics. William Johnston here refers to Jones' note on the Roma, which is found in the third volume of the journal *Asiatic Researches*.²⁰ Jones believes that the Roma came to the Mediterranean from Egypt. However, referring to the list of Romani words in Grellmann, he believes that their language contains so many Sanskrit words that it must have originated in India. A very important and interesting remark by Jones is that the words are closer to classical Sanskrit than to the modern Hindi idiom. Jones is right in this case, because we know today that the Roma left India at the time of the spoken Middle Indo-Aryan languages. Their language, after their departure from the subcontinent, is referred to as "Early Proto-Romani", and has passed all the stages of Middle Indo-Aryan language development, retaining some rather conservative features (cf. Beníšek 2020: 25–26) not attested in New Indo-Aryan Hindustani.²¹

However, in further discussion, Jones presents a very strange opinion on the origin of the Roma people. Jones attributes this theory to an unnamed "ingenious friend". According to this view, Romani words that are close to Indian words were adopted by the Roma from the ancient Egyptian language, and the Roma descended from the Egyptian "troglodytes" who inhabit the area of Thebes. Jones, however, dismisses this possibility because there is no evidence of similarity between ancient Egyptian dialects and Romani; he does support the

18 Grellmann (1783: 261–274) extensively discusses that the Roma come from a caste he calls "Suder", referring to the *śūdra* social class. According to Grellmann, on the Malabar coast, they are called "Parias" ("Pareier"). (Grellmann 1783: 261).

19 Grellmann (1783: 273) speculates that the Roma came through Sigistan (Sistān, Sakastān), between eastern Iran and southern Afghanistan. Further, Grellmann assumes a southern route along the Persian Gulf, Basra, and on towards Egypt.

20 The Eighth Anniversary Discourse, delivered 24 February 1791. *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. III, p. 8, 1792. Calcutta: T. Watley.

21 On the chronology of Roma migrations, see Bakker & Monrad (2011, esp. 44–45). On synthetic Romani verb forms and their antiquity, see Ježić & Katavić 2016: 32; cf. also Katavić 2022: 269.

naive and impossible view that Roma from India came to Africa or Arabia as pirates and settled in Egypt, from whence they dispersed or were expelled. As concerns the Indian origins of the Romani language and its age, both Vesdin and Jones are on the right track. However, Vesdin is closer to the truth than Jones when he claims that the Roma came from India by land through Central Asia. Vesdin is certainly wrong chronologically, because he places the time of the Roma migration too late—at the end of the 14th century.

Vesdin's most interesting insights into the Romani language can be found on pp. 258–260 of the *Viaggio*. On p. 259, Vesdin explicitly identifies Grellmann's book *Historischer Versuch über die Zigeuner*, published in Leipzig in 1783, as a source of knowledge of the Romani language. Referring to Grellmann's list of words, Vesdin states: "I examined the words, their changes, conjugations, the way they were formed, and the meaning the *Zingari* attribute to each voice. I am fully convinced that the *Zingari* language is a Sanskrit dialect."²²

In fact, Vesdin did not reach this conclusion only by comparing Romani words with the "Hindustani" words in Grellmann's lists. Vesdin actually compares Romani with Sanskrit. This is not a systematic comparison like those with Latin, Avestan, and Germanic in his two comparative treatises (Vesdin 1798 and 1802), but likely only Vesdin's intuition. We must also bear in mind that, in 1796, when *Viaggio* was published, Vesdin's first comparative study comparing words first from Sanskrit to Avestan and then to Germanic languages had not yet been published.

It is also interesting to note that neither Vesdin nor Jones use Johann Christian Christoph Rüdiger's study *Von der Sprache und Herkunft der Zigeuner aus Indien* (Leipzig, 1782), in which he compares Romani to Hindustani with the help of the Hindustani grammar *Grammatica Hindostanica*, authored by missionary Benjamin Schultze (Halle, 1745). In his study, Rüdiger argues that Romani is related to Hindustani, and places the Romani homeland in India. Grellmann's study,²³ however, adopts much of Rüdiger's findings and evidence. Matras (1999: 91) and Adiego (2020: 73) even see plagiarism in Grellmann's work, and believe it has unjustly overshadowed Rüdiger's. It is remarkable that only Grellmann is quoted by Vesdin and Jones (and Anquetil-Duperron?), and that none of them seem to be acquainted with Rüdiger's study. This means that, just a few years after both books were published, Grellmann had completely overshadowed Rüdiger. Furthermore, Grellmann's work was translated into English in 1807.²⁴ Rüdiger, however, does not link the Roma migration to the Timur conquest of 1398, so this misconception appears to be Grellmann's contribution.

Wherever else he mentions the Roma in *Viaggio*, Vesdin no longer contributes anything new, simply repeating Grellmann's thesis that the Roma left India because of Timur's conquests. Vesdin certainly took this thesis from Grellmann (1783: 270–273), together with the thesis affiliating the Roma people to the Pariah caste. Vesdin's original contributions are thus modest, but not insignificant. Vesdin recognises the connection of Romani not only with Hindustani, but with Old Indo-Aryan (Sanskrit), corrected Grellmann's wrong dating of Timur's

²² "L'autore d' un libro Tedesco: Historischer Versuch über die Zigeuner, stampato in Goettinga, 1787, ha dato un lungo elenco delle parole Zingare. Io esaminai le parole, la loro derivazione, le coniugazioni, la maniera di costruirle, ed il significato che gli Zingari attribuiscono ad ogni voce. Io sono pienamente convinto, che la lingua Zingara è un dialetto del Samskrda..." Vesdin 1796: 259–260.

²³ *Die Zigeuner. Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksale dieses Volkes, nebst ihrem Ursprunge*, Dessau und Leipzig, 1783.

²⁴ *Dissertation on the Gipseys: Representing Their Manner of Life, Family Economy, Occupations and Trades, Marriages and Education, Sickness, Death and Burial, Religion, Language, Sciences and Arts etc.; With an Historical Enquiry Concerning Their Origin and First Appearance in Europe*. London: Printed by W. Ballantine, 1807, trans. by Matthew Raper.

invasion of India from 1408/1409 to 1398, and indicated a more plausible route for the Roma migration.

The first two volumes of the 1808 French translation of *Viaggio* comprise a complete translation by a certain Marchena, while the third volume contains extensive notes and a commentary by Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron. As Anquetil-Duperron died in 1805, Silvestre de Sacy completed and edited the notes. Anquetil-Duperron (1731–1805) resided in India from 1755 to 1761 and managed to collect 180 manuscripts, mostly Avestan texts. He translated them into French with the help of Parsi scholars; upon his return to France, he published the three-volume *Zend Avesta* (Paris, 1771). Anquetil-Duperron was also remembered for his work *Oupnek'hat*, a Latin translation of the Persian work *Sirr-i-akbar*, Dārā Šukūh's 1657 translation or adaptation of 50 Upaniṣads from Sanskrit into Persian. Through this work, Anquetil-Duperron became the first to acquaint the West with the Upaniṣads.

Anquetil-Duperron, France's most learned expert on India, undertook the task of editing Vesdin's book and writing the notes, to which he devoted great effort. Vesdin often criticises Anquetil-Duperron's book *Recherches historiques et géographiques sur l'Inde* (Berlin, 1786) in *Viaggio*. For example, on p. 35, Vesdin claims that Anquetil-Duperron is completely unacquainted with ancient Indian laws; on p. 91, he criticizes his claim that Tamil is spoken on the Malabar Coast; on p. 121, he criticizes Anquetil-Duperron's interpretation of certain Hindu rites, etc. Vesdin often challenges Anquetil-Duperron's opinions in his other books; e.g. in *De antiquitate et affinitate linguae Zendicae, Samscrdamicae, et Germanicae dissertatio* (pp. 12–15), Vesdin criticizes Anquetil-Duperron's claim that Avestan and Georgian are related; Vesdin also challenges his claims that Persian and Pahlavi evolved from Avestan, and that writing from right to left is an ancient Persian custom. Vesdin believes that this writing direction is the influence of the Arabs, although Avestan script actually evolved from Pahlavi script, and Pahlavi cursive script developed from Aramaic script.

Thus, the numerous critical remarks found in Anquetil-Duperron's notes on Vesdin's *Viaggio* are not surprising. However, Anquetil-Duperron, although he most probably felt obliged to respond, did not refer so much to Vesdin's specific criticisms as to Vesdin's theses in general.

In the third volume of the French translation of the *Viaggio* (pp. 396–398), Anquetil-Duperron refers to p. 198 (p. 260 in Vesdin's Italian original), criticising Vesdin's notes about the Roma and their language. It should be noted that he does not recognize Vesdin's (actually Grellmann's) mistaken assumption on the 14th century Roma migration from India, but concentrates on a critique of Vesdin's remark about the Indian origins of the Romani language. Anquetil-Duperron notes that words can be borrowed, and that a migration cannot be assumed based on a handful of similar words. Anquetil-Duperron's critique here is more methodological; he does not directly criticise the claim that the Roma came from India, but rather the idea that a people's origins can be established by noting similarities among words. On the other hand, according to Anquetil-Duperron, communication between nations through conquests and travels is much more certain. From this statement, one might conclude that Anquetil-Duperron does not believe in the Indian origins of the Roma, nor in the Indian origins of the Romani language. Anquetil-Duperron seems to have been generally opposed to establishing the genetic kinship of languages on the basis of word comparison. This is apparent in several examples. The first is a critique of Vesdin's comparison of Sanskrit, Avestan, and German in his comments to *Viaggio*, on p. 341–242 (note 1):

Instead of wasting his time writing 20, 30, or 100 pages which prove nothing or very little, instead of comparing 100 or 200 words from different languages, the missionary would do better to publish for the learned

public a good and complete translation of Amarasimha or the dictionary of Hanxleden or Biscopling. (tr. Jauk Pinhak 1984a: 135)²⁵

However, Vesdin's study *De Latini sermonis origine* is in fact a pioneering study of comparative and historical linguistics. In it, Vesdin treats the history of Latin, discusses the first settlers of ancient Lazio, the Italian languages, and the relationship of Latin to Old Indian Sanskrit and Old Iranian Avestan. Vesdin points out that both languages, but mostly Sanskrit, in many words so happily and accurately resonate with Latin words, and similarly inflect the verbs, that hardly a better egg fits the egg (pp. 9–10). Vesdin concludes that the ancient Latins and Indians belonged in antiquity to the same people who spoke a kind of original Sanskrit (p. 10) and lived somewhere in the area of ancient Chaldea or Media. Vesdin thus hinted at the development of Indo-European studies, as well as the search for the Indo-European homeland (p. 24).²⁶ Central to the discussion (pp. 15–22) is a comparative list of 260 Latin and Sanskrit (sometimes Malayalam) words that Vesdin considered related. According to Andrijanić (2017: 195), Vesdin successfully identified 200 matching pairs of cognate words. Vesdin acts similarly in *De antiquitate et affinitate linguae Zendicae, Samcrdamicae et Germanicae*, in which he compares Sanskrit with the Old Iranian Avestan language and with German. The Avestan words were taken by Vesdin from Anquetil-Duperron's Dictionary of Avestan-French in *Zend Avesta*, Volume II, p. 433–475. (*Vocabulaire Zend Pelhvi et François*). All Avestan words in the Anquetil-Duperron dictionary come from the Avestan-Pahlavi dictionary *Frahang-i-oim-ēwak*²⁷ (cf. Andrijanić & Matović 2019). Vesdin sharply criticises Anquetil-Duperron for failing to recognize the connection between Avestan and Sanskrit in his work *Zend Avesta*; Anquetil-Duperron again considered these resemblances a matter of borrowings.

Another example of Anquetil-Duperron's scepticism about comparing word lists to determine the genetic relations of languages is his attitude toward a memoir sent to Paris in 1767 by a Jesuit missionary in Madurai, Père Gaston-Laurent Cœurdoux (1691–1779). At the request of Abbé Barthélemy of the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres to write something about Sanskrit's similarity to Latin, Cœurdoux drafted a memorandum in which he asserted similarity between the two languages. He supported his observations with lists of similar words, concluding that both languages must have come from a common source. Although Anquetil-Duperron's correspondence with Cœurdoux shows he approved of his ideas in general, Cœurdoux's revolutionary discovery took 40 years to be published. Godfrey (1967: 59) argues that Anquetil-Duperron failed to recognise any relevance in Cœurdoux's research; his research only appeared in print in 1808,²⁸ after Anquetil-Duperron's death and 40 years after Cœurdoux had sent his research to Paris. This same year, Schlegel's *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* was published, immediately making Cœurdoux's 40-year-old memoir obsolete.

25 Both of Vesdin's studies were published before Anquetil-Duperron's death, so it is not entirely clear which one he is referring to.

26 It is important to keep in mind here that Vesdin operates within the framework of the biblical worldview; Greeks, Romans, Germans, Persians, and Indians all descended from Noah's descendants. The Latins and Greeks are the descendants of Javan, Noah's grandson, and the Italic peoples were united by Kitim, the fourth son of Javan. Vesdin considered the similarity between the Sanskrit name for the Greeks (*yavana*) and the name Javan to be important evidence of this claim.

27 Vesdin takes Germanic words (59 pairs) from Johann Schilter's dictionary *Thesaurus antiquitatum Teutonicarum* (Ulm, 1728) and Bessel's *Chronicon Gotwicense*, Tomus I (Tegernsee, 1732).

28 *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, XLIX (1784–1793). According to Godfrey (1967: 59), the memoir was most probably printed so late because of the French revolution. For details on Cœurdoux's discussion, see Godfrey (1967: 57–59). His discussion is reprinted in Mayrhofer (1983). For a more recent review of Cœurdoux's work, see Swiggers 2017: 160; for the relationship between Vesdin and Cœurdoux, see Van Hal 2005.

The fundamental difference between Vesdin's and Anquetil-Duperron's approach to the idea of linguistic kinship and the history of language is evident. In this sense, by compiling tables with strings of words from different languages they considered related, Vesdin (and Cœurdoux) became the true forerunners of historical and comparative linguistics. Such lists of related Romani and Hindustani words appear in Rüdiger and Grellmann as well. They all correctly note—albeit more intuitively than systematically—the similarity of words and meanings, unlike Anquetil-Duperron, who is sceptical of this methodology and strives for the practical use of language in learning about other cultures.

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Sažetak

Bilješka o ranoj raspravi o podrijetlu romskog jezika

Ovaj članak predstavlja kratke napomene Filipa Veddina (Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo) o podrijetlu Roma i njihovom jeziku u njegovu djelu *Viaggio alle Indie Orientali* (1786), zajedno s reakcijama na njegove napomene prevoditelja i redaktora njegova djela. Veddin zastupa teoriju o indijskome podrijetlu Roma, iako je u zabludi u uvjerenju da su Romi napustili Indiju nakon Timurova osvajanja Delhija 1398. Veddin također povezuje romski jezik sa staroindoijskim jezikom (sanskrtom), te smatra romski sanskrtskim „dijalektom”. Veddin je ove zaključke temeljio na vlastitu promatranju sličnosti između romskih i hindustanskih riječi u popisu riječi Heinricha Grellmanna. U komentarima koji prate prijevod Veddinove knjige na francuski, Anquetil-Duperron kritizira ideju srodstva između romskog i staroindoijskog. U prijevodu Veddinova djela na engleski, Johnston (1800) se slaže s Veddinom i Grellmannom, citirajući Williama Jonesa. Ovaj rad ocrta temeljnu razliku u Veddinovu i Anquetil-Duperronovu pristupu ideji jezičnog srodstva, povijesti jezika i filologije. Veddin predstavlja predmodernoga preteču povijesnoga i poredbenoga jezikoslovlja, za razliku od Anquetil-Duperrona, koji se suprotstavlja povijesnom pristupu ističući šira kulturološka pitanja.

Ključne riječi: Filip Veddin, Anquetil-Duperron, romski, jezična srodnost