Rom / Romni

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Rom

Rom (Romani: rom): husband

A few experts propound the hypothesis that rom, in the sense of "husband", is the original and basic meaning of this word, while the ethnonym Rom is an extension of the original meaning. This hypothesis appears to be incorrect because, in India, husbands, if they speak about or to their wives, customarily call them by their caste name. For example, a lohar (blacksmith) would say, méri lohárin, which does not mean "my female blacksmith", but rather "my wife". A jatt (farmer) would say, "méri džattní". A Ddom would say, "méri ddomní", etc. A Bhil (a member of an ethno-social pre-Aryan community) would speak of his wife as "méri bhílní", etc. Ethnically or socially, the caste name is primary and its use to designate marital status is secondary.

Therefore, one must conclude that the original term is the ethnonym Rom, and rom (husband) is the secondary meaning.

Romňi

Romňi (Romani: romňi – woman): wife