

Book Reviews

From 'race science' to the camps. The Gypsies during the Second World War, volume 1. *Karola Fings, Herbert Heuss, and Frank Sparing*. Translated from German by Donald Kenrick. Foreword by Henriette Asséo. Postscript by Gilad Margalit. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997. (Interface Collection 12). viii + 136 pp. £12,75 (paper). ISBN 0-900458-78-X.

In the shadow of the Swastika. The Gypsies during the Second World War, Volume 2. *Donald Kenrick*, ed. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999. (Interface Collection 13). viii + 220 pp. £12.75 (paper). ISBN 0-900458-85-2.

Reviewed by David Crowe

Contents of Volume 2: Donald Kenrick, 'Introduction', 9–10; Giovanna Boursier, 'Gypsies in Italy during the fascist dictatorship and the Second World War', 13–35; Erika Thurner, 'Gypsies in the Austrian Burgenland—the camp at Lackenbach', 37–58; Marie-Christine Hubert, 'The Internment of Gypsies in France', 59–88; Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov, 'The Bulgarian Romanies during the Second World War', 89–94; Michelle Kelso, 'Gypsy deportations from Romania to Transistria, 1942–44', 95–130; Michael Zimmermann, 'The Soviet Union and the Baltic states, 1941–44: The massacre of the Gypsies.' 131–48; Ctibor Nečas, 'Bohemnia and Moravia—two internment camps for Gypsies in the Czech lands', 149–70; Reimar Gilsenbach, 'Chronology', 171–89; Donald Kenrick, 'Postscript', 191–2.

In a recent essay, Barany (2000) decries the lack of serious scholarship in Roma studies. One of the three areas that he singles out in need of serious scholarly investigation is the Holocaust, for which the term *Porajmos* has recently been coined by Roma activists. The two volumes under review are part of a series of works sponsored by the *Centre de recherches tsiganes* (and

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published by the University of Hertfordshire Press in the Interface series) on the Roma Holocaust that will finally begin to help fill the scholarly void on this tragedy. Another important part of this collection is Kenrick and Puxon's (1995) update of their 1972 classic.

The first volume consists of three essays that provide an historical overview of Roma persecution in Germany from 1870 to 1945, the purpose and structure of Roma incarceration in concentration camps under the Nazis, and a look at the specific nature of Roma mistreatment in Buchenwald, Ravensbruck, and Auschwitz. For the most part, these essays should be considered primers for those looking for an overview of the topics under discussion, and not definitive scholarly studies. Since this volume's principle authors are German, they draw heavily on German sources. Each author's detailed notes are quite useful for anyone interested in further study of the Roma Holocaust.

There is nothing really new in Herbert Heuss' look at German policies towards the Roma from the time of German unification in 1870–71 to the end of World War II. Nazi policies towards the Roma were an extension of earlier German policies towards this group. What he fails to do is capture the confusing attempt by the Germans to create a definitive policy for the Roma. The author tends to meld together a series of laws and decrees aimed at the Roma without any critical analysis of their deeper significance during the Holocaust. His failure even to mention the Nuremberg Laws and the codicils that dealt with the Roma is baffling. These important laws as well as earlier Weimar laws, the Denaturalization Law (1933), the Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring (1933), and the Law Regarding Expulsion from the Reich (1934) provided the Germans with the legal basis to persecute the Roma well into World War II. The fact that the Germans used such laws to mistreat the Roma, whom they viewed as a criminal 'asocial' element, haunted the Roma even after World War II. As Gilad Margalit points out in his Postscript, it was not until 1963 that the West German Supreme Court ruled that the Roma were victims of racial persecution from 1938–45. Up until this time, the German courts hid behind Nazi law to void Roma reparations claims.

The second essay, by Frank Sparing, is somewhat repetitive of the first, since it covers some of the same legalistic ground that the Germans used to persecute the Roma. Yet instead of an incisive look at the nature of the concentration camps system in the Third Reich, it concentrates on disparate

Roma camps in Austria and Königsberg. The final essay by Karola Fings fills in many of the gaps left by Frank Sparing. While a great deal has been published about the Gypsy Family Camp at Auschwitz, far less is known about the Roma in the Ravensbruck Womens' Camp and in Buchenwald. What makes this essay particularly valuable is the author's interviews of Roma survivors. Such interviews must form the core of all future Holocaust studies. Hopefully, scholars have not waited too long to undertake this essential task.

The second volume in this series is different since it consists of essays by some very prominent Roma scholars. The essays discuss the Holocaust in Italy, the Austrian camp at Lackenbach, France, Bulgaria, Romania and Transnistria, the Soviet Union and the Baltic States, and Bohemia–Moravia. Almost all of the essays in this collection use primary source material from regional and national archives. Consequently, for anyone interested in one of the countries or regions covered in the volume, the references are as valuable as the essays. Erika Thurner's essay on the Austrian Roma camp at Lackenbach is very important and should be read in conjunction with the essays by Frank Sparing and Karola Fings in the first volume.

Equally valuable are the essays by Michael Zimmermann on the massacre of the Roma in the western Soviet Union after the German invasion in 1941 and Ctibor Nečas' discussion of the Roma internment camps at Léty and Hodonín in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. For anyone who has looked with any thoroughness at the German onslaught against the Soviet Union and read the *Einsatzgruppen* reports (cf. Arad *et al.* 1989), there is little surprising in this essay. His essay discusses Germany's murderous policies towards the Roma well into 1943. At the end, the author touches on one of the most controversial questions in the Holocaust: were the Roma included belatedly in the Final Solution? In light of Guenther Lewy's recent work denying this, it would have been helpful if the author had looked more closely at this question.

Ctibor Nečas' article opens a new area of scholarship on two relatively unknown Roma camps in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Léty and Hodonín. Unfortunately, it is flawed by the lack of footnotes. Yet one should not forget the author's classic (Nečas 1981) study on Czech and Slovak Roma from which some of this work is drawn.

Both of these essays are a sample of the very solid scholarly work throughout this volume. For anyone interested in a more in-depth look at

the plight of the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union during the Holocaust, *In the Shadow of the Swastika* is essential reading. Also useful is Reimar Gilsenbach's Holocaust chronology, which should be read in conjunction with Ian Hancock's (1991) chronological survey of Roma persecution, particularly in the German states.

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My ancestors were Gypsies. *Sharon Sillers Floate*. London: Society of Genealogists, 1999. 89 pp. £3.95 (paper). ISBN 1-85951-401-4.

Reviewed by Robert Dawson

The past decade has seen a massive increase in interest amongst British Gypsies and gorgers to find out more about their forebears. In 1994 this led to

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the formation of the Romany and Traveller Family History Society, and the membership total of this Society is now over 300 and growing.

As anyone with an interest in their own family will know, such research can be profoundly difficult, and none less than with the Gypsies of Britain. Nomadism, name changes, transportation, hiding out and a host of other extra problems face the Gypsy genealogist which the gorjer does not normally have.

My ancestors were Gypsies is one of a series published by the Society of Genealogists, other titles covering various Christian sects, the British Army, Freemasons, City of London Freeman and several more. In her book, Sharon Sillers Floate seeks to redress the balance for Gypsy and Traveller researchers, and thereby to provide a valuable tool. After all, statistically, 100 per cent of persons whose ancestors have been in Britain for eleven or more generations have what is often referred to as 'Gypsy blood' somewhere and it seems likely that more and more people will try to seek it out.

The book covers a historical introduction, the social organization and culture of Gypsies and their impact on family history research, normal genealogical sources and their application to Gypsies, and specialist sources. There are also appendices of a select calendar of legislation affecting Gypsies in England and one on Gypsy surnames and their distribution. There is a bibliography, a section with suggested background reading, and a list of useful addresses.

Illustrations include several not normally found in Gypsy sources, such as old marriage, baptismal and pedlar's certificates. Settlement examinations were, of course, a constant bugbear of English Gypsies in the past, and it is interesting to see one reproduced from 1797. There is also an extract from one of T.W. Thompson's previously unpublished and ever valuable letters, this one to Eric Otto Winstedt and relating to the Draper family.

All this adds up to a very useful book indeed, and one which no scholar of English and Welsh Gypsies should be without. The book provides sources which are not always obvious, and in the process throws up many of the questions for, and areas of, research which, so far, have not been undertaken in British Gypsy studies.

If for no other reason, this would make the book a 'must' for every shelf. Although the principal audience is not a scholarly one, the book is certainly scholarly and systematic in its approach, without being pedantic. Anyone seeking Gypsy forebears would find it an essential tool, and even those seeking forebears from other countries could learn a lot from it.

With such a difficult subject area, Floate faced a major problem in the presentation of such a book. There is so much sound English Gypsy research from Thompson and others (and, of course, some far from sound from other contributors to the old JGLS)—what do you include and what do you leave out? As anyone with a knowledge of English/Welsh Gypsies knows, they can be notoriously difficult to categorize.

This is well illustrated with Floate's section on the Gypsy matrilineal and matrilocal society. Though it is perfectly true that maternal ties are always strong, there were (and are) significant exceptions. How does one put this over to a non-specialist without confusing the issue thoroughly? To her great credit, Floate has pitched problems like this with skill, accuracy and simplicity without compromising the facts. I like, too, her explanations of social partnerships, marrying out and extended family groups.

Travel patterns are also a difficult area, and here, though Floate's information is as ever totally accurate, it would have been useful to give non-experts an example of a typical travel route in some part of the country, showing how it was affected by seasonal occupations, fairs and family celebrations. In my experience, genealogists find such ideas very hard to grasp.

Transportation is another necessarily thin area in the book. Floate has special expertise in transportations to Australia but a more explanatory paragraph about the transportations to the West Indies and Virginia which predated these would have been beneficial.

There are one or two surprising omissions from the bibliography, which might also have been strengthened by the inclusion of some sound books on British Gypsies for children, as more and more youngsters are trying to discover their Romani roots. This is beginning to include present day Romanies themselves. (I accept, of course, that there is an awful lot of dross for children, but all the more reason to provide a good list.)

But these are minor criticisms only, and, overall, this is a superb book. I would go so far as to say that it deserves to become one of the classics of British Gypsy studies, and I am confident that it will. Floate is to be congratulated on producing something so excellent about such a notoriously difficult area. As only a limited number have been produced, I can imagine this being a hard book to buy within a short time.

Dire le chant: Les Gitans Flamencos d'Andalousie. *Caterina Pasqualino.* Paris: CNRS Editions and Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1998. 294 pp. ISBN 2-271-05564-4 and 2-7351-0791-4.

Reviewed by Anita Volland

Recent years have seen an explosion of interest in the dynamic and expressive art form known as 'flamenco'. Increasingly familiar to the international music world through the popularity of stars like the Gypsy Kings, the films of Carlos Saura, and successions of dance-troupes, this once local genre of Andalusian performance-art has achieved global recognition, albeit in forms adjusted to its wider audience. Likewise, scholarship on flamenco, once dominated by Spanish folklorists, has expanded to include noteworthy studies by non-Iberians in the fields of history, ethnomusicology, and the social sciences (e.g. the contributions of Leblon, Mitchell, and Washabaugh). Much of this recent work has set flamenco against the background of historical change, viewing questions of its origins and evolution in relation to political and social forces both within and outside of Spain. This intellectual climate, with its emphasis on theory and on the fluidity of cultural forms, has tended to distance itself from the living context of flamenco among the people who are most often credited with its creation, namely the Gypsies of Andalusia. It is thus with particular appreciation that those of us who have yearned for a serious ethnographic investigation of flamenco in the lives of Spanish Gypsies today should greet Caterina Pasqualino's rich and haunting monograph on the Gitanos of Jerez de la Frontera.

Pasqualino's title, *Dire le chant* (Sp. *decir el cante*) is drawn from a Gitano expression used in relation to *cante*, the special song-style of flamenco. Literally translated, it means 'to speak the cante' and refers to a way of pronouncing the words of a song almost as if one were engaged in an intimate conversation. With this title the author establishes the theme of her work, namely that in Jerez flamenco is foundational to the Gitano view of the world, the very 'corner stone' of Gitano identity (p. 11). To paraphrase one

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of Pasqualino's respondents: not all Gitanos perform flamenco, they *are* flamencos (p. 18). In *Dire le chant* cante and everyday speech are not separate elements but 'prolongations' of one another within the same pattern of thought and action (p.11).

That flamenco comprises a total way of life has been asserted many times by both flamenco aficionados and students of Andalusian and Gitano culture. Nonetheless, in the opinion of the reviewer no previous work has satisfactorily demonstrated the truth of this claim through the systematic study of observed data and in a specific context. It is now, through Pasqualino's efforts as an ethnographer, that we can fully comprehend the depth and complexity of a symbolic world in which the dance and music of a Gitano community tell a story inaccessible through any other media.

Collecting the data for such a study was not easy for the author. As an ethnographer, her aim was to live for an extended period of time in a Gitano community where she could participate in daily life, observe, and conduct in-depth interviews. Ironically, Pasqualino was initially skeptical of flamenco as an entrée into Gitano life. Based at first in Seville, Andalusia's largest city, she sought the help of social workers in making contact with the local Gitanos. Only after a disastrous experience with a group of recent migrants from Portugal did she recognize the barriers she herself had created through associating herself with government workers in the face of a culture that so strongly resists outsiders. Following the advice of flamenco aficionados, she eventually moved to Jerez and apprenticed herself to the only Gypsy guitar teacher in the city, Pedro Carrasco, called Periquín. Through Periquín, his wife, and eventually other members of his circle, she widened her network of Gitano acquaintances and began in earnest the work of gathering data. Flamenco had brought her to the Gypsies.

Most of *Dire le chant* consists of a meticulous and comprehensive analysis of Gitano rituals—engagements, weddings, pilgrimages and processions, funerals, and parties—all of which are suffused with meanings accessible through flamenco. Although the author makes no specific statements regarding her theoretical orientation within social science, her treatment of the data follows the emphases of symbolic anthropology. It is clear that what Pasqualino wants is to understand how the Gitanos of Jerez think about their world and how they give meaning to the content of their lives. Such profound questions are answerable only through the patient work of uncovering innumerable separate 'strands' of meaning and connecting them in a comprehensive whole.

A fundamental element of this symbolic whole is the rapid and rhythmically complex flamenco song-dance called *bulería*. Bulerías are performed at virtually all ritual occasions, as well as spontaneously in everyday life. Within the wider repertoire of flamenco genres, some of which are associated with non-Gypsies, the *bulería* has always been considered a quintessentially Gitano form, particularly as performed by the Gitanos of Jerez. A solo or couple dance, accompanied by a solo singer, clapping, and the loud verbal encouragement of a surrounding circle of participants, *bulerías* are used to assert Gitano presence both within the community and in situations, like the pan-Andalusian commemorations of the passion and death of Christ, where Gitanos and non-Gitanos mix in crowds.

Through Pasqualino's detailed observations and transcriptions we learn, among many other things, what the *bulería* looks like when danced, how it functions at engagements and weddings (both of which are fully described), how it constitutes a complex code between potential or real lovers, and how it reveals the way that Gitanos appropriate as their own symbols from the larger Andalusian religious ideology. For example, the Cristo del Prendimiento, a processional image depicting the captive Christ with his fists crossed and tied in front of him, is said to be dancing the *bulería* because this position of the arms is characteristic of one of the most important movements of the dance. Likewise, at the pilgrimage to Cabra, a site associated with pan-Gypsy political solidarity, Gitanos boisterously rejoice in front of the enshrined Virgin, celebrating her virginity as they would at a wedding—that is, by dancing the *bulería*, tearing off their shirts, and throwing flowers or candy.

Of particular interest to aficionados of flamenco song is Pasqualino's treatment of the *juerga*, a party where dance and song are primary, rather than secondary, motives and which characteristically lasts from the evening of one day to the dawn of the next. Here some of the most important symbolic threads of Pasqualino's work are tied together. For one thing, participants in a *juerga* arrange themselves in a characteristic pattern, namely in tightly packed but independent circles. Interaction within such circles is intense and centripetal. As the purveyors of dance—in its symbolic opposition to song—women dominate the first phase of a *juerga* by initiating and maintaining the standing circles that surround and encourage the *bulería* performers. Later in the evening, circles dominated by men begin to form, often in corners and usually seated. Here, as the recognized purveyors of song, the men one by one sing the slow, gut-wrenching *cantes* (*cante hondo*)

that evoke the tragic Gitano past. As the juerga atmosphere deepens, the male singers exert themselves further and further in their struggle with the power and pain of the cante, awaiting the momentary and unpredictable presence of the supernatural, the *duendes*, whose arrival is acknowledged by a special silence. As the singer expends his last breath—the *último suspiro* associated with the expiration of Christ on the cross—his voice may take on an alien, ‘metallic’ sound which Gitanos comprehend as not his own voice but as an echo from the beyond, the voice of the dead. Since in Gitano thinking breath is linked to life and fertility, in this moment the dead transmit their fecund breath to the living, who again pass it on. The juerga meal of tripe stew (*menudo*) then becomes a kind of communion meal uniting past and present generations of Gitanos.

The fact that the data for Pasqualino’s study were gathered mainly at Jerez is in itself felicitous. Located in southern Andalusia, this city of famous wine makers has one of the largest concentrations of Gypsies in the region. Although Gitano enclaves are scattered throughout the city, the oldest and most important ones occupy the neighbourhoods of Santiago and San Miguel. A rivalry between these two communities has existed since time immemorial, each group attributing to itself and to its rival certain contrasting qualities of character. This allows the author to draw additional symbolic parallels between the dualities of Santiago/San Miguel, feminine/masculine, and the two cultural traditions of sedentary-acculturated/marginal-“free”. The largest number of Pasqualino’s acquaintances were middle-aged, that is between 40 and 60 years old, and in the text tend to express themselves through examples and models current in the 1960s and 70s. Nonetheless, there are also glimpses of Gitano youth, with their body tattoos of favourite saints, their boom-boxes blasting flamenco, and their attempts to achieve the rough, haunting flamenco voice—a voice common to older Gypsies—through the use of drugs. Well-known flamenco personalities such as Agujetas and Camarón are presented from the viewpoint of Gitano mythology concerning community and gender ideals.

Speakers of English with a basic reading knowledge of French will find *Dire le chant* entirely accessible, as Pasqualino’s writing is vivid, straightforward and totally bereft of jargon. Verbatim statements from respondents are given in both French and Spanish in the text, as well as in the numerous and valuable footnotes. The bibliography does strongly favour the scholarly literature in Spanish and French and does not include certain English works that were seminal in the development of symbolic approaches to Flamenco

within the social sciences. As regards methodology, other ethnographers may want to know more about how tape-recorded conversations and videos were used in constructing the author's detailed analyses of whole rituals.

Pasqualino's attempt to uncover and represent such a comprehensive configuration of thought is certainly an ambitious one. There are those who, as scholars, aficionados or Gitanos, will disagree with some of her interpretations or question the extent to which she presses the scope of her analysis. Nonetheless, it is the reviewer's opinion that never before has the cultural context of Flamenco in the everyday lives of Andalusian Gitanos been so richly described, so carefully documented or so sensitively interpreted. *Dire le chant* is without question required reading and a potential classic in Flamenco studies and in Gitano ethnography. It is to be hoped that an English edition of this fascinating book will be made available forthwith.

Romani III. Dieter W. Halwachs, ed. (Grazer Linguistische Studien 51). Graz: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Graz, 1999. 170 pp. ISSN 1015-0498.

Reviewed by Lars Borin

Contents: Vorwort [Editor's Preface]; Peter Bakker and Heinz Werner Wessler: The etymology of the Romani quotative *xăcē, xătē* 'I/you/he said'; Katharina Deman and Ursula Glaeser: Roman-Unterricht in Burgenland [Roman school instruction in Burgenland]; Ursula Glaeser, Dieter W. Halwachs and Mozes F. Heinschink: Vier Vend-Romani-Texte [Four Vend Romani texts]; Kimmo Granqvist: Notes on Finnish Romani phonology; Anthony P. Grant: Romani in the wilderness: On the marginalisation of Romani within general linguistics in Britain and America, and some consequences of the 'Rise of the Amateur'; Hristo Kyuchukov: Acquisition of Romani morphology; Hristo Kyuchukov and Peter Bakker: A note on Romani words in the gay slang of Istanbul; Yaron Matras: s-h alternation in Romani: An historical and functional interpretation; Lev N. Tcherenkov: Eine kurzgefasste Grammatik des russischen Kalderaš-Dialekts des Romani [A brief grammar of the Russian

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Kalderash Romani dialect]; *Peter Bakker*: Review of Mānuš, Leksa, Neiland, Jānis and Rudevič, Kārlis: Čiganu-Latviešu-Angļu un Latviešu-Čiganu Vārdnīca [Romani-Latvian-English and Latvian-Romani dictionary].

The work under review contains three contributions—by Granqvist, Grant, and Kyuchukov—which were read before the *Fourth International Conference on Romani Linguistics* in 1998 in Manchester, while the remaining seven articles have been written specifically for the *Grazer Linguistische Studien*.

Linguistics is a heterogeneous discipline. Romani linguistics forms no exception in this regard. This is evident if we look through some recent publications in this field (e.g., Matras 1995; Matras *et al.* 1997). A convenient way of characterising many (but not all) linguistic works—and consequently also works on Romani linguistics—is to accommodate them in a space defined by two dimensions: the ‘synchronic–diachronic’ dimension and the ‘language use’–‘language system’ dimension. These dimensions form a continuum: linguistic investigations may combine synchronic and diachronic aspects of language—as when Tcherenkov gives historical explanations of synchronic grammatical phenomena (see below). They may also integrate both aspects of language system and language use. Most of the articles in the volume under review fit fairly neatly into this scheme. Exceptions are Grant’s ‘metalinguistic’ contribution, where the object of study is not language or language use, but Romani linguistics itself, and Bakker’s review of a Latvian Romani dictionary. Language–system-oriented linguistics has been more prominent, at least during the last two centuries, and it probably has more practitioners in general linguistics than language–use-oriented linguistics. It is not surprising therefore to find more language–system-oriented contributions in the present collection. However, we also find various mixtures of synchronic and diachronic system-oriented studies. Granqvist’s study of the phonology of modern Finnish Romani may stand as representative of the synchronic extreme of the scale, while the etymological contribution by Bakker and Wessler is about as far toward the diachronic end as one can get.

Several contributions provide primary empirical data—which should be the point of departure for any linguistic investigation with scientific aspirations—that is, they are first and foremost of a descriptive character (although in some cases the data is also accompanied by a theoretical discussion). Glaeser, Halwachs and Heinschink present four original traditional stories in Vend Romani (Hungary)—a variety for which no folktales have

been recorded earlier—with comments on the linguistic features of the texts. Kyuchukov and Bakker list borrowed Romani items in the gay slang of Istanbul Turkish. Granqvist presents the results of a corpus-based investigation of Finnish Romani phonology, giving useful numerical data on the Finnish Romani phoneme inventory and phonotactics, to which he has since added data on vowel harmony processes (Granqvist 1999). I would have liked to see a more theoretical discussion (beyond the brief remarks on p. 50) of the relationship between the various orthographies represented in Granqvist's corpus—and particularly the present standard orthography (Ortografiakomitea 1971)—and the sound system of the modern spoken language.

In his language acquisition study, Kyuchukov provides examples of the child-directed speech (CDS) of mothers and other adult speakers of Bulgarian Erlij Romani. His aim is to show that Roma children go through universal stages in their acquisition of Romani morphology, while different CDS-strategies are being used by Roma adults, as compared to adults in other cultures. More data is needed before this can be shown conclusively, however. Tcherenkov's grammatical sketch of Russian Kalderash adheres to a fairly traditional—one is tempted to say outmoded—format, in that he concentrates on (derivational and inflectional) morphology (30 pages out of 36) to the almost complete exclusion of syntax (1 page). Terminology is not always as rigorously defined as one would wish—for example, accusative and oblique are sometimes separated (pp. 142ff., for instance) and sometimes equated (as on pp. 147ff.), without making the basis for one or the other treatment explicit. The traditional format also becomes apparent in the preference for historical explanations of grammatical phenomena (pp. 139, 141, 156 and others).

More analytical accounts of linguistic facts are also found among the contributions. Bakker and Wessler give an altogether plausible etymology for the quotative marker *xâcê/xâtê* found in some Romani varieties, tracing it back to Old Indo-Aryan *kath* 'to tell, relate, say'. Both the proposed sound development and typological studies on the grammaticalisation of quotative markers (see Saxena 1995) seem to bear out this conclusion.

The *pièce de résistance* of the language-system-oriented part of the collection is Matras's thorough and highly interesting investigation of one of the traits commonly used in the classification of Romani dialects, the *s~h/Ø* 'alternation'. He argues, convincingly in my view, that not one, but two major different historical *s>h/Ø* shifts are involved (p. 103), each originating

in different centres of diffusion (pp. 120 ff.). The actual outcomes of both processes are the results of a complex combination of motivating factors, both formal and functional. In conclusion, Matras urges care in using this alternation for dialect classification. His conclusions also seem to call for a re-evaluation of the extent of nomadism in Roma history.

Linguists have long been concerned with particular immigrant and minority languages (see for example Nelde 1980; Wande *et al.* 1987). Such issues have come to the foreground as a general problem in recent years in the wake of pessimistic predictions about the fate of the world's linguistic diversity, if things are allowed to run their natural course (Krauss 1996). The need for computational resources (written and spoken text corpora, spelling checkers, language instruction materials, etc.) for minority languages has been addressed most recently at an international workshop in connection with the LREC2000 conference in Athens (Ó Cróinín 2000) with one contribution on (Finnish) Romani (Borin 2000), but there could and should be more. Against this background it is heartening to read the account by Deman and Glaeser of the efforts to provide instruction in Burgenland Romani in Austrian schools. Here, too, didactic computer games are seen as a good means of motivating the pupils (p. 18).

Grant argues in his contribution that Romani linguistics has come of age in the last few decades, having been the realm of amateurish dilettants, and something that professional linguists might only pursue in the closet, as it were (p. 79). One sign of this is the increasing volume of high-quality work on Romani linguistics, both as contributions to journals and edited collections and in the form of grammars of individual Romani varieties. The volume under review makes a most welcome and very valuable addition to the growing Romani linguistics literature.

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