Anna-Maria Sonnemann. *Language Families in Contact: The Mutual Impact of Slavic and Romani*. Berlin/Boston: DeGruyter Mouton, 2022. xvii + 247 pp. [Language Contact and Bilingualism, ed. Yaron Matras, volume 24.] ISBN 978-3-11-075604-3.

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For specialists in Slavic linguistics, the study of Slavic contacts with Romani is important for discussions of the kinds of grammatical change that can occur in a non-Slavic system under the influence of various Slavic languages, as well as changes in the lexicon in both directions. This useful work, based on the author's habilitation thesis at the University of Cologne (2021)—which itself expands and revises some of the author's previously published work—provides an excellent survey of all the key issues. Aside from the usual front matter (i–xviii), the book consists of nine chapters (1–170), two appendices (171–207), about 365 references (219–39), a subject index (241–43), and a language index (245–47).

Chapter 1 (1–15) is the Introduction, which gives a brief discussion of the problems of determining the number of Romani speakers (as opposed to those who identify as Romani, itself also problematic due to underreporting connected with social stigma), a brief discussion of Romani multilingualism, the history of research on Slavic-Romani language contact, the Romani Morphosyntactic Database (RMS), which is indeed the single most useful comprehensive source for looking at Romani-Slavic contact, and an overview of the volume. Chapter 2 (16–25) presents the author's arguments for treating Romani as a "family" on the same level as the Slavic "family". Chapter 3 (26–32) is entitled "Examining contact phenomena through a contemporary lens". Chapter 4 (33–66) gives an overview of the structural impact of Slavic on Romani. Chapter 5 (67–91) looks at Slavic verbal prefixes in Romani. Chapter 6 (92–113) discusses Slavic lexical borrowings in Romani, and Chapter 7 (114–38) examines Romani borrowings in a selection of Slavic languages (BCMS, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian). Chapter 8 (114–38) is entitled "Writing Romani in 'Slavic' alphabets", and Chapter 9 (165–70) gives the conclusions.

Chapter 1 does a good job of covering the basics necessary for this book. Chapter 2 is somewhat problematic. The author begins by asking: "What is a language family, what is a language, what is a dialect, and where do

Romani and the Slavic languages belong in this framework?" The discussion of the term *family* as having broad and narrow definitions is adequate. Here I would emphasize the definition used by Nichols (1992: 24–25) that is in one of Sonnemann's citations. Nichols uses *family* for the time depth of one of the older branches of Indo-European (2500–4000 years, e.g. Iranian) and *stock* for the deepest reconstructible phylogenetic node, e.g., Indo-European. We can note in passing that this frees up *phylum* for a hypothetical deeper genealogical node for which some evidence can be adduced, even though the signal is weaker than that required for the stock, e.g., (Na-)Dene-Yenisean (Kari and Potter 2010). Sonnemann rightly skates over the problem of whether or not Balto-Slavic is a reconstructible unity, and does not bother to mention the question of whether Common Slavic as we have reconstructed it was a relatively late koine that was superimposed over earlier dialectal diversity, as happened with Ancient Greek, when the Attic-based koine displaced all the ancient dialects except, to some extent, the Doric that is the basis of Tsakonian. Even if reconstructed Common Slavic as we know it is considerably more recent than, e.g., Proto-Iranian, I see no problem using the same term for the genealogical level of Slavic. Balto-Slavic would then be at the level of Indo-Iranian, even if the reconstruction of the latter is more secure than that of the former.

Treating Romani as a "family" on the same level as Slavic, however, is problematic. Basically, the author compares 15 sentences of a dialect from Bulgaria with a dialect from Finland, finds that 50 out of 90 words (56%) are neither identical nor cognate, and concludes that despite a variety of basic phonological, grammatical, and lexical commonalities among Romani dialects, Romani is a "family" like Slavic. She does not pursue this thought, however, to specify which dialects enter into which "languages", nor does she consider the sociolinguistic implications of her claim, nor the terminological problem of what to call Indic or Indo-Iranian if Romani is a "family" and Indo-European is a "stock". For the rest of the book, no attempt is made to assign the various dialects to "languages". Overall, this chapter does not really contribute much.

Chapter 3 is a quick look at some contemporary theories of language contact, of which the author chooses the functional-pragmatic approach exemplified by Matras (2020). This is certainly a suitable approach for the data. Chapter 4 looks at the structural impact of Slavic on Romani and examines the following topics: phonetics and phonology (33–37); nominal morphology (37): inflectional endings and word-formation affixes (37–38), cases (38–41), articles (41–42), comparison (42–43), indefinites (43–45), interrogatives (45), possessives, personal pronouns, and demonstratives (46); verbal morphology (46–47): tense (47–48), the "new infinitive" [*sic*; I see no reason for the scare quotes] (48–49), voice and reflexivity (50–51), modality (51–53), the conditional (53), renarrative and evidentiality (53–54), imperative, optative, and jussive (54); syntax (54): prepositions and conjunctions (55–58), object doubling (58–59), conditional

sentences (59–60), negation (60), word order (60–62), and zero copula (62–63); and a summary (63–66). In this chapter, the author does a very competent job of presenting the most important phenomena for each topic, with useful examples for every point. This chapter represents an excellent overview of the subject and would be suitable for assignment in Slavic, Romani, and contact linguistics courses. A very small quibble with the summary (p. 60): not all the Romani dialects in contact with Macedonian have final devoicing, although some do. (This is actually a topic that requires future research.)

Chapter 5 is an insightful discussion of Slavic verbal prefixes in Romani, based mostly on the RMS database. Sonnemann identifies three regional patterns in prefix borrowing, moving from south to north corresponding to from least to most. Dialects in contact with South Slavic have very limited borrowings of Slavic prefixes on Romani verbs; the numbers are higher for dialects in contact with Czech and Slovak, and highest in dialects in contact with Polish and East Slavic. No Romani dialect, however, actually imports the Slavic perfective/imperfective aspectual system. Rather, the use of prefixes for Aktionsarten is what gets borrowed to a lesser or greater extent as one moves from south to north.

Chapter 6 gives an overview of Slavic lexical borrowings into Romani dialects currently in contact with Slavic, and a more detailed case study of two Polish varieties, Bergitka and Polska, where Bergitka borrows more heavily from Polish than Polska. There is also a brief section on calquing. The first part of the chapter is organized by word class. This section contains several bar charts of lexical meanings showing the number of dialects borrowing a given type of lexical item using English glosses, e.g., for temporal and phasal adverbs, the largest number—over 60—borrow "always" while the smallest number—one or two (the chart is graded by units of 10)—borrow "today". Other charts are given for local adverbs and for focus particles and intensifiers. There are similar charts for prepositions and for conjunctions in Chapter 4. It would be interesting to compare such data with a larger typological study such as that in Haspelmath and Tadmor (2009 a, b), or Tadmor et al. (2010).

Chapter 7 is entitled "Romani borrowings in diastratic varieties of Slavic". The qualification "diastratic" is necessary since borrowings from Romani into Slavic, even the most widespread and everyday, are limited to colloquial registers (or their written representations), cryptoglossic, and slang registers of various sorts. The chapter gives a brief survey of sources of such elements in specific argots of Bulgarian, BCMS, Czech, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian, e.g., BCMS *Šatrovački*, Bulgarian *Čalgadžiski ezik*, etc. The author then examines Romani elements in these languages' modern colloquial registers. For BCMS, she gives a bar chart of frequency counts in the Croatian national corpus. An interesting point that emerges is that while *love* (Romani *love* is borrowed into BCMS as *lova*) 'money' is the most frequent in BCMS, it is completely absent from Bulgarian. The discussion of Bulgarian *aver* 'friend, companion'

spends too much time on Leschber's (2002) unconvincing arguments for a Romani origin for this term (Romani *aver* 'other'). The Bulgarian is surely ultimately from Hebrew *khaver* 'friend, companion, comrade', and more likely via Judezmo rather than Yiddish, which is proposed as a possible source on 129. The word is also listed in Appendix 1, and although it is set off in square brackets, there is no explanation why this is a very doubtful entry. Frequency bar charts of Romani words are also given for the Czech national corpus and the Russian national corpus. An especially useful feature of this chapter is the comparison of the historical material registered in studies of argots with modern material from national corpora and other contemporary sources.

Chapter 8 addresses the issues of writing Romani in nation-states where the dominant language is Slavic. It represents a good overview of the various issues connected with writing Romani, which, until the twentieth century, was generally written only by linguists rather than by speakers themselves. Chapter 9 summarizes the book's contents, Appendix 1 lists the Polish words in the two Romani dialects discussed in detail in Chapter 6, and Appendix 2 gives a useful list of Romani words in the six Slavic languages considered in Chapter 7, with columns of specifications: one for historically attested argots and the other for modern usage, complete with the forms these various words take in the recipient languages.

There is much that is original in this book in terms of its research. It is a contribution of new knowledge. Slavic linguists interested in language contact will be able to read and use this book with profit.

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