

Johannes BENZING, *Einführung in das Studium der altaischen Philologie und der Turkologie*, Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1953 [*Introduction to the Study of Altaic Philology and Turcology*, Publishing House Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1953], VII + 142 pages in 8°.

Altaic linguistics have made great progress in the last few decades and the literature on the Altaic languages and their interrelationship has become so extensive that it is not easy to orientate oneself in the numerous problems, a task particularly difficult for beginners in this field. Therefore, an introduction to the study of Altaic linguistics has been urgently needed. Some Altaic languages, e. g., the Turkic languages, are better known than other members of the Altaic group, and Turcologic literature exceeds by far that on other languages. Therefore, the author of the book under review stresses Turcology and devotes more than half of his book to the Turkic languages (pp. 61-131), entitling his work *Introduction to the Study of Altaic Philology and Turcology*. It is not difficult to understand the reason for entitling this book in this manner, although I do not think BENZING's formulation is a very happy one, because Turcology is a subdivision of Altaic studies and, consequently, this title looks as queer as that of a book entitled *Introduction to Indo-European Studies and Germanics*. A title such as *Introduction to Altaic Studies with Emphasis on Turcology* would be more acceptable.

Different authors have their own ideas about what an introduction to a discipline should be. Therefore, it is not easy to write an introduction which suits everyone's taste. BENZING's book tells us what Altaic studies are and what languages constitute the subject of study. It gives us some statistical data on the peoples speaking these languages, some information about the history of investigation, and a detailed bibliography. In my opinion, the reader should also be given an explanation of the numerous systems of transcription and transliteration, tables of the scripts used by the peoples concerned, and brief outlines of the grammatical structure of the Altaic languages of the type of N. К. ДМИТРИЕВ's *Строй турецкого языка* (Ленинград, 1939) [*Structure of the Turkish Language*, Leningrad, 1939] or the article

by C. F. VOEGELIN and M. E. ELLINGHAUSEN "Turkish Structure" (Publications of the American Oriental Society, Offprint Series No. 17, New Haven, Conn., 1943) and my Строй хаиха-монгольского языка (Ленинград, 1936) [*The Structure of the Khalkha-Mongolian Language*, Leningrad, 1936]. Of course, I do not mean outlines of all Altaic languages but of one most typical for each branch of the Altaic group. BENZING's book does not contain such outlines and no explanation of the systems of transcription is given either, although the author gives on page 41, for reasons not quite obvious to me, the romanized Mongolian alphabet which was used by the Buriats and Kalmucks between 1931 and 1937 and has not been used since.

The author explains on page 1 the meaning of the term "Altaic languages" and adds that most scholars who used this term believed that the Altai mountain range was the original homeland of the peoples concerned. This is not a quite accurate statement, because, although it was so believed at the time of CASTRÉN and SCHOTT, at the present time the term "Altaic," like the term "Indo-European," does not imply any geographic idea. "Altaic" is only a linguistic term.

I cannot agree with BENZING's statement that the situation in the Altaic languages is fundamentally different from that in the Indo-European or Semitic languages which are characterized by a very definite structure (p. 2). If BENZING means the inflectional grammatical structure of the Indo-European languages which distinguishes them from other language families, why does he not acknowledge the agglutinative structure of the Altaic languages as their most characteristic feature? The Altaic languages, too, have a large number of common roots and stems. BENZING is extremely sceptical about the affinity of the Altaic languages and he tries to strengthen his position by quoting the Turcologist W. BANG and the explorer of the Tungus, SHIROKOGOROV, who were reluctant to recognize the Altaic theory. Yet SHIROKOGOROV was never an authority in the linguistic field, and BANG died twenty years ago. Much has changed in these two decades. The outstanding posthumous work of Władysław KOTWICZ, "Studia nad językami ąltajskimi" (wydał Marian LEWICKI, *Rocznik Orien-*

talistyczny, tom XVI, pp. 1-318, Kraków, 1953, ["Studies on Altaic Languages, edited by Marian LEWICKI, *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, Volume XVI, pp. 1-318, Kraków, 1953], demonstrates clearly how much has been achieved in the recent past. KOTWICZ's book appeared almost simultaneously with BENZING's "Introduction" and this explains why it is not mentioned in the latter.

When criticizing the former linguists who believed in the existence of the so called "Altaic language type" (p. 3), BENZING points out that one of the phenomena most important to those linguists was that the adjectival attribute does not change, while in the pre-classical Mongolian and Middle-Mongolian there was an agreement of the attribute and the word defined in number. BENZING is right, but does it make sense to criticize pioneers of WINKLER's type in whose works we find errors in large numbers? BENZING concludes his doubts with the words that, as long as the Turkic, Mongolian, and Tungus languages remain unexplored in all details, the existence of the Altaic language family neither can be asserted nor denied (p. 4). This conclusion cannot be accepted. It would have been justified 30 or 40 years ago, when there was not a single descriptive grammar of the colloquial Mongolian languages and no dictionaries were available. At the present time we have detailed Kalmuck, Buriat, Khalkha, Urdu, and Monguor grammars and dictionaries and also Tungus dictionaries. There is even an excellent comparative phonology of the Tungus languages by V. I. TSINTSIUS. Thus BENZING's doubts are, at least, a quarter of a century late. As for the criticism of SCHOTT, WINKLER, and other old writers, BENZING has wasted too much effort in refuting opinions no longer shared by anybody. I think the author should have mentioned the names of the old scholars in his bibliography and, instead of discussing their unconvincing hypotheses, should have undertaken a thorough refutation of the opinions of RAMSTEDT, RÄSÄNEN, and other supporters of the Altaic theory which BENZING does not acknowledge. I think a special chapter should have been included in which BENZING should have demonstrated why RAMSTEDT's theories are unacceptable to him.

On page 4 and the following pages a brief outline of the history

of Altaic studies from STRAHLENBERG to RAMSTEDT is given. STRAHLENBERG, CASTRÉN, and some other scholars in the past were not so much Altaicists as Ural-Altaicists. In their works the Altaic languages were discussed in their relationship to the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed languages which are not counted among the Altaic languages at the present time. Therefore, BENZING should also have mentioned the Ural-Altaicists and Turanists, RASK, Max MÜLLER, and even KLAPROTH.

On page 9 BENZING points out that the Altaic languages do not have numerals common to all of them. In my opinion this does not necessarily speak against their affinity. Besides, it should be remarked that there are numerous words which serve as numerals in one Altaic language while they function as other parts of speech in other Altaic languages, e. g.,

Tungus *umun*, Manchu *emu* "one" = Mo. *emüne* "in front, before";

Tungus *džūr*, Ma. *juve* "two" = Middle-Mongolian *jin* "two" (in reference to women); cf. the ordinal Mo. *žitüger* "the second wife" (the same derivation type as in *γутуγар* "third" and *dötüger* "fourth");

Turkic *eki* "two," *ekiz* "twins" = Mo. *ikire* "twins," *ikis-ikes* "placenta";

Mo. *qoyar* "two," **qoyar* > Buriat (Kachug) *χōr* id.; Mo. *qorin* "twenty," *qosiyayad* "by twos," etc. The root **qo* = Turkic *qoš* "pair," etc.

These etymologies have been known for a quite long period, but probably BENZING did not see my article on this subject « Монгольские числительные » ["Mongolian Numerals"], Сборник языковедных проблем по числительным, т. 1, Ленинград, 1927, pp. 97-119. It is also missing in his bibliography. BENZING's objection to RAMSTEDT's etymology of Mo. *arban* "ten" (compared with *arbayi*- "to spread out the fingers," "to show all the ten fingers") is justified, but his comparison of it with Kirgiz *arbin* "plentiful" and *arbī*- "to be numerous" is not acceptable either, because *arbī*- is a loan from Mongolian and, besides, *arban* has developed from *harban* < **farban*, while *arbin* never had an initial *h* < **φ*; cf. the *Secret History arbin* "abundant."

On page 15 BENZING proceeds to the Tungus languages. He supplies general information about the number and home of the Tungus and mentions also the names of some clans. Of them *čapəgir* is hardly derived from *čāpə* "a squirrel's nest," because *čapəgir* has a long vowel in the second syllable, i. e., $\bar{e} \sim \bar{o}$, not to mention the fact that one would hardly expect a clan name be derived from a word meaning "a squirrel's nest."

On pages 17-18 there is criticism of the theory about the affinity of the Tungus and Mongolian languages. BENZING claims that there are no regular phonetic correspondences between Tungus and Mongolian (p. 19). This is, at least, inaccurate, because in one of his works RAMSTEDT has irrefutably demonstrated that Ma. *f*-, Nanai (i. e., Goldi) *p*-, and Evenki (Tungus) *h*-~Zero correspond to *h*- in Middle Mongolian and *Zero* in Written Mongolian ("Ein anlautender stimmloser Labial in der mongolisch-türkischen Ursprache," *Journ. de la Soc. Finno-Ougrienne XXXII: 2*). His observation was accepted and corroborated by Paul PELLJOT ("Les mots à *h* initiale, aujourd'hui amuie, dans le mongol des XIII^e et XIV^e siècles," *Journ. Asiatique* 1925, pp. 193-263) and VLADIMIRTSOV, Сравнительная грамматика монгольского письменного языка и халхаского наречия, Введение и Фонетика, Ленинград, 1929.

The outline of the history of Manchu studies (pp. 22-30) is complete and does not compel one to raise objections. To BENZING's bibliographic data should be added the book of A. В. Гребенщиковъ, Очеркъ изученія маньчжурскаго языка въ Китаѣ, Извѣстія Восточнаго Института, томъ XXXII, вып. 3-й, Владивостокъ, 1913, стр. XXII + 194 + 98, which contains valuable information about studies of this language in China and European countries in the past.

The next section deals with the history of the study of the Nanai (Goldi) language and the dialects spoken along the lower course of the Amur river (pp. 30-33) and also Tungus (pp. 33-38). BENZING says that the Evenki (Tungus) dialects have undergone Mongolian influence to a lesser extent and, therefore, should be of greater importance to the linguists. In his opinion, the agreement in number of the adjectival attribute and the subject is

a phenomenon unusual from the point of view of the laws of the Altaic languages (p. 34). Yet, in pre-classical Mongolian agreement of the attribute (and the predicate noun) with the subject in number is very usual. Cf. N. POPPE, "Die Sprache der mongolischen Quadratschrift und das Yüan-ch'ao pi-shi," *Asia Major*—Neue Folge, I. Jahrgang, 1944, 1. Heft, p. 102). As for the Tungus attribute taking the case ending, this again resembles the Buriat language in which the attribute takes the plural ending and the subject lacks it, e. g., *jeχenüüd ger* "big yourts." Cf. Г. Д. Санжеев, *Грамматика бурят-монгольского языка*, Москва-Ленинград, 1941, p. 85). In Ancient Turkic there are found such examples as: *aqlar bulut* "white clouds," *qaralar bulut* "black clouds." Cf. A. VON GABAIN, *Alttürkische Grammatik*, 2. verbesserte Auflage, Leipzig, 1950, p. 85. Consequently, what BENZING believes to be characteristic only of Tungus was common to all Altaic languages in the past.

The chapter dealing with Mongolian studies (pp. 39 ff.) raises more objections. First of all, it is not correct that there are 5,000,000 Mongols in the Mongolian People's Republic (p. 39). According to the most recent data, Outer Mongolia has a population of only 850,000 (1941 census). The total number of the Mongols both in Outer and Inner Mongolia, including the Oirats, is somewhere around 3,500,000. When discussing the Mongolian script, BENZING says that the ḥP'ags-pa script (it is not *dürbeljin*, however, but *dörbeljin*) was replaced by the Uighur script. This is not quite correct, because the Uighur script existed before the introduction of the ḥP'ags-pa script (from 1269 to 1368) and the latter was invented to replace the Uighur script but failed to do so.

Mentioning the archaic features of Mongolian, BENZING believes that Turkic *š* versus Mongolian *l* and Turkic *z* versus Mongolian *r* are older than their correspondences in Mongolian. In this respect BENZING returns to the position taken by GOMBOCZ and SETÄLÄ who believed that $*z > r$ and $*š > l$, while in the light of recent research the opposite is true. The Turkic *z* goes back to a particular shade of *r* (cf. *ř* in Czech or *rz* in Polish).

Some corrections should be made in the chapter dealing with the periodization of the history of the Mongolian language. The

Secret History is not a document of Ancient Mongolian as BENZING believes but of Middle Mongolian. The latter is the stage in which *h-* is preserved but *-*γ-* and *-*g-* have disappeared. The Moslem sources also belong to this category. The letters of Argun and Öljeitü are samples of pre-classical Written Mongolian. When BENZING discusses Written Mongolian (pp. 46-47), he should give its periodization and classification into pre-classical, classical, and modern language. VLADIMIRTSOV's important book, Монгольский сборникъ разказовъ изъ Раѣcatantra (Петроградъ, 1921) [*A Mongolian Collection of Tales from the Rañcatantra*], in which for the first time in the history of Mongolian studies the above periodization of Written Mongolian was given, is mentioned by BENZING in the section dealing with religious literature, where he says, at the end, "schliesslich sei hier noch angeführt" ["and lastly should be mentioned"], as if this were a third-rate book. It is known to everyone that *Rañcatantra* is not a religious work. A book attributed to VLADIMIRTSOV, Образцы монгольской литературы, is mentioned on page 49, but this is an obvious misunderstanding, because there is no such book by Vladimirtsov. If BENZING means VLADIMIRTSOV's Образцы монгольской народной словесности (северо-западная Монголия) [Ленинград, 1926], this is a collection of folklore and deals with dialectology. Likewise, my article "Geseric" does not deal with Mongolian literature but is a linguistic work. On the contrary, VLADIMIRTSOV's Монгольская литература and his Монголо-ойратский героический эпос and my book Халха-монгольский героический эпос which primarily deal with the history of Mongolian literature are not mentioned at all. From this I conclude that BENZING's bibliography obviously contains titles of books and articles which he has never seen.

On page 51 BENZING refers the reader to the survey of Mongolian languages and dialects in VLADIMIRTSOV's *Comparative Grammar*, but he should also have mentioned the very important article by the Reverend Antoine MOSTAERT "The Mongols of Kansu and their Language," *Bulletin No. 8 of the Catholic University of Peking*, 1931, which he does not quote at all.

On page 52 we find again fantastic data on the Mongolian

People's Republic: 4,500,000-5,000,000 sq. km. of territory and 3,000,000-5,000,000 population (correct figures are 1,500,000 sq. km. of territory and a population of 850,000). Besides, the People's Republic has 18 aimaks (provinces) and not four. BENZING's data refer to the time before 1930. In this connection, it should be remarked that statistical data make sense only when they are correct.

Of books on Khalkha the obsolete works of VITALE and SERCEY might have been omitted, but instead the new grammar by ТОДАЙЕВА should have been mentioned, although it is not at all good. Likewise, BENZING's mention of the inadequate work of SOULIÉ side by side with the outstanding works of the Reverend Antoine MOSTAERT looks strange. RUDNEV's Материалы по говорамъ Восточной Монголии is not mentioned at all.

A few corrections and additions should be made in the section dealing with the Buriat language. First of all, the clan name is Tsongol and not Tschongol as BENZING transcribes it on page 55. To the bibliography of historical literature on the Buriats the book of М. Н. ВОГДАНОВ, Очерки истории Бурят-Монгольского народа (Верхнеудинск, 1926), and the important book of Ф. А. Кудрявцев, История бурят-монгольского народа от XVII в. до 60-х годов XIX в., Очерки (Москва-Ленинград, 1940), should be added and, instead of the obsolete dictionary of ПОДГОРБУНСКИЙ which is full of errors, the new dictionary of ЧЕРЕМИСОВ should be listed, Бурят-монгольско-русский словарь, Москва, 1951. In the bibliography the outstanding work of А. Д. РУДНЕВ, Хори-бурятский говоръ (Петроградъ, 1913-14) is missing. This work deserves to be mentioned rather than ВОГДАНОВ's Русско-бурятский букварь or the very inadequate grammar of ОРЛОВ.

The chapter on the Kalmucks contains several minor inaccuracies. BENZING speaks of their territory as of an autonomous region of the Russian Federation with the capital in Elista. As a matter of fact, this was so in the past, but in December, 1943 the Autonomous Kalmuck Socialist Soviet Republic (and not region!) was dissolved, the Kalmucks were resettled behind the Urals, and the city of Elista was renamed "Stepnoi."

On page 60 the glossaries of Shirongol and other dialects col-

lected by POTANIN, the glossary of the Shera-Yöğur by MANNERHEIM, and KOTWICZ's article "La langue mongole parlée par les Ouïgours Jaunes près de Kan-tcheou," *Collectanea Orientalia* No. 16, 1939; reprinted in *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, t. XVI, pp. 435-465) should be added.

The greater portion of BENZING's book is devoted, however, to Turcology. BENZING is right when he complains that Turcology is still greatly neglected and the only subject taught at universities is the Turkish language. Unfortunately, it is true that Turcology is still a monopoly of Soviet science, while it is lagging behind in all the other countries. Outside of the U.S.S.R. serious Turcologic work is done only in Turkey, although there the funds available are rather limited.

Without dwelling on BENZING's doubts about the affinity of Turkic and the other Altaic languages and his criticism of the fantastic Japhetic "theory" of MARR, already refuted in Soviet linguistics (Материалы объединенной научной сессии, посвященной трудам И. В. Сталина по языкознанию, Москва, 1951), I should like to point out that on pages 68-69, where literature on the Turkic borrowings in other languages is discussed, the book of Karl Heinrich MENGES, *The Oriental Elements in the Vocabulary of the Oldest Russian Epos, the Igor' Tale* (Supplement to *Word, Journal of the Linguistic Circle of New York*, Monograph No. 1, December 1951, vi + 98 pages) should be quoted in the first place. The literature on the classification of the Turkic languages should be supplemented by the classification of RAMSTEDT and RÄSÄNEN (vide: M. RÄSÄNEN, *Materialien zur Lautgeschichte der türkischen Sprachen*, Helsinki, 1949, pp. 26-31; cf. M. RÄSÄNEN, "Contributions au classement des langues turques," *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, t. XVII, Kraków, 1953, pp. 92-104).

In the section dealing with Chagatai the article of A. N. САМОИЛОВИЧ «К истории литературного среднеазиатско-турецкого языка,» Мир-Али-Шир, Сборник к пятисотлетию со дня рождения, Ленинград, 1928, pp. 1-23, is not mentioned at all, although it is one of the most important works on this language. In connection with Chagatai a serious chronologic error on page 82 should be corrected. BENZING says that this language owes its name to Chagatai, a grandson of Tamerlan. It is, however, com-

monly known that Timur was born in 1336 and Chagatai, the second son of Chinggis Khan died in 1241 and, therefore, could not possibly have been a grandson of Timur.

I do not think BENZING's remarks about RADLOFF who *unfortunately* neglected Turkmenian (p. 94) and did not pay attention to Karachai and Balkar (p. 98) are deserved, because RADLOFF's work exceeds everything one could expect of one scholar and it can be easily understood that he could not have explored all the Turkic languages. As far as Balkar is concerned, I can, however, point out that V. FILONENKO has published a good Balkar grammar (Nalchik, 1941), but *unfortunately* it is not mentioned in BENZING's book.

Speaking of the Crimea and the Crimean Turks, BENZING should have mentioned GASPİRALİ, one of the most outstanding and remarkable characters in history of the culture of the Turks. In the bibliography referring to Crimea the very important book of Edige KIRIMAL, *Der nationale Kampf der Krimtürken mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Jahre 1917-1918*, (Verlag Lechte, Emsdetten, Wetzl., 1952) should have been included.

The reader learns on page 128 that RAMSTEDT did not regard Chuvash as a Turkic language but as an independent Altaic language, occupying a place between Turkic and Mongolian. This is an obvious misunderstanding, because RAMSTEDT says the following in his article "Zur Frage nach der Stellung des Tschuwassischen" (*Journal de la Société Finno-Ogrienne XXXVIII: 1*, p. 34): "Es genügt hier klargelegt zu haben, dass das Tschuwassische eine regelrechte Entwicklung der Türk-Sprache ist und zwar ohne jede direkte Berührung mit dem Mongolischen." ["It suffices to have demonstrated here that Chuvash is a regular development of Turkic with no direct contact with Mongolian"].

In conclusion, it should be stated that BENZING's book, containing a number of errors and inaccurate statements, does not give a clear picture of where the Altaic linguistics stands at the present time. Nor does it tell us what can be regarded as definitely established. Nevertheless, it can be of some help to a reader in making his way through the literature on Altaic linguistics.

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