

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Review: [untitled]

Author(s): Gerard Clauson

Source: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, Vol. 33, No. 1, In Honour of Sir Harold Bailey (1970), pp. 215-217

Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#) on behalf of [School of Oriental and African Studies](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/613346>

Accessed: 21/03/2011 15:18

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=cup>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Cambridge University Press and School of Oriental and African Studies are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

and to assess their relevance to the evaluation of man emerging in our modern technological society, could be a very worth-while exercise.

Dr. Cragg certainly has the scholastic equipment for the task he essayed; but he has chosen to approach it as a Christian theologian, often concerned with apologetical issues. The first chapter, entitled 'Contemporary man: "I lack nothing except myself"', sets the tone. It would do excellently to introduce a book on Christian apologetics—the ransacking of recent secularist literature to expose the sense of alienation and frustration in modern secular society.

Despite the statement on the dust-cover that the 'aim in *The Privilege of Man* is to bring the two worlds [*sic*] together, to let the common faith of the great monotheisms about man take the measure of the modern malaise, . . .', it is difficult to be certain of Dr. Cragg's thesis, though not of his purpose. Perhaps the following passage comes nearest to defining the academic theme of his book: 'The command to "love the Lord with all your mind" stands as a perpetual validation of the right role of reason in a sound theology. To hold only a functional, pragmatic or instrumentalist view of the rational in man is to invite its worst distortion. . . . It only finds its dignity in its converse with God, and for this it is well endowed. . . . Hence the emphasis, throughout the Hebraic, Christian and Muslim ethos, on history and action, revelation and event, devotion and commitment, as the ultimate context of the Divine-human encounter' (p. 194). To achieve this 'sound theology', Dr. Cragg has selected certain topics common to the three religions concerned, and compared their respective treatments of them. These comparisons invariably redound to the credit of Christianity.

The following passage is typical of the presuppositions of Dr. Cragg's approach, as well as being an example of the nature of his argument and style: 'Such *imitatio Christi* is the inward counterpart of what Christianity knows historically as the Incarnation. The term has aroused endless, and largely needless, impatience or disquiet among both Jews and Muslims, as being allegedly incompatible with Divine majesty and unity. Neither is in question. It is not that God is less One, only more manifestly so; not less, but only differently greater. The human calling to bear the Divine Name is seen to be reciprocal to the Divine will to participation with men. "The Word made flesh" is the point of intersection' (pp. 142-3).

It is obvious in any comparative study of Christianity and Islam that attention must be given to the question of the political factor involved in the genesis of each faith. On this

basic issue what might be called Dr. Cragg's theological parochialism is seen in its most disturbing form. He is realistic in his evaluation of the political factor in Islam: 'the social and political conditions in the Hijāz in Muḥammad's day could be said to have made inevitable the political pattern of his mission after the Hijrah' (p. 127). But Dr. Cragg will not tolerate any suggestion that Jesus became involved in his people's cause against Rome. Regarding Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God, the "filiality" of Jesus, the meaning in the active of Sonship to the Father' (p. 133), obviously precludes for him the very possibility of such involvement. He subsequently dismisses recent work on the political factor in Primitive Christianity in a footnote (p. 128), citing in justification the evidence of 'the Holy Communion'.

As a Christian theologian, Dr. Cragg is perfectly entitled to choose this approach to the subject. And, even in this role, he has much that is valuable to say about Islam. But statements like the following seem more appropriate to the pulpit than to a university lecture hall: 'Are not the Gospels alive, even at first glance, with just this quality of penetration, of frankness, scattering the clouds of illusion and falsity, fresh as the open-air in which so much of the ministry and the preaching was set?'. The historian of religions, concerned to evaluate the Gospels as evidence of the beginnings of Christianity, is not likely to see them in this idyllic way.

Dr. Cragg's book inevitably raises a question about the purpose of the Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion, which are given under the auspices of the School of Oriental and African Studies. As such they should afford a valuable opportunity of obtaining contributions at a high level to the comparative study of religion, which is a discipline of increasing importance in modern society. The opportunity they provide should never be used for the propaganda and apologetical interests of any religion. Fortunately most of the previous Jordan Lectures have been objective academic studies of their particular themes. The present reviewer is sorry that he has to make these observations; for he thinks that Dr. Cragg, if he had chosen to write as a historian of religions and not as a Christian theologian, would doubtless have added notably to a distinguished series.

S. G. F. BRANDON

N. A. BASKAKOV: *Vvedenie v izuchenie tyurkskikh yazykov*. 383 pp. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Vysshaya Shkola', 1969. Rbls. 1.01.

This 'Introduction to the study of the

Turkish languages', the second edition of a book first published in 1962, is described on the title-page as 'authorized by the Ministry of Higher and Medium Specialized Education of the Soviet Union as a textbook for state universities'. It is entirely different in character from the textbooks for degree courses in Western Europe and America, and for a very good reason. There are in the world nearly 60 million people whose native language is some form of Turkish, and of these about 23 million live in the Soviet Union. It is reasonable to suppose that in the Soviet Union the main demand for degree courses in Turkish comes from these people and that the most important purpose of this book is to enable them to study their own native languages within the wider framework of the Turkish language group as a whole. It is unfortunate that in the rest of the world, indeed even in the Turkish Republic, this is not a subject which forms part of a normal degree course in Turkish. The series of handbooks of individual Turkish languages spoken in the Soviet Union published by Indiana University suggests that these languages are at any rate studied in the United States, though probably not integrated in a formal degree course, but in Western Europe Turkish studies are normally concentrated on Osmanli and Republican Turkish, with some excursions into the earlier written languages, Türkü, Uyghur and one or two medieval languages like Chaghatay.

No one could be better qualified than Professor Baskakov to write such a book. He is the leading authority on the modern Turkish languages of the Soviet Union and has written, or been concerned with the compilation of, a long and impressive series of dictionaries, textbooks, and chrestomathies of these languages. Moreover, he is very historically minded and lays great stress on the importance of correlating the history of the Turkish languages with the history of the peoples who spoke or speak them.

The book contains a short introduction, five chapters, and five appendixes. Ch. i (51 pp.), 'History of the study of the Turkish languages in Russia and the Soviet Union', contains a fascinating account of the contacts between Russian and Turkish peoples from the tenth century to the present day and brings together a great deal of information not readily available elsewhere. Ch. ii (14 pp.), 'A short review of the correlational and comparative-historical study of the Turkish languages', starts with a brief mention of Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī's remarks on the differences between various Turkish languages in the eleventh century and introduces the theme of the connexion between the history of the

languages and that of the people who spoke them. Ch. iii (63 pp.), 'The structure of the Turkish languages', discusses both structural and grammatical questions. Ch. iv (61 pp.), 'The development and evolution of the Turkish languages', covers the whole ground from the earliest period to the developments which have taken place in the Soviet Union since 1917. Ch. v (139 pp.) is a systematic list of the ancient and modern languages in each of the groups which make up the Turkish family of languages to-day with a brief account of the phonetic and other peculiarities of most of them.

The appendixes are :

- (1) a classification of the Turkish languages ;
- (2) a genealogical tree setting out this classification diagrammatically ;
- (3) an alphabetical list of all Turkish languages and peoples ;
- (4) a list of the characters, Cyrillic with Latin equivalents, used to represent the vowel and consonant sounds of the languages (both of these are elaborate phonetic alphabets) ;
- (5) the same letters tabulated in both alphabets.

This is a masterly review of the whole subject, but the growing number of scholars who do not accept the Altaic theory will greatly regret that Professor Baskakov has added his great authority to it, although he says (p. 85) that it still requires more detailed examination and proof before it can be accepted. His primary interest is, of course, in the modern spoken languages ; for the earlier history of the language he has unfortunately relied on the *obiter dicta* of other scholars, many of them very dubious, and has accepted as valid without close examination a number of arguments in favour of the theory which are open to serious challenge. For example, he says (pp. 85-6) 'the greatest genetic resemblance between these languages, and in particular Turkish and Mongolian, appears in the significant layer of the vocabulary, which in the case of nouns and especially verbs is common to these languages . . .'. This is just not true. In a study of this subject to be published shortly in the *Central Asiatic Journal*, XIII, 1, I have included a table of the earliest Turkish and the earliest Mongolian and Manchu equivalents of the 200 basic concepts (nouns, adjectives, pronouns, numerals, and verbs) which have been chosen as the foundation for lexicostatistical and glotto-chronological studies. This table shows that there are no convincing correspondences between the Turkish and Manchurian columns. There are at most 16 (8 per cent) correspondences between the Turkish and Mongolian columns,

but most of these are demonstrably or almost certainly Turkish loan-words in Mongolian, and the residual four are probably also loan-words. There are at most 15 correspondences between the Mongolian and Manchu columns, none relating to the same Mongolian words as those which correspond to Turkish, and here too more than half are certainly and the rest probably Mongolian loan-words in Manchu. It is interesting to find in the working papers of the 'first Altaistic Conference' held in Leningrad last May (*Problema obshchosti altayskikh yazykov; tezisi dokladov*, 20) a paper in which a distinguished Soviet scholar, Professor N. A. Yakontov, comparing the three language groups on the basis of Professor Swadesh's shorter list of 100 basic concepts, also came to the conclusion that they were not genetically related. If Turkish during the last 1,000 years and Mongolian during the last 700 had changed radically these comparisons might be less convincing, but in fact they have changed very little. Only 1 per cent of the Mongolian basic words have become obsolete during this period and about 95 per cent are still in current use in their original meanings. In most Turkish languages nearly 90 per cent of the old words are in current use, and even in Chuvash, the most idiosyncratic of the Turkish languages, the figure is about 70 per cent. As Professor Baskakov rightly points out, there has been a great deal of interchange of vocabulary between Turkish and Mongolian languages over the ages; the earliest Turkish loan-words in Mongolian may go back to the fourth century; but that is no evidence of a genetic connexion.

Most scholars too will have great difficulty in accepting the theory in ch. iii that the whole Turkish vocabulary has been built up by adding suffixes to a basic stock of monosyllables (nouns and verbs) of the form consonant-vowel-consonant. Quite apart from the fact that about one-third of the early Turkish words begin with vowels and that a number of words end with them, there are a great many disyllables and some longer words which cannot reasonably be broken up into monosyllables with suffixes, words for example like *öpke*: 'lung' and *yégirmi*: 'twenty'.

These criticisms, however, relate only to a minor part of what is in other respects an authoritative introduction to the subject for which all Turkish speakers and students of the language will be profoundly grateful.

GERARD CLAUSON

GAYA CHARAN TRIPATHI: *Der Ursprung und die Entwicklung der Vāmana-Legende in der indischen Literatur.* (Freiburger Beiträge zur Indologie,

Bd. 1.) xvi, 253 pp. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1968. DM 28.

This work is a fine example of the German *textgeschichtliche* tradition, which accounts both for its strengths and for its weaknesses. It is extremely thorough, detailed, scholarly, and precise; it marshals the evidence of a considerable number of Sanskrit texts dealing with a single theme—the myth of the three steps taken by Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarf, in order to win back the three worlds from the demon Bali—and discusses the problems involved in their chronological arrangement, as well as the developments apparent in the versions produced in consecutive periods from the Vedas up to and including the Purāṇas. This is an invaluable contribution to the study of Indian mythology and, incidentally, a most useful aid to those engaged in the attempt to establish critical editions of the Purāṇas; in his discussion of the relative age of several of the older versions, Dr. Tripathi argues convincingly against some of the chronologies suggested by Willibald Kirfel many years ago and left unchallenged too long.

Yet there are flaws in the method, and particularly in the method as employed by Dr. Tripathi. Hanns-Peter Schmidt recently applied the same basic technique to the myths of Brhaspati and Indra with extremely interesting results, partly because of the former obscurity of the myths involved and, in greater part, because of the light that they shed upon the relationship between priest and king in Vedic India. P. Hacker produced a similar analysis of the myths of Prahlāda, a corpus of material far closer to the Vāmana myths, and Dr. Tripathi refers frequently to this work. Yet Hacker's work is more successful than Tripathi's, for two principal reasons: Hacker dealt more thoroughly with the religious concepts and related myths which provide the context for the Prahlāda story, and he picked a more important myth.

To a considerable extent, the shortcomings of the present work may be attributed to the original choice of the myth. Dr. Tripathi claims that it is one of the oldest and most important Indian myths; it is indeed one of the oldest, in that at least certain characteristics of Viṣṇu in the myth may be traced back to the Ṛgveda, a fact which alone would establish its importance in the eyes of those in search of the *Urtext*. But the myth has played a comparatively small part in the development of Indian religion, literature, and art; Dr. Tripathi remarks that he has not used iconographical evidence because it is not as old as the myth (by which of course he means the Vedic elements of the myth, not the same thing at all) and because few of the