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Buriat Grammar. Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series, Vol. 2 by Nicholas N. Poppe

Review by: Gerhard Doerfer

*Central Asiatic Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December 1961), pp. 318-319

Published by: [Harrassowitz Verlag](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41926654>

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voicelessness. In addition to the tables, some kymographic tracings are appended

S. P. Gorskii (pp. 85–119) discusses “Some Peculiarities in the Language and Style of Mikhail Sespel”, covering lexical usage, morphological peculiarities and syntactic usage in the poetical writings of Sespel (1899–1922). B. A. Broitman writes on “Friendship of Peoples of the Soviet Union in the Poetry of Mayakovsky” (pp. 106–119). The only reason for including this article seems to be that Mayakovsky once briefly met the Chuvash poets Khuzangay and Shelebi. A valuable contribution is N. V. Nikol’skii’s “On the Proverbs of the Chuvash People” (pp. 120–143), a topic heretofore rather neglected. Many examples, both pre-Revolutionary and of *kolkhoz* life, are given, with Chuvash text and translations.

A joint article by A. I. Petrukhin and I. I. Odyukov is titled “Achievements of the Great October Socialist Revolution in the Subject Material of Chuvash Soviet oral-poetical Creativity” (pp. 144–168). It is mostly propaganda, as a defamatory poem about Truman on p. 167 shows. Pages 169–177, by A. I. Kuz’min, give a survey of “Chuvash Tales and Novels of 1956” and is followed by the work of V. Ya. Kanyukov (pp. 180–191), “Notes on the Plots of recent Chuvash Literary Works”. Both articles give data on the current output of Chuvash literary figures.

A second portion of the book is devoted to *Discussions and Judgments* (pp. 192–233), first, I. A. Andreyev treating “Once More the Compound Subordinate Clause in Chuvash” (pp. 192–222), breaking lances with Ashmarin, Rezyukov and Pavlov, then, S. P. Gorskii’s article, the only one in Chuvash, *Morfologi iytävësem šine tērlēren pāḡni mēnren kilet?* (“How do the different treatments of morphological questions come about?”), pp. 223–228. The author asks where the various approaches to morphological phenomena come from in science, and expresses his views on some features of Chuvash, as the dative and accusative, the past participle and some other forms. Also in this portion is V. T. Seifullin’s article “On the Existence of Diphthongs in Chuvash,” pp. 229–233, which revolves about the question of whether in the syllabic nuclei *ay, uy, oy, ey, iy* and *dy*, the *-y* functions as a vowel or consonant. He concludes that it is consonantic, a view also expressed by this reviewer in a phonemic analysis of Chuvash to appear in 1961 from the Indiana University Press. The last portion of the book is “Criticisms and Bibliography,” containing another article by Seifullin, “On Chuvash National Pedagogy,” pp. 234–241.

This appears to be a very valuable little book with some useful studies in it and with considerable information about contemporary literary works. The articles dealing with syntactic and morphological questions all seem to suffer from the great preoccupation with Russian grammatical types that so strongly influences all Soviet linguistic scholars. A greater acquaintance with K. Grønbech’s *Der türkische Sprachbau* would produce analyses more indicative of the true nature of the Chuvash sentence.

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Nicholas N. Poppe, *Buriat Grammar*. Indiana University Publications, Uralic and Altaic Series, Vol. 2. Published by Indiana University, Bloomington and Mouton & Co, The Hague, 1960. IX + 129 S. 8°.

Das Burjätische ist eines der wichtigsten mongolischen Idiome, über das bisher nur sehr wenig in westlichen Sprachen publiziert worden ist, während das ziemlich ausgedehnte russische Material weitgehend unzugänglich erscheint. Deshalb stellt Poppes Arbeit die Erfüllung eines Desideratums dar. Als ihr besonderer Vorzug darf angesehen werden, daß sie auch die Satzintonation darstellt. Wichtig ist ferner die genaue phonetische Wiedergabe der russ. Fremdwörter, z. B. *t’arākt’or* > russ. *tráktor*,

*tsenzürä* < russ. *cen-zura* usw., wo stets russ. betonter Silbe ein Langvokal entspricht, der in der offiziellen sowjetischen Schreibweise vernachlässigt wird (bei Cydendambaev: *Russko-burjat-mongol' skij slovar'*, Moskva 1954: *traktor, cen-zura*), außer in gewissen Fällen, wo man anscheinend die russ. Herkunft des Wortes übersehen hat (so *törbo* < russ. *törba* 'Sack, Beutel', das seinerseits ein Lehnwort < türk. *torba* ~ *tobra*, dieses < pers. *tōbra* ist). Zur Einführung für Anfänger sei Poppes Arbeit aufs wärmste empfohlen.

Wiesbaden

Gerhard Doerfer

*American Studies in Uralic Linguistics*. Edited by the Indiana University Committee on Uralic Studies (= Vol. I of the *Uralic and Altaic Series*, Editor: Thomas A. Sebeok). Bloomington, 1960, 356 pp. (Also: Mouton and Co., 's-Gravenhage).

The Indiana University Committee on Uralic Studies deserves our praise for having produced this volume, well up to the standard of highest scholarship. It contains twelve articles on Finno-Ugrian linguistics, written by scholars working in the United States. As Indiana University has lately become the leading centre (outside the Mari Republic) of Cheremis studies, it is not surprising to see that five articles deal with Cheremis problems. Four contributions are made to Balto-Finnic studies. By far the longest article in the volume is by Alo Raun on "The equivalents of English 'than' in Finno-Ugric" (pp. 149–247). – A remarkably clear and well-documented treatment of a difficult and interesting problem. Two articles deal with Hungarian. One of them, by Nicholas Poppe, "On some Altaic loanwords in Hungarian" (pp. 139–147) is an appropriate reminder of the many ties that join Uralic to Altaic studies. Poppe's article has already called for some interesting comments by Ligeti, "Néhány megjegyzés úgynevezett altaji jövevényszavainkról", *MNy.*, LVI (1960), 289–303.

We have known for some time of the vigorous new school of Uralic studies brought into being by Thomas A. Sebeok. This volume – of which he is the Editor and to which he contributed an important study on "Eighteenth century Cheremis: the evidence from Pallas" (pp. 289–345) – is a further testimony to the seriousness with which these studies are now pursued in the United States. After such a promising start one can look forward hopefully to the first "Altaic" volume of this new series.

Cambridge

Denis Sinor