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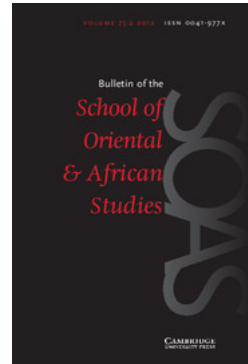
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Burling Robbins: Proto Lolo-Burmense. (*International Journal of American Linguistics*, 33, No-1, Pt. II; Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics, Publication 43.) [vi], 101 pp. Bloomington: Indiana University; The Hague: Mouton and co., 1967. Guilders 15.

R. K. Sprigg

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interrelations between what the newspapers were talking about and the organization and events of the society for which they were written. But it is only a sketch, and one may be encouraged to hope that, now that the way has been shown, some more ambitious attempt may be made to study the social, cultural, and political history of the Chinese in modern Malaya in such a fashion as to correlate the evidence from the press with that derived from other sources. We should be grateful to Mr. Chen both for what he has done and for what he has made possible.

MAURICE FREEDMAN

ROBBINS BURLING: Proto Lolo-Burmese. (*International Journal of American Linguistics*, Vol. 33, No. 1, Pt. II; Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics, Publication 43.) [vi], 101 pp. Bloomington: Indiana University; The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1967. Guilders 15.

Appointment to a lectureship at the University of Rangoon for a year gave Dr. Burling an enviable opportunity of studying not only Burmese itself and two closely related languages, Atsi and Maru, but also two Lolo languages, Lahu and Lisu. The third section of his book ('The modern languages', pp. 13-29) contains a phonemic analysis, in three pages or so each, of these five languages by the author, together with an equally brief phonemic analysis of a third Lolo language, Akha, by P. Lewis.

Dr. Burling then proceeds, in sections 4 and 5 ('Phonological correspondences', pp. 31-69; 'Cognate sets and reconstructions', pp. 70-98), to reconstruct 'proto Burmish' from a comparison of cognates in Burmese, Atsi, and Maru, 'proto Loloish', similarly, from the three Lolo languages, and, finally, 'proto Lolo-Burmese' from a comparison of such of his 'proto Burmish' forms as have corresponding forms in 'proto Loloish'.

One does not have to be Arakanese or Tavoyan oneself to feel that it is a shade presumptuous on Dr. Burling's part to take the Rangoon dialect of Burmese as sole representative of the various Burmese dialects, with only a reference in passing to the dialects of Tavoy and Inle, and to Arakanese. Indeed, so far from adopting any one Burmese dialect for direct comparison with Atsi and Maru there is a strong case for first attempting to reconstruct an intermediate stage from comparison of Rangoon Burmese with

Tavoyan, Arakanese, Taungyo, and the other dialects and languages of what Shafer has termed 'the Southern Unit of the Burmese Branch'. This 'proto Southern Unit', or whatever other term were applied to it, would reflect the greater range of syllable-initial features that is a well-known characteristic of Arakanese as compared with Rangoon Burmese; and such Arakanese [kr-] forms as [kri:], [kraʔ], and [kroʔ] would have helped the author towards some of the *k_γ and *kl 'initial clusters' that he is anxious, but hesitant, to reconstruct for 'proto Burmish', whence the brackets enclosing the 'proto Burmish' form:¹

gloss	proto B	Burm.	Maru	Atsi	p.
big	(*k _γ iʔ)	/ci/	/γī/		74
fowl	(*k _γ aʔ)	/ceʔ/	/γòʔ/	/voʔ/	82
rat	(*k _γ VS)	/cweʔ/	/γùʔ/		90

and would make it unnecessary for him to look outside Burma, to the Garo language, for support.

Burmese orthography, of course, also supports the threefold Arakanese distinction with *r* versus *y* versus neither in relation to initial *k*, *kh*, *p*, etc.; but Dr. Burling deliberately ignores Burmese orthographic forms: 'it has been assumed with little evidence that the orthography reflects earlier characteristics of the language, but the only way to determine whether or not this is so, is, of course, to obtain independent evidence for the earlier forms. . . . It should now be rewarding to compare my reconstructions with the written forms, since the reconstructions provide, for the first time, criteria against which to judge the orthography' (p. 3). One can sympathize with this point of view; but his claim to be the first in the field with 'criteria against which to judge the orthography' is admissible only if one ignores comparison with other, and especially Tibetan, orthographic forms. He, if I am not mistaken, has made himself wholly dependent on the degree of conservatism of the contemporary Tibeto-Burman spoken languages.

The other main feature of interest from the point of view of theory is to try and determine how successful Dr. Burling's phonemic analyses are as a basis for the reconstruction that he attempts. The form of each lexical item that he chooses for his comparison is what he terms its "morphophonemic" form; but this is less exciting, as a contribution to theory, than it appears at first sight because his 'morphophonemic forms' have nothing to do with morphophonemics. They are, in fact, phonemic:

¹ The symbol ? in the author's transcription represents a glottal-stop phoneme.

'For historical work it is mandatory to consider each syllable in a basic or "morphophonemic" form, the form assumed by the syllable when spoken in isolation, and the form from which the various particular instances can be automatically derived by simple phonologically expressed rules' (p. 14). These phonemic citation forms he then compares (and this I find highly significant) not, as one might expect, phoneme by phoneme, but under the three suprasegmental headings 'initials', 'finals', and 'tones' (section 2, 'Survey'; section 4, 'Phonological correspondences').

His reason, I take it, for choosing to work through 'finals', groups of phonemes, rather than through individual phonemes is: 'vowels [i.e. vowel phonemes] in syllables which are terminated by nasals or stops almost invariably show radically different correspondences than the vowels of open syllables. So different are the correspondences that reconstructions for open, nasal and stopped syllables rarely support one another. ... An additional complicating factor is that initial and medial [/y/, /w/] consonants seem to have strongly effected [sic] the development of certain vowels' (p. 10). Accordingly, the correspondences of certain phonemes are treated syntagmatically: in section 4.4 ('Summary of correspondences', pp. 66-9), for example, *e in *we is treated independently of *e otherwise than in *we; and *a in (*ap), *at, *a?, *am, (*an), and *aŋ separately in each, and separately from *a in open syllables. His grouping the reconstructed vowel and consonant phonemes under the heading 'finals' in this way leads me to suspect that it was inadvisable to separate the individual vowel and consonant phonemes of the current spoken languages from their syllable-final and their medial environments in the first place; and my suspicions are reinforced by Dr. Burling's own remarks quoted earlier in this paragraph. In that case would it not be preferable to consider, for example, treating the phonemes of these three types of final independently of each other from the outset?

This same syntagmatic and polysystemic approach could also, I suspect, be applied with advantage to the phonemes of Dr. Burling's other two sections, 'initials' (pp. 31-47) and 'tones' (pp. 56-65), and to the 'medials'. I have one instance, in Burmese, particularly in mind. It concerns the relations of Dr. Burling's 'initials' /p/ and /hm/ (and possibly other labial phonemes too) with /y/, one of his two 'medial' phonemes, in syllables in which the 'final' is /i?/. In the following examples of this type of Burmese syllable, glossed as 'shoot' and 'bamboo shoot' respectively, together with their Atsi and Maru cognates and his 'proto Burmish' reconstruction,

proto B	Burm.	Atsi	Maru	p.
*pik	(/pyi?/)	/pik/	/pak/	93
*mik	(/hmyi?/)	/myik/	/mak/	74

he puts the Burmese forms in brackets to indicate that both are irregular, when compared with their Atsi and Maru cognates, in having the 'medial' /y/; but in fact a palatal non-syllabic vowel ([j]) is obligatory in Burmese labial-initial syllables with his 'final' /i?/, and there are not, and cannot be, contrasting forms with [p-] and [m-], such as *[pɿʔ] and *[mɿʔ]. For Burmese syllables with most other types of 'final' a distinction between initial clusters containing the 'medial' phoneme /y/, e.g. /py/, /phy/, /hmy/, and such single initial phonemes as /p/, /ph/, and /hm/ is unquestionably valid; but no such distinction applies to those with /i?/ (or to those with /ein/ and /ei?/, though the position in their case is the reverse of those with /i?/: a palatal non-syllabic vowel ([j]) following an initial labial is not possible); and, in a poly-systemic type of phonemic analysis that made separate provision for non-contrastive environments, there would be no need to give phonemic status to this obligatory and non-contrastive [j]: it could be taken to be part of the phonetic realization of /i/ wherever /p/, /ph/, /m/, and /hm/ combine with /i?/, and Dr. Burling's examples '(/pyi?/)' and '(/hmyi?/)' above regularized, as /pi?/ and /hmi?/ ([pɿʔ], [mɿʔ]).

His proof-reader has done Dr. Burling no small disservice: misprints abound. Among the more striking of these, if such indeed it is, is the word 'phonemes' (twice on p. 26).

R. K. SPRIGG

MINN LATT: *Modernization of Burmese*. (Dissertationes Orientales, Vol. 11.) 349 pp. Prague: Academia, Publishing House of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences for the Oriental Institute, 1966. 55s.

Essentially *Modernization of Burmese* is a contribution to the discussions taking place in Burma, among writers, academics, and laymen, and in government-sponsored committees, about the burning issues of contemporary Burmese: how best to set about enlarging the vocabulary to cope with the needs of science and technology, how to settle the centuries-old wrangles about the spelling of certain words, how to formulate the grammar, and how to narrow the gap between the spoken language and the stiff old-fashioned language used for writing and formal situations. The important sections of the book are therefore