

## MISCELLANEA

### **Gunnar Jarring (1907–2002)**

On the 28th of May, 2002, Professor Gunnar Jarring left us. He was one of the greatest figures in Turkology, but his life-work was more than that.

He was born to a peasant family in a small village of fishermen in the South of Sweden on 12 October in 1907. His original name was Gunnar Jönsson. He studied at the University of Lund where he got his first degree in German and Scandinavian languages in 1928. At the University he met Gustaf Raquette which meeting was decisive for his later carrier. G. Raquette was a missionary and medical doctor who worked in Chinese Turkestan. However, as many of the missionaries, he was also very interested in the language of the local people. He published many texts and his *Eastern Turki Grammar*. The *English–Turki Dictionary* of Raquette, based on the dialects of Kashgar and Yarkand appeared in 1927. The language of East Turkestan was at that time of special interest. After the discovery of the Old Uighur texts and the first publication of the *Dīvān* of Kāshgarī it were the dialects spoken in East Turkestan which promised to offer a key to the difficult words and passages in these texts. Jarring went to conduct field-work in 1929–1930 and collected great material in Sinkiang and in Kashmir, which he published in four volumes

under the title *Materials to the Knowledge of Eastern Turki, I–IV* (Lund 1948–1952). A dictionary to these and other texts appeared in 1964 (*An Eastern Turki–English Dialect Dictionary*, Lund). Based on these materials he defended his PhD thesis in 1933 (*Studien zu einer osttürkischen Lautlehre*, Lund 1933).

His carrier began as a “normal” one. In 1933 he became assistant professor at the University of Lund and while teaching there he made several trips to the places where Turkic languages were spoken. He visited Berlin where he met among others W. Bang and Budapest where he met J. Németh as the two places where (besides Russia) Turkology had a long history and high standing.

A big change came in his life in 1939 when the Swedish Government who used him as an interpreter realised that his language skills were outstanding and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent him on a mission to Ankara. It was soon realised that not only his language proficiency but also his personal skills were indispensable to the state. During World War II he worked in Teheran and Baghdad. After the war he represented Sweden in Ethiopia, India and Ceylon, from 1951 in Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. From 1953 to 1956 he was Head of the Political Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. In the following years he represented Sweden in the Security Council of the United Nations, and from this time he became a

diplomat known all over the world. He mediated in the Kashmir conflict in 1958 and was asked to mediate in 1967 between the Arabs and Israel. As the Special Representative to the UN Secretary General, he tried to do his best to ease the conflict in the Middle East. He was the Swedish Ambassador to the United States (1958–1964) and to the Soviet Union from 1964 until his retirement in 1973.

Even during his busiest days he worked in his scholarly field. During his stay in Moscow he regularly invited his colleagues working in the field Turkology to the Embassy, where over a five o'clock tea they discussed the most interesting problems of Turkic studies. My Russian colleagues spoke with the highest admiration not only of his scholarly qualities but also of his kind, humble and warmhearted personality.

After his retirement from diplomatic service he worked as a consultant to Swedish firms and the Swedish Government.

He took an active part in the life of Altaic studies. In the late 70s there was a crisis in the Societas Uralo-Altaica. In 1979 leading personalities of the Societas asked Gunnar Jarring to put his diplomatic skills at the disposal of the Societas. He accepted the request and it was his merit that both the Societas and the (new) Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher have normalised their activities.

In 1982 he and Staffan Rosén organised the Permanent International Altaistic Conference in Uppsala. The material of this conference was published in the same year (*Altaic Studies. Papers Presented at the 25th Meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference at Uppsala June 7–11, 1982*).

There are two bibliographies of the work of G. Jarring known to me. The earlier was published in 1977 (*Gunnar Jarring en bibliografi redigard av Christofer Toll och Ulla Ehrens-värd*, Stockholm, 1977). This contains all of his published material including newspaper articles and other publications. The second was published in his Festschrift (*Turcica and Orientalia. Studies in honour of Gunnar Jarring on his eightieth birthday, 12 October 1987*, ed. by U. Ehrens-wärd, Istanbul, 1988). This contains

addenda to the first bibliography and all publications which appeared between 1977 and 1988.

A fascinating book is the description of his return to the places of his youth (*Åter till Kashgar: memoarer i nuet*, Stockholm, 1979, English translation: *Return to Kashgar. Central Asian memoirs in the present*, 1986). His last great book (*Central Asian Turkic Place-Names – Lop Nor and Tarim Area – An attempt at Classification and Explanation Based on Sven Hedin's Diaries and Published Works*, Stockholm, 1997) is a goldmine for linguists, historians, geographers and those interested in the culture and everyday life of Turkic Central Asia.

I had the privilege to see him many times and I shall always remember our long scholarly conversations in my home in Budapest which he never missed to visit when he was in our city. In his last years I could follow his work partly through his publications which he regularly sent me and partly through our common Swedish friends who reported on his dictionary nearing completion. Gunnar Jarring, a great man and an excellent scholar, will remain with us forever.

András Róna-Tas

#### **Day of Oriental Studies (17 December 2001, Budapest)**

The Oriental Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has organised the Day of Oriental Studies for the second time. This conference is a forum for young scholars and PhD students to introduce themselves and their studies, and a good opportunity for the orientologists to meet each other. This time the Historical Institute of HAS was the host of the conference, and it was held in the Jacobin Hall of the Institute's building.

The participants selected from the proponents by the Oriental Committee represented the Eötvös Loránd University (Department of East Asian Studies, Department of Inner Asian Studies, Department for Iranian Studies, Department of Japanese Studies, Department for Turkic Philology), the Pázmány Péter Catholic

University, the Szeged University (Department of Ancient History) and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Institute for Ethnography, Institute for Musicology, Research Group for Altaic Studies, Research Group for Ancient Hungarian History, Oriental Collection of the Library of HAS). Most of the lecturers were PhD students, but some of them represented the “older” generation, university lecturers and researchers. The audience consisted of scholars and teachers of various fields of Oriental studies, as well as of university students.

The president of the Oriental Committee of HAS, Gyula Wojtilla, has opened the conference and he was the chair of the morning session, while that of the afternoon session was Éva Jeremiás.

Linguistics was the most “populous” field with six papers on Japanese, Mongolian and Turkic topics. Ákos Bertalan Apatócky has introduced a copy of the Beilu Yiyu, a Chinese–Middle Mongolian parallel text kept in the Library of HAS. He compared the text with the other versions and called the attention to an interesting feature of the Chinese transcription of Mongolian words, which can advance the solution of some questions concerning Middle Mongolian phonology.

Adrienn Szabó Igarashi’s paper on the conjunctions and conjunctive particles of the classical Japanese language gave the outline of their usage, and the detailed handout made the understanding easier for the “outsiders”, too.

Éva Csáki’s lecture based on her field-work material was dealing with the language of the Karachay population in Turkey, but she also mentioned data about their history and settlement in Turkey. This paper was tightly connected with that of János Sipos (see below), since the two authors carried out their field-work together.

Attila Rákos sketched an outline about the spoken language influence expressed on Written Oirat. The phonological, morphological and syntactical influence of the spoken language as appears in various texts from the 17th–20th centuries is an essential source for the researches on the history of the Mongolian languages.

Benedek Péri was dealing with the term Chagatay denoting an Eastern Turkic literary language in the 15th–19th centuries. He cast doubt on the correctness of this term and suggested new terminology, basing his idea on the writings of native authors, who rarely use this term to designate a certain language.

Ágnes Németh read her paper on the *Qānun-e Sokhan*, a Persian grammar of Mirzā Hasan ‘Akkas Sirāzi published in 1913. She spoke about the author and the circumstances of the work’s birth, as well as about the contemporary level of school education in Iran.

Buddhist philosophy was represented by Tamás Agócs, who introduced a 19th-century *rdzogs-chen* work on *khregs-chod* meditation. He put this work and the *rdzogs-chen* tradition into the system of the Tibetan philosophy.

The other paper connected with religions was that of Szabolcs Felföldi, who took a survey of the position of religions spread in the Hepthalite Empire. He mentioned Christianity, Buddhism, Manichaeism etc. as well as the European, Chinese and Indian historical sources that are the bases of the research on this topic.

Bence Fehér read his paper entitled *An Early Islamic Bronze Mirror Type*, and presented unpublished and already published samples from the collection of the Museum of East Asian Art and other museums. On the basis of the presented material he defined a characteristic type of bronze mirrors from the early Islamic period.

István Sántha spoke about his study on the usage and importance of the Buriat, Russian and Evenki languages in a multiethnic and multilingual Buriat village in Siberia. He analysed the relation between the ethnic origin, the (mother)language and the social position of the inhabitants from an anthropological point of view.

The Tibetan manuscripts and block prints kept in the Oriental Collection of the Library of HAS were presented by Gergely Orosz, who works on the detailed catalogue of these documents. He distinguished and arranged the different types of the texts, making easier for Tibetologists to study them.

János Sipos's paper continued his well-known work on the study and comparison of the Turkic and Hungarian folk music. This time he presented his Karachay material collected during his field-work with Éva Csáki among the Karachays in Turkey.

Balázs Sudár presented several examples in his paper entitled *Symbols of Musical Instruments in Ottoman Poetry*. These symbols are not only important for the studies on the Ottoman literature, but provide valuable sources for organography, too.

Due to the limited length of the conference, István Seres was included into the programme as "substitute" lecturer only, but the absence of some participants let him present his paper on the Mongolian outlaws and their special instrument. The topic itself and the speaker's impressive style met with success among the audience and woke up the attention, which started to flag towards the end of the day.

As the closing of the conference Miklós Maróth gave a brief summary of the presentations and drew conclusions for the organisation of next-year's session.

In general, the audience followed the papers with attention, and several replies and questions were directed to the speakers, but it would be beneficial to increase the activity of the discussions and involve the audience into them to an even greater extent.

Similarly to the last year, the proceedings of the conference (Orientalista Nap 2001) will be published thanks to the support of the Komatsu Chiko Foundation. The publication includes papers, which were submitted until the deadline and not published elsewhere. The volume, edited by Ágnes Birtalan and Masanori Yamaji, was planned to appear in the middle of 2002.

Attila Rákos

**Permanent International Altaistic  
Conference 45th Meeting,  
Budapest 23–28 June 2002**

Organised by the Research Group for Altaic Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Csoma de Kőrös Society, the 45th conference gathered in Budapest. The meeting was intended to commemorate the centenary of Professor Ligeti's birthday, therefore no central topic was offered to the participants but instead, Ligeti's almost boundless field of interest was in the limelight.

The opening plenary session was dedicated to personal remembrances of the great Hungarian scholar. Denis Sinor the secretary general of PIAC had known Professor Ligeti for the longest. He recalled personal memories of publishing his first article Ligeti refused to publish. András Róna-Tas described the beginnings of Altaic studies in Hungary. Ligeti was not only a great scholar who worked on a wide field of topics, but was a teacher who followed and helped his students' work day and night. Katalin Uray-Kőhalmi was one of his first students who followed the paths of the great master after World War II.

Some seventy people took part in this meeting from more than twenty countries. It is a most promising tendency that young orientalists, post-graduates and PhD candidates took part in great number. They represented the departments of Moscow, Budapest and Szeged Universities.

After thirty years Ankara will be the host of the next meeting as was agreed upon during the business meeting where Professor Denis Sinor was unanimously elected as secretary general again.

Éva Csáki