

Preface

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Papers from the Third International Conference on Historical Linguistics, Hamburg, August 22–26 1977

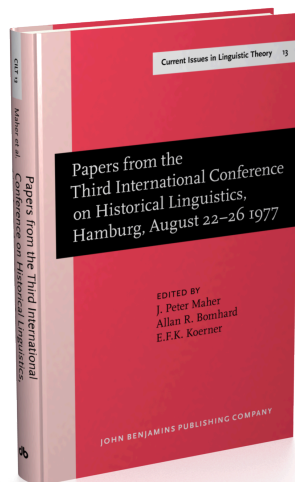
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PREFACE

The Third International Conference on Historical Linguistics (3rd ICHL) met from 22nd to 26th August 1977 at the University of Hamburg. In attendance were over ninety scholars from Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Europe.

3rd ICHL took place at a time of great turmoil in the political life of the German Federal Republic and of German universities in particular, though our conference itself came during a blessed lull. Just weeks before, the International Conference on the Future of the University had sent its German Universities Commission to investigate, and ultimately to confirm, the reports of chaos. Few 3rd ICHL participants, except for those familiar with Hamburg, sensed the relevance of this and the symbolism of academic solidarity for a victim of the new totalitarians in German life in my inviting to speak on "Drei literaturwissenschaftliche Auffassungen der Wirklichkeit" my colleague in the Seminar für Englische Sprache und Kultur, Professor Dr. Johannes Kleinstück, a scholar himself of no mean linguistic accomplishments. Earlier in the Summer Term he had been "host" in his commandeered office to a delegation of fifteen "Reformers" wearing stocking masks. Apart from this gesture of fraternal support for a persecuted colleague, Professor Kleinstück's paper, as linguists informed in the philosophy of science appreciated at the time, represents an issue of paramount importance to historical linguistics.

As for the papers read by the regular participants in 3rd ICHL, the widely hoped for debate on recent controversial issues, such as the theoretical status of "Analogy", failed to materialize through the absence of principals in the debate. Indeed, partisans of both sides of

this controversy were jointly disappointed. My repeated dispatch of registered invitations was to no avail.

The present volume could not accommodate all the papers read at 3rd ICHL, and various factors, apart from editorial selection, affect the mix. The long delay in publication stemming from my problems of relocating home and career discouraged several colleagues, who have since published their work elsewhere. Others, for a variety of reasons, withheld theirs. Yet others who were not present at sessions of 3rd ICHL at which publication was discussed unfortunately were unaware that proceedings would be published. Still others, and we all know the agony, did not succeed in writing the definitive draft. We wish one day to see all this remedied.

At midweek 3rd ICHL participants and their guests treated themselves to an epicurean buffet feast in the Provence Restaurant high above the night life of Sankt Pauli, overlooking the harbor lights of the Elbe. Our wandering scholars next day tasted the sights and sounds, the seafood and good beer of the world of the Hansa, under the bluest skies and balmiest breezes that ever blew over the waves of the Elbe. Unser Dank gilt dem Mäzen, der Firma Pätz + Co., Hamburg.

3rd ICHL participants have on the whole been immensely considerate to the harried director, who accepted the kind offer of technical assistance from E.F.Konrad Koerner (Ottawa) and Allan R. Bomhard (Boston), without whom no proceedings ever would have appeared. The publishers, John and Claire Benjamins have exceeded the very patience of Job in this case. At Hamburg, colleagues who helped find solutions for 3rd ICHL are Dr. Rudolf Beier, Professor Dr. Margarethe Schwerdtfeger, Professor Dr. Rudolf Haas, and, above all, Dr. Hans-Jürgen Höhling, without whom there would have been no Third International Conference on Historical Linguistics.

Generous funding for 3rd ICHL came from the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, through its Second Mayor and Kultursenator Biallas, together with the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Bonn-Bad Godesberg.