

Preface

 <https://doi.org/10.1075/sihols.128.pre>

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Last Papers in Linguistic Historiography

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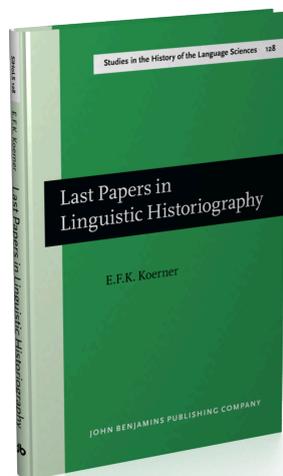
[*Studies in the History of the Language Sciences*, 128]

2020. x, 214 pp.

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Preface

The title of this volume – *Last Papers in Linguistic Historiography* – hardly requires an explanation, even though some readers may wonder why I should not have called it *Final Papers in Linguistic Historiography*. Be it as it may, having served as the editor of an internationally established journal for 46 years and being in the 82nd year of one's life, it is understandable that there must be an end to staying at the front for such a long time. (When the first 2021 issue of *Historiographia Linguistica* becomes available, the reader will see what provisions have been made to secure the continuation of the journal – under new leadership and an updated associated team.)

'Final' would be understood that the opinions expressed in these 8 chapters would not permit any further discussion. On the contrary, they are and remain open for discussion, extension, revision, and, of course, criticism.

Looking at the table of contents, there are two parts containing four items each. The first makes an effort to summarize what has been said before, where in my view we came from and now stand within linguistic historiography, and thirdly what further intellectual development could be considered.

The second chapter picks up where the third point in the first had left off. In fact, it is a bit longer than the first and certainly invites critical discussion.

The third chapter is, unusual at first sight, written in French; however, for the benefit of those who find the language difficult, an English summary has been provided at the beginning. The celebration of the centenary of the *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* offered the opportunity to see how other periodicals launched earlier or later have fared. Some journals did not survive for many years; others have done very well and are still available today and have exceeded 100 years of existence.

The fourth chapter might perhaps also be comfortably placed in Part II, but it deals with only one subject: analogy in historical linguistics and how authors could be ignored by the next generation who obviously like to claim originality for themselves. Many years before August Schleicher the concept of 'analogy' was not an unknown concept, beginning with Franz Bopp's (1791–1867) ground-breaking *Ueber das Konjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache* (Frankfurt/Main, 1816), which by 1845 was translated simply as *Comparative Grammar* (London:

Madden & Malcolm). The editors of Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* chose exactly 1916 to mark the new approach to language in which historical linguistics was to play a secondary role.

Part II is mainly devoted to the relationship between individual linguists: Baudouin de Courtenay and Schleicher, Hermann Paul and Saussure, Mixail Baxtin and his contemporaries during the 1930s. Chapter 7 on Edward Sapir stands out because he has been placed within the center of attention. But his ideas are frequently compared with Saussure's *Cours* that soon had become available in English translation. By the 1920s, the two have been regarded as complimentary by many linguists.

All chapters in Part II deal with both dissension and agreement, influence or parallel development, though in the last chapter there is in addition the question of truth and falsehood at play.

In short, it is clear that the subjects treated in this study are by no means final. As long as linguistics in general – and the history of linguistics in particular – remain an academic field, there will be discussion and further development in one form or another, certainly a healthy scholarly situation..

Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg,

21. May 2020