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Robert Blust and Alexander D. Smith

Bibliography of the Languages of Borneo (and Madagascar). Phillips (Maine): Borneo Research Council, 2014, vi + 218 pp. [Borneo Research Council Reference Series Volume 2.] ISBN 1929900155. Price: USD 35.00.

This bibliography aims at including all descriptive, theoretical, and comparative works focused on languages of Borneo that have appeared since the annotated bibliography of Borneo languages by Cense and Uhlenbeck (1958). It also covers varieties of Malagasy (the language of Madagascar) and the Sama-Bajau languages wherever they occur in insular South East Asia.

An extensive introduction explains the premises of the bibliography. It provides an up to date discussion of the typology of Borneo languages. It clearly explains the criteria for linguistic subgrouping and some of the problems they entail. It also explains the scholarly basis for extending the bibliography to Madagascar and Sama-Bajau languages, namely the particularly close genetic relationship that exists between these languages and the Barito languages in southern Borneo. It gives an overview of the literature on Borneo languages and detailed accounts of the organization of the material and the research methods followed in preparing this work. It also refers to the history of the project, which grew out of a class on Borneo languages (Linguistics Seminar 770) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. An improved version of *The Ethnologue's* inventory of Borneo languages (close to 150 in number) is added.

The bibliography includes theses but excludes unpublished conference papers, Indonesian field reports, and government publications with no author. It also excludes information already published in Cense and Uhlenbeck because duplication is not desirable, and many of the references in this work are only tangential to Bornean linguistics. Finally, it excludes publications concerned with varieties of Chinese and with the languages of recent migrants (such as Tausug and Cocos Keeling Malay in Sabah).

The material is divided into: (1) Bibliographies; (2) Works of a general nature that refer to languages of Borneo and Madagascar but do not focus on them; (3) Works dealing specifically with languages of Borneo and Madagascar and the Sama-Bajau languages. Each entry has three keywords referring to: (1) Type of work (dictionary, pedagogical/descriptive grammar, review, survey, texts etc.); (2) Area represented (Brunei, Kalimantan, Sarawak, Sabah, or simply Borneo); (3) language in which the work is written (Malay, English, French etc.). Some of the entries have annotations which are identified by authorship.

The bibliography is an indispensable reference tool for the study of the traditional languages of Borneo. It is also a fairly comprehensive and eminently readable introduction to this linguistic area. The annotations are instructive

and to the point. The authors have clearly surpassed all earlier bibliographies of Borneo languages in comprehensiveness, thoroughness, and method.

As the bracketed mention of Madagascar in the title already suggests, the linguistics of this area is catered for in a less complete way. The Introduction has no information on linguistic variety in Madagascar itself, nor on the literature on this topic. There are some bibliographical omissions, including Beaujard (2012) which deals, among other things, with lexical borrowing, Kikusawa's publications on North Betsimisaraka (Kikusawa 2006, 2008), Elli's *Bara Malagasy—French dictionary* (Elli 2010),¹ the monolingual Malagasy dictionary by Rajaolison (1985),² a historical evaluation of the importance of the 'early Malagasy' line in the Old Malay inscriptions of South Sumatra by Kullanda (2009), a list of European loanwords by Dez (Dez 1965) and other publications. There is also no reference to the online list of Randriamasinanana at <http://folk.uio.no/janengh/gassisk>: although not exactly complete itself, this list includes several additional titles that are not in the current volume. These omissions hardly deserve stern criticism because there were in fact many fewer Malagasy bibliographical sources the authors could rely on or benchmark against than in the case of Borneo languages.

A few more critical remarks are in order. One wonders why substantial contributions to the study of Malagasy history such as Mahdi (1988) and Simon (2006) are left without annotations, whereas Dahl (1991) receives a generous one. The latter booklet (on early migrations) is a setback in the study of this history because of its erroneous interpretations of Indonesian ethnology. Finally, it comes as a bit of a surprise to find a PhD thesis (Hoogervorst 2012) among the list of bibliographies.

In one instance, the information about Malagasy language history and early migrations, which is provided in the Introduction and some of the annotating comments, needs to be qualified. Commenting on several of my publications on these matters, Blust refers to the route followed by the early Malagasy migrants as one 'along the littoral of mainland Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Arabian peninsula and the Horn of Africa' (p. 46; cf. also pp. 3 and 42). That the Indonesian navigation route to East Africa was coastal (rather than trans-oceanic) seems obvious and has been taken for granted by most Indian Ocean scholars. However, I do not explicitly share their viewpoint as I have made clear in Adelaar (1989) and in later publications. In Adelaar

1 This is an extension of an Italian-medium dictionary of Bara Malagasy by the same author (Elli 1983).

2 The reference does occur, but only as part of (what seems to be) a review article in Ahmed-Chamanga (1988).

(2009) I even adduce indirect linguistic support to Manguin's (1993) arguments that before modern times Indonesians were capable of cross-ocean navigation between South East Asia and East Africa. The point that I make in 2009 is that if the early Malagasy had travelled along the Indian Ocean littoral, one would expect to find some evidence of this in the form of loanwords (cultural words, terms for trade products, etc.) acquired through contacts with Indians, Arabs, and others made during the voyages. But there is no clear evidence for such contacts. (There are of course loanwords from languages along the Indian Ocean coast in Malagasy, but these were either introduced via Malay and Javanese and basically before the migration took place, such as Sanskrit loanwords, or they are clearly post-migratory, such as words from Arabic and Persian).

A more central question is whether it makes sense to combine the languages of Borneo, Madagascar, and the Sama-Bajau diaspora in the same linguistic bibliography in the first place. These languages are genetically related, and that deserves some highlighting. But scholarly considerations aside, is this a workable combination as far as marketability and target groups are concerned? Given the enormous geographic and conceptual distance between Madagascar and insular South East Asia, chances are that most users will be interested in only one of the main sub-areas. As for the Sama-Bajau languages, their coverage may be overlooked because they are not mentioned on the title page.

These critical notes notwithstanding, scholars working on languages in Borneo, Madagascar, and the Sama-Bajau diaspora should be very happy with the appearance of this work. As far as the Borneo component is concerned, this is an excellent bibliography. It is very well structured and rich in references and background information about Borneo as a linguistic area of study. As far as the Madagascar component goes, it is a great asset in that we have never before had so much bibliographical information in one publication. It is clear that Madagascar has received a less systematic treatment, but this is what can be expected given that it had not previously been covered in a systematic linguistic bibliography. Linguistics Seminar 770 at Hawai'i (2013) has every reason to be proud of its achievement!

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