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## RECENT PROGRESS IN TUNGUSIC LEXICOGRAPHY

Reviewed by **Juha Janhunen**

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Thanks to Russian authors publishing in the West, such as Andrej Malchukov, Igor Nedjalkov, and Irina Nikolaeva, the Tungusic languages have emerged from being little-known objects of exotic inquiry into the spotlight of general linguistics and language typology. Apart from those in Western Europe and North America, there are a few eminent Tungusologists in Japan and Korea, but much of the work done in these countries remains unknown to the rest of the world because of the language barrier. Tungusology is also developing in China, but most of the scholarship carried out in the Chinese framework still remains at a very low level of quality and has almost no interaction with the international circles of the field.

There is, however, one branch of Tungusology that has always been international, and to which China has also made important contributions. This is the field of Manchu studies. As far as lexicography is concerned, a major work produced in eighteenth-century China is the “Manchu Pentaglot” *Wu ti Qing wen jian*, which records, in terms of a thematically organized system, the lexical resources of the five principal languages of the Manchu Empire: Manchu, Tibetan, Mongol, Turki, and Chinese. This work has mainly been available to modern scholarship via a facsimile print published in 1957 in Peking. As a major advance in the study of this source, it has now been published as a new Romanized edition with German translations and commentaries under the editorship of Oliver Corff:

*Auf kaiserlichen Befehl erstelltes Wörterbuch des Manjurischen in fünf Sprachen, “Fünfsprachenspiegel”.* Systematisch angeordneter Wortschatz auf Manjurisch, Tibetisch, Mongolisch, Turki und Chinesisch. Vollständige romanisierte und revidierte Ausgabe mit textkritischen Anmerkungen, deutschen Erläuterungen und Indizes. Ed. Oliver Corff, Kyoko Maezono, Wolfgang Lipp, Dorjpalam Dorj, Görööchin Gerelmaa, Aysima Mirsultan, Réka Stüber, Byambajav Töwshintögs, and Xieyan Li. Vols I–II. Wiebaden: Harrassowitz, 2013. liv + 1–564 pp. xii + 565–1110 pp. ISBN 978-3-447-06970-0.

Due to the sheer volume of the source, which comprises close to 19,000 entries arranged according to 36 semantic groups, the new edition has taken several decades to be completed, and the work has involved a large number of contributors specialized in the “five languages” of the dictionary, as listed on the title page. The new edition itself has well over a thousand pages (in *quarto*), comprising, apart from the actual dictionary, also a detailed discussion concerning the published and unpublished versions of the source as well as a number of other technical details.

It is perhaps particularly encouraging that the edition was published with German as the scholarly metalanguage, thus avoiding the common overemphasis on English as a language of international scholarship.

While basically a dictionary of Manchu words and expressions, the “Manchu Pentaglot” serves, of course, equally well as a source for the other four principal languages of the empire. Until now it has most often been used as a source of lexical comparisons between Manchu and Mongol, but the new edition will certainly increase its use for the study of Tibetan and Turki, as well. The latter may be understood as the Late Eastern Chaghatai language, as used in East Turkestan by the ancestors of the modern Uighur. Not without interest are the Manchu transcriptions of the Tibetan and Turki data, as well as the occasional colloquial features of the Mongol data. In the new edition, the Mongol data are complemented by a transcription in Cyrillic Khalkha.

The editorial work led by Oliver Corff is generally very careful, and the external realization of the two volumes by Harrassowitz is of a high quality. As already mentioned in an extensive review by Michał Németh (*Folia Orientalia*, vol. 51, 2014, pp. 415–420), it is difficult to find problems with the edition. There is one aspect, however, which the editor could – and should – have considered more carefully, viz the issue of transcription and transliteration. As it is, the editor has chosen to use the conventional systems of Romanization for both Mongol and Tibetan, although more scientific alternatives would have been available. The Romanization of the Manchu transcriptions of non-Manchu words is a challenge which could also have been met with some innovative solution.

Another major contribution to Manchu lexicography is the new edition of Jerry Norman’s dictionary:

**Jerry Norman**, with the assistance of Keith Dede and David Prager Branner. *A Comprehensive Manchu-English Dictionary*. (Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 85) Cambridge: HUP, 2013. xxvi+(2)+418 pp. ISBN 978-0-674-07213-8.

With Norman’s (1936–2012) illness and death, this came to be a posthumous work, whose final publication was possible thanks to the involvement of Keith Dede and David Prager Branner. The volume contains a short biography of Norman by Prager Branner, as well as a preface by the author, a “guide to Manchu pronunciation and script”, based on the speech of the Sibe Manchu professor Kuang Lu (1900–1973), and a “list of conventions and symbols”. The actual dictionary follows the model of the first edition, which bore the title “Concise Manchu-English Lexicon” (1978), but is considerably larger, as the name implies. Although there is a recent re-edition of Erich Hauer’s *Handwörterbuch der Mandschusprache* (2007), a work of about the same size, it is likely that Norman’s dictionary will long remain the most commonly used lexicographical tool for Manchu.

In spite of the Western activity in Manchu studies, basic work on the other Tungusic languages is still carried out largely in Russia and in Russian. Among the Tungusic languages, extensive lexicographical works have long been available on Ewenki and Ewen, as well as Nanai, while the other languages, especially those spoken in the Amur region, have remained less well documented. With the appearance of the dictionaries of Jirô Ikegami (*Uiruta go jiten*, 1997), L.V. Ozolinya (*Oroksko-russkii slovar’*, 2001), and L.V. Ozolinya with I.Ia. Fediaeva (*Oroksko-russkii i russko-orokskii slovar’*, 2003), the Orok alias the Uilta language has been more or less completely covered, and major progress in Udeghe lexicography was marked by the *Udeghe*

*Language Dictionary* of V.T. Kyalundzyuga and M.D. Simonov (reviewed by the present author in *Studia Orientalia*, vol. 85, 2000, pp. 459–465). Even so, new works are still being published, and among the most active contributors in recent years has been Albina Girfanova, today the foremost authority on the Udeghe language. Among other things, Girfanova has published a small practical study tool containing a thematically arranged dictionary of Udeghe:

**A.X. Girfanova**, *Uchebnyi tematiceskijj slovar' udègeiskogo iazyka*. Saint Petersburg: Sankt-Peterburgskii gosudarstvennyi universitet, Filologičeskii fakul'tet, 2012. 96 pp. No ISBN.

Unfortunately, this work will not be easy to acquire, since it appeared without an ISBN number and in an extremely small printing of only 75 copies. According to the preface, the publication is mainly intended for “students of philological specializations”, but it may also serve those younger ethnic Udeghe who want to learn at least some elements of their traditional language. The volume is based on an earlier Udeghe dictionary by Girfanova (*Slovar' udègeiskogo iazyka*, 2001) and contains thematic vocabularies on 20 topics, covering chronology, astronomy, hydrology, zoology, botany, anatomy, kinship terms, as well as several other aspects of social structure and material and spiritual culture. There is also an alphabetically arranged Russian-Udeghe index.

Girfanova, together with N.L. Sukhachev, has also been active in making available the heritage of the famous scholar of the Amur region V.K. Arsen'ev. Although Arsen'ev (1872–1930) was basically a military explorer, cartographer, geographer, and ethnographer, he also collected linguistic material on the Udeghe and Oroch languages. From this material, preserved in the archives of the Society for the Research of the Amur Region (*Obsshestvo izučeniia Amurskogo Kraia*) in Vladivostok, Girfanova, and Sukhachev have now published a critical edition of Arsen'ev's lexical data on “Oroch”:

**V.K. Arsen'ev**, *Russko-orochskii slovar': Materialy po iazyku i tradicionnoi kul'ture orochei i udègeicev*. Ed. A.Kh. Girfanova & N.L. Suxachev. Saint Petersburg: Filologičeskii fakul'tet Sankt-Peterburgskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 2008. 494 pp. ISBN 978-5-8465-0755-5.

In this context, the term “Oroch” is to be understood in the sense Arsen'ev used it, that is, as a collective name for the entire dialectal continuum of Udeghe and Oroch. Although in many cases the two languages are indistinguishable, most of the data seem to derive from Udeghe, which itself may be seen as an innovative southern sub-branch of Udeghe-Oroch (Orochic), one of the four principal branches of Tungusic. The manuscript version of the dictionary was completed by Arsen'ev in 1908–1909, with later corrections and additions. Apart from the edited form of this dictionary (pp. 18–264), the publication by Girfanova and Sukhanova contains an index of Tungusic words (pp. 265–428), a thematic word list with ethnographical commentaries by Arsen'ev (pp. 429–454), a republication of Arsen'ev's booklet *Lesnye liudy uděxejcy* (pp. 455–493, originally published in Vladivostok in 1926), as well as a biographical and technical introduction by the editors (pp. 3–17). Altogether, in spite of the fact that Arsen'ev was not linguistically trained, this is an important new source of primary material on Udeghe-Oroch.

More specifically on Oroch (proper), Girfanova has also contributed a practical bilingual school dictionary, which follows the model of similar dictionaries on other “northern” languages of Siberia and the Russian Far East:

**A. X. Girfanova**, *Slovar' orocho-susskii i russko-orocho-susskii*. Okolo 4000 slov. Posobie dlia uchashhixsia nachal'noj shkoly. Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo “Drofa”, 2007. 199 pp. ISBN 978-5-94745-215-0 (paperback).

With the exception of such possibly already extinct minor varieties as Kilen and Kili, Oroch is probably the Tungusic language most imminently disappearing. While language revitalization efforts enjoy at least some popularity, and even results, among several other tiny Tungusic-speaking populations such as the Udeghe and Orok, there seems to be nothing that can be done to save the Oroch language, which certainly has no more than a handful of very old speakers. This situation justifies the small printing of only 200 copies of this book. On the other hand, in spite of its practical orientation, Girfanova's dictionary can also serve the scholarly need for an easy-to-access lexical database on Oroch.

Today, all major and most minor varieties of Tungusic may be considered as lexicographically well documented, and on many varieties further documentation would be impossible, as these varieties are either extinct or only rudimentarily preserved in the memory of the last semi-speakers. This will also soon be the fate of Manchu, once by far the most important and internationally visible Tungusic language with the largest number of speakers and with a sophisticated literary culture.

In this situation, Tungusic studies should perhaps look back and focus once more on the diachrony of this language family. In spite of the pioneering work carried out by V.I. Cincius, Johannes Benzing, and Gerhard Doerfer, our diachronic understanding of the Tungusic languages is still far from complete. Even the linguistic history of Manchu, a field to which Jerry Norman made important contributions, remains a challenge that calls for a comprehensive monographic treatment. When it comes to lexicography, there is an obvious need for an up-to-date historical and etymological dictionary of Tungusic. With the synchronic work more or less completed, this could well be the next large international project in Tungusic studies, to which scholars from various backgrounds could contribute.