

PREFACE

I met Bertil Tikkanen for the first time at the beginning of the fall semester 1972. I still remember, in a somewhat embarrassed way, what a great scholar I considered myself to be. After all, I already had successfully passed the first year Sanskrit. I think I made my great learning very clear to him, in a patronising way. Nevertheless, somehow we still became good friends, and I soon realised that he already knew Hindi much better than I knew Sanskrit. Soon he mastered Sanskrit, too, and wrote his doctoral dissertation on Sanskrit grammar. We also realised that we had somewhat different interests and dispositions in scholarship, he as a linguist, I as a philologist, but still close enough to make frequent discussions and chats very fruitful indeed.

Bertil Leo Viking Tikkanen was born in Helsinki on the 26th of November 1949. He matriculated from the Swedish school in Loviisa (Lovisa Svenska Samlyceum) in 1969. He soon started studies at the University of Helsinki, first in genetics, but he soon moved to Indology, with Arabic, English Philology, Phonetics and General Linguistics as additional subjects. In Indology, his teachers were Pentti Aalto and Asko Parpola. He obtained his MA in 1980, Lic. Phil. in 1984 and PhD in 1988, all at the University of Helsinki.

Bertil's career as teacher started as early as 1976, and for many years he was responsible for the courses of Hindī and Urdū. On one occasion he was also responsible for Tamil teaching during the absence of Asko Parpola. After his doctorate, a Docentship of South Asian Linguistics was conferred on him in 1988; his first lectures as docent formed an Introduction to South Asian areal linguistics. Later on, he dealt with such subjects as historical linguistics, Aśokan inscriptions and the rich results of his own fieldwork. From 2003 he has taught as Lecturer of Indian Languages, all the time at the University of Helsinki. In 1984–2001 he also held various research positions in the Academy of Finland that also financed his fieldwork.

Bertil's doctoral dissertation (as well as his earlier MA thesis) dealt with the Sanskrit gerund. The subject was originally suggested by our teacher Pentti Aalto (see my article in the present volume). This was before the time of electronic texts available on the Internet and, to get his material representative enough, Bertil read a great number of Vedic and later Sanskrit texts, carefully collecting all relevant gerund formations. Later evolution and parallel forms in Middle and New Indo-Aryan were also taken into consideration. The parallel evidence both

in related and areally significant languages – especially in Iranian and Dravidian – was duly noted and discussed. The book has remained the standard study of this common verbal category.

After his doctorate, Bertil did some further work on Sanskrit grammar and historical linguistics, but his interests were already shifting and before long he gradually left Sanskrit and turned to linguistic fieldwork and areal linguistics. On several occasions Bertil has conducted fieldwork in North Pakistan. Here his interests mainly concentrated on the famous isolate language Burushaski and on the local New Indo-Aryan gipsy language Ḍomakī. In a few months, he learnt to speak Burushaski and could thus work independently with his informants. Up to now, he has published only small part of his large collections of field material. In addition to purely linguistic material, it contains a number of folklore texts.

Bertil has been the Lecturer of Indian Languages at the Institute for Asian and African Studies from 2003. In this position his main task is to teach Hindī at all levels. Accordingly, he has again also included Hindī among his research interests. Yearly visits to India have widened his knowledge of the forms of Hindī spoken in the different parts of the vast linguistic area called Hindī in the wide sense of the word. Even earlier, he has produced a detailed grammar of Hindī in Finnish, showing his great ability in analysing and explaining grammatical forms, especially the complicated system of Hindī auxiliary verbs. This was soon complemented by a similar work on Urdū. Generations of students have used these books. As a teacher, he is rather demanding, but also always helpful and considerate. If you have done your homework, you have nothing to worry about, and if you do not understand something, you are always welcome to ask. Bertil has also collected a large library of modern Hindī literature and is familiar with the works of all major authors.

Bertil is one of those rare individuals who learn languages quickly and easily. He belongs to the Swedish-speaking minority of Finland, but has always taught in Finnish, of which he has long had perfect command. In addition to Hindī, Urdū, Sanskrit, Burushaski and Ḍomakī – and a number of European languages – he knows Bengālī, Kashmīrī, Tamil and Telugu. As a student, he had Arabic as a secondary subject and a long stay in Japan in the early 1980s made him familiar with Japanese. He took up Bahasa Indonesian as a hobby in the late 1970s. Bertil knows and uses the methods of modern linguistics and has supervised dissertations ranging from comparative Indo-European to Korean grammar.

Bertil's list of publications is not very long, but everything in it shows the painstaking care and exceptional critical acumen that always characterise his work. This also concerns his reviews. The same minute care he puts into his teaching, to the great benefit of his students. I must not leave unmentioned that in recent years he has put much time into preparing the Swedish translation and supervising

the Finnish translation of the new Arabic textbook written (in English) by our common teacher and friend Faruk Abu-Chakra, the emeritus Lecturer of Arabic at the University of Helsinki.

Our friendship has been permanent. On different occasions, we have been a team. The combination of a linguist and a philologist has turned out to be useful in many ways. In the late 1970s, when we both got very modest teaching positions, we often attended each other's classes. In the 1980s, we jointly produced the Finnish translation of the *Godān*, the great Hindī novel by Premchand. For various reasons, the plans for a joint expedition to North Pakistan were not realised – Bertil was there often, I never. We shared a common office in the Institute for about fifteen years. In the early 2000s, we sat together for hours, preparing and polishing our respective applications for our present jobs and, after we were nominated, we have been directing South Asian studies at the University of Helsinki as a joint venture.

For me, it has been great pleasure to write these lines, and to edit this book, as a proper contribution to Bertil Tikkanen, who has not only been a staunch friend, but who also, as a scholar of rare quality, wholly deserves it. I would also like to thank all Bertil's friends and colleagues who have given their contributions to make it such a fascinating volume. Our old friends Margot Stout Whiting and Robert Whiting have checked the English of non-native writers (including myself). Special thanks are due to Dr. Lotta Aunio, who, as the editor of *Studia Orientalia*, has taken care of the practical side of the editing work, especially during my absence in India and Japan.

Finally, it is my sad duty to report that our long-standing friend William L. Smith passed away on December 19th 2009. We were able to correspond about some details of his fascinating contribution, but the final proofs were read by me.

Klaus Karttunen