The American Philosophical Society

HELD AT PHILADELPHIA
FOR PROMOTING USEFUL KNOWLEDGE

Grantees' Reports 1979

JANUARY 1, 1979—DECEMBER 31, 1979

The American Philosophical Society
Independence Square
Philadelphia 19106
1980
REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH

JO-ANN FLORA, Trinity College, Washington, D.C.

Grant No. 8328—Penrose Fund (1978), $300. Reduplicated words in Austronesian languages.

The aim of this project was to explore and describe the semantic, morphological, and phonological aspects of reduplication in the Austronesian language family and the extent to which features of this process are shared by member languages, in order to understand better the historical development of Austronesian languages and peoples and the genetic relationships existing among them. The project involved three major activities: first, intensive study of works on comparative Austronesian to strengthen the grantee's knowledge of the family, the known relationships among the members, and proposed reconstructions of Proto-Austronesian; second, detailed examination of analyses of a large sample of Austronesian languages with special attention to descriptions of reduplication; third, analysis of cross-linguistic data using the comparative method to determine what features of reduplication are shared among languages and should be reconstructed for the proto-language.

The grant enabled partial completion of the activities outlined above. The grantee was successful in obtaining copies of works on comparative Austronesian, such as Otto Denzler's Vergleichende Lautelehre des Austronesischen Wortstammes, proceedings from the First and Second International Conferences on Austronesian Linguistics, and others. The grant also enabled the grantee to communicate with other linguists who are currently working on Austronesian languages and to obtain photocopies of their findings on reduplication in those languages. These materials aided the grantee in beginning work on the first two phases of the project. The study is at this time still in its early stages, and will be completed next year, when the grantee will be based at Yale University and will work with Dr. Isidore Dyen.

ROBERT T. FORTNA, Vassar College
Grant No. 1368—Johnson Fund (1977), $1,000. The Evangelist, John and his predecessor.

The grantee was enabled to accept two research appointments in Jerusalem during the academic year 1976-1977; as Senior Scholar of the Ecumenical Institute for Advanced Theological Studies during the first semester, and as Annual Professor of the Albright Institute, a part of the American Schools of Oriental Research, during the second semester. Presence in Jerusalem made available to the grantee the excellent library, one of the best in the Biblical field, at the Ecole Biblique.

The year's project was the writing of a book of redaction-critical studies of the Fourth Gospel (that of John), to be published under the provisional title of "John the Evangelist and His Predecessor: From Source to Redaction in the Fourth Gospel." It seeks to revise the grantee's earlier work (The Gospel of Signs, 1970), attempting to identify and characterize a written source which the evangelist ('John') putatively used as the basis for his own gospel, and then to trace the intellectual shift from source to present gospel—in short, to sharpen our understanding of John as "redactor" of older material, and so of his own message.

The manuscript is nearing completion and will be ready for publication shortly.

HUMANITIES

VICTOR A. FRIEDMAN, University of North Carolina

The grantee visited Sofia, Bulgaria and Pristina, Yugoslavia to collect data on Bulgarian and Albanian verbal categories as part of a larger project, which will ultimately result in a monograph comparing verbal categories of the languages of the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

In Bulgaria, the grantee consulted with members of the Academy of Sciences and engaged in conversations with other educated Bulgarians to determine the extent to which the opposition perfect/reported (the latter being distinguished by omission of the auxiliary in the third person) is consistently observed in spoken literary Bulgarian. He also worked in Varna, in Eastern Bulgaria, where this opposition is said to be stronger. He has concluded that the omission is not a grammatical marker of reported speech but a stylistic device similar to the same phenomenon in Serbo-Croatian and West Macedonian dialects.

In Yugoslavia, the grantee consulted and conversed with Albanians teaching at the Universities of Pristina and Skopje and with Shaban Demiraj of the University of Tirana. The grantee's most salient conclusions are the following: (1) While the perfect is becoming an unmarked past similar to the French compound past, this is true only for some speakers. (2) The imperfect cannot be used with time-limiting adverbs and for noncoordinated events, thus differing from the Balkan Slavic imperfect. (3) The two types of pluperfect, one using an aorist auxiliary, the other an imperfect, may be distinguished by status rather than aspect; the imperfect being preferred for reported events, the aorist for witnessed. (4) The defective (a series based on an inverted perfect) cannot be used in subordination to mendoj "I think," although it can be used for irony and repor: as well as surprise. This may indicate that it is limited to events associated with direct or indirect observation. (5) The past indicative of "be" and "have" can be used to express present surprise in exactly the same manner as the use of the Balkan Slavic past indefinite, which has previously been compared to the Albanian present indicative.