5

GERMANIC LANGUAGES

I. GERMAN STUDIES

LANGUAGE

By J. West, Lecturer in German in the University of Dublin, Trinity College

I. GENERAL SURVEYS, COLLECTIONS, BIBLIOGRAPHIES


LINGUISTIC THEORY

After a break of four years, J. Knobloch, *Sprachwissenschaftliches Wörterbuch* (Indogermanische Bibliothek, 11. Reihe—Wörterbücher), Heidelberg, Winter, resumes with Lieferung 9, pp. 641–720. This dictionary is the only one to take full account of Ger. linguistics before and since the war and should not be missed. In this connection Z. Starý, 'Sprachwissenschaft an der Scheide', *GM*, 12, 1980: 25–36, is a reassessment of Hermann Paul. The publication of H. Brinkmann,
Sprache als Teilhabe (SG, 55), 229 pp., coincides with the author’s 80th year and comprises post-1971 essays, far-reaching in scope and subject-matter, which reflect B.’s theoretical position in re language: ‘Durch Sprache ist dem Menschen die fundamentale Möglichkeit zur Teilhabe (my italics) verliehen, deren er für sein Dasein als Person und als soziales Wesen bedarf’, p. 52. His ‘wissenschaftstheoretische Vorüberlegungen’ and ‘Sprache als conditio humana’ stress the organic (like Goethe’s plants) and social aspects of language. ‘Sprache als Rede’ has a message for Ger. text linguistics, ‘Sprache als Zeichen’ for semanticists. Altogether, a stimulating collection. L. Auburger, Funktionale Sprachvarianten. Metalinguistische Untersuchungen zu einer allgemeinen Theorie (ZDL, Beihefte, 38), Wiesbaden, Steiner, viii + 243 pp., concentrates on the variable and interactive aspects of language. A.’s premise is that structuralist, behaviourist and generative approaches have failed to deal adequately with language variation and it is certainly true that by assuming uniformity linguists have neglected an important language universal. His review of other approaches — de Saussure, Coseriu, Lieb and Pike — and his own discussion of the dimensions of language reveal a series of 21 definitions and 75 theoretical statements, admittedly of varying sophistication and novelty, which may be questioned but should not be ignored. Finally, a contribution by a Japanese Germanist: K. Satō, ‘Über den Gegenstand der Bedeutungs-form-Grammatik von Tsugio Sekiguchi’, DB, 66: 126–36.

2. Interdisciplines