



Prof. Emeneau's family history illuminates his life; this history began 350 years ago amidst the Anglo-French wars in Europe and the New World. Expelling the Acadians on their North American odyssey, the British colonial authorities in Nova Scotia arranged to import Protestants of various nationalities. So it was, sailing in 1752 on the *Speedwell* out of Rotterdam, that Samuel Emoneau and his son Frederick brought their families to Halifax from the *Payée de Montbéliard*, then a francophone Lutheran principality and now a part of France. In the following year, together with other Montbéliardians and English, German, and Swiss Protestants, the Emoneaus were among the founding settlers of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. French may have fallen out of use by the early nineteenth century, but German was still used in public as late as 1888 in Lunenburg.

In this multilingual context Murray Emeneau was born on February 28, 1904. As a student of languages — French, German, and Latin — Murray Emeneau was the top high school student in Nova Scotia three years running. He studied Greek and Latin at Dalhousie University, where he got his bachelor's degree in 1923, then at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, and finally at Yale as a graduate student in Classics. At that time George Bobrinskoy, Franklin Edgerton, and Eduard Prokosch taught Indo-European and Sanskrit at Yale, and with them Murray moved into the study of Sanskrit. He received his Ph.D. in 1931 after editing for his dissertation a Sanskrit text, published in 1934. Academic positions in Sanskrit were hard to come by in the Depression, and Dr. Emeneau worked at Yale for several years as a lecturer and research Sanskritist. During those years linguistics at Yale was transformed by the arrival of Edward Sapir in 1931. Dr. Emeneau attended Sapir's classes, among them the famous field methods class on Wishram, and on Sapir's suggestion he went to India in 1936 to work not on Sanskrit or its Indo-Aryan descendants but on Toda, a non-literary Dravidian language. He stayed in India for three years, doing linguistic fieldwork not only on Toda but ultimately also on Badaga, Kolami, and Kota.

With the death of the Berkeley Sanskritist Arthur Ryder, and after two final years at Yale, Dr.

Emeneau was hired in the Classics Department at Berkeley, where he arrived in 1940 as an assistant professor of Sanskrit and general linguistics. The war brought him to work on Vietnamese, on which he wrote three pedagogical books and a volume of grammatical studies; on the campus academic ladder he became an associate professor in 1943 and was promoted to the rank of full professor 59 years ago in 1946. Prof. Emeneau wrote some 21 books in all, and already in 1967 he had written 77 articles and 68 reviews; these numbers have now surely reached the triple digits. Our colleague contributed to many areas of linguistics and allied disciplines, but it seems right to single out two fields he helped create: the study of the minority Dravidian languages of India and the study of what he called 'language areas'.

When Prof. Emeneau first went to India, no linguistic fieldwork on the non-literary Dravidian languages had ever been done. The literary languages of the family were well known, but the field of Dravidian linguistics was a tabula rasa because the systematic comparative and historical study of these languages requires treating the minority languages as seriously as those with literary traditions. Prof. Emeneau created this field through work that includes grammars of Kolami and Toda, published in 1955 and 1984, and a Kota text collection published in three volumes from 1944 to 1946. While linguistically important — for example, his 1939 *Language* article on Badaga is still the clearest study of the only known vowel system with two degrees of vowel retroflexion — Prof. Emeneau's work is by no means narrowly linguistic. Thus his 1971 masterpiece *Toda Songs* is as significant for ethnopoetics as his other work is in linguistics. But surely Prof. Emeneau's greatest achievement in Dravidian studies is the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary*, written with Thomas Burrow and first published in 1961. Despite the characteristic reserve that eschewed reconstruction this work, revised in a 1984 second edition, remains the indispensable guide, tool, and authority for every Dravidianist.

Prof. Emeneau is also generally seen as having initiated the modern field of areal linguistics, and by the way having introduced the term 'linguistic area' to general linguists, in his 1956 article 'India as a Linguistic Area', published in the issue of *Language* honoring A. L. Kroeber on his 80th birthday. His work in this field continued with a series of studies of mutual linguistic influences, including a 1962 book with Burrow on Dravidian borrowings from Indo-Aryan; in the history of linguistics at Berkeley he thus mediates between Kroeber's interest in so-called 'culture areas' and the larger-scale areal typology of Johanna Nichols and her équipe. Prof. Emeneau's perspective and contributions to the field were entirely original, though, and grounded in his own formation: among his first articles, published 69 years ago in the eleventh volume of *Language*, was a study of the English dialect of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. It is surely significant both for his career and for the subsequent history of our field that this piece was no mere dossier of structural elements but an inquiry into their origins in language contact. *What for a thing is that?* said the Lunenburger a century ago, *Don't fress; it tastes leppish.*

Prof. Emeneau's career had the trajectory of an enormously accomplished and influential scholar. In 1949 he served as the 25th President of the Linguistic Society of America, writing as

his presidential address a paper, published in *Language* in 1950, on the mutually determining relationship between linguistic and social structures in the area of kinship; in 1954 he was then president of the American Oriental Society. In 1952, offered a position as his teacher Edgerton's successor at Yale, he persuaded this university to establish a Survey of California Indian Languages and a Department of Linguistics, which he subsequently chaired. Prof. Emeneau was named the Collitz Professor of the Linguistic Society of America in 1953, and at Berkeley he gave the Faculty Research Lecture in 1956, one of only three members of our department to have received this highest campus research honor; on his retirement in 1971 he was the 35th recipient of the Berkeley Citation. The recipient of four honorary degrees, the Wilbur Lucius Cross Medal from Yale, and the Medal of Merit of the American Oriental Society, Prof. Emeneau was also a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Fellow of the British Academy, and an honorary member of the Philological Society and of the Linguistic Society of India.

Murray Barnson Emeneau, emeritus Professor of Linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, died in his sleep at home on Monday, August 29, 2005. He was 101. Across the globe his friends, colleagues, and students will miss him.

### **Andrew Garrett**

### **Books by Murray B. Emeneau**

- Jambhaladatta's Version of the Vetālapañcaviṅśati: A Critical Sanskrit Text in Transliteration* (1934)  
*A Course in Annamese: Lessons in the Pronunciation and Grammar of the Annamese Language* (1943)  
*The Sinduvāra Tree in Sanskrit Literature* (1944)  
*Kota Texts* (3 vols, 1944-46)  
*An Annamese Reader* (with Lý-duc-Lâm and Diether von den Steinen, 1944)  
*Annamese-English Dictionary* (with Diether von den Steinen, 1945)  
*The Strangling Figs in Sanskrit Literature* (1949)  
*Studies in Vietnamese (Annamese) Grammar* (1951)  
*Kolami, a Dravidian Language* (1955)  
*A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* (with T. Burrow, 1961; 2nd ed. 1984)  
*Brahui and Dravidian Comparative Grammar* (1962)  
*Abhijñāna-Śakuntala: Translated from the Bengali Recension* (1962)  
*Dravidian Borrowings from Indo-Aryan* (with T. Burrow, 1962)  
*India and Historical Grammar* (1965)  
*Sanskrit Sandhi and Exercises* (1968)  
*Dravidian Comparative Phonology: A Sketch* (1970)  
*Toda Songs* (1971)  
*Ritual Structure and Language Structure of the Todas* (1974)  
*Language and Linguistic Areas: Essays* (1980)  
*Toda Grammar and Texts* (1984)  
*Dravidian Studies: Selected Papers* (1994)

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