

Preface

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Preface

The present volume comprises papers by the researchers who participated in workshop (B) ‘Historical Development of the Tibetan Languages,’ held as a part of the 17th Himalayan Languages Symposium at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies from September 6th to 9th, 2011 (cf. the Time Table given at the end of the preface).

We have finally received contributions from six of the participants. We have also included a paper by Takeuchi on the Alchi rock inscriptions, which has remained unpublished for over twenty years, but is relevant to our topic.

The aim of the workshop and the present volume is to discuss the process of historical development of the Tibetan languages from its oldest records, namely the Old Tibetan language, and its subsequent form, Classical Tibetan (or Middle Literary Tibetan), to the modern dialects. The structure of the present volume, therefore, is composed of two parts.

Part 1 consists of four papers concerning Old Tibetan and Classical Tibetan. Takeuchi’s paper outlines Literary Old Tibetan from its formation as the official language of the Tibetan state to its transformation into an international *lingua franca*. Iwao’s paper reexamines the well-known Sino-Tibetan bilingual treaty inscription; he argues that both the Tibetan and the Chinese texts of the inscription were originally prepared by the Tibetan side. Takeuchi’s paper presents the texts and descriptions of rock inscriptions found on the Indus river bank near Alchi. They were probably made by Tibetan military officers stationed there in around the 11th century. Hoshi’s paper discusses how the question marker *^e*, which apparently began to be used in the colloquial Eastern dialect, was adopted by Classical Tibetan; it is an interesting and important attempt to connect Literary (Middle) Tibetan and modern colloquial forms.

Part 2 consists of three papers concerning modern dialects. Zemp’s paper describes the word class called ‘dramatizers’ in the Purik dialect (also attested in Jirel and Sunwar) from the historical point of view and concludes that a number of dramatizers have been grammaticalized from verbs, nouns and adjectives. Namgyal’s paper investigates the cultural influence from surrounding people on the Ladakhi language by explaining the historical and cultural background. Ebihara’s paper offers a linguistic description of the Hwari (written *dpa’ris*) dialect of Tibetan, which is spoken in Qinghai and Gansu provinces. She argues that although it should be considered a member of the Amdo dialect group, it shares several linguistic features with the Kham dialects of Tibetan.

The dialects discussed in Part 2 are the so called ‘conservative type’ that retains the complex morphology of Old Tibetan to a certain degree. The comparison of these dialects with the old literary forms described in Part 1 is considered to be an indispensable step for the historical reconstruction of the Tibetan languages.

The editors are fully aware that all of the research results presented at the workshop have not been incorporated into the present volume, which is not sufficient to cover this vast field of research. Nevertheless, we hope this publication will serve to promote and accelerate future research on the history of the Tibetan languages.

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