

SHORT REVIEWS

SKETCH OF THULUNG GRAMMAR with three texts and a glossary. By N. J. Allen. *xii + 254 pages*. Cornell University East Asia Papers No. 6/1975. Published by China-Japan Program, 140 Uris Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

N. J. Allen is a social anthropologist, now at the University of Durham in the U. K., who studied Thulung while doing anthropological research on the Thulung Rais during 1969-71. His 'sketch' of the grammar is a mine of detailed information about the language, and the inclusion of texts, chosen for their anthropological interest, should make the book appeal to a wider audience.

The book is organized as follows : Ch. I: Introduction, pp. 1-10; Ch. II: Phonology, pp. 11-38; Ch. III: Personal Pronouns and Verb, pp. 39-94; Ch. IV: Brief Comments on Other Parts of Speech, pp. 96-115; Ch. V: Further Topics, Mainly Diachronic, pp. 116-136; Ch. VI: Texts, pp. 137-187; Glossary, pp. 188-251. The format is a very readable photoreproduced typescript.

Thulung is a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the area around the confluence of the Dudh Kosi and the Solu River in the southern part of Solu Khumbu District in Nepal. Allen estimates that there are 8,000 speakers, all of whom also speak Nepali. He says that the nearest linguistic relative of Thulung may be Bahing Rai, its southern neighbor, but that the two languages are not mutually intelligible. Sunwar, to the west, and Khaling, to the north, are also closely related.

Thulung resembles Nepali in word order and overall syntax, but the case marking is more thoroughly ergative: subjects of transitive verbs are marked in the ergative case (which, like Nepali *-le*, is the same as the instrumental) in all tenses, not just the past as in Nepali; but first and second person pronouns (perhaps only the singulars, as in Sunwar) never receive ergative marking. Objects of transitive verbs, like the subjects of intransitives, are unmarked (the absolutive case, which Allen calls the 'affected case') although there is now some tendency to mark animate transitive objects with the Nepali objectmarker *-lāi*. The pronouns and the verbal morphology and agreement are much more complex than in Nepali: pronouns show singular, dual, and plural number, and there is a distinction between inclusive 'we' ('I and you'— cf. Newari *jhi*) and exclusive 'we' ('we, not including you'— cf. Newari *jipim*.) There

is also a complete set of possessive pronouns (curiously relegated to Ch. IV). Verbal agreement reflects all the pronominal categories of person and number, and transitive verbs agree with both their subjects and their objects. 'It is because of these relationships that the language family to which Thulung belongs has been called pronominalized,' (p. 39).

In the phonology, Thulung's system of initial consonants is remarkably similar to Nepali's, but as is typical of Tibeto-Burman, the system of syllable finals is considerably reduced, including only *p*, *t*, *ʈ*, and *k* among stops. (The dental / retroflex distinction in Thulung seems to show Nepali influence.) There are ten vowel qualities, with distinctive length, and at least the remnants of a system of tones. Allen believes that there are two tones, which he calls 'tense' and 'lax', but he found that he was generally unable to record the same tone consistently for individual words, except where a word happened to be a member of a minimal pair, distinguished only by tone, and in a few other items, or where tone served to distinguish tense in the verb. He lists the pairs and other items for which a consistent tonal realization was recorded, but does not generally mark tones elsewhere in the grammar. It may be, as he suggests, that the tonal system is going out of use under the influence of Nepali, and thus is only preserved sporadically; if so, it is a case of 'tonoexodus,' balancing the 'tonogenesis' which has been widely observed in Tibeto-Burman.

Allen's first text, 'Baginanda', is the myth of a shaman-hero; the second text contains stories of the Thulungs' relations with their neighbors: the establishment and rupture of marriage relations with the Bahings, the introduction of salt by the Sherpas, a dispute over salt with the Khalings and the foundation of *Bhume* rites. These texts are in ordinary language; they are presented with an interlinear word-for-word translation, a free translation, and some linguistic notes. The final text is a narrative in 'ritual language.' Nouns are expressed in a 'paired-up form... clearly related to the chanting of rituals'—i. e. for rhythmic effect. For example, the ritual word for 'basket', *siumditophrim salatophrim*, contains an ordinary word for 'basket', *tophrim*, and other elements not normally compounded with it. (Perhaps these are *sal*—'sift' and *sium*—'ferment' found in the glossary; cf. *siumdikhundium salakhundium*, for *khundium* 'threshing stick'; and *sidumdikorceom salakorceom pesikorceom*, for *korceom* 'stirrer'). Many Rai languages have such a ritual variant, and much of Iman Singh Chermjong's Limbu material relates to a ritual variety of Limbu. The contents of the final text, too, are closely paralleled in the traditions of other Rai groups. Allen promises to discuss the cultural aspects of the texts in further publications.

The Thulung-English glossary of some 1600 words goes well beyond the vocabulary covered in the grammar and texts, and will be very useful for comparative studies.

In the introduction, Allen explains that the orientation of his anthropological study was diachronic, and the same goes for much of his linguistic work. He carefully notes details of morphophonemic alternation and phonological distribution and points out their significance for internal reconstruction. For example, he gives several pieces of evidence for the derivation of the ten-vowel system of Thulung from an older five-vowel system. He has also made full use of previous studies of Thulung: B. H. Hodgson's unpublished notes from the last century, the grammar in Nepali by Agam Sing Devasa Rai, and an article by S.N. Wolfenden. (These last, incidentally, are indeed both cited in Vol. 2 of Shafer's *Bibliography of Sino-Tibetan Languages* (1963), which Allen (p. 3) seems to have missed). Using Hodgson, he is able to show that Thulung once had a system of numeral classifiers based on the shapes of objects, which has since been lost. Perhaps only Newari in Nepal has such a system today; e.g. Newari *chà-pu lha*: ; Old Thulung *ko seol loa*. 'one—CLASSIFIER arm'.

Allen's grammar is a most substantial and valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepal. We must admire his enterprise in crossing linguistic and disciplinary barriers to make it.

B. M.

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ANCIENT PAPER OF NEPAL. 271 pages, 239 b/w plates, on Nepalese paper, 1 map. With summary in Danish. By Jesper Trier. Jutland Archaeological Society Publications, Volume X, Copenhagen 1972. Price D. Kr. 140 /- (N. Rs. 280/-)

It has not been the privilege of this reviewer to see a more beautifully produced book on any Nepalese subject, notwithstanding the recent flood of multicolour-picture books on Nepal. Not only is the paper used in the book exquisite—as one might expect in a book on paper—but the black and white photographic plates are all, almost without exception, masterfully engraved. It is reassuring that there are still block-makers and publishers who keep such high standards in this age of high-speed offset and computerized printing.

This interdisciplinary study attempts to cover a fairly large area, including an introductory chapter on Nepal and its people, the botanical characteristics of the fibres used for paper-making, a summary of the literature on paper-making, the various traditional and modern uses of paper, etc. This is a most welcome—and not entirely unsuccessful—departure from the rather narrow monograph approach to Nepalese subjects we have become accustomed to as far as scholarly works are concerned.

The author visited the Junbesi and Baglung areas in 1964 and 1970 to systematically study the methods of paper-making, and there is a most detailed description, accompanied by excellent photographs, of the different processes. He also studied paper-making in the Kathmandu Valley and describes carefully production as it evolved from being a simple craft to a modern manufacturing enterprise. Chapter 4 further contains details of the various processing stages handmade paper goes through once it reaches the paper merchant or the consumers themselves. This includes parting, dyeing, impregnating and glazing. The manufacture of ink is also covered.

In Chapter II, a detailed description of the various fibres used for paper, their properties and characteristics is provided along with extensive references and quotations from relevant botanical works. For example, to produce high quality paper in the past, the root of *Wikstroemia Chamaejasme* was used, and this is a plant still found in Dolpo and other places at high altitudes in the Himalaya. This is information which could be useful for administrators working to improve economic conditions in these areas. This book should hence also be of great interest to persons concerned with cottage industries and rural development in Nepal.

The most interesting parts of the book, however, deal with the author's field studies on paper-making techniques (chapter 4), the results of the technical investigations of the paper samples brought back to Denmark (chapter 6), and the tables and diagrams (pages 226-248).

Although detailed microscopic, chemical and optical spectographic analyses yield a considerable amount of information regarding the characteristics of the paper, it cannot give precise data on for example the dating of manuscripts. But a good amount of circumstantial data can be collected in this way, so that age and origin of manuscripts can be reasonably determined if one has extensive knowledge of paper properties and treatment processes used from place to place and period to period.

The bibliography is comprehensive as far as paper-making in the Himalaya is concerned, but a more detailed and complete index would have been desirable.

H. K. K.

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