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A Bibliographical and Linguistic Study

on

An-nan-yi-yu 安南訊語

by

Ch'en. Ching-ho

Introduction

First of all, the author discussed about the origin of the Vietnamese language and the linguistic group it belongs. Having examined one after another the studies of H. Maspero, J. Przyluski, A. G. Haudricourt, G. Coedes and Paul K. Benedict, he came to the conclusion that:

“The Vietnamese language in the course of its evolution, was at the beginning a language which possessed amply the characteristics of Mon-khmer language. Later because it was subject to the overall influence of Thai through the Proto-Vietnamese period, it lost most of its Mon-khmer features. Then, under the early independent dynasties, the Ancient Vietnamese developed gradually due to the great number of borrowed words from Chinese. Meanwhile because of the combined influence of Thai and Chinese, Vietnamese has picked up the system of tones similar to the two neighboring languages.”

Secondly, the author, basing on the various facts of Vietnamese cultural history and its particular phenomenon, divided the evolution of the Vietnamese into the following five periods:

2 1) Pre-Vietnamese: From Bronze period (IVth and Vth centuries B. C.) to early Southern and Northern Dynasties (Beginning of the VIth century). At this period, in Giao-chi (Nowadays North Vietnam), there existed two or more than two languages of different types which prevented the Vietnamese from taking its proper form.

2) Proto-Vietnamese: From Liang dynasty (Middle of the VIth century) to early Ly dynasty (Early XIth century). During this period, Thai language exercised an overall and powerful influence on the vernaculars spoken by the inhabitants of North Vietnam, and thus got rid of the ever-disunited state.

3) Ancient Vietnamese: From early Ly dynasty, through the Trans to the end of Ming domination (Upper half of the XVth century). Owing to the formation of Sino-Vietnamese and to the invention of Chu-nom writings 字喃 and also to the widespreading vogue of Quoc-ngu poem 國語詩, Chinese had come to replace Thai, bearing obvious and profound effect on Vietnamese. Whereas numerous Chinese terms and words were applied to Vietnamese vocabulary. On the other hand, the original three tones in Vietnamese had been developed into six. Furthermore, owing to the formation of Sino-Vietnamese, Vietnamese was separated decidedly from Muong language too.

4) Medieval Vietnamese: From the beginning of Le dynasty (Upper half of the XVth century through the period of the usurpation by Mac to the downfall of the Tay-son regime (early XIXth century). Due to the popularization of Ngam 吟 and Truyen 傳, rhythmic verses based on 'the Luc-bat' 六八体 style and 'Song that Luc-bat' style 双七六八体, Chu-nom spread among the common people, and following the diffusion of Chinese thoughts and cultural ideas, there were more increase in borrowing Chinese words. At the end of this period, there occurred between the North, Central and South Vietnam, dialectic and provincial differences in sounds and tones.

5) Modern Vietnamese: From the establishment of Nguyen dynasty (beginning of the XIXth century) to the end of French Protectorate. Chinese classical influence retreated in this period. The Vietnamese language was under Western, especially French influence which generated the prose literature and modern poetry. Thus at the end of this period, Vietnamese has incorporated a lot of Western (dominantly French) and modern Chinese terms to become a modern language.

Chapter One: *The Origin of The An-nan-yi-yu and Its Manuscripts*

The author attempted a general description on the study of the various Hua-yi-yi-yu 華夷訳語, and pointed out that among the three categories A, B, C of the Hua-yi-yi-yu, only the category C contained a bilingual lexicon of Chinese-Vietnamese (i. e. An-nan-yi-yu) which was compiled undoubtedly by the Chinese interpreters of Hui-t'ung-kuan 会同館 of Ming dynasty. There are now seven manuscripts of such yi-yu, namely manuscripts of London, Hanoi, Seikado 静嘉堂本, Awano-kuni 阿波国本, Naito (i. e. Inaba) 内藤 (稻葉) 本, Kondo 近藤本 and Hsuan-lan-t'ang 玄覽堂本. Among these, the author paid particular attention to the importance of the last one. Through the bibliographical study on the edition of Hsuan-lan-t'ang, it was asserted that An-nan-yi-yu was compiled at the end of the XVth to the beginning of the XVIth century, and up to the middle of the XVIth century, there appeared a revised edition of An-nan-yi-yu.

Chapter Two: *Annotation to The Yi-Yu*

The An-nan-yi-yu contains 716 words (or expressions) which are divided roughly into 17 sections. Each word (or expression) has its Chinese character(s) at first; then one or several Chinese characters are given for serving as phonetic transcription (音註) for the correspondent Vietnamese words. So that one may reconstruct the relevant Vietnamese sounds belonging to the period of An-nan-yi-yu's compilation. In this chapter, the author studied every one of the 716 words in the An-nan-yi-yu. Firstly the author based on the Awanokuni manuscript generally and compared its content with that of the other six manuscripts in order to find out a reliable original text. Then he referred to Chau Teh-ching's Chung Yuan Yin-yün 中原音韻 and B. Karlgren's Analistic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese, to find the correct value of every phonetic transcription. Then basing on the materials thus obtained, he tried to reconstruct

the relevant Vietnamese words of the XVth-XVIth century.

In 1953-54 the author published "A Linguistic study of An-nan-yi-yu (I & II)" in the Bulletin of College of Arts, National Taiwan University (Nos. 6,7). His studies were based on the five manuscripts of Hanoi, Seikado, Awanokuni, Naito & Kondo. On the other hand Professor E. Gaspardone of College de France also incidentally published almost at the same time "Le Lexique Annamite des Ming" in the Journal Asiatique (1953). However, in the present study, the author added in the London and Hsuan-lan-t'ang manuscripts to his reference to obtain the original text for examining his past study and Gaspardon's analyses, so that he might arrive at a comparatively more reasonable and satisfactory explanation of every word.

Chapter Three: *A Comparison of The Phonetic Transcription and Vietnamese Sounds*

In order to understand generally and concretely the relationship between phonetic transcription of the 716 words and correspondent Vietnamese sounds in yi-yu, the author had compiled Table A: "A Bird's Eye View of Vietnamese Sounds" and Table B: "A List of Phonetic Transcription". In Table A, the author clarified what Chinese characters were used as phonetic transcription for demonstrating each Vietnamese pronunciation. In Table B, he listed out all phonetic transcriptions showing what Vietnamese sounds were indicated by them.

Chapter Four: *The Evolution of The Vietnamese Initials before and after The XVIth century*

The author compared the medieval Vietnamese derived from the analysis of the yi-yu (Chap. Two) and the modern Vietnamese words before and after the XVIth century. For instance, the process of the evolution that the compound initials: kr-, pr-, tr- developed to initial s- was not yet completed at

the compilation of yi-yu; or the formation of initial d- was taking place during the time of the compilation: or the formation of r- initial can be traced back to the period preceding the completion of yi-yu, and has been completed down to the time of modern Vietnamese, etc. In many respects this chapter has revised or supplemented the theories of H. Maspero.

Chapter Five: *A Glimpse of The Syntax and Vocabulary*

In this chapter, the author examined the characteristics of syntax and of vocabulary observed in the yi-yu, then referred to Hsuan-lan-t'ang manuscript and other six manuscripts, comparing their similarities and differences. Based on this, he put forth a new approach as to the method and procedure of the compilation of this yi-yu.