

The present volume is one of the most authentic and oldest books of Grammar of the lesser known languages of North-eastern India.

By a tradition, the Naga tribe known as the Ao have from very early times had two dialects, the Zungi and Mungsen. However, Zungi has evidently been the dominant element in the Ao tribe and this dialect become more prevalent than the Mungsen.

Besides providing a detailed study of dialects, alphabet, articles, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, interjections, syntax, numerals, division of time and measurements, over forty pages are devoted to illustrative phrases. About hundred pages are devoted to English Ao vocabulary.

This is a useful volume for scholars and students of tribal languages of India.

Rs. 295

MRS. MARY M. CLARK alongwith her husband were sailed from Boston on Oct. 20th 1868 in the Bark Pearel via Cape of Good Hope under the Missionary Union as Missionaries and Printers and arrived at Sibsagar in March 1869.

During their stay at Sibsagar for the first time they had the opportunity of meeting some of the Nagas roaming around in search of food; thus, they wrote to Home Board in Boston in 1871. "Tribe upon tribe of Nagas accessible to the Gospel. It is certainly painful for us at Sibsagar to unable to lift our eyes without seeing these hills and thinking of the people on them who have no knowledge of Christ." They sent Godhula, the Evangelist to Dekahaimong and came down after few months stay with nine people and baptized at Sibsagar by Rev. E.W. Clark on 11th. Nov. 1872. The following month in Dec., Rev. E.W. Clark make a trip to Nagaland, his entering into the Nagaland was not permitted by British Government, and the Home Board in America was much reluctant to approve his plan but he entered in his own risk. After a few days stay, he baptized fifteen people at Dekahaimong (Molungvimchen) on 22nd. Dec. 1872 and organized the first Baptist Church in Nagaland on that day.

They served in Ao field and the whole Naga tribes in general as soul winners, mediators, Christian Administrators, Translators, Writers, Organizers and Printers for about forty years.

Dr. Edward Winter Clark retired from the active service in 1911 and died at St. Augustine, Florida on 18th. March 1913 at the age of 83 years. Mrs. Marry J. Mead Clark died on 23rd. Nov. 1924 at Amenia N.Y. at the age of 92 years.

THE AO-NAGA GRAMMAR

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THE AO-NAGA GRAMMAR



MARY M. CLARK



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PREFACE.

IN the preparation of this work, I have had access to my husband's AO NAGA-ENGLISH MANUSCRIPT DICTIONARY, and am also indebted to him for personal assistance, especially on the GRAMMAR.

MARY M. CLARK.

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AO NAGA GRAMMAR.

DIALECTS.

BY a tradition, more or less supported by present facts, the Naga tribe known as the Ao have from very early times had two dialects,—the Zungi and Mungsen. The legend is, that a colony of Zungi and friendly Ahoms migrated to these parts hundreds of years ago. The Zungis stopped for years at Zungi Imti, a place just behind the upper villages of the tribe, and the Ahoms resided awhile at a place now occupied by one of the upper villages called Lungmisa or Tzūmar Menden. Tzūma is what the Aos call the valley of Assam, and Tzūmar Menden means the seat or abode of Assamese, or Ahoms, as they were called before the English occupation of the valley. The Ahoms are said to have lived not many years in the hills, and then to have moved down into the valley. By tradition, while the Aos were still in the one village called Zungi Imti, the Mungsen lived near, but just below them. At first there is said to have been no intermarriage between the two peoples, but for many years there has been; yet to this day the difference in physique between the two can frequently be noted, the Mungsen being more Mongolian. In many instances these two classes have lived for generations in the same village and intermarried, yet the two dialects have remained. In other villages where the Zungi or Mungsen has very largely predominated the weaker dialect has succumbed; but even in such villages both dialects are generally understood, though only one may be spoken in the village.

When Zungi and Mungsen converse together, each frequently, though not always, speaks his own dialect. From the first, Zungi has evidently been the dominant element in the Ao tribe, and only among the Zungi do the village offices descend in family lines. This dialect is now decidedly more prevalent than the Mungsen. Some words of the latter have crept into the Zungi dialect, but only very few, considering the long and intimate relationship of the two dialects. The language of the books thus far printed in Ao is Zungi, and this is employed in the following pages.

ALPHABET.

The Nagas had no books or letters ; in making books for the Ao tribe of Nagas, the English or Roman alphabet has been used. By the system in vogue at present for Romanising the languages of India proper, the letter *a* is used to correspond with the first Sanskrit vowel, and it is presumed to have the sound of short *ई*, like *u* in *but*. This use of *a* may be convenient for languages and dialects of Sanskritic origin, but it is very inconvenient for other languages, especially if there be a desire to avoid diacritic marks. In giving an alphabet to a people, these marks should be used as little as possible, because they are troublesome to write, liable to break off in process of printing, and as their projections require extra space, it is very difficult to print a large book like the Bible in a form small enough to be convenient for general use.

It is also important that each letter have one sound and be allowed no great deviation. If, now, to the letter *a* be assigned the sound of short *ई*, then *ai*=*ईi*, and *ao*=*ईo*, and *au*=*ईu*. In other words if *a* represents short *ई*, it cannot be used in forming diphthongs. Hence, as to the power of *a*, the Indian system of Romanising has been departed from, but adhered to in most other respects. In short, the Roman vowels in Ao books have the Italian sound, and in support of this system are the highest authorities,—the Royal Geographical Societies of London and Paris. As a result of some inquiry, it may perhaps be asserted that this system is now, outside of India, the basis of Romanising the unwritten languages of the world.

Sounds peculiar to a language may require new characters or diacritic marks to indicate them. The sound of *u* in *but* is said to be foreign to the old Roman alphabet, and to represent this sound in Ao Naga a new letter has been formed, it is a looped *v*,* thus, *v*. The character is easily written and readily distinguished by the eye. In this way the Ao alphabet is completed, the essential sounds represented without a diacritic sign. The alphabet is as follows :

VCWELS AND DIPHTHONGS.

- a* has the sound of *a* in father, *ah*.
e " " " " *e* " met and they.

The loop of this new character should have been larger and more distinct, so as to appear as a loop rather than a dot—M. M. C.

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------|------------------|----------|----|----------------|----------------|
| | <i>i</i> | has the sound of | <i>i</i> | in | <i>pîn</i> and | <i>pique</i> . |
| | <i>o</i> | " | " | " | <i>o</i> | " note, mote. |
| | <i>u</i> | " | " | " | <i>oo</i> | " fool, tqol. |
| | <i>y</i> | " | " | " | <i>u</i> | " but, cut. |
| <i>ae, ai</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>i</i> | " ice, rite. |
| <i>ao, au</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>ou</i> | " out, mound. |
| <i>av</i> | " | " | " | " | <i>aw</i> | " awe, bawl. |

CONSONANTS.

| | |
|---|-------------------------|
| <i>b</i> as in English. | <i>n</i> as in English. |
| <i>c</i> always soft. | <i>p</i> " " " |
| <i>d</i> as in English. | <i>q</i> " " " |
| <i>f</i> " " " | <i>r</i> " " " |
| <i>g</i> always hard. | <i>s</i> always soft. |
| <i>h</i> seldom used to aspirate a vowel. | <i>t</i> as in English. |
| <i>j</i> always soft. | <i>v</i> " " " |
| <i>k</i> as in English. | <i>w</i> " " " |
| <i>l</i> " " " | <i>x</i> not used. |
| <i>m</i> " " " | <i>y</i> as in English. |
| | <i>z</i> " " " |

The diphthong *av* is very seldom heard. The diphthongs *ae, ai*, though sounded alike, are both needed; the same is true of *ao* and *au*. Between the two last a slight distinction in sound can be made, but practically none is observed. The diphthong *oi* is not heard. At one time the variations of sound between that of *e* in *met* and *they*, also that of *i* in *pîn* and *pique*, were indicated by diacritic marks; but these distinctions confused the pupils learning the alphabet, and retarded their progress. Furthermore, it was ascertained that the Nagas did not need them as an aid to correct pronunciation; they were serviceable only to the foreigner who had not well mastered the language. For these reasons diacritic marks do not now appear in Ao books.

The single consonants in the Ao language have about the same power as in English: but *f* is not heard in Ao words except in 'tefset,' 'lefset'; *x* is not used at all. The chief use of *c* is in combination with *h*, and this *ch* has the sound of *ch* in *church*; *c* is also used in a few instances after *s* to prolong its sound. The letter *j* is always soft as in *join*, and *g* always hard as in *give*; *sh* is sounded as in *shine*. There is scarcely any use of *h* except in the combinations *ch* and *sh*. The letters *q, v,* and *w* are used but little. The letters *ng* when written together are pronounced as one letter, never separately.

written together are pronounced as one letter, never separately, as, 'ang-u' *not* 'an-gu', and 'ang-a' *not* 'an-ga'. Few words begin with *d*, *e*, *g*, *u*, or *v*. A notable feature in Ao words is that many of them end with short *ŋ*, *v*. This sound as final is one that a foreigner finds a little difficult to articulate properly.

The vowels are not always permanent, as, *ka* (one), but one emphatic—one only—becomes 'ketang' instead of 'katang'. From 'tenuk' or 'nuk' (the eye), we have in one direction 'nokshi', to look on desiringly, to covet, and in the opposite direction 'nyka' and 'anyk', seeing to, watching. When two vowels come together there is generally a coalescence or elision, and sometimes also a new vowel sound is the result. 'Sy', the stem of one of the verbs 'to be', should have as an imperative form 'syang', which becomes 'sang'; 'ky', my, and *o*, word, unite and become 'ku'; 'gy or ky', the stem of the verb 'to give', becomes in the imperative 'kwa' or 'kwang' instead of 'kva' or 'kyang'. There is one word so metamorphosed as to be hardly recognisable, it is 'mokolung' for 'metkulung'. But of such changes even in the most common colloquial terms there is hardly a parallel to this.

There are more mutations among the consonants than the vowels; those most frequently interchanged the one for the other are *b* and *p*, *d* and *t*, *g* and *k*, occasionally *b* and *v*, *m* and *n*. In fact among the words of everyday use almost any letter may be changed for euphemism, and to this end the letter *f* is brought into the language in the two sole instances of its use above specified.

When the final consonants in a verbal form are *ts*, these are changed into *s* before a suffix beginning with *a*, as 'agytsy' (to give to some one beside the speaker), by adding *a* becomes 'agyza', not 'agytsya', by adding 'ang' it becomes 'agyzang', not 'agytsyang'.

It may be remarked here that peculiar inflections for giving different ideas to the same word is a device of articulation seldom resorted to in Ao Naga, though so common in the Chinese and its cognates. In the Ao language, articulation is by vocables represented by letters, though in a very few instances words have different meanings by accenting different syllables.

ARTICLES.

For the indefinite article *a* or *an* the numeral for one, 'ka' or 'kati', is used, and for *the* we have demonstrative pronouns or demonstrative suffixes. If we allow that an

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