

Preface

This is a collection of ‘interpretative maps’ as opposed to ‘display maps’. The term ‘interpretative’ maps might suggest abstract maps processed using isoglosses and other methods. This collection does not employ such processing methods and thus may be closer to display maps in that sense. We would like to call these maps interpretative, however, for the classifications of lexical forms and referents along with the use of symbols on the maps show the researchers’ interpretations of lexical changes. This methodology is a product of traditional Japanese dialectology as seen in the *Linguistic Atlas of Japan* (National Institute for the Japanese Language, Japan, 1966-1974).

The collection presented here is based on dialect surveys already published in China. The majority of the source materials that our collection relied upon were published in China, though some were published elsewhere, including Japan. The descriptive study of Chinese dialects has made a remarkable advancement since the 1980s, offering us the increasing number of viewable materials and the necessary conditions to create dialect maps. We could maintain, in this regard, that this collection is also the outcome of a very strong tradition in Chinese descriptive dialectology.

Our study of Chinese dialectology has a history of twenty years. It started as a Grants-in-Aid Scientific Research (GASR) project which I initiated in 1989, followed by three more GASR projects, each organized by Shoji Hitara, Mitsuaki Endo, and Itsuku Ota, respectively. Each project published maps in the form of GASR project reports, but those separate maps were never published collectively for various reasons. Consequently I organized a new GASR project in 2004, producing many of the maps contained here as its outcome. The authors of these maps are relatively young scholars who joined this research recently. As for the maps we accumulated in the 1990s, we are currently preparing to publish a second volume of the collection to accommodate these.

Our GASR project launched in 2004 has achieved great progress both in terms of technology and theory. First, we have made significant advancements in database creation and mapping. We currently use a comprehensive information system called the ‘PHD System’, which is illustrated by its creator, Tomo Hayashi, at the end of this book.

As for theoretical development, we provide an overview in the Introduction below. As we encounter more maps and more discoveries, we feel more strongly the significance of linguistic geography and the profound and abstruse nature of dialectology. By the term ‘linguistic geography’, we mean the theories on, and the methods of, historical linguistic study established by Jules Gilliéron (1856-1926), introduced to China and then to Japan by Father Willem Grootaers (1911-1999). The current mainstream in Chinese historical linguistics, either comparative linguistics initiated by Bernhard Karlgren (1889-1978) at the start of the 20th century, or the studies on grammaticalization that have flourished in the past 20 years, deal with

systematic and regulated linguistic changes, treating individual and irregular changes as exceptions. Speaking of the number and frequency, however, we have in fact observed that the majority of the changes are of an individual and irregular nature, just as the majority of DNA in the human genome contains no genetic information. As these DNA are unessential for biological evolution, the objects of our research are mostly the changes that are unessential in the long history of the language. However, we should be aware of the fact that all of these changes are surely the products of human linguistic activities. Also, the repetition of such changes spanning a long period of time could influence the backbone of the language. In the process of mapping we discovered many variants which do not follow established phonological rules. This would prove that sounds exist in the living lexicon and lexical changes are caused by all types of factors, including extralinguistic ones. We could say, in other words, that a large part of lexical change is controlled by the lifestyle and the social environment of the people. Also, a change which seems to occur randomly is in fact created unconsciously out of the dialect speaker's 'linguistic consciousness', the source of linguistic creativity of the human beings. In this regard, language change fundamentally differs from biological evolution and legitimately proves that our studies belong to the pure humanities. Our goal, then, is to find some regularity in these seemingly ad-hoc phenomena.

Here, we would like to make mention of *Hanyu Fangyan Dituji (Linguistic Atlas of Chinese Dialects)*, edited by Professor Zhiyun Cao, et al. at the Institute of linguistics, Beijing Language and Culture University (2008). This is a collection of display maps created from the primary information obtained from a survey conducted by Professor Cao and 45 researchers (including Hiroyuki Akitani from Japan and Richard Simmons from the U.S.) at 930 geographical points across China. Since the inauguration of their project on this map collection in 2001, we have maintained a close relationship and carried out academic exchange with them. I feel particularly honored to have been invited to their editors' meetings quite a few times, but at the same time, their project made me wonder if there would be any need for us to publish our own maps. Seeing that two collections were created for different purposes, in different methods for classification and mapping, we now hope that our collection of Chinese dialect maps with Japanese scholarly characteristics is worth publishing.

To confess, we felt it increasingly more difficulty to 'interpret' a map as the amount of information increased. We often felt helpless in front of the huge volume of linguistic information. It almost looked as if the Chinese dialects blocked our way to reach the truth. In spite of the fact that each member of our project made a great effort to discover clues leading to the answer, interpreting each and every map, we must admit that our insights may probably be incomplete or incorrect. Due to this reason, we would like to invite our readers' insightful opinions and criticisms.

The creation of this collection is the achievement of more than thirteen researchers listed here as authors. First, our hearty thanks to the two professors,

Professor Rujie Shi from Kumamoto Gaku'en University and Professor Robert Sanders from the University of Auckland, who contributed to Chinese checking and English composition. Professor Shi not only graciously checked our poorly composed Chinese but also gave us a lot of suggestions for the commentaries of maps. Professor Sanders performed a long and painful process of making and polishing the English composition. This collection would not have existed without the dedication of these two scholars. Secondly, my respectful friend Professor Itsuku Ota offered us all of his precious dialect materials, mainly consisting of books on dialects in *xianzhi* (county historical records), which he collected over ten years. The vast majority of the dialect materials listed in the Major Dialect Materials section in this book came from him. He also assisted us tremendously in editing the list. Also, we should not forget that Professor Shoji Hirata and Professor Mitsuaki Endo, who organized projects on dialectology in the 1990s, and Professor Susumu Sato and the late Professor Nobuhisa Tsuji, who contributed to the initial database creation, all of which laid the foundation for our 2004 GASR project.

We would like to thank Isao Higuchi, Misato Negishi, Takumi Kano, Zhenyu Wang, Ryoko Yamashita, Kiyomi Tominaga and many other students at Kanazawa University and Shizuoka University for inputting the large volume of linguistic data to create our database. Of the maps and commentaries collected here, the ones by Xiaodong Huang from Beijing Language and Culture University are his accomplishment achieved during his short-term training at Kanazawa University in Japan. We would also like to acknowledge our reference to the graduation theses of Tokiko Fujikawa from Aichi Prefectural University and Yuko Kobashi from Kanazawa University, who left academia a long time ago and therefore were not included as the authors here, for their maps and commentaries for the entries 'morning', 'evening and night' and 'ankle'.

Lastly, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to late Father Willem Grootaers for bestowing upon us a great power and the courage to pursue our research.

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