



Handbook of Proto-Tibeto-Burman: System and Philosophy of Sino-Tibetan Reconstruction

James Alan Matisoff, James Matisoff

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This 800-page volume is a clear and readable presentation of the current state of research on the history of the Tibeto-Burman (TB) language family, a typologically diverse group of over 250 languages spoken in Southern China, the Himalayas, NE India, and peninsular Southeast Asia. The TB languages are the only proven relatives of Chinese, with which they form the great Sino-Tibetan family.

The exposition is systematic, treating the reconstruction of all the elements of the TB proto-syllable in turn, including initial consonants (Ch. III), prefixes (Ch. IV), monophthongal and diphthongal rhymes (Ch. V), final nasals (Ch. VII), final stops (Ch. VIII), final liquids (Ch. IX), root-final *-s (Ch. X), suffixes (Ch. XI). Particular attention is paid to variational phenomena at all historical levels (e.g. Ch. XII "Allofamic variation in rhymes").

This *Handbook* builds on the best previous scholarship, and adds up-to-date material that has accumulated over the past 30 years. It contains reconstructions of over a thousand Tibeto-Burman roots, as well as suggested comparisons with several hundred Chinese etyma. It is liberally indexed and cross-referenced for maximum accessibility and internal consistency.

Emphasis is placed on the special theoretical issues involved in historical reconstruction in the East/Southeast Asian linguistic area.

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