

## **BOOK NOTICE: *AUSTROASIATIC SYNTAX IN AREAL AND DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE***

*Austroasiatic Syntax in Areal and Diachronic Perspective* elevates historical morpho-syntax to a research priority in the field of Southeast Asian language history, transcending the traditional focus on phonology and lexicon. The volume contains eleven chapters covering a wide range of aspects of diachronic Austroasiatic syntax, most of which contain new hypotheses, and several address topics that have never been dealt with before in print, such as clause structure and word order in the proto-language, and reconstruction of Munda morphology successfully integrating it into Austroasiatic language history. Also included is a list of proto-AA grammatical words with evaluative and contextualizing comments.

After the initial position paper, this volume contains ten chapters, most of which contain new hypotheses, and several address topics that have never been dealt with before in print. The volume concludes with a list of proto-AA morphological and lexical elements with evaluative and contextualizing comments.

*Position paper: Austroasiatic syntax in diachronic and areal perspective:* by Mathias Jenny, Paul Sidwell, Mark Alves. The chapter considers what is known broadly about AA historical syntax and lays out a research agenda through questions and topics pursued in this volume and for potential future investigations. The summary of research questions and methodology is organized by parameters for diachronic syntax, including time depth, geography, social factors, as well as a range of grammatical issues.

### ***Syntactic Reconstruction***

1. *Verb-initial structures in Austroasiatic languages:* by Mathias Jenny. Verb-initial structures are found in different groups of AA, especially in peripheral languages and secondary syntactic elements (e.g. dependent clauses). These data sets, which cannot be explained by language contact in the region, provide evidence of verb-initial structures in proto-AA. Modern verb-final structures are mostly accounted for by language contact, and possible scenarios of development from proto-AA are discussed.
2. *Initial Steps in Reconstructing Proto-Vietic Syntax:* by Mark Alves. This chapter provides tentative reconstructions of the early Vietic clause and noun structures. Based solely on modern patterns among Vietic languages, the same structures would be reconstructed for Proto-Vietic. In contrast, historical textual evidence, comparative evidence outside Vietic, and assumptions of regional typological restructuring, e.g. contact with Chinese, allows for the hypotheses that (a) quantification has been moved to the pre-noun position, (b) passive voice appears to be a later development, but (c) there is no evidence of change in clause structure, and the topic-comment/subject-predicate order of modern languages must be reconstructed for Proto-Vietic.
3. *Nicobarese Comparative Syntax:* by Paul Sidwell. Car and Nancowry are analyzed for word-order patterns and constraints and marking of grammatical relations. Proto-Nicobarese is reconstructed to have favored VS/VPA word order. Additional notes are made about grammatical vocabulary in Nicobarese, including some related to Austroasiatic.

### ***Northern Austroasiatic Word Order***

4. *Verb-initial order, Gender, and Diachrony in Khasian:* by Hiram Ring. This chapter describes the current state of knowledge of constituent order in Khasian languages and links it with the investigation of the development of pronominal and gender systems in the group. The origin of the gender systems, which are unique to this branch of Austroasiatic, are hypothesized to be related to hypothesized earlier verb-initial/head-initial structures.

5. *Word order in The Wa languages*: by Atsuh Yamada. This chapter analyzes the word order variation in Wa languages from synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Wa languages show verb-initial structures in many contexts. The more isolated groups predominantly use VS structures, while those with a history of language contact with Chinese and Tai are prone to the SV pattern.

### ***Munda***

6. *Proto-Munda prosody, morphotactics and morphosyntax in South Asian and Austroasiatic contexts*: by Gregory Anderson. This overview puts forth a new hypothesis of how the original Austroasiatic typology of prosody and morphosyntax came to fit into the current Munda morphosyntactic template via revised notions of changes in prosody and morphotactics. It presents an updated view in contrast with the Donegan-Stampe theory of "rhythmic holism," and shows stronger typological connections with the rest of AA.
7. *The Proto-Munda Predicate and the Austroasiatic Language Family*: by Felix Rau. This chapter describes how Munda morphology developed from a proto-Munda state with very few bound morphemes, and how these are later developments in Munda and even Munda sub-branches, thereby bringing the group typologically closer to the bulk of AA languages.
8. *Proto-Kherwarian negation, TAM and person-indexing interdependencies*: by Gregory Anderson and Bikram Jora. This chapter presents hypotheses of the historical origins and development of negation among Kherwarian languages by reviewing negation and its interaction with TAM-marking and person indexing.
9. *Relative clauses in Santali: a matching analysis approach*: by Mayuri Dilip, Rajesh Kumar, Kārumūri.V. Subbārāo, G. Uma Maheshwar Rao, Martin Everaert. The chapter presents a unified account of relative clauses of Santali, whose unmarked structure is the prenominal form of Externally Headed Relative Clauses, an innovation evolved due to the change in the word order from SVO to SOV.

### ***Grammatical Lexicon***

10. *Grammatical words in Austroasiatic: an annotated comparative vocabulary with reconstructions*: by Mark Alves, Mathias Jenny, Paul Sidwell. Proto-AA function words are grouped by category (e.g. pronouns, locative terms, etc.) and evaluated for likelihood of proto-AA status. Statements are also provided for common AA affixal and reduplicative morphology. The data provide a foundation for future comparative work on AA grammatical structures and related lexical and morphological material.

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