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ON B. PILSUDSKI'S OROK VOCABULARY

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0. Introduction

In B.Piłsudski's unpublished manuscripts, there are some linguistic materials concerning Tungus: texts and vocabularies of Orok (Uilta) and Olcha, and grammatical remarks on Orok. They have all been typewritten with their English equivalents by A.Majewicz, which makes them more readily available to us. In this paper I will take up and examine the Orok vocabulary. This vocabulary, consisting of some 2,000 Orok words, was collected in 1904, which is a relatively early date for descriptions on Orok. In fact we can say that it is the first substantial dictionary of Orok.

After giving a general survey of Orok lexical studies, I will compare the transcription of the vocabulary with that of current materials. Moreover I will review some entries from semantic and morphological points of view. In many respects, we will find that Piłsudski was by no means inferior to those who came after him.

1. History of Orok Lexical Studies

In the history of Orok lexical studies, Japanese researchers have played an important role. The first noteworthy collection of Orok words was made by (a) Japanese in the middle of the 19th century. This vocabulary, consisting of about 350 Orok words written in Japanese syllabic letters, was recovered from two manuscripts and published with annotation by J.Ikegami (Ikegami 1971).

Next came B.Piłsudski's vocabulary Słówniczek Oroksko-polski, which was collected in 1904. The total number of items is about 2,700 (not including proper names listed separately), but there have been found so many transcriptional variants and inflectional forms that the number of different words is estimated at around 2,000. This vocabulary, as mentioned above, was recovered with English equivalents by A.Majewicz in 1984.

The first printed form of an Orok vocabulary appeared in 1912. A Japanese linguist Kyosuke Kindaichi, who worked with the Ainu language, published a small handbook of five aboriginal languages (Kindaichi 1912), in which about 250 Orok words are listed in terms of Japanese syllabic letters.

Three more Japanese made linguistic researches on Orok in Karafuto (Sakhalin) before World War II. Akira Nakanome published an Orok grammar in 1917, to which he appended an Orok glossary containing a 1,000 words written in Roman letters

(Nakanome 1917, a German version in 1928). Hisaharu Magata, as a result of his researches from 1928, compiled a substantial volume of Orok dictionary, which was published later in 1981 (Magata 1981). This dictionary contains an estimated 3,500 heads (including affixes and endings), under which many valuable illustrative phrases and sentences are provided. Hideya Kawamura collected linguistic and ethnographic materials during his stay in Karafuto from 1930 to 1947. His work was published later in 1983 by J.Ikegami with an Orok index, consisting of 900 items written mostly in Japanese syllabic letters and partly in Roman letters.

In USSR, on the other hand, the result of Orok lexical studies was, together with other Tungus, compiled into the Comparative Dictionary of the Tungus-Manchu Languages (Tsintsius et al. 1975, 1977), in which we find as many as 6,000 Orok items (including many transcriptional variants). Without doubt this is one of the most contributive works in Tungus lexical studies, but a close examination of its Orok items has revealed many transcriptional inexactitudes along with some other problems (see Tsumagari 1980).

After World War II, J.Ikegami began his researches with Orok informants who migrated from Sakhalin into Hokkaido. He published a basic vocabulary (1,000 words) in 1980, and additional 1,400 folk terms in 1985 (Ikegami 1980, 1985). All the words are sufficiently analyzed and transcribed phonemically, which makes them most reliable.

Considering the above-mentioned development of Orok lexical studies, we can say that Piłsudski is outstanding at least in two points. The first point is that the date of his collection is relatively early: we have only one inadequate source before him. The second point is that his vocabulary has a sufficient volume in spite of its earliness: moreover we must consider the fact that his Orok research was made within a relatively short time (see Kotwicz's undated foreword for Piłsudski's Orok materials).

Aside from the date and the volume, I will now go into the contents of the vocabulary. Through the examination of individual items, we can fully appreciate Piłsudski and realize some general problems in Orok lexical studies.

2. Piłsudski's Orok Vocabulary

2.1 Transcription

One of the most crucial points in deciding the value of a linguistic record is transcriptional exactitude. I will begin the examination by comparing the transcription of Piłsudski with that of a current source. In the following comparison I adopt as a "standard" J.Ikegami's basic vocabulary (cited in < >), most words of which I re-collected from the same informant.

Olcha *orgi* 'pig')' <orgeemba 'pig (Acc)'>. Such comments show his careful and objective attitude to his own materials.

2.3 Morphological Confusion and Anomalous Form

However, the morphological analysis of entry words are not always satisfactory. It is often the case that morphologically different forms are listed together without making any distinction: bóko~bokombóni 'stomach, belly' <bokko 'id.'; bokkom-bo-ni 'his stomach (Acc)'>, díli~diléni(~ǯilin) 'head' <ǯili 'id.'; ǯillee-ni 'his head (Acc)'>. As also seen above, personal forms are listed unanalyzedly instead of basic forms: silláni 'flower' <sillaa-ni 'its flower'>, hamdatáni 'leaf' <xamdatta-ni 'its leaf'>. Verbal forms are generally less analyzed, and occasionally we find some confusion of category of person: huśévi 'he/she vomits' <xussee-wi 'I vomit'>, sariní 'I know' <saa-ri-ni 'he knows'>.

Thorough examination of all items of the vocabulary will find many anomalous and unidentified words. Some of them may be ascribed to mistake, and others may reflect some linguistic facts. Finally, I would like to point out only one anomalous but interesting form. The expected form for 'cow' is ixa, but Piłsudski records jáha 'cow' along with xúsi jahá 'bull' <xusə ixa>. Such a form is not known in other Orok vocabularies as well as in Tsintsius's Comparative Dictionary: all the corresponding forms of the Tungus languages have i in the first syllable. However, some dialects of Spoken Manchu are reported to have such forms as ja ɤan 'cow' (Rudnev 1912) and yahan [ja:xʌ̃] 'id.' (Hattori 1941), which seem to have resulted from ihan by so-called "i-breaking" as in Mongolian. Piłsudski's Orok form jáha may be related to such Spoken Manchu forms.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that Piłsudski's Orok vocabulary, perhaps along with his other works, deserves much more attention. I am aware that the above is only a tentative and rough review, and more detailed examination is needed. However, I believe that I could give an outline of the value of the vocabulary, as well as its limitations. We know that most of the problems mentioned above are still found in modern works. In this sense we must start from Piłsudski to go beyond Piłsudski.

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