

## Current studies on Lolo manuscripts

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The Lolo language (or Yiyu in Mandarin) belongs to Lolo-Burmese language group, within Tibeto-Burman language branch. Lolo is spoken in the southwest part of China, the northern province of Vietnam and it is also said to be spoken in Laos. There are 6 dialects with 25 sub-dialects in China and 2 dialects in Vietnam.

Lolo possesses a great number of manuscripts written in its own letters. Their contents include diverse fields such as religion, literature, medicine, astronomy and so on. The letters and the formats are different from a dialect to a dialect.

This presentation aims to introduce the current situation of the studies upon Lolo manuscripts which are stored in Britain and France and to demonstrate some examples and features that I have researched hitherto.

Studies of Lolo manuscripts are being pursued most actively in China and less so outside China. Many Chinese translations from Lolo such as “Zhi lu jing” -a kind of sutra to intone in funeral- have been published. However, there exist only few linguistic analysis of the manuscripts. Outside China, on the other hand, much research has not been done except for some French translations are being carried on. In order to consider the historical change in the Lolo language, it is essential to research the written Lolo language and analyse its features. This research might provide the development of Tibeto-Burman linguistics with contributory information.

Demonstrating some examples with the translation, I will mention some notable findings of the Sani manuscripts, which is a dialect spoken in Yunnan. All the examples are cited from the manuscripts stored in the British Library and in Missions Etrangères de Paris. Those in the British library have never been studied nor translated.