

# Preface

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## **Papers from the 7th International Conference on Historical Linguistics**

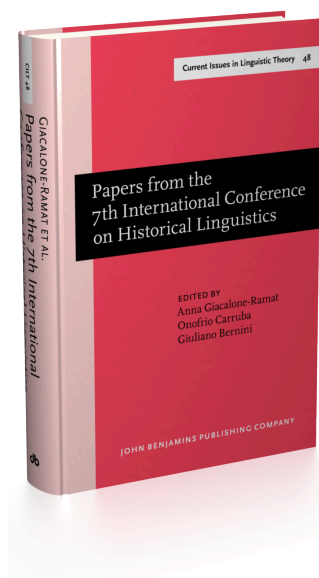
**Edited by Anna Giacalone Ramat, Onofrio Carruba and Giuliano Bernini**

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## PREFACE

The VII International Conference on Historical Linguistics was held in Pavia, Italy, from September 9th to 13th, 1985, in the pleasant setting of the old University with its courtyards and towers lit up by the late summer sun.

It was organized by Anna Giacalone Ramat, President of the International Society for Historical Linguistics for the period 1983-85, assisted by the following Local Committee members: G. Bernini, O. Carruba, M.-E. Conte, G. Graffi, G. Manzelli, M.V. Molinari, P. Ramat, C. Segre.

The International Committee, whose members at the time of the Conference were J. Fisiak (Vice-President), H. Andersen (Secretary), T. Fraser, M. Gerritsen, M. Harris and P. Hopper, gave advice before, during and after the Conference and their help was invaluable in the task of assessing which abstracts should be included in the programme and which ought to appear in this volume. I wish to thank all my colleagues for their hard work and sound advice and particularly the co-editors of this book O. Carruba and G. Bernini.

There were over two hundred participants attending the Conference, coming from all the corners of the world: Eastern and Western Europe, Iran, Japan, New Zealand and the U.S. More than 65 papers were read which created great interest, stimulated much debate and provided an excellent overview of the current state of the art in historical linguistics and related topics. The papers collected in this book clearly show that new issues are emerging in the theory of linguistic change which tend to incorporate non-autonomous principles like naturalness in phonetic processes, the influence of socio-cultural settings and discourse pragmatics. This wide range of issues is designed to contribute to an explanatory theory of language change.

On the last day of the Conference, Friday, September 13th, two workshops were held on *Historical Development of Auxiliaries* (the co-ordinators were Martin Harris and Paolo Ramat) and on *Reconstructions of the Indo-European Sound Systems and Their Consequences* (co-ordinator Theo Vennemann). The papers from these workshops will appear in the near

future, in two volumes published by Mouton-De Gruyter.

It was possible to hold the VII International Conference on Historical Linguistics in Pavia thanks to the generous co-operation of several institutions which gave substantial subsidies. We must thank the following: the University of Pavia, the Amministrazione Provinciale di Pavia, the Regione Lombardia, the Camera di Commercio di Pavia, the Banca del Monte di Pavia e Bergamo, the Banca Popolare di Lodi. The Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche gave a generous contribution towards the publication of this volume.

Special thanks are due to all our colleagues and young researchers who worked enthusiastically and efficiently and who made the conference organization so smooth. I wish to mention, in particular, C. Pagani and M. Mazzoleni, for their invaluable collaboration in running the secretariat for about two years and in helping in the task of preparing the indices.

Anna Giacalone Ramat  
Pavia, November 1986