

EDITORIAL FOREWORD

This is the first sound analytical grammar of the Lepcha language to be published ever since Mainwaring's pioneering work in the mid-nineteenth century first sparked scholarly and popular interest in this language and at the same time shrouded Lepcha in a veil of mystique. With the present grammar Heleen Plaisier has lifted this veil and lucidly explains the fascinating details of Lepcha grammar in the language's own terms. In producing this grammar and her other publications on Lepcha language and culture, the author gives back many precious gifts to the Lepcha community in return for the hospitality and friendship which she has received from so many Lepchas. Since her very first sojourn amongst the Lepchas, the author has maintained cordial ties and warm friendships with many people from different strata of the socio-economically, politically and religiously highly diverse Lepcha community. Her interest and love for the Lepcha language, history and native cultural traditions leap from the pages of her writings. All who are fond of Lepcha owe a debt to Heleen Plaisier.

George van Driem
Kathmandu, 16 July 2006