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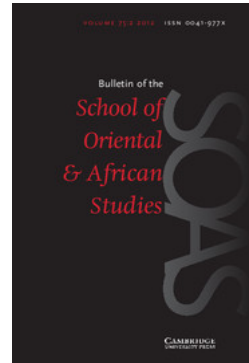
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Loss of / or r in Tibetan Initial Consonantal Clusters

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In (a) the preposition *l* + suffix is added to the verb in which the vowel of the suffix is lengthened. The penultimate vowel is always prominent. In (b) where *-u* is elided the anaptyctic vowel *-a-* is inserted in the singular but not in the plural. In this paradigm the penultimate vowel is always prominent.

THEODORE PROCHAZKA, JR.

LOSS OF *l* OR *r* IN TIBETAN INITIAL CONSONANTAL CLUSTERS

The paucity of sounds in Sino-Tibetan words constitutes one of the major difficulties of etymological research in this field. Initial clusters with *l* or *r* are therefore of great importance as they appear to offer safe guidance in assembling Tibetan word families. Though in general they may be regarded as stable elements, this stability, as the following examples will show, is by no means absolute. While making due allowance for a possibly secondary nature in some cases of an *r* preceding a guttural stem-initial¹—see p. 443, nn. 6 and 7—there would still seem to be more than 40 examples where there is clear evidence for the loss of *l* or *r*. It will be noted that in these cases *l* and *r* occur either in shifted position (I) or when the clusters are preceded by an *s*-prefix (II). In an appendix a few cases have been added where, owing to the presence of an original *s*-prefix, we witness *l*-clusters in which the (dental) stem-initial itself has disappeared.

I

l or *r* preceding the stem-initial

(1) *l*

A. Guttural stem-initial

lga/sga 'ginger'

lgañ-bu/gañ-bu 'husk, pod'

lgo/dgo 'puff-ball' (*dgo* occurring in *p'a-ba dgo-dgo* 'puff-ball')

B. Palatal stem-initial

lcañ-lcañ/gsañ-gsañ 'rugged places'

lcud/pa/gcud-pa 'to twist'²

lce-spyañ/ce-spyañ 'jackal' (lit. 'tongue—wolf')

lji-ba/hji-ba 'flea'

ljen-pa/žen-pa 'to penetrate'

ljoñs/gžoñs 'valley, region'

C. Dental stem-initial

ltam(s)-pa/gtam(s)-pa 'to be full', *t'am-pa* 'full'³

¹ It should be noted that Professor P. K. Benedict, in his recent work *Sino-Tibetan: a conspectus*, Cambridge, 1972, 109–10, assumes a 'prefixed *r* of uncertain function' in some of his Tibeto-Burman roots.

² cf. also below, IIA(a).

³ cf. also *ltam-pa/t'em-pa* '(to be) full'.

ltoñ-ga/toñ 'notch, indentation' (*toñ* occurring in *ri-toñ* and *la-toñ* 'ridge of mountains' and 'indentation of a mountain pass')

ldag-pa/hdag-pa 'to lick'

*ldu-gu*⁴/*gdu-gu* 'ring, bracelet'

ldum 'vegetable' / *sdum* in *sdum-ra* '(vegetable) garden'

*ldum-po*⁴/*dum-po* '(large) piece'

lde-gu/hde-gu 'ointment'

lde-ba/hde-ba 'treasurer'

*ldeg-pa*⁵/*hdeg(s)-pa* 'to lift, raise'

ldehu/sdehu 'kind of peas'

ldebs/hdabs 'side'

D. Labial stem-initial

lbu-ba/dbu-ba 'bubble'

(2) *r*

A. Guttural stem-initial

rkan/dkan 'palate'

rkam-pa/skam-pa 'to long for'

rked/sked 'waist'

*rgod-pa*⁶/*dgod-pa* 'to laugh'⁷

B. Palatal stem-initial

rje-sa/ze-sa 'deference'

*rjo-bo*⁸/*jo-bo* 'master'

rnyil/snyil 'gums'

*rnyog-pa*⁹/*nyog-pa* 'dirty'

C. Dental stem-initial

(a) Dental plosive

rta/t'a 'horse' (*t'a* occurring in the compound *t'a-skar*¹⁰)

rtuñ-ba 'to shorten' / *t'uñ-ba* 'short', *stun-ba* 'to shorten'

rten-pa/sten-pa 'to adhere to'

rtod-pa/gtod-pa, *btod-pa* 'a stake'

brtan-pa 'firm' / *ht'an-pa* 'firmness'

⁴ Also *gdu-bu/gdub-bu/gdub*. Cf. also *zlum-po* 'round' < **sdlum* (see below Appendix, item 4). *ldum* 'piece' may belong to the same word family, then meaning originally a 'round piece'.

⁵ See *Mahāvīyutpatti* (ed. Sakaki), No. 5121.

⁶ *r* may be a secondary development when alternating with a *d*-prefix, but see n. 7.

⁷ cf. also *brgad-pa* 'to smile'.

⁸ See Professor F. K. Li, 'A Sino-Tibetan glossary from Tun-Huang', *T'oung Pao*, XLIX, 4-5, 1961, p. 258, item 21.

⁹ See, however, under C(b) below and n. 11 of the article quoted in p. 444, n. 11 below.

¹⁰ Professor F. K. Li was the first to point out that *t'a* in *t'a-skar* belongs with *rta*. See his article 'Certain phonetic influences of the Tibetan prefixes upon the root initial', *Academia Sinica, Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology*, IV, 2, 1933, 150.

rdarñ/gdarñ ' clothes-stand '
rdar-ba/bdar-ba ' to rub '
rdal-ba/gdal-ba, bdal-ba ' to spread '

(b) Dental nasal

rna-ba ' ear ', *rno-ba, rnon-po* ' sharp ' / *nyan-pa*¹¹ ' to hear '
rnag ' matter, pus ' / *nyag-nyig, nyag-nyog* ' filth, dirt ', *nyog-pa* ' soiled '
rnam-pa ' piece ', *rnams* ' sign of plural ' / *mnyam-pa* ' like, equal '
rnal(-ma) ' rest ' / *mnal* ' sleep ', *nyal-ba* ' to lie down, to sleep '

(c) Dental affricate

rtsi-can ' sticky ' / *ts'i-ba* ' sticky matter '
rtsis ' calculation ' / *ts'is* (also *ts'igs*) in *so-ts'is (ts'igs)* ' housekeeping, husbandry '
rtsub-po ' rough ' / (*h*)*ts'ub-ma* ' storm '
rtsol-ba ' to endeavour ' / *hts'ol-ba* ' to seek, search, try to obtain '
*rtsib(s)-ma/ts'ib-ma*¹² ' rib '
rdziñs/qziñs ' ship '

II

Clusters with an *s*-prefix

A. Guttural stem-initial

(a) Both *skr-* and *skl-* are simplified to *sk-*:

skras > *skas* ' staircase '
 **sklud* > *skud* ' thread '

In the second example the *l*-cluster is to be inferred from the obvious cognate *lcud-pa* < **clud-pa* (with palatalized stem-initial) ' to twist ', adduced above under I(1)B.

(b) Loss of *l* or *r* may also occur as a result of iotization:

**skyluñ-ka* > *skyuñ-ka*¹³ ' jackdaw '; cf. the palatalized variant *lcuñ-ka*
 < **cluñ-ka*
 **skyribs* > *skyibs* ' shelter '

The original *r*-cluster must be inferred from *sgrib* ' shadow ', which (in the modern language) occurs also in the meaning of ' shelter '.

¹¹ This and the other examples under C(b) have been set out in more detail in ' Ear, sharp, and hearing—a Tibetan word family ', in M. Boyce and I. Gershevitch (ed.), *W. B. Henning memorial volume*, London, 1970, 406–8.

¹² See *Mahāvvyutpatti* (ed. Sakaki), No. 4005.

¹³ The verb *skyuñ-ba* ' to diminish ' (this meaning to be added to the entry in Jäschke's dictionary) seems to go back to an earlier **sknyuñ-ba*, belonging with *cuñ, c'uñ, and nyuñ* ' little '. A passage in the *Vinayavibhanga*, concerned with the monks going *quietly* from house to house (Narthang, *hDul, Nya* 378 = *Tib. Tripitaka*, XLII, 233a²), which shows *sgra bskyuñ* followed by the synonymous *ts'ig nyuñ-ñus*, would appear to confirm this etymology. The *Mahāvvyutpatti* (ed. Sakaki, No. 8537) renders *alpaśabda* by *sgra skyuñ-ba*.

We observe both loss of the *r* and absorption of the *s*-prefix in the process of palatalization in

**sgyren̄-ba* (< *sgren̄-ba*¹⁴ > *bžen̄-ba*)¹⁵ 'to raise'

B. Labial stem-initial

We observe simplification of *smr-* to *sm-*:

**smro-ba* > *smo-ba* 'to talk', cf. *smra-ba* 'idem', *smran* 'word, speech'¹⁶

**smras-pa* > *smas-pa* 'wound, wounded', cf. *rmas-pa* 'idem'¹⁷

APPENDIX

It will have been noticed that examples of clusters with an *s*-prefix and dental stem-initial are missing in section II. In clusters of that kind not the *l* or *r*, but the dental stem-initial is lost. In the case of *r* this development is well known, cf., e.g., *sron̄-ba* (pf. *bsrañs*, fut. *bsrañ*) 'to straighten' by the side of *drañ-po* 'straight', or *sro-ba* 'to warm' by the side of *dro-ba* 'warm'. But cases with *s*-prefix and *l* are less easily recognized, as we witness at the same time a voicing of the prefix:

1. *zla-ba* < **sdlā* 'to deliver', causative¹⁸ of *hda-pa* < *(*h*)*lda*¹⁹ < *(*h*)*dla* 'to pass over, go beyond'.

2. *zlo-ba* < **sdlo* 'to say' (= *zla-ba* 'idem') listed by Csoma and Schmidt as synonymous with *hdo-ba*²⁰ < *(*h*)*ldo* < *(*h*)*dlo*.

3. *zlog-pa* < **sdlog* 'to cause to return' from *ldog-pa* < **dlog-pa* 'to return'.²¹

4. *zlum-po* (also *zlum-pa*) < **sdlum* 'round', variant of *ldum-po* 'idem'.²²

WALTER SIMON

¹⁴ Note, however, the retention of *r* in the palatalized variant *rjen(-pa)* of *sgren(-mo)* 'naked'.

¹⁵ cf. also *gšou* 'to put astride' (wrongly doubted by Jäschke, *Dict.*, 566, and therefore left out by Das, see, e.g., *Tib. Tripitaka*, xxxix, 51c⁶⁻⁸) by the side of *skyon-pa*, and *zon-pa* 'to mount', which clearly belong with *gyon-pa* 'to put on, wear', the latter word being a derivative of *gon-pa* 'idem'.

¹⁶ Note also the variant *rmo-slags* of *smre-slags* 'to wail, lament', listed by Schmidt and Jäschke, and the metathesis of the *r*, as in *rgal* 'to cross' ~ *sgral* 'to ferry across' and *rga* 'old' ~ *dgre-ba* 'to grow old' (see *Asia Major*, NS, I, 1, 1949, 12 ff.).

¹⁷ The entry *smas-pa*, taken over by Jäschke from I. J. Schmidt's *Wörterbuch*, can be confirmed in its verbal meaning by a passage from the *Vinayavastu* (Narthang, *hDul, Kha*, 306B⁵ = *Tib. Trip.*, xli, 178c⁸): *lus dmas šññ rma byuñ-bas rnağ hdzag la*. Cf. also *Divyāvādāna* (ed. Cowell and Neil), 463⁷. Note also *smē-ba* 'spot, mark, mole' by the side of *rme-ba* (and *dme-ba*) 'idem'.

¹⁸ The two verbs are clearly contrasted in the translation of the well-known cliché (last two words) *mukto mocaya tīrṇas tāraya āśvasta āśvāsaya parinirvṛtaḥ parinirvāpaya* (*Divyāvādāna*, ed. Cowell and Neil, 39¹⁴⁻¹⁵): *yoñs-su mya-ñan-las ma hdas-pa-rnams ni yoñs-su mya-ñan-las zlos-śig* (*Tib. Trip.*, xli, 116d⁴⁻⁵).

¹⁹ For the loss of the *l* cf., e.g., *ldag-pa/hdag-pa* in I(1)C.

²⁰ Both *hdo-ba* and *zlo-bu* are listed by Csoma and Schmidt. The example *ma hdos-par* 'unspeakable', rightly queried by Jäschke, who has referred to Schiefner's correction *ma hoš-par* (see now *Tib. Trip.*, xl, 107a⁵), has been taken over by Das (*Dict.*, 689) without question mark and without reference to either Jäschke or Schiefner.

²¹ cf. also the doublet *slog*.

²² See also above, p. 443, n. 4.