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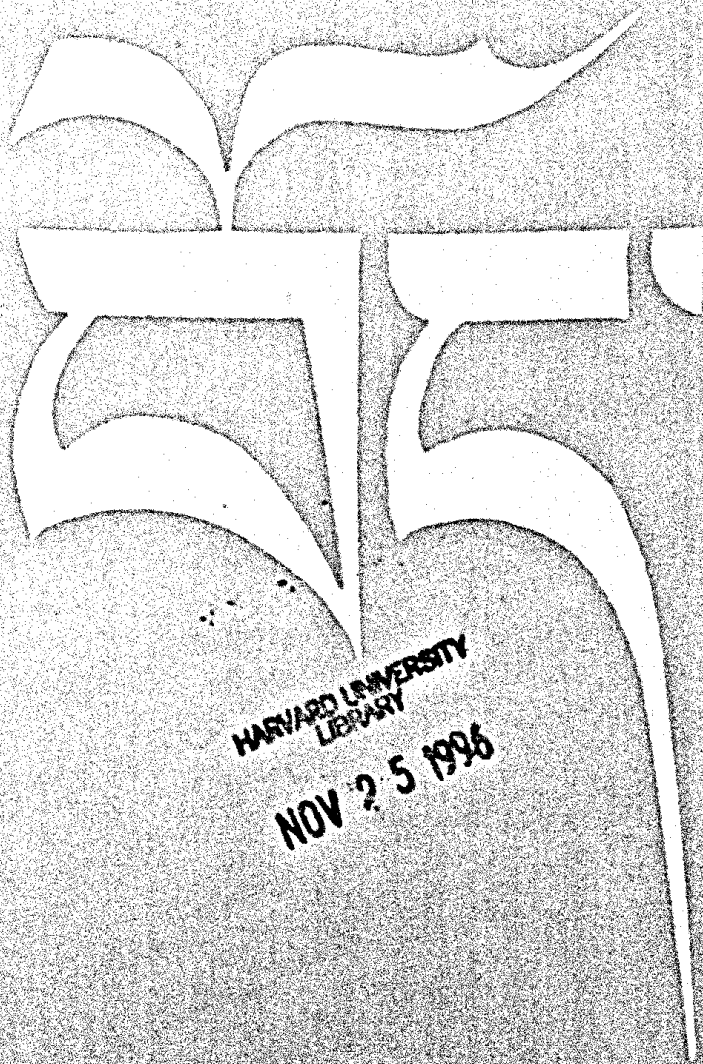
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The Tibet Journal
a publication for the study of Tibet

Tibetan Linguistics

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My Balti-Tibetan and English dictionary, and its predecessors

R.K. Sprigg

I. A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLIER DICTIONARIES

A. CLASSICAL (LITERARY, OR WRITTEN) TIBETAN

Few topics could be more appropriate for a talk to a Darjeeling society such as the Manjusri Centre of Tibetan Culture than that of Tibetan dictionaries. My reason for making this bold claim is that you have had one of the pioneers of Tibetan dictionary-making here in Darjeeling. Indeed, in a sense, he is here still; for his grave is on a hillside only a mile or two away from here, and has been for the last one hundred and fifty-three years. I am, of course, referring to the Hungarian scholar Csoma de Körös, who died of malaria here while striving to reach Central Asia in the hope of discovering the ancestral home of his race: "in order to dedicate himself to the study of Tibetan literature [he] lived like a monk for years among the inmates of a Tibetan monastery" (Simon 1965, 87); this was in the Zangskar area of Ladakh. What he modestly called *Essay towards a dictionary, Tibetan and English* was published in Calcutta in 1834.

Sixty-eight years later Darjeeling was again connected with Tibetan lexicography through Sarat Chandra Das, 1902; the title of his dictionary is *Tibetan-English dictionary with Sanskrit synonyms*; and his address is given as: Lhasa Villa, Darjeeling.

Another connection of Das's with Darjeeling that I might mention in passing is that of his being appointed Headmaster – the first Headmaster, in fact – of the Bhutia Boarding School, in 1874. This connection is of special interest to me because among his early pupils was enrolled David Macdonald (then known as Dorje), my wife's grandfather, who later won recognition through contributing texts to *The Linguistic Survey of India*: "Tibetan: Central dialect" (with Colonel Waddell; 1899, III, 1, 77-82), and "Dänjong-kä or Bhōtia of Sikkim" (with Major Waddell; 1899, III, 1, 123-8) (Macdonald also published two books of general interest, *Land of the Lama*, in 1929, and *Twenty years in Tibet*, in 1932).

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Early though it is, Csoma de Körös's dictionary was not the first Tibetan dictionary to be published; indeed, it was not even the first dictionary to be printed in English: the East India Company, eager for trade with Tibet, had earlier published a dictionary at Serampore, in 1826. This dictionary had to be translated into English from Italian; its compiler's name, formerly unknown, is della Penna (1690-1745), a Roman Catholic missionary of the Capuchin order, though it is generally known, from the name of its translator, as Schroeter's dictionary.

Earlier still comes the very first dictionary of Tibetan into a European language, begun nearly three hundred years ago, in 1708, by the Capuchin friars da Ascoli and da Tours, who were in Lhasa from 1707 to 1711 (Bell 1931, 144), and completed by da Fano (1674-1728), who took it to Rome in 1713 (Simon 1965, 85). This dictionary, however, is not from Tibetan into some other language, but from another language into Tibetan, the other language being, as you may have already guessed from the religion of its compilers, Latin. The compilers have given an explanation, in the preface to their dictionary, for what they see as its deficiency: because of their extreme poverty, which forced them to rely on stinging nettles and other weeds for their food, they could not afford to engage Tibetan teachers.

The earliest Tibetan dictionaries, then, linked Tibetan to Latin, to Italian, and to English; they were soon to be followed by German: Schmidt's *Tibetisch-deutsches Wörterbuch*, published in 1841, with a Tibetan-Russian version, *Tibetsko-Russkii Slovar'*, two years later.

French came next, in the *Dictionnaire Thibétain-Latin-Français par les missionnaires catholiques du Thibet*, edited by Desgodins, and published in 1899 in Hong Kong, though these missionaries are known here in Darjeeling for their connection with this district: they settled in Pedong, less than fifty miles away, in 1883.

B. SPOKEN TIBETAN (DIALECT FORMS)

The five dictionaries that I have considered already, in (A) above, are, naturally, concerned with the classical, or literary, form of the Tibetan language; and Jäschke's *A Tibetan-English dictionary, with special reference to the prevailing dialects* (1881\1934) agrees with them

in this aim; but it departs from them significantly, as one can readily see from the extension to the title, by giving some recognition to spoken Tibetan forms, especially from dialects of the western part of the Tibetan-speaking area. In his preface Jäschke has written: "The present language of the people has as many dialects, as the country has provinces. – Especially it is interesting to note, in respect to pronunciation, how old consonants, which would seem to have been generally sounded and spoken twelve centuries ago, when the Tibetan written character came into existence, and which, at any rate, are marked by the primitive system of writing, remain still extant, every one of them can still be disinterred, somewhere or other, from some local peculiarity of language" (iv). To support this statement Jäschke has followed the "Preface" with five or six pages of a "phonetic table for comparing the different dialects". He has limited himself to six dialects, those of Ladak, Lahoul, Spiti, Tsang, Ü, and Khams, two of which, Ü and Tsang, share a single column, and have then been combined with Spiti into a "Central Provinces" section, while Ladak and Lahoul have, similarly, been combined into a "West Tibet" section. As an example I will give the Tibetan word for *silver*:

	"dnul	
	Ladak .	ṅul (vulgo mul)
West. Tib.	Lahoul	ṅul
	Spiti	ṅul
Central Prov.	Tsang, Ü	nū Ts. ṅul Ü
Khams		ṅul
	Bal.	χṅul or χmul" (Jäschke 1881\1934, xix)

While Jäschke's dictionary was the first major dictionary to include a selection of dialect pronunciations in addition to Classical Tibetan entries, Desgodin's *Dictionnaire* to some extent resembled it in this respect by including "dialectal features of Eastern Tibetan" (Simon 1965, 92), doubtless because this was the part of Tibet in which the French missionaries began their work, in 1852.

C. DICTIONARIES OF THE SPOKEN-TIBETAN DIALECTS

Having considered the dictionaries that are solely or mainly concerned with Classical (Literary, or Written) Tibetan, in sections (A) and (B) above I come now to dictionaries that resemble my own dictionary in that they are restricted to a particular form of the spoken language, one of the Tibetan provincial dialects. In doing so I shall confine myself to those collections of words which are presented in the form of dictionaries, and ignore those lists of words which are presented in the form of glossaries or vocabularies contained in grammars or manuals. This means that I shall have to leave out of account, for example, Sandberg's *Manual of the Sikkim Bhutia language or Dé-jong ké* (Calcutta, 1888), Byrnes's *A colloquial grammar of the Bhutanese language* (Allahabad, 1909), de Roerich's *Le parler de l'Amdo* (Rome, 1958), volume III, part I, of the *Linguistic Survey of India* (G.A. Grierson ed., 1909), Goldstein's *Modern Spoken Tibetan: Lhasa dialect* (1970), and Bielmeier's *Das Märchen vom Prinzen Čobzan*. With lists and vocabularies left out of account from sources such as these the number of Tibetan-dialect dictionaries becomes quite small; in fact I can think of only three. Two of these are from the period of the Younghusband Expedition, Walsh's *A vocabulary of the Tromowa dialect of Tibetan spoken in the Chumbi Valley* (Calcutta, 1905) and Bell's *English-Tibetan colloquial dictionary* (Calcutta, 1920; but first published in 1905, during the Expedition, as part of his *Manual of colloquial Tibetan*). The former, Walsh's *Vocabulary*, distinguishes two different dialects within the Chumbi Valley, an upper dialect, spoken towards Phari Jong, and a lower dialect, spoken in the area of Yatung (or Shasingma); the latter, Bell's *Colloquial dictionary*, is for the dialect of the Capital, Lhasa; but, in brackets, it gives "the simple form of book language" for comparison with some of the entries, as, for example:

*Stand, to *bzhang* (*bzhengs*) *nas bzhugs-pa*
Kill, to *bsad-pa* (*gsod-pa*).

Bell acknowledges a debt to others, "especially to Mr. Henderson's *Tibetan Manual*, which marks a great advance in the Tibetan colloquial over any of its predecessors. And most of all my thanks are due to Mr. David Macdonald, — to whose unrivalled knowledge of both colloquial and literary Tibetan are largely due whatever merits the work may possess" (1905, viii), high commendation indeed.

The much more recent *Tibetan Word Book* (1943) results from the Government of India's having established the British Mission in Lhasa in 1937, and especially, Sir Basil Gould explains in his "General Preface", from his visit to Lhasa in 1940 in connection with the Installation of H. H. the 14th Dalai Lama. The close association with the form of Tibetan spoken by the official class (*sku-drag*) in the Capital, Lhasa, made it possible to produce this authoritative collection of 2,000 syllables together with such compounds as the syllables enter into, rather a novel arrangement, by which I have myself, to some extent, been influenced in my own dictionary of the Balti dialect of Tibetan.

II. BALTI-TIBETAN AND ENGLISH DICTIONARY,
WITH AN ENGLISH-BALTI SUPPLEMENT

A. A.F.C. READ

I owe my interest in the Balti dialect of Tibetan to a Christian missionary of the Central Asian Mission, A.F.C. Read; his book *Balti Grammar* (1934) made exciting reading for me because the pronunciation that I found recorded in it struck me as being remarkably close to the pronunciation implied by Classical Tibetan orthography, especially as regards the spelling of the syllable finals known, in Tibetan orthography, as the *yang-'jug* class, romanized here in accordance with the system proposed by Wylie (1959) as *gs*, *ngs*, *bs*, and *ms*, but with the Balti spelt in accordance with the system that I have devised, on phonological principles explained in section (H) below; e.g.

- mi zhiks (he) will not be afraid
- mi spungs (he) will not pile up
- mi baps (he) will not come down
- mi dams (they) will not gather together.

I was also much struck by the letter *s* of the *rjes-'jug* class, as in:

- mi bzhes (he) will not eat (honorific)
- chos (the Mohammedan) religion, Islam.

There are also intriguing pronunciations of some of Tibetan's more awe-inspiring syllable-initial letters, such as the *db* of *dbus*, with the voiced uvular fricative sound of [ghbus] or, though less commonly,

the voiced alveolar tap sound of [rbus], meaning, in Balti, "the central pillar" of a Baltistan house, or the *dnng* of *dnngul* "silver", with the voiceless uvular fricative sound of the Balti equivalent [χmul].

Read allowed me to make a xerox copy of the incomplete Balti-English dictionary that he had had in typescript at the time when he left Kashmir in, if I remember correctly, 1947. In those troubled times the latter half of his dictionary had, unfortunately, gone astray; and only the part from *a* to *m* remained in his possession. Consequently, I made it my main task, during my six-month stay in Rawalpindi in 1964-5 – the Government of Pakistan did not allow me to visit Baltistan – to try and replace the missing part, as far as I could after the lapse of nearly twenty years, during which time, moreover, Urdu had become the national language of the new country of Pakistan, and the Tibetan-speakers of Baltistan had discovered that they had more to gain from a knowledge of Urdu than from the language of their ancestors.

B. THE KHAPALU AND SKARDU DIALECTS OF BALTISTAN

Read's Balti dictionary was based on the dialect of Khapalu, a village in the Shyok valley, remote from Skardu, the administrative centre of Baltistan, which, by 1964, was linked by air to Rawalpindi, and had become subject to language influence from outside Baltistan. The Khapalu dialect had also the advantage of being more conservative, in most respects, than the Skardu dialect; in fact Khapalu Balti is, I believe, the only form of Tibetan spoken today that preserves the dorso-velar pronunciation [kr-], [khr-], and [gr-], using the back of the tongue in contact with the soft palate, for words spelt with *khr-* and *gr-* in Classical Tibetan, such as the Balti words that I spell *kro*, *khvak*, and *gri* (Classical Tibetan: *gro*, *khvak*, *gri*; "wheat", "blood", "knife"). In the Skardu dialect, however, these words are pronounced with a slightly retroflexed tongue-tip contact with the front of the hard palate, and back of the alveolar ridge, as [tro], [thvak], and [dri] respectively. My Balti informant, Mohammad Zakir Hussein Baltistani, was a speaker of the Khapalu dialect; but he had spent some time in Skardu too, where the prestige dialect of Balti is spoken. When I met him, in 1964, he was a

17-year-old student, employed part-time by Radio Pakistan as a news-reader in the Balti-language service. He was also, I discovered, the son of Baltistan's leading poet; and, influenced, perhaps, by his literary family background, he was familiar with the main differences between the Khapalu dialect and the Skardu. This made it possible for me to expand my dictionary to try and cover both dialects, using K. to distinguish pronunciations, lexical items, words, and usages peculiar to Khapalu, and S., correspondingly, for the Skardu dialect. I have, for example, used S. to distinguish *chukhi* as the Skardu word for "otter" from *chu-sram*, the corresponding Khapalu (K.) word.

I also made some use of my personal servant, Abdul Karim, a speaker of the Khapalu dialect; but I had to treat his pronunciation with caution because he had a clearly noticeable speech defect.

My findings, for both dialects, differ in some respects from those of a survey of seven Baltistan dialects, including the Khapalu and Skardu, carried out nearly a generation later, in October 1989 and November 1990 (cf. Backstrom 1992).

C. BIELMEIER, AND WESTERN-TIBETAN DIALECTS

Of the various dialects of Western Tibetan, then, my dictionary entries are limited, apart from occasional references to Kharmang and Chorbit, to two sub-dialects of the Balti dialect; but I found it interesting to compare these two sub-dialects with related forms from a number of other Western-Tibetan dialects, Purik, Ladakhi, Zangskar, and Brokskat, which are contained in two books by R. Bielmeier, *Untersuchung die historische Entwicklung der Konsonanten-cluster in den westtibetischen Dialekten* (undated) and the "Glossar" of *Das Märchen vom Prinzen Čobzan* (1985). Thinking that others too might find these comparisons useful I have, with the author's permission, cross-referenced entries that I have in common with these two books by adding to such entries the letters U., for *Untersuchung*, and M., for *Das Märchen*, with a page reference; e.g.

chu mik, s. phr., spring, (water) source (M. 166)

chu-rba, s., wave(s) (U. 250).

The entry for *chu* in Bielmeier 1985 appears as:

čhu (5, 10), "Wasser," *čhui* (10, 17\10, 23) Genitiv; Read *čhu* "water"; Bailey *čhu* neben *šu* "id."; Rangan (25) *čhu* "id.";

Ramsay *chu* "id."; Hoshi (143) *chu* "id." ST *chu*' (166).
 Bielmeier's sources are: Read 1934, *Balti Grammar*; Bailey 1924,
Grammar of the Shina language; Rangan 1975, *Balti phonetic reader*;
 Ramsay 1890, *Western Tibet: a practical dictionary of the language
 and customs of the districts included in the Ladak Wazarat*; Hoshi and
 Tsering 1978, *Zangskar vocabulary. A Tibetan dialect spoken in
 Kashmir*.

D. ETYMOLOGY

I have added its etymology, or language origin, to each head entry,
 using for this purpose Jäschke's *A Tibetan-English Dictionary* (1881\
 1934) for Classical Tibetan, while, for Urdu, Persian, and Arabic, I
 have used Platts' *Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindī, and English*
 (1884\1932). Thus, for my first entry, the prefix *a-* is identified, by
U., as having been borrowed from Urdu, though originally from
 Arabic, denoted by *A.*:

a-, pref., plural prefix equivalent to *-s* [*U. a-*, fm *A.*]
a-hadiis, *s.*, traditions (sayings of Mohammed and his
 companions)

The letter *T.* serves to link a Balti entry such as *chu* with a Classical
 Tibetan original; e.g.

chu, *s.*, water [*T.* "water", "river"] (*M.* 166)

In this respect my aim is the same as that of the editor of *Concise
 Oxford Dictionary* (1911\1964), which gives the etymology of the
 English word water as:

O(ld) E(nglish) *wæter*, O(ld) S(axon) *watar*, Old High G(erman)
wazzar, (cf. O(ld) N(orse) *vatn*, Goth(ic) *wato*, f. G(er)m(ani)c
 **wat-*, cognate with WET, Lat(in) *unda*, G(ree)k *hudōr* (1473);

but I have not tried to give etymologies in the same depth as the
C.O.D.. I have not, for example, attempted to go beyond Classical
 Tibetan, Urdu, Persian, and Arabic origins, and, with the help of
 Bielmeier, West-Tibetan dialects. I have not gone so far afield as to
 give cognates from Old Burmese, or from reconstructed forms such
 as those of Archaic Chinese (circa 1200-800 B.C.) and Ancient Chi-
 nese (circa 600 A.D.) (cf. Benedict 1972, 152-3).

Balti-speakers owe loanwords such as a-hadiis, given as an example above, to their having been converted to the Mohammedan religion nearly six hundred years ago; traditionally, this was due to the missionary activities of Syed Ali Hamadani in 783 A.H. (1405 A.D.); but there was a further conversion to a Mohammedan sect exclusive to Baltistan, the Nurbakshia sect, in 842 A.H. (1464 A.D.), by Syed Nur Baksh (Hurley 1961, Khan 1962; cf. also Söhnen 1983, 585). These conversions isolated Tibetan-speakers of Baltistan from the Buddhist Tibetan world to the east, and, in doing so, may have helped to preserve the dialect from influences such as the increase in importance of the Lhasa dialect that began when the 5th Dalai Lama assumed authority there in 1642.

E. ROMAN ALPHABET

The Balti dialect is almost unwritten. I have seen it written only for Zakir Hussein's news broadcasts, for language examples that he wrote for me, and for poems and songs composed by his father, Fida Hussein Shamim. In such cases Balti-speakers these days have recourse to the Persian script with slight modifications, as, for example, using zhe for [tsh] of Balti. There is, however, an example, in the Linguistic Survey of India, of a "script which was perhaps invented at the time of the conversion of the Baltis to Muhammadanism" and is "said to have been used in old books still in the possession of the present Rajahs" (III, 1, 33); yet the text given as an illustration of this script is verse 16 of chapter 3 of the *Gospel according to St John*, which was translated into Balti as recently as 1906 (and written in the Persian script; British and Foreign Bible Society 1965, 15).

I have had to devise two special symbols for the sake of the retroflex sounds that occur quite commonly in words borrowed into Balti from Urdu: capital d and capital t, but in a smaller fount so as to match the fount of the other lower-case letters; e.g. Daak "post," "letters"; Thiik "all right".

F. PHONETIC INTERPRETATION, OR KEY TO PRONUNCIATION

Since the spelling that I have devised for Balti is a phonological spelling, not a phonetic spelling, the values of the letters are not self-evident; and I am obliged to give a phonetic value, or phonetic values, to each of my symbols. There are two reasons why this is essential: (i) the value of a letter may vary according to the context,

its place in the word. There is no difficulty about the letters *b* and *p*, for example when they occur in word-initial position, before a vowel:

b: ba (milk-giving) cow [b-]
p: payu (Baltistan) salt [p-];

but the pronunciation of *b* is quite different when it is followed by a consonant. In that case it is pronounced either (i) voiced or (ii) voiceless to match the sort of sound that follows; e.g. (in the Skardu pronunciation, with the phonetic symbols simplified, in some cases)

	bd	bt	bg	bc	bts	bz	bs	bzh	bsh	bl
i.	[vd		vg			bz		bzh		
ii.		[ft		fc	fts		p/fs		p/fs	fl

From the above examples it will be seen that, unlike the letter *b* at the beginning of the word *ba* "cow," the letter *b* in this context, with a consonant following, has one or other of four different pronunciations: [v b f p]. The voiced sounds [v] and [b] combine only with a following voiced sound; but the converse is not quite true because, exceptionally, the voiced sound [l] combines with a preceding voiceless sound: [pl]; and the voiceless sounds [f] and [p] combine only with a following voiceless sound. In addition, where [p] and [f] have been shown, by a slant mark (\), to be alternative, the latter, [f], is appropriate only to a fast rate of speech, fast tempo (for a phonetic table, in which the correct symbols according to the International Phonetic Association have been used, see Sprigg 1972, 585).

With these different values in mind for *b* according to context it is possible to give the correct Skardu pronunciation to the initial letters of the following words, to which I have added the Classical

Tibetan spelling on the line below:

bdun	btul	bgya	bcu	kha-btse	bzang-mo
bdun	btul	brgya	bcu	kha-btse	bzang-po
seven	please	hundred	ten	sneaking on	good

bsil	bzhi	bshak	bla\blas
bsil-ba	bzhi	bshags	(b)sle\lhas
cool	four	split, tear	plait

Comparing my Balti spelling in each of these examples with the spelling of its Classical Tibetan counterpart on the line below, it is easy to see that my phonological spelling for Balti has made it possible for me to remain as close as possible to the Classical spelling; but the price that has to be paid for this advantage is that of having to learn the different phonetic values of the various symbols, the *b* symbol, for example, in each of their contexts, making an allowance, in some contexts, for a difference in speed of utterance, or tempo, as well: fast speech versus deliberate speech.

In the above examples I have, with one exception, kha-btse, given the pronunciation that the *b* cluster of symbols has when it occurs in the initial position in words, limiting myself, there, to the Skardu dialect; for the Khapalu dialect has a slightly different pronunciation for some of those clusters: bc-, bsh-, and bl-.

When these *b* clusters occur in medial position in words, especially when following a consonant, they have to be given a different and, commonly, simpler, pronunciation. In bdun-bcu *bdun-cu* "seventy," for example, the bc cluster of letters is pronounced not [fc], a sequence of two sounds, but the single sound [c], as in [-nc-], not *[-nfc-] (in this instance the Classical Tibetan spelling, *bdun-cu*, can be seen to be more phonetic, and my Balti spelling, *bdun-bcu*, more phonological: it keeps the same spelling for bcu even though the pronunciation is different, and simpler); and in gnam-bzang *gnam-bzang* "clear sky" too the sequence of consonant sounds in the

middle of the word has to be symbolized phonetically as [-mz-], simpler than the *[-mbz-] that one might have expected. In other words the simplicity of a uniform spelling, the *bcu* and *bzang* to be found in these examples, is balanced by complexity in the phonetic description: [fc-] and [-c-], and [bz-] and [-z-].

In the examples that I have just considered, the b-cluster spellings have a simpler pronunciation in medial position than they have in word-initial position, [-c-], for example, versus [fc-], and [-z-] versus [bz-]; but for some types of cluster the reverse is true: the *mj* member of the m-cluster system is to be interpreted phonetically as a sequence of two sounds, [-mzh-] (in the Skardu dialect, but [-mj-] in the Khapalu dialect) when it occurs following a vowel in the middle of the word, as in *ba-mjuk* *ba-mjug* "cow's tail," "horse-hair"; but in both dialects it is to be interpreted phonetically as a single sound when it occurs in word-initial position, either as [zh-], in *mjuk-la* "in the end," in the Skardu dialect, or as [j-] in this same word in the Khapalu dialect. In accordance with my general principle of using the same letters of the alphabet for both these dialects wherever possible, in spite of differences in pronunciation, *mj* here represents [zh-] and [-mzh-], in complementary distribution by type of context, for the Skardu dialect but [j-] and [-mj-], correspondingly, for the Khapalu dialect. It has the advantage of being economical.

In loan-words from Urdu, though, such as *jagiir* "landed property" and *jahaaz* "ship", both these two dialects use the same sound, [j-], as the initial sound of the word, imitating the Urdu pronunciation; so it becomes necessary to make a distinction between the spelling, and pronunciation, of loan-words and the spelling, and pronunciation, of original, or unborrowed, words. Thus, in the Skardu dialect the letter *j* has the phonetic value [zh] in words of Tibetan origin but the value [j] in words of Urdu origin, while the Khapalu dialect has the value [j] for *j* in words of either origin.

In this respect, the using of a single spelling for a word, or for a component of a word, that has two different pronunciations, one for one dialect but another pronunciation for another dialect, I

hope to have achieved the same result as that of numerous words spelt with *wh-* in English:

wh-. In a few of the words beginning thus the *w* is, as indicated in the pronunciation brackets, not sounded; in all others the *h* is silent in ordinary modern usage, but the earlier sound, *hw*, is retained by the Scots, Irish, Welsh, & northern English, and by some purists in pronunciation, as well as for the nonce in unfamiliar words or such as might be confused with commoner words having no *-h-* (*whet, whey*) (*The Concise Oxford dictionary, 1911\1964 1483*).

In spite of my general principle of keeping my spelling of the Balti as close to Classical Tibetan spelling as possible, in one respect, perhaps mistakenly, I have departed from it: I have used the letters *-k*, *-t*, and *-p*, and also *-ks* and *-ps*, where Tibetan spelling has *-g*, *-d*, and *-b*, and also *-gs* and *-bs*. My main reason for making this reluctant choice in favour of *-k*, *-t*, and *-p*, etc. is that the sounds that these symbols represent are voiceless in word-final position, like *-k*, *-t*, and *-p* in the English words *yak*, *cat*, and *sap*; e.g. (in the following examples the symbols [k] and [g] have not the values of the International Phonetic Alphabet but the values, respectively, of uvular stop and uvular fricative)

voiceless:

[k]	[t]	[p]
mi yak	mi cat	mi lsap
bhzag/yog	bcad/gcod	bslabs/slob
will not put	will not cut	will not teach

but in medial position the corresponding sounds are voiced:

voiced:

[g]	[d]	[b]
yak-et	cat-et	lsap-et
bhzag-yod	bcad-yod	bslabs-yod
puts	cuts	teaches

The voiceless type of sound ([-k -t -p]) and the voiced type of sound ([-g -d -b-]) are in complementary distribution; so either the letters k, t, and p or the letters g, d, and b have a fair claim to symbolize the alternatives. It would also, of course, be possible, though not economical, to avoid having to make this choice by introducing a new set of symbols, neither k, t, and p nor g, d, and b. In order to stay within the Tibetan orthographic tradition these letters might be either the k, t, and p set or the g, d, and b set but in reverse, like the reversed letters of the *log-yig drug* series used in Tibetan for the Sanskrit cerebral series; but such a course, though theoretically sound, seems to me to be unnecessarily uneconomical.

G. WORD DICTIONARY OR LEXICAL-ITEM (MORPHEME) DICTIONARY
The Concise Oxford Dictionary, which I have made the model for my Balti dictionary, is not merely a word dictionary; while most of its entries are indeed words, it also includes parts of words, components, or elements, of words. For these components of words I might have used the term *morpheme*; but my choice has fallen on the term *lexical item*, cumbersome though it may seem. I will give my reason for avoiding *morpheme*, and accepting *lexical item*, after I have given examples of these components, in English and in Balti, and the means by which they are distinguished in dictionaries from words.

The fourth entry in *C.O.D.* is the entry *a-*, which occurs as part of such words as *arise* (cf. *rise*), *akin* (cf. *kin*), *ascend* (cf. *descend*, divisible into *de-* and *-scend*), and *amorphous* (cf. *morphology*). By comparing these words *arise*, *ascend*, *amorphous*, etc. with *rise*, *descend*, and *morphology*, etc. the component *a-* in these words can be shown to be separable. It is also clear that, unlike *rise* and *kin*, the component *a-* in these words can occur only in combination with another component, a component that follows it; this dependence on a following component is shown in the dictionary entry by a hyphen, which earns for *a-* membership of the prefix category, though the hyphen is not used in the various words *arise*, *amorphous*, etc. in which *a-* occurs.

The very first entry in my Balti dictionary, *a-*, is also a lexical item, not a word; and it is also a prefix, hence the hyphen. The only word in which this *a-* prefix occurs is the word *a-hadiis* "traditions (sayings of Mohammed and his companions)". This word is a plural

form; so the function of the *a-* prefix is grammatical: plural number. The same grammatical function is carried out in English by the lexical item *-s*, as in *traditions*, or by the lexical item *-en*, as in *oxen*, with the difference that *-s* and *-en* are following components, following the lexical items *tradition* and *ox*, which can occur uncombined, as singular substantives (or nouns).

It is, however, preferable to represent this English suffix as *-(e)s* rather than as *-s*, in order, also, to take account of words in which this suffix is spelt *-es*, as in *fishes*; but, whatever the spelling, it seems strange to me that the C.O.D. has ignored not only this suffix but also all suffixes that are also inflexions. Not only is there no entry in the C.O.D. for (i) this plural-number inflexion suffix, *-(e)s*, but there is no entry for (ii) the possessive inflexion suffix *'s*, as in *dog's nose* (alternating with the *apostrophe* in *-s* plural forms, such as *dogs' noses*), for (iii) the third-person singular-number inflexion suffix *-(e)s*, as in *(he) eats* or *(he) misses*, or, for (iv), the past-tense inflexion suffix *-(e)d*, as in *agreed* and *mended*. In my Balti dictionary, on the other hand, I have included the loan-word plural-number prefix *a-*, considered above, and all inflexion suffixes, such as the "original" plural-number inflexion suffix *-ong*, as in *mi-ong* "men" (pronounced [myung]) and *me-ong* "fires" (pronounced [myong]), the past-tense inflexion suffix *-s*, as in *shi-s* "he died" and *thop-s* "he got," or the imperative-mood inflexion suffix *-s*, as in *shi-s* "die!", "drop dead!" and *ma rku-s* "do not steal!"

No doubt the reader will have noticed that in all cases I have separated Balti inflexions, such as the prefix *a-* and the two suffixes *-ong* and *-s*, by a hyphen, to make clear the division of the word in which they occur into two lexical items, one of which has a grammatical function; but I have done the same for all types of lexical item, both those which have a grammatical function and those which have a purely lexical function.

Unlike the inflexion suffixes the C.O.D. has included an entry for the suffix *-er*, with the preceding hyphen to distinguish it as occurring only in combination with a preceding lexical item; but there is no hyphen when it occurs in combination in the compounds *eater* and *hatter*, for example. I, on the contrary, have used a hyphen to separate the corresponding suffix *-khan* in such a word as *za-khan* "eater," "someone who eats". The hyphen in the dictionary entry serves as a reminder that *-khan* never occurs

separately, as a word, unless it happens to be the topic of a linguistic discussion. This suffix *-khan* combines only with verbs, such as *za* "eat"; and the combined form, e.g. *za-khan*, is not a verb but a nominalized verb, or verbal noun. There is a very similar suffix, *-nkhan*, which combines only with substantive lexical items, such as *chu* "water," whence the compound word *chu-nkhan* "waterman," "boatman" (pronounced [chungkhan]). In these two English words one has to remember that in correct, or C.O.D., English usage there is no hyphen – I am apt to forget this in the case of *waterman* – ; but my principle in dealing with the Balti is always to separate lexical items within the word, by hyphen.

My usage, in the Balti, is simpler, therefore, than English spelling. The latter makes a threefold distinction, to be seen in *waterway* (one word), *water-buffalo* (one word, but containing a hyphen), and *water polo* (two words, with a space in between). The Balti words corresponding to the first two of these three words, *chu-lam* and *chu-bang*, are hyphenated; and the hyphen indicates that the final syllable of these words is the stressable syllable (for more detail on stress in Balti cf. Sprigg 1966); in the two-word phrase *chu mik* "spring", "(water) source", on the other hand, both words can be stressed.

Now that I have given quite a number of illustrations of my use of the term lexical item, it is time to explain why it is that I have preferred this two-word term to the one-word, and shorter, term *morpheme*. My reason is that I do not wish to follow Harris 1942\1957 in, for example, identifying *-en*, as in *oxen*, and his three alternants /-z/, /-s/, and /-z/ with a single morpheme, named "plural" (Harris 1942\1957, 114); he has managed to do this through mixing lexical grounds with phonological grounds: the distribution of *-en* is lexically determined, while that of /-z/, /-s/, and /-z/ is phonologically determined, through a threefold difference in junction. I should not wish to confuse lexical distribution, as in *oxen* and *brethren* (versus *ox* and *brother*), with phonological distributions and should keep *-(e)s*, as in *cats*, *dogs*, and *fishes*, separate from *-en* as two distinct lexical items: (i) [s/z/iz] and (ii) [er/in], though with a common grammatical function: plural, but each of the two with its own *phonological formula*. The two phonological formulae can in no way be unified, any more than the plural prefix *a-* of *a-hadiis* "traditions" can be unified in a single

phonological formula with the plural suffix *-ong* of, for example, *mi-ong* "men" and *me-ong* "fires" (cf. also Sprigg 1980, 516-7).

H. PHONOLOGICAL FORMULAE AND SINGLE ORTHOGRAPHIC FORMS
 For each lexical item I have tried to arrive at a single orthographic form, or spelling, taken from its phonological formula. In this approach to spelling I have been much encouraged by English spellings such as *column*. Since the letters *-mn* at the end of this word are pronounced [-m], the final letter might seem to be superfluous; and the same observation applies to these two letters in the lexical item *column-* as it appears in compound words such as the plural form *columns* ([-m-]), where the following lexical item is a consonant; but where *column-* is followed by a lexical item beginning with a vowel, such as the *-ist* and the *-ar* of *columnist* and *columnar*, the pronunciation of the two letters *-mn-* is, of course, a sequence of two sounds, [-mn-]. This *-mn* spelling for *column*, then, justifies itself by being more inclusive: it can symbolize all three types of pronunciation, [-m], [-mC], and [-mnV-] (in which I have used the letters [C] and [V] phonetically to symbolize, respectively, any suitable English consonant sound and any suitable English vowel sound). I have used the same principle in Balti by spelling the "original" plural suffix as *-ong*, in *mi-ong* "men" (pronounced [myung]) and *me-ong* "fires" (pronounced [myong]), in *bu-ong* "sons" (pronounced [bung]) and *sgo-ong* "doors" (pronounced [zgong]), where my spelling, a phonological spelling, is, clearly, more abstract, and more general, than the phonetic spellings (given in square brackets) (cf. Sprigg 1980, 517).

Similarly, I have used the letters *ks* in *zhiks* "be afraid" in all instances of this lexical item, though the pronunciation of these two final letters alternates from [-ks] in *mi zhiks* "(he) will not be afraid" to [-ks-] in *zhiks-uk* "(he) may get frightened," [-kh-] in *zhiks-na* (alternatively [-ks-]) "if (he) is afraid," [-kf-] in *zhiks-pa* "to be afraid," [-k-] in *mi zhiks-pa* "(he) would not be afraid", and, lastly, [-kh] in *zhiks cuk-uk* "(he) shall make (him) frightened".

L THE ENGLISH-TIBETAN APPENDIX

The greater part of the dictionary comprises Balti lexical items rendered into English; but, in order to protect myself against a criticism that I have myself levelled against others, I have felt obliged

to add a section in which a selection of common English words has been rendered into Balti.

My criticism, contained in a review of *Boro vocabulary* (1968), was "that the vocabulary is Boro-English only, and that in consequence the [Tibeto-Burman] comparatist will be obliged to make quite a search for the items that he is interested in, and may well be in doubt whether or not they have been included until he has read the vocabulary from start to finish" (Sprigg 1970, 420). In making this criticism I have assumed that it is Tibeto-Burman or Sino-Tibetan comparatists who are especially likely to consult vocabularies, glossaries, and dictionaries such as Bhat's *Boro vocabulary*, the "Glossar" in Bielmeier's *Das Märchen dem Prinzen Čobzari* (1985), and my Balti dictionary. Specialists in comparative linguistics doubtless already have a fair idea of what to expect from the Balti dictionary for words such as "eye" and "road," for example, that the former is almost bound to be found in my dictionary under the initial letter *m*, and to resemble *mig* or *dmig*, while the latter will be found under *l*, and will resemble *lam*; and they will not be disappointed: my dictionary gives *mik* "eye" and *lam* "road" (and Bhat 1968 gives *megón* and *lamá* respectively for Boro; 133, 140); but our comparatist would look in vain for the Balti for "silver" under *ngul* or "centre" under *dkyil*. In order to help him to find his way to my entries *gmul* "silver" and *skil* "centre" I have added an English-Balti appendix, based on the 22-page vocabulary in Read's *Balti Grammar* (1934) and the 58-page "English-Tibetan vocabulary" in Jäschke's *Tibetan-English dictionary* (1881\1934).

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