

A KOTTISH-TIBETAN-CHINESE WORD EQUATION

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The linguistic relations between the Yenissei-Ostyak language (which is also called Ketish) and the now extinct Kottish on the one hand and Tibetan and Chinese on the other have been discussed by a number of scholars in the more recent past. I limit myself here to mentioning in the first instance the paper on Yenissei-Ostyak ("*Zum Jenissei-Ostjakischen*") by Professor Ernst Lewy (Ungarische Jahrbücher, Vol. XIII (1933), pp. 291-308). Though this paper is devoted mainly to an analysis of the structure of the Yenissei-Ostyak verb, in its first part Professor Lewy not only deals with the early history of our knowledge of Yenissei-Ostyak and its relation to Chinese and Tibetan, but he also proposes a number of word equations which partly confirm, partly supplement, and partly invalidate the Tibetan-Chinese word equations (*Tibetisch-Chinesische Wortgleichungen*, Berlin, 1930 [reprinted from 'Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen, Vol. XXXII, 1929, Abteilung I] which were proposed by the present writer. Furthermore I wish to mention K. Bouda's "*Jenisseisch-Tibetische Wortgleichungen*" (Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Vol. XC [1936], pp. 149-159). Both papers have also been included in the bibliography appended by Professor R. Jakobson to his contribution on the palaeo-siberian languages ("*Langues Paléosibériennes*" in "*Les Langues du Monde*" (ed. by A. Meillet and M. Cohen, 2nd Ed., Paris, 1952, p. 431).

As Professor A. J. Joki informs us in his "*Lehnwörter des Sajansamojedischen*" (Mémoires de la Société Finno-ougrienne, Vol. 103, Helsinki, 1952, p. 40), he proposed about 200 Yenissei-Ostyak-Indochinese word equations. These latter equations have, however, so far remained unpublished⁽¹⁾.

In the present paper I intend to deal with one word only, viz. the Kottish word for "belly". In his "*Deutsch-Jenissei-Ostjakisches und Kottisches Wörterverzeichnis*" Dr. A. Castrén lists the following three variants⁽²⁾: *talôx*,

(1) See also the following two publications by the same author: "*Indochinesische Lehnwörter im Samojedischen*" (Finnisch-Ugrische Forschungen, XXIX (1946), pp. 202-221) and "*Ketica. Materialien aus dem Ketischen oder Jenisseiostjakischen*". Aufgenommen von Kai Donner. Bearbeitet und herausgegeben von A. J. Joki. (Mémoires de la Société Finno-ougrienne, Vol. 108, Helsinki, 1955).

(2) M[atthias] Alexander Castrén's "*Versuch einer Jenissei-Ostjakischen und Kottischen Sprachlehre*." Hrsg. von Anton Schiefner. St. Petersburg, 1858, p. 233, entry "*Bauch*".

t'alôx, *t'alôk*. I think the obvious Tibetan correspondence is *lto(-ba)* “belly, stomach”, and it would be difficult to refrain from adducing Chinese 肚 as the obvious Chinese correspondence, though, as is well known, this word is not attested in ancient Chinese texts or dictionaries. This latter fact prevented me from including the equation Tibetan *lto(-ba)*=Chinese 肚 *tuo*, *d'uo* in my *Word Equations*, as it has induced Professor Karlgren to exclude the character 肚 from his *Grammata Serica* (Stockholm, 1940, Series 62, p. 143), though it had been included by him, with the ancient sound values just quoted, in his “*Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Japanese*” (Paris, 1923, Series 1129, p. 319).

On the Kottish side, Castrén lists one derivative, *talôga* or *t'alôga* “pregnant”, and one compound, *t'alogûti* “satiated”, of which the latter word is obviously compounded with Kottish *ûti* “full”. On the Tibetan side, *lto* “food, victuals” (in addition to which Jäschke in his *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, p. 219 notes “seldom *lto-ba*”) is no doubt etymologically related, and it will be discussed below whether *ltogs-pa* “hungry, to be hungry” may be added as a further member of this “word family”.

Apart from the more general considerations proffered at the end of this paper, the important conclusion to be drawn from the proposed word equation is that the position of the *l* of *lto* has resulted from metathesis. The suggestion that Tibetan initial *l* and *r*, followed by a consonant, are not prefixes but shifted consonants was first made in *Wortgleichungen* (pp. 30/31) and elaborated further in a paper on “*The Range of Sound Alternations in Tibetan Word Families*” (Asia Major, N.S., Vol. 1, pp. 10–15). It would seem to derive further support from the present equation which presupposes some such development as *talôx* > *tlôx* > *ltôx*⁽¹⁾ > *lto* on the Tibetan side.

The present equation would furthermore seem to rule out any etymological connection between *lto-ba* “belly” and *lte-ba* “navel”, which it would be tempting to suggest on account of the frequent alternation *o*~*e* to be observed in the case of words which belong to one and the same family (e.g. *srol* “usage, habit” and *srel-ba* “to bring up, rear, train”). Whatever the merit of the equation *lte-ba*=*dz'iei* 臍 (archaic [Karlgren]: *dz'ier*) which I proposed (loc. cit., No. 198), Professor Lewy was certainly right in adducing Kottish *tyl* (plural *tyltey*) < *tylt* as a word related to Tibetan *lte*. The metathesis of the

(1) The question whether the final fricative was voiceless or voiced in Tibetan cannot be discussed here.

l would again seem to be confirmed. On the other hand, the final dental reconstructed by Professor Lewy in view of the plural form makes it unlikely that there should be any connection between Tibetan *tleḍ* (as reconstructed by me in conformity with the *-ḍ* assumed as the archaic Chinese final consonant) and Tibetan *tloχ* or *tloɣ*⁽¹⁾ which I should like to reconstruct on the strength of Kottish *talôx*.

The reconstructed final guttural leads to considering the question as to whether *ltogs-pa* "hungry, to be hungry" may be regarded as a cognate word. The meaning of "food" for *lto* might suggest the primary meaning of "feeder" for *lto-ba* "belly, stomach" and some kind of "gerundival" meaning, expressing the "necessity of being fed" for *ltogs-pa*, as it were, Latin *nutrimentum* (*lto*), *nutritor* (*lto-ba*) and *nutriendus* (*ltogs-pa*). But I am unable to adduce parallels for such "gerundival" word formation ending in a plosive + *s*.

While the *l* of *lto* may now definitely be considered as part of the word body of *lto* and not as a prefix, it may be less sure whether the same is true of the *t*. Professor Lewy has, in fact, pointed to the possibility that the syllable *ta-* may be regarded as a prefix in certain Yenissei-Ostyak verbs. In any case the proposed equation suggests an archaic form of the Tibetan, or for that matter, Chinese word which it would be very hazardous to assume merely on the evidence of the latter two languages.

(1) see above, p., 442 note 1.