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CONTENTS

To Our Readers (致讀者)	177
A Hypothesis on the Origin of Old Chinese Pharyngealization (上古漢語咽化聲母來源的一個假設) Laurent Sagart and William H. Baxter (沙加爾、白一平)	179
The evidence for Chinese *-r (古漢語 *-r 尾音的證據) Nathan W. Hill (丘內藤)	190
How many *-s suffixes in Old Chinese? (古漢語有多少個 -s 後綴?) Guillaume Jacques (向柏霖)	205
Using Network Models to Analyze Old Chinese Rhyme Data (基於網絡模型的古韻數據分析) Johann-Mattis List (游函)	218
說蜜 (On <i>Mì</i> 'Honey') 許全勝 (Quansheng Xu)	242
建陽閩語的聲調模式：兼論五條降拱的類型學意義 (The five falling contours in Jianyang Min: Typological significances) 沈瑞清、洪英、林文芳、朱曉農 (Ruiqing Shen, Ying Hong, Man Fong Lam, Xiaonong Zhu)	250
Identifying Early Sino-Vietnamese Vocabulary via Linguistic, Historical, Archaeological, And Ethnological Data (早期漢越語詞彙的確認——來自語言學、歷史學、考古學、民族學的資料證據) Mark J. Alves (歐邁強)	264
Style Sheet for the <i>BULLETIN OF CHINESE LINGUISTICS</i> (《中國語言學集刊》)	296
Appendix I: Board of Directors and Officers of the Li Fang-Kuei Society for Chinese Linguistics (紀念李方桂先生中國語言學研究學會董事及執行委員名單)	299
Appendix II: Four Awards of the Li Fang-Kuei Society for Chinese Linguistics (四種獎項及申請辦法)	302
Appendix III: 2014-15 LFK Book Award (2014-15 年李方桂語言學論著獎)	303
Appendix IV: Letter from the LFKS to the Public (李方桂學會致讀者的公開信)	304
Appendix V: Donors to the Li Fang-Kuei Society Endowment Fund (紀念李方桂先生中國語言學研究學會贊助人名單)	307



A Hypothesis on the Origin of Old Chinese Pharyngealization

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Abstract

It is proposed that OC pharyngealized onset consonants—that is, ‘type-A’ onset consonants—arose out of Proto-Sino-Tibetan plain consonants followed by geminate vowels separated by a pharyngeal fricative. When the first copy of the geminate vowel fell, the initial consonants formed clusters with the pharyngeal fricative, evolving into the OC pharyngealized consonants we reconstruct. In the Kuki-Chin branch of Tibeto-Burman, the pharyngeal fricative fell, and long vowels resulted. This proposal supposes a statistical correlation between Kuki-Chin long vowels and OC type-A words on the one hand, and between Kuki-Chin short vowels and OC type-B words on the other, as originally proposed by S. Starostin. A significant statistic bearing on forty-three probable Chinese-Kuki-Chin cognates supports this correlation. Thus reconstructed, a precursor language of Proto-Sino-Tibetan was aligned with Proto-Austronesian and Proto-Austroasiatic in exhibiting a surface constraint against monomoraic free words: by that constraint, the vowel of an underlying monosyllable was realized as a geminate with an intervening parasitic consonant such as a glottal stop or a pharyngeal fricative, while the vowels of a disyllable remained nongeminate. After reduction of disyllables to monosyllables, this process resulted in a pharyngealized vs. nonpharyngealized consonant distinction in OC.

Keywords

Chinese – Sino-Tibetan – Austronesian – Austroasiatic – pharyngealized consonants – morae – constraints

* This is a reworked version of a paper presented at the Recent Advances in Old Chinese Historical Phonology Workshop held in London on 5 and 6 November, 2015 as part of the European Research Council Grant ‘Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State’. We thank the participants at the workshop for their comments, and the participants in an Academia session on the same paper for their useful discussion, particularly South Coblin, Zev Handel, Doug Henning, Guillaume Jacques, Johann-Mattis List, Thomas Pellard, Adam Smith, Miguel Carrasquer Vidal, Gong Xun, Lukáš Zádřapa. The first author’s work is part of the program Investissements d’Avenir, overseen by the French National Research Agency, ANR-10-LABX-0083 (Labex Empirical Foundations of Language).

The Evidence for Chinese *-r

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Abstract

In 1989 Starostin proposed that Old Chinese had a final *-r that later changed to -n (and sometimes -j). Baxter & Sagart subsequently incorporated Starostin's proposal in their 2014 Old Chinese reconstructions. This essay attempts to assemble the evidence for Old Chinese final *-r and to elaborate an explicit notation for the relative strength of this evidence for reconstructing an *-r in particular words.¹

Keywords

Old Chinese – historical phonology – rhotics – reconstruction

1 Introduction

Because the Chinese script does not unambiguously encode phonetic information, like all other aspects of Old Chinese phonology, the final consonants of Old Chinese are necessarily somewhat uncertain.² The general tack of Chinese historical phonologists is to begin by projecting the finals of Middle Chinese backward onto Old Chinese and then to make adjustments of various kinds as deemed necessary.³ Schuessler (2009) is a convenient exemplar of the *opinio communis*; he distinguishes final *-p, *-m, *-k, *-ŋ, *-t, *-n, *-w, *-wk, and *-j.⁴ Starostin further proposes *-r to explain connections between final *-n

1 I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the European Research Council for supporting this research, under the auspices of 'Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State' (ERC Synergy Project 609823 ASIA). This paper has also benefited from comments received following its presentation at the University of Washington.

2 In this essay Chinese characters are provided with a reference number from Schuessler (2009), Middle Chinese readings employ Baxter's (1992) system, and Old Chinese readings follow Schuessler's (2009) system. However, this author mechanically adapted the conventions of Schuessler's reconstructions to match the typographical conventions presented in Baxter & Sagart (2014a) to ease comparison with the latter.

3 Karlgren's (1923:27–30) voiced stop finals (cf. Baxter 1992:325–342) and Pulleyblank's (1977–8:187–194) palatal finals (cf. Baxter 1994:145, 153–155) are of historic interest only and need not distract the current discussion. Karlgren reconstructed *-r and *-n in Old Chinese (Karlgren 1933:19–37, Schuessler 1974:80–81). Subsequently most researchers change his *-r to *-j and extend its occurrence (Schuessler 2009:25), i.e. Karlgren's *-r and Starostin's (1989) *-r are not equivalent. Some researchers, such as Zhengzhang (2000), prefer to reconstruct *-l rather than *-j, a rather cosmetic disagreement that has no effect on the structure of Old Chinese phonology.

4 The finals *-h, *-s, and *-ʔ are omitted from this final list. These are needed to explain the origin of tone in Middle Chinese, but are not relevant to the current discussion of *-r.



How Many *-s Suffixes in Old Chinese?

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Abstract

This paper presents potential cognates of the *qusheng* derivations in more conservative languages of the Trans-Himalayan family, in particular Rgyalrongic and Kiranti. It is suggested in particular that the valency-increasing uses of the *qusheng* could be related to the applicative -t suffix and that its valency-decreasing uses may be a trace of the reflexive -si suffix.

Keywords

derivation – causative – applicative – reflexive – antipassive – Kiranti – Rgyalrongic – Old Chinese

1 Introduction

While *qusheng* 去聲 derivation is one of the most prominent trace of morphology in Old Chinese, it is probably also the least understood one, as it presents diverse and even contradictory functions, to the extent that Downer (1959:262), in his seminal article, argued that it was simply a way of creating new words, not a derivation with a well-defined grammatical function.¹

Yet, we know thanks to the work of scholars such as Haudricourt (1954), Forrest (1960); Schuessler (1985) and Sagart (1999) that *qusheng* derivation comes (at least in part) from *-s suffixes. As -s suffixes with functions similar to those that have been reconstructed for Old Chinese are attested and even are

* This article is the revised version of a talk presented at the conference ‘Recent Advances in Old Chinese Historical Phonology’. I gratefully acknowledge the grant ‘Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State’ awarded by the ERC. This research was funded by the HimalCo project (ANR-12-CORP-0006) and is related to the research strand LR-4.11 ‘Automatic Paradigm Generation and Language Description’ of the Labex EFL (funded by the ANR/CGI). The examples are taken from a corpus that is progressively being made available on the Pangloss archive (Michailovsky et al. 2014, http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/pangloss/corpus/list_rsc.php?lg=Japhug). I would like to thank Nathan W. Hill, Laurent Sagart, Scott DeLancey, Bettina Zeisler as well as the anonymous reviewer, for providing detailed and helpful comments and corrections.

¹ ‘The present writer holds the opinion that with our present knowledge of Classical Chinese, it is better to regard chiuhseng derivation not as a remnant of a former inflectional system of the Indo-European type, but simply as a system of derivation and nothing more. When new words were needed, they were created by pronouncing the basic word in the chiuhseng. The grammatical regularity found in many cases would then be in a way fortuitous, being the result not of grammatical inflection, but of the need to create new words.’

Using Network Models to Analyze Old Chinese Rhyme Data

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Abstract

The evidence one can draw from the rhyming behavior of Old Chinese words plays a crucial role for the reconstruction of Old Chinese, and is particularly relevant to recent proposals. Some of these proposals are no longer solely based on the intuition of scholars but also substantiated by statistical arguments that help to assess the probability by which a given set of rhyming instances can be assigned to an established rhyme group. So far, however, quantitative methods were only used to confirm given hypotheses regarding rhyme groups in Old Chinese, and no exploratory analyses that would create hypotheses regarding rhyme groups in a corpus were carried out. This paper presents a new method that models rhyme data as weighted undirected networks. By representing rhyme words as nodes in a network and the frequency of rhymes in a given corpus as links between nodes, rhyme groups can be inferred with help of standard algorithms originally designed for social network analysis. This is illustrated through the construction of a rhyme network from the *Book of Odes* and comparing the automatically inferred rhyme groups with rhyme groups proposed in the literature. Apart from revealing interesting general properties of rhyme networks in Chinese historical phonology, the analysis provides strong evidence for a coda **-r* in Old Chinese. The results of the analysis and the rhyme network of the *Book of Odes* can be inspected in form of an interactive online application or directly downloaded.

Keywords

rhyme network – *Book of Odes* – Old Chinese phonology – Old Chinese reconstruction methodology

1 Introduction

1.1 *Rhyme Analysis in Old Chinese Reconstruction*

The analysis of rhyme patterns is one of the core methods for the reconstruction of Old Chinese phonology. It emerged when scholars of the Suí 隋 (581–618) and Táng 唐 (618–907) dynasties realized that old poems, especially those in the *Book of Odes* (Shījīng 詩經 ca. 1050–600 BCE), were full of inconsistencies regarding the rhyming of words. While the first reaction was to attribute inconsistencies to a different, less strict attitude towards rhyming practiced by the ancestors (as advocated by Lù Dè míng 陸德明, 550–630), or to a habit of the elders to switch the pronunciation in certain words in order to make them rhyme (a practice called *xiéyīn* 諧音 ‘sound harmonization’, Baxter 1992:153). Later scholars from the Míng 明 (1368–1644) and Qīng 清 dynasties (1644–1911) realized that the inconsistencies in the rhyme patterns reflect the effects of language change (Baxter 1992:153–157). Table 1 illustrates how a poem that

說 “蜜”

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提要

“蜜” [mì ‘honey’ < MC *mjit* < OC **mit*] (Baxter and Sagart 2014) 是極少數有確切證據源于印歐語的漢語外來詞，它可能即源自吐火羅語B (即龜茲語) 的 *mit*。一個世紀以前，俄國語言學家 Polivanov (1916) 已撰文證明“蜜”可追溯到原始印歐語 **medhu*。這個詞還可與梵語 *madhu* (蜜，蜂蜜酒)、希臘語 *μέθυ* (*methu*, 葡萄酒) / *μέθη* (*methē*, 烈性酒)、古教堂斯拉夫語 *medŭ* (蜜)、立陶宛語 *midùs/medùs* (蜜)、古英語 *meodu* (蜂蜜酒)、古高地德語 *metu* (蜂蜜酒)、德語 *met* (蜂蜜酒)、英語 *mead* (蜂蜜酒) 比較。¹ 本文重新檢討古典文獻及出土文獻中所見的“蜜”字和“蠶”字，推測蜂蜜很可能在西元前一千年之前已傳入中國。

關鍵詞

蜜、吐火羅語B *mit*、蠶

1 早期傳世典籍所見“蜜”字

《說文解字·虫部》：“蠶，飛蟲螫人者。從虫逢聲。”“蜜”字《說文》作蠶，從虫、從甬聲：“蠶，蠶甘飴也。一曰螟子。從虫甬聲。蜜，或從宀。”段玉裁注云：“飴者，米蘖煎也。蠶作食，甘如之。凡蠶皆有蜜。《方言》：‘蠶，大而蜜者謂之壺蠶。’郭云：‘今黑蠶穿竹木作孔，亦有有蜜者。’是則蠶飴名蠶，不主謂今之蜜蠶也。”² 蠶從甬聲，或從宀聲。甬、宀、密古音很近，³ 《儀禮·公食大夫禮》：“甸人陳鼎七，當門，南面，西上，設局甬。甬若束若編。”鄭注：“局，鼎扞，所以舉之者也。……古文甬皆作密。”⁴

* 小文得到徐文堪先生的指教，筆者感激不盡。對匿名評審專家及 Guillaume Jacques、孫景濤二位先生的寶貴意見，也在此表示深切謝意。但文中如有疏誤，概由筆者自負其責。

1 參 Adams (2013)、Ringe (1995)、季羨林 (2009: 12)。最近法國學者 Guillaume Jacques (2014) 據拉珈語 (Lakkia) 中“蜜蜂”一詞 *-mlet* 借自漢語，重新構擬了古漢語的“蜜”字為 **mr̥it*，并推測這可能來自前共同吐火羅語未經證實之形式 **melit*。其說富有啟發，值得重視。

2 參段玉裁 (1981: 675)。

3 參高亨 (1989: 591-592)。

4 參鄭玄、賈公彥 (1999: 476)。



建陽閩語的聲調模式：兼論五條降拱的類型學意義

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提要

本文描寫閩北建陽話的聲調，並從類型學角度對它們進行定位。建陽話除了一個升調、一個高短調跟一個平調外，還有五條降拱，{63, 52, 54, 43, 32}對類型學構成很大的挑戰。在普適調型庫中它們可以確定為四個降型調和一個純低調：上域高降型 /63/；常域高降型 /52/、高微降型 /54/、中微降型 /43/、純低調 /22/。這四個降型調的發現，對聲調類型學有三重意義：1) 豐富了調型庫：原來微降只有一種，現在要增補一種；2) 原來上域降調只有短降，現在要增補一種長降。3) 證實了一個有五條降拱的極端例子。

關鍵詞

聲調類型學、調型、降調、五降拱、中微降、上域高降

1 背景介紹

本文使用多個發音人材料，描寫閩北建陽一帶聲調的聲學和聽感特徵，並對其進行音法類型學歸類。本文所採用的是以“分域四度制”（Zhu 2012）為基礎的“普適調型庫”（朱曉農 2014），“調型模式”指的是一個調系中調型的組合。“調型”（tonotype）由三項標準來定義：（1）每個調型都有它自己的聲學或聽感特徵。（2）每個調型至少在一個語言中與至少另一個同拱度調型形成對立。（3）由所有調型組成的“普適調型庫”對於所有聲調的類型定位和演化解釋是充分而必要的（朱曉農、阮廷賢 2014）。我們不用“調形”一詞以免混淆，改用“拱形”。因此“降拱”指聲學上的曲綫形狀，而“降調”指類型學上“降型”的一個具體表現。



Identifying Early Sino-Vietnamese Vocabulary via Linguistic, Historical, Archaeological, and Ethnological Data

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Abstract

In this study, over 60 Chinese loanwords in Vietnamese are claimed to have been borrowed during the East Han or West Jin Dynasties. These Early Sino-Vietnamese (ESV) words are identified via a combination of linguistic, historical, archaeological, and ethnological data sources and frameworks. Such an interdisciplinary method helps to confirm or refute these words' status as loanwords and as belonging to this specific historical period. The combined linguistic and extralinguistic data also leads to hypotheses about possible phonological changes in Chinese from the Old Chinese (OC) to Middle Chinese (MC) periods. In particular, while Sino-Vietnamese words from the MC period have expected *qusheng* tones for Chinese *qusheng* loanwords, OC-era ESV words have either *shangsheng* or, unexpectedly, *pingsheng* tones. It is hypothesized that ESV words with *shangsheng* tones for OC *qusheng* words were borrowed earliest, while ESV items with *pingsheng* represent a later stage in OC in which final *-s was in the process of being lost in the first few centuries CE.

Keywords

Early Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary – interdisciplinary historical linguistic methodology

1 The Significance of Extralinguistic Data in Sino-Vietnamese Historical Linguistics

Early Sino-Vietnamese vocabulary² (ESV hereafter) is the layer of Chinese vocabulary borrowed into Vietnamese, and in some instances into Proto-Vietic,³ from the Han to Tang Dynasties, that is, from around

1 I wish to thank Nam Kim for comments on archaeological issues in the paper, Liam Kelley on historical issues, and a reviewer for additional suggestions.

2 The term 'Early Sino-Vietnamese' was proposed by Phan in contrast with 'Old Sino-Vietnamese', from Wang Li's term 古漢越語. The rationale is that 'Old X' often refers to a proto-language reconstruction, as in 'Old Chinese'. Phan's term is adapted throughout this article.

3 Vietic is the sub-branch of Austroasiatic that includes Vietnamese, varieties of Muong, and two dozen highly conservative varieties of related languages that are bisyllabic and with either four-tone systems or phonation/register systems. See the Glottolog entry for Vietic (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/viet1250>) for more studies and also Vietic lexical data online at http://lacito.vjf.cnrs.fr/pangloss/index_en.htm.