

APPENDIX VI

Pyu

The Pyu, as described in the Burmese historical sources, were an ancient people whose center was Prome. A good account of the Pyu is given in Luce, G.H.: The Ancient Pyu, J.E.R.S., v. 27, 239-253, 1937. Luce identifies the Pyu (spelt Pru) with the P'iao, 票, later 馬票, described in some detail in the Hsin T'ang Shu. The Pyu archaeology is known from excavations at the site of Sri Ksetra, some five miles southeast of Prome; outstanding features are the fine craftsmanship in stone and metals and the practice of urn burial. The Pyu inscriptions antedate the Burmese, the Nyazedi inscription (dated 1113 by Luce), which is perhaps the earliest Burmese inscription, being almost the last of the Pyu. Luce provisionally accepts the dates on the urn inscriptions deciphered by Blagden, which are in the 7th and 8th centuries. The era is not known, but it is assumed that the ordinary Burmese era, dating from 658 A.D., was in use by the Pyu, perhaps even introduced by the Pyu. These dates accord better with the account in the Hsin T'ang Shu, where the Pyu (P'iao) kingdom is said to have been overthrown by the Men-shu (Nan-chao or tribes under Nan-chao) in 832 A.D. Luce perhaps tends to exaggerate the "goodness of fit" shown by these data, but we can at any rate be certain that an ancient kingdom existed in the Prome region during the last part of the first millenium after Christ.

The key to the Pyu inscriptions is found in the quadrilateral inscription in Pyu, Burmese, Mon, and Pali on

twin pillars at the Myazedi pagoda of Pagan. This inscription has been partially deciphered by Blagden (A Preliminary Study of the Fourth Text of the Myazedi Inscriptions, J.R.A.S., 1911, 365-388). The text is written in an archaic Indian script of unknown antecedents, quite distinct from Mon. The visarga (ḥ) and anusvāra (ṃ) are freely used, the latter both as a superscript and as a subscript, and combinations of the two signs also frequently appear. Blagden seems to have been justified in supposing that these signs were used as tonal marks (cf. the discussion below). Blagden has also succeeded in analyzing some Pyu urn inscriptions from the Payagyi Pagoda, written in a script that looks slightly older than that of the Myazedi inscription (The "Pyu" Inscriptions, J.B.R.S., v, 7, pt. 1, 37-44, 1917, reprinted from Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XII). These inscriptions have yielded several numerals and a few other words. The following notes are based on these comparisons that seem the most reliably established.

Original final -a is preserved, cf. qa, piṅa "five" (qa^ḥ); saṃ "son" (sa^ḥ); majaḥ "wife" (ma+ja^ḥ). In the one available comparison, O.Bu. short -a' is represented by final -e, cf. de or le "moon" (la^ʰ). This differentiation is generally poorly observed in Loloish, but cf. Moso ha, la "moon".

O.Bu. final -e < -i is twice represented by -a, cf. pla^ḥ "four" (le^ḥ); pa^ḥ "give" (pe^ḥ); twice by -i, cf. hi "die" (se^ʰ); pli "grandchild" (mre^ḥ, archaic Burmese mlij). Note that in se^ʰ "die" the vowel is short.

The correspondences for O.Bu. final -ui show no regularity, cf. tko "nine" (kui⁵), but uru "bone" (a-rui⁵) (very doubtful), and qhsu "that" (t'ui).

O.Bu. final -atš is twice represented by -a, cf. ta^o "one" (tatš); hra^o "eight" (hratš, O.T. brgjad); thrice by -i, cf. hni^o "two" (hnatš); kni "seven" (k'u²-natš); ani^o "year" (a-hnatš, O.T. rnjiq). The differentiation between the words for "one" and "two" is found in many of the Loloish languages. The forms in final -i are probably to be interpreted as derived directly from original -ik, -iq.

O.Bu. final -um is represented by -o, cf. ho^o "three" (aū⁵); bo "shape" (pum).

O.Bu. final -ań is represented by -i, as in Modern Burmese, cf. u-mi "name" (a-mań); pri^o "city" (prań "country").

O.Bu. final -aŋ is represented by -a, cf. tša^o "likeness, image" (a-tš'aŋ); ja^o "this, that" (jaŋ⁵ "that") (Blagden suggests a comparison with i "this, that", which seems less probable).

A single comparison is available for O.Bu. final -ok, viz. tru "six" (k'rok), but this must be compared with O.T. drug.

Final -u is perhaps preserved, cf. su "ten", O.T. btšu (probably quite distinct from O.Bu. tš'ai).

Final -r is dropped in loan-words, cf. the "gold", Mon thar.

As regards initials, it will be noted that initial sonants have usually become surd, as in Burmese; thus sa^o "son",

O.Bu. $sa^{\check{3}}$, where the Loloish root is clearly *za. Initial clusters both with medial -r- and -l- are found, in which respect Pyu is more archaic than Burmese. With pla° "four", cf. Kānburi Lawā pli (northern Siam), Takpa pli, Garo bri < bli, O.T. $b\check{z}i$ < *bzli. The initial mr-, ml- combination does not occur, and it would seem that in Pyu, as in O.T., the nasal has been shifted to a stop, cf. pli "grandchild" ($mre^{\check{3}}$ < mlif). Of extraordinary interest is the form tru "six", O.T. drug, since this initial combination is lacking in O.Bu., where a shift to k'r- has occurred (k'rok).

Original prefixes are apparently preserved in piqa "five", cf. Garo boqa, Mikir p'oqo, Nung pe-qa; and in tko "nine", O.T. dgu, Nung te-kī.

In hni° "two" ($hnat\check{s}$) the surdization of the initial is observable; as in O.Bu., but the original sn- combination occurs in sni° "year" ($a-hnat\check{s}$), original *snik or *snij, cf. O.T. rnij.

Only one noteworthy equation can be made for the initials, cf. ho° "three" (sum), with hi "die" ($se^{\check{3}}$), where an h- < s- shift has taken place; this phenomenon is scarcely found in Burmish-Loloish, but cf. Akō (by Stirling, in GUBSS) hē "know" ($si^{\check{3}}$), he "three" ($s\check{u}^{\check{3}}$), he "iron" ($s\check{a}$), and ho "tooth" ($swa^{\check{3}}$).

As for the so-called "tone marks" (vide supra), the evidence suggests that the visarga ($\overset{\circ}{o}$) corresponds to O.Bu. falling tone ($a^{\check{3}}$) and final nasals, while the anusvāra ($\overset{\circ}{o}$) corresponds to O.Bu. final stop consonants, particularly $-at\check{s}$ < -ik.

and to final -s < -i < -it. A number of forms, however, do not conform to this scheme.