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A functional reconstruction of the Proto-Tibetan verbal system

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ABSTRACT

Based on the divergent functions attested in Purik for all four stems of the maximally complex transitive Written Tibetan (WT) verb paradigms, we are able to reconstruct a Proto-Tibetan (PT) verb system in which labial-prefixed voiceless onsets triggered a focus on the initial phase of an event (i.e., its instigation), nasal-prefixed voiced onsets on its final phase (i.e., its result), and unprefixing and eventually aspirated voiceless onsets on the event as such (or the middle phase of the event). The reconstruction of this threefold phasal distinction for PT allows us to recognize the original functions of a number of other features of Tibetan verbal morphology, to wit, the “stative” *-s* suffix, the nominalizing *-d* suffix, the causative *s-* prefix and its “result-causative” form *z-*, and the “deictic” *-o-* replacing the stem vowel *-a-*. Furthermore, the most plausible and economic account for how all these features evolved in different varieties of Tibetan involves the assumption that subordinator-less concatenations were common in PT when two verbs described different facets of one and the same event.

KEYWORDS

Proto-Tibetan, functional reconstruction

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*A functional reconstruction of the Proto-Tibetan verbal system**

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1 Introduction

1.1 *The Crazy Verbal Morphology of Written Tibetan*

Guillaume Jacques (2012: 212) holds that “[m]ost of the vocalic and consonantal alternations observed in the [WT] verbal paradigms remain unexplained after more than a hundred years of investigation: the study of historical Tibetan morphology would seem to have reached an aporia.” The four paradigms of transitive WT verbs given in Table 1¹ illustrate some of the alternations Jacques presumably means. Notice that the onset is parallel for the past stems of all four example paradigms. Why is it then that only the first two verbs have a nasal-prefixed voiced onset in the present, while the third one has a voiceless aspirated and the last one a *g*-prefixed onset? Similarly, why do only the first two verbs have a *d*- prefix (which becomes *g*- before dentals) in the future, while the other two have voiceless onsets with different prefixes? And what accounts for whether a stem has a postfinal *-s* or not? What Jacques means is that there are no functional (nor phonetic) explanations for any of these irregularities.

Present	Past ²	Future	Imperative	Meaning
'gog ~ 'gegs	bkag	dgag	khog(s)	'block'
'dogs	btags	gdags	thogs	'bind'
'thag	btags	btag	thogs	'grind'
gcog	bcag	gcag ~ gcog	chogs ~ (g)cog	'break'

Table 1. Four paradigms of transitive WT verbs with a root ending in *-ag*

* This work was initially funded by the Phil.-hist. Faculty of the University of Bern (“seed money”) and later by the Swiss National Science Foundation, whose fellowship (P2BEP1_159046) enabled me to check my reconstructions against the Old Tibetan evidence at Kobe University, where I received great support from Prof. Tsuguhito Takeuchi.

¹ I only list those stems in Table 1 and elsewhere that are found in more than one of the sources cited in Nathan Hill’s *A lexicon of Tibetan verb stems as reported by the grammatical tradition* (2010). My transliteration of WT corresponds to the one used by Old Tibetan Documents Online, for instance, where a preconsonantal <’> stands for a homorganic nasal prefix.

² Some scholars such as Hill (2010) refer to the second stems of WT verb paradigms as “past stems”, while others such as Coblin (1976) (see Table 2) call them “perfect stems”. It will emerge from the discussion below that the WT past stems with the *-s* in fact *originate* from perfects, while those without the *-s* originate from eventive past forms. Synchronically, however, the basic function of transitive second stems with and without the *-s* suffix appears to be “past”; when subordinated, these stems assume a “perfective” meaning (which, of course, must not be confused with “perfect”). Hence, I will generally use the label “past stem”.

According to Jacques, almost no substantial progress has been made in understanding the WT morphology since W. South Coblin (1976) together with Fang-Kuei Li (1933) explained some of the alternations as the result of sound changes. Table 2 features the eight WT transitive conjugations Coblin (1976: 60) was thus able to reconstruct (not without putting aside 106 verbs that “could belong to two or more paradigms”):

	Pres.	Perf.	Fut.	Imp.	No. of verbs
I	'---	b---s	b---	---s-*o	55
II	'---d	b---s	b---	---s-*o	5
III	---d	b---s	b---	---s-*o	9
IV	g---	b---s	b---	---s-*o	29
V	g---	b---	d---	---s-*o	4
VI	'---d	b---	d---	---s-*o	14
VII	'---	b---s	d---	---s-*o	16
VIII	'---d	b---s	d---	---s-*o	3

Table 2. Major transitive conjugations of WT

However, neither Coblin nor any other scholar working on Tibetan has been able to provide explanations for why a verb belongs to one or another conjugation class, or, in other words, to explain why past stems with identical onsets correspond to present stems with different onsets, why a stem has an *-s* suffix or not, or why it has an *-o-* instead of an *-a-*, and so on. In other words, to date, the earliest reconstructable stage of Tibetan on the one hand still contains, for instance, present stems that are marked by either a (nasal) *'* or a *g-* prefix, a *-d* suffix, an *-o-* instead of an *-a-* in other stems, or by combinations of these markers. On the other hand, particular markers are still found in a number of stems, for instance, the *b-* prefix in past as well as future stems, and the *-s* suffix in past, imperative as well as – a fact that Coblin’s simplified analysis does not capture – present stems. That is, we can neither attribute a single marker of WT to any particular function nor a unitary function to any particular marker.

Coblin and many others paid little attention to intransitive verbs, presumably because there is not much to explain about them. The two paradigms in Table 3 illustrate that most intransitive verbs contain in all three stems (present, past, and future, typically no imperative) either the *(')G*³ onset that also marks the present stems of many transitive verbs or the *(')Kb-* onset that also marks the imperative stems of many transitive verbs (and the present stems of some of these same verbs). In other words, intransitive verbs generally exhibit no alternation with respect to the plosives and affricates that are often particular to one or another stem of a transitive verb. Additionally, with much greater regularity for intransitives than for transitives, a nasal prefix distinguishes present from past stems, and an *-s* suffix past from present stems. We will see that the consideration of intransitive verbs is crucial for the successful reconstruction of the PT verbal system.

Present	Past	Future	Meaning
'gag	'gags	'gag	'be stopped'
'chag	chag(s)	'chag	'break, be broken'

Table 3. Two paradigms of intransitive WT verbs with a root ending in *-ag*

³ Capital *G-* stands for any voiced plosive or affricate, *K-* for any voiceless plosive or affricate.

1.2 Functional Reconstruction

What we find in WT corresponds to what Talmy Givón (1979) would call “a crazy synchronic state of the grammar”. According to Givón (2000: 114), however, “irregularities are merely the foot-prints of diachronic change from earlier regularities”, needless to say that this change is “highly natural and ... motivated ... by various communicative factors” (Givón 1979: 235). Presuming “that coherence must have been there at some earlier evolutionary or diachronic stage” (Givón 2000: 113), it is thus theoretically possible for linguists to internally reconstruct the earlier regular stage of a language on the basis of its attested irregular reflexes.

Scholars working on Tibetan in the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, such as August Conrady, August H. Francke, Walter Simon, Stuart N. Wolfenden, Jacques Durr, Géza Uray, Robert Shafer, and Paul Benedict may at times have had aims quite similar to the one later outlined by Givón (1979, 2000; see the preceding paragraph). However, presumably due to the lack of a comprehensive description of an archaic western variety such as Purik or Balti, in which all the consonant clusters of WT have remained distinct, they were unable to make sense of the WT paradigms. We will see below that the evidence from Purik proves crucial for the reconstruction of PT, because the “crazy features” of WT all perform diverging functions there. It is thus only by comparing the “crazy synchronic states” of two different varieties of Tibetan that we are able to recognize the highly regular original system from which they stem.

Even if Givón called his method “internal reconstruction”, he readily also adduced available comparative evidence (see, for instance, Givón 2000: 124). Because functional divergences between the different varieties are at least as important as the ones within the different varieties in reconstructing PT, I prefer to call the method I am applying here “functional reconstruction”. This method is very simple. It is about continuously testing hypotheses against the identified functional divergences and upholding those that best account for them, or in other words, the most plausible and economical hypotheses. Nevertheless, at least since the mid-20th century, nobody appears to have persistently tried to functionally reconstruct Tibetan.

1.3 Taking Intrinsic Variation of Grammatical Categories for Granted

The contrast between intransitive verbs with voiced onsets and transitive verbs with voiceless onsets is well-attested in Tibeto-Burman languages.⁴ Despite this, and the fact that there are many intransitive verbs with voiced onsets in Tibetan, scholars have tended to view the tense and mood distinction exhibited in the maximally complex four-stem paradigms of transitive verbs (as exemplified by the first two paradigms in Table 1) as original. Drawing on earlier observations by Francke and Simon in Jäschke’s Tibetan grammar (1929⁵), Benedict (1972: 124) was aware of the “obscuring” nature of the onset-alternations within the transitive paradigms and surmised that “Tibetan has secondarily made use of initial alternation as a time-index”. More recently, however, Guillaume Jacques (2012: 220) writes that “there is no need to suppose that the present and future

⁴ According to Paul Benedict (1972: 124), “[i]n Tibetan, Kiranti, Bahing, Vayu, and Bodo-Garo the fundamental contrast is that between intransitives with sonant initials and transitives with surd initials, and this contrast is surely to be regarded as an inherited TB feature”. Randy LaPolla (2003: 23) adds that “[m]ost scholars now would see the Chinese forms as parallel to the TB forms, and part of a cognate phenomenon.”

⁵ Francke and Simon in Jäschke’s Tibetan grammar (1929) hold “that the main line of cleavage in Tibetan roots is that between presents and futures (sonant initial, intransitive or durative) and perfects and imperatives (surd initial, transitive or active)”.

are somehow derived from the intransitive verbs as some authors have suggested.” Nathan Hill (2014: 2) even reaches the contrary conclusion that “[t]he voiceless intransitive appears to derive from the present stem of the voice-alternating transitive.” The statements of both Jacques and Hill reveal a belief prevalent among scholars in the field that the complex onset-alternating transitive paradigms are much more likely to preserve archaic features than the simple intransitive verbs (see also Bettina Zeisler 2004: 347).

One reason why scholars were unable to recover the original functions of Tibetan verb stems is that they followed Robert Shafer (1950, 1951) in assuming that there is no trace of the transitive WT present stems with *'G-* and future stems with *dG-* in western dialects such as Purik, Balti, and Ladakhi. According to Shafer’s “Proto-West Bodish Hypothesis”, the aforementioned dialects preserve a stage of the language that did not derive from the one attested in the oldest written sources. Shafer assumed that the various verbal prefixes of WT only evolved after it had split off from the aforementioned dialects.⁶ I argue in this article that the transitive present stems with *'G-* and the future stems with *dG-* are well-attested in western varieties, however, in intransitive meanings, and that WT did not innovate any prefixes but reanalyzed many stems with initial *'G-*, *dG-*, and *Kb-* as expressing transitive notions.

A view different from both Shafer’s and my own is expressed by Zeisler (2009: 75), who holds that “the opaque [Old Tibetan] alternations of prefixes, consonants and vowels in verb stem formation were levelled out and replaced by regular systems of periphrastic construction in the western and central varieties”, and that these “processes of simplification (...) were triggered in a linguistic contact situation, where Old Tibetan served as a lingua franca for various non-Tibetan peoples.”⁷ Zeisler (2009: 77) claims that, in the course of these simplifications, Central and Western Tibetan “have lost all grammatical prefixes as well as vowel and consonant alternations for stems I and II [i.e., the WT present and past stems]”.

Zeisler (2002, 2004) represents a nice example for how scholars were defied deeper insights because they took variation of a grammatical category for granted. First, she recognized that the WT imperative stems sometimes had a “potential” meaning in both Amdo and WT that had to be older than their imperative function (Zeisler 2002: 449-50). Second, she correctly observed that nominalized forms of the WT future stems had an intrinsic “permissive” meaning (Zeisler 2004: 264-65). In neither of these two cases, however, did Zeisler notice that the potential and the permissive meanings could not have been intrinsic to all the different markers that were attested for

⁶ Shafer (1951: 1020) argues that “[I]f one assumes that the West Bodish simple verb roots which resemble the Old Bodish [i.e., WT] perfect (...) arose through degeneration of an ancient complex morphology such as we have in Old Bodish, we are faced with difficulties. For that would imply that only the transitive perfect (...) was more used than the present and the future combined (...). This is improbable.” In Roland Bielmeier’s (2004: 396) words, “[w]e would have to assume that only the perfect stem of Old Bodish has survived in Western Archaic Tibetan (WAT) without leaving any trace of the Old Bodish present and future stem.” Bielmeier (2004: 397) thus supported Shafer’s (1951: 1020) alternative assumption “that West Bodish preserves a root form of the verbs which in prehistoric times had no prefix (...) and no consonantal alternation for tense or the imperative; that to this simple root the Eastern dialect, which later became the literary language, developed prefixes and consonantal alternation which had no effect on the popular speech of Western Tibet, except in borrowed words.”

⁷ More or less the same claim is expressed once more in Zeisler (2009: 3): “The development of the misleadingly so-called “archaic” or “conservative” West Tibetan varieties can only be explained as an outcome of a long lasting contact situation between primarily Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Iranian languages and a gradual shift to the then spoken Old Tibetan lingua franca. Even the development of the Central Tibetan varieties is better explained as a result of linguistic contact than as a result of internal development.”

the respective slots of the transitive WT paradigms. We will see in §4 that in order to recognize the original functions of the WT imperative stems we need to carefully distinguish between the voiceless aspirated onset of some of them and the stem-vowel *-o-* instead of an *-a-* of others. It will then become clear that, contrary to Zeisler's (2009: 77) assumptions, neither the aspiration nor the ablaut of these stems was lost in Western Tibetan. Accordingly, the permissive notion will be shown in §3 to have only been intrinsic to the WT future stems with a *d/g*-prefixed voiced onset, but certainly not to the ones that share a *b-* prefix with the corresponding past stems. Contrary to Zeisler's (2009: 77) claim that "[a]ll modern varieties have lost stem III [i.e., the WT future stem]", we will present broad evidence from Purik for verb stems with a *d/g*-prefixed voiced onset.⁸ None of the features (neither stems themselves nor the affixes marking them) Zeisler assumes to have been lost in western varieties were thus actually lost there. They merely diverged functionally from their WT correspondences (or vice versa) to the extent that they have not been identified as such anywhere in the literature.

Given that we have to reconstruct a threefold phasal distinction for PT, we need to quickly mention here Géza Uray's (1953: 60) idea of a "threefold system of voices", even though I have not been able to understand what he meant by it. Uray (1953: 60) acknowledged that "Durr's outstanding merit lies in his discovery of the basis of the threefold system of voices." However, it does not become clear from a lecture of Jacques Durr (1950) exactly what voice distinction Uray was referring to⁹, and this corresponds to Uray's (1953: 53) verdict that "the problem of voice-categories has so far remained unsolved. For this reason one of the most important tasks in connection with the Ancient Tibetan verbal system is to clear up the problems of the voice-categories." Nevertheless, Nathan Hill (2014) appears to hold that this "consistently ignored" idea of Uray's (1953: 50-51) actually solved the problem. In my view, however, Hill's summary throws up more questions than it answers: "voicing alternation occurs among triplets and not pairs of verbs. A voiced intransitive (A), voice-alternating transitive (B), and voiceless intransitive (C) all derive from the same root." Whatever Uray or Durr had in mind, the threefold distinction Hill posits based on their lecture has nothing in common with the ideas put forth in the present article. Most essentially, it will be demonstrated that we need not put up with alternating primitives such as the voice-alternating transitive.

The state of the art is best illustrated by means of two of the most recent attempts at making sense of the "extremely irregular conjugation" (Jacques 2012: 212) of Tibetan, which agree in refuting just one of those things the pioneering scholars seem to have gotten right. Jacques was quoted above already for rejecting Durr's (1950) idea that the WT present and future stems should derive from the intransitive verb, and Hill (2014: 1) is similarly skeptical about Conrady (1896: 27), who "associates the voiced members of the transitive paradigm with the voiced intransitive paradigm. This idea has proven tenacious."

That linguists have recently – when confronted with a verbal category that is characterized by an alternation of markers that are also found in other verbal and nominal categories – consistently preferred to derive a non-alternating form from an alternating one rather than vice versa must have

⁸ The fourth claim of Zeisler (2009: 77) that Western Tibetan "shows over-generalisation of suffix *-s*" will be refuted in §2.

⁹ Durr (1950: 168) quite adequately characterizes the semantic difference between all four WT stems as "*bkang* ... est rempli par (un agent); *khang*, est rempli; *gang*, est plein ... *d-gang*, est plein (non pas hic et nunc, mais) dans l'avenir, c'est-à-dire *sera plein*", but he does not appear to capture anywhere else (facets of) the original distinction reconstructed here.

something to do with the fact that “functional reconstruction” has barely been appreciated as a tool of historical linguistics. At the same time, scholars appear not to have recognized most of the material that is needed for such a task.¹⁰

1.4 Purik

In order to be able to reconstruct the original functions of the verbal markers of WT, we need to consider the diverging functions these markers perform in Purik, a variety of Tibetan spoken in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir in Northwestern India, in which all WT verbal markers have remained distinct.¹¹ The verbal morphology of Purik is somewhat less crazy than that of WT, because there are no paradigmatic relationships between the stems marked with different onsets (even if some of them might synchronically still be associated with each other and be analyzed as related), all of which have lexicalized as verbs, nouns, or other parts of speech expressing different aktionsarten in Purik.¹² Hence, the stems with initial 'G-, which have become reanalyzed as transitive present stems in many WT paradigms, still convey resultative-passive notions in Purik. Similarly, the transitive WT imperative stems with initial *Kb-* correspond to nouns and verbs conveying dynamic-passive notions in Purik.

Only two of the markers found in the transitive WT paradigms are productive in Purik. The first, the *-s* suffix marks the past of transitive but not intransitive verbs (recall that it more regularly distinguishes perfect from present stems of intransitive than of transitive verbs in WT), as well as the imperative of verbs with a vocalic final. It is also in imperatives that the second productive marker, the vowel the vowel *-o-* replaces an *-a-* of the root. Note that both the *-s* and the *-o-* instead of an *-a-* have also lexicalized as part of the roots of many verbs, nouns, and other parts of speech.

There is no use in spending any more time describing the grammars of the two varieties of Tibetan mainly compared here. The process of producing and testing hypotheses in order to come up with the most plausible and economic account of the functional divergences between Purik and WT is primarily abductive (cf. Givón 2000: 112–13). This means that there are no direct clues that would point from a synchronically attested to an earlier function. Especially in the case at hand, hypotheses were much less about the functions of single markers than about the system in which the different markers restricted and thereby defined each other. As a consequence, it is time to present what I have reconstructed for PT. Based on that reconstruction, we may then proceed to trace how the different features evolved in the two varieties.

1.5 Reconstructing Proto-Tibetan

The most plausible account I have been able to come up with builds on the assumption that at an early stage of PT, the verbs focused on three different *phases* of an event depending on their

¹⁰ To some extent, Jacques (2012: 217) was right in claiming that “no systematic reconstruction of the Tibetan verbal system will be possible until modern dialects and ancient texts have been exhaustively investigated.”

¹¹ Balti is about equally archaic, but especially the (post)final *-s*, which proves crucial for the reconstruction of PT, has been subject to a great deal of variation. As far as the phonetically conservative varieties of Amdo are concerned, they do not bear testimony to the functional divergences needed for the reconstruction of PT, because they are very closely related to WT. For the phonology of Purik, see Zemp (2014b), for its grammar, see Zemp (2014a).

¹² For the “dramatizers”, see Zemp (2012), and §§2.4 and 4.4 in the present article.

onsets. Thus, a labial-prefixed¹³ voiceless onset triggered a focus on the initial phase of an event, a voiceless aspirated onset on its main middle phase, and a nasal-prefixed¹⁴ voiced onset on its final phase.¹⁵ I suggest to call the three stems “A-, M- and Z-phasives” respectively, since “A” is the initial letter of the Roman alphabet and evokes the involved “activity” and the instigation of the event by an “agent”, “M” is a letter in the middle of the alphabet and evokes the “main” and “middle” part of the event, and “Z” is the final letter of the alphabet and thus represents the end or result of the event.

This threefold phasal distinction seems typologically rather odd. I have not found any description of such a system in the literature, except that the M-phasives strongly resemble dynamic passives, the Z-phasives stative passives, and the A-phasives actives. However, the fact that the M-phasive is formally the least marked but the A-phasive is marked sharply distinguishes the PT phasal distinction from the voice distinctions described for other languages. According to Siewierska (1984: 2-3), Givón (1994: 8), and Keenan and Dryer (2007: 325), passives are normally derived from the more basic and less marked actives.

It is instructive to compare the reconstructed threefold phasal distinction of Tibetan with the verbal onset distinctions found in other TB languages. What Paul Benedict (1972) and Randy LaPolla (2003) find in many branches (see footnote 4) are only twofold distinctions consisting of a transitive verb with a voiceless onset and an intransitive verb with a voiced onset, which they agree in viewing as an inherited TB feature. Benedict (1972: 124) thus reconstructs alternations such as the following (citing only those here that appear to be continued in Tibetan): **bar* ~ **par* ‘burn’, **be* ~ **pe* ‘broken, break’, **byar* ~ **pyar* ‘affix, plait, sew’, **gwa-n* ~ **kwa-n* ‘put on clothes’, **du-t* ~ **tu-t* ‘joint, tie, knot’. However, given that the forms with a voiceless and a voiced initial (thereby switching back from Benedict’s order to the one that suits our purposes) are related and hence both refer to the same event, respectively, they should perhaps rather be viewed as “actives” and “passives”. Thus, they give an account of one and the same event from the perspective of the actor (voiceless onset, active) and the undergoer (voiced onset, passive), respectively. It is evident then that the TB actives correspond to the PT A-phasives, and the TB passives to the PT Z-phasives, while the PT M-phasives are left without a TB correspondence. However, given their meaning viz. their focusing on the main part of the event or the event as such, M-phasives are likely to have evolved from the bare verb roots.

It may contribute to our understanding of the processes involved in the establishment of the threefold phasive distinction to quickly jump to §5.3. Noticing that Tibetan does not contain a single trace of the elaborate TB person agreement morphology, while all other aspects of PT appear to be of TB origin (i.e., the lexicon and the derivational morphology), we will reach the conclusion there

¹³ Its reflexes in the spoken dialects suggest that the *b-* prefix stood for a (bi)labial fricative (ϕ -) in the absolute *anlaut*. It certainly had a devoicing effect on the following initial. For the evidence from alphabets unearthed in East Turkestan suggesting that OT <*b*> represented a glide /*w*-/ rather than a plosive /*b*-/, see Uray (1955: 103). Note also that the *b-* prefix is reflected by /*p*/ in the internal position of compounds, see §5 of the present article. Evidence of a “causative” *p-* prefix in Bodo-Garo and Mikir is discussed in Benedict (1972: 112). Furthermore, Maspero (1930; 1952: 593) reconstructs a ‘causative’ *p-* prefix for Old Chinese, the functions of which “still await clarification” according to Sagart (1999: 89).

¹⁴ In varieties spoken in Amdo, Kham, Hor, Ngari, and Spiti (cf. the CDTD), the voicing prefix is consistently reflected by a nasal that is homorganic with the following voiced initial. This evidence suggests that we reconstruct the same phonetic form for the PT prefix, and represent it by *N-*.

¹⁵ Note that I have confined my investigation of the Tibetan verbal morphology to verbs with initial plosives or affricates in at least some of their stems, because the verbs with initial nasals and liquids do not appear to have lent themselves to the threefold phasal distinction.

that PT was a highly “creoloid” language (see DeLancey 2014a). In fact, considering that the PT reconstructed here is much simpler than previously assumed, it appears that PT immediately emerged from a situation in which a TB language was “suboptimally transmitted” (see Dahl 2004) to speakers of different tongues. What is characteristic about the initial stages of the PT creole is that all its (exclusively derivational) verbal markers strongly tended to be generalized and extended across the different roots.

The phasal distinction was generalized just like that. Hence, PT certainly inherited a number of pairs consisting of active verbs with voiced initials and passive verbs with voiceless initials. Along with these, PT likely also inherited some bare, perhaps already aspirated verb roots from TB, even if they have not been mentioned by scholars discussing TB onset alternations. (After all, the threefold contrast has gone unnoticed even in Tibetan, which native grammarians have studied for over one thousand years and western scholars for more than two hundred years.) It is less likely that all M-phasives were backformed from corresponding actives and passives. However, when the threefold distinction was generalized by deriving new A-phasives by means of the devoicing * ϕ - prefix and new Z-phasives by means of * N -, some M-phasives may have also been backformed from their two marked correspondences.

A few open questions remain. Did PT inherit the M-phasives deriving from the bare roots already in an aspirated form, and did this form simply reflect an emphatic way of denoting an event as such? Or were M-phasives only secondarily aspirated, while their active and passive derivations were protected by a prefix? Furthermore, did PT inherit the actives and passives together with their prefixes? Or did * ϕ - and * N - only emerge as the means to derive new A- and Z-phasives? The TB evidence for these prefixes is too scarce to decide this issue.

Even if some aspects about the emergence of the threefold PT phasal distinction remain in the dark, its recognition allows us to neatly account for the evolution of all other verbal markers of Tibetan. Before tracing the evolution of the different phasives in §§2-5, we will quickly discuss a few further traits that can be reconstructed for PT.

At the earliest reconstructable stage of PT, there appear to have been no direct ways to indicate whether one was speaking about a past, present, or future event. Simple verb forms thus appear to have come to generally refer to recent past events. Together with the “stative” *-s* suffix, they were used to indicate the result of an event, thereby generally implying that this result was expected to still hold at the moment of speaking. A number of different strategies were used to imply that one was speaking about a future event. M-phasives indicated the event as such and were thus used to indicate that this event had taken place, but also that it could take place. While in Proto-Purik (PPT), the latter, “potential”, meaning regularly lexicalized in denoting the entity that could undergo the event in question, in Proto-Written Tibetan (PWT), it eventually evolved into an imperative to perform that event. Whenever the verbal root had an *-a-*, this vowel was changed into an *-o-* in these same imperatives. This vowel change is likely to reflect “lip-pointing” (see Enfield 2001, and §4 of the present article), which was used to point to an entity that was situated before the interlocutors. (In PPT, imperatives became expressed by A-phasives with the same *-o-* instead of an *-a-* in the root.) Furthermore, in order to indicate an event that regularly took place or that needed to take place, speakers of PT must have at times employed the Z-phasives, which focused on the final phase of an event and thereby implied that its instigation was not at stake. This use of the Z-phasives became conventionalized only in PWT, but a few traces in Purik suggest that it was already possible in PT. Finally, it appears that the causative *s-* prefix PT inherited from TB was extended from voiceless to voiced initials, thereby yielding stems that described a situation that potentially leads to a future event

(namely the event denoted by the corresponding Z-phasive). These stems best illustrate a strong tendency that adheres to the divergent evolution of all PT stems in the two branches under focus. In PPT, the stems with initial *z-G- lexicalized as words denoting (or characterized as) the state or event that potentially leads to another event. In PWT, on the other hand, the same stems (with initial d-G- in WT) grammaticalized as indicating that an event will take place in the future. In other words, the same forms appear to have become “objectivized” in PPT but “subjectivized” in PWT (for these notions, see Langacker 1990).¹⁶ PWT thus became endowed with a number of strategies with which one could refer to a future event by manipulating the onset. There are only very few traces of these same strategies in Purik. Probably they never generalized in PPT to the same extent as in PWT. However, they may have also been ousted by the periphrastic constructions that arose around the time PT started to diverge into distinct varieties with a decreasing amount of contact. Which brings us to a last feature of PT that is reconstructed in this article. The periphrastic constructions that are characteristic of all spoken varieties of Tibetan are best accounted for by assuming that subordinators-less concatenations were the rule in PT if two verbs described different facets of one and the same event.

In the sections that follow, I will try to show how the reconstruction of PT came about. Since the best hypotheses typically do not only explain what one wanted to explain but other facts as well, it is best to discuss certain features of the PT grammar together. Hence, the evolution of the Z-phasives is best understood when at the same time considering the stative -s and the nominalizing -d suffix, as done in §2. The Z-phasives with the *z- prefix (yielding many WT future stems with initial dG-), an altered form of the causative s- prefix, are discussed in §3. Furthermore, the discussion of the M-phasives in §4 also sheds light on the origin of the -a-/-o- vowel alternation. Finally, A-phasives are addressed in §5. In the discussion section, we will quickly trace the collapse of the threefold stem distinction (§6.1), list some paradigms whose stems appear to have ceased to be associated with each other by the time Tibetan started to be written down (§6.2), and finally demonstrate why PT must have been a creole (§6.3).

Note that I will generally not adduce any typological parallels for the functional changes reconstructed in this article. They are claimed to be plausible in their own right. Needless to say that I expect most of them¹⁷ to have occurred in other languages. Similarly, I will only rarely be able to adduce phonetic parallels from within Tibetan in order to establish actual sound laws, because prefixes and suffixes are often subject to phonetic conditions (such as their high frequency and their being attached to the generally unstressed verb) to which no other sounds are.

2 The Z-phasives, the stative -s suffix, and the nominalizing -d suffix

The present section is dedicated to the Tibetan verb stems with a voiced onset, which were claimed to have originally focused on the final phase of an event. The nasal prefix that once triggered the voicing of the onset has been regularly preserved in a large number of mostly eastern dialects (see footnote 14). In addition, it is found in perhaps all dialects in the internal position of some

¹⁶ The reanalyses that led to the transitive WT present stems with 'G- and imperative stems with *Kb-* also involved ‘subjectification’, but they additionally involved implicatures.

¹⁷ Except perhaps for those that may only take place under the peculiar condition that a creole generalized a voice distinction triggered by voiceless and voiced onsets of its lexifier language.

compounds.¹⁸ In order to trace the evolution of the verb stems with a nasal-prefixed voiced onset, we will mainly look here at those instances that are reflected by transitive WT present stems (and a corresponding past stem with a *b*-prefixed voiceless onset) on the one hand, but intransitive verbs in Purik (and a corresponding transitive verb with a voiceless onset) on the other.¹⁹ There are three types of such correspondences, all of which are illustrated by one example each in Table 4.

Purik		Written Tibetan (transitive)	
intransitive < Z-phasive	transitive < A-phasive	present	past
Simple Past: -∅	Simple Past: -s		
<i>gays</i> ‘be blocked’	<i>kaq</i> ‘block’	<i>’geg(s)</i>	<i>bkag</i>
<i>bri</i> ‘become less’	<i>ḡri</i> ‘make less’	<i>’brid</i>	<i>ḡbris</i>
<i>dul</i> ‘become soft (of leather)’	<i>tul</i> ‘soften, knead’	<i>’dul</i>	<i>btul</i>

Table 4. Purik intransitive verbs: WT transitive present stems

The first group of correspondences has an *-s* suffix in one or both of the branches compared; the second group lacks a suffix in Purik but has a *-d* suffix in WT; and the third group has alveolar finals, after which the occurrence of the similarly alveolar suffixes *-s* and *-d* is and always was restricted. In §§2.1 and 2.2, we will contrast the diverging ways in which all of these Z-phasives are used in Purik and WT. In §2.3, we will then take a closer look at those Z-phasives that generally have an *-s* suffix in both branches (the first group in Table 4) and account for why this *-s* was added to their roots but not to others at some stage of PT. We will conclude that the Z-phasives received the *-s* suffix with its “stative” meaning when they were used telically, but not when they were used atelically. This means that together with the *-s*, they described the state that resulted from a past event; without the *-s*, they described the past event itself. In §2.4, we will see that further peculiarities of the Purik grammar are explained if we assume that all verbs were once used resultative-statively with the *-s* suffix and eventually without it. Turning to the second group of Z-phasives in §2.5, I will

¹⁸ For Purik, cf. for instance *skjenzüks* ‘hug (lit. neck-enter)’ < **skye* ‘jug-*s*, *sangul* ‘earthquake (earth-move)’ < **sa* ‘gul, *fangrums* ‘sore muscles (flesh-be.pinch)’ < **sha* ‘grum-*s*, *fangaq* ‘when a shirt or skirt reveals skin around the waste or the legs because it does not fall properly (flesh-be.stuck)’ < **sha* ‘gag, or the negated testimonial existential copula *mi-nduk* < *mi* ‘dug.

¹⁹ The WT distinction between transitive present stems with a voiced initial and past stems with a voiceless initial is regularly continued as an aspectual distinction between imperfective and perfective stems (a direct consequence of the fact that simple verb forms more or less ceased to be productive but were nominalized and subordinated to auxiliaries in spoken Tibetan) in Jirel (see Strahm and Maibaum 1975) and Sherpa (see Tournadre et al. 2009: 281-90) in Northern Nepal, Tshochen in Ngari (see Qu and Tan 1983), as well as Themchen and many other phonetically conservative varieties spoken in Amdo (see especially Haller 2004 and the CDTD). Only a few traces of the distinction between transitive imperfective stems with voiced initials and perfective stems with voiceless initials are found in Purang and Gertse (in Ngari, see Qu and Tan 1983), Nangchen (in Southern Qinghai, see Causemann 1989), and Lhasa (see the CDTD). While Amdo has also preserved labial and nasal prefixes, it is only in Jirel, Sherpa, and Tshochen that A-phasives with an initial labial plosive have also remained unaspirated and thus distinct from the corresponding M-phasives (> imperatives). This evidence suggests that the ancestor of Jirel, Sherpa, and Tshochen split off from PWT before the labial prefix of the A-phasives with labial initials had disappeared, thus allowing them to become aspirated in WT and Amdo. This conclusion is confirmed by evidence for unaspirated labial A-phasives in Leh (e.g., *pe* ‘open, separate, select’, or *pi* ‘wipe off; pull out’), which bears testimony to the fact that the labial prefix marked A-phasives also in PPT before they became aspirated in most of its daughters (but not in Leh).

demonstrate that the *-d* suffix of some transitive WT present stems originally had a nominalizing function. We will then be able to account in §2.6 for how the three groups of Z-phasives acquired their transitive meanings in WT.

2.1 *The Purik Simple Past*

In today's Purik, the Simple Past of transitive²⁰ verbs is formed by suffixing an *-s* to the verb root, as illustrated for *p^hij-s*, *kro(l)-s*, and the compound *kaq-se zaq-s* in (1), (3), and (5). In contrast to this, the Simple Past of intransitive verbs never takes an *-s*, as shown for the intransitive correspondences of the transitive verbs above, namely *bij*, *grol*, and *gaχs* in (2), (4), and (6) (the last of which already contains an *-s* in its root). Note that unlike in WT, the *-s* may also stand after alveolar finals (*-r*, *-l*, *-n*, and *-t*) in Purik, sometimes in turn deleting them, as illustrated by *kro-s* (~ *krol-s*) in (3). The Simple Past is negated by inserting *ma* immediately before the predicate.

- (1) *zer-un p^hij-s*
 nail-PL take.out-PST
 '(I) took out the nails.'
- (2) *k^ho are tɬfajm-e-ka bij*
 (s)he that tree-G-LOC go.up
 '(S)he climbed the tree.'
- (3) *skjeraχs-po kro-s*
 belt-DEF untie-PST
 '(He) took off (his) belt.'
- (4) *mana ttoχs-e grol, de-aŋ tɬaj met*
 very become.hungry-CNJ become.loose that-INE nothing NEG:EX
 '(I'm) falling apart from hunger, there's nothing in there (i.e., in my stomach).'
- (5) *di-aŋ balan kaq-se zaq-s*
 this-INE cattle block-CNJ put-PST
 '(I've) locked the cattle in here.'
- (6) *rtswa gaχs, wa de-w-a soq-se nangos-tsa-a toŋ*
 grass be.blocked hey that-DEF-DAT stuff-CNJ inside-LIM-DAT give\IMP
 'The grass is stuck – Give it a jolt there and push it inside (a little)!'.

While Simple Pasts normally describe past events, certain contexts conventionally trigger a resultative reading of intransitive verbs, see (7) and (8), and less commonly, an inchoative reading of transitive verbs, see (9).

²⁰ If we apply the distinction between transitive and intransitive to the Purik verbs, it is important to exclude from the former category verbs with a dative experiencer (e.g., *t^hoŋ* 'be visible, see', as in *k^ho-a ma t^hoŋ* '(S)he did not see (it).', etc.) or a locative stimulus or goal (e.g., *rdjaŋ* 'trust', as in *ŋa k^ho-ika ma rdjaŋ* 'I did not trust her/him.').

- (7) *ttoχs-a*
become.hungry-Q
'Are you hungry (now)? (In other contexts: Did you get hungry?)'
- (8) *t^hoŋ-a*
be.visible-Q
'Can you see (it)? (In other contexts: Did you see (it)?)'
- (9) *baŋ zer-s*
adhan say-PST
'The adhan has started to pray. (In other contexts: The adhan prayed.)'

2.2 The WT Simple Present

In WT, simple transitive present stems are mainly used in two ways.²¹ Their “habitual” function is illustrated by *'dzugs* in (10) and *'dul* in (11), which both describe how an action is generally carried out, viz. how it needs to be carried out.

- WT *gzi brjid*:
- (10) *mda' mdung ral gri rten du 'dzugs, gser gyu rin chen rten du 'dzugs*. 'One sets up as symbols the arrow, the spear and the sword, and one sets up as symbols gold and turquoise and precious stones.' (Snellgrove 1980: 64²²)
- (11) *tsha ba thams cad bsil gyis 'dul, grang ba thams cad drod kyis 'dul, bad kan thams cad gsing gis dbye*. 'All feverish conditions are counteracted by the cooling kind; all cold conditions by the warming kind; all phlegmatic conditions by the dispersing kind.' (Snellgrove 1980: 39)

The other typical function of Simple Presents in WT is illustrated by *'debs* in (12) and *'bul* in (13), which both describe an action the speaker is going to perform himself. This function will be referred to as the “speaker-plan”.

- WT *mi la ras pa'i rnam thar*:
- (12) *bla ma bka' drin can la gsol ba 'debs* (de Jong 1959: 76.25)
'I am praying to you (= starting now, lit. applying my prayers), gracious Lama!' (Evans-Wentz (1985: 99): 'Zu dir, oh gnäd'ger Guru, bete ich!')
- (13) *lus ngag yid gsum yang 'bul*. (de Jong 1959: 56, twice on the same page)
'I am giving (= willing to give) you body, word, and soul, the three!' (Evans-Wentz (1985: 70): 'Ich bringe dir Leib, Wort und Geist dar.')

²¹ According to Zeisler (2004: 325), “the mere present stem in Tibetan ... [is] used for habits, performative acts, events in the immediate future, and all cases where the fact that the event is ongoing is less important than the fact that the event occurs at all.” For more examples illustrating the use of WT present stems, see Zeisler (2004: 325-42).

²² Examples (10) and (11) along with their translation are from the *gzi brjid*, a WT text that can be dated to the end of the fourteenth century (Snellgrove 1980: 3).

The habitual function is found already in OT, as exemplified by the same verbs adduced above already for later WT, i.e., 'debs in (14), 'dzugs in (15), and 'bul in (16). I have not come across, however, clear examples of the speaker-plan function in OT.

OT IOL Tib J 0738.3v33:

- (14) *rta dang rkyang 'dres na // zhags [pa?] nI gang la 'debs*
 'When mixing horse and wild ass, on which should one put the noose?' (Thomas 1957)

OT Pelliot Tibétain (Pt) 1283.558 (Report of the mission consisting of five Uighur envoys sent to North Asia):

- (15) ... // *sgor ni tog dgu 'dzugste*
 'They (the *dru gu rus dgu*) put up nine emblems (tassels) at the gate.' (see Moriyasu 1977: 4)

OT Pt 1283.568:

- (16) ... // *hor la / byi ba sngon po'i pags (569) pa 'bul*
 '(The tribe called *Khe rged*) pay (as tribute) furs of the blue rat to the Hor.'

2.3 Transitive WT Present Stems Corresponding to Intransitive P Verbs

The goal of the present section is to account for how the same verb forms could come to express resultative-passive notions in Purik but function as transitive verbs in WT. In order to achieve that goal, we need to compare the first two groups of correspondences that were distinguished in Table 4. Table 5 lists those intransitive verbs of Purik corresponding to transitive present stems in WT that tend to contain an *-s* suffix in both branches of Tibetan.²³

Purik		Written Tibetan (transitive)	
intransitive < Z-phasive	transitive < A-phasive	present	past
Simple Past: -∅	Simple Past: -s		
<i>gan</i> 'be filled'	<i>skan</i> 'fill' ²⁴	<i>'gengs</i>	<i>bkang</i>
<i>gaxs</i> 'be blocked'	<i>kaq</i> 'block'	<i>'geg(s)</i>	<i>bkag</i>
<i>gaps</i> 'crouch (< *be covered ²⁵)'	<i>kap</i> 'cover'	<i>'gebs</i>	<i>bkab</i>

²³ I will account below for why *gan*, *daq*, and *zük* lack an *-s* in Purik but have one in WT.

²⁴ The inherited causative *s-* appears to have remained productive in Purik (as well as Balti and Ladakhi) after it had split off from the other dialects. In verbs like *skan* (also found in Balti in the same form) or *stjaq*, it may therefore have replaced an original *b-* prefix. All the other transitive verbs of Table 5 in both Purik and Balti lack (and thus appear to have lost) a *b-* reflected in the corresponding perfective stems of Amdo Tibetan (AT), e.g., Themchen *ngox*, *kwaχ* 'block' and *ndzəç*, *ptsəç* 'plant'.

²⁵ That Purik *gaps* 'crouch' is related to *kap* 'cover' is revealed by two OT passages. In both of them, the Z-phasive is used in the imperative form *gob shig* and means 'Hide (in sth.)!' and thus 'Be covered (completely)!'. The first passage is found in the OT Ramayana (line 257 of version A, see de Jong (1989: 125)): *srin pos bsad par 'ong ste / gob shig* '... The demon will/is going to kill [you], thus, hide!' (I have adopted Zeisler's (2004: 280) translation). The second passage is from the 'End of the Good Age and tragedy of the horse and yak' (verso 64 of IOL Tib J 731 = Ch.82.IV = Scroll Box 139, see OTDO): *kbyod brungs phag na gob shig* 'Hide yourself among the dung-hill swine.' (translation by Thomas (1957: 30)). A little further down in the same text (v93), Thomas' (1957: 19, 31) reading provides evidence for the assumption that the basic form had the stem vowel *-a-*: *brungs ki phag du gabs te* '... hid among the swine of

<i>daq</i> ‘come off’	<i>stjaq</i> ‘lift’	<i>'degs</i>	<i>btag</i>
<i>doxs</i> ‘be annoyed’	<i>taq</i> ‘attach’	<i>'dogs</i>	<i>btags</i>
<i>baps</i> ‘go down’	<i>p^hap</i> ‘put down’	<i>'bebs</i> ²⁶	<i>phab</i>
<i>zuks</i> ‘enter’	<i>tfuk</i> ‘put in’	<i>'jug</i>	<i>bcug</i>
<i>zuk</i> ‘be stung, pricked’	<i>tsuk</i> ‘sting’	<i>'dzugs</i>	<i>btsugs</i>

Table 5. Purik intransitive verbs: transitive WT present stems (both with -s)

Table 6 contains all those intransitive verbs that lack a suffix in Purik but correspond to transitive present stems with a -*d* suffix or its reflex (*'byin* < **'byung-d*) in WT.²⁷

Purik		Written Tibetan (transitive)	
intransitive < Z-phasive	transitive < A-phasive	present	past
<i>bi(t)</i> ‘fall out’	<i>p^hi</i> ‘pull out, tear out’	<i>'byid</i>	<i>ph^his</i>
<i>be</i> ‘be opened’	<i>p^he</i> ‘open’	<i>'byed</i>	<i>ph^hye</i>
<i>bo</i> ‘be spilled’	<i>p^ho</i> ‘spill’	<i>'bo</i> ²⁸	<i>phos</i>
<i>biŋ</i> ‘come/go out/up’	<i>p^hiŋ</i> ‘take/put out’	<i>'byin</i>	<i>ph^hyung</i>
<i>bri</i> ‘become less’	<i>p^hri</i> ‘make less’	<i>'brid</i>	<i>ph^hris</i>
<i>goq</i> ‘come off’	<i>koq</i> ‘snatch away’	<i>'gog</i> ²⁹	<i>bkog</i>
<i>zik</i> ‘be damaged’	<i>ʃik</i> ‘destroy’, Bal <i>p^hʃik</i>	<i>'jig</i>	<i>bshig</i>

Table 6. Purik intransitive verbs without -s : transitive WT present stems with -d

Let us leave aside the additional -*d* of WT for now (it will be taken up again in §2.5) and focus on the fact that the intransitive verbs of Purik shown in Table 5 apparently received an -*s* suffix at some point in PT, while those listed in Table 6 did not. Both groups of intransitive verbs are characterized by a voiced onset, which has been argued above to have triggered a focus on the final phase of an event (whence they have been called Z-phasives). We will see presently that those Z-phasives that received an -*s* appear to have primarily referred to the *result* of an event, while those that did not receive an -*s* appear to have referred to the *achievement* of that result. Before we elaborate on the semantic difference that triggered this divergent behavior, we are well-advised to take a look at the other documented varieties of Tibetan in order to check whether they support the evidence of Purik with regard to the perhaps rather elusive -*s*.

the dung-hill’). Suffice it to mention here that the meaning of *gob* and *gabs* would be even more compatible with an interpretation of *phag* as meaning ‘hidden place’ (cf. Jk. 339b ‘something hidden; concealment’) rather than ‘swine’.

²⁶ The original -*a-* must have been palatalized by the postfinal -*s* in *'gengs*, *'gegs*, *'gebs*, *'degs*, and *'bebs*.

²⁷ Furthermore, Purik *zum* ‘smile (noun)’, corresponding to *tsum* ‘close’, and WT present *'dzum*, past *btsums* ‘close’, ceased to be used as a verb at some point in the prehistory of Purik, being only attested there as a complement of *ba* ‘do’.

²⁸ WT *'bo*, *phos*, *dbo*, *phos* ‘spill’, on the other hand, corresponds to Jirel *boʃ*, *poʃ*, *p^hoʃ* and Themchen (where -*d* > -*l*) *m^hp^hol*, *hol*, *hol*, that is, these dialects have generalized over the entire paradigm a -*d* that is missing in WT.

²⁹ Note that postfinal -*d* cannot stand after a final -*g* in WT. However, there are many verbs with a final -*g* [*k/q/χ*] and a postfinal -*s* in Purik. Considering their lacking an -*s* as well as their semantics, *'gog* and *'jig* may thus be grouped with the atelic verbs that did *not* receive an -*s* in Purik and were often added a -*d* in WT.

Since after consonantal finals, the *-s* has been lost in almost all modern varieties of Tibetan outside of WAT, it is only verbs that used to end in a vowel that allow us to recognize whether or not an *-s* was commonly added to the root of their finite ancestor. And indeed, palatalized and/or lengthened reflexes are found in all Tibetan varieties of all dialect areas³⁰ for all WT verbs with an *-s* following a vowel in Purik, namely *rgas* ‘be(come) old’, *gas* ‘crack’, *dros* ‘be(come) warm’, *sbos* (< **dbos*) ‘swell’, *kbros*³¹ ‘be(come) angry’, *’gos* (Purik *gus*) ‘be spilled’, *lus* ‘be left behind, remain’, *’dus* ‘gather, assemble’, *shes* ‘know, etc.’, and *dres*³² ‘be mixed’.³³ In contrast, all those *Z*-phasives that (still) end in a vowel in Purik and are widely attested across the Tibetan dialects lack a reflex of the *-s* in practically all of these dialects³⁴, namely *tsha* ‘be(come) hot, burn, sting, ache’, *na* ‘be(come) sick’, *go* ‘understand, hear’, *bro* ‘(come to) taste’, *bo* ‘be spilled’³⁵, *be* ‘be opened’, and *bi* ‘fall out’.³⁶ Knowing that both the presence and absence of the “intransitive” *-s* suffix in Purik is thus backed by all other dialects allows us to proceed to the semantic analysis of the verbs to which it was or was not added in PT.³⁷

Given that the voiced onset of the intransitive verbs of both Tables 5 and 6 once triggered a focus on the final phase of an event, the divergent behavior with regard to the *-s* suffix allows us to distinguish between two kinds of *Z*-phasives. Those that received an *-s* in PT (i.e., those in Table 5) appear to have originally denoted processes that were generally conceptualized as reaching completion. Those that did not receive an *-s* (i.e., those in Table 6) all appear to have denoted processes that were generally *not* conceptualized as reaching completion. The first type of *Z*-phasives thus appears to have had a telic, the second type an atelic *aktionsart* (they may be abbreviated as V_{Zt} and V_{Zat} , respectively). As a consequence of their distinct *aktionsart*, the telic *Z*-phasives were commonly associated with a well-defined resultant state that was more salient than its achievement. In contrast, the atelic *Z*-phasives denoted processes that yielded an ill-defined resultant state that was less salient than the processes themselves, most of which involved motion. The fact that the *-s* suffix was conventionally used only with the telic *Z*-phasives suggests that it had a “stative” meaning

³⁰ Basing my investigation on the CDTD, I have ignored only a few Changthang- and Hor-dialects as well as Jirel, because a postvocalic *-s* can only rarely be made out there. In Southern Mustang, which lacks a length distinction for vowels, the effect of the *-s* is only noted after *-a*, *-o*, and *-u*, which it has palatalized. And, strictly speaking, it is only the evidence from Amdo (and less often Kham) that allows us to distinguish the reflexes of an *-s* (*-Vs* > *-i*, *-os* often > *-u*) from the ones of a *-d* (> *-l*), which generally both palatalize and/or lengthen preceding vowels in Central Tibetan.

³¹ Unaccounted for is the long *-a*: of some Kham varieties.

³² In Amdo Tibetan, the *-s* of *dres* is reflected in the perfective but not the imperfective stem.

³³ Only palatalized reflexes are also found of the much less widely attested *gnas* ‘be, dwell’ (beside Purik also in Tabo, Kyirong, and Dingri), *yas* ‘bloom’, and *ras* ‘boil down, get coarse’ (which, aside from Purik, are only found in Tabo).

³⁴ All of them contain a final *-r* instead in Shigatse, and some of them a final *-t* in Jirel.

³⁵ The telic *bos* ‘call (of animals)’, however, appears to have hyperbolically conceptualized the entire content of an animal spilling from it.

³⁶ Diverging evidence is only found in the dialect of Southern Mustang, where *go*, *bro*, and *bo* were palatalized at some point, either by the *-s* under discussion or by a *-d*. However, in that particular dialect, even the 11 *transitive* verbs that end in *-o* or *-u* (namely *sro* ‘make warm’, *sko* ‘appoint’, *rngo* ‘fry’, **p(h)o* ‘spill’, *gso* ‘feed, raise’, *bzo* ‘make’, *sku* ‘smear’, *kbhu* ‘wash’, *’thu* ‘collect’, *shu* ‘peel’, and *bru* ‘dig’) have palatalized reflexes, while of all transitive verbs that end in *-a*, just the past stems are palatalized (namely of *lta* ‘look’, *za* ‘eat’, *rnga* ‘harvest’, *dra* ‘cut’, and *smra* ‘speak’). Finally, that the only exceptional verb with an *-s* in Purik (and WT) but no traces thereof in a number of dialects appears to be Purik *rgos* (WT *dgos*) ‘need’ must be related to the fact that this verb in most dialects also serves as an auxiliary.

³⁷ While Coblin (1976: 60) shared Uray’s (1953: 51-2) impression that the *-s* belongs “to the most unstable elements of Classical Tibetan”, it thus proves to have been entirely stable in the prehistory of Purik.

that lent itself to describe the state that resulted from a process.³⁸ On the other hand, the atelic Z-phasives were incompatible with the stative *-s* suffix due to the ill-defined result they implied. Instead, they appear to have conventionally described the more salient past process that led to that result. The stative finite form of PT verbs with the *-s* suffix may be called Simple Resultative, the eventive form without a suffix, Simple Past.

Let us look at a few examples. The secondary use of *be* ‘be opened’ in connection with doors does not keep us from grasping its atelic basic meaning as manifested, for instance, in *bar be* ‘space opened up in between’. There are *no outer limits* to *be*, which was therefore generally not conceptualized as reaching completion. Similarly, the entire content of a vessel does not have to be spilled in order for *bo* ‘spilled’ to be used, and *gog* ‘crumbled off’ never means that the entire wall crumbled down, etc. In contrast, **gags* (> P *gaχs*, WT *’gegs*) was lexicalized together with the stative *-s* because it indicated the well-defined state of something that was (completely) blocked (a state that was much more salient than its achievement). Similarly, *gobs* already in OT (see footnote 25) ordered someone to hide completely rather than with an arm sticking out and being visible to the approaching enemy. And finally, the proto-form of Purik *doχs* ‘be fed up’ and WT *’dogs* ‘fear’ must have meant that something did not let go of someone, viz. that was continuously pulling.

The examples of P *gan* ~ WT *’gengs*, P *daq* ~ WT *’degs*, and P *zuk* ~ WT *’dzugs* show that some Z-phasives could be construed either telically or atelically. Thus, P *gan* and *zuk* without the *-s* derive from forms that described a past event (i.e., **gang* ‘became filled, fuller’ and **dzug* ‘was inserted, pricked’), while WT *’gengs* and *’dzugs* with the *-s* derive from forms that described the (present) result of that event (i.e., **gang-s* ‘has become full’ and **dzug-s* ‘has become inserted, established’).

The reconstruction of a stative *-s* suffix that only occurred with telic verbs is also in full correspondence with those Z-phasives in Tables 5 and 6 that must have only secondarily come to mainly describe controlled motion. While the out- or upward-directed *biη* ‘come/go out/up’ did not receive an *-s* because there are typically no limits to out- or upward movement, the downward-directed *baps* ‘go down’ and the inward-directed *zuks* ‘enter’ did receive one because the ground and the inside of something normally represent limits that cannot be surpassed.³⁹ Accordingly, we need to reconstruct the resultative meanings ‘be down’ and ‘be inside’ for the latter two verbs, but ‘go out/up’ for *byung*.

Having recognized that telic Z-phasives were used with the stative *-s* suffix and atelic ones without it allows us to trace the further evolution of both types of Z-phasives in Purik. Note at this point that the meaning of **V_{Zat-∅}* did not actually change in PPT. Rather, it described past events in PT (e.g., **bo* ‘spilled’, or **bri* ‘became less’) and still does in modern Purik (*bo* and *bri*). **V_{Zt-s}*, on the other hand, primarily described the state that resulted from a past event in PT (e.g., **gag-s* ‘is blocked’ and **jug-s* ‘is inside’). However, it came to primarily describe past events in Purik (i.e., *gaχs* ‘became blocked’ and *zuks* ‘came inside’), presumably in analogy to *V_{Zat-∅}*.⁴⁰

³⁸ The *-s* also has a “stative” meaning in West-Himalayish Bunan, see Widmer (2015: 401-4).

³⁹ That the upward-directed *lans* ‘rise’ received an *-s* indicates that it was most commonly used in the telic meaning of ‘be standing’ or ‘be up’.

⁴⁰ I will argue in §2.4 that it was probably the innovative resultative **V-s-’dug* that pushed both **V_{Zt-s}* and **V_{A-s}* from indicating present results to indicating past events (while the *-s* suffix was reanalyzed as part of the root in the former but as a past marker in the latter construction).

2.4 Fossilized *-s-less* Forms of Active PT Verbs

We saw in §2.1 that the Simple Past of transitive verbs in modern Purik always has an *-s* suffix. This *-s* suffix, however, was shown in §2.3 to have had a stative meaning in PT. Simple Z-phrasives were used together with this suffix in order to describe the result of an event. If we were to assume that the past marker also derives from the stative *-s* suffix, this would therefore imply that transitive verbs originally described past events without the *-s* suffix but eventually came to describe it with the suffix. I will argue presently that many Purik “dramatizers” represent fossilized instances of eventive *-s-less* forms of transitive or rather active⁴¹ PT verbs. After that, we will see that there is also a plausible account for how *-s-less* Simple Past of active verbs generally became replaced by forms with the *-s* suffix, and how the suffix thereby changed its meaning from “stative” to “past”.

Before arguing that Purik collocations consisting of a dramatizer and a verb reflect subordinator-less PT verb concatenations of the form V_1-V_2 , we must acknowledge that such subordinator-less concatenations have ceased to be productive in Purik. Instead, when two verbs describe two facets of one event, the verb in first position must stand in the conjunctive *-(s)e* participle, which has the form *-se* after vowels and labial and velar consonants, and *-e* after alveolar consonants, as exemplified by *gret-e soŋ* ‘fell on the ground’, *lta-se soŋ* ‘Take care! (lit. Go by looking out!)’, and *drul-e joŋ-s* ‘came on foot’. In what appear to be the most frequent concatenations, the conjunctive morpheme may lack the *-e-* vowel. These shorter forms are most common when the light verb *taŋ* functions as V_2 , as in *p^hut-(e) toŋ* ‘Let go!’, *ldzoq-s(e) taŋ-s* ‘gave back’, and *p^haŋ-s(e) taŋ-s* ‘threw away’. It is important to note, however, that the two latter concatenations *never* lose the conjunctive *-s-*. This evidence unequivocally indicates that the presently discussed concatenations consisting of a dramatizer and a verb cannot be analyzed as containing a reduced form of the conjunctive morpheme, but instead must reflect originally subordinator-less concatenations, which may also be called “nonce-concatenations” (a term coined by James Matisoff (1969), see also DeLancey (1991)).

“Dramatizers” (see Zemp 2012) serve the function of dramatizing specific events or facets of events and may thereby occur immediately before just a small number of verbs that express the notion they are suited to dramatize. The basic function of these dramatizers will be illustrated by means of the very dramatizers that are argued here to reflect former eventive and, therefore, *-s-less* verb forms. Hence, *soq*, *poq*, *rjaq*, *spaŋ*, *ltaŋ*, and *rup* are always stressed and thus pronounced with a higher pitch than the verbs they dramatize in collocations such as *soq t^hen* ‘Pull (at once, with force)!’, *poq p^hut-s* ‘pulled out (at once)’, *rjaq zdam-s* ‘hugged (her/him at once)’, *spaŋ mik-tfi taŋ-s* ‘gave (her) a kiss (just like that)’, *ltaŋ t^hams* ‘got a hold of (it) (at once)’, or *rup k^hums* ‘wince, crouch (at once)’. Note that these dramatizers cannot be analyzed as verbs in present-day Purik. In fact, speakers of Purik are even reluctant to view them as actual “words”. All of the examples adduced above, however, *derive* from verbs, some of which are still used in a related meaning in modern Purik (e.g., *soq* ‘stuff’, *spaŋ* ‘dip’, and *rup* ‘rush in upon’), some in a slightly divergent form (e.g., the verb *ltaŋ* ‘fold’ has an alveolar rather than a retroflex stop like the corresponding dramatizer) and/or meaning (e.g., *rjaŋs* has an additional *-s*, means ‘begin’, and must have originally meant ‘has touched’ or ‘has laid hands on (some

⁴¹ By “active” verbs, I mean those verbs that came to be treated as transitive verbs in Purik in that they receive an *-s* suffix in the Simple Past. Hence, this category includes A-phrasives as well as verbs with nasal, rhotic, lateral, or fricative initials that did not lend themselves to the threefold phasal distinction of PT. The use of V_A below is thus a simplification. We will try to identify the conditions under which an *-s* suffix was reanalyzed as “past” more closely at the end of the subsection.

job)', cf. also *rág-pa* "W. for *rég-pa* to touch, feel" Jk. 521b⁴²). Moreover, the verbal origins of some dramatizers can only be reconstructed thanks to evidence from other varieties of Tibetan (e.g., for *poq*, cf. WT *'bog(s)-pa* "pf. *bog* ... to be rooted out, uprooted, pulled out ..." Jk. 395b]).⁴³

I argued already in Zemp (2012: 106) that the collocations just adduced cannot derive from concatenations employing a conjunctive morpheme *-(s)e* whose *-e-* is elided, because there would still be no explanation for why there is no *-s-* either (conjunctive *-(s)e* regularly lacks an *-s* after alveolar, but never after velar or labial consonants). However, the lacking *-s* can be neatly accounted for if we assume that all the dramatizers adduced above reflect eventive and hence *-s-*less PT verb forms. This function made them well-suited to add dynamics to the account of a past event, e.g., **pog pbud* 'uprooted and took (it) out', **gtab tham-s* 'folded (her hands) and held on (to something)', and **rub khum-s* 'rushed in and shrunk'. The *V_{1s}* of these collocations ceased to be analyzed as verbs and became fossilized as dramatizers when *-s-*less verb forms ceased to be productive in describing past events and when constructions of the form *V-V* ceased to be productive.

Constructions reflecting **V-song* 'went *V-ing*', **V-thal* 'went past *V-ing*', and **V-byung* 'appeared *V-ing*', which have in many spoken varieties of Tibetan come to indicate the direct testimony of a past event, further support our assumption that subordinator-less concatenations were productive in PT when two verbs described different facets of one and the same event.⁴⁴ While the dramatizers discussed above originally added dynamics to the account given by the following verb, the *V₁* in the mentioned testimonial constructions originally specified the manner of the motion designated by the *V₂* *song*, *thal*, or *byung*.⁴⁵

A number of verbs even suggest that *V-V* was productive already in earlier stages of PT, and they confirm our assumption that no *-s* was originally added to verbs that specified the manner of the movement described by the following verb. The verbs in question again include *byung* (Purik *biŋ*), along with its transitive correspondence *phyung* (Purik *ph^hiŋ*) 'take out', which are likely to reflect the early PT nonce-concatenations **bi-yong* 'came having come out' and **phi-yong* 'came having been taken out', respectively. Accordingly, the two antonyms *k^hjong* 'bring' (widely attested west of

⁴² For **-a-* > *-ja-* (and WT *-e-*) / *-q, ng*, see Zemp (2014b: 185-86).

⁴³ Further collocations with dramatizers deriving from less active or controllable verbs are *rdzaq siŋ-tŋi ton* 'Put some wood into the fire (at once)!', *ph^hrik gul-b-in-duk* 'doesn't move (at all)', *siŋ ph^hi-s* 'Wipe (it) off (at once)!', *qan k^hil* 'stopped (at once)', *ldum nam k^hor* 'became clouded (at once)', and *t^hum tŋuk* 'Close (at once)!' Dramatizers deriving from verbs with a non-alveolar final are attested in the collocations *ph^hur ŋe-s* 'Rub (at once)!', *mur skraq-s* 'kneaded (well)', *tsir ph^hiŋ-s* 'took out (at once)', *ltŋur ph^hiŋ-s* 'put out (at once)', *zbut zgo ph^hul* 'Push/Close the door (at once)!', *tŋat stor* 'was lost (at once)'. For their etymologies, see Zemp (2012). Dramatizers will be further discussed in §4.4.

⁴⁴ Note that DeLancey (1991) nowhere appears to consider that the unmarked construction without any subordinator might be old (as well); hence, "many Tibeto-Burman languages permit omission of the NF subordinator" (DeLancey 1991: 4), "the grammaticalization process in Tibetan will require the development of an innovative serialization construction lacking the NF marker" (DeLancey 1991: 5), or "the dropping of the mark of subordination" (DeLancey 1991: 7). I would also like to point out that even if his "consultants report no difference in meaning between sequences with and without NF marking" (DeLancey 1991: 8) when *V₂* is either *'gro/phyin*, *yong*, or *sdad*, the subtle difference that is noted by DeLancey's (1991: 9) "most linguistically sophisticated (and most conservative) consultant" points to the claim made here, according to which the conjunctive morpheme was originally not applied when both verbs described one and the same event.

⁴⁵ Notice that only very few comparable nonce-concatenations are attested for WT, with Zeisler (2004: 894-901) finding just three of them in *Legenden des Naropa* (see Grünwedel 1933, i.e., *'pur song* in 79/27a4, *log phyin* in 130/51b3, and *bros yongs* in 111/42b4), and another one in *btsum mo bka'i thang yig* (see Laufer 1911, i.e., *rgyugs song* in 55.14).

Southern Mustang) and *k^hjer* ‘take away’ (found all throughout the Tibetan dialect area) are likely to reflect **k^hi:-yong* ‘come carrying’ and **k^hi:-hyar* ‘go away carrying’, respectively.⁴⁶

The etymology of *byung* ‘appeared’ < **bi-yong* ‘came out and came’ is supported by evidence from Kyirong Tibetan. According to Huber (2005: 123)⁴⁷, *V-bo* < **V-byung* indicates past events that took place in the direction of the speaker (cf. the neutral *V-so* < **V-song*). However, the negated form of *V-bo* is *V-ma-jō̄*. The negated form is argued here to have been incompatible with **bi* ‘come out’, since the scope of the negation would have been equivocal in **V-bi-ma-yong*: Did something not come out? Or did something come, but not out? Hence, **V-bi-ma-yong* must have been avoided, and instead, the simpler form **V-ma-yong* was generalized in negated contexts. We may finally suspect that *bi* was added before *yong* in contexts in which the entity approaching the speaker was not in control of its own movement or growth.

Simple eventive forms of active verbs have thus ceased to be productive in Purik and many other varieties of Tibetan. However, they were fossilized if their frequency was high enough to resist the generalization of the past marker *-s*. This was also the case if they were applied as auxiliaries or suffixes, as most clearly shown by the Purik “quotative” marker *lo* < **lap* ‘said’ and the East-Purik non-visual testimonial existential copula *raq* < **rag* ‘touched’.

While V-V concatenations were used in PT when two verbs referred to one and the same event, two productive constructions of Purik deriving from **V-s-’dug* illustrate that *V-s-V* was used in PT when two verbs described two facets of one and the same *state*. While *taŋ-z-duk* in (17) directly attests the present state resulting from a past event, both *soŋ-suk* and *p^hoχ-suk* in (18) indicate a past event that is inferred on the basis of its directly attested result (*jes-en-duk* confirms the assumption that the speaker is actually *looking* at the apricots).

- (17) *koŋ-i* *goŋsta-o* *ldabldab-a* *taŋ-z-duk*, *p^hjarp^hjar-la*
 coat-GEN lap-DEF hanging-DAT give-STAT-EX.T hanging.down-DAT
taŋ-z-duk, *zom-ba-mi-nduk*, *osmet-tfik* *t^h-en-duk*
 give-RES-EX.T suit-INF-NEG-EX.T bad-INDF go-PROG-EX.T
 ‘The lap of the coat is hanging down, it doesn’t suit (you), it looks awkward.’

⁴⁶ The verb *k^hi:* ‘carry’ is attested in the CDTD for Dingri (and in a palatalized form for Nangchen), and I have myself attested it in phrases such as *k^hi:-so(?)* ‘Bring! (lit. come carrying)’ used by Tibetans living in Kathmandu. On the other hand, *hjar* is a rude verb meaning ‘go away’ in Purik, the CDTD documents *xjar* ‘be off, die (rude)’ for Balti, and the synonymous *hjar* for Tshangra, Nurla, and Khaltse, and *jar* for Leh. Evidently, this verb originally indicated movement away from the speaker, which quite plausibly facilitated its being considered rude as well as its reanalysis in the meaning ‘die’.

⁴⁷ According to Huber (2005: 123), Kyirong Tibetan “*-so* is grammaticalized from the past stem of the WT verb *soi* ‘to go’. This is also a very widespread auxiliary in other dialects. The morpheme for direct sensory evidence of an act or event directed towards the speaker, *-bo* is related to WT *byuni*. The full verb *pō̄*: ‘to get’ also goes back to WT *byuni*. ... Furthermore, some speakers have still preserved the nasalization in the auxiliary morpheme. When this form is negated, however, it is *V-ma-jō̄*; cf. the list of negated auxiliaries in Table 123. The negated form rather looks as if it originated from the verb *oŋ* ‘to come’ (WT ‘*oŋi*). But it is also possible that it has developed from WT *byuni*, by a sound development which cannot yet be explained.” It is argued here that it was the negated *V-ma-jō̄* that preserved the original form of the verb *yong* ‘come’.

- (18) *tfuli sarasire soŋ-suk, ot p^hoŋ-suk tfuli karpo fes-en-duk*
 apricot reddishwent-INFR light hit-INFR apricot white estimate-PROG-EX.T
 ‘The apricots have become reddish, the light hit them (they have come to shine); the apricots look bright.’

Reflexes of the resultative *V-*s*-’*dug* are found in perhaps all spoken varieties of Tibetan (see Zemp 2014b: 135), in many of which it has been reanalyzed in the inferential function illustrated in (18). These constructions bear testimony to the original stative meaning of the -*s* suffix. At the same time, they are likely to have triggered the reanalysis of this suffix as indicating past events after transitive verb roots. Because *V-*s*-’*dug* explicitly referred to the result of a past event, the less explicit resultative V-*s* must have retained its form due to its high frequency while it was extended from results of past events to past events proper, thereby ousting the eventive -*s*-less verb forms. Past events were thus likely reanalyzed as “completed” even if they did not actually reach completion but were simply not ongoing anymore at the moment of speaking. We have not yet mentioned the transitive WT past stems that lack an -*s*, such as *bkag* ‘blocked’, *bkang* ‘filled’, *bkab* ‘covered’, *bkog* ‘snatched’, and *bkram* ‘spread’ (to name just a few whose finals would have allowed for an -*s* suffix). Unlike the past forms of transitive verbs in Purik, the listed WT past stems preserve their eventive -*s*-less forms. This makes sense insofar as we lack any evidence for *V-*s*-’*dug* in OT and at least in early WT. Hence, eventive and therefore -*s*-less past stems of transitive WT verbs appear not to have been replaced by -*s*-suffixed forms, likely because the forms with the -*s* were not pushed out of their resultative function by an innovated periphrastic resultative construction such as *V-*s*-’*dug*. Instead, WT inherited transitive past stems both with and without an -*s* whose function has defied an analysis by grammarians ever since.

2.5 The Nominalizing *-d Suffix

Before turning to the <-*d*> suffix that distinguishes atelic transitive WT present stems from corresponding intransitive verbs of Purik, we need to quickly discuss another suffix that is represented by <-*d*> in OT. For this purpose, consider the third group mentioned in Table 4 of correspondences between transitive WT present stems and intransitive Purik verbs. Table 7 contains all those correspondences that end in an alveolar consonant in both branches.

Purik		Written Tibetan (transitive)	
intransitive < Z-phasive	transitive < A-phasive	present	past
<i>but</i> ‘fall down’	<i>p^hut</i> ‘throw down’	<i>’bud</i>	<i>p^hbud</i>
<i>dul</i> ‘become soft (of leather)’	<i>tul</i> ‘soften, knead’ ⁴⁸	<i>’dul</i>	<i>btul</i>
<i>gel</i> ‘fall down (on the ground)’	<i>kal</i> ‘put on’	<i>’gel</i>	<i>bkal</i>
<i>grol</i> ‘be untied’	<i>krol</i> ‘untie’	<i>’grol</i>	<i>bkrol</i>
<i>gral</i> ‘sitting hierarchy’	<i>kral</i> ‘distribute’	<i>’grel</i>	<i>bkral</i>

Table 7. Purik intransitive verbs: WT present stems with apical finals

⁴⁸ The *b*- prefix is reflected in the etymologically related A-phasive *ttur* ‘pull up (snot), calm down’ (< **stul* < **ϕtul*, see §§2.2.2.1.3 and 2.2.2.1.6 in Zemp 2014a), cf. also the M-phasive *t^hul* ‘(be able to) climb, get on top’, which allows us to reconstruct the original meaning of *’dul* as ‘be subdued’. The active *tul* ‘soften, knead’ must therefore be a later derivation of *dul* ‘become softened’, which are both used in the context of tanning leather.

While over 100 intransitive verbs of Purik received an *-s* in PT, none with an alveolar final (i.e., *-t*, *-l*, *-r*, or *-n*) did. Rather than to assume that all of the intransitive verbs with an alveolar final happened to have an atelic aktionsart, it appears safer to assume that the “stative” *-s* was prohibited in that environment. Many scholars (e.g., Thomas (1957: 23), Li (1959: 58), Coblin (1976: 50), and Beyer (1992: 169, fn. 6)) have suggested that the *-s* suffix in perfective contexts had an allomorph *-d* after alveolar finals in OT (i.e., the so-called *da drag*).⁴⁹ Subscribing to that analysis, I will only hypothesize here that the stative *-s* suffix turned into *-t* (represented by OT <*d*> or a following initial <*t*>) between verbs ending in *-r* and *-l* and a clause-final demonstrative *de*, and that the form with the *-t* was then extended into other positions. While this hypothesis appears to account for the form (*s*)*te* of the conjunctive morpheme in Ladakhi (lacking the *s*- only after alveolars), it leaves Purik and Balti (*s*)*e* (without an alveolar stop, but also lacking the *s*- after alveolars) unexplained.⁵⁰ Irrespective of the origin of the conjunctive morpheme in Purik and Balti, it appears that the “perfective” *da drag* only evolved in a predecessor of OT and Ladakhi but not Purik and Balti.

Having stated this, we may now turn to a different PT **-d* suffix for which we find evidence in all mentioned varieties. In the remainder of the present subsection, we will deal only with the *-d* suffix that does not appear to convey a past or perfective meaning in OT and which Beyer (1992: 175-6) labelled ‘present stem *da drag*’. I will demonstrate that there must have been a nominalizing **-d* suffix (> *-t* / *V_#*) in PT that facilitated the reanalysis of the atelic *Z*-phasives listed in Table 6 as transitive present stems in WT.

A number of Purik nouns with related intransitive or transitive verbs allow us to reconstruct a nominalizing *-t* suffix. The nouns that were derived from intransitive verbs all appear to have an abstract meaning, e.g., *brot* ‘taste (noun)’ from *bro* ‘(come to) taste’, *trot* ‘heat’ from **dro*, cf. *dros* ‘become warm, faint’ or *dronmo* (< **drod mo*) ‘warm’, *ts^hat* ‘heat’ from *ts^ha* ‘become hot’, *nat* ‘illness’ from **na* ‘become ill’, which is widely attested as a verb in the dialects outside of Purik, *ret* ‘opportunity’ (from *re* ‘depend on’), and the additionally derived *rga-t-po* ‘old person’ (from **rga* ‘become old’, cf. *rgas* ‘become old, set (of sun)’). The *-t* nominalizations of transitive verbs, on the other hand, denote theme nouns, e.g., *skut* ‘theft’ from *sku* ‘steal’, *skut* ‘ointment’ from *sku* ‘smear’⁵¹, and *p^het* ‘half’ (from *p^he* ‘open’ < **move two parts of an entity asunder*). The function that can be attributed to the *-t* suffix in connection with transitive verbs suggests that originally designated, also with intransitive verbs, a concrete entity to which a verbal property applied rather than an abstract noun. For instance, *brot* ‘taste’ may still be construed as referring to the concrete ‘taste’ that can actually be perceived on one’s palate, and *trot* and *ts^hat* may similarly be taken to refer to what one actually perceives. We will see below that the ambiguity between a concrete and an abstract interpretation was a crucial precondition for the reanalysis of the *-t* nominalizations as present stems in WT. At the same time, it is important to note here that *-t* nominalizations appear to have only been formed from *atelic* intransitive verbs.

⁴⁹ Most scholars express themselves rather vaguely about the meaning of the *-s* and *-d* suffixes. One of the less vague statements is found in Li (1959: 38, note 3): “The Tibetan suffix *-d* (*da-drag*) here is definitely a morpho-phonemic variant of the suffix *-s*, usually found in the perfective.”

⁵⁰ While the allomorphs of the conjunctive morpheme with the *-s* may be explained as reflecting an assimilatory process **V-s-de* > *V-se* that is paralleled by **V-s-dug* > *V-suk*, the allomorphs without the *-s* (e.g., Purik *kh^hjer-e* ‘taking away, having been taken away’, *gjel-e* ‘laying down, having laid down’) are more complex and have to be discussed elsewhere. Suffice it to state here that we seem to lack a trace of the ‘perfective’ *da drag* in Purik and Balti.

⁵¹ Consider also transitive WT *skud*, *bskus*, *bsku*, *skus* ‘smear’, and *skud* ‘ointment’.

A group of adjectives ending in $-(n)te/te$ that is quite frequent in the western part of the Tibetan dialect continuum also bear testimony to the nominalizing $-d$ suffix. For Purik, I have been able to attest *ts^hante* ‘hot’, *ts^hinte* ‘heavy’, *skante* ‘thick (fluid), turbid’, *χante* ‘bitter’, *šante* ~ *šante* ‘hard, stable’, and *junte-a* ‘tilted’, which is exclusively used in the adverbial dative.⁵² All of these adjectives are derived from atelic verbs; they are argued here to contain a $*-d$ suffix that was nasalized before a clause-final demonstrative *de*⁵³, which was regularly used in PT to point to an entity situated before the interlocutors.⁵⁴

There is no doubt that the same nominalizing $*-d$ suffix also needs to be reconstructed for the Purik nouns corresponding to transitive WT present stems shown in Table 8, that is, *p^hen* ‘fart’ < $*phang-d$ ‘(which) is thrown out’, and *zin* (in *noz^hin t^ha* ‘be recognized’) < $*zung-d$ ‘(which) is caught’.⁵⁵

Purik		Written Tibetan	
noun	verb	present	past
<i>p^hen</i> ‘fart’	<i>p^han</i> ‘throw (off, out)’	<i>p^hen</i>	<i>p^hangs</i>
<i>noz^hin</i> ‘sight, recognition’	<i>zun</i> ‘catch’	<i>d^zin</i>	<i>bzung</i>

Table 8. Purik noun and transitive verb: WT present and past stems

Let us finally turn to the transitive WT present stems previously listed in Table 6, which were claimed to have been derived from atelic Z -phasives by means of the $-d$ suffix at discussion. Based on the discussion of the preceding paragraphs, we are now able to reconstruct the original meanings of what were reanalyzed as transitive present stems in WT. Thus, $*bye-d$ ‘(which) is moved asunder’,

⁵² Furthermore, $*slad$ ‘de’ is also widely attested west of Shigatse but not in Purik, cf. the CDTD entry $*sla$ ‘de’ ~ *slan te*. The alveolar variant of this adjectival ending is found in many other predominantly western dialects, the retroflex one only in a few, and predominantly after other retroflexes or sounds favoring a retraction of the tip of the tongue, such as $-ul$ in *ul^hte* ‘poor’ and *rul^hte* ‘rotten’, two comparable adjectives with a retroflex documented by Monika Kretschmar (1995: 55) for the variety of Southern Mustang (Northern Nepal). The voiceless stop suggests that they derive from constructions closely corresponding to those used with the adjectives mentioned above, only that the final $-l$ of the verbal syllable appears to have prevented the following $-d$ from being nasalized, i.e., $*dbul-d-de$ ‘Oh, how poor (how he needs to be given)!’ and $*rul-d-de$ ‘There is mold on it!’.

⁵³ This sound change (i.e., the first of two consecutive dental stops is nasalized) is elsewhere only attested in *mantax* ‘truth’ < $*mad$ *taq-s*. However, a syllable-final $-d$ was also turned into an $-n$ in front of an m -, cf. *rgunma* ‘mare’ < *rgod ma* and *drenmo* ‘bear’ < *dred mo*; and with a nominalizing $-d$ *ts^honma* ‘vegetable’ < *tsho-d ma*, i.e., ‘which can be cooked’; and *nanmet ts^hanmet*, an idiom that is used to express that one is fine and healthy, i.e., $*na-d$ *med tsha-d med* ‘having neither disease nor pain’.

⁵⁴ The reconstruction of two clause-final demonstratives (proximate *de* ‘that’ and obviate *e* ‘the other’) for PT is more thoroughly defended in Zemp (in preparation). Recall that the conjunctive $-(s)(t)e$ morpheme was above also claimed to have evolved from a postverbal *de*.

⁵⁵ The $-d$ suffix can probably also be reconstructed for the palatalized *len* ‘take’ < $*lang-d$ ‘sth. that can or should be taken (up)’ (similarly Beyer 1992: 176), *t^hen* ‘pull’ < $*thang-d$ ‘sth. that can be moved across’, as well as perhaps *zen* ‘get absorbed, have an effect, catch fire, get furious’ < $*zhang-d$, cf. *chang*, *bcangs*, *bcang*, *chongs* ‘keep (in mind), possess, touch’, *chang* ‘which is kept, held on to’, all of which must have been reanalyzed as verbs after having originally referred to entities that could be involved in an event. Further palatalizations that may be hypothesized to have been caused by a $-d$ suffix are Purik *ber* ‘hurt’ < $*bar-d$ ‘(which) is burning’, *nar* ~ *ner* (< $*nar-d$) ‘become flexible, stretchable (of dough)’, *zer* ‘speak’ < $*zar-d$ ‘(which) is dripping out’, *gjel* ‘fall down, be slouched’ < $*gal-d$ ‘(which) is put on top of something else’, and *sprel* ‘spend, waste’ < $*spral-d$ ‘(which) is separated, given away’.

*'bri-*d*' ('which) is diminished', and *'byin < *'byung-*d*' ('which) comes out' appear to have originally referred to the concrete theme or product of an event. How both the telic Z-phasives with the *-s* and the atelic Z-phasives with the *-d* suffix were reanalyzed as transitive present stems in WT is discussed presently.

2.6 *The Transitive Reanalysis of Z-phasives*

I have been arguing that verb stems with voiced onsets originally focused on the final phase of an event, whence they have been called Z-phasives. We saw in §2.2 that some of these Z-phasives (telic ones with the stative *-s* suffix, see §2.3, and atelic ones with the nominalizing *-d* suffix, see §2.5) acquired two main transitive functions in WT. They came to profile actions as being generally performed in a certain way (habitual), and to indicate that the speaker is going to perform an action herself (speaker-plan). While the habitual function was already common in OT, no clear instance of the speaker-plan function is attested there. Hence, the former may be older than the latter function.⁵⁶ Regardless of whether this is true, by focusing on the final phase of an event, both telic and atelic Z-phasives could imply that the instigation of the event is not at stake. Moreover, since only *-s*-suffixed forms of telic Z-phasives and only *-d*-suffixed forms of atelic Z-phasives acquired the transitive functions in question⁵⁷, we must assume that their capability to describe a state (or an entity that is in a certain state) was crucial for their transitive employment. It thus appears that those instances of V_{Zt-s} and V_{Zat-d} that were reanalyzed as transitive verbs initially indicated that something "is done". If they were employed in contexts in which a group of people sharing some cultural background could be inferred to regularly perform the action leading to the profiled result or product, the mentioned Z-phasives were reanalyzed as meaning "is generally done". If they were employed in contexts in which the speaker could herself perform the action leading to the profiled result or product, the mentioned Z-phasives were reanalyzed as meaning "is already done", which implied that the speaker will do it herself.

3 *d/g*-prefixed Z-phasives

The assumption that verb stems with a voiced initial originally described the final phase of an event receives strong confirmation from stems with voiced initials and an additional *d/g*- prefix (*d*- before velars and labials, *g*- before alveolars) in WT and a *z/r*- prefix (*z*- before velars and labials, *r*- before alveolars) in Purik.⁵⁸ These stems in Purik regularly denote events or states that lead to

⁵⁶ There are also a few Z-phasives in Purik that convey a habitual notion, for instance *duksmi* 'servant viz. person who always stays/has to stay by his master's side', *bandaqs* 'roof < *'ba 'dag-*s* *'roof that is/needs to be put on top (of the house)', *ben* 'target' < *'bang-*d* 'which is/needs to be hit', *doŋ* 'Let's go!' < *(we) are/need to be gone', *dronp^{ho}* 'guest' < *'drong-*d-pho* 'who needs to be invited and served', and *hangol* 'dull, careless' < *(whose brain) needs to be covered with a roof. These words suggest that the habitual use of Z-phasives was a feature of PT that was only generalized in PWT, while Purik only contains a few fossilized traces.

⁵⁷ Note that both telic Z-phasives which in WT lack the palatalization (*-a* > *-e* / *_Cs*) caused by the stative PT *-s* suffix (e.g., 'gag, 'gags, 'gag 'be blocked', gang 'become full', and 'bab, bab(s), (')bab 'descend') and atelic Z-phasives which in WT the palatalizations (*-a* > *-e* / *_(C)d*, *-ung-d* > *in*) caused by the nominalizing PT *-d* suffix (e.g., 'bye, bye, 'bye 'be opened', 'bri, bri, 'bri 'be diminished', and 'byung, byung, 'byung 'appear') became or remained intransitive in WT.

⁵⁸ As evident in Table 9, before labials and velars, the prefix is represented by *d*- in WT and *z*- in Purik, and before alveolars by *g*- and *r*-, respectively. The reflexes found in these two and other varieties suggest that the original form

another event, namely the one denoted by the corresponding Z-phasive, and have lexicalized as verbs, nouns, and parts of compounds. Such lexicalized forms of *d/g*-prefixed Z-phasives can also be found in WT. However, the same stems have also regularly grammaticalized there as transitive future stems, which may be used to indicate that an action will take place in the future. It is often found in law or ritual codes, and therein appears to profile an event as naturally following from the established rules.

The meaning that is reconstructed for verb stems with initial *d-G-/g-D-* closely corresponds to the “permissive” meaning Zeisler (2004) attributed to the WT future stems, however, without distinguishing between those with initial *dG-* and those with *bK-*. Zeisler (2004: 265) adequately captured the meanings of a number of nominalized forms of the WT future stems, e.g., *gdon* “evil spirit, demon”, literally “what is to be expelled” (see also Table 9), *dbul* “poor ... the one to whom (something) is to be given”, *dbye* “division, section ... what is to be divided”, or *gzung* “interest, inclination ... what will be taken (usually)”. Zeisler (2004: 264-5) follows that “the notion of necessity and obligation ... is primitive and basic to the stem form C [i.e., the future stem of the transitive WT four-stem paradigms] ... which is comparable to a gerundive”. It is argued here that her characterization only applies to the *d/g*-prefixed Z-phasives, however, and not to the *b*-prefixed WT future stems that are only distinguished from the corresponding past stems by their lacking the (post)final *-s* if at all, such as Zeisler’s (ibid.) last example *bzhon pa* “carriage, riding-beast ... what is to be mounted”, cf. WT *zhon, bzhon, bzhon, zhon* ‘to mount’.

Many more reflexes of the stems with initial *d-G-* in Purik allow us to refine Zeisler’s characterization and at the same time support our reconstruction of a resultative-passive meaning for ‘G-. In fact, the meanings and grammatical functions of all *d/z*-prefixed Z-phasives in WT and Purik are best explained by assuming that the *d/z-* prefix is a voiced variant of the causative *s-* prefix that was inherited from TB.⁵⁹ This means that the causative *s-* was at the earliest stage of PT typically used before voiceless initials conveying an active notion. Still at an early stage of PT (a stage at which all verbal markers strongly tended to be extended into new contexts), the *s-* must have increasingly come to be used also before passive verbs with voiced initials (>Z-phasives). The meaning of the prefix changed accordingly. Together with active verbs, the *s-* prefix typically indicates that someone (external to the caused action) causes someone else to perform an action. With passive verbs, the voiced *z-* prefix came to indicate that something (external to the entailed event) leads to an event. I suggest to call the altered meaning of the *z-* prefix ‘result-causative’. This label implies that there is no direct access to the origin of the entailed event, because that event is typically not controlled. The lack of direct access to the causation of the entailed event is also implied in the alternative label ‘attracto-causative’. We will see presently that the causation expressed by *z*-prefixed Z-phasives indeed often involves attraction.

The result- or attracto-causative meaning is accurately reflected by the following verbs from Purik, whose corresponding transitive WT paradigms are given in Table 9: *zgaq* ‘hold back (pee)’ < *‘cause to be blocked, not to run, using external force, as if, but not actually blocking any channel’, *zguk* ‘summon’ < *‘cause to gather around oneself’, *rdap* ‘beat (wool)’ < *‘cause the dust to be attracted by the beating sticks, as if it were to become attached to them’, and *rdon* ‘hit with an envious look

of the prefix was a fricative *z-* or *ð-*, which dissimilated into *y-* before alveolar initials and further into *-k-* after *-a-/**-o-*. This uvular form is preserved in Purik in the internal position of compounds, e.g., in *k^habzar-la t^huj* ‘drink without touching a bottle or pitcher with one’s lips, i.e., by letting it run down into the mouth’, cf. the WT future stem *gzar* (cf. Jk. 464b), with a velar fricative (*ɣ-*) also in Balti.

⁵⁹ For the broad evidence for the reconstruction of a TB causative *s-* prefix, see Benedict (1972: 105ff.).

that is supposed to cause the target to pass the desired thing over'. A few other result-causatives that are etymologized in Table 9 denote a state that affords or allows for another event to take place (*zgoqpa*, *zgram*, *zgrulbil*, *zgalto*), an entity that is in a state⁶⁰ in which another event may be triggered at any time (*ɣazbos*, *zbutpa*, *zbuks*), or an entity in a state that eventually leads to the result described by the corresponding Z-phasive (*rdul*).

Written Tibetan				Purik	
meaning	present	past	future		
'hinder, stop'	' <i>geg(s)</i>	<i>bkag</i>	<i>dgag</i>	<i>zgaq</i>	'hold back (one's pee, by pulling oneself together)'
'load'	' <i>gel</i>	<i>bkal</i>	<i>dgal</i>	<i>zgalto</i>	'firewood, i.e., which is to be put into the fire'
'call, summon' <*bend, control'	' <i>gug(s)</i>	<i>bkug, bgug</i>	<i>dgug</i>	<i>zguk</i>	'collect (cattle, after they have been brought to the mountains together with the other sheep of the village), i.e., summon'
'snatch off'	' <i>gog</i>	<i>bkog</i>	<i>dgog</i>	<i>zgoqpa</i>	'garlic, i.e., which needs to be scraped from the bottom of the pestle' ⁶¹
'spread, display'	' <i>grem(s)</i>	<i>bkram</i>	<i>dgram</i>	<i>zgram</i>	'box, i.e., (the content of) which can be spread out, displayed'
'untie'	' <i>grol</i>	<i>bkrol</i>	<i>dgrol</i>	<i>zgrulbil</i>	'cross-legged sitting position, i.e., where the legs need to be untied'
'cast, throw, strike, hit'	' <i>debs</i>	<i>btab</i>	<i>gdab</i>	<i>rdap</i>	'beat wool (with two sticks), i.e., beat in order for the dust inside the wool to be cast out'
'tame, subdue'	' <i>dul</i>	<i>btul, thul</i>	<i>gdul</i>	<i>rdul</i>	'dust, i.e., which will be tamed, will settle'
'cause to go out'	' <i>don</i>	<i>bton</i>	<i>gdon</i>	<i>rdon,</i> <i>Balti</i> <i>ydon</i>	'envy, hit with a glance (that is supposed to cause the other person to lose the desired thing or pass it over to the envious person)'

⁶⁰ Some *d-/g-*prefixed verbs denote the period of time during which another event is favored, such as WT *dpyid* (P *spit*) 'spring' (i.e., 'when plants come out of the ground'), WT *dbyar* (P *zbyar*) 'summer' (i.e., 'when plants are sticking around'), or WT *dgun* (P *rgun*) 'winter' (< **d-gong-d*, i.e., 'when plants shrink'). The first of these seasons additionally shows that the *d-/g-* prefix also occurs before voiceless radicals, cf. also WT *gtong* (P *ltjon*) 'notch of arrow, i.e., which allows (the arrow) to be shot or sent away'. I may only hypothesize here that alveolar and velar prefixes before voiced initials may be the result of a second extension of the functionally modified 'causative' prefix back to voiceless initials.

⁶¹ More evident in WT *dgog ting* 'pestle' (Jk. 86b), i.e., '(the) snatch-spread, where garlics and the like is spread on the bottom only that it has to be snatched off again afterwards'.

'pour out'	'bo	'bos, bo, pho	dbo	χazbos	'easily upset, i.e., from whom anger (χα) bursts out at once (if provoked)'
'blow'	'bud	bus, phus	dbu	zbutpa ⁶²	'bellows, i.e., which may be used to blow, kindle the fire'
'pierce, break open'	'bug(s)	phug	dbug	zbuks	'air in a tire, pressure, i.e., where all the content would come out at once if it were to be pierced'

Table 9. Transitive WT future stems⁶³ and their Purik correspondences

The reanalysis of the *z-prefixed PT Z-phasives as transitive WT future stems is more straightforward than the reanalyses of Z-phasives and M-phasives that yielded WT present and imperative stems. The only implication the transitive use of d/g-prefixed Z-phasives involved is their extension from non-controlled to controlled relatively future events. It is therefore not surprising that the transitive future use of d/g-prefixed Z-phasives is more common in OT than the transitive habitual and speaker-plan use of simple Z-phasives.

Let us have a look at how d/g-prefixed Z-phasives are used in OT both as transitive future stems and as verbs or nouns in which the attracto-causative meaning has lexicalized. The OT document IOL Tib J 753, which was edited and translated by Frederick W. Thomas (1936) and discussed by Brandon Dotson (2007), details the proper punishment of thieves. In this document, *dgumo* (i.e., *dgum* together with the “statement particle” -o, for which see Beyer (1992: 352-53)) is used several times to express that one or several thieves will be put to death under certain conditions. For instance, *rab mgo gum dgumo* means that (only) the three ringleaders are killed if the value of the theft was between 80 and 99 *srang* (see Dotson 2007: 14), and *kun dgumo* means that the thief and all accomplices are killed if the theft surpassed 100 *srang*. Further down in the same document, *dbabo* and *dbab'o* are used in the same function as *dgumo*. The first passage reads *srang nyis gyi rkud da dbabo*, the second one *srang chig gyi rkud dbab'o*. Taking into account Thomas' (1936: 283) translation of *rkud* as ‘penalty’, *dbab(o)* thus means in both contexts that under certain conditions, a fine of two or one *srang* is levied on thieves or their accomplices. Given that the root *bab* normally means ‘descend’, one may also interpret *rkud* as a punishment that will be *enforced upon* or *put down on* a thief.

Another OT future stem is found in OT Pt 1042.46, which details how funeral rituals need to be carried out.⁶⁴ In (19), the future stem *gdab* contrasts with the perfective *btab* in the next sentence.

OT Pt 1042.46:

(19) *zhal ta pa dang / zi mo rnams kyang / (47) bshums ngud kyis gdab // bshums ngud kyis btab lags nas*

‘The Zhaltapa and the Zimos too have to weep and cry (apply a weep cry). Having wept and cried (having applied a weep cry), ...’

⁶² Cf. also Purik *zbut*, which “dramatizes” the account of an opening door by indicating the suck or air that only arises when it is done with some force, or *zbuntse* (< **zbud-tse*) ‘chipped wood’. Furthermore, WT *sbud pa* ‘to light, kindle ...’ (Jk. 404b) exemplifies that the “result- or attracto-causative” prefix was also in WT sometimes represented by < s >.

⁶³ The paradigms are from Jäschke (1881).

⁶⁴ I owe my understanding of this text to Ai Nishida and Tsuguhito Takeuchi.

However, we also find verbs with an “attracto-causative” aktionsart in OT rather than a grammaticalized future meaning. One example is provided by *dgug* as used in the phrase *'bangsu dgug pa* ‘to subject (a country)’ in the OT Chronicle (Pt 1287). The Purik cognates of this verb suggest that the root **Kug* originally means ‘bend, control’, and its voiced correspondence *gug* ‘be bent, controlled’. It is only the *d*-prefixed Z-phasive of that root which is suited to describe someone’s going into another country in order to get the inhabitants of that country to follow one’s orders.

Another OT word with an “attracto-causative” aktionsart is *dbang* ‘power’, which is derived from the same root as *'bangs(u)* in the preceding paragraph. While the Z-phasive *'bangs* ‘subjects’ means what is subject or thrown down, its *d*-prefixed form *dbang* means what enables someone to throw others down, i.e., someone’s ‘power’. Notice that WT *sbang* in Purik (*zban*) and most other varieties of Tibetan means ‘soak’. It appears that the fluid is thereby conceptualized as pulling the soaked entity down to the ground, just like the king’s subjects are pulled down under his power. At the same time, OT *dbango* (and its alternate form *gbango*) is used many times in Pt 1071 as a transitive future stem expressing that blood money (*myI stong*) will be imposed on someone under certain conditions, see Dotson (2007: 10).

Finally, the form *dbye* ‘are dispersed’ in (11) is clearly derived from the Z-phasive *'bye* ‘move asunder’. While *dbye* evolved into a future stem of the transitive verb *'byed, phye(s/d), dbye, phyes* ‘open’, its original ‘attracto-causative’ aktionsart also lexicalized in the full verb *dbye* ‘are dispersed’ < *‘are caused to move asunder’.

In summary, the **z*-prefixed Z-phasives were shown to have lexicalized, thereby preserving their “attracto-causative” aktionsart, or grammaticalized as transitive future stems, the latter only in PWT. Lexicalization appears to have involved objectification, while grammaticalization involved subjectification (see Langacker 1990). This means that a situation either became construed from the perspective of the object or the speaker, and that this perspective was conventionalized. That is, an event became either construed as being entailed by a type of event or state in case a **z*-prefixed Z-phasive lexicalized, but as lying in the future as seen from the speaker in case it grammaticalized. The lexicalized and grammaticalized meanings are about equally close to what may be suspected to have been the original meaning: a plain description of a situation that leads to an event. While the entailed event is likely to have typically been uncontrolled, the **z*-prefixed Z-phasives most likely did not favor any one of the two perspectives (the one of the object or the one of the speaker).

4 M-phasives

I demonstrated in the two preceding sections that the PT verb stems with voiced initials must have conveyed resultative-passive notions, and that stems with **z*-prefixed voiced initials are clearly derived from the stems with voiced initials. The goal of the present section is to show that stems with voiceless aspirated initials must have originally expressed meanings that differ from the ones expressed by stems with voiced initials. In fact, stems with initial *Kb-* must have originally described the main middle and essential part of an event, or the event as such, while stems with **p-K-* and **N-G-* respectively conveyed a focus on the initial and final phase of an event. The “M-phasives” with their voiceless aspirated onset have left far too many traces to be comprehensively treated in the present article. Hence, I will restrict myself to sketching the different paths along which they appear to have evolved in different varieties of Tibetan in order to make it plausible that they originally described the main middle part that defines an event.

In §4.1, I will quickly discuss a few Purik verbs that indicate that an event “goes from A to Z”, that is, which denote what defines an event. In §4.2, we will take a closer look at the large number of Purik words which reflect the two M-phasives *tʰaŋ* ‘move across’ and *kʰaq* ‘stop’ and see that only the latter root acquired iterative meanings in some contexts, evidently due to its ‘cessative’ aktionsart. In §4.3, I will show that it was very common for M-phasives to be nominalized. Many of the Purik nouns that derive from M-phasives correspond to imperative stems in WT. Evidently, these M-phasives must have once pointed to the entity that could be involved in a dynamic event. They were reanalyzed as an appeal to the addressee to perform the action in question in WT but as denoting the entity typically involved in that action in Purik. The M-phasives that evolved in this way generally contained an *-o-* vowel if their basic root had an *-a-*. Considering the further evidence for that *-a/-o-* alternation, it will be argued in §4.3 that the *-o-* is likely to reflect “lip-pointing”, a phenomenon widely attested not only in Southeast Asia (see Enfield 2001). In §4.4, we will see that the dynamic meaning of M-phasives is also reflected in a number of dramatizers.

4.1 ‘A to Z’ Verbs Deriving from M-phasives

Purik contains a number of verbs with initial *Kb-* that indicate that an event goes from A to Z. This meaning is accounted for by the assumption that M-phasives described the event as such, that is, all that is definitional for it. The Purik verbs that best illustrate this “A to Z” meaning include *tʰul* ‘be able to climb on top, to clear an obstacle’ and *tʰjaq* ‘be able to lift, be liftable’, as used for instance in *tʰjaq-tʰa mi-nduk* ‘(I) can’t lift (it). (lit. There is no lifting.)’. These verbs can be said to convey the ‘potentialis’ meaning that Zeisler (2002) reconstructed for WT imperative stems in general. The ‘A to Z’ notion also characterizes *kʰjet* ‘be sufficient, big enough to cover something’, *tʰeps* ‘be long enough, reach’, or *kʰiks* ‘be fitting’. Finally, *tʰaq* ‘weave’ and *kʰal* ‘spin’ exemplify the iterative notion M-phasives sometimes assumed: they indicate that an event is repeatedly taken from A to Z.

4.2 Simple Dynamic vs. Iterative M-phasives

Purik has a great number of reflexes of A-, M-, and Z-phasives of the two PT verb roots **Kaŋ* ‘stop’ and **Taŋ* ‘move across, clear’.⁶⁵ Hence, these roots serve well to illustrate the differences between A-, M-, and Z-phasives as well as some of the meanings M-phasives could acquire. At some point, A-phasives and Z-phasives were derived from both these roots in order to focus on the initial and the final phase by means of a *p-* and a nasal (*N-*) prefix, respectively. The A-phasive of the former root is reflected by Purik (P) *kaŋ* ‘block’ and the WT past stem *bkag*, and the Z-phasive by P *gaŋs* ‘be(come) blocked’ and the transitive WT present stem *’gegs*. The A-phasive of the latter is continued by P *taŋ* ‘give, hit, etc.’ and WT *btang*, the Z-phasive by P *daŋs* ‘(with *zermo*) be(come) free of pain’ as well as *daŋ* ‘with *ba* wait (< *let pass)’ and WT *dang* ‘be pure’ (Jk. 249b).⁶⁶ The meanings of the various reflexes of these verbs with voiceless aspirated initials, then, are best accounted for if we assume that they derive from the original roots **Kaŋ* and **Taŋ*, which eventually became phonemically aspirated while their functions may have been constrained and thus shaped in between

⁶⁵ The earliest traceable forms of the roots are represented with capital initials here in order to express the reservation that they may or may not have been (subphonemically) aspirated at that stage.

⁶⁶ Note that *’gegs* and *bkag* etc. were assembled in a single transitive paradigm in WT, while *’dang* and *btang* appear to have ceased to be associated with each other already in PT.

the A- and Z-phasives that were originally derived from them (if the M-phasive was not backformed from them).

The semantic evolution of M-phasives strongly depended on the respective event structure. Hence, due to its cessative meaning, **k^haq* ‘stop’ was employed to convey iterative notions and thereby appears to have become dynamicized. No iterative meanings are attested for the M-phasive **t^han*. Alongside its A- and Z-phasive correspondences **p-tan* ‘instigate a crossing movement’ and **N-dan* ‘be over, have passed, be clear’, the M-phasive **t^han* retained its plainly dynamic meaning and in all its Purik reflexes describes uncontrolled horizontal movement, hence *t^han* ‘with *nam* (sky) become clear of clouds’, *t^han**t^hu* ‘wood floating down the river’, the emphatically retroflected *t^han**t^han* ‘taught’ (i.e., *‘which constantly pulls across’) from a reduplicated **t^han*, the verb *t^hen* ‘pull’ < **t^han-d* ‘can be moved across’, as well as the dramatizer *t^hjan*⁶⁷ that occurs before the verb *t^hen* in modern Purik. In contrast, **k^haq* acquired an iterative meaning in *k^haq* ‘cut with a blunt knife’ (i.e., ‘be blocked again and again’) and the deverbal noun *k^haka* ‘scrape, graze (e.g., of donkeys) from carrying heavy loads’. The contrast between a simple dynamic and an iterative meaning is also evident in further derivations of the same two roots containing an *-o-* instead of the *-a-*, e.g., *t^hon* (WT *mt^hong*) ‘be visible’ < *‘come across to one’s eyes’⁶⁸ and *k^hox* ‘cough’ < *‘stagnantly move along the inside of one’s throat’.⁶⁹ All the evidence adduced in the present paragraph is neatly accounted for by the assumption that the meaning of the originally unmarked bare roots was shaped into the ‘M-phasive’ meaning by the abductive inferences invited by not using the A-phasive on the one hand and the Z-phasive on the other. Hence, the use of the bare root implied that the speaker neither wanted to focus on the instigation nor the result of an event. As a consequence, the unmarked form of the verb was evidently interpreted as focusing on the phase that lay between the initial and the final event of a phase, that is, the dynamic main part of the event that took it from A to Z. And if that event was ‘cessative’ as in the case of **Kaq* ‘stop’, the M-phasives acquired an iterative meaning if they were not nominalized.

4.3 Nouns and WT Imperative Stems Deriving from M-Phasives

Broad evidence from Purik (and many other varieties) shows that M-phasives could also be construed as nouns. In fact, they were commonly analyzed as referring to either the ground that facilitated an event or the figure that represented its main theme. If the basic root-vowel was an *-a-*, that *-a-* appears to have prompted the construal of the M-phasive as referring to a ground, while its

⁶⁷ The conditions under which and when (relatively) *-a-/-o- > -ja-/-jo-/_q, ng* (see Zemp 2014b: 185-86) took place are still unclear. On the other hand, the retroflexion of the initial plosive as well as the diphthongization *-o- > -wa-* (see also footnote 68) appear to be typical for dramatizers and reduplicated or assonant adverbials, all of which are highly “expressive” types of words. These processes are thus likely to be related to the extra strong stress of dramatizers that primarily manifests itself as an extra high pitch.

⁶⁸ The reconstruction of this meaning is confirmed by a passage of the OT Ramayana (A 324 in de Jong’s 1989 edition), in which *mt^hongs* is analyzed by de Jong (1989: 39-40) as describing an uninterrupted chain that resulted from the king’s shooting arrows and “joining each succeeding arrow-head to the notch of the preceding one”.

⁶⁹ The fact that both the A-phasive *koq* ‘snatch off’ and the Z-phasive *gog* ‘crumble off’ point to a figure suggests that they both derive from *k^hox(s)* and not **k^haq*, which points to a ground. Furthermore, that the dramatizer *k^hwaq* is used before *lajs* ‘get up, stand still’ or its imperative from *lajs* suggests that it derived from the bare root **Koq* (before it became aspirated) and not the A-phasive *koq* ‘snatch off’. The glide *-w-* might then be assumed to have prevented the onset from becoming aspirated. Two more dramatizer-verb collocations support the assumption that a consistently stressed PT *-o-* turned into P *-wa-*, e.g., *k^hwar* (< **Kor*) *k^hor* ‘turn, take a walk (just like that)’ and *l^hwaq* (< **loq*) *ldzoq* ‘turn over, throw down (with verve)’.

replacement by an *-o-* prompted the construal as a figure. The two roots already used in §4.1 serve to illustrate these claims. Both P *tʰaj* ‘desert, plain’ (*‘where something may be moved across’) and *kʰaq* ‘responsibility’ (< *‘where something gets stuck’⁷⁰) with the *-a-* have come to designate a ground that must have been conceptualized as facilitating the respective event. The nouns with the *-o-*, on the other hand, all relate to a figure that could represent its main theme, cf. *tʰoj* ‘plow’ (*‘which is moved across (the field)’, perhaps similarly *tʰongos* ‘hoe’), *kʰoq* *‘which blocks or fills out something else’ in *kʰoqpa nirim* ‘pregnant’, and *kʰoqkʰol* ‘worried’ (‘which blocks and weighs heavy’). That the nominalized M-phasives of the root **Kag* imply a continuous rather than an iterative blockage, furthermore, suggests that the nominal construal of M-phasives is just as old as the verbal one. The nominal M-phasive *kʰaq* ‘responsibility’ was certainly not derived from the iterative verbal M-phasive meaning *‘be blocked again and again’, and *kʰoq* ‘which blocks something else’ certainly not from the iterative verbal M-phasive reflected by *kʰoqs* ‘cough’. Much more plausible is the assumption that the M-phasives, which derived from bare roots, described the event as such, and were thereby readily used to refer to entities that regularly underwent the event in question.

Many of the M-phasives that yielded nouns in Purik, however, were reanalyzed as imperative stems in WT as well as Amdo and a number of Central Tibetan dialects. It was Felix Haller (1997) who first commented on a peculiar use of imperative stems in the Amdo Tibetan variety spoken in Themchen that is illustrated by examples (301b) and (266b) from Haller’s (2004) grammar of that variety. While the active verbs *kʷaχ* (< WT *bkag*) ‘block’ and *ptaχ* (< WT *btag*) ‘attach’ indicate that an action was instigated,⁷¹ *kʰoχ* and *tʰoχ*, related verbs with a voiceless aspirated onset and the stem-vowel *-o-*, indicate that the action was not successfully completed.⁷²

(301b) Amdo Tibetan (Haller 2004: 98)

ʂtamdʒən-ye ləç kʷaχ-tʰa-ra ma-kʰoχ-tʰa
 Tamdrin-erg sheep block.pfv-nvol.evid-conc neg-block.imp-nvol.evid
 ‘Tamdrin (tried to) keep the sheep from escaping, but he couldn’t do it.’

(266b) Amdo Tibetan (Haller 2004: 94)

ʂtamdʒən-ye mdzomu ptaχ-tʰa-ra ma-tʰoχ-tʰa
 Tamdrin-erg dzomo tether.pfv-nvol.evid-conc neg-tether.imp-nvol.evid
 ‘Tamdrin (tried to) tether the Dzomos, but he couldn’t do it.’

Haller (1997) had already noticed a similar use of the imperative stems in early WT. Zeisler (2002) was able to also assert it for OT. I will only adduce example (20) here, in which the later imperative stem has both a voiceless aspirated onset and an *-o-* vowel. (Most of the other examples adduced by Zeisler do not start with a plosive and can therefore evidently not be characterized by an aspirated onset. Those whose root must have originally contained an *-a-*, however, all have an *-o-* instead, e.g., *lon*, *snyogs*, and *sod*.)

⁷⁰ As used, e.g., in *kʰaq kʰur-kʰan su in* ‘Who’s responsible? (lit. Who carries the *kʰaq*?)’.

⁷¹ The ‘conative’ notion the A-phasives *kʷaχ* and *ptaχ* convey in (301b) and (266b) may reflect their originally focusing on the initial phase of an event, as discussed in §5.

⁷² I have adopted the interlinearization from Haller (2004) and translated his original German translations of the two examples: (301b) ‘Tamdrin (versuchte), den Schafen (den Weg aus dem Pferch) zu versperren, aber es gelang (ihm) nicht.’ and (266b) ‘Tamdrin (versuchte), die Dzomo festzubinden, aber es gelang (ihm) nicht.’

OT IOL Tib J 0738/3v97⁷³:

- (20) *shre'u chung nI sgyId zhan pas // rI ka nI rgyug myi chod*
 'A little fawn with weak knees, [it] cannot run across the mountains.'⁷⁴

Zeisler (2002) correctly assumes that the original meaning of the WT imperative stems is preserved in their negated use in OT and AT and reconstructs a “potentialis” function for them.⁷⁵ However, since only those WT imperative stems that have a plosive in their onset are characterized by aspiration, while the others contain an *-o-* if their root has an *-a-*, and the remaining ones are completely unmarked, Zeisler did not notice that we have to carefully distinguish between the two markers. Fortunately, we are now in the position to refine her analysis and reconstruct the original meaning of both the aspiration of voiceless plosives and the *-a-/-o-* alternation.

It was mentioned above in the present subsection that many WT imperative stems correspond to nouns in Purik. Table 10 lists a few evident examples of such correspondences. Note that both the WT imperative stem and the Purik noun is characterized by an *-o-* if the root has an *-a-* (for which see the WT past stem).

Written Tibetan					Purik
meaning	present	past	future	imperative	
'fill'	'gengs	bkang	dgang	khong	k ^h oŋstsoq 'evil'
'load'	'gel	bkal	dgal	kbol	mikk ^h ol 'pain in the eye'
'crack'	'gad	bkad	dgad	khod	k ^h ot 'grain that is to be ground in the watermill'
'divide'	'gyed	bkyes	bkye	khyes	k ^h jemet 'useless', p ^h ank ^h etfan 'useful'
'elevate'	'gyog	bkyags	'gyog	khyog(s)	k ^h joga (buts ^h a) 'brave'
'send'	gtong	btang(s)	gtang	thong(s)	t ^h oŋ 'plow'
'gather, collect'	'thu	btus	btu	thus	t ^h wa (< thu ba) 'lap, front part of skirt', Balti 'full lap (e.g., of grain)'
'spread'	'ding	bting	gding	thing(s)	naqt ^h inj ^h ij 'pitch black', sert ^h inj ^h ij 'glistening yellow'
'attach'	'dogs	btags	gdags	thog(s)	t ^h oq 'roof, Balti 'crops'
'wring, squeeze'	'tshir	btsir(d)	btsir	tshir(d)	t ^h ir 'queue, order, succession'
'sell'	'tshong	btsongs	btsonq	tshong	t ^h oŋ 'trade'
'pour'	'chu	bcus	bcu	chus	t ^h u 'water'

⁷³ I have adopted the transliteration of OTDO. The passage makes part of a text on divination with dice that corresponds to text VI in Thomas (1957).

⁷⁴ My translation essentially corresponds to Zeisler's (2002: 447). One might also translate mi chod by 'will not/never be able to run' in order to express the prospective generic notion mi appears to have conveyed in OT as in Purik. Note, furthermore, that *ri ka* is still the regular locative of *ri* 'mountain' in present-day Purik.

⁷⁵ "As all these examples show, the *potentialis* function is most often found with negation. This makes it quite plausible that the imperative function is a secondary development, derived from the positive statement of ability and then generalised to the extent that the original meaning of the stem form is fully preserved only in negation." (Zeisler 2002: 449-50)

'make'	'chos	bcos	bco	chos	tʰos 'religion (< *which is/needs to be done)'
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Table 10. WT imperative stems corresponding to nouns (or adjectives) in Purik⁷⁶

We claimed above that some M-phasives turned into nouns in Purik, and that a stem-vowel *-o-* instead of an *-a-* in the root appears to have prompted their reference to the entity that represents the theme of the respective event. That these same M-phasives came to indicate an order in WT allows us to reconstruct their ambiguous original function. They must have originally referred (and actually pointed if they had an *-o-* instead of an *-a-*) to an entity by indicating that it could be involved in a certain event (i.e., '(this) is/can be V-ed). While the addressee in PWT came to understand these verbal forms as initially indirect and therefore presumably polite appeals to perform the action in question⁷⁷, they remained to be understood as identifying an entity in Purik.⁷⁸

The evidence discussed here suggests that an *-a-* was replaced by an *-o-* when speakers of PT⁷⁹ referred to a figure rather than a ground. This makes it appear quite plausible that the *-a-* was changed into the *-o-* because speakers were actually pointing to that figure by means of their lips.⁸⁰ The phenomenon of “lip-pointing” is widely attested by Enfield (2001) for the languages of Southeast Asia and other parts of the world, and I have myself observed it among Central and Kham Tibetans living in Kathmandu. That Purikpas do not generally use it makes sense insofar as the *-o-*

⁷⁶ The paradigms of *'gad*, *gtong*, and *'dogs* are from Hill (2010); for *'gyed*, *'gyog*, *'thu*, *'tshir*, and *'chos*, I have only listed the forms that are most widely attested in the sources quoted by Hill. The remaining paradigms are from Jäschke (1881).

⁷⁷ In Zeisler (2002: 450)'s words: “In assertive employment, the stem form underwent a considerable shift of meaning: from the mere description of the ability to perform an action or to obtain a result via the wish that one may be able to perform and the wish that the action will be performed (optative) to the command that the action should be performed (imperative).”

⁷⁸ Recall that in Purik, instead of the described indirect construal by means of M-phasives, orders became conventionally expressed by exchanging the *-a-* vowel of “active” verbs with an *-o-* and adding an *-s* suffix to those ending in a vowel. In other words, in Purik, imperative stems are never characterized by an additional aspiration feature. Zeisler (2002: 450) fails to point that out when she writes that “[o]nly in Balti and Purik ... is the imperative stem used regularly in prohibitions.” What she presumably means is that it is sensible for a stem meaning ‘this can be done’ (M-phasives with an *-o-*) to be employed as an imperative (‘you should do it’) but not as a prohibitive when negated (‘this cannot be done’ ≧ ‘this must not be done’). There is no reason, however, why the unequivocally marked imperative stems of Purik and Balti (meaning ‘Do!’), where A-phasives clearly lost their exclusive focus on the initial phase, should not be used in prohibitions (‘Do not!’).

⁷⁹ Pairs of intransitive verbs with *-ō-* (representing fronted *-o-*, cf. Widmer (2015: 100-102)) and transitive verbs with *-a-* Shafer (1950: 717) presented for Kanauri (Kinnauri), i.e., *zhög-* ‘be broken’ : *cag-* ‘break’ and *zōr-* ‘rise (of sun)’ : *sar-* ‘raise’, suggest that PT may have even inherited the ‘pointing’ *-o-*.

⁸⁰ Accordingly, I suggest to reject Shafer’s (1951: 1022) according to Jacques (2012: 212) “well accepted” proposal “that the *a/o* alternation in the imperative was related to the *-o* suffix in Tamangic languages” (even though DeLancey (2014b: 24-5) adduces evidence from still other TB languages). It is implausible because, as Jacques himself notes, Zeisler’s (2002) reconstruction of a potential meaning “implies that a parallel semantic shift from potential to imperative took place independently in Tibetan and Tamangic”. However, much more compelling evidence against Shafer’s assumption is provided by the fact that we lack evidence for the assumption that an *-o* suffix was lost just like that, or that it changed a preceding *-a-* into an *-o-*. In fact, the only *-o* suffix we need to reconstruct for PT left clear traces in both branches, namely the “terminative particle” *-o* (see Takeuchi 2014: 409) of WT and the ‘emphatically affirmative’ *-to* (which appears to have incorporated the final *-t* of the regularly preceding *jo*t, cf. Zemp 2014a: §4.5.3) of Purik. Hence, this evidently old *-o* suffix was neither lost nor did it change preceding vowels.

was regularized as a marker of the imperative there (while in Central Tibetan, it occurs much less regularly). This suggests that the gesture ceased to be used where its effect (-o- instead of -a-) was reanalyzed as indicating an order. At the same time, the involved entity did and does not always have to be situated before the interlocutors anymore.⁸¹

4.4 Dramatizers Deriving from M-phasives

The M-phasives of PT are also reflected by a number of Purik dramatizers. I have attested nearly 100 of these mostly monosyllabic “words” (speakers of Purik are reluctant to grant them the status of “words”) that may be used immediately before very small groups of semantically compatible predicates, receive an extra-high pitch⁸², and thereby appear to make the respective proposition more vivid. It was argued already in §2.4 that a considerable proportion of these dramatizers derive from verbs and stem from a stage of PT in which two verbs were concatenated without any subordinator if they described two facets of one and the same event. Thus, all of the dramatizers listed in column two of Table 11⁸³ originally described events that highlighted the dynamic notions of the verbs that followed them in PT and still follow them today. For instance, *t^haq* meant ‘*come off’ and thereby pictured *k^hru* ‘wash’ as a dynamic process in the course of which dirt is removed with verve from the washed item, and *t^hop* ‘*be planted, be cast’ added similar verve to *tsuk* ‘plant’. While all of these dramatizers ceased to be construed as verbs when nonce-concatenations of the form V-V ceased to be productive, their originally dynamic meaning is clearly reflected by a dramatizing effect on the following predicate in today’s Purik. The dramatizers thus bear testimony to the dynamic meaning M-phasives acquired by denoting the event as such, viz. nothing more and nothing less than what defines the event. The implication that an event went from its beginning to its end may well have been strengthened by the availability of A- and Z-phasives that could respectively focus on its initial and final phase.

WT or P Etymology	P Dramatizer + Verb	Original meaning
cf. WT <i>'dag</i> ‘be clean’, P <i>daq</i> ‘become clean’, <i>t^hjaq</i> ‘lift’	<i>t^haq k^hru</i>	*‘wash in order for the dirt to come off’
WT <i>gtum</i> , <i>btums</i> , <i>gtum(s)</i> , <i>thums</i> ‘wrap’, P <i>t^hums</i> ‘be wrapped’	<i>t^hum tsuk</i>	*‘close (the door) wrapping (the house) up’
WT <i>'debs</i> , <i>btap</i> , <i>gtap</i> , <i>thob(s)</i> ‘sow, strike’, P <i>tap</i> ‘id.’	<i>t^hop tsuk</i>	*‘put inside planting (e.g., a needle)’

⁸¹ Evidence for the shift of focus between -a- and -o- might also be found in the assonant adjectives that describe qualities wavering between two extremes, such as *sqabasqobe* ‘red-colored (just before completely ripening)’, *labalobe* ‘(incoherent) sleep talking’ (cf. WT *lab* ‘speak’), *k^hjabak^hjobe* ‘weak (barely able to stand on one’s feet)’, however, where the second syllable even more commonly has -u- instead of -o-, cf. *t^haba^ht^hube* ‘neither bright nor dark’ from the abstract *t^hup* ‘dark(ness)’, *bralabrul* ‘small change’ (cf. *bral* ‘be separated from’ and *brulu* ‘crumble, small piece’), or *malamule* ‘lukewarm’, etc. (cf. Zemp 2014a: 153).

⁸² Since stress is primarily indicated by means of high pitch in Purik, the extra-high pitch of dramatizers also accounts for why sound changes such as *t-* > *t-* or *-o-* > *-wa-* only applied to them.

⁸³ Cf. also *t^hjan* (used with *t^hen* ‘pull’), which was already mentioned in §4.2.

id.	<i>tʰap tsir</i>	*‘squeeze planting (e.g., one’s fingers inside of a lemon)’
cf. WT <i>’dre(s)</i> ‘be mixed’, <i>sre</i> ‘mix’, P <i>dres, stre</i>	<i>tʰre (tʰuli) spruk</i>	*‘shake (an apricot tree) mixing it up’
cf. P <i>dams</i> ‘be together’, <i>zdam</i> ‘press together’, <i>tʰams</i> ‘hold’	<i>tʰam (tʰuli) spruk</i>	*‘shake (an apricot tree) firmly holding on to it’
cf. WT <i>’du(s)</i> ~ P <i>tʰu</i> ‘collect’	<i>tʰus tʰoχs</i>	*‘bump into (a dry ear of corn) so that its entire contents assembles on the ground’

Table 11. M-phasives > Purik dramatizers

5 A-phasives

I have so far avoided the difficult question concerning degree to which the different PT phasives mutually restricted and thereby shaped each other. It is highly likely, however, even if it is hard to point to particular instances, that the meanings of M-phasives and Z-phasives were constantly shaped by the abductive inferences triggered by using one and not another stem. In the present section, we will discuss certain uses of A-phasives that may be taken to indicate that their meanings were restricted to exclusively refer to an event’s *instigation* by corresponding M-phasives, *nota bene* at a stage in which the phasal distinction was still productive.

The “conative”⁸⁴ use of two Themchen–Amdo Tibetan perfective stems (< A-phasives) was already discussed in §4.3 and illustrated for *kwaχ* ‘(try to) block’ in (301b) and *ptaχ* ‘(try to) attach’ in (266b) from Haller (2004). Examples (306) and (307a) from Zeisler (2004: 415) show that transitive past stems were sometimes also conatively used in WT.⁸⁵

(306) *btul gyis mi thul gyis* ‘having subdued (=having tried/trying to subdue) ... will never be subdued ...’

(307a) *ji ltar bkag rung ma kbegs pas* ‘How much [they] hindered (=tried to hinder) ... was not hindered ...’

Possibly, the conative notions the A-phasives convey in these two examples is a relic from the stage of PT in which the devoicing labial prefix triggered a focus on the initial phase of an event. Some plausibility is added to this by the fact that Zeisler (2004: 414) finds the conative situations under discussion “to be quite typical for proverbs, aphorisms, or songs”, while they do not occur frequently in her OT and WT narrations. Hence, they are likely to at least be old. At the same time,

⁸⁴ Cf. Zeisler (2004: 407): “With past time reference, it is not uncommon to find the past stem of telic verbs for conative situations, when a controlled action is but started or intended. The neutral presentation of an action (holistic perspective) does not necessarily include the typical boundaries, but leaves it open to the context whether the *télos* is achieved or not. In Tibetan, at least, this impreciseness is motivated by the notion of control that, ideally, extends only up to the point of transformation. Since the *télos* of the action, the transformation itself is not under the sole control of the agent, it may still be disturbed or prevented, although in most cases the achievement of the *télos* would automatically follow the attempt.” A number of Japanese scholars have referred to essentially the same phenomenon (especially in Burmese) as ‘event cancellation’, cf. Atsuhiko (2014).

⁸⁵ Both examples are taken from Heruka’s *Mi la ras pa’i rnam mgur*, which must have been written in the early 16th century according to footnote 110 in Zeisler (2004: 414). The translations are Zeisler’s.

we must note here once more that the examples she discusses are not restricted to past stems with a *b-* prefix. If we suggest that the conative use of WT past stems may represent a relic of the focus on the initial phase of an event that was originally triggered by the devoicing labial prefix, we have to be aware that any active past stem is perhaps susceptible to an employment in conative situations.

There are a few compounds in Purik in which a *p-* prefix has been preserved in the internal position of a compound (while it was lost in the absolute initial position). The assumption that this *p-* once conveyed an exclusive focus on the initial phase of the action appears plausible considering the semantics of all these compounds. Thus, the conative notion appears to still be notable in Purik *faptsoŋspa* ‘butcher’, i.e., ‘who *tries* to sell his meat’, *k^haptʃos (ba)* ‘(do) covering of things stored on the roof (to prevent them from getting wet or wetter, since the rain has typically already started)’, i.e., ‘*trying* to cover as many things as possible as quickly as possible’, *mipsat* ‘murderer’, i.e., ‘someone who will *try* to kill (you and others)’, *rdwaptʃans* ‘deep sleep outside of one’s proper bed(ding)’, i.e., ‘as if *trying* to lift a rock’ (from the perspective of parents trying to put their sleeping child into its proper bed), *tʃ^hupʃat* ‘wash by winnowing (lentils)’, i.e., ‘*trying* to comb/*as if* combing (the lentils) with water’, and *gopskor* ‘trouble’, i.e., ‘*almost* making one’s head spin’.

Clearly, the conative notions of the *p-*prefixed verb stems in the listed compounds of Purik might just as well be argued to reflect a secondary reanalysis of plainly transitive verbs. However, the evidence that is at the same time provided by the conative WT and Amdo past (or perfective) stems makes the assumption appear highly likely that **p-*prefixed verb stems conveyed a restrictive focus on the initial phase of an event in the latest common stage of the ancestor of all these Tibetan varieties.

6 Discussion

6.1 *The Collapse of the Threefold Phasal Distinction*

The most evident reason why nobody has recognized that PT exhibited a threefold phasal distinction is that it appears to have collapsed into a twofold distinction in all documented written and spoken varieties of Tibetan. Let us quickly retrace the processes that led to the collapse of the phasal distinction. Given that the stative *-s* suffix is an inherited feature of PT, the phasal distinction must have started to collapse as soon as it was established. We saw in §2.4 that the stative *-s* suffix was used after all different phasives (including the **z-*prefixed Z-phasives). By describing the result of an event, however, it must have always tended to neutralize the distinction holding between A-phasives focusing on the initial phase, M-phasives focusing on the medial, and Z-phasives focusing on the final phase of an event. At the same time, the *-s* suffix itself ceased to make sense to speakers. It was reanalyzed as marking the “perfect” of intransitive verbs in PWT but the “past” of transitive verbs in PPT. The latter reanalysis must have been prompted by the periphrastic resultative **V-s-’dug* that started to replace the Simple Resultative V-*s* in spoken Tibetan around the time it started to be written down.

In WT, the original relationships between the stems became even more opaque through the transitivization of M-, Z-, and **z-*prefixed Z-phasives. Many M-phasives were reanalyzed as imperative (or present) stems, Z-phasives as present stems, and **z-*prefixed Z-phasives as future stems. If there was no suitable candidate for the respective slots among these passive phasives in PWT, however, A-phasives could be used to fill any of them. The transitivization of certain phasives also brought features such as the *-d* suffix or the *-o-* stem vowel into present and sometimes other

stems. As a consequence, the transitive paradigms of WT are full of markers that cannot serve their original function anymore.

Fortunately, things did not become that messy when the passive phasives did not grammaticalize as transitive stems but lexicalized as full verbs, nouns, or other parts of speech. Because they have come to denote a reoccurring situation of life or an entity that was regularly involved in such a situation, we are therefore still able to detect the original aktionsart of many lexicalized PT verb stems in both Purik and WT.

6.2 Dissociated Groups of Phasives

Based on both phonetic and semantic criteria, we may thus identify a number of further groups of related phasives (including *z-prefixed Z-phasives) even if they were not assembled in transitive paradigms of WT. The list given in Table 12 is in no way exhaustive. The semantic specification of some stems makes it obvious why they ceased to be associated with related stems by the time Tibetan started to be written down (if not by the time the paradigms were established by grammarians).

Z-phasive		*z-prefixed Z-phasive	PT root	M-phasive	A-phasive
Purik	Original meaning				
<i>got</i> ‘loss’, <i>got tʰa</i> ‘die (h)’	**‘crack off (from sth. larger, e.g., the world of living beings)’	<i>zargat</i> ‘joke’, <i>rgot</i> ‘laughter’, < * <i>ʁgat</i> ‘about to crack’	* <i>Kat</i> ‘crack’	<i>kʰot</i> ‘grain to be ground in the watermill’ < **‘which is to crack’	<i>katpa</i> ‘a crack, quarry’
<i>gon</i> ‘wear’			* <i>Kon</i> ‘carry’	<i>kʰon</i> ‘grudge’ (i.e., ‘sth. carried’)	<i>skon</i> ‘dress so. else’
<i>gor</i> ‘be late’	**‘have so. else turn around waiting’	<i>ʁorʁor tan</i> ‘churn by means of a lathe’ < * <i>dgor</i> °	* <i>Kor</i> ‘turn around’	<i>kʰor</i> ‘turn around’	<i>skor</i> ‘make turn around’
<i>gjes</i> ‘be fed up’, in Tö-dialects with <i>kʰa</i> ‘separate, divorce’	**‘become to much for so.’	<i>ltʃaʁzɡjet</i> ‘three-legged iron stove’ < * <i>zgyed</i> ‘which can be folded up’	* <i>Ke</i> ‘unfold’	<i>kʰemet</i> ‘useless’, <i>pʰankʰetʃan</i> ‘useful, beneficial’	<i>skje</i> ‘give birth’
<i>grag</i> ‘greet, talk briefly’	**‘mix in’		* <i>Krag</i> ‘mix in’	<i>kʰsaxs</i> ‘be well knead’	<i>skrag</i> ‘mix, knead, stir’

<i>grims</i> 'be(come) mixed (and a single mass)'		<i>zgrim</i> 'mix' < *'allow to be mixed'	* <i>Krim</i> 'mix (and thereby become one)'	<i>kʰsims</i> 'custom' < 'which absorbs all the members of a community'	<i>skrim</i> 'mix'
<i>daq</i> 'be(come) clean'	**'be freed from sth. else (that is lifted, taken off)'	<i>zdjajs</i> 'match, comparison, avarice' < <i>gdeg</i> 'put sth. in the state that it can be lifted, weighed up against sth. else'	* <i>Taq</i> 'come off, lift'	<i>tʰaq</i> 'dram. wash', <i>tʰaqtʰaq</i> 'peeled, plain', <i>tʰjaq</i> 'be lifted, able to lift'	<i>stjaq</i> 'lift'
<i>dal (jot)</i> '(have) time'	**'(work) has passed'		* <i>Tal</i> 'pass'	Kham/Amdo auxiliary * <i>thal</i> 'passed'	<i>ltarmik</i> < * <i>btal mig</i> 'esophagus'
<i>duk</i> 'stay, ex.t'	**'have met, stay after having met'	<i>zduk</i> 'make sad' < *'attract pity (burning)'	* <i>Tuk</i> 'meet'	<i>tʰuk</i> 'meet'	<i>stuk</i> < <i>btug</i> 'sue (< *confront, make meet)'
(<i>me</i>) <i>duks</i> 'catch fire'	* 'be in the state of having met (fire)'	<i>rduk</i> 'burn incense' < *'be constantly about to catch fire'	* <i>Tuk</i> '(a)light'	<i>thugs</i> 'which is alive, in the state of having caught fire/life'	<i>tuk</i> 'light'
<i>dums</i> 'be together, covered (e.g., one's legs by a blanket)'		<i>ldum</i> 'dram. be clouded' < * <i>gdum</i> 'can be wrapped up'	* <i>Tum</i> 'wrap around'	<i>tʰums</i> 'be wrapped up, around'	<i>tum</i> 'wrap up, cover'
<i>dot</i> 'become well'	**'be put on top'	<i>zdot-tʃi duk</i> '(I'm) ok' < *'will be ok'	* <i>Tat</i> 'go on top of sth. else'	<i>tʰat</i> 'be happy' < *'on top', <i>tʰot</i> 'turban' < *'which is put on top of so.'	<i>stat</i> 'put on top, hand to so.'

<i>don</i> ‘goal’	**‘the larger context in which sth. emerges’	<i>rdon</i> ‘enviously look at so. to make him pass over the desired thing’	* <i>Ton</i> ‘emerge’	<i>tʰon</i> ‘be displayed after having been carried to the house (grass)’	<i>ston</i> ‘show’, Leh/Amdo <i>ton</i> ‘take out, read’
<i>zaq</i> ‘leak’		<i>rdzaq</i> ‘dram. add wood to the fire’ < * <i>gzag</i>	* <i>Tsaq</i> ‘trickle’ ⁸⁶	<i>tsʰaxs</i> ‘sieve’	<i>tsaq</i> ‘filter, cause to trickle’
<i>zir</i> ‘aim’	**‘do as if there were a row of things between oneself and a target’		* <i>Tsir</i> ‘line up’	<i>tsʰir</i> ‘queue, order, succession’	<i>tsir</i> ‘wring’ < **‘put in a row’
<i>zam</i> ‘skim off (cream from milk, having become separated)’			* <i>Cam</i> ‘exist alongside each other without disturbance’	<i>tʰams</i> ‘(come to) exist alongside each other without disturbance’	
<i>zalatuttut</i> ‘dragging across the floor’	* <i>zal</i> ‘be aligned’		* <i>Cal</i> ‘align’		<i>ʈfar</i> ‘weigh (< *make align)’
<i>zu</i> ‘melt’	**‘become fluid’		* <i>Cu</i> ‘fall/run down (like a fluid)’	<i>tʰu</i> ‘water’	<i>tfu</i> ‘pour’

Table 12. Dissociated groups of phasives

6.3 The ‘Creoloid’ Nature of PT

It is beyond doubt that Proto-Tibeto-Burman had highly elaborate person-agreement morphology (see for instance DeLancey 2010, or DeLancey’s plenary talk at the 48th International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics held in Santa Barbara, August 21st–23rd, 2015). DeLancey (e.g., 2014a) has repeatedly argued that many of the TB languages lacking such

⁸⁶ Benedict (1972: 125) also recognized the link between *zaq* and *tsʰaq*.

morphology are likely to have lost it in the course of processes involving intense language contact, and that Tibetan is one of these languages. On the one hand, the features I have been able to reconstruct for PT in the present article strongly appear to substantiate DeLancey’s ideas. On the other, they afford us to clearly distinguish between the creolization process that yielded PT and the variety of processes by which the different spoken dialects diverged from PT. Whether these latter processes should also be considered “creolizing” needs to be reconsidered.

DeLancey bases his claims on historically attested varieties of Tibetan. He adduces the following example sentence from Lhasa Tibetan in order to illustrate the “creoloid” characteristics of Tibetan (DeLancey 2014a: 43).

3)	<i>snga.mo snga.mo gcig la</i>	<i>spo.bo</i>	<i>cig</i>	<i>dang</i>	<i>rmo.bo</i>	<i>cig</i>
	long.ago	old.man	a	and	old.woman	a
	 <i>yod-pa</i>	 <i>red</i>				
	exist-NMZ	be				

‘Long, long ago, there were an old man and an old woman.’

Comparing Lhasa Tibetan with sample sentences from other creoloid TB languages, DeLancey (2014a: 44) makes the following observations:

The Lhasa verb is equally complex, in the simple sense of the number of morphemes attached to the verb, but it is more transparent: the form is a recently grammaticalized nominalization construction (DeLancey 2010b, 2011b), and each morpheme – the lexical verb, the nominalizer *pa*, and the equational copula *red*, is synchronically recognizable, and has a specific, unitary contribution to the meaning of the construction This is characteristic of creoloid verbal constructions. More fundamentally, the Lhasa verb does nothing to present the scene – the number and identity of participants is recoverable only from the NP arguments themselves. All of the inflection of the verb – and all of the copious paradigm of nominalizations, suffixes, serial verbs and nested copular constructions in the modern verbal system – is about grounding the event in the world of discourse.

DeLancey is aware of the fact that Lhasa *yod pa red* has only recently grammaticalized. My reconstruction of PT suggests that auxiliaries such as *red* only started to grammaticalize after *V-*s-'dug* had introduced evidential notions into the language around the time it was first written down (see Zemp forthcoming). The equative *red* is only found in the eastern half of the Tibetan dialects. In Shigatse, we find *pie* instead (see Haller 2000), and in Southern Mustang, *rak* (see Kretschmar 1995, and Bielmeier 2000). And at the western periphery, e.g., in Purik, we see that *yin* is still the only equative copula and has thus retained its non-evidential factual function. I am not convinced that we need to assume intense language contact to account for the processes involving the wide variety of auxiliarizations of V_{2s}.

Similarly, the idea of a creolized PT needs to be carefully distinguished from Zeisler’s (e.g., 2009) attempts to account for the alleged simplification of the verbal system in the western dialects by assuming that Tibetan was used as a *lingua franca* in these regions (see §1.3 above). I have tried to show in the present article how the stems that once conveyed a phasal distinction must have been

reanalyzed as conveying temporal and modal notions in WT. None of the stems Zeisler assumes to have been lost in the western dialects were actually lost there. They have just been serving functions that have diverged from the ones attested for WT to the extent that they have gone unnoticed until now.

Regardless of whether the evolution of the Tibetan varieties from PT has to be accounted for by assuming intense language contact, the reconstructions of the present article make a strong case for the assumption that PT itself emerged from a situation involving heavy language contact. In fact, the minimal structures of PT even make it appear likely that it resulted from the imposition of a TB language on non-TB-speaking populations. It is too early to reach conclusions on the identity of either the “lexifier” language or its “substratum” or “substrata”. We need to refine the reconstruction of PT in order to be able to make such claims. However, mainly based on Aldenderfer and Zhang (2004) and Aldenderfer (2007), DeLancey (2014a: 57), shows both that the Zhang-zhung polity is a likely candidate for having imposed their language onto large populations in Central Eurasia, and that these populations are likely to have spoken either Indo-European or Altaic languages. Note that according to Widmer (2015: 56), the language of Zhang-zhung is most closely related to an eastern branch of West-Himalayish.

Let us readdress the features I have been able to reconstruct for PT in the light of the assumption that this PT emerged from a situation of intense language contact. We will thereby distinguish between features PT strongly appears to have inherited from TB and features that likely emerged in early PT.

Inherited features:

- Active $*(p-)K-$ vs. passive $*(N-)G-$, and bare, perhaps aspirated, roots $(*K(h)-)$
- Causative $s-$ prefix
- Stative $-s$ suffix
- Nominalizing $*-d$ suffix
- Focus marking $-pa$ (even if not discussed here; see Bickel 1999)

Early PT features:

- A-phasives with $*p-K-$: M-phasives with $*Kb-$: Z-phasives with $*N-G-$
- “result-causative” $*z-$ prefix (< causative $*s-$)
- V = Simple Past, V- s = Simple Resultative
- Verbs concatenated without a subordinator when they described different facets of one and the same event (V-V) or state (V- s -V)
- “lip-pointing” changing $-a-$ into $-o-$

First, the inherited features support the idea that PT was a “suboptimally transmitted” (see Dahl 2004) TB language. It appears that PT only inherited derivational markers, while TB inflectional markers were dropped entirely. This sort of simplification is very typical of creoles. Second, the features that may have evolved in early PT (if they were not inherited from TB after all) are the products of “natural”, sometimes iconic, uses of features. For instance, that the bare root came to focus on the main middle part of an event is a natural process given that two marked forms of the same root respectively focus on the instigation and the result of the event. Similarly, given the availability of the stative $-s$ suffix, it appears to have been economic to describe past events by means of simple verb forms and their results by adding the $-s$. This trait of PT resembles what we may

expect from “creoles” according to Velupillai (2015: 54).⁸⁷ Typical for creoles are also subordinator-less concatenation of verbs (see Velupillai 2015: 54), which represent a straightforward way of expressing that these verbs are linked and therefore relate to one and the same event. And finally, the *-o-* replacing an *-a-* was even claimed to reflect a non-linguistic gesture, namely “lip-pointing”. Such a gesture is likely to be employed in order to point to the entity one is referring to when one is using a language whose verbal morphology does not serve to indicate the roles subjects or objects assume in an event.

Third, the early stage of the PT creole must have involved a great deal of generalization. All available features were highly productive and were thereby continuously extended into new contexts, used with new verb roots (e.g., the three phasives, and the causative *s-* and result-causative *z-*), whose forms sometimes differed from the ones they occurred with before (e.g., causative *s-* before voiceless onsets > result-causative *z-* before voiced onsets). It is fully plausible that a creole with an extremely simple grammar (leaving speakers unable to indicate whether they are referring to a past or future event, for instance, or to indicate who participates in an event) will involve a great deal of generalization in that the few markers it has are highly productive and thereby continuously extended into new contexts.

Everything I have reconstructed for the earliest stages of PT thus makes the assumption highly plausible that its emergence involved intense language contact. The structure of PT is more minimal than scholars have assumed until now.⁸⁸ Some of the constructions that grammaticalized in its later stages (see Zemp forthcoming) should already be viewed as steps transferring the grounding from the world of discourse to the world of the event. In my opinion, the Lhasa construction discussed by DeLancey (2014a) is thus only typical for creoloid languages in that it reflects a step *away* from their minimal grammar, viz. a pragmatic way of bringing new order into a linguistic system that had become messy and intransparent.

7 Concluding Remarks

I hope to have demonstrated what we can achieve by means of functional reconstruction, a method that has not received the appreciation it deserves in linguistics, and which has not been applied to Tibetan before (at least not persistently). By producing and testing hypotheses in order to produce the most plausible and economic account for functional divergences of different varieties and within each of these, I have achieved a detailed reconstruction of the language from which all well-documented varieties of Tibetan likely derive.

⁸⁷ Besides having reduced morphology (Velupillai 2015: 53), it is typical of creoles that “[l]exical aspect is described as affecting the reading of the base form of the verb (with stative verbs getting a present tense reading and dynamic verbs getting a past tense reading), ...” (Velupillai 2015: 54). Hence, the PT verb system differs from that expectation by the fact that the unmarked form refers to the anterior (rather than the present), while the marked form (with the *-s*) refers to the present (rather than the anterior).

⁸⁸ The PT reconstructed here may be said to look as creoloid as a language may look, which strongly suggests that it immediately originated from a situation in which large numbers of speakers adopted a language different from their mother tongue. It is therefore unlikely that we will be able to find genetic relatives among the languages investigated here, and we may almost certainly rule out that PT derives from a “hypothetically creoloid Proto-Bodish” (DeLancey 2014a: 59). We are much more likely to find evidence for the assumption that the similarities between Tibetan and another language stem from episodes of contact that took place after the genesis of PT. The other possibility is that we are able to identify a language that is likely to have played a dominant role in the creolization of PT.

That functional reconstruction has not been more popular is certainly related to the fact that linguists have been unable to establish neat principles guiding them in deciding whether a hypothesized grammatical change is possible or not. I hope that studies such as the one at hand will contribute to improving this situation. This insinuates that, for the time being, we should view reconstructions that explain so many irregularities in different parts of the grammar as sufficient proof that the implied grammatical changes did take place. However, there are certainly many details about my reconstructions and the evolution of each PT feature that need to still be refined.

There is also a more direct way in which we can benefit from such functional reconstructions. In *Zemp* (forthcoming), I demonstrate that the reconstruction of PT sheds a great deal of light on the more recent evolution of Tibetan. In particular, it allows us to understand how evidentiality emerged around the time Tibetan was first written down, and how it evolved in the different varieties spoken today. Note that the method by which these processes are uncovered is again functional reconstruction. And again, we may benefit from the results of that method in finding out about how grammar may and may not change.

The reconstruction of both the prehistoric evolution of the PT creole and its divergence into the different written and spoken varieties gives us a solid basis on which we may reassess the relationships between Tibetan and other languages. That PT was a creole makes it rather unlikely for us to find any genetic relatives. We may, however, find that a particular language looks like another creole that reflects the suboptimal transmission of the same language that lexified PT. Or, we might even identify the language that lexified PT (perhaps along with other languages of the region).

ABBREVIATIONS

Interlinear Glosses

CNJ	conjunctive morpheme	INFR	inferential
DAT	dative	LIM	limitive
DEF	definite article	LOC	locative
DRAM	dramatizer	NEG	negation
EX(.F)	(factual) existential copula	PL	plural
EX.T	testimonial existential copula	PROG	progressive
G(EN)	genitive	PST	past
IMP	imperative	Q	question particle
INDF	indefinite article	STAT	stative
INE	inessive		

Reference Abbreviations

CDTD	Bielmeier, Roland, et al. Forthcoming. <i>Comparative Dictionary of Tibetan Dialects. Vol. 1: Verb</i> . Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
jk.	Jäschke, Heinrich August. 1881. <i>A Tibetan-English dictionary, with special reference to the prevailing dialects</i> . London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
OTDO	Old Tibetan Documents Online. URL: http://otdo.aa.tufs.ac.jp

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