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A Linguistic and Anthropological Survey of the Tibetan Borderland¹

Krisadawan Hongladarom

Abstract

This paper reports the linguistic and anthropological situation of an important but poorly documented region of Tibet, namely the cultural province of Kham. Characterized by "four rivers and six ranges," the region is a historical frontier zone between Tibet proper and western provinces of China. It has been a meeting place between the Tibetans and the Han Chinese and a common home for these peoples as well as other ethnic minorities. As an introduction to the ethnic and linguistic complexity of Kham, the paper pays a special attention to Gyalhang (Zhongdian), which is located on the southernmost tip of the frontier and is the last Kham town in the embrace of the Yangtze river. An investigation of local history, cultural identity as well as linguistic diversity of this and other Kham communities not only advances our understanding of Kham regionalism, but also sheds light on Modern Tibet as a whole.

¹ I wish to express my gratitude to the ASIA Fellows Program and the Thailand Research Fund for the research grants which allowed me to do fieldwork in several Kham communities in Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces. I am grateful to Professor Piyanart Bunnag for inviting me to submit this paper to *Asian Review 2001*. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Prapod Assavavirulhakarn for his comments and suggestions.

A Linguistic and Anthropological Survey of the Tibetan Borderland

1. The Sino-Tibetan Borderland of Kham

The most integral and lasting contacts between the Tibetans and the Chinese did not develop from formal diplomatic relations in Lhasa or Beijing. They evolved naturally on the frontiers where the two peoples met in war, trade, and pilgrimage, in regions where the writ of their governments barely ran at all.

(Aris 1992: 13)

The term "Frontiers of China" emerged from travel accounts and scholarly writings of pioneering explorers of the early twentieth century (cf. the work by Fletcher (1979), Latimore (1962), Migot (1955), and Rock (1956)). In the common conception, this term conjures up an image of remote wilderness, which inevitably evokes the discourse of fear. Numerous accounts of brigandry, murders, landslides and hailstorms - among major calamities on the high plateaus as well as strange tongues and habits of their inhabitants justify the fear and augment the sense of distrust. Thus the Tibetan frontiers constituted another "forbidden land" provoking the challenge for those who wanted to tame them.²

For shepherds, traders and farmers who live along the borderlands, the term conjures up another image. It was their only known world whose genuine rulers were not the Chinese emperors or the Dalai Lamas but local chieftains. The line on paper marked by cartographers meant little

to them; the only boundaries they recognized were the rivers and mountains which separated them from their neighbors. Their world was of complex interdependence cutting across cultures, religions, languages and ethnic groups. Hence the frontiers were neither restricted areas to be controlled nor political arenas between two governments.

Acknowledging the spatial greatness of the Sino-Tibetan borderland and its independent relationship with the central government of Lhasa, Tibetan scholars call it *phö chemo* (bod chenpo) "Greater Tibet," in contrast with *phö* (bod) "Tibet."³ The latter simply designates Ü-Tsang (Central Tibet of which Lhasa is the capital), whereas the former refers to the two remaining traditional provinces of Kham and Amdo in East and Northeast Tibet respectively.

Though the location of the frontier zone covers both Kham and Amdo, it is surprising to see that most relevant existing literature talks greatly about the latter, paying little attention to the former. Aimed at remedying this gap, the paper investigates the Kham part of the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. As an introduction to its linguistic and ethnic complexity, the paper pays a special attention to Gyalthang (Zhongdian), which is located on the southernmost tip of the frontier and is the last Khampa town in the embrace of the Yangtze river.

Although the notion frontier or borderland is quite meaningless when one talks about modern politics (presently Kham is divided into several Tibetan autonomous prefectures, see §2), I contend that the borderland discourse is instrumental and is still fitting on the following grounds. Firstly, it helps us see the relationship between Khampas and Tibetans from other regions, particularly Lhasans, more clearly. Secondly, from a linguistic point of view, the notion instigates cultural interactions resulting in linguistic diversity. Kham is by no means a monolithic speech community. Cultural contact has brought about language contact

³ Note on transcription and transliteration: For practical reasons, most place names in this paper are written using Roman letters based on broad phonetic transcription. The names in parentheses correspond to Written Tibetan and the Chinese pinyin which appear in official maps.

² It is interesting to note that many western explorers (including Christian missionaries) attempted to enter Lhasa through the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. That is, Lhasa has always been the *true* forbidden land.

resulting in loanwords, bilingualism and multilingualism in the region. Lastly, the notion reminds us that the term Tibet is a misnomer as it merely refers to Central Tibet (what is today Tibet Autonomous Region [TAR]/Xizang) and does not include outlying provinces where Tibetan-speaking people, with strong ethnic identity and different local histories, live.

Traditionally labelled the land of "Four Rivers and Six Ranges," Kham has played an important role in frontier politics and trade and served as one of the most important pilgrimage routes to Lhasa and Mt. Kailash for several centuries.⁴ Bathang in southern Kham, for example, provides an overland route for trade and pilgrimage via Markham into Tibet proper. Moreover, the frontier region is not only the meeting place of the Tibetans and the Han Chinese but also home of descendants of Mongol tribes (e.g., the Hor) and various Tibeto-Burman ethnic groups who exhibit cultural and religious affinities with Tibetans. They are, for example, the Chiang (Qiang) and the Gyalrong in the north and northeast and the Naxi (Nakhi/Moso) in the south. Apart from the dominance of Tibetan Buddhism, the frontier has also been influenced by Bon and Islam, though the population of the believers of the latter faiths cannot be compared with the number of Buddhists.

2. Geographical Location

Presently, there are about 5 million Tibetans in China. Half of this number live in the Lhasa valley and TAR; the remaining half in Amdo and Kham. Modern Amdo is located in Qinghai and Gansu Provinces,

⁴ The four great rivers which flow in parallel from north to south of Kham are the Salween (Nu jiang/Ngul chu), the Mekong (Lancang jiang/Dza chu), the Yangtze (Jinsha jiang/Dri chu) and the Yarlung (Yalung jiang/Nyang chu). The six ranges are Tsawa gang (5,100-6,700 m.), including Mt. Kawa Karpo (6,702 m.) lying between the Mekong and the Salween; Markham gang (5,100-5,700 m.) lying between the Mekong and the Yangtze; Pobor gang lying between the southern Yangtze and the lower Yarlung; Zelmo gang (4,800-5,400 m.) between the northern reaches of the Yangtze and the Yarlung; Mardza gang (5,100-5,700 m.) between the upper Yarlung and the Yellow river; and Minyak Rab Gang (4,800-7,750 m.) including Mt. Minyak Gangkar (7,756 m.), the highest mountain in Kham between the lower Yarlung and the Gyarong (Gyurme Dorje 1996).

whereas Kham extends from the southeastern part of Qinghai and western Sichuan to northwestern Yunnan. Like other parts of Tibet, Kham is divided into several Tibetan autonomous prefectures (TAP) and one Tibetan autonomous county, as follows:

*TAR (21 counties): Chamdo TAP, Nakchu TAP, Nyangiri TAP
Qinghai (6 counties): Jyekundo (Yushu) TAP
Sichuan (18 counties): Kandze (Ganzi) TAP, Mili (Muli) county
Yunnan (3 counties): Dechen (Diqin) TAP*

The Kandze TAP is today the cultural heart of Kham extending from the prefecture's government seat, Dartsedo (Kangding/Tachienlu) to Dege (Derge) in the north and Lithang and Bathang in the south. Chamdo and Jyekundo lie in the periphery of modern Kham territory, though they had been important trading towns of this region. Despite the separate politics under Chinese administration and a continuing process of sinicization, Kham still retains its strong regionalism and Tibetan culture is very much thriving. Migot's description of Dartsedo (i.e., Kangting) as the gateway of Tibet still has some application today:

But once one is west of Kangting, he has finished with China. Henceforth only Tibetan is spoken, only Tibetans are to be seen. Even the landscape alters. The religious monuments are all Buddhist, the temples are all lamaseries. Chinese money ceases to circulate, and the only Chinese one meets are officials or soldiers or little merchants, all seemingly lost in a land which they do not understand and in which they keep to themselves, living in the Chinese fashion, having as little as possible to do with the weird and (to them) barbarous world around them...

(Migot 1955: 92-3)

Kham is further divided into two sub-regions with Dartsedo in the middle. Northern Kham - area northeast of Dartsedo - includes the great kingdoms of Dege and Nanchen ruled by hereditary kings, the Hor states of Kandze, Daowu and Drango ruled by hereditary chieftains, and the northwestern states of Chamdo, Drayab and Riwoche governed by lama

dignitaries. Southern Kham covers the states ruled by appointed regents, viz. Lithang, Bathang, Derong, Tsawarong and Markham (Gyurme Dorje 1996).

The Khampa of both sub-regions depend on both agricultural and pastoral economy. Northern Kham at higher elevations is inhabited mainly by *drokpa* ('brog pa) "nomads/pastoralists," whereas the Tibetans in lowlying southern Kham, with Lithang as an exception, maintain their lifestyles as *samadrok* (sa-ma-'brog) "semi-nomads/neither farmers nor pastoralists" herding cattle as well as growing barley, wheat, buckwheat and potato.

3. History

After the collapse of the Yarlung dynasty in 842 A.D., the Tibetan empire broke up and Kham, together with Amdo and other borderland territories such as Gyalrong, remained independent territories. They were never ruled again by any Tibetan government (Gruschke 2001: 11). Kham was later composed of several small principalities and kingdoms governed by local chieftains, hereditary kings and reincarnate lamas (Aris 1992). Each kingdom was perceived as a center in its own right, not lying in the margin, as was the case when judging from the Lhasan perspective. The case of Dege is clear. It used to be a great kingdom ruled by kings and its territory covered the large area including Denkok in the north.⁵ It has been renowned for having its own printing academy housing and publishing thousands of precious Buddhist scriptures. Having produced great scholars and lamas, Dege is still considered the cultural center of Kham, in a similar manner that Lhasa is perceived as the center of Tibet.

Frontier politics did not apply merely to the rulers of Central Tibet and China. But it also involved other foreign powers. Southern Kham (i.e., Lithang, Bathang, and Gyalthang) was attacked by the Naxi kings of Lijiang (Jang Sadam kingdom) and was subsequently ruled by them until the early 20th century when the Chinese province of Sikang was

⁵ok belongs to Dzachukha (Serqu) county.

established. Northern Kham was subjugated by the Mongols since the period of Kubilai Khan's reign in the 13th century.

Around the end of the 17th century the Manchu domination was felt in the Kham region. As politics and religion in Tibet usually go hand in hand, the Qing emperors brought about the spread and power of the Gelugpa sect under the leadership of the 5th Dalai Lama in Kham and Amdo. They were the patrons of this sect and co-operated with them to control the frontier people. As a result, a number of Nyingma, Sakya and Kagyu monasteries (three former sects in Kham) were sacked and replaced with Gelugpa ones.

Subsequently, there was an attempt to mark the frontier zone. According to Migot (1955: 90), a pillar on the Bum La, a pass which lies two and a half days' travel to the southwest of Bathang was erected. From there the frontier ran north along a line parallel to, and slightly west of, the Yangtze. All the territory to the west of this line was under the direct authority of the Dalai Lama, but to the east of it the petty chieftains of the local tribes remained a considerable measure of independence.

During the early 20th century a small province of Sikang was established. This corresponds to the area on the west side of the upper Yangtze. It had 27 sub-prefectures with Bathang as the capital. This act was to announce that Kham was an official territory of China. However, Migot remarks that even under Chinese administration, the Tibetans completely disregarded it and obeyed only their own chiefs. "One very simple fact illustrates the true status of Sikang's Chinese rulers: nobody in the province would accept Chinese currency, and the officials, unable to buy anything with their money, were forced to subsist by a process of barter." (Migot 1955: 92)

Another aspect of Kham history worth noting here is that the region was home of Tibetan soldiers who were sent by the Yarlung kings since the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po in the 7th century AD to protect the empire's borders. After several military campaigns, these soldiers settled in the region and became ancestors of several Khampa communities, including Gyalthang.

4. Linguistic and Ethnic Make-Up

The Sino-Tibetan borderland of Kham is populated by a number of nationalities, namely Tibetans, Han Chinese, Mongols, Hui (Chinese-speaking Muslims), Tibetanized Qiangic-speaking groups such as Gyalrongs and Minyaks, and other Tibeto-Burman groups such as Yi, Naxi, Pumi and Lisu. The Gyalrongs and Minyaks consider themselves Tibetans and are officially included within the Tibetan nationality, though they speak non-Tibetan languages as their mother tongues. Smith (1996) notes that the ethnonym Hor refers to almost all of the northern nomads of Kham and that they are the descendants of the Mongol tribes who migrated to the plateau after the fall of the Yuan dynasty (1260-1368) and during the early Qing dynasty (1644-1912).

The Tibetans call themselves *khampa* (kham pa), instead of *phopa* (bod pa), which designates Lhasans and other people from Central Tibet.⁶ Therefore, when asked what language they speak, they tend to answer *khāmākē* (kham skad) "Kham language," instead of *phokē* (bod skad) "Tibetan language". It is interesting to note that since the change of the political system in China and subsequent changes in Tibet, the term *phoril* (bod rigs/ zangzi-) "Tibetan nationality" has become widely used. This term is in contrast with such terms as "Yi nationality" or "Hui nationality" referring to other nationalities in China, among the 56 official groups. The Khampa thus describe themselves as being *phorik* as well as *khampa*, but not *phopa*.

Linguistically speaking, Tibetan belongs to the Bodish branch of the Tibeto-Burman division in the Sino-Tibetan language family. It consists of three major dialects, corresponding to the three traditional provinces: Ü-tsang, Kham and Amdo. Lhasa Tibetan is the most important variety of Ü-tsang and is the standard dialect. Kham Tibetan is a conglomerate of dialects roughly divided into two groups: valley/agricultural dialects *ronke* (rong skad) and nomadic dialects *drokē* ('brog skad). The former

⁶ The particle *-pa* (in Written Tibetan pa/ba) in the words *khampā* and *phīpa* refers to the inhabitants of each given region. In certain cases the particle is pronounced *-wa*, as in *lhasawa* "Lhasans" and *gyalthangwa* "Gyalthang inhabitants".

group consists of a number of sub-dialects which are mutually unintelligible; the latter group poses fewer internal differences and are similar to the dialects spoken in Amdo.

In concomitant with the geographical location, Kham Tibetan is classified into four sub-dialectal groups, as follows:

1. Sichuan Kham Dialects

Dege is the most prestigious dialect and is generally considered Kham *khoinē*. Other important dialects are Bathang, Lithang in the south and Dartsedo and Kandze in the north. In addition, a number of nomadic dialects, e.g. Dzachukha and Golok (Sertha) are included in this group.

2. Yunnan Kham Dialects

Gyalthang is the most important dialect of this group.

3. Qinghai Kham Dialects

The most important dialect is Jyekundo.

4. TAR Kham Dialects

The most important dialect for this group is Chamdo.

5. Gyalthang

Frontier town on the Upper Yangtze

With its population of approximately 120,000, Gyalthang (Gyelthang/Rgyalthang) or its widely known Chinese name Zhongdian is the prefecture's seat and one of the three counties of the Diqing TAP in northwestern Yunnan; the other two counties being Dechen (Deqin) and Weixi populated mainly by Tibetans and Lisu respectively. Apart from Tibetan and Han populations, there are also other ethnic groups in the three counties, e.g., Hui, Bai, Naxi, Yi and Pumi.

three cousins in the natives' conception ñ used to be governed by the Naxi kings since the Yuan dynasty in the 13th century.

However, in terms of language, the Gyalthang was view that their language is superior than most Khampa speeches. Gyalthang ancestors were descendants of the soldiers of the Yarlung dynasty who set up garrisons during military campaigns on what was then the border between the Tibetan empire and the dominions of the Tang rulers of China (Makley et al 1999; Wang Xiaosong, personal communication). Therefore, the language is derived directly from Old Tibetan, the standard dialect of that time.

As in most southern Kham communities, the Gyalthangwa are *samudrok*: they both herd animals and do farming. The following interview excerpt clearly illustrates this statement (Fieldnotes, Khoce village, 1998):

de ngatsho khaba zhe na gazo byas dgos zer na
te yatshe khawa sa na kazo zu gya se na
gcig de phyugs rta 'tsho dgos red
tai ta gata sua gya re
gnyis de sa zhing 'debs
nei ta sa zig to

"If we talk about the land of snow, if we say how we must do it, first, we must tend cattle. Second, (we) do farming."

Each family in the village possesses a plot of land where they once a year grow potato, wheat and barley. In addition, they own horses and cattle, particularly the *dzo* and *dzomo*, male and female crossbreeds of yaks and cows. Other animals such as sheep, goats, pigs and chickens are rare. The work of a herder can be summarized as follows:

Herders go up the mountain taking the animals there and stay with them throughout the whole summer (July-September). Then they will move down at about 5 stages until the winter months approach when they have to return to the village. A day's activities are centered on feeding the

At an elevation at 3,300 meters, Gyalthang is situated on the highland plains surrounded by numerous mountains.⁷ It is in the Do Med (mdo mad) region. The road to the north-west for a distance of 180 kilometers leads to the sacred Karwa Karpo Mt. in Dechen, one of the most important pilgrimage sites in East Tibet. Due to poor road conditions occasionally worsened by heavy snowfalls and its location in a remote valley, Dechen is often isolated from Gyalthang and other parts of Kham. Gyalthang, on the other hand, has a much closer connection with China, TAR and Kham, partly because of the recently built airport which links it with Kunming, Lhasa and Chengdu.

The Gyalthangwa often describe themselves as people who live in the embrace of the Yangtze river before it leaves Tibetan land and falls into China proper. The Upper Yangtze is the natural boundary separating Gyalthang from Lijiang, its Naxi neighbor in the south. The Gyalthang county is composed of two towns: Da Zhongdian "Big Gyalthang" and Xiao Zhongdian "Little Gyalthang". The major villages of the county are Ketsa and Demarong in the north and Nixi in the west. The villagers are mainly Tibetans and their dialects are similar to the one spoken in Gyalthang, though there are some variations, especially in the pronunciation of certain consonants. Because of their remoteness, the dialects have a lesser degree of contact with the Chinese language. Hence, they possess fewer loanwords, though generally speaking most villagers can carry on basic conversations in Chinese.

Although Gyalthang is under the Yunnan administration and has a large number of Han Chinese settlers, it shares a lot of cultural and historical affinity with other southern Kham communities. The Gyalthangwa call themselves *khampa*, in contrast with *phöpa* (or *lhasawa*) and *amidowa*. When talking about their history, they often make a reference to Bathang and Lithang, which today belong to the Ganzi TAP under the Sichuan administration. As mentioned earlier, the three counties ñ the

⁷ Because of these fertile plains, wealthy families from Demarong (Dangwang), home of notorious robber tribes, migrated to Gyalthang and settled down there (Fieldnotes, Gyalthang, 1996).

cattle and dogs who help look after them; herding the cattle on the grassland; milking the dzomo; making yoghurt, butter and cheese; collecting firewood, making tea and enjoying themselves on the beautiful highland where both the animals and herders are happier than anybody can imagine. (Fieldnotes, Khoce village, 1998).

Linguistic and Cultural Practices

There are several interesting Gyalthang linguistic and cultural practices such as kinship terms, terms relating to animals, household terms which reflect how Gyalthang people view their family and the universe, as well as idioms, proverbs and various kinds of songs and performances.⁸ Due to limited scope, the paper will discuss only the yak vocabulary which reveals a close affinity between lexicon and the way of living of these people.

The Gyalthang dialect has more than 30 terms for calling cattle and their crossbreeds. In other words, the borrowed term yak in English in fact refers to cattle of various kinds: whether they are male or female and whether they are crossbreeds of yak and cow, bull and female yak, yak and dzo (hybrid of yak and cow), bull and female dzo, yak and *ti* (hybrid of yak and female dzo), or bull and *kuba* (hybrid of bull and female dzo). The Gyalthangva also have endearment names and terms to call these animals depending on their age and characteristics, such as when they are one year old, two year old, when they are ready to mate, when the female one gives birth to her first calf, and when the male one is castrated.

Most dzos and dzomos are given special names because they are closer to their owners and are treated more affectionately. Yaks are generally raised for meat and mating; they do not get to spend time with their owners as much as the dzo and dzomo do. Common names for dzos and dzomos include "the black one with straight horns," "the black one with leaning horns," the black one with white forehead," "the black one with

white tail and limbs," "the black one with yellow marrow," "the black, stout one with yellow marrow," "the black one with no horns," "the ordinary, black one," and so on.

Apart from dzos and dzomos, horses are also given names, such as "the red one," "the beige one," "the white one," "the black one," the dark blue one," or "the dark brown (chocolate color) one". A female horse is called *guwang*, whereas a male one is *ta*, which is also a general term for horse. *Chopa* are horses reserved only for mating. The offspring of horse and donkey is called *cang* (male) and *kore* (female).

China's Shangri-la

(The land is high and mountains are numerous; the soil is hard, and the five grains cannot be grown. The peasants are poor and the land infertile; the lamas are of great importance and are the real rulers of the country.

(Rock 1947: 249)

Contrary to Rock's description above, modern Gyalthang is by no means an impoverished area. When compared to neighboring communities (i.e., the Yi), the peasants of Gyalthang have fared better in terms of farming and housing. They possess abundant, fertile land for farming and grassland for herding animals. Farm products such as potato are sold in Dali, where they buy grapes, bananas and other kinds of fruits not found on the plateau. Dairy products, particularly cheese and butter are transported daily to the local markets and the peasants bring back to their villages Chinese goods. Their two-storied walled houses with a large courtyard where animals are kept are made singly of wood and are beautifully decorated. The size of a Gyalthang house and the amount of wood spent are particularly impressive and quite unusual when one compares it with most houses in other parts of Kham.

The Gyalthang lamas are still of great importance, but during recent years Tibetan Buddhism has become a commodity attracting a number of Chinese tourists to this part of the borderland. To promote tourism in the county, Gyalthang was proclaimed "gateway to Tibet" and the long-lost "Shangri-la" by the Yunnanese government. This discourse of

⁸ of the Gyalthang kinship system, see Corlin (1978).

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Buddhism And Its Impacts on Indian Society: The Untouchables Under the Shadow of Buddhism

Banjob Bannaraji

Absract

Over 2600 years, the caste system has lasted in Indian society. In the course of time, it has been more complicated and rigid. the complexity and rigidity has now been maintained under the Hindu norm.

Buddhism, even poses against the caste system, has never rooted out the physical system. The Buddha accepted that the caste system was an obstacle to social justices, but not to enlightenment in terms of right view. So he launched a campaign to convert people to wisdom based on morality. He won much success and was so warmly welcomed by all classes and castes that he could establish the Sangha (the Order). It was, not only the center of people from walks of life, but also the main helper to spread his teachings around India of the time. Consequently, Buddhism became a new popular choice and finally the Buddha, the founder, the rising star, too.

In the past, many times under the changing circumstances of Indian society and polity, Buddhism encountered the unexpected role losses and sometimes seemed to be forgotten. However, by voices of the Untouchables, Buddhism has been revived for their refuge. In their believes, under the shadow of Buddhism, they are human beings and receive human treatment. that is all they need. So, it is not strange, millions of the Untouchables pleasantly converted to Buddhism and more millions will follow them.

In Buddhist idea, the Law of Kamma taught by the Buddha is the Law of Justice. People get what they did, either good or bad. None can avoid his deeds as long as he remains in the circle of birth and death. Only Kamma truly decides a human value, but the caste system cannot.

ผลงานเสนอในการประชุมวิชาการนานาชาติ

(แนบเฉพาะผลงานที่ยังไม่ได้ตีพิมพ์และบทคัดย่อของผลงานที่จะเสนอที่
ประเทศสิงคโปร์ในเดือนสิงหาคม 2546)

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Particulars: DR HONGLADAROM, KRISADAWAN

Paper Title: "We are the center of the world and the universe": Language and ethnicity in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands

Abstract: This paper presents a preliminary investigation of the relationship between the Tibetans, so-called the Khampas, who form the majority group in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands, and other ethnic groups such as the rGyalrongwas, the Pumi, the Naxi as well as the Han, which constitute one of the minority groups in the borderlands but the majority group in the nation-state. The area under investigation generally labeled "China's Far West" ranges from South-west Qinghai to North-west Yunnan. Since the demise of the Yarlung dynasty in the 11th century A.D., this area became petty kingdoms and states ruled by local chieftians (e.g. Derge Kingdom, rGyalrong States). Hence, despite the fact that they were sandwiched between the Lhasa government of Central Tibet and the central government of China, the Khampas and these ethnic minorities felt that they were in fact "the center of the world and the universe," as Michael Aris pointed out. This paper discusses issues related to language, identity, ethnohistory and encounters between the Tibetans and these ethnic groups in a significant but poorly studied ethnic area of Asia. In addition, it raises questions concerning "minority" and "majority" in the quest to understand the relationship between nation and ethnicity.

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The Khampas of Tibet's Eastern Frontiers: Language, Identity and Ethnohistory

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Introduction

Blue sky and snow-capped mountains seem to characterize the Tibetan Plateau – no matter whether that sky belongs to the area called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), or whether it is part of a Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) in China's western provinces. Rising above 3,400 meters with three important rivers of Asia – the Yangtze, Mekong and Salween – passing by from north to south, Dechen (Diqin) is prominent among a multiplicity of administrative divisions in Yunnan.¹ It is the only Tibetan prefecture in this province. At the same time, it constitutes an outlying district in the far south-east, the edge of the Tibetan world.

Like its neighbors in the Kandze (Ganzi) TAP in Sichuan, Dechen people live a semi-nomadic lifestyle. They subsist on tending herds of yaks, cattle, *dzo* 'cross-breeds' and sheep on the alpine grassland and growing potato, wheat and barley on the valley plains. They sell excess cheese and butter to townspeople, pick wild mushroom and asparagus, dig herbal roots and caterpillar fungus, and engage in a long-distance trade. They speak several dialects some of which are described as "archaic" and exhibit a number of discrepancies from other varieties classified under the broad term *Kham Tibetan*.

This term, with its vague meaning "the speech of the Khampas," took me to these two prefectures which make up parts of the so-called "Tibetan borderlands" or the "Frontier Zone" of China.² My linguistic queries were what Kham Tibetan was like, how many varieties there were, and how it was similar to or different from Lhasa Tibetan, the standard dialect. Assuming that linguistic pursuits are rooted in anthropological underpinnings, I also investigated how the Khampas lived their lives, how they perceived of themselves, and how they interacted with other groups of Tibetans and other ethnic groups who inhabited the same

area.

I deemed it necessary to study not only the language, in its abstract sense, but also the languages that define historicity and ethnicity (Harrell 1995, 2001). These refer to the ways local people talk about themselves and how other people, including scholars and authorities, talk about them. In other words, I found it insightful to explore what Harrell (1995: 98) labels "the triangle of discourses," namely ethnohistory, ethnic classification and ethnic identity, that pertain to the Khampas.

In the sections that follow, I will attempt to locate the Khampas, both geographically and culturally, and in both the Tibetan context and the context of the larger society of China. Their ethnohistory, which can be argued to give rise to linguistic internal variation and form a basis for their regional and local identities, will be examined. Then I will discuss the linguistic situation in Kham (Khams) and peculiarities of its dialects. The paper ends with some remarks on how the Khampas position themselves in a contemporary context in which boundaries of nation-states are thin (*i.e.*, being a frontier people is the discourse of the past) and they are more exposed to the outside world.

"I know no place intimately"

For a period of 9 months (August 2000-May 2001), I assumed various roles which would help me to achieve my research goals: I became the Khampas's friend, acquaintance, student and teacher. All these roles were dynamic and relative: for some, I was a teacher who became friend, a friend who was like "one of us". For others, I remained an outsider, someone who could not be trusted easily and who would leave a slight trace, a blurred memory, once I had left the field.

Contrary to most fieldwork linguists or anthropologists and my own previous researches in Nepal and Southwest China, I did not adopt a single place as my "fieldsite". The reason for this is related to the broad purpose of my project – I wanted to explore Kham as extensively as possible and meet the Khampas of various regions within the limited period of time. Comparable, perhaps, to Harrell's (2001:13) fieldwork experience in the Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture,³ "I know no place intimately; I know a moderate amount about a

large number of places." In addition, there are places of which I lack eyewitness knowledge but about which I have acquired information from the natives who stayed in Chengdu, "Gateway to Kham," as guidebooks tell us, which became my primary base.

In Chengdu I elicited words and sentences from Bathang speakers; studied materials written in Kham colloquialism mixed with Written Tibetan with a Kandze teacher; transcribed folktales from a remote village with a Dege linguist; worked with a Kandze assistant on the attitude survey; and attended activities organized by Khampa academics at the Southwest Institute for Nationalities, where I was affiliated. When chance permitted and weather allowed, I made sojourns to these people's hometowns.

Also significant to my research was the period of nearly three months (February-April 2001) I spent at China's capital city, where a handful of Khampa students and teachers were clustered around the campus of the prestigious Central Nationalities University. There I worked mainly with a retired professor who has lived in Beijing since 1951 - eight years before the Chinese takeover of Tibet. Yet, he has not fully assimilated; he displayed a strong sense of Kham identity from the ways he talked, sang and danced, and from his aspiration to see a grammar and folktales of his mother tongue written down.

Locating the Khampas

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact location of Kham, as what is Kham today is mainly split into three western provinces of China. Specifically speaking, it covers eastern portions of TAR, southeastern Qinghai, western Sichuan and northwestern Yunnan. The Kandze TAP in Sichuan is generally considered the cultural heart of Kham. It extends from the prefecture's government seat, Dartsedo (Kangding/Tachienlu) to Dege and Dzachukha (Serqu) in the north and Lithang (Litang) and Bathang (Batang) in the south. Chamdo (Qamdo) in TAR, and Jyekundo (Yushu) in Qinghai lie in the periphery of modern Kham territories, though they had been important trading towns connecting this region with Lhasa and China on each side of the Upper Yangtze (Migot 1955).

Out of China's 56 recognized *minzu* 'nationality,' the *zangzu* 'Tibetan nationality' number 4.8 million (census conducted in 1990 based on Barnett 1993); one-third of this being

the Khampas. Interestingly, this number also includes other ethnic groups who are officially classified as *zangzu*, such as the Prmi and the Gyarong/Jyarong in Sichuan (Harrell 2001). As Stein (1972: 29) notes, although these Qiangic speakers speak non-Tibetan languages, they share customs, beliefs and even the creation myth with the Tibetans (or more specifically the Khampas).

Greater Tibet, where Kham is located, can be claimed to be one of the most ethnically diverse areas in Tibet. To the south is the land of the Nakhi (Naxi) who used to rule southern Kham (Spengen 2002). To the north and northeast lay the Monguors' territories. To the west of the Kandze TAP are homes of the Prmi and the Yi. There have been long contacts between the Tibetans and these ethnic groups some of whom speak Kham Tibetan as a lingua franca and have been basically tibetanized. But contact did not happen one way. Corlin (1978: 88) remarks that the unique matrilineal kinship and inheritance pattern in Gyalthang/Gyethang (Zhongdian), the Tibetan enclave in northwest Yunnan may have been a result of the contact with the Nakhi.

Tracing Kham Identity and History

The existence of *zangzu*, which gives rise to a neologism in Tibetan *phörik* (bod rigs) plays an important role in forming a pan-Tibetan identity. Before this term was used, the Tibetans hardly thought of themselves as a single, unified group, although they have shared the same writing system since the 7th century and looked up to the Dalai Lama as their spiritual head. There was no pan-Kham identity either, until after the establishment of the *Chu zhi gang drug* 'Four Rivers, Six Ranges' movement during the Khampa revolt against the People's Liberation Army in 1958 (Shakya 2001: 167, 173).

The Khampas hardly call themselves *phöpa* 'Tibetan,' they prefer the regional term *khampa*. The word *phöpa*, they say, has a restricted meaning; it refers specifically to the people of central Tibet. In fact, most Khampas introduce themselves using their birthplaces: *degewa* 'native of Dege,' *bawa* 'native of Bathang'. Hence, local identities are even stronger than the regional one. Similarly, people from central Tibet, particularly those in Lhasa do not usually consider the Khampas *phöpa* and are even intimidated by them.⁴

During the 7th-9th centuries, Kham was part of the Yarlung Empire.⁵ In the wake of its demise in 842 A.D., it was not governed by any unified state but was divided into small kingdoms and principalities. Some of these "stateless" polities, as Samuel (1993) calls them, were ruled by hereditary kings; others were controlled by hereditary lamas or appointed regents. Under the Fifth Dalai Lama's rule in the 17th century religious wars broke out in Kham. His Gelugpa sect sacked a lot of Nyingma, Kakyu and Sakya monasteries and transformed them into Gelugpa centers. Kham in the 19th-20th centuries experienced successive internal strives and Chinese attacks. It was forcibly annexed by China and became a new, but short-lived province called Xikang during the first half of the 20th century until the end of the republican period in 1949. Under the communist government, Kham was split into several autonomous prefectures. As discussed in Hongladarom (2000: 14), the fact that Kham was not centrally ruled for several centuries explain why Kham regionalism is still strong and why the Khampas generally view themselves as a separate group distinct from other regions of Tibet. The interplay between history and language will be demonstrated in the following sections.

In the Web of dialects

When people say they are going to Tibet, they often mean they are going to Lhasa. In the same way, when linguists talk about the Tibetan language, what they really mean is the Lhasa dialect, a koiné for central Tibet.⁶ In fact, there are a multitude of dialects spoken in Tibet and each region has its own koiné. Kham exemplifies this situation best because it consists of a large number of dialects, generally classified into two groups: valley dialects and nomad dialects (Gesang Jumian 1964). The former group consists of a number of sub-dialects which are basically mutually unintelligible; the latter group poses fewer internal differences and are similar to the dialects spoken in Amdo, Tibet's northeastern province.

Makley et al (1999: 100-101) view that history plays a role in enhancing dialectal divergences in Amdo. This is also true for Kham, which historically comprises several independent states. Other factors have to do with the region's scattered population,

typography and poor road conditions which discourage people to travel, unless they go on a pilgrimage or trade.

Because of the lack of the Tibetan common language, when the Khampas meet Tibetans of other regions, they often resort to Chinese as a primary lingua franca. The standard and prestigious Lhasa Tibetan is usually not intelligible among the majority of Khampa speakers. When they meet the Khampas of other districts, they tend to communicate with the latter by using their own mother tongue but mix it with some elements from the Dege dialect as well as common expressions from other major dialects. Educated speakers are also likely to employ a lot of words and expressions from Written Tibetan. This kind of mixed language, to me, is similar to what has been described as Kham koiné (Denwood 1999). Contrary to popular belief, most Kham speakers do not switch to the Dege dialect, the language of the former Dege Kingdom which is generally considered to be more prestigious than other local varieties of Kham.

Linguistic Peculiarities of Kham Tibetan

Following Denwood (1999), Tibetan dialects can be classified according to a linguistic criterion into three categories: cluster dialects, transitional dialects, and non-cluster dialects. Cluster dialects still preserve initial consonant clusters attested in Old Tibetan. Transitional dialects demonstrate a change in progress: the clusters are being replaced by tones. Non-cluster dialects no longer preserve the clusters and have a full-fledged tonal system. Most valley dialects of Kham belong to the transitional group, whereas the nomad dialects are mainly of the cluster type. Contrary to most Kham dialects, Lhasa Tibetan is a clear example of the non-cluster group. Apart from this divergence, there are other interesting characteristics Kham dialects share, which make them different from the Lhasa dialect and other Tibetan varieties.

Although the majority of words in Kham dialects are similar to those in Written Tibetan and Lhasa Tibetan, there are at least two peculiarities. First, there are a larger number of loanwords from Chinese and other minority languages which have come into contact with the former. Second, conversations and narratives in Kham Tibetan dialects are characterized

by special words and expressions, including discourse markers.⁷ This lexical feature, augmented by the lack of honorific words, often renders Kham speech "blunt" and "rude" to the Lhasa speakers' ears.

In terms of grammar, Kham Tibetan diverges to a large extent from Written Tibetan and shares some similarities with Lhasa Tibetan as well as other modern spoken dialects. The study of Kham grammar thus not only advances our theoretical understanding of such linguistic phenomena as ergativity, evidentiality and grammaticalization but also reveals interesting insights on the historical grammar of Tibetan, the linguistic glory of the past.

The Khampas: Change and Continuity

Although I found it important to introduce the Khampas as a frontier people, as I have done in the beginning of the paper, I also found it significant to conclude here by positioning them in the contemporary context leaving the frontier discourse as an unforgettable past. The Khampas I have dealt with, like other nationalities in China, are subject to changes which have taken place in the post-Mao era. Traces of globalization, e.g., satellite dishes and internet cafés can be easily spotted even in remote towns of Kham. Although there have been efforts, particularly by Khampa lamas in exile, to build Tibetan-medium schools in Kham and preserve at least the major dialects, if not local varieties, the impact of globalization is still strong.

The Khampas whom I befriended wanted to speak English to get ahead. An inevitable consequence of this is that local varieties are disdained by young people and are hence spoken to a lesser degree. In order to get good jobs and benefit from limited national resources, these young Khampas aspire to master first the language of the nation and second the language of the world.

As Epstein (2002: 2) rightly points out, our historical, geographical and ethnographic knowledge of Kham is still tenuous. Kham poses a challenge to scholars of Asian studies with its multitude of unexplored dialects, uncollected folktales and linguistic artifacts which reveal the inextricable relationship between language and culture, fragmentary history and

fluidity of frontier discourse, and ongoing changes as a result of the interactions between the local and the global.

Acknowledgments

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Notes

¹ Tibetan place names are used in this paper. Their Chinese counterparts, the official toponyms are given in parentheses on first mentions. Unfortunately, there is no standard way to write Tibetan names. In this paper they are only broadly transcribed to reflect the Tibetan pronunciation. Tibetan spellings are given in parentheses, when there is a need to cite the written forms.

² On the frontier zone of China, see Alonso (1979), Aris (1992), Lattimore (1962), Rock (1947) and Teichman (2000).

³ Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture is one of the three prefectures in Sichuan. The other two are Kandzi and Ngawa (Aba). Most Ngawa residents are speakers of an Amdo dialect and practitioners of Bon, primordial religion of Tibet.

⁴ To the people of central Tibet, the Khampas have been considered to be bandits.

Interestingly, this prejudice is also widespread in Kham. The inhabitants of Kandze and Nyarong (Xinlong) are often viewed as being non-trustworthy and aggressive by the Khampas of other counties.

⁵ Tibetan historiography is based mainly on central Tibet. Kham history still remains largely fragmentary and is drawn mainly from western travelers' and missionaries' accounts of the 19th and 20th centuries.

⁶ Tibetan belongs to the Bodish branch of the Tibeto-Burman division in the Sino-Tibetan language family. It consists of three major dialects, corresponding to the three traditional provinces: Ü-Tsang (central Tibet), Kham and Amdo. Lhasa Tibetan is the most important variety of Ü-Tsang and is the standard dialect.

⁷ One of the most interesting linguistic and cultural practices in Kham Tibetan is the yak vocabulary. See Hongladarom (2000: 12-13) for an analysis of this kind of vocabulary in the Gyalthang dialect.

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Indexical Categories in Kham and Central Tibetan¹

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1. Introduction

This paper reports on a significant grammatical feature of Modern Spoken Tibetan so-called "indexical categories" (Agha 1993),² which refer to speech act participant, aspect, and evidential markings in the verbal morphology. This feature, together with other salient characteristics of Tibetan grammar, e.g., ergativity, has been studied widely. However, previous study was often restricted to Lhasa Tibetan, the standard dialect.³ Little work has been done on the other dialects. One of the aims of this study is thus to describe the indexical system of the Rgyalthang dialect of Kham Tibetan. The paper is also aimed at presenting a preliminary result of comparing and contrasting indexical categories in this dialect with those in Lhasa. It will be demonstrated that though indexical categories expressed through verbal auxiliaries are found in both dialects, they are different in many respects. This is obvious when we look at perfective auxiliaries, which will be the focus of this paper. The paper also pays

¹The research on which this paper is based was supported by Thailand Research Fund. I am indebted to Wang Xiaosong and Sonam Rgyatso for the data reported here. Abbreviations used in the paper are: CT Classical Tibetan, GT Rgyalthang Tibetan, LT Lhasa Tibetan, 1S 'first person singular', 3D 'third person dual', 3S 'third person singular', 3P 'third person plural', AUX 'auxiliary', CAUSE 'causative', CON 'conjunction', DIS 'discourse marker', DAT 'dative', ERG 'ergative', FUT 'future', HS 'hearsay evidential', IMPF 'imperfective', LOC 'locative', NEG 'negative', NOM 'nominalizer', PF 'perfective', PN 'proper name', TOP 'topic'.

²Agha (1993) uses the term indexical categories in a more general sense than I do in this paper. For him, indexical marking includes all grammatical categories that need to take context into account. One of the categories is deference, which is not treated here.

³Lhasa is the best known variety of Central Tibetan. The term Central Tibetan refers to a group of dialects spoken mainly in the areas called Ü and Tsang in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Central Tibetan dialects include Dingri, Shigatse, Gyantse, Kongpo, Dakpo, Lhasa, as well as related languages spoken in the North of Nepal. Among these dialects, the grammar of Lhasa has drawn attention from most linguists.

attention to the notions volitionality and control,⁴ which have been reported to play an important role in Modern Spoken Tibetan grammar (DeLancey 1985).

This paper is organized as follows. In §2, I will give a synopsis of Rgyalthang grammar focusing on ergative marking and other interesting features of the clause. It will be argued that Rgyalthang grammar operates around the pragmatic notion of "the speaker's perspectives" (Hongladarom, 1998). This notion is less visible in Lhasa. In §3, I will describe the systems of indexical marking in both dialects with an emphasis on perfective volitional auxiliaries. In §4, non-volitional auxiliaries are addressed. It will be shown that the semantics of verbs plays an important role in auxiliary selection in both dialects.

2. Rgyalthang Grammar

According to Denwood (1999:31), the linguistic term "kham" (WT *kham*s) is much more than a convenient geographical label for a rather heterogeneous collection of dialects which range from extreme cluster (archaic) to transitional ones well on the way to being non-cluster (non-archaic). When compared to Lhasa, Kham Tibetan has been studied in a much lesser degree, and most published works (e.g. Yu 1948; Ray 1965; Olson 1974; Nagano 1975; Gesang Jumiian 1989; Wang 1996) deal mainly with phonological descriptions. Gō et al (1954), for example, provides the first dictionary of what they call "Modern Eastern Tibetan" with an emphasis on initial consonants in this language as compared to those in Written Tibetan and Lhasa Tibetan.

In order to get a glimpse of Kham grammar, I will briefly discuss morphosyntactic categories of Rgyalthang, one of the Kham dialects I have been working on during these past three years. Tibetan is often said to be an ergative language (this is especially true when we consider Old Tibetan or Classical Tibetan), though the degree of ergative marking varies from one dialect to another, to the extent that some dialects may lose it entirely. The Rgyalthang dialect still contains features of ergative marking, but the pattern is not as systematic as that in the Lhasa dialect. Unlike several other Tibeto-Burman languages such as Chepang and Sunwar, Tibetan does not express role relations in verbal affixes. Instead, it employs a number of auxiliaries to indicate speech act participant, volitionality, and other indexical categories.

Rgyalthang has 7 morphological cases: ergative (*gə*), absolutive ($\emptyset$), genitive (*gə*), instrumental (*ji*, *gə*), locative (*nə*, *la*, *go*), dative (*go*, *la*, *go la*, *tsa*), and ablative

⁴According to Haller (forthcoming), volitionality is expressed through auxiliaries, whereas control is lexicalized in the stem of the verb. However, I find it difficult to distinguish volitionality from control, as both are conveyed by the same auxiliaries in Tibetan.

(*re*). The locative has different forms which are somewhat synonymous to one another. *-la-* is an obvious borrowing from Lhasa Tibetan. It is found mainly in the speeches of Rgyalhang speakers who can converse in this dialect. The dative has four forms: *-go*, *-la*, *-gola* (found only in a folktale), and *-tsa* (in the beneficiary sense). Other than marking recipient or beneficiary in a ditransitive clause, *-go* can also occur with animate patients in a monotransitive clause.⁵ The ergative and the genitive are homonyms. Historically, they are derived from different sources: CT gis/kis/gyis and gi/ki/gyi respectively.

In Hongladarom (1998), I argue that ergative marking is marginal in Rgyalhang grammar. Rather, it is a pragmatic phenomenon best described in term of the speaker's perspectives. When the speakers want to emphasize who or what the actor is, then they will employ ergative marker. This is why a sentence with ergative subject often contains a volitional predicate or is a causative construction. Lexical aspect (Aktionsart) is found to play no role in governing nominal case marking. Unlike Lhasa, there is no distinction between volitional and non-volitional intransitive predicates in the Rgyalhang dialect. Thus, it cannot be said that Rgyalhang is an ergative language or exhibits active typology as found in Lhasa (DeLancey 1990). The notion the speaker's perspectives also helps explain other related case marking patterns such as dative marking. When there is an emphasis on the patient in a monotransitive clause, it is marked with dative. In a ditransitive clause, it is the beneficiary nominal which appears with this marker.

Rgyalhang has an unusual pattern of demonstrative preceding the head noun ('di gna'-sgung ni ndā nātāŋ-tə this + story + TOP 'as for this story'). Other determiners and adjectives follow head nouns. In a text, actors are often omitted, or, if present, are not accompanied by ergative marker. They are, instead, presented by topic marker-*tə*. This marker can topicalize participants as well as time and place of the situation. (1) is an excerpt of a Rgyalhang text, which exhibits a high degree of topic marking.

1) GT

⁵This phenomenon is known as "primary object marking," (Dryer 1986) which is found in several Tibeto-Burman languages such as Chepang. It is, however, marginalized in Lhasa Tibetan. An important difference between the object marking pattern in Ryalhang and the one found in Chepang is that actor in the latter is obligatorily marked by ergative case. In Ryalhang, only is when actor emphasized that ergative marker is used.

- a. pǎtshā jǎŋ dēnǎ lēmbā tçi-tsa nē nǐ-wàŋ
 boy also, even like that stupid one-DAT bride NEG-give
- sūŋ-thuireŋ-tə
 think-CON-TOP
- b. hēi khōnànēi-tə nā
 formerly 3D-TOP promise
- zǎ-ra-ji khātà tçō-thuireŋ-tə tsukhothuireŋ-tə
 keep-PF-AUX upside turn-CON-TOP DIS-TOP

The topic marker is prevalent in these clauses. It adds to the pronoun as in (1b), or appears in the final position following subordinate clauses, *i.e.* after *-thuireŋ*, as in *(-sūŋ-thuireŋ-tə)* and *(-tçō-thuireŋ-tə)*. It also appears after the discourse marker *tsukhothuireŋ*, as in *(-tsukhothuireŋ-tə)*.

In brief, Rgyalthag exhibits a number of attributes at both the sentence and discourse levels which are not found in the Lhasa dialect. Although nominal case marking is based on agentiveness, this alone cannot account for split ergativity and split objectivity in the dialect. We need to go further to the pragmatic domain. Indexical categories, to be discussed in detail in § 3 and § 4, are also another area where both dialects differ.

3. Indexical Marking in the Rgyalthag and Lhasa Dialects

Events in Lhasa can be broadly classified into two groups: past and non-past. Non-past events consist of future tense and imperfective (progressive and gnomic) aspects. Past events comprise perfective (preteric) and perfect aspects. As the system of past events is complex and exhibits an interplay between volitionality and evidentiality, I will deal mainly with it in this paper. An emphasis will be given to Rgyalthag, the knowledge of which is relatively unknown.

3.1 Lhasa Verbs

Lhasa verbs are classified into three types: (1) lexical verbs which exhibit agreement with neither number nor speech act participant (*i.e.*, person); (2) verbs of being (the copula *yin* and *ree*; and the existential *yöö*, *tuu*, and *yoo ree*), which also function as auxiliaries in periphrastic constructions; and (3) auxiliary morphemes

grammaticalized from deictic motion verbs, *soŋ* (imperative form of CT *'gro* 'go') and *tɕuŋ* (CT *byuŋ* 'appear, come out, emerge'). Generally speaking, the stem of a lexical verb does not reflect tense variations, except for some verbs which have suppletive forms (e.g. *'gro tso* 'go' vs. *phyin tɕhin* 'went'). Verbs of being and auxiliaries mark participant, volitionality, evidentiality, as well as tense/aspect. All these categories are indexical in the sense that in a circumstance that arguments are omitted, we can still recover their identities, as shown in (2) and (3) below.

2) LT	tɕhin-pa	yin
	went-PF	SELF
	'(I) went'	
3) LT	tɕhin-pa	ree
	went-PF	OTHER
	'S/he went'	

Even though the actors in (2) and (3) are missing, it is easily understood from the given auxiliaries that they refer to the speaker and the third person reference respectively. Speech act participant marking (henceforth "participant marking") is also called by various terms: participant role perspective (Agha 1993), viewpoint marking (Denwood 1999)⁶, conjunct-disjunct marking (Genetti 1988, among others), or simply person marking. The self form indicates that in a declarative sentence the actor and the speaker are the same. In an interrogative sentence, it suggests that the actor and the hearer are the same. Otherwise, the other form is used. This includes a situation in which the speaker has no volition in performing a certain action, or when s/he has no control over the predicate described.

Participant marking is a novel characteristic of Modern Spoken Tibetan Grammar. It is reported in a number of dialects, including Shigatse (another variety of Central Tibetan) and Amdo dialects (Haller, forthcoming; Sun 1993). When we investigate verbal morphology of other Himalayan languages most of which are pronominalized, it is obvious that the type of participant marking as is found in Tibetan dialects is quite rare. Other than Tibetan, it was reported in Newari. But participant in Newari is marked by verbal suffixes, rather than auxiliaries. According to Genetti

⁶Denwood (1999:136-138) gave an interesting discussion of viewpoint in Lhasa. The speaker's viewpoint is the main factor that governs the choice of "self" vs. "other" forms. If the speaker views that the act by others has something to do with him, he may opt to report it using the self form (e.g., She is teaching me songs - "she" takes the self auxiliary).

(1988), participant forms (or what she calls "conjunct and disjunct forms") do not simply code person of the subject or volition, but also constitute an evidential system.

In perfective system, Lhasa Tibetan employs several utterance-final volitional auxiliaries: *-pa yin*, *-pa ree*, *soŋ*, and *shaa*, as shown in Table 1.

SELF	OTHER		
	DIR	IND	INF
-pa yin	soŋ	-pa ree	shaa

Table 1. Perfective volitional auxiliaries in Lhasa Tibetan

There is only one form for the "self" category, but three forms for the "other". These other centred forms typically convey a three-way evidential distinction: indirect experience (*-pa ree*), direct experience (*soŋ*), and inference (*shaa*). These auxiliaries occur mainly with controllable predicates—both transitive and intransitive verbs. The presence of these auxiliaries in perfective aspect often entails the presence of ergative marker. This is true even in intransitive clauses, rendering split-S marking. *S_a* (agentive subject) in "I went there (intentionally)" takes ergative case and occurs with the volitional *-pa yin*. In contrast, *S_o* (patient subject) in "I went there (unintentionally)" takes absolutive (zero) marking and occurs with either *soŋ* or *shaa*, which functions as non-volitional auxiliary.

In addition to controllable predicates, the "other" forms can also occur with non-controllable predicates, as can be seen in the following examples:

4) LT

- a. molaa na-pa ree
 grandmother sick-PF OTHER
 'Grandmother was sick'
- b. molaa na soŋ
 grandmother sick OTHER
 'Grandmother was sick'
- c. molaa na shaa
 grandmother sick OTHER
 'Grandmother was sick'

(4a)-(4c) carry the same lexical meaning. But they convey different epistemological perspectives. (4b) is a report obtained through direct experience. The speaker met the grandmother and found out that she was sick. The choice of *shaa* in (4c) indicates that the speaker could not tell exactly that the grandmother was sick. But based on evidence (she had runny nose, she looked pale, etc.), the speaker could infer that knowledge. (4a), on the other hand, could not be used to report a here-and-now event. We can add an adverb *the tūü* 'that time' in front of (4a), but not (4b) or (4c). We should note that *shaa* is quite peculiar to the Lhasa dialect. In Rgyalhang, there are only two way-evidential contrasts: direct and indirect experiences, or better new and old knowledge. A form that functions in a similar way as *shaa* is not found. Another peculiar characteristic of this morpheme is that it can occur only in a declarative sentence.

While evidentiality is the most important feature in non-first person clauses, volitionality plays a significant role in first person clauses.⁷ When the speaker wants to express his emotions and feelings, report an unintentional act, or describe the state in which s/he finds him or herself, s/he may choose to express these using the non-volitional auxiliary *təuŋ*, or resort to *soŋ* or *shaa*, but hardly *-pa ree*.⁸ I will refer to these morphemes "non-volitional auxiliaries", as they occur with patient subjects. The basis of choice of these auxiliaries in Lhasa, in comparison with those in Rgyalhang, will be discussed in §4.

3.2 Rgyalhang Verbs

In a similar way, Rgyalhang verbs are divided into three classes: (1) lexical verbs, which express neither number nor person. The stem remains unchanged for both past and nonpast events as well as imperative mood.⁹ There are only a handful of honorific verbs, whereas almost every verb in Lhasa has both ordinary and honorific counterparts; (2) verbs of being, which are classified into copular (*zin*, *nə*, *re*, *ji*, *ro*) and existential verbs (*ŋāŋ*, *ndô*, *ndô re*, *jy*, *jy re*, *do re*)¹⁰; and (3) auxiliary morphemes most of which are grammaticalized from verbs. These auxiliaries are subdivided into two groups: bare forms (*zin*, *gu*, *caŋ* - used with first person, and *thi*, *nə*,

⁷See DeLancey (1996) for a discussion of the interplay between volitionality and evidentiality in Lhasa Tibetan.

⁸According to Goldstein & Nornang (1970), *-pa ree* is also found in unintentional first person clauses. In my view, this form may not signify the lack of volitionality as much as remoteness of time.

⁹An exception is *sōŋ*, which is an imperative form of *ngūə* 'go'.

¹⁰Copular and existential verbs in the Rgyalhang dialect differ in many respects from the Lhasa dialect. I intend to report this interesting feature in another paper.

re -used with non-first) and periphrastic forms comprising aspectivizers (*-tci/thui/tsha/re*) and bare forms.¹¹

The copular and auxiliary *zin* is derived from CT *yin* 'be'. The auxiliary *gu* came from the ergative marker *gis* and is used only with perfective aspect (the difference between *zin* and *gu* is treated briefly in Hongladarom (1996)). The auxiliary *ɕaŋ* is a cognate of Lhasa *tɕuŋ*, derived from the deictic motion verb *byung* 'appear, come off, emerge'.

The usual indexical marking in the Rgyalthang dialect deals with speech act participant and aspect, as illustrated in the following pair (5)-(6). Lhasa examples (7)-(8) are also shown here for a clear comparison.

5) GT	ŋă	ǒŋ	zin
	1S	come	SELF
	'I came'		
6) GT	khō	ǒŋ	re
	3S	come	OTHER
	'He/she came'		
7) LT	ŋa	yɔŋ-pa	yin
	1S	come-PF	SELF
	'I came'		
8) LT	kho	yɔŋ-pa	ree
	3S	come-PF	OTHER
	'He/she came'		

These examples are quite similar in both dialects, except for the fact that aspect markers are not present in the Rgyalthang data. That is, Rgyalthang employs bare forms which can be interpreted as either that the action was completed (preterite), as indicated in my translations above, or that it was completed but with emphasis on present result (perfect).

In the perfective system alone, Rgyalthang has at least 20 auxiliaries (Table 2), whereas Lhasa has merely 4 forms (as already indicated in Table 1). The bare forms comprise *thi*, which is grammaticalized from CT *thal* 'cross over' and the copular *re* (from CT *red*) and *nə* (from the declarative sentence final suffix /o/ in Classical

¹¹Other periphrastic forms are also found: *tci thui thi* and *tsha thui nə*.

Tibetan). It is interesting to note that of all these bare auxiliaries, only *re* can be used to describe future statements by combining with the future marker *-zə* in *-zə re*.

SELF	OTHER	
	+NEW	-NEW
(1) a. <i>zin/ -tɕi zin</i> b. <i>gu/ -tɕi gu</i>	(1) a. <i>thi/ -tɕi thi</i> b. <i>-tɕi nə</i>	<i>-tɕi re</i>
(2) <i>thui</i>	(2) a. <i>thui thi</i> b. <i>thui nə</i>	<i>thui re</i>
(3) <i>tsha</i>	(3) a. <i>tsha thi</i> b. <i>tsha nə</i>	<i>tsha re</i>
(4) <i>ra</i>	(4) a. <i>ra thi</i> b. <i>ra nə</i>	<i>ra re</i> ¹²

Table 2. Perfective volitional auxiliaries in Rgyalthang

There are several interesting points to note about Table 2.

1. Among the self forms, the only possible periphrastic construction is *-tɕi+zin/gu*. *thui*, *tsha*, and *ra*, when used with first person actors, must occur as bare forms.

2. *zin/gu* and *-tɕi+zin/gu* function in a similar manner. Both are used in perfective intentional clauses. The sentences with *-tɕi* convey a stronger sense of transitivity. Therefore, it is odd to say **ŋă ăŋ-tɕi zin* 'I came' or **khō ăŋ-tɕi re* 'He/she came'.

3. The other forms (*thi*, *nə*, *re* and derived periphrastic forms) denote the speaker's source of knowledge. In Table 2, I roughly gloss the distinction between these evidentials as being +NEW and -NEW. *thi* and *nə*, possessing the feature +NEW, are used when the speaker has eyewitness knowledge of a particular event, whereas *re* indicates the speaker's general knowledge, old knowledge, or that obtained through indirect sources. It functions in a similar manner as Lhasa *ree*. Informants tend to view that *thi* and *nə* are synonymous and can replace each other.

¹²Interestingly, *-ra* can also occur with the existential *jŷ re*, emphasizing the existence of the activity result.

4. Another evidential which is not reported in Table 2 is hearsay evidential *-tɕa*. This marker often occurs with *-tɕi* and thus reports a past event. It indicates the speaker's indirect experience and is common in narratives, as can be seen in (9)

9) GT	pǔmā	phǔsǒ-gola	sīŋ-tɕi-tɕa	-
	girl	another person-DAT	give-PF-HS	
	'(They) gave the girl to another guy, it was said'			

5. Like the Lhasa other forms, the counterparts in Rgyalthang can be used with both controllable as well as non-controllable predicates. Volitionality is not a parameter in distinguishing these forms.

6. Aspect and Aktionsart are important parameters which govern the choice of *thui* and *-tɕi*. *thui* is a versatile verb. It functions as a lexical verb meaning "complete" and is on the verge of becoming an aspectivizer. In addition, when combined with *reŋ* 'time', it becomes a temporal conjunction meaning "after". Telicity distinguishes *thui* from *-tɕi*. The former is used with verbs which have no natural terminal points and may take a long time to complete (atelic verbs), e.g. eat, work, wash, write, sweep (floor), whereas the latter is used with verbs that have natural terminal points (telic verbs), e.g. hit, kick, or kill. We can also look at this distinction from Vendler's (1967) verb classification: *-tɕi* is used with activity terms depicting a dynamic and durative situation that has an arbitrary endpoint. *thui*, on the other hand, is used with accomplishment terms describing a situation that is dynamic and durative, but has a natural endpoint. In this way, it is not surprising to find that *thui* also connotes perfect aspect.

10) GT	ŋǎ	sěŋ	tɕhǎ	thúi	
	1S	food	eat	complete (SELF)	
	'I have eaten'				
11) GT	nǎ	děŋ	sê	thúi	thi
	person	seven	kill	complete	OTHER
	'(He) has killed seven people'				
12) GT	nǎ	tɕi	sê-tɕi	thi	
	person	one	kill-PF	OTHER	
	'(He) killed a person'				

In (10) *thui* occurs with the verb 'eat'. (11) and (12) have the same lexical stem 'kill' but they are used in different situations. Suppose the actor of (11) were a professional killer, and he was assigned a task to kill seven people. After he killed the first person, he could not really utter (11). He had to describe his action using *-t̤ei thi*, as in (12). However, after his job had completed (he had killed seven people), then he could utter (11).

7. *-tsha* 'finish' is not as common as *thui*. It is used to emphasize that the action has been finished, as in the following example.¹³

13) GT	tōlō	ṣ̣iŋ-nə	jōŋmā	tō	tsha	re
	this year	field-LOC	a kind of veg.	plant	finish	OTHER
	'This year jōŋma has already been planted in the field'					

8. *ra* 'get' emphasizes the resultative state of an action, as can be seen in (14)-(15). Aktionsart may be an important parameter which distinguishes it from the other aspectivizers. However, the data at this stage of research are too limited for me to make a conclusion.

14) GT	khōtshè	t̤hēwa	kin	p̄ao-ra	thi
	3Pexcl	thing	all	tie-PF	OTHER
	'They tied all the things together.'				

15) GT	khənata	j̄itsūə-nə	t̤hūŋ	n̄c̄à	t̤ei	zuə-ra	re
	PN	village LOC	house	good	one	make-PF	OTHER
	'(He) built a good house in the khəna village.'						

Though (14) and (15) employ the same aspectivizer, they have different auxiliaries. *thi* in (14) denotes an event the speaker has just found out, whereas *re* in (15) indicates that the speaker has known the statement in question. That is, *thi* reports a particular event based on the speaker's new knowledge. *re*, on the other hand, reports a general situation based on the speaker's old knowledge.

From the description of Lhasa and Rgyalthang verbs above, we see that even though Rgyathang has a more complex indexical system than Lhasa, the underlying notions in the verbal morphology in both dialects are quite the same. Other than marking aspect, Aktionsart, and participant, auxiliaries also mark volitionality, control,

¹³van Driem (1998: 290) also found the similar morpheme in Dzhongkha, *tshâ*. He labels it the auxiliary of the terminative Aktionsart. It expresses that an action has come to an end, such as in *z'â-tsha-yi* 'I have already eaten'.

and evidentiality. Volition is an attribute of first person utterances, whereas evidentiality is an important characteristic of non-first person statements. Only the speaker can claim to have direct knowledge of his or her own action. And this is why there is no distinction in term of volitionality in non-first person utterances. To give an example, the evidential *thi* can be used with both controllable (as in (16)) and non-controllable verbs (as in (17)-(18)).

- | | | | | | |
|--------|---|----------|--------------|----------|-------|
| 16) GT | khō | jñtā-gə | tōŋ dzēpā | sè-tçi | thi |
| | 3S | gun-ERG | bear several | kill-PF | OTHER |
| | 'He killed several bears with a gun' | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 17) GT | ʔälā | sěj | ma-tṣhă | phō-tçi | thi |
| | cat | food | NEG-eat | spill-PF | OTHER |
| | 'Not eating the food, the cat spilled it' | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 18) GT | khōtshē | tṣhè-tçi | thi | | |
| | 3P | tire-PF | | OTHER | |
| | 'They were tired' | | | | |

Though the actor in (16) is volitional, and those in (17) and (18) are not, all employ the same auxiliary *-tçi thi*.

4. Non-volitional Auxiliaries in the Rgyalhang and Lhasa Dialects

In this section, I will present some data on non-volitional auxiliaries in the Rgyalhang and Lhasa dialects and examine the basis of auxiliary selection in unintentional clauses.

4.1 Lhasa Non-volitional auxiliaries

In the perfective system, there are two non-volitional auxiliaries that can occur with first person subjects: *tçuŋ* and *soŋ*. *tçuŋ* also occurs with non first person subject, but in that case it indicates that the action described in the utterance —most often intentional act— has something to do with the speaker. For example, the speaker may say "He gave it (*tçuŋ*)" not explicitly stating who the recipient is. In that case, it will be understood that the act of giving is done to the speaker. Therefore, any non first person clause ending with this morpheme suggests that the action is oriented toward the speaker. DeLancey (1985) argues that this auxiliary marks Goal, in contrast to *soŋ*, which marks Source.

According to Denwood (1999: 144), the difference between *tɕuŋ* and *soŋ* has to do with the notion "generality". He reports that the "general" form with *tɕuŋ* is usually interpreted as referring to a longer and/or more remote period of time than the "particular" form with *soŋ*.

19) LT	di	ŋɛɛ	haako	tɕuŋ
	that	1S.ERG	know	SELF
	'I knew that (already)'			

20) LT	di	ŋɛɛ	haako	soŋ
	that	1S.ERG	know	SELF
	'I have understood that (just now)'			

However, Denwood notes that many non-controllable verbs can occur with both auxiliaries (e.g., *hago* 'understand', *dran* 'remember'), but many require only either of them (e.g., *na* 'be sick' requires *tɕuŋ*, *brjed* 'forget' requires *soŋ*). DeLancey (1985) gives the following lists of verbs that can take either of these forms. He notes that the verbs with *soŋ* are mainly transitive, whereas those with *tɕuŋ* resemble verbs that take dative subjects in many languages.

tɕuŋ: find, remember, fall, see, dream, meet, perspire, burst out laughing, sneeze, be sick, catch cold, shiver, be hungry, faint

soŋ: lose, forget, cause to fall (and all derived causatives), break sth., spill sth.

Some of these verbs, particularly those that occur with *soŋ*, take ergative subjects. The verbs which occur with *tɕuŋ* are classified into three groups according to the nature of case marking of its subjects: those that take ergative subjects, those that take absolutive subjects, and those that take dative ones. That is, the semantics of verb does govern both case marking and auxiliary selection. For example, verbs of perception select *tɕuŋ* and the perceiver must appear in ergative case. Verbs of emotions also select *tɕuŋ*, but the subjects need not be in ergative. To find or get something is perceived as a direction toward the speaker, and thus *tɕuŋ* is used. Interestingly, the recipient must be in dative case. Forgetting verbs (the speaker used to have or know something but lost or forgot it) select *soŋ*, which marks the direction away from the speaker. The experiencer must be marked with ergative case.

Table 3 lists verbs that usually appear with *tɕuŋ* or *soŋ* and specify the case marking pattern of their subjects.

	SELF (<i>tɕuŋ</i>)	OTHER (<i>soŋ</i>)
Ergative subjects	see, hear, miss, know, understand	lose, forget, be mistaken, know, understand
Dative subjects	find ¹⁴ , get, catch cold, dream	
Absolutive subjects	be sick, thirsty, hungry, burst out laughing	

Table 3. Lhasa non-volitional auxiliaries classified according to the semantics of verb and the nature of case marking of their subjects

It is clear from the above description that the verbs that take these auxiliaries denote states and the lack of volition or control on the actor's part. That is, these verbs take patient subjects. Yet some verbs require that the experiencer or perceiver must be in ergative case. The motivation behind case marking and auxiliary selection for Tibetan dialects is not at all clear. The data in Lhasa and in Rgyalhang (to be discussed below) lead us to believe that one of the bases for case and auxiliary selection has to do with the semantics of the verb. However, the lists reported so far are too limited for us to make a solid generalization. It will be necessary to compile more verbs in the Lhasa dialect that can take these auxiliaries and compare them with their counterparts in other dialects.

4.2 Rgyalhang Non-volitional Auxiliaries

Non-controllable predicates in Rgyalhang are expressed mainly through *ɕaŋ* or *-tɕi ɕaŋ*. The morpheme *ɕaŋ* is a cognate of *tɕuŋ* in the Lhasa dialect. The bare form indicates an on-going state, whereas the periphrastic one describes a particular state or feeling, as can be seen in (21)-(22).

- 21) GT ɲă ngũə-rɛŋkha tshōtshè nă-tɕi ɕaŋ
 1S go-CON suddenly ill-PF SELF
 'I felt ill as soon as I left'

¹⁴DeLancey (1985:63) cites an ergative subject for this verb. But I agree with Hu Tan et al (1998) that this verb requires dative subject.

- 22) GT tɕəpà nə ɕaŋ
 neck sick SELF
 'I have neck pain'

-tɕi ɕaŋ in (21) is used to describe a particular incident which takes place at a certain moment, whereas *ɕaŋ* expresses a general situation, which is, in this case, the speaker's having neck pain.

Like Lhasa, Rgyalhang cannot employ the self form *ɕaŋ* with verbs of perception, verbs of cognition, and a few others. Instead, the other form *-tɕi nə* must be used. For example,

- 23) ɲǎ ɕĩ tɕɛn-tɕi nə
 1S child miss-PF OTHER
 'I missed the child'

Interestingly, *thi* or *-tɕi thi* is not allowed in this construction. It is used only with non-first person, as illustrated in (25) below.

- 24) ɲǎ rû ɕùĩ ɕaŋ
 1S friend meet SELF
 'I met (a) friend'

- 25) khō rû ɕùĩ thi
 3S friend meet OTHER
 'He/she met (a) friend'

Another verb which requires the other form is *brjed* 'forget' (*dzû* in Rgyalhang and *dzee* in Lhasa). As seen in Table 3, this verb in Lhasa takes the other-centred *soŋ*, instead of the self-centred *tɕuŋ*.

- 26) GT
- a. ɲǎ dzû-tɕo thi
 1S forget-CAUSE OTHER
 'I forgot'
- b. ɲǎ dzû thũĩ thi
 1S forget complete OTHER
 'I have forgotten'

Absolutive subjects	hear, miss, dream, recover, <u>be sick</u>	understand; be tired, hungry, sleepy, <u>be sick</u> , embarrassed; cry, laugh (with <i>ṣū</i> 'lose'); sweat, cough	forget	miss, smell, <u>be sick</u>
Dative subjects				find, get

Table 4. Rgyalthang non-volitional auxiliaries classified according to the semantics of verb and the nature of case marking of their subjects

So we see that verbs of cognition in both dialects can take self or other forms (*-tṣi ṣaŋ* or *-tṣi na*), whereas verbs of perception require the other form (*soŋ* in Lhasa and *-tṣi na* in Rgyalthang). Moreover, the perceiver in both dialects must be marked with ergative. Finding and getting verbs take dative subjects, though in Rgyalthang they cannot occur with the self form.

5. Conclusion

A preliminary analysis of indexical categories in the Rgyalthang and Lhasa dialects, which represent Kham Tibetan and Central Tibetan respectively, reveals a number of interesting things about Modern Spoken Tibetan verbs. In term of similarity, auxiliaries in both dialects index volitionality, evidentiality, aspect, and speech act participant. The existence of portmanteau morphemes like perfective auxiliaries is not attested in either Old Tibetan or Classical Tibetan. In these older varieties, there is no participant marking. Tense and mood are conveyed by stem inflections.¹⁶ Even though there are a few auxiliaries which appear in periphrastic constructions in Classical Tibetan, they do not convey evidential contrasts or are governed by volitionality. We may conclude that the interplay among these indexical categories is an innovation of Modern Spoken Tibetan. And in this paper I have shown that this is true not only in Central Tibetan but in Kham Tibetan as well.

One point I made in this paper is that Rgyalthang perfective auxiliaries differ from those in Lhasa in terms of form, function, and grammaticalization. Rgyalthang auxiliaries are more complex and exhibit interesting cases of *Aksionsart* which interacts with auxiliary selection in the other category. Rgyalthang makes a clear distinction

¹⁶Beyer (1992)