This book is an introduction to the family of languages derived from Old Tibetan. These languages are spoken on the Tibetan plateau, in the Himalayas and the Karakoram. The Tibetic-speaking area is nowadays located in six countries: China, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar. Some of the smallest languages are seriously endangered, and likely to disappear soon. In the first chapters, sociolinguistic and anthropological aspects of the Tibetic societies are presented, as well as information about the main religions of the Tibetic area – Buddhism, Bön, and Islam. The book includes a presentation of the main phonological and grammatical characteristics found in the Tibetic languages, and also provides information about the Tibetan script and the written languages used in the area. A whole chapter is devoted to dialectology and the presentation of the main linguistic characteristics for each section of the Tibetic area – Southeastern, Eastern, Northeastern, Central, Southern, South-western, Western, and Northwestern. The book also includes a historical and comparative dictionary presenting the main lexical differences between the modern languages, as well as their etymologies in Classical Tibetan. It presents the lexical correspondences between the major Tibetic languages: Central Tibetan, Tsang, Amdo, Kham, Dzongkha, Lhoke (Sikkim), Sherpa, Balti, Central Ladaks, Purik and Spiti. In order to explain the interactions with other language families, we have provided a presentation of the contact languages, which essentially belong to other Tibeto-Burman branches, as well as Sinitic, Mongolic, Turkic, Indo-Aryan, Iranic, Germanic (English) and Burushaski language families. This work includes three appendices. The first two deal with toponymic information and provides the names of the main mountains, rivers and lakes of the Tibetic area. The third appendix includes several detailed maps presenting the locations of the Tibetic languages and dialects. It also offers maps of the natural and human environments, as well as the administrative units of the area.

Nicolas Tournadre is a linguist, member of the Academic Institute of France (IUF), and Professor emeritus at Aix-Marseille University. During the last 35 years, he has conducted extensive fieldwork research in Tibet and the Himalayas, as well as in Central Asia. He has been an invited keynote speaker in numerous conferences, and has given talks on the five continents. Among his prominent publications are *L'ergativité en tibétain moderne : Approche morphosyntaxique de la langue parlée* [Ergativity in Modern Tibetan, morphosyntactic approach of the spoken language] (1996), the *Manual of Standard Tibetan* [with S. Dorje] (2003), *Le grand livre des proverbes tibétains* [with F. Robin] (2006), *Sherpa-English and English-Sherpa dictionary* [with L. N. Sherpa, G. Chodrak and G. Oisel] (2009), *Le prisme des langues* [The prism of languages] (2014) and *Vegetal meditations and mineral reflections* (2022).
He is a polyglot, and knows many languages affiliated to nine language families across Eurasia.

Hiroyuki Suzuki (D. Litt. in linguistics) is a lecturer in Chinese language studies at Kyoto University, Japan. He has conducted fieldwork for more than 20 years in the eastern Tibetosphere, focusing on minority languages and communities. His main research interests are descriptive linguistics, geolinguistics, dialectology, and sociolinguistics of the languages in the Tibetosphere. He is the author of the following monographs: *Dongfang Zangqu zhuyuyan yanjiu* [Study on languages in the eastern Tibetosphere] (2015), *100 linguistic maps of the Swadesh word list of Tibetic languages from Yunnan* (2018), and *Geolinguistics in the eastern Tibetosphere: An introduction* (2022). He is also the co-editor of *Linguistic atlas of Asia* (2021) and *The Oxford guide to the Tibeto-Burman languages* (forthcoming).

The book includes originals maps designed by Xavier Becker and digitized by Alain Brucelle.

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Nicolas Tournadre and Hiroyuki Suzuki

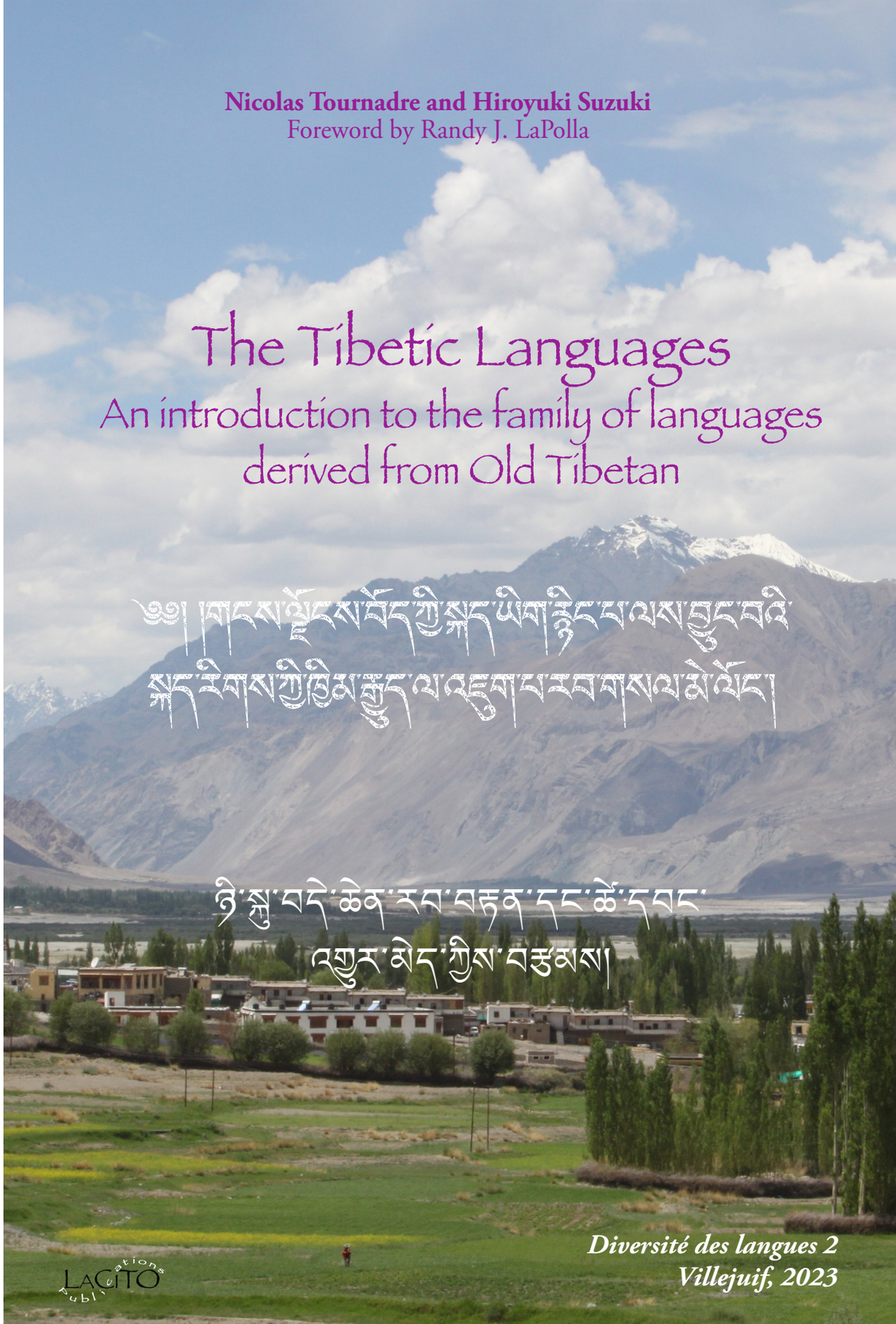
The Tibetic Languages. An introduction to the family of languages derived from Old Tibetan

DL 2

Nicolas Tournadre and Hiroyuki Suzuki
Foreword by Randy J. LaPolla

The Tibetic Languages

An introduction to the family of languages derived from Old Tibetan



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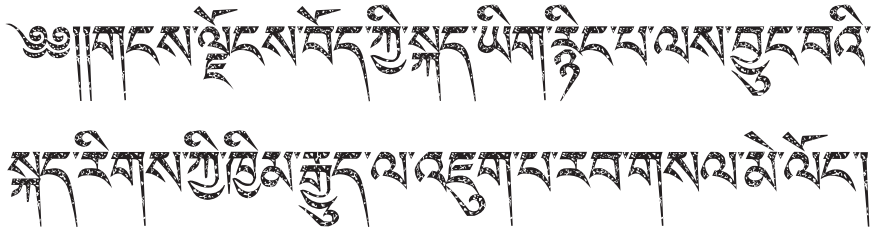
An introduction to the family of languages derived from Old Tibetan



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Diversité des langues 2

Nicolas Tournadre and Hiroyuki Suzuki

The Tibetic Languages: An introduction to the family of languages derived from Old Tibetan

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About the authors :

• Nicolas Tournadre is professor emeritus of linguistics at Aix-Marseille University and member of the Academic Institute of France (IUF).

• Hiroyuki Suzuki is a linguist, specialist of the Tibetic languages and geolinguistics, currently a Lecturer in Chinese language studies at Kyoto University, Japan.

About the contributors:

• Randy J. LaPolla is Professor of Linguistics at Beijing Normal University, China, and Senior Associate at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He wrote the foreword of the present book.

• Xavier Becker is a former *Professeur Agrégé* of geography. He designed seven original maps for this book and contributed to the elaboration of the map indexes.

• Alain Brucelle is a former Professor at the École Nationale des Sciences géographiques, Paris, and a specialist in geographic information systems (GIS) and cartography. He carried out the digitization of the maps.

• Quentin Devers is an archaeologist at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS, Paris). He specialized in the archaeology of Ladakh and contributed to the North-Western section *Migration patterns, legends and historical records*.

Notice:

This book has been peer-reviewed. We would like to thank all those who took part in this evaluation process.

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Foreword

Randy J. LaPolla, Beijing Normal University at Zhuhai, China and Nanyang Technological University

This massive tome is a distillation of more than thirty years of fieldwork by the two authors on the many linguistic varieties spread across Western China, Tibet, Northeast India, Northwest India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal that can be shown to be descendants of Old Tibetan. The authors are two of the most dedicated fieldworkers I know of, each having investigated dozens of varieties and worked with hundreds of people in some of the toughest areas of the world to do fieldwork in. I have had the chance to interact with the authors over the years while they were working on this book, first conceived of by Nicolas Tournadre in the early 1990s, and have enjoyed hearing about the adventures they had while doing the fieldwork. They also refer to work by other authors as well in completing this survey to make it more comprehensive.

The main goal of the work is to present a comprehensive overview picture of the life and languages of the speakers of the many language varieties that can be traced back to Old Tibetan. It not only presents the linguistic data, but also includes survey information about the peoples who speak these languages: their ethnic designations and locations, their religions, their lifestyles and livelihoods (and differences in the speech of speakers who have different livelihoods), their sociolinguistic practices, such as the use of honorifics, and their contact with speakers of other languages and its effects. It also includes an extensive discussion of the origins, uses, and styles of the Tibetan script. For this reason the book will also be of use to anthropologists, sociologists, historians, language typologists (Chapter 7 is a typological overview of what does and does not appear in the phonologies of the different varieties, and Chapter 8 is a typological overview of the grammatical features found), and historical linguists generally, as well as specialists on Tibetic languages and cultures.

A second goal of the work is to allow those who know Classical Tibetan (which is the later literary language) to understand the correspondence rules between Classical Tibetan and the modern varieties, so that they can easily learn those varieties. The discussion of this aspect is framed within a larger discussion of the historical development of Literary Tibetan in general and the morphological features of Classical Tibetan. The mutual influence of Literary Tibetan and the modern varieties is also discussed.

The main part of the book (Parts 2 and 3) is the linguistic overviews, not only in Chapters 7 and 8, which are phonological and grammatical outlines of the languages as a whole, as well as a discussion of the phonological changes that have occurred and their geographical distribution, to explain the differences between the Old and Classical Tibetan forms and the modern forms, but also in Chapter 9, which presents the classification of the varieties and gives their phonological and grammatical characteristics. The lexical features of the Tibetic varieties are also covered in depth, along with a historical and comparative glossary with English index.

Chapter 9 is a detailed classification of the Tibetic varieties. The discussion starts off with a review of earlier proposals for classifications and the justification for the new proposal. The different varieties are then grouped into sections with geographic names, such as the 'Southeastern Section', and information about the linguistic and ethnic groups of each section, the sociological and sociolinguistic situation in the section, the geographic boundaries and historical extensions and migrations relevant to each section, the number of speakers in each section, a full-color map of their locations, and the phonological and grammatical characteristics of each section are given. A wealth of information is presented in this long chapter. This internal classification is then followed (in Chapter 10) by a discussion of the place of Tibetic in the Sino-Tibetan stock generally and its genetic and contact relations to certain neighboring languages more specifically. In this chapter the idea of a 'Tibetosphere' is argued for, and the languages within this sphere of influence are discussed. There is also a lengthy discussion of how to distinguish a Tibetic language from a non-Tibetic language, using lexical, phonological, and morphological cognacy.

The book also includes three appendices and the references cited round out the volume. The first appendix provides elements of the geography and a list of the main mountains, rivers and lakes of the Tibetic area. The second appendix, "Elements of toponymy", is a discussion of the different formatives used in the place names in the different areas where Tibetic speakers live. The study of toponyms has become a hot topic in linguistics, and this will aid those working in this field, but also help those working in the various areas where the Tibetic languages are spoken to understand the meaning of the place names.

The third appendix contains seven beautiful original maps produced by Xavier Becker and digitized by Alain Brucelle. The maps highlight different aspects of the region, e.g. the languages and dialects, the administrative divisions, and the Tibetic linguistic sections. The map of the languages and dialects is also accompanied by an index with all the dialect names and locations. The third appendix also lists the administrative units of the Tibetic area, gives the names of all of the provinces, cities, towns, counties, and districts in the countries where speakers of Tibetic languages live. The names are given in Tibetan and the relevant local language (e.g. Chinese, Nepali and Hindi-Urdu).

In all this is an incredibly rich compilation of information about the Tibetic languages that will be useful for anyone wanting to get an overview of the whole branch, or wanting to find details about the varieties spoken in a certain area, or wanting to understand the history of the branch, or looking for the typological regularities found in the branch, or a dozen other purposes. The authors should be congratulated and thanked for producing such a volume, the fruit of so many years of arduous work to benefit the scholarly community.

Preface

In the minds of many people, Tibet is a small region of high altitude enclaved in the Himalayas between Nepal and China. This misconception is due primarily to contemporary geopolitical factors.

In reality, the Tibetan plateau represents about a quarter of the total Chinese territory and it is crossed by a dozen of high mountain ranges. The southern border of Tibet is delimited by the Himalayas and the Karakoram.

The immense territory that constitutes the Tibetan Plateau is commonly called the "Roof of the World" because of its average high altitude. However, the Tibetan Plateau has also been known as the "Third Pole" because Tibet and its southern border, the Himalayas, stores more snow and ice than anywhere else in the world outside the polar regions. This Third Pole is also the source of all the major rivers of China, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Hence this vast area serves as a remarkable ecological buffer and will probably play a major role in the context of global warming. This region of the world has an extraordinary geological and biological diversity, but it also has preserved a very rich cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

From a historical point of view, the Tibetan Plateau belonged to the great Tibetan empire over a millennium ago. This empire has disappeard long ago but its traces are still present today. From a cultural point of view, the Tibetan Plateau and the Himalayas form a distinct entity from the neighboring great civilizations of China and India. For this reason, some authors have stated that one should speak not only of the traditional Sinosphere and Indosphere (the cultural spheres of Influence of China and India) but also of the Tibetosphere since the impact of the Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhism is still very strong over the entire "Third Pole."

The only independent country which belongs to this cultural buffer zone is Bhutan, whose national language, Dzongkha, is a Tibetic language. Some Tibetic areas in China and in India have various autonomous statuses.

Another *cliché* about this region of the world is the fact that most people still think that there is only one language, Tibetan, traditionally spoken in Tibet.

In fact, Nicolas Tournadre had this perception before he traveled for the first time in 1985 to the Himalayas and Ladakh and then to Tibet in 1988. Eventually, in 1990, during a trip to Bhutan, the idea of writing a book about the dialectal diversity germinated. At that time, all the scholars, specialists of the languages and cultures of Tibet and the Himalayas, were talking about 'Tibetan dialects' when they referred to the languages derived from Old Tibetan.

These languages are spoken from Sichuan to the Karakoram in Pakistan, 2,500 kilometers away. Of course, there is no more intelligibility between these languages than there is between Romance languages such as French, Portuguese and Romanian, or Germanic languages such as English, German, Dutch and Swedish.

The "crazy idea" of writing a book about the whole Tibetic linguistic family arose in the beginning of the 1990s because at that time, the first author of this book could not imagine the incredible linguistic diversity of this language family. The task of writing such a book was nearly an impossible challenge. In the beginning of the twenty-first century researchers kept finding Tibetic languages that were never described. A number of languages and dialects were still poorly documented or not documented at all. During the last two decades, while the knowledge about the Tibetic languages was increasing at a fast pace, a number of languages and dialects were starting to disappear or to be endangered. Though the present publication cannot pretend to be an exhaustive presentation of the Tibetic languages, it shows already the fantastic linguistic and cultural diversity of the languages derived from Old Tibetan.

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This book was initially a project carried out by Nicolas Tournadre since 1995. From 2011, Hiroyuki Suzuki joined the project and we decided to coauthor the book and join our data derived from many years of independent fieldwork.

Thus, the acknowledgements had thus to be written separately.

N. Tournadre's acknowledgements

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I am indebted to my teachers and colleagues:

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I am also very greatful to Venerable Thubten Rigzin (Sébastien Carrillo), my adoptive son, for his technical help, his faithful support and inspiration.

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I wish to express my gratitude to the many language consultants and friends who have contributed directly or indirectly to this book. These consultants were from all the Tibetic areas in which I conducted fieldwork over the past four decades: Ü, Tsang, Ngari, Kongpo, Hor (Nagchu), Kham, Amdo, Khumbu (Sherpa area in Nepal), Jirel, Baltistan, Ladakh, Spiti, Garzha, upper Kinnaur, Bhutan and Sikkim. (See the list of consultants in the post-scriptum).

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Conventions

In this book, we use a *transliteration* of the Tibetan script in roman script. The transliteration renders the Tibetan orthography. It is useful for readers who have not mastered the Tibetan script.

We also provide a *romanization* which renders the pronunciation of Tibetan terms particularly proper names.

Finally, in the discussions dealing with the phonology, morphology and syntax of Tibetic languages, we also provide a *phonetic transcription*. This transcription will be presented in Chapter 7.

Transliteration

The transliteration is useful for providing the Tibetan orthography but does not indicate the modern pronunciations in the various Tibetic languages. The same word may be read in different ways for example by Ü-Tsang, Amdo, Ladakhi or Dzongkha speakers.

The transliteration and the Tibetan script are functionally *strictly equivalent*. Since the present book may be read by those who have not necessarily mastered the Tibetan script, we provide the transliteration after the Tibetan script or, in some cases, a romanization (see below).

Our letter-to-letter transliteration is based on the **international Wylie transliteration** except for the letter ཨ which is noted as ʔ (see details in Chapter 5). In this book, the transliteration is always noted in **small capitals and italics**, which is not usually the case in most publications. The reason for using these styles is to make a clear distinction between the transliteration and the romanization or phonetic transcriptions used in the book. In our transliteration, when a word has several syllables, they are connected by a dot.

Thus, for example:

གཞིས་ཀ་རྩེ་ *GZHIS.KA.RTSE*, སྨད་འཇིས་ *MNGA'.RIS*, འབྲས་སྤུངས་ *'BRAS.SPUNGS*, དཔའ་འཇིས་ *DPA'.RIS*, རྒྱལ་རོང་ *RGYAL.RONG*, འབྲུག་ཆུ་ *'BRUG.CHU*, ཁམས་ *KHAMS*, ཨ་མདོ་ *A.MDO*, ཕྱག་ཕྲེང་ *PHYAG.PHRENG*.

If we mention Tibetan authors or titles written in Tibetan in the body of the texts, the radical letter in the first syllable of each word form is capitalized in its transliteration. The Tibetan words in the bibliography and the index are also sorted by the roman alphabetical order of the radical letter of the first syllable. This rule may be applied for all the proper names related to Tibetan letters.

Phonetic transcription

For the precise description of the phonological systems found in the Tibetic languages, we use a *pandialectal phonetic transcription*, which is described in the chapter 7. It is always provided either **in square brackets**, for a phonetic description, ex. [ŋ] or **in slashes,** for a phonological description, ex. /ng/. In the chapters which do not deal explicitely with phonology, we avoid technical transcription and use the romanization to facilitate the reading of non specialists.

Romanization

In this book, we propose a romanization **which is noted in lowercase letters** to render the reading pronunciation of Tibetan names (person names, toponyms, etc.) for the general public.

Thus, for example:

གཞིས་ཀ་རྩེ་ Zhikatse, སྨད་འཇིས་ Ngari, འབྲས་སྤུངས་ Dräpung, དཔའ་འཇིས་ Pari, རྒྱལ་རོང་ Gyälrong, འབྲུག་ཆུ་ Drugchu, ཁམས་ Kham, ཨ་མདོ་ Amdo, ཕྱག་ཕྲེང་ Chagthreng.

The romanization is easily readable and does not use diacritic signs for tones.

Pronunciation of the romanization

The velar series *k*, *kh*, *g*

k as 'k' in 'akin', *kh* as the aspirated initial 'k' or 'c' in 'kill', 'cool', *g* as 'g' in 'gold'.

The palatal series *č, ch, j*

č (or simply *c*) is pronounced as 'ch' in 'couch' or as 'c' in 'ciao' (in Italian).[1] The consonant *ch* is aspirated as in 'cheese, chair', while *j* is voiced and unaspirated as 'j' in 'jazz'.

The dental series *t, th, d*

t as 't' in Spanish 'torro', *th* as the aspirated 't' in 'take, talk', *d* as 'd' in Italian 'dente'.

The retroflex series *tr, thr, dr*

tr as 'tr' in 'metro', *thr* as the aspirated 'tr' in 'try', *dr* as 'dr' in 'dry'.

The labial series *p, ph, b*

p as 'p' in 'copy', *ph* as the aspirated 'p' in 'poor', *b* as 'b' in 'boat'.

The affricate series *ts, tsh, dz*

ts as 'ts' in 'lots', *tsh* as an aspirated 'ts', *dz* as 'ds' in 'ads'.

The fricatives *s, z, sh, zh*

s as 's' in 'same', *z* is realized as *z* in 'zoo' (many modern languages may devoice the z and pronounce it like s). *sh* is realized as 'sh' in 'shoe', *zh* as in 'Bre**zh**nev' or 'su' as in 'pleasure'.

The nasal *ng, ny, n* and *m*

ng as 'ng' in 'king', *ny* is realised as 'ni' in 'onion', *n* as 'n' in 'never' and *m* as 'm' in 'more'.

The lateral and vibrant *r* and *l*

r is pronounced in a similar way as the 'r' in 'rye' and *l* as in 'leave'.

The glides *w* and *y*

w as 'w' in 'way' and *y* as 'y' in 'yellow'.

1. The reason why we use a haček is to remind beginners that the 'c' should always be pronounced as a (pre-)palatal sound close to 'ch' in English (but not aspirated!) and never as the letter 'c' in 'can'. It would be quite alright to use the 'c' sign without a haček, since it is never ambiguous in Wylie and is always pronounced as in Czech or Ciao.

The glottals *h* and *'*

h as 'h' in 'how'. Historically, the sound, noted by an apostrophe ', corresponds to /ɦ/, a sound which does not exist in English. In some modern languages, the sound is no longer pronounced. It can be ignored by readers who do not speak Tibetan.

The vowels *a, ä, i, e, u, ü, o, ö*

- *a* is pronounced as 'a' in Spanish 'madre';
- *ä* corresponds to the vowel sound in English 'share' or Swedish 'väst';
- *i* corresponds to the sound *i* in Italian 'pizza' or *ey* in English 'key';
- the vowel *e* is similar to the vowel in the French 'été' or to the German 'See';
- *u* corresponds to the sound oo in 'cool' or u in 'rune';
- *ü* corresponds to the sound *u* in French 'tu' or to *ü* in the German word 'Bücher'.
- *o* is pronounced as *o* in Spanish or French'coco';
- *ö* corresponds to the sound in Swedish 'öst' or 'oe' in German 'Goethe'.

Standardization issues

The Tibetan transliteration is standardized to a large extent (see Wylie transliteration in Chapter 5), but that is not the case of the romanization. Due to the lack of standardization, some names may be transcribed in many ways depending on the various publications and the authors. For example, the town of གཞིས་ཀ་རྩེ *GZHIS.KA.RTSE*, capital of the Tsang region, may be written as Shikatse, Shigatse, Zhikatse, Zhigatse, Zhigatsey, Rikazê, Xigazê, etc.; the 'Northern plain' or བྱང་ཐང་ *BYANG.THANG* is spelled Changthang, Changtang, Jangthang, Byangthang, Qangtang, etc.; and the town འབྲུག་ཆུ་ *'BRUG.CHU* may be romanized as Drugchu, nDrugchu or mBrugchu. Some of these spellings partly reflect the pronunciation and partly the traditional orthography. They may be based on an English transcription, a Chinese transcription (Pinyin, etc.), a Hindi-Urdu or Nepalese pronunciation (or a hybrid system) and in some cases an IPA transcription.

A standardized rendering of Tibetan names is also needed because names written in Tibetan script (which correspond to traditional orthography) may have very distinct pronunciations depending on the native dialect of the reader and variations are sometimes perceptible even between neighboring dialects. That is for example the case of ཕྱག་འཕྲེང་ *PHYAG.PHRENG* which is pronounced in Kham [č'akt'eng] [sh'aⁿt'eng], [s'at'eng] or [č'at'eng].

Hence, in order to avoid having a single spelling in Tibetan script related to a significant number of pronunciations, which would be very confusing, we associate the Tibetan script to a single pronunciation. The romanization used in the present book is **directly derived from the transliteration**, by some simple rules consisting in deleting the letters that are not pronounced in the reading pronunciation of the so-called Common Tibetan (སྤྱི་སྐད་ *Čikä*). For a presentation of the derivation rules from transliteration to romanization, see Chapter 5.

We provide a system of romanization (used in the book mainly for proper names) that reflects to a large extent the pronunciation of 'Common Tibetan', however, it is only for the sake of simplicity, readability and consistency. This book introduces the *various Tibetic languages*, thus we do not have any intention to force readers to use a standardized pronunciation. Since the names are also usually given in Tibetan script, the reader of each region will read the script according to his own dialectal phonology.

Finally concerning Chinese, we usually provide words in Chinese script as well as the Pinyin (phonological transcription) but without tones. We uniformly avoid presenting tonal signs of pinyin for two reasons. The first one is that many proper names transcribing Tibetan pronunciations reflect local Mandarin dialects, which present a lot of tonal variations. Any reading in Standard Mandarin (Putonghua) is not recommended in this case. The other reason is that the characters with a tonal sign are unfriendly for those who want to search for a given word on the online document. The script code (Unicode) makes a different treatment of the character when it has a tonal sign.

It is also due to the same logistical reason that tonal signs are not indicated on the phonetic symbols but put before a word form in the phonological description of a given language. See Section 7.3.

Examples and glosses

Unless specified otherwise, all the examples given in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 are from Suzuki (for Amdo, Kham and the Eastern section) and Tournadre (for Ü, Tsang, Tö Ngari, Amdo, Hor, Northern Kham, Thewo Mä, Dzongkha, Choča-ngača, Lhoke, Spiti-Garzha, Khunu Töt, Ladaks,[2] Zanhar, Purik and Balti). The great majority of examples are given in Tibetan script always accompanied by the Wylie transliteration. All the examples are translated into English. When necessary, particularly in some grammatical examples, a word-to-word gloss is provided.

2. The term 'Ladaks' refers here (and elsewhere in the book) to the dialects of Central Ladakh spoken in Leh and around the capital.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of general terms

*	Unacceptable phrase/sentence
※	The sign is used to indicate a reconstructed form. This "reference mark" replaces the usual asterisk to avoid the ambiguity with the above meaning.
◊	Form or spelling not attested in Classical Tibetan
#	Pragmatically or semantically weird sentence but acceptable in some contexts. Also used for rare or specific phonological forms
√	Lexical root (without prefix or suffix)
1	First person pronoun
2	Second person pronoun
3	Third person pronoun
A	Agent
ABL	Ablative
ABS	Absolutive
ADJ	Adjective
ADM	Adjunctive marker
ART	Article
ASS	Associative
AUX	Auxiliary
B	Beneficiary
C	Consonant
CAUS	Causative
CHIN	Chinese
CEV	Copulative and existential verbs
CMP	Completed (aspect)
CNTEXP	Counter-expectation

COMP	Comparative
CO	Connective
COL	Collective
CompNP	Comparee noun phrase
ComTib	Common Tibetan
CPV	Copulative verb
CS	Comparative suffix
CT	Classical Literary Tibetan
DAT	Dative
DEF	Definite
DEM	Demonstrative
DET	Determinant
DIR	Directional/Tropatic
Dr	Drogpa (pastoralist)
EGO	Egophoric
E-E	Evidential-Epistemic (system).
ELA	Elative
ERG	Ergative
EXV	Existential verb
FQ	Final question marker
FUT	Future
GEN	Genitive
HCTL	Historical and Comparative Tibetic Lexicon (Chapter 12)
H	Honorific
Hum	Humilific
IMP	Imperative
INE	Inessive

INF	Inferential
JUS	Jussive
LOC	Locative
LV	Light verb
LVC	Light verb construction
MOD	Modifier
NEG	Negation
NML	Nominaliser
NP	Nominal phrase
NUM	Numeral
OT	Old Tibetan
P	Patient
PL	Plural
POS	Possessive
POST	Postposition
PPS	Purposive
PQ	Prefixed question marker
PR	Pronoun
PRS	Present
PSN	Personal name
PST	Past
PT	Proto-Tibetic
PTB	Proto-Tibeto-Burman
QNT	Quantifier
R	Recipient
REL	Relator
Ro	Rongwa (cultivator)

S	Single argument
S_A	Single argument agent
Sg	Singular
S_P	Single argument patient
SEC	Secondary verb
SENS	Sensory
SFE	Sentence final exclamative suffix
StandNP	Standard noun phrase
SUP	Superlative suffix
ST	Sino-Tibetan
TAG	Tag question
TB	Tibeto-Burman
TAM	Tense, aspect, modality
TAME	Tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality
TIB	Tibetan
TOP	Topic marker
UNCMP	Uncompleted (aspect)
V	Vowel
V[FLEX]	Verb stem with an inflection
Vs	Verb stem
VIS	Visual sensory
NVIS	Non-visual sensory

List of language names and their abbreviations

Am	Amdo (ཨ་མདོ་ *ʔA-MDO*)
Ba	Balti (བལ་ཏི་ *BAL.TI*)
Bc	Drugchu (འབྲུག་ཆུ་ *'BRUG.CHU*)
Bl	Janglam /Shanglan/ (བྱང་ལམ་ *BYANG.LAM*)
Bm	Baima (བོད་དམག་ *BOD.DMAG*)
Bro	Brokpa (མེ་རག་སག་གཏེང་སྤྲོད་འབྲོག་པའི་ཁ་ *ME.RAG SAG.TENG 'BROG.PA'I KHA*)
Cho	Choča-ngača (ཁྱོད་ཅག་ང་ཅག་ *KHYOD.CAG NGA.CAG*)
Cn	Čone (ཅོ་ནེ་ *CO.NE*)
Cp	Chagthreng (ཕྱག་ཕྲེང་ *PHYAG.PHRENG*)
DJ	Derong-Jol (སྡེ་རོང་འཇོལ་ *SDE.RONG 'JOL*)
Dy	Dzayül (རྫ་ཡུལ་ *RDZA.YUL*)
Dz	Dzongkha (རྫོང་ཁ་ *RDZONG.KHA*)
HB	Hor Bachen (ཧོར་སྦྲ་ཆེན་ *HOR SBRA.CHEN*)
HN	Hor Nagchu (ཧོར་ནག་ཆུ་ *HOR NAG.CHU*)
Hor	Hor (ཧོར་ *HOR*)
Jir	Jirel (ཇི་རེལ་ *JI.REL*)
Kg	Kyegu (སྐྱེ་དགུ་ *SKYE.DGU*)
Kh	Kham (ཁམས་ *KHAMS*)
Kk	Khöpokhok (ཁོད་པོ་ཁོག་ *KHOD.PO.KHOG*)
Ko	Kongpo (ཀོང་པོ་ *KONG.PO*)
Ky	Khyungpo (ཁྱུང་པོ་ *KHYUNG.PO*)
La	Ladaks (ལ་དྭགས་ *LA.DWAGS*), the dialects of Central Ladakh
LJ	Ladakhi Jangthang (ལ་དྭགས་ཀྱི་བྱང་ཐང་ *LA.DWAGS-KYI BYANG.THANG*)
Lho	Lhoke (ལྷོ་སྐད་ *LHO.SKAD*)
Ll	Lholam (ལྷོ་ལམ་ *LHO.LAM*)

Lo	Lo-Mönthang (ལྷོ་སྨོན་ཐང་ *GLO SMON.THANG*)
Mi	Minyak Rabgang (མི་ཉག་རབ་སྒང་ *MI.NYAG RAB.SGANG*)
Kh	Kham (ཁམས་ *KHAMS*)
Pa	Pälkyi /Pashi/ (དཔལ་སྐྱིད་ *DPAL.SKYID*)
Ph	Phänpo (འཕན་པོ་ *'PHAN.PO*)
Po	Pomborgang (སྤོ་འབོར་སྒང་ *SPO.'BOR.SGANG*)
Pur	Purik (སྤུ་རིག་ *PU.RIG*)
Ro	Rongdrak (རོང་བྲག་ *RONG.BRAG*)
Sk	Sharkhok (ཤར་ཁོག་ *SHAR.KHOG*)
SKh	Southern Kham (ཁམས་ལྷོ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་སྐད་ *KHAMS LHO.PHYOGS KYI YUL.SKAD*)
Sh	Sherpa (ཤར་བ་ *SHAR.BA*)
Sn	Semkyi Nyida /Shanggi Nyila/ (སེམས་ཀྱི་ཉི་ཟླ་ *SEMS.KYI NYI.ZLA*)
Sp	Spiti-Khunu-Garzha (སྤི་ཏི་/ གར་ཞྭ་/ཁུ་ནུ་ *SPI.TI/GAR.ZHWA/KHU.NU*)
Th-m	Thewo-mä (ཐེ་བོ་སྨད་ *THE.BO SMAD*)
Tö	Tö-Ngari (སྟོད་མངའ་རིས་ *STOD MNGA'.RIS*)
Tt	Thewo-tö (ཐེ་བོ་སྟོད་ *THE.BO STOD*)
Ts	Tsang (གཙང་ *GTSANG*)
Ü	Ü (དབུས་ *DBUS*)
YK	Yolmo-Kyirong (ཡོལ་མོ་/ སྐྱིད་རོང་ *YOL.MO /SKYID.RONG*)
Za	Zanhar (ཟངས་དཀར་ *ZANGS.DKAR*)

Part 1. – Ethnocultural, sociolinguistic and geographic backgrounds

1. Introduction

1.1. *The purpose of this book*

The primary goal of this book is to give an idea of the diversity of the Tibetic languages and dialects spoken on the Tibetan Plateau and in the Himalayas. While mainly focusing on linguistic issues, this book also tackles various cultural, religious, ethnic, geolinguistic and sociolinguistic issues to give a global view on a linguistic region of the world, which is now divided into six countries.

Tibetan civilization is one of the great and ancient cultures of Asia. This civilization has still a significant impact in Asia and, to a certain extent, in the rest of the world mainly because of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan medicine. Tibetan civilization is located between two of the greatest cultures in Asia: the Chinese and Indian civilizations. Over the course of history Tibetan civilization has naturally been influenced by its two neighbors but has also created its own original civilization adapted to the high altitude environment. To illustrate briefly both influences, it is sufficient to say that the Tibetan script is derived from an Indian script, whereas the twelve-year cycle of the Tibetan astrology is essentially influenced by the Chinese tradition.

This geographical and cultural advantage has turned into a misfortune since these two Asian civilizations also correspond to the two most populated territories on earth, whereas the areas in which the Tibetan civilization has flourished are largely desertic and scarsely populated lands.

Today languages and cultures are facing various threats of the four following types:

a) significant immigration of labor force from China, India or Nepal.

b) mass tourism mainly from China, India, Nepal and the West, which may outnumber the local populations.

c) acculturation in part due to immigration and mass tourism as well as to the lack of political independence (with the notable exception of Bhutan).

d) fragile mountainous environment (glaciers, rivers) subject to current global warming and climatic changes as well as to the multiplication of hydroelectric plants and mining industries.

The secondary goal of this book is to demonstrate how closely the modern languages and dialects derived from Old Tibetan are related to Classical Tibetan. Thus, for someone who already knows Classical Tibetan, the derivational rules provided in this book should facilitate the learning or the description of the modern languages or dialects. It also aims at showing that the modern spoken languages and dialects convey rich oral traditions and vocabularies which often allow reconstructing early stages of the Tibetan language.

This book draws on previous work conducted by various authors in the field of Tibetan linguistics and dialectology, but it is also based on our own fieldwork.

Since 1985, Nicolas Tournadre's extensive fieldwork in China, India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Pakistan has involved recording and analyzing many dialects in the following areas: Ü, Tsang, Tö Ngari, Kongpo, Lhokha, Kham, Hor, Amdo, Thewo, Sharkhok, Khopokhok (China); Central Ladakh and Purik, Sikkim, Upper Kinnaur, Spiti and Lahul (India); Baltistan (Pakistan) Pharak, Khumbu and Jiri (Nepal); and Thimphu and Monggar (Bhutan).

Hiroyuki Suzuki has conducted extensive fieldwork since 2003 in China, Nepal and Myanmar, recording and analyzing many dialects especially in the following areas: Kham, Amdo, Sharkhok, Khöpokhok, Čone, Thewo, Drugchu, Hor, Ü, Tsang (China), Dölpo (Nepal).

The book is intended primarily for those interested in Tibetic languages and dialects, Classical Tibetan (CT), Tibetan linguistics and the recontruction of Proto-Tibetic. However, some chapters should also interest scholars and students in anthropology, literature, history, geography or other human sciences, who could use the data for their own field or purpose.

The present book also provides general information about the number of speakers and the administrative divisions of the area where speakers of Tibetic languages are found, and includes maps of the Tibetan linguistic family illustrating linguistic boundaries.

The book is divided into three parts:

The first part (Chapters 1–3) is devoted to the general presentation of the languages and cultures of the Tibetic and the contact languages of the Tibetosphere.

The second part (Chapters 4–10) discusses the history of the Tibetic languages and the reconstruction of Proto-Tibetic, as well as the written languages and the Tibetan script. It also proposes a description of the main phonological and grammatical features of the Tibetic languages and dialects (see Chapters 7 and 8).

The third part of the book (Chapters 11–12) discusses lexical features of the Tibetic vocabulary and contains a Historical and Comparative Tibetic Lexicon which analyzes more than one thousand words. Throughout the book, extensive references are made to CT in order to demonstrate that it shares its fundamental grammar and a considerable body of its vocabulary with the spoken languages.

Finally, the book includes three appendices with various original maps (and indexes) of the Tibetic languages and dialects, as well as environmental, cultural and administrative maps. The appendices provide additional information about the administrative units of the Tibetic areas in six Asian countries as well as elements of geography and toponymy.

1.2. *The definition of 'Tibetic' as used in this book*

The term 'Tibetic' has been used in the recent past by some authors (Matisoff 2000; Beckwith 2006; Dalby 1999, 2000; van Driem 2014; Chirkova 2013; Tournadre 2008, 2014a, 2014b; Blench, Roger & Post 2014; Noonan 2011; Sun 2014; Zeisler 2018a; etc.) as well as the Ethnologue website and the World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS) in different ways to refer to various intermediate levels of classification within the Sino-Tibetan macrofamily (hereafter ST).[1]

1. The Sino-Tibetan macrofamily is accepted by most specialists. However, the grouping and sub-grouping with ST are not well-established and scholars do not agree on the nature (genetic relation or borrowal) and the proximity of the relationship. Many scholars consider that although Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic were very closely related some seven thousand years ago, a major split occurred between Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic. Contact and migration have played a major role in the construction of ST (LaPolla 2001). Sino-Tibetan refers to a grouping together of Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic (which cor-

Tibetic is sometimes used as a synonym or quasi-synonym of Tibeto-Himalayan or 'Bodic',[2] a subgrouping of ST comprising many languages found both in the North and the South of the Himalayas.

'Tibetic' is also sometimes used as a synonym or quasi-synonym of Bodish, a much smaller subgrouping of languages, with languages such as Tamang, Manangi, Bumthang, Kurtö, and 'Tibetan'. However, Bodish is not very well-defined and the hypothetical common innovations of this grouping have not yet been provided. Also there is no fundamental reason to replace the term Bodish with another term.[3]

The notion of 'Tibetic languages' may, however, turn out very useful to replace 'Tibetan dialects', which is not appropriate for various reasons.

Here we need to provide a small explanation about the difference between 'language' and 'dialect'. Whichever linguistic community we belong to, we do not speak a 'language', but above all a particular 'dialect' (Chambers and Trudgill 1998; Laks 2012; Calvet 2004; Tournadre 2016). Each dialect has its own lexical, grammatical and phonological specificities and, as noted by van Driem, each "dialect deserves its own description" (2002: 9).

The term 'language' when opposed to 'dialect' may refer to an abstract entity corresponding to a 'group of dialects' which allow mutual intelligibility.[4] Two (or more) genetically related dialects belong to a same group if these dialects allow for

responds to the 'Chinese dialects'). The term 'Trans-Himalayan' has been proposed instead of ST (van Driem 2014) but it is not widely used. Broader relationships have also been suggested such as Sino-Austronesian (Sagart 2005). The Tibeto-Burman branch includes many sub-groups such as Karenic, Lolo-Burmese, Qiangic, Bodo-Garo-Jingpho, 'Tibeto-Himalayan' (or Bodic). There is a lot of variation in the detailed classification of the TB branch. Some of the subgroups are still problematic or impressionistic.

2. The geographic term Tibeto-Himalayan is preferable to Bodic since the latter is derived from Bod ('Tibet') and several languages belonging to this group such as the West Himalayish are only remotely connected to Tibetan.

3. The term 'Bodish' which is derived from the root *bod* 'Tibet' makes more sense than the term Bodic because the Bodish languages are very closely related to Tibetan, whereas the term Bodic includes languages that are very different from the Tibetic languages.

4. Thus for example, the 'English language' includes several dialects.

intelligibility. In the inverse case, they must be classified in different groups.[5] The term 'language' may also convey a sociolinguistic and political sense which is entirely different from the above meaning. Weinreich reportedly provided the following famous definition: "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy" (one may add a written form, a political status and an education system).

Let us turn back to the choice of 'Tibetic languages' as opposed to 'Tibetan dialects'.

First, the notion of 'Tibetan dialects' implies the existence of a single 'language' (according to the above meaning). However, the so-called 'Tibetan dialects' refer in fact, as we will see, to various 'languages' (or 'groups od dialects'), which do not allow mutual intelligibility at all!

Second, these languages are spoken not only by Tibetans *per se*, but also by other ethnic groups such as Ladakhi, Balti, Kinnauri, Sherpa, Bhutanese, Sikkimese and others who do not consider themselves to be Tibetans.

The expression 'Tibetan languages' (in the plural) has also been used recently (Zeisler 2004; Gawne and Hill 2017) instead of 'Tibetan dialects'. The expression 'Tibetan languages' is not very appropriate either because speakers of Ladakhi or Dzongkha would not consider that they speak *Tibetan proper* and their languages do not allow mutual intelligibility. If we take in account the 'linguistic scale', it is better to coin a term that refers clearly to a family of languages. We do not usually speak of *French languages* or *Russian languages* (in the plural). If we want to refer to the family of languages that include them, we use the respective terms of 'Romance' or 'Slavic'. The distinction between 'Tibetan' and 'Tibetic' is also very similary to the one between 'German' and 'Germanic'. Thus English is designated as a one of the Germanic languages and not as one of the German languages.

5. Of course, mutual intelligibility is a matter of degree. One must also consider that dialectal variation is often inscribed in the context of a *geolinguistic continuum*. However, if speakers can converse each in her own dialect and conduct a whole conversation, then the mutual intelligibility is sufficient to communicate. Otherwise, the speakers naturally often chose to speak another common language (if available). For more details, see Tournadre (2014b, forthcoming).

Of course, we could understand the word 'Tibetan' as referring to 'Old Tibetan' and thus the expression 'Tibetan languages' would be equivalent *mutatis mutandis* to the expression 'Latin languages' (in its plural form), but such a label would be inappropriate to designate the Romance languages. The expression 'Tibetic languages' is used, in relation to Literary Tibetan, in a similar way as 'Sinitic languages' in relation to Classical Chinese or 'Romance languages' in relation to Latin.[6]

For all the above reasons, the term 'Tibetic' is very convenient to denote a very well-defined family of 'languages' (or 'groups of dialects') directly derived from Old Tibetan (See Tournadre 2008; Tournadre 2014a; Tournadre and Karma Rigzin 2015; DeLancey 2018; Suzuki 2017b; Gawne 2017, Yliniemi 2017; Hyslop and Karma Tshering 2017; Chirkova 2017a).[7] This is the way that 'Tibetic' is used in the present book. It advantageously replaces the expression 'Tibetan languages' or 'Tibetan dialects' which are misleading in various ways.

The Tibetic family is comparable in diversity to the Romance or Germanic language families.

In Tibetan, there is no straightforward way to translate the term 'Tibetic'. For a number of years, however, the word སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *Bhoṭi* 'Bhoti', or its variant 'Bhutia', has had a meaning similar to Tibetic,[8] and is frequently used in the Tibetic communities outside Tibet.

The term སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *Bhoṭi* or its variant སྦྷོ་ཏ་ *Bhoṭa* is derived from the Indo-Aryan pronunciation of term བོད་ *BOD* 'Tibet',[9] but sometimes includes Himalayan languages such as Gurung, Tamang, Manangi, etc.

6. Sinitic languages traditionally called 'Chinese dialects' refer the languages derived from Old Chinese and form a very well-defined family (see Chappell 2006).

7. In some exceptional cases such as Baima, languages may have a distinct substrate attesting that they are not directly derived from OT.

8. As noted by Matthew Kapstein (personal communication), the word *Bhoṭi* or its variants had or may have negative connotations in some areas. However, the word *Bhoṭi*, which is also the root for Bhutan is now used all over, particularly in India and Nepal, and has even acquired an official status. See below.

9. Some people think it might be the other way around, i.e, the term *Bod* would be derived from *Bhoṭa.* But we disagree with such an interpretation.

Thus, the term རྫོ་ཏེ་ *Bhoṭi* is perfectly suited to render the English term, 'Tibetic', *in its restricted meaning*. In the present book, the term རྫོ་ཏེ་ *Bhoṭi* is only used (unless specified otherwise) for the Tibetan translation of the English term 'Tibetic'.

According to the above definition, we have listed seventy-six Tibetic 'groups of dialects' or 'languages' spoken in the entire Tibetic speaking area (see Section 2.2 and Chapter 9). Among these seventy-six dialect groups, forty-five are located in Tibet (TAR and TAPs in China), and thirty-one dialect groups are located outside Tibet, in India, Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan.[10]

As we will see (Chapter 10) the Tibetic languages are in contact with languages belonging to other branches of ST or to other phyla. In Tibet alone, there are fifty-two non-Tibetic languages (see Section 3.4 and Chapter 10); some of them spoken by a very small number of people.

All the modern Tibetic languages and dialects share phonological features as well as fundamental grammar and a core vocabulary. Beyond these common features, the linguistic diversity of Tibetic languages include many phonological, grammatical and lexical discrepancies. The most striking differences probably lie in their phonetics and phonology. To give just a small idea of this diversity, some Tibetic languages have tones and simple syllabic structures (Ü-Tsang, Kham, Dzongkha, etc.), whereas others do not have tones, but have a complex syllabic structure (Amdo, Balti, Purik, etc.).

Thus it is safe to say there is a real mosaic of languages and dialects on the high plateau. This exceptional diversity has also been noted by the Tibetans themselves who often use the famous proverb: བླ་མ་རེ་ལ་ཆོས་ལུགས་རེ་ལུང་པ་རེ་ལ་སྐད་ལུགས་རེ། *BLA.MA RE-LA CHOS.LUGS RE, LUNG.PA RE.LA SKAD.LUGS RE* 'every lama has his own religion, every valley has its own speech'. This proverb has an interesting variant in the Purik area of Ladakh: བླ་མ་རེ་ན་ཆོས་ལུགས་རེ་ཨ་ནེ་རེ་ན་བཟང་ལུགས་རེ། *BLA.MA RE-NA CHOS.LUGS RE, A.NE RE-NA BZANG.LUGS RE* 'every lama has his own religion, every woman has

10. Generally the dialect groups do not cross today's national borders. However, there are a few exceptions, such as the southern section which includes some dialects spoken in Tibet (Dromo) as well as Dzongkha and Dränjong, respectively in Bhutan and Sikkim (India). The same is true for the South-western section, which includes mainly dialects spoken in Nepal, as well as the Kyirong dialect spoken on the other side of the border in Tibet. For more on this topic, see Chapter 9.

her own virtue'. A proverb from Ladakh also says: ◊ །ཆུ་གཅིག་གཅིག་འཐུང་ན་སྐད་གཅིག་གཅིག་ཡོང་ངེས་ནོག (*CHU CIG.CIG 'THUNG-NA SKAD CIG.CIG YONG-NGA.NOG*) /chu chik-chik thung-na skat chik-chik yong-nga-nok/ 'if you drink the same water, you speak the same dialect' (Tournadre and Robin 2006; Zeisler 2004: 604).

These proverbs bear some sociolinguistic truth! As we will see in Chapters 2 and 3, the parameter of 'valley' and 'river' is essential to define the languages on the Tibetan plateau and in the Himalayas.

Apart from the above linguistic definition of Tibetic (or Bhoti) speakers as people speaking languages derived from Old Tibetan, we will also mention some general cultural features shared by all the Bhoti ethnic groups. Regardless of whether they are Buddhists, Bönpos, Muslims or those belonging to other religious communities, all members of Bhoti communities live in a high mountainous environment, and they share an especially adaptive relationship with the surrounding mountains.

They also share some rituals and food habits. Virtually all the Buddhists, Bönpos and Muslim Tibetic or Bhoti communities practice the ancestral fumigation ritual of purification called *sang* or *shugsang*, using the juniper tree *shugpa*. Note that this ritual is very ancient and predates the conversion of Tibetic communities to Buddhism.

Butter has acquired a nearly 'sacred' status. All the Tibetic-language speaking people commonly consume མར་ *mar* 'butter' mixed with roasted barley flour or in the tea. But butter is also traditionally used as an ointment for one's face. Some ceremonies, such as weddings or welcoming guests, include 'buttering the forehead' (putting a small swab of butter on their head). A small clump of butter, called a ཡར་སྦྲིན་ *yädrön* or *yäzä* (in Common Tibetan), ཡར་ *yar* (in Ladakh) and ཡར་སྦྲིན་ *yardrön* (in Bhutan), is put on the rim of tea or *chang* cups and other things served to guests, as an auspicious symbol. Butter is also used as མཆོད་མར་ *chömar* 'butter for religious offerings', but also to make flowers and other decorations on *tormas* (offering cakes) called མར་རྒྱན་ *margyän*, as well as for butter lamps (མཆོད་མེ་ *chöme* [H] or མར་མེ *marme*), and so forth.

Last, but not least, རྩམ་པ་ *tsampa* (or ནས་པེ་ *nasphe* in Ladakh) 'roasted barley flour' is the staple food of nearly all the Tibetic ethnic groups. Beyond their religious identities, Bhoti ethnic groups may as well be defined as 'tsampa eaters'. This term was

recently used in a song by a famous Tibetan rapper, Karma Emchi, who used it as a poignant symbol for Tibetan identity.[11]

This would be true not only for the Tibetan proper, but for all the Tibetic people from Baltistan and Ladakh to Tibet and Bhutan. So, in brief, it is safe to consider *sang* fumigation, butter and *tsampa* to be important features of lay identity for Tibetic peoples!

1.3. *Traditional terms for written and spoken Tibetic languages*

People usually make a major distinction between spoken languages, ཁ་སྐད་ *KHA.SKAD*, and written languages, ཡིག་སྐད་ *YIG.SKAD*. The term སྐད་ཡིག་ *SKAD.YIG* refers both to the spoken and written forms. Classical Tibetan, the traditional written language of the entire Tibetic area for more than a millennium, was long considered to be prestigious, and generally remains until now the written language of the elite. Traditionally it is simply referred to as བོད་ཡིག་ *BOD.YIG* lit. 'written Tibetan'. Instead of written Tibetan, in many traditional texts, the general expression བོད་སྐད་ *BOD.SKAD* lit. the 'Tibetan language' can be found. Many religious texts thus begin with the expressions: རྒྱ་གར་སྐད་དུ་ *RGYA.GAR.SKAD-DU* lit. 'in the Indian language' (i.e. Sanskrit) and བོད་སྐད་དུ་ *BOD.SKAD-DU* lit. 'in the Tibetan language'. In this case, *BOD.SKAD* refers to the *Classical written language*. Now, the term རྒྱུན་སྐོལ་བོད་ཡིག་ *RGYUN.SROL BOD.YIG* lit. 'Classical Tibetan' is also used. Because Classical Tibetan (hence CT) is often associated to Dharma or Tibetan Buddhism, it is also referred to as ཆོས་སྐད་ *CHOS.SKAD* lit. 'Dharma language' or 'religion language'. This term is used in Tibet, but it is particularly common in Bhutan, Sikkim and Ladakh. There are two problems with the term, ཆོས་སྐད་ *CHOS.SKAD*. First CT is not only used to express Buddhism philosophy or religion, but also traditionally conveys texts related to history, medicine, astrology, poetry, and so forth. Morever texts written in Classical Tibetan appear in the context of other religions, such as Bön or, even more marginally, Islam and

11. It is interesting to note that Tibetan sign language designates the term, Tibetan (*BOD.RIGS*), with a sign related to the mixing of tsampa (see the Tibetan sign language dictionary by Wangchen Gelek et al. 2011). One could also mention *chang* 'barley beer (or cider)' as part of the Bhoti 'cultural habit'. Although *chang* is nearly pervasive, it is not found in some regions such as Amdo.

Christianity.[12] The second issue with the term, ཆོས་སྐད་ *CHOS.SKAD*, is that it implies specific grammatical features. That is not the case. Certainly, ཆོས་སྐད་ *CHOS.SKAD* includes a specific lexicon of terms related to Buddhism (ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཐ་སྙད་ *CHOS KYI THA.SNYAD*), just as Dharma English uses specific terms. However one should not consider Dharma English to be a language that is distinct from English, even if the language may have been influenced by the source language of Dharma, as shown by Griffiths who speaks of 'Buddhist Hybrid English'.

A modern version of CT, དེང་དུས་ཀྱི་བོད་ཡིག་ *DENG.DUS-KYI BOD.YIG* 'Modern Written Tibetan', has been used since the twentieth century, both in Tibet and outside in the Himalayan regions. Modern Written Tibetan has integrated many neologisms related to modern concepts and technologies. Its grammar has also been influenced by the spoken language of Central Tibet, but there is a continuum between the grammar of Classical Tibetan and Modern Written Tibetan.

As for the vernacular languages, they are usually called ཁ་སྐད་ *KHA.SKAD* 'oral languages' (lit. 'mouth languages') or ཕལ་སྐད་ *PHAL.SKAD* lit. 'ordinary language' or 'secondary language', as opposed to the written language(s). When referring to the linguistic diversity, the term ཡུལ་སྐད་ *YUL.SKAD* 'dialect' (lit. 'local speech or language') is frequently used. Note that the term ཡུལ་སྐད་ *YUL.SKAD* entails an ambiguous meaning, independent of the degree of mutual intelligibility. Thus, for example, many Tibetan authors use the term ཡུལ་སྐད་ *YUL.SKAD* to refer to various Tibetic languages, which do not allow for mutual intelligibility, such as Balti, Amdo and Dzongkha.

1.4. *Difficulties related to fieldwork*

Fieldwork and data collection on Tibetic languages present a number of specific difficulties, which are due to several factors.

Among the difficulties of fieldwork, one should note the following:

- The territory across which the Tibetic languages and dialects are spoken (see Chapter 2) is immense, and transportation across the Tibetan Plateau and the

12. For example, the famous text entitled *KHA.CHE PHA.LU* is clearly inspired by Muslim authors and Persian poetry. The Gospels and the Bible have been translated in CT.

Himalayas is difficult. In many areas, mountain ranges and rivers still constitute natural boundaries. Due to the lack of proper roads or bridges, some villages are isolated. Fieldworkers have had to and, in some cases, still have to take jeeps on mud roads, ride horses or yaks or even walk long distances.

▪ The average altitude of the area is high. Many villages are above an altitude of 3500 meters. The elevation correlates with a harsh mountainous climate, with various consequences: strong temperature contrasts (a fall of twenty-five degrees in one day is frequent), sudden flash floods or swollen rivers, falling stones and rocks, monumental landslides, snowstorms and heavy snowfalls (even in the middle of the summer, in June, July or August). Some regions are isolated during winter because the passes which connect them to the neighboring areas are blocked by the snow. Furthermore, some villages are only connected to the rest of the world via ropeways, which are called by various names – *torang* (Spiti), *threng* (Kham), *giling* (Bhutan), *bips* (Ladakh) –and which allow one to slide on ropes across roaring rivers.

This climate and terrain can result in having villages cut-off for weeks or months at a time.

This area is also a highly seismic zone and severe earthquakes are not rare, such as the terrible earthquake of Yülshül (or Yushu) in 2010, or the one that took place in Sikkim (2011).

▪ Another factor contributing to the difficulty of data collection in the area is the tense political situation in most of the Tibetic area, whether in China, Nepal, Pakistan, India, Myanmar and, to a lesser extent, in Bhutan. For example, many areas of the Tibet Autonomous Region and Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in China were inaccessible between 1950 and 1980. Separatist Tibetan guerillas were active in some areas until 1974. Furthermore, the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) prevented research in China, since all schools and academic activities were suspended for years during that period. With the unprecedent wave of self-immolations that have taken place since 2008, there are a number of restricted areas in eastern Tibet (in Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai). Some areas

located near the Indian border remain inaccessible, and special permits are required to access the Tibet Autonomous Region and even some areas in the Tibetan-speaking Chinese provinces.

On the border between India and Pakistan, it is still difficult to access some regions of Ladakh and Baltistan because of the Indo-Pakistani armed conflict over Kashmir. Some villages of Ladakh close to the Chinese border are also not accessible because of conflicts over border issues. The area of upper Kinnaur in India has only been open to tourism and research since 1993 and still requires an 'inner line permit'. The state of Sikkim still requires a special permit for foreigners.

The situation in Nepal was more favorable, but deteriorated from 1996 to 2006 due to the conflict between the monarchy, the mainstream political parties and the Maoist guerrilla wing of the CPN-M (Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist). Some of the Tibetic-speaking areas of Mustang, Dölpo and Solukhumbu are accessible only with special permits.

Many regions have been closed for years, and even today research permits are not always easy to obtain.

Close to the border of the Tibetan linguistic area, in Assam one finds another armed conflict: various separatist groups such as the United Liberation Front of Assam or the Bodo Liberation Tiger Force fight for their independence.

In Myanmar (Burma), the few Tibetan-speaking villages in the area of the Hkakabo Razi are located in the Kachin state, which has been in war with the government for the past few decades.

These geographic, climatic and political factors, together with the immensity of the area, have created various difficult conditions for fieldwork, which have resulted in a lack of data or insufficient data for some languages or dialects of the region.

High altitude, transportation difficulties, political problems and the relatively low development of education across the entire area have had a positive linguistic consequence. Many Tibetic languages and dialects have so far remained isolated and thus relatively well preserved. With the rapid economic development, however, the building

of roads and infrastructure, the situation has been changing rapidly since 1990, and the ecolinguistic situation in some regions has become fragile.

1.5. *General remarks about language names*

There is a large variation in the glossonyms and this creates confusion. This is partly due to the fact that the language names are often given in national languages (Chinese, Hindi-Urdu or Nepali) or even in English, and not in a transcription of the local languages. They often differ substantially and cannot be recognized. In the book, we prefer to use autonyms to designate the languages and generally avoid exonyms, regardless of whether they are Chinese, English, Hindi-Urdu or other types, and replace them with original glossonyms. For example, we replace the exonyms Tshona Mönpa (or Cuona Menpa),[13] Black Mountain, Ladakhi,[14] Purki or Sharchop (lit. the 'Eastern people') with the endonyms respectively Dakpa, 'Ole, Ladaks, Purik and Tshangla. In some rare cases, such as Choča-ngača, we maintain the exonym because it is used by the local people in their own language. In some cases, such as Sharwa and Piti, we maintain the usual language names, respectively Sherpa and Spiti, despite the fact they do not reflect the local pronunciation, because they are well-established.

In Bhutan, the Dzongkha morpheme, /-p/ or /-pa/ ('people'; related to the CT derivational marker -pa) is added to many language names. Thus, for example the language name Kurtöp reflects the pronunciation of the Dzongkha name, ཀུར་སྟོད་པ་ *KUR.STODP KHA* or ཀུར་སྟོད་པའི་ཁ་ *KUR.STOD PA'I KHA* lit. 'the language of the Kurtö people'. The same is true for the term བུམ་ཐང་པ་ *BUM THANGP KHA* or བུམ་ཐང་པའི་ཁ་ *BUM.THANG.PA'I KHA* 'the language of the Bumthang people', which has given the language name, 'Bumthap'. In this case, the language name has also been influenced by the Dzongkha pronunciation, which does not pronounce the final velar nasal /ng/ of Bumthang, and thus directly adds the -p to Bumthap. For the language label, we thus use the original names: Kurtö and Bumthang.

13. The Chinese term Cuona is a geographic term that refers to Tshona County, and the ethnic term Mönpa is a general ethnic exonym that designates 'non-Tibetans living in the southern areas'.

14. Ladakhi reflects the Purik pronunciation and the Urdu spelling of this pronunciation. The original name of the language is ལ་དྭགས་སི་སྐད་ (*LA.DWAGS.SI.SKAD*) /ladaks-e skat/.

We also normally avoid using the forms *SKAD* (or its transcription –ke) or *KHA* after the language name in English, because these terms already mean 'language' in CT and in Dzongkha. Thus, we use Amdo (language) and not Amdo-ke language, Kham language and not Kham-ke language, and Choča-ngača language and not Choča-ngačakha language. There are a few exceptions to this convention, such as Dzongkha (in Bhutan) or Lhoke (in Sikkim), for which the language names are well established.

2. The geography and the people

2.1. *Territory and administrative divisions*

The Tibetic speaking area corresponds to an immense territory of roughly 2,4 million km^2 comprising the Tibetan Plateau as well as some areas of the southern Himalayas and the Karakoram.[1] The territory extends 2,500 km from east to west and in some places more than 1,000 km from north to south.

This territory extends over mountainous areas of five different countries: China, Bhutan, Nepal, India, and Pakistan. Additionally, a dialect of Kham has been reported in Myanmar (Suzuki 2012a). This territory corresponds roughly to the expanse of the ancient Tibetan Empire (seventh to ninth centuries)[2] and, in some cases, to subsequent migrations in the southern Himalayas.[3]

The major part of the Tibetic area is located in China with about 2,200,000 km^2 and extends over a quarter of the current total Chinese territory.[4] The rest of the Tibetic area is shared by the other countries: Bhutan, 47,000 km^2; India, 48,000 km^2; Pakistan, 25,000 km^2; Nepal, 20,000 km^2; and Myanmar, a few hundred km^2.

Within China, Tibetic languages and dialects are spoken in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), as well as in various Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures (henceforth TAP), which are included in the adjacent Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan. Details about the Tibetan administrative units within China are given in Appendix 3. Tibetic languages are also spoken, in a marginal way, in some counties of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan outside the Tibetan Autonomous

1. The figure of 3,800,000 km^2 was mentionned in R. Stein 1962, but that is an overestimation. In any case, the Tibetic area is bigger than the whole territory of Mongolia (1,556500 km^2) and even Iran (1,643958 km^2). India has less than 3,3 M km^2.

2. If we except the Tarim Basin and the areas of Gilgit and the Hunza valley.

3. The Tibetan-speaking areas in the Southern Himalayas (i.e. Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim) correspond to a later, 15th century, emigration southward from Tibet. Concerning the Tibetan empire, see, among others, Stein 1962; Smith 1996; Beckwith 1993.

4. Precisely: 2,179,025 km^2. It includes the TAR (1,138,400 km^2), Qinghai TAPs (723,600 km^2), Sichuan TAP and TAC (247,530 km^2), Gansu TAP and TAC (45,625 km^2), and Yunnan TAP (23,870 km^2).

Prefectures (see the maps in Appendix 3). It is important to emphasize that nearly half of the Tibetic-speaking area within China are located outside the TAR in various TAP.

In Bhutan, Tibetic languages and dialects are mainly spoken in the western region and in a marginal way in the central and eastern regions (see the details of the Bhutanese administrative units in Appendix 3). Dzongkha, a Tibetic language, is spoken as a native language in western Bhutan, but since it has been adopted as the national language of Bhutan, it is now spoken as a second language by many Bhutanese across the entire county.

Within India, Tibetic languages and dialects are spoken essentially in the northern states of Jammu and Kashmir,[5] Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and, in a marginal way, in West Bengal and Uttarkhand Pradesh. Within these states, Tibetic speakers are found mainly in the regions of Ladakh and Kargil districts, central and northern Sikkim, Lahul, Spiti, Upper Kinnaur as well as in the areas of Darjeeling and Kalimpong. (See details in Appendix 3.)

Within Nepal, Tibetic languages and dialects are spoken in nearly all the districts along the border between Nepal and the TAR (China). A substantial number of Tibetic language speakers live in the capital, Kathmandu.

Within Pakistan, Balti is spoken in the Gilgit-Baltistan territory, which is located in the northern areas of the country. The Balti language is spoken in the two districts of Skardo and Ganche, eastern Baltistan borders Ladakh, India.

Political status of the various regions

With the salient exception of Bhutan, which is an independent country, most Tibetic speaking areas have only autonomous status or lack autonomy entirely.

Within China, the *Tibet Autonomous Region* has a formal autonomous status, which corresponds more or less to the status of a Chinese Province. Other Tibetic speaking areas in China have a level of autonomy only at the prefecture level, being integrated into the Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan.

5. Since 2019, Ladakh has acquired the status of 'Union Territory'.

Some counties also have autonomous status. Lastly, a minority of Tibetan settlements located within some Chinese provinces do not have any autonomous status.

In India, Tibetic speaking areas are integrated into states such as Sikkim and West Bengal or are under the direct governance of Delhi. In Nepal, the northern districts along the border where Tibetic languages are spoken do not have autonomous status. In Pakistan, Baltistan is integrated in the broader entity of Gilgit-Baltistan and does not have any real autonomy.

2.2. *Traditional toponyms and modern designations*

One of the difficulties for researchers working in Tibetic regions is that there are many variations in place names as well as in the names of peoples and of languages. County names, which are often eponyms of language, may change because of political or economic reasons.

There are many instances of these changes, as the following examples demonstrate. In China: རྒྱལ་ཐང་ Gyalthang is now called སེམས་ཀྱི་ཉི་ཟླ་ Semkyi-Nyida [Shanggi Nyila], a transcription of 'Shangrila', a name invented by the British writer James Hilton in his novel "Lost Horizon"; རྨེ་བ་ Mewa is called དམར་ཐང་ Marthang (lit. 'the red plain'), a translation of the Chinese 红原 Hongyuan. Tibetan place names are sometimes replaced by their designation in Chinese: དར་རྩེ་མདོ་ Dartsendo is called 康定 Kangding; འབབ་ལུང་ Balung [Melung] is referred to as 维西 Weixi; རེབ་གོང་ Rebgong is often called by its Chinese name 同仁 Tongren; ཡ་རྫི་ Yadzi is often called 循化 Xunhua, and so on.

An additional source of confusion stems from the many official names that are modified because of new administrative divisions. That is the case, for example, with Sinta County, which is now incorporated in འཇོ་མདའ་ Jonda County, and Thopa County, which no longer exists, and is part of ཆབ་མདོ་, now known as Chamdo Municipality. Similar cases have occurred in Kandze Prefecture, former Qianning, Tongkor (Dengke) and Yidun have already been incorporated in Tau, Sershül, Bathang and Lithang counties respectively.

In Nepal, the Tibetic names sometimes have been replaced by exonyms. For example སྨོན་ཐང་རྫོང་ Lo Mönthang Dzong is called Mustang District (मुस्ताङ) and

ནགས་ཆེ། Nauche 'the big forest', the Sherpa name for the main town of the Khumbu, is usually referred to as Namche Bazaar (नाम्चे बजार). In India, the replacement of local toponyms has also taken place. This is the case for the state name 'Sikkim', which is used instead of the Lhopo name འབྲས་མོ་ལྗོངས། Dränjong.[6] Most village names of upper Kinnaur and Lahul and Spiti have also been altered. For example, Shelkhar (Kinnaur) has replaced the traditional name of སྐྱ་མཁར། Kyakhar, Gemur is the modern Hindi name of དགེ་སྨོན། Gemön, and Teling has replaced the original Garzha name ཤྭ་མེ་གླིང། Shrameling.

In Baltistan, the village name of Parkuta has been replaced by Mehdiabad, an Urdu toponym of Persian origin.

Thus, for various political and economic reasons, many traditional names (e.g. village names, rivers, mountains) across the Tibetic regions, whether in China, India, Pakistan or Nepal, have already been lost or are just known by the elders. The only notable exception is Bhutan, which is the only independent state of the Bhoti area.

These traditional names often have a clear meaning in Tibetan. In this book, we provide the traditional and historical place names, together with the modern official names, as often as possible.

2.3. *Environment and geography*

From a geographic point of view, the Tibetic speaking area comprises the Tibetan Plateau as well as various regions of the Himalayas and the Karakoram ranges. Geography is an important key to understanding the cultural and political situation of Tibetic ethnic groups. The Tibetan Plateau, which has been called the 'Third Pole', essentially constitutes the water reservoir of South and Southeast Asia. It is no coincidence that terms for 'waters' or 'rivers' figure in the names of the two significant regions boardering the Tibetan Plateau: 'Punjab' on the Indian side and 'Sichuan' on the Chinese side. The name 'Punjab' is derived from Persian and means 'five waters' (from *panch* 'five' + *ab* 'water'). Three rivers out of five, the Indus and its two tributaries, the Sutlej and the

6. However, the name Dränjong is itself fairly recent (sixteenth century), dating from when Tibetans settled in this indigenous Lepcha area.

Chenab, originate on the Tibetan Plateau. The name 'Sichuan' means 'four rivers' (from *si* 'four' and *chuan* 'water', or 'plain' in Old Chinese) and refers to the four major tributaries of the Yangtze. Of those tributaries, the Min originates on the Tibetan Plateau as well as the Yangtze itself.

The average elevation of the Tibetan Plateau is 4,000 m above sea level, making elevation a fundamental feature of this linguistic area. Speakers of Tibetic languages, whether Tibetans, Sherpas, Ladakhis, Baltis, Bhutanese or Sikkimese, etc. have settled only in mountainous regions ranging from 1,500 m to 5,000 m in altitude, the majority dwelling at an altitude of about 3,000 m.

Archeological evidence indicates that the high plateau was already populated some 20,000 years ago. However, there is no clear evidence that the paleolithic population had any genetic link to the present Tibetan population. Living at such altitude necessitated various shared physiological adaptations. The populating of the Tibetan high plateau occurred long before that of the Andean plateau, which took place only 13,500 years ago. The mechanisms of biological adaptation to altitude in the Andes and on the Tibetan High Plateau seem very different. (See Aldenderfer 2003; Beall, 2001.)

Regarding the main mountain ranges of the Tibetic speaking area, it is important to note that the great arc formed by the Himalayan range constitues only the southern border of this area. Dozens of other mountain ranges are located on the Tibetan Plateau itself or at its periphery. (See the map 'Tibetic area at the heart of Asia' and Appendix 3.)

Although all the Tibetic regions share an average high altitude and many other related features, such as a rich hydrological system, they exhibit extraordinary geographic, climatic and biological diversity. The ecology varies dramatically from the wide valleys of Central Tibet, to the steppes and deserts of the Jangthang area, the paddy fields of Bhutan and Sikkim, the large forests and pastures of Kham, the orchards of Upper Kinnaur, Kongpo, Lahul and Baltistan, and the grasslands of Amdo, for example.

It is clear that the geographic environment, particularly mountains and great rivers, had, and continues to have, a tremendous impact on Tibetic cultures. This is

reflected in many popular songs and proverbs, as in the following examples (see also the proverbs in section 1.2):

རི་མཐོ་སར་ཕྱིན་ན་ཕྱོགས་བཞི་མཐོང་ *RI MTHO SAR PHYIN-NA PHYOGS BZHI MTHONG* 'If you go up a high mountain, you can see in all four directions' [meaning, you become more broad-minded].

རི་ཆེན་ལ་སྐོར་ས། དཔོན་ཆེན་ལ་ཞུ་ས་ *RI CHEN-LA SKOR-SA/ DPON.CHEN-LA ZHU-SA* 'There is a way to go around even high mountains, there is a way to report to big chiefs'.

རི་བོ་གཅིག་ལས་གཅིག་མཐོ། མཁས་པ་གཅིག་ལས་གཅིག་མཁས། *RI.BO GCIG-LAS GCIG MTHO/ MKHAS.PA GCIG-LAS GCIG MKHAS/* 'There are always higher mountains, there are always people that are more expert').

རི་ཆེ་ན་གཡང་ཆེ། ཁེ་ཆེ་ན་ཉེན་ཆེ། ཆོས་ཟབ་ན་བདུད་ཟབ *RI CHE-NA G·YANG CHE / KHE.CHE NA NYEN CHE/ CHOS ZAB-NA BDUD ZAB* 'If there's a high mountain, there's a steep ravine; if there's big profit, there's big risk; if there's profound dharma, there are powerful demons'.

རི་ཆེན་ཁོག་པ་རླུང་གིས་ཁེངས། མི་ཆེན་ཁོག་པ་རྫུན་གྱིས་ཁེངས། *RI CHEN KHOG.PA RLUNG-GIS KHENGS/ MI CHEN KHOG.PA RDZUN-GYIS KHENGS/* 'The hollows in the heart of a big mountain are filled with winds; the hollows in the heart of a big man are filled with lies'.

རི་བོ་ཟོས་ནས་མ་བརྒྱགས། རྒྱ་མཚོ་བཏུང་ནས་མ་ངོམས། *RI.BO ZOS-NAS MA BRGYAGS/ RGYA.MTSHO BTUNG-NAS MA NGOMS/* 'Even if one eats the entire mountain, one is not full, even if one drinks the entire ocean, one is not satisfied'.

གངས་དཀར་པོ་སེང་གེའི་གདན་ས་ལ། འབྲུག་ཕོ་ཐང་ཡིན་གཟུར་ན་དགའ་ *GANGS DKAR.PO SENG.GE'I GDAN.SA-LA/ 'BRUG.PHO THANG YIN GZUR-NA DGA'* 'If the lion sits in his den on the white glacier, the male dragon should be careful even in the plains…'

◊ མི་ན་མི་ཐུག་ཅེན་ རི་ན་རི་ཐུག་ཅ་མིན་ *MI-NA MI THUG-CEN RI-NA RI THUG-CA.MIN* 'People can meet [anywhere] but mountains can't meet' [meaning,'behave nicely because you can always run into somebody you offended.'] (Pur).

Four mythical animals play a major role in Tibetic languages and cultures: གངས་སེང་ *gangseng* 'snow lion', འབྲུག་ *drug* 'dragon', ཀླུ་ *lu* 'nāga' (a divine snake-like creature) and བྱ་ཁྱུང་ *jakhyung* 'garuda' (a divine eagle-like creature). All are related to the environ-

ment of the High Plateau. With the exception of the snow lion, the three other mythical animals are found in many countries of South Asia (India, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, etc.), Central Asia (Mongolia, Buriatia, etc.) and the Middle East (Iran, etc.).

Snow lions dwell on high peaks and usually symbolize strength and courage. Dragons sleep in lakes but they can also fly, particularly during summer storms. In all Tibetic languages, 'thunder' translated as the 'dragon's sound' or 'the dragon's call'. Nāgas, snake-like water deities, also dwell in rivers and springs, and sometimes in trees. Often considered harmful creatures, *nāgas* are neverthless associated with prosperity. The feminine form of *nāga,* the *nāgini* called ཀླུ་མོ་ *lumo* in Tibetan, is associated with extraordinary female beauty. *Garuḍa*, which are described as a kind of giant eagle, dwell in the sky and are enemies of the *nāga.* A *garuda* is often represented carrying a snake in its mouth.

2.4. *Landscape and architecture*

As we have just seen, one finds throughout the Tibetic-speaking area a great variety of landscapes situated in mountainous environements usually at a high altitude: wide plateaus, deep valleys or gorges, large forests, deserts, high pastures and steppes, tumultuous rivers, great lakes, etc. But the landscape is also characterized by various man-made structures that are emblematic of Tibetic civilization. These constructions are essentially of two types.

First, those that are religious in their nature or purpose. Stupas, called མཆོད་རྟེན་ *chörten* in Tibetan, are ubiquitous. Other religious structures that punctuate the landscape include the many monasteries (དགོན་པ་ *gönpa*), temples (ལྷ་ཁང་ *lhakhang*) and hermitages (རི་ཁྲོད་ *rithrö*). On mountain passes, or on the roads, one frequently sees cairns (ལ་བཙས་ *labtse*, also called ལྷ་ཐོ་ *lhatho*) and prayer flags (དར་ལྕོག་ *darchok*). Walls of stones carved with sacred inscriptions called 'mani walls' (མ་ཎི་རྡོ་ཕུང་ *mani dophung*) and water-powered prayer wheels (མ་ཎི་རླུང་འཁོར་ *mani chunkor*) are also part of the landscape.

Rock carvings with representations of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, epigraphic carvings of mantras are also frequent. Such representations are found everywhere from Tibet to Bhutan and Ladakh, including the Muslim areas of Purik and Baltistan, which have

preserved a very rich Buddhist patrimony (see 9.10), in some cases predating the Tibetan presence in the region (see e.g. Schuh & Munshi 2013; Devers 2017a-b).

In the Muslim part of the Tibetic-speaking area, in some part of Amdo, in Baltistan and in Purik (Ladakh), monasteries are replaced by mosques, ཁ་ཆེ་ལྷ་ཁང་ *khache lhakhang*, or ཕྱག་ཁང་ (*PHYAG.KHANG*) *chakkhang* pronounced /phyakkhang/ in Balti. In Purik (Ladakh) and Baltistan, one also sees ◊ ཨ་སྟ་ན་ *asthana* – graves of famous Muslim saints, kings or queens – and ◊ མ་ཏམ་སར་ *matamsara* (lit. 'mourning hall' in Persian), which refer to community halls used for religious Shiah festivals. There are also ◊ ཁོན་ཇ་ *khanqa* which designate originally dervish and Sufi retreat places. One should also mention the *Qor'an khanqa* which resembles the Buddhist cairns known as ལྷ་ཐོ་ *lhatho*.

Second, throughout the Tibetic-speaking area, one also finds fortresses, castles and palaces which represented secular power during the Tibetan Empire and subsequently. These architectural elements are called མཁར་ (*MKHAR*) *khar*, རྫོང་ (*RDZONG*) *dzong* and ཕོ་བྲང་ (*PHO.BRANG*) *phodrang*. A number of these palaces and fortresses are well-preserved or have been restored. The most famous is the Potala Palace, ཕོ་བྲང་པོ་ཏ་ལ་ or རྩེ་ཕོ་བྲང་ *Tse phodrang*, in Lhasa. Whereas in Bhutan castles or *dzong*, which still represent the Bhutanese administration, have been remarkably preserved in most districts, the situation is very different in Tibet. With a few exceptions, such as རྒྱལ་རྩེ་རྫོང་ *Gyantse dzong* in Tsang province, most of the *dzongs* were badly damaged or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. In Ladakh and Baltistan, one also finds many fortresses or *khar*, some of which have been well-preserved. However, most of these fortresses are now in ruins.

Finally, in some Tibetic areas, particularly in Western Tibet, Ladakh and Baltistan, one finds a lot of proto-historical rock art, petroglyphs and pictographs (Bellezza 2008; Devers 2017b).[7] In some areas, particularly in Central and Western Tibet, one sometimes also sees steles or *doring* རྡོ་རིང་ (*RDO.RING*) with epigraphic inscriptions.

7. Devers (forthcoming) gives the following comment: "By convention, Protohistory in Central Asia encompasses the Bronze and the Iron Ages, starting in the 3rd millennium BC and lasting well into the 1st millennium AD. It is usually these dates that are retained for the Protohistory in Ladakh, though

2.5. *Populations*

2.5.1. Ethnic groups and ethnonyms of the Tibetic area

The Tibetic languages are spoken not only by Tibetans *per se* but also by other ethnic groups such as Ladakhi, Balti, Lahuli, Khunuwa, Pitiwa, Sherpa, Bhutanese, Lhopo and Bhotia (Sikkim), among others, who do not consider themselves to be Tibetans. As in other regions of the world, there is no strict correlation between certain ethnic groups or nationalities and the language they speak.[8]

In China, the government has tried to establish the nationality upon language. However, this criterion has not been used in a consistent way and cannot always be applied because language is just one constituent, albeit an essential one, of the cultural identity. Moreover, in China, the Tibetans, just as all the other cultural minorities, are called 'nationalities with small populations' (Tib: གྲངས་ཉུང་མི་རིགས་ *Drangnyung mirik*, Chin: 少数民族 shaoshu minzu).

In China, within the Tibetic area, we find at least a dozen or more 'nationalities'. These 'nationalities' correspond to political categories defined within the political system of the PRC, and now we often find *minzu* instead of this term even in English contexts. The main one is, of course, the Tibetan nationality, which is called *Bö-rik* (བོད་རིགས་ *BOD.RIGS*) in Tibetan and Zangzu (藏族) in Chinese. The term *Börik* refers to the Tibetans living in the three traditional provinces of Tibet (ཆོལ་ཁ་གསུམ་ *Chölkha sum*), i.e. Ü-Tsang, Kham and Amdo (corresponding roughly to the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Autonomous Prefectures in the four Chinese provinces). Although the Tibetans do use the term *Bö-rik*, they often prefer to call themselves with the traditional term བོད་པ་ (*BOD.PA*) *Böpa* in nearly all the regions or simply བོད་ (*BOD*), pronounced in many ways such as /wot/, /wol/ in Amdo or /pe/ in Kham.

we completely lack radiocarbon dating in Ladakh to either confirm or correct these dates." There is no precise Tibetan term to designate the petroglyphs and they are just called བྲག་ལ་བརྐོས་པའི་རི་མོ་ *BRAG-LA BRKOS-PA'I RI.MO* lit. 'designs carved on rocks'.

8. Just as, for example, French citizens traditionally spoke languages belonging to several linguistic families: Romance, Celtic, Germanic (all Indo-European macrofamily) and Basque (isolate).

The great majority of Ethnic Tibetans speak various Tibetic languages traditionally referred to as བོད་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་སྐད་ *bö-kyi yülkä* 'Tibetan dialects' (see Chapter 9). A minority of Tibetans do not speak a Tibetic language as their mother tongue but speak other languages belonging to the ST macrofamily such as the rGyalrongic, Qiangic or Tibeto-Himalayan groups.

The non-Tibetic languages are often referred to as ལོགས་སྐད་ (*LOGS.SKAD*) *logkä* lit. 'reversed languages' or 'side language', a term which is also used for "slang." Sometimes other derogatory terms such as འདྲེ་སྐད་ (*'DRE.SKAD*) *drekä* 'demon language' and སྨྱོ་སྐད་ (*SMYO.SKAD*) *nyokä* 'lunatic language', used in Rebgong Amdo, are also encountered.

The main non Tibetic languages spoken as mother tongues by ethnic Tibetans are found in the རྒྱལ་མོ་ཚ་བ་རོང་ *Gyälmo Tshawarong* area (lit. meaning 'the hot valley of the queen'), which is often abbreviated as རྒྱལ་རོང་ *Gyälrong*. They include Situ (or eastern rGyalrong), Showu, Tshobdun, Japhug, Lavrung, Geshitsa, sTodsde (Shangzhai), sTau, and Nyagrong-Minyag.[9] They are all spoken in Sichuan, in the border area of Ngawa Prefecture (Throchu, Marthang, Ngawa, Barkham, Tsanlha, Chuchen and Dzamthang) and Kandze Prefecture (Tau, Rongdrak, Drango and Nyagrong). Another series of languages spoken by ethnic Tibetans in Ngapa [ᵗNgawa] and Kandze Prefectures[10] (Sichuan) include the following languages, principally classified into Qiangic and Naic: Rmaic (Qiang), Choyu (Queyu), nDrapa (Zhaba), nGochang (Guiqiong), Darmdo Minyag, Shimian Minyag, Prinmi (Pumi), Shixing (Shihing), Namuyi (Namzi),[11] Ersu, Doxu, and Lüzu.[12] In addition to these, Chamdo Municipality in TAR is a home to three non-Tibetic languages: Lamo, Larong sMar, and Drag-yab sMar, and Dzayül County in Nyingthri Municipality has a language called gSerkhu, related to Lamo (see Tashi Nyima & Suzuki 2019). Finally a Bodish language, ཟིག་

9. The last five languages are still regarded by some authors as one language called 霍尔巴 Horpa or 尔龚 Ergong in Chinese, but this does reflect the reality. Morever, these terms are not appropriate. See Tunzhi (Sonam Lhundrop) et al. (2019).

10. As well as Muli Tibetan Autonomous County.

11. Some scholars think that Namuyi is a member of Naxi group (also called Na).

12. It is sometimes spelled 'Lüsu' because of the Chinese transcription, but the actual autonym is Lüzu.

བཱསུམ་སྐད་ *BRAG.GSUM.SKAD* 'Basum' locally called 'Ba-ke' (བཀ་སྐད་) is spoken by Tibetans in the Kongpo area of the TAR (for a detailed account of the non-Tibetic languages spoken in the Tibetic area, see Roche & Suzuki 2017).

The second pervasive ethnic group thoughout the Tibetic area in China is the Han Chinese nationality, called རྒྱ་རིགས་ (*RGYA.RIGS*) *Gya-rik* in Tibetan. Han Chinese have settled in many towns of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century. Many Chinese Muslims called Hui (རྒྱ་རིགས་སམ་རྒྱ་ཁ་ཆ་), who are considered a separate 'nationality', also live in the Tibetic area particularly in Amdo.

In Qinghai, east of Kokonor Lake, we find the Tu people (土族 Tuzu), who live in Tuzhu, Minhe and Datong counties and the Bonan people (保安族 Baoanzu) in Rebgong County (Tongren in Chinese). They are called ཧོར་ *Hor* or དོར་རྡོ་ *Dordo* in Tibetan (note however that this word is sometimes perceived as pejorative by the Tu people). These ethnic groups speak Mongolic languages.

Various groups belonging to the Mongolian nationality, called སོག་རིགས་ *Sog-rik* in Tibetan and 蒙古族 Mengguzu in Chinese, are found in the Mongol Autonomous County, further south of Qinghai in the Mongol Autonomous county of Sogwo [Chin: Henan menggu zizhixian]. The Mongolian, Tu and Bonan nationalities speak various Mongolic languages. The official classification of the Tu and Bonan nationalities is rather confusing for several reasons. First, the main distinction between these two nationalities is based on the dominant religion: Buddhism in the case of the Tu people and Islam for the Bonan people. Linguistically the Bonan people speak a Mongolic variety very similar to the one spoken by the neighboring Tu people called Manigacha. Second, the Tu group speaks various Mongolic languages that do not allow a good intelligibility (see Fried 2010). Third, some people of the Rebgong, Minhe, Tuzhu and Datong counties have shifted nationalities, from Tibetan to Tu or Bonan (or vice-versa) during the last decades depending on the fluctuations of Chinese state ethnic policy.

In Amdo, one also finds Salar, Kazakh and Yughur who speak various Turkic languages.

Members of the Salar nationality (Tib: སལ་ལར་རིགས་ *salar-rik*; Chin: 撒拉族 Salazu) mainly live in Xunhua County (see Simon 2016). According to Dwyers (2007: 14): "Today, to be Salar is no longer to be a displaced Central Asian Turk; rather it is to be a distinct member of the greater Muslim community in Amdo Tibet." Yughur nationality (Tib: ཡུ་གུར་རིགས་ *yugur-rik*, Chin: 裕固族, Yuguzu), sometimes called Yellow Uyghurs, are essentially found in Sunan Yughur Autonomous County (Gansu), north of Qilian county (Arik), but some Yughur people have settled in the Tibetan Prefecture of Yülshül. Various communities belonging to the Kazakh nationality (哈萨克族 Hasakezu) have settled at the Qinghai-Xinjiang border and in Gansu (Pari County).

Further south, we find the Qiang nationality (Tib: ཆང་རིགས་ *chaang-rik*; Chin: 羌族 Qiangzu) in Ngawa Prefecture, mainly in Mao, Li (or Trashiling) and Wenchuan counties and the Pumi nationality (ཕུ་ཉི་རིགས་ *phuumi-rik* 普米族 Pumizu) who live mainly in Yunnan, Lanping and Ninglang counties.

The Jang nationality (འཇང་རིགས་ *jang-rik*), better known as Naxi (纳西族 Naxizu), live in various areas of Yunnan and some communities are located in the TAP of Dechen as well as in Markam County (TAR). They speak a language traditionally classified as Lolo-Burmese but recently Michaud & Jacques (2011) have convincingly proposed a new classification of Naxi which belongs to an independent group called Naic.

In the case of some nationalities, the situation is rather confusing. For example even if the majority of Pumi, Qiang and Naxi have now been recognized as independent ethnic groups from the Tibetans, the Pumi communities living in Gyäzil and Muli Counties, the Qiang of Throchu and Naxi communities are still officially considered to be Tibetans.[13] This ethnic affiliation is due to the fact that they practice Tibetan Buddhism. In the case of the Naxi, it is also very confusing because they are

13. According to the site of the Ethnologue, there are 130,000 total for Northern and Southern Qiang languages, including 80,000 as Qiang nationality and 50,000 as Tibetan nationality. The Pumi are reportedly 54,000: 24,000 as Pumi nationality and 30,000 as Tibetan nationality.

either classified as being of Naxi nationality (in Yunnan), as Tibetans or as Mongolians (in Sichuan).

Members of the Trung nationality (Tib: ཏྲུང་ལུང་རིགས་ *tuulung-rik*; Chin: 独龙族 Dulongzu) live in Gongshan Dulong and Nu Autonomous County in Yunnan and in Myanmar (Huang & Dai 1992: 649) but they are also found in Balung County (Chin: Weixi) in Yunnan and Dzayül county, in TAR. Their language is closely related to the Rawang in Myanmar and belongs to the Qiangic group.

Members of the Nu nationality (རྣུ་རིགས་ *nuu-rik*; Chin: 怒族 Nuzu), locally pronounced ནུང་ *Nung*, are found mainly in Fugong, Gongshan and Balung (Weixi) counties in Yunnan, but also in Dzayül County of the TAR. The Nu speak four languages: Nusu, Zauzou, Anong, and Trung. The first three are independent languages, with the third being a language related to Trung (aka Nung). Anong is considered as a dialect of Trung but this is frequently used by Tibetan speakers in Gongshan.

Members of the Lhopa nationality[14] (ལྷོ་པ་འམ་ལྷོ་རིགས་ *lhopa* or *lho-rik*, Chin: 珞巴族 Luobazu) are found in various counties of the Nyingthri Prefecture (TAR). They also live on the other side of the *de facto* border with India in Arunachal Pradesh. The Lopas speak various Tani languages.

The Deng people called སྟེང་པ་ *Tengpa* or གདན་རིགས་ *Dän-rik* (Chin: 僜人 Dengren) are considered as members of the Tibetan nationality. Deng people mainly live in Arunachal Pradesh, but some are also found in the Dzayül County of the TAR. They also speak a language of the Tani group.

The Mönpa nationality (Tib: མོན་པ་ *mönpa* or མོན་རིགས་ *mön-rik*; Chin: 门巴族 Menbazu) in China refers to various groups of people living mainly in Nyingthri Prefecture of the TAR. The term Monpa is also a generic term to designate various groups who usually speak Bodic languages found in Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh as well as Ladakh (see 2.6.3).

14. Lhopa is a recent orthography. The people used to be called 'Lopa'. See next section about traditional ethnonyms.

The Lisu nationality (Tib: ལི་སུ་རིགས་ *lisuu-rik*; Chin: 傈僳族 Lisuzu) is mainly found in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture but Lisu people also live in Dechen TAP and Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture. They speak a Lolo-Burmese language.

The Yi nationality (Tib: དཉི་རིགས་ *Yi-rik*; Chin: 彝族 Yizu) refers to a number of ethnic groups living in Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi. In Sichuan, the Yi are mainly in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture where Tibetans are also found. Yi speak various Lolo-Burmese languages, among which Nosu is spoken in the contact areas with Tibetans.

Members of the Bai nationality (Tib: པའེ་རིགས་ *Pae-rik*; Chin: 白族 Baizu) are mainly found in Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, but the Bai people also live in Dechen TAP and Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture. They speak Baic languages (see Wang Feng 2008).

In the southern Himalayas and the Karakoram region, whether in India, Nepal, Bhutan or Pakistan, there is no generic name referring to speakers of Tibetic languages, unlike the term 'Tibetan' in the Tibetan territories in China. For example, in Bhutan, there is no designation referring to the speakers of Dzongkha and other Tibetic languages, as opposed to speakers of non-Tibetic languages such as Tshangla or Bumthang.

The same is true for Nepal, India and Pakistan. In the case of some major groups, a specific name is used to designate a group such as the Baltis (Pakistan), the Ladakhis (ལ་དྭགས་པ *ladakspa*) and the Lhopos (ལྷོ་པོ་ *lhopo*) in India or the Sherpas whose autonym is 'Sharwa' (ཤར་པ་ *sharpa*) in Nepal and India. Smaller groups are rarely identified by a specific ethnic name.

Instead, they are often designated by the generic term of Bhoti (སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *bhoṭi*), which is derived from the pronunciation of the historical name *Bod* ("Tibet"), by Indo-Aryan speakers (see 1.2 and 2.5.2).

In some areas, the ethnonym and glossonym *Bhoti* or its variants have also been used for family names. This is the case in Northern India (Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Gangtok, etc.), where Bhutia has become a frequent family name.

In Nepal, the family name 'Lama' is automatically given to Tibetan refugees and some other Tibetic groups. According to Gawne (2013: 17), "the [Tibetic] languages of Lamjung, Ramechhap and Helambu are often referred to as *Lama* or *Lama Bhasa* in Nepali [...]."

The Indian and Nepalese governments label as 'Tribals' all the non-Indo-Aryan ethnic groups that traditionally do not use the Indian caste system or *jāti*. 'Bhutia' and 'Lama' also generally fall into the category of 'Tribals'[15] but the Indian and Nepalese government have also tried to integrate some of the 'Tribal groups' into the Indian caste system. In the case of 'Bhoti', 'Bhutia' or 'Lama', etc., this is particularly problematic since they originally came from Tibet where the Indian caste system is unknown.

From the official political point of view, the Indian government, in its constitution, classifies some distinct ethnic and linguistic groups as "scheduled tribes" and "scheduled castes." The latter are essentially groups which are traditionally lower castes in Hinduism, but the concept of "caste" is quite flexible. These statuses given to "historically disadvantaged people" of India may provide some political preferences such as the reservation of seats for political representation.

For example, some ethnic groups in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Sikkim, such as Bhot, Bhutia, Balti, Purigpa, Yolmo, Sherpa and Jangpa (Jangthang people), who speak Tibetic languages, are officially considered as "schedule tribes."

2.5.2. Some terminological issues about *Bod*, *Bhoti*, *Bodhi* and *Bodyig*

As mentioned above, the term བོད་རིགས་ *BOD.RIGS* (lit. Tibetan ethnic group) is used in China. This term is new and was introduced after the Chinese took control of Tibetan areas in 1950. It is used to designate the Tibetan nationality and refers to all the Tibetans or བོད་པ་ *BOD.PA* independently of their native language. The term *BOD* in China is thus used as an ethnic concept.

In Pakistan, the ethnic term Balti བལ་ཏི་ *BAL.TI* is used to designate the people of Baltistan who speak a Tibetic language. Note that the spelling སྦལ་ཏི་ *SBAL.TI* is normally used in Classical Tibetan, however, this spelling would be pronounced /zbalti/

15. This term may of course have a derogatory connotation!

according to the phonology of this language, whereas it is actually pronounced /balti/ and local scholars generally use the above spelling *BAL.TI*.

In Bhutan, the term འབྲུག་པ་ *'BRUG.PA* or འབྲུགས་ *'BRUGP* /ɖu:p/ (lit. the 'Dragon people') designates all Bhutanese citizens independently of their native language. In its primary significance *'BRUG.PA* refers to the *'BRUG.PA BKA'.BRGYUD* religious order. As mentioned above, there is no common term to refer only to the speakers of Tibetic languages such as Dzongkha or Choča-ngača as opposed to the speakers of non-Tibetic languages such as Tshangla or Nepali.

In India, and Nepal, the situation is more complex and there is a considerable terminological and conceptual confusion. The ethnonym སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *Bhoṭi* (usually written as *Bhoti*), or its alternative forms *Bhoṭe*, *Bhuṭia* or *Bhoṭiya*, is very frequently used to designate the various populations speaking Tibetic languages, such as Sherpa, Mustangi (Nepal), Ladakhi, Lhopo (India) and even Bhutanese. The terms *Bhoti*, *Bhutan* and the above variants are exonyms and correspond to the Indo-Aryan pronunciation of the word *Bod*, 'Tibet'. Let us remember that in the eighteenth century, the British still confused 'Thibet' and 'Bootan' or 'Bhutan'.[16]

Bhoti as a derivation of *Bod* is a good match for the English word 'Tibetic'. The first small problem is that the term *Bhoti* is spelled in many ways: *Bhot*, *Bhutia*, *Bhotyia*, etc. All these terms are absolutely synonyms and are derived from the classical word *Bod*.

A more serious issue is that the term *Bhoti* may also be used loosely to designate people of mongoloid descent in the Himalayas, who speak various TB languages such as Tamang (རྟ་མང་), Manangi (སྙེ་ཤང་པ་ *Nyeshangpa*), or even Lepcha (ལེབ་ཅ་), etc. which are not Tibetic languages since they are not derived from Old Tibetan. In order to avoid the confusion, it is better to use the term སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *Bhoṭi* or གངས་ལྗོངས་སྦྷོ་ཏི་ *ganjong bhoṭi* (lit. 'Bhoti of the Snowy Land') as synonyms of 'Tibetic'.

16. See K. Teltscher (2006). In the writings of George Bogle (1746-1781), an employee of the East India Company and visitor to both Bhutan and Tibet, he used the term Bootan for the country and Boot for the people.

In recent years the term Bhoti has become a political symbol to unite the various Himalayan populations who speak Tibetic languages (or, as we just mentioned, closely related languages). The political dimension of the term 'Bhoti' can be perceived in the following sentence: བོད་ཡིག་སྦྱོ་དེ་སྐད་ཡིག་ནི་ཉི་མ་ལ་ཡའི་ཚོས་སྲིད་ཀྱི་ཡར་རྒྱས་རྩ་བ་ཡིན། "Classical Tibetan Bhoti language is the fundamental channel for the development of the religion and politics of the Himalayas."[17] In this context, the term Bhoti is sometimes used to refer to a hypothetical general 'Tibetic language' spoken throughout the southern Himalayas.

For example, the website *Reach Ladakh* (November 7, 2014) reported the following information: "Reading out the argument in favour of the demand for recognition of Bhoti language [i.e. Tibetic] in the 8th Schedule, Tsewang Dorje said that Bhoti is the mother tongue of more than a million people living in the Himalayas right from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh. The choice of the term 'Bhoti' over 'Tibetan' is a conscious strategy adopted by the leaders of the movement belonging to diverse tribes to affirm their status as a part and parcel of the Indian identity."[18] In the above context, the word Bhoti refers to various languages such as Sherpa, Spiti, Ladaks or Lhoke which are closely related and derive from Old Tibetan but do not allow mutual intelligibility. Moreover, it includes non-Tibetic languages such as Tamang, Gurung or Lepcha. Thus, the expression 'Bhoti language' should appear in the plural: 'Bhoti *languages*'. The term Bhoti in its restricted meaning is useful to designate the *whole family of languages* derived from Old Tibetan and should of course not replace the names of the various languages: Amdo, Kham, Central Tibetan, Dzongkha, Lhoke, Balti, Ladaks, Purik, and others.

In Ladakh and some other Himalayan regions, སྦྱོ་དེ་ Bhoti is also sometimes used as a synonym of བོད་ཡིག་ *Bodyig* (or *Bodyik*) 'Classical Tibetan'.[19] Again, this may

17. Seminar on Buddhist culture and Bhoti language to commemorate the 2550th Buddha Mahaparinirvana at Kaza (Spiti), Jispa (Lahul), Manali. Himachal Pradesh. Delhi 2007. Himalayan Buddhist cultural association.

18. http://www.reachladakh.com/himalayan-budhist-cultural-association-demands-inclusion-of-bhoti-language-in/2613.html

19. See for example: http://jkbose.co.in/syllabus/Ded_Syllabus.pdf

generate a lot of confusion, since the term Bhoti usually applies to the modern languages such as Ladaks, Purik, Dzongkha, Lhoke, Sherpa, etc., whereas *Bodyig* refers to the Classical Tibetan written language. The confusion between the two terms comes in part from the fact that the term *Bodyig* is ambiguious since it also designates the Tibetan script (see Chapter 5 and the HCTL). Thus for example, ལ་དྭགས་པའི་ཡི་གེ་ '*written Ladaks*', རྫོང་ཁའི་ཡིག་ '*written Dzongkha*' and སྤྱི་ཡིག་ '*written Lhoke*' are written down in Tibetan script but are not equivalent to Classical Tibetan. The same idea has been expressed by the *Khenpo* Konchok Phanday from Ladakh : བོད་ཡིག་ཏུ་བྲིས་པའི་སྐད་ཡོད་ཚད་བོད་སྐད་དུ་ཁས་ལེན་པ་ངམ་མི་འཐད་པ་སྟེ་འབྲས་ལྗོངས་དང་འབྲུག་ཡུལ་དང་ལ་དྭགས་པའི་སྐད་བོད་ཡིག་ཏུ་འབྲི་འང་བོད་སྐད་མ་ཡིན། *BOD.YIG-TU BRIS-PA-'I SKAD YOD.TSHAD BOD.SKAD-DU KHAS LEN-PA'ANG MI 'THAD-STE 'BRAS.LJONGS-DANG 'BRUG.YUL-DANG LA.DWAGS.PA-'I SKAD BOD.YIG-TU 'BRI-'ANG BOD.SKAD MA-YIN* "All the languages written in Tibetan script cannot be considered as 'Tibetan'. The languages of Sikkim, Bhutan and Ladakh [Lhoke, Dzongkha and Ladaks] even if they are written in Tibetan script *are not* Tibetan."

The most serious confusion comes from the use of another term, namely *Bodhi*, which refers either to Ladaks language or other regional Tibetic languages[20] but it may also in some cases be a synonym of Classical Tibetan. This confusion is partly due to the fact that both བོད྄ཧི: Bodhi and སྤྱི་ཏི་ Bhoti are pronounced in a very similar way in English. The word *Bodhi* appears as an official term on some government websites, in the media and school curriculum of the state of Jammu and Kashmir[21]. The term བོད྄ཧི:

20. "Tibetan-based Bodhi is the language of the 15,000 people of Zanskar." (http://www.aazanskar.us/aazanskar.us/index.php/zanskar-main).

"The 32-member LAHDC [Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council] also passed a resolution for inclusion of Bodhi language in the Eight Schedule of the Constitution without any opposition." (http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-02-28/news/28642453_1_national-emblem-state-emblem-opposition-pdp).

21. "It is established that Kashmiri ranks first among the mother tongues of the State commanding the largest number of speakers, with Dogri in second and Gujari in third position, followed by Punjabi, Bodhi, Balti, Shina/Dardi in succession" (http://koausa.org/language/Warikoo.html). In this sentence Bodhi is a synonym for Ladakhi. The same is true for this list presented on an official government Indian site of Jammu and Kashmir state: "Kashmiri, Dogri, Pahari, Punjabi, Gojari, Ladakhi or Bodhi, Balti, Dardic" (http://mha.nic.in/more3).

Bodhi, cognate with 'Buddha', is not appropriate to refer to Bhoti or Tibetic languages because it is a Sanskrit term which means 'Enlightment' in a Buddhist context. The use of *Bodhi* induces the idea that the Tibetic or Bhoti languages are 'Buddhist languages' and that the Tibetan script is a "Buddhist script." Some official documents of the Jammu and Kashmir state even propose to choose between 'Arabic' and 'Bodhi', i.e. in other words, between a "Muslim script" and a "Buddhist script." This formulation introduces another confusion i.e. between a script and a written language. The same language or very closely related dialects of a language may be written in different scripts: Hindi and Urdu, Persian and Tajik, Serbian and Croatian. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the Arabic script is used not only by Muslims but also by Christian Arabs and members of other religions such as the Zoroastrians. The qualification of the Latin script as 'Christian script', which is used to write in a great number of languages (including English), would also be equally absurd.

In the same way, the Tibetan script is not a Buddhist script but an Indic script (as are Devanāgarī, Bengali, Gurmukhi, etc.) and was used in the course of history not only by Buddhists but also by Bönpos and even by Muslims. Thus, the conflation between Bodhi/Buddhist and Bhoti/Tibetic is politically problematic. The Muslim communities of Baltistan and the Purik area (Ladakh) and Amdo, which speak Tibetic/Bhoti languages, could feel excluded if the term Bodhi is used.

We will now examine other issues related to traditional ethnonyms.

2.5.3. Traditional ethnonyms

Some traditional designations for ethnic groups generate plenty of confusion since the same names may refer to entirely different groups and have several meanings. Let's review some examples.

The term *Böpa* (བོད་པ་ *BOD.PA*) 'Tibetan' can be used in several ways. It usually refers to the entire Tibetan speaking people within China and is, in this case, a synonym of *Börik* (བོད་རིགས་ *BOD.RIGS*) 'Tibetan nationality'. It also sometimes designates, in a restrictive sense, the Tibetans of the TAR, but the term may also be used, albeit rarely, in a traditional way to refer to some populations of cultivators in Central Tibet. This is the case, for example, in Nyemo County located just one 100 km east of Lhasa. In

this county, the pastoralists are traditionally called *Drogpa*, whereas the cultivators are designated as *Böpa* and the agropastoralists as སྨད་མ་འབྲོག་ *Bömadrok* (instead of the usual term *samadrok*). Thus, the term སྨད་ *Bö* designates here some lower valleys of Central Tibet.

Under the Tibetan nationality, we find various traditional regional identities, such as ཨ་མདོ་བ་ *Amdowa*, ཁམས་པ་ *Khampa*, གཙང་པ་ *Tsangpa*, ལྷ་ས་བ་ *Lhasawa*, འཕན་པོ་བ་ *Phänpowa*, ཀོང་པོ་བ་ *Kongpowa*, ཧོར་པ་ *Horpa*, སྟོད་པ་ *Töpa*, རྒྱལ་རོང་བ་ *Gyälrongwa* and so forth.

The traditional term *Drogpa* (འབྲོག་པ་ *'BROG.PA*) 'cattle breeders' is used to refer to various pastoralist populations of central, western and eastern Tibet, as well as Bhutan. In southeastern Ladakh, these pastoralists are referred to as བྱང་པ་ *Jangpa* (alt. *Changpa*). The term *Drogpa* (འབྲོག་པ་ *'BROG.PA*) is pronounced in various ways depending on the region as /ɖokpa/ (Central Tibet), /^{m}ɖoxwa/ (Amdo), /bloqpa/ (Balti), /^{b}jo:p/ (Dzongkha), and so on. However, in the areas of Baltistan and Purik, *Drogpa* – locally pronounced *Bloqpa* or *Broqpa* – refers to an ethnic group that speaks Brokskat, a variety of Shina, a Dardic language (subgroup of Indo-Aryan). The Brokpa live in the Hanu area near Kargil (India) and on the other side of the border in Pakistan. Brokpa are usually cultivators, wine makers and more rarely cattle breeders and shepherds. They practice Buddhism or Islam depending on the settlement. Thus, the same word *Drogpa* (འབྲོག་པ་ *'BROG.PA*) has acquired two different meanings: in the Tibetic areas, it refers generally to cattle breeders whereas in western Ladakh and Baltistan, it designates an ethnic group who speaks an Indo-European language. It is worth noting that in Purik and Western Sham, the word འབྲོག་ *Brok* is used for 'isolated places (usually high places but not always)', as opposed to མལ་ *Mal*, which designates a lower place and a permanent residence.

The designation Brokpa/Drokpa in both cases ('cattle breeder' and 'a specific ethnic group') probably stems from the original CT meaning of *'BROG* as a'lost place usually in high altitude', a synonym of དབེན་པ་ *DBEN.PA* < *DBEN*, meaning 'isolated place'.

The traditional term *Rongpa* རོང་པ་, pronounced *Rongwa* རོང་བ་ (notably in Amdo), normally designates the populations of cultivators living in lower valleys or gorges.

This is the usual meaning in Amdo for example. However, the term *Rongpa* may also refer in Sichuan to Pumi or other people who speak non-Tibetic languages. The Sherpas and other Tibetic-speaking groups of Nepal use the word *Rongpa* to designate the Nepalese people. The same is true in Kinnaur (India), where *Rongpa* is one of the terms Tibetic-speaking people of upper Kinnaur use to refer to the Kinnauri, called *Khunu* people ཁུ་ནུ་ by the Tibetic-speaking population of upper Kinnaur or *Khunu Töt* ཁུ་ནུ་སྟོད་.

Geographic labels related to altitude are often used both in Tibet and elsewhere in the Himalayas to designate ethnic groups or subgroups and their language. These include: སྟོད་ *tö* 'upper', གྱེན་ *gyen* 'upward', གོང་ *gong* 'higher part', སྨད་ *mä* 'lower part', and ཤར་ *sham* 'lower part', ཞོལ་ *zhöl* 'lower part'. For example, the term སྟོད་པ་ *Töpa* refers to the inhabitants of Ngari Province (in Tibet) as well as people who live in the Upper Spiti valley, upper Kinnaur, or upper Garsha or Lahul (in the Indian Himalayas). ཤར་ *Sham* is used to refer to the lower Indus valley after Leh and also designates the language spoken there: ཤར་སྐད་ *sham-kä* locally pronounced /shamskat/ and ཤར་པ་*Shamma* 'people of Sham'. The term Sham also applies to the lower part of Zangskar.

The historical terms ཧོར་ Hor or ཧོར་པ Horpa are used in the north and east of Tibet to refer to various groups, including Turkic tribes, Mongols, and Tanguts. In Nagchu, Hor is used to refer to cattle-breeders likely of mixed Tibetan and Mongolian origin, whereas in Kandze TAP (Sichuan), 'Hor' is an exonym which refers to a group of Khampas in the region of ཧོར་ཁོག་ *Horkhok*[22] or རྟེ་ཧོར་ *ṭehor*, including speakers of rGyalrongic (non-Tibetic) languages.

The traditional designation of མོན་པ་ *Mönpa* is used to refer to various groups of people living in the southern valleys of Lhokha, Kongpo and Dzayül (TAR), as well as in Kinnaur, Ladakh, Sikkim, Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh. In China, the term *Mönpa* officially designates one nationality (see section 2.4.1) which includes at least two groups speaking different languages: Tshona Mönpa, which is spoken in Lhokha

22. ཁང་གསར་ *KHANG.GSAR*, མ་ཟུར་ *MA.ZUR*, བྲག་འགོ་ *BRAG.'GO*, བེ་རི་ *BE.RI* and རྟེ་ཧོར་ *TE.HOR*. There is no consensus about the precise boundaries of this region.

(TAR) and Metok Mönpa, also known as Tshangla, which is spoken in Nyingthri Prefecture (Metok County or Pemakö), Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh. Additionally, the term *Mönpa* in Sikkim traditionally refers to the Lepchas, who speak a TB language not related to the two above languages. In Bhutan, the term *Mönpa* denotes various communities of Wangdu Photrang, Shemgang, and Trongsar districts, who speak eastern Bodish languages closely related to Tshona and Tshangla. In Spiti and Kinnaur, the term *Mönpa* is applied to the Kinnauri people. Finally, the same term, *Mönpa*, locally called *Mon* designates a "caste" of musicians in Ladakh. From the above description, we can see that Mönpa does not refer to a precise ethnic group and is applied by the Tibetans to various ethnic groups south of the Himalayas, speaking Tibeto-Burman languages.

The term *Lopa* (ལྷོ་པ་ *KLO.PA*) derived from *Lalo* (ལྕགས་ལྕོ་ *KLA.KLO*) meaning 'savages, uncivilized people', is an exonym referring to various tribes of the southern periphery, who have not been converted (or not entirely converted) to Buddhism. The term ལྕགས་ལྕོ་ *Lalo* is also used to refer to Hui (Chinese Muslims) in the Kham area of Kandze prefecture (see Suzuki 2007a).

The ethnonym ལྷོ་པ་ *Lopa* designates groups speaking various languages such as Bokar, Idu or Sulong. To avoid the term Lopa, which bears a derogatory connotation, people now prefer to use term ལྷོ་པ་ Lhopa which means 'Southerner'. The replacement has been possible because the pronunciations of *Lopa* and *Lhopa* sound very similar. This latter term is now used to designate a nationality recognized by the Chinese administration. The problem is that Lhopa is also used to refer to various people of the southern Himalayas.

For example, the Sikkimese 'Bhutia' often call themselves ལྷོ་པོ *Lhopo* (a local pronunciation of Lhopa). A small group of people living in the District of Sankhuwa-Sabha in Nepal are called Lhomi (ལྷོ་མི་) which also means 'Southerners'.

To make things a little more complicated, the people of Mustang in Nepal, which is locally called Lo Mönthang ལྷོ་སྨོན་ཐང་, are also called *Lopas*. Although it is pronounced

in the same way as the *Lopa* nationality in the TAR, the local term referring to Mustangi is spelled གློ་པ་ *GLO.PA*.[23]

The term ཤར་པ་ *Sharpa* is another traditional term which can refer to various populations. It is derived from the Tibetan root *shar* 'east' and the suffix *pa* and simply means 'Easterner'. The term *Sharpa* may be pronounced in various ways depending on the region: /ɕarwa/, /ɕarpa/, /x'arwa/, etc., but it has been popularized in English under the orthography of Sherpa. This term mainly designates the Tibetic language called /sharwi tamnye/ spoken in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal and in various villages of western Sikkim as well as in Dram (TAR). However, Sherpa is also sometimes used to refer to a group known as Helambu Sherpa in Nepal who speaks another Tibetic language alternativelly called Yolmo. The two languages Yolmo and Sherpa are distinct and should not be confused. Because of the fame of the Sherpa community on a national and even international level, some ethnic groups of Nepal or India who speak TB languages may declare themselves as Sherpas. A third group of people sometimes called ཤར་བ་ *Sharwa* is located on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau in Zungchu County (Sichuan) in the Sharkhok region. The language used there is not directly related to the Sherpa language in Nepal.

Thus as we have seen, there is a rich ethnic diversity in the Tibetic-speaking area. The majority of the ethnic groups speak Tibetic languages but a significant number of groups speak non-Tibetic languages (for more details, see below 3.4).

23. The etymology of *glo* might be 'side' or 'strap'. The word *glo* usually means 'lungs'.

2.5.4. Population figures

It is difficult to give precise figures for the people who speak Tibetic languages. One of the reasons is that the censuses from the six countries of this linguistic area are neither precise nor reliable. The second reason is that many issues linked to linguistic classification are not yet solved. The number of speakers for the six countries that we provide below are thus tentative and approximative.

China

The number of people who speak Tibetic languages in China is hard to estimate because of the lack of recent and reliable censuses[24] and also because of the complex relationship between ethnic and linguistic parameters. Another flaw of many studies is that the figures proposed are based on linguistic classifications that are neither precise nor accurate, as we will see in the Chapter 9.

sKal.bzang 'Gyur.med and *sKal.bzang dByangs.can* (2002: 2) mention the figure of 4,593,000 speakers. Linguists in China usually classify the "Tibetan dialects" [Tibetic languages] into three main groups and accordingly estimate the number of speakers in the three main dialect groups of Ü-Tsang, Kham and Amdo. For example Qu (1996) mentioned 1,500,000 Kham speakers[25], over 1,000,000 for Ü-Tsang and roughly 800,000 Amdo speakers. More recently Kalsang Norbu *et al.* (2000) proposes the figure of 1,500,000for Amdo speakers.

As mentioned in the previous section, some Tibetans speak, as native speakers, non-Tibetic languages such as various rGyalrongic, Qiangic, Bodish as well as Tani, Lolo-Burmese or Naic languages. The total number of Tibetans who are native speakers

24. A lot of figures given by the various authors are based on the 1990 census. The official statistic of the *Zhongguo minzu renkou ziliao: zangzu* 中国民族人口资料 藏族 for the Tibetan population in TAR and TAP in 1990 (quoted by Catriona Bass 1998) is 4,574,977. The web site of the Renmin Ribao newspapers dating from November 2000 gives the figure of 4,593,000. This is also the figure mentioned by Gesang Jumian (*sKal.bzang 'Gyur.med* and *sKal.bzang dByangs.can* 2002: 2). See also the website: tibet.nbyzwhzx.com.

25. As we will see in Chapter 9, which is devoted to the classification of the Tibetic languages, Kham may no longer be considered as a single language and thus this figure is problematic since it lumps together distinct languages.

in these languages is about 300,000, i.e. roughly 5% of ethnic Tibetans.[26] However, a significant number of those Tibetans who are native speakers of non-Tibetic languages may also speak Amdo or Kham languages depending on their location. Nowadays, they also acquire Chinese.

Aside from Tibetans, various ethnic groups of Tibet may also speak Tibetic languages. For example, in Amdo a number of people belonging to the Salar, Tu, Bonan or Hui communities can also speak Amdo as a second language, sometimes as natives. The Mongols of Sogwo have been tibetanized and speak mostly Tibetan.

Various ethnic groups who live in Kham area, such as the Pumi, Lisu, Bai, etc., may also speak various Kham dialects. Likewise, in the TAR, many Monpas can speak Central Tibetan dialects from the Lhokha or Kongpo areas.

Conversely due to the pressure of Mandarin-speaking Chinese, some young Tibetans in the cities have lost their native tongue or may not be very fluent.[27] This is often the case in counties such as Bayi (TAR), Dartsendo (Kangding) in Sichuan, Drugchu in Gansu, Gyalthang [Xianggelila/ Zhongdian] in Yunnan, and others.

Given the complexity of the linguistic, ethnic and political situation, it is probably safe to say that the total number of native speakers of Tibetic languages in China is between **five and six million.**

India

In India, the major groups who speak Tibetic languages are the Ladakhi (160,000 speakers),[28] the Lhopos or Sikkimese (70,000),[29] the Baltis (39,000 speakers), the Puriks (100,000 speakers; Zemp 2018), the Sherpas (31,000 speakers), the Zangskari (12,000), the Spiti Bhotis (10,000). The remaining groups (Lhomis, Garzha, Jads,

26. Gerald Roche (pers. comm.) independently proposes the same estimation.

27. A number of Tibetans live in Chinese cities such as Beijing, Xi'an, Chengdu, Lanzhou, etc. Many Tibetan students are sent far away from their home to study in various Chinese provinces.

28. We include here the Jangpas (alt. Changpas), who are given an estimate of 10,000, pastoralists in the south of Ladakh.

29. Yliniemi (2019) considers it is an overestimation.

etc.) each have less than 10,000 speakers. Thus the total number of speakers of Tibetic Languages in India is approximately **400,000**.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, only one Tibetic language, Balti, is spoken but it has a large number of speakers, reportedly **270,000**.

Bhutan

In Bhutan, the main Tibetic language is Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan. It has approximately 160,000 native speakers and many people also speak it as a second language. The second language is Tsamang (or Choča-ngača), with 20,000 locutors. The remaining groups are Lakha, Mera Sakteng, Brokkat, each with less than 10,000 speakers. The total number of native speakers of Tibetic languages in Bhutan is approximately **200,000**.

Nepal

In Nepal, most of the Tibetic communities (see section 2.3) have between 1,000 and 10,000 speakers. Only the Sherpa have a significantly higher figure of 50,000 speakers. The total number of speakers of Tibetic Languages in Nepal is approximately **100,000**. This does not include the recent Tibetan immigration in Nepal, which probably includes more than 20,000 refugees.

Myanmar

In Myanmar, a variety of Kham Tibetan is reportedly spoken in the Kachin state on the border with China. Thus the total number may not exceed **400** speakers.

The Tibetan diaspora and other emigrations from the Tibetic area

Due to immigration since 1959, about 150,000 Tibetans make up a diaspora community that lives mainly in India, Nepal and Bhutan, but also in many other countries worldwide, particulary Europe, Northern America, Asia and Australia.

Given the lack of the data, it is more difficult to evaluate recent migrations of Tibetic speakers from India, Bhutan, Nepal or Pakistan. Buddhists or Bönpos may follow the migration patterns of the Tibetans. Tibetic speakers of India, Bhutan, Nepal or Pakistan may also follow the migratory patterns of their compatriots. For

example, many Nepalese people work in the United Arab Emirates or Hong Kong and these Nepalese may include Tibetic-speaking people such as the Yolmo, Sherpas, etc.

Various migration patterns are also attested within various zones of the Tibetic area. For example, a number of Nepalese Yolmo or Sherpa speakers have settled in the Spiti area of India. Sherpas have migrated to Sikkim together with the massive Nepalese immigration into this Indian state.

Total number of Tibetic language speakers

We can estimate roughly that the total number of speakers for the Tibetic language family in the six countries, including the diasporas, is slightly less than seven million people. Nearly 90% of the speakers live in the Tibetan Autonomous administrative units in China.

2.6. *Geographic distribution of the languages*

Leaving aside for the time being the problem of dialectal diversity and the theoretical issues related to the distinction between dialects, dialect groups and languages, we will list the traditional Tibetic glossonyms. The purpose of this inventory is to provide names for the languages of this family and their approximate location. For discussions concerning the classification, grouping or subgrouping of these languages and related issues, see Chapter 9.

Starting from the western regions, the first languages are Balti (◊ བལ་ཏི་སྐད་ *BAL.TI SKAD*),[30] spoken in the Balti and Ghanche districts of Baltistan (northern Pakistan), Purik (◊ ཕུ་རིག་སྐད་ *PU.RIG SKAD*) and Ladaks[31] (ལ་དྭགས་སྐད་ *LA.DWAGS.SKAD*), locally called ◊ ལ་དྭགས་ཞི་སྐད་ *LA.DWAGS.SI SKAD* [ladakse skat] or [laakse skat], spoken on

30. The usual spelling in Literary Tibetan is བལ་ཏི་ཡི་སྐད་ *SBAL.TI 'I SKAD*, but it does not match the Balti pronunciation. There is a little-known but consistent rule in Literary Tibetan: if a word ends with a vowel, a genitive marker will be added before the word *SKAD*. With a final consonant, the genitive may be dropped. Thus, one usually finds *SBAL.TI 'I SKAD* or *A.MDO'I SKAD* (with the gentitive) and *KHAMS.SKAD* or *'BRAS.LJONGS SKAD* (without the genitive).

31. We prefer to use local names rather than exonyms. In this case, the local term Ladaks for the language is preferred to *Ladakhi* which corresponds to the Hindi-Urdu form. For the same reason we use the local term Zanhar instead of the Hindi-Urdu term 'Zanskari'. See Below.

the other side of the border in the Kargil and Leh districts of Ladakh, Northern India. Until recently, speakers of Ladaks, Purik and Balti had regular contact, but due to the political conflict between India and Pakistan the exchanges are now very limited. Zanhar, also referred to as Zangskar (ཟངས་དཀར་སྐད་ *ZANGS.DKAR SKAD*) locally pronounced ◊ ཟང་ཀར་ཀད་ [zāhar hat] is spoken in the Kargil district. It is closely related to Ladaks and generally allows mutual intelligibility with Leh dialect but includes a lot of specific features.

The next languages are Spiti (སྤི་ཏིའི་སྐད་ *SPI.TI'I SKAD* [Piti]) and Garzha (གར་ཞའི་སྐད་ *GAR.ZHA'I SKAD*), which are closely related. Both are spoken in Himachal Pradesh in the district of Lahul and Spiti further in the southeast. Garzha which sometimes referred to as Lahuli, is locally called སྟོད་སྐད་ *STOD SKAD* [tötkat]. The language name Garzha is preferable to Lahuli since the latter also designates an Indic language.

Other Tibetic languages located further southeast are Khunu (ཁུ་ནུའི་སྐད་ *KHU.NU'I SKAD*), which is spoken in Upper Kinnaur District (ཁུ་ནུ་). At the border between Himachal and Jammu Kashmir, one also finds two Tibetic languages, Pangi (◊ པང་གིའི་སྐད་) and Paldar (◊ པལ་དར་སྐད་), spoken by small communities.

Further southeast, in the gorges of the Jad Ganga (Uttarkashi district), one finds a small community who speaks Jad or Dzad (◊ འཛད་དད་སྐད་), a language closely related to Spiti.

Further east in Nepal, we find a series of closely related languages, which are all spoken along the Sino-Nepalese border. They include from west to east: Humla (ཧུམ་ལའི་སྐད་) in Humla district; Mugu (སུ་གུའི་སྐད་) in Mugu District; Dölpo (དོལ་པོའི་སྐད་) in Dölpo District; Lo-ke or Mustang (སྨོ་སྐད་དམ་གློ་སྨོན་ཐང་གི་སྐད་) in Mustang District; Nubri (ནུབ་རིའི་སྐད་) and Tsum (ཙུམ་སྐད་), both in Gorkha District, Gyalsumdo (རྒྱལ་གསུམ་མདོ་), in Manang District; Langtang (ལང་ཐང་སྐད་), in Rasuwa District; Yolmo (ཡོལ་མོའི་སྐད་) and Kagate (CT), in Sindhupalchok and Nuwakot Districts; Jirel (རྗེ་རེལ་སྐད་)(locally called རྗེ་རེལ་རྟད་ jirel bat), in Dolakha, Sherpa (ཤར་བའི་སྐད་), locally called ◊ ཤར་བའི་གཏམ་སྐད་

[Sharwi Tamnye],[32] in Solukhumbu District; Shupa (ཤོག་པའི་སྐད་) in Ramechhap District; Lhomi (ལྷོ་མིའི་སྐད་) in Sankhuwa-Sabha District; Walungchung Gola (ཝ་ལུང་ཆུང་སྒོ་ལའི་སྐད་) or simply Walung (ཝ་ལུང་སྐད་) in the district of Taplejung and Tokpe Gola (གྲོག་པོ་སྒོ་ལའི་སྐད་).

Further west, in the Indian State of Sikkim, we find the Dränjong language (འབྲས་ལྗོངས་སྐད་), which is more often locally called Lhoke ལྷོ་སྐད་ (lit. 'southern language'). It is closely related to the language spoken in Dromo on the other side of the Indochinese border.

The next Tibetic languages further west are spoken in Bhutan: Dzongkha (རྫོང་ཁ་) traditionally spoken in the districts of western Bhutan; Tsamang (རྩ་མང་ཁ་) also called by the exonym of Choča-ngača (ཇོར་ཅ་ང་ཅ་ཁ་), in Mongar and Lhüntse Districts; Lakha (ལ་ཁ་), also called Tshangkha ཚང་ཁ་, in Wangdi Phodra District; Dur Brokkat (དུར་ཀྲོ་འབྲོག་སྐད་), also called Bjokha (in Dzongkha) in Bumthang District; and finally Mera Sakteng Brokpa (མེ་རག་སག་སྟེང་འབྲོག་པའི་སྐད་) in Trashigang District.

Let's now mention the Tibetic languages spoken on the Tibetan Plateau and its periphery in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Chinese Provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan (note that the names used in this chapter are traditional labels. For a precise description of the languages and dialect, see Chapter 8).

The Ü and Tsang dialects (དབུས་སྐད་དང་གཙང་སྐད་), sometimes lumped together as Ü-Tsang (དབུས་གཙང་སྐད་), are spoken in the TAR. It comprises numerous dialects (for details see Chapter 9) spoken in Ü (དབུས་ lit. 'Center') around the capital Lhasa, Tsang (གཙང་), in Zhikatse Prefecture (གཞིས་ཀ་རྩེའི་ས་ཁུལ་) and Lhokha (ལྷོ་ཁའི་སྐད་) in Lhokha Prefecture (ལྷོ་ཁའི་ས་ཁུལ་) south of the TAR. Closely related dialects include Kongpo (ཀོང་པོའི་སྐད་) spoken in the Nyingthri Prefecture east of the TAR, and Tökä སྟོད་སྐད་ traditionnally spoken in the Ngari Prefecture (མངའ་རིས་ས་ཁུལ་) in the west of Tibet at the border of Ladakh.

32. The spelling *GTAM.SNYAD* is usually found in the Sherpa dictionaries in Tibetan script (see Gyurme Chodrak & Tournadre et al. 2009), however form with a nasalized vowel is attested in Solu area (Matthew Kapstein, pers. comm.). This form could be a reflex of the CT *GTAM.SNYAN* 'sweet speech'.

The dialect spoken in Kyirong (སྐྱིད་རོང་), which belongs to Zhikatse Prefecture, is closely related to the dialects spoken on the other side of the Sino-Nepalese border such as Kagate and Langtang (see below).

The Kham 'language'[33] (ཁམས་སྐད་) is spoken in the east and the southeast of Tibetic area in Chamdo Prefecture (ཆབ་མདོའི་ས་ཁུལ་) and a part of Nyingthri Prefecture (ཉིང་ཁྲིའི་ས་ཁུལ་) [TAR], in Dechen Prefecture (བདེ་ཆེན་ས་ཁུལ་) [Yunnan] in Kandze Prefecture (དཀར་མཛེས་ས་ཁུལ་) and some neighboring counties [Sichuan], and in Yülshül Prefecture (ཡུལ་ཤུལ་ས་ཁུལ་) [Qinghai]. The complexity of dialects may be reflected in the traditional geographic diversity. From a historical and geographic viewpoint, Kham is called ཆུ་བཞི་སྐང་རྡུག་ཐང་གསུམ་ *chuzhi gangdruk thangsum*, which means: 'four rivers, six plateaus and three grasslands'. The inhabitants dwell in the latter two areas. The six plateaus designate ཟལ་མོ་སྐང་ *Zälmo gang* (present Derge and its surroundings), ཚ་བ་སྐང་ *Tshawa gang* (corresponds to present eastern Dzayül and to Dzogang [nDzogong] alongside of Nujiang), སྨར་ཁམས་སྐང་ *Markham gang* (corresponds to present Markham and its surroundings, between Nujiang and Lancangjiang), སྤོ་འབོར་སྐང་ *Pombor gang* (corresponds to present Gyalthang, Derong, Chagthreng, Dabpa and Lithang, between Lancangjiang and Jinshajiang), དམར་རྫ་སྐང་ *Mardza gang* (corresponds to present northeastern Daofu to Golok) and མི་ཉག་རབ་སྐང་ *Minyak Rabgang* (corresponds to present Dartsendo and Yajiang, between Mt Zheduo and Yalongjiang). The three grasslands designate ལི་ཐང་ *Lithang* (roughly equivalent to present Lithang), འབའ་ཐང་ *Bathang* (roughly equivalent to present Bathang) and རྒྱལ་ཐང་ *Gyalthang* (present Shangri-La, especially its central area).

Some pockets of Kham speakers are also found in other areas outside of Kham, such as Gertse, Gegyä (Ngari Prefecture), Bhutan, and even Myanmar. These Kham communities correspond to relatively recent migrations. The dialectal diversity of Kham is so enormous that mutual intelligibility is very limited in some areas. The delimitation and subgrouping of Kham dialects will be discussed in details in Chapter 9.

33. The term 'language' is used here for simplicity sake. But as we will see below, Kham corresponds in fact to several groups of dialects.

The Hor language (ཧོར་སྐད་) is very closely related to northern Kham dialects. It is spoken in the Jangthang area བྱང་ཐང་ north of the TAR in Nagchu Prefecture and in some limited areas of Ngari.

Next is the Amdo language (ཨ་མདོའི་སྐད་) or Amkä (ཨམས་སྐད་), which is spoken in the north and northeast of the Tibetic area mainly in Qinghai, Sichuan and Gansu. Amdo speaking regions in Qinghai include the prefectures around Kokonor Lake: Tshonup Prefecture (མཚོ་ནུབ་མ་ཁུལ་, lit. 'prefecture west of the lake'); Tshojang Prefecture (མཚོ་བྱང་མ་ཁུལ་, lit. 'prefecture north of the lake'); Tsholho Prefecture (མཚོ་ལྷོའི་མ་ཁུལ, lit. 'prefecture south of the lake'); Tshoshar Prefecture (མཚོ་ཤར་མ་ཁུལ་, lit. 'prefecture east of the lake') and in the area of Xining City (ཟི་ལིང་མ་ཁུལ་). Amdo is also spoken in the Golok Prefecture (མཁོ་ལོག་མ་ཁུལ་) and in the Malho Prefecture (རྨ་ལྷོའི་མ་ཁུལ་), located south of the Yellow river.

In south Gansu, Amdo is spoken in the Kanlho Prefecture (ཀན་ལྷོའི་མ་ཁུལ་), also called Dolho (མདོ་ལྷོའི་མ་ཁུལ་), and in Pari County (དཔལ་རིས་), locally pronounced [Xwari].

In Sichuan, Amdo is essentially spoken in Ngawa Prefecture (རྔ་བའི་མ་ཁུལ་, spelled as རྔ་པ་ Ngapa in Central Tibet), and in the northern parts of Kandze Prefecture (དཀར་མཛེས་མ་ཁུལ་), particularly in Sershül and Serta counties and in some pastoralist communities of Lithang, Dartsendo and Nyagchu Counties (see details in Chapter 9).

Aside from Amdo and Kham, a series of Tibetic languages and dialects are spoken in southern Gansu and northern Sichuan mainly in the area of the Min Jiang and Bailongjiang rivers, respectively called Zungchu (རྫུང་ཆུ་) and Drugchu (འབྲུག་ཆུ་) in Tibetan.

These languages include Čone (ཅོ་ནེའི་སྐད་), Thewo Tö (ཐེ་བོའི་སྟོད་སྐད་), Thewo Mä (ཐེ་བོའི་སྨད་སྐད་), Drugchu (འབྲུག་ཆུའི་སྐད་), Pälkyi [Pashi] (དཔལ་སྐྱིད་སྐད་), Khöpokhok (ཁོད་པོ་ཁོག་སྐད་), Baima locally called [Pema] and sometimes written བོད་དམག་སྐད་ (*BOD.DMAG.SKAD*), Sharkhok (ཤར་ཁོག་སྐད་), and Zhongu (ཞོང་དུའི་སྐད་).

So far, we have listed about fifty terms referring to distinct Tibetic 'languages' that are mutually unintelligeable or have limited intelligibility from one to another (for the detailed listing and classification, see Chapter 9). The essential claim here is that all

these languages are derived from Old Tibetan, and share a lot of lexical and grammatical features with Classical Tibetan.

However, they also differ from each other in many ways. Although they *do share* a common basic vocabulary and grammar, they may largely differ in some aspects of phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. To illustrate some of the difference, it is sufficient here to say that some of these languages are tonal, while others are non-tonal. They present also significant differences in their tense-aspect, evidential and epistemic systems as well their grammatical case systems (see Chapter 8).

The Tibetic area shows a remarkable dialectal diversity which can be partly explained by the mountainous terrain and the difficulty of travel across the Plateau and the Himalayas. This diversity may also be partly explained by language contact with non-Tibetic languages (see Chapter 3). Some areas, such as southern Gansu, northern Sichuan, western Yunnan (China) or Ladakh (India) exhibit very complex dialectal cartographies. For precise geographic locations of the Tibetic languages, see maps 3 and 4 in the Appendix 3.

2.7. *The main Tibetic languages*

With regard to the number of speakers, only three Tibetic languages have more than one million speakers: Central Tibetan,[34] Amdo and Northern Kham.[35] A few Tibetic languages have about 100,000 speakers or more. They include Balti, Ladaks, Purik and Dzongkha. Apart from these languages, just a couple of languages have more than 10,000 speakers: Lhoke (or Sikkim Bhutia), Sherpa, Sharkhok, Spiti and Čočangača.

The remaining languages which constitute the great majority of the Tibetic linguistic family have less than 10,000 speakers and in some cases even less than 1,000 speakers. We can consider these languages as endangered in various degrees.

34. It includes *Čikä* or Common Spoken Tibetan. Here we also include the varieties of Tsang, Phänpo and Lhokha which are closely related. For details, see chapter 9.

35. As we will see in Chapter 8, Kham linguistic diversity is remarkable and here it designates the language spoken in Northern Kham (along the northern road), but also includes the Hor variety which is very closely related. For details, see chapter 9.

Thus the main Tibetic languages are: Central Tibetan (Tibet Autonomous Region, China),[36] Amdo (Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures, China), Northern Kham (Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures and Tibet Autonomous Region, China), Balti (Pakistan), Dzongkha (Bhutan), Ladaks (Leh district, Ladakh, Union Territory, India), Purik (Kargil district, Ladakh, Union Territory, India), Lhoke (Sikkim, India), Sherpa (Solukhumbu, Nepal; Sikkim, India), Sharkhok (Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, China), Spiti (Lahul & Spiti, HP, India), and Choča-ngača (eastern Bhutan).

As we will see in Chapter 5, for more than a thousand years, the written language of the whole Tibetic area[37] has been Literary Tibetan which is commonly referred to as Classical Tibetan. This prestigious written language is still used as the liturgical language of Vajrayana Buddhism and Bön. During the twentieth century, a modernized form of Classical Tibetan, sometimes called Modern Literary Tibetan, has developed (Goldstein 1991). It generally preserves the traditional orthography of Classical Tibetan and its essential grammar (with minor inovations) but has integrated into its lexicon many neologisms to render modern technical and scientific concepts that did not exist in Classical Tibetan. Modern Literary Tibetan serves as the contemporary official written language of Tibet and is used basically in all the Tibetan automous administrative units within China.

Elsewhere, Modern Literary Tibetan is also the written language of the Tibetan diaspora. There is a severe diglossia between the spoken Tibetic languages and Literary Tibetan, whether in its classical or modern forms. Both Classical Tibetan and Modern Literary Tibetan are not spoken languages *per se*, but rather are used exclusively as written languages. Amdo, Ü-Tsang, Kham and other modern Tibetic languages of Tibet have not developed a written system because they share Literary Tibetan as a

36. The information given in parenthesis provides the administrative location, but it does not mean that the entire administrative units speak the same dialect or even the same dialect group of language. For details about the locations see Chapter 9 and the maps in Appendix 3.

37. With the notable exception of Baltistan which abandoned the Tibetan script after the 15th century as well as the Purik-speaking area in Ladakh where it was also gradually abandoned due to the propagation of Islam.

written language.[38] The development of a written language for these languages would undermine the unity of the Tibetans in China[39] and has thus been avoided despite the problem of diglossia.

Literary Tibetan is also used as a written language by Tibetans who are not native speakers of Tibetic languages and speak, for example, rGyalrongic or Qiangic languages.

The situation is quite different outside Tibet, in the southern and western Himalayas, in Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Some of the major Tibetic languages of these areas such as Dzongkha, Lhoke (Sikkimese Bhoti) and Ladaks have developed a written form.[40] Others such as Sherpa and Balti are currently developing a written form. Additionally Bhutanese, Ladakhis, Sherpas and Lhopos also use Literary Tibetan as a liturgical language of Vajrayana Buddhism and sometimes as a formal written language, along with their own written languages. Although, the mutual intelligibility between the modern Tibetic languages is quite limited, the fact of sharing a prestigious written language is an important aspect of the Tibetic or 'Bhoti' identity.

In Chapter 5, we will discuss the written systems developed for Dzongkha, Ladaks, Lhoke, Sherpa and Balti. Apart from these languages, none of the modern Tibetic languages have developed a written language.

2.8. *Endangered languages and dialects*

As we have seen above, many small Tibetic languages are spoken by less than 10,000 people and some by less than 1,000. Some of these languages are threatened and may disappear rapidly.

38. There are however regional influences of the local dialects on the Modern Literary Tibetan. See 6.7.2.

39. In a similar way, speakers of Sinitic languages have been reluctant to transcribe their language using specific characters distinct from Literary Chinese. A notable exception is Cantonese which use up to 1,000 specific characters, but the majority of the publications remain in Literary Chinese. In Hong Kong the traditional complex characters are used as in Taiwan while in Guangdong Province the simplified characters are also used.

40. The number of publications in Ladaks and Lhoke are still very limited. Aside from Literary Tibetan, which has a lot of print and online publications, only Dzongkha has gained some visibility on the internet. For details, see 5.8.

Most Tibetic languages and dialects are now under the threat of both internal and external forces. On the one hand, Common Tibetan and Standard Bhutanese (Dzongkha) place considerable pressure on the neighboring "minor" languages. On the other hand, Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, Nepali, and English are also becoming major influences. Literary Tibetan has been replaced by Chinese for nearly all administrative activities in Tibet and thus is declining for the first time in its thousand-year history. In Bhutan, the influence of English is also becoming increasingly dominant.

The main languages listed in the previous section may be declining but are not immediately threatened with extinction. This is not the case, however, for many smaller languages – those spoken by less than 10,000 speakers, such as: Baima/Pema, Khöpokhok, Drugchu, Khalong, Dartsendo, Rongdrak, Daan, Zhollam, Balung [Melung], mBalhak, Pari [Xwari] (all spoken in Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan, China), Sangdam (in Myanmar), Kagate, Lamjung Yolmo, Jirel (in Nepal), Khunu Töt, Garzha, Jadang (in India), Mera-Sakteng, Dur-brokkat, Lakha (in Bhutan), etc.

If we implement the labels proposed by C. Grinevald (2007; Grinevald & Bert 2011), for a typology of speakers, we find various types in the Tibetic area, such as:

- Semi-speakers, who are often found in urban areas.
- Minimal-speakers, i.e. speakers who are capable only of minimal communication (e.g. Balung [Melung])
- Ghost-speakers, who actually pretend not to know a given language but have some competence in it.

One salient feature of the area is the linguistic differences between generations. Sociolinguistic factors have a strong impact on these small endangered languages. The speech of some younger speakers, who have been sent to school outside their valleys for a number of years, may have undergone significant modifications. Thus in some cases one can witness linguistic gaps between generations, with the result that they do not have a common native language anymore.

Since none of these small languages are written, they are threatened with rapid disappearance. In some cases, the communities show a pragmatic attitude towards

their language and consider that it is better to speak a major Tibetic language or a national language rather than their own native languages.

3. Sociolinguistic and cultural background

The information presented in this chapter is meant to help a wide readership understand the cultural background and sociolinguistic dimension of the Tibetic language. There are numerous scientific publications about the cultures, societies and religions of the Tibetan plateau and the Himalayas. We intend here to provide only a brief description of some important aspects. We will see, for example, that some socio-economic and religious communities have developed their own dialects.

3.1. *Socio-economic background*

Within most of the Tibetic speaking area, the population is traditionally divided into cultivators called ཞིང་པ་ *zhingpa* or རོང་པ་ *rongpa* / རོང་བ་ *rongwa* (alternative names have been documented. See the HCTL, in Chapter 12) and cattle breeders or pastoralists called འབྲོག་པ་ *drogpa*.

The pastoralists, who raise livestock and do not cultivate fields, are found on the highlands of the Tibetan plateau, usually above 4,000 m[1] altitude, and more marginally on some grasslands of the high Himalayas. The main pastoralist communities are located in the *Jangthang* region བྱང་ཐང་ extending over a huge territory that stretches from the Hor Nagchu region to Tö Ngari (Western Tibet) and Ladakh. They are also found in the *Yermothang* region[2] གཡེར་མོ་ཐང་, in Amdo and in Kham pastoralist areas (Eastern Tibet). Some limited pastoralist areas are also found in Central Tibet, as well as in the southern Himalayas, in Bhutan, Sikkim (India) and Nepal. The cultivators, who tend fields and raise crops, dwell in the lower valleys with more fertile lands located on the Tibetan Plateau (Ü-Tsang, Kham, Amdo), in the southern Himalayas (Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal) and in the western Himalayas and Karakoram (Baltistan,

1. In the northern areas, such as Amdo where the climate is colder, pastoralism starts at a lower altitude. For ex. many pastoralists live around Kokonor lake (*Tsho ngonpo*) at 3,200 m.

2. This name, as we already mentioned, is a historical term and it is difficult to establish the precise location of this plateau. Matthew Kapstein (pers. comm. 2020) has tentatively identified the Luchu region of Gannan but the term might have been used in past times for other regions as well.

Ladakh, Spiti). Most of the arable lands of the Tibetic area are found at an altitude between 2,000 and 4,000 m[3].

There is also an intermediary category of agropastoralists or "cultivators-pastoralists" which are usually referred to as ས་མ་འབྲོག་ *samadrok* (lit. 'half land-half pasture').

In Tibet, *samadrok* (agropastoralists) and *drogpa* (pastoralists) are always differentiated as distinct groups. Drogpas who practice 'pure pastoralism' are sometimes referred to as འབྲོག་པ་འབྲོག་ནག་ *drogpa drognak* 'lit. entirely black *drogpa*'.[4]

Depending on the languages and dialects, alternative names for *samadrok* such as རོང་མ་འབྲོག་ *rongmadrok* (notably in Amdo), ཞིང་མ་འབྲོག་ *zhingmadrok*, ཡུལ་མ་འབྲོག་ *yülmadrok*, ཞིང་ཆེད་འབྲོག་ཆེད་ *zhingche-drogche*, རོང་ཆེད་འབྲོག་ཆེད་ *rongche-drogche* (in Kham), འབྲོག་ཞིང་ཁ་སྦྲོད་ *drogzhing khatrö* or even བོད་མ་འབྲོག་ *bömadrok* (in Nyemo, near Lhasa) are also found. Agropastoralists cultivate fields but also breed some cattle. Their settlements are usually located lower than pastoralist areas but higher than agricultural lands.

In the Tibetic speaking area outside Tibet, the notion of *samadrok* is usually absent. However, in many areas of the southern Himalayas, in Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, as well as in Ladakh, cultivators breed poultry, cows or *dzo* (more rarely yaks), sheep, goats, donkeys and, in some areas, pigs (see below). In some regions, they may practice some seasonal transhumance.

Nomadic and sedentary lifestyles are often noted when referring to the distinction between cattle breeders and cultivators. However, if it is true that cultivators are sedentary, there is no equivalence in Tibet between pastoralism and nomadism. Traditionally, most cattle breeder communities (pastoralists and even agropastoralists) practice transhumance and live in tents all the year or part of the year. Camps are established in the same place each year and the pastoralists move according to seasonal

3. There are some lower areas. The Choča-ngača community of eastern Bhutan lives at an altitude of 1,000 m.

4. F. Robin (pers. comm. 2020) provided an alternative explanation: -nak would mean in this case 'extreme' (drogpa).

patterns from their summer camps called *yarsa* དབྱར་ས་ to winter settlements called *günsa* དགུན་ས་, which correspond to the main residence and middle season camps referred to as *barsa* བར་ས་.

In some areas of the Tibetan Plateau, Drogpas have settled in houses and have become sedentary pastoralists. Thus, the Drogpas are mainly defined by the activity of herding and cattle breeding. Nomadism or transhumance is a secondary characteristic. The general tendency in the recent years is the sedentarisation of pastoralist communities throughout the Plateau (Tö, Hor Kham, Amdo, Ladakh). Forced sedentarisation has often been part of a Chinese government policy.

Pastoralism on the Tibetan Plateau, as in other regions of the world,[5] is faced with many challenges. In some areas, Drogpas who were traditionally pastoralists have even sold their cattle and settled in houses and now are engaged in trade or other activities.

On the Indian side, in Ladakh Jangthang and Zangskar (or other areas), pastoralism is also threatened because the younger generations do not want to continue in the harsh living conditions endured by their parents, often preferring the comparatively more comfortable lifestyles offered in lower areas where facilities and schools are available. In Upper Kinnaur, yak and goat herding have been abandoned in the past decades.

Aside from cultivators and pastoralists, the traditional socio-professional groups include ཇོང་པ་ *tshongpa* 'merchants', who before 1950 used to travel throughout the entire Tibetic area, from Ladakh, Bhutan, Sikkim, Khumbu, etc., to Central Tibet. Since then, the frontiers between India, China, Bhutan, and Nepal have been totally or partially closed and the traditional routes are no longer used.

5. "A recent estimate suggests that there are 120 million pastoralists and agropastoralists in the world. Some 50 million of these live in sub-Saharan Africa, where pastoralism is a widely used practice in an area extending from Senegal to Somalia. There are also many African pastoral communities within the band stretching from the Horn of Africa to Namibia. A considerable amount of pastoralism also exists in the arid areas of Central and Southern Asia and of the Tibetan plateau, in Europe, and in Andean plateaus in Latin America." (http://www.agter.org/bdf/fr/corpus_chemin/fiche-chemin-623.html)

Nowdays, tourism has become a major business in the Tibetic area. This industry has prompted the construction of many roads and hotels. During the last two decades, local tourism from China, India, Pakistan and Nepal has become more important than international tourism.

Some socio-professional groups are often looked down upon in the Tibetic area. They include ཤན་པ་ *shänpa* 'butchers', རྔོན་པ་ *ngönpa* 'hunters', ཉ་པ་ *nyapa* 'fishermen', མཁར་བ་ *garwa* 'blacksmiths', ལྷམ་བཟོ་བ་ *lhamzowa* 'cobblers', ཤིང་བཟོ་བ་ *shingzowa* 'carpenters', སྟོབས་བྱེད་ *tobdän* 'corpse cutters', ཐགས་མཁན་ *thagkhän* 'carpet, shawl weavers', སྒྲང་ཡོ་རོལ་མོ་བ་ *trangpo rölmowa* 'begging musicians' and རྫག་པ་ *jagpa* 'bandits'. These professional groups are considered as 'low castes' or གདོལ་རིགས་ *dölrik*.

The prestigious socio-professional groups include many types of religious masters or professionals such as རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ *rinpoche* (a title literally meaning 'precious' generally applied to highest lama or *trülkus*), བླ་མ་ *lama* 'religious teachers', ཨ་ལ་གསལ་ *alak* 'high lama' (in Amdo), སྤྲུལ་སྐུ་ *trülku* 'reincarnated lamas', མཁན་པོ་ *khänpo* 'head of a monastery, abbot, highly qualified monk' (in the Nyingmapa tradition), དགེ་བཤེས་ *geshe* 'doctors of Buddhist philosphy', དཔེ་ཚ་བ་ *pechawa* 'learned monk', གྲྭ་པ་ *drapa* 'monks', རྗོ་མོ་ *jomo* 'nuns' (or ཨ་ནེ་ *ane*), སྔགས་པ་ *ngagpa* and དཔོན་ *pön* (pronounced /xwon/ in Amdo) which are various kinds of tantric priests, ལྷ་པ་ *lhapa* 'medium', མཁའ་འགྲོ་མ་ *khandroma* 'Dākinī' (lit. 'skygoer', a type of sacred female spirit), རྣལ་འབྱོར་པ་ *näljorpa* 'yogins', རི་ཁྲོད་པ་ *ritröpa* 'hermits', as well as other professionals such as ལྷ་རིས་པ་ *lharipa* 'thangka painters', [6] ལྷ་བཟོ་བ་ *lhapzowa* 'statue makers', ཕྱག་མཛོད་ *chandzö* 'treasurer, chamberlain', སྨན་པ་ *mänpa* or ཨེ་མཆི་ *emchi* 'doctors', དགེ་རྒན་ *gegän* 'teachers', and ལས་བྱེད་པ་ *lächepa* 'civil servants'.

The proportion of monks and nuns in Tibet before the 1950s reached more than ten percent of the population, being no doubt the highest in the world. Pilgrimages called *näjäl* གནས་མཇལ་ or *näkor* གནས་སྐོར་ are an important activity. The objectives of these pilgrimages may be monasteries, temples, sacred lakes or mountains, particularly during the winter months. The *näkorwa* གནས་སྐོར་བ་ 'pilgrims' may travel for several months or years to visit the various sacred places and may use various types of transpor-

6. It is pronounced /l'apripa/ in Lhasa.

tation but may also perform the arduous physical action of making prostrations all the way to increase the merit of their journey.

Aristocrats or སྐུ་དྲག་ *kudrak*, also referred to as དཔོན་པོ་ *pönpo* (notably in Amdo) formerly played an important political role in Central Tibet, Ngari, Kham and Amdo, until the arrival of the Chinese communists in Tibet. Outside Tibet, in some areas, such as Ladakh, Spiti, Lo Mönthang (Mustang), Dränjong (Sikkim), Baltistan, and Bhutan, རྒྱལ་པོ་ *gyälpo* 'kings' and noble families are still found. Presently Bhutan is still officially a kingdom and Bhutanese nobles are called by the title དྲག་མཛོད་ *dragshö*. In the other countries of the Tibetic area in Nepal, India, and Pakistan, kings may continue to play some political role but their title is only a formal one. In Spiti, the kings are referred to as ནོ་ནོ་ *nono*.

Aside from the religious affiliations that may have sociolinguistic characteristics (see below 3.2), one also encounters various ethnic communities. Let us mention here the well known ཀ་ཙོ་ར་ *Katsara* community in Lhasa, the descendants of Newar craftsmen and traders who came to Tibet from Nepal and married Tibetan women.

Many ethnic groups of the Plateau and the southern Himalayas are organized in clans and subclans. The term རུས་ *rü*, which originally meant 'bone', corresponds to the patrilineal affiliation, while ཤ་ *sha* meaning 'flesh' refers to the matrilineal affiliation.

The clan plays a great role in the organization of various groups, particularly Tibetan pastoralists of the Jangthang, Kham and Amdo. It is also true for the Jirels, Sherpas, Lhopos, Ladakhis, and many others groups. Patrilineal descent is predominant in the area (see Osmaston & Denwood 1995).

Monogamy and various types of polyandry are encountered across the Tibetic area. While monogamy prevails in the towns, fraternal polyandry, which is referred to in Tibetan as *zasum* བཟའ་གསུམ་ (lit. 'three spouses') is still found in many rural areas of Tibet, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, Khunu, Mustang, etc. (Goldstein 1971, 1987). However, polyandry is generally declining in the Tibetic area.

Funeral rites are very diverse within the Tibetic area. Cementaries and funeral sites are generally called དུར་ཁྲོད་ *durthrö*. The methods for disposing of a human body after death are associated with the four elements: ས་ *sa* 'earth', ཆུ་ *chu* 'water', མེ་ *me* 'fire'

and རླུང་ *lung* 'air'. In Buddhist tradition, the corpse is considered an empty vessel and should be eliminated as soon as possible so that the soul or རྣམ་ཤེས་ *namshe* does not become attached to it. If the body is buried, Tibetans consider that it is offered to worms and insects; if it is thrown into a river, it is offered to fish. In many cases, the body is cut up and given to vultures but, in some areas, it may also be left for wolves or jackals.

The method known as བྱ་གཏོར་ *jator* 'sky burial', which consists of offering the corpse (cut into pieces) to the vultures, is practiced in some areas of Ü-Tsang, Ngari, Kham, and Amdo, but since it requires the presence of བྱ་རྒོད་ *jagö* 'Himalayan vultures', it is often practiced in higher places and more frequently in pastoralist areas. The other rites, which consist of burying the corpse, throwing it into a river, or burning it, are also practiced inside and outside Tibet in the neighboring areas.

སྦྱིན་སྲེག་ *jinsek* 'cremation' is restricted in some area because of the lack of wood. The details of the rites may also widely differ from one region to another. In Muslim villages of the Tibetic area, the corpse is buried, whereas in many Buddhist and Bön regions in Tibet and in the Himalayas – in Bhutan, Nepal and India (Ladakh, Kinnaur and Lahul, etc.) – the body is usually burned. Finally, one ought to mention mummification, which has also been marginally attested. (See Kunsel Palmu 2018.)

Economy and subsistance

Depending on the altitude and the climate, the main crops cultivated in the Tibetic regions are ནས་ *nä* 'barley', གྲོ་ *dro* 'wheat', བྲ་བོ་ *drawo* 'buckwheat', སོ་ *sowa* 'thick-shelled barley', ཞོག་ཁོག་ *zhogkhok* 'potatoes', སྲན་མ་ *sänma* 'beans', ཡུངས་དཀར་ *yungkar* 'yellow mustard' and ཡུངས་ནག་ *yungnak* 'black mustard'. The names ནས་ *nä*, གྲོ་ *dro* and སྲན་མ་ *sänma* are usually pandialectal.

Barley, which can grow at up to 4,300 m. of altitude, and beans are emblematic crops since they are cultivated throughout the Tibetan Plateau and in the higher valleys of the Himalayas and their designation is similar in most of the Tibetic

languages. Roasted barley flour called རྩམ་པ་ *tsampa*,[7] or simply ཇེ་ *che* 'flour', in many areas is the staple food of Tibetans and of most Tibetic ethnic groups from Amdo to Baltistan as well as in the soutern Himalayas.[8] In many areas, *tsampa* is mixed with tea and kneaded into a dough, called སྦག་ས་ *pak*, ཁོ་ལ་ *kholak* or ཟན་ *zän*,[9] which is eaten as is, without further cooking.

In the lower areas of the southern Himalayas and on the margins of the Tibetan plateau, people also cultivate འབྲས་ *drä* 'rice', ཐྲེ་ *thre* 'millet', ས་རྨོ་ལོ་ཏོག་ *mamö lotok* 'maize' and ཡུག་པོ་ *yugpo* 'oat'.

Fruit trees and orchards are found in the lower valleys of the Tibetan Plateau and the southern Himalayas. The main fruits of the Tibetic area are ཀུ་ཤུ་ *kushu* 'apple', ལི་ཆི་ litsi 'pear', ཁམ་བུ་ *khambu* 'peach', མངར་རིས་ཁམ་བུ་ *ngari khambu* 'apricot' also called ཆུ་ལི་ *čuli* (in the Western regions), སྟག་ཁ་ *tarkha* 'walnut'. In some areas, such as Kongpo and Kham, one finds many varieties of apples and pears. The western regions of Ngari, Baltistan and Ladakh are famous for their varieties of apricots. Walnuts are also emblematic of the Tibetic areas and are found in most places. The name for 'walnut' which is derived from CT སྟག་ཁ་ *STAR.KHA* is found in nearly all regions (see the HCTL, chap. 12).

Tibetic ethnic groups are usually fond of ཤ་མོ་ *shamo* 'mushrooms', which are abundant in regions such as Kham, Central Tibet, Sikkim or Bhutan. In the forest areas, people also eat ཟྭ་པོ་ *zapo* or ཟྭ་ཙྭ་ *zača* 'nettle' and ནགས་སྐྱེས་ *nagkye /naki/* 'fern' or སྟོན་ཞི་ *tönshi* as it is called in Bhutan (respectively in Dzongkha and Choča-ngača) or སྤྱང་གི་ལག་པ་ *čanggi lagpa* lit. 'wolf's hand' in Thewo (Gansu, China).

7. However, in various Tibetic areas, especially located in the south, *tsampa* is not always used to mean 'barley flour' but 'flour of crops,' which may include wheat, bean and even corn. It depends on the kind of the areal main crop.

8. Strictly speaking, *tsampa* is not completely equivalent to "roasted barley flour." In some regions, *tsampa* designates the flour of wheat as well as corn; in other words, what *tsampa* designates "will tsampa."

9. The choice of term depends on the area of usage. Other words are marginally found. Note that *zan* is often cooked. See the Lexicon, chap 12.

Some areas are very dry and desertic, whereas others are covered with forests, but in most Tibetic areas, two types of tree are emblematic: ལྕང་མ་ *čangma* 'willow', which is ubiquitous and ཤུག་པ་ *shugpa* 'juniper',[10] which is used among other things for fumigations together with fragrant herbs such as མཁན་པ་ *khänpa*. Other common trees include ཐང་ཤིང་ *thangshing* 'pine', སོམ་ཤིང་ *somshing* 'fir', བེར་དོ་ *berdo* 'oak', and in lower areas ཉུག་མ་ *nyugma* 'bamboo'.

In some lower areas at the margin of the Plateau and in the southern Himalayas, one can even find དགུན་འབྲུམ་ *gündrum* 'grapes' (lit. 'winter grapes'), རྫ་ཤིང་ *jashing* 'tea-tree', ཚ་ལུ་མ་ *tshaluma* 'orange', བ་དམ་ *badam* 'almond', and ཨམ་[11] 'mango' (or 'persimmon').

Concerning beverages, tea has a special place in the diet of Tibetic ethnic groups. There is a large variety of teas but 'butter tea' is frequent in various areas. It is prepared with butter (sometimes milk) and salt. This beverage receives various names depending on the regions: རྫ་སྲུབ་མ་ *ja subma* or རྫ་སྲུས་མ་ *ja süma* 'churned tea', དཀྲོག་རྫ་ *trogja* 'churned tea', སུ་རྫ་ *suja* 'churned tea' (in Bhutan), རྫ་ཁ་འཇེ་ *ja khante* 'bitter tea' (in Ladakh), ཡ་ཡུ་རྫ་ *payu ja* 'salt tea' (in Baltistan) or བོད་རྫ་ *böja* 'Tibetan tea'. The other frequently encountered types of tea are རྫ་མངར་མོ་ *ja ngarmo* 'sweet [milk] tea' sometimes called in some Kham dialects རྫ་དཀར་པོ་ *ja karpo* [karo] 'white tea'; རྫ་ཐང་ *jathang* 'plain black tea' and in the region of Amdo འོ་རྫ་ *oja* 'salt milk tea'.

Another important element of the diet in many Tibetic areas is ཆང་ *chang*, an alcoholic beverage made of barley more specifically called རྣ་ལས་ཆང་ *nä-chang*. But chang may be made of other cereals and one encounters འབྲས་ཆང་ *drä-chang* 'rice chang', ཨ་ཇོམ་གི་ཆང་ *ashom-gi chang* 'corn chang', etc. In the southern Himalayas (in Jiri, Solukhumbu, Kalimpong, etc.), chang may be made of millet ཐྲེ་ཆང་ *thre-chang* and drunk with a straw from a container called གཏོང་པ་ *tongpa*. A stronger beverage called ཨ་རཀ་ *arak* or རག་ཁུ་ *ragkhu* is also highly appreciated. It is usually made of rice or barley, but in some areas, such as Kinnaur, it may be prepared with fruits (apple, apricot, etc.).

10. Both the names *changma* and *shugpa* are found in nearly all the Tibetic languages.
11. The written form is ཨ་ཏྲ་ *A.MRA.*

Many cultivators and samadrok (see above) also have some livestock such as བོང་བུ་ *bongbu* 'donkeys' or ཀུ་རུ་ *kuru* (in Kham), རྡལ་ *drel* 'mule', གླང་ *lang* 'ox', ཨ་ *ba* 'cows', ར་ ra 'goats', རྟ་ *ta* 'horses' and མཇོ་ *dzo*, the last being hybrids of yak and cow. They also usually own བྱ་རྡེ་ *jade* 'chicken'. In relatively low areas of Kham, Kongpo and Amdo or the southern Himalayas, in Bhutan and Sikkim, farmers also raise ཕག་པ་ *phagpa* 'pigs' (or simply ཕག་ *phag*, see the HCTL). The breeding of pigs is rarely found in Central Tibet or in the western regions of Ngari (in Tibet), Ladakh, and Spiti. It is also not present in the pastoralist regions and, due to religious prohibitions against pork, in the areas inhabited by Muslims in Baltistan, Ladakh and Amdo.

Pastoralists breed various species of livestock such as ལུག་ *lug* 'sheep', ར་ *ra* 'goat', གཡག་ *yak* '(male) yak', འབྲི་ *dri* 'female yak' (also called གནག་ *nak* in some areas), མཇོ་ *dzo* and མཇོ་མོ་ *dzomo* 'female *dzo*'. In Bhutan farmers also breed བ་མེན་ *bamen* 'mithun' (crossbreed between wild Indian ox and domestic cow). The wealthy pastoralists usually breed རྟ་ *ta* 'horses'.

The pastoralists do not cultivate fields and rely mostly for their nutritional needs on meat and diary products. They also buy tsampa, cabbages, potatoes, beans and rice from the markets.

Dairy products are important in the diet of the various Tibetic ethnic groups. They include འོ་མ་ *oma* 'milk' of cows, *dri*, *dzomo* and goats, མར་ *mar* 'butter', དར་བ་ *dara* 'curd', as well as various types of ཆུར་བ་ *chura* 'cheese' and ཞོ་ *zho* 'yoghurt'. On the highlands, a wild crop སྤྲོ་མ་ *droma* 'silverweed (*Potentilla anserina L.*)' is often included in the seasonal diet.

Meat is also an important part of the diet of pastoralists and to a much lesser extent of cultivators. In most areas, people eat ལུག་ཤ་ *lug-sha* 'mutton' and ཚག་ཤ་ *tshag-sha* or གཡག་ཤ་ *yak-sha* 'yak meat'. In many agricultural areas, one will find བྱ་ཤ་ *ja-sha* 'chicken', ར་ཤ་ *ra-sha* 'goat meat' and sometimes གླང་ཤ་ *lang-sha* 'beef' (in some areas of Nepal and India, such as Himachal Pradesh, the consumption of yak or cow is forbidden). In Bhutan and in eastern Tibet, particularly in Kham, Kongpo and Amdo, people eat ཕག་ཤ་ *phag-sha* 'pork', while the consumption of pork is not traditional in Central and Western Tibet, Ladakh or Spiti. Although fish is abundant in some lakes

and rivers of the Plateau, ཉ་ཤ་ *nya-sha* 'fish' is rarely eaten and is not popular among ethnic groups of the Tibetic area. There are some exceptions such as Chushur (in Central Tibet), Kongpo and southern Kham populations of Yunnan (see Lange, 2010). The euphemism ཆུའི་ལ་ཕུག་ *chüi laphuk* 'water turnip' is used for 'fish'. The reluctance to eat fish may be related to the belief in nagas, spirits who mostly live in the water.

A certain number of wild animals of the Tibetic area, including endemic species, were traditionally hunted for their meat or for their skins. However, the influence of Buddhism has limited hunting activities and nowadays, most of these species are protected: འབྲོང་ *drong* 'wild yak', རྐྱང་ *kyang* 'onager, wild ass', འདྲེ་མོང་ *dremong* 'Tibetan bear', དོམ་ *dom* 'black bear', སྐྱིན་ *kyin* 'ibex' (especially in western areas: Spiti, Ladakh, Baltistan), ནགས་བ་ *nawa* 'bharal or blue sheep', རྒོད་པ་ *gowa* 'gazel', མཚོད་ *tsö* 'antelope', ཤྭ་བ་ *shawa* 'deer, stag', ཉག་ *nyän* 'argali' (type of wild sheep), ཕྱི་བ་ *chiwa* 'marmot', སྒམ་ *sam* 'otter', རི་ཕག་ *riphak* or ཕག་རྒོད་ *phaggö* 'wild boar', འབྲོང་གྱིམཚེ་ *drong gyimtse* or རྭ་རྒྱ་ *ragya* 'takin' or 'gnu goat' (the national animal of Bhutan), སྟག་ *tak* 'tiger', གཟིག་ *zik* 'snow leopard', གསའ་ *sa* 'snow leopard', གཡི་ (དཀྱི་) *yi* 'linx', གུང་ *gung* 'leopard cat', and སྤྲ་ *tra* or སྤྲེའུ་ *treu* 'monkey' (macaques, langurs, etc.). In northern Amdo and in the Nubra valley (Ladakh), one also finds ཉ་མོང་ *ngamong* 'camel' pronounced *rngabong* in Ladakh.

Some of the skins (such as tiger, dremong or leopard skins) were traditionally used as carpets in wealthy families or used as cloths ornaments (particularly tiger, otter, monkey, and leopard skin), but since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Dalai Lama as well as other religious leaders have urged followers to abandon this ancient custom, for obvious Buddhist and ecological reasons.

Coming back to diet, a few spices are widely used in some Tibetic regions, the most popular being གཡེར་མ་ *yerma* 'Sichuan pepper (*Zanthoxylum*)' (other terms are attested, see the HCTL), སི་ཞེན་ *sipen* or དམར་ཙ་ *martsa* 'chilli' and ག་སྨུག་ *gamuk* 'ginger' (བཅའ་ག་ chazga in Ladakh). In the southern Himalayas, particularly in Sikkim and Bhutan, ལེན་རྗེ་ *lenji* 'cardamon' is also very popular.

Medicinal herbs called སྨན་རྩྭ *mäntsa* play an important role in the economy and in the cultural tradition of most Tibetic areas. They are used in traditional Tibetan medicine. The collection of cordyceps sinensis, called དབྱར་རྩྭ་དགུན་འབུ་ *yartsa günbu*, which is found on the high pastures, brings substantial revenues (sometimes the main revenue) to many people.

A traditional source of income for the pastoralists is the production of wool of various types: བལ་ *bäl* 'sheep wool', ཇིད་པ་ *tsipa* 'yak hair' used to make the pastoralists' black tents, ཁུ་ལུ་ *khulu* 'yak wool', and ལེ་སྣུ་ *lena* 'goat wool' or 'pashmina'.

Traditionally during the winter seasons the pastoralists transported the salt from salt lakes and exchanged it with farmers for grains. The cattle breeders who form salt caravans are called ཚྭ་པ་ *tshapa*. Some of these traditional activities (the production of salt and pashmina) have either disappeared or declined in the past decades.

Despite the geographic and biological diversity across the Plateau and the Himalayas, the various regions of the Tibetic area traditionally share many sociocultural and economic features in a number of fields such as language, social structure, food, architecture, and medicine, etc. Additionally all the Tibetic groups share a common adaptation to high altitude.

3.2. *Religious traditions*

Let us now briefly consider the religious traditions across the region.

Even though Tibetan Buddhism is dominant, one should not assume that it is a religion common to all Tibetic ethnic groups. Within the Tibetic speaking area, one encounters a great variety of religious traditions.

Aside from Buddhism, the main religion, one also finds Bön, Islam and, although in a marginal way, Hinduism and Christianity are also found on the Tibetan High Plateau or at its periphery.

Buddhism and Bön

Tibetan Buddhism, called ནང་པ་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཆོས་ *nangpa sanggyäpä chö*, or simply ནང་པའི་ཆོས་ *nangpä chö*, and also referred to as Vajrayana རྡོ་རྗེ་ཐེག་པ *dorje thegpa*, is the dominant religion of the Tibetic area. It is usually divided into four main schools called

གྲུབ་མཐའ་ *drubta* in Tibetan: *Nyingmapa* རྙིང་མ་པ་, *Kagyüpa* བཀའ་བརྒྱུད་པ།, *Sakyapa* ས་སྐྱ་པ་ and *Gelugpa* དགེ་ལུགས་པ་ (called དགའ་ལྡན་པ་ *Gandänpa* in Amdo). Additionally, one also finds the *Jonangpa* ཇོ་ནང་པ་ and the *Kadampa*[12] བཀའ་གདམས་པ་ schools.

Hundreds of large monasteries are found accross the Tibetic areas (see e.g. Goldstein & Kapstein 1998; Kapstein 2006). Although the four main schools are represented across the entire Tibetic area, many regions have developed specific ties with one or two schools in particular. For example, in Bhutan, Sikkim and the Sherpa area, there are essentially Nyingmapa and Kagyüpa monasteries.

The Bön religion or གཡུང་དྲུང་བོན་ *yungdrung bön* and Buddhism have had such a mutual influence on each other that Bön is sometimes considered as a branch of Tibetan Buddhism. The Fifth Dalai Lama recognized Bön as one Tibet's official religions (Richardson 1998; Karmay & Nagano 2003; Beckwith 2012).

Bön monasteries, although much less numerous than the Buddhist ones, are also found in all the Tibetan territories, such as Ü-Tsang, Tö Ngari, Kham, Khyungpo, Nagchu, Amdo, Gyälrong, and even outside China in the Nepalese Districts of Mustang and Dölpo. For a detailed account of Bön monasteries and Bön religion, see the publications on Bön studies edited by Samten Karmay and Yasuhiko Nagano (2000, 2003).

Throughout the whole area, there are also various types of practionners who perform curative techniques, divinations, medium trances, etc. These practitionners are called by various names, including ལྷ་པ་ *lhapa* or ལྷ་བབས་ *lhabap*, དཔའ་བོ་ *pawo* ◊ འབོང་ཐིང་ *bongthing* (in Sikkim), ◊ བོན་པོ་ *bönpo* (but not referring to the organized Bön religion). These practitioners have sometimes been designated as "shamans" by foreigners. (See e.g. Geoffrey 1993.) However, they do not belong to any recognized religious body, except, as it is often the case, insofar as they and their followers adhere to Buddhism or Bön.[13]

12. Kadampa refers to a historical school of Buddhism (eleventh century) which led to the creation of the Gelugpa school as well as to a modern school, called New Kadampa, which developed in the end of the twentieth century.

13. We are thankful to M. Kapstein for his comments on these practitioners.

Islam

Islam called ཁ་ཆེ་ཆོས་ལུགས་ *khache chöluk* is mainly found in the northwest and the northeast of the Tibetic area. The term *khache* which in many regions is a general term to designate Muslims is derived from the name Kashmir. (See e.g. Sheikh 2010; Berzin 2019.)

In Baltistan and in the Kargil district of Ladakh, Muslims are mainly Shi'ah བལ་ཏི་ཨི་ཡ་ *Balti Shi'ah* but there is also a minority of Nurbakhshi Shi'ah རྒྱུད་བག་ཨི་ and even Sunni Muslims called specifically ཁ་ཆེ་ *khache* in Ladakh. They are also found in Leh and Padum (Zangskar) and in a few villages of Central Ladakh (Chushot, Shey, Thiksey) and Sham (Achinathang). Given the Buddhist prohibition of killing animals (but not of eating meat), the butchers in Ladakh and even Lhasa were usually Muslims (from Kashmir and Baltistan), who were invited as butchers. Intermarriage between Muslims and Buddhists in Ladakh was fairly common until the end of the twentieth century.

Another region with a significant population of Muslims is located at the northeast border of the Tibetic area in Amdo (see Hille et al. 2015). This community corresponds to Chinese Hui Muslims locally called ཧོར་ཧོར་ *HWOS-HWOS* locally pronounced /xwexwe/ or ཧོར་རིགས་ *HWOS-RIGS* (alt. ཧུའེ་རིགས་ *HU'E.RIGS*). Some elders of this community speak Amdo as their native language.

In Lhasa, two Muslim communities are found: ལྷ་ས་ཁ་ཆེ་ *lhasa khache*, who are originally from Kashmir or neighboring regions and considered Tibetans, and the Hui Chinese or རྒྱ་ཁ་ཆེ་ *gya khache* also known as Horpaling who are of Chinese origin.[14] The Tibetan capital has two main mosques representing these two Muslim communities.

Christianity

Christianity ཡེ་ཤུ་ཆོས་ལུགས་ *yeshu chöluk* exists at the margin of the Tibetan Plateau or in the southern Himalayas. It was introduced into Western Tibet and in Ü-Tsang during the seventeenth century and into Ladakh in the nineteenth century. A church

14. The native language of the *Lhasa Khache* is Tibetan (see also 3.3.4) while the native language of Hui Chinese and Horpaling (chin: Hebalin) is Chinese.

was even built in Lhasa during the eighteenth century. The first Christians were Roman Catholics but later, Protestant missionaries also arrived in the region.

Incidently, the research and publications of some Christian missionaries, such as Heinrich August Jäschke and Auguste Desgodins, made pioneering contributions to Tibetan philology (see Jäschke 1881, and Desgodins 1899).

Before World War II, some wealthy Tibetan families would send their children to Christian colleges in Darjeeling or Kalimpong. This is still true in the southern Tibetic speaking areas of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.

Scattered small communities of Christians are still found among the Tibetans especially in southern Kham. In the Tibetic area outside China, a few Christians are also found among various ethnic groups such as the Ladakhis and the Lhopos of Sikkim (see e.g. Houston, 1991).

Hinduism

There are very few communities speaking Tibetic languages who are Hindus. Some Jirel people in Nepal are followers of Hinduism རིན་དུ་ཅོས་ལུགས་ *hindu chöluk*. But generally their practice includes elements derived from Hinduism, as well as Buddhism or various other pratices (Sidky et al. 2000). Tibetic communities of Garzha in Lahul and Khunu Töt in upper Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh, India) are also in close contact with the Hindu surrounding populations and influenced by Hinduism.

Various types of "syncretism" or mixed religious practices, including elements of Buddhism, Bön, Hinduism or Islam are attested in various regions of the Tibetic area. Sheikh (2010: 226-228) recalls for example that in Kuksho, a village of the Purik area (Ladakh), still in the 1970s,

> "most of the men [...] had combined Buddhist and Muslim names, such as Rahim Tsering, Ali Tashi, Namgyal Musa. The elder brother of the family received a Muslim name, but almost all the women had Buddhist names. In the wake of a severe illness of a child, on the advice of a priest, the parents would change the name of the child from a Buddhist to a Muslim one and vice versa."

Sheik (ibid.) mentions the case of two brothers, one who was a monk and the other who had performed *haj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) and adds: "the strange aspect of their

relationship was that the two brothers shared a polyandrous marriage (see *zasum*, 3.1)." However, in the past fifty years, these combined Muslim-Buddhist practices have almost entirely disappeared.

3.3. *Sociolinguistic background*

Various social and political factors have contributed to interactions among the various dialects. Of these factors, three probably play a central role: monastic networks, aristocratic and royal families and the way of life of pastoralists as opposed to that of cultivators.

3.3.1. The dialects of pastoralists and cultivators

In many areas of the Tibetan Plateau and in a marginal way in the southern Himalayas, one can distinguish two sociolinguistic subgroups of dialect: that of the pastoralists and that of the cultivators (or agropastoralists). The first set of dialects are referred to as འབྲོག་སྐད་ (*'BROG.SKAD*) *drogkä* and the second as *rongkä* རོང་སྐད་ (*RONG.SKAD*) or *zhingpä kä* ཞིང་པའི་སྐད་. There is traditionally no special term to designate the dialects spoken by agropastoralists ས་མ་འབྲོག་ *samadrok*, who are often assimilated into the cultivators.

In each region (see 3.1), the pastoralists speak dialects that differ from the dialects of neighboring cultivators or agropastoralits.

The idea that cattle breeders speak "the same language" all over Tibet is very widespread. In fact, this is reflected in the following saying: འབྲོག་སྐད་ལ་ཁྱད་པར་མེད། རོང་སྐད་ཡུལ་སྐད་མང་། *'BROG.SKAD-LA KHYAD.PAR MED, RONG.SKAD YUL.SKAD MANG* "There is no difference among the speech of pastoralists; there are many dialects among the speech of cultivators." As we will see this view does not reflect the linguistic reality.

Such a view is probably due to the fact that the cattle-breeders traditionally shared a "nomadic way of life." However, from a linguistic point of view, it is not correct to say that the various pastoralist communities would speak the same language.

Depending on the areas, *drogkä* འབྲོག་སྐད་ can be considered as independent groups or as subgroups of dialects and even in some cases, simply as sociolinguistic varieties (see the classification in Chapter 9). For example, the *drogkä* dialects of Amdo constitute various groups of Amdo. In Ladakh, the dialects of the pastoralist communities referred

to as *Jangpa* ཇང་པ་ (alt. Changpa) are tonal dialects and thus very different from the archaic dialects of cultivators of the lower Indus valley.

Kham pastoralists cannot successfully communicate with Amdo pastoralists and Tö Ngari pastoralists have also trouble communicating with Kham pastoralists.

Some pastoralists of Nagchu have settled in the Nagtshang area and even further away in the Ngari region of Western Tibet. They often have Tö pastoralists as neighbors on the steppes and share a similar way of nomadic life. However, from a linguistic point of view, the Nagchu (or Hor) pastoralists speak a dialect closely related to northern Kham whereas the Tö pastoralists speak a dialect related to the Tsang and Ü dialects as well as to the dialects of the Ladakh Jangthang and Spiti.

In Amdo, two clearly distinct types of pastoralist dialects are found (see Chapter 9): the innovative and the archaic dialects. Thus there is much variation within the pastoralist dialects (see Chapter 9).

It is generally true in Amdo, Nagchu and Ngari, that the dialects of pastoralists have preserved more archaic features than those of the cultivators in these areas. However, the same is not true in Ladakh, where the Jangpa's dialect is less conservative than the dialects of Shamskat spoken by cultivators in the Lower Indus valley. The cultivator dialects of Baltistan and Purik (together with Amdo pastoralists) have preserved the most conservative features of the Tibetic family. As we have seen earlier, in Baltistan and Purik, /bloqpa/ (< *'BROG.PA*) does not refer to 'pastoralists' and designate native speakers of 'Brokskat' (< CT *'BROG.SKAD*) which is an Indo-Iranian Dardic language closely related to Shina, or a variety of Shina which has been greatly influenced by the neighboring Tibetic languages.

In Bhutan, the pastoralist dialects of Lakha, Dur and Merak-Sakteng are more innovative than the cultivator dialect of Tsamang (Choča-ngača).

The pastoralist groups of dialects are not only characterised by the phonological features mentioned above but also by grammatical and lexical peculiarities.

For example, in many Hor and northern Kham pastoralist dialects, the existential verbs for 'to be' are derived from གདའ་ *GDA'* and འོད་ *'OD* (an archaic form of ཡོད་ *YOD*)

whereas cultivator dialects tend to use forms derived from འདུག་ *'DUG* or སྣང་ *SNANG* and ཡོད་ *YOD*. Likewise, 'to see' is often derived from རིག་ *RIG* (< CT 'to know', 'to perceive') in many pastoralists dialects whereas the CT root མཐོང་ *MTHONG* is used in cultivator and agropastoralist dialects.

All the above evidence shows that the socio-economic distinction between pastoralists and cultivators has significant linguistic consequences. Furthermore, this distinction is clearly correlated to the geography since pastoralists live on grasslands that are higher than the cultivators' lands. Thus one can say that the *Tibetan linguistic map* depends directly on elevation as a key factor. The picture is much more complicated, however since in some regions, such as Rebkong, there are historical cases of cattle breeders becoming cultivators (Jangbu Dorje Tsering, pers. comm.).

Apart from linguistics, the social and cultural differences between the various groups of cattle breeders and cultivators are quite significant. They include housing, clothing, professional activities, physical appearance, food, language, mentality, as well as various traditions (wedding customs, handicraft, etc.).

3.3.2. Monasteries as cultural melting pots

It is clear that monastery networks have played and still play a crucial sociolinguistic role in all the Tibetic areas.

After the fall of the Tibetan Empire, there was never again a powerful state that had control over the entirety of Tibetan-speaking areas. From the end of the ninth century, the territory once belonging to the empire became divided into a number of small kingdoms, principalities, and even estates (see Stein 1962) with the notable exception of the western regions (Ladakh and Western Tibet) and the emergence of the Ngari Korsum kingdoms (ninth century–fifteenth century). This situation lasted until the seventeenth century when the Fifth Dalai Lama managed to reunify Central Tibet. However, even at the height of its strength, during the reigns of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Thirteenth Dalai Lama (first third of the twentieth century), the Lhasa government did not control Amdo nor the major part of Kham. Despite political divisions, religion maintained a certain unity and played a fundamental role in linguistic development. In fact, throughout the entire Tibetan-speaking area, each of the major

schools of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as the Bön religion, established their own network of monasteries. Monasteries belonging to the same school had and still have strong ties, regardless of the distance between them. This meant that prominent lamas or monks would visit and teach in the various monasteries of Ü-Tsang, Amdo, Kham, Ladakh, Bhutan, and Sikkim, etc. The constant flow of lamas, monks and pilgrims had and ongoing impact on the linguistic situation, since people speaking various Tibetic languages were living for months or years in the same monastery and thus were forced to communicate and to adapt to other dialects or languages. In some areas this situation remains unchanged even today.

The case of Lhasa deserves special attention. For centuries, the capital of Tibet has been, and to a certain extent still is, a major pilgrimage center for Vajrayāna Buddhists.[15] Until 1959, the main monasteries of central Tibet, especially the གདན་ས་གསུམ་ *Dänsa sum* 'three seats' (Dräpung, Sera and Gandän) had monks coming from various regions of Tibet and beyond (such as Ladakh, Bhutan, Mongolia, Buriatia, and Kalmykia, etc.). Although the monks quarters within the main Gelugpa monastic seats were divided into various ཁམས་ཚན་ *khamtshän* (sometimes spelled as ཁང་ཚན་ *KHANG.TSHAN*) or "colonies" according to their regional origin, communication was common between the monks of all regions. The language spoken in the great monasteries of *Dräpung* འབྲས་སྤུངས་, *Sera* སེ་ར་ and *Gandän* དགའ་ལྡན་ was a mixture of Literary and Central Tibetan influenced by all the possible dialects. In the main Nyingmapa monasteries, the dialectal "melting pot" was even stronger due to the absence of *khamtshän* in this school.

Lhasa being one of the centers of pilgrimage, as well as the main political and economic city, continually attracted people from all over the Plateau. Thus, the high number of migrants, speaking various dialects especially at the time of the New Year Festival and the Great Prayer Festival, has certainly had an impact on the Lhasa dialect.[16]

15. Since the 2008 Tibetan riots in Lhasa, the Chinese government has implemented various new policies that impose restrictions on settling and traveling in the TAR and prevent many Tibetans from other areas from journeying to the Tibetan capital.

16. This without taking into account the additional factor of linguistic borrowings from Mongolian, Sanskrit, Hindi, Chinese and Uighur.

While the religious factor has often contributed to the tightening of relations between various dialects, it has sometimes played the opposite role. One clear example of dialectal distinction based on religious parameters is the བཟང་རི་ *Zangri* village in Nyemo County between Lhasa and Zhikatse. The eponymous Bönpo monastery of Zangri was founded in the eleventh century (see Karmay & Nagano 2003) and became an important Bön center in Tsang, with hundreds of monks. Whereas all the Buddhist villages of Nyemo county use the verb ◊ འབའ་ / ʼba/ or ◊ འབོ་ / ʼbo/ for 'to be', only the Zangri village in Nyemo makes use of /reʔ/ derived from the Classical verb རེད་ *RED* as in Lhasa. All of 114 Households of Zangri are Bönpos. It is clear that this important linguistic peculiarity for the verb 'to be' is due to the religious identity of this community.

Another clear example of sociolinguistic factor driven by the religious affiliation is the case of the Khyungpo dialect spoken in Tengchen and Bachen (TAR) on a high plateau. The Khyungpo dialect is very peculiar, and the Thromtshang variety is by far the most astonishing. Although the Khyungpo dialect is a variety of Kham, it bears some very archaic features that resemble some Amdo pastoralist dialects. It is also spoken by a community of herders, who are followers of the Bön religion. Khyungpo is the seat of one of the biggest Bönpo monasteries in Tibet.

3.3.3. The relationships of Aristocratic families across the region

For many centuries, aristocratic families in Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh or Baltistan, to name a few, have had significant ties with aristocratic families in Lhasa, Tsang and Ngari. Because of the prestige of these Tibetan families and their political roles, Central Tibetan, and particularly the Lhasa dialect, has lent words even to the most remote dialects.

Direct relationships between aristocratic families located in peripheral areas were also common. For example, the royal families of Spiti and Baltistan had various bonds with the Ladakhi royal family. Ties between aristocratic families of Bhutan and Ladakh are also historically documented. These relationships may have had some impact on the linguistic situation.

Various terms are used to refer to kings and rulers. Apart from རྒྱལ་པོ་ *Gyälpo* 'king' and བཙན་པོ་ *Tsänpo* 'emperor' (lit. 'the powerful', a term used for the rulers of the Tibetan Empire), terms such as རྗོ་ *Jo* 'lord' and ནོ་ནོ་ *Nono* are attested in Ladakh, Spiti and Baltistan. The term བློན་པོ་ *Lönpo* lit. 'minister' is also widespread.

In some areas, such as Kham, there were also some principalities or vassals states with their own *Gyälpo* རྒྱལ་པོ་ 'king' or 'chieftain', such as Yülshül, Derge or Nangchen. These small kingdoms also had aristocratic families but they were independent from the ruling aristocratic families of Central Tibet.

3.3.4. Respectful register

As Mélac and Tournadre (2021: 185) noted:

> "In all the world's languages, there are words, constructions, terms of address and/or grammatical paradigms that encode respect towards the addressee, as well as the things and people that the speaker refers to (Ide 1989; Agha 1993, *inter alia*). However, several Asian languages possess an honorific domain that is more pervasive and systematised."

The respectful registers attested in some Tibetic languages are sophisticated systems comparable to those found in Japanese and Korean (Okamoto 1999; Strauss & Eun 2005, *inter alia*). Several scholars have studied the Tibetan honorific system (Kitamura 1974; DeLancey 1998; Tournadre & Dorje 1998, 2003; Tshewang Tamding 2000; Denwood 1999; Mélac & Tournadre 2021). It is so developped that there are dictionaries devoted solely to the honorific lexicon (see e.g. *BSOD.NAMS RDO.RJE* et al. 1993; *RDO.DGON BSANG.BDAG RDO.RJE & LHUN.PAR BSTAN.'DZIN LHA.'DZOMS* 2002; Tshewang Tamding 2000).

The respectful register (a.k.a politeness register), called in Classical Tibetan ཞེས་ '*zhesa*', corresponds to a formal and polite way of speaking found in Literary Tibetan as well as in many Tibetic languages and dialects. It is probably related to the development of the Tibetan aristocracy in the period of the Tibetan Empire. The term ཞེ་སྡ་ *ZHE.SA* is attested at the time of the empire under the form རྗེ་སྡ་ *RJE.SA* 'deference' (Chung Tsering 2000). The word ཞེ་སྡ་ *ZHE.SA* or its variant ཞེ་སོ་ *ZHE.SO* (in Sikkim) appears in most languages but in Ladakh, the term ཆེ་རྟགས་ *CHE.RTAGS* lit. 'sign of greatness' is used.

The respectful register is quite developed in the dialects of Ü, Tsang, Lhokha, Ladaks, Dzongkha and, to a lesser extent, in Balti, Sherpa, Lhoke, Spiti or Khunu. It was generally considered that the respectful register was very limited in northern Kham and Amdo; however, recent studies have revealed the existence of a respectful register which developed in a completely different way from Central Tibet in the pastoralist speech of Amdo (Tsering Samdrup & Suzuki 2019) and some varieties spoken in the southern and eastern Kham areas. As we will see below, it is true that respectful registers attested in Kham and Amdo are more restricted than those of Central Tibet. However, it is more accurate to say that most Tibetic languages (if not all) have some kind of respectful register: these registers differ in their significance, ways of functioning and frequency of usage.

We can generally distinguish *two main types of respectful register*: the 'aristocratic type', attested in many Central, Southern and Western languages, but also to a much lesser extent in the Eastern languages, and the 'pastoralist type', found in Amdo and Kham. The first type is always related to the existence of aristocratic families, e.g. in Lhasa but also in other cities, such as Zhikatse, Gyantse, Thimphu (Bhutan), Gangtok (Sikkim), Leh (Ladakh) or Skardo (Baltistan). As we have seen in section 3.3.3, these aristocratic families had ties for many centuries, and this explains why the *zhesa* they use exhibits many similarities. It is, however, important to note that the use of *zhesa* in the Tibetan capital, and more generally in the Tibetic languages, is not restricted to aristocratic families and may be used largely by the clergy and cadres as well as by merchants or cultivators. It is also interesting to note that Lhasa Khache, the Tibetan Muslims of the capital, usually have a very good knowledge of *zhesa*. Another characteristic of *zhesa* is that it is not only used to indicate the relationship to a higher social status. It may be used between friends and, at least in Central Tibet, is often used inside the family and by married couples.

The first type of respectful register, the 'aristocratic one', essentially consists of two main categories. Note that the Tibetan linguistic terms we use below were proposed by Dogonpa Sangda Dorje (see Tournadre & Sangda Dorje 1998):

a) honorific མཐོ་མཚོན་བའི་ཞེ་ས་ *MTHO.SA MTSHON-PA'I ZHE-SA*

The honorific (abbreviated as 'H') is used in reference to others (in the 2nd and 3rd person) and may not be used by the speaker to refer to him or herself (1st person). In the case of a monovalent verb (or when only one human participant occurs in the clause), the honorific form indicates that the Agent or the Undergoer (which excludes the speaker) is treated by the speaker as having a high position or in the case of bivalent /trivalent verb, indicates that the Agent is *treated by the speaker as having a higher position* than the Patient or the Recipient (when they refer to human beings).

b) humilific དམའ་ས་བཟུང་བའི་ཞེ་ས་ *DMA'.SA BZUNG BA'I ZHE-SA*

The humilific (abbreviated as 'h') is used with the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons, but when using the respectful register, the humilific is mandatory with the 1st person. In the case of a monovalent verb (or when only one human participant occurs in the clause), the humilific form indicates that the Agent or Undergoer *is treated by the speaker as having a low position*, and in the case of a bivalent verb (or trivalent verb), the Agent is treated as having a lower position than the Patient or the Recipient (when they refer to human beings).

In some occasions, these two categories may combine to create a single humilific-honorific form (abbreviated as 'hH'). དམའ་ས་མཐོ་ས་གཉིས་ཀ་མཚོན་བའི་ཞེ་ས་ *DMA'.SA MTHO.SA GNYIS.LA MTSHON.PA'I ZHE-SA.* The **humilific-honorific** form (hH) indicates that the Agent is treated by the speaker as having a high position but a position lower than the Patient or the Recipient.

Ex. སྐུ་ཞབས་ལག་ས་ཀྱིས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལ་ཕྱག་དེབ་ཕུལ་གནང་པ་རེད་ *SKU.ZHABS LAGS-KYIS RIN.PO.CHE LA PHYAG.DEB **PHUL**(h)-**GNANG**(H)-PA.RED*. The venerable monk (H) has **offered** (h) a book to Rinpoche (H, title of a reincarnated lama).

In some languages (e.g. Lhasa, Zhikatse), the honorific may further be subdivided into two categories: 'usual honorific' ནམ་རྒྱུན་གྱི་ཞེ་ས་ *NAM.RGYUN-GYI ZHE-SA*, and 'high honorific' ཞེ་ས་ཤིན་ཏུ་མཐོ་པོ་ *ZHE-SA SHIN.TU MTHO.PO*. However, this differentiation between usual honorific and high honorific is not present in all the languages that have developed zhesa.

In order to speak in a formal, polite and respectful way, the speaker has essentially two options: s/he uses honorifics (H) or high honorifics (HH). In both cases, the respectful register will include humilific forms (h). It is interesting to note that while there are many honorific verbs, there are essentially only four humilific verbs: མཇལ་ *MJAL* 'to meet', བཅར་ *BCAR* 'to go', ཕུལ་ *PHUL* 'to offer', ཞུ་ *ZHU* 'to say, eat, drink, do'. (Robin, pers. comm. 2020).

Some examples of honorific, high honorific and humilific words in Common Tibetan are provided in the chart III.1 (see below).

The appropriate form of the register (h, H, HH, hH) "for a given linguistic item is chosen according to the social status of the participants mentioned in the sentence (explicit or implicit) with respect to the speaker. The register does not only refer to people, *but also to their spheres, that is, the objects and other entities that are related to them.*" (Mélac & Tournadre 2021: 186).

Honorific forms (H) are found for verbs, nouns, personal pronouns, adjectives, auxiliaries, terms of address and politeness formulas. High honorific forms (HH) are also found for these categories except maybe for the adjectives. Humilific forms (h) concern verbs, personal pronouns and some politeness formulas, but they do not apply to nouns. The combination of humilific and honorific forms (hH) are restricted to compound verbs.

The *zhesa* system in Lhasa is very sophisticated and is to a certain extent comparable to the Japanese 敬語 *keigo*. The morphological system of the Japanese respectful register is principally divided into four categories: honorific or exalted form, humilific or humble form, polite form, and mannerly word (Kamei et al. 1996: 324-325; Minami 1987).[17]

17. The first two categories are called 'respect forms' (respectful register towards reference), whereas the last two are 'speech levels of deference' (respectful register towards addressee) (cf. Martin 1964). Honorific forms can be divided further into supreme honorifics (reserved for the imperial family members) and others. As with its Tibetan homologue, the Japanese respectful register also uses suppletive forms of the verbs. For example, the word formation for the respectful register of the verb 'to

CHART III.1. – Examples of respectful and ordinary registers in Common Tibet

Zhesa / respectful register			*Ordinary register*	*Meaning*
High honorific	Honorific	Humilific	plain	
ཆིབས་བསྒྱུར། *CHIB.BSGYUR*	ཕེབས། *PHEBS*	བཅར་ *BCAR*	འགྲོ་/ ཡོང་/ ཕྱིན། *'GRO/YONG/PHYIN*	'go', 'come'
སྩལ། *STSAL*	གནང་། *GNANG*	ཕུལ་ *PHUL*	སྤྲད་ *SPRAD*	'give'
ཐུགས་དོ་མཁྱེན་ *THUGS.NGO MKHYEN*	དོ་མཁྱེན་ *NGO MKHYEN*	ཞལ་འཚོར *ZHAL.'TSHOR*	དོ་ཤེས་ *NGO SHES*	'know s.o'
	གསུང་ *GSUNG*	ཞུ་ *GSUNG*	ལབ་ / བཤད་ *LAB /BSHAD*	'tell, say'
ལྕགས་སྨིན། *LJAGS.SMIN* གསོལ་ཚིགས་ *GSOL TSHIGS*	ཞལ་ལག *ZHAL.LAG*		ཁ་ལག *KHA.LAG*	'food, meal'
གསེར་ཞལ་ *GSER.ZHAL* བཞིན་རས་ *BZHIN.RAS*	ཞལ་རས་ *ZHAL.RAS*		གདོང་པ་ *GDONG.PA*	'face'
	སྐུ་ *SKU*		ལུས་ *LUS*	'body'
	ཕྱག་ *PHYAG*		ལག་ *LAG*	'hand'
	ཆབ་ *CHAB*		ཆུ་ *CHU*	'water'
སྐུ་ཉིད། *SKU.NYID*	ཁྱེད། *KHYED*		རང་། ཁྱོད། *RANG/KHYOD*	'you'

do' involves derivational as well as suppletive forms or a combination of the two strategies: する suru 'do' (plain), される sareru 'do' (honorific; derivational), なさる nasaru 'do' (honorific; suppletive), いたす itasu 'do' (humilific; suppletive), します simasu 'do' (polite; derivational), なさいます nasaimasu 'do' (honorific polite; suppletive+derivational), いたします itasimasu 'do' (humilific polite; suppletive+derivational).

In the *zhesa* system, all the respectful categories can co-occur according to whom a speaker wants to express politeness (see ex. above). This is also the case for the Japanese *keigo*.[18]

Lhasa, being the nexus for both the Tibetan aristocracy and clergy, had a very developed *zhesa* vocabulary until the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). During this period the use of *zhesa* was prohibited because it was perceived as a 'class language'. Nowadays, *zhesa* is again in use, but 'broken honorific forms' ཞེ་སའི་རྐང་ཆག *zhesa kangchak* are often heard particularly in Common Tibetan. These broken honorific forms involve the mixture of honorific and non-honorific. Sometimes, unnecessary repetitions of honorific forms such as གསུང་གནང་ *GSUNG GNANG* (the honorific verb followed by an honorific auxiliary) whereas the honorific གསུང་ *GSUNG* is sufficient.[19]

As mentioned above, the respectful register of the first type extends to various word classes (verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, auxiliaries, etc.) and is particularly abundant in some domains. The vocabulary of the respectful register is mainly concerned with the human social sphere. It includes personal pronouns (for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons);[20] nouns indicating body parts, clothes, food, objects and some animals ('horse', 'dog'); various verbs related to oral, mental or physical activities, and a series of 'light verbs'. Some adjectives related to human activities or states may also have a specific honorific form (see Tournadre & Sangda Dorje 2003, 2009). In the various languages which have developed the 'aristocratic type' of respectful register, the form and the number of honorific and humilific words may vary.

18. 私は先生のお作りになったお料理をいただきました。
watasi=ha sensei=no otukuri=ni nat-ta o-ryouri=wo. itadaki-masi-ta
1=TOP teacher=GEN make(H)=CONJ do-PFT *MANNER*-dishes=ACC eat(h)-*POLITE*-PFT
'I ate(h; polite) the dishes(mannerly) that the teacher made(H)'

19. Again, it is interesting to note that this trend is also found in Japanese. Recently, the system of the Japanese respectful register has undergone some changes, such as the inclusion of *unnecessary* or *excessive* double-marked honorific forms. A formulation "honorific suppletive form + a derivational auxiliary" is one such usage, e.g., なさる *nasaru* 'do (H)' vs. なされる *nasareru* 'do (H)'; 召し上がる *mesiagaru* 'eat, drink (H)' vs. 召し上がられる *mesiagarareru* 'eat, drink (H)'. The latter form of each pair is considered incorrect usage for honorifics; nevertheless, they are sometimes used in oral communication.

20. Only some dialects such as Tsang and Spiti have a special humilific form for 'I'.

Here are some frequent honorific and humilific verbs (simple or compound forms) used in many Tibetic languages, particularly Ü, Tsang, Ladaks, Purik, Balti, Dzongkha and Lhoke:

▪ motion and posture verbs, such as ཕེབས་ *PHEBS* 'to go, come [H]' (Ü, Ts, Kh, Am, etc.), གཤེགས་ *GSHEGS* 'to go, come' 'to go, come, to sit [H]' (Ba), སྐྱོད་ *SKYOD* (La, Pur, Sp, etc.) 'to go, come [H]', ཐེགས་ *THEGS* 'to go' [H], བཅར་ *BCAR* (Ü, Ts) 'to go' [h], བཞེངས་ *BZHENGS* 'to stand up' [H], བཞུགས་ *BZHUGS* (Ü, Ts, NorthKh, La, Pur, Am) 'to go, come' [H], གཟིམས་ *GZIMS* 'to lie down, to sleep' [H] (Ü, Ts, NorthKh, La, Pur, Am).

▪ speech verbs, such as གསུང་ *GSUNG* (Ü, Ts, Am) 'to tell, to teach' [H], ཞུ་ *ZHU* 'to tell, to report' [h], བཀའ་མོལ་ཞུ་ *BKA'.MOL ZHU* (Ü, Ts) 'to talk' [h], མོལ་ *MOL* (La, Pur, Ba) 'to tell, to teach' [H].

▪ verbs of gift or action, such as གནང་ *GNANG* 'to give, to do' (hon), སྩོལ་ *STSOL* (Ü) 'to give' [HH], ◊ སལ་ *SAL* (La) < སྩལ་ *STSAL* [H], འབུལ་ *'BUL* (Ü, Ts, Kh, Am, Sh, La) 'to offer' [h], གསོལ་ *GSOL* 'to do offering rituals' [H]' (La), མཛད་ *MDZAD* (La) 'to do' [H], བསྐྱོན་ *BSKYON* (Ü) 'to make' [H], གཟིགས་ *GZIGS* (Ü, La) 'to buy' [H], བསྣམས་ *BSNAMS* (Ü, Ts, La) 'to take' [H], བཞེས་ *BZHES* (Ü, Ts, North Kh, Am) 'to take' [H], སྤྱན་འབུལ་ཞུ་ *SPYAN.'BUL ZHU* (Ü) 'to show' [H], ཐུགས་དོ་མཁྱེན་ *THUGS.NGO MKHYEN* (Ü, Ts) 'to know (s.o)' [H], ཞལ་འཚོར་ *ZHAL 'TSHOR* (Ü, Ts) 'to know (s.o)' [h].

▪ verbs of perception, such as གཟིགས་ *GZIGS* (Ü, Ts, La) 'to see, to look at, to read, etc.' [H], གསན་ *GSAN* 'to listen to, to hear' [H], མཇལ་ *MJAL* (La, Sh, Ü, Ts) 'to visit, see' [h].

▪ verbs related to eating and drinking: བཞེས་ *BZHES* (Ü, Ts, North Kh, Am), 'to eat, drink' [H] < 'to take', ཞུ་ *ZHU* 'to eat [h]' (La, Ba, Ü, Ts, North Kh, Am, Dz), མཆོད་ *MCHOD* (Ü, Ts) 'to eat, drink' [H] < *MCHOD* 'to offer', འདོན་ *'DON* (La) 'to eat, drink' [H] < 'to recite prayer' (La). In these two last cases, the honorific for eating and drinking is related to the Buddhist habit of offering and praying before meals.

▪ birth and death: གྲོང་ *GRONG* (Ü, Ts, Sh) 'to die' [H], གཤེགས་ *GSHEGS* (Ü, Ts)

'to die' [H]< 'to go', དགོངས་པ་རྫོགས་ *DGONGS.PA RDZOGS* 'to die' [H] lit. 'to complete the thought', ཞིང་ལ་ཕེབས་ *ZHING LA PHEBS* 'to die' [H], lit. 'to travel to the (Buddha's) fields', འཁྲུངས་ *'KHRUNGS* (Ü, Ts, La, Sh) 'to be born' [H].

The main roots used for honorific nouns include body parts:

- སྐུ་ *SKU* (Ü, Ts, Kh, Am, Dz, La) 'body' [H], ཕྱག་ *PHYAG* 'hand' [H], ཞབས་ *ZHABS* 'leg, foot' [H], དབུ་ *DBU* (Ü, Ts, Kh, Am, La) 'head' [H]', ཞལ་ *ZHAL* (Ü, Ts, La, etc.) 'mouth' [H], སྤྱན་ *SPYAN* (Ü, Ts, Am) 'eye' [H], ཤངས་ *SHANGS* (Ü, TS) 'nose' [H], སྣ་ཅོག་ *SNYAN.COG* 'ear' [H], ཐུགས་ *THUGS* 'heart, mind' [H], etc.

and terms related to food, drink or speech:

- ཆབ་ *CHAB* 'water'[H] (note that it means 'river' in Old Tibetan, see Bialek 2018a), བཀའ་ *BKA'* 'speech, order' [H].

The honorific and humilific vocabulary is made of a small number of specific roots, usually nouns or verbs (such as the above examples). These roots which are essentially monosyllabic are used to build a great number of compound words (see e.g. Tournadre and Sangda Dorje 2003).

In some languages or dialects, the Classical honorific forms may have lost (or never acquired) the honorific meaning. This is for example the case of the pronouns ཁོང་ and ངེད་ (H) which convey the meaning of a plural, respectively 'they' and 'we' in some southern or western languages (Dz, Cho, La). This is also true for the noun ཞབས་ *ZHABS* 'foot, leg (H) which is used in Amdo and Kham as 'bottom' (ordinary) but rarely for 'leg (Honorific)', or verbs such as བཞུགས་ *BZHUGS*, ཕེབས་ *PHEBS* as འཁྲུངས་ *'KHRUNGS*, བྱོན་ *BYON* which, in some dialects of Southern Kham simply means respectively 'to sit', 'to go', and 'be born' in the ordinary register. In Dzongkha and Spiti, forms derived from the CT honorific verb བཀྲེས་ *BKRES* 'to be hungry' (H) now conveys the meaning 'to be hungry' (ordinary register).

Apart from the 'aristocratic type', a second type of respectful register has recently been discovered among Amdo and Kham pastoralist communities (Tsering Samdrup & Suzuki 2019). Aside from the limited use of some verbs and nouns such as ཕེབས་ *PHEBS* 'to come, go', བཞུགས་ *BZHUGS* 'to come, go', བཞེས་ *BZHES* 'take, eat', དབུ་ *DBU* 'head', སྤྱན་ *SPYAN* 'eye', ཕྱག་ *PHYAG* 'hand' (inherited from the 'artistocratic type'),

these Amdo and Kham communities additionally have developed a second type of respectful register which primarily concerns humilific nouns. The pastoralist communities who use this second type do not consider it as a part of *zhesa*. Because of this reason, the use of humilific forms is often criticized as 'bad manners' by intellectuals and speakers who tend not to use these words when talking with outsiders.

Humilific forms attested in pastoralist speech of Amdo principally appear in nouns, by adding a suffix or an adjective, or by a suppletion of word forms. These forms have a humilific meaning only when they are used by the speaker to talk about himself /herself, his/her belongings or his/her social sphere. Otherwise, it might have a derogatory or insulting meaning.

The main suffixes are: ངན་ *NGAN* < CT 'bad', ཆག་ *CHAG* < CT 'broken', ཆད་ *CHAD* < CT 'cut, fallen apart', རྡིག་ *RDIG* < CT 'torn, ripped with patches', རུལ་ *RUL* < CT 'rotten', རྒན་ *RGAN* < *CT* 'old', རྩུལ་ *RTUL* < CT 'dull, weak'.

The adjective ཨ་ཧྭ་མ་ *A.HWA.MA* 'bad' and འདྲ་པོ་ 'similar, sort of' and some suppletive forms (see below 'body' and 'meat') are also used for this purpose.

Below are examples from the Mabzhi dialect (spoken in Mangra County) and from Sogwo:

- ཞྭ་ངན་ *ZHWA-NGAN* [h] 'hat (lit. bad hat)' for 'my hat', ཟོ་ཆག་ *ZO-CHAG* [h] 'bucket (lit. broken bucket)' for 'my bucket', སྦྲ་རྡིག་ *SBRA-RDIG* [h] 'black yak hair tent (lit. torn and ripped black yak hair tent)' for 'my tent', ཁྱི་རྒན་ *KHYI-RGAN* [h] 'dog/mastiff (lit. old dog)' for 'my dog', དགེ་རྒན་ཨ་ཧྭ་མ་ *DGE.RGAN ʔA.HWA.MA* [h] 'teacher (lit. bad teacher)' for 'my teacher', མྱི་ཨ་ཧྭ་མ་ *MYI ʔA.HWA.MA* [h] 'I (for male; lit. bad man)', ང་ནག་ *NGA.NAG* 'I, me 'black self' (in Sogwo), ཤ་འདྲ་/འདྲ་བོ་ *SHA ʾDRA.ʾDRA.BO* [h] 'meat (lit. meat-like thing)' for 'the meat I cooked', རོ་ *RO* [h] 'body' (lit. corpse) for 'my body', རུས་པ་ *RUS.PA* [h] 'meat' (lit. 'bone') for 'my meat'.

This type of derivational morphology is attested in various languages spoken in the eastern area with a difference of suffixes. It is also noteworthy that cultivators in Amdo generally do not use the humilific words whereas some in Kham such as Minyak, Derge, and rGyalthang, do use them.

3.3.5. Gesar epics

Gesar epics, གེ་སར་སྒྲུང་ *GE.SAR SGRUNG* is one of the great epics of Asia. It narrates the deeds of the King Gesar of Ling གླིང་གེ་སར་རྒྱལ་པོ་ *GLING GE.SAR RGYAL.PO*. This epic is one of the longest epics in the world, together with the Manas epics of the Kirghiz people. The Gesar story resembles in some ways the Medieval epics of Europe such as King Arthur. The Gesar epic, which originates in Tibet, is particularly interesting because it is common to the various Tibetic cultures and it is also found in Mongolia, Tuva, Hunza and few other cultures in Asia. Traditionally, *drunpa* (སྒྲུང་པ་ *SGRUNG.PA*) or bards would recite the story. This epic was transmitted orally and not written down until the seventeenth century. The recitation and the reading of the epic was even forbidden in some Buddhist monasteries (see Karmay 1999).

The Gesar epic is very popular in most Tibetic areas, namely Kham, Amdo, Ü, Tsang, Ngari, Ladakh, Baltistan and Bhutan. It is particularly interesting from a cultural and linguistic point of view because the bards would sing this epic in their native dialect, but also because this epics contains a lot of specific expressions. Many versions of the texts are attested in the various Tibetic languages.

3.3.6. Dialect blending

One of the remarkable features of the Tibetic dialectology is that it is quite common in many Tibetic areas to mix various dialects in a single conversation. This is by no means unique to this area and is found elsewhere in the world, but the high dialectal diversity of the Tibetic area and the lack of standard language (in most cases) makes this type of 'dialect porridge' or 'dialect kasha' particularly frequent. For example, within Ladakh, one will frequently mix forms from Nubra, Zanhar and Sham with Leh dialect forms (or similarly various dialects of Purik, Balti and Sham mixed with the Kargil dialect). The same is true within Tibet, where dialect forms from Kongpo, Tsang, Tö Ngari or even Hor will frequently mix with Lhasa dialect or other dialects. The same situation can be found in Kham and Amdo, as well as in Bhutan and Sikkim.

Apart from the high dialectal diversity and lack of standardisation, a few additional reasons contribute to this kind of dialect mixing. First, it is frequent to have a མཐག་ད་

magpa 'son-in-law' or a མནྡའམ་ *nama* 'daughter-in-law' from a different valley or region, and thus within a single family one often hears some dialectal diversity.

Second, for the purpose of education in schools or monasteries, children from isolated villages are often sent far away from home for a couple of years, sometimes up to ten years, and have to learn a different dialect. When they come back to their village, they have often partly forgotten their native dialect or mix it up with the dialect or language that they have acquired. Merchants who travel frequently through various Tibetic regions are also likely to acquire several dialects which may over the years color their native dialect.

Consequently, when documenting a specific dialect, one should bear in mind these characteristics and try to choose consultants who have well maintained their native dialects.

3.3.7. Code-mixing and code-switching

Code-mixing refers to placing various linguistic units from two (or more) codes *within the same sentence.* Within Tibet and the Himalayas, code-mixing is frequent between the official dominant languages and Tibetic languages or dialects.

For example, the various Tibetic languages of Central Tibet, Amdo and Kham are often mixed within a same sentence with Mandarin Chinese or local Chinese dialects from Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan (concerning the situation in Lhasa, see e.g. Tournadre 2003). In Baltistan, Ladakh and Spiti, the various Tibetic languages are often mixed with Hindi-Urdu as well as English whereas in Nepal, Sikkim (India) and Bhutan, the mixing generally involves the local Tibetic languages and Nepali or English.

In most cases, code-mixing involves the use of a Tibetan grammatical structure mixed with non-Tibetic lexical items (Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, Nepali or English depending on the region). Among the non-Tibetic lexical items, we find in particular numerals, nouns and some adverbs. Verbs and adjectives as well as grammatical categories are less likely to be used in the context of code-mixing. The speaker may use foreign words from the national dominant languages even when s/he knows very well the Tibetic equivalent.

It is important to note that here code-mixing does not refer to pidgins nor to mixed languages which are more stable types of speech and may be acquired as mother tongues.

In Tibet, code-mixing is usually called རར་མ་ལུག་སྐད་ *RA.MA.LUG SKAD* 'half goat half sheep language', སྒྲག་སྐད་ *SBRAGS SKAD* 'combined language' or བསྲེས་པའི་སྐད་ *BSRES.PA'I SKAD* 'mixed language'. As mentioned above, code-mixing is a frequent phenomenon in the various Tibetan regions. However, for about the past decade, a strong movement called ཕ་སྐད་གཙང་མ་ *PHA.SKAD GTSANG.MA* 'the pure mother tongue' (lit. 'father tongue') has been spreading in Tibet. This movement advocates the important of speaking a pure Tibetan and avoiding code-mixing.

Code-switching is also very frequent in the Tibetic-speaking area and essentially involves the same languages as the code-mixing: Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, Nepali and English. For example, it is quite common for a speaker to start a speech or a dialogue in a Tibetic language and after a few sentences to switch to the national dominant language(s) – Chinese in China, Hindi-Urdu, or Nepali and/or English in the southern Himalayas – then may switch back to his mother tongue, etc. When switching from his mother tongue to another language, the speaker is not always aware of the successive shifts.