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Journal
Himalayan Linguistics, 0(0)

Author
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Publication Date
2015-06-15

DOI
10.5070/H90025495

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Synoptic grammar of the Bumthang language

A language of the central Bhutan highlands

George van Driem
in the collaboration with
དབྱི་མཛོད་སངས་རྒས་རྡོ་རྗེ། Dr'âsho Sangye Dorji

with contributions by
Nathan Wayne Hill

Himalayan Linguistics
Archive 6

Himalayan Linguistics Archive 6 (2015), 1-77
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DZONGKHA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN



Foreword

This grammatical sketch of the Bumthang language is a tribute to the great Bhutanese scholar Dasho Sangay Dorji, who for decades guided the Dzongkha Development Commission as Secretary. Under his visionary leadership, the Commission took great strides in advancing Dzongkha, the national language of the kingdom of Bhutan, in manifold ways. At the same time, Dasho Sangay Dorji conducted, stimulated and orchestrated linguistic research on all of the languages of Bhutan and essentially launched and nurtured Bhutan's first programme of documenting the nation's linguistic diversity. It is thanks to the close friendship between Dasho Sangay Dorji and Jamyang Özer, alias George van Driem, that this sketch grammar was produced. It is hoped that this grammar will act as a seed to stimulate future linguistic research that will yield accounts that supersede this first exploratory grammatical sketch.

The grammar of the Bumthang language was first prepared in Dutch and published in 1995 by George van Driem. An English version was submitted to the Royal Government of Bhutan in the same year, and the Dzongkha Development Commission made the original version available on the commission's website. To enhance the dissemination of the material for scholarly research, the Dzongkha Development Commission now cordially grants *Himalayan Linguistics*, currently headquartered at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the right to publish the polished 2013 version of this account of the Bumthang language in the freely available journal *Himalayan Linguistics*. Naturally, the Royal Government of Bhutan retains the right to publish the grammar and any future editions thereof in Bhutan, as the need arises.

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Secretary DDC, Thimphu

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Prolegomena

A first edition of the present synoptic grammar of the Bumthang language was published in Dutch in 1995 as *Een eerste grammaticale verkenning van het Bumthang, een taal van midden-Bhutan, met een overzicht van de talen en volkeren van Bhutan*. The Dutch title can be rendered into English as 'a first grammatical reconnaissance of the Bumthang language, a language of central Bhutan, with an overview of the languages and linguistic communities of Bhutan'. The Bumthang grammar was published in Leiden by the curiously named and now defunct *Onderzoeksschool Centrum voor niet-Westerse Studiën* or — as its name used to be rendered into English — the School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies. In the same year, an English version of the manuscript was also prepared and submitted to the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan in Thimphu. Recently, this draft has been made available by the Dzongkha Development Commission on the internet as: http://www.dzongkha.gov.bt/research/papers/DRIEM-Bumthang-ALL.pdf

This grammatical exploration of Bumthang made the linguistic data on the language available to the international academic community, particularly to interested comparativists. At the time it was our intent that a comprehensive grammar of the Bumthang language would be prepared in English after the publication of the revised Dzongkha grammar. The expanded Dzongkha textbook by དཀར་སེལ་ཀུན་ཚོ་རིང་ Karma Tshering of Gaselô and myself appeared in 1998 under the title ཇོང་ཁ། Dzongkha as the first volume in Languages of the Greater Himalayan Region, a series launched by His Excellency འཇིགས་མེད་འཕྲིན་ལས་འོད་ཟེར་ Jigme Thinley Yoezer, then Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bhutan to the United Nations in Geneva. A second grammar of a Kiranti language of Nepal, entitled Yamphu by Roland Rutgers, appeared in the series just before the newly established School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies was abolished. With the exception of the grammar series, publications of the school were taken over by the fledgling Leiden University Press. The series Languages of the Greater Himalayan Region, however, was adopted by the academic publisher Brill, who has nurtured the grammar series ever since.

Subsequently, the three most endangered languages of the kingdom, i.e. Gongduk, Lhokpu and Black Mountain Mönpa, were targeted for documentation. This initiative is described in the article 'Bhutan's endangered languages programme under the Dzongkha Development Authority: Three rare gems' (van Driem 2004b). As the title indicates, the Dzongkha Development Commission went by the name of the Dzongkha Development Authority for a brief spate, but meanwhile now again goes by its original name of Dzongkha Development Commission. This semi-autonomous body in Thimphu is en-

trusted by the Royal Government of Bhutan both with the task of advancing the national language Dzongkha as well as with documenting and safeguarding Bhutan's linguistic diversity and the kingdom's rich native linguistic heritage.

Due to the focus on the country's most endangered languages, further study of the Bumthang language came to be neglected. However, interest in languages of the East Bodish group grew. East Bodish and Tibetic together comprise a higher-order subgroup which Robert Shafer called Bodish. Gwendolyn Hyslop first studied the Kurtöp language in 2005, as part of a Field Methods class at the University of Oregon, and since 2006 has been researching the language *in situ* in Bhutan. The glossary of lexical items at the end of this grammatical sketch has been augmented with Trans-Himalayan comparanda from other Tibeto-Burman languages by Nathan Hill of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London on the basis of his study of the original Dutch edition of the Bumthang grammar.

The present account of the Bumthang language and any observations regarding other East Bodish languages as well as Dzongkha are based on my own investigations. It lies beyond the scope of this work to present a bibliography of all recent work on East Bodish languages that has appeared since the original 1995 Dutch edition of this sketch grammar. Nonetheless, I gladly seize the opportunity to recommend the newer work of both Gwendolyn Hyslop and Tim Bodt on East Bodish. The present sketch does not contain the overview of the languages and linguistic communities of Bhutan included in the 1995 Dutch edition, since that information has been superseded by the more elaborate exposition in the 2001 handbook entitled *Languages of the Himalayas*, and more elaborate information on East Bodish languages in general has been provided by Bodt (2012, 2105).

With an estimated 30,000 speakers, the Bumthang language is a major regional language of the kingdom of Bhutan. This synoptic grammar, which is being made available in English thanks to the kind urging of Nathan Wayne Hill and Gwendolyn Hyslop, describes just the most obvious grammatical features in the four main dialects of the language, with an emphasis on phonology and morphology. A description of kinship terms and a limited glossary are included, the latter now having been enriched with Trans-Himalayan comparanda. It is hoped that the appearance of this brief and preliminary sketch, with the blessings of the Honourable Secretary of the Dzongkha Development Commission, Dr'âsho Sherub Gyeltshen, will stimulate the study of the Bumthang language and the research and documentation of East Bodish languages more generally.

In describing the grammar of any language, theoretical and typological issues arise, some of which appear to be recurrent or perennial themes in linguistics. Their recurrence may in some cases be ascribed to a certain degree of Eurocentrism in the outlook

of many linguists. For example, on occasion linguists treat certain grammatical categories in other languages as 'optional'. In response to the abuse of the term 'optional case marking', which had recently come into vogue in discourse on Himalayan languages, I once felt compelled to state that: 'Strictly speaking no morphemes are ever optional' (van Driem 2001: 643). Whilst the singular vs. plural distinction in English nouns is equipollent *sensu* Jakobson, leaving the English speaker no choice but to specify morphologically whether one or more of a countable thing is intended, the plural in Nepali or Mandarin nouns, for example, is a privative opposition in that non-use of the plural ending does not indicate the presence of a zero morpheme denoting singular number, but merely the absence of the plural category.

Not surprisingly, the Nepali plural does not mean the same thing as the English plural. whilst the latter conveys the rather mechanical meaning of 'more than one of a countable object', the grammatical meaning of the Nepal plural marker <-harū> entails an imprecise muchness. Consequently, the Nepali grammatical meaning is inherently incompatible with a precise number so that nouns do not take the plural suffix <-harū> in *tīnauṭā phul* 'three flowers' or *cārauṭā kursī* 'four chairs'. Yet the larger difference is that Mandarin and Nepali lack a zero marker denoting singular number in nouns. Similarly, there is no zero morpheme denoting non-diminutive or non-augmentative meaning in Italian nouns whenever a speaker chooses not to add a diminutive or an augmentative suffix to a noun.

In a language such as Limbu, the non-use of the ergative suffix in nouns signals absolutive, which is marked by a zero suffix so that some might argue that the distinction between absolutive and ergative in Limbu nouns might represent an equipollent opposition. In some other languages, such as Bumthang, the use or non-use ergative is a privative opposition, and the occurrence of the ergative is consequently said by some linguists to be 'optional'. In a privative opposition, either the speaker chooses to express the meaning denoted by the grammatical morpheme or he chooses not to do so. The marking itself is not optional. Rather, the speaker can choose to express or not to express the meaning. In this regard, Roman Jakobson famously observed that '[l]anguages differ essentially in what they *must* convey and not in what they *may* convey.' (1959: 236). Where a language has an equipollent opposition, there is no choice but to make a choice.

The same applies *mutatis mutandis* for case marking. Transitive verbs in the past tense more or less automatically trigger the ergative case in Hindi, whereas in Nepali the semantics of the ergative are more subtle. The Nepali ergative can, for example, also be used in other tenses whenever it seems natural to highlight the agentivity of the subject. For example, one might say of an unfamiliar gadget *Yasle ke garcha?* 'What does

this do?' Similarly, in Bumthang grammar, the ergative morpheme is part of a privative opposition. The speaker will not use the morpheme when he does not choose explicitly to express this category of grammatical meaning. In a great number of largely predictable cases, however, the speaker will choose to do so because it makes better sense to express the meaning of the grammatical suffix.

Merely to establish that an ergative case suffix is 'optional', therefore, is an inadequate description. If the ergative marker partakes in a privative opposition, then the description of the language is more informative when it states that the opposition is privative. In such cases, the linguist may wish explicitly to state that there is no zero morpheme denoting absolutive. The best that the linguist can do is to describe in words and with examples as aptly as possible the precise language-specific meaning of the grammatical category in a given language, such as the ergative case suffix in Bumthang.

Logically, the 'Leipzig glossing rules' and their Platonic essentialist underpinnings are likewise rejected as part of a semantically stunted approach to language. Semantically perceptive empirical linguists document fundamental differences in meaning between grammatical systems across languages, and this appreciation is palpably manifest in sound analytical documentation of language phenomena. The Italian proverb *traduttore traditore* 'the translator is a traitor' continues to hold true. Yet linguists perennially fall prey to the Platonic idealism of labels such as 'mirative', 'plural' or 'aspect'. Such labels compel a certain variety of linguist to make arbitrary typological judgements, whereby they presume the 'cross-linguistic' reality of the posited notional categories, e.g. Haspelmath *et al.* (2005). Although the terms 'imperfective' and 'perfective' were first coined in 1808 to describe Czech grammar, the term 'aspect' was first coined in 1860 for Russian (cf. van Driem 2001: 648-660). Insightful contrastive studies have long shown that there is no such thing as 'Slavic aspect'. Rather, each aspectual category of grammar expresses a language-specific meaning, e.g. Mathesius (1947), Wierzbicka (1967), Stunová (1991, 1993).

The obvious semantic domains of colour, spatial deixis and number were presumed to represent readily accessible targets more amenable to empirical investigation. Studies on colour perception have taken on an almost iconic status since Gladstone's (1858) study of colour terms in the Homeric Greek, and a steady stream of studies has appeared since Brent and Kay's (1969) study of allegedly 'basic' colour terms, e.g. Saunders and van Brakel (1997), Lucy (1997), Kay and Maffi (1999, 2005), Levinson (2000), Roberson *et al.* (2000, 2005a, 2005b), Roberson (2005), Regier *et al.* (2005), Winawer *et al.* (2007), Gilbert *et al.* (2006, 2008), Kay and Regier (2007).

The investigation of motion and spatial deixis, although seemingly more tangible, has not proved necessarily more tractable to linguistic inquiry, yielding both insightful

and contestable results, e.g. Haviland (1993), Bickel (1997), Gennari *et al.* (2002), Levinson (1997, 2003a, 2003b, 2008), Pederson (1995), Pederson *et al. (*1998), Li and Gleitman (2002), Munnich and Landau (2003), Levinson *et al.* (2002, 2003), Majid *et al.* (2004). Newer research has investigated the influence of language-specific spatial and temporal metaphors on the conceptualisation of time, e.g. Boroditsky (2011), Lai and Boroditsky (2013), Saj *et al*. (2014). Since some recent work has addressed the role of metaphor on cognition more broadly, e.g. Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011), it is useful to recall that the phenomenon of metaphor shaping linguistic reality and yielding abstract concepts from concrete linguistic notions is a topic with a venerable history of scholarship dating back to the work of Clauberg (1663).

In the context of the Bumthang epistemic marking systems which distinguishes categories such as the experienced past, the inferred past and the experienced imperfective, it is bracing to recall the exhilaratingly choleric controversy which has broken out about mirativity, with the empirical realists pitted against the essentialist typologists, e.g. Hill (2012, 2013), Aikhenvald (2012), DeLancey (2012), Friedman (2012), Hengeveld and Olbertz (2012), Hyslop (2014). In this context, we might also mention a few of the studies which have been devoted to numerical cognition as expressed linguistically, e.g. Imai (2000), Imai and Mazuka (2003), Gordon (2004), Pica *et al.* (2004).

The easily demonstrable and widespread semantic non-equivalence of grammatical categories between languages is matched by substantive differences between the conceptual repertoires reflected in the lexicons of different languages. Consequently, the problem of translatability or, rather, intranslatability was already recognised by John Locke (1690), Étienne de Condillac (1746), Pierre de Maupertuis (1748, 1756) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1822, 1825, 1836), and this pivotal issue has remained a conundrum for language philosophers, e.g. Quine (1987, 1990). Scientific inquiry into linguistic relativity was introduced relatively late to the Americas, e.g. Sapir (1921, 1949), Greene (1966), Grace (1981, 1987), where it is ironically best known under the name of one of its most rickety latter-day proponents, i.e. Whorf (1940, 1956). The perceptive writings of those who understand such differences have periodically been assailed by those who lack the semantic insight, sensitivity and precision to grasp the nature of such differences, e.g. Maine de Biran (1815), McWhorter (2014). A corollary assertion to that of Roman Jakobson, quoted above, is therefore that languages differ not only in what they *must* convey, but often also in what they *can* convey.

In consultation with the editors at Himalayan Linguistics, the English glosses of the Bumthang verb *jumala* have been rendered into Latin by the corresponding forms of the verb *futuere*. This practice, quite familiar from old-fashioned philology, may strike some readers as stuffy, but in fact the editors are entirely correct in pointing out that the

most common colloquial word denoting sexual congress in English is imbued with a hue of verbal aggression which is singularly lacking in the Bumthang verb. Whilst both the Bumthang verb *jumala* and its straightforward Dutch translation, used in the 1995 edition of the grammar, exude a mirthful and wholesome sense of *joie de vivre,* the most readily available English translation for Bumthang *jumala* highlights a sad dimension of Anglo-American culture. The English verb is effectively employed more often in verbal abuse than as a neutral term denoting carnal congress, whereas neither Bumthang nor Dutch are handicapped in this respect in the way that English happens to be. The English word has therefore not been eschewed out of squeamishness, but avoided because its meaning yields an unsuitable translation. At the same time, whereas the Latin verb *futuere* has been chosen as a translation for the Bumthang verb *jumala* for the purposes of this grammatical sketch, it would be preposterous to claim that *jumala* corresponds precisely to Latin *futuere* in either meaning and style register.

As has become clear in the course of these prolegomena, the concerns raised by the editors at Himalayan Linguistics regarding the English rendering of Bumthang *jumala* and the use or avoidance of some linguistic labels which have recently come into vogue touch directly upon broader and deeper issues in linguistics. The opposition between the essentialist typological and empirical realist approach to lexical and grammatical signs and their meanings and the associated views of language itself can be used to highlight two different models of language evolution. Some categories of meaning appear to thrive and propagate themselves at the expense of others, and a number of studies have begun to explore the epidemiology of language-borne constructs and categories, e.g. van Driem (2001, 2003, 2004a, 2005, 2008a, 2008b), Enfield (2002, 2003, 2008)

Greene (1966) discussed how Irish lacks many precise equivalents for notions that elsewhere in Europe had been calqued from one language to another, e.g. *in-fluence, Ein-fluss, в-лияние, in-vloed, v-liv* etc. This has led to the paradox whereby some advocates of Irish have observed that the greatest single threat to the language might be the compulsory nature of education in Irish to and often by people who express their thoughts more comfortably in English. The contrasts between the notional repertoire expressed through the traditional Irish lexical inventory as opposed to numerous concepts shared by most other European languages get ironed away when users of Irish use Irish words as if they were translation equivalents of English concepts:

> Linguists have long recognized that something is lost when a language disappears, that humankind is impoverished by each decrease in the linguistic diversity of the world. However, …a still more serious loss… is marked, not so much by the decrease in the number of languages spoken in the world as by an *increase* in the extent to which the existing languages are intertranslatable. The extent to which intertranslatability increases is the extent

> to which all languages have become expressions of the same culture. And *that*, in turn, is the extent to which our accumulated cultural capital — our heritage from all of the preceding generations of humankind — has been dissipated. (Greene 1966: 143)

Globalisation is characterised by increasing conceptual assimilation worldwide, whereby language communities participating in a shared *Kulturkreis* come to exhibit increasing uniformity in their lexical and grammatical meanings. What is happening to Irish is happening to many languages today on a worldwide scale. In this context, the ongoing controversy surrounding Daniel Everett's work on Pirahã (2005), which has been hailed both as a heterodox profundity and as a hoax, vividly illustrates the fundamental importance of linguistic relativity to the scientific study of language. Since Everett's work, and the protests of envious colleagues who were displeased by the prospect of having to modify their views of language to accommodate his findings, a development scheme has been implemented by the Brazilian government intended to bring the Pirahã into the mainstream of the national culture of the Brazilian nation state. This programme of 'upliftment', if this is the right word, will inexorably lead to the assimilation of the Pirahã conceptual universe to the mental universe mediated by Brazilian Portuguese.

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published on 24 November 1859. The German translation by the palaeontologist Heinrich Georg Bronn appeared in 1860 as *Über die Entstehung der Arten*. The maverick German biologist Ernst Haeckel sent a copy of the German translation to his friend, the linguist August Schleicher. Inspired by this work, Schleicher adopted the view of individual languages as species, which compete against each other 'im Kampfe ums Dasein' (1863). A modern proponent of Schleicher's view of languages as species subject to natural selection is Salikoko Mufwene (2001, 2005a, 2005b). By contrast, Friedrich Max Müller conceived language as such to be an organism. On the 6th of January 1870, in the very first issue of *Nature*, Müller took issue with Schleicher's idea of language survival in terms of 'die Erhaltung der höher entwickelten Organismen' and instead argued that language survival was a more complex issue.

> Although this struggle for life among separate languages exhibits some analogy with the struggle for life among the more or less favoured species in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, there is this important difference that the defect and the gradual extinction of languages depend frequently on external causes, i.e. not on the weaknesses of the languages themselves, but on the weakness, physical, moral or political, of those who speak them. A much more striking analogy, therefore, than the struggle for life among separate languages, is the struggle for life among words and grammatical forms which is constantly going on in each language. Here the better, the shorter, the easier forms are constantly gaining the upper hand, and they really owe their success to their inherent virtue. (1870: 257)

Darwin (1871, I: 60-61) adopted Müller's of language evolution in his *Descent of Man*. Over a century later, I voiced an essentially similar view, diametrically opposed to that of Schleicher and Mufwene.

> The survival of a language is not determined by its grammatical subtlety, its degree of refinement or the richness of concepts and notions which find expression in its lexicon, but by largely unrelated economic, demographic and political factors affecting the people who happen to speak the language. Languages which survive are not necessarily in any way superior to those that go extinct… The fecundity with which a particular language spreads and outcompetes another language may have little or, in some cases, nothing to do with its grammatical propensities or lexical richness and refinement. (2001: 113)

These two approaches, language as an organism vs. languages as species, represent distinct views of language evolution. In the Müller-van Driem approach, the emergence and evolution of language in hominids is viewed in terms of language as a semiotic organism which arose symbiogenetically within the human brain. Relevant to our understanding of the nature of this semiosis is the novel claim advanced by George Grace (1981, 1987) that language evolved primarily not as a system of communication, but as an epistemological system in order to organise the vast amount of sensory input and build conceptual models of possible realities. The communicability of language-borne constructs and categories would, in Grace's conception, be a secondary feature. The language organism model studies natural selection as operative at the levels of lexical and grammatical morphemes and language structures.

By contrast, the Schleicher-Mufwene conception views individual languages as species in competition on a global scale. Whereas both models envisage natural selection as operating on observable linguistic diversity and driving language change, the units of selection are on a different order of magnitude. Notwithstanding my critical and initially skeptical stance with regard to the Schleicher-Mufwene conception, the premiss formulated by Schleicher and elaborated by Mufwene is an intrinsically interesting one, and this model deserves to be tested and studied in the current context of language endangerment on a global scale. The challenge would clearly be to design a programme of research which aims analytically to assess the Schleicher-Mufwene model.

Such a programme would have to assess the applicability of the notion of inclusive fitness to grammatical structures and semantic systems in the light of competing linguistic developments in the cultural environment of a language community. Mathematical models have been developed to quantify inclusive fitness, e.g. Dawkins (1982), Demetrius and Ziehe (1994), Grafen (2009), Keller (1994), Maynard Smith (2000, 2004), but for languages weighted assessments of socio-economic, demographic and

politico-historical factors affecting the vitality of individual languages would also have to be quantified and modelled. Without overstretching biological analogies, the utility and applicability of the notion of an extended phenotype manifestly holds promise for modelling the vitality of individual languages. One reason why such a programme of research has not been undertaken until now is the sheer difficulty and analytical complexity of conducting an empirically grounded study of all linguistic and other observable phenomena relevant to developing and testing the Schleicher-Mufwene model.

Another reason why this model has not been tested today is that the concept of individual languages as entities in competition goes back to the early days of language typology, at a time when the field was marred with a chequered history. After Pott (1848) distinguished the basic linguistic types, e.g. 'isolirend, agglutinirend, flexivische, einverleibend', a racist form of linguistic typology was developed by others who did not heed the exhortations of Julius von Klaproth and Max Müller not to confuse linguistic affinity and biological ancestry. Scholars such as Arthur de Gobineau, Heymann Steinthal and Ernest Renan used language typology to buttress a racist world view and arranged language types hierarchically on a typological ladder of evolutionary development. If we keep this egregious episode of Social Darwinism in linguistics in mind as a cautionary example, it should be possible today to devise a programme of inquiry to explore and test the Schleicher-Mufwene hypothesis within a Darwinian framework devoid of ludicrous value judgements.

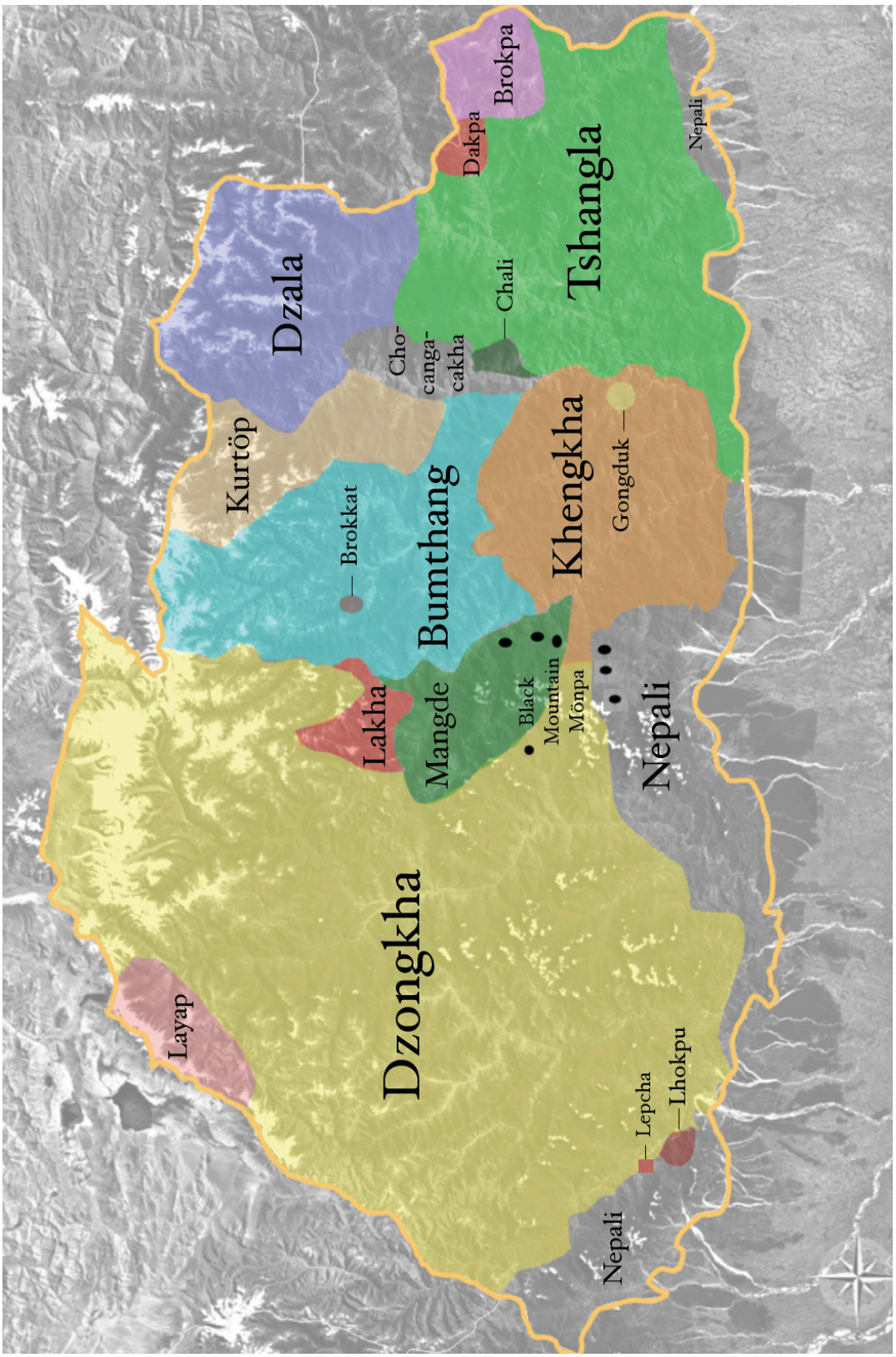
Needless to say, the Müller-van Driem approach also merits testing, and arguably many experimental models in language evolution studies today have already for some years been directly germane to the further development of this model, since Müller's conception of natural selection in language evolution quickly became the view espoused by Darwin. As announced previously (van Driem 2008b), a forthcoming monograph will be devoted to this topic.

Abbreviations and symbols

adh.	adhortative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
art.	article
Bur.	Burmese
Ch.	Chinese
col.	collective suffix
dem.	demonstrative

Dz.	Dzongkha
emp.	emphatic
e.p.	experienced past
erg.	ergative
gen.	genitive
ger.	gerund
i.p.	inferred past
inf.	infinitival future
interj.	interjection
Kur.	Kurtöp
loc.	locative
n.	noun
Nep.	Nepali
nom.	nominalising suffix
num.	numeral
O.Bur.	Old Burmese
opt.	optative
O.Tib.	Old Tibetan
part.	past participle
pl.	plural
postp.	postposition
pres.	present tense stem (Tibetan)
pro.	pronoun
Q	interrogative suffix
rGy.	rGyalrong
sg.	singular
tel.	telic
Tib.	Tibetan
v.	verb
vol.	volitional future
Wr.Bur.	Written Burmese
*	only recorded in the Tang dialect form
√	symbol preceding the etymological root, after which an inflected form may be provided, as found in a dictionary
—	form recorded as such in all four major Bumthang dialects

following page: Map of the languages of Bhutan


Brokpa
Dakpa
Nepali
Dzala
Tshangla
Chali
Cho-
canga-
cakha
Kurtöp
Brokkat
Bumthang
Khengkha
Gongduk
Lakha
Mangde
Black
Mountain
Mönpa
Nepali
Dzongkha
Layap
Lepcha
Lhokpu
Nepali

Transcriptions

Two mutually compatible systems of transcription are used, and one system of transliteration. The first system of transcription is Roman Dzongkha, the linguistic standard of rendering Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, phonologically in Roman script. The second system is the Roman Bumthang, a phonological transcription of the Bumthang language proposed in 1995. Written Dzongkha spellings of names in the Bhutanese དབུ་ཅན་ 'Ucen script are provided between parentheses. Roman Dzongkha is based on the phonology of the standard or prestige dialect of Dzongkha spoken in ཝང་ Wang and ཐེད་ Thê, by which names the ཐིམ་ཕུག་ Thimphu and སྤུ་ན་ཁ་ Pünakha valleys are traditionally known. Roman Dzongkha makes use of twenty-two letters of the Roman alphabet (the F, Q, V and X are not used) and of three diacritics: the apostrophe ['], the diaeresis or *Umlaut* [¨] and the circumflex accent [ˆ]. A complete description of Bhutanese roma-nisation is provided elsewhere (van Driem 1991, Karma Tshering and van Driem 1998). A brief outline of Roman Dzongkha is as follows:

The apostrophe at the beginning of a syllable indicates a preglottalised or high register tone in syllables beginning with a nasal, approximant, liquid other than /r/ or a vowel. Elsewhere the tone of a syllable can be predicted on the basis of the initial consonant: Syllables beginning with a voiceless or an aspirated plosive or affricate or with a voiceless sibilant or liquid or with /h/ are pronounced in the high register tone. Low register syllables are those beginning with a voiced or devoiced plosive, affricate or sibilant, or with /r/. An apostrophe after an initial consonant indicates that the initial is devoiced. The low register vowel following a devoiced consonant is characterised by breathy phonation. Many Bhutanese whose native language is not Dzongkha fail to distinguish voiced from devoiced initials. The initials of a Dzongkha syllable are listed in TABLE 1. In Dzongkha, the consonants n, m, ng, p, k and sh also occur as finals.

The transcription system used for Bumthang and the related languages Kheng and Kurtöp is largely based on Roman Dzongkha. Bumthang romanisation is explained in Section 2 on Bumthang phonology. Outside of the glossary, Bumthang, Kheng and Kurtöp words are italicised, unless they are placed between morpheme brackets. Phonetic transcriptions in International Phonetic Alphabet are placed between square brackets. People's names are given in Dzongkha. Toponyms within Bumthang District are given in their Bumthang pronunciation.

TABLE 1
Dzongkha initial consonants

	high tone voiceless	high tone aspirated	low tone voiced	low tone devoiced
velar plosives	k	kh	g	g’
palatal plosives	c	ch	j	j’
retroflex plosives	tr	thr	dr	dr’
dental plosives	t	th	d	d’
bilabial plosives	p	ph	b	b’
bilabial-palatal affricates	pc	pch	bj	bj’
alveolar affricates	ts	tsh	dz	
palatal sibilants	sh		zh	zh’
alveolar sibilants	s		z	z’

	high tone	low tone
voiced velar nasal	’ng	ng
voiced palatal nasal	’ny	ny
voiced dental nasal	’n	n
voiced bilabial nasal	’m	m
voiced palatal approximant	’y	y
voiced lateral	’l	l
voiceless lateral		lh
voiced labiovelar approximant	’w	w
voiced apical trill		r
voiceless apical fricative		hr
voiceless glottal approximant		h

Dzongkha distinguishes thirteen vowels. Vowel length is distinctive. The diaeresis marks the inherently long vowels **ä** [æ:], **ö** [œ:] en **ü** [y:]. The vowels **a**, **e**, **i**, **o**, **u** also occur as long vowels, in which case they are marked by a circumflex accent **â**, **ê**, **î**, **ô**, **û**. Vowel length is not indicated on a vowel before the final **ng** because vowels lengthen automatically before final **ng** if it has, in fact, not disappeared. The historical rules of apophony in Dzongkha appear to be more complex than those of Lhasa Tibetan (van Driem 1993).

TABLE 2
Dzongkha vowels

i	î		ü			u	û
e	ê		ö			o	ô
		ä		a	â		

Written Dzongkha in the ’Ucen script is transliterated in Tibetological transliteration: k, kh, g, ṅ; c, ch, j, ñ; t, th, d, n; p, ph, b, m; ts, tsh, dz, w; ź, z, ḥ; y, r, l; ś, s, h; a, i, u, e, o. Transliterated written forms are provided between parentheses. Syllables are separated by a hyphen in transliteration where they are separated by the triangular dot known as the ཚོད་ tshâ in written Dzongkha. The tshâ is not used in modern Dzongkha when what used to be two consecutive syllables in an older stage of the language have collapsed into a single syllable in modern Dzongkha.

1 About the Bumthang language

The Bumthang language or Bumthangkha, as it is known to its speakers, is the *kha* ‘language’ of Bumthang, the highlands covering the northern half of central Bhutan. There are approximately 30,000 speakers of Bumthang. Closely related to Bumthang are the languages Kheng and Kurtöp. Kheng is spoken by approximately 40,000 people south of Bumthang in the district of Zh’ämgang, known in Bumthang as Zhramzhrong. Kurtöp is spoken by approximately 10,000 people east of Bumthang in Lhüntsi district. It is linguistically defensible to consider Bumthang, Kheng and Kurtöp as three distinct dialect groups of a single Greater Bumthang language. The differences between the various dialects of Kheng appear to be just as great as the differences between any one of these dialects and a randomly chosen dialect of Bumthang. An important structural difference between Bumthang on one hand and Kheng and Kurtöp on the other is the fate of finals. In Kheng and Kurtöp finals have disappeared, resulting in the lengthening of the preceding vowel, whereas Bumthang has preserved the original situation, e.g. Bumthang *ka* ‘snow’ vs. *kak* ‘blood’ as against Kheng and Kurtöp *ka* [ka] ‘snow’ vs. *kâ* [ka:] ‘blood’. Bumthang dialects do not exhibit distinctive vowel length.

Sir John Claude White noted that Bhutanese people belonging to a different linguistic stock lived to the east of the Dzongkha speaking area:

> Amongst the people of the East who live beyond the Pele-la the bulk of the population is not of Tibetan origin, nor do they speak Tibetan. I give a few words they use, spelt phonetically, which seem to me different to those of Tibetan derivation. *Gami* = fire, *Nut* = barley, *Mai* = house, *Tyu* = milk, *Yak* = hand, *Tsoroshai* = come here. Their origin is not clear, but... They are of a different type to those in the west, smaller in stature, the complexion is darker and features finer cut, and their dress is different. (1909: 13)

On the basis of the words he cites — in modern phonetic notation [gami], [nat], [mai], [ju], [jak] and [tso-ro shai] — it is clear that White was speaking about the Bumthang language.

The languages Bumthang, Kheng and Kurtöp belong to the East Bodish branch of the Trans-Himalayan or Tibeto-Burman language family. The other East Bodish languages are: (1) Dzala, spoken in northeastern Bhutan by 15,000 people, (2) Mangde, a heterogeneous collection of dialects the Black Mountains which is also known as Henkê or ’Nyenkha or by a number of local toponyms, with 10,000 speakers, (3) Chali, with approximately one thousand speakers in the village of Chali and a few neighbouring hamlets on the left bank of the Kuri River in eastern Bhutan, and (4) Dakpa, spoken on the eastern border and in ཏ་ཝང་ Tawang, for which the orthography རྟ་དབང་ is also attested, in the Indian state of Aruṇācal Pradeś. Bumthang is classified by Aris (1979a: xv, 122, 1979b: 10) as a member of the branch which Shafer (1954, 1974) called ‘East Bodish’.

In Shafer’s phylogeny, East Bodish constitutes one out of three branches of Bodish, alongside West Bodish (sBal-ti, Bu-rig) and Old Bodish (Tibetan, Dzongkha and other languages descended from Old Tibetan). The languages and dialects which Shafer referred to as West Bodish and Old Bodish are now all subsumed under Nicolas Tournadre’s newer term ‘Tibetic’, though traditional Tibetologists conventionally refer to these languages collectively as the ‘Tibetan dialects’. Shafer’s Bodish is, in turn, one of the branches of Bodic, a nebulously defined putative higher-order subgroup within Tibeto-Burman. Shafer’s names are somewhat misleading in that, in Shafer’s own assessment, it is not the Old Bodish languages but the East Bodish languages which are the more conservative and which tend to retain archaic traits. This idea is supported by a number of the phonological traits of Bumthang (Mazaudon and Michailovsky 1994, van Driem 1995).

Shafer’s study of East Bodish was based entirely on a language called ‘Dwags’. The data which Shafer studied were taken from Hodgson’s (1853) ‘Tákpa’ material, which Shafer incorrectly identified with the Tibetan dialect of Dags-po, situated southeast of Lha-sa, south of the gTsaṅ-po and west of the Koṅ-po area. Hodgson’s ‘Tákpa’ data,

however, originate from Tawang, a former Tibetan vassal state northeast of Bhutan which is known in Tibetan sources as the Dag-pa Tsho-lṅa 'The Five Hosts of the Dakpa' (Aris 1979a: xvi). From 1873, Tawang has been administratively within the Outer Line, i.e. south of the watershed and the line of highest peaks forming the Outer Line, and therefore under British colonial jurisdiction. Consequently, Tawang continues today to form part of Indian territory.

In Tawang, two languages are spoken which Aris (1979a: 120-122) called 'Northern' and 'Central Monpa'. 'Northern Monpa', which Aris demonstrated to be related to Bumthang, is the language which is called དྭགས་པ་ཁ་ Dakpakha or དྭགས་པ་ཁ་ D'abikha in Bhutan. The 'Central Monpa' of Tawang is Tshangla or Shâchop, which happens also to be the major language of eastern Bhutan. Shafer's (1954, 1955, 1974) comparative study of 'Dwags' and 'Proto-East Bodish' should therefore be read as applying collectively to the languages of the Bumthang group, which Aris (1979a) was the first to identify as East Bodish languages.

2 Bumthang phonology

Bumthang has four main dialects, which not coincidentally coincide with the four old main geographical and administrative divisions within Bumthang district, viz. ཅུན་སྨད་ Chunmat, ཆོ་འཕོར་ Chogor, ཨུ་རུ་ 'Ura and སྟང་ Tang. Local pronunciations of toponyms throughout Bhutan preserve valuable information about Bhutan's past and furnish the basis for the study of historical toponymy. The lofty Thrumshingla pass, which lies within Bumthang, is *Phrumsengya* in Bumthang, which shows that the etymology assumed by the modern Dzongkha spelling ཁྲུམ་ཤིང་ལ་ *Thrumshingla* (Khrum-śing-la) is historically incorrect. There exists a tendency in Bhutan to devise Chöke, i.e. Classical Tibetan, spellings for place names in Bhutan which actually have far older names. Tibetologists often fall prey to this tendency, for example Snellgrove (1961, 1967) in the case of toponyms in Nepal with local non-Tibetan meanings. Such native local names often lack a Classical Tibetan etymology, but their local pronunciation preserves valuable information which holds the key to part of Bhutan's unknown past.

In preparing this sketch, I have worked together closely with the respected Bhutanese scholar དབུ་མོས་སངས་རྒས་རྡོ་རྗེ་ Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji 'Sangye Dorji' of ཆུ་སྟོད་ *Chutö*, who is my old friend and a native speaker of the Tang dialect of Bumthang, upon which this synoptic grammar is based. The innovative proposals regarding Bumthang 'Ucen orthography and Bumthang romanisation were conceived by Dr'âsho. Other Bumthang speakers whom I consulted in 1993 were the twenty-seven year old painter ལྷུན་དོན་གྲུབ་

Pêma Döndr'u of ཟུང་དེ་ Zungnge in Chunmat, ཤེས་རབ་ལ་ Shêrapla, former ཤེད་པོ་ gap of 'Ura, འཇམ་དབལ་དཉོས་གྲུབ་ Jambe 'Ngödr'u from དུར་ Dur in Chogor, མི་འཇུར་ Minjur, former gap of ལྷམ་མཁར་ Camkhar in Chogor, སངས་རྒྱས་ཟངམོ་ Sanggä Zâm, a woman from མདའ་ཟུར་ Dazur in Tang and ཆོས་སྒྲོན་ Chödrö, a woman from རྟ་ཏུང་ Tahung in Tang.

The dialect of ཀྲོང་གསར་ Trongsa, west of Bumthang and east of the Mangde speaking area, may be considered to be a dialect intermediate between Bumthang and Kheng. Unlike the Bumthang dialects, the loss of final occlusives in the Trongsa dialect has led to vowel lengthening, just as in Kheng and Kurtöp. The speakers of this dialect also do not identify themselves as Bumthangpas. The dialect is known as ཀྲོང་གསར་པའི་ཁ་ *Trongsabi kha* 'language of Trongsa' and is also sometimes called ནུབ་པའི་ཁ་ *Nupbi kha* 'language of the West'. The latter descriptive name, however, is also used to designate the Hâ dialect of Dzongkha spoken in the westernmost part of Bhutan.

2.1 Initial consonants

The consonants which may occur at the beginning of a Bumthang syllable are listed in TABLE 3, along with their proposed equivalents in Bhutanese 'Ucen script. The well-chosen 'Ucen spellings for the Bumthang apical trilled fricative series are those proposed by Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji. The romanisations of these unique Bumthang phonemes are based on Dr'âsho's Bumthang 'Ucen orthography, which is presented here below. A phonetic description of the Bumthang speech sounds is likewise provided below.

Bumthang is extraordinarily rich in rhotic sounds. In addition to the apical trill **r**, Bumthang has a complete initial series of apical trilled fricatives ཤྲ་ **shr**, ཧྲ་ **hr** and ཞྲ་ **zhr**. Like Roman Bumthang ཧྱ་ **hy**, the symbols ཤྲ་ **shr**, ཧྲ་ **hr** and ཞྲ་ **zhr** do not represent retroflex sounds or consonant clusters, but single initial consonant phonemes unique to the Bumthang language. The **shr** is a voiceless apical trilled fricative [r̥], e.g. ཤྲ་ *shra* [r̥a] 'meat', ཤྲེ་ *shrai* [r̥ai] 'drool, drivel', ཤྲེམ་ *shraima* [r̥aima] 'toothless harrow', ཤྲབ་ *shrap* [r̥ap] 'veranda', ཤྲམ་ *shram* [r̥am] 'shoe' (Dz. ལྷམ་ lham); ཤྲུབ་ *shrup* [r̥up] 'sheath', ཤྲུང་ *shrung* [r̥uŋ] 'shake everything into place (e.g. things in a sack), heave whilst sobbing', ཤྲོག་སེང་ *shrokseng* [r̥okseŋ] 'juniper' (Dz. ཤུག་པ་ཤིང་ shupashing); ཤྲོར་དོ་ *shrordo* [r̥ordo] 'an extra chore performed in addition to the main task assigned in order to show devotion to one's boss' (Dz. ཞོར་ཁ་ zhôkha).

TABLE 3
Bumthang initial consonants

	voiceless	*aspirated*	*voiced*
velar plosives	k ཀ་	kh ཁ་	g ག་
palatal plosives	c ཅ་	ch ཆ་	j ཇ་
retroflex plosives	tr ཏྲ་	thr ཐྲ་	dr ད྅་
dental plosives	t ཏ་	th ཐ་	d ད་
bilabial plosives	p པ་	ph ཕ་	b བ་
alveolar affricates	ts ཙ་	tsh ཚ་	dz ཛ་
palatal sibilants	sh ཤ་		zh ཞ་
alveolar sibilants	s ས་		z ཟ་
glottal approximant	h ཧ་		
palatal-glottal fricative	hy ཧྱ་		
velar nasal			ng ང་
palatal nasal			ny ཉ་
dental nasal			n ན་
bilabial nasal			m མ་
palatal approximant			y ཡ་
labiovelar approximant			w ཝ་
lateral liquid	lh ལྷ་		l ལ་
apical trilled fricative	shr ཥྲ་	hr ཧྲ་	zhr ཞྲ་
apical trill			r ར་

The **hr** is an aspirated apical trilled fricative [r̥ʰ], e.g. མའི་ཧྲམ་མ་ལ་ *mai hram-mala* [r̥ʰam-mala] ‘they will break the house down’, ཧྲག་ཧྲོག་ *hrak-hrok* [r̥ʰak-r̥ʰok] ‘mixed up’, ཧྲའི་ *hrai!* [r̥ʰai] ‘come!’. The **zhr** is a voiced apical trilled fricative [ɽ], more fully voiced than the Czech phoneme ř, e.g. ཞྲ་ *zhra* [ɽa] ‘what’, ཞྲོར་ *zhror* [ɽor] (dialect form for standard Bumthang ཆུར་མ་ *churma)* ‘native beer’ (Dz. ཆང་ chang), ཞྲབ་ *zhrap* [ɽap] ‘layer of butterfat on top of salted Bhutanese tea’, ཞྲོང་ *zhrong* [ɽoŋ] ‘worm’, ཞྲུར་ཏི་ *zhrurti* [ɽurti] ‘bamboo species’.

2.2 Register tone

Just as in Dzongkha, the distribution of the low and high register tone in Bumthang is predictable to some extent. Syllables with voiced plosives, affricates or fricatives are in low register tone (**g**, **j**, **dr**, **d**, **b**, **dz**, **zh**, **z**, **zhr**). Syllables with voiceless or aspirated initials, including voiceless liquids and fricatives, are in the high register tone (**k**, **kh**, **c**, **ch**, **tr**, **thr**, **t**, **th**, **p**, **ph**, **ts**, **tsh**, **sh**, **s**, **h**, **hy**, **lh**, **shr**, **hr**). Only Bumthang syllables beginning with a voiced continuant (**ng**, **ny**, **n**, **m**, **y**, **r**, **l**, **w**, or a vowel) may be in either the preglottalised high or the low register tone.

TABLE 4
Bumthang continuant consonants in low and high register tone

low tone		high tone	
ng	ང་	’ng	ངྷ་
ny	ཉ་	’ny	ཉྷ་
n	ན་	’n	ནྷ་
m	མ་	’m	མྷ་
y	ཡ་	’y	ཡྷ་
w	ཝ་	’w	ཝྷ་
l	ལ་	’l	ལྷ་
r	ར་	’r	རྷ་

Just as in Roman Dzongkha, the high register tone is indicated in such Bumthang syllables by an apostrophe at the beginning of a syllable, e.g. ཨའེ་ *’ai* ‘who’ vs. འཨུ་ཡ་ *auya* ‘jackal’, རྱ་ *’ya* ‘deposit at the bottom of copper pans’ vs. ཡ་ *ya!* ‘grab it!’. In contrast to Dzongkha, Bumthang syllables beginning with initial **r** may also be in high register tone, e.g. རྩྭ་ *’rat* ‘bamboo fibre for weaving traditional Bhutanese bowls’ vs. ར་ཏོ་ *rato* ‘root’, རྱི་ *’ri* ‘start, beginning’ vs. རི་ *ri* ‘hill, mountain’, རྩ་ *’ra* ‘hair on scalp’ vs. ར་ *ra* ‘goat’, རྭོག་ *’rok* ‘river’, རྭེ་ཝ་ *’rewa* ‘tool for removing ears of wheat from the stalks’.

2.3 Initial clusters

In contrast to Dzongkha and quite distinct from the retroflex series, however, Bumthang has eight initial consonant clusters of which **r** is the second element: **kr**, **khr**, **gr**, **pr**, **phr**, **br**, **mr**, **'mr**. Therefore, in Bumthang, the combinations ཀྲ་ and ཁྲ་, for example, represent the initial cluster **kr** and **pr** and not single retroflex phonemes as in Dzongkha, e.g. ཀྲོང་ *krong* 'village', ཁྲངས་ཁྲང་ *khrangkhrang* 'crane (bird)', གྲང་ཀ་གྲང་དེའ་ *grangka grangae* 'count!' (literally 'count the counting!'), གྲན་ *gran* 'compete', ཟྲ་ *pra* (dialect form for ཟིའུ་ *priu)* 'rhesus monkey' (as opposed to རག་ཤ་ *raksha* 'golden langur'), ཟྲད་མ་ལ་ *prat-mala* 'fight', ཝེད་ནེང་དད་ཟྲད་སང་ *wet neng ngat phratsang* 'you and I shall get into conflict', བྲད་མ་ལ་ *brat-mala* 'scratch', བྲན་མ་ *branma* 'Tatary buckwheat' (*Fagopyrum tataricum*, Dz. ཇོའོ་ bj'ô), སྨྲ་ *mrat* 'paddy', སྨྲ་ *'mrat* 'flour to thicken soup with', སྨྲན་ *'mran* 'blackhead, sebum'.

TABLE 5
Bumthang initial clusters with **r**

	high tone voiceless	high tone aspirated	low tone voiced	high tone voiced
velar plosives	kr ཀྲ་	khr ཁྲ་	gr གྲ་	
bilabial plosives	pr ཟྲ་	phr ཟྲ་	br བྲ་	
bilabial nasals			mr སྨ་	'mr སྨྲ་

Bumthang has five initial consonant clusters of which **l** is the second element: **kl**, **gl**, **pl**, **bl**, **ml**, e.g. ཀླད་པ་ *klatpa* 'brains', གླ་བའེ་ ~ གླ་བལ་ *glabae ~ glabä* 'hit!', ཟླ་ *ble* 'four', མ་བླ་གའེ་ *maplagae* 'don't make noise!', བླག་ཏ་ *plakta* 'noise', བླག་ཐླ་ག་ *blakbloga* 'sloppy, spilt' [said of fluid or of handwriting], བླག་ཏང་ *blaktang* 'spilt fluid, goo, sticky mass, viscous slime', སླག་ཐླ་ག་ *mlakmloga* 'viscous, syrupy, oozing', སླག་ས་ *mlaksa* '[you] are soiling [your hand] in something sticky'. As a few of the above examples just cited will already show to the keen observer, the syllable boundaries suggested by the Bumthang orthography do not always coincide with morphological boundaries between Bumthang morphemes. The difference in phonological and morphological segmentation in the language is particularly manifest in some forms of the imperative and in the optative, to be discussed below. The Bumthang 'Ucen writing system used here was developed by Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji's between 1991 and 1994 and first introduced in print in the 1995 Dutch edition of the Bumthang grammar sketch. This well-designed system is a phono-

logically complete and consistent system, suited to representing the phonological and morphological regularities of the Bumthang language.

TABLE 6
Bumthang initial clusters with **l**

	high tone voiceless	low tone voiced
velar plosives	kl ཀླ་	gl གླ་
bilabial plosives	pl པླ་	bl བླ་
bilabial nasals		ml མླ་

The Bumthang phoneme **w** forms clusters with the velar initials, e.g. ཀྭ་ *kwa* ‘tooth’, ཁྭི་ *khwi* ‘dog’, ཁྭེ་ *khwe* ‘water’, ཁྭིད་ *khwit* ‘too big, oversize’, གྭི་ *gwi* ‘hip’. The **w** in such clusters is often pronounced like the French glide [ɥ]. For example, Bumthang ཀྱི་ *kwi* [kɥi] ‘round woven bamboo mat to underset pots and pans’ is pronounced just like French *cuit* ‘cooked’.

TABLE 7
Bumthang initial clusters with **w**

	high tone voiceless	high tone aspirated	low tone voiced
velar plosives	kw ཀྭ་	khw ཁྭ་	gw གྭ་

2.4 Final consonants

In Bumthang, the consonants **k**, **t**, **p**, **ng**, **n**, **m**, **h** and **s** may occur as finals, e.g. བྲག་ *brak* ‘cliff’ (Dz. ཇྲག་ bj’â), པད་ *pat* ‘leech’ (Dz. པདཿ pêp), ཏ་ཨ་ཕོབ་ *tawa phop* ‘instep’, ཟོན་ *zon* ‘two’, སུམ་ *sum* ‘three’, རྣ་ཕང་ *’naphang* ‘nose’, ཡ་ *ya!* ‘grab it!’ vs. ཡའ་ *yah!* ‘watch out!’ vs. ཡག་ *yak* ‘yak’. The sibilant /s/ only occurs as a final in forms of the experiential past tense, in which case it may also occur as a post-final, e.g. ཏུབས་ *tups* ‘cut’, དོས་ *dos* ‘slept’.

TABLE 8
Bumthang final consonants

k	ག་
t	ད་
p	བ་
ng	ང་
n	ན་
m	མ་
s	ས་
h	འ་

2.5 Vowels

The Bumthang vowels are listed in TABLE 9. Length is not a distinctive feature of Bumthang vowels. Therefore, the Roman Dzongkha diacritic, the circumflex accent [ˆ], is not used in Roman Bumthang. In rapid speech, the vowel sequence **ae** in Bumthang is realised as **ä**.

TABLE 9
Bumthang vowels in low and high register

low tone		high tone	
a	་	’a	ཨ་
e	ེ་	’e	ཨེ་
i	ི་	’i	ཨི་
o	ོ་	’o	ཨོ་
u	ུ་	’u	ཨུ་
ä	ཻ་	’ä	ཨཻ་
ö	ོ་	’ö	ཨོ་
ü	ུ་	’ü	ཨུ་

3 Nominal morphology

This section treats Bumthang pronouns, nouns, numerals, articles and the major endings of nominal parts of speech.

3.1 Pronouns

The Bumthang personal pronouns are listed in TABLE 10. In Bumthang, three persons and singular and plural number are distinguished, resulting in six pronominal categories. There is no dual, nor is there an inclusive vs. exclusive distinction in the first person.

TABLE 10
Bumthang personal pronouns

	singular absolutive	plural absolutive	singular ergative	plural ergative
1st	ངད་ ngat	ཉེད་ nget	ངའི་ ngai (ངའི་ལེ་ ngaile)	ཉེའི་ ngei (ཉེའི་ལེ་ ngeile)
2nd	ཁྱེད་ wet	ཡིན་ yin	ཁྱི་ wi (ཁྱི་ལེ་ wile)	ཡིན་ལེ yinle
3rd	ཁིད་ khit	བོད་ bot	ཁི་ khi (ཁི་ལེ་ khile)	བོའི boi (བོའི་ལེ་ boile)

In the dialect of Chunmat, the second person plural pronoun is འིན་ *in* instead of ཡིན་ *yin* ‘you’ [pl.], and the ergative form of the first person singular pronoun is ངུའི་ *ngui* instead of ངའི་ *ngai* ‘I’ [erg.], e.g. ངུའི་ཁ་མི་གོ་ *ngui kha-mi-go* ‘I don’t understand’ (Dz. ང་ཀ་མི་གོ་ nga ha-mi-g’o). The form of the third person singular pronoun in the Chogor dialect is ཆིད་ *chit* ‘he, she’, although the form ཁིད་ *khit*, pronounced [khjit], is also attested. The demonstrative གོན་ *gon* ‘that, the other’ is often used instead of ཁིད་ *khit.* Bumthang གོན་ *gon* is translated into Dzongkha both as ཁོ་ *kho* ‘he’ and as གཞན་མི་ *zhenmi* ‘the other’.

The most important interrogative pronouns and adverbs in Bumthang are: ཇའི་ *’ai* ‘who’, e.g. ཁིད་ ཇའི་ཡོ། *khit ’ai yo?* ‘who are you?’, ཇ་ཇི་ *’aji* ‘who’ [erg.], e.g. ཇ་ཇི་བུས་ *’aji bus* ‘who did that’, ཇ་ཇི་ *’aji* ‘whose’, e.g. ཇ་ཇི་ཅ་ལ་ *’aji cala* ‘whose stuff’, ཇའི་རོ་ *’ai-do* ‘to whom’, ཞྲ་ *zhra* ‘what’, ཇའོ་ *’ao* ‘where, whither’, e.g. ཇའོ་གའི་གེ། *’ao gai-ge?* ‘where are we going?’, ཇངྒི་ *’angi* ‘whence’, e.g. ཁྱེད་ཇངྒི་ཡོ། *wet ’angi yo?* ‘where are you from?’, ཞྲ་བུ་རྫེ་ *zhrabudze* ‘how much’, ཇ་དོ་རོ་ *’adoro* ‘how’, ཇར་བ་ *’arba* ‘when’.

3.2 Nominals and nominal affixes

The plural suffix in nouns is ཚའི་ <tshai>, e.g. མིན་ཙོ་ཚའི་ *minbotsa-tshai* ‘women’, ཅ་ལ་ཚའི་ *cala-tshai* ‘stuff, articles’. Adjectives in Bumthang follow the noun they modify, e.g. ཡམ་ཁངམ་ *yam khangma* ‘long road’, མི་བོང་ཁངམ་ *mi bong khangma* ‘tall person’ (literally ‘man of tall length’). The final **t** in the absolutive forms of the pronouns appears to be a mark-er of the absolutive <t> with a zero allomorph after the final **n** of *yin* ‘you’ [pl.]. How-ever, this ending does not occur other than in personal pronouns.

The ergative suffix in nouns is ལེ་ <le>. Nouns and plural pronouns may take the collective suffix གམ་པོ་ <gampo>, comparable in meaning to Dzongkha ཆ་ཚུབ་ <chachap>. In such cases, the ergative suffix <le> follows <gampo>. The ergative suffix in personal pronouns, on the other hand, is -ཡི་ <i> with the exception of the second person plural pronoun *yin* ‘you’ [pl.], which takes the ergative suffix used in nouns and therefore has the ergative form *yinle*. Ergative pronouns in <i> may also take the ergative suffix for nouns <le> in addition to <i>, e.g. *ngai ~ ngaile* ‘I’ [erg.], *wi ~ wile* ‘you’ [erg.], *ngei ~ ngeile* ‘we’ [erg.]. Pronominal forms with a double ergative ending -ཡི་ལེ་<ile> have contrastive meaning, e.g. *ngeile* ‘we’ (and not somebody else) [erg.].

As opposed to a canonical ergative, the Bumthang ergative is not an obligatory marking of the agent of a transitive verb, e.g. ངད་ཟམ་ཟུས། *ngat zam zus* ‘I [abs.] ate rice’ vs. ངའི་ཟམ་ཟུས། *ngai zam zus* ‘I [erg.] ate rice’. Just as in Dzongkha and modern Tibetan, the ergative category in Bumthang expresses a higher degree agentivity or volition on the part of the subject. This is why the ergative suffix occurs primarily, but not exclusively, as a marker of the agent of a transitive verb. This type of ergative does not appear to be a rare or unusual phenomenon. A possibly comparable difference in meaning is reportedly found between the ergative and absolutive cases in Bats, a Northeast Caucasian language, which, in the words of Comrie (1981: 53), is ‘entirely one of control’.

The personal pronouns have special genitive forms, which exhibit some superficial resemblance to the ergative forms. The original genitive suffix in nouns is evidently ལེ་ <le>, but the suffix གི་ <gi> has also become widespread under the influence of Dzongkha and Chöke, e.g. ཡག་གི་རྔི་ཕང་ *yak-gi ’nyiphang* ‘tail of the yak, yaktail’. The allomorph of the genitive suffix after nominals which end in a vowel is -ཡེ་ <e> (in Chunmat and ’Ura -ཡི་ <i>). This allomorph appears to be etymologically related to the genitive suffix allomorph occurring after vowels in Dzongkha, viz. -ཡི་ <i>, e.g. ངའེ་ཨ་པའེ་མེང་ *ngae ’apae meng* ‘my father’s name’, ངའེ་ཆོ་རི་གི་མེང་ *ngae charo-gi meng* ‘my friend’s name’. The allomorph <e ~ i> sometimes occurs in combination with the suffix <gi>, e.g. པོའི་གི་ཆེ་ཝ་ *po-i gi chewa* ‘the fangs of a snake’. A comparable phenomenon is observed in Dzong-

kha where two allomorphs of the genitive suffix are used together, apparently superfluously.

TABLE 11
Bumthang personal pronouns

	genitive singular	genitive plural
1st	དང་ ngae, དངལ་ ngale	དེ་ nge, དེལ་ ngele, དེགི་ ngegi
2nd	ཁྭེ་ we, ཁྭེལ་ wele	ཡིན་དེ་ yinde
3rd	ཁི་ khi, ཁིལ་ khile	བོལ་འེགི་ böegi, བོའིལ་ boile

	dative singular	dative plural
1st	དངོ་ ngado	དེངོ་ ngedo
2nd	ཁྭེངོ་ wedo	ཡིན་དུ་ yindu
3rd	ཁིདུ་ khidu	བོངོ་ bodo

Bumthang also distinguishes emphatic forms of the genitive which are formed by attaching the genitive suffix allomorph <e> to the emphatic suffix ར་ <ra>, most probably cognate with Tibetan རང་ raṅ ‘self’, e.g. དངའེ་ *nga-rae* ‘my own’, དེརའེ་ *nge-rae* ‘our own’, ཁྭེརའེ་ *we-rae* ‘your own’ [sg.], ཡིན་རའེ་ *yin-rae* ‘your own’ [pl.], ཁིརའེ་ *khi-rae* ‘his own, her own’, བོརའེ་ *bo-rae* ‘their own’.

The dative forms of the personal pronouns listed in TABLE 11 are regular. The suffix is the same as the morpheme which marks the dative in nouns and the supine in verbs. In Bumthang, the dative and supine are not two separate categories but two separate manifestations of a single grammatical category, which I label ‘telic’. The telic category marks the syntactic constituent which represents the goal towards which a situation expressed by a verb is directed. The telic suffix marks both nouns as well as the supine verbal complements of verbs. The traditional names ‘dative’ and ‘supine’ describe the two ways in which the unitary function of the Bumthang telic suffix finds expression when combined with different parts of speech, i.e. nouns and verbs respectively.

The form of the telic ending is <-QO>, whereby both the segments <Q> and <O> are variables. The vowel <O> represents a vowel harmonic variable, with the realisation /u/ after the closed vowels /i/ or /u/ in the preceding syllable and with the realisation /o/

in all other environments, e.g. ངའོ་དབའི། *nga-do 'wai!* 'bring it to me!', ཤེ་དོ་ཞི་མ་ལ། *we-do bi-mala* 'I shall give it to you', ཁི་དུ་བེ། *khi-du be!* 'give it to him!', ཤར་དོ *shar-do* 'to the east', ཡིན་དུ་ *yin-du* 'to you, for you' [pl.].

The phonological value of the consonant <Q> is a function of the preceding final segment. After final /k/, the variable <Q> is realised as /g/, yielding the form <gO>, e.g. ཐིམ་ཕུག་གུ *Thimphuk-gu* 'to Thimphu'. After a final /ng/, the phonological value of <Q> is /ng/, giving the form <ngO>, e.g. ཀྲོང་ངོ *krong-ngo* 'to the village, in the village'. After final /p/ or /t/, the variable <Q> is realised as /t/, yielding the form <tO>, e.g. ཐབ་ཏོ་ཀུ་ལའེ། *thap-to ku-lae!* 'put it in the oven!' [< ཀུད་མ་ལ *kut-mala* 'to put, place'], ཡག་ཞིད་ཏུ་ *yakbit-tu* 'on the back of the hand'. After all other final consonants, the variable <Q> is realised as /d/, giving the form <dO>, e.g. ཡམ་དོ *yam-do* 'on the road, on the way'.

When a noun lacks a stem final consonant, the stem of the noun is said to be either hard or soft. Whether the stem of a noun or a verb is hard or soft is a lexical given. The terms 'hard' and 'soft' are taken from Dzongkha grammar, where the terms — used in the morphological rather than phonological sense — designate two groups of stems with different morphophonological behaviour. Open stems which behave like closed stems are called 'hard', whereas 'soft' open stems take different allomorphs of certain grammatical endings. In the case of the Bumthang telic ending, hard stems are followed by the allomorph <dO>, whereas soft stems take the allomorph <rO>, e.g. བོ་དོ *bo-do* 'to them', ཡིན་གམ་པོ་རོ་ *yin-gampo-ro* 'to you' [col.pl.], བོད་གམ་པོ་རོ་ *bot-gampo-ro* 'to them' [col.], མའི་དོ *mai-do* 'home, at home'. The suffix ནང་ <nang> 'inside, within' is often used in combination with the telic ending, e.g. མོར་ནང་ངོ *mor-nang-ngo* 'inside the old vagina'. The morphophonology of the telic ending after verbs works the same way, but this is treated in the following section.

As distinct from the dative sense of the telic category, Bumthang has a locative suffix ན་ <na>, e.g. ཡག་ན་ *yak-na* 'in the hand', རུ་ན་ཏོག་ཨའེ། *ju-na tog-ae!* 'fondle [her] breast!'. In certain contexts either suffix is equally apt, e.g. མི་རུ་ཞི་མ་ལ། *mi-ru bi-mala* 'I shall give it to the man', མི་ན་བེ། *mi-na be!* 'give it to the man!'. Certain verbs appear to govern the telic <QO> as well as the locative <na> with a corresponding difference in meaning, e.g. ནད་དོ་ཕན་མ་ལ། *nat-do phan-mala* 'recover from an illness [tel.]', ནད་ན་ཕན་མ་ལ། *nat-na phan-mala* 'cure an illness [loc.]'.

3.3 Numerals and articles

The Bumthang numerals are listed in TABLE 12. The element *neng* in compound numerals is just the conjunction ‘and’. In the dialects of ’Ura and Chunmat, the form of the conjunction is *ning*. Like all other languages of Bhutan, Bumthang counts according to a vigesimal system based on the *khae* ‘score’. A score of scores *nyishu* ‘four hunderd’ represents the next higher stage of the system. In numerals greater than *nyishu*, scores are not counted with the word *khae*, but with the word *tsa*, e.g. *khae-thek* ‘one score, i.e. twenty’ but *nyishu-thek neng tsa-thek* ‘a score of scores plus one score, i.e. four hundred and twenty’. When more than one conjunction is used in numerals above four hundred, the first will be *neng* ‘and’, and the second *doma* ‘and’. A score of *nyishu* is a *khaechen* ‘eight thousand’, and a score of *khaechen* is a *yangchen* ‘one hundred sixty thousand. TABLE 13 gives a comparison of the numerals up to one score in the *Tangpa* and *’Urapa* dialects.

The numeral གཅིག་ *thek* ‘one’ is also used in the sense of ‘a/an, a certain’, e.g. ཕེ་ཅུང་གཅིག་ *phecung-thek* ‘a bag’. There are also Bumthang postpositions which act as articles or demonstratives, e.g. the postposition འོ་ *o* ‘this’. The postposition དི་ *di* ‘the’ is possibly a loan from Dzongkha, e.g. ཕེ་ཅུང་དི་ *phecung-di* ‘the bag’. Although by no means rare, these postpositions do not occur with great frequency. As in Dzongkha, these demonstrative or article-like postpositions immediately follow the noun they modify, preceding any plural or case endings which there may happen to be, e.g. མིན་ཏོ་ཅོ་ཚའི་ *minbotsa-o-tshai* ‘these women’.

TABLE 12
Bumthang numerals

1	གཅིག་	thek	11	ཆུ་རེད་	chwaret	21	ཁའེ་གཅིག་ནེ་གཅིག་	khaethek neng thek
2	གཉིས་	zon	12	ཆུ་རྩིད་	chwa’nyit	22	ཁའེ་གཅིག་ནེ་གཉིས་	khaethek neng zon
3	གསུམ་	sum	13	ཆུ་སུམ་	chusum	23	ཁའེ་གཅིག་ནེ་གསུམ་	khaethek neng sum
4	བཞི་	ble	14	ཅེ་བཞི་	cheble			etc.
5	ཡ་དང་	yanga	15	ཆཱ་དང་	chänga			
6	དྲུག་	grok	16	ཆོ་ལ་ངེ་དྲུག་	chöegrok	40	ཁའེ་གཉིས་	khaezon
7	བདུན་	’nyit	17	ཅེར་བདུན་	cher’nyit	60	ཁའེ་གསུམ་	khaesum
8	ཇད་	jat	18	ཆར་ཇད་	charjat			etc.
9	དགུ་	dogo	19	ཆོ་ལ་ངེ་དགུ་	chöedogo			
10	ཅུ་	che	20	ཁའེ་གཅིག་	khaethek			

400	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་	nyishuthek	420	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་ཐེག་	nyishuthek neng tsathek
800	ཉི་ཤུ་ཟོན་	nyishuzon	440	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་ཟོན་	nyishuthek neng tsazon
1200	ཉི་ཤུ་སུམ་	nyishusum	460	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་སུམ་	nyishuthek neng tsasum
	etc.				etc.

481	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་བླེ་དོ་མ་ཐེག་	nyishuthek neng tsable doma thek
482	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་བླེ་དོ་མ་ཟོན་	nyishuthek neng tsable doma zon
483	ཉི་ཤུ་ཐེག་ནེང་ཙ་བླེ་དོ་མ་སུམ་	nyishuthek neng tsable doma sum
	etc.	
8000	ཁཅེ་ཆེན་ཐེག་	khaechenthek
160 000	ཡང་ཆེན་ཐེག་	yangchenthek

TABLE 13
Bumthang numerals in the Tangpa and ’Urapa dialects

	Tang		’Ura		Tang		’Ura
1	ཐེག་	thek	ཐེག་	thek	11	ཆྭ་རེད་	chwaret	ཆོ་ཝ་རེ་	choware
2	ཟོན་	zon	ཟོན་	zon	12	ཆྭ་ཉིས་	chwa’nyit	ཆོ་ཝ་ཉིས་	chowa’nyis
3	སུམ་	sum	སུམ་	sum	13	ཆུ་སུམ་	chusum	ཆུ་སུམ་	chusum
4	བླེ་	ble	བླ་	blä	14	ཆེ་བླེ་	cheble	ཆེ་བླ་	cheblä
5	ཡ་ང་	yanga	ཡ་ང་	yanga	15	ཆཱ་ང་	chänga	ཆཱ་ཇ་	chä’nga
6	གྲོག་	grok	གྲོག་	grok	16	ཆོས་ཀེ་གྲོག་	chöegrok	ཆེ་གྲོག་	chegrok
7	ཉིས་	’nyit	ཉིས་	’nyis	17	ཆེར་ཉིས་	cher’nyit	ཆེར་ཉིས་	cher’nyis
8	རྗད་	jat	རྗད་	jat	18	ཆར་རྗད་	charjat	ཆེར་རྗད་	cherjat
9	དོ་གོ	dogo	དོ་གོ	dogo	19	ཆོས་ཀེ་དོ་གོ་	chöedogo	ཆེ་དོ་གོ་	chedogo
10	ཆེ་	che	ཆེ་	che	20	ཁཅེ་ཐེག་	khaethek	ཁཅེ་ཐེག་	khaethek

Bumthang has separate numerals for ‘one’ and ‘two’ when counting filled vessels or receptacles. This is reminiscent of the Dzongkha numeral གྱང་ *g’ang* ‘one’ used in the same way. These Bumthang numerals are བླེང་ *bleng* ‘one’ and གྭ་ *gwa* ‘two’, e.g. རྗ་པར་བླེང་དབའི་ *jappar bleng ’wai* ‘bring one cup of tea’, རྗ་པར་གྭ་དབའི་ *jappar gwa ’wai* ‘bring two cups of tea’.

4 Verbal morphology

A Bumthang verb is not conjugated for person or number of subject, object or other actant. The finite verb is inflected for tense and aspect. As a matter of convenience, conjugated verbs in sample sentences are often given a third person singular translation. In explaining each of the Bumthang tenses, whichever dialect has the simplest morphophono-logy for that particular tense is chosen as the point of departure from which to discuss the dialects with a more elaborate morphophonology. It has not been ascertained whether or not each of the four dialect areas is internally homogeneous. It is particularly uncertain whether the dialect of *Chutö* typifies the entire Tang dialect area because, for example, the experienced past tense in the dialect of Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji is identical to that of the 'Urapa dialect, whereas the inferred past tense is formed in the same way as in the Chun-mat and Chogor dialects.

4.1 Present tense

The present tense suffix in the dialect of Chogor is <-da>, དད་ཞེད་ཀྲན་དེ། *ngat wet kran-da* 'I miss you', ཆིད་གལ་དེ། *chit gä-da* 'he's going', བྲི་ནུམ་དེ། *bri num-da* 'he is smelling [it]'. Just as in Dzongkha, there is a morphophonologically relevant distinction in Bumthang between verbs with a hard stem and verbs with a soft stem. Verbs with a closed stem, i.e. with a final consonant, are hard. An open verb stem is either hard or soft, depending on the particular verb in question. In the Chogor dialect, a soft stem verb takes an epenthetic /t/ before the ending <-da>, e.g. ཆིད་ཞེ་གོ་ཟུད་དེ། *chit zhego zut-da* 'he is eating food' < *zu* 'eat', བོད་ཟོན་རད་དེ། *bot zon rat-da* 'the two of them are coming' < ར་ *ra* 'come', ཡོལ་རད་དེ། *yö rat-da* 'it is raining' (literally 'rain comes'), ཆི་དོ་ཏི་རུ་བིད་དེ། *chi nga-do tiru bit-da* 'he is giving me money' < *bi* 'give', དའི་ཏོ་སང་ལེ་ཕེ་ཅུང་དི་བིད་དེ། *ngai tosang-le phecung-di bit-da* 'my friend is giving me the bag', དད་ཡད་བུད་དེ། *ngat yat but-da* 'I am working' < བུ་ *bu* 'do', ཨོད་དེ་ *'ot-da* 'brings' < ཨོ་ *'o* 'bring', སེད་དེ་ *set-da* 'dies' < སེ་ *se* 'die'. Hard open stems do not take an epenthetic /t/, e.g. ཚུལ་དེ་ *tshü-da* 'seeks', དད་རྔོན་ཐྲོའི་དེ། *ngat 'ngon throi-da* 'I am weeding', དེད་གལ་དེ། *nget gä-da* 'we are going'. Closed stems are hard as well, e.g. དོད་དེ་ *dot-da* 'sleeps, ཆིད་ཉིད་དེ། *chit nyit-da* 'he is sitting', ལབ་དེ་ *lap-da* 'says, tells', པོག་དེ་ *pok-da* 'hits, strikes', ལོག་དེ་ *lok-da* 'returns, comes back', བྲན་དེ་ *bran-da* 'recognises', ཁན་དེ་ *khan-da* 'knows', དམ་དེ་ *ngam-da* 'tastes good', ཁྲང་དེ་ *khrang-da* 'climbs'.

TABLE 14
Morphophonology of present tense endings

Chogor	**Tang**
ད <da> (epenthetic /t/ in soft stems)	ས <sa> after /p, k, m, ng/
	ཏ <ta> after soft stems and after /t/
	ཟ <za> after hard open stems
	ད <da> after /n/

'Ura	**Chunmat**
ས <sa> after a voiceless final consonant	ས <sa> after /p, t, k, m, ng/
	ཏ <ta> after soft stems
ཟ <za> after a vowel or a voiced consonant	ཟ <za> after /n/ and after hard open stems

In the dialect of Tang, the present tense ending has the form ཏ <ta> after soft stems and stems ending in final /t/, e.g. ཟུ་ཏ *zu-ta* 'eats, is eating', བི་ཏ *bi-ta* 'gives', ཉིད་ཏ *nyit-ta* 'sits', དོད་ཏ *dot-ta* 'sleeps'. The ending takes the allomorph ད <da> after stems ending in final /n/, e.g. བྲན་ད *bran-da* 'recognises', ཁན་ད *khan-da* 'knows'. The ending has the form ས <sa> after other closed stems, e.g. ལབ་ས *lap-sa* 'says, tells', ཤྲོབ་སེ་ཁྲངས། *shropse khrang-*

sa ‘he is shinning up’ (literally ‘he is climbing, a-shinning’), གླག་ས་ *glap-sa* ‘hits, strikes, ལོག་ས་ *lok-sa* ‘comes back, returns’, ངམ་ས་ *ngam-sa* ‘tastes good’. The ending takes the allomorph ཟ་ <za> after open hard stems, e.g. ཚུལ་ཟ་ *tshü-za* ‘seeks’, ཤྲོས་སེ་གའི་ཟ། *shropse gai-za* ‘he shinned up to it’ (literally ‘he went there, a-shinning’).

In the dialect of ’Ura, the present tense ending has the form ས་ <sa> after stems ending in a voiceless consonant, e.g. ཁིད་ཉིད་ས་ *khit nyit-sa* ‘he is sitting’, དོད་ས་ *dot-sa* ‘sleeps’, ལབ་ས་ *lap-sa* ‘says, tells’, པོག་ས་ *pok-sa* ‘hits, strikes’, ལོག་ས་ *lok-sa* ‘returns, comes back’. In all other environments the ending takes the allomorph ཟ་ <za>, e.g. ཡོལ་ཟ། *yö ra-za* ‘it is raining’ (literally ‘rain comes’), ཁིད་ཞེ་ཙོ་ཟུ་ཟ། *khit zhego zu-za* ‘he eats food’, ཁི་ངའི་རུ་ཏིར་བི་ཟ། *khi nga-do tiru bi-za* ‘he gives me money’, ངེད་གའི་ཟ། *nget gai-za* ‘we are going’, བོད་སུམ་ཟ། *bot sum ra-za* ‘the three of them are coming’, ངའི་ཏུ་སང་ངེ་ཕེ་ཅུང་ཐེག་བི་ཟ། *ngai tosang-nge phe-cung-thek bi-za* ‘my friend gave me the bag’, ཚུལ་ཟ་ *tshü-za* ‘seeks’, བན་ཟ་ *bran-za* ‘recognises’, ཁན་ཟ་ *khan-za* ‘knows’, ཁྲང་ཟ་ *khrang-za* ‘climbs’, ངམ་ཟ་ *ngam-za* ‘tastes good’.

In the dialect of Chunmat, the present tense ending takes the form ས་ <sa> after stems ending in final /m/, /ng/ or a voiceless consonant, e.g. ངམ་ས་ *ngam-sa* ‘tastes good’, ཧྲངས་ *hrang-sa* ‘climbs’, བི་ནུམ་ས་ *bri num-sa* ‘he is smelling at it’, དོད་ས་ *dot-sa* ‘sleeps’, ཉིད་ས་ *nyit-sa* ‘sits’, ལབ་ས་ *lap-sa* ‘says, tells’, པོག་ས་ *pok-sa* ‘strikes, hits’. The ending takes the allomorph ཏ་ <ta> after soft stems, e.g. ཟུ་ཏ་ *zu-ta* ‘eats’, སྐྱོང་ར་ཏ་ *’long ra-ta* ‘a breeze is blowing’ (literally ‘a breeze comes’), ཤོ་སྐྱོང་ར་ཏ་ *sho’long ra-ta* ‘a strong wind is blowing’ (literally ‘a strong wind comes), ལོག་ར་ཏ་ *lok ra-ta* ‘comes back, returns’, བི་ཏ་ *bi-ta* ‘gives’. The ending takes the form ཟ་ <za> after open hard stems or stems ending in final /n/, e.g. ཚུལ་ཟ་ *tshü-za* ‘seeks’, གའི་ཟ་ *gai-za* ‘goes’, བན་ཟ་ *bran-za* ‘recognises’, ཁན་ཟ་ *khan-za* ‘knows’.

The negative of the present tense is formed through prefixation of the negative morpheme མེ་ <me>, in Chunmat མི་ <mi>, e.g. (Tang, Chogor) མེ་ཡན་ད་ *me-yan-da* ‘does not obey’, (’Ura) མེ་ཡན་ཟ་ *me-yan-za*, (Chunmat) མི་ཡན་ཟ་ *mi-yan-za.* In the interrogative, the vowel in the present tense ending changes from /a/ to /e/, e.g. ཞྲ་བྱད་དེ་ *Zhra but-de?* ‘What are you doing?’. Negative prefixes are invariably attached to the root of a verb. In the case of polysyllabic verb stems, the root is the last syllable of the stem, e.g. ཁ་མི་ཀོ་ *kha-mi-go* ‘I don’t understand’.

4.2 Experienced past tense

The experienced past tense expresses an event or situation in the past which the speaker has experienced himself. We shall return to the meaning of this tense in the next section.

TABLE 15
Morphophonology of experienced past tense endings

Chogor	**Tang**
<Ø> after /k/ and /ng/, whereby /k/ is dropped	in Chutö as in ’Ura
ས་ <s> in other environments	elsewhere as in Chogor
’Ura	**Chunmat**
ས་ <s>	ས་ <s> after hard stems and after /t/
	elsewhere <Ø>, whereby the stem final is dropped if it happens to be /k/

In the dialect of ’Ura, the experienced past tense ending has the form ས་ <s> regardless of the nature of the final segment of the verb stem to which it is affixed, e.g. དད་ཕེད་ཀྲནས་ *ngat wet kran-s* ‘I have missed you’, གཞིས་ *gai-s* ‘went’, ཕས་ *pha-s* ‘it’s done, happened’ (Nep. ‘bhayo’), ཟུས་ *zu-s* ‘at’, ཐོངས་ *thong-s* ‘drank’, དེ་མ་དད་ཁྲགས། *dema ngat khrak-s* ‘I arrived yesterday’, དུའི་ཚུལས་ *ngui tshüs* ‘I sought’, པྲོནས་ *pron-s* ‘crashed a party or prayer service’, ཤམས་ *sham-s* ‘set the table’, ཐྲོའིས་ *throi-s* ‘uprooted’ (e.g. plants), བྲི་ནུམས་ *bri num-s* ‘has smelled at it’, དའི་སེང་ཐུས། *ngai seng thu-s* ‘I’ve chopped the wood’, ཏུབས་

tup-s ‘cut’, ཁྲོས་ *khro-s* ‘has bathed’, ཙ་མ་དུལ་རྙོར་རྙོར་ཐུངས། *tsamadü ’nyor-’nyor thung-s* ‘we had lots of sex’ (whereby *tsamadü* ‘much’, *’nyor-’nyor* ‘sex’, *thung* ‘commit, perform’), མེ་ར་སག་ཏེང་གའི་དོ་རྙམས། *Mera Sakteng gai-do ’nyam-s* ‘he felt like going to Mera and Sakteng’. The stem final /t/ is dropped before the suffix of the experienced past tense, e.g. དོས་ *dos* ‘slept’ < དོད་ *dot* ‘sleep’, ཉིས་ *nyis* ‘sat, stayed’ < ཉིད་ *nyit* ‘sit, remain’.

In other Bumthang dialects, the experienced past tense suffix also has the form ས་ <s> after soft stems and after stem final /t/, e.g. དད་ཟུས་ *ngat zus* ‘I’ve eaten’, བིས་ *bis* ‘gave’, ཡད་བུས་ *yat bus* ‘worked’, གོན་རས་ *gon ras* ‘he has come’, དད་དང་མ་ལོག་རས། *ngat dang-ma lok ras* ‘I came back yesterday’, ཨོས་ *’os* ‘[I] have brought it’. In other Bumthang dialects, a stem final /t/ is also dropped before the experienced past tense ending, e.g. དོས་ *dos* ‘slept’ < དོད་ *dot* ‘sleep’.

In the Chunmat dialect, a zero allomorph of this ending occurs in environments other than these, e.g. དུའི་ལབ་ *ngui lap* ‘I said’, ཚུལ་ *tshü* ‘sought’. In the dialect of Chogor, the zero allomorph occurs only after the stem finals /k/ and /ng/, whereas the allomorph ས་ <s> occurs in all other environments, e.g. དའི་དང་མ་ཐུང་། *ngai dangma thung* ‘I saw it yesterday’, but ཆི་ཁོར་ས་ *chi khors* ‘he took it away’, ཆི་ཚུལས་ *chi tshüs* ‘he sought’, དའི་ལབས་ *ngai laps* ‘I said’, དའི་བྲནས་ *ngai brans* ‘I recognised’, དམས་ *ngams* ‘It has come to be delicious’, i.e. ‘it tastes good’. In both Chunmat and Chogor, stem final /k/ is dropped before the zero allomorph of the experienced past tense ending, e.g. Chogor: དང་མ་དད་ཁྲ། *dangma ngat khra* ‘I arrived yesterday’ < ཁྲག་ *khrak* ‘arrive’, Chunmat: དད་དང་མ་ཧྲ། *ngat dangma hra* ‘I arrived yesterday’ < ཧྲག་ *hrak* ‘arrive’, Chogor: དང་མ་དའི་པོ། *dangma ngai po* ‘I hit him yesterday’ < པོག་ *pok* ‘hit, beat’.

In all dialects other than that of ’Ura, the verb ‘to go’ has an irregular past tense form in <e>, གའི་འེ་ *gai-e* ‘went’, e.g. ཀོ་ཉེ་མའི་དོ་པྲོན་དོ་གའི་འེ། *konye mai-do pron-do gai-e* ‘He went to ‘crash’ the other house [in the hope of being able to partake of the meal]’. With the exception of the verb ‘to go’, the experienced past tense in the Chutö dialect is form-ed as in ’Ura, i.e. with the suffix ས་ <s>. In other Tang dialects, the same morphophono-logical rules seem to apply as in Chogor.

The negative of the experienced past tense is formed in the same way in all tenses: by the past tense negative prefix མ་ <ma>, whereas the experienced past tense ending has a special allomorph <t> in negative forms after soft stems, and a zero allomorph in other environments, e.g. མ་ཟུད་ *ma-zu-t* ‘didn’t eat’, དའི་ཁི་དོ་ཏི་རུ་མ་བིད། *ngai khi-do tiru ma-bi-t* ‘I didn’t give him any money’, མ་སེད་ *ma-se-t* ‘didn’t die’, མ་སུད་ *ma-sut* ‘didn’t kill’, མ་ཚུལ་ *ma-tshü* ‘didn’t seek’, མ་ཐོར་ *ma-thor* ‘didn’t pluck’, ཁིད་མ་གའི་ *khit ma-gai* ‘he didn’t go’, སེང་མ་ཐུད་ *seng ma-thu-t* ‘didn’t chop the wood’, ཁིད་ཁག་སོ་མ་ཡང་ *khit khakso ma-yang* ‘he didn’t stand up’, མ་རད་ *ma-rat* ‘he has not come’.

4.3 Inferred past tense

Alongside the experienced past tense, Bumthang has an inferred past tense. The ending of the inferred past tense in the dialects of Chogor and Chunmat is ནཱ <-na>, e.g. ཉིད་ན *nyit-na* ‘has remained, has sat down’ (Dz. སྡོད་ཀུག dö-nu), ཆིད་གཡ་ན *chit gä-na* ‘he has gone’ (Dz. སོ་ནུག so-nu), ཁིད་ཀྲར་ཤིང་ཤྲོབ་སེ་ཁྲངས་ན། *khit tarshing shropse khrang-na* ‘he shinned up the prayer flagpole’. In the dialect of ’Ura, the ending of the inferred past tense is ཟུ་སུད <zumut>, and in Tang with the exception of Chutö the ending is སི་སུད <simut>, e.g. ’Ura: ཁིད་གའེ་ཟུ་སུད། *khit gai-zumut* ‘he is gone’, Tang: ཁིད་གའེ་སི་སུད། *khit gai-simut*.

The Bumthang experienced past tense is comparable in meaning to the Dzongkha past tense in <ci ~ yi>, whereas the inferred past tense corresponds to the Dzongkha past tense in <-nu>. The experienced past tense expresses an event or action in the past which the speaker has himself experienced or, in the case of question to the second person, which the person addressed is assumed to have personally experienced or observed. By contrast, the inferred past tense expresses an event or situation which the speaker has not himself experienced, but which he is able to infer has transpired on the basis of his observations or knowledge of the results in the present of the inferred past tense event. This explains why the experienced past tense is most often used when the subject is a first person, seldom when the subject is a second person, and sometimes when the subject is a third person. Under normal circumstances, one will say ངའི་ཚྱུས་ *ngai tshüs* ‘I sought’, and not **ngai tshüna*, because it is difficult to conceive of a situation whereby the speaker was looking for something but did not experience this process personally. One will therefore say ངའ་ཟུས་ *ngat zus* ‘I have eaten’ (Dz. z’a-yi), but about someone else one may say either ཆིད་ཟུས་ *chit zus* (’Ura: ཁིད་ཟུས་ *khit zus)* ‘he has eaten’ (Dz. kho z’a-yi) or ཆིད་ཟུ་ན་ *chit zu-na* (’Ura: ཁིད་ཟུ་ཟུ་སུད་ *khit zu-zumut)* ‘he has eaten’ (Dz. kho z’a-nu). The choice is determined by epistemological considerations. However, there is no person agreement as such in the Bumthang verb.

In the sentence ཆརོ་ལེ་ངའོ་བིས་ *charo-le nga-do bi-s* ‘[my] friend has given it to me’, only the experienced past tense can be used under normal circumstances because the speaker, who is the beneficiary in this sentence, must have experienced the event himself. Similarly, in the sentence ཨ་མི་ཁུལ་རུ་ཞེ་ཀོ་བིས། *’ami khü-ru zhego bis* ‘mother has fed the dog’ (literally ‘mother [erg.] has given food to the dog’), the choice of past tense indicates that the speaker has himself observed the event described, whereas the speaker who uttered the sentence ཨ་མི་ཟ་མ་ཁེར་ན། *’ami zama kher-na* ‘mother [erg.] has cooked rice’ only observed the results of mother’s efforts after the fact but did not remain in the kitchen all the while as it was happening. This is why the inferred past tense is the usual form to employ when establishing a present tense state or condition which is the result

of a process which one has not personally observed, e.g. པོ་ཁྲོང་ན་ *po khrong-na* ‘he needs a shave’ (literally ‘body hair has sprouted up’).

The lexical meaning of some verbs influences the choice of tense, e.g. the verb ཞིད་ <zhit> ‘forget’ takes the inferred pat tense even with a first person subject, e.g. ཞིད་ན་ *zhit-na* ‘I forgot’, because the speaker did not consciously experience the process of forgetting. Much attention has been devoted to this distinction in Dzongkha (van Driem 1992, 1993, 2007, Karma Tshering and van Driem 1998). Just as with the experienced past tense, the negative of the inferred past tense is formed through prefixation of the past tense negative morpheme མ་ <ma>, but in most dialects the inferred past tense morpheme undergoes no allomorphic changes in the negative, remaining ན་ <-na>, e.g. མ་ཉིད་ན་ *ma-nyit-na* ‘he didn’t stay’. In some locolects, however, the inferred past tense morpheme does have a special negative allomorph ད་ <da>, e.g. མ་ཉིད་ད་ *ma-nyit-da* ‘he didn’t stay’.

4.4 Experienced imperfective

A verb in the experienced past tense can take an imperfective aspectual ending བ་ <ba>, the initial consonant of which /b/ is but weakly voiced and often sounds like [p], e.g. བོའི་མའི་ཁེར་བ་ *boi mai kher-ba* ‘they’ve built their house’, དང་ཟུ་རུ་ཉམ་བ་ *ngat zu-ru ’nyam-ba* ‘I feel like eating’, དང་མ་གི་ཞེ་སོ་ངམ་བ་ *dangma-gi zhego ngamba* ‘yesterday’s food tasted good’, ངའི་ཁིད་ཐུང་བ་ *ngai khit thung-ba* ‘I saw him’, ཏུན་བ་ *tun-ba* ‘showed’, ཏི་རུ་ཆོང་བ་ *tiru chong-ba* ‘produced the money’, ཁོར་བ་ *khor-ba* ‘took away’, ངུའི་ལབ་ཨ་ *ngui lap-ba* ‘I said’, ངུའི་བན་ཨ་ *ngui bran-ba* ‘I recognised’, ངུའི་དང་མ་ཐུང་བ་ *ngui dangma thung-ba* ‘I saw it yesterday’, ཚུ་ཨ་ *tshü-ba* ‘sought’, ཁིད་གའི་ཨ་ *khit gai-ba* ‘he went’, དང་ཁྲ་ཨ་ *ngat khrak-ba* ‘I arrived, I’ve been there’. The suffix ཨ་ <ba> is realised as /wa/ in allegro speech, particularly after stem final /r/ or /ng/, e.g. ཝི་ཆུར་མ་ཐོང་ཡ། *wi churma thong-wa ya?* ‘did you drink beer?’, ཝི་དང་ཐུང་ *wi ngat thung-wa?* ‘did you see me?’. The allomorph <a> of the imperfective suffix occurs after soft stem verbs, whereby the experienced past tense ending <s> is retained, e.g. ངའྱི་ཞེ་སོ་ཟུ་ས་ཡ་ *ngadzi zhego zusa ya?* ‘have you had breakfast?’, ངའི་ཡད་བུ་ས་ *ngei yat busa* ‘we did the work’, བི་ས་ *bisa* ‘gave’. In ’Ura, forms of the type ཟུས་ཨ་ *zuspa* ‘has eaten’ are attested.

There are no distinct negative forms of the imperfective past tense. Therefore, a form like མ་ཉིད་ *ma-nyit* ‘didn’t sit, didn’t stay’ corresponds both to ཉིས་ *nyis* ‘sat, stayed’ as well as ཉིད་བ་ *nyitba* ‘sat, stayed’.

4.5 Copula

In Bumthang, the copula ཨེན་ *wen* ‘is’ and its negative counterpart མིན་ *min* ‘is not’ may connect two substantives and thereby establish the identity of the referent (Dz. *’ing* ‘is’, *mä* ‘is not’, Nep. *ho* ‘is’, *hoina* ‘is not’). In general, the interrogative suffix ག་ <ga> is affixed to the finite at the end of an interrogative clause, but the special interrogative suffix ན་ <na> is affixed to the copula ཨེན་ *wen* ‘is’ or མིན་ *min* ‘is not’, e.g. ཨེན་ན་ *wen-na* ‘isn’t that so?’.

The copulas ན་ *na* ‘there is’ and སུད་ *mut* ‘there is not’ are used in existential, location-al and attributive senses, i.e. ‘there is’, ‘to be somewhere’, ‘to have a quality’ (Nep. *cha* ‘is’, *chaina* ‘is not’), e.g. ཆན་སུད་ *chan mut* ‘it doesn’t matter’ (literally ‘there is no differ-ence’; Dz. ཁེད་མེད། khê mê). The copula སུད་ *mut* takes the same endings as other verbs, e.g. མིན་བོ་ཙ་ཚའི་ཀཀ་ཅན་སུད་དུ་ *minbotsa-tshai kakcan mut-da* ‘the women aren’t any good’. The copula ན་ *na* is used to indicate location, e.g. མི་རྒྱའི་མ་ལ་འི་ཅ་ལ་མའི་དོན་ *mi-’mui-mala-i cala-tshai mai-do na* [not-sell-inf.-nom. things-pl. house-in is] ‘the stuff that’s not for sale is in the house’.

4.6 Periphrastic perfect

The Bumthang perfect is a periphrastic tense formed by the auxiliary ཨེན་ *wen* ‘is’ in combination with the past participle of the verb. The past participle is derived from the experienced imperfective form of the verb through suffixation of the nominalising ending <i>, e.g. ཉིད་བའི་ *nyitbai* ‘sat’ < ཉིད་བ་ *nyitba* ‘sat’, ཟུ་སའི་ *zusai* ‘eaten’ < ཟུ་ས་ *zusa* ‘ate’. The Bumthang nominalising suffix can also be attached to an infinitive form of the verb, although this does not yield a past participle, e.g. མི་རྒྱའི་མ་ལའི་ཅ་ལ་ཚའི་མའི་དོན། *mi-’mui-mala-i cala-tshai mai-do na* [not-sell-inf.-nom. things-pl. house-in is] ‘the stuff that’s not for sale is in the house’. The Bumthang nominalising suffix འི་ <i> is probably ety-mologically related to the Tibetan post-vocalic allomorph འི་ <-ḥi> of the genitive suffix.

The opposition experienced vs. inferred is neutralised in the periphrastic perfect, which is used indifferently with respect to all three persons, e.g. ངེ་ཚུལ་བའི་ཨེན། *nge tshübai wen* ‘we have sought’, ཁིད་ཡང་བའི་ཨེན། *khit yangbai wen* ‘he has stood up’, ཁི་ཟུ་སའི་ཨེན། *khi zusai wen* ‘she has eaten’, ཨེད་ཞེ་གོ་ཟུ་སའི་ཡ། *wet zhego zu-sai ya?* ‘have you eaten?’, ཁྲག་པའི་ཨེན། *khrakpai wen* ‘he has arrived, ཨེད་ལབ་པའི་ཨེན། *wet lapbai wen* ‘you are the one who said it’, བོད་དོད་པའི་ཨེན། *bot dotpai wen* ‘they have slept’. In ’Ura, past participles occur of the type ཟུས་པི་ *zuspi* ‘eaten’, e.g. ཨེད་ཞེགོ་ཟུས་པི་གེ། *wet zhego zu-spi-ge?* ‘have you eaten food? (in which utterance གེ་ *ge* is the ’Urapa form of the interrogative suffix).

The Bumthang perfect not only expresses an event or situation in the past with present time relevance but also serves to establish the identity of the agent who performed an activity, e.g. དའི་ཐོང་བའི་ཝེན། *ngai thongbai wen* ‘I have drunk, I am the one who has drunk’ as a response to the question as to who drank. In this function the past participle is also used attributively, e.g. ཐིམ་ཕུག་གུ་གའི་ཝའི་མི་ཁིད་ཝེན། *Thimphuk-gu gai-wai mi khit wen* [Thimphu-in go-part. person he is] ‘He is the one who went to Thimphu’, སེང་ཐུས་པའི་ཇའི་ཏོ་ཉིད་ན། *seng thus-pai jai-do nyit-na* [wood chop-part. atop-tel. sit-i.p.] ‘he is the one who has been sitting on the chopped wood’.

The negative of the periphrastic perfect is formed by means of the negative copular auxiliary མིན་ *min* ‘is not’. The allomorph གི་ <gi> of the past participial ending is used in the negative instead of འི་ <i>, e.g. ཚུལ་བ་གི་མིན་ *tshübagi min* ‘has not sought’. After soft stem verbs, both the allomorph འི་ <i> occurs to which the allomorph གི་ <gi> too is affix-ed, e.g. ཟུ་སའི་གི་མིན་ *zusaigi min* ‘has not eaten’. Here again the allomorphy of the nominal-ising suffix is identical to that of the genitive suffix.

4.7 Infinitival future

The future ending is མ་ལ་ <-mala> in the dialects of Chogor and Chunmat, e.g. དད་ཝེད་ཀན་མ་ལ། *ngat wet kran-mala* ‘I shall miss you’, མིན་པོ་ཅ་ཏེ་ཚའི་གམ་པོ་རོ་ཏི་རུ་བི་མ་ལ། *minbotsa-o-tshai-gampo-ro tiru bi-mala* [woman-these-pl.-col.-tel. money give-inf.] ‘I shall give some money to these women’, ཝེད་ཡམ་པད་གལ་མ་ལ་ཡ། *wet yampat gä-mala ya?* ‘are you going away tomorrow?’, ར་མ་ལ་ *ra-mala* ‘I shall come’, བོད་བྲི་ནུམ་མ་ལ། *bot bri num-mala* ‘they will smell at it’, ཆརོ་ངོ་ཏི་རུ་བི་མ་ལ། *charo-do tiru bi-mala* ‘I shall give the money to my friend’, མའི་ངོ་གའི་མ་ལ་ *mai-do gai-mala* ‘I’ll go home’, རུག་མ་ལ་ *ruk-mala* ‘we’ll put it away, we’ll clean it up’, སུད་མ་ལ་ *sut-mala?* ‘are they going to slaughter [the pig]?’, ངོད་མ་ལ་ *dot-mala* ‘will sleep’. In the dialects of ’Ura and part of Tang, the future ending is སང་ <sang>, e.g. ངོད་སང་ *dot-sang* ‘shall sleep’, ཟུ་སང་ *zu-sang* ‘shall eat’.

The ending མ་ལ་ <mala> is also affixed to the verb to denote the action or event as such, i.e. to give the infinitive of the verb, e.g. སྨྲུལ་མ་ལ་ *mrü-mala* ‘scratch, carve out, squeeze out’. In other words, there is a verbal category in Bumthang the meaning of which covers both what in English is felt to be future as well as an infinitival meaning. This is vaguely similar to the use of the Nepali infinitive in <ne>, but the Bumthang tense is its own system, whereas Nepali has an array of other infinitival endings and other future tenses. Forms in མ་ལ་ ~ སང་ <mala ~ sang> are used with auxiliary ཝེན་ *wen* ‘is’, e.g. གའི་མ་ལ་ཝེན་ *gaimala wen* ‘I shall go, I am to go’ (’Ura: གའི་སང་ཝེན་ *gaisang wen* ‘I shall go, I am to go’). Such a construction portrays the event as a situation which will

take place according to schedule or some tacitly assumed scheme of things, ཕེད་ཡམ་པད་གའི་སངཕེན་ན། *wet yampat gai-sang wen-na?* ‘Are you leaving tomorrow?’ This question is not a query about what the person addressed wants to do, but about his intended plan of action or programme.

4.8 Volitional future

The Bumthang volitional future in གེ་ <ge> expresses an action which the subject of the sentence intends to carry out or an event about which the subject is very sure that it will take place in the future. This is why the volitional future is apt to express an action which will be realised in the immediate future, and why it is often used when the subject is a first person about whose future intentions the speaker generally has a good deal of knowledge, ཉིད་གེ་ *nyit-ge* ‘I will sit’, ཟུ་གེ་ *zu-ge* ‘I will eat’, རུ་གེ་ *ju-ge* ‘futuam’. The infinitival future in མ་ལ་ <mala> merely expresses a future possibility, whereas the volitional future expresses the wish, intent or decision of the subject about a future event and in this way expresses an almost certain future, e.g. ཁིད་ཉིད་མ་ལ་ *khit nyit-mala* ‘he will [probably] stay on’ vs. དད་ཟུ་གེ་ *ngat zu-ge* ‘I will eat’, ཡད་བུ་རུ་གའི་གེ་ *yat bu-ru gai-ge* ‘I am going off to work’. With the infinitival future in མ་ལ་ <mala> the speaker assumes a possible future, e.g. ཕེད་ཉིད་མ་ལ་ ཕེན་ན། *wet nyit-mala, wen-na?* ‘you’re going to be staying on, aren’t you? (Nep. *timī basne, hoina?*). With the volitional future, by contrast, the speaker asserts or questions the intent or will of the subject about the event denoted by the verb, e.g. ཕེད་ཉིད་གེ་ ཕེན་ན། *wet nyit-ge, wen-na?* ‘you intend to stay, don’t you?’ (Nep. *timī baschau, hoina?*).

The negative of the volitional future is formed by addition of the negtive prefix མི་ <me>, in Chunmat མི་ <mi>, whereby the suffix གེ་ <ge> is dropped, e.g. དད་མི་ཉིད་ *ngat me-nyit* ‘I won’t sit down, I won’t stay’, ཁིད་མི་གའི་ *khit me-gai* ‘he won’t leave’, མི་རུ་ *me-ju* ‘non futuam’, མི་སུད་ *me-sut* ‘I won’t kill’, ཁིད་མི་ཟུ་ *khit mi-zu* ‘he won’t eat’, དད་ཁག་མོ་མི་ཡང་ *ngat khakso mi-yang* ‘I won’t get up’, དད་ཅོག་མེ་ཅོག་ *ngat cok me-cok* ‘I won’t shit’ (literally ‘I won’t defaecate faeces’), ཁིད་མི་ར་ *khit mi-ra* ‘he won’t come’. In the interrogative, the volitional future suffix གེ་ <ge> is dropped before the interrogative suffix ག་ <ga>, e.g. ཕེད་ཆོ་རང་ཉིད་ག་ *wet cho-rang nyit-ga* [you here-emp. sit-Q] ‘Did you want to sit here?’

The suffix ན་ <na> can be added to a volitional future form to indicate that the utterance represents newly acquired knowledge on the part of the speaker, knowledge about which the speaker has reason to believe is an accurate representation of reality, but not beyond the shadow of a doubt, e.g. ཡམ་པད་ནན་སུན་གའི་དོན་རྟོམ་གེ་ན། *yampat-nanmun gai-do*

'nyam-ge-na 'he'll be pleased to be leaving soon'. This Bumthang suffix ན་ <na> is comparable in meaning to the Dzongkha suffix བས་ ~ ཝས་ <wä ~ bä>, which also expresses the episte-mological stance of the speaker with respect to the contents of the utterance. When the volitional future ending གེ་ <ge> has been compounded by the ending ན་ <na>, then the volitional future suffix གེ་ <ge> is not dropped in the negative, e.g. ཁིད་ཉིད་གེ་ན་གཱ། *khit nyit-ge-na-ga* 'Is he going to stay?' (whereby གཱ་ <ga> is the interrogative suffix) — མི་ཉིད་གེ་ན་ *mi-nyit-ge-na* 'no, he won't stay'.

4.9 Supine

The supine is a function of the Bumthang telic category expressed by the suffix <-QO> when this morpheme is attached to a verb. In this suffix, the vowel symbol <O> represents a vowel harmonic variable with the phonological value /u/ when the vowel in the preceding syllable is either of the closed vowels /i/ or /u/. In all other environments, its phonological value is /o/, e.g. སུད་དུ་ *sut-du* 'in order to kill', དོད་དོ་ *dot-do* 'in order to sleep', ཉིད་དུ་ *nyit-du* 'in order to sit', དེད་མེན་ཏོ་ཐོར་དོ་གའི་གེ་ *nget mento thor-do gai-ge* 'we are going to pick flowers'. The phonological value of the variable represented by <Q> depends on the stem final of the verb. (1) After final /k/, the telic ending is <gO>, e.g. ཁིད་པོག་གོ་ངད་གའི་གེ་ *khit pok-go ngat gai-ge* 'I'm going there to give him a beating', རུག་གུ་གའི་གེ་ *ruk-gu gai-ge* 'we are going to put everything back in its place', ཝེད་ཅོག་ཅོག་མོ་མ་གའི་ཡ། *wet cok cok-go ma-gai-ya?* 'Didn't you just go off to shit?'. (2) After stem final /ng/ the ending has the form <ngO>, e.g. ཐོང་ངོ་ *thong-ngo* 'in order to drink', ཡུང་ངུ་གའི་གེ་ *yung-ngu gai-ge* 'I shall go to fetch it'. (3) after final /p/ the ending has the value <tO>, e.g. ཏུབ་ཏུ་ *tup-tu* 'in order to cut', ཐབ་ཏོ་ག་ལའེ་ *thap-to ga-lae!* 'go away (i.e. somewhere else) to argue!', ལབ་ཏོ་གའི་གེ་ *lap-to gai-ge* 'we are going off to tell [them]'. (4) After all other final consonants and after hard open stem verbs, the telic ending has the form <dO>, e.g. ཏོར་དོ་ག་ལའེ་ *tor-do ga-lae!* 'go sow!', ཇུ་ཕོར་དོ་ག་ལའེ་ *ju phor-do ga-lae!* 'go to fondle her breasts!', པོན་དོ་ *pron-do* 'in order to crash a party or prayer service', ཤམ་དོ་ *sham-do* 'in order to set the table, in order to display wares on a table' (Dz. བཀམ་ནི་ bkram-ni), བི་སུམ་དུ་གའི་གེ་ *bri num-du gai-ge* 'I am going to smell at it', སྨུལ་དོ་ *mrü-do* 'in order to squeeze it out', ཚུལ་དོ་ *tshü-do* 'in order to look for it', ངོན་ཐྲོའི་དོ་ *'ngon throi-do* 'In order to extirpate weeds'. In contrast to the morphophonology of the telic suffix when attached to nominal parts of speech, the telic suffix also has the form <dO> after verb stems in final /t/, e.g. ཐོད་དོ་ *thot-do* 'in order to join', དོད་དོ་ *dot-do* 'in order to sleep'. After soft open verb stems, the initial of the telic suffix has the phonological value <rO>, e.g. ཟུ་རུ *zu-ru* 'in order to eat',

སེ་རོ་ *se-ro* ‘in order to die’, སེང་ཐུ་རུ་གའི་གེ་ *seng thu-ru gai-ge* ‘I am going off to chop wood’, ཏི་རུ་བི་རུ *tiru bi-ru* ‘in order to give money, in order to pay’.

The supine is not only the form of verbal complements of verbs of motion. The supine is also the form of verbal complements of the Bumthang verbs ཚུགས་མ་ལ་ *tshuk-mala* ‘to be able’ and ནྱམ་མ་ལ་ *’nyam-mala* ‘to feel like doing something’, e.g. གའི་དོ་ནྱམ་ད་ *gai-do ’nyam-da* ‘I feel like going’, ངད་ཆུར་མ་ཐོང་ངོ་མེ་ཚུགས་ *ngat churma thong-ngo me-tshuk-sa* ‘I can’t drink the beer’.

4.10 Imperative

The imperative is formed through affixation of the suffix ལའེ་ <lae>, in allegro speech pronounced as ལལ་ <lä>, e.g. སྨྲུལ་ལའེ་ *mrü-lae!* ‘squeeze it out, scratch it out!’, ཐྲོའི་ལའེ་ *throi-lae!* ‘weed, extirpate!’, ཐོར་ལའེ་ *thor-lae!* ‘pluck, pick!’, པྱོན་ལའེ་ *pron-lae!* ‘crash [a dinner party]!’, The verb གའི་མ་ལ་ *gai-mala* ‘to go’ has the stem ག་ <ga> in the imperative, e.g. ག་ལའེ་ *ga-lae!* ‘go away!’. The negative imperative is formed through affixation of the negative prefix མ་ <ma>, e.g. མ་སྨྲུལ་ལའེ་ *ma-mrü-lae!* ‘don’t squeeze it out!’, མ་ཚྷུལ་ལའེ་ *ma-tshü-lae!* ‘don’t look for it!’, མ་ག་ལའེ་ *ma-ga-lae!* ‘don’t go!’, མེན་ཏོ་མ་ཐོར་ལའེ་ *mento ma-thor-lae!* ‘don’t pick the flowers!’, མེན་ཏོ་མ་ཐྲོའི་ལའེ་ *mento ma-throi-lae!* ‘don’t uproot the flowers!’, མ་སེ་ *ma-se!* ‘don’t die!’.

Verb stems ending in /t/ drop this final before the imperative suffix, e.g. མ་སྨྲ་ལའེ་ *ma-mra-lae!* ‘don’t scratch!’ < སྨྲད་མ་ལ་ *mrat-mala* ‘scratch’, ས་རོ་ཉི་ལའེ་ *saro nyi-lae!* ‘sit down!’ < ཉིད་མ་ལ་ *nyit-mala* ‘sit’, དོ་ལལ་ *do-lä!* ‘go to sleep!’, < དོད་མ་ལ་ *dot-mala* ‘sleep’, སུ་ལའེ་ *su-lae!* ‘kill!’ < སུད་མ་ལ་ *sut-mala* ‘kill’. After verb stems in final /ng/, /k/ or /p/, the imperative ending is realised as the allomorph <ae> and the verb stem finals /k/ and /p/ become voiced /g/ and /b/, e.g. མ་ཡ་དའེ་ *ma-yang-ae!* ‘don’t stand up!’, ཏི་རུ་ཡ་དཇོངའེ་ *tiru yanga chong-ae!* ‘get out five ngütram’ (Bhutanese currency unit), མ་པོ་གའེ་ *ma-pog-ae!* ‘don’t beat!’ < པོག་མ་ལ་ *pok-mala* ‘hit, beat’, ཏུ་བའེ་ *tub-ae!* ‘cut it!’ < ཏུབ་མ་ལ་ *tup-mala* ‘cut’. After the verb stem final <m>, the imperative ending has the allomorph མའེ་ <mae>, e.g. ཀར་ཡུ་ མ་ཐྲོམ་མའེ་ *karyu ma-throm-mae!* ‘don’t break the porcelain cup!’, བྱི་མ་ནུམ་མའེ་ *bri ma-num-mae!* ‘don’t sniff at it!’ (whereby བྱི་ *bri* ‘smell’ is the obligatory complement of the verb ནུམ་མ་ལ་ *num-mala* ‘to smell’ if there is no other overt complement).

Soft open stem verbs with either the stem vowel /i/ or /u/ form their imperatives through the apophonic rule whereby /i/ goes to /e/ and /u/ goes to /ö/, e.g. ངའོ་མ་བེ་ *nga-do ma-be!* ‘give it to me!’ < བི་མལ་ *bi-mala* ‘give’, ཟོལ་ *zö!* ‘eat!’ < ཟུ་མ་ལ་ *zu-mala* ‘eat’, མ་རྫོལ་ *ma-jö!* ‘ne futue!’ < རྒྱ་མ་ལ་ *ju-mala* ‘futuere’, ཐོལ་ *thö!* ‘chop!’ < ཐུ་མ་ལ་ *thu-mala* ‘chop’. The verbs ར་མ་ལ་ *ra-mala* ‘come’ and ཨོ་མ་ལ་ *’o-mala* ‘bring’ have irregular imperative

forms, viz. རྒྱའི་ *hrai!* ‘come!’, མ་རྒྱའི་ *ma-hrai!* ‘don’t come’, དབའི་ *’wai!* ‘bring!’, མ་དབའི་ *ma-’wai!* ‘don’t bring!’.

4.11 Gerund

The ending of the gerund is སེ་ <se>, and in Chunmat སི་ ~ ཟི་ <si ~ zi>. This suffix is attached to a verb which expresses an event or situation which obtains simultaneously or immediately prior to the situation denoted by the main verb (cf. Dz. སྟེ་ ~ ཏེ་ ~ དེ་ <di>, Nep. <-era>), e.g. མའི་རྒྱམ་སེ་གའི་འེ་ *mai hram-se gai-e* ‘after they had destroyed the house, they left’, ཤྲའི་ད་ཤྲའི་སེ་གའི་ད་ *shrai-da, shrai-se gai-da* ‘it’s overflowing, it’s overflowing and getting away’, ཅུ་ཅུ་ཤྲོབ་སེ་མ་ཉི་ལལ་ *cucu shrop-se ma-nyi-lä!* ‘don’t just sit there masturbating!’. The verb ཟད་མ་ལ་ *zat-mala* ‘complete, finish’ governs the gerund, e.g. ཡི་གུ་དྲི་སེ་ཟས་ *yigu dri-se zas* ‘I’ve finished writing, I’m done with writing’. The verb གོད་མ་ལ་ *got-mala* ‘must’, however, takes the bare stem of a verb as its complement, e.g. ཞེ་གོ་ཟུས་དན་དོད་གོད་ས། *zhego zus, dan dot got-sa* ‘[we] have eaten the food, now [we] must go to sleep’. It is not clear whether any etymolo-gical relationship exists between the Bumthang gerund suffix སེ་ <se> and the Bumthang experienced past tense suffix <s>.

4.12 Adhortative

The adhortative ending is ཀྱ་ <kya>, e.g. ཏུབ་ཀྱ་ *tup-kya* ‘let’s cut it’, པྲོན་ཀྱ་ *pron-kya* ‘let’s crash [their dinner]’, ཤམ་ཀྱ་ *sham-kya* ‘let’s set out [the wares] for display’, དོད་ཀྱ་ *dot-kya* ‘let’s go to sleep’, ཟུ་ཀྱ་ *zu-kya* ‘let’s eat’, ཡད་བུ་ཀྱ་ *yat bu-kya* ‘let’s work’, རྔོན་ཐྲོའི་ཀྱ་ *’ngon throi-kya* ‘let’s uproot the grass’, ཐོང་ཀྱ་ *thong-kya* ‘let’s drink’, གའི་ཀྱ་ *gai-kya* ‘let’s go’, ཚུལ་ཀྱ་ *tshü-kya* ‘let’s look for it’, མུ་ཀྱ་ *mu-kya* ‘let’s do it’. The adhortative may be used with respect to a second person subject in questions, where it has the connotation of polite encouragement, e.g. རྨུའི་སེ་མ་ཟད་པའི་ཅ་ལ་གམ་པོ་མའི་དོན་ ཞེད་གོད་ཀྱ་ རྔུལའི་ཀྱ། *’mui-se ma-zat-pai cala-gampo mai-do na. wet got-kya? ’ngüi-kya?* [sell-ger. not-finish-part. stuff-col. house-in be. you need-adh.? buy-adh.?] ‘The things which have not been sold off yet are still in the house. Mightn’t you need them? Won’t you buy them?’

4.13 Optative

The optative ending is ག་ <ga>. As this ending is homophonous with the interrogative suffix, intonation serves a disambiguating function, e.g. ཡད་བུ་ག་ *yat bu-ga!* ‘may [he/you/

etc.] work!', སུ་ག་ *mu-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] do it!'', ཟུ་ག་ *zu-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] eat!', དོད་ག་ *dot-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] sleep!', པྲོན་ག་ *pron-ga!* 'may [you/they/etc.] crash [their dinner]!', ཚུལ་ག་ *tshü-ga!* 'may [he/you/etc.] look for it'. In certain Bumthang locolects, the optative ending has the form <(n)ja>, whereby the full allomorph <nja> occurs after open stem verbs, e.g. ཡད་བུན་ཇ་ *yat bu-nja!* 'may [he/you/etc.] work!', སུན་ཇ་ *mu-nja!* 'may [he/you/etc.] do it!', ཟུན་ཇ་ *zu-nja!* 'may [he/you/etc.] eat!', ཚུལན་ཇ་ *tshü-nja!* 'may [he/you/etc.] look for it!'. The allomorph <ja> occurs after a closed stem verb, e.g. པྲོན་ཇ་ *pron-ja!* 'may [you/they/etc.] crash [their dinner]!'. Verb stems ending in /t/ lose this final before the optative ending in locolects where the optative suffix is <(n)ja>, e.g. དོ་ཇ་ *do-ja* 'may [he/you/etc.] sleep!'. The optative can be used with respect to a subject in all three persons. The optative is only attested in the first person in the questions intended to sollicit the approval of the person addressed, ངད་གའི་ག་ *ngat gai-ga* 'shall I go now?'.

4.14 Aspectivisers <thung> and <thro>

The term 'aspectiviser' denotes an auxiliary which expresses an *Aktionsart*, adding a dimension of meaning to the meaning of the main verb. Bumthang probably has more aspectivisers than just <thung> and <thro>, but a complete treatment of all such Bumthang verbal auxiliaries falls beyond the scope of this modest synoptic grammar. The two aspectivisers <thung> and <thro> do not exhibit similar morphological behaviour. The data available at present are too limited to draw any conclusions in the regard.

The Bumthang aspectiviser ཐིང་ <thung> adds a dative of relinquitive meaning to a verb in the past. When the auxiliary <thung> is affixed to a soft stem verb, the allomorph <t> of the experienced past tense is retained, e.g. ཆ་རོ་ལེ་ང་དོ་བིད་ཐུང་ *charo-le nga-do bi-t-thung* 'my friend has handed it over to me', ཁི་བིད་ཐུང་བ་ *khi bi-t-thung-ba* 'he gave it away', ཡད་བུད་ཐུང་ *yat bu-t-thung* 'has he completed the task?' (Nep. *kām gari diyo)*, ཟ་མ་ཟུད་ཐུང་ *zama zu-t-thung* 'has he finished off the rice'.

The aspectiviser ཐྲོ་ <thro> expresses the inexorability of a situation or process. The auxiliary <thro> is often used in conjunction with a past participle, e.g. ཅ་ལ་ཚའི་ཁི་ལེ་ཁོར་ཝའི་ཐྲོ་ *cala-tshai khi-le khorwai thro* 'he is the one who took away the stuff'. The English translation conveys the the meaning of the Bumthang syntax in the given utterance. The use of ཐྲོ་ <thro> conveys the sense of 'it just happens to be the case that he is the one who took the stuff away, and there's nothing we can do about it'. In the sentence ཇེབ་པའི་ཐྲོ་ཝ་རེ། *jep-pai thro ware!* 'we enjoyed it!', the auxiliary ཐྲོ་ <thro> connotes that the enjoyment was long-lasting. The emotive word *ware* at the end of the clause expresses a meaning similar to that of Dzongkha སྨ་རེ་ *'mare*, which might be described as conveying

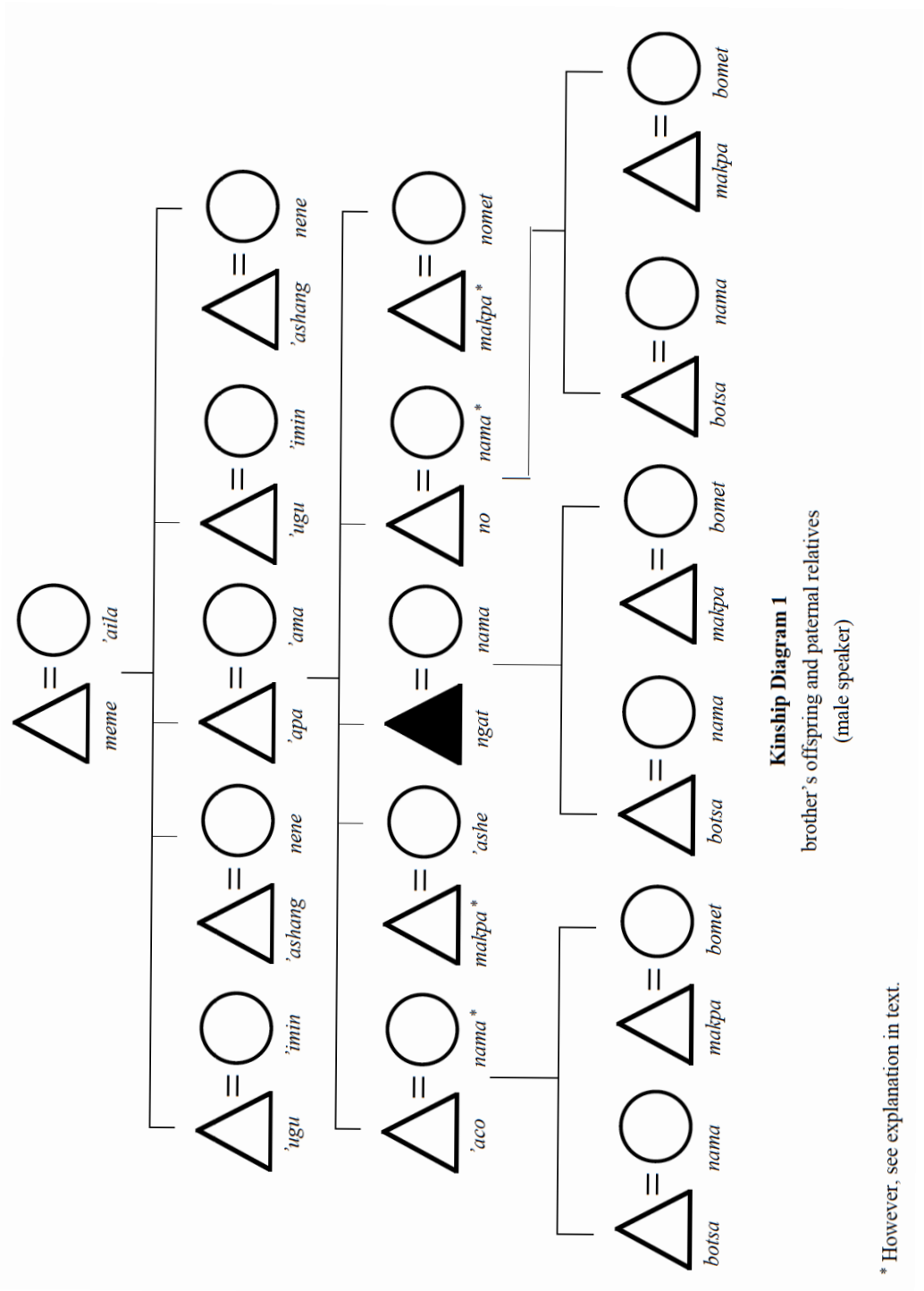
an air of authority on the part of the speaker. The use of the auxiliary <thro> in the utter-ance ཉིད་པའིཐོ་ *nyitpai thro* ‘he just kept on sitting there’ conveys the idea that the subject is immovable, inert or lethargic.

The auxiliary <thro> may also be attached directly to the stem of a verb instead of the present tense ending, e.g. ངའ་ཅོ་རང་ཉིད་ཐོ་ *ngat cho-rang nyit thro* ‘I’m staying here!’. The aspectiviser <thro> can be used as a main verb in the meaning ‘persist, continue to’, in which case it takes all the regular endings of a main verb and itself takes a gerund as its complement, e.g. ཟུ་སེ་ཐོ་ན་ རང་སེས། *zu-se thro-na, rang ses* ‘[the pig] just kept on eating, it died just like that’. The latter utterance pertains to the practice of feeding a hemp porridge to pigs in Bhutan. This porridge renders pigs docile and lazy, making them easier to keep track of and prone to fattening. This porridge is not fed to pigs who are ripe for the slaughter, but to growing pigs. The amount of *Cannabis indica* is gradually increased, but it can happen that a pig dies of an overdose if moderation is not observed in the initial stages by an inexperienced farmhand preparing the porridge. The sentence ཟུ་སེ་ཐོ་ཝེན་ *zu-se thro wen* ‘I am going to keep on eating it’ can, for example, be said to a person who is entertaining the idea of eating an apple which the speaker has already started eating and temporarily put aside.

4.15 Hearsay evidential

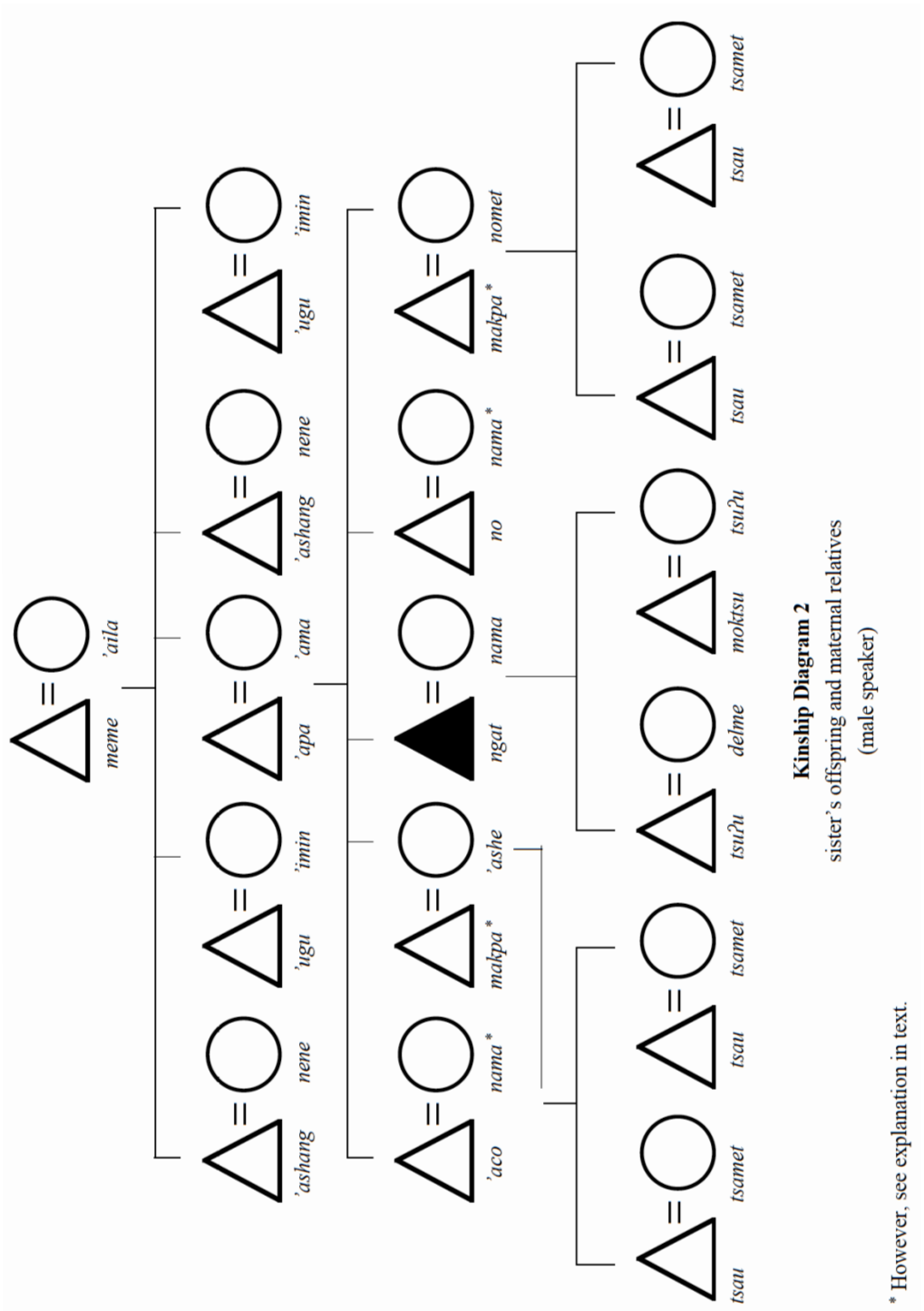
A hearsay evidential is a grammatical particle which indicates that the information conveyed in an utterance is neither the product of the speaker’s own observations, nor information the accuracy of which the speaker has been able to ascertain. A hearsay evidential expresses that the content of the utterance represents intelligence obtained from a third party, which the speaker has come to know from hearsay, or an assertion made by the subject of the sentence itself.

Bumthang distinguishes between an interrogative hearsay evidential ཤུ་ <shu> and a non-interrogative or indicative form རེ་ <re>, ཁིད་ཉིད་གེ་ཤུ་ *khit nyit-ge shu* ‘does he say (do they say/is it said) that he is going to stay?’, ཁིད་ཉིད་གེ་རེ་ *khit nyit-ge re* ‘he says (they say/it is said) that he is going to stay’. It is no doubt merely a remarkable coincidence that the non-interrogative Bumthang hearsay evidential happens to be formally similar to its Nepali counterpart *re*, e.g. *U hāmīsaṅga khāndaina re* ‘he says (they say/it is said) that he won’t be eating with us’.



Kinship Diagram 1
brother's offspring and paternal relatives
(male speaker)

* However, see explanation in text.



Kinship Diagram 2
sister's offspring and maternal relatives
(male speaker)

* However, see explanation in text.

5 Kinship terms

The Bumthang system of kinship terminology is described here on the basis of the Chutö dialect. The word for 'father' is ཨ་པ་ *'apa*, and 'mother' is ཨ་མ་ *'ama*. 'Grandfather' is མེ་མེ་ *meme* (Chunmat: མི་མི་ *mimi)*, and 'grandmother' is ཨཱའི་ལ་ *'aila* (Chunmat: ཨ་ཡ་ *aya)*. 'Grandson' is དི་བུ་ *dibu*, and 'granddaughter' is དི་མེད་ *dimet*. For uncles and aunts, a terminologically distinguishing criterion is whether the sex of the referent is the same as or different from the sex of the connecting relative, in this case the parent. Father's brothers and their wives are respectively designated by the terms ཨུ་གུ་ *'ugu* (Chunmat: ཨུ་གོ་ *'ugo)* and ཨི་མིན་ *'imin*. Similarly, mother's sisters and their husbands are respectively designated by the terms ཨི་མིན་ *'imin* and ཨུ་གུ་ *'ugu*. Different terms are used to designate uncles and aunts whose sex is not the same as that of the connecting relative, i.e. the parent. Father's sisters and their husbands are respectively designated by the terms ནེ་ནེ་ *nene* (Chunmat: නී་නී་ *nini)* and ཨ་ཤང་ *'ashang*, and mother's brothers and their wives are respectively designated by the terms ཨ་ཤང་ *'ashang* and ནེ་ནེ་ *nene*.

The kin relationship to the offspring of ཨུ་གུ་ *'ugu* and ཨི་མིན་ *'imin*, the parallel cousins, is felt to be closer than the relationship with the offspring of ནེ་ནེ་ *nene* and ཨ་ཤང་ *'ashang*, the cross cousins. Parallel cousins are terminologically equivalent to one's own siblings and are designated, depending on their relative age as compared with that of the speaker, by the sibling terms ཨ་ཅོ་ *'aco* 'elder brother', ནོ་ *no* 'younger brother', ཨ་ཤེ་ *'ashe* 'elder sister' and ནོ་མེད་ *nomet* 'younger sister'. Cross cousins are, by contrast, called སྤུན་ *pun* 'son of father's sisters or of mother's brother' and པཡུ་རིན་མོ་ *puringmo* 'daughter of father's sister and mother's brother'. It is forbidden to marry a parallel cousin, just as it is forbidden to marry one's own sibling. However, a cross cousin represents a preferable choice of spouse in Bumthang, as it does throughout central Bhutan (Kurtöp, Khengpa, Gongdukpa). Cross cousin marriage is not practised in western Bhutan by the 'Ngalong population. In the list of Bumthang kinship terms collected by Imaeda and Pommaret (1990), cross cousins and parallel cousins are not terminologically differentiated. The terms which they recorded also exhibit formal differences with the terms presented here.

In accordance with the division into parallel and cross cousins, brother's offspring are for a male speaker terminologically equivalent to his own offspring, and the same applies to sister's offspring in the case of a female speaker. The terms for one's own offspring are བོ་ཙ་ *botsa* 'son' (Chunmat: བོ་ཟ་ *boza),* and བོ་མེད་ *bomet* 'daughter', and ཨོ་ང་ *'onga* 'child'. A male speaker refers to his sister's children and their spouses by the terms ཙཱུ་ *tsau* (male) and ཙ་མེད་ *tsamet* (female), and a female speaker uses these terms to refer to her brother's offspring and their spouses. The Bumthang terms ཙཱུ་ *tsau* and ཙ་མེད་

tsamet are evidently related to the Dzongkha terms ཚའོ་ *tshao* en ཚམ་ *tsham*, but the Bumthang term ཙ་མེད་ *tsamet* contains the same indigenous suffix མེད་ <met> as in Bumthang དི་མེད་ *dimet* ‘granddaughter’, ནོ་མེད་ *nomet* ‘younger sister’ and བོ་མེད་ *bomet* ‘daughter’. The kinship diagrams illustrate the kinship system for a male Bumthang speaker. The kinship system for a female Bumthang speaker can be easily derived on the basis of the description provided here.

A man calls his wife ནོ་མོ་ *namo* (Chogor: ནེ་ས་ *nesa)*, and a woman calls her husband མཁ་པ་ *makpa*. Daughters-in-law and the wives of parallel nephews are called ན་མ་ *nama*, and sons-in-law and the husbands of parallel nieces are also referred to as མཁ་པ་ *makpa*. A speaker may also refer to his or her sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law respectively as ན་མ་ *nama* and མཁ་པ་ *makpa* when these people live under a single roof with the speaker. If this is not the case, it is more usual to use decriptive circumlocutions like ཨ་ཇོ་ལེ་ནོ་མོ་ *’ajo-le namo* ‘elder brother’s wife’.

6 Bumthang language glossary with Trans-Himalayan comparanda provided by Nathan Wayne Hill

The alphabetical order of this glossary in Bumthang Roman basically follows the alphabetical order of Roman Dzongkha.

a	g	’m	p	ts
’a	h	n	ph	tsh
ä	hr	’n	r	u
’ä	hy	ng	’r	’u
b	i	’ng	s	w
c	’i	ny	sh	’w
ch	j	’ny	shr	y
d	k	o	t	’y
dz	kh	’o	th	z
e	l	ö	thr	zh
’e	m	’ö	tr	zhr

Entries followed by an asterisk between parentheses (*) have only been recorded in their Tang dialect forms. Entries immediately followed by a dash (—) have been recorded for all four major Bumthang dialects, whereby a deviant form in any of these

dialects is given separate mention. Polysyllabic verb stems are hyphenated before the root, which corresponds to the last syllable of the verb stem, in order to indicate the position at which prefixes are attached to the verb. Verbs are listed in their future infinitival form in <mala>. Each entry is also given in the Bumthang orthography in Bhutanese དབུ་ཅན་ 'Ucen script developed by དྲག་ཤོས་སངས་རྒས་རྡོ་རྗེ་ Dr'âsho Sanggä Dôji 'Sangye Dorji' between 1991 and 1994, but never formally proposed.

Comparanda suggested by Nathan Hill are added between braces { }. Chinese characters are followed by Baxter's (1992) Middle Chinese reconstruction, an Old Chinese reconstruction that is either taken from or compatible with the current version of Baxter and Sagart's (2011) system, and the character number in Karlgren (1964 [1957]). As in Baxter's own recent work, for Middle Chinese the digraphs ae and ea are used in place of his original æ and ɛ. The newer convention of changing ɨ to + has, however, not been followed, on aesthetic grounds. Old Chinese reconstructions lacking in Baxter and Sagart (2011) are provided in Hill's own reconstructions, which often rely on Schuessler (2009). Certain features of Baxter and Sagart's system are omitted here, such as pointed brackets, intended to show morphological structure. Tibetan verbs are cited by verbal root and present stem, whereby verbs that undergo voicing alternation are assumed to have a voiceless root (cf. Hill 2010).

ar འར་ — n., phlegm, slime.
auya འ་འུ་ཡ་ — n., jackal, *Canis aureus;* Dz. འ་དོམ་ or ཕ་དོམ་ âd'ôm.
'aco ཨ་ཅོ་ — n., elder brother.
'adoro ཨ་དོ་རོ་ — adv., how.
'ai ཨའི་ — pro., who.
'aila ཨའི་ལ་ — n., grandmother [Chunmat: འ་ཡ་ aya]
'aji ཨ་ཇི་ — pro., who (erg.); whose (gen.).
'ama ཨ་མ་ — n., mother.
'angdar ཨང་དར་ — n., [< Eng. underwear] underwear; cf. དོར་མ་ *dorma.*
'angi ཨ་ངི་ — adv., whence, where from.
'ao ཨའོ་ — adv., where.
'apa ཨ་པ་ — n., father.
'arba ཨར་བ་ — adv., when.
'ashang ཨ་ཤང་ — n., 1) mother's brother; 2) father's sister' husband.
'ashe ཨ་ཤེ་ — n., elder sister.
'adzing ཨ་ཛིང་ — n., belt with which a woman fastens her ཀི་རད་ *kirat*.
baspa བས་པ་ — n., nest hair, peach fuzz; cf. པོ་ *po.*
be བེ་ —v., imperative of བི་མ་ལ་ *bi-mala*.

beng བེང་ (*) n., smegma; cf. Dz. ཇེང་ bj'eng.
bi-mala བི་མ་ལ་ — v., give.
binma བིན་མ་ — n., calf [dialectally: གཕ་ས་ gapsa].
blakbloga བླག་བློག་ — adj., messy, spilt (said of fluids or of handwriting).
blaktang བླག་ཏང་ — n., spilt fluid, goo, sticky mass, viscous slime.
ble, blä བླེ་ བླ་ — num., four {Tib. བཞི་ bźi, O.Bur. ལིཡ liy, Ch. 四 sijH < *s.li[j]-s (0518a)}.
bleng བླེང་ — num., one (used of filled vessels or receptacles); Dz. གང་ g'ang; cf. གྭ་ *gwa.*
bodok བོ་དོག་ — n., long ceremonial scarf of raw Bhutanese silk, usually white; cf. Dz. བཀབ་ནས་ kapni.
boi, boile བོའི་ བོའིལེ་ — pro., they (erg.).
bomet བོ་མེད་ — n., 1) daughter; 2) girl {Tib. བུད་མེད་ bud-med}.
bong བོང་ — n., length, size.
bot བོད་ — pro., they, them.
botsa བོ་ཙ་ — n., 1) son; 2) boy; [Chunmat: བོ་ཟ་ boza].
brak བག་ — n., cliff; cf. Dz. ཇག་ bj'â; Tib. བག་ brag.
bran-mala བན་མ་ལ་ — v., recognise, know.
brangdo བང་དོ་ — n., chest {Tib. བང་ braṅ}.
branma བན་མ་ — n., Tartary buckwheat, *Fagopyrum tataricum;* Dz. འཇོའོ་ bj'ô.
brat-mala བད་མ་ལ་ — v., scratch, claw {Tib. འབད་ ḥbrad}.
bre ཟེ་ — n., female yak; cf. Tib. འབྲི་མོ་ ḥbri-mo.
bri num-mala ཟི་ནུམ་མ་ལ་ — v., smell, sniff at something.
bugang བུ་གང་ — n., fontanelle.
bu-mala བུ་མ་ལ་ — v., do.
cala ཙ་ལ་ — n., wares, stuff.
cingdum ཅིང་ཏུམ་ — n., trousers, or long breeches extending to just over the knees; cf. དོར་མ་ *dorma*.
cingku ཅིང་ཀུ་ (*) adj., small {Tib. ཆུང་བ་ chuṅ-ba}.
cok ཅོག་ — n., shit, faeces.
cok-mala ཅོག་མ་ལ་ — v., defaecate, shit.
comen ཅོ་མེན་ — n., dimple [Tang: ཅོ་མེད་ comet].
comet sungsung ཅོ་མེད་སུང་སུང་ (*) adv., in such a way that one's dimples become visible; e.g. ཅོ་མེད་སུང་སུང་གད་དའ། *comet sungsung gat-da* 'he smiled so that you could see his dimples'.
cong ཅོང་ — n., 1) anus, arse; 2) loins; ཅོང་ན་རྫུ་ཀྱ་ *cong-na ju-kya* 'let's commit sodomy'.
congmek ཅོང་མེག་ — n., anus [dialectal: ཅོག་སི་མེག་ coksimek]

cucu ཙུཙུ་ — n., penis; esp. the penis of a man after having attained puberty, but before fathering a child; cf. མི་ལིང་ *miling,* ཀ་གཱ་ *kaga,* ཏེམ་པ་ལི་ *tempali*.

cucui phailang ཙུཙུའི་ཕའིལང་ (*) n., glans penis, literally: penis forehead; cf. གང་ *gang.*

cucui shrop ཙུཙུའི་ཤྲོབ་ (*) n., [< ཤྲོབ་མ་ལ་ shrop-mala, q.v.] foreskin, literally: penis sheath.

chan ཆན་ — n., difference. {Tib. མཚན་ mtshan ‘mark, characteristic’}

charjat, cherjat ཆར་རྫད་ ཆེར་རྫད་ — num., eighteen.

charo ཆརོ་ — n., friend; cf. Dz. ཆརོགས་ châro; cf. *tosang.*

chänga, chä’nga ཆལ་ང་ ཆལ་ངྷ་ — num., fifteen.

che ཆེ་ — num., ten. {Tib. བཅུ་ bcu}

cheble, cheblä ཆེབླེ་ ཆེབླ་ — num., fourteen.

cher’nyit, cher’nyis ཆེར་ཉིད་ ཆེར་ཉིས་ — num., seventeen.

chetpu ཆེད་པུ་ (*) adj., big {Tib. ཆེད་པོ་ ched-po}.

chewa ཆེ་ཝ་ — n., fangs of a snake; cf. *dongkwa, kwa* {Tib. མཆེ་བ་ mche-ba, VbV > VwV indicates this word must be a Tibetic loan}.

chi ཆི་ — n., lip {Tib. མཆུ་ mchu}.

chimbo ཆིམ་བོ་ — n., liver {Tib. མཆིན་ mchin, Bur. သည်း saññḥ}.

chit ཆིད་ — pro., see ཁིད་ *khit*.

cho ཆོ་ — adv., here.

chong-mala ཆོང་མ་ལ་ — v., produce, take out, show; cf. ཏུན་མ་ལ་ *tun-mala.*

chöedogo, chedogo ཆོལའེདོ་གོ་ ཆེདོ་གོ་ — num., nineteen.

chöegrok, chegrok ཆོལའེགྲོག་ ཆེགྲོག་ — num., sixteen.

chubak ཆུབག་ — n., Bhutanese male garb (Dz. བགོ་ g’ô < O.Tib. གོས་ gos) [Chogor: ཆུབ་ chuba].

churma ཆུར་མ་ — n., native beer; cf. Dz. ཆང་ chang.

chusum ཆུསུམ་ — num., thirteen.

chwa’nyit, chowa’nyis ཆྭ་ཉིད་ ཆོཝ་ཉིས་ — num., twelve.

chwaret, chowaре ཆྭ་རེད་ ཆོཝ་རེ་ — num., eleven.

dakhu དཀུ་ — n., sperm.

dangma དང་མ་ — adv., yesterday [’Ura: དེ་མ་ dema].

dema དེ་མ་ — adv., see དང་མ་ *dangma*.

denca དེན་ཅ་ (*) n., a slap (with the hand).

dibu དིབུ་ — n., grandson.

dimet དིམེད་ — n., granddaughter.

dogo དོ་གོ་ — num., nine {Tib. དགུ་ dgu}.

dongkwa དོང་ཀྭ་ — n., [< ཀྭ་ kwa ‘tooth’] fangs of a mammal; cf. ཆེ་ཝ་ *chewa.*

dorma དོར་མ་— n., short pants, underpants [cf. Tib. དོར་མ་ dor-ma ‘trousers’]; cf. ཨང་དང་ *’angdar,* ཅིང་དུམ་ *cingdum.*

dot-mala དོད་མ་ལ་— v., sleep.
döba དོལ་བ་ (*) n., male gayal, *Bos frontalis;* Dz. ཡང་གུ་ yangg'u.
döbam དོལ་བམ་ (*) n., female gayal, *Bos frontalis;* Dz. ཡང་གུམོ་ yangg'um.
dri-mala དྲི་མ་ལ་ — v., write {Tib. √ri, pres. འདྲི་ ḥdri, cf. Hill 2005}.
dumang དུ་མང་ — n., goitre.
dungshing rotpa དུང་ཤིང་རོད་པ་ — n., vertebrae [Chunmat: དུང་ཤིང་རོ་ས་ dungshing rosa].
dungshing དུང་ཤིང་ — n., spinal column.
dusum དུ་སུམ་ (*) adv., today.
gai-mala གཱི་མ་ལ་ — v., go.
gajolewang གཇོ་ལེ་ཝང་ — n., armpit.
gajolewangpo གཇོ་ལེ་ཝང་པོ་ — n., armpit hair.
gami གཱ་མི་ — n., fire {Tib. མེ་ mye, Bur. မီး mīḥ, Ch. 烬 xjwɨjX < *hmɨjʔ (0583e)}.
gamlang གམ་ལང་ — n., chin [Chunmat en Tang: གམ་ gam].
gampo གམ་པོ་ — col.postp., altogether, all (often left untranslated); cf. Dz. ཆ་ཆཔ་ chachap.
gamtha གམ་ཐ་ — n., beard [Chunmat: གམ་ཚང་ gamtshang, Tang: གམ་ཆང་ gamchang].
gang གང་ — n., glans penis.
ganji-khenjang གན་རྗི་ཁེན་རྗང་ — n., [< Hindi *ganjī* 'singlet, t-shirt' + Bum. *khenjang*] singlet, t-shirt.
gapsa གབ་ས་ — see བིན་མ་ *binma.*
gapsawang གབ་ས་ཝང་ — n., fossa poplitea.
gatpo གད་པོ་ (*) n., old man {Tib. རྒད་པོ་ rgad-po}.
gä-mala གཱ་མ་ལ་ — v., see གཱི་མ་ལ་ *gai-mala.*
glap-mala གླབ་མ་ལ་ (*) v. [Tang], hit, strike, beat; cf. པོག་མ་ལ་ *pok-mala.*
gon གོན་ — pro., the other one, that; cf. Dz. གཞན་མི་ zhenmi.
got-mala གོད་མ་ལ་ — v., must, need, require.
grang-mala གྲངམ་ལ་ — v., count {Tib. འགྲངས་ ḥgraṅ}.
gran-mala གྲན་མ་ལ་ — v., compete {Tib. འགྲན་ ḥgran}.
grangka གྲངས་ཀ་ — n., counting {Tib. གྲངས་ graṅs}.
grekpo གྲེག་པོ་ — n., yeti, the abominable snowman; Dz. མི་རྨོད་ 'migö; cf. མིར་གུ་ལ་ *mirgula.*
grok གྲོག་ — num., six {Tib. དྲུག་ drug}.
grumangti གྲུ་མང་ཏི་ — n., elbow [Tang: གྲུ་མང་ grumang] {Tib. གྲུམོ་ gru-mo}.
gungmu གུང་སུ་ (*) n., middle finger; cf. *pramang bonpo.*
guyung གུ་ཡུང་ — n., head {Tib. མགོ་ mgo}.
gwa གྭ་ — num., two (used of filled vessels or receptacles); cf. བླེང་ *bleng.*
gwi གྭི་ — n., hip.
hrak-mala ཧྲག་མ་ལ་ — v., see ཁྲག་མ་ལ་ *khrak-mala*.
hrang-mala ཧྲངམ་ལ་ — v., see ཁྲངམ་ལ་ *khrang-mala.*

hrai ཧྲའི་ — v., imperative of རམ་ལ་ *ra-mala.*
hrak-hrok ཧྲག་ཧྲོག་ — adv., confused, mixed up.
hram-mala ཧྲམ་མ་ལ་ — v., destroy, demolish.
hyawang ཧྱ་ཝང་ — n., lamasery; cf. Dz. ལྷ་ཁང་ lhakha.
in འིན་ — pro., see *yin*.
'imin ཨི་མིན་ — n., 1) mother's sister; 2) father's brother's wife
jai རའི་ — postp., on top of, atop, above.
jappar རབ་པར་ — n., cup of tea.
jat རད་ — num., eight {Tib. བརྒྱད་ brgyad, Wr.Bur. ཇྱཻ rhac < O.Bur. *rhyat (cf. Nishi 1999: 47), Ch. 八 peat < *pˤret (0281a)}.
jawa རྦ་ — n., moustache.
jep-mala རེབ་མ་ལ་ — v., enjoy.
jigpala རིག་པ་ལ་ (*) adj., enormous, huge.
joma རྗོ་མ་ — n., intestines, abdomen.
ju རུ་ — n., 1) breast, tit, teat; 2) milk {Tib. ཞོ་ źo 'yoghurt' : Japhug rGy. tɤ-lu 'milk'}.
ju-mala རུ་མ་ལ་ — v., [an etymological relationship with *ju* 'breast' cannot be excluded, although this seems improbable] futuere.
ka ཀ་ — n., snow {Tib. ཁ་བ་ kha-ba}.
kaga ཀ་ག་ — n., penis of a boy before reaching puberty; cf. ཙུ་ཙུ་ *cucu*.
kai ཀའི་ — n., back {Tib. སྐལ་ sgal}.
kak ཀག་ — n., blood {Tib. ཁྲག་ khrag, Ch. 赫 xaek < *qʰˤrak (0779a) 'red, fiery', Bur. ཧྲཀ် *rhak* 'ashamed'}.
kakcan ཀག་ཅན་ — adj., good.
kan ཀན་ — n., palate.
kangbut ཀང་བུད་ — n., bladder {Tib. ལྕང་བུ་ lgaṅ-bu}.
kangdung ཀང་དུང་ — n., thigh.
karyu ཀར་ཡུ་ (*) n., [< Tib. དཀར་ཡོལ་ dkar-yol] porcelain cup.
kat ཀད་ (*) n., language {Tib. སྐད་ skad}.
ketpa ཀེད་པ་ — n., waist {Tib. སྐེད་པ་ sked-pa}.
ki ཀི་ (*) n., potato, tuber.
kili ཀི་ལི་ — n., the little finger, pinkie [Chunmat: ཀི་ལིག་ kilik].
kirat ཀི་རད་ — n., Bhutanese female garb (Dz. དཀྱིས་རས་ kira) [Chogor: ཆུབ་ chuba]; cf. ཀི་སང་ *kisang.*
kisang ཀི་སང་ — n., cloth to wrap in which to wrap something, cf. ཀི་རད་ *kirat.*
klatpa ཀླད་པ་ — n., brain {Tib. ཀླད་པ་ klad-pa}.
konye ཀོ་ཉེ་ — adj., next, following.
kra ཀྲ་ — n., hair on scalp [Tang: དབ་ 'ra] {Tib. སྐྲ་ skra}.

kran-mala ཀྲན་མ་ལ་ — v., miss someone, yearn, long for.
krong ཀྲོང་ — n., village {Tib. སྒྲོང་ sgroṅ}.
kut-mala ཀུད་མ་ལ་ — v., put, place.
kwa ཀྭ་ — n., tooth; cf. ཅེ་ *chewa,* དོང་ཀྭ་ *dongkwa,* ཕུག་ཀྭ་ *phupkwa,* སུར་ཀྭ་ *surkwa.*
kwi ཀྭི་ — n., round woven bamboo mat to underset pots and pans.
kha ཁ་ — n., mouth, language; cf. ཀད་ *kat* {Tib. ཁ་ kha}.
kha-go-mala ཁ་གོ་མ་ལ་ — v., understand, grasp; cf. Dz. ཧ་གོ་ནི་ hag'oni {Tib. ཧ་གོ་ ha-go, not met in early Tibetan literature}.
khae ཁེ་ — num., one score (twenty) {Tib. ཁལ་ khal 'a unit of volume equal to twenty སྦྲེ་ bre'}.
khaechenthek ཁེ་ཆེན་ཐེག་ — num., eight thousand.
khaesum ཁེ་སུམ་ — num., sixty.
khaethek ཁེ་ཐེག་ — num., twenty.
khaezon ཁེ་རྫོན་ — num., forty.
khaido ཁེ་དོ་ — n., kidneys {Tib. མཁལ་ mkhal}.
khakso ཁག་སོ་ — adv., up, straight up, upright.
khan-mala ཁན་མ་ལ་ — v., know {Tib. མཁན་ mkhan}.
khangma ཁང་མ་ — adj., long.
kharkharma ཁར་ཁར་མ་ — adj., white {Tib. དཀར་ dkar}.
khawa ཁ་ཝ་ — n., chicken, hen.
khawate ཁ་ཝ་ཏེ་ — n. [< khawa 'hen' + ?te 'egg'], egg, chicken egg
khawate khrangma ཁ་ཝ་ཏེ་ཁྲང་མ་ — n. [literally 'egg-pip'], yolk.
khenjang ཁེན་རྗང་ — n., shirt; Dz. ཁྱེན་རྗ་ khenja.
kher-mala ཁེར་མ་ལ་ — v., cook, build, prepare.
khi, khile ཁི་ ཁི་ལེ་ — pro., he, she (erg.).
khit ཁིད་ — pro., he, him, she, her.
khor-mala ཁོར་མ་ལ་ — v., take away.
khrak-mala ཁྲག་མ་ལ་ — v., arrive, have been somewhere [Chunmat: ཧྲག་མ་ལ་ hrak-mala].
khrang ཁྲང་ (*) n., pip.
khrang-mala ཁྲང་མ་ལ་ — v., climb [Chunmat: ཧྲང་མ་ལ་ hrang-mala].
khrangkhrang ཁྲང་ཁྲང་ — n., crane (bird).
khratpa ཁྲད་པ་ (*) n., the wild Himalayan gaur, *Bos gaurus;* Dz. བ་མེན་ b'amö.[1]

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[1] Most speakers of the national language in Bhutan are not native speakers of Dzongkha. Therefore, sometimes so-called reading pronunciations can be heard, such as the non-native *bamen for correct Dzongkha བ་མེན་ *b'amö,* for example, especially when a speaker is unfamiliar with the genuine grassroots 'Ngalop pronunciation of a word.

khro-mala ཁྲོ་མ་ལ་ — v., bathe {Tib. √kru, pres. འཁྲུ་ ḥkhru}.
khrong-mala ཁྲོང་མ་ལ་ — v., germinate, sprout, sprout up, shoot up.
khur ཁུར་ — n., cheek {Tib. མཁུར་བ་ mkhur-ba}.
khurba ཁུར་བ་ — n., heavy Tatary buckwheat flatbread; Dz. ཇོའོ་གྱི་ཁུ་ལེབ་ bj'ô g'i khulep.
khü ཁུ་ — n., see ཁྭི་ *khwi*.
khwe ཁྭེ་ — n., water {Tib. ཁུ་བ་ khu-ba 'liquid'}.
khwethor ཁྭེ་ཐོར་ — n., rapids, surf, turbulent water.
khwi, khü ཁྭི་ ཁུ་ — n., dog {Tib. ཁྱི་ khyi, O.Bur. ခုယိး khuyḥ, Ch. 犬 khwenX < *k^{whs}enʔ (0479a)}.
khwit ཁྭིད་ (*) adj., too big, oversize.
lajan ལ་རན་ — n., white cuffs to be worn with the *chubak*; Dz. ལག་ཆུན་ lâge.
langma ལང་མ་ — n., buttocks.
lap-mala ལབ་མ་ལ་ — v., say, tell [note: low tone in contrast to Dz. སྨྲ་ནི་ 'lapni] {Tib. ལབ་ lab}.
litpa ལིད་པ་ — n., clitoris.
lok ལོག་ — adv., back.
lok-mala ལོག་མ་ལ་ — v., return, come back {Tib. ལོག་ log}.
luspa ལུས་པ་ — n., body [Chunmat: ལུ་སྭ་ lusa, dialectal: ལུད་པ་ lutpa] {Tib. ལུས་ lus}.
'li ནྱི་ — n., tongue {Tib. ལྕེ་ lce, Bur. လျှာ lhyā, Ch. 舐 zyeX < *Cə.leʔ (0867f) 'lick'}.
'lijungmet ནྱི་རྡུང་མེད་ — n., uvula.
'lithakpa ནྱི་ཐག་པ་ — n., frenulum linguae.
'long ནྷོང་ — n., wind, breeze. {Tib. རླུང་ rluṅ}
mai མའི་ — n., house {Tib. མལ་ mal 'bed'}.
makpa མག་པ་ — n., 1) husband; 2) son-in-law, grandson-in-law {Tib. མག་པ་ 'bridegroom', Bur. မက် mak}.
matki མད་ཀི་ — n., male sarong (Nep. luṅgī).
mek མེག་ — n., eye {O.Tib. དམིག་ *dmig*, མིག་ *mig*, Bur. မျက် myak, Ch. 目 mjuwk < *C.muk (1036a)}.
mekbo མེག་པོ་ (*) n., pupil of the eye [Chunmat, Chogor: ཙ cha].
mekkharti མེག་ཁར་ཏི་ — 1) n., white of the eye; 2) adv., with the white of one's eyes, e.g. མེག་ཁར་ཏི་ཏད་དྱ་ *mekkharti tat-da* 'he looked at him with the whites of his eyes'.
mekpakpa མེག་པག་པ་ — n., eyelid (literally 'eye-skin).
mekpuli མེག་པུ་ལི་ — n., tear.
meme མི་མི་ — n., grandfather [Chunmat: མི་མི་ mimi] {Tib. མེས་ 'ancestor'}.
Meng མེད་ (*) n., 'Ngalong, the Dzongkha speaking population of western Bhutan.
meng མེད་ — n., name {O.Tib. མྱིན་ myiṅ, Bur. မည် mañ, Ch. 名 mjieng < *C.meŋ (0826a)}.

Mengkat མེང་ཀད་ (*) n., Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, native to western Bhutan.
mento མེན་ཏོ་ — n., flower {O.Tib. མེན་ཏོག་ men-tog}.
mewa མེ་ཝ་ — n., small mole or birthmark {Tib. རྨེ་བ་ rme-ba, the change VbV > VwV shows that this word is a Tibetic loan}.
mi མི — n., person, man (note: low tone in contrast to Dz. མི་ 'mi) {Tib. མི་ mi}.
miling མི་ལིང་ — n., penis of a man who has fathered a child; cf. ཙུ་ཙུ་ *cucu*.
min མིན་ — v., not to be (used to establish identity of referent). {Tib. མིན་ min}
minbotsa མིན་བོ་ཙ་ — n., woman [Chunmat: མེམ་བ་ཟ་ membaza]
mirgula མིར་གུ་ལ་ — n., rhesus monkey; cf. གྲེག་པོ་ *grekpo,* རཱ་ཀ་ *raksha*.
mlak-mala སླག་མ་ལ་ — v., soil something or part of one's body in something sticky, syrupy or slimy.
mlakmloga སླག་སློ་ག་ — adj., sticky, syrupy, slimy.
mor མོར་ — n., vagina of an old woman, large vagina; cf. པ་པེ་ *pepe.*
mos མོས་ — n., pubic hair; Dz. ཧུང་ hung {Thangmi *mus* 'body hair', O.Bur. မုယိး muyḥ, Ch. 毛 maw < *C.mˤaw (1137a)}.
mrat སྨད་ — n., paddy, standing rice {Tib. འབྲས་ ḥbras, Ch. 糲 lat < *(mə-)rˤat (0340g)}.
mrat-mala སྨད་མ་ལ་ — v., scratch {Tib. འབྲད་ ḥbrad}.
mrü-mala སྨུ་མ་ལ་ — v., scratch, etch, squeeze out, scratch out {Tib. √dru ~ √bru 'scrape'; cf. Jacques (2010: 28)}.
mu-mala སྨ་མ་ལ་ — v., do.
mukduma སྨག་དུ་མ་ (*) n., fist, cf. པ་རེ་ *pare.*
mut སྨད་ — v., not to be (in the existential, locational and attributive senses) {Tib. མེད་ med}.
'mingma སྨིན་མ་ — n., eyebrow {Tib. སྨིན་ smin}.
'mran སྨན་ — n., sebum, blackhead.
'mrat སྨད་ — n., flour to thicken soup with.
'mui-mala སྨུའི་མ་ལ་ — v., sell.
na ན་ — loc.postp., in, at, on.
na ན་ — v., be (in the existential, locative or attributive senses).
na ན་ — n., ear {Tib. རྣ་ rna}.
namo, nama ན་མོ་ ན་མ་ — n., 1) wife [Chogor: ནེ་ས་ nesa]; 2) daughter-in-law, granddaughter-in-law {Tib. ཉ་མོ་ ña-mo}.
nang ནང་ — postp., inside, within {Tib. ནང་ naṅ}.
nanmun ནན་སུན་ — adv., the day after tomorrow.
nat ནད་ — n., illness, disease {Tib. ནད་ nad}.
natpa ནད་པ་ — n., ear wax [Chunmat: ནས་ཀབ་ naskap]

neng ནེང་ — conj., and, with.
nene ནེནེ་ — n., 1) father's sister; 2) mother's brother's wife; [Chunmat: ནེནི་ nini].
nengma ནེང་མ་ — n., heart {Tib. སྙིང་ sñiṅ, Bur. နှစ် nhac, Ch. 仁 nyin < *niŋ (0388f) 'kindness'}.
ning ནིང་ — conj., see ནེང་ *neng.*
no ནོ་ — n., younger brother {Tib. ནུ་བོ་ nu-bo 'younger brother', Ch. 孺 nyuH < *nos (0134d) 'child, mild'}.
nomet ནོ་མེད་ — n., younger sister.
nu ནུ་ — n., breast, tit, teat {Tib. ནུ་ nu 'suck', Ch. 乳 nyuX < *noʔ (0135a) 'milk, nipple'}.
'naima རྣ་ཞིམ་ — n., wool yarn.
'namse རྣམ་སེ་ — n., pimple.
'nap རྣབ་ — n., snot {Tib. སྣབས་ snabs, Bur. နှပ် nhap}.
'naphang རྣ་ཕང་ — n., nose {Tib. སྣ་ sna, Bur. နှာ်း nhā}.
'naphangmek རྣ་ཕང་མེག་ — n., [literally 'nose-eye'] nostril.
'ne རྣེ་ — n., gums {Tib. རྣིལ་ rñil, སྙིལ་ sñil, Ch. 齦 ngjɨn < *ŋə[n] (0416-)}.
ngartong ངར་ཏོང་ — n., shin.
ngat ངའ་ — pro., I, me {Tib. ང་ ṅa 'I, me', Bur. ငါ ṅā, Ch. 吾 ngu < *ŋˤa (0058f)}.
ngei ངེའི་ — pro., we (erg.).
ngadza ང་ཛ་ — n., morning.
ngai ངའི་ — pro., I (erg.).
ngam-mala ངམ་མ་ལ་ — v., taste good, be delicious.
nget ངེད་ — pro., we, us {Tib. ངེད་ ṅed, Ch. 我 ngaX < *ŋˤajʔ (0002a)}.
ngui ངུའི་ — pro., see ངའི་ *ngai.*
ngur ངུར་ — n., face {Tib. ངོ་ ṅo}.
'ngon ངོན་ — n., grass, weeds {Tib. སྔོན་པོ་ 'blue, green'}.
'ngüi-mala ངུལ་དེ་མ་ལ — v., buy {Tib. དངུལ་ dngul 'silver', O.Bur. ငုယ် ṅuy, Ch. 銀 ngin < *ŋrə[n] (0416k)}.
nya ཉ་ — n., muscle {Tib. ཉ་ ña 'tendon, sinew'}.
nya ཉ་ — n., fish {Tib. ཉ་ ña, Bur. ငါး ṅāḥ 'fish', Ch. 魚 ngjo < *ŋa (0079a)}.
nyamgong ཉམ་གོང་ — n., thigh.
nyishu ཉི་ཤུ་ — num., four hundred {Tib. ཉི་ཤུ་ ñi-śu 'twenty'}.
nyit-mala ཉིད་མ་ལ་ — v., sit, stay, remain.
'nyakpa རྣག་པ་ — n., earlobe.
'nyam-mala རྣམ་མ་ལ་ — v., feel like doing or having something.
'nyiphang རྣི་ཕང་ — n., tail.
'nyit, 'nyis རྣིད་ རྣིས་ — num., seven {Bur. ခုနှစ် khu-nhac}.

’nyor-’nyor ནྱོར་ནྱོར་ — n., sexual union.
omtsho-khenjang འོམ་ཚོ་ཁེན་རྗང་ — n., [< Dz. omtsho + Bum. khenjang ‘shirt’] cardigan, pullover.
otomang འོ་ཏོ་མང་ — n., front of the neck.
’o-mala ཨོ་མ་ལ་ — v., bring.
’onga ཨོ་ང་ — n., child.
pak, pakpa པག་ པག་པ་ — n., skin; པག་ཤྲོབ་ན་ གང་པླིག་ན་ *pak shrop-na, gang plik-na* ‘the [fore]skin has been retracted, [your] glans penis has been exposed’; cf. ཙུ་ཙུའི་ཤྲོབ་ *cucui shrop* {Tib. ལྤགས་པ་ lpags-pa}.
pare པ་རེ་ (*) n., a held up hand, the hollow of the hand; cf. སུག་དུ་མ་ *mukduma.*
pare-gang པ་རེ་གང་ (*) num., a handful {Tib. སྦར་གང་ sbar-gaṅ}.
pat པད་ — n., leech; cf. Dz. པདཔ་ pêp.
patmong པད་མོང་ — n., knee {Tib. སྤུས་མོ་ spus-mo, དཔུས་མོ་ dpus-mo, Bur. ပုဆစ် pu-chac}.
pepe པ་པེ་ — n., vagina; cf. *mor.*
pethe པ་ཐེ་ — adj., bald.
plak-mala པླག་མ་ལ་ — v., scream, make noise.
plakta པླག་ཏ་ — n., screaming, hollering, noise, racket.
plik-mala པླིག་མ་ལ་ — v., be peeled, be uncovered, be lid bare.
po པོ་ — n., body hair {Tib. སྤུ་ spu}.
po པོ་ — n., snake, serpent {Tib. སྦྲུལ་ sbul , O.Bur. မြွေ mruy, Ch. 蝮 xjwɨjX < *ɾuj?}.
pok-mala པོག་མ་ལ་ — n., strike, hit, beat.
pongma པོང་མ་ — n., shoulder {Tib. དཔུང་པ་ dpuṅ-pa}.
pra, priu ཕ་ ཕྲིཝ་ — n., rhesus monkey; cf. རཀྵ་ raksha {Tib. སྤྲ་ spra ‘monkey’, སྤྲེཝ་ spreḥu ‘monkey’, the Tibetan diminutive suffix suggests a Tibetic loan}.
pramang ཕྱ་མང་ — n., 1) fingers, toes; 2) index finger.
pramang bonpo ཕྱ་མང་བོན་པོ་ — n., middle finger [Tang: གུང་སུ་ gungmu].
prat-mala ཕྱད་མ་ལ་ — v., fight.
priu ཕྲིཝ་ — see ཕ་ *pra.*
pron-mala པྱོན་མ་ལ་ — v., crash a party, dinner or prayer service in the hope of being able to partake thereof.
pun སྤུན་ — n., male cross-cousin, i.e. son of father’s sister or of mother’s brother {Tib. སྤུན་ spun}.
puringmo སྤུ་རིང་མོ་ — n., female cross-cousin, i.e. daughter of father’s sister or of mother’s brother..
pha-mala ཕ་མ་ལ་ — v., happen, be done.
phai ཕའི་ — n., forehead [Tang: ཕའི་ལང་ phailang] {Tib. དཔྲལ་ dpral}.

phan-mala ཕན་མ་ལ་ — v., cure an illness (loc.), recover from an illness (tel.) {Tib. ཕན་ phan ‘help, benefit’}.
phecung ཕེ་ཅུང་ — n., bag, sack.
phoja ཕོ་ཇ་ — n., man.
phor-mala ཕོར་མ་ལ་ — v., fondle, feel; cf. ཏོག་མ་ལ་ *tok-mala*.
phrat-mala ཕྲད་མ་ལ་ — v., come into conflict, be at loggerheads.
phupkwa ཕུབ་ཀྭ་ — n., [< ཀྭ་ kwa ‘tand’] molars.
ra ར་ — n., goat {Tib. ར་ ra}.
ra-mala ར་མ་ལ་ — v., come.
raksha རག་ཤ་ — n., golden langur; cf. མིར་གུ་ལ་ *mirgula;* གྲེག་པོ་ *grekpo,* པྲིཏུ་ *priu* {< Skt. rakṣasa}.
rang རང་ (before the genitive suffix: ར་ ra) — pro., self, own; adv. by itself, of it own accord {Tib. རང་ raṅ}.
rantsam རན་ཙམ་ — n., hairline [dialectal: ཀྲན་ཙམ་ krantsam].
rantsham thonmo རན་ཚམ་ཐོན་མོ་ — n. + adj., receding hairline. {Tib. ཚོམ་ tshom ‘beard’, Bur. ဆံ chaṃ- ‘hair’, Ch. 簪 tsrim < *tsrəm (0660g) ‘hairpin’}
rato རྟོ་ — n., root.
re རེ་ — adv., hearsay evidential in non-interrogative sentences.
ri རི་ — n., hill, mountain {Tib. རི་ ri}.
rotpa རོད་པ་ — n., bone [Chunmat: རོ་ rosa] {Tib. རུས་ rus, O.Bur. ရိုဝ်း ruiwḥ}.
ruk རུག་ — n., curry.
ruk-mala རུག་མ་ལ་ — v., put away, clean up.
’ra ཀྲ་ — n., hair on scalp.
’rat ཀྲད་ — n., bamboo fibre for weaving traditional Bhutanese bowls.
’rewa ཀྲེ་ཝ་ — n., tool for removing ears of wheat from the stalks.
’ri ཀྲི་ — n., start, beginning.
’rok ཀྲོག་ — n., river.
’ronman ཀྲོན་མན་ — n., thread [Chunmat: ཀྲོད་མན་ ’rotman].
’rotpa ཀྲོད་པ་ — n., appendix.
sar, saro སར་ ས་རོ་ (*) adv., down.
se-mala སེ་མ་ལ་ — v., die {Tib. ཤི་ śi, the lack of palatalisation shows that the Bumthang form is cognate and not a Tibetic loan}.
seng སེང་ — n., wood, tree {Tib. ཤིང་ śiṅ, the lack of palatalisation shows that the Bumthang form is cognate and not a Tibetic loan}.
sengma སེངམ་ — n., urine{Tib. གཅིན་ gcin, the lack of palatalisation shows that the Bumthang form is cognate and not a Tibetic loan}.
sima སི་མ་ — n., nails (on digit) {Tib. སེན་མོ་ sen-mo}.

sinla སིན་ལ་ — n., ring finger [Tang: སིན་ལཱག་ sinlak].
sirsirma སིར་སིར་མ་ — adj., yellow {Tib. སེར་པོ་ ser-po 'yellow'}.
sotro སོ་ཏྲོ་ (*) adj., with crooked teeth.
sum སུམ་ — num., three {Tib. གསུམ་ gsum}.
sunla སུན་ལ་ — 1) n., night; 2) adv., at night.
surkwa སུར་ཀྭ་ — n., [< ཀྭ་ kwa 'tand'] canine teeth.
sut-mala སུད་མ་ལ་ — v., kill, slaughter {Tib. √sad, pres. གསོད་ gsod}.
sham-mala ཤམ་མ་ལ་ — v., set the table, display wares.
shar ཤར་ — n., east{Tib. ཤར་ śar}.
shekpa ཤེག་པ་— n., scrotum [Chunmat: ཤེག་པད་ shekpat].
shekpa khrangma ཤེག་པ་ཁྲངས་མ་— n., [literally 'scrotum pip'] testicles [Chunmat: ཤེག་པད་ཁྲངས་མ་ shekpat khrangma, Tang: ཤེག་པའི་ཁྲང་ shekpai khrang].
shindi ཤིན་དི་ — adj., red {Daai Chin s^{h}en}.
sho'long ཤོ་ལྦོང་ — n., strong wind.
shu ཤུ་— adv., hearsay evidential in interrogative sentences.
shra ཤ་ — n., meat {Tib. ཤ་ śa, Bur. သား sāḥ, Lashi śɔH, Daai Chin s^{h}a}.
shrai ཥྲེ་ — n., drool, drivel.
shrai-mala ཥྲེ་མ་ལ་ — v., overflow.
shraima ཥྲེ་མ་ — n., harrow without teeth.
shram ཥྲམ་ — n., shoes; cf. Dz. ལྷམ་ lham {Tib. ལྷམ་ lham}.
shrambrat ཥྲམ་བྲད་ — n., sash for fastening traditional shoes at the top.
shrap ཥྲབ་ — n., veranda.
shrä, shrai ཥྲལ་ ཥྲེ་ — n., drool, drivel.
shrokseng ཥྲོག་སེང་ — n., juniper; Dz. ཤུག་པ་ཤིང་ shupashing, Lat. *Juniperus*.
shrop-mala ཥྲོབ་མ་ལ་ — v., be retracted [of foreskin]; clasp or hold something cylindrical in shape; shin, climb by shinning.
shropse ཥྲོབ་སེ་ — adv., gerund of ཥྲོབ་མ་ལ་ *shrop-mala.*
shrordo ཥྲོར་དོ་ — n., extra chore performed in addition to the main task assigned in order to show devotion to one's boss (cf. Dz. ཞོ་ཁ་ zhôkha).
shrung-mala ཥྲུང་མ་ལ་ — v., shake everything into place (e.g. articles in a bag); heave whilst sobbing.
shrup ཥྲུབ་ — n., sheath. {Tib. བཤུབ་ bśub}.
takpa thatsa ཏག་པ་ཐ་ཙ་ — n., nape of the neck, lower part of the neck near the shoulders.
takpa ཏག་པ་ — n., back of the neck.
tarpa ཏར་པ་ — n., whey; Dz. དར་ཕ་ d'âu.
tarshing ཏར་ཤིང་ — n., prayer flag.
tawa lem ཏ་ཝ་ལེམ་ — n., upper surface of the foot.

tawa phop རྟ་ཕྱོབ་ — n., instep of the foot.
tawanang རྟ་ཕྱ་ནང་ — n., sole.
tegolong རྟེ་གོ་ལོང་ — n., ankle.
tempali རྟེམ་པ་ལི་ — n., 1) penis of an old man; cf. ཙུ་ཙུ *cucu;* 2) wooden penis used as a talisman suspended from the eaves of the house to ward off evil spirits {Tib. སྨིན་ mje, Kur. plik, Bur. လီး līḥ}.
tep རྟེབ — n., rib.
tingma རྟིང་མ་ — n., heel.
tiru རྟི་རུ — n., money, Ngütram (the Bhutanese currency unit); Dz. རྟིག་རྒྱབ་ tiru.
tiwit རྟི་ཕྱིད་ — n., navel {Tib. ལྟེ་བ་ lte-ba}.
to རྟོ་ — n., nipple
tok-mala རྟོག་མ་ལ་ — v., fondle, fiddle with something; cf. ཕོར་མ་ལ་ *phor-mala*.
toktemet རྟོག་རྟེ་མེད་ — n., cheekbones.
tor-mala རྟོར་མ་ལ་— v., sow.
tosang རྟོ་སང་ — n., friend; cf. *charo;* Dz. ལྷོ་ཚོང་ totsha.
tottong རྟོད་རྟོང་ — n., white collar worn in conjunction with a *chubak* (Dz. tögo) [Chogor: རྟོད་དུང་ totdung].
tun-mala ཏུན་མ་ལ་ — v., show, display; cf. *chong-mala* {Tib. སྟོན་ ston}.
tup-mala ཏུབ་མ་ལ་ — v., cut, slice{Tib. གཏུབ་ gtub}.
turtsum ཏུར་ཙུམ་ (*) n., suctional movement made by the vagina around the penis; cf. Dz. སུ་བཟུམ་ tuzum ‘ibidem’, ཁ་བཟུམ་ khazum ‘sucking movement of the mouth’.
thap ཐབ་ — n., oven {Tib. ཐབ་ thab}.
thap-mala ཐབ་མ་ལ་ — v., argue, dispute, harangue.
thatsa, cucui thatsa ཐ་ཙ་ ཙུ་ཙུའི་ཐ་ཙ་ (*) n., corpus spongiosum penis; cf. Dz. ཐཱ་རྩ་ thâtsa.
thatsa-gatpo ཐ་ཙ་གཱད་པོ་ (*) n., nerd, literally: ‘corpus spongiosum penis old man’; cf. Dz. ཐཱ་རྩ་རྒེས་པ་ thâtsa-gêp.
thek ཐེག་ — num., one; art., a/an, a certain. {Tib. གཅིག་ gcig, Bur. တစ် tac, Ch. 隻 tsyek < *tek (1260c) ‘one of a pair’}
thep ཐེབ་ — n., spit, saliva.
therma ཐེར་མ་ (*) adv., the day before yesterday.
thimang ཐི་མང་ — n., thumb, big toe. {Tib. མཐེ་བོ་ mthe-bo}
Thimphuk ཐིམ་ཕུག་ — n., Thimphu, capital city of Bhutan.
thomala ཐོ་མ་ལ་ — n., arm above the elbow [Chunmat, Tang: ཐོ་ tho].
thong-mala ཐོང་མ་ལ་ — v., drink; cf. Dz. འཐུང་ thung {Tib. འཐུང་ ḥthuṅ}.
thor-mala ཐོར་མ་ལ་ — v., pluck, pick; cf. Dz. བཅག་ནི་ câni.
thot-mala ཐོད་མ་ལ་ — v., join, connect, bind.
thu-mala ཐུ་མ་ལ་— n., chop.

thung-mala ཐུང་མ་ལ་ — v., see; cf. Dz. མཐོང་ thong {Tib. མཐོང་ mthoṅ}.

thung-mala ཐུང་མ་ལ་ — v., 1) commit, execute, perform; 2) dative or relinquitive aspectiviser.

thripa ཐི་པ་ — n., gall bladder {Tib. མཁྲིས་པ་ mkhris-pa, the sound change khr- > thr- ensures a Tibetic loan}.

thro ཐོ་ — v., aspectiviser meaning ‘persist, persevere, continue, be inexorably involved in’.

throi-mala ཐྲོའི་མ་ལ་ (*) v., weed, uproot, extirpate; cf. Dz. འབབ་ནི་ bäni {Tib. སྒྲོལ་ ‘liberate, release’, the sound change sgr- > thr- ensures a Tibetic loan}.

throm-mala ཐྲོམ་མ་ལ་ — v., break, shatter.

thrung ཐྲུང་ (*) n., rice.

tsa ཙ་ — n., vein, artery {Tib. རྩ་ rtsa}.

tsamadü ཙ་མ་དུལ་ — adv., intensely, a lot, much.

tsamet ཙ་མེད་ — n., brother’s daughter or the wife of brother’s son (for a female speaker); sister’s daughter or the wife of sister’s son (for a male speaker); cf. Dz. ཚམ་ tsham.

tsau ཙའུ་ — n., brother’s son or husband of brother’s daughter (for a female speaker); sister’s son or huband of sister’s daughter (for a male speaker); cf. Dz. ཚའོ་ tshao.

tsirphat ཙིར་ཕད་ — n., wart.

tshai ཚའི་ — plural suffix.

tshakti ཚག་ཏི་ — n., crown.

tshuk-mala ཚུག་མ་ལ་ — v., can, be able to.

tshü-mala ཚུལ་མ་ལ་ — v., seek, look for, search {Tib. འཚོལ་ ḥtshol}.

’ugu ཨུ་གུ་ — n., 1) father’s brother; 2) mother’s sister’s husband; [Chunmat: ཨུ་གོ་ ’ugo].

wagam ཨ་གཱམ་ — n., jaw.

waktem ཨག་ཏེམ་ (*) n., [< Dz. ཨག་བཏེམ་ waktêm] hip movements of a woman during intercourse.

ware ཨ་རེ་ — adv., emotive particle gently demanding the attention of the person addressed and underscoring the speaker’s authority; cf. Dz. སྨ་རེ་ ’mare.

wen ཨེན་ — v., to be (establishing the identity of referent) {Tib. ཡིན་ yin, the discrepancy in the initials ensures that the Bumthang form is not a Tibetan loan}.

wet ཨེད་ — pro., you (sg.).

wi ཨི་ — pro., you (sg.erg.).

’wai དབའི་ — v., imperative of ཨོ་མ་ལ་ *’o-mala*.

ya ཡ་ — interj., grab it!, take it!, here you are!

yah ཡའ་— interj., watch out!

yak ཡག་ — n., lower arm from the elbow on down, lower arm and hand {Tib. ལག་ lag, Bur. လက် lak}.

yak ཡག་ — n., yak , i.e, male yak; cf. *bre* {Tib. གཡག་ g.yag}.
yakbit ཡག་སིད་ (*) n., back of the hand.
yaknangma ཡག་ནང་མ་ — n., palm of the hand, the inner surface of the extended palm and fingers.
yaktshik ཡག་ཚིག་ — n., wrist {Tib. ལག་ཚིགས་ lag-tshigs}.
yam ཡམ་ — n., road, way {Tib. ལམ་ lam, Bur. လမ်း lamḥ}.
yampat ཡམ་བད་ — adv., tomorrow.
yampat-nanmun ཡམ་བད་ནན་སུན་ — adv., one of these days, soon.
yan-mala ཡན་མ་ལ་ — v., obey.
yanga ཡ་ང་ — num., five {Tib. ལྔ་ lṅa, Bur. ငါး ṅāḥ, Ch. 五 nguX < *C.ŋˤaʔ (0058a)}.
yang-mala ཡང་མ་ལ་ — v., stand, stand up; e.g. ཅུཅུཡང་དྲ་ *cucu yang-da* ‘I have an erection’ (literally: ‘penis is standing’).
yangchenthek ཡང་ཆེན་ཐེག་ — num., one hundred sixty thousand.
yat ཡད་ — n., chore, work, task {Tib. ལས་ las}
yigu ཡི་གུ་ — n., letter; cf. Dz. ཡི་གུ་ yig’u {Tib. ཡི་གེ་ yi-ge}.
yin ཡིན་ — pro., you (pl.).
yinle ཡིན་ལེ་ — pro., you (pl.erg.).
yo ཡོ་ — clause-final interj., hey, y’hear.
yö ཡོལ་ — n., rain [Tang: ཡོའི་ yoi] {Wr.Bur. ရွာ rwā, Ch. 雨 hjuX < *C.gʷaʔ (0100a)}.
yung-mala ཡུང་མ་ལ་— v., get, fetch.
’ya ཀྱ་ (*) n., deposit at the bottom of copper pans.
zama, zam ཟ་མ་ ཟམ་ — n., cooked rice.
zat-mala ཟད་མ་ལ་ — v., finish, complete [governs the gerund in <se>].
zhimnyae ཞིམ་ཉའེ་ (*) n., cat {Tib. ཞི་མི་ źi-mi, the change *ly > ź suggests a Tibetic loan}.
zon ཟོན་ — num., two {Tib. ཟུང་ zuṅ ‘pair’, Bur. စုံ cuṃ, Ch. (?) 雙 sraewng < *sˤroŋ (1200a)}.
zödem ཟོལ་དེམ་ (*) n., tasty, pungent, soft yak cheese with veins of blue and black fungus; Dz. ཟོས་ཐུད་ z’öthü.
zu-mala ཟུ་མ་ལ་ — v., eat {Kur. zù, Tib. ཟ་ za, Bur. စား cāḥ, Japhug rGy. ndza, Ch. 咀 dzjoX < *dzaʔ (0046u)}.
zhego ཞེ་གོ་ — n., food.
zhit-mala ཞིད་མ་ལ་ — v., forget.
zhra ཞྭ་ — pro., what.
zhrabudze ཞྭ་བུ་རྩེ་ — adv., how much, how many.
zhrap ཞྭབ་ — n., layer of butterfat on top of salted Bhutanese tea {Tib. (?) ཞག་ źag}.
zhrong ཞྲོང་ — n., worm.
zhror ཞྲོར་ — n., dialect word for *churma* ‘native beer’.

zhrurti ཞུར་ཏི་ — n., bamboo species; Dz. ཆང་བཤོ་ changsho.
zhruwa ཞུ་ཝ་ — n., lungs {Tib. (?) གློ་བ་ glo-ba}.

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