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Dialekt und Erzählungen von Themchen. Sprachwissenschaftliche Beschreibung eines Nomadendialektes aus Nord-Amdo
By Felix Haller
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Reviewed by Bettina Zeisler

The volume under review appears in a series of publications on the dialects and the oral literature of Tibet, which does not seem well known outside Europe. While the earlier volumes have focused on traditional narratives, the series has also developed into an interesting collection of linguistic descriptions of various Tibetan vernaculars, namely: Balti (vol. 6), the dialect of the Drokpas in south-western Tibet (8), southern Mustang (12), Lende, Kyirong (15), Diṅri (9), Shigatse (13), Nangchenpa, Kham (11), and Themchen, Amdo (14, the present volume).

This last dialect is spoken by nomads in the community of *Brag-dmar* (Chin. Zhihema) in the Themchen district, which is part of the Haixi Mongolian-Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the Qinghai Province. The Amdo dialects spoken in the nomadic area of north-eastern Tibet are of particular interest, as they are not only phonologically conservative, a feature they share with the West Tibetan dialects, but have also preserved most elements of the complex Old Tibetan verbal morphology, such as prefixes and alteration of vowels and consonants.

Like in his study on the Shigatse dialect (Haller 2000), the author presents in this volume a thoroughly researched study, based on extensive fieldwork. The strength of the volume lies in its purely descriptive approach. The book is of high documentary value, particularly through its detailed verb list and its rich indices. The reviewer, however, misses at times some diachronic or synchronic comparative remarks as well as a more elaborate theoretical reasoning.

The book is divided in three main parts: I Linguistics; II Texts and translations; III Glossary and indices. Part IV contains the bibliography, which does not only list the works cited in the main body, but also further literature concerning Tibetan linguistics or geographical notes on Amdo. A short introduction on pp. 11-17 sketches the research history, the presentation of the data, some problems of fieldwork, and introduces the geography as well as the informants and narrators. Before discussing Part I in greater detail, an outline of the rest of the book shall be given.

The small middle Part II, pp. 165-207, contains the narrations, three fairy tales of decreasing length (156, 45, and 32 sentences, respectively), each of which is presented in a phonemic transcription on the left side, provided with a translation into German on the right side and followed by a repetition of the Tibetan text in phonetic transcription. Each sentence starts at a new line and is supplied with an identification number. But since a

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sentence may contain several clauses or longer parts of direct speech and may extend over more than ten lines, the identification of glossary items, or of particular phrases, words, or morphemes discussed in Part I is not always easy.

Part III, pp. 209-433, containing the various glossaries and indices, is the most voluminous one. The 148-page Amdo Tibetan glossary is arranged in three columns: the full word forms including morphemes are listed in the first column; the second column contains either the Written Tibetan equivalent for the base form, or the segmentation of derived forms, the identification of case markers and a few other morphemes, and a reference, if the form had been documented previously; the third column gives the German equivalent as well as the identification number of the sentence or the example number together with the section number of the descriptive part. The glossary is followed by 38 pages (not particularly clearly arranged) of the Written Tibetan index,[1] a short index of place names, and a German – Amdo Tibetan index of 33 pages.

The linguistic description in Part I, pp. 165-207, makes up somewhat more than one third of the whole volume. For the audience not familiar with German, this part shall be presented in somewhat greater detail, highlighting especially those features that are typical for the Amdo dialects or that are of particular interest from a synchronic or diachronic comparative view. The main body of the text below is reserved for the account of the content, while the reviewer's supplementary remarks and the critical discussion will be found in the footnotes.

A. Phonology

The phonological description is found in §1 Phonetics and phonology, §2 Morphophonemic processes in word derivation, and §3 correlation with Written Tibetan.

Haller differentiates between primary vowels *e*, *a*, *ə*, *o* and secondary vowels *i* and *u*. Vowels *i* and *u* are very restricted with respect to the co-occurrence with final consonants. From the data and the list of final rhymes (pp. 45-49) it becomes clear that *i* and *u* as attested in Old Tibetan (in the following OT) have merged into *ə* and are preserved only before OT final *l* > ø (merging with *e* and *o* respectively: *il*, *el* > /i/, *ul*, *ol* > /u/), vowel *i* additionally before OT final *s* > ø (merging with all vowels: *as*, *is*, *us*, *es*, *os* > /i/). Before final ŋ, *i* and *e* are lowered, but *u* and *o* are raised thus *aŋ*, *iŋ*, *eŋ* > /aŋ/, *uŋ*, *oŋ* > /uŋ/, similarly, *e* but not *i* is lowered before OT final *g*: *ig* > [iç], *eg* > [aχ], whereas vowel *o* is raised in some unstressed nominal morphemes.

The consonantal inventory contains the following consonants: p, pʰ, b, t, tʰ, d, k, kʰ, g, ʦ, ʦʰ, ʣ, ʈʂ, ʈʂʰ, ɖʐ, ʨ, ʨʰ, ʥ, m, m̥, n, n̥, ɲ, ɲ̥, ŋ, ŋ̊, r, φ, s, sʰ, z, ʂ, ɕ, ʐ, ʑ, ç, γ,[2] χ, ʁ, h, w, j, l, and ɬ. Simple oral stops, affricates, and fricatives are always voiceless in absolute initial position. Voiced consonants can be found only in cluster onsets. The final consonants are: p, m, n, r, l (< *d*), ç/χ (< *g*), and ŋ.

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[1] Two columns for verbs on the right half of the page, two columns for all other parts of speech on the left half of the page. This sorting principle, however, is nowhere mentioned.

[2] The phonemic status of /γ/ seems to be problematic. γ appears as a phonetically conditioned remnant of OT pre-radicals *g*- and *d*- before voiced radicals (realised as /ç/ before unvoiced radicals) and in non-first syllable single onsets as the positionally conditioned allomorph of /g/ (cf. pp. 19, 23 and glossary).

A particular Themchen feature is the aspiration of OT radical *s* > /sʰ/ and the uvulari-sation of not only OT *w* (< *ḥv*)[3] but also OT *db* > /ʁ/. The phoneme /ɸ/ is typically a pho-netically conditioned remnant of OT pre-radical *b-* before unvoiced stop radicals. But it appears as a distinctive phoneme in /ɸi/ [fi] < OT *spos* 'incense' and as a remnant of the OT cluster *bsky* /ɸtɕ/ in contrast to the OT clusters *bc* and *bkr* > /ptɕ/ (unfortunately this becomes clear only after checking the glossary).

The semi-vowel /w/ corresponds to the OT plain radical *b*, in rare cases also to the OT plain radical *p*, cf. /wantɕʰen/ *Paṇchen* 'Panchen Lama' and /woχka/ ~ /woχsʰa/ *pagspa* 'fur'. In non-first syllables, morpheme-initial /w/ replaces /p/ after open syllables or final /ŋ/ (/p/ follows the finals /p/, /m/, /l/ (< *d*), /n/, while after final /ç~/χ/ it is assimilated to /k/). Similarly, final /p/ changes to /w/ before vocalic onset.

Furthermore, the semivowel reflects a lost OT pre-radical *b* in clusters /kw/ *bk* and /ʈʂw/ *bkr*, but only if the OT word had vowel *a*; otherwise, the pre-radical is typically re-tained as /p-/ or occasionally dropped as in /kopa/ *bkodpa* 'plan' (this has to be distilled from the glossary, and Written Tibetan index). The cluster /χw/ corresponds to OT *dp* and *sp* (see glossary). Triple clusters are only possible with the semi-vowel /w/ as last ele-ment and a labial as first element.[4]

B. Noun phrase

The parts of speech are described in §4 Word and phrase level, pp. 50-155. Subsec-tions 4.1-4.6 describe the various elements of a nominal phrase: pronouns, article, noun (substantive and adjective), local-deictic adjective, pronominal adjective, and numerals, as well as number (§4.7), case marking (§4.11), and adverbs (§4.12).

Among the personal pronouns (§4.1.1) one should mention the derived forms /khərge/ **khur-ge* 'he, it' and /mərge/ **mur-ge* 'she', which seem to be typical for Amdo. They cannot take a plural marker so that demonstrative pronouns have to be used for plural ref-erents. The simple forms /kho/ *kho* and /mo/ *mo* are merely logophoric pronouns used in indirect speech. The first person plural inclusive pronoun /ə-tɕhu/ *ḥu-chabo* is not based on the first person singular /ŋa/ *ŋa* but on an element /ə/ *ḥu*.[5] Some family terms are de-rived from pronominal forms: /ɲekhe/ 'my family', /tɕhekhe/ 'your family', /khuŋge/ 'his family'.[6]

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[3] The OT letter *w* is a digraph consisting of the letter *ba/va* and a superscribed *ḥ*, representing a cluster on-set **gw*, **γw*, or **ḥw* (cf. Roerich 1933: 96). While some Amdo dialects, such as Dpari have preserved the complete cluster (Uray 1955: 109-110), the preservation of only the first element is not only typical for Amdo dialects, but is also found in Western Tibet, Spiti, and Upper Ladakh, cf. Gya, Upper Ladakh /ɦatse/ watse 'fox'.

[4] The semivowel is thus merely a reflex of the OT pre-radicals *m-* or *ḥ-* > /m-/ and *b-* > /p-/, /b-/, and /ɸ-/, and the syllable structure of Themchen Tibetan can be defined as (C)(C)V(C).

[5] The OT demonstrative pronoun *ḥo* ~ *ḥu* is attested as base for first person plural inclusive pronouns also in Western Tibet, Spiti and Upper Ladakh (cf. Gya, Upper Ladakh /ɦoγo/ 'we incl.').

[6] They are not derived from the singular pronouns as listed by Haller, but from collective pronouns, *ŋed* 'we, I', *khyed* 'you (pl or sg hon)', *khoŋ* 'they, s/he (hon)', used also as honorific singular pronouns in Written Tibetan and many spoken varieties. It appears as if the lost final *-d* triggered the aspirated form. Al-though the vowel of the morpheme /-khe/ ~ /-ge/ does not match the normal Themchen genitive /-kə/, /-γə/

Among the various compounds (§4.3.1.2) one should mention the combination of verb Stem I and the noun /kʰa/ *kha* 'mouth', expressing the simulation of an event, the appearance as someone or something else (in combination with the copula /jən/ *yin*), as well as an event that barely happened.

C. Verb phrase

The verb is the central element in a Tibetan sentence and bears most of the semantic load. It is the only element that has to be expressed explicitly. Haller is thus more than justified to dedicate the largest part of the linguistic description to the verb and the verb phrase (§4.17, pp. 68-155).

Haller distinguishes three basic verbal categories, namely controllability, volitionality, and evidentiality, but their definitions are not given in the beginning but rather towards the end of the verb section (4.1.5.1-3). The [±control] distinction (also known in terms of 'volitionality' or 'agentivity'), is defined very briefly as follows: "A verb is termed controllable, if the event described can or could be controlled by an agent." The distinction is "lexicalised in the stem" (p. 136).[7]

The distinction of [±volitionality] interacts closely with the [±control] distinction. It is expressed through the choice of auxiliaries: controllable verbs can be marked either as volitional or as non-volitional, whereas non-controllable verbs are typically marked only as non-volitional. The volitional marker is used when the event is intended by the speaker (or is guessed to be intended by the addressee of questions, in anticipation of his or her reply).

(/-ə/, /-i/, /-u/ after vowels), the distribution of the initial consonant corresponds to that of the OT genitive allophones *kyi* and *gi*, and the derivation seems to follow a Mongolian model (e.g. pronoun plus genitive marker plus derivational morpheme *x* in *Khalkha*), which might perhaps also explain the phonetic mismatch.

[7] The somewhat opaque statement seems to express that the [±control] distinction is inherent to the verb meaning of a given underlying root form. This is not absolutely true, as some verbs allow different readings with different grades of controllability, cf. the verbs (221) /jel, ji, çi/ *byed, byas, byos* 'do', experience' and (367/156) /ser, bzi, (zi)/ *zer*, *bslas*, (*slos*) 'say' with their [−control] readings, (610) /jel, ji/ 'do [sic.: "machen"] and (628/641) /ser, bzi/ 'be called'. While the German verbs *heiß* (be called) and *sag* (say) appear to be totally unrelated, the English translation already indicates that *be called* is only the result *of calling someone by a certain name*. The Tibetan equivalents show that the expression to be translated as 'be called' is nothing but a conventionalised impersonal construction of a [+control] verb with the meaning 'say' and 'call (by a certain name)'. There is no need to talk about two different verbs. (Whether it is necessary to count suppletive stems as separate verbs is yet another question.)

If Haller, however, means that the lexicalisation is constituted by the absence of Stem IV, the reviewer would think that controllability is at best a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the use of Stem IV. In Ladakhi, e.g., the use of Stem IV is often blocked for [+control] verbs when they express a socially inadequate action, such as 'quarrel'. Even the use of a [+volitional] marker might be avoided lest the speaker would be blamed for swaggering with socially inadequate behaviour. On the other hand, [−control] verbs might receive a separate Stem IV in sarcastic speech, expressing something like *go on with this behaviour and you'll see what happens* without becoming truly controllable verbs.

The distinction of [±evidentiality] crosscuts the [±volitionality] distinction. A verb is marked as evident, if the event is or was perceived by the speaker (or is supposed to be perceived by the addressee in questions).

In contrast to the dialects of the agricultural area and to the dialects of Khams, Central and Western Tibet, the Amdo dialects of the nomadic areas have preserved most elements of the complex Old Tibetan verbal morphology, such as prefixes and alteration of vowels and consonants. The combination of these elements (§4.17.2) serves to derive a set of different verb stems, maximal four in Old Tibetan and maximal three in the modern Tibetan varieties. Haller classifies these three stems as "imperfective", "perfective", and "mood". The first stem, however, is also used in the "aspectually neutral" Future (p. 138), the Prohibitive and Adhortative, as well as in combination with various modal verbs and in various periphrastic expressions, such as a "Perfect of Experience" (p. 151) or prospective constructions with the complementary verbs /ran/ *ran* 'be time to do' and /ndol/ *ḥdod* 'wish sth to happen'.[8] In the following, a more neutral designation will be used, namely "I", "II", and "IV".

Non-controllable verbs do not have a separate Stem IV. Moreover (but this is not explicitly mentioned by Haller), only very few of them have a separate Stem II (14 out of 206 verbs).

Among the modern varieties, Amdo Tibetan is quite peculiar in using Stem IV as expression of ability in negations and questions, see the examples below. Haller leaves it open whether this application is a function of Stem IV or of an independent verb.[9]

1: 152	tə	sʰol-atuŋ!		
p. 180	*de*	*sod-*a-thoŋ*		
	that-Abs	kill-IV-…		
	'Kill that one!'			
(167)	ʂtamɖʐən-ɣə	ləç	φsat-tʰa-ra	ma-sʰot-tha.
b.	*Rtamgrin-kyis*	*lug*	*bsad-thal-daŋ*	*ma-sod-thal*
p. 84	Tamdrin-Erg	sheep-Abs	kill-II-PfvII-…	Neg-kill-IV-PfvII-…
	'Tamdrin (tried to) kill the/a sheep, but couldn't.'			

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[8] The claimed aspectual values of Stem I and II is not at all argued for and are in part contradicted by the actual usage, cf. the modal usages of Stem I. Stem II is found with the function of an *imperfectum de conatu* in example 167, below p. 5. In example 1: 89, below, Stem II plus converbial marker is used for the description of an already ongoing background situation (a typical case for an Imperfect or imperfective verb form in true aspect languages).

[9] The use of Stem IV as expression of ability is also attested, and without any polarity restriction, in Old and Classical Tibetan. Given the importance of this feature for language reconstruction, it is a pity that the relevant examples, although referred to in a footnote, have to be searched throughout the book. The reviewer would like to point to recent discussions within the traditional Tibetan grammarians' community. Authors of Amdo or Kham provenience are well aware that Stem IV can have an inagentive function. Strangely enough, the *potentialis* function is hardly ever mentioned. Tshetan Žabsdruŋ (1988: 237-238) and Skalbzaŋ Ḥgyurmed (1992: 370) describe Stem IV as expression of an agentless, inagentive (not self-controlled) event, Dpaḥris Saŋsrgyas (1999: 237 and passim) as an expression of a transformation of the 'object', Dorži Gdoŋdrug Sñemsblo (1999: 178-179, 275-276) as an expression of ability or resulting state.

(167)	tɕʰo	kʰeri	ləç	ə-sʰol?
g.	*khyod*	*kherpos*	*lug*	*ji-sod*
p. 84	you	alone-Erg	sheep-Abs	Quest-kill-IV-Ipfv.b…
	'Are you able to kill (a) sheep?'			

A very laudable innovation in the above-mentioned series is Haller's concise verb list (pp. 75-134). The simple verbs, identified with a consecutive example number (73-646; a few are actually [±control] doublets or suppletive forms) are classified in six groups according to the [±control] distinction and a rudimentary syntactic classification (case marking of the first and a further argument) as follows:

– "cA", i.e. [+control], one or more arguments, the first argument in the absolutive case (68 verbs)

– "cEA": [+control], two (ore more) arguments, the first in the ergative, the second (or third) in the absolutive case (285 verbs)

– "cED": [+control], two arguments, the first in the ergative, the second in the dative case (11 verbs)

– "ncA": [–control], one or more arguments, the first argument in the absolutive case (167 verbs)

– "ncEA": [–control], two arguments, the first in the ergative, the second in the absolutive case (19 verbs)

– "ncDA": [–control], two arguments, the first in the dative, the second in the absolutive case (16 verbs)[10]

According to Haller, cED verbs "usually express an AGENT and a PATIENT", but the group also contains "verba sentiendi", i.e. "the verbs of seeing, hearing, and smelling", where the dative argument expresses a "kind of mental goal" (p. 111).[11]

All verbs are listed with Stem I, additionally also Stem II and IV, if these are available, followed by a translation into German. Most of the verbs are supplied with at least one full example sentence. In a few cases, a reference is given to a sentence discussed in the descriptive part or occurring in the narrations. In a number of cases, additional examples are given, sometimes just providing a different verb form, but sometimes also indicating a variation in valency. On two occasions, Haller points to a possible case variation:

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[10] The reviewer misses the following bivalent patterns: Absolutive – Absolutive (predicative verbs), Absolutive – Dative (motion and emotion verbs), Absolutive – Ablative (motion and separation), Absolutive – Comitative (contact and separation), as well as a classification of trivalent verbs.

[11] The dative argument is not a PATIENT, and the so-called *verba sentiendi* are agentive perception verbs, expressing a self-controlled attention towards a TARGET: 'look *at*' (also 'read'), 'listen *to*', 'sniff *at*'. In the case of the other verbs of the group, such as 'beat', 'bash' = 'hit *against/upon* so', 'scold' = 'speak scolding words *to* so', 'wait (*for* so)', 'turn out of the way' = 'give way *to* so', the second argument always expresses a DIRECTION or TARGET towards which the activity is oriented.

(81) cA /ɸʈʂəl/ *sprul* 'transform os.' allows an instrumental marker for the RESULTING-STATE argument, but in the narration the dative marker is used. Similarly, (127) cA /rgol, bgwal/ *rgod*, *brgod* 'laugh' may be realised with only one argument or with two arguments, the second one, specifying the REASON or FOCUS, might be in the absolutive or in the dative.

In §4.17.3, the list ends with a couple of compound verbs (nos. 647-660), cf. (647) /kʰa.ɸɕe, kʰa.ɸɕi, kʰa.çi/ 'open (the mouth of sth)', Written Tibetan *kha + ḥbyed*, *phye~phyed~phyes*, *dbye*, *phyes* 'open sth'. According to Haller, a noun immediately preceding the verb may be counted as belonging to the verb if it is in the absolutive case and if there is already another absolutive argument in the sentence. Example 1:89 is thus classified as compound, but (344) not:[12]

1: 89	a!	mɲə	ɣɲi-ɣə	ɕatʰo-zəç	ʂtsopa.bdzaw-i
p. 172	*a*	*myi*	*gñis-kyis*	*žwatho-žig*	*rtsodpa-brgyab-*kyin*
	oh	man	two-Erg	hat-a-Abs	quarrel-(Abs)-perform-II-…
	Oh, two men were quarrelling about a hat…				

(344)	ʂtamdʐən-ɣə	wu	rdzaχ-kokə.
p. 102	*Rtamgrin-kyis*	pao (chin.)	*rgyab-kyi-yod-kyi*
	Tamdrin-Erg	gun-Abs	operate-I-…
	Tamdrin fires off/is firing of [his] gun.		

Subsection 4.17.5.4 describes the temporal and aspectual marking. The Future (derived from Stem I) is aspectually neutral and is the sole instance of TENSE. The so-called imper-

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[12] The definition is contradicted by (649) /khi.len, khi.blaŋ, khi.luŋ/ 'admit (orally)', lit. 'take with/by the mouth', the Written Tibetan equivalent of which is *kha-s len*, *blaŋ*, *loŋ* 'promise, presume, acknowledge, admit', where the argument in question, *kha* 'mouth', is in the instrumental case.

It is an interesting question, whether there are formal criteria to treat such expressions as compounds. The most obvious would be Haller's criterion, because, if a noun is fully incorporated, it should not display any case marker. At the same time, the slot of the original absolutive argument should become free for another argument and valency should decrease. However, the argument is only valid, if it can be demonstrated that, besides the copula construction, Themchen Amdo never allows double absolutive constructions of simple verbs.

Furthermore, as Agha (1993: 106f. no 24b and c) shows for Lhasa Tibetan, the ergative marker might be retained in cases where true incorporation would lead to monovalency. This is especially true for bivalent light verb constructions, such as Haller's example (344). Apparently, different rules apply for trivalent light verb constructions, such as Haller's example (651). But does this mean that the trivalent light verb constructions are always compounds, while the bivalent constructions never are? What would happen if one adds a TARGET argument to example (344)?

An important point against incorporation is the fact that the seemingly incorporated argument can undergo normal NP-deletion (cf. Agha 1993: 106 for Lhasa Tibetan), something that is not possible in the German compound verb.

The reviewer would like to add that the arguments in question are often part of a possessor construction, cf. also Haller's examples (685, 687, 688), p. 141, x-Gen *kha len*, 'listen to x', lit. 'take the mouth of x'. It does not seem well motivated to treat *kha* here as an independent argument, in contrast to the *khas len* and *kha ḥbyed* constructions mentioned above.

fective forms are based on Stem I, the so-called perfective forms are based on Stem II. The Imperfective a is found in present and past time contexts, Imperfective b usually only in present time contexts. According to Haller, both forms express durativity and habituality, but some of the examples (673, 674, 677, 685, 687-689) indicate that both forms, especially the Imperfective b, might be used with a non-durative and non-habitual function.[13] The two forms of the Perfective I are predominantly resultative in contrast to the Perfective II. According to Haller, Perfective I and II would be found solely in past time contexts, but according to the examples, the Perfective Ia can be quite frequently found for states and activities ongoing at the time of the utterance (examples 694-702, 705, 707, 708), less frequently (possibly only with state verbs) also the Perfective Ib (examples 718-720). The latter form may also express habitual situations (examples 709, 713) and is commonly used for background situations in narrations. In questions and negations, the [+volitional +evidential] Perfective II is identical with the mere Stem II (the positive form adds the emphatic morpheme /-a/). The [–volitional] Perfective II has the complementary verb /tʰa/ ~ /ta/ *thal*.[14]

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[13] With only one exception, all examples are given in isolation. The examples are translated into German simply with the aspectually neutral Present, without making use of the adverb *gerade* 'just' or of the constructions *dabei sein zu* 'be in the process of' and *am Verben sein* 'be at verbing'. A discussion of how AS-PECT interacts with TYPE OF EVENT is completely missing.

   Given this lacuna, it is particularly annoying that Haller does not make any attempt to explain why his examples should correspond to the internal perspective on the event as being in the middle of an ongoing process (imperfective function) and not simply to a holistic perspective on the event as such (perfective function). The only 'imperfective' example given in the context of a narration, 1: 37 shows a non-durative, non-habitual, thus clearly perfective use of the Imperfective a: a rabbit threatens that it is *about to catch up with* the fleeing wolf. Only example (667) demonstrates the durative character of the Imperfective a in conformity with the incidence scheme (*when x verbed, y was verbing*).

   Haller also does not discuss the distribution of aspectual functions among the imperfective forms. But the a-form is apparently more frequently used with a durative function, while the b-form is more frequently used with a habitual function. There is no convincing example that the Imperfective b could have a durative function. Most examples describe habits. Examples (685, 687, 688) would be most natural as a promise, a request for such promise, and the rejection of such promise (holistic perspective). It appears thus that the 'imperfective' forms display an opposition of aspect among themselves: the perfective-habitual Imperfective b, corresponding to a Simple Present in English, as opposed to the neutral, ±durative/±habitual Imperfective a, which matches the English Present Continuous only partially.

[14] Haller does not explain the alleged perfective character of examples (694-702), (705-708), all translated with the Present. Like in many languages the two present perfect constructions (Perfective Ia/b) may express states and here even activities, ongoing at the time of the utterance. Language history shows that the Perfect may substitute an original Present. This is due to its ambivalent character, referring to a past transformation, on the one hand, to a present resulting situation, on the other. In the case of example (699), the verb refers to the past action of having taken up of the water pail and simultaneously to the present result, namely its carrying along, still ongoing at the reference time. The habitual function of the Perfective Ib could perhaps be compared to the Present Perfect Continuous in English.

   The Perfective II is a neutral past tense construction, corresponding to a Simple Past in English. The contextual example 1: 124, translated with the Present demonstrates that the non-evidential form may function like a Present Perfect.

Subsection 4.17.5.5 describes the modal marking, in particular: Imperative, Prohibitive, and Adhortative, §4.17.6 the modal verbs. Subsection 4.17.7 lists several partly emphatic, partly epistemic, modifiers of the verb, among them simple morphemes, modifying verbs, or even complex phrases. Subsection 4.17.8 deals with the negation prefixes /mə-/ *mi* and /ma-/ *ma*, §4.17.9 with the verbal nouns. A particularly Amdo Tibetan feature is the replacement of the OT nominaliser *pa/ba* by /-nə/, ~ /-ni/ ~ /-nu/. Rather particular for Themchen is the use of /-ndəç/ *ḥdug* as nominaliser for propositions, /-ʂtɕəl/ *spyod* as a purposive nominaliser, and /-ton/ *ḥdon* as a nominaliser stating a reason.

D. Sentence structure

The last section deals with the simple clause (5.1), questions (5.2), and the complex sentence structure (5.3). The question marker /ə-/ for yes/no questions is prefixed to the verb or to the auxiliary verb.[15] Haller further describes the relative (more precisely: nominalised) clause (5.3.1), direct and indirect speech (5.3.2), (somewhat misplaced) the causative derivation (5.3.3), the asyndetic and syndetic coordination of clauses, the former without, the latter with the help of converb morphemes (5.3.4), and touches briefly on the ellipsis of noun phrases (5.4) and the postponement of sentence elements (5.5).

As far as the language data is concerned, Haller's study does not offer much opportunity for critical remarks, but in a few cases the linguistic terminology is applied in an all too superficial manner. Another flaw is the layout. The whole volume is printed in a font size that is usually reserved for footnotes. Additionally the Tibetan font is horizontally extremely condensed so that the reviewer cannot discriminate between the graphemes for *pa* and *ba* and for *ya* and *a* without the help of a magnifying glass.

Haller's book is certainly more than an endless footnote. It is a most welcome resource for the student of Amdo Tibetan as well as for the researcher of Tibetan dialects and language history. The verb list is certainly an enrichment and should serve as a model to be imitated and further developed by future researchers.

The reviewer hopes that the book finds a large international audience. Not being fluent in German should not serve as excuse. With the help of the Written Tibetan index and a medium-sized German-English dictionary, one can make ample use of the glossary, indices, and the verb list. Much of the rest can be guessed from a majority international nomenclature in a mildly strange orthography.

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[15] A prefixed question marker is typical for East Tibetan dialects, but can also be found in Old Tibetan as *ji* plus verb. In all other dialects the question marker follows the verb.

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