

Ethnic History and Language Typology in Western China:

The Cases of Xining, Daohua and Bai

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A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2022

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Linguistics

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Abstract

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The following dissertation examines the language history of areas historically lying along the China-Tibet frontier, namely Amdo, Kham and the Dali region of northwest Yunnan. It draws from a wide and diverse literature related to descriptive and theoretical linguistics, ethnology of the many peoples in the region and historical scholarship concerning their settlement and encounters with the Chinese State and Han from roughly the Han era to the early 20th century.

More specifically, this dissertation takes at its core three case studies on local languages: the Xining dialect of Chinese in Qinghai, the Daohua language of Yajiang County in western Sichuan, and the Bai language spoken by the Bai people in Dali. Besides being spoken in geographically adjacent regions, along the largely autonomous borders of the Chinese empire, these languages have in common that they draw a majority of their lexicon from Sinitic, and all have been variously described as creoles, mixed languages, or as varieties of Sinitic by different linguists examining their lexicons and grammatical structures.

This study attempts to reconcile those differing viewpoints, while at the same time compiling the relevant descriptive information about each language's historical, ethnic, and linguistic environment. All three are a product of their specific settings, and what gives each language its particular flavor is precisely the way it has incorporated non-Sinitic elements (or been constituted from them) into its phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical profile. Judging from the accumulated evidence, the conclusions here are that Xining appears to be one of several regional Sinitic varieties, restructured via contact by its multilingual setting, while Daohua appears more like a classic mixed language, and Bai a historically Tibeto-Burman language.

More generally, this dissertation broadly examines several linguistic questions relevant to hypothesizing the origins, development and classification of each language, including those related to the formation of language areas, the typology of contact-based languages and their relationship to genetic language families, and issues of relative complexity in language contact settings. It also pursues historical questions concerning possible avenues for language contact to have occurred in Amdo, Kham and Dali, and how potential conclusions are complicated by historically shifting and fluid ethnic affiliations. To this end, drawing together a broad range of published sources, the text provides historical overviews, linguistic descriptions of over a dozen Sino-Tibetan and Altaic languages, and contextualized accounts of the focal languages in the case study chapters.

In calling for more holistic treatments of language history couched in ethno-historical reality, the ultimate conclusions and analyses presented here bear on the nature and applicability of typological and genetic classification, the goals of historical linguistic methodology, and the implication for using linguistics in other disciplines, such as historical and ethnological studies.

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Linguistic Data and Glossing Abbreviations

The language data presented in this dissertation all comes from published sources. A wide range of authors, with a wide range of linguistic traditions and theories guiding their writing, in both Chinese and English, as well as Japanese, was surveyed to create the presentation herein. This has meant that the same or similar linguistic concept, e.g. evidential marking of knowledge source, could have been termed variously as conjunct/disjunct marking, personal/objective reference, subjective/objective perspective, 判断词 (*pànduàn cí*, lit. ‘judgment word’, a kind of evidentiality-marking copula) and so on. More difficult still is when the terminology includes a somewhat different range of phenomena from the terminology used by another author. I hope that in the end I have used language that is both clear and accurate in conveying the authors’ original intentions.

In general, in attempts to regularize and standardize, I have tried to make only slight changes to the glossing conventions of the original authors, out of respect for the meticulous and valuable work they do. Two changes I took more liberty with were regularizing all instances of aspiration as [h], instead of the more common apostrophe ['] found in many authors writing in or about Chinese. (Ejectives are not present in the languages of the region, hence the convention.) I have also in all instances converted IPA tone letters, language specific tone numbering, diacritics and other forms of tone marking to Chao numerals, when pitch-based values were provided as reference. Exceptions include Mandarin pinyin, references to Cantonese data and cases where such conversions were lacking or would be confusing.

Nonetheless, regularizing across so many sources has proven challenging, especially when translating to English. It is common practice in the 简志 *jianzhi* series (brief grammars) of

language studies in China to gloss only content morphemes, or only the function morpheme in question. In other publications, original data was represented phonetically, every syllable separated by a hyphen, with only a Chinese translation or Written Tibetan as accompaniment. When possible, I venture my own glosses for the morphemes, through comparison across the source material. Also, when Chinese equivalents were provided in the source material, I have included them here as reference.

One issue that arises for Sinitic languages (and some extent Tibeto-Burman) is when to separate morphological and/or phonological words. Chinese, as well as several other languages surveyed, are primarily isolating languages, and so one extreme would be to treat every morpheme, in virtually all cases each being monosyllabic, as a “word”, and never use hyphens. This would not only fail to capture the sense of phonological words uttered as units, but would be inaccurate to begin with, as most languages make some use of affixation, and ample use of compounding.

I have not shown any internal constituency for compound words, except in those cases when I explicitly discuss their composition; they are all glossed as polysyllabic words, as is usually the case in the literature consulted. When to use a hyphen is another story, and typically no author follows the same guiding criteria as another. Mine have been this:

1. I hyphenate a numeral or demonstrative with its following classifier or measure word, motivated in part by the latter’s phonological (usually tonal) reduction, and the fact they are uttered in the same intonational unit.
2. I hyphenate complementizers and nominalizers/subordinators (which by the latter, I mostly mean instances of Chinese nominalizer/genitive 的 DE) at the end of the noun phrases they attach to, for the same reasons as just stated.

3. I hyphenated elements in the verb phrase for Sinitic languages that follow the verbal head as complements, resultatives or directionals, as well as the aspect morphemes and any intervening elements. Examples would include verb phrases like the following:

爬上了
pa-shang-le
climb-DIR-LE
'climb up'

床不起来
chuang-bu-qi-lai
rise-NEG-DIR-come
'can't get up'

Again, to separate any of the above elements into separate “words” in the gloss would, I think, feel unnatural, given their prosodic alignment in speech, not to mention their aligned morphosyntactic and semantic function.

Some conventions common in the field of Sinological linguistics and/or Tibeto-Burman studies are used throughout this dissertation. One of these includes departure from the IPA in transcribing so-called “apical vowels”. This phenomenon is discussed by Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996:314) where they are called “fricative vowels”. In syllables containing such segments, the tongue is in essentially the same articulatory place for the nucleus as for the onset. Ladefoged & Maddieson claim the term “apical” comes from the position in the alveolar case but is “not appropriate” for retroflexes (Ladefoged and Maddieson 1996: 314). They are limited in distribution; the first appearing only after dental affricates and fricatives and the latter only after retroflex consonants (which, as Ladefoged & Maddieson point out, puts them in complementary distribution with [i]).

Apical vowels are a highly salient feature of Sinitic languages, and are present, by contact influence or not, in many of the neighboring languages in China. In Pinyin orthography, as allophones of /i/, they are written simply as <i>. In Wade-Giles orthography, they are <ih> following retroflex consonants, and <ü> following non-retroflex. Duanmu (2007:44) considers them to have no underlying representation, but to be the result of spreading of the onset consonant to fill an empty nucleus, thus a syllabic consonant. Lin (2007), following Lee & Zee (2003), also considers them to be syllabic approximants, and uses [ɿ] in transcription. John Wells (2007) considers the most accurate phonetic transcription to be [ɿ̥] for the retroflex, and [z̥^u], which captures a raising of the central part of the tongue, for the dental. Many other phonetic studies have measured and analyzed these sounds, an early source for all of Sino-Tibetan being that of Baron (1974).

In most published literature, especially that written in Chinese, the symbols used to capture these sounds are [ɿ] after retroflex consonants and [ɿ] after non-retroflex. Using a symbol meant to reflect a vocalic unit results in not only capturing the intuition that these are vocalic phenomena, but it also avoids adding voiced obstruent consonants to inventories that would otherwise lack them altogether, but for this single, constrained allophonic environment, complementary with high, front vowels. (Admittedly, while this argument holds for Standard Mandarin, it is greatly weakened in this dissertation by the presence of other syllabic fricatives and approximants, especially [ɥ], found throughout the region, including in arguably Sinitic varieties.) In this dissertation, in keeping with regionalist practice, and to introduce the general reader to what they may encounter should they consult one of such publications, I am using the IPA-castaways [ɿ] and [ɿ].

Another common notation found in published materials, in both Chinese and English, are a set of alveolopalatal consonants not found in IPA, viz. [ɲ] and [ʎ]. These would be properly transcribed with a fronted notation in IPA, such as [ɲ̟] and [ʎ̟], reflecting the raised tongue tip implied by the alveolopalatal properties of the given characters. For these, and other common symbols used in transcribing languages of the Sinosphere, see Handel (2015).

For transcribing Standard Mandarin data, when issues of phonetics/phonology are not in play, I have used Hanyu Pinyin (汉语拼音), unless the precise phonetic transcription of the data was necessary. A chart of Pinyin consonant transcriptions in IPA can be found in the Chapter 9 Appendix, 9.1. On a similar note, I use the simplified character system introduced officially in the 1950s for giving Chinese original terms and references. As explained in the text, I sometimes use toneless pinyin to represent readable phonological forms for dialects and languages when only Chinese characters are provided in the original.

Below is a list of abbreviations that ultimately have been used in the glossed language data. Any errors in transcription, or inconsistencies across sources, are my own fault, and not that of the original authors.

1, 2, 3	First, Second, Third Person
ABL	ablative case
ABS	absolute case
ACC	accusative case
ACCOMP	accomplishment
ACTOR	actor marker
ADESS	adessive case
ADVB	adverbializer
AFF	affirmative mood
AGT	agent marker
ALL	allative case
ATTR	attributive
AUX	auxiliary verb/morpheme
BEN	benefactive

CAUS	causative
CERT	certain evidential/modal
Ch.	Chinese
CL	classifier
CMPL	completive aspect
CMPR	comparative marker
CNC	concord
COLL	collective
COMIT	comitative case
COMM	commitment aspect
COMP	complement marker/complementizer
CON	connective case
COND	conditional mood
CONJ	conjunction / conjunctive particle
CONJEC	conjunctural evidential
CONT	continuative aspect
CONSEQ	consequential
CONV	converbial marker
COORD	coordinative
COP	copula
CS	change of state
DAT	dative
DELIM	delimitative aspect
DEM	demonstrative
DES	desire; desiderative
DET	determiner
DIM	diminutive
DIR	directional auxiliary/verb
DIRECT	direct knowledge evidential
DIRP	directional prefix
DIST	distal
DISTR	distributive
DO	direct object
EMPH	emphatic
ERG	ergative case
EVID	evidential morpheme
EXCL	exclusive first person plural pronoun
EXEC	executive auxiliary
EXIS	existential verb
EXP	experiential aspect
F	feminine
FACT	factual evidential
FIN	final converb
FOC	focus particle

FUT	future/futuritive
GEN	genitive
GOAL	goal marker
HAB	habitual aspect
HSY	hearsay evidential
ILL	illative case
IMM	imminent
IMPFV	imperfective
IMPER	imperative mood
INCH	inchoative aspect
INCL	inclusive first-person plural pronoun
INCOMPL	incomplete; non-completive aspect
INDEF	indefinite
INF	infinitive
INFR	inferential
INST	instrumental case
INT	intentional evidential
INTERR	interrogative
intrans.	intransitive verb
INTS	intensifier
IO	indirect object
ITER	iterative aspect
LINK	linker
LOG	logophoric
MC	Middle Chinese
MOD	modal verb
MIR	mirative
NAT	nature case
NEC	necessitative
NEG	negative
NMLZ	nominalizer
NONPAST	non-past tense
OBJ	object marker/ Mandarin 把 BA
OBJT	objective stance
OBL	oblique
OBV	obviative
PART	partitive
PASS	passive construction marker
PAST	past tense
PAUC	paucal
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PN	proper noun
POL	polite form

POSB	possibility
POSS	possessive
POT	potential
POV	point-of-view marker
PRES	present tense
PRIOR	prior aspectual marking
PROG	progressive aspect
PROS	prospective aspect
PROX	proximal
PRPY	preparatory aspect
PSR	possessor marker
PTCL	modal/discourse/structural particle
PURP	purposive clause
Q	question particle
QUOT	quotative
RECIP	reciprocal
REF	referential
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative; relativizer
REM	remote tense
REP	reported speech
RES	resultative auxiliary
SEM	semelfactive aspect
SEQ	sequential converb
SER	serial verb marker
SG	singular
SM	Standard Mandarin
ST	stative marker
STRONG	strong (egophoric) empathy
SUB	subordinator
SUBJT	subjective stance
TERM	terminative case
Tib.	Tibetan
TOP	topic marker
trans.	transitive verb
TRANSL	translative case
UNCERT	uncertain evidential
VALID	valid propositional aspect
VIS	visual evidential
VOL	voluntative
WEAK	weak (egophoric) empathy

ISO Codes for Languages Mentioned in This Dissertation

The following ISO abbreviations are from *Ethnologue* (Eberhard et al., 2022). Note that there are no apparent entries or inclusions for many of the Sinitic varieties discussed in Amdo and Kham, such as Tangwang, Gangou, Daohua or Xining. Wutun, however, does have an entry as Wutunhua [wuh], though it is also listed as an alternate name for “Tu” [mjg], likely because Wutun speakers are classified in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) *minzu* system as Tu people (Tuzu). Additionally, both Mangghuer and Mongghul, two mutually unintelligible Mongolic varieties often referred to collectively by their ethnic group name, Monguor, are listed as Tu [mjg], likely following the Chinese designation. Similar to Sinitic lects, Tibetan varieties, such as Labrang and Dege, are grouped under wider dialectal divisions, such as Amdo and Kham. Finally, Yongning Na, one of the two Naic languages that are described in Chapter 5 on Dali, is listed as Narua [nru].

Anong [nun]
Bai, Central [bca]
Bai, Lama [lay]
Bai, Panyi [bfc]
Bai, Southern [bfs]
Baima [bqh]
Bonan (a.k.a Baoan) [peh]
Chinese [zho]
Chinese, Hakka [hak]
Chinese, Mandarin [cmn]
Chinese, Wu [wuu]
Dai Nua [tdd]
Darang Deng [mhu]
Derung [duu]
Dongxiang (Santa) [sce]
Ersu (includes Duoxu, Lizu as “dialects”) [ers]
Guiqiong [gqi]
Hani [hni]
Hmong [hmn]

Jingpho [kac]
Kazakh [kaz]
Lahu [lhu]
Lalo, Central [ywt]
Lalo, Dongshanba [yik]
Lalo, Eastern [yit]
Lalo, Western [ywl]
Lavrung [jiq]
Lipo [lpo]
Lolopo [ycl]
Lisu [lis]
Minyag, Eastern (Munya) [emq]
Minyag, Western [wmg]
Namuyi [nmy]
Narua (Yongning Na) [nru]
Naxi [nxq]
nDrapa (see Zhaba)
Nuosu (Yi) [iii]
Prnmi (Northern Pumi) [pmi]
Prnmi (Southern Pumi) [pmj]
Qiang (Northern) [cng]
Qiang (Southern) [qxs]
Queyue (Choyo) [qvy]
Rawang [raw]
rGyalrong [jya]
rTa'u (a dialect of Horpa) [ero]
Santa (see Dongxiang)
Salar [slr]
Tibetan, Amdo [adx]
Tibetan, Kham [khg]
Trung [tco]
Turkman [tuk]
"Tu" (Monguor; Mangghuer and Mongghul) [mjg]
Uzbek [uzn]
Uyghur [uig]
Vietnamese [vie]
Wutunhua [wuh]
Xumi (Shixing) [sxx]
Yugur, East (Shira Yugur) [yuy]
Yugur, West (Sarig Yugur) [ybe]
Zhaba/nDrapa [zhh]

Dedication

For Iris, Peter, and The Little Guy

Gratitude and Acknowledgments

Any number of times in recent years this project's sprawl and ambition risked expanding into an endless patchwork of side topics and stunted new directions, hitting snags along the road that threatened to derail it at any minute. Or maybe that was just PhD life itself. In any case, both are, against all odds, culminating in the following dissertation, itself the product of two decades of interest in Chinese history and East Asian languages, the completion of which couldn't have happened without the help and support of many.

At the University of Washington in Seattle, I was fortunate to receive a multi-disciplinary education providing me the wide scope to draw together multiple lines of investigation, and background my study against a broader picture of Asian Studies. Nearly half this education was funded through the UW's East Asia Center, in the form of FLAS fellowships that let me pursue interests across the humanities, all the while arduously climbing the mountain of Chinese and Japanese language study. That funding shaped my academic life, and thus this dissertation, in ways I could not have anticipated. I am also deeply grateful to the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation in Taiwan for a generous Dissertation Writing Fellowship that provided me extra time to see this project through to completion. Without their kind patience, I could not have included all the data and perspectives presented here. Finally, outside of my own department of Linguistics, I am grateful to the UW English department for keeping me afloat for one year, and the UW Asian Languages and Literature department, where I was able to put my scholarly interests into action in front of the classroom, teaching and designing courses on East Asian history, ethnology, language contact and linguistics.

My PhD years put me in contact with many supportive professors from multiple departments. I owe my deepest and most lasting thanks, however, to my advisor, Professor Sharon Hargus,

for her unwavering support and thoughtful advising. Though not an East Asian specialist (she has spent her life in the service of documenting Pacific Northwest languages), she clocked hours upon hours listening to descriptions of Qiang dialect continua, Bodic tonogenesis and, perhaps sometimes to her dismay, Chinese philological approaches to phonology and Chinese “dialects”. I thank her above all for her patient counseling on the unexpected, and often turbulent, directions my path has taken during the past nine years.

I also have deep gratitude and admiration for my other committee members. I came to the University of Washington to work with Professor Zev Handel, after reading his early writings on script typology in East Asia from my tatami room in rural Kagoshima so many years ago. My knowledge of Chinese linguistic history, and the multi-faceted traditions necessary to uncover it from Old Chinese reconstructions, to Middle Chinese philology, and onward to modern dialects, would have never been possible without his excellent courses here in Seattle.

In the spring of my second year, allowing myself to veer a little off the path of syntactic investigations of Mandarin aspect marking, I registered for Professor Stevan Harrell’s Minorities of China course in Anthropology, and by the end of those ten short weeks, I was reminded of why I pursued graduate school in the first place. I dropped my theoretical syntax class and never looked back. Working with Professor Harrell has been like working with a celebrity, as he is cited in almost every book I have read on the topic of *minzu*, and has written the introduction for quite a few of them, too. Tapping into his vast knowledge and resources on China and Taiwan, unconstrained by any single field of scholarship, has been an immense privilege.

Many dissertation committees at this university have a Graduate School Representative who is only there to see that the procedural details run smoothly, with little input on the overall process. Such was not the case with my GSR, Professor Matthew Mosca. His two-quarter

seminar on research methodology in China Studies taught me how one hacks away excess in one's writings (though the resulting page count of this document is not his failing, but rather my own), while at the same time broadened my knowledge of Chinese frontier history. He, too, served as a limitless source of references on demand, steering me towards whom to read and what to avoid, giving my work a deeper historical perspective.

Outside my committee I was also influenced and supported by many wonderful professors and instructors here at UW. Professor Amy Ohta in Japanese always offered me strong advice when I most needed it. I deeply enjoyed reading modern Japanese fiction in Professor Ted Mack's fourth-year Japanese course, and he became a source of moral support in the years that followed, as well. I would also like to thank Professor Keith Dede at Lewis and Clarke College, for sharing resources and thoughts on the Qinghai sprachbund; his fascinating work is what got me started on this project in the beginning. Clarissa Surek-Clarke, who I don't know whether to count more as a teacher or as a friend (so I will count her as both), not only gave me someone here to greet heartily in isiZulu (Sawubona!), but also got me started on my path towards creole and mixed language studies. I would also like to thank Professor Ellen Kaisse in Linguistics, as well as Professor Barbara Citko, who in addition to making generative syntactic theory actually fun (!), engaged me in many in-depth movie conversations.

Perhaps the most enduring part of my years here will be the close bonds I've formed with fellow students and scholars. A small, select group deserve extra special attention for sticking with me when times turned especially tough. Zhinan Chen, classicist and textual scholar, more than anyone kept me going through the eye of the storm, and stuck around afterwards to share Friday beers and cheese fries on a regular basis. I owe her a lifetime of gratitude. Alec 山龙 Sugar was the bro-scholar, China hand, jazz-enthusiast that I always needed to offer me hard

advice and go toe-to-toe on music recommendations, a truly great friend that I owe countless favors, big and small. Sarala Puthuval, unwittingly assigned the role of my grad school “mentor”, turned out to be just that and much more. On epic urban hikes around the city, her patience navigating the conversation away from my own self-obsessions will be forever appreciated. Kellianne Bennet, also beyond kind in the time she devoted to listening to me process my own thoughts, quelled my anxiety on multiple occasions. Kisaki Takeuchi, too, helped me across the threshold of an epic rough patch, as did Christina Chung, who never hesitated to listen to hours of fretful rambling over Facebook, always responding with compassionate, sage advice. Finally, in recent years Rie Tsujihara has been a wonderful friend, kind listener, and sometime language partner, providing me cheerful, weekly Zoom meetings throughout the pandemic, which later evolved into a two-person writing group in Gowen Hall once I reached crunch time on this dissertation. My deepest gratitude to you all.

So many others have helped me along the way through the friendship they’ve offered. An exhaustive list would be a risky endeavor, but I will take a shot here, nonetheless. Many thanks go to Brent Woo, Russ Hugo and rik Koncel-Kedziorski. A warm thank you to Shiwei Zhou for the Eilieen Chang, and for later carrying the torch of Friday beer and cheese fries. Thank you to Alli Germain, Olga Zamaraeva, Molly Fitzmorris, Marina Oganyan, Esther Le Grezause and Amie De Jong for all the epic conversations. Thank you to Maho Takahashi, always a pleasure to catch up with. Thanks to the amazing and inspiring Stephanie Yingyi Wang and Darren Byler, two scholars whose work make the world a better place. Many thanks to Gyeol Han, seasoned film critic, and to fellow Sinologists, John Carlyle and Grainger Lanneau. Thank you to Gloria Han Lee, for keeping me talking about linguistics. A very special thanks to Ross Henderson, who also helped me out immensely. Thanks to Xi Zhu. Thank you to Fatema Baerzae for her wry

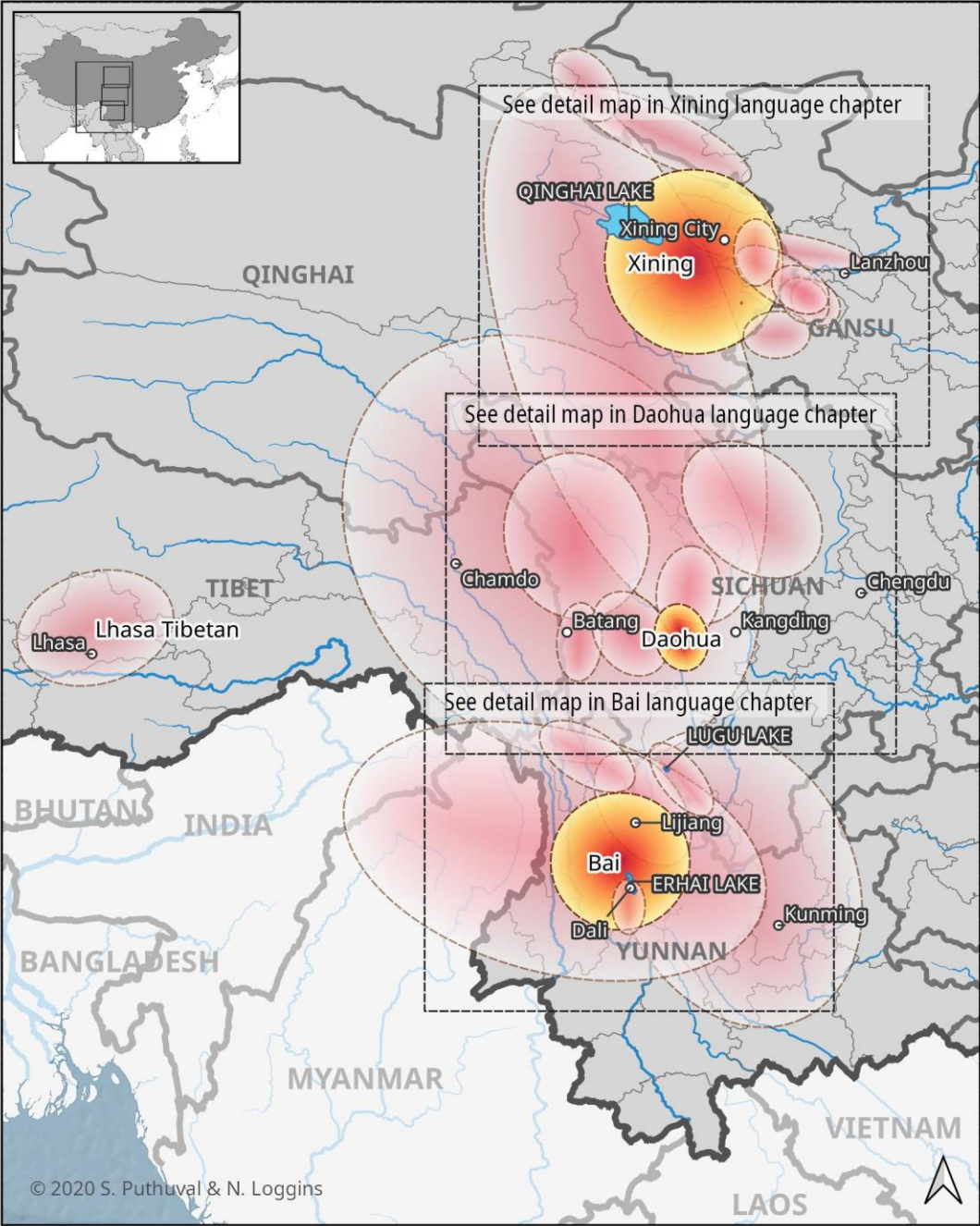
commiseration. To David Inman, my fellow pessimist and disenchanting super-scholar. Thank you to Jiahui Huang; I wish you were still here to chat all things China-related. Thanks to Zhenyi Zhou, to Congcong “Daphne” Zhang, to Juan Luo, to Nataliya Griggs and to Jieyu Zhou. Thank you to Xiaoshun Zeng, to Wandu Wang and to Yiyu Tian for their friendship, and to Julia Chatterjee, for long conversations in the English office. Thanks to Trent Ukasick for sharing in Tibetan enthusiasm. Thanks to Cairen Lhayong for her bright language expertise, and thanks to Azjargal Amarsanaa for always giving a Mongolian perspective in my classes. Thanks also to Yusuke and Maya Shono and to Kelly Tan and Sahana Cidambi. Thanks to Wendy Kempbell Jacinto and Leanne Rolston. To Chak-lam Colum Yip. To Kyoko Sano. To Anna Schnell. Thanks to Joseph Hopkins, from Athens, but for moving here and reveling in the Seattle weather. Finally, but emphatically, thank you to Zahra al-Zuwayed, artist of many genres and an awesome friend.

My long, scholarly years have been enhanced by close friends, since even before the Seattle years. Many thanks to Justine Rochot for countless deep conversations on life, and China, and life in China. Thank you to Ai Taniguchi for the long friendship. Rodney Lewallen deserves a lifetime of thanks for helping me figure out who I am. Other fellow Habershamians, Joseph Ledford and Justin Allen, thank you as well. Thanks to Fukiko Parungao, and her awesome family, for always giving me a place to stay, and a lift to the airport, when I’m passing through Atlanta. Thank you to Charlotte Ye Xu, for being an inspiring scholar of language and Sinology. Thanks to Mingrong Yi and Huan Ding, my close friends in Beijing. To Liu Dan, in and outside of Beijing. The big, heartwarming Kato family in Kagoshima. To Kazuyuki and Sachiko Matsushita in Yamanashi. Thanks to my dear friend Hsin-Wei Huang and to Lona Smith, my longest-running friendship. And finally, thanks to my old comrade-in-arms, Michigan Mike Opper, the first Chinese linguistics buddy I made in this world.

My family have offered me support and contributed to my growth my entire life. I thank my dad, Hugh Paul Loggins, whose open-mindedness and sharp humor have shaped my own personal development since forever. My mom, Janet Ledford, and stepdad, Kenneth Ledford, for all the support over the years. My brother, Jaron Loggins, who though frustrated at times with the lines of communication, kept me well-stocked on good music and movie recommendations, especially when I didn't have time to keep myself committed to the cause.

And finally, saving the best for last, by far the most important person in my life, without whom I would not even have a life, my wife, Iris Meng. For almost two decades now, she has supported me and pushed me and kicked me into being a more fully functioning adult human being, setting aside her own joys and ambitions to help me attain my own. Leaving behind her own life in Athens, Georgia to move together to Beijing, to Kagoshima, to Dalian, and then to Seattle, making a life for us possible as I mindlessly pursued these academic interests, she has been there for it all. I am forever indebted for the support, and hope that the coming years will represent a start to a long lifetime of attempting to return the favor.

**Xining, Daohua, Bai
and neighboring languages of Western China**



Map 1. Xining, Daohua, Bai and neighboring languages of Western China

“Chinese did become an important frontier language during this time, but most did not learn Mandarin Chinese from gentleman teachers (who simultaneously dispensed large doses of imperial ideology). Instead, they learned the Yunnanese dialect that many people spoke in the markets. Even a ‘wild savage,’ as a Qing soldier described one frontier denizen, might speak some Chinese. This particular man had learned Chinese during trips to Crescent markets, and his son and mother also spoke Chinese...Conversely, Han also learned indigenous languages. Conversation, after all, is a two-sided affair. Immigrants to Talang used the local indigenous language in the marketplace. In addition, the state found bilingual people useful. A Han man from Zhanda, for example, served as an interpreter for a Qing officer during the Burma Campaigns...As one might expect, frontier people shifted from one language to another, depending on the circumstances.”

-- C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands* 2001:88

“[T]he identification of hypothesized racial groups with languages is unsupportable on the basis of historical data. The languages of Inner and Central Asia have proven to be more stable than the peoples with which they may be associated in the historical record.”

--Pamela Crossley 1990:9

"Raikichi is originally from Tokyo but, in the twenty-odd years since he married his present wife, he has been living in a house where everyone else prattles on from morning till night in the Osaka dialect until at last, influenced by these surroundings, he has developed a strange manner of speech and forgotten his native tongue. Talking with people from Tokyo, he'll inadvertently use the Osaka word *hokasu* instead of *suteru* for "throw away", and be ridiculed for it. Between husband and wife, too, silly little quarrels sometimes arise over differences in customs and habits, but his wife has her daughter and younger sister to back her up, so if the quarrel escalates, Raikichi just surrenders."

--Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *The Maids* 1963 (transl. Michael P. Cronin, 2017)

1 Introduction: Languages in Contact on the Sino-Tibetan Frontier

The expansive pastures of the northern Tibetan plateau meet the arid perimeter of the Gobi Desert near the shores of Koko Nor, the lake Chinese speakers translated from the Mongolian as Qinghai (青海), also the namesake for the modern province. Inhabited by Tibetans since their early imperial expansions, the region, known in Tibetan as Amdo ཨ་མདོ, became a haven for Tibetan Buddhists fleeing persecution in Central Tibet in the ninth century and onwards. When the Chinese army retook Gansu in the early 800's, they found previously stationed Chinese soldiers, alongside Tibetans and 'Azha, thoroughly assimilated as Tibetans, and speaking Tibetan as a lingua franca (van Shaik 2011:50). Later the region would be held by successive offshoots of the Mongol empire, the most noteworthy being the Tümed under Altan Khan, who bestowed upon a young Gelugpa monk the title "Dalai Lama".

When American missionary Robert Ekvall lived in the region between that ruled by the Chinese state and the largely lawless Amdo grasslands to the west, a place where nomads came into town to trade with Hui Muslims and Han frontier settlers, he observed that Tibetans mostly stuck to their own language and custom, while others adapted and "parade[d] Tibetan words the way the sailors who had sailed with Drake mixed Spanish with English when they talked in Biddleford town" (Ekvall 1939:61). Even in the 21st century the older population of the Qinghai capital, Xining 西宁, speak a dialect, *Xininghua* 西宁话, that has all the trappings of Altaic and Tibetic morphosyntax, but an essentially Chinese vocabulary (Bell 2017; Dede 1999a, 1999b, 2007b).

In the latter regard, Xining is apparently an anomaly from a Sinitic perspective. Nonetheless all along the Qinghai-Gansu border, similarly "restructured" dialects, with mostly Sinitic vocabulary but non-Sinitic grammar, abound, from Tangwang and Gangou in Gansu, to the

more isolated Wutun, spoken by a handful of villages in Tongren County, southeastern Qinghai (Xu 2017, Kerbs 2019, Janhunen et al. 2008).

Further south, in a region of once scattered local kingdoms and estates commonly known as the Tibetan province of Kham¹ ཁམས་, the border town of Dartsedo (Tib. དར་ཕྱེ་མདོ་), more recently known by its Chinese name Kangding 康定, traders from all around the world—China, Russia, Japan, Southeast Asia—met in small trade houses called *guozhuang* 锅庄, where communication was arbitered by multilingual Tibetan women, some the daughters of mixed Han-Tibetan marriages, up until the first half of the 20th century (Tsomu 2016). To the west, Chinese dynasties could not pretend to exert real control, and had only nominally taken charge of the territory in extended military campaigns in the early 1700s. For over a century it would continue to send forces to quell local rebellions in the frontier regions. In a small patch of central Kham, along the Yalong River 雅砻江, in the modern county of Yajiang 雅江县, groups of Han Chinese boatmen stayed behind and married local Tibetan women. There, and in surrounding villages, two centuries later a language referred to as “reversed speech”, or Daohua (倒话), is in use, so called because it took the Chinese language and “reversed” its order, placing the verb at the end and marking relations with postpositions instead of prepositions and converbs (Atshogs 2004).

Even farther south, just beyond the southernmost reaches of Tibetan areas, as the mountain ranges smooth out south of Lijiang, and give way to lush forests and placid lakes on the Dali

¹ The Tibetan term for both the region and the subgroup of Tibetan dialects ends in an <s> in Written Tibetan, though this segment is no longer pronounced in modern varieties. It is, nonetheless, sometimes included in the Romanization of the name, hence some authors’ use of Khams as a designation.

plateau, an ethnic minority have become famous for their connection to early regional kingdoms, first Nanzhao (Ch. 南诏) and then Dali (Ch. 大理), as well as for their vibrant local customs. They speak their own language, Bai (Ch. 白语), which is generally held to be a(n independent) member of the Tibeto-Burman family (Matisoff 2001; Lee and Sagart 2008). The Minjia (民家), now known as Bai, were influential in Nanzhao and Dali, which had their own dealings and exchanges with the Tibetan state, but were also quite open to Chinese customs, adopting Confucianism and Chinese names, along with the literary language of Classical Chinese to record their official affairs and local legends. Often this closeness with (Han) Chinese culture, which some connect explicitly to waves of Han in-migration beginning during the Ming, is how they set themselves apart from the “less civilized” groups in the region, such as the Yi and the Miao. Currently linguists are divided over the genetic affiliation of their language, due to its overwhelming (some would claim virtually exhaustive) Sinitic vocabulary, and similarly its Chinese-like morphosyntax. Some even say it could be an early split from Old Chinese, possibly a sister language to Sinitic (Starostin 1995; Zhengzhang 1999; Wang 2006:175).

The above languages spoken in these three localities, particularly Xining, Daohua and Bai, share a lot in common. First of all, they each developed in borderland regions where multiple empires—Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolic, Bai-Man—each waxed and waned in local influence and control. The three languages’ speakers would have felt a strong pull from the Tibetan sphere of cultural influence, until contemporary times, when China would exert more state control. Each one exhibits a majority vocabulary traceable to Chinese, but enough non-Chinese elements to point to a prominent history of contact. However, in the linguistic literature, with some range of opinion obtaining, each is delineated by a different sort of terminology.

In current times, Xining is spoken natively by people living in and around the Qinghai provincial capital, a majority of whom are Han. Like Tangwang and Wutun, it is considered a dialect, or *fangyan* (方言), of Chinese, albeit a high restructured one. Daohua is spoken by people in central-west Sichuan who are classified as Zangzu 藏族, or what many would simply call Tibetans, even though, like other peoples in the region, the state-labelled ethnic designation from the mid-20th century glosses over more complex historical backgrounds (Harrell 1995a; Mullaney 2011). Daohua is generally referred to as a mixed language (Atshogs 2004) or a creole (Chen 2017), given its obvious origins in both Kham Tibetan and (Southwestern) Han Chinese, though others (Chirkova 2012b) argue it is simply restructured Sinitic. Finally, Bai, spoken mostly by the modern Bai minority (白族), but also by some Lisu and other smaller groups in northwest Yunnan province, is considered to be the language of that ethnicity. Morpho-syntactically, if not lexically as well, it is probably closest to Sinitic, though it is perhaps, among the three, the most routinely described as non-Chinese. That is, it is an ethnic minority language, a label that bears out the traditional/Stalinist view that a distinct people should have their own distinct language, though Bai speakers don't always agree where Bai stops and Chinese begins (Hefright 2011).

In sum, each of the three languages, all highly restructured compared to their most likely genetic relatives, all within adjacent regions and a similar socio-historical context, is argued to be a different *type of* language than the other—a Chinese dialect (*fangyan*), a mixed language, an independent Tibeto-Burman language spoken by a distinct ethnic minority (*minzu*) group.

In this dissertation, I explore why that might be. If there are substantial differences between the three, either linguistic or socio-historical, then I want to understand what they are. With so much commonality of linguistic structure, if not historical development, one might assume that

they are all three “mixed languages”, arising as they do from multilingual settings. Or maybe they are all dialects of assimilated Han people, originally arriving as minorities in frontier lands, the ethnic origins of their first speakers diluted by locally fluid ethnic identities, only to be frozen in place by mid-20th century taxonomy. Or perhaps there is something local in each case that sets them apart, not only from each other, but from the scores upon scores of other languages spoken around them, from Naic and Ngwi languages like Naxi, Lisu and Lalo, to Qiangic languages like nDrapa and local Tibetan dialects of Amdo and Kham, to the Mongolic and Turkic languages of the northwestern frontier, such as Monguor, Santa and Salar, to finally local speech that is less ambiguously Chinese, such as Southwest and Central Plains Mandarin.

By contextualizing Xining, Daohua and Bai in their local socio-cultural history along imperial frontiers and borderlands, as well as in their local linguistic context by exploring the grammars, sound systems and lexicons of their neighbors, I aim to illuminate the commonalities they share, both locally and across the wider region, and point to any factors that may set them apart, both as atypical members of their local language settings, and, in some cases, as potential outliers of the Sinitic language family. In doing so, I attempt to answer the call of so many linguists who claim that, in order to understand a language’s history and changes, one must consider the socio-cultural circumstances in which it has developed.

As such, throughout the case studies of this dissertation, I paint a picture of language change in frontier zones and ethnic borderlands that speaks to the mutually influential process of language contact and multicultural communities and networks. Linguists have documented and analyzed linguistic areas all over the world, many even more multilingual than Amdo and Kham, and have found that local factors guide language change in presumably unpredictable fashion (Aikenvald and Dixon 2001; Thomason 2000, 2003, 2008; Thomason and Kaufman 1988). What,

then, are the local factors that have shaped the ecology of the Chinese-Tibetan frontier, which have given shape to Xining, Daohua and Bai, as well as their neighbors? And what can their story add to the picture of language contact/change and language areas? What sorts of perspectives do the settings of Amdo, Kham and Dali bring to theoretical questions of language genesis, linguistic complexity and the formation of language areas? How do ambiguously categorized languages like Daohua or Wutun, or even Xining or Bai, inform our understanding of language families and language change?

Finally, to what extent are the terms we use, and the assumptions we take for granted, perhaps influenced or obscured by non-linguistic factors such as narratives of political history, ethnic identity, linguistic documentation practice, or even assumptions about language differentiation and relatedness, bound up in the terminology we use to describe them? What is in a term like “creole” or “mixed language”, or even “Chinese” or “Bai”, and what assumptions do we make when we casually ascribe shared commonalities (or differences) between languages to contact, or when we reference a local “language area”? What is behind our practice of treating “contact languages” separately from cases of “normal transmission”, that is, inter-generational transfer within the (presumably) same speech community, in terms of genetic affiliation (Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Mufwene 2001, 2002, 2008) and what does it occlude about a language’s history by doing so?

In other words, is there something exceptional in the way languages develop in multilingual zones of cultural intersection, even though such “language areas” of multiculturalism and multilingualism constitute the majority of cases of language change the world over? In describing the historical development and local language environment of eastern Amdo, central Kham and the Dali plains, I speak to all of these questions, and explore the ambiguities that

remain when we consider an individual language not in isolation, either from its local circumstances or from other languages with similar backgrounds, but rather contextualize broadly with what we know about language change and language typology generally.

The organization of this dissertation is as follows: In Chapter 2 I provide a literature review of relevant topics in contact-based language change and the formation of linguistic areas, as well as problems distinguishing (or unifying) different types of languages resulting from historical contact, such as creoles, mixed languages, and other heavily restructured varieties, and how they relate to language typology, particularly the notion of whether some languages are more linguistically complex than others (McWhorter 2007; Trudgill 2011), and why that may be. In Chapter 3 I give background information about the Chinese-Tibetan frontier in the context of Chinese imperial expansion westward, in the face of Mongol and Tibetan empires/states. I also lay out theoretical and anthropological perspectives on ethnicity, and its loose association with cultural/linguistic groups historically. I also provide there an overview of the Southwest Mandarin branch of northern Sinitic, a highly populous, but little described (in English-language literature), grouping of dialects that constitute the “local Chinese” to which the languages of Chapters 5 and 6 have been exposed through contact.

Chapters 4-7 are the core of the dissertation, case studies on Xining, Daohua and Bai, with a brief return to the setting in Amdo, respectively. For each study, utilizing insights from Chapters 2 and 3, I provide historical background to the demographics and settlement of each region, sketch an overview of the primary language(s) under observation, as well as the surrounding regional typology by profiling other local languages and their speakers, and finally consider explanations for the case study languages’ development and classification type. In Chapter 8 I close with discussion of the overall picture from the view of Amdo, Kham and Dali,

and thoughts on their relevance for understanding Sinitic languages as a historical group. My hope is that, by providing thorough grammatical descriptions of the focal languages of each chapter, representative languages of their immediate environment, and a contextualizing overview of both Southwest Mandarin in 3.4, and Standard Mandarin in the Chapter 9 Appendix, this dissertation may also serve as a one-stop locus for information on these languages' typology, as well as their historical and ethnological background.

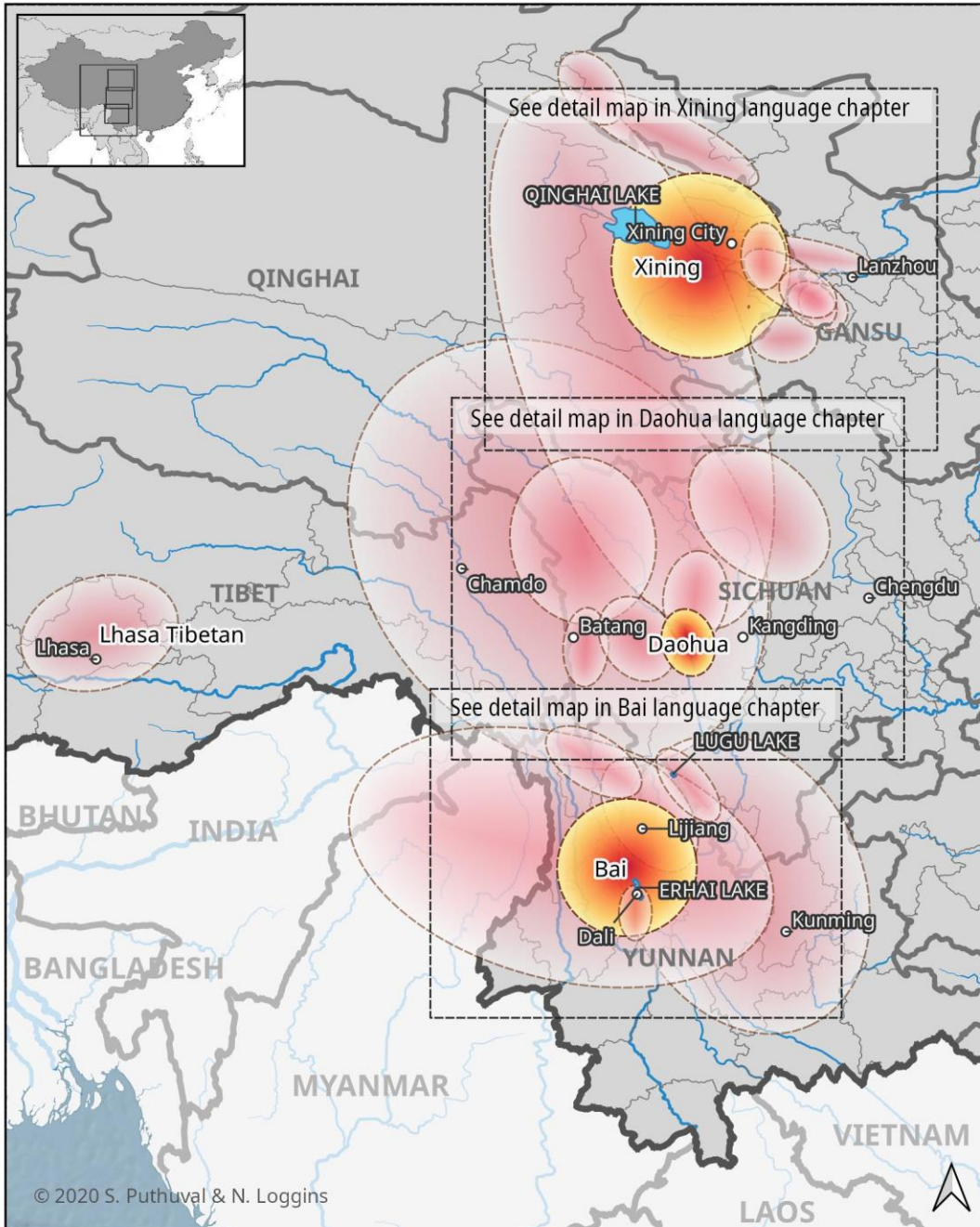
This is a multi-disciplinary approach, which traverses several areas of specialization. I am not fully equipped to handle them all. I approach this project with a background as a Sinologist trained in linguistic theory. I have made some inroads into historical scholarship, but I am not a historian; my access to, and ability to work with, archives and other historical documents is limited, and throughout I rely on secondary scholarship, and others' navigation of travel writings, local gazetteers and other primary sources of data. I have also brought to bear ethnological studies of China's *minzu*, and the anthropological theories of ethnic identity formation that have flourished in academic circles since the end of the 20th century. But I am not an anthropologist: unraveling the interconnectedness of language(s) and ethnic identification is a larger project than I can fully do justice to here. The ideas presented here serve to some extent as a starting point to understanding not only the development of the case studies' language settings, but how to reconcile conflicting notions of language type, language families and their relationship to social history in general.

Finally, though I have approached this project with a critical stance on the (diminished) role of the Chinese "civilizing projects" (Harrell 1995a), myself seeking to de-center a Han narrative of enlightened Chinese civilization spreading from the center to the benighted ethnic periphery, I am nonetheless asking questions about what happened to the (Han) Chinese language, as (Han)

Chinese people entered the area. In the end, I conclude with implication for Sinitic dialects specifically, more than any other family of languages. A Tibetologist, using local Tibetan records, or a Mongolic scholar, using Mongol records, might tell this story very differently, perhaps even reaching different conclusions and further insights.

Therefore, though this project has been informed by experts in different areas and fields and has tried to take a simple narrative of superstrate-substrate, language shift-inspired accounts of local languages and give it a multi-dimensional, culturally and historically informed context, it is only the start of a longer project to put together all the pieces of the puzzle. I use a range of specialists' writings, including dozens of documentary linguists' data, but I cannot do justice to the hard work of specialization and primary research that I draw from. I am deeply indebted to those historians, ethnologists, anthropologists, and linguists whose work I assemble and summarize in trying to get a clearer picture of a fascinating and complex region of the world. My acknowledgments and gratitude to them can be found in the extensive references section at the end of this dissertation.

Xining, Daohua, Bai and neighboring languages of Western China



2 Theories of Historical and Contact Linguistics

*“It is interesting to note that this period [of tonogenesis] was roughly contemporaneous with the Mongol invasions that convulsed Eurasia in those centuries...Could the peoples of the region have been so terrified by the Golden Hordes that they hardly dared to vibrate their vocal cords, dooming the *voiced obstruents to transphonologize into mere breathy voice or lower tone?” James Matisoff (2001:323)*

2.1 Overarching Questions

In this chapter I will survey some of the literature on issues broadly related to language classification and diachronic conceptualization. That literature abounds with questions pertaining to how we should understand languages changing over time and space, particularly when they are spoken alongside other languages or dialects, either by the same group of bilingual or multilingual speakers, or by groups living in close proximity.

Broadly speaking there is tension between notions that languages may develop from the melding of two or more languages in a contact setting, and with more traditional notions that individual languages develop and split diachronically as projections of an older (proto-)language, whose constancy throughout time can be traced “genetically” from an original state to “retentions” and “innovations” in a modern form and its closest “relatives”, metaphors that originated in analogies to biological family trees of related species. However, it is also widely known that other languages and dialects influence that trajectory in time, especially as speakers of the language disperse from an original homeland (or, as theorized by Dixon (1999), when the homeland itself was inhabited by speakers of different languages, which may account for unprovable “superfamilies” of similar language families, such as Altaic).

As language varieties come into contact, their properties, to some extent bounded by geographical space, as well as by possible typological difference, spread between each other,

resulting in “linguistic areas” of at least partial convergence. Taxonomies of the particular kinds of languages that emerge from these varying contact settings have been attempted, but with terms that often defy diagnostic universal definitions, particularly pidgins, creoles and mixed languages. As we will see, definitional attempts often rely on arbitrary thresholds of convergence or mixture to distinguish one type from another.

Finally, when contact plays a significant role in a language variety’s development, as it almost always does, what range of possibilities exist for the potential outcome? What predictions, if any, can we make about the role linguistic and social factors will play in shaping those outcomes? And with regard to social factors, are there commonalities, either in socio-historical or in linguistic geographic settings (e.g. the particular constellation of typological features present or the genetic relatedness and distance of the language families represented), that we can point to as recurring states in the history of the spread of languages?

These questions have been widely debated in recent decades, and at present still leave more unresolved issues than firm answers, given the vast diversity of human sociolinguistic history, as well as the necessary in-depth fieldwork that is required, but largely remains to be carried out. An important symbiosis between data gathering and application of theory will continue to push these questions into the future, as we develop more fine-grained pictures of (areal) language history.

2.2 Language Families and Linguistic Areas

Problems of language interrelatedness, and the origins of language “families”, formed much of the bedrock of linguistic scholarship well into the 20th century. Aikhenvald and Dixon (2001:4) date the metaphor of a language family tree to August Schleicher in 1862, and that of wave theory to Johannes Schmidt in 1872. The latter theory developed to address certain

shortcomings of the branching family tree model, particularly the way in which change spreads throughout related dialects or adjacent languages. The idea implied by a traditional Stammbaum family tree is that a unitary linguistic community, distinct enough from neighboring linguistic communities to occupy its own node, makes a clean break into two (or more) equally distinct linguistic communities based on the development of innovations exclusive to the newly emergent entities, based on their physical separation from the original community.

However, such a mode of development is often at odds with how linguistic changes spread throughout communities, changes which can be mapped onto geographic space by isoglosses showing the extent of particular innovations, emanating outward from what Hock (1986) calls a focal area. From there, presences of features gradually diminish into a transition area, where variants of a feature coexist in multiplicity, while perhaps at the same time leaving behind a relic area, that is, a zone where the changes fail to take hold at all. As multiple instances of such change spread across the map of geographic space, originating from different focal areas, with different ranges of application, the resulting picture is akin to ripples on the surface of water during a light rain. Thus, the model of wave theory was proposed to capture the more fluid nature of language relatedness as such changes spread, usually gradually, across language boundaries and dialect continua, resulting in less sharply divided linguistic boundaries than are implied by a Stammbaum tree.

At the same time, contact-induced change is a multi-faceted problem in genetic linguistics. Not only do languages become more distinct from their closest ancestors via outside influence, they simultaneously become more similar to others through the process of convergence, in some cases to high degrees, in what are known as sprachbunds, or linguistic areas. In many

areas of the world, as arguably in the Amdo-Kham region, languages from different families begin to look less like their close genetic relatives, and more like their geographic neighbors, forming a distinct areal group of their own. Aikhenvald and Dixon (2001:11) define a linguistic area as “a geographically delimited area including languages from two or more language families, sharing significant traits (which are not found in languages from these families spoken outside the area). There must be a fair number of common traits and they [i.e. the traits] should be reasonably distinctive.” However, various other authors have offered their own definitions (e.g. Thompson and Kincade 1990; collections in Matras et al. 2006; Hickey 2020), and defining criteria for what constitutes a linguistic area, distinct from areas of “normal” linguistic change, becomes a tricky characterization.

Campbell (2006:2) claims that rather than adhering to a universal definition of a so-called “linguistic area”, studies of sprachbund locations amount to “local linguistic borrowing, and its history, and little else”. Originally Trubetzkoy (1923, cited in Campbell 2006) proposed the term *Sprachgruppe* to describe a cluster of languages bound to each other by common traits, and subdivided this into language families and *Sprachbunde* (Campbell 2006:3). Thus, the term sprachbund was born, and the distinction between genetic transmission and contact established.

The debate over defining sprachbunds for decades then has turned to how many languages (just two? more than two?), or how many language families (has to be two? same family, but well separated internally?), or how many linguistic features (is one enough?) must be in circulation, in some geographic area (confined by what? physical geography? isoglosses? how condensed?) to constitute a sprachbund, or as they have been revived in English translation by Murray Emeneau, “linguistic areas” (Campbell 2006).

Sarah Thomason (2002:2) offers an answer to some of these questions. She claims that linguistic areas do differ from two-language contact instances by being bi-directional. For example, in the Balkan Sprachbund, origins of changes are hard to locate historically, and affect multiple languages; conversely, in Russian Romani, much of the structural interference can be seen to have originated in Russian. However, exceptions (e.g. the Ethiopian highlands, Central Asian Turkic languages of the former USSR) do exist. As she cautions: “The most important (though not very neat) conclusion, however, is that attempts to find very general social and/or linguistic principles of convergence in a linguistic area are doomed, not only because every Sprachbund differs from every other one, but also because the conditions of contact in large Sprachbunde will inevitably vary over time and space.”

The methodology of identifying a shared structure and tracing it to a source is contextualized and advocated by Campbell (2006:12), who says: “With the focus on the history of diffusion and not on defining the boundaries, there ceases to be a problem. This lends support to my conclusion that defining the area is of little importance, and it is the history of diffusion that counts. Indeed, it is the individual borrowing events involving specific individual instances of language contact that produce these isogloss patternings, and the investigation of the history of these individual borrowings should be our primary concern.”

Such diachronic contact tracing, as it were, is advocated in a similar formulation, offered by Thomason (2001): “...the way a linguistic area arises is through contact-induced changes that occur over a long period of time and spread widely through the region—but always from language to language in a series of events, not in some single mystical area-wide process that affects many languages at once.” Campbell (2006:13) follows through on the thought by summarizing:

“The notion of a ‘linguistic area’ offers little on which these different sorts of linguistic areas can be united, other than the fact that they all involve borrowing in some way, but borrowings of different sorts, for different reasons, in different settings and at different times... A linguistic area, to the extent that it may have a legitimate existence at all, is merely the sum of borrowings in individual languages in contact situations.”

So, aside from the most extreme cases of isolation, everything is a linguistic area and nothing is a linguistic area. And yet the notion remains in how researchers analyze language change in multilingual areas, often implicitly guiding the methodology they employ. Campbell delineates two camps of researchers, divided by whether contact or genetic transmission is central:

“The historicists call for historical evidence that the traits used to define linguistic areas really were borrowed, while circumstantialists tend to amass a number of shared traits among the languages of a region and allow the circumstances to imply the probability of diffusion, but do not require proof of this.”

Other authors, particularly Thomas Stolz (2002, 2006), have claimed that defining linguistic areas becomes an act of *reductio ad absurdum*, in that any area on a map (Europe, for example, or East Asia or Mesoamerica) ultimately amounts to a linguistic area, once you define the linguistic features dispersed there. As a means to side-step so much seemingly arbitrary taxonomic quibbling, linguistic areas have alternately been analogized to “ecological feature pools” of linguistic features (e.g. in the work of Salikoko Mufwene, applied in a Chinese context by Dede (2007)). In such an analogy, language communities are viewed as populations of idiolectal speakers, wherein each individual contributes features, from phonemic variables to syntactic structures and so on, to the local “ecology” of the language setting².

² While the biological analogy has been pursued further, for example by Mufwene (2001, 2002, 2008), in this dissertation I use the term “language ecology” only to refer to this localized collection of various levels of linguistic structure, especially when it applies to a multilingual area (though in the framework, it need not include so much local diversity). The theoretical implications are left to those focusing on the theory itself.

As we will see moving forward, despite vigorous argument over precise diagnostics, the field of contact linguistics is still in flux with regard to defining its terms. Nonetheless, whether or not one might wish to poke at the semantic edges of its jargon, as within any field, negating a commonly used vocabulary rarely results in useful practice. Further, even if every place on earth is part of some linguistic area, it does not preclude linguistic areas within linguistic areas, with varying degrees of local convergence, perhaps with their feature overlap defined in the same (isoglossic?) manner as dialect diffusion zones, as discussed above.

2.3 Contact situations: Types of Interference

2.3.1 Theoretical Background to Interference

In his famous essay *The Rise and Fall of Languages*, R.M.W. Dixon (1999) applied a model of “punctuated equilibrium”, adapted from the work of biologists Niles Eldredge and Steven Jay Gould, to account for the two types of change resulting from wave-like spreading of features throughout communities (his equilibrium) discussed above, and the splitting into distinct entities more akin to family tree models resulting, in most cases, from an externally-motivated breakup of those speech communities (his punctuation). Such punctuating events could come from foreign invasions, civil wars, natural calamities, and so on. That is, in times of relative stability, languages simmer in a multicultural setting, exhibiting “horizontal” restructuring from borrowing, and convergence towards prototypical norms with neighboring languages³. However, once an external event punctuates this equilibrium, languages change more abruptly, often splitting into daughter languages, and the rate of change (or stasis) for a particular linguistic community is largely dependent on the nature of this punctuated equilibrium.

³ Though languages also change through “drift” due to natural internal processes of change—see Matisoff 2001 on how shared retentions can set the stage for later parallel developments in related languages that may appear as contact-induced, despite the lack of historical contact.

At the same time, as others have pointed out, the way in which language speakers migrate from an original homeland may differ from case to case, not to mention the sociocultural circumstances that hold within a linguistic area may be distinct from other areas depending on a variety of factors. The dispersal of speakers may not be as abrupt as Dixon's model implies, either. Matisoff (2001) points out that the case of Sino-Tibetan involves more of a slow trickle over time, "percolating" areas like Southeast Asia so that contact flows readily between the newly encountered communities, as well as through ties maintained with the original community. As such, Matisoff offers that, rather than a family tree, genetic relations may resemble something more like a tangled bush, at least in the context of Southeast Asia.

As the types of contact situations may vary along so many situationally unique parameters, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) famously argued for sociohistorical considerations to take precedence over linguistic ones in tracing the history of a language's evolution. Only in this way, they claim, can one distinguish between the different types of linguistic interference that contribute to contact-induced change. In their model, there are two types of such interference, borrowing and shift, and not only do different socio-historical settings lend themselves more readily to one or the other, but their effects are quite distinct.

In the latter type, viz. interference through shift, a certain structural type of language could serve as evidence about a past socio-historical setting, when otherwise direct historical evidence is lacking. That is, in ordinary instances of "language maintenance" (i.e., where an original language is "maintained" in the presence of other viable languages), borrowing begins with the importation of words before structural interference in the original language, if there is structural interference at all. In the case of language shift, structural interference in the target language comes first, and borrowing of words may be quite minimal. The latter case is a sign of

substratal influence from the shifting of a population to the language of another, often without adequate exposure to the target language (though the target language-speaking community may be borrowing simultaneously from the shifting population's language as well).

Therefore, by their account, if we find a variety of a language where the lexicon is primarily similar to other varieties of the language (family), but the grammatical structure resembles that of some other genetic group, we can infer from this linguistic evidence a past shift among a local population to that of the lexifier language, carrying along at least some of the morphosyntactic trappings of the original language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:212). On the surface, this seems to apply easily to the languages of China's historic frontier with Tibet, in varieties like the Xining dialect, Tangwang, Gangou, Wutun and Daohua, all of which involve Sinitic lexicons with Altaic or Tibetic morphosyntax, as some have argued (e.g. Dede 1999a; Bell 2017).

In order to establish that historical contact took place, Thomason (2008) offers the following diagnostics:

1. Establish that there was contact intimate enough to permit contact-induced structural change.
2. Find several independent shared features in X and Y ideally, features in different grammatical subsystems.
3. Prove that the shared features were not present in pre-X.
4. Prove that the shared features were present in pre-Y.

By her definition: "Contact is a source of linguistic change if it is less likely that a given change would have occurred outside a specific contact situation." The obvious hedging allows for "multiple causality", including the conspiracy of internal and external factors in change. In practice these can be quite difficult to distinguish, and thus the preponderance of evidence will

be based on considering typological tendencies, known patterns of the genetic family, and other factors, including socio-historical setting.

As for the origins of shared features, items three and four above, she lays out the following possibilities: either they were present in one or more protolanguages of the area; or they arose independently by sheer chance; or that they originated in one language and diffused to the others in the area; or finally, that they arose through “negotiation”, that is, misperception by adult second language learners. The latter two situations are also notoriously hard to distinguish in practice (Thomason 2000:11). Presumably, however, even in cases of “negotiation”, one could look to the functionalist literature (e.g. Ohala et al. 1981) to find evidence that the features or structures were likely to have originated in one of the languages involved historically (perhaps as retention), and were more likely to have been misperceived by speakers of another language.

As Mithun (2013:244) observes, however, it is often extremely difficult to establish whether contact took place or not when the languages in contact are closely related genetically (i.e. having a reasonably well-known common ancestor), and thus much more likely to be typologically similar, sharing much of their morphological function and form. Na’ama Pat-El (2013) elaborates on this difficulty, offering diagnostic criteria based on how patterns of possible externally influenced change are distributed differently across the grammatical systems of the two languages. Her working hypothesis, born out in an analysis of modern Aramaic and Hebrew, is that languages borrowing grammatical patterns will show more limited effect from, or appear to be in an intermediate stage of adaptation of, the rule in question than that of the source language, as internal changes tend to have more far-reaching grammatical effects than do borrowings.

At the same time, the linguistic outcome may differ depending on the nature of the interference. If there is sustained contact between the communities, and high levels of bilingualism on the part of the shifting population, then grammatical interference may be more significant; whereas, with limited exposure, the resulting contact may be simple in many respects, with fewer elements beyond vocabulary, similar in nature to classic pidgin formations when a new language emerges. Therefore, even though not all members of a speech community need be bilingual for change to spread, the degree of bilingualism, as well as the time depth of sustained contact, play a major role in the resulting linguistic structure.

Finally, in language shift situations, the change may be quite rapid and abrupt, possibly within a generation. (Otherwise, claim Thomason and Kaufman, sustained bilingualism would result in a closer replication of the target language.) In such situations, it is more common that structural interference will be far greater than lexical borrowing from the substrate, which may be very limited. Situations of language shift contrast with situations of language maintenance, where the restructuring language remains dominant in the community, and lexical borrowing far outweighs structural interference (Thomason and Kaufman 1988; Yakpo and Muysken 2014:104, *inter alia*).

This then returns us to the question of how to classify, in fact how we identify, languages whose origins involve more than the “normal transmission” of a single language between generations. The conclusion Thomason and Kaufman draw is that some languages arise from “abnormal transmission”---that is, abrupt change where language is not transmitted through generations and peers, thus not exhibiting the regularities of internally motivated changes, and in many cases where the lexicon is not from the same source as the bulk of the grammar. In their view, these languages are not genetically related to other languages, and are of limited

use in reconstructing protoforms of the languages. Such languages exist outside the family tree, as it were. Thomason and Kaufman consider these languages exceptions, and find the tree model otherwise of lasting utility for historical linguistics. However, they add, if such a restructured language arises through abnormal transmission far enough in the past, the historical linguist may mistake it as a distant relative of that which provided the bulk of the lexical stock.

Views on such languages, particularly creoles and mixed languages, have a long history both before and after Thomason and Kaufman's work. Generally, in lieu of genetic/reconstructionist methods (though see below criticism from Mufwene), researchers take a typological, best-exemplar prototype approach, and as such will be treated independently in the following two sections. In closing, though, we might note that Dixon's (1997) essay raises a number of questions for genetic linguistics, such as to what extent external influence can serve the role of "defining innovations" in delineating subgroups. Kessler (2001) advocates an approach for describing "historically related languages", where borrowings and contact-induced structures are given equal weight as genetic inheritances. This will be a main topic of discussion in the final chapter of this dissertation. Let us now turn to the types of languages said to emerge from such "abnormal" and "non-genetic" transmission.

2.3.2 The Indefiniteness of Creoles

2.3.2.1 *Defining Creoles*

For a while the concept of a creole was axiomatic. To those scholars considering linguistic classification, since many of the languages in question were called something like Kriol or Jamaican Creole or Cape Verde Creole, and given the cultural connection to the ethnic mixing resulting from European colonialism and the slave trade, their status as "creoles" was taken for

granted. And indeed, one wonders whether the labelling of a language as “creole” is based as much upon a received wisdom that some languages are called creoles and others are not, as it is on any attempts at structural or socio-historical typology.

With regards to forming a structural class, there have been quite a few attempts to find commonalities that are shared among all identified creoles, which would set them apart from their non-creole counterparts, probably the most developed and forceful argument coming from John McWhorter (1998, 2005). In many cases, the general assessment is that creole languages exhibit less structurally developed morpho-syntactic profiles, with reduced phonological inventories, all of which tend toward unmarked features of their contributing languages. The assumption is that, given their origins in settings of highly multilingual, perhaps predominantly adult speech communities, or perhaps as originating from likewise structurally reduced pidgins in a “pidgin-to-creole life cycle” (Velupillai 2015:189-191), simplification is the natural outcome for such languages, which in turn may look something like the interlanguage of adult second-language learners. I return to the question of linguistic complexity, and its role in contact and creoles, in 2.4.3, and to the application of such assumptions toward defining English as a creole or not in 2.3.4.2.

Viveka Velupillai (2015), in her textbook treatment of pidgins, creoles and mixed languages, surveys a wide array of creoles from an expansive set of historical sources, to test whether these assumptions hold up statistically. She (ibid:287) notes that historically such descriptions in the literature have been skewed by a mostly Indo-European lexifier, often Caribbean-based, bias in the languages that form the basis of such studies. Taking a much wider view, she finds that the assumption creole languages are likely to have smaller phoneme inventories than their lexifiers is born out, but not that their syllable structure or tonal inventory is necessarily

smaller. Velupillai also finds that, while tending morphologically analytic, derivational and inflectional morphology is not quite so rare as is often assumed, and reduplication in creoles no more common than among non-creoles. Furthermore, creoles tend to have plural markers, which are usually optional, and expressed analytically, rather than synthetically. They also mark for tense, mood and aspect, often with multiple categories marked, though the lexical aspect of the verb tends to take precedence over individual morphemes in the reading of aspect in the verb phrase. Syntactically, creoles tend to have SVO word order, but they also tend to take the word order of their lexifier, which with the majority being lexified by English, French or Portuguese, creates an inherent bias in the sampled data. Directional serial verb constructions are not particularly common or uncommon among creoles, either. On the lexicon, she has the following to say (Velupillai 2015:55):

“...[C]reoles are described as deriving the bulk of their lexicon from one language. Creoles are also, however, often described as having incorporated other, or additional meanings in various lexical items, so that what sounds like a word from the lexifier may, in fact, have new or additional semantic and symbolic connotations. Creoles are described as having fewer adpositions than their lexifier languages, in turn leading them to derive new ones from nouns.”

Examples of a few illustrative creole languages are provided below. The first example from Hawai’ian Creole in (2-1) shows the generally reduced phonological nature of the language compared to its lexifier, English, as well as the more analytic verbal structure and differing word order. The second example in (2-2), from Macanese (a.k.a. Makista or Patuá), a Portuguese-lexified creole spoken in Macau, shows the lack of such features as pronominal and verbal inflection, as well as a word order different than Portuguese, all showing the influence of a largely Cantonese substratal influence. Finally, the third example in (2-3), from Yilan Creole (宜蘭クレオール), a Japanese-lexified creole spoken by colonially displaced Atayal communities

in northern Taiwan (Chien 2015, Chien and Sanada 2011, Qiu 2015, Sanada and Chien 2010), shows the extension and regularization of certain vocabulary beyond its usage pattern in Japanese, here the morpheme *cigaw* (Japanese *chigau* 違 っ), which means ‘to be different’, and is a common reply to a statement to mean ‘wrong’ or ‘incorrect’ in Japanese.

(2-1) Hawai’ian Creole (Velupillai 2015:197)

dei neva pik ap de tiŋ jet?
3PL NEG.PAST pick up DEF thing yet
‘Haven’t they picked up the thing yet?’

(2-2) Macanese (Ansaldo and Matthews 2004:15, inter alia)

unga-unga já virá vai casa
one-one PFV return go home
‘One by one, they returned home.’
(Cf. Standard Portuguese ‘Um por um, eles voltaram para casa’⁴.)

(2-3) Yilan Creole (Qiu 2015)

Are hana cigaw lasi
that flower NEG seem
‘That does not appear to be a flower.’
(Cf. Standard Japanese ‘あれは花ではないみたいだ *Are-wa Hana-de-wa nai mitai da*’⁵)

2.3.2.2 *On the Origins of Creoles*

Until the mid-20th century, creoles were generally taken to be bastardized versions of the standard languages of European metropolises, resulting from the “impure” speech of those people relocated, either as slaves or indentured servants, to the plantations of the Caribbean or South Pacific. Much of the early linguistic work on creoles, usually in the context of New World colonial settings, had the explicit goal to legitimize their status as genuine languages, and not broken or imperfect forms of European languages, similar to early work on nonstandard dialects of English by American sociolinguists in the 1960s and 1970s.

⁴ I am grateful to Professor Eduardo Viana Da Silva (p.c.) for providing me with Portuguese translations of some Macanese sentences.

⁵ I am grateful to Rie Tsujihara and Yasuko Yukimoto (p.c.) for providing the most appropriate Japanese translation.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, scholars began to approach the question of creole genesis in more theoretically sophisticated ways⁶. It was in the context of this discussion that Thomason and Kaufman's dichotomy of "shift without normal transmission" and "shift with normal transmission" was put forth. The former scenario supposedly gives rise to creoles, and the latter, when coupled with linguistic "interference" of some sort, gives rise to mixed languages like Mednyj Aleut and Ma'a. (See 2.3.3 below.)

At the same time as Thomason and Kaufman's work gained ground in the field, a greater emphasis on tracing the demographic trail through historical records began to add another dimension to creole studies, often challenging the commonly held view that all creoles are the result of native language acquisition of an abruptly formed pidgin formed by a break in generational transmission. The concept of a community of people sharing no common language, but whose children grew up filling in the gaps in a prevailing pidgin to form a creole, became far less simplistic in the social settings of historical colonial sites like the Caribbean or Hawai'i. Arends (2008) stresses the importance not only of checking the historical record for the demographics of early plantations and colonial settings during the early stages of creolization, but also the social make-up of the colonizers (the superstrate) who were responsible for displacing those Africans and Asians (the substrate) who would be primarily responsible, out of communicative necessity, for creating the new language of the colony.

The emerging view from bringing history into the picture is that European populations early in the stages of colonization, like the first generations of colonial Jamaica or Hawai'i, were

⁶ The limits of space preclude a fuller background on theories of creole genesis, but see Velupillai (2015) Chapters 5 and 6 for an overview. Such theories have ranged from monogenesis, which claims all creoles descend from early Portuguese exploration routes around the globe, to Derek Bickerton's generative grammarian theory of a Bioprogram Hypothesis extending from Universal Grammar (Bickerton 1984,1988; Veenstra 2008), such that creole genesis is seen as a window onto the cognitive-psychological workings of UG.

sometimes as linguistically diverse as the displaced Africans and Asians, consisting of mostly lower class, sometimes non-native, speakers of the colonial language (see, e.g. Mufwene 2001).

In this way, the form of the European language serving as a kind of target to the acquiring population was more like a koine, a convergence of different dialects from the country of origin, than the standard variety of the educated urban population. Such a view of creole formation, then, departs from the usual explanation that creoles by definition necessarily develop from “nativized” pidgins, though not everyone in the field agrees on whether or not this is the case, and if so, in how many historical cases (Velupillai 2015:186-191).

For one thing, the break in transmission was not always as abrupt as supposed. Salikoko Mufwene (1996, 2000, 2001, 2008) also differs from most scholars (e.g. Thomason 2008) in downplaying the abruptness of change, denying such a “break in the transmission”. Instead, Mufwene argues, demographic data imply that early stages of creole genesis took place in multilingual settings, in which a variety of languages would have been used by speakers of different ages, often in considerably close contact with the superstrate languages. As the demographics shifted towards more Africans or Asians in proportion to Europeans, the proportion of second language learners of the superstrate language would outgrow native speakers, so that the resulting language variety would become more affected by outcomes of second language acquisition than direct input from Europeans.

This observation weakens the argument that plantation creoles differ from non-creoles in the “abruptness” of intergenerational disruption; that is the time discrepancy may not be such a decisive factor as the demographics of the population after all. Furthermore, Mufwene (2000:68) points out that Thomason also relies on an over-idealized definition of “normal transmission” (a complete and direct transfer of a language from parent to child), and ignores

the communal setting in which children acquire, often in incomplete states, the language—more aptly the language features—present in their environment. Nor is there anything special in that creoles are the result of a process of negotiation between languages (which in Thomason’s terms often refers to adult second language imperfect learning, and substratal interference more generally). The same could be said of various dialects of world English, including, for example, Irish English, with its Celtic substratal effects.

One also need not assume perfect replication of the target language (TL) (i.e., the superstrate language) was a goal of the community. Thomason and Kaufman (1988:Chapter 6) discuss creolization in terms of an abrupt process of language shift without normal transmission, and at least implicitly seem to assume that learners’ ultimate goal is native-like fluency: “Where the proportion of TL speakers to substrate speakers is high, we would expect shifting speakers to learn some (more) TL grammar, given the dominant position of the TL. That is, increased access to the TL should promote better learning of it...” (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988:155).

However, as Ansaldo (2010) points out in the context of Sri Lankan Malays, who speak a mixed language descending from various Austronesian, Indic and Dravidian languages, identity formation goes hand in hand with language formation in multilingual societies. Since multilingual and multicultural societies define the norm globally, it may be too simple to think of contact-induced language change as the result of passive drift away from idealized standards via intergenerational transfer, exacerbated by adult second language learners imperfectly replicating the speech of “native speakers”. That is, contra McWhorter (2007) and Trudgill (2011), discussed below, notions of covert prestige and group identity may play a role in divergences from superstrate norms, just as much as outcomes of adult second language learning do.

Finally, it does not preclude the possibility that, alongside creating a community language that both served communicative and identity-based needs, slaves and indentured workers on New World plantations were still actively learning the colonial languages, in whatever koine-ized forms they existed locally. Mufwene (2000:76) claims that not only would it have been to the advantage of the colonized to learn the colonizing language, but given the process involved in restructuring it into a creole, it makes no sense to posit lack of at minimum passive knowledge of its forms. As he puts it: “[I]s there any fundamental difference between targeting a European colonial lexifier and taking most of a creole’s lexicon from the same language? Can such a massive selection of the lexicon from a particular language be distinguished from identifying the same as a target system? Would the vocabulary have been learned alone without the concurrent structural and pragmatic constraints on their usage, regardless of the ensuing restructuring?”

At the same time, as more sophisticated descriptions of heavy contact-influenced languages have proliferated, the need for a further delineation between creoles and other varieties has grown. We will turn now to the somewhat ill-defined category of “mixed languages”, a loosely defined group of languages where, it turns out, issues of identity and covert prestige are posited to play a central role in development.

2.3.3 The Multifacetedness of Mixed Languages

2.3.3.1 *Defining Mixed Languages*

The term “mixed language”, though sometimes used offhandedly to describe a language with significant contact-based elements, refers to a certain, vaguely specified type of language growing out of a multilingual environment where source languages are usually spoken alongside the emergent new language. I say vaguely defined because, often times, there is an

arbitrarily defined threshold, usually of lexical replacement, beyond which “heavy contact” becomes a new (type of) language altogether.

Thomason (2003) offers a simple definition, which includes in it pidgins, creoles and “bilingual mixed languages”: “A mixed language is a language whose grammatical and lexical subsystems cannot all be traced back primarily to a single source language”. As such, Thomason’s characterization of mixed languages (and creoles for that matter) is a question of interpreting to what extent one can ultimately trace one back to a single genetic ancestor. In essence, whether, for example, Afrikaans is a creole or a descendant of Dutch then becomes a question of how much Dutch grammar is continued in Afrikaans. The difference between mixed languages and creoles is then determined by both a social distinction--imperfect learning played a role in pidgins and creoles, but not mixed languages--and by the resultant structure--in mixed languages, unlike pidgins and creoles, the lexicon and grammar are adopted from both contributing languages, “with minimal distortions” (Thomason 2003:22).

In Viveka Velupillai’s (2015:535) wording, a mixed language is “a language that arose primarily due to expressive needs in community bi- or multilingualism and which has a limited amount of identifiable source languages [usually only two]”. In most cases the mixed language develops out of in-group identity, whether it be a secret language to mask communication in the presence of outsiders, such as Angloromani in the British Isles or Ma’a in Kenya, or as a badge of group solidarity to maintain identity within a larger setting, as among street youth in South Africa for Tsotsitaal or Bilingual Navajo in the American Southwest, which emerged in boarding schools in the first half of the 20th century, where speaking Navajo was officially restricted (Velupillai 2015: 85). One famous mixed language is Michif, spoken by a group of Native Americans in North Dakota and several adjacent Canadian provinces, who can trace their

origins back to French settlers and traders intermarrying with local Cree women, and who speak a so-called “intertwined language” (see below) that exhibits French nouns and nominal morphology with Cree verbs and verbal morphology (Bakker 1997).

In other situations, it is difficult to tell whether or not a variety is a language or a code based on intentionally scrambling a native system, such as Irish Shelta or Old Helsinki Slang. In its least restrictive definition, a mixed language would include any language where a considerably large portion of one area of the grammar or lexicon comes definitively from one source, but another portion from another, e.g. Media Lingua in the Andes, or Javindo in Indonesia, a Javanese-Dutch mixed language.

Some authors note that the number of languages involved is important. For instance, Bakker claims mixed languages must have roughly equal and identifiable components from two languages, claiming no case of three equally proportioned source components have been found in the genesis of a mixed language⁷. This amounts to mixed languages being defined by the type of contact outcome. For Bakker, this distinguishes mixed languages from pidgins and creoles, in that the latter clearly receive the vast majority of their lexicon from one language, and the grammars lack much similarity to any of their source languages (Bakker 2003:109).

However, to Thomason (2003:23), the issue of stability is also involved: does the described form constitute an actual language, or rather an unstable register or sociolect? For example, Arabic-Greek descendants on Cyprus speak a variety called Kormatiki Arabic, which is argued by some to be a stable language, but by others to be an “elaborate codeswitching phenomenon” (ibid). Furthermore, Michif patterns of verb/noun splits in the grammatical system are

⁷ This argument does seem to presuppose the ability to clearly determine the original languages involved, and thus separate them from possible later borrowings.

exhibited in French-Arabic codeswitching in Morocco. In Thomason's view, only social factors can determine stability, amounting to a difference of degree, not kind, in the linguistic mixing of the contact situation. Ultimately, how useful the language is to the community will determine its ultimate stability and continuation.

In her overview chapter on mixed languages, Velupillai (2015) notes that mixed languages often develop from expressive, rather than communicative needs. That is, they necessarily evolve in settings of community bilingualism or multilingualism, and usually don't involve a break in transmission from their contributing languages. As such, in their origins, and possibly throughout their existence, they often do not serve as an L1 for the community in question, but rather exist as a communal language available for specific social settings, such as Media Lengua or Tsotsitaal. Similarly, Ansaldo (2010) discusses the parallels between cultural mixing and language mixing among Sri Lankan Malays, and claims that the two phenomena go hand in hand in social settings where members of a multicultural community form their identities from multiple distinct origins.

Thomason (2008:51), speaking to the group identity-based nature of mixed languages states:

"Both Michif and Mednyj Aleut, like Media Lengua, Ma'a, and all the other bilingual mixed languages that have been reported in the literature, are in-group languages. They are not used for communicating with outsiders; indeed, they couldn't be used for such purposes, because none of them is intelligible to monolingual speakers of either component language. (It is debatable whether they are intelligible to people who are fluent in both component languages but who have not learned the bilingual mixed language. It seems unlikely.) In other words, they were created for social reasons."

As such, mixed languages are, as Bakker (2003) calls them, "autonomous systems": once they come into existence, they develop independently from changes in their source languages, and

the components of their grammar and lexicon can be synchronically different from their source languages, as well.

2.3.3.2 Types of Mixed Languages

Velupillai (2015) notes a sub-distinction among mixed languages in the literature between intertwined languages, like Michif or Mednyj Aleut, and converted languages, such as Sri Lankan Malay (discussed below) and, by Velupillai's reckoning, Wutun. Converted languages, also known as Form-Structure Language (F-S languages), are varieties for which the morphemic forms and lexicon originate from one language, but the grammatical/relational system—that is, how the grammar patterns or operates—can be traced to another language. Bakker (2003:116) explains converted languages are varieties that “changed their typological outlook radically, kept their vocabulary and used native language material in order to copy the grammatical structure of another language. All lexical and grammatical morphemes have the same etymological source, but the formal and semantic structure is based on a different language.” He offers the following example of converted languages in Sri Lanka that have been under heavy influence of Tamil, Sri Lankan Portuguese and Sri Lankan Malay. Note that the glosses so closely align (with only minor exceptions), that Tamil data can be included without a separate explanatory line, as can be seen in (2-4)-(2-5):

(2-4) Example from Sri Lankan Portuguese⁸

e:w eli-pə diñe:ru ja:-dá: (SL Portuguese)

na:n avan-ukku calli-ya kúTu-tt-an (SL Tamil)

I 3SG-DAT money-ACC past-give-PAST-CNC

'I gave him money'

(Portuguese: (Eu) dei o dinheiro para/a ele) (Bakker 2003:118)

⁸ Thank you to Sahara Cidambi for lending her insight to Tamil morphemes in helping me uncover the meaning of this abbreviation in the original text.

(2-5) Example from Sri Lankan Malay:

Dey ruma-na pi-kalu (SL Malay)

Avan uttu-ku pon-al (SL Tamil)

he house-DAT go-if

'if he goes home'

(Bakker 2003:119)

Note that Bakker (2003:120) claims Amdo sprachbund varieties of Chinese are of this type.

Converted languages are in contrast to intertwined languages, which subdivide into Noun-Verb (N-V) languages and Grammar-Lexicon (G-L) languages, involving elements traceable to separate languages, but which keep the source form of the adopted material. Put another way, in G-L languages, the functional morphemes have the form and function of one language but the content morphemes of another. In N-V languages, such as Michif, the verbs, and accompanying verbal morphology, is from one language, but the nouns from another. Bakker (2003:109), claims these varieties emerge either from mixed ethnic groups, or from descendants of former nomads (in the latter case, as a kind of secret language). Many Romani languages across Europe, for example Angloromani, are of this type.

The following examples from Michif in (2-6) and from Mednyj Aleut in (2-7) well illustrate the split nature of intertwined languages (note Bakker 2003 doesn't consider Mednyj Aleut intertwined, though):

(2-6) Michif (adapted typographically from Matras and Bakker 2003:3, French is italicized)
 kayâs *une fille* *La Cendrreuse* kî-isinihkâ-sô-w
 long.time.ago a.F girl The Cinderella PAST-name-REFL-3
 ‘A long time ago there was a girl called Cinderella.’

avec o-mâmâ-wa kî-wîki-w *puis* *trois* *ses* *soeur(s)*
 with POSS-mother-OBV PAST-live-3 and three POSS-PL sister
 ‘She was living with her mother and her three sisters.’

La Cendrreuse mâka *tout* kî-piskeyiht-am *tout*
 The Cinderella however all PAST-clean-it all
 ‘Cinderella, however, cleaned everything.’

La maison, *le plancher* kî-kisîpêkin-am
 the house the floor PAST-wash.by.hand-it
 ‘She washed the house, the floor.’

(2-7) Mednyj Aleut (from Matras and Bakker 2003:4, Russian is italicized):
stiklaa-ḫ *siḫa-ḫtaa-y-it* *davnu*
 glass-CASE⁹ break-RES-3SG long-ago
 ‘The glass has been broken for a long time’

ya *bud* *ivo* *hayaa-t’* *ukushka-ḫ* *haksii-t*
 I will him ask-INF window-CASE open-INF
 ‘I will ask him to open the window’

Matras and Bakker (2003) differentiate Michif from Mednyj Aleut in that Michif, unlike any other mixed language, they claim, is spoken natively by the community, independent of knowledge of either of its source languages. Other prominent intertwined languages in the literature, according to Matras and Bakker, include Media Lengua, Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia and Ma’a in Ethiopia, though Thomason and Kaufman (1988) offer a different explanation for Ma’a, not to be pursued here.

⁹ In Matras and Bakker’s (2003) text uses the generic gloss ‘CASE’ for the suffix -ḫ. Thomason (1997:457) calls it absolutive, in contrast to the other Aleutian noun case inherited in Mednyj Aleut, viz. relative. In any case, whatever the exact function of the case markers, the relevant point here is that they are Aleutian in origin, attaching to a Russian-origin nominal.

Bakker (2003) adds to the above typology “lexically mixed languages”, like Chamorro and Malti, whose basic vocabulary, he claims, come in equal parts from more than one language. This would also be true as well for the pidgins Russenorsk, Chinese-Russian pidgin and Trio-Ndjuka, however (ibid.121). Such formations could emerge from taboo language practices, as in aboriginal Australia (ibid.122). Matras and Bakker (2003) have a somewhat differently organized typological list of mixed languages, up to seven distinct types, including “extremely heavy borrowing” languages, such as Yiddish, Ottoman Turkish, Malti and Chomorro. To what extent these latter types are distinct from languages that have undergone long periods of heavy contact discussed in 2.3.4 below is unclear, however.

2.3.3.3 *Origins of Mixed Languages*

Differing proposals have been made concerning the origins of mixed languages, including language shift and extensive borrowing, even to the point of relexification or paralexification¹⁰ on the one hand, or fusional process on the other, which do not presuppose a shift, but instead a gradual mixing or “intertwining” of the two languages over time (Bakker and Muysken 1994; Velupillai 2015: 81-84). Thomason (2003:27) lists seven “sources of interference” in language mixing, including passive familiarity (i.e. understanding a language that you don’t speak), language acquisition choices, and deliberate distortion. The question that often arises is how abrupt is their formation? Do they involve a gradual mixing of languages over a long period of time, as proposed by Thomas and Kaufman (1988), such that eventually no single genetic source can be identified, or do they form within a generation or two, by deliberate means, as

¹⁰ The latter is a situation in which speakers may be shifting or have already shifted, but still have more than one lexical “reservoir” available to them, perhaps as a vestige of ancestral identity.

suggested by Peter Bakker (2003). In any case, as Thomason (2003:33) points out, the more abrupt the emergence, likely the more deliberate the choice to mix the languages.

Bakker (2003) claims that the wholesale replacement of a morpho-syntactic system seems “impossible” to happen on a gradual scale, given the systematic nature of its properties. As such, the possibility that they simply borrowed so much over time that they became ostensibly mixed, such as Chomorro and Malti, discussed below, is ruled out by Bakker. He corroborates this further by the observation that, as discussed above in 2.3.1, borrowing tends to lead to lexical replacement, whereas mixed languages are primarily restructured in their morphosyntax (Bakker 2003:135).

One other prominent hypothesis for mixed languages is that they grow out of the grammaticalization of code-switching strategies in discourse (Auer 1999; Myers-Scotton 2003; de Smit 2010), though some authors (Bakker 2003; Thomason 2003, 2008) reject this possibility, at least as an exclusive source of mixing. Carol Myers-Scotton is a major proponent of the idea that mixed languages can emerge from code-switching practices. In her model of grammar, a new language is adopted as the matrix language responsible for grammatical morphemes (the “grammaticiser language”), while the ‘old’ community language serves strictly as the embedded language, supplying lexical morphemes (the “lexifier language”). When the underlying matrix shifts from one language to another completely, she terms this a “complete turnover”, which could be a “gradual, longitudinal” process, in contrast to the abruptness of language shift on a societal level (Myers-Scotton 2003:89-90)¹¹.

¹¹ In fact, Myers-Scotton’s model is far more detailed than presented here, with multiple levels of semantic and morpho-syntactic components, and a distinctive categorization of morphemes appearing at different levels of the grammar.

McConvell (2008) shows that recorded patterns of code-switching between Gurundji (a Pama-Nyungan aboriginal language) and Kriol (an English-based creole emerging from an early 20th century Cattle Station Pidgin) in the Northern Territory of Australia follow very neatly the grammatical patterns of the mixed language that grew out of the community in the 1960's-1980's as an L1 for many speakers, Gurindji Kriol. McConvell concludes that, if the primary input to a generation is heavily marked by codeswitching, then it can play a primary role in the emergence of a mixed language. He compares the case of Gurindji Kriol to another mixed language of Australia, Modern Tiwi, which shows similar patterns of adaptation, as well as Michif and Mednyj Aleut, to show that the "center of gravity" of the old language (roughly, the site of most morphological marking) serves as a carrier for codeswitching patterns that can then crystalize in the grammatical alignment between source language material in the emergent mixed language, e.g. Cree verbs and French nouns in Michif, or Aleutian nouns and Russian verbs in Mednyj Aleut.

Before moving on, to recap: mixed languages, by most formulations, involve two languages (some claim no more than two) in intimate contact, such that the subsystems of the language—lexicons or morphosyntax; VPs and NPs; phonological forms and semantic range—become mixed in such a way that genetic affiliation becomes quite difficult to establish. They arise in settings of community multilingualism, usually where the contributing languages are spoken at the same time, and often form for purposes of in-group identity. Theories vary as to whether they can be abrupt or gradual, but many authors point to code-switching practices, interacting with properties of the grammatical system, as one way that mixed languages can form.

2.3.4 The Indeterminacy of Contact-based Change

As troublesome as it is to separate creoles from mixed languages, or converted languages from intertwined languages, it is not even always straightforward to decide whether a language represents an abrupt (or not-so abrupt) break from “normal transmission” or not, or whether it constitutes a linguistic relative removed from the genetic family tree. Authors often differ over their characterization of the same language, including better-studied languages such as English and Mandarin. Below I will present two cases studies, that of the Austronesian language Chamorro and differing views on the status of English, both of which show considerable influence from other languages.

2.3.4.1 The Case of Chamorro

In some cases, a careful examination of the written record, compared alongside the (known) historical landscape, can reveal a very regular and systematic development of the language over time. According to Thomas Stolz (2003), such is the case for the Austronesian language Chamorro, spoken in the US territory of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and heavily influenced by Spanish.

Chamorro is an Austronesian language: its morphology is agglutinative, and it has variable VSO (/SVO) word order, depending on topicalization, along with split ergativity. It has been exposed to the Spanish language over several centuries, to such a degree that the lexicon is marked by a very high number of Spanish loans (Stolz 2003:273). The grammatical system has remained in essence Austronesian, while the items borrowed into Chamorro from Spanish behave morphologically and syntactically like the inherited items of Austronesian descent (Stolz 2003:273-4).

Consider the three sentences from Chamorro (Stolz 2003:274) in (2-8)-(2-9). According to Stolz, the data show some influence of Spanish morphosyntax, e.g. the Spanish analytic *ir + a + infinitive* pattern showing up in the Chamorro *bai* (< Spanish *voy* 'go.1p.SING.PRES') construction of the first sentence (cf. Spanish *voy a comprar* 'I am going to buy'), though it is restricted to 1p sing/pl, and is optional (Stolz 2003:275). However, it is not only broken up by a pronoun, but there are other future markers in Chamorro (the adverb *siempre*, for example, or the future/irrealis pronouns *un* and *u*), which show that the future tense is not a category solely introduced by the adoption of Spanish syntax, as in (2-8)-(2-9) (ibid.276).

(2-8)

ha	tareha	yu'	para	bai	hu	agångi
3SG.ERG	give.a.task	1SG.ABS	to	FUT.1SG	1SG.ERG	invite
ayu i	bunitu-na	boi gi	i	klas-ta		
DEM DET	nice-LINK	boy in	DET	class-PSR.1PL.INCL		

'She asked me to invite that cute guy in our class.'

(2-9)

kumeke'-ilek=ña	este-na	esta	b-in-endisi	i	saga=ña
AUX.DEFECTIVE-see=PSR.3SG	DEM-LINK	TERM	bless:GOAL.F	DET	place=PSR.3SG
ni'	ånghet-ña				
DET	angel-PSR.3SG				

'This means that the guardian angel has bestowed blessings upon that person's particular place.'

ha	konsutta	i	ma'estro	ni'	d-um-irihi	i	gurupu
3SG.ERG	consult	DET	teacher	REL	lead:ACTOR.F	DET	group

'He consulted the teacher who was leading the group'

Nouns are pluralized by the post-nominal free morpheme *siha*, and the linker¹² *na* (with clitic *n*), which also connects to nouns, as in (2-10):

¹² The term "linker" is common in Austronesian circles to refer to a set of morphemes that connect a modifier/modifier phrase to the head noun it modifies. See a recent theoretical analysis by Scontras and Nicolae (2014), who, citing previous work, define it as a "semantically vacuous" operator.

(2-10)

mang-guaguan-na rigålu siha
PL-expensive-LINK gift PL
'expensive presents'

(Stoltz 2003:275)

Chamorro has adopted grammatical gender and agreement from Spanish. However, though agreement only occurs in nominal/adjectival attribution, and never pronominal anaphors, and rarely on inanimate nominal constructions, gender agreement is also optional (Stolz 2003:278-280). Spanish nouns borrowed as plural do not contribute plurality to Chamorro, e.g. *duhendes siha* 'dwarves' (< Spanish *duhend-es* 'dwarf-PL'); without the free plural morpheme *siha*, *duhendes* is interpreted as singular (ibid.280). The Spanish diminutive is active in Chamorro nominal morphology, e.g.: *ga'lågu* 'dog'; *galag-itu* 'puppy'¹³ (ibid.281). Finally, Chamorro is the only Austronesian contact partner of Spanish to borrow the indefinite article *un*, as shown in (2-11) below (ibid)¹⁴.

(2-11)

Ma-baba i kettinagi un anåkko'-na bångko gi i
PASS-open DET curtain in INDEF long-LINK bench in DET
sanhiyong un tenda
outside INDEF shop
'The curtain opens on a long bench outside a shop.'

(Stoltz 2003:281)

Stolz (2003:286) claims: "Owing to the fact that we do not have any reliable quantification procedure at hand, it is no easy task to decide whether or not Chamorro and Malti are more mixed on the grammatical level than other languages...However, the degree to which they have experienced grammatical reorganization according to patterns of their partners in contact does

¹³ The Chamorro data, following Stoltz (2003), is in Chamorro orthography, where the <å> represents the vowel [a], <a> the vowel [æ], and the apostrophe <'> a glottal stop [ʔ].

¹⁴ Note the scope over the full NP of *un* in *un anåkko' nabångko* 'a long bench', as well as the Spanish loanwords *banco* 'bench', *corina* 'curtain' and *un puengi* 'one night'.

not seem to go beyond the amount attested for other languages that usually are not considered mixed languages.”

Nonetheless, he takes a rough quantificational approach to deciding how much of the two languages are the result of contact with Romance languages. There is a remarkably high number of Romance-derived function words in both languages. Chamorro also has Spanish-derived discourse particles, conjunctions, prepositions, intensifiers, other adverbs, articles, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, and altogether over fifty Spanish function words have been borrowed (Stolz 2003:288).

In Chamorro, the lexicon is 42.5% Austronesian, and 54.9% (5,300 words) Spanish, which extends beyond the supposed 45% threshold that Bakker and Mous (1994) consider, somewhat arbitrarily, the upper limit of foreign element in languages with only “massive borrowing” (Stolz 2003:290 *inter alia*). (According to Stolz, for many modern languages of the Phillipines, Spanish items do not surpass 21% of the lexicon.) And as for core vocabulary, Stolz (2003:291) reports:

“I checked the number of Hispanisms for Chamorro in a slightly extended version of the well-known 200-word list. Of 203 lexical entries, 79 (=39%) were undoubtedly of Spanish origin. Of these 79 cases, 26 have no Austronesian synonym at all, as, e.g., *niebi* ‘snow’ (<nieve), whereas the remaining 53 Hispanisms have each at least one Austronesian competitor such as, e.g., *blanka* vs. *á’paka* ‘white’....the Hispanisms in the Chamorro core vocabulary are not numerous enough to qualify Chamorro as a proper mixed language.”

To account for such a major restructuring of the language, particularly to see if it was abrupt, or the outcome of slow, gradual change, Stolz examines historical writings in Chamorro. The earliest document is from 1668, in which the Spanish missionary Sanvitores wrote a grammar-turned-catechism in Latin and Chamorro, and for which the language is far less Romance-influenced:

“All in all, there are about 30 Spanish items [in the 1668 catechism] including proper nouns and Biblical toponyms with 274 attestations in a text of 2,366 words which is equivalent to a share of 11.5% of Spanish words. The Spanish elements are especially frequent in the most formulaic and repetitious parts of the catechism. There are no function words (prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliaries) of Spanish origin. Furthermore, all the lexical Spanish admixtures to the Chamorro text are proper technical terms of the new religion, i.e., there are no traces of Spanish borrowings outside this semantic field.” (Stolz 2003:295)

So-called “Hispanicization” must therefore be the product of the subsequent centuries (ibid).

Following the colonial war of the late 1600’s, when the Spanish took over the Marianas, the surviving Chamorros were forced to relocate to Guam until the nineteenth century. There an urban/rural divide developed, where the rural language had far fewer attestations of Spanish-derived morphemes (Stolz 2003:297). Then, in the late 1800’s, following the loss of Latin American territories, the Spanish tried to amplify the Hispanicization of native peoples in the Pacific, resulting in a Chamorro grammar written by Ibañez del Carmen (1865), intending to teach Spanish to Chamorro pupils. Around this time there is a noticeable uptick in the Hispanicization of the language, into what is now called Neo-Chamorro, a time in which some posited perhaps the native population was shifting to Spanish (ibid.299). Subsequently, however, the number of native Spanish-speakers began to dwindle following the Spanish-American war of 1898, and other than sporadic early 20th century missionaries, there was little occasion for Spanish-Chamorro contact (ibid.302).

Nowadays there are “dialectal, sociolectal, and stylistic differences” which determine the degree of Romance elements in a particular instance of Chamorro. “Thus, you may find side by side texts which are artificially devoid of foreign elements and those which seem to reflect some strange variety of either Italian or Spanish,” claims Stolz (2003:303). The emerging situation is not unlike a creole continuum, where the percentage of Spanish elements used by individual Chamorro speakers varies by register, sociolects, etc. However, in the case of

Chamorro, Stolz concludes, the restructuring was not historically abrupt, but rather the outcome of long processes. Stolz (2003:308) concludes:

“If languages can become ever more mixed over a long period of time, there is a fair chance that full-blown mixed languages may develop in this way, too. If the degree of mixture can increase step by step, the process may come to a halt anywhere on the scale / continuum. This has happened with Chamorro...when Spanish...[was at some point] marginalized.”

Like many other authors, Stolz’s claim that Chamorro is not a “full-blown” mixed language depends on positing a numerical threshold, here taken from Bakker and Mous (1994) at 45%, but which potentially could be any number, beyond which a language would be considered mixed. Perhaps such a method could be fruitful if the lexicons of all the world’s languages were tallied and compared, but would still depend on artificially choosing a number, barring some obvious clime correlated with contact setting. Nonetheless, the historical long-view Stolz takes is illuminating in showing the continuum of contact-induced changes over time.

2.3.4.2 [The Debate Over English](#)

The presence of a well-known written record does not always lead to a unified view on how to characterize a given language. Such has been the case in debating the nature of English, particularly in its evolution from Old to Middle English. To some extent, depending on what aspect of the language one emphasizes, a different view of genetic affiliation emerges. Emonds and Faarlund (2014) claim that, between shared core vocabulary, regular sound changes and shared morphosyntax, it is the latter that is most important to the Germanic subgrouping of Indo-European. They use some twenty morphosyntactic changes throughout their book between Old and Middle English to show that English made a significant move towards Northern Germanic, away from its West Germanic origins, to become a kind of “Anglicized Norse” at this stage of its development.

As Emonds and Faarlund's explain, in the early 9th century, Norse speakers from Scandinavia settled northern England, and in 1013, after ruling the northern half of the island since 878, Danes and Norwegians took control of the Anglo-Saxons and established the so-called Danelaw. Shortly thereafter, the Norman Conquest began in 1066, and later, between 1250-1400, the economically and socially dominant Anglo-Normans, who were then in control of England, and originally spoke French, shifted to English, bringing much of their vocabulary and prosody to bear on the language.

However, there is a significant lapse in the written record between the Norman conquest and the late 12th century. When writing again appeared, the language of England had lost 80-85% of its Old English vocabulary, despite not yet being replaced by French loans (which wouldn't begin until 1250, when the Normans began to write in English). There was, however, a massive borrowing from Scandinavian, well after the so-called Viking period of the early 9th century. It was at this time that the morphosyntactic patterns noted by Emonds and Faarlund also began to appear. The authors thus propose that the "lost language" of the Scandinavians in England, who by many previous accounts had given up their language, was in fact the mixed language of Middle English, as it came to be written around 1150 (Emonds and Faarlund 2014:29).

Middle English is generally considered to have arisen in the East Midlands and the North of England, that is the areas of the former Danelaw, between 1070 and 1230, just shortly after the Norman Conquest. At that time, both Old English and Anglicized Norse would have been spoken in the area, and intermarriage would have been common (Emonds and Faarlund 2014:39):

"...[G]iven the likelihood that more males than females emigrated from Scandinavia, many Danelaw families consisted of Norse-speaking men and Old English-speaking women. It is common enough that many women learn their husband's language and then make free use of

their native vocabulary when lacking for words in the new tongue. Of course, they then pass on this vocabulary from either source to their children. Through both these avenues, the Norse in the Danelaw was probably significantly “Anglicized” well before the Conquest.”

Under the Norman regime, the two previously distinct peoples most likely were culturally united under their new colonizer, and the languages they spoke are assumed to have merged through bilingual practice (ibid.41). The authors cite textual sources from around the time (which are few) implying Saxon (that is, Old English) gradually died out, while the language spoken in the former Danelaw remained. They further hypothesize that, perhaps owing to the previous conquest of the region by King Canute, and the ensuing two centuries of settlement in middle England, alongside their success in trade and agriculture, Scandinavians may have enjoyed a social prestige, despite previously playing the role of colonizers, thus encouraging the shift towards Norse (ibid.155).

The authors point out that these relexified-Norse (that is, Middle English) speakers would have identified their language as English, just like all immigrants to a new country tend to identify the speech of the place they are adopting, and thus the Normans would not have noted anyone speaking “Norse”, to their knowledge (ibid.30).

Due to the genetic and typological similarity between Old English and Old Norse, the influence of the latter on the former would not necessarily be so obvious.¹⁵ By Emonds and Faarlund’s (2014:49, 55) count, Norse and Old English shared about 50% cognate vocabulary, and about 60% of Old English vocabulary identified in Middle English had proto-Germanic cognates. This would bias scholars of the language to downplay the Scandinavian element, as they would favor an Old English origin of a word as “native” in their etymologies (ibid.53). Furthermore, a

¹⁵ Watts (2011:98-99) also takes note of these similarities, but argues instead that Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon were close enough to each other in form and meaning to constitute simply varieties of the same language in contact, rather than different languages, in essence creating a koine rather than a creole or mixed language.

significant portion of the Scandinavian vocabulary that is generally identified in Middle English is pertinent to daily life, such as ‘birth’, ‘die’, ‘egg’, ‘flat’, ‘root’, and ‘sky’ (ibid:50).

For purposes of space, I refer the reader to Emonds and Faarlund’s (2014) book, whose chapters cover the changes towards Northern Germanic patterns attested in Middle English¹⁶, as well as the losses from Old English¹⁷, which the authors point out were already absent or fading in Norse at the time, further evidence of the continuous use of the latter during the Danelaw period (ibid.108)¹⁸, as well as innovations common to both Middle English and Scandinavian not found in West Germanic.

The arguments of non-genetic origins for Middle English are not unique to Emonds and Faarlund’s book, however. They point out that they are not even the first to claim Middle English derived from Old English-Scandinavian fusion (see Baugh and Cable 2002). Patricia Poussa (1982), also considers the evolution of early Standard English, pointing to a creole emerging from English and Scandinavian mixing under the Danish kings of the 11th century. Another early source, Andrei Danchev (1986) argues that the Middle English vowel inventory, in its reduction from that of the Old English vowel inventory, is a result of interlanguage phenomena, resulting from English-Scandinavian contact¹⁹.

¹⁶ These include change of word order, adposition changes on verbs, subject-to-subject raising, subject-to-object raising, periphrastic auxiliaries and stranded prepositions.

¹⁷ These include loss of “verb-third” patterns, lack of case-marked relativizers, possible subjunctive mood in indirect discourse, loss of (most) inherent reflexives and the disappearance of Old English “correlative” adverbs.

¹⁸ McWhorter (2007:95-96, 100) makes essentially the same argument, in the same context, though, judging by citation, Emonds and Faarlund seem unaware of his book.

¹⁹ In a later article, Danchev (1997) suggests that the hypothesis of a Celtic substratal language shift at some point in history may also help explain the simplification of English from its Old to Middle stages. McWhorter (2007:88) rejects this, however, claiming that the Brythonic Celts more gradually adopted English, leaving unmistakable signs of shift over time (e.g. the introduction of do-support), but not simplifications of grammar associated with abrupt shifts (ibid:90). He also rules out Low Dutch speakers arriving from 1150-1700 as agents of the Hanseatic League, for similar reasons.

The question of whether or not later stages of English, with its missing case and gender markers and reduced vowel system, amounts to a creole outbranch of Germanic has been batted back and forth in the literature for decades, beginning with Bailey and Maroldt's (1977) *The French Lineage of English*. However, most later authors, e.g. Thomason and Kaufman (1988:263-330), who consider English to be a genetically Germanic language which has undergone extensive borrowing, and John McWhorter (2007: Chapter 4), note that the French occupiers would have been too few in number, and too removed from the general public, to have exerted such widespread restructuring of the language.

Original arguments for English as a creole do not rest on nativization of a pidgin, but rather non-trivial and extensive language contact resulting in a new system (cf. arguments by Jacques Arends and Salikoko Mufwene from 2.3.2 above). Görlach (1986) rejects the possibility of English as a creole largely for this very reason, rejecting the notion that a pidgin could have been present in the British Isles, and counting development from a pidgin as a defining criterion of a creole. McWhorter (2007:96), however, holds out the possibility of an early Norse-English pidgin, claiming "Old Norse and Old English look much more similar on paper than their accent, intonation and morphophonemics might have allowed in a spoken medium." He posits that the Vikings would have had a stronger impulse towards learning English than vice versa, and that core vocabulary from Scandinavia, such as the pronouns "they/them/their", "both", "same" and so on, are remnants of the Scandinavian immigrant substrate in learning Middle English as adults, as well as their (bilingual) direct descendants (ibid)²⁰.

²⁰ McWhorter (2007:91-93) points out that the greater degree of morphologically marked forms and overspecification remained longer where there were fewer Scandinavian settlements, features such as external possessor marking ('He's pulling that chap his leg'), grammatical gender (he/him or she/her to refer to non-human objects like trees), directional adverbs ('Where to is it?'), inherent reflexive marking ('[she] laid her down') and V2 word order. He goes on to point out that the features of English that win it recognition as "still complex" (do

Other proposals have attempted to assess Middle English against a list of linguistic features common to creole languages in general, such as Danchev (1997), who finds English to have about half of the prototypical features of a creole, and thus shows more effects of contact than other Germanic languages, but still less than a typical creole (Danchev 1997:100). Similarly, Görlach (1986) claims Middle English contains too many structures not typically found in creole languages to count as such. Focusing largely on simplification processes, these arguments seem to equate diagnostic features with descriptive features, and ignores relative simplification among languages not typically considered “complex”, however. (See discussion of this point in 2.4 below.)

As is obvious from the above excursus, a single language, a well-documented one at that, can still remain ambiguous as to its genetic versus mixed or creolized status among scholars. The points of view taken by individuals, even if not colored by notions of linguistic purity or colonialist hints of racial prejudice, are still dependent on theoretical notions of indicators of genetic affiliation (in the type of linguistic evidence that establishes such a link, e.g. lexicon versus morphosyntax), or in indicators of language contact, such as degrees of simplification in the grammar. Let us then look at theoretical formulations of the latter, as they have played a significant role in explaining language change, especially from a contact-based perspective.

2.4 Simplification as an Indicator of Prior Contact

2.4.1 Are Some Languages More Complex Than Others?

Around the turn of the 21st century a long-shelved question in linguistics began to circulate once more: can one language be objectively more complex than another? One camp to take

support, article subtleties and so on) arose in the long period after the disappearance of the Danelaw, giving it time to gain back some lost complexity from the era of interlanguage-induced simplification (ibid. 102).

on this question was the creolists, at least some of them, who concluded that “the world’s simplest grammars are creole grammars” (McWhorter 2001). The other camp, most prominently represented by Peter Trudgill, focused on the social settings that allowed for complex structures to abound, in essence arguing from the other side of the coin: not how do languages simplify through contact, but how do languages retain and/or accrue complexity through isolation. In recent years a number of monographs and anthologies have proliferated, discussing questions of defining and explaining complexity, e.g. Dahl (2004), Miestamo, Sinnemäki and Karlsson (2008), Aboh and Smith (2009), Sampson, Gil and Trudgill (2009), Trudgill (2011), and Newmeyer and Preston (2014), as well as scores of articles, including two full issues of the journal *Linguistic Typology* (2001, 2004).

Discussing complexity is a thorny issue because it challenges a long-held nicety that all languages are equally complex, compensating for reduction in one area by greater specification in another, what McWhorter (2007) calls a “strange attractor” effect. This argument probably came from a humanist perspective earlier in the field, when Euro-centric attitudes towards language typology still widely prevailed, and linguists encountering non-European languages for the first time essentially needed to “defend” their lack of, say, inflectional morphology (see, for example Kennedy (1951)). However, a moment’s consideration of the phonological difference between, say Spanish and Adyghe, or Malay and White Hmong shows that, at least in terms of contrastive inventories, some languages are remarkably more complex than others, in these cases Adyghe (ady) contrasting between 50-60 consonants and White Hmong contrasting up to eight tones.

2.4.2 Complexity Through Isolation

Measuring complexity also requires clear specification of what type of complexity one means by the term. As commonly known, people have an easier time learning a language more closely related to one's own than a non-related, typologically dissimilar language, with no shared inherited features or phonological/morpho-syntactic structures to draw from. As Newmeyer and Preston (2014) discuss in their Introduction, there are two types of complexity issues: relative complexity, which is a psycholinguistic, learnability problem, and absolute complexity, which is a structural, typological (possibly quantificational) problem. Cantonese, despite a greater syllabic and tonal inventory, will nonetheless be easier to learn for a Mandarin speaker than it will be for a German speaker, due to the genetic (as well as typological) distance from the L1. For the most part, authors tend to focus more on questions of absolute complexity, however, and different authors define their metric for complexity in related but distinct ways from others, e.g. Trudgill (2011) in (2-12):

(2-12) Trudgill's (2011) criteria for measuring linguistic complexity

1. distinct morphological categories (greater markedness, in the Structuralist definition of markedness)
2. syntagmatic redundancy (e.g. repletion of pronouns or gender marking)
3. increase in morphological opacity or fusionality (i.e. an increase in allomorphy)
4. irregularization

McWhorter (2007: Chapter 2) begins with a general discussion of overspecification, structural elaboration and irregularity as general measures of complexity, but in his chapters for each case study he works from a quantifiable, family-specific set of structural criteria common to each group, where related languages differ by degrees of instantiation for that set of linguistic features and structures. For instance, in his chapter on Mandarin, which he claims is the simplest of all the Sinitic subgroups (especially compared to Yue, Hakka and Min), he looks at

laryngeal contrasts in onsets, coda contrasts, tonal inventories, tone sandhi patterns, aspectual specification in complementizers, negator allomorphy and affixation.

At the same time, it is worth pointing out that too much simplicity, say in phoneme inventories, can tilt the scales in the other direction, away from large inventories and morphological opacity, resulting in typologically “difficult” languages with small phoneme inventories and long agglutinative words, which Trudgill (2011:124-125) illustrates with pages of lexical items from Maori, each word consisting of only five distinct vowels and two distinct consonants in dozens of permutations each.

Trudgill (2011) argues that small, tight-knit communities with limited social networks give rise to greater complexity over time than larger communities, especially urban, cosmopolitan ones. A common explanation for the cause of this is that the latter tend to involve more adult second language learners entering the network and introducing variation and learning errors to the shared linguistic repertoire. Based on case studies, largely from dialect variation in Germanic languages, Trudgill’s list of factors that foster the growth of complexity over time are given in (2-13):

(2-13) Factors contributing to the growth of complexity over time, from Trudgill (2011)

1. absence of adult second-language learners
2. isolation and stability within the community
3. small speech communities
4. dense social networks
5. large amounts of communally shared information (giving rise to entropy effects in the phonology, for example)

An “interruption” (a la McWhorter (2007)) in any of these situations could result in simplification of the grammar that might not have occurred if the conditions had otherwise been maintained. (Cf. Dixon’s (1999) “punctuated equilibrium” hypothesis in 2.1 above).

McWhorter takes this a guiding principle in claiming that languages lacking complexity can often be connected to identifying historical events that caused them to be that way.

2.4.3 Simplification Through Contact?

McWhorter's (2007) analysis of relative complexity and historical "language interruptions" consists of a series of case studies exploring the historical possibility of such interruptions cross-linguistically by comparing simple languages to their more complex relatives against the historical background of major and abrupt local demographic shifts. He posits the reduction of linguistic complexity, and "interruption" of the language's natural development to retain or develop the aforementioned "accoutrements" of complexity, to be the result of universal outcomes of adult second-language learning.

Since creoles by necessity arise from such settings, this argument unites his views on creole grammars as simple grammars with other "regular" processes of language change in specific types of socio-historical settings, thus in some ways unifying the two types of diachronic change and, one could argue, eliminating the need for "creole" as a category altogether. The differences between languages, then, would be how smoothly they have been passed on intergenerationally, which may be thought of as simply a time differential between normal contact-influenced language transmission and more abrupt disruptions resulting from, say, forced displacement, as well as what sort of discontinuities may have emerged, with cross-linguistic complexity differentials falling out as a by-product of historical circumstances.

However, the question of whether we could tell solely from a language's linguistic structure whether it qualified as a creole was still largely left open. In McWhorter's (2001, 2005, 2007) view we are able to, in part due to the dramatic simplification one finds in creole grammars versus other languages that have had more time to "stew", as it were, accruing various forms of

overspecification and opaque forms, such as, say, Estonian. As comparative evidence, he contrasts Saramaccan creole “simplified” grammar with Estonian. The data in (2-14) - (2-16) from Saramaccan, a creole spoken in Suriname, are striking in their analyticity and lack of inflectional or derivational marking (McWhorter 2007:41-2).

(2-14)

Mi	bi	téi	u	dí	búku	
I		PAST	take	GEN	DEF	book

“I took the book”

(2-15)

Mi	á	bi	téi	dí	búku	
I		NEG	PAST	take	DEF	book

“I did not take the book”

(2-16)

Mi	bi	tá	lési	dí	búku	
I		PAST	IMPFV	read	DEF	book

“I was reading the book”

Compare Estonian, where the genitive and partitive marking, two of Estonian’s fourteen distinct cases, are grammaticalized around other features of the sentence, shown in (2-17)-

(2-19) (ibid.):

(2-17) Genitive used for singular objects

Ma	võtsin	raamat-u
I	take.PAST	book-GEN

‘I took the book’

(2-18) Nominative used for plural objects

Isa	viis	lapse-d	kool-i
father	take.PAST	child-NOM.PL	school-ILL

‘Father took the children to school’

(2-19) Partitive used for objects in negative sentences

Ma ei vōt-nud raamat-ut
I NEG take-PART book-PART
'I did not take the book'²¹

In Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) view, to the extent that creole languages tend towards simpler grammars, this was the outcome of aligning on features shared by all the substrate languages with the superstrate, which has the probability of being those universally unmarked structures and sounds that happen to be more commonly shared in the world's languages. Such is one way to explain the apparent universals in geographically separated language areas (as opposed to tracing these apparent universals to a single source, such as a variety of maritime English or Portuguese that made its rounds at some early stage).

McWhorter's (2007) argument appears to break down, however, in the fact that not all language contact situations result in simple languages. Not surprisingly, as more sophisticated descriptions of creoles became available (e.g. those collected in Holm (2000)), it became obvious that a single set of linguistic criteria would not be easy to pin down for all creoles, without resorting to a circular argument of the type that "creoles are languages with simplified grammars because creoles have simplified grammars". For example, the crowded phoneme inventory of Chinook Jargon (see Thomason and Kaufman (1988:256-263)), a pidgin language of the Pacific Northwest, with uvulars, ejectives and secondary articulation, appears quite complex when compared with, say, the inventory of Hawai'ian, itself not considered a creole language. (See Ansaldo and Matthews (2001), referring to comments by Michel DeGraff, for a similar argument.)

²¹ McWhorter does not comment on the different forms of the past tense in the three example sentences. The first instance of partitive marking in (2-19) seems more likely to be a typo, indicating PAST, not PART.

As Thomason and Kaufman (1988) point out, not all contact situations from which a new language emerges result in simplified grammars. Language shift and language mixing tend to retain complexity in ways that pidgins and creoles do not, and thus the socio-historical setting of language contact may account for such variability. Ansaldo (2009) uses the case of Sri Lankan Malay, a considerably complex language, morphosyntactically speaking, which the historical record can show to be a recently evolved language (not predating the colonial area, at least), to point out that relative complexity is not a reliable indication of the age of the language in question, either, an observation somewhat at odds with Trudgill's (2011) argument (though Trudgill does emphasize isolation over time depth).

The opposite situation, i.e. ostensibly ordinary genetic transmission yielding simple grammars, holds true as well: Ansaldo and Matthews (2001) consider the case of Chinese dialects, which are almost universally considered to be simple grammars typologically speaking, containing little derivational morphology, no inflection, analytic morphosyntax or verb chains. (Basically the only criterion of McWhorter's Creole Prototype they violate is that of lexical tone, which happens to be receding in some northern dialects.) Developed through successive waves of historical migration, of both Sinitic and non-Sinitic speakers, contact has played a key role in the development of Sinitic. And yet Chinese, that is, Sinitic as a whole, is not typically considered to be a creole family by most researchers. (See Hashimoto 1986 for an argument that northern Sinitic is a Chinese-Altaiic creole, however.)

Perhaps, then, general tendencies aside, the line between a "creole", or a "mixed language", and a language heavily influenced by historical contact, is not to be measured universally by the relative complexity or simplicity of its subcomponents. However, in an areal setting, or in comparing languages within a genetic subgrouping, it may be a useful metric to postulate

whether or not some demographic event led to a simplification process through mass adult second-language learning, since we do often find relative simplification in settings and events that involve large, multilingual communities. The latter scenario tends to correspond with an urban/rural divide, as discussed above with reference to Trudgill's work. However, normalizing trends of education, and their ties to national networks of standardization, may work to reverse natural simplification processes, such as reduction in phonemic inventories.

2.5 Unifying Language Change Under Social Conditions

With such a messy taxonomy of terms to distinguish creoles from mixed languages from languages that have only been “heavily restructured” but have not become “full blown” mixed languages, some authors, e.g. Salikoko Mufwene (1991, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2008) focus more on the natural processes of language change at play in any linguistic setting, and how multilingual societies, by virtue of their more diverse “feature pools” (mentioned in 2.2) result in more linguistically mixed systems.

In particular, Ansaldo and Matthews (2001) claim that the only remarkable difference between what are traditionally called creoles and non-creoles is the speed with which restructuring takes place in the former vs. the latter—a quantitative, rather than qualitative, distinction. Though recall that this may not necessarily involve such an abrupt break from the target language as is often assumed. In this regard, the diversity of features which may appear in a given language for a community of speakers is a function of the diversity of linguistic forms, be they from one uniform dialect (taken as an ensemble of idiolects in this framework), resulting in less chance of language mixing on a community level, or from different language varieties, mutually intelligible or not, contributing to a greater chance of language mixing. The

greater the input diversity of forms, the greater the possibility that a common language emerging from such a feature pool will show signs of language contact.

Yaron Matras (2003, 2007, 2009, 2010) also downplays the meta-barriers between languages, seeing communication as an amalgamation of speech acts, which will be greater in number and variety for multilinguals. Matras (2010:72) posits that multicultural areas with “flexible attitudes towards community and identity boundaries” will result in relaxed normative trends towards spontaneous productions of language mixing, which will then be propagated, leading to the formation of linguistic areas.

This thought is echoed by Szeto, Matthews and Yip (2017:511), who discuss the differences between innovative forms in bilingual children’s first language(s) acquisition, and language mixing that forms into new varieties of languages. They call the former “transient grammaticalization”. However, one can well imagine that in societies where one language of a multicultural area is taught as the primary medium of education, and thus provides access to desirable jobs, that the same normative trends may affect, at least, the formal registers of community language (e.g. Standard Mandarin in regions where nonstandard (Mandarin) Chinese dialects are spoken).

In the end, what is left is at most traditional terminology of convenience to refer to languages sharing a similar socio-historical background, if that. DeGraff (2003:391), for example, suggests that “creoles” should refer only to the varieties of European languages that emerged among displaced populations resulting from the trans-Atlantic slave trade, given the term’s intimate history with the socio-historical setting there. For a history of evolving, but consistently (neo)colonialist views on creoles, see DeGraff’s (2003) discussion on the “history of the history” of Haitian linguistics, and his (2005; 2016) explication of how linguistic adherence to a principle

of “creole exceptionalism” perpetuates inequalities and limited access to educational and other resources in Haitian society (cf. Gal and Irvine (1995), and Irvine, et al. (2009), on what DeGraff calls the linguistics/ideology interface).

Note in conclusion that researchers like Salikoko Mufwene and Michel DeGraff see the distinction between creoles and non-creoles as akin to a type of linguistic segregation perpetrated by scholars on creole populations, in essence a kind of linguistic neocolonialism that separates the “pure” conqueror languages from the impure colonial masses and their “disenfranchised dialects” (Mufwene 2000). On the other side of the coin, Danchev (1997:81) notes: “[t]he exotic connotations of the terms creolization and creole have probably contributed to the generally skeptical attitude of the English historical linguistics community to the ME creolization hypothesis”.

Mufwene (2007:68) claims that this has left creoles and other contact-restructured languages outside the enterprise of historical reconstructions, based not only on this separation from genetic language families, but also on the false assumption that the exemplars for reconstruction should be standardized linguistic varieties of European metropolises, which in fact account for a minority of the actually spoken Indo-European languages. In keeping such varieties part of the overall picture, it reflects the artificiality of the comparative method in reflecting real linguistic change. He goes on to say (ibid):

“Meillet (1900) had already developed a similar argument, pointing out, in addition, that genetically related language varieties may share morphological structures or distinctions simply because they innovated (or borrowed) them under similar ecological conditions, but not necessarily because they inherited them from their common ancestor. Moreover, we cannot ignore cases where a language diverges significantly from its genetic kin simply because it has been heavily influenced by other languages, as in the case of English, which bears heavy influence from Latin, French, and the insular Celtic languages (among others), compared to Dutch and German.”

Mufwene points out the mismatch between linguists seeking to explain the origins and development of creole languages based on typological criteria, while seeking to explain the development of non-creole languages on so-called genetic, lexical inheritance. In his view, creoles like those of the Atlantic region are simply “just the latest linguistic outcome of Indo-European dispersal” (Mufwene 2007:68).

2.6 Summary of Views

As is probably obvious from the above, the topics touching on language contact, as it were, in the linguistic literature spill across the barriers of sub-disciplines and theoretical frameworks. In the century since the term *sprachbund* became common currency, the conversation about what constitutes a linguistic area, and how to envision it has grown from an extension of sociolinguistic isoglosses of particular forms to ecologically-driven feature pool metaphors.

Not only has the proper diagnostic definition for a linguistic area been debated through global case studies, but so have the prototypical, and not so prototypical, referents of terms like pidgin, creole and the ever-elusive mixed language. The more authors try to put forth enumerative criteria for classification as one or the other, the more counterexamples and in-between cases appear. Often times, individual authors stick to somewhat arbitrary criteria, such as a given percentage of the lexicon which must be genetically inherited, rather than borrowed, in order to classify a language as “mixed” or not. Other times particular morphosyntactic profiles are taken as indicative of historical restructuring, such as the correlation of simplified phonology and morphosyntax in creoles. However, such a diagnostic ignores the natural tendency of some morphological profiles, viz. analytic, to already hew closely to such types, not to mention particular cases lacking corroboration from the historical record. (Though, of course, in some cases there is no historical record, and the likelihood of

historical contact inferred from the linguistic structure *is* the evidence put forth, particularly for non-written languages.)

We see that these theoretical differences, and loosely defined terms, lead to disagreements about the proper reference for even languages as ubiquitous as English, with detailed arguments put forth claiming it to be a creole, a mixed language, or nothing more than a Germanic language with heavy outside contact. Indeed, as we will see later, there is some disagreement as to the source of Mandarin's particular profile within Sinitic.

However, the conclusions drawn from analyzing the historical grammar and lexicon, alongside the socio-historical record, go beyond simple typological labels, and affect how we conceive of not only the history of a language as it has been spoken across geographic space and time, but how we fundamentally view the nature of historical language change, privileging, in some cases, the inheritances of proto-forms over local innovations stemming from contact. As Michel De Graff and others point out, the kind of linguistic segregation of contact languages may also have real-world ramifications for speakers in the form of linguistic segregation, stigmatization and even educational opportunities and official recognition of language status.

We will move now from this general overview of relevant linguistic topics and theory to the specific geographic, demographic, historical and linguistic setting of this dissertation, the regions historically forming the imperial frontiers of China and Tibet, a cultural and linguistic mosaic rife with language contact.

3 Background: People, Places, Languages

“Critical to such an analysis is the question of how the logic of centrality relates to the historiographical conceit of sinicization, or, the notion that cultures along the periphery of the Central States regions assimilated into Hua-xia culture by adopting it wholesale. Should we accept at face value its implicit assumption that Hua-xia peoples and cultures from the North swept across the Southlands with such political, military, and cultural force that the Southerners were naturally swayed and won over by it? The model of sinicization, which functions much like Confucius’ depiction of the gentleman whose De-virtue 德 blows over petty people like wind over grass, is clearly a gross oversimplification of modes of cultural change in Chinese history...If there is historiographical merit to the concept of sinicization, then it is only after the boundaries of time and place have been constructed and the limits and extent of such a process have been set.” (Erica Fox Brindley 2015:xii)

Across a stretch of land running about 2200 kilometers, within a geographical space ranging from near desert-like flatlands to high forested mountain peaks to semi-tropical wetlands, numerous empires have waxed and waned throughout history, including the Tibetan, Mongol, Chinese, Nanzhao and Dali. Xining was an important outpost on what was for some time the western margin of the Chinese empire, a last stop before entering Tibetan nomadic grasslands to the west, or the often chaotic Turkic and Hui-inhabited deserts to the north. Yajiang lies between Kangding and Batang, in what even prior to the Qing annexation in 1720 was an important section of the trade network between Chengdu and Lhasa, traversed by the tea-horse roads connecting the terminus of the Silk roads to the north to the mineral-rich mines to the south (Booz 2011; Wang 2011). Finally, Dali was the site of two early non-Han kingdoms, the Nanzhao and Dali, and was a meeting grounds for trade for people as far afield as eastern India, Southeast Asia and the Chinese hinterland. Even today, Dali and its surrounding areas draw ethnic minority peoples from all around the Yunnan and Sichuan region, as well as travelers from all over China (and the world) who come to experience its multiculturalism.

Therein lie the three languages which this dissertation takes as case studies in language contact and change: Xining, Daohua and Bai. With three usual classifications—a heavily contact-induced Chinese dialect, a Tibetan-Chinese mixed language and a Tibeto-Burman language with heavy Chinese influence, respectively—one might think of them all as different kinds of languages, more Chinese or less Chinese, depending on what those labels evoke in one’s mind²². At the same time, the grammars of all three are similar in a number of ways—simple syllable structures, SOV word order and postpositional case marking—and they all have a high degree of Sinitic vocabulary. Historically they all lie on what was, or perhaps in many ways still is, the farther western stretches of Chinese lands. The arrival of a stable, enduring Chinese presence is relatively recent in all areas, with Yajiang perhaps counting only a couple of centuries at best, and all involved waves of settler migrants, arriving as the entourage of military expeditions or as frontier tradesmen fleeing overpopulation and seeking new trade opportunities.

This dissertation examines the shared historical experiences as colonial frontier towns of various empires, but especially the Chinese and Tibetan empires, and considers how such forces may have led to similar linguistic outcomes in each case. In the remainder of this chapter, I will present a brief overview of China as a historical entity expanding and contracting, changing its ethnic makeup (more often to accommodate than to assimilate) over time, before focusing on the China-Tibet frontier specifically. From there I will give an overview of the language families and major groups of speakers in the focal regions, and then present theoretical considerations of ethnic affiliation, and its fluid, underspecified definition over time. Finally, before moving on

²² There is not, in fact, universal agreement on any of these varieties, as will be discussed in each of the respective chapters. However, this characterization is based on the most readily available and descriptive works of each.

to the specific case studies of Chapters 4-7, I will present a sketch of the Sinitic languages as a sub-family, with special attention to Southwest Mandarin, which is the variety spoken in Sichuan and Yunnan, the settings of Chapters 5 and 6, respectively.

3.1 Historical and Ethnolinguistic Overview

3.1.1 A History of China's Expansion and Interaction with Others

In many ways the history of China, or at least the history of the Chinese state and its various imperial projects over time, has been the history of reactions to, and campaigns against, peoples who at some point in time would have been outside that state, and thus not Chinese, but were referred to by one of a number of appellations meaning roughly 'barbarian' (hu 胡, yi 夷, man 蛮, luo 獠). The ancient Hua 華 civilization, which we usually think of as the early "Chinese" (read: Han), have always vied for territory with other regional groups. Originally surrounded in Shang and early Zhou times by peoples such as the 'Di 狄', 'Rong 戎' and 'Qiang 羌', and later beset by the unified forces of the Xiongnu Empire raiding Han territory in the final centuries BCE, the main source of political conflict tended towards structured confederacies of northern nomadic peoples. (See Barfield (1989) for a thorough overview.)

Later, various dynasties held power over major parts of the now Chinese geographical space, especially between the fall of the Han in 220 CE and the arrival of the first major outside power to rule a united China, the Mongol-controlled Yuan Dynasty 元朝 (1271-1368). These included the Sarbi, or Xianbei 鲜卑, people, an early Mongolic group who were a constant threat to Chinese stability during the Three Kingdoms period (三國時代), constituting the ruling class of some of the 16 Kingdoms Period polities (e.g. the Yan 燕 State around modern Beijing), one of which, the Tabgach (a.k.a. Tuoba 拓拔), eventually formed the major state of Northern Wei 北魏 from 386-535. Other groups, such as the Tungusic Khitan 契丹 and Jürchen 女真, formed

state powers, the Great Liao 大遼 (916-1125) and Jin 大金 (1115-1234) Dynasties, respectively, ruling much of northeastern China during the late medieval period. Other pre-Yuan nomadic powers, such as the early Turkic 突厥 and Ugyhur 回鶻汗國 empires, never gained direct control over the Chinese state, but rather forced marriage and trade alliances, often to the outsiders' benefit, through strategic raids across the Chinese borders (Barfield 1989).

The two most famous, and far-reaching, invader-turned-emperor dynasties, however, were the Mongol-ruled Yuan Dynasty and the Manchu-ruled Qing Dynasty 大清 (1636-1912), the latter being descendants of the Tungusic-speaking Jurchens. The former drew in peoples from all across East and Central Asia, and through their population categorization, contributed to a dramatic escalation in ethnic awareness that had been simmering since the end of the Han. However, China's territory would reach its greatest cohesive expansion, including central Tibet, under the Manchu rulers of the Qing. The Qing inherited from the previous Ming Dynasty 大明 (1368-1644) a number of broiling disputes with Mongol polities to the West, particularly with the Dzungar Khanate 准噶尔汗国, a western branch of the Oirats 瓦剌, with whom military conflicts would spill over into Amdo and Kham, and eventually the central Tibetan plateau.

Later, in a great show of anti-Manchu sentiment, bolstered by a newfound "Han" awareness, the modern political state of the Chinese Republic would replace the old dynastic system and begin what is often taken for the "modern era" in a country that has changed geographic and ethnic shape for over three millennia. In the 1950s, following on the heels of the revolutionary Communist Party "liberation" of the country, an extensive campaign was carried out to map and classify the peoples of the nascent "multiethnic" nation state (多民族国家), a project referred to as the Minzu Shibie (民族识别).

This campaign, and the loose set of pseudo-scientific Stalinist criteria used to assess local claims of ethnic affiliation (with a healthy dose of 19th-century American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan's theories of social development thrown in), is the subject of much literature in the late 20th and early 21st century writing on Chinese ethnic studies, as the results often ran counter to local voices, or otherwise involved political maneuvering that ran counter to historical tradition or ethnic reality on the ground²³.

As can be seen from the above, China's history, even its upper echelons, has included far more people than those traditionally known as "Chinese", that is the ethnic majority Han 漢, who now make up about 92% of the modern population. Also throughout history, China has received, and sent abroad, emissaries from other states and peoples, near and far, from Zheng He to Marco Polo to Henry Kissinger, and has evolved under influences as far-reaching as chariot-driven warfare and Marxist-Leninist Communist ideology. Some of the cultures that the Chinese have influenced, and been influenced by, have resided along what previously would have been the porous state borders of Chinese territory, in many cases eventually becoming absorbed into the expanding state.

The traditional account of Chinese cross-cultural encounters has followed something of a north-south schism, with much tension and warfare marking the nature of interactions with those "barbarians" (read: awe-inspiring forces, ever threatening Chinese sovereignty and stability) to the north, lying along the Mongolian steppes and Manchurian borderlands with Siberia, and an assumed relatively peaceful southward expansion into the lands once held by the so-called Hundred Yue (Bai Yue 百越) along the southeastern coasts and immediately

²³ For a thorough overview of the campaigns and their after-effects, see Mullaney (2011), as well as discussion in Harrell (1995a, 2001).

adjacent interiors. The latter term refers to a multiplicity of peoples and small kingdoms to the south of the central states in the pre-Han era. As Erica Fox Brindley (2015:21) puts it:

“The ancient expanse of peoples who were associated with the term “Yue” is enormous, consisting in over 3,200 kilometers of coastline and its inland routes from Shanghai all the way down to central Vietnam. Naturally, such an expanse was home to a wide variety of ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse people.”

Much has been made of how these early peoples, in most cases unquestionably assumed to have been absorbed within the southern expansion of Chinese civilization, are connected to the cultures and languages scattered throughout southern China, northern Vietnam and southeast Asia. This is the region where the bulk of Tai-Kadai, Hmong-Mien, Austroasiatic and possibly proto-Austronesian languages were originally spoken. A famous paper by Jerry Norman and Mei-tsu Lin (Norman and Mei 1976) examines borrowings from Austroasiatic languages that would have occurred through contact with the peoples of this region. The most oft-cited example is the Chinese morpheme *jiāng* 江 ‘river’ (cf. Cantonese *gong1*; Old Chinese **kro:ŋ*), which Norman and Lin show to be cognate with Proto-Vietic **k-ro:ŋ* ‘river’ and Mon /krɜŋ/ ‘creek’. This early contact, evidenced as such in the linguistic and archeological record, predates contact in the western regions by over a millennium, and is far less understood due to limited written records.

When there are written accounts, they are often broadly filtered through (northern) Han Chinese cultural commentary. What we do know, however, is that people from the Chinese states to the north have migrated southward since very early history, and that included aristocratic elites going back to the fall of the state of Yue 越 in 333 BCE (Brindley 2015:28). In this southern region, issues of ethnicity and state affiliation developed in intertangled ways, reflected in local Yue peoples learning Chinese and leading campaigns for Chinese states against

other Yue peoples (ibid.239). As such, language mixing, before any of the local languages were adequately recorded, must have developed in tandem.

Conversely, the expansion westward and southwestward into lands on the border of the traditional Tibetan state, its vassal territories, and Southeast Asian states and polities, including Annam (northern Vietnam) and the “Miao” territories now comprising the Chinese provinces of Guizhou, Guangxi and the northern regions of Vietnam, occurred well after the Han expansion into southern Yue territories, and fairly late in comparison to the defensive campaigns against nomadic peoples to the north. Other than extensions into Turkestan along the Hexi corridor (河西走廊) north of present-day Qinghai and Gansu, much of the real contact with the Amdo-Kham region and the southwest, from a state perspective, begins no earlier than the Tang.

Interactions in these areas have been a combination of bloody military campaigns, large (and small) waves of locally arriving Han-migration, and gradually expanding colonial control. This swath of land includes what is sometimes termed “Outer Tibet”, the former states of Amdo and Kham, heavily influenced by the Buddhist religion and culture emanating from the central Tibetan Ü-Tsang states (དབུས་གཙང་, Ch. 乌思藏), as well as the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms where the Tibetan plateau spills out into the flatlands around Lake Er (洱海).

Though scores of peoples and polities make up the history of the region ranging from modern Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, from Hui Muslims and Salar Turks in the north, to highland-dwelling Qiang and Yi peoples settled throughout central and southern Sichuan, to the historical Dian and Sipsong Panna Dai kingdoms of Yunnan, this dissertation takes three localities along this region to examine the linguistic similarities and differences that have emerged as they have slowly over time been brought into the fold of the Chinese state, viz. Xining (supplemented in Chapter 7 by examination of other possible Amdo Sinitic varieties),

Yajiang (in central Kham) and Dali. These three areas, Amdo, Kham and Dali, will be introduced in more detail in the relevant case study chapters, but they all share in common the fact that Chinese expansion into these regions was relatively late (with the exception of Dali, where contact was established earlier, though the region remained in control of local groups until the Yuan Dynasty), that the terrain is foreign to the central-state dwelling Han, and that multi-ethnic trade and cultural exchanges long predates Han Chinese arrival.

We will now turn to a brief overview of linguistic and ethnic groups throughout these three regions.

3.1.2 Ethnolinguistic Geography of Western China and Outer Tibet

The regions of Amdo and Kham are home to speakers of multiple branches of the Sino-Tibetan family, particularly Tibetic (Tournadre 2014) and Northern Chinese, as well as sub-families of the “Altaic” language family—a generally used, but currently unproven, language family consisting of Turkic, Mongolic and Tungusic language families, and possibly Japanese and Korean. Traversing the southern Amdo region (in northern Sichuan), and most of Kham, into the northern border areas of Yunnan, are a couple dozen languages loosely classified under Tibeto-Burman as Qiangic (Chirkova 2012). These include the better documented languages of Qiang proper (Huang and Zhou 2006; LaPolla and Huang 2008), rGyalrong (Jacques 2008) and Prinmi (Ding 2014), but also lesser documented languages like Xumi (Chirkova 2013), Ersu (Zhang 2013; Chirkova 2014b) and nDrapa (Gong 2007). (See 5.2.1.2 for more details.)

In Dali and adjacent areas, besides Bai and Southwestern Mandarin, most of the languages are Tibeto-Burman Ngwi (Loloish) languages, but also include some speakers of Tai-Kadai (Kra-Dai) (e.g. Dai) and Hmong-Mien (e.g. Hmong, or Miao), as well as Hui Muslims, who speak a variety of northern Sinitic influenced in its past by Islamic languages, lexically mostly Arabic and

Persian, but sometimes morphosyntactically by Altaic (see Zavyalova 2015). Forming both a geographic and a linguistic bridge between central Kham and the Lijiang foothills and Dali plain are the Tibeto-Burman Naic languages, Naxi, Na and Laze (Jacques and Michaud 2011).

Stevan Harrell (1995:99, 2001:209) notes that the songs of the Bailang 白狼 in the Houhan Shu 后汉书, considered by many linguists to be of a Qiangic speaking people, serves as likely evidence that the local Qiangic speaking peoples were the earliest inhabitants of the region among those residing there today. Their origin was likely somewhere to the northwest, in modern Qinghai (ibid). Their migration southward may have been accompanied by Naic speakers, though the Naic languages could have originally been present somewhere around southern Sichuan, pushed westward by the early expansion of the Ngwi speaking groups that would become the modern Yi 彝族, as well as perhaps Lisu (傈僳族) and Lahu (拉祜族), from their origins in northeast Yunnan and Guizhou (see Harrell 2001:63-67 for discussion). One branch of Naic speakers, the Naxi 纳西族, would establish several autonomous chiefdoms around the area of Lijiang during the early Tang, and remain as *tusi* 土司 (local chieftains, administering on behalf of the Chinese empire) for centuries afterwards (ibid).

Tibetans would come to occupy the area from modern Qinghai in the north, to the edges of Lijiang and Dali in Yunnan in the south, following the 7th and 8th century expansion of the Tibetan empire between Emperors Songtsen Gampo and Tridu Songtsen (van Schaik 2011:Chapter 2). Their hegemony would be challenged by the Tang Dynasty, but the two regional powers would collapse more or less simultaneously, at the same time the Nanzhao Kingdom to the south would lose its authority to the nascent Dali Kingdom. A few centuries later, Mongols, the newcomers to the scene, would continue to wax and wane in influence,

under various polities, from Qubilai's 13th century campaigns throughout the region, up until the Qing established firm control over Dzungar lands in the early 18th century.

By the modern era (here referring to the end of the Qing Dynasty in the early 20th century onward) there is a culmination of migrations of ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse peoples to the Gansu-Qinghai border region, including settlements of Turkic people from the west, e.g. the Muslim 撒拉族 Salar ethnicity. Janhunen (2012) lists no fewer than 15 languages spoken in close proximity in eastern Qinghai and adjacent Gansu: two Turkic languages (Sarygh Yughur, Salar), seven Mongolic (Shira Yughur, Huzhu Mongghul, Minhe Mangghuer, Qinghai 保安 Bonan, Gansu Bonan, 康家语 Kangjia, Santa), five Sinitic varieties (by his classification of what constitutes Sinitic) (Northwest Mandarin, Hezhou 河州话 (formerly Linxia 临夏), Tangwang 唐汪话, Gan'gou 甘沟话, Wutun 五屯话), and one Tibetic (Amdo Tibetan, with variants—for one classification of “Tibetic” varieties see Tournadre 2014). He observes that all the languages of the sprachbund have adopted aspects of Altaic, but for the most part languages split as to whether they have been primarily affected by Tibetan or Sinitic.

In the past several decades, the entire region, from Xining to Dali, has seen an influx of Han Chinese speakers in waves from the east, bringing with them a newly standardized language of the People's Republic, Putonghua 普通话. Previously some regions had seen greater influxes of Han migration (e.g. central Yunnan) than others (e.g. central Kham), but in modern times the number has shifted the demographic balance in many regions, so that speakers of other languages are often in the minority. (Exceptions may be some Nuosu Yi speaking regions of Liangshan, the Tibetan areas of western Amdo and Kham, and mountaintops throughout). In some cases, this has led to language endangerment (Mongghul (Dede 2012), for example, or Kangding Tibetan (Suzuki and Wangmo 2015)—for endangerment issues throughout the region,

see (Roche and Suzuki 2018)), while in other cases, even small languages tenaciously hang on, including Daohua and Wutun.

However, it should be kept in mind that the linguistic hegemony of Chinese is for the most part a recent development, resulting from the consolidation of the modern nation state. Much of this dissertation is about examining the instances of Han Chinese (people and language) arriving in the region as a minority, and consequently adapting and assimilating as such—possibly shifting the evolution of local Chinese in the direction of Tibeto-Burman or Mongolic restructuring. To see how the language first started making a mark on the scene, or did not much make a mark, as it were, let us go back to the Ming Dynasty, which was looking to expand its newfound control over regions earlier brought under the State's purview by the expansions of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty.

3.1.3 The Nature of Chinese Rule Along Its Colonial Borders

During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), direct contact between the Chinese and Tibetans was minimal until the dynasty's decline, and consequently Chinese cultural influence was minor (Wiens 1954:9). The Chinese government relied both on native chieftains, whom they gave the title *tusi* 土司, as a means to rule over local peoples, and various types of soldier regiments to settle in the area and maintain order. Shin (2010:34-36) documents the different ways in which the Ming state operated in the western and southwestern frontiers:

“To extend its military reach in Guangxi, the Ming state had from early on continued the Yuan-dynasty practices of organizing regular military officers and soldiers into units of guards (*wei*) and battalions (*suo*) and carrying out the policy of “military colonization” (*jun tun*). According to this so-called *wei suo* system, which was implemented in most parts of the Ming realm, regular officers and soldiers (and members of their immediate families) were assigned to settle in designated areas where they were expected to farm in times of peace and defend in times of war. In theory, the system not only would ensure the state a steady source of abled bodies but would do so also without imposing onto the government a serious financial burden. Such a

system, it was hoped, would also allow officers and soldiers to bring to the border regions the beliefs and practices of the central plains and to facilitate the process of 'civilization'. In practice, however, the wei suo system, at least as it was implemented in Guangxi, was a failure. In time, not only did local authorities have to continue to finance a largely defunct military structure, they also had to keep up with the costs of a variety of defense arrangements that had sprung up in its stead...

In addition to mercenary soldiers, officials in Guangxi had also come to rely on the so-called farmer-soldiers (*geng bing*). Numbering nearly sixteen thousand by the end of the sixteenth century, "farmer-soldiers" were native soldiers who had been sent by native chieftains to assist the Ming in its warfare and who had subsequently been assigned to settle in the newly secured areas...Over time, although some of these *geng bing* would remain under the jurisdiction of their original chieftains, others, especially those whose new settlements were far away from their native domains, would form relatively autonomous units." (Shin 2010:34-36)

Nonetheless, the Chinese presence in many areas before the late Qing was still a minority, and by the sixteenth century, the Ming state was relying mainly on natively recruited soldiers to hold local military posts (Shin 2010:91). Shin (2010:58) points out that, though originally set up to bring local polities under the sway of the Chinese state, over time the central court came to depend on local rulers to avoid complete collapse of society at the empire's margins. As such, the system operated more as a partnership than a subordinating mechanism. Like other polities recognizing Chinese dominance in the region, local rulers were expected to travel to the capital to present tribute to the Emperor. However, Shin (*ibid*:63, 104) points out the tributary system benefitted both parties. Though it cost the Ming dynasty rulers a substantial amount of money, it was a means of maintaining order and submission throughout the land. For the local rulers, besides benefitting financially, it also gave them a degree of legitimacy by being recognized by the Ming court. It also gave them the opportunity to send their children to receive a Chinese education.

Much has been written regarding the educational system under Ming and Qing imperial rule (see for example, Elman and Woodside 1994). So in some respect, the most obvious outlet for indigenous peoples living in China's newly annexed border areas to have learned Chinese,

become bilingual and give rise to language mixing would have been through the Chinese education system. However, this outlet seems not to have been a primary means of transmitting Chinese to non-Han colonial subjects. For one thing, it existed primarily to serve the children of Han colonizers sent by the state, and was only taken advantage of by elite chieftains and their children, as they tried to gain status in the new society and assimilate by taking a Confucian education.

The topic of imperial schooling in Amdo and Kham, whether for the children of Han soldiers or settlers in the region, or as a means to educate the non-Chinese residents, has received very little attention in modern scholarship. However, a number of scholars have treated the situation in the Southwest, as the Chinese imperial system was extended into the Miao, Yao, Yi and other areas of modern Yunnan, Guizhou and southwestern Sichuan. The main mode of education was the Confucian literary tradition, which stressed the classics and modes of self-cultivation, a cultural rampart used from the earliest imperial era as a means of assimilating people to the State's mainstream society (Gao 2016). During the Shunzhi reign (1644-1661) favorable quotas were established for the Miao and Yao (understood here as a general reference for the 'non-Chinese' peoples in the south) candidates in the civil service examination system, and this can be observed in the official drive, at least until the second half of the eighteenth century, to establish in border areas so-called charity schools (*yixué* 义学) (Shin 2010:187).

I consider here the role of imperial education in assimilating non-Han, culturally and linguistically, on the assumption that similar modes of thought guided expansion into Amdo and Kham. However, one major caveat is in order, that being the widespread proliferation of monastic learning centers in that region, as well as Tibetan Buddhist learning in general, which

brought with it a classical written language and system of beliefs not found on such a wide scale in the southwest. (See 4.3.2.1 for discussion of its role in Amdo.) Nonetheless, indigenous peoples of Guizhou and Yunnan often—though not always—resisted the imposition of Chinese culture from above, and we can imagine there would have been little reason not to resist in Kham or Amdo either.

Looking at the way in which China fought wars with, and subdued, the “Miao tribes” of premodern Guizhou, John Herman touches on some interesting policies of the expanding Chinese state that have implications for how language spread throughout the region, particularly through the education system. One particularly interesting section considered the attempts on the Ming’s behalf to educate the native peoples of the region, and the failure of the state’s civilizing mission in this regard. The education of this area was primarily a means to introduce spoken Chinese in order to communicate with local *tusi*. As Herman (2007:113) puts it: “Ming civilian officials often complained of having to rely on ‘unsavory Han’ to communicate with *tusi*, and Ming military commanders blamed battlefield setbacks on the inability of native troops (士兵 *tǔbīng*) to understand their orders accurately.” Ultimately, the local governmental forces had more pressing concerns than educating the non-Han of the region, and though some schools were built, the vast majority of their student base was Han (Herman 2007:114). (Weinstein (2014: 77) points out that in addition to other problems, the state had trouble finding scholars and teachers willing to live in Miao territory.)

Though the state attempted to require heirs of *tusi* to have received a Confucian education, in Chinese, in order to assume leadership, Ming officials complained of the unwillingness of these students to learn the language, and “they all but confirm the presence of a two-track education system: one for Han students hoping to enter the examination process, and one for the non-

Han students from *tusi* domains who ‘come to school because they are required to’“ (Herman 2007:114). As Herman (ibid:116) sums up the attempt to educate the barbarians:

“From the Jiajing reign on, every Ming and Qing emperor issued the same decree commanding schools be built in every local jurisdiction in the southwest (or throughout the country for that matter) in order to ‘bring a civilizing influence to the common people.’ That the decree was repeatedly issued indicates, if nothing else, that the spirit and reality of the decree remained unfulfilled.”

This give and take and constant adaptation to changing situations among the local population served to permanently thwart the Qing mission of subduing the local population, such that the state’s presence in the region is characterized by Weinstein (ibid 125) as “[a] rule...not hegemonic, but rather a hegemonic project with incomplete results”. As such, the role of education in spreading Chinese among the semi-conquered people of frontier regions seems to have played only a marginal role at best, sometimes taken advantage of by upwardly mobile elites, but most likely not utilized by the majority lay people at all.

3.2 An Ethnological View of Borderlands

Much of the late-20th century literature on ethnicity in China focused on the historically permeable boundary between modern ethnic categories often popularly taken for granted as based in hard, unshifting historical fact. Many authors examined the “origins” of certain ethnic groups, finding their emergence in arbitrary, sometimes state-induced events. No doubt like many other parts of the world, ethnic categories in modern China are not easily projected backwards in time. Some, like Pat Giersch or Jonathan Lipman, have paid more attention to the fluidity and malleability of ethnic identification, which tends to cut across what settled, literate societies think of as fast lines. Authors such as Pat Crossley, Evelyn Rawski, Leo Shin and Laura Hostetler, among others, explore how such ethnic categories have evolved both by defining and

delineating the ethnic Other at the frontier from the collective group in the “civilized” interior.

Before examining the setting of China, we will first look at a framework for repositioning history outside of court documents and official accounts, and what implications it may have for language evolution.

3.2.1 A View from the Hills

James Scott’s central thesis in *The Art of Not Being Governed* (2014) is that history has given undue emphasis to the development of states and power centers, and to the implicit (or explicit) assumption that humankind originated in the “Hills” (how did they get there?) and descended into the “Valley” to become civilized, taking on the accoutrements of civilization in the form of taxes, hierarchy and wet rice agriculture. (The Hills can be taken more loosely to be any terrain outside of State space, even if it happens to be flat, like the nomadic grasslands of Amdo.) Scott argues essentially the opposite, that hill society formed out of a shift to the hills to escape incorporation into evolving power centers, and that the cultures and societies we find outside the reach of valleys are a motley group of shifting ethnicities that have evolved a way of life designed to resist being ruled by others. I find this a compellingly disruptive framework for viewing contact and language spread because so many accounts of linguistic change in China take for granted that frontier and other marginalized peoples were either sitting ducks, waiting to give up their ancestral languages, or actively “moving to the center”, in order to receive Chinese culture and language.

A major theme of Scott’s book is the fluidity of ethnicity. Where it is convenient, peoples will readily change ethnic identification for their own gains, becoming Shan or Lahu or Tibetan overnight in order to better their position or extricate themselves from an undesirable association. Scott (2014:329) quotes Richard O’Conner to say, “while we usually start with the

assumption that a group has an ethnic identity, in Southeast Asia, ‘where people change ethnicity and locality rather frequently, we might better say that an ethnicity has a people’”. (Cf. Pamela Crossley’s quote at the beginning of this dissertation).

We know that people can change languages as well, but doing so is by its very nature not a simple task: it may of necessity be more gradual, as languages are not learned overnight, and if the population shifting is adult, they are bound to have major restructuring effects on their adopted language, especially if those shifting are comparable or greater in population size than the original speakers. (This is the basis of much of Scott DeLancey’s (2010, 2013a,b) recent work on Sino-Tibetan, using ideas put forth in McWhorter (2007).) In this sense, how much can we extend O’Conner’s quote to language and claim, for example, in the case of the Yao or the Miao, whose ethnic designation has never been constant, and has largely been applied from the outside by Han Chinese nomenclature, that “a language has a people”? Can we reconstruct the language of a people beyond a point in time when the people even existed as a defined, coherent group?

At the same time, Scott points out that not only is ethnicity fluid, it is not mutually exclusive, either. He speaks instead in many cases of “registers of self-identification”: someone may belong to a different ethnicity, with all that implies culturally and linguistically, when at market versus when at home. Again, the parallel with language is obvious, but it requires multilingualism in the same way it requires intimate knowledge of multiple cultural norms. To pass as belonging to a culture linguistically, one must require a substantial command of the language, and this seems to be a missing piece in the puzzle: when would the contact have been sustained enough to develop the proficiency that decades of second language acquisition research has told us is quite rare beyond a relatively early age?

When members of the elite, powerful culture decide to repair to the hills, taking their language with them, trading Han ethnic status for Miao, or Burmese for Kachin and so on, what then happens to that language? Is it discontinued out of local solidarity or loss of currency, or is it accommodated, valued even, among hill peoples as maintaining the ability to trade with the lowland cultures? Or do we find new, “intertwined”, mixed languages emerging from the contact between the two?

Linguistically it could be the case that the people in the hills regard their language about as much as they regard their ethnicity—that is very little, beyond how it may benefit their livelihoods. And the labels we have given to local forms of speech as purportedly discrete units are equally similar to how colonialists looked for reasonably well-defined tribes they could then name and incorporate into their jurisdiction, including the imperial Ming and Qing states in the form of so-called Miao albums for the Southwest (Deal and Hostetler 2006). If, objectively speaking, one group speaks more than one variety of a language or languages, just like they may subscribe to a variety of ethnicities, but don’t draw clear lines between them (see, for example, 6.3.2.3 for the case of the Bai in Dali), what is the resulting implication for language contact and mixing? How can we analyze discreet categories as language X and Y, and ascribe origins to features in either? Finally, what effect, if any, does tribal designation have on linguistic reality and language mixing, once it comes into being? In short, historical linguistic practice, even allowing for language variation, may assume too much in the form of a unitary descent for a given group of language speakers.

At the same time, such explanations of self-reliance and rejection of outside rule may not always be so straightforward or simple, especially when the local historical landscape is littered with the remains of past rulers. For example, Christiaan Klieger (2015:2) notes that refusing to

join newly imposed national narratives doesn't necessarily entail a rejection of state power wholesale, but may point to previous affiliations, such as with the former Tibetan empire among the peoples of Kham and/or Southeast Asia (e.g. the Rawang tribes of the Kachin Hills):

"The circumstances of occupation and forced annexation, rather than voluntary affiliation, characterizes much of the now border regions of China, India, and Russia. To assume that its peoples are escapists from modernization belittles the historic circumstances of their origin and development. Zomia [that is, roughly, highland Southeast Asia] as a concept has its limits."

3.2.2 The Han Majority

Perhaps more than any ethnic category in China, the majority Han label is taken for granted to refer to a specified group of people, often referred to interchangeably as "Chinese", throughout time. However, as some authors have pointed out, this "default ethnicity" has only had broad identity affiliation in relatively modern times. Furthermore, the members of its category have crossed in and out of its boundaries, which some modern Chinese scholars acknowledge. The solution has been to focus on the open nature of Han affiliation, particularly by way of the cultural assimilation that afforded historically non-Han individuals to assume Han identity by adopting Confucian culture and mores. One modern author, Xu Jieshun (2016:116), refers to this as a "snowball effect", in which he claims:

"...the Han nationality, which is actually composed of many micro-ethnic groups, exhibits a structural pattern of "plurality and unity". In this pattern, the micro-ethnic groups are the "plurality"; the Han nationality is the "unity". The plurality and unity structure of the Han has been molded by three factors: the diversity of Han origins, its formation, and its development."

This characterization keeps nicely to the image of the Han as an all-consuming, centripetally attractive culture, which is historically desirable by non-Han as a way to become part of state society. However, the notion of who is Han, and what it means to be Han, has evolved

considerably over the centuries, only at the end of the Qing Empire starting to become an ethnic category resonating in the minds of ordinary Chinese.

Discussing how conceptualization of ethnic identity has shifted historically, Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi (2015:26-27) describes the pre-Han Dynasty conceptualization of culture as “inherently spatial” by the late Zhou period, imagined as concentric squares contrasting the *nei* 內 (“inside”) from the *wai* 外 (“outside”), but not specifically bound to territory. Furthermore, those savages residing in the outside could be divided between the *sheng* 生 (“unfamiliar and uncultured”, often translated as “raw”) and the *shu* 熟 (“familiar and more cultured”, often “cooked”), depending on how much they integrated with Chinese “lifeways”.

It was during the fourth century, during the Northern Wei, in the face of barbarians encroaching on China’s territory, that the term “Han” shifted from a dynastic designation (i.e. as a reference to the Han Dynasty) to an ethnic one²⁴. Originally, after the fall of the Han empire, the only people referred to as “Hanren 漢人” were those of the small, ephemeral Later Han state in Sichuan (Elliott 2012:180). The taking up of the term as an ethnic designation, in Elliott’s view, first happened in the Northern Wei, under the ruling Tabgach (a.k.a. Tuoba 拓拔) clan of the Xianbei (a.k.a. Sarbi) confederacy, who wanted to both claim legitimacy as rulers of China, which involved positioning themselves as Huaren 華人 (i.e. civilized people, as opposed to the “other Others”—i.e. the non-Xianbei, non-Han), but also distinguish between the Han and other Xianbei people. At the same time, since “Hua” 華 had taken on a cultural significance, and Hanren referred to the people under Northern Wei rule, the term “Nanren” 南

²⁴ The use of a prior dynasty of glorious stature to refer to a group of people is not limited to the Han dynasty only. For example, Wiens (1954:xiv) notes that the people of Lingnan (modern Guangdong and Guangxi) call themselves “Tangren” because it was during the Tang Dynasty that “orthodox” Chinese culture began significantly shaping local “Han” culture.

人 had to be coined to refer to those “Chinese” people of the south, outside the Xianbei purview (Elliott 2012:183).

This semantic shift occurred against the backdrop of major ethnic intermingling, wherein the Tabgach rulers adopted a policy of acculturation with the people of the Central States, in order to gain legitimacy, while ordinary citizens there wholeheartedly adopted customs and dress (and, unaddressed by Elliott, but one must ask, also language?) of the Xianbei rulers, which Elliot calls the “borealization” of the Hua. Such mutual assimilation included not only the Tabgach Wei adopting “Chinese” surnames, but the latter, particularly officials in the new government, adopting Tabgach surnames as well.

By Elliott’s account, the term *Hanren*, or sometimes *Han’er* (originally carrying a derogatory connotation), fluctuated in reference between the fall of the Wei and the term’s stabilization during the Ming, when it began to be used much as today (particularly in unifying people of the north and the south). For instance, in the Liao and Jin, it often referenced subjects of conquered states, whereas in the Yuan it more generally described people in the north that were not Mongol, including Koreans, Jurchens, Khitan and other “non-Han” people, but conspicuously not “Nanren”, i.e. southern Chinese. As Elliott (2012:187) puts it: “As such it conveyed more forcefully than ever before the idea that Han was a fungible and capacious term that could be expanded according to administrative need...and lacked any firm ethnic connotations [between the Wei and the Ming].”

In any case, until the 19th century, the designation Han was not of particular importance to most common folk, particularly in the interior (内地), with “homeplace” (家乡) references serving as most people’s group affiliation (Joniak-Lüthi 2015:22). The founder of the Chinese republic, Sun Yat-sen, attempted to rally support among the Han, whom he considered to lack a

strong identity, by inventing a legendary common ancestor in the form of the Yellow Emperor, as well as creating new symbols of nationality, in order to rally support among a common ethnic solidarity. Particularly in response to Qing rule, where the Han masses were contrasted with the Manchu elite, and soon after in the face of Japanese and Western aggression, the Han ethnic designation began to enter individuals' lives meaningfully for the first time (ibid:22, 37). After the formation of the Republic, at least in discourse, the terms *Zhongguoren* (中国人) and Han began to drift apart, but remained intertwined in many everyday ways (ibid:33). As Joniak-Lüthi (ibid.23) summarizes:

“Though de facto constructed and fragmented, it is today a primordially framed identity, just as it was in the communities that identified with it in the past. In this sense, Han-ness is both a new and an old identity. As a collective identifier, it has a long history; yet who was Han and what it meant to be Han has drastically differed from one historical frame to another, and from one location to another.”

Originally, one could acquire Han-ness by assuming certain behaviors associated with this identity (particularly as disseminated through a classic Confucian education), practicing certain rituals (including footbinding), holding certain beliefs and by “documenting” descent from Han ancestors. Furthermore, Han family names could be acquired through military service, or for local elites, through imperial decree (Ebrey (1996); Joniak-Lüthi (2015:28); see also discussion of Bai surnames by Lian (2013), in 6.3.2). And, especially as literacy among the public grew²⁵, the use of Chinese writing expanded beyond a class marker, to a general marker of Han-ness (Joniak-Lüthi 2015:31). Eventually the most powerful groups in a region determined there what would count as Han, and appropriated the identity for themselves. Given the cultural cachet

²⁵ Although it was somewhat late historically, still Evelyn Rawski (1979:140) found that by the mid-19th century, 30-45% of males and 2-10% of females were functionally literate.

and superiority that came with the label, some “not-yet” Han attempted to claim the category for the material and symbolic capital it entailed²⁶ (Joniak-Lüthi 2015:25).

A consistent marker of non-Han-ness, however, particularly during the *minzu shibie*, was speaking a language other than *Hanyu* 汉语, i.e. “the language (*yu*) of the Han”—that is, Chinese (Mullaney 2011, Joniak-Lüthi 2015:39). In her work surveying Han Chinese in Shanghai and Beijing, Joniak-Lüthi (2015:53) found that language, particularly referenced as *Hanyu*, was a common response as to what constituted a trait of the Han ethnicity: “Indeed, it is ‘the culture of language (*yuyan wenhua*)’ that makes ‘the Han’ unique in relation to other *minzu*. ‘Han speak the Han language’, it was argued.” Furthermore, many of the ethnic markers of “the Han” are simultaneously markers for what it means to be “Chinese”, what should theoretically be a geographic/political category, according to PRC “multi-ethnic” state discourse.

Nonetheless, despite attempts to push back against Han chauvinism, the Communist government from the 1950s retained bloodline descent as the sole means for transmitting Han ethnicity inter-generationally²⁷ (Joniak-Lüthi 2015:42). Joniak-Lüthi (2015:134) concludes her study by claiming:

“The Han-dominated state agencies of the twentieth century have clearly enhanced an understanding of Han-ness as a stable identity, one not subject to negotiation but to maintenance. In relational terms, the home-place, rural/urban, local/outsider, and other *ren* and *jia* identities of my Hanzu informants were much more negotiable, flexible, and dependent on the individual than the *minzu* identity.”

If the category boundaries of ethnic affiliation for the majority Han ethnicity were fuzzy across history and region in China proper, then at the margins of the empire, as many scholars show,

²⁶ For similar examples, see the case of the Dan, or Tanka (鬻家), people, described by Siu and Liu (2006), or that of the itinerant Pengmin (棚民), presented by Leong (1997:129-147).

²⁷ See also Ebrey (1996), echoed in Brown (2004), who argues that, though the Confucian route to civilization was an acknowledged path to Han-ness, the ancestry connection associated with surnames was generally considered a more desirable marker of such, even among Han.

those boundaries were general tendencies at best. As illustration, we turn now to literature on the Southwest, primarily.

3.2.3 Ethnic Fluidity at China's Frontier

As with issues relating to demographics and educational policy, recent literature on ethnicity in China has focused less on the Amdo-Kham frontier, and more on either the northern borders or the Southwest. (Melissa Brown (2001,2004) has also written extensively on ethnic affiliation, and its complex history, in Taiwan. See 8.2.2 for discussion.) Here again comparisons are useful, but must be tempered by the unique cultural and religious setting of Outer Tibet, where Tibetan Buddhism and/or Islam have a well-defined (though not always impermeable) cultural framework for ethnic identification.

Discussing the shift in terminology used by the Qing court to refer to groups of people in the southwest over time, Giersch (2012:198) points out that prior to the 19th century, overwhelmingly the term *min* (民 'subjects'), eventually packaged into the Japanese borrowing *minzu* (民族 < Japanese *minzoku* 'people; ethnic group; nationality'), was used to refer to who we now think of as "Han". However, he is quick to mention that the term was not strictly applied:

"Much like Hunan's Gelao people, who claimed to be *min* (while also recognizing a cohesive Gelao identity), the Bairen of western Yunnan referred to themselves as *min* households (*minjia*). The terms subject and migrant, then, were not necessarily equated with Han, suggesting that the terms might not be associated with specific lifeways or cultures; they probably were not terms that referred to groups who developed cohesive cultural boundaries."

As an example of equating *min* with Han, Giersch (2012:200) quotes local observers to the Southwest frontiers in 1803:

"There are subjects (*minren*) who have gone to *yi* areas (*yidi*) to plow and plant. There are also *yi* people (*yiren*) who are very similar to Han people (*Hanren*) and come to the interior to trade

and live. In the past, they have united in marriage; their clothing and headwear styles have become mixed up, and they learn each other's languages. In a little while, it becomes impossible to distinguish the yi from the Han."

It is worth noticing that the original provocation for this comment from the observers was a case in which the "Yi highlanders" (probably Lahu and/or Wa) in southern Yunnan were learning Chinese (Hanyu) and Mahayana scriptures from "Han people", and this was in turn "helping to fuel bloody conflicts between highlanders, Han, and the local Tai elite, who patronized Theravada Buddhism and also sought to control the highlands." (ibid.201)

These depictions echo similar observations by geographer Oliver Coales, traveling between Dartsedo (Ch. Dajianlu 打箭炉) and Chamdo (Ch. Changdu 昌都) in Kham in the 1910's (Coales 1919:229):

"The people of Kham are a comparatively pure race of Tibetan and show few marks of the occasional intermingling of Mongols and Chinese who have invaded the country. It is remarkable that the immigrants of these two races seem quite unable to preserve their national characteristics after the second generation, and we find that the people of Gyade in the north-west who claim to be of Chinese or Mongol stock are quite indistinguishable from Tibetans in appearance or language."

After a few centuries of inland migration to the Southwest, during which time instead of a uniform Han ethnicity, "Chinese people" identified primarily as people from a specific region or province (cf. Joniak-Lüthi 2015), and during which time ethnic affiliation remained a rather fluid phenomenon, by the 19th century there were enough late arrivals versus local people, especially "yi people" and Muslim Hui, that "Hanren" became a convenient label to speak of "us" versus "them", and the term moved closer to its modern usage.

In the same vein of resistance to civilization as James Scott, Jodi Weinstein documents the forged "livelihoods" of the Zhongjia people, a Tai-speaking group spread out across what are now three provinces (Guizhou, Guangxi and Yunnan), and in modern times mostly part of the

Bouyei (布依族) *minzu* group²⁸. Weinstein defines “livelihood” as “not just the activities that people use to make a living, but also the social, ethnic, and religious resources available to them”, which entail “a range of reactions from acceptance, reluctant compliance, to diverse forms of everyday resistance” (Weinstein 2014:60). This approach to seeing the relations between the traditionally deemed “conqueror” and “conquered” points out, in her words, that “the decision to follow the law was as much a livelihood choice as the decision to break the law” (ibid 61).

As such, Weinstein gives vivid accounts of local people resisting state encroachment through banditry, or garnering support for uprisings through appeals to traditional magical practices, as well as those that find it within their interests to cooperate with the new power structure and even report on the illegal activities of their fellow people, often as a means of survival more than a shot at climbing the social hierarchy. In short, similar to the Hui Muslims of 19th-20th century northwest China, ethnic identification does not necessarily imply ethnic allegiance. When it comes to language, then, how does the choice to comply, or the choice to resist, affect the maintenance of local language and influence the spread of larger, “conqueror” languages?

Similar to Guizhou, Qing attempts to bring to heel the Kham region of the Tibetan frontier also met with mixed, often failed, results due to strong traditions of local autonomy, as evidenced by the rampant banditry and proliferation of independent chieftainships. Tenzin Jinba (2014:25) puts the number of *tusi* rulers in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands at more than 800. In the introduction to their volume on geographic conceptions of peripheries, Yeh and Coggins (2014) mention that the borderlands between historic Tibet and China were organized into

²⁸ The Bouyei themselves are a somewhat contentious grouping in modern times, being classified as Zhuang in Guangxi (as many of them, regardless of location, identify), and as Buyi in Guizhou, largely due to the way the initial classification campaigns were carried out independently in each province. See Mullaney (2011:87-88).

kingdoms claiming allegiance to neither state, but ruled by numerous small chieftains, such that in the early 20th century, “Kham was an agglomeration of up to twenty-five independent or semi-independent polities”, leading to a “Khampa rule for Kham” movement in the 1930s (Yeh and Coggins 2014:8). Similarly for Amdo, Nietupski (2008:xxii) describes the situation thus: “The aim of Qing policy, though at times strategically imperialist, was not uniformly one of annexation, colonization, or even inclusion of the neighboring territories; it was rather one of alliances with neighbors.”

As groups could adopt or reject ethnic affiliation to serve their needs, so too could individuals, as is reflected in recounted experiences of travelers to the region. Pat Giersch (2001) focuses largely on the China-Burma frontier, where Han immigrants would often marry locally and adopt native culture. He opens with the account of a Han man, Shi Shangxian, who led a local uprising allied with the Burmese against the Qing state, and was subsequently captured by Cao Xiu, the indigenous son of a local *tusi*. The problem of Han “crossing over” seems to have been so widespread it led to the Qing banning immigration to the Southwest in the 1760s. The settlers tended to look out for themselves first and foremost, and if this meant allying with indigenous polities against the imperial state, then so be it (Giersch 2001:75). As another example, Lipman (1984:271) quotes a Ma Ho-t’ien, who tells of a family on the Qinghai-Gansu border for whom ethnicity and religious alliance split even within familial lines:

“Ma Ho-t’ien...tells of a two-family village complex south of Lan-chou [Lanzhou] in which both families were divided by religion. The T’ang family in the upper village was 80-90% Muslim, while most of the T’angs in the lower village considered themselves Han. The Wangs, on the other hand, were half and half. The conversion of the Muslims in both families had taken place during rebellions, and Ma Ho-t’ien deduced from this experience that “Kansu Muslims are mostly distinguishable only by religion, not because they are of a different race.” In this case, of course, Han and Hui were not only of the same race but of the same lineage.”

Finally, writing on society in early 20th century Amdo, Robert Ekvall draws from his decades living in the region, observing the network of interactions between local ethnic groups. He notes a strict divide among Chinese and Muslim (i.e. Hui) labor, and from town to town, always one group maintaining a strict majority in population number (Ekvall 1939:19). As for the nomadic Tibetans of the west, Ekvall (1939:60) claims that they deal mainly with sedentary Tibetans or Hui, and rarely with Chinese people, learning “only a few words [of Chinese] at best.” The Hui, he observes, often travel into Tibetan territory, where they have a fondness for Tibetan attire, and sometimes marry locally:

“The traders not only acquire a fondness for Tibetan clothing and saddlery and adopt Tibetan travel equipment in its entirety, but when at home they like to show off their Tibetan boots and great fur hats and talk in a half-Tibetan lingo for the admiration of the home-town folks—they parade Tibetan words the way the sailors who had sailed with Drake mixed Spanish with English when they talked in Biddleford town. They all, of course, speak Tibetan fluently, though most of them speak it with a marked accent.”

Note here that, though they are observed to communicate solely in Tibetan when dealing with Tibetans, they adjust their speech when communicating with “home-town folks”. Whether what Ekvall observed amounted to a full pidgin, or simply a scattering of exoticisms to show off, is not for certain, but such language mixing shows up in other accounts, as we will see in 4.3.2.

In sum, to use Pamela Crossley’s words (1990:1), “there is an irreconcilable incompatibility between sinological concepts (including ‘sinicization’) and contemporary ethnic studies.” Giersch (2001:70) echoes the same thought: “it assumes a single Han culture to which one might acculturate, thereby concealing the significant tensions between migrants and officialdom, popular and imperial cultures.”

The same might be said for much of historical linguistics (though trends have been towards moving language contact and variation to the fore). Tracing the history of a language assumes

at least some degree of a static quality over time to trace in the first place, as most linguists reject the idea that languages may have more than one ancestor, even among many creolists. Though distinct, language and ethnicity are often intertwined in complex ways, and their analysis suffers from the insistence on hard and fast labels and one-size-fits-all analysis.

3.3 The Persistence of State Prestige

Nonetheless, it is not so simple as to say that ethnicity doesn't exist and sinicization never happened. Ho Ping-ti (1998) gives a vehement defense of sinicization in a response to Evelyn Rawski and many of the trends mentioned above in Section 3.2. Ho provides ample evidence of trends across all stages of Chinese history, from rebellion leaders to non-Han dynasties, in which non-Chinese have adamantly striven to adopt Confucian culture or conveniently adopted Chinese surnames to avoid, for example, Ming dynasty requirements to intermarry with Han (Ho 1998:141). At the same time, particularly at court, Ho argues the fashion was often to take on the trappings of the so-called "barbarians", especially between the end of the Han and the classic era of the Tang. As Ho (1998:136-137) puts it:

"Instead of reasserting the superiority of the Chinese political and cultural tradition as a form of forced assimilation of the aliens, the T'ang Chinese watched with amusement the adoption of certain steppe ways and customs by the playful aristocrats and commoners. They resigned themselves to the fate of "barbarization" of the northeast after the An Lu-shan rebellion, but welcomed with open arms the introduction of Central and Western Asian music, dance, food, drinks, and games as well as ancient and rising religions. It is through T'ang China's attitude toward religions we can best understand that it is the open-mindedness and large-heartedness that account substantially for sinicization's innate strength."

In other words, though the great arc of history has bent toward assimilation, it has been down a two-way street, by which Chinese culture has in turn absorbed many "foreign" elements, even among court elites, in fashioning a so-called multi-ethnic state, similar to Xu's ethnic snowball effect, but never to the detriment of a state-propagated "Chinese" culture.

As many authors have noted, it is a regular fixture of indigenous aristocrats to adopt elements of Chinese culture, including family names, to gain prestige, both with their neighbors for trade and tribute benefits, as well as with their own people, as a form of cultural prestige. In her work on the kingdoms of ancient southwest China, Alice Yao (2016) considers the import of Chinese coins and other tools as a means of establishing legitimacy among local rulers in the pre-Han Southwest, even though contact with the Chinese state was marginal at best—a kind of remote prestige. Crossley (1990:3) notes: “Speaking Chinese and catering to Chinese tastes could be commercially advantageous, and it is not miraculous that many border peoples with no other very profound interest in Chinese culture adapted in limited ways.” Herman (1997) explains that, despite resistance in certain parts of the Yi and Miao-speaking world, the imperial education system propagated by the Ming authorities could actually be a desirable thing. Similarly to how Jodi Weinstein sees adherence to Chinese law among the Zhongjia people assimilating to Chinese culture, particularly by learning the Chinese language, contributing to the livelihood of local people, a colonial education has often been a means to social elevation among many of the oppressed people of Chinese history.

As it stands, the dispersion of Chinese culture into frontier regions, even by proxy, cannot be ignored as one way by which local peoples, especially local rulers, advanced their livelihoods. In the case of the indigenous *tusi* system, though the Ming and Qing states came to rely on local chieftains to maintain order at the borders (Shin 2010), one could argue the legitimization of local autonomy was what laid the framework for assimilation itself. Nonetheless, those further down the social ladder were quick to shift allegiance and identification when the occasion arose, and as Han migrants entered the area looking to improve their own lot, assimilating to

local “lifeways”, and thus moving the flow of culture in both directions, was another significant trend along the frontier, including language learning.

My work here follows the framework laid out by Scott (2014) in de-centering history from a state-centric view of indigenous communities, and by extension from a narrative that sees Han replacement of local languages as an inevitable process of social development. Rather, I look for explanations from the perspective of local autonomy, and view the development of Sinitic as a product of the peoples it has encountered. I also proceed by assuming that language speakers were not bound to well-defined ethnic categories, and did not always feel a strong allegiance to a single ethnic group. In such a fluidly multi-ethnic setting, one might imagine that multilingualism, code-switching and mutual influence would have been the norm, with no a priori reason to assume the Chinese Han language would have exerted greater prestige or pressure to shift for the majority population. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that the pull of Chinese State-based culture, especially its economic markets, was a strong one, and that language shift and assimilation was always an option for bringing one closer to that culture.

Before proceeding to the case studies of this dissertation, and considering how the ideas of this chapter and the previous one align with the historical and linguistic facts, let us first take an extended overview of the Sinitic languages themselves, the linguistic carriers of Chinese culture, with a particular focus on Southwest Mandarin, the variety of Chinese spoken throughout many of the regions discussed in the present study.

3.4 The Sinitic Languages

3.4.1 The Meaning of Mandarin in Language Comparison

Throughout this dissertation I reference Standard Mandarin/Chinese as a point of comparison, both as an exemplar of (Northern) Sinitic, and as a comparative point for borrowings into the various languages discussed in Chapters 4-7. (For an overview of the Standard Language itself, and its linguistic features, see the Chapter 9 Appendix.) In each chapter, the relevant Sinitic variety differs by region. In Amdo, i.e. Chapters 4 and 7, the local Sinitic varieties *are* the focal point of analysis, though the region is usually labelled as being within the Central Plains Mandarin (中原 Zhongyuan) area (though some authors, such as Chirkova 2012b, refer to the varieties, perhaps in a non-technical sense, as Northwestern Chinese). In Chapter 5 a local variety of Southwest Mandarin would be spoken alongside Daohua, Dege and nDrapa. In Chapter 6, the Southwestern variety of Mandarin spoken in Dali would be the most recent Sinitic variety to take hold there, usually represented by Jianchuan Mandarin (e.g., Lee and Sagart 2008), though in Chapter 6, especially in 6.2.7, I discuss the overall history of Chinese in the region. Of course, from the latter half of the 20th century onward, Standard Chinese, that is *Putonghua* (普通话), would be increasingly spoken as the result of in-migration from the interior and the spread of standardized education and national media, certainly reaching some regions before others.

Nonetheless, the usage of Standard Mandarin forms throughout the dissertation is not to imply that the language communities under discussion are solely speaking Putonghua, or that the origins of a borrowed word or phoneme or grammar pattern necessarily come from the standard language itself. Rather, as is common practice in the literature pertaining to Chinese languages in general, Standard Mandarin serves as a point of reference for Sinitic forms at

large, when more precise forms are not necessary or, more often the case, are lacking in source material. At the same time, in publications written in Chinese, even when describing the morphosyntax of true regional dialects of Mandarin, such as the Chengdu dialect (e.g., Zhang, Zhang and Deng 2001), the forms given are in Chinese characters alone, except when exact phonological notation is deemed necessary. The reader, if they lack knowledge of the variety under discussion, would then presumably read them in Standard Mandarin pronunciation. As such, the inclusion of Pinyin romanization from Standard Mandarin in English sources, such as in this dissertation, is simply an extension of this practice, and in many sections serves as a necessary transliteration for source material lacking romanization.

Furthermore, in many cases the exact local variety of Northern Sinitic may be inadequately described in the literature, and/or buried in scattered articles with more generalized regional names in their titles: an article on tone sandhi in “the Sichuan dialect” (四川话 *Sichuan-hua*), for example, would likely implicitly refer to the speech of the capital city, Chengdu, but not necessarily. Often times a reference to the dialect of a province is used to stand in for all the dialects of that province, even as the examples may illustrate that of the capital city. At any rate, under the label *Sichuan-hua*, such a general designation would unlikely be referring to the exact forms used in Yajiang County, where Daohua is spoken, for example, even if it is used for comparison.

Nonetheless, in recent years more and more treatments of non-standard, regional varieties have appeared in the literature, though they still are usually written from a Standard Mandarin-comparative perspective, rather than a straightforward grammatical description outright. As such, since it plays such an outsized role in this dissertation, I include in 3.4.3 an overview of several comprehensive treatments of Southwest Mandarin, most of which focus on varieties

spoken in Sichuan, albeit usually in and around the provincial capital of Chengdu. For the most part, the presentation here follows the literature in describing the subgroup in terms of how it differs from Standard Mandarin, or in how it developed from Middle Chinese phonological categories.

While it would perhaps also be useful to sketch a portrait of Central Plains Mandarin, spoken roughly from Shanxi in the east, to eastern Qinghai and southern Gansu in the west, including the provincial capitals of Xi'an and Lanzhou between, I have not been able to conduct a proper search on descriptions of such dialects, and, as stated above, the varieties of Chinese examined in Chapters 4 and 7 themselves already constitute a regional survey of features spoken there. Unlike Daohua and Bai of Chapters 5 and 6, respectively, Xining, Tangwang, Gangou and others are not spoken *alongside* regional Chinese---until the most recent decades they were spoken *as* regional Chinese. How they compare with more “normal” Sinitic varieties of the region to the north and east, where not obvious from context (such as the adaption of Middle Chinese tones for particular lexical items), must wait for future investigation on my part.

Before presenting Southwest Mandarin, however, I will first contextualize Northern Sinitic within the larger language family and then present the necessary terminology for following the Sinologist literature when describing varieties of Chinese, especially the reflexes of Middle Chinese tonal categories, which are such a foundational feature of discourse in the literature.

3.4.2 The Middle Chinese Phonological System and Mapping Chinese Varieties

The Sinitic languages are defined as a group as those languages who share a common ancestor in Old Chinese, the language spanning the period from the Shang Dynasty oracle bone inscriptions until about the end of the Han Dynasty, roughly 1250 BCE to 200 CE. As we will see in Chapter 6, there is some discussion about whether this group includes the Bai language or

not, but otherwise the grouping as Sinitic or non-Sinitic, heavily restructured contact languages aside, is widely known and uncontroversial.

The reconstruction of Old Chinese, given the language's immense time depth and logographically recorded ancient records, is a far from complete enterprise, and involves a unique, and sometimes baroque, methodology, making use of criteria ranging from ancient poetic rhyme schemes of the 11th-7th centuries BCE (i.e. the 诗经 *Shijing*, Classic of Poetry), the internal composition of written Chinese characters and their ancient variants, loanwords in a host of languages around China's periphery (especially Austroasiatic, Hmong-Mien and Kra-Dai languages), and comparisons with the Middle Chinese phonological system discussed below. Several reconstructions, partial or otherwise, have been put forth in recent decades, including Zhengzhang (2000, [2003] 2013), Schuessler (2006, 2009) and Baxter and Sagart (2014), with perhaps the latter being the project with the widest current support globally.

Old Chinese itself, beyond serving as an ancestor language to all of Sinitic, does not concern us much in this dissertation, except perhaps to note that the multiple open questions about exact reconstructions do become something of a stumbling block in assessing whether older stratum Bai morphemes are borrowings from Sinitic or not, as discussed in 6.2.7.1. (See Lee and Sagart (2008) for more details.)

The stage of historical Sinitic that first becomes relevant to the current study is that of Middle Chinese (MC), often considered to run between the middle of the 5th century to the middle of the 12 century CE²⁹. Though it involves a number of (unlikely) assumptions about the nature of the Chinese language(s) spoken during the MC era, most of the modern Sinitic varieties are

²⁹ For present purposes I do not distinguish between Early Middle Chinese and Late Middle Chinese, though a number of sound changes, and an increase of syllabic initials marks this transition. For more, see Baxter (1992:Chapter 2).

considered to be traceable back to Middle Chinese, except for the Min dialects, which are considered to have independently branched from Old Chinese (Handel 2017:98). Part of the issue at play is that Middle Chinese is not a phonological reconstruction, produced by application of the comparative method, but is for the most part the product of a methodology that has its roots in Qing-era study of medieval philological materials.

In its modern form, it is the result of relating 20th-21st century Sinitic varieties (pioneered in practice by the Swedish linguist Bernhard Karlgren) to the categories produced from analyzing rhyming dictionaries of the 7th and 11th centuries, such as the 切韵 *Qieyun* and 广韵 *Guangyun*, and the 12th century rhyme tables (韵图 *yuntu*), such as the 韵镜 *Yunjing* (see Branner 2006), which applied originally Indian methodology for arranging the syllabic canon in gridded charts for textual study³⁰.

This philological methodology, well-developed since the Qing Dynasty, has spawned its own lexicon of specialist jargon, and the modern linguist interested in descriptive studies on Sinitic varieties will not get far, even armed with Chinese literacy, without a familiarity of its terms and principles. The discourse that it produces may appear cryptic and exclusive to the non-initiated, but it is nonetheless the language of Chinese dialectologists and the tradition of the field. Any description of a modern Sinitic variety, especially those of the highly influential Sinitic journal *Fangyan*, will speak in terms of the modern reflexes of such Middle Chinese categories, their splits, mergers and so on.

What makes this a specifically Sinologist enterprise is that each of these Middle Chinese categories, at various levels of specificity and super-grouping, has its own unique label, which

³⁰ For a call to arms to apply the Neo-grammarians principles of the comparative method, which for the most part has gone unheeded, see Norman and Coblin (1995).

will be used as reference in modern writings. For example, each initial consonant possible in onset position in Middle Chinese has a label in the form of a Chinese character that is read with that initial consonant; each syllabic rhyme has its own character-based label, read with that particular syllabic rhyme; and so on. This allows the specialist a term of reference that simultaneously relates the Middle Chinese form, the Standard Mandarin correspondent, and the form in a variety under analysis.

The generally accepted set of consonants of Middle Chinese, along with their category labels, and an IPA transcription of their commonly assumed values, is given in Table 1 below. To the extent that they have merged or remained distinct in a modern variety will be obvious simply from pronouncing the Chinese character of the label aloud in that variety. The traditional articulatory categories of the rows, from top to bottom, can be translated as: 1. “lip sounds” (a. light and b. heavy), 2. “tongue sounds” (a. tip and b. top), 3. “(canine) tooth sounds” (i.e. velars), 4. “tooth sounds” (a. tip and b. proper), 5. “throat sounds”, 6. “half-tongue sounds” and 7. “half-tooth sounds”.

Table 1 Late Middle Chinese consonant inventory by traditional label³¹

1. 脣音:	a. 重脣	幫 p-	滂 p ^h -	並 b-	明 m-		
	b. 輕脣	非 f-	敷 f ^h -	奉 v-	微 w-		
2. 舌音:	a. 舌頭	端 t-	透 t ^h -	定 d-	泥 n-		
	b. 舌上	知 t-	徹 t ^h -	澄 d-	娘 ŋ-		
3. 牙音:		見 k-	溪 k ^h -	群 g-	疑 ŋ-		
4. 齒音:	a. 齒頭	精 ts-	清 ts ^h -	從 dz-		心 s-	邪 z-
	b. 正齒	照 tʂ-	穿 tʂ ^h -	牀 dz-		審 ʂ-	禪 ʐ-
5. 喉音:		影 ʔ-		喻 j-	曉 x-	匣 ɣ-	
6. 半舌:				來 l-			
7. 半齒:				日 ɲ-			

³¹ This presentation is also inspired by the layout of an unpublished course packet for a course on Chinese historical phonology taught by Zev Handel in the Winter of 2014.

In this way, the term “見 initial” (jiàn-initial) would refer to the onset of any morpheme in any modern Sinitic variety that has a reflex of the Middle Chinese velar initial stop consonant /k/; the term “匣 initial” (xiá -initial) would refer to the onset of any morpheme in any modern Sinitic variety that has a reflex of the Middle Chinese voiced velar fricative initial /ɣ/ (sometimes considered a voiced glottal fricative [ɦ]), and so on. Similarly, the term “沃 rhyme” (wò -rhyme) would refer to the rhyme of any modern Sinitic variety that has a reflex of the Middle Chinese final /owk/, and so on³². From reading these three names in Standard Mandarin, one can already see how they developed in that variety; in a statement like “many Sichuanese dialects maintain the”疑-initial”, that is, the velar nasal initial (yí-initial), one relates Sichuanese simultaneously to Standard Mandarin and Middle Chinese in one clause.

Fortunately for the non-specialist reader, for present purposes the only jargon that we need to carry over is that of the Middle Chinese tonal system, as it becomes impossible to reference any material on modern developments and subgroupings without utilizing it. For syllabic onsets and rhymes, it will usually suffice to give the proposed phonological reconstruction (usually based on Baxter (1992)), with the label provided in parentheses afterward. For a more complete overview of Middle Chinese philology and methodology, see Norman (1988:24-42), Baxter (1992:Chapter 2), Kurpaska (2010:Chapter 4), Handel (2014, 2017:97-101).

The Middle Chinese tonal system, and its labels, is given in the chart below, and explained in the following text.

³² In interests of space, I am not displaying or discussing the MC rhyme groups, which are slightly less agreed upon across sources, especially in their medial (glide) components. See Baxter (1992:61-85) for illustration.

Table 2 Middle Chinese Tone Categories

		平 Píng 'level'		上 Shǎng 'rising'		去 Qù 'departing'		入 Rù 'entering'
阴 yīn 'light'	1a/1	Yinping	2a/3	Yinshang	3a/5	Yinqu	4a/7	Yinru
阳 yáng 'dark'	1b/2	Yangping	2b/4	Yangshang	3b/6	Yangqu	4b/8	Yanru

So as not to confuse tonal categories with descriptive pitch values, I am using the Chinese name of each tone in this dissertation, rather than labels such as “Level tone”, and “Rising tone” for Ping tones and Shang tones, respectively³³. Theoretically, a “Rising tone” (Shǎng tone) could have a falling pitch value as a modern reflex, a “Level tone” (Píng tone) could have a rising pitch value, and so on. Such labelling also matches the sources in the literature.

Alternatively, sometimes tones are referred to as values on a grid, either 1-8, as labelled below, or 1-4a and 1-4b, reflecting high and low registers, respectively. Both are included in Table 2.

As just mentioned, the labels in Table 2 represent tonal categories in a Middle Chinese phonological system that are assumed to follow regular adaptation not only into most modern Chinese dialects, but also languages known to have heavily borrowed from Chinese, including Bai, Hmong, and Zhuang, whose diachronic relationship between tone groups and syllabic material such as laryngeal features and coda consonants match the same grid as that described for Chinese above. The high-register tones, those labelled A, or *yīn* in Chinese, are assumed to usually develop largely from voiceless initials, while the low-register tones, labelled B, or *yáng* in Chinese, developed from voiced obstruent and sonorant initials. The first column, Ping tones in Chinese tradition, presumably arose from Old Chinese sonorant-ending or open syllables, whereas those in the second column, Shang tones in Chinese, arose from glottal endings, the

³³ See Mei (1970) for evidence of how the traditional names of the categories may have matched their actual pitch values in Middle Chinese varieties.

third, Qu tones in Chinese, from sibilant or breathy endings, and finally the fourth column, Ru Tones in Chinese, corresponds to tones carried on oral stop-final, or “checked”, syllables.

Though in origin, the Ru tone syllables may not have contrasted with the other tones for pitch value, but rather as the stop counterparts to the sonorant-endings in other categories, the tradition is to assume the contrast as one of a tonal category, given the segmental origins of all of the tones and the fact that they pattern together as categorical classes, thus maximizing tonal contrasts rather than coda contrasts. Finally, it is typical of modern Sinitic languages that many of the Middle Chinese tonal categories have merged, especially the Ru tones, with other categories, so that the logical 8-tone system is only found in some Sinitic subgroups, and never in Northern Sinitic.

Do bear in mind that Table 2 represents the Middle Chinese tonal inventory, as it hypothetically existed for Chinese varieties that both underwent the transphonologization of final segments into tonal contours, and a register split into high and low tones via loss of initial voicing contrasts (which not all varieties underwent to the same degree or at the same pace); though there may be reasonable hypotheses, there are no firmly established pitch values for such categories. And besides, the purpose of such a table is not to represent an inventory of (hypothetical, contrastive) pitch values, but rather an inventory of phonological tone categories that may then be traced diachronically into all daughter languages of the reconstructed system.

Martha Ratliff (2002:29-30) explains it well:

“For those who are unused to thinking in terms of tone categories (A1, A2, B1, B2, etc.) as opposed to phonetic categories (high level, low rising, etc.) it is useful to think of them this way: all the words in a particular tonal category have a common historical origin of terms of final and initial consonantism (A1 = *voiceless initial, open syllable or syllable with a nasal coda). This insures that when the original consonantism is transphonologized into tone that all of the words belonging to each original category as defined by syllable type will continue to pattern

together tonally. Although phonetic studies have shown that the newly emergent tones will have certain properties due directly to the type of consonant lost, once tones are created, they morph quite quickly into other things: originally high tones may lower, low tone may raise, tones may merge, contours may simplify, etc. Therefore words across languages in a family which belong to a particular tonal category may have quite different phonetic realizations...The categories themselves, on the other hand, are remarkably stable...members of the group of cognates [which share the same historical consonantism]...will all have the same tone in each language of the family...regardless of the phonetic value of that tone in any particular language.”

As such, in writings on tones in non-Sinitic languages like Hmong or Zhuang, tones may be referred to as 1A/1 for an originally high register level tone from a sonorant-ending syllable, or 3b/6 for a low register tone from an originally glottal-ending syllable. In communities of non-Chinese speakers with a tradition of written Chinese, there may even be a native tradition of “converting” the Middle Chinese tones to native forms, as is described for Bai in 6.2.7.1.

Finally, besides tonal categories, occasionally other linguistic facets of Middle Chinese, relevant to the development of later varieties, will sometimes be referenced, each with its corresponding jargon. The most common is the traditional division of the syllable (音节 *yinjie*) into two parts, the initial (声母 *shengmu*) and the final (韵母 *yunmu*), which of course correspond essentially to the onset and rhyme in modern linguistics terminology, though the tradition of grouping semivocalic glides, termed medials (韵头 *yuntou*, lit. “head of the rhyme”), as part of the final sometimes conflicts with modern phonological analyses.

Sometimes these and other traditional terms are used interchangeably with more modern terminology by authors, such as those for laryngeal distinctions: broadly 清 *qing* ‘voiceless’ (lit. “clear”) versus 浊 *zhuo* ‘voiced’ (lit. “muddy”), more finely distinguished 全清 *quan-qing* ‘voiceless, unaspirated’ (lit. “fully clear”), 次清 *ciqing* ‘voiceless, aspirated’ (lit. “secondarily clear”), 全浊 *quanzhuo* ‘voiced plosives’ (lit. “fully muddy”), and 次浊 *cizhuo* ‘voiced sonorants’ (lit. “secondarily muddy”) (Kurpaska 2010:19).

One very common item of jargon from Middle Chinese phonology refers to the so-called *jian-tuan* sounds (尖团音, lit. “sharp-round sounds”), which refer to two phonological series of Middle Chinese initials, the dental sibilants (尖音 lit. “sharp sounds”) and the velar stops (团音 lit. “round sounds”), that have merged in many modern dialects before high front vowels and glides, via palatalization to alveolopalatals. For example, in Standard Mandarin there is the homophonous pair 津 *jīn* ‘ford’ (< MC *tsin*) and 巾 *jīn* ‘kerchief’ (< MC *kin*) (Baxter 1992:51-52). Thus, if a dialect is said to maintain a *jian-tuan* distinction, it means that it in some way keeps distinct the original dental sibilant phonemes from Middle Chinese from the original MC velar phonemes before high front vocoids, for example, perhaps as a dental affricate for the original dental sibilants and a palatal stop for the original velar stops (ibid.).

The result of studying this system and tracing its categories forward into 20th century Sinitic varieties is identification of mutually unintelligible subgroups of the family, each of which has a range of mutual intelligibility just about on par with that of a subgroup of Indo-European, such as Romance or Germanic³⁴ (Norman 1988:187). Since none of the non-Mandarin subgroups—that is, none of the non-Northern Sinitic groups—play a role in the regions analyzed in this dissertation, I will simply list them in (3-1) below, for reference, with rough generalizations on distribution added myself. Note that numbers 8-10 are generally less established groups than the preceding 7 in the literature, such as Ramsey (1987) or Norman (1988). The interested reader may consult a variety of publications about subgrouping of Sinitic as a whole, and features of each group. See for example, Ramsey (1987:Chapter 6), Norman (1988:Chapters 8-

³⁴ Kurpaska (2010:33) states: “The criterion of mutual intelligibility between Chinese dialects is not a popular means for dialect classification. So far, no satisfactory method for using this criterion has been found.”

9), Yuan (2001), Kurpaska (2010), Handel (2017), Yue-Hashimoto (2003), and Chappell (2001a, 2015).

(3-1) The modern Sinitic Languages (adapted from Chappell 2001a:331)

1. Northern Chinese (Mandarin) 北方话 (the majority of the country, from Manchuria in the Northeast, to Xinjiang in the Northwest, south to the Jiang-Huai region in the east and to the Southwest of Sichuan and Yunnan in the West)
2. Xiang 湘 (mostly in Hunan Province)
3. Gan 赣 (mostly in Jiangxi Province)
4. Wu 吴 (mostly in southern Jiangsu and most of Zhejiang province)
5. Min 闽 (concentrated in Fujian, but also along the Guangdong coast, in Hainan and Taiwan)
6. Hakka (a.k.a. Kejia) 客家 (most concentrated in the northeastern region of Guangdong Province, but also present in most provinces between Sichuan and Jiangxi, as well as Taiwan)
7. Yue 粤 (primarily in Guangdong and eastern Guangxi provinces)
8. Jin 晋 (largely in Shanxi province and Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, and adjacent areas)
9. Hui 徽 (largely in southern Anhui)
10. Pinghua 平话 (a handful of dialects, close to Yue, in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region)

The above groups are to a large extent based on similarities in how they developed features of Middle Chinese, especially the tones, into their current forms. (However, distinctive basic vocabulary forms often play a role, as well.) The classification of a dialect as belonging to Northern Sinitic has been stated as those dialects where voiced aspirated initials in Ping tones become voiceless and aspirated and those in other tones voiceless and unaspirated, while the Ru tones merge with the other three tonal categories (Handel 2017:101, summarizing Li Fangkuei). Within Northern Sinitic, the Central Plains (*Zhongyuan*) dialects are classified, alongside adaptation of MC initials, as those in which Ru tones occurring with voiceless and sonorant initials become Yinping tones, while Ru tones with obstruent initials become Yangping (Wurm, et al. 1988:B-4).

From this overview, we now turn to the largest, and most pertinent to this dissertation, subgroup within Northern Sinitic, Southwest Mandarin.

3.4.3 An Overview of Southwest Mandarin

As discussed in 3.4.1 above, the variety of Chinese spoken throughout many of the locations of this dissertation is Southwest Mandarin (西南官话 *Xinan Guanhua*). While this is not true of Amdo, per se, the languages spoken in Chapters 4 and 7 are located on the border of the Southwest Mandarin region and do in fact share some similarities with the dialects to the south (for example reduced syllable codas, or expansion of reduplication and lexically empty nominal suffixes, as compared to Standard Mandarin), implying perhaps a gradient between Southwest Mandarin and Central Plains Mandarin subgroups around the Qinghai-Gansu-Sichuan border.

Since it holds such importance as the often-referenced variety of “Chinese” spoken in Sichuan and Yunnan, I present here an overview of the subgrouping of Southwest Mandarin, and a survey of the linguistic features that researchers present when describing it. To my knowledge, no source in English presents a full survey of literature on this dialect group, its subgrouping or its characteristics. As such, I give below a thorough overview, in hopes of providing a complete context of the Southwest subgroup of the Mandarin branch of Sinitic. At the same time, its description in this dissertation will serve the purpose of showing the “natural” variation and change of a dialectal group of Northern Sinitic not considered by researchers to be “hybrid” or “creolized”, etc. like those varieties immediately to its north in Amdo.

One final note may be in order: while present interests here are in areal trends, and diachronic tendencies, some of the features mentioned by sources may be either going out of date among younger generations of dialectal speakers, or present forms common in say, Chengdu or Kunming, but less familiar in Chongqing or Baoshan, as became evident when I consulted with (young) native Southwest Mandarin speakers. To the best extent possible, I attempt to tailor descriptions to the Dali region in Yunnan, but the area around Yajiang is often

left undescribed in treatment of “Sichuanese”, explicitly stated as due to it being a minority area, and therefore much of the description of Sichuanese may be assumed to represent the Chengdu dialect, or other eastern varieties of the province.

3.4.3.1 *Classification and Subgrouping*

According to Li (2009:72), Southwest Mandarin is the dialectal subdivision of Mandarin dialects (aka Northern Sinitic (北方话 *Beifanghua*)) that is the most widespread geographically, and the largest in terms of number of speakers. It is distributed across nine provinces, ethnic autonomous regions, and municipalities in China, namely all of Sichuan, Chongqing, Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and parts of Hunan, Hubei, Shaanxi and Jiangxi provinces³⁵. For a map of the area it covers, see the map below³⁶. It is spoken by at least 270 million (27,000 *wan*), and altogether spans 549 distinct administrative units, any one of which could be subject to its own linguistic study in the literature. (Choose a delineated administrative area, add 话 *-hua* ‘speech’ to its name, and you have a Chinese dialect by Sinitic tradition³⁷.) Li (*ibid.*) broadly divides the area into six main regions, with 22 subdivisions³⁸.

³⁵ Prior to 1997, Chongqing was part of Sichuan province. At that time it separated to gain municipality status (直辖市 *zhíxiáshì*). In many surveys of the region, especially those before 1997, it is grouped with Sichuan generally.

³⁶ The following map was downloaded from the Wikipedia page for Southwest Mandarin on April 13, 2022 at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=38158346>. The work is creator Fobos92’s own work, with the attribution number CC BY-SA 4.0.

³⁷ This is only slightly in jest. To sample a few of the provinces in Li’s article, there are 157 jurisdictional areas (县市区) in Sichuan, and 156 dialect zones (方言点); there are 82 jurisdictional areas in Guizhou and 82 dialect zones; there are 40 jurisdictional areas (市区县) in Chongqing municipality, and 28 dialect zones. Yunnan’s total is given separately in the article (Li 2009:79), and is about 118 jurisdictional areas, give or take two in neighboring provinces that may or may not be part of that total, while it is listed as having 124 dialect zones. Cui (1996:115-118) gives a full list of 186 dialect zones for Sichuan and Chongqing.

³⁸ Hao and Hu (1985) give a different classification, based on statistical modeling, of only Sichuan dialects, which they divide into six groups, based on eight diagnostic criteria. However, besides being relegated to Sichuan (and Chongqing), they do not seem to include any dialects from Aba or Ganzi. Other studies on subclassification no doubt exist, but I make use of Li’s (2009) article for present purposes. Deng and Zhang (2010:8-11) divide Sichuan into dialectal areas based on three criteria, each resulting in different regional groupings. The first is divided by how dialects have merged the Ru Tone with other tones. They also differentiate areas where there is still a distinct Ru Tone, thus a 5-tone system, which constitutes about 1/3 of the province, plus Chongqing (Deng and Zhang 2010:13). Finally, they distinguish areas where retroflexes have merged with dentals from those where they are



Map 2. Distribution of Southwest Mandarin (西南官话 Xīnán guānhuà)

As explained in 3.4.2, the classification of all Sinitic varieties is largely based on the reflexes of Middle Chinese categories, including four tonal categories each with a high and low register, syllable initial consonants and syllable rhymes. Within the Mandarin dialects (官话方言), the traditional classification of Southwest Mandarin is based on the merger of the historical Ru Tone category with the historical Yangping category. Li (2009:75) does point out, however, that while certain cities in Sichuan, namely Luding (泸定, Tibetan Changsam ལུགས་ཟམ་), Neijiang 内江, Luzhou 泸州 and Xichang 西昌, have the Entering Tone merging with other categories, or maintain it as a distinct tone, as in Luzhou (with the value 33), the four tones of the Chengdu dialect all perfectly correspond with the same four tonal categories of those localities. (The situation in other provinces is comparable to that of Sichuan, as well.)

According to Li (2009:73), with the exception of 九寨沟 Jiuzhaigou in the north (which he concludes is Northwest Mandarin), and the “conservative speech” (老派话 *laopaihua*) of those

distinct. However, for researchers other than Li (2009), it seems that Aba and Ganzi, aside from Luding, two large ethnic autonomous regions, are left out of the picture, with Liangshan being the only majority ethnic region represented.

over 50 years of age in Xichang 西昌市, the seat of Liangshan Autonomous Yi Prefecture, all of the dialects of Sichuan and Yunnan are considered Southwest Mandarin, representing 156 jurisdictional areas³⁹⁴⁰. Li (ibid.74) argues it is harder to establish a logical subclassification within Southwest Mandarin for Chinese dialects of Yunnan, however, owing to the earlier establishment of a native Chinese dialect, successive waves of migration, and the effects of local non-Chinese languages.

Given their close cultural connection historically, Li (2009:76) treats Sichuan and Guizhou collectively as a larger dialectal zone (川黔派西南官话, Chuan-Qian Southwest Mandarin), and within it divides the region into Eastern Shu (西蜀片 Xi-Shu division, using the name of the ancient state of the region—see 3.4.3.2), where the traditional Ru Tone is not read as Yangping, the “bilingual accented area” (双语区带口音) of western Sichuan (川西片 Chuan-Xi division, literally “west of the river”), and the remaining Sichuan-Guizhou area (川黔片 Chuan-Qian division) where the Ru Tone is read as Yangping. In this region, the Yinping is the highest tone value, and the Yangping is the lowest tone value, with the Shang Tone the second highest and the Qu Tone the second lowest.

To more or less translate Li (2009:76) in full: the Eastern Shu area (西蜀片) is at the juncture of Sichuan, Chongqing, Yunnan and Guizhou, and was one of the earliest developed areas, going

³⁹ In Xichang there is a variety of Northern Mandarin called “Henanhua 河南话”, after the northern Chinese province of Henan. According to Cui (1996:135) it is the only dialect in Sichuan where the Yinping is not a low falling tone, rather its value is 52. Furthermore, instead of a high-falling Shang Tone, it has the value 34. And while the Qu Tone is usually low-rising or low-falling-rising, in Xichang its value is 11. The Ru tone value is 31, rather than mid-level or mid-rising, as in other dialects. It is apparently from this set of tonal values, similar to that of Henan dialects, that it is called Henanhua. This similarity to Northern Mandarin apparently has led people from Kangding to call it “fake Beijing dialect (假北京话)”, and the people from Xichang “fake Beijing’ers (假北京人)” (Cui 1996:136). The author further concludes that, indeed, a local student from 郑州 Zhengzhou, the capital of Henan, said it had the feel of a Henan dialect (ibid.).

⁴⁰ Two other exceptions are the “local Cantonese” (土广东话) of Sichuan, which is a Hakka dialect spoken in Sichuan, and the “Old Huguang speech” (老湖广话), which is spoken by earlier immigrants from Hunan (ibid.85). For in-depth analyses of these varieties, see Cui’s (1996) Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, respectively.

back to the Late Han area. However, due to the geographic isolation from so many mountains and rivers, it remained relatively isolated, even during the influx of migrants from the Huguang (present-day Hubei and Hunan provinces) area during the Ming and Qing eras. For example, speakers in this region retained a distinct Ru Tone category, only beginning to gradually lose coda obstruents in the 1950s. Another example is that speakers say the words for ‘rooster’ and ‘hen’, 公鸡 *gōngjī* and 母鸡 *mǔjī* in Standard Mandarin, respectively, as 鸡公 *jīgōng* and 鸡婆 *jīpó*⁴¹.

Li (2009:76) continues: the Western Sichuan area (川西片) lies within the Aba and Ganzi and Liangshan Autonomous Regions, as well as the towns congregated along the major transportation routes connecting them. In this area, Han people can usually speak a little of the local minority languages, and the local minorities are usually bilingual, but speak Chinese with an accent, which is not usually a difference of phonological contrast, but rather an obviously minority-based intonation or accentuation⁴². Locals are quite sensitive to this accent, and often will use it to distinguish whether someone is Han or from a minority group.

Phonologically, this region tends to distinguish nasals from laterals initially, as well as have retroflex onset consonants. Lexically, the most prominent characteristic is in kinship terminology. Though the local minorities all collectively learn Chinese through the education system, they make use of a familial prefix 啊 *a-* from their local languages, adding it to ‘father’,

⁴¹ Stevan Harrell (p.c.) notes that the same word order is true of Yi dialects, and so this may constitute an external, rather than internal, development, regionally.

⁴² 在这些地方, 当地汉族往往会说一些简单的少数民族语言, 少数民族则往往兼通汉语, 但多少带一些少数民族口音, 这种口音通常不是音系意义上的差别, 而是一种听感上很明显的民族语腔调。

‘mother’, ‘older brother’, ‘older sister’, etc. (阿爸 *a-ma*, 阿妈 *a-ba*, 阿哥 *a-ge*, 阿姐 *a-jie*), usually not making use of the local Han kinship terms⁴³.

For Yunnan province, given the long history of settlement, and its own regional independence for much of history, the internal subdivisions of the dialectal groups is much fuzzier. Li (2009:76) divides them into three areas, beginning with the capital area of Kunming, where the Shang tone has the highest pitch value, and the Qu Tone and Yangping both have the lowest, with the Yinping second lowest. Comprised of 昆明 Kunming, 东川 Dongchuan and 玉溪 Yuxi districts, this is the core of the Yunnan group. The next region is around 开远 Kaiyuan, in the southeastern part of the province, part of Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture (红河哈尼族彝族自治州) where the highest tone is Yingping, and the lowest tone is the Qu Tone, while Yangping is second highest, and Shang tone is second lowest. Finally, in the western part of the province is the Baoshan region, where the Shang Tone is highest, and the Yinping is a mid tone, with the Yangping second highest, and the Qu tone second lowest. (See Table 3 below.)

Though the latter two regions’ dialects are quite distinct from that of the Kunming region, they are not so distinct from each other, and so Li (2009) treats them collectively as the Yunnan group of Southwest Mandarin (云南片).

In summary, those localities surveyed in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, and their reflexes of Middle Chinese tonal values, are given in Table 3, from Li (2009:75):

⁴³ Many Tibeto-Burman languages of the region use this prefix in kinship terms, but then so do other Sinitic varieties, for example Cantonese (see Matthews and Yip 1994:374-377). For more on the distinctiveness of Sichuanese kinship terms, not necessarily attributed to language contact, see Deng and Zhang (2010:276-325). Stevan Harrell also points out that speakers usually don’t distinguish between patrilineal and matrilineal relations, especially among generations two levels removed, such as great-grandchildren, for example.

Table 3 Reflexes of Middle Chinese tones in different Southwest Mandarin dialects

	Yinping tone	Yangping tone	Shang tone	Qu tone	Ru tone
Sichuan 四川					
Chengdu 成都	55	21	42	213	merges w/ Yangping
Luding 泸定	55	21	53	24	merges w/ Yinping
Xichang 西昌	44	31	53	33	merges w/ Yangping; a few distinct 21
Neijiang 内江	55	21	42	213	merges w/ Qu tone
Luzhou 泸州	55	21	42	13	33
Yunnan 云南					
Kunming 昆明	44	31	53	212	merges w/ Yangping
Kaiyuan 开远	55	42	33	12	merges w/ Yangping
Baoshan 保山	32	44	53	25	merges w/ Yangping

Working from the above groupings, Li (2009) further subdivides each region into smaller areas, based on their own phonological features. Those subcategorizations pertinent to Sichuan and Yunnan are given below in Table 4:

Table 4 Relevant Regional Subgroupings of Southwest Mandarin

Major Grouping	Subgrouping	Region includes:
川黔 Chuan-Qian	成渝 Cheng-Yu	Sichuan, Chongqing, Guizhou
	黔中 Qian-zhong	Central Guizhou
	陕南 Shaan-nan	Southern Shaanxi
西蜀 Xi-Shu	岷赤 Min-Chi	Sichuan, Chongqing, Guizhou, Yunnan
	雅甘 Ya-Gan	Parts of Liangshan and Ganzê
	江贡 Jiang-Gong	
川西 Chuan-Xi	康藏 Kang-Zang	
	凉山 Liangshan	
云南 Yunnan	滇中 Dian-zhong	Yunnan and Guizhou
	滇西 Dian-Xi	
	滇南 Dian-Nan	Yunnan and Guangxi

The Chuan-Qian group, to which the Chengdu dialect belongs, is the largest, and most typical dialect group, marked by a merger of nasal and lateral initials, loss of /m/ and /ŋ/ codas, loss of

retroflexes, and four tones, with no sandhi (Li 2009:77). The two subgroups that contain the geographic regions profiled in this dissertation, specifically those localities where Daohua, Bai and their neighboring languages are spoken, lie in two regions of Sichuan and Yunnan, respectively, and are the Kang-Zang (康藏, i.e. Kham Tibetan) subgroup of Sichuan and the Dian-Xi (滇西, i.e. Western Yunnan) subgroup of Yunnan. While other features, besides the tonal adaptations discussed above, are given for some of the other subgroupings, such as not distinguishing nasals and laterals initially for Chengyu subgroup, or distinguishing nasals and laterals for the Dian-Zhong subgroup, for the Kang-Zang and Dian-Xi subgroups, aside from having a distinct Ru tone category in the latter, the only characteristics Li (2009:78-79) gives for these subgroups is that they are influenced by the non-Han languages of the two regions.

3.4.3.2 *Historical Background*

The modern province of Sichuan (and municipality of Chongqing, which was carved out from Sichuan in 1997) are part of an area with documented local cultures and polities going back millennia. The most famous were those of the Ba and Shu states (巴蜀国) of the 1st millennium BCE. According to Liu (2012:8), building on Cui (1996), the local language had a pre-Qin and post-Qin era, where the former represented a “non-Hua-Xia” (非华夏语), i.e., non-Chinese, language, and the latter a “Hua-Xia” language (转变为华夏语), or Chinese variety.

Though scattered references in the early record point to different cultural origins of the Ba and Shu kingdoms and the Chinese, due to scant information, we cannot say with any certainty what the language of those kingdoms was like before the in-migration of peoples from Qin began entering the region⁴⁴ (Liu 2012:9). Nonetheless, researchers have sought out traces of

⁴⁴ 如果直到秦国移民进入蜀国，当地百姓能通秦言，那么在此之前的日常交际中肯定不用秦言。到底用什么语言，由于没有文献记载，今天已不可考。

ancient Ba-Shu influence on the culture and dialects of the province, e.g. Cui (1996:55-65) and Liu (2012:4-28), with inconclusive outcomes.

However, Chinese scholars seem in full agreement that beginning from the Qin unification, which brought the Ba and Shu states under Chinese control, a steady in-flow of Chinese people, first as Qin armies, then as commoners, began arriving, and that their culture, carrying a Warring States-era (circa 475-221 BCE) language, began to take hold in the territory formerly held by the Ba and Shu states (Cui 1996:11). By the time that 揚雄 Yang Xiong (53 BCE – 18 CE) recorded some words of the “Shu language” in his famous first century text, 方言 *Fangyan*, the words represented a variety of Chinese from the states of Qin or Jin (which split into the Han and Wei states in the 5th century BCE) (秦晋方言语系) (ibid.12). From then onward, despite internal changes and contact with other dialectal varieties, the language of the region maintained a direct link to that of the language brought with the conquering armies of the Qin emperor in the late 4th century BCE (ibid.13).

From at least the beginning of the Western Han period (202 BCE-9 CE), peoples from China’s interior fled famine and warfare into the area formerly of the states of Shu and Ba to make a living. From the Western Jin period (266-316 CE) onward, records begin to show immigrants from the South, as well (Cui 1996:8), though the majority of Chinese hailed from the north until the end of the Yuan, and thus the major dialectal influence would have been northern dialects (ibid.10). During the Ming Dynasty, immigrants continued to flow into the region, especially from Huguang 湖广, the area of modern Hubei and Hunan, and parts of Guizhou and Guangxi.

Such in-flow of migrants to the areas around modern Chengdu and eastern Sichuan continued throughout the dynasties, such that by the Ming era, the area was a flourishing outpost of the Chinese State. Then, with the collapse of the Ming, and the abandonment of the short-lived

ambitions of the rebel leader Zhang Xianzhong 张献忠, the area was scorched and levelled and left in such disarray that agriculture virtually disappeared, wildlife, including tigers, proliferated, even in the streets of the capital, and the local population dropped by as much as 75% (Whiting et al. 2019; Yuan and Schmitt 2020).

As such, in the early Qing era of the 1600s, the emperor undertook to move people into Sichuan to “open up the wilderness” (招民开垦), resulting in the second “Huguang filling in of Sichuan (湖广填四川)” (ibid.9). The modern forms of Sichuanese were formed from this era onwards, with small pockets of speakers from other regions, including importantly Hakka, existing as islands amid the greater Southwest Mandarin-speaking population. (See 3.4.3.1.)

Cui (1996:107-108) claims that one can date the emergence of Southwestern Mandarin (西南官话) back to the Muslim military general 沐英 Mu Ying (1345-1392), from Henan (now in modern Anhui), and the massive armies he directed in the early Ming, most of them from the North, which secured Yunnan for the newly founded dynasty. As Cui (ibid.) puts it: “In the Ming era Mu Ying pacifies Yunnan and Guizhou, thus Northern dialects penetrate the Southwest. (明代沐英平定云贵，北方话深入西南)”. He sums up the history of Sichuanese by saying:

“We consider Sichuan Mandarin to be brought by outsiders. In the war turmoil and mass migration at the end of the Yuan and beginning of the Ming, a majority of troops from Huguang, with a portion from Henan, Shaanxi and Anhui, and ordinary people came to settle Sichuan.”

我们认为，四川官话是外地人带来的。元末明初的战乱和大移民，大批湖广籍和部分河南籍，陕西籍和安徽籍的军人和平民留居四川。 (Cui 1996:108)

3.4.3.3 *Phonetics and Phonology*

Many of the phoneme inventories for Southwest Mandarin are consistent with Standard Mandarin, with only a few differences. Where they differ most is in which Middle Chinese

series have merged in modern dialects, and whether they retain older categories, such as an initial velar nasal initial or a contrastive MC Ru Tone reflex. Deng and Zhang (2010:12) give a composite phonological inventory based on their surveys, divided into an initials and finals chart. Those charts are reproduced below. Note that glides are included as part of the syllabic rhyme, and thus represented on the chart of syllabic finals.

Table 5 Composite Inventory of All Possible Initials (Onsets) of Sichuanese Dialects

	Bilabials	Labiodentals	Alveolars	Retroflexes	Alveolopalatals	Velars
Stops	p p ^h		t t ^h			k k ^h
Nasals	m		N		ŋ	ŋ
Fricatives		f	s z	ʃ ʒ	ç	x
Affricates			ts ts ^h	tʂ tʂ ^h	tʃ tʃ ^h	

Table 6 Composite Inventory of Finals (syllabic rhymes) of Sichuanese Dialects

		a	æ	ɔ	o	e	ɿ	ə	ai	ei	au	əu	an	ən	aŋ	oŋ
i		ia	iæ			ie			iai		iau	iəu	ian	in	iaŋ	
	u	ua	uæ			ue			uai	uei			uan	uən	uaŋ	
y	yu		yæ		yo	ye							yan	yn		yoŋ

Though the alveolopalatals are included on the above chart without commentary by the authors, I assume that, as in Standard Mandarin, they are not phonemically distinctive. I am nonetheless choosing to keep the inventory charts as presented in the source text, however, to reflect the source. Most areas have 19 or 20 initial consonants, with a few regional varieties (都江堰 Dujiangyan, 彭州 Pengzhou, 新都 Xindu, 西充 Xichong) having at most 24, including the zero initial (Deng and Zhang 2010:12). No dialect has all of the syllabic finals listed on the above chart; the average seems to be about 36, with 黔江 Qianjiang having the most at 40, lacking only /ɔ/ and /iæ/. Liang (1982:71) reports that 屏山 Pingshan has the fewest at 31. He (ibid.77) also claims that very few Sichuan dialects have the retroflex apical vowel, perhaps reflecting the low presence of retroflexes in the region.

Sichuan dialects exhibit very little sandhi phenomena. The authors note three main instances of tone sandhi, occurring for individual tonal categories in nominal reduplication, the exact tone differing by region. The authors also note a number of syllabic contractions in common phrases or compounds, such as 做啥子 ‘what are you doing?’ (SM 干什么 *gàn shénme*), in isolation [tsu²¹³ sa²¹³tsɿ⁵³], more commonly pronounced [tsua²¹³ tsɿ⁵³] (Deng and Zhang 2010:14).

Differences from Putonghua include merger of /n/ and /l/ onsets for most dialects, as well as the merger of retroflex and dental series of onsets. For the latter, even in some areas where the two consonantal series are distinctive, they are only kept so preceding a narrower range of finals than in Putonghua (Deng and Zhang 2010:15). Cui (1996:120) found that out of 134 dialect zones (方言点), 28 of them distinguish retroflex from dental initials, but not all have the full set of /tʂ tʂ^h ʂ/ versus /ts ts^h s/. (Cui 1996:120). Out of those same dialect zones, 11 of them distinguish the *jiantuan* 尖团 series, where Middle Chinese dental sibilants and velars have not merged before high front vowels. Cui (1996:121) also mentions a few dialects that have merged retroflex sibilants with /f/ (similar to dialects in Amdo), as well as one dialect, 阆中 Langzhong, that has merged the syllable /su/ with /fu/. It is also common to find syllables that in Putonghua would be pronounced [xu] pronounced as [fu] in Sichuanese, e.g. 胡 ‘Surname’ [fu] (SM [xu]).

Also, whereas Standard Mandarin entirely lacks velar nasal initials, the sound is retained for many morphemes in Sichuanese⁴⁵, e.g. 爱 ‘love’ [ŋai] (SM [ai⁵¹]), 我 ‘I’ [ŋo] [SM wɔ²¹³], and 藕 ‘lotus’ [ŋəu] (SM [ou²¹³]). Liang (1982:54) notes that the cognate of Mandarin /r/--that is, local

⁴⁵ Where tones are omitted in transcription, it means that they are omitted in the source. Liang (1982) uses a numbering system 1-4, which corresponds with the Middle Chinese tonal categories Yinping, Yangping, Shang and Qu, respectively. He (1982:23) gives their values in the Chengdu dialect as 55, 21, 53 and 213, respectively, and so for data from his book I have converted them from the referential numbers to the pitch values stated here.

reflexes of the Middle Chinese palatal nasal initial (日母)--is realized as either [z] or [n] in the Chengdu dialect⁴⁶. Examples (from Li et al. 1998:20, 218 and 297) include 日 [z²¹] ‘sun’ (SM [z⁵¹]), 软 [zuan⁵³] ‘soft; pliable’ (SM [zuan²¹³]), and 饶 [zau²¹] (SM [zau³⁵])⁴⁷. In some dialects, including the Chengdu dialect, there is an alveolopalatal nasal in morphemes before a high front vowel, as in 你 [ɲi] (SM [ni²¹³]) and 牛 [ɲiəu] (SM [niəu³⁵]) (Deng and Zhang 2010:15; Liang 1982:54-55, 64-65).

Final nasal consonantal contrasts have (partially) merged to a single dental nasal in many dialects, most commonly after the vowels /ə/ and /i/. Beyond that, nasals have deleted from coda position in some dialects (at least in some rhymes) altogether, transferring nasality to the preceding vowel, especially following low vowels (Deng and Zhang 2010:16). A common feature for some dialects is that those syllabic rhymes beginning with a rounded palatal glide have merged with the plain palatal glide, homophonizing morphemes such as 雨 (SM [y²¹³]) ‘rain’ and 以 (SM [ji²¹³]) ‘utilize’, 权 (SM [tɕ^huan³⁵]) ‘power’ and 钱 (SM [tɕ^hian³⁵]) ‘money’ (ibid.) Finally, there are some syllabic rhymes in Putonghua which are missing altogether in many Sichuan dialects, such as /ɻ/ and /uo/, while Sichuan dialects exhibit rhymes not found in Putonghua, sometimes as splits and sometimes as mergers of older rhymes, e.g. /iai/, /ue/, /yo/, /yu/, and /æ/, /iæ/ and /uæ/ in Ru Tone syllables (ibid).

For the most part, tonal categories between Sichuan dialects and Putonghua correspond, except in how the Ru Tone has been distributed among the other Middle Chinese tonal categories. The pitch values for each of the tone categories are also quite similar, except that the traditional Qu Tone and Shang Tone values have reversed from that of Putonghua, resulting

⁴⁶ There are some exceptions, where a Sichuanese /z/ onset corresponds to other onsets in Standard Mandarin, e.g. 挠 [zao²¹] (SM [nao³⁵]) ‘scratch’, 酿 [zan⁵³] (SM [nian⁵¹]), 孕 [zyn²¹³] (SM [yn⁵¹]) (ibid.).

⁴⁷ The tone values in Li et al.’s 1998 dictionary are the same as in Liang (1982) and Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001).

in, for example, the morpheme 买 ‘to buy’ (SM [mai²¹³]) sounding like the morpheme 卖 ‘to sell’ (SM [mai⁵¹]) in dialects like Chengdu or Chongqing (Deng and Zhang 2010:16). See 3.4.3.1 for more general comments, regionally.

In the 1989 Yunnan Gazetteer’s dialect volume, Wu et al. (1989:17-18) list the following general characteristics of western Yunnan dialects, which they ascribe to the Dali, Baoshan and Lincang areas, given in (3-2):

(3-2) Features of Western Yunnan dialects, from Wu et al. (1989:17-18)

1. In many counties, in urban areas /n/ and /l/ are distinguished⁴⁸.
2. In the majority of areas, urban dialects lack a retroflex series, though there is a /z/.
3. Besides Dehong and some parts of Baoshan, all have a /v/ initial.
4. In about a quarter of counties, urban dialects have a velar nasal /ŋ/ initial.
5. In the vast majority of counties, urban dialects have a rounded palatal glide (撮口呼).
6. In most areas, urban dialects lack a rhotacized rhyme /ə/.
7. A fairly large portion of urban dialects have the characteristic rhyme /uɛ/ [uɜ, uə, uʔ, ue], which mainly appears in the reading of characters such as 国 [SM [kuo³⁵]], 或 [SM [xuo⁵¹]], etc.
8. “Rhymes containing nasalized vowels are especially abundant, and the quality of nasalized vowels is very apparent.” (鼻化元音韵母极为丰富，且鼻化音音色十分明显。)
9. “With the exception of Eryuan, Jianchuan, and Shidian, each of the remaining counties’ dialects all have four tones, and the traditional Ru tone has commonly merged with Yangping. Eryuan, Jianchuan, Yunlong and other counties’ dialects all have five tones, viz. Yinping and Yangping Tones, and the Shang, Qu, and Ru Tones. Shidian’s dialects, as well as some townships in Changning and Yun County’s dialects only have three tones, viz. Yinping and Yangping and the Qu Tone.” (除洱源，云龙，施甸外，其余各县方言均为四个声调，古入声字一般归入阳平调类。洱源，剑川，云龙等县方言都是五种声调，即阴平，阳平，上声，去声，入声。施甸县城的方言以及昌宁，云县些乡村的方言，只有三种声调，即阴平，阳平，去声。)
10. Characteristics of initial + final (i.e. onset + rhyme) combinations include that the distribution of the /v/ initial is that it can combine with syllables with no glide and a low back vowel (开口呼) and syllables with no glide and a /u/ vowel (合口呼的 u 韵).

⁴⁸ I translate here as “urban areas” statements like: 市能分区 n, l、市有 ŋ 声母 (ibid.).

The other two characteristics listed are for counties outside of Dali or Lijiang and involve syllabic rhymes before which dental and alveolopalatal onsets merge. The other comments include listing unexpected tonal contours for certain Middle Chinese tonal reflexes in dialects of Baoshan and other locations south of Dali.

Wu et al. (1989:28-30) discuss the phoneme inventory for the Dali dialect. On the one hand, they claim that it has two voiced fricatives /v/ and /z/. While both are common in Southwest Mandarin, the first may not be of phonemic status. My assumption is that it is a phonetic interpolation of the zero-initial, as the illustrative examples always given are of morphemes that both involve a high, back vowel, and in Standard Mandarin would lack an onset consonant. The examples for Dali are 五 ‘five’ (SM [u²¹³]) and 闻 ‘hear’ (SM [uən³⁵])⁴⁹. (No transcription is given for the Dali data, however.) However, more data would be needed to conclude whether this results in an initial contrast otherwise. The /z/, as elsewhere in the Southwest where it appears, seems to be the reflex of the Middle Chinese palatal nasal, the given examples for Dali being 认 ‘recognize’ (SM [zən⁵¹]) and 惹 ‘provoke’ (SM [zɤ²¹³]).

Though in the above inventory the authors list many parts of western Yunnan as distinguishing /n/ and /l/, in the section on the Dali dialect, they claim the two phones are not distinguished, as is common in the region. In keeping with their list, however, they state that Dali lacks a retroflex series of phonemes, having merged it with dentals. Unlike many parts of the province, the rounded and unrounded palatal glide are distinct as syllabic medials. Also, in contrast to their list above, they list the Dali dialect as having only four tones, with the values of Yinping 44, Yangping 31, Shang 53 and Ru 213. The Ru tone has merged mostly with

⁴⁹ For the Kunming dialect (Wu et al. 1989:143) claim it to be the reflex of the Middle Chinese initial categories, 微 w, 疑 ŋ, 喻 j.

Yangping. Finally, they (1989:28, 143) list among the localities with an initial velar nasal (a reflex of the Middle Chinese initials 疑 η and 影 $ʔ$) Dali and Lijiang, with examples such as the first person pronoun 我 (SM $wǒ$), as well as morphemes for ‘nest’ 窝 (SM $wō$), ‘love’ 爱 (SM $ài$) and ‘peace; safety’ 安 (SM $ān$).

Interestingly, the authors have this to say about the effects of the Bai population on the local dialect of Dali:

“In Yunnan province, Dali serves as an area of concentration where the Bai ethnicity live. The Bai language has an abundance of nasal vowel rhymes, which regularly contrast with their corresponding oral rhymes, for example $i-ĩ$, $e-ě$, $a-ǎ$, $o-ō$, $u-ũ$, $iɛ-iě$, $io-iō$, $iɯ-iũ$, $ui-uĩ$, $uɛ-uě$, $uɑ-uǎ$. As a widespread influence, in the Dali dialect there is also an abundance of rhymes with nasalized vowels.

“大理为云南省白族主要聚居地。白语中有丰富的鼻子化元音韵母，与相当同部位的元音韵母形成整齐对应，如 $i-ĩ$, $e-ě$, $a-ǎ$, $o-ō$, $u-ũ$, $iɛ-iě$, $io-iō$, $iɯ-iũ$, $ui-uĩ$, $uɛ-uě$, $uɑ-uǎ$ 等。影响所及，大理方言中亦有丰富的鼻化音韵母。” (Wu et al. 1989:29)

In other words, they attribute the loss of nasal coda consonants, transphonologized to an oral-nasal vocalic contrast, as the result of language contact with Bai speakers, despite this being a fairly common syllabic development, including in neighboring Sichuan. Such is a common tendency in the literature to ascribe contact origins to natural diachronic phenomena (like tonogenesis).

3.4.3.4 *The Noun Phrase*

Deng and Zhang (2010:16-17) claim that Sichuanese dialects are more consistent in their morphosyntax than their phonologies, and that compared to phonology and the lexicon, the differences in grammar from Putonghua are not especially great. They (2010:58-63) give a number of common affixes specific to Sichuanese. These include the prefix 老 $lǎo-$, which, in addition to the same usage in Standard Mandarin, appears before numerals and certain

adjectives to provide an ordinal meaning, such as 老大 *lǎo-dà* ‘the oldest, lit. ‘Old Big’, 老三 *lǎo-sān* ‘third-born, lit. Old-Three’, 老幺 *lǎo-yāo* ‘the youngest’⁵⁰. A number of other addressee forms, which wouldn’t take this affix in Standard Mandarin, do so in Sichuanese, such as 老汉儿 *lǎo-hànr*, ‘father’⁵¹.

There is also the suffix 家 *-jiā*, which can follow most any terms for people to mean that class or group of people. Deng and Zhang (2010:62) provide examples 女人家 *nǚrén-jiā* ‘women’, 娃娃家 *wáwá-jiā* ‘children’. They also mention that it may follow certain time expressions, as well, e.g. 白天家 *báitiān-jiā* ‘daytimes’, 热天家 *rètiān-jiā* ‘hot days’, 往天家 *wǎngtiān-jiā* ‘bygone days’. No exact explanation is given for the latter, but presumably the meaning is that of instances of daytime, or hot days/seasons, eras, etc.

The Chengdu dialect marks plural with a post-nominal 些 *[-cie⁵⁵/ci⁵⁵]*. This is in addition to the plural marker for people, 们 *-men*, which in Chengdu also has the variant 伙 *-huǒ*. The former human plural has a narrower range of application in the spoken language than it does in Putonghua, not usually placed after groups of people such as workers, teachers, etc. (Zhang, Zhang and Deng 2001:48). The latter, 伙 *-huǒ*, has a range somewhere between 们 *-men* and 些 *[-cie⁵⁵/ci⁵⁵]*. For more details, see Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:51-53). Liang (1982:137-

⁵⁰ It is important to note that in this section, and the remaining sections of 3.4.3, the transcription of data is not in any Southwest Mandarin dialect, but rather in Pinyin romanization of Standard Mandarin. This is an unfortunate, but necessary, mechanism, as the source material is all written in Chinese characters. Exact pronunciation, rendered in IPA or some other system, is only included when the source authors felt it necessary to refer to a morpheme’s pronunciation; otherwise source texts would presumably be read in the reader’s native pronunciation of the characters, or more likely in Standard Mandarin, even when reading about non-SM dialects.

When exact pronunciation of local morphemes is given in a text, I include it in the glosses and romanizations in brackets. Otherwise, romanization is in unbracketed, Pinyin orthography, italicized in text, but given in plain font in glossing. Though I sometimes know how a morpheme may differ by personal knowledge, e.g. 下 *xià* pronounced with a velar fricative onset [xɑ], I have only transcribed local pronunciations when they appear in the source. See the Appendix for more information about exact sound values of Pinyin.

⁵¹ The authors include this process in their description of Sichuanese, though since the ordinal usage is possible in Standard Mandarin as well, it’s not clear whether it is to imply such prefixation originates in Southwest Mandarin, or simply for descriptive purposes. The latter example of *lǎo-hànr* for ‘father’ is specific to Sichuan however, based on my inquiry with Chinese native-speakers from outside the area.

138) also emphasizes that the above plural marker 些 [-ɕie⁵⁵/ɕi⁵⁵], in addition to acting as the general quantifier ‘some’, as in Standard Mandarin, may also follow common nouns as a plural marker, shown in (3-3) and (3-4).

(3-3)

娃娃些睡着了

wáwá-xiē shuì-zhe le
child-PL sleep-DUR CS

‘The children are sleeping now.’

孩子们睡着了

(3-4)

把这些东西些搽⁵²起走

bǎ zhè-xiē dōngxī-xiē nǎo-qǐ zǒu
OBJ this-PL thing-PL take-INCH go

‘Take these things and get out of here.’

把这些东西拿走

Such usages do not simply express a small amount of the noun, but rather act as an objective plural form in Sichuan dialects, anywhere from two to many⁵³. A couple more examples are given in (3-5) and (3-6) below (Zhang, Zhang and Deng 2001:42-43).

(3-5)

小伙子些，过来帮个忙

xiǎohuǒzi-xiē, guò-lái bāng gè máng
little.child-PL come.toward help CL work

‘Young man, come here and lend a hand.’⁵⁴

(3-6)

啤酒些点儿都没剩，白酒些也喝光了

píjiǔ-xiē diǎnr dōu méi shèng, báijiǔ-xiē yě hē guāng-le
beer-PL a.bit all NEG left, grain.alcohol-PL also drink complete-PFV

‘There’s not a drop of beer, and the grain alcohol has all been drunk as well.’

⁵² 搽 [nao3] is a dialectal word meaning ‘to clasp’.

⁵³ 表示客观事物的复数，不限于数量不多的量，从两个到很多都可以 (Liang 1982:138).

⁵⁴ I thank Stevan Harrell, who points out that the usage of this nominal usually refers to young males.

For extensions and restrictions on this plural marker in the Chengdu dialect, see Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:42-48), including the fact that it can only occur with indefinite quantification, never definite quantification, thus the ungrammatical phrase in (3-7) (ibid.).

(3-7)

*三个小伙子些

sān-gè xiǎohuǒzi-xiē

3-CL kid-PL

intended: ‘three kids’

In Standard Mandarin, similar in function to the morpho-phonological process 儿化 *er-hua*⁵⁵, a lexically empty morpheme 子 *zi* is added to morphemes to form disyllabic words. The etymological meaning of the morpheme is ‘child’, from which it sometimes derives a diminutive meaning, though many words containing this element lack any diminutive connotation. In Sichuanese, a wider range of nouns than in Standard Mandarin take this second element *zi*, e.g. ‘year’, as in 今年子 *jīnniánzi* ‘this year’, 明年子 *míngniánzi* ‘next year’; ‘tree’ 树子 *shùzi*; and ‘sheep’ 羊子 *yángzi* (Deng and Zhang 2010:18; Deng, Deng and Zhang 2001:20-27; Liang 1982:102-113), where the Standard Mandarin forms would be the same, minus the final 子 *zi*. It may also appear following reduplicated measure words and classifiers, such as 块块子 *kuàikuàizi* ‘something in chunks, pieces or denominations’ (SM 块块东西 *kuàikuài dōngxī*) and 斤斤子 *jīnjīnzi* ‘something per pound’ (SM 成斤重的东西 *chéng jīnzhòng de dōngxī*) (ibid.). In other cases, where Putonghua would use a diminutive suffix or 儿化 *er-hua* for nouns, Sichuan dialects reduplicate (ibid.104-106).

⁵⁵ *Erhua* is a regular process in Mandarin dialects, whereby the syllabic rhyme of a syllable is altered to include a rhotacization of the vowel, often having no specific lexical effect. In the written language, a syllable 儿 *ér* is written after the rhotacized syllable, hence the name, which means literally to ‘*ér-ize*’. The exact phonetic form may differ in some dialects. See Duanmu (2007:Chapter 9) for in-depth analysis, and Duanmu (2007:Chapter 7) for “the word length problem” that empty lexical items like 子 *zi* play a role in.

Compared to Putonghua, Sichuanese reduplication is considerably productive (Deng and Zhang 2010:17; Liang 1982:107-108). Nearly any morpheme can be made into a noun by reduplication, including other nouns (杯杯 *bēibēi* ‘cup’, SM 杯子 *bēizi*; 洞洞 *dòngdòng* ‘hole’, SM 洞 *dòng*), verbs (吹吹 *chuīchuī* ‘a whistle’, from the verb *chuī* ‘to whistle’, SM 哨子 *shàozi*; 数数 *shùshù* ‘number’, from the verb *shù* ‘to count’, SM 数 *shù*), adjectives (方方 *fāngfāng* ‘square’, meaning ‘a square thing’ (方形的东西)) and classifiers (块块 *kuàikuài* ‘something shaped like a chunk’ (块状物)) (ibid.). In the case of nominalization, the second syllable undergoes tone sandhi, whereas if tone sandhi does not occur, then the meaning is one of quantification, meaning ‘every X’, where ‘X’ is the reduplicated morpheme. In many cases, reduplication is accompanied by *er-hua* (ibid.). In some cases, the root morphemes are just entirely different, such as 帕帕 *pàpà* for 手绢儿 *shǒujuànr* ‘handkerchief’ or 函函 *hánhán* for 水坑儿 *shuǐkēngr* ‘puddle’ (Liang 1982:106).

Compounding can differ lexically between Putonghua and Standard Mandarin. In some examples, the constituent elements of the compounds are entirely different between Sichuanese and Standard Mandarin words, though they refer to the same thing. For example, Deng and Zhang (2010:53) provide the following examples in (3-8):

(3-8)

	Standard Mandarin	Sichuanese
‘intelligent’	聪明 <i>cōngmíng</i> smart + bright	精灵 <i>jīnglíng</i> energy + clever
‘quilt’	被子 <i>bèizi</i> quilt + <i>zi</i> ⁵⁶	铺盖 <i>pūgài</i> plank bed + cover
‘fox’	狐狸 <i>húli</i> fox + tanooki	毛狗 <i>máogǒu</i> hair + dog
‘make things difficult’	刁难 <i>diāonàn</i> difficult + hard	弯酸 <i>wānsuān</i> twist + sore
‘drunkard’	醉鬼 <i>zuìguǐ</i> drunk + ghost	酒疯子 <i>jiǔfēngzi</i> alcohol + lunatic
‘cockroach’	蟑螂 <i>zhāngláng</i> roach + roach ⁵⁷	偷油婆 <i>tōuyóupó</i> steal + oil + wife
‘pickpocket’	扒手 <i>páshǒu</i> pick + hand	摸包儿贼 <i>mōbāoerzéi</i> touch + pocket + thief

In other cases, the head element of the compound is the same between Standard Mandarin and Sichuanese, but the modifying element is different. The authors (ibid.54) provide the following examples in (3-9):

(3-9)

	Standard Mandarin	Sichuanese
‘chili pepper’	辣椒 <i>làjiāo</i> spicy + pepper	海椒 <i>hǎijiāo</i> ocean + pepper
‘broad bean’	蚕豆 <i>cándòu</i> silkworm + bean	斗豆 <i>dòudòu</i> join together + bean
‘sticky rice’	糯米 <i>nuòmǐ</i> gooey + rice	酒米 <i>jiǔmǐ</i> alcohol + rice
‘bed sheet; comforter’	被单 <i>bèidān</i> cover + sheet	包单 <i>bāodān</i> wrap + sheet

⁵⁶ See explanation of this morpheme in this section.

⁵⁷ Among the few disyllabic morphemes in Chinese, many of them are of insect names, and sometimes assumed to be loanwords from other languages. In all likelihood, this applies as well to *zhāngláng*. The Chinese tradition, since each syllable will be written with a single character, is to list the composite characters for such disyllabic morphemes separately in a dictionary, with each defined as the meaning of the full “compound” word, or to claim one or the other as a “meaningless bound form”.

Finally, in other instances, the compounds are made of the same elements, but their order may be reversed, as in (3-10) (ibid.). (For some words, the internal ordering in Sichuanese may appear either way, thus sometimes matching the same order as Standard Mandarin, as in the words for ‘rooster’ and ‘hen’.)

(3-10)

	Standard Mandarin	Sichuanese
‘rooster’	公鸡 <i>gōngjī</i> male + chicken	鸡公 <i>jīgōng</i> chicken + male
‘hen’	母鸡 <i>mǔjī</i> female + chicken	鸡母 <i>jīmǔ</i> chicken + female
‘guest’	客人 <i>kèrén</i> guest + person	人客 <i>rénkè</i> person + guest
‘power’	力气 <i>lìqì</i> strength + qi	气力 <i>qìlì</i> qi + strength
‘bustling’	热闹 <i>rènao</i> fervent + noisy	闹热 <i>nàorè</i> noisy + fervent

The authors point out that this reversal of order from Standard Mandarin is common in other Sinitic subgroups, such as Xiang, Yue, Min, Hakka and others (Deng and Zhang 2010:55).

Personal pronouns seem mostly the same, but time references, interrogatives and demonstratives look considerably different. For example, Standard Mandarin 这个时候 *zhège shíhòu*, lit. this-CL time, ‘this time’ or 这会儿 *zhè huìr*, lit. this moment, ‘at the moment’ could be, in Sichuan dialects, 这阵 *zhè zhèn*, and 这下儿 [*ze*²¹³ *her*⁵⁵], respectively (Liang 1982:140). Liang (1982:136-137) also lists over a couple dozen classifiers which quantify different nouns than do their Standard Mandarin counterparts.

As in most sources on Southwest Mandarin, the section on grammar from Wu et al.’s (1989) gazetteer on Yunnan dialects begins with the statement that local dialects are for the most part consistent with Standard Mandarin grammar (与普通话大体一致) (Wu et al. 1989:493). Many of the affixes listed by Wu et al. (1989:494-496) are also mentioned in the sources on Sichuan

dialects reviewed above. Two examples I had not noticed for Sichuanese include the prefix 写 [-ɕi⁵³]~[-ɕiæ⁵³] (Standard Mandarin [ɕiɛ²¹³] ‘to write’), which appears before names for seniors or before pet names, and the suffix 首 [-ɕəu⁵³] (Standard Mandarin [ɕəu²¹³] ‘head; chief’), which follows nouns to indicate location, time or position, as in 家首 [tɕiæ⁴⁴-ɕəu⁵³] ‘at home’, 夜首 yè-[-ɕəu⁵³] ‘at night’, and so on⁵⁸.

Wu et al. (1989:497-499) claim that reduplication in Yunnan dialects is also more widespread than Standard Mandarin, with some constructions that are not found in the latter. Many of the patterns are similar to those given for Sichuan dialects, including for nouns, adjectives and verbs. See the next section, 3.4.3.5, for examples of verbal and adjectival reduplication patterns.

Finally, there are apparently more pronouns in Yunnan varieties for expressing politeness, and in the Kunming dialect, the morpheme for ‘family’, [tɕiæ⁴⁴], may follow the pronoun to show respect, as in 你家 [ni⁵³ tɕiæ⁴⁴], 他家 [t^hə⁴⁴ tɕiæ⁴⁴], 你家们 [ni⁵³ tɕiæ⁴⁴ mə] (Wu et al. 1989:500). There are also differences in the lexical forms used for interrogative and demonstrative pronouns (ibid.501-503).

3.4.3.5 *The Verb Phrase*

It is probably in descriptions of the verb phrase that accounts of Southwest Mandarin show the greatest proliferation of topics, especially in discussing aspect. Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:57) list nine aspect categories of the Chengdu dialect: inchoative or incipient aspect 起始体, futuritive aspect 将然体, 先行体 (contingent aspect—shows a connection between actions, where the marked action depends on or emerges from the first), durative aspect 持续体, perfective aspect 已然体, experiential aspect 经历体, iterative aspect 反复体, delimitative

⁵⁸ Given their statements in (3-2), it is surprising to see the transcribed retroflexes in Wu et al.’s data.

aspect 短时体, and 尝试体 (attemptive aspect). Each of these aspects are built from a combination of the verb and auxiliaries and different degrees of reduplication, and for each labelled aspect given by Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:Chapter 4), there are multiple variations on that pattern, some involving different combinations of auxiliaries. For purposes of space, I will not attempt to illustrate all 27 possible permutations they give for expressing aspectual meaning in the Chengdu dialect, but only highlight a few here.

It is worth noting, however, that Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001) never make the claim that Sichuan dialects plainly utilize the common Standard Mandarin aspect morphemes 了 *le*, 着 *zhe* or 过 *guo*. It is not clear to me whether this is because the authors felt there was nothing distinctive about such forms in Sichuanese worth mentioning, or because they are genuinely lacking⁵⁹. As mentioned below, Wu et al. (1989) claim they are used in Yunnan dialects, and they do appear in a few example sentences illustrating other features of Sichuan dialects, which implies the former. Nonetheless, no author treats them directly in a description of Sichuanese.

One form, the experiential, seems to be formed simply of the verb and *guo*, as it would be in Standard Mandarin. But while *le* appears in a number of structures, no examples of V-*le*, or V-*zhe*, are given by Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001), or by other authors. The durative, for its part, is formed in a number of distinctive ways, utilizing preverbal (正)在 (*zhèng*)*zài*, as it sometimes does in Mandarin, or with a post-verbal 走(走) *zǒu*(*zǒu*), which is reduplication of the morpheme meaning ‘to walk; to leave’. To illustrate just a sample of the constructions described by Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:55-89), examples are given in (3-11) - (3-15).

⁵⁹ Stevan Harrell (p.c.) concludes that it is the former: nothing distinctive.

(3-11) Durative 倒(得) [tau⁵³]

老刘在喝倒茶得

lǎo-liú	zài-hè-[tau ⁵³]	chá	dé
Old-Liu	DUR-drink-DUR	tea	DUR

'Old Liu is drinking tea.'

cf. Standard Mandarin

老刘在喝着茶呢

Lǎo-liú	zài-hē-zhe	chá	ne
Old-Liu	DUR-drink-DUR	tea	DUR

'Old Liu is drinking tea.'

(3-12) Experiential 过

昨天下午我去找你过

zuótiān	xiàwǔ	wǒ	qù	zhǎo	nǐ	guò
yesterday	afternoon	1SG	go	search	2SG	EXP

'Yesterday afternoon I went looking for you.'

(3-13) Prior 哆 [to⁵⁵]

你不要着急，你听我先说完了哆

nǐ	bùyào	zhāojí, nǐ	tīng	wǒ	xiān	shuō	wán	liǎo-[to ⁵⁵]
2SG	NEG.IMPER	worry	2SG	listen	1SG	before say	end	complete-PRIOR

'Don't be in such a rush. Let me finish what I'm saying first.'

(3-14)

你等一下，我把电视剧看完了哆

nǐ	děng	yíxià, wǒ	bǎ	diànshìjù	kàn	wán	liǎo-[to ⁵⁵]
2SG	wait	a.little	1SG	OBJ	TV.program	watch end	complete-PRIOR

'Wait a moment—once I'm finished with this TV show, then we'll talk.'

你等一下，我把电视剧看完了再说 (Deng and Zhang 2010:19-20)

(3-15) Short-term V 几 V

一个大企业，他几搞几搞就搞垮了

yī-gè dà	qǐyè,	tā	jǐ-gǎo-jǐ-gǎo	jiù	gǎo	kuǎ-le
one-CL big	company,	3SG	short.term-do-short.term-do	then	do	crumble-PFV

'Such a big company, and he in no time at all destroyed it.'

Other than the overlap with Standard Mandarin mentioned above, the durative is expressed, among other means, as in (3-16) and (3-17):

(3-16)

老师站倒讲， 学生坐倒听

lǎoshī zhàn-dào jiǎng, xuéshēng zuò-dào tīng
teacher stand-DUR teach student(s) sit-DUR listen

'[As] the teacher stands teaching, the students sit listening.'

老师站着讲， 学生坐着听 (Deng and Zhang 2010:19)

(3-17)

这个雨下不起走， 风一吹又没得影子了

zhègè yǔ xià bù qǐzǒu, fēng yī chuī yòu méidé yǐngzi le
this-CL rain fall NEG DUR wind one blow also NEG trace PFV

'This rain won't continue, since not a trace will be left when the wind blows.' (ibid.:68)

Finally, one rather prominent aspectual pattern is V 得有 *déyǒu* Obj, formed of a post-verbal potential morpheme and the existential, is described as mainly showing that an action has already taken place, and its effects are still felt (Zhang, Zhang and Deng 2001:71), i.e. perfect aspect, or as the Sichuanese equivalent of both Mandarin perfective aspect (了 *le*) and durative aspect (着 *zhe*) (Liang 1982:100). This structure is clearly utilized in the Daohua language, as discussed in 5.2.4.3 and 5.2.6.3. Examples of perfect usage are given in (3-18) and (3-19), while the equivalent of the Mandarin durative are given in (3-20) and (3-21):

(3-18)

你带得有火柴莫得

nǐ dài-dé-yǒu huǒchái mò-dé
2SG bring-POT-EXIS firewood NEG-POT

'Have you brought the firewood?'

你带了火柴没有

(Liang 1982:142)

(3-19)

我带得有(火柴)

wǒ dài-dé-yǒu (huǒchái)
1SG bring-POT-EXIS (firewood)

'I brought it.'

我带了

(ibid.)

(3-20)

柱子上刻得有花纹

zhùzi-shàng kè-dé-yǒu huāwén

post-on carve-POT-EXIS design

'There's a design carved on the post.'

柱子上刻有花纹

(Liang 1982:143)

(3-21)

水果头含得有多种维生素

shuǐguǒ-tóu hán-dé-yǒu duō zhǒng wéishēngsù

fruit-inside contain-POT-EXIS many kind vitamin

'Fruit has many kinds of vitamins.'

水果里含有多种维生素.

(ibid.)

The above structure of V 得有 *déyǒu*, like other Southwest Mandarin syntactic configurations, makes use of the common functional morpheme 得 *de*. In Standard Mandarin 得 *de* serves a variety of grammatical structures in the standard language, appearing in potential constructions (both declarative and interrogative) and as a complementizer to a post-verbal complement. As the pronunciation of all these functions are the same, some authors assume it to be the same morpheme as the subordinator 的 *de*, and the adverbializer 地 *de*, though all three are written with distinct characters in the modern language. (Historically they were all written as 的 *de*. See Wiedenhof (2015) for a summary.) I generally gloss it here as POT, following its more common usage.

Some of the aspect configurations given by authors correspond to more than one aspect structure in Standard Mandarin, perhaps implying the individual morphemes' primary function isn't always to morphologically mark aspect, but rather that aspectual meaning emerges compositionally from the grammar and lexical content. For example, Liang (1982) gives the following description of two aspect configurations. The first is the pattern already illustrated in (3-11) above, which he describes as sometimes acting like SM aspect durative *zhe*, as in (3-22),

other times like SM resultative constructions of 到 *dào* or 着 *zháo*, as in (3-23), and other times like SM completive resultative 了 *liǎo*, as in (3-24) (Liang 1982:147-150).

(3-22)

我们说倒耍的

wǒ-men shuō-dào shuǎ-de
1-PL talk-DUR play-SUB

'We hung out while talking.'

我们说着玩的

(3-23)

他捉倒五个丁丁猫儿

tā zhuō-dào wǔ-gè dīngdīngmāor
3SG catch-RES five-CL dragonfly

'He caught five dragonflies.'

他捉到五个蜻蜓

(3-24)

他管不倒那么多

tā guǎn-bù-dǎo nàme duō
3SG mind-NEG-CMPL that much

'He doesn't mind that much.'

他管不了那么多

Another structure illustrated by Liang (1982:151-156) is V 起 *qǐ*, where it serves the same function as Standard Mandarin directional complements, 上 *shàng* 'up' and 下 *xià* 'down', or as the SM directional complement that, among other things, also doubles as an inchoative auxiliary, 起来 *qǐlái*, as in (3-25) - (3-27).

(3-25)

他闭起眼睛乱说

tā bì-qǐ yǎnqíng luànshuō
3SG close-INCH eyes talk.nonsense

'With his eyes closed, he spoke a bunch of nonsense!'

他闭着眼胡说

(3-26)

人些都坐起了

rén-xiē dōu zuò-qǐ-le
person-PL all sit-INCH-PFV

‘Everyone has sat down.’

人们都坐下了

(3-27)

把你的东西收拾起

bǎ nǐ-de dōngxī shōu jiǎn-qǐ
OBJ 2SG-GEN thing receive pick-INCH

‘Gather your stuff up.’

把你的东西收起来

A construction not found in Standard Mandarin, but common in Sichuanese is the use of the morpheme 过 *guò* ‘(pass) through’ before a verb or verb phrase to mean ‘using the method of V’, as in (3-28):

(3-28)

排骨过炖，不过烤

páigǔ guò-dùn, bù guò-kǎo
spare.ribs via-stew, NEG via-roast

‘The ribs are cooked by stewing, not by roasting.’

排骨用炖的方法加工，不用烤的方法加工

(Deng and Zhang 2010:20)

Liang (1982:115) notes the use of 等 *děng* as a causative converb, as in (3-29):

(3-29)

莫等他晓得了

mò děng tā xiǎo-dé-le
NEG.IMPER CAUS 3SG know-POT-PFV

‘Don’t let him know.’

别让他知道了

Sichuan dialects also possesses a number of verbal classifiers, which quantify iterations of an action (e.g. English ‘a round’, ‘a tour’, ‘a trip’, etc.), not found in Standard Mandarin, for example 一道 *yī-dào*, as in (3-30) and (3-31) (Liang 1982:139):

(3-30)

昨天我去看过他一道 (cf. SM 一次 *yī-ci*)
zuótiān wǒ qù kàn-guò tā yī-dào
yesterday 1SG go see-EXP 3SG one-CL
'Yesterday I went around to see him.'

(3-31)

这本书我只看过一遍 (cf. SM 一遍 *yī-biàn*)
zhè-běn shū wǒ zhǐ kàn-guò yī-dào
this-CL book 1SG only read-EXP one-CL
'This book I've only read one time.'

Adjectives may take a number of forms when used as a predicate that do not appear in Standard Mandarin. For the morpheme 白 [pe²] 'white', Deng and Zhang (2010:20) give the examples 讯白 *xùn* [pe²] 'very white' (SM 很白 *hěn bái*), 白生生 [pe²] *shēngshēng* 'fairly white' (SM 较白 *jiào bái*, positive connotation (含褒义)), 白瓦瓦 [pe²] *wǎwǎ* 'fairly white' (SM 较白 *jiào bái*, negative connotation (含贬义)), 白普普 [pe²] *pǔpǔ* 'faded; blanched' (SM 泛白 *fàn bái*, negative connotation), and 刷白 *shuà* [pe²] 'very white, usually referring to paleness of face' (SM 很白 *hěn bái*, 多指面无血色的样子).

Another reduplication pattern forms adjectives from morpheme collocations in the form AABB. Examples include 高高长长 *gāogāochángcháng* 'having a tall and slim stature' (身材瘦长的样子), 呵呵哄哄 *hēhēhōnghōng* 'to fool; deceive' (欺骗, 糊弄), as well as forming adjectives from preexisting disyllabic adjectives, such as 清清楚楚 *qīngqīngjìngjìng* 'very quiet' (很安静) (ibid.18). See Deng and Zhang (2010:72-87); Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:135-155); Zha (2008:65-93) for further analysis and many more examples of such patterns.

Sichuan dialects in general have more disyllabic or trisyllabic adjectives than does Standard Mandarin, where similar words might consist of a monosyllabic adjective and an added intensifier or a post-adjectival complement construction, e.g. Sichuanese 焦(吧)湿

jiāo([p^ha⁵⁵])*shī* ‘very damp’⁶⁰, which in Mandarin would be rendered 很湿 *hěn shī* ‘very damp’ or 湿得很 *shī-dé hěn* ‘damp-COMP very’ (Liang 1982:133). On the other hand, some adverbials, such as 非常 *fēicháng* ‘very; much’ are shortened to one syllable in Sichuan dialects, becoming simply 非 *fēi*, as in 非冷 *fēi lěng* ‘very cold’, 非热 *fēi rè* ‘very hot’, 非辣 *fēi là* ‘very spicy’ (ibid.). Other examples include those from Liang (1982:134) in (3-32):

(3-32)

满秋秋 [men²¹³ qiou⁵⁵ qiou⁵⁵], in Standard Mandarin 满等等 *mǎn děng děng* ‘full’

烂噜噜 [p^ha⁵⁵ nu⁵⁵ nu⁵⁵], in Standard Mandarin 软乎乎 *ruǎn hū hū* ‘very soft’

白卡卡 [pe²¹ k^ha⁵³ k^ha⁵³], in Standard Mandarin 苍白 *cāngbái* ‘pale; pallid’

Other reduplicated suffixes, which add a “different degree of objective quality or state” to the adjective⁶¹, include 稀稀 *xīxī* and 甃甃 *sōusōu*, for example 瓜稀稀 *xīxī* ‘a bit stupid’, 懒稀稀 *lǎn-sōusōu* ‘a bit lazy’ (Liang 1982:135).

Sichuan dialects differ in negation from Standard Mandarin in a few ways. Though no authors I read discuss it explicitly, it is common from example sentences that the word 莫得 (SM *mòdé*) often appears as a negator to existential/possessives. In Li’s (1998:183) dictionary, several definitions are given for the negator 莫/没得 *mòdé*, the first three of which are given below⁶²:

【没得】 *mei⁵⁵ te²¹* = 【莫得】 *mo²¹ te^{21>55}* = 【没有】 *mei²¹³ iəu⁵³* ① 表示“领有，具有”等的否定：~钱 | ~路走 [Translation: Expresses the negation of “to have, to possess”, etc.: ~money | ~a path] ② 表示存在的否定：屋顶里~人 [Translation: Expresses negation of existence: ~ people (SM: on) the rooftop] ③ 用在“哪个”前面，表示“没有谁”：~哪个喊叫他这个样子做....[Translation: Used before “which one”, expresses “there is nobody”: ~who calls for him (SM: calls after) in this way]

⁶⁰ As mentioned in 3.4.3.7, this morpheme is unique to Sichuan dialects, its literal meaning being ‘rotten’.

⁶¹ 有的形容词后缀表现了客观事物性质或状态的不同成都

⁶² I have converted IPA tone letters to Chao numerals, but otherwise reproduced the original text as near to the original as typographically possible.

Ma (2012:238) also gives a definition for 没得 (transliterated as *modei*) that means ‘there is no; none’ (没有, 无). Ma claims it to be interchangeable with 莫得 *mòdé* mentioned above. An example sentence is given in (3-33) below:

(3-33)

除了钱没得, 啥子都好说.

chúle	qián	méidé,	sházi	dōu	hǎo-shuō
besides	money	NEG.EXIS	anything	all	good-say

‘Other than my not having money [to give you], we can talk about anything else.’

Furthermore, Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:312-313) discuss a dialectal use of 不兴 *bùxīng* in the Chengdu dialect, where it appears pre-verbally to indicate that the action did not take place (but it should have)⁶³, as in (3-34) below:

(3-34)

你不兴多吃点儿嘛, 等下要饿肚皮的

nǐ	bùxīng	duō	chī	diǎner	ma,	děngxià	yào	è	dùpí	de
2SG	NEG	more	eat	a.bit	PTCL	wait.until	will	hunger	belly	PFV?

‘Since you haven’t eaten much, later on you’re going to be starving.’

For Yunnan dialects, in terms of aspect marking, besides making use of the same morphemes as Standard Mandarin, 了 *le*, 着 *zhe* and 过 *guo* (see Appendix 9.3), Yunnan dialects also mark aspect with morphemes such as 掉 [tə]/[tɿ²¹²], 得 [tə³³] and 倒 [tɿ⁵³] (Wu et al. 1989:493-494). The first, which has the lexical meaning ‘to drop’, illustrated in (3-35), marks an event as having already passed (已经过去), and is used together with *le*. The second, with the lexical meaning of ‘to get; obtain’, illustrated in (3-36), expresses an event in immediate action (正在进行). And the third, meaning ‘to turn over; to fall’, illustrated in (3-37), similar to the Sichuanese data

⁶³ I thank Zhao Runhua (p.c.) for explaining the subtler connotation in this usage.

illustrated in (3-11) and (3-22), expresses a durative aspect, similar to Standard Mandarin 着 *zhe* (持续进行, 相当于普通话得“着”).

(3-35)

他昨天走掉了

tā zuótiān zǒu diào le
3SG yesterday go PFV CS

He already left yesterday.

他昨天已经走了

(3-36)

他们开得会

tā-men kāi-dé huì
3-PL hold-PROG meeting

They're holding a meeting.

他们开着会

(3-37)

他背倒书包走了

tā bèi-dào shūbāo zǒu-le
3SG back-DUR bookbag leave-PFV

He left carrying his bookbag on his back.

他背着书包走了

Wu et al. (1989:499) also note that Yunnanese does not have the same Standard Mandarin “delimitative aspect” (Li and Thompson 1988:232-236, see Appendix 9.3) pattern of A — A (A-*yī*-A), where the optional number one from the pattern has completely deleted in local Yunnan dialects. One interesting pattern mentioned involve A 了 A (A *le* A) for adjectives, which emphasizes the degree of the adjective, as in 坏了坏 *huài-le-huài* ‘quite spoiled’, 香了香 *xiāng-le-xiāng* ‘quite fragrant’, and so on.

Wu et al. (1989:494) list a “characteristic” property of Yunnan dialects, where the coda of the verb is lengthened, and a low rising tone is used in place of the lexical tone, to express that an

action has already completed⁶⁴. An example is given in the following exchange in (3-38), where the verb form 洗[çi⁵³] becomes [çi:²¹³] in the reply (ibid.).

(3-38)

咯洗[çi⁵³]衣裳了

[kə⁵³] [çi⁵³] yīshang-le

Q wash clothes-PFV

'Did you wash the clothes?

洗衣服了吗?

洗[çi:²¹³]了

[çi:²¹³] le

wash PFV

'I have (washed them).'

已经洗了

Local Yunnan dialects have the negator 冇 (in Kunming, pronounced [məu⁵³]), as well as 不有 (pronounced in Dali as the fused form [piəu⁵³]), corresponding to Standard Mandarin negators 没 *méi* and 没有 *méiyǒu* (See Appendix 9.4). They are illustrated by Wu et al. (1989:505) in the following exchange in (3-39):

(3-39)

老张咯来了?

lǎo zhāng [kə⁵³] lái-le

Old-Zhang Q come-PFV

'Did Old Zhang come?'

老张来了吗?

冇来

[məu⁵³] lái

NEG come

'He didn't (come).'

没来或没有来

Or

不有来

[piəu⁵³] lái

NEG come

⁶⁴ 用动词尾音得延长上升来表示动作已经完成

‘He didn’t (come).’
没来 或 没有来

3.4.3.6 *Constituent Order and Syntax*

Like Standard Mandarin, but unlike the dialects of Amdo, or the language Daohua, Southwest Mandarin seems to be a predominantly SVO language, as does the Bai language. However, also like Standard Mandarin, there are SOV structures common in the language. (See 4.3.1.3 for discussion of SOV structures in Standard Mandarin in the context of Amdo Chinese syntax.) I did not find any sources comparing their percentage of syntactic configurations in the dialects overall (such as Yang (2015) does for the Gangou dialect, cited in 7.2.4.1, or Xu (2017) does for Tangwang and Wutun, discussed in 7.3.2), but Stevan Harrell (p.c.) considers them more common than in the standard language, generally. Finally, authors that provide syntactic structures unique to Southwest Mandarin often do so in a rather list-inclined fashion, most of which are either to indicate aspect (see 3.4.3.5 for such examples), or to form interrogatives, as discussed below.

As already noted in 3.4.3.5, a common morpheme found in many of the syntactic structures of Southwest Mandarin is 得 (SM *de* [tɿ³⁵/tə]). (Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:376-398) devote an entire chapter to it in the Chengdu dialect, which they transcribe⁶⁵ as [te²¹].) In Sichuanese dialects, there is a general extension of the morpheme’s usage, often occurring with reduplicated verbal morphemes. As stated in 3.4.3.5, given that its primary function in Standard Mandarin is within potential structures, I am glossing it in this section as POT (potential). In many usages, however, it appears as an empty element, forming part of the verb, while in others it indicates a voluntary verbal action. Examples from Deng and Zhang

⁶⁵ Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001) use the same tonal transcription as Liang (1982), with the same values. I adapt it for transcriptions the same way I did for Liang’s, as described in footnote 45.

(2010:61) include 听得 *tīngdé* ‘can hear’ (可以听), 没得 *méi dé* ‘not have; not be’ (没有), 要得 *yàodé* ‘can; able to’ (可以) and 只得 *zhǐdé* ‘only have’ (只有).

There is a variety of ways to form yes/no interrogatives particular to Southwest Mandarin, which receive much attention in the literature. Liang (1982) lists the following in (3-40) - (3-42):

(3-40) Interrogatives with V 得不⁶⁶

我来得不

wǒ lái-dé bù
1SG come-POT NEG

‘Can I come?’

我能来吗 或 我能来不能来 或 我来得来不得

(Liang 1982:143)

(3-41) Interrogatives with 得不得 V

他得不得来

tā dé-bù-dé lái
3SG POT-NEG-POT come

‘Will he come?’

他回不回来

(Liang 1982:145)

(3-42) V 得来 V(不来), or V 得来不

你做得来(做)不(来)

nǐ zuò-dé-lái (zuò)-bù(-lái)
2SG do-POT-come (do-)NEG(-come)

‘Do you know how to do it?=(Are you able to do it?)’

你会做不会做

(Liang 1982:146)

Another interrogative structure, also for inquiring of future possibility, is 得不得 V (*dé-bù-dé*

V), as in (3-43):

(3-43)

他得不得走了

tā dé-bù-dé zǒu le
3SG POT-NEG-POT leave PFV/CS

‘Is it possible that he’s already left?’

他会不会已经走了

⁶⁶ The interrogative in (3-40) above is also illustrated for Yunnan dialects by Wu et al. (1989:512).

Also, a variation on this sentence pattern involves a sentence-final tag particle following the object, as in (3-44) (Liang 1982:147):

(3-44)

你唱得来这些新歌不

Nǐ	chàng-dé-lái	zhè-xiē	xīngē	bù
2	sing-POT-come	this-PL	new.song	NEG

‘Do you know how to sing these new songs?’

你会唱这些新歌吗

Liang (1982) lists two verbal structures common in Sichuan dialects, each of which involve post verbal or post stative expressions of degree. The first has the form V/Adj 很了 *hěnle*, and expresses the degree to which the verb or adjective applies, or simply the notion of ‘too much’. It is illustrated in (3-45). The other verbal structure has the form V/Adj 惨了 *cǎnle* and appears quite similar, though most examples given by Liang seem to imply a negative connotation, perhaps stemming from the semantics of the morpheme 惨 *cǎn* ‘tragic’. A positive example is given in (3-46), which implies the construction is used like English ‘terribly’.

(3-45)

你不要累很了

nǐ	bùyào	lèi	hěn-le
2SG	NEG.IMPER	tired	very-PFV

‘Don’t get too tired.’

你别太累了

(Liang 1982:158)

(3-46)

这本书好惨了

zhè-běn	shū	hǎo	cǎn-le
this-CL	book	good	tragic-PFV

‘This book is terribly good.’

这本书好极了

(Liang 1982:159)

In Sichuan dialects, the morpheme 脱 *tuō* ‘remove’ may serve as a resultative complement.

This is only possible in a few Standard Mandarin verbal collocations, such as 摆脱 *bǎituō*

‘remove; get rid of’, 跳脱 *tiàotuō* ‘extricate; escape’, etc. Examples include (3-47) and (3-48):

(3-47)

他把东西拿脱了

tā bǎ dōngxī ná-tuō-le

3SG OBJ thing take-remove-PFV

‘He failed to bring his things.’

他把东西拿掉了

(Liang 1982:159)

(3-48)

他逃不脱他的手板心

tā táo-bù-tuō tā-de shǒubǎn xīn

3SG evade-NEG-remove 3-POSS palm heart

‘He cannot free himself from his [someone else’s] hand.’

他逃不出他的手心

(ibid.)

Sichuanese uses the morpheme 着 [tsau²¹], also written 遭, to mark the passive voice. This is, in fact, a continued use of the morpheme’s older meaning, ‘to run into (a bad situation)’ (遭遇到(不好的事情)). Deng and Zhang (2010:21) give the following example sentence, where

(3-49) shows the older usage of the morpheme, and (3-50) the passive voice construction:

(3-49)

地震的时候, 他们家的人没着, 只是房子着垮了⁶⁷

dìzhèn de shíhòu, tā-men jiā-de rén méi [tsau²¹],
earthquake SUB time, 3-PL family-GEN person NEG encounter,
zhǐ shì fángzi [tsau²¹] kuǎ le
only COP house encounter crumble PFV

‘When the earthquake happened, no one in their family was harmed, only the house caved in.’

⁶⁷ There is, perhaps, a telling point of interest in the written Chinese here. A friend from Chongqing (Zhou Shiwei, p.c.), who was helping me confirm translations throughout, felt it incorrect to use the character 着 in this sentence, which is of course an aspect marker in Standard Mandarin, rather than the character 遭, which indicates the negative, verbal meaning. There are many ways to interpret this, but the facts are that Deng and Zhang (2010:21), noting that the pronunciation of the passive marker in Sichuanese is the same as both the pronunciation of the verb meaning ‘to run into a bad situation’ and the Standard Mandarin aspect morpheme, used the character for the latter, even when the meaning was clearly lexical. The fact that the Sichuan dialect has no standardized

(3-50)

杯子着(他)打烂了

bēizi [tsau²¹] (tā) dǎ làn le
cup PASS (3SG) hit break PFV

'The cup was broken (by him).'

杯子被(他)打烂了。(Deng and Zhang 2010:21)

Deng and Zhang (2010:22) also give examples of differences from Standard Mandarin involving features of the direct and indirect object, including an opposite ordering of direct and indirect objects, given in (3-51) and (3-52), and the lack of auxiliary verb 给 *gěi* 'give', where it would be obligatory in the standard language, as in (3-53) and (3-54):

(3-51) V DO IO

给本书他

gěi běn-shū tā
give CL-book 3SG

'give him a book'

(3-52)

送朵花他

song duǒ-huā tā
send CL-flower 3SG

'send him some flowers'

(3-53)

拿支笔他

ná zhī bǐ tā
take CL brush 3SG

'take a brush from him'

(3-54)

借 100 块钱他

jiè 100 kuài qián tā
loan 100 bill money 3SG

'loan him 100 yuan'

written tradition makes the choice of characters a possible point of contention. This is surely a common issue in writing about Chinese dialects, in Chinese.

From the description in Wu et al. (1989:493-516), syntactic properties of Yunnan dialects look similar to those of Sichuan. The passive construction with 着, pronounced [tʂo²¹] locally, is the same as in Sichuan (ibid.508). They also list various examples of prepositions, besides the passive marker, as well as nominal and verbal classifier collocations, that differ from Standard Mandarin (Wu et al. 1989:504).

For word order, Wu et al. (1989:511-514) provide four main syntactic constructions in Yunnan dialects that differ in word order, or other properties, from Standard Mandarin. These include yes/no questions, negative statements, sentences where the object of the verb serves as the subject (受事主语句) and sentences where predicate adjectives (谓词修饰) serve as sentential complements (述补). As I did for Sichuan dialects, I will focus here on the yes/no question patterns, as well as the negator patterns.

There is an interesting dialectal morpheme for Yunnan interrogatives, the question particle, 咯 [kə⁵³]⁶⁸, which generally precedes the predicate. This takes the place of the Standard Mandarin question particle 吗 *ma*, which is invariantly sentence-final in that dialect. Examples are given in (3-55)-(3-57) (Wu et al. 1989:511-512).

(3-55)

他们咯来

tā-men [kə⁵³] lái

3-PL Q come

'Did they come?'

他们来吗 或 他们来不来

⁶⁸ The character used to write this morpheme is not found in Standard Mandarin. I noticed online it is written as 各, which is read homophonously. The form given matches the Kunming pronunciation (see Gui 2000:33). However, a colleague from northeastern Yunnan, where it is pronounced [kei], tells me she and her friends often type it with the character for the 'give' verb, 给 SM [kei²¹³] Jieyu Zhou (p.c.).

(3-56)

水咯开了

shuǐ [kə⁵³] kāi-le

water Q boil-PFV

'Has the water started boiling?'

水开了吗? 或 水开了没有?

(3-57)

他咯还掉书了

tā [kə⁵³] hái diào shū le

3SG Q return PFV book CS

'Has he returned the book?'

他还了书了吗?

Wu et al. (1989:512) give two types of special negation structures in Yunnan dialects, the second having four different functions. The first has the form Verb + 不来 *bù lái*, and indicates that someone will not or does not do something, as in (3-58). The second, with the form Verb + 不得 *bù dé* can mean that someone is not good at doing something, as in (3-59), that someone cannot do something, as in (3-60), that someone has not done something, as in (3-61), or that some person's behavior, or some kind of thing, is not satisfactory⁶⁹, as in (3-62).

(3-58)

讲不来

jiǎng bù lái

talk NEG come

'will not talk'

不会讲

(3-59)

记不得

jì bù dé

remember NEG POT

'memory is not good'

记忆不好

⁶⁹ 对某人得行为或某种事物不满意

(3-60)

吃不得

chī bù dé
eat NEG POT

'cannot eat'

不能吃

(3-61)

晓不得

xiǎo bù dé
know NEG POT

'does not know'

不知道

(3-62)

听不得

tīng bù dé
hear NEG POT

'doesn't sound good; sounds strange'

不爱听, 听不惯

Finally, Wu et al. (1989:515) list three types of sentences they claim are the result of influence from “brethren minorities” (兄弟民族), the first in Dali and the latter two in 云龙 Yunlong, just outside of Dali. The first, illustrated in (3-63) and (3-64), involves sentences with connected predicates and a direct object shared by both verbs (连谓共用一宾). The second, illustrated in (3-65) and (3-66), are sentences where elements of the modifying quantifier phrase have reversed order from Standard Mandarin (定中倒位), similarly to that often discussed for Bai, as described in 6.2.3. Finally, they also include sentences where the object and complement have switched places (宾补换位), as illustrated in (3-67). (SM translations provided when given.)

(3-63)

买吃米线

mǎi chī mǐxiàn
buy eat rice.noodles

'to buy and eat rice noodles'

(3-64)

挖卖洋芋

wā mài yángyù

dig sell potato

'to dig up and sell potatoes'

(3-65)

样子这三只赶出去

yàngzi zhè sān-zhī gǎn-chū-qù

sheep these three-CL drive-out-go

'Drive these three sheep out of here.'

把这三只羊赶出去

(3-66)

今天他买了鸡五只

jīntiān tā mǎi-le jī wǔ-zhī

today 3SG buy-PFV chicken five-CL

'Today he bought five chickens.'

今天他买了五只鸡

(3-67)

我说他不过

wǒ shuō tā bù guò

1SG talk 3SG NEG pass

'I cannot out-talk him.'

我说不过他

3.4.3.7 *Discourse Marking and the Lexicon*

Unlike other languages in this dissertation, I am treating the lexicon and features of discourse marking in Southwest Mandarin together, as there is very little of the latter in the literature to speak of. There is apparently no straightforward evidentiality or egophoric marking, but Deng and Zhang (2010:21) give examples of some sentence-final particles, quite common across Sinitic, as well as Southeast Asian languages. Examples are given in (3-68). (See also Li et al. (1998:18-19) for a list of a detailed description of sixteen such particles.)

(3-68)

嘛[ma²¹] making a request or pleading (表请求)

噻⁷⁰[sæ^{55/213}] urging on (表催促) or sometimes to expressing impatience (不耐烦意)

哈[xa⁵²] giving advice (表提出建议) or reminding someone (提醒) or seeking someone's opinion (征询意见)

嗦[so⁵³] asking for confirmation (表求得证实,问是否真的)

Wu et al. (1989:509-510) list several final modal particles native to Yunnan dialects that serve a variety of emotive and pragmatic effects. One of these appears to have a quasi-evidential effect, namely the particle 了嘛 [lǎ⁵³ma]. In one usage, it appears sentence-finally to express certainty, as in (3-69). In another usage, it appears following the copula to show strong certainty in reply to an interlocutor's question, as in (3-70) or a degree of agreement with an interlocutor's opinion, as in (3-71), though either could also be interpreted as a modal exclamation, perhaps. They (ibid.) give the following examples:

(3-69)

我的作业交掉了嘛

wǒ de zuòyè jiāo diào lema
1SG GEN homework hand.in PFV CERT

'I have so turned in my homework.'

我的作业已经交了呀。

(3-70)

三点开会噻

sān-diǎn kāi huì [kæ⁵³]

three-o'clock start meeting Q

Will the meeting start at 3:00?

三点开会吗?

是了嘛

shì [lǎ⁵³ma]

COP CERT

'Yes it will.'

是的

⁷⁰ This character is more commonly written as a mountain with a mouth radical on the left.

(3-71)

这种灯泡质量最差了

zhè zhǒng dēngpào zhìliàng zuì chà le
this kind light.bulb quality most low MIR
'This kind of lightbulb has the poorest quality.'

是了嘛

shì [lǚ⁵³ma]

COP AFF

'That it does.'

就是啊

Much of the comparison between Sichuan dialects and Putonghua, however, focuses on differences of vocabulary—either (apparently) unique vocabulary items in local dialects, or distinct pronunciations of the same etymons, or expanded or reduced semantic ranges. For example, the local morphemes 烂 [p^ha⁵⁵], meaning 'soft', 'rotten', etc., or the morpheme 瓜 [kua⁵⁵], which in Sichuan dialects means 'idiot', show up in many sources. Furthermore, Liang (1982:115-116) gives examples of verbs that are narrower in scope in Sichuan dialects than in Standard Mandarin, i.e. the same verb in different SM usages correlates to multiple verbs in Sichuan dialects. One example given is the verb 碰 *pèng*, which in Standard Mandarin may be used to mean 'to collide', 'to have contact with' or 'to run into (negative sense)', all related meanings, but only expressible in Sichuanese with the verbs 碰 *pèng*, 撻⁷¹ [p^haŋ⁵³], 遇(到) *yù(dào)*, respectively, according to Liang.

A representative example of statements on lexical comparisons comes from Liang (1982:123), in the following paragraph:

⁷¹ This appears to be a dialectal usage of this morpheme, in part evidenced by the specified pronunciation in the text and also that the dictionary definition is 'to whip'.

“This verb “push”, in Sichuan dialects there’s 搵⁷² [ts^hou⁵⁵], <XX>⁷³ [ɕiao⁵⁵], 搵 [ɕyan⁵⁵]—several ways to say it; In Putonghua they’re all said 推 *tuī*. ([ɕyan⁵⁵] has the meaning ‘to push out with force’). Among the verbs for ‘to support; to prop up’, all have the meaning ‘take something that has fallen over and put it back up’, whereas in Sichuan dialects you normally say 搵 [ts^hou⁵⁵], and in Putonghua you say “扶 *fú*”; the “*fú*” of “搀扶 *chānfú*” [support by the arm], in Sichuan dialects you also say “扶 *fú*”. In Sichuan dialects, “抬 *tái*, 搵 [ts^hou⁵⁵], 端 *duān*” all can be expressed by the verbs “to take(拿 *ná*)”, or “to move (搬 *bān*)” something. “端 *duān*” is to take something holding it in your hands in front of the body, which corresponds with the way you say it in Putonghua. For example, “to carry a plate, to carry a cup of tea, to carry some cooked rice, to carry an inkwell, to carry a stool”. “抬 *tái*” mainly expresses “lifting something upward”, or two people moving something together, the same as Putonghua. When one person moves some slightly large things, it’s called “搵 [ts^hou⁵⁵]”, like “move a stool, move a chair, move a ladder, move a wardrobe,” whereas in Putonghua you use “搬 *bān*”. Taking something and picking it up or holding it up in one’s hands or lifting it is also called 搵 [ts^hou⁵⁵], like “lift the table a little higher”, “don’t lift him so high”, whereas in Putonghua you say “抬 *tái*”.

“推”这个动作，四川方言里就有“推”，“搵 [cou1]”，“口” xiao1”，“搵 xuan1”几种说法；普通话都说“推”（“搵”有“用力往外推”的意思）。“扶”的动作中，凡有“把倒下的东西扶起来”的意思，四川口语中一般都说“搵”，普通话说“扶”；“搀扶”的“扶”，四川口语中也说“扶”。在四川口语中，“抬搵，端”都可以表示“拿”，“搬”东西的动作。“端”是手在身体前面拿东西，与普通话说法相同。如“端盘子，端茶玩，端墨盘(砚台)，端凳子”。“抬”主要表示，“往上托举”或两个人共同搬东西，与普通话用法同。一个人搬动稍大一些的东西四川叫“搵”，如“搵凳子，搵椅子，搵梯子，搵柜柜”，普通话说用“搬”。把东西往上抬，托，举也叫“搵”，如“把桌子搵高点儿”，“莫把他搵高很了”，普通话说“抬”。

Examples of some lexical items that have the same form, but different meanings between Standard Mandarin and Sichuanese include 多久 *duōjiǔ* ‘for a long time’, not SM ‘for how long’; 好多 *hǎoduō* ‘how much’, not SM ‘very many’; 不好 *bùhǎo* ‘sick or uncomfortable’ not simply ‘not good’; 冷饭 *lěngfàn* ‘leftovers from the last meal’ not ‘cold rice’ and 倒饭 *dào fàn* ‘to vomit or make someone nauseous’, not ‘to turn over rice’ (Deng and Zhang 2010:178). See 3.4.3.4 for

⁷² I use the unsimplified character here because it is available to type. Liang uses a character which has a simplified phonetic component on the right, not available in Unicode, as in 搵.

⁷³ This indicates, like the blank square in the Chinese text, that no character is available for the morpheme, not uncommon in nonstandard dialects.

examples of Sichuanese compounds whose constituent ordering differs from Standard Mandarin.

Sichuanese has a means of expressing one's subjective evaluation of a quantity or amount. The morpheme 打⁷⁴ 'to hit; to strike' (SM *dǎ*) is added between elements of a reduplicated measure word to express the subjective feeling that the amount is too much; the morpheme 把 *bǎ* 'to grasp; to cling' is added in the same environment to express that the amount is too little. For example, the examples from Deng and Zhang (2010:21), given in (3-72)-(3-73).

(3-72)

一个小时就收了百打百块钱

yī-gè xiǎoshí jiù shōu-le bǎi-dǎ-bǎi -kuài qián
one-CL hour then receive-PFV 100-hit-100-MW money
'In just one hour one can receive up to 100 yuan.'

(3-73)

块把块钱掉地上, 捡都没得人捡

kuài-bǎ-kuài qián diào dì-shàng, jiǎn dōu méidé rén jiǎn
bill-grasp-bill money fall ground-on pick all NEG person pick
'Just a few bills lying on the ground, no one would bother to pick them up.'

According to Cui (1996:130), using approximately 900 words from the 汉语方言词汇 *Hànyǔ fāngyán cíhuì* (*Chinese Dialectal Vocabulary*), the author found that 494, or 54.7% corresponded to the same forms in Putonghua, while 409, or 45.3% did not directly correspond. Among those not corresponding to Standard Mandarin, he finds, after sharing the greatest number of correspondences with the Kunming dialect (58.3%), the other Southwest Mandarin dialect surveyed, the next greatest number of correspondences is with the Changsha dialect (54.9%), a Xiang dialect. Beyond that, it shares roughly the same number of correspondences

⁷⁴ This morpheme has various pronunciations in Sichuan dialects, which include [ta⁵³], or [n/la] with Shang Tone reflexes.

with three other Mandarin dialects, Yangzhou (52.7%), Hefei (52.4%) and Xi'an (52.2%)

(*ibid.*131-132). Cui (1996:130) makes a very pertinent point in saying:

“People in the past had a vague impression, thinking: “Chinese dialects’ differences are carried in the sound system, while the vocabulary and grammatical differences usually are slight and not very obvious”. This kind of thinking is lacking in factual evidence. When you compare the Chengdu dialect and Putonghua and various dialectal regions, it strongly proves that Chinese dialects’ vocabulary differences are not slight, rather they are very distinct.”

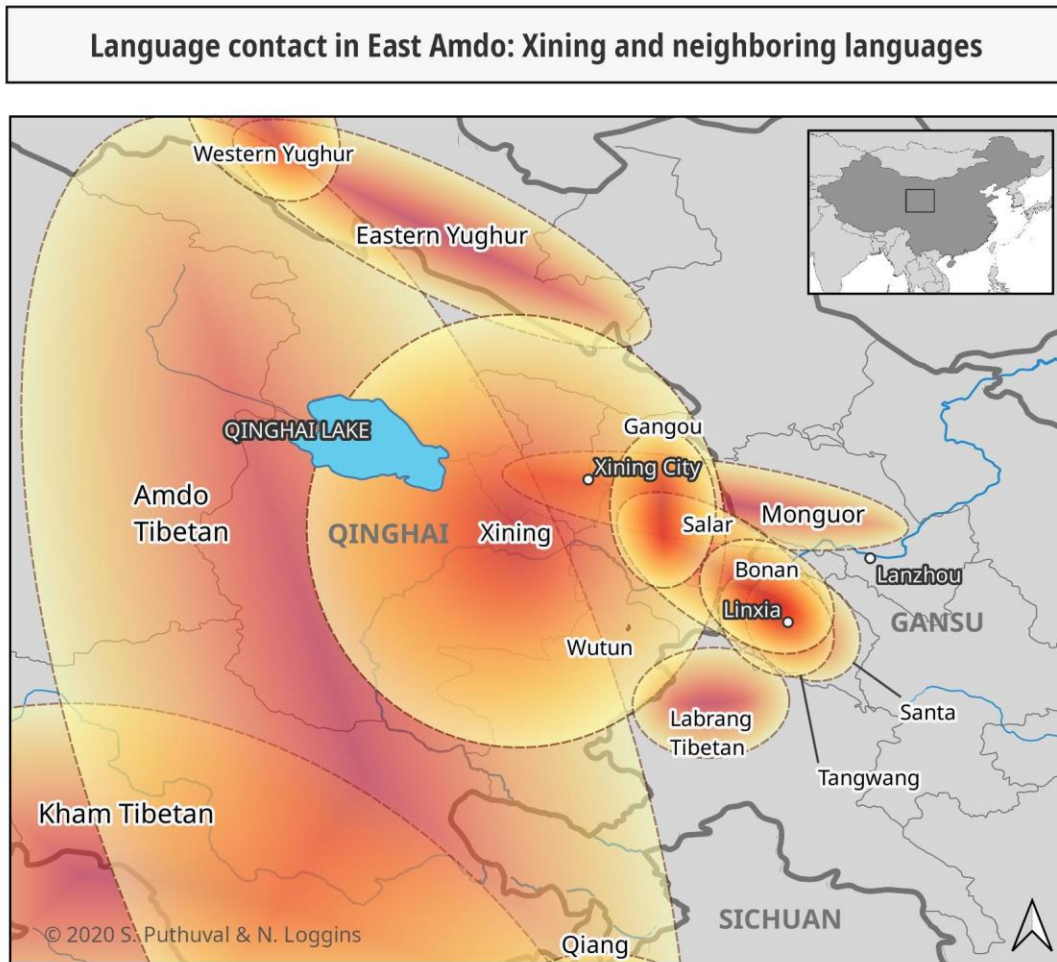
“以往人们有一种模糊得感觉，认为‘汉语方言得差异主要表现在语音’上，‘词汇语法差异往往是细微的，而不是十分明显的’。这种说法显然缺乏事实根据。成都话与普通话和诸方言点词汇同异的比较，有力地说明汉语方言词汇的差异不是细微的，而是十分明显的”

3.4.3.8 *Summary*

Despite being considered a dialect of Mandarin, and not often highlighted for its mutual unintelligibility (which in practice is often a barrier between Sichuanese and non-Sichuanese), when one considers the ways in which Southwest Mandarin is distinct from Standard Mandarin, the differences are quite considerable, from sharing barely more than half of the same vocabulary items for terms (3.4.3.7), to having different tonal reflexes for a large amount of morphemes (3.2.3.3), to varying collocations in compounds, classifiers and affixes (3.2.3.4 and 3.2.3.6). What we see is a local variety of Mandarin, descended from older forms of Chinese, retaining some features lost in the standard language, such as initial-velar nasals and occasionally the Entering Tone category (3.4.3.3), and otherwise developing innovations, such as various syntactic configurations (3.4.3.6) and ways of marking aspect in the verb phrase (3.4.3.5), on its own terms, independent (though no doubt influenced by in recent decades) of the standard language of Putonghua, propagated in the public life of the PRC since 1949.

From these two background chapters on linguistic and ethnological theory, as well as a thorough description of Southwest Mandarin, mirroring the linguistic descriptions found in Chapters 4-7, we can now turn to the case studies of this dissertation, to see how languages have evolved in such frontier settings, beginning with the Xining dialect of Chinese, discussed in Chapter 4 on the Amdo sprachbund.

4 Amdo: The Case of Xining



Map 3. Languages of the Amdo Region, including the Xining Dialect

“Golok [to the north of Dege, in southern Qinghai] was inhabited by some of the most aggressive and least accessible people in pre-modern Tibet...Nor were those individual groups [in Golok] “tribal” as they are often referred to in the literature. Many of them were, in the main, amalgamations of immigrants, refugees, and defectors from almost every corner of Kham and Amdo, as the name Golok suggests. “Golok” (Tibetan mgo log) means something like “turncoat” or “rebel”. Golok functioned as something of a haven for miscreants, malcontents, refugees and even perhaps criminals.” (Rinzin Thargyal, 2007:185)

In this chapter I will present Amdo (Tib. ཨ་མདོ།, Ch. 安多) specifically eastern Amdo, on the Qinghai/Gansu border, as a classic linguistic area, fitting much of the criteria discussed in 2.2, shaped by centuries of migration, shifting power structures, multi-ethnic interaction (mainly through trade, but also around regional monastic complexes) and multilingualism. As a linguistic area, it is heavily shaped by contact, but there are of course clear examples of internal change acting in parallel.

After a historical overview of the peopling of the region, and its place at the intersection of different empires and cultures, I present the stock of the linguistic area, the composition of the local feature pool, as it were. This will serve to contextualize the Xining variety, the most prominent local dialect of Northern Chinese, in its ecological setting. I then close the chapter with discussion of how Xining has developed, linguistically and historically, as a Sinitic member of the regional linguistic area, the Amdo sprachbund. Corroborating evidence and additional analysis will be presented from other regional Sinitic varieties in Chapter 7.

4.1 Historical Background of Amdo

The geographic area today comprised of Qinghai province, southern Gansu province, and parts of northern Sichuan province is often referred to by its Tibetan name, A.mdo (ཨ་མདོ།; Ch. 安多). Though inhabited much earlier, the first known written records of the Amdo area date to the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE, but with conquest of the region starting from 61 BCE), when Chinese expeditions into the region set the stage for historical military contact, as well as sometime penal and civilian colonies. Prior to this campaign, Chinese records note the region was inhabited by a people referred to as Qiang 羌 (Dede 1999a:61). E.G. Pulleyblank (1983) claims that their language, along with that of the Di 氐 (distinct from the Di 狄 to the south), would have been Tibeto-Burman. After Han conquest, in times of firm central government

control, a Chinese presence was maintained in the region that came to be known by the Mongolic name Kokonor (later, Chinese “Qinghai”, both meaning ‘blue ocean’), but under reduced control from the Chinese capital, the Han population would either assimilate into local culture or immigrate to other regions, presumably leaving little behind by way of lasting linguistic influence (Dede 1999a:62-63).

Between the decline of the Han dynasty and the unification of the Sui 隋朝 (581-618), branches of the Xianbei people (see 3.2.1) from modern Eastern Inner Mongolia entered the region, forming alliances with peoples to the south and east, and came to be known as Tuyuhun 吐谷浑, known to Tibetans as the ‘Azha (Dede 1999a:65). The alliance was eventually broken during the Tang dynasty (618-907), in response to the expanding Tibetan empire. The subjugation of the Tuyuhun by the Tibetan regent Gar Tongtsen (van Shaik 2011:16) paved the way for excursions by Tibetan groups, then known to the Chinese as the Tǔbō 吐蕃, the first apparent major settling of a Tibetic-speaking people in the area.

By 670 Tibet had expanded into Kokonor, seizing the Tarim basin from Chinese control, continuing its campaigns northward and westward into Turkic territories, and eastward into tribal borderlands alongside the Chinese state (Beckwith 1987:23; 80-82). In 710 it took control of areas now part of Qinghai and Gansu, and in 763 even briefly held the Chinese imperial capital of Chang’an 長安 (modern Xi’an 西安). The Chinese, too, would lead campaigns into northwestern Tibetan imperial realms, especially under Emperor Xuanzong beginning in the late 730s through the 750s.

The 750s saw a series of losses for Tibet in the Kokonor region as Tang armies extended their troop presence there. However, the An Lushan Rebellion from 755-763 would ultimately spell

the end of Emperor Xuanzong's reign and during the reign of his successor, Suzong, the Tang lost much of its holdings in Central Asia and northwest Tibet (Beckwith 1987:144-145).

The modern Qinghai capital of Xining 西宁 dates to shortly after this period during the 700s, established by the Qingtang 青堂, a remnant of the Tibetan Empire that ruled most of modern northeast Kokonor. In the early 800s, Tibet saw its point of greatest imperial expansion. Then, following a series of infightings and intrigue at the royal court, as well as stemming from chaos among Turkic polities to the north, the its empire would collapse, losing political control of a large portion of its territorial holdings, including Gansu and the Tarim basin, and splitting into lines of heirs with no central authority (Uebach, 2008:11; van Schaik 2011:Chapter 3). Though remaining a source of woe for China for a long time to come, it would never regain its status as a major empire of Asia.

Later, following the rise and fall of the Chinese Song Dynasty (960-1279), during the expansionist period of the Mongol-controlled Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), a significant Altaic-speaking presence settled the area, and it is likely that the modern ethnic group Tǔ 土族, which includes Monguor and Mongghul speakers, as well as, by modern PRC designation, Wutun-speakers, comes from the remnants of these Mongol border guards, organized under hereditary units known as *tǔrén* 土人, sent by the Yuan court to safeguard the frontier (Dede 1999a:68)⁷⁵. In the late 1300s, Turkic speakers from Central Asia also arrived in eastern Amdo. Dwyer posits that the major local group, the Salar, arrived in Amdo, via the Hexi Corridor, as a branch of the multicultural army of the Mongols marching into Sichuan in the early 1300's

⁷⁵ Some Chinese scholars, however, cited in Xu (2017:18) link the name to the Tuyuhun kingdom, which seems to me less likely, though I have not checked the original sources.

(Dwyer 2007:7). In 1373, their leader, Han Bao 韓寶 submitted to Ming rule and was appointed local *tusi* 土司, or chieftain leader (ibid.8).

Finally, adding to the strata of Bodish and Mongolic speaking peoples, a permanent Chinese presence in Gansu and eastern Qinghai around Kokonor began in the early 14th century, with the arrival of the Ming dynasty army, the last period of major Chinese immigration until the latter half of the 20th century, from which the modern variety of Northwestern Mandarin in the region descends (Dede 1999a:68). This lineage is supported by both folk traditions among the local people claiming a genealogical origin tracing back to near Nanjing, as well as a relatively stable political situation that has obtained since the early Ming (Dede 1999a: 69-70). At the same time, however, such is a common claim among many peoples on China's western frontier, including the Bai and Lisu in Yunnan, as well as many of the local Yunnan Han. (See 6.3.2.)

Earlier in 1081 a market had been set up by the Chinese at Xining's Dongxiao Gate, in the city's eastern suburb, which drew in substantial commerce (Gabautz 1996:106). In 1371 the Ming established a regional tea-and-horse market at Xining, trading tea mostly from Sichuan and Hunan for horses and other items, until a horse shortage, coupled with an overabundance of tea, caused prices to drop (ibid). They then extended their trade centers to nearby Hezhou, Taozhou and Gannan, and heavily regulated the import of tea to the region, later in the 17th century subsidizing tea traders in the area. Nonetheless, Xining was eclipsed by Lanzhou regionally as a more prosperous trade center, despite its ideal location for receiving Tibetan goods such as wool (ibid.107).

Amdo would eventually fall under control of the Khoshut (Ch. Héshuòtè 和碩特) Mongols by the mid-17th century. Though official documents from the Ming Dynasty continued to claim control over Tibetan regions, it was in the form of honorary titles bestowed on Tibetan

dignitaries, the so-called *tusi* 土司 system, indicative of the tributary system existing across much of East Asia at the time. The Ming claimed Tibet to fall under jurisdiction of their offices in Hezhou 河州, in southern Gansu, far from the Tibetan heartland (Sperling 2008:19-20).

In the 19th century, the area between Chinese Turkestan and the nomadic areas of Amdo was overrun with internecine fighting between contending Muslim Hui groups, abiding by different interpretations of the Sufi teachings of the area (Lipman 1997). This infighting was exacerbated by state campaigns not distinguishing between different Muslim orders, much less individuals caught between, rather meting out violence and repression to all, resulting in a generalized uprising against the government. Lipman (1997) explains that some Hui, though Muslim, allied with the state against the rebels, seeking stability, while many others were inspired to take up arms against it.

The first Muslim uprising began in 1781, and subsequent waves of violence would continue to sweep the region (known variously as the “Hui-hui Wars” and the “Dunggan Uprisings” 同治回亂), drawing the attention of foreign and Chinese travelers alike. Seeking stability, the Tibetan monasteries of Kokonor, such as Kumbum (塔尔寺) and Choni (卓尼寺), allied with the Chinese state, and the Qing sought the aid of Amdo Tibetan mercenaries to violently suppress Hui protests, leading to resentment between the two groups (Lipman 1997:162).

Travel writings and ethnic studies from Westerners in the nineteenth and early 20th century give us some picture of the ethnic composition of Amdo and adjoining regions, as well as the general lawlessness of the time. Such descriptions, while mired in the language and racial views of the era, are valuable descriptions of both inter-ethnic relations at the time of travel, as well as notes on language habits. Prejevalsky (1876:148-149) describes a number of different Mongol groups living in Kokonor, their relationship with the surrounding Tibetans (whom he

refers to as Tangutans) being fraught with violent plunder. He describes local people's relationship with the resident Chinese authorities:

"The Kara-Tangutans are only nominally subject to the Chinese governor of Kan-su; they regard the Dalai-Lama of Tibet as their lawful sovereign, and are under their own officers, refusing to submit to the chiefs of the Mongol banners in whose districts they are living."

This statement echoes Huc and Gabet's earlier travels to the region, in which they claim the "Hsi-fan" (i.e. the same group of Tibetans) continuously keep the Mongols "always on the alert" (Huc and Hazlitt 1928:116-117). Finally, Prejevalsky (1876:118) observes that in some localities sedentary Tibetans and Chinese live side-by-side, though his remarks imply that the adaptation to agrarian practice is not so voluntary among the former: "We saw some Tangutans near Chobsen, living with Chinese, engaged in agriculture; but a settled life does not harmonise with their restless natures. They pine after the careless pastoral existence best suited to their indolent character."

However, other observers, such as Lipman (1984), Hansen (2005), Vasantkumar (2012, 2014), as well as missionary-scholars, such as Ekvall (1939), paint pictures of more mutual inter-ethnic communication and acculturation, well into the 20th century. We will return to those accounts in 4.4.2, which may shed light on the development of the Xining dialect, and other language mixing, but first let us survey the languages involved, starting with the Xining dialect itself.

4.2 A Sketch of Xining and Its Neighbors

4.2.1 General Background on the Languages

4.2.1.1 *General Background on Xining*

The present data for the Xining dialect come to us not from a grammar, or any other holistic treatments, but rather from scattered articles and dissertations on specific constructions or

phonological features, as well as literature placing Xining in a broader language contact setting. This is not surprising for a “Chinese dialect” (*fangyan*), as full grammatical descriptions of *fangyan* rarely appear, other than relatively prestigious varieties such as Mandarin, Cantonese and Taiwanese. (See 3.4.3 for references on the Chengdu dialect.) Instead, most literature on individual *fangyan* consists of permutations between Middle Chinese categories and modern reflexes, comparisons with Mandarin, and word lists. Therefore, part of what I want to do presently is gather together these disparate sources to give a fuller, more holistic overview of Xininghua (西宁话) than has appeared in the English-language literature.

The most detailed descriptions I have seen are Keith Dede’s (1999) dissertation, and the more recent dissertation on syntactic structures by Daniel Bell (2017). There is also a dictionary by Li and Zhang (1994). Probably the most holistic descriptive source, however, is Zhang and Zhu’s (1987) “Dialect Gazetteer” (*Fāngyán zhì* 方言志), which largely consists of lexical lists, arranged thematically, but which also includes a phonological description (Chapter 2), a comparison with the Beijing dialect (Chapter 4), and a lengthy descriptive treatment of the morphosyntax (Chapter 7), as well as a few transcribed (but unglossed, except for corresponding characters) texts (Chapter 5). For an extensive bibliography on Xining research pre-2006, see Zhang (2006).

The designation “Xining dialect” (or the more airy, “Qinghai dialect”) is a fuzzy term, which may include a number of forms in and around the namesake provincial capital, but should at least always refer to the older stratum of speech, prior to demographic shifts in recent decades. (See Dede 2006 for a comparison of Old and New Xining, a dichotomy emerging under heavy demographic shifts and urbanization in recent decades.)

As such, the following description is a patchwork composition from around a dozen sources, out of which I have attempted to build up a general description matching the categories of

other languages surveyed in this dissertation, and have given a representative sample of the types of constructions, usually attributed to some contact phenomena.

According to Zhang (1984:187), Qinghai dialects are quite similar to other Central Plains (Zhōngyuán 中原) dialects of Northern Sinitic (i.e. Mandarin dialects), particularly Xi'an and Lanzhou dialects. They share similar vocabulary (for example, *p^ho fǎ* 'to be vexed 心烦', and *piɑ* 'to paste; to stick 张贴'), and in other phono-morphological characteristics show direct correspondents⁷⁶. For example, where Xi'an and Lanzhou have labial affricates and fricatives corresponding to Standard Mandarin retroflex initials before high back vowels (Xi'an *pfu²¹* 'pig 猪', *pf^hu²¹* 'to go out 出', *fu²¹* 'book 书'), Xining has labial nuclei (*tʂy⁴⁴*, *tʂ^hy⁴⁴*, *fy⁴⁴*, respectively). They also share similar modal particles (exhortative 煞, for example, pronounced *sɑ³³* in Xining, *ʕiɛ³³* in Xi'an). Finally, Xi'an has a tendency towards SOV word order, just like Xining (ibid).

Zhang describes other regional similarities closer to Xining. For example, the local dialects of Xunhua Salar Autonomous County (循化撒拉族自治县) in Qinghai, just southeast of Xining, and Linxia City 临夏市 (formerly Hezhou 河州) across the border in Gansu, to the southwest of Lanzhou (兰州), each have only three lexical tones, and also a widely used sentence final particle 哈 [xa] for softening one's tone (Zhang 1985:188). I return to these in Chapter 7.

All of these examples show areal tendencies in the local Chinese dialects that differ from Standard Mandarin, stretching across at least three modern provinces from the Shaanxi capital of Xi'an to Qinghai's capital of Xining. At the same time, Zhang points to differences in local vocabulary specific to Qinghai (see 4.2.7 below), as well as borrowings from local minority

⁷⁶ Here, and throughout, when no tonal quality is transcribed, it is because it was absent in the source material.

languages, such as the following words for goat (山羊): [tɕy³³ lɿ³⁵] 羴羴, [tɕia⁴⁴ la³⁵] 夹拉, and [kɿ⁴⁴ lɿ³⁵] 咕卢.

As for the whole of Qinghai province, he divides it into three sub-dialectal zones: Xining 西宁, Ledu 乐都, and Xunhua 循化. His examples mostly follow lexical variation, as reflected in etymological reading lists, for example the characters 泥 ‘mud’, 女 ‘female’, 米 ‘uncooked rice’, which are all read⁷⁷ as *mj*⁵³ in Xining, *ŋj*⁵³ in Xunhua and *mj*⁵³ or *mj*¹² (with varying tones) in other places (Zhang 1985:189).

Finally, Zhang (1985:188) illustrates language mixing in Qinghai, particularly of a mixed Han-Tibetan speech known locally as “wind stirring snow” (风搅雪). There is a local saying, given in (4-1):

(4-1)

t ^h u ^ǎ 21pɔ ⁵³	fɔ ^{35>21} tsɿ ⁵³	sɿ ⁴⁴ na ⁵³ -xa ⁵³ ,	zɿ ^{44>21} -k ^h u ⁵³	ts ^h ɿ ²¹⁴ fɔ ⁴⁴ -liɔ ⁵³
spoon	spoon	spoon	one-mouth	breath say-PFV
sǎ ⁴⁴ -tɕu ^ǎ 53	xua ²¹⁴			
three-kind	speech			

铜宝, 勺子, 西纳哈, 一口气说了三种话
 “Tongbao, Shaozi and Xina: in one breath speak three languages.”

The first three words—[t^hu^ǎ21pɔ⁵³] 铜宝, [fɔ^{35>21}tsɿ⁵³] 勺子, and [sɿ⁴⁴na⁵³] 西纳—are all words for spoon, the first sounding like the local Tibetan word, the second like a Sinitic word and the third like a local Mongol word. He further relates an exchange between a Han and Tibetan (given in full in (4-2), with my translation added to the final line; the Chinese translation and comments are directly retained, as from the text):

⁷⁷ Zhang’s vocalic notation for these etyma seems to imply a fricative vowel for Xining, and other varieties notated as [mj], a feature of high vowels common in the region. I have seen other authors use a voiced palatal fricative [j] in such notation. Keith Dede (below) also uses a [j].

(4-2) Dialogue presenting local Qinghai language mixing:

汉：你阿里去了

[ŋi⁵³ a^{44|44} tɕh^{213>21}-liɔ⁵³ʔ]

2 where go-PFV

Han: Where are you going? 你上哪儿去

藏：朗淌磨上去了。

[lɔ̃²¹thɔ̃⁵³ mɔ̃^{213>21}-ʂɔ̃^{213>53}-tɕh^{213>21}-liɔ⁵³]

grindstone grind-DIR-go-PFV

Tibetan: To the grind stone there. (lɔ̃²¹ thɔ̃⁵³ is Tibetan for mortar)

到磨子那儿去 (“朗淌”是藏语“磨子”的意思)

汉：磨哈去了？

[mɔ̃²¹³ sa²¹³ tɕh^{213>21}-liɔ⁵³]

grind what go-PFV

Han: To grind what? 磨什么去？

藏：赛马大豆磨去了

[sɛ²¹ma⁵³ ta²¹³tu²¹³ mɔ̃²¹³-tɕh^{213>21}-liɔ⁴⁴]

soy.beans soy.beans grind-go-PFV

Tibetan: To go grind soy beans (sɛ²¹ ma⁵³ is Tibetan for soy beans.)

磨大豆去 (“赛马”是藏语“大豆”的意思)

(In the last sentence, the speaker repeats “soy beans”, the first time in Tibetan, the second time in Chinese.)

From Zhang’s account, one easily sees not only the influence of local minority languages on dialects in Qinghai, but also regional tendencies among Sinitic dialects in nearby provincial capitals. A topic I will return to in later discussion is Xining’s place among Northern Chinese more generally, and how this bears on the question of its status as a Chinese variety.

4.2.1.2 *Other Language Groups in the Area*

The capital of Qinghai province rests in a region of what Max Oidtmann (2016) has called “overlapping empires”. It has passed between different regimes of Mongol control and Chinese imperial ownership, has been home to Tibetan Buddhists, as well as Hui, Turkic and Mongol Muslims, serving as a trade post connecting the Silk Road routes to the Tea-Horse roads, drawing travelers from all across Eurasia. Among the languages indigenous to the region are

those of Turkic, Mongolic, Sinitic and Tibetic language families, the latter mostly Amdo varieties. Being the local language varieties longest in the area, let us first take a closer look at Amdo Tibetan.

4.2.1.2.1 *Amdo Tibetan*

Amdo varieties of Tibetan are spoken throughout most of Qinghai province in Hainan 海南, Haibei 海北, Haixi 海西, Huangnan 黄南 and Golog 果洛 prefectures/autonomous regions, in southern Gansu's Gannan 甘南 and Bairi Tibetan Autonomous County 天祝藏族自治县 areas and Sichuan's Ngawa Tibetan-Qiang autonomous prefecture 阿坝藏族羌族自治州, along with scattered nomadic varieties represented in central Kham⁷⁸ and the Changtang. Considered by some writers (e.g. Gesang and Gesang 2002) to be generally mutually intelligible across the subgroup, Amdo dialects are often divided into pastoralist, i.e. usually nomadic, and agrarian varieties.

Amdo Tibetan dialects are well-known in the literature, along with the Western Balti dialects in northern India/Pakistan, for being the most phonologically conservative contemporary Tibetan varieties, retaining consonantal reflexes of nearly all Written Tibetan initial consonants. As such, there are many articles analyzing some particular phonological aspect of Amdo, but very few full grammatical descriptions. Jackson Sun's (1986) famous study of an Amdo variety of northern Aba prefecture in Sichuan, the Ndzorge Śæme Xyra dialect, makes the following comment, still largely relevant today:

"...[T]here are very few comprehensive descriptions of Tibetan dialects written by competent linguists. For instance, the only description of Amdo Tibetan dialects I have seen that makes any mention of syntactic processes is Georges de Roerich's grammar of the Rebkong dialect (1958)..cover[ing] only 38 pages. (Sun 1986:179)."

⁷⁸ Even though nomadic herders in Kham counties such as Daofu, Ru'ergai and Luhuo speak dialects of Amdo Tibetan, culturally they are more prone to identify with local Khambas (Wang 2012:31).

Wang Qingshan's (1995) excellent English-language grammar (intended for Tibetan learners, but organized with linguistic sophistication) is mostly "linguistic data...collected from the rural area and pastoral area, such as Tianjun, Gangtsa, Gongho, Jantsa, and other regions", but the Tibetan language data is presented in the Tibetan writing system only, with no transliteration for local reading practices. (As such, I have made only sparing use of it here.) Perhaps the most detailed morphosyntactic description of any Amdo variety is Gesang Jumian and Gesang Yangjing's (2002) sketch of the pastoral Labrang variety, which I present below. However, in their section on syntax, data is presented with no morphological gloss, giving only a transliteration of the Tibetan, with a Chinese translation and the written Tibetan. For those examples, I have offered my own glossing, to the best of my ability.

More common are articles waxing typological about what makes an Amdo variety Amdo, almost all focusing on the sound system⁷⁹. The primary defining characteristic for most authors is the rich syllabic initial inventory, and the nearly complete lack of phonological tones (though there are exceptions). Wang (2012) presents a series of tables illustrating the reflexes of various Amdo dialects, provided here in a condensed format for illustration: (WT stands for Written Tibetan, taken as a fairly close approximation of Old Tibetan by most researchers.)

⁷⁹ For a fairly comprehensive overview of the literature, see Wang (2012:19-23).

Table 7 Amdo complex initials and aspirated fricatives, modified from Wang (2012:32-34):

WT	Zeku	Tongde	Xiahe	Hualong	Luhuo	Aba	Maqu	Maduo	
skra	ʂc̣ca	ʂṭca	ʂṭca	hṭca	ʂc̣ca	ʂṭca	ʂṭca	ṭʂa ⁵³	‘hair’
l̥ŋa	r̥ŋa	R̥ŋa	h̥ŋa	h̥ŋa	r̥ŋa	r̥ŋa	r̥ŋa	ŋa ⁵³	‘five’
m̥ŋar	m̥ŋar	M̥ŋar	ŋar	ŋar	m̥ŋar	m̥ŋar	m̥ŋar	ŋar ⁵³	‘sweet’
rdo	rdo	Rdo	h̥do	h̥do	rdo	rdo	rdo	do ⁵³	‘stone’
br̥gjad	w̥jjaɮ	w̥ḍzaɮ	h̥ḍzaɮ	h̥bie	w̥j̥jat	w̥ḍzat	w̥ḍzat	ḍzat ¹³	‘eight’
WT	Zeku	Arou	Xiahe	Hualong	Luhuo	Aba	Rangtang	Maduo	
dgu	rgə	rgə	h̥gə	h̥gə	h̥gə	rgə	rgə	gə ¹³	‘nine’
bdun	wdən	wdən	hdən	hdon	wdən	dən	dən	dən ¹³	‘seven’
rgjag	r̥ḍzaɰ	r̥j̥jaɰ	h̥ḍzaɰ	h̥ḍzaɰ	r̥jaq	r̥ḍzaɰ	h̥jaq	ḍzaq ⁵³	‘strike’
WT	Zeku	Tianjun	Arou	Hualong	Daofu	Aba	Hongyuan	Maqu	
k ^h ji	c̣ç ^h ə	c̣ç ^h ə	c̣ç ^h ə	ṭç ^h ə	ç ^h ə	ṭç ^h ə	ç ^h ə	ṭç ^h ə	‘dog’
WT	Tianjun	Arou	Xinghai	Xiahe	Hualong	Daofu	Gande	Maqu	
sa	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	s ^h a	‘earth’
za	sa	Sa	sa	Sa	sa	za	za	za	‘eat’
ɕa	x ^h a	x ^h a	x ^h a	x ^h a	ç ^h a	x ^h a	x ^h a	x ^h a	‘meat’
z̥wa	ɕa	ɕa	ɕa	ɕa	ɕa	z̥a	z̥a	z̥a	‘hat’

Besides Maduo 玛多 and Maqin 玛沁, no dialects utilize phonemic tones, but high pitch phonetically correlates with voiceless initials and low pitch with voiced initials. The following table, compiled from Wang (2012: Chapter 4), gives representative syllabic inventory data from a northern and southern dialect from both pastoral and agrarian varieties. Note the addition of two phonemic tones in the Maduo inventory results in a major reduction of complex initials.

Table 8 Comparison of Amdo varieties' syllabic properties

Language	Simple Initials	Complex Initials	Vowels	Finals
N. Nomadic				
Zeku 泽库	31	93	7	25
Asang 阿桑	31	94	6	26
N. Agrarian				
Tongren 同仁	33	31	6	24
Hualong 化隆	32	37	10	12
S. Nomadic				
Maduo 玛多	41	14	8	29
Luhuo 炉霍	34	98	8	28
S. Agrarian				
Banma 班吗	32	82	6	30
Rangtang 壤塘	33	86	6	29

As a representative Amdo dialect, we will return to a summarized description of the Labrang dialect 拉不楞话, spoken in Xiahe prefecture 夏河县 in Gansu, which Makley et al (1999) note has a long history as a prestige variety, being the site of the famous Labrang Monastery

described in more detail in 4.4.2.1. Labrang’s status as a regional “broker between nomadic and farming speech communities” is only one reason I have chosen it for illustrative purposes; there is simply very little complete information on other varieties. Closer to Xining than Labrang is Kumbum monastery (塔尔寺), just south of the capital, though there is far less literature available for it than Labrang. The only mention I was able to find of a local Amdo dialect around Xining itself was the Arig (阿力克) nomadic pastoralists northeast of Qinghai Lake, said to be descendants of Mongols. However, other than a segment inventory in the 藏语方言图 *Tibetan Dialect Atlas* (40 simple initials plus 94 complex initials, with seven vowels and 26 final rhymes), I could not track down any sources on Arig.

First, however, we will introduce the Mongolic languages of the eastern Amdo area.

4.2.1.2.2 Monguor and Its Relatives

Among the languages contributing to the Qinghai-Amdo sprachbund, in addition to local varieties of Chinese, Amdo Tibetan and the Turkic Salar language, there are a handful of languages forming an areal Mongolic subgrouping, which include Bonan (Chinese Bao’an 保安), Santa (Ch. Dongxiang 东乡) and the two languages of the “Monguors” (Ch. 土族 Tuzu, or Tu Nationality), Mangghuer and Mongghul. Farther north, in central Gansu, another Mongolic language, intermediate between central Mongolic languages, such as Oirat and Mongol proper (usually referring to the Khalkha dialect), there is Shira Yughur, or “Yellow Uyghur”. This is one of the two languages of the Yugur nationality (裕固族), the other being a Turkic language, Sarygh Yughur (not to be confused with Uyghurs, or their related Turkic language). Both language names mean “Yellow Uighur”. See 4.2.1.2.3 for more reference to the Turkic Sarygh Yughur language.

Volker Rybatzki (2003) gives a tentative classification of Mongolic languages based on groupings by shared innovations (including the systematic losses from Middle Mongolic, which he calls negative innovations). After discussing the difficulties of sub-groupings, stemming mainly from language contact and the shallow time depth since the expansion of Mongolic-speaking people, he applies 74 phonological and morpho-syntactic features, carefully surveyed across 12 languages, to come up with the following schema, based on the number of features shared by any two or more languages among the 12:

Buryat, Khalkha, Ordos and Oirat form a compact subgroup, with 32 to 45 shared innovations, as do Mongghul, Mangghuer, Bonan and Santa, with 30 to 37 shared innovations. Khalkha and Oirat are the most closely related, while Moghol (spoken, or once spoken at least, in Afghanistan) and Dagur (spoken east of Mongolia, in southern Siberia) are the most distant from each other, unsurprisingly.

The overall subgrouping, based on number of innovations in common, points to six areal groups, with Southeastern Mongolic being the branch that most concerns us here:

1. Northeastern Mongolic: Dagur
2. Northern Mongolic: Khamnigan Mongol, Buryat
3. Central Mongolic: Mongol proper (which includes the Khalkha dialect), Ordos, Oirat
4. South-Central Mongolic: Shira Yughur
5. Southeastern Mongolic: Mongghul and Mangghuer, Bonan, Santa (most of the Amdo varieties)
6. Southwestern Mongolic: Moghol

As can be seen in his fourth and fifth grouping above, the Mongolic varieties spoken in Amdo form a closely related subgroup, based on their shared features.

The Mongolic languages of Qinghai and southern Gansu, i.e. Bonan, Santa, Mangghuer and Mongghul, are noted for having dramatically different phonological systems than Mongolic languages outside the region, usually attributed to high degrees of language contact (Slater

2003b:38). Most prominent among these in the literature on the Xining dialect are the Monguor people, a local Mongolic-speaking ethnic group descended from the first Mongol campaigns in the region near the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368).

In fact, linguistically the Monguors speak two mutually unintelligible languages, both sometimes referred to in English as simply “Monguor”. However, Mongghul and Mangghuer are quite distinct and spoken by different communities just east of the Qinghai capital, Xining⁸⁰. Their inclusion under one single term “Monguor” parallels the usage of Tuzuyu 土族语, i.e. the Tu language, in Chinese, a naming practice that reaches back at least to the Ming Dynasty (Slater 2003b:3)⁸¹.

Most of the descriptive literature available focuses on Mongghul, the language spoken primarily in Huzhu Tu Autonomous County (互助土族自治县), as well as in Datong Hui and Tu Autonomous County (大通回族土族自治县), also in Qinghai, and Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County (天祝藏族自治县) in present-day Gansu (Georg 2003:286). These speakers are also often times referred to as “Monguor”, such as in the seminal work of Louis Schram (1954).

Georg (2003) gives a thorough overview of the literature on Mongghul, including missionary studies from the early 20th century, as well as extensive Russian, Japanese and Mongolic grammars or grammatical studies. Besides various grammar articles, published folktales, and a considerable Chinese-Mongghul dictionary compiled by Li Keyu (1988), two major sources of

⁸⁰ The phonological difference reflected in the names is the shift of the final liquid consonant in the historical name for ‘Mongol’ to a rhotic in Mangghuer, as well as some dialects of Mongghul.

⁸¹ The Tu ethnicity also includes Wutun speakers residing in Tongren County, Qinghai and local Bonan speakers, who in Qinghai are not generally Muslim. The modern ethnic term used by the PRC government as a nationality designation, Tū, functions in the modern sense as a negatively defined term for unrelated groups of peoples who do not speak Chinese and are not ethnically Tibetan or religiously Muslim (Janhunen et al. 2008). The Bonan spoken by Tuzu in Qinghai and that spoken by the Muslim Baonanzu in Gansu appears to be mutually intelligible, however (Slater 2003b:5).

Ethnologue lists Mangghuer and Mongghul together as dialects, as Tu [mjg]. This seems based primarily on Chinese ethnic classification. Wutun, however, does receive its own entry, as Wutunhua, with ISO code [wuh].

description are the Chinese 简志 *jianzhi* study on the “Tu language” (Zhaonasiu [Junast] 1981) and Stefan Georg’s (2003) sketch for the Mongolic Languages anthology (Janhunen 2003).

Having said that, thanks to the meticulous work of Keith Slater and others, the depth of materials on Mangghuer, in English at least, far exceeds that on Mongghul.

The areal features of Mongolic will be drawn primarily from Mangghuer, with some comparisons with Mongghul and Yellow Uyghur. According to Keith Slater (2003:307), Mangghuer is spoken in Minhe Hui and Tu Autonomous County (民和回族土族自治县), just north of the Yellow River on the Qinghai side of the provincial border with Gansu. Slater describes Mangghuer as the product of heavy contact with Sinitic, resulting in a Chinese phonology, and sizeable Sinitic lexicon, but with clearly identifiable Mongolic morphosyntax, though the latter also shows signs of Chinese borrowing, as well as some likely of Tibetan origin. The situation is strongly similar to that of Turkic Salar, below in 4.2.1.2.3, described by Dwyer (2007).

As such, Slater (2003b:7) cautions against analyzing the grammar of any one language in the Amdo sprachbund individually. As he sees it, the phonologies and grammars of the local languages all meld into a regional convergence zone, which leads him to claim “If we look at the linguistic features of the region as a whole, we find that what is happening diachronically is not simply the outworking of the normal tendency of any pair of languages in intense contact to influence each other, but, rather, an overall pattern of structural convergence among all the languages.”

4.2.1.2.3 Salar

95% of the approximately 90,000 Salar live in Amdo, while about 4,000 Salars living in the Ili Valley region of northern Xinjiang (Dwyer 2007:77, based on 1990 census data). This correlates

to two major dialect divisions between the two regions, with Dwyer referring to local Amdo variants as “vernaculars”. Within Amdo, Salar people live mostly in the eastern prefectures of Qinghai province, and across the Gansu border in Linxia (formerly Hezhou), but are most concentrated in Xunhua (around 49,000 in Xunhua at the time of Lin 1985).

In Dwyer’s (2007) overview of historical research on the origins of Salar as an ethnic group, she concludes that the Salar (previously 撒剌(爾) in Yuan sources, and in the Xunhua gazetteer of the late 1700’s) are an originally nomadic Oghuz clan who migrated from around Samarkand through Chinese Turkestan, likely spending some time in Hami during the 1320’s, before arriving, albeit circuitously, in their current location. This is corroborated both by linguistic evidence, in the form of Southeast Turkic and Mongolic elements in the language, as well as reference in the *Mingshi* 明史 that they arrived in Xunhua in the third year of the Hongwu 洪武 reign (i.e. 1370).

The Salar, then, would have been constituted from a local Yuan military garrison left in charge of defending western Gansu, and even now Salar language and dress exhibit elements of Mongol influence (ibid.8). Early contacts, however, would have been with Tibetans in the region, where after a brief period of living together, the Salar displaced the local Tibetans south of the Yellow River. The river now serves as the major cultural and linguistic divide between northern and southern Salars. Over time the Salars of the southern bank, known as Bayan Salar, became so Tibetanized that they were considered a different ethnic group in the Xunhua gazetteer (ibid.). However, after the Ming administrative control of the 1370’s, many Chinese-speaking Hui Muslims began settling the area, arriving from Hezhou (modern Linxia), resulting in common intermarriage, and many Hui began referring to themselves as Salar (Dwyer 2007:12).

Despite showing heavy degrees of language contact effects (from Chinese, but also Tibetic, Mongolic, Persian and Arabic), Salar “displays Turkic features at all levels of language, despite heavy language contact effects” (Dwyer 2007:26). Until the 1960s, researchers assumed Salar was closely related to, or even a dialect of, modern Uyghur (ibid.33). According to Dwyer, Salar is an Oghuz language, but displaced in the Southeastern area. Oghuz was a southwestern offshoot of Middle Turkic, which gave rise to literary Turkmen, Turkish and Azerbaijani. In contrast, Kazakh and Kyrgyz are northern Kipchak languages, while modern Uyghur and Uzbek developed out of languages from the Chagatai khanate, its literary language, Chagatay, being widespread in Central Asia, well into the 20th century.

Though mutually intelligible, Amdo Salar dialects vary between mountainous and remote township varieties (where Tibetan loanwords are more common) and those of urban areas. The main dialectal distinction in previous literature on Amdo is between the Altiuli (街子 Gaizi) and Munda (孟达) varieties of Xunhua County. To these Dwyer adds Hualong Salar, namely that spoken in the urban Gandu 甘都 township, as well as the more remote Chumar 初玛 and Ashnu 阿什努 localities (ibid.82). At least at the time of Dwyer’s fieldwork, Salar men tended to be bilingual in Salar and “Qinghai Chinese”, with about half literate in written Chinese. Many Salar men and some women were trilingual, expressing a range of communicative ability in Amdo Tibetan, while many Salar families have their children study Arabic at the local mosque (Dwyer 2007:89-90).

Being part of the Amdo sprachbund, Salar exhibits a number of linguistic features that set it apart from its Turkic relatives, and speak to the (mutual) influence of surrounding languages. However, it is worth noting that Chinese has exhibited the greatest degree of contact influence on Salar. As Dwyer points out, this is surely to do with the influence of religion, viz. Islam, the

primary conduit for which was intermarriage with Chinese-speaking Hui Muslims. (However, see Sandman and Simon 2016 for Tibetic features in Salar, the former of which they call a “model language” for contact purposes.)

4.2.2 Phonetics and Phonology

In this section I will give an overview of the sound properties of the selected languages of the region, first selected local languages representing the different language families, then a more detailed account of the Xining dialect, showing its similarities or differences areally.

4.2.2.1 *Amdo Tibetan Phonetics and Phonology*

Labrang Tibetan, as is typical for Amdo dialects, is atonal. The Labrang dialect has 36 simple initials and 18 complex initials, a rather modest showing for an Amdo dialect. With the exception of [kw], all complex initials may appear in the first syllable of the word, a position commonly rather restricted in Amdo dialects (Gesang and Gesang 2002:191). The consonant inventory provided by Gesang and Gesang (2002:192) is shown below, slightly edited, but following their placement of [ɬ] as a fricative in series with the fricatives, rather than, say, a voiceless lateral approximant:

	Bilabial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stops	p p ^h b		t t ^h d			k k ^h g		
Nasals	m		n		ɲ	ŋ		
Fricative		s s ^h z	ʈ	ʂ	ç z	x	ʁ	h
Affricate		ts ts ^h dz		tʂ tʂ ^h dʒ	tç tç ^h dʒ			
Laterals			l					
Trills			r					
Glides	w				j			

The complex initials include a first-position (i.e. first element in a consonant cluster) nasal series⁸², a first-position h-series and a labialized series, as illustrated here: /nb, ndʒ, nd, ndʒ, ndz, ng/, /hm, ht, hts, hn, hl, htʂ, htç, hç, hk, hŋ/, /xw, kw/. Note that this creates the possibility for a contrast between /ng/ and /ŋ/, as well as /hl/ and /ʈ/, which indeed are illustrated by the morphemes /ngan/ ‘task’ vs. /ŋan/ ‘bad; spoiled’, and /hlo/ ‘lung’ vs. /ʈo/ ‘south’.

The Labrang phonemic vowel inventory, as presented by Gesang and Gesang (2002:199), is given here:

	front	central	back
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
		ə	
Low	a		

⁸² Though pre-nasalized consonant phonemes are common in the region, I am following Gesang and Gesang (2002:191-196) here, who treat them as clusters. I do so simply to represent the source material, though one may note, judging from the written Tibetan, that the nasal phonemes are often written with the traditional glottal stop initial, implying they are reflexes of a historical cluster, not yet merged into a single phoneme, e.g. འགན་ <‘gan> ‘任务 task’.

The Labrang syllable allows seven coda consonants: /p, m, t, n, k, ŋ, r/. These may combine with all vowels except the high vowels /i/ and /u/ to form 25 different finals (i.e. vowel + consonant combinations), of which *[ek], *[eŋ], and *[əŋ] are not attested. Thus, the Labrang syllable consists of 6 types: V, VC, CV, CCV, CVC, and CCVC.

4.2.2.2 Mongolic Phonetics and Phonology

The consonant inventory of Mangghuer, in an adapted form from Slater (2003b:26) (which differs in substantial ways from Slater 2003a:309), is as follows (wherein the Monguor orthography, based largely in pinyin conventions, is presented in italics below the IPA):

	Labial	alveolars	Retroflex	Palatals ⁸³	Velars	uvulars
Stops	p ^h p <i>p b</i>	t ^h t <i>t d</i>			k ^h k <i>k g</i>	q ^h q <i>kh gh</i>
Affricates		ts ^h ts <i>c z</i>	tʂ ^h tʂ <i>ch zh</i>	tɕ ^h tɕ <i>q j</i>		
Fricatives	f <i>f</i>	s <i>s</i>	ʂ <i>sh</i>	ɕ <i>x</i>		χ <i>h</i>
Nasals	m <i>m</i>	n <i>n</i>			ŋ <i>ng</i>	
Liquids		l <i>l</i>	ɭ <i>r</i>			
Glides	w <i>w, u, o</i>			j <i>y, i</i>		

And the vowel inventory is as follows⁸⁴:

	Front	Back
High	i	u
Mid	e	o
Low	a	

⁸³ Slater (2003a) describes these sounds as postalveolar laminals (though in a “palatal” series). Slater (2003b) describes them as palatals.

⁸⁴ Slater doesn’t state whether the low vowel is front or back or underspecified. Evidence from the 1p imperative suffix (in 4.2.4.2 below) suggests perhaps it is front, but such may just be a functioning of low and/or unrounded vowels. He does, however, notate it as [a].

Slater (2003a:309) points out that Pinyin orthography works well for Mangghuer because the language's phonology is so close to Qinghai Mandarin, similarly to the Gangou 甘沟话 dialect.

Slater (2003b:39) notes the high degree of similarity between Monguor and Xining Chinese and Linxia Hui Chinese, while pointing out that both Amdo and Proto-Mongolic had voicing distinctions, whereas northern Chinese contrasts for aspiration. This parallels the situation in Salar (see 4.2.2.4), with regard to departure from Turkic phonological norms (Dwyer 2007). He also considers the properties of Monguor /r/ to be closer to Chinese than Mongolic, in phonetic implementation and phonological patterning.

The contrastive palatal and retroflex series probably appeared in Sinitic loanwords, but has moved to the native vocabulary. These sounds follow a similar distribution to their Mandarin counterparts, with palatals preceding front vowels, and retroflex before non-front vowels, though *sh* [ʃ] has a wider distribution than such a neat phonological rule would imply⁸⁵ (Slater 2003:310). Since Amdo Tibetan has a much fuller set of contrastive segments, it was less likely to have been the original source (ibid.41). A similar contact origin is posited for the /f/ phoneme. The uvular phonemes are the only uniquely Mongolic segments, originated in the native vocabulary as positional variants of velars (ibid).

The Mangghuer syllable structure is CGVC, where the final C may be a glide, an [r] or one of the nasals [n] or [ŋ]. The final [r] is a retention of Proto-Mongolic final *[l], though it is interesting to note why it may have been retained: varieties of northern Mandarin also have a final [r] among their impoverished coda inventories, the so-called “er-hua (儿化)”, and this was

⁸⁵ Though the sets are for the most part in complementary distribution, Slater (2003b:51) argues two points for treating them as independent phonemes: 1. their diachronic development does not seem to have been conditioned by the same environment for all palatals, and 2. claiming the palatals are conditioned by the following vowel causes trouble for postulating the Monguor syllabic template.

likely to have played a role in motivating coda-liquid retention in the Mangghuer inventory, though of course the origins are different. The only vowel possible before coda [r] is a schwa, thus [ə-]. Note, also, that in the Halchighol Mongghul dialect (the more widespread of the two Mongghul dialects), the final lateral was preserved in coda position, hence the name Mongghul.

The suprasegmental system of Mangghuer is best described directly in Slater's (2003:310) own words:

“The suprasegmental feature of stress displays an interesting mixture of Mongolic and Sinitic characteristics. Stress consists primarily of high pitch, and appears on the final syllable of a root, or on the final one of any suffixes or enclitics added to a root. Word boundaries, then, can be identified on the basis of stress, a stressed syllable being the final syllable of a phonological word. In Chinese borrowings, however, stress behavior is different. The basic rule seems to be that in a borrowed word, stress is assigned to any syllable which, in the donor language, had a tone pattern which included a high pitch. A Chinese borrowing, then, can have multiple stressed syllables, or it can have no stressed syllables at all, depending on its original tone pattern. A similar stress pattern has been described for Gansu Bonan. There are no distinctive tones in Mangghuer.”

Consider for example the Chinese loanwords [tʃun'tʃhən] 'sincere; honest', from Chinese *zhōngchéng* 忠诚 [tʃon⁵⁵tʃ^hən²⁴], and ['ji'tʃi-] 'continually; directly', from Chinese *yīzhí* 一直 [i⁵⁵tʃɿ²⁴]. While both lexical items have the same pitch pattern in Mandarin, they have different tonal adaptations in Monguor, illustrating how the mapping of tone to word stress in Monguor is a feature still somewhat in flux.

Nonetheless, while Bonan also has a similar strategy for Chinese loanword adaptation, Mongolic languages in general tend to have word-initial stress. Only the Qinghai-Amdo Mongolic languages, including Eastern Yughur, have final stress (Slater 2003b:79). Comparing the Mangghuer situation with Graham Thurgood's description of Cham, Slater (*ibid*) considers the prosodic system to have been a natural phonological adaptation, spurred in motion by the

areal influence from Chinese or perhaps other local languages. For example, Slater (2003b:80) cites Field (1997), who posits that word-final stress in Santa was the result of Turkic speakers shifting to Mongolic in the 13th century as part of the historical development of the Santa-speaking community. Slater thinks Turkic or Tibetan influence could account for Monguor stress patterns, as well.

Mongghul, the other language variety referred to by the label “Monguor”, has the same consonantal and vocalic inventory as Mangghuer, but contrasts long versus short vowels, as in the words *amu* ‘life’ versus *aamu* ‘millet’, *bosi-* ‘to rise’ versus *boosi* ‘flea’, and *niki-* ‘to weave’ versus *nikii* ‘fur’ (Georg 2003:289). The length contrast is proposed to be the result of elision of intervocalic fricatives between Proto-Mongolic and Mongghul, as in **böxe* > *boo* ‘shaman’, or **temexe/n* > *timeen* ‘camel’, although some lexemes are not accounted for by this explanation (ibid:290). Like other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex, there is no vowel harmony in Mongghul. Also, like Mangghuer, Mongghul has a rhotacized [ə̤] schwa in Chinese loanwords, as in *erliuzi* ‘lazybone’.

The prosodic system of Mongghul is the same as that described above for Mangghuer. Georg (2003:292) notes that the final stress has resulted in the loss of many initial-syllable vowels, or sometimes entire syllables. As such, Mongghul allows a number of initial consonant clusters, perhaps fortified by contact with the cluster-heavy Amdo Tibetan dialects (as in the Tibetan borrowing *rgomba* ‘temple’). Georg (2003:293) gives the following possible sequences in syllable-initial position, a total of 24 possible complex onsets. I use here his rendering, based on the local Pinyin-based orthography, which has the following values that differ from standard IPA: gh [ɣ], z [dz], sh [ʃ], x [ç] and h, which represents a free variation between [x] and [h].

n-initial: nd, nt, nj, ng, ngh
s-initial: sb, sm, sd, sz, sg, sgh
sh-initial: shb, shd, shz, shg, shgh
x-initial: xj
r-initial: rm, rd, rz, rg, rgh
h-initial: hg, hgh

4.2.2.3 Salar Phonetics and Phonology

Other than the uvular consonants and velar fricatives, the Turkic language Salar has a very (northern) Chinese flavor, particularly the retroflex and alveolopalatal series (Dwyer 2007:94).

Below is the underlying phonemic inventory, slightly adapted from Dwyer (2007:96)

	Labial	Dental	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stops	p b	t d			k g	q ɢ	
Fricatives	f v	s z	ʂ	ç	x ɣ		h
Affricates			tʂ dʒ	tç dʒ			
Nasals	m	n			ŋ		
Liquids		l r					
Glides	w			j			

Dwyer provides extensive analysis of the origins of Salar phonemes from a diachronic perspective. For example, she (2017:214) posits that the Salar initial /p/ is a loan from either Chinese or Amdo Tibetan, as Common Turkic had no *p. Retroflex fricatives and affricates most often occur in loanwords, but [ç] sometimes is in free variation with [ʂ] in words of Turkic origin (Dwyer 2007:97). Dwyer also considers [f] and [h] to have originated in Arabic and Persian vocabulary (ibid.96). The Turkic postalveolars reanalyzed as alveolopalatals could have come from either Chinese or Tibetan, but Salar is like Amdo, and unlike Chinese, in that the palatals may appear with most nuclei, not just high front vowels (Dwyer 2007:304).

It is worth pointing out that some borrowings reflect Middle Chinese initials that have palatalized in many northern Chinese dialects, pointing to contact before this northern palatalization process was complete. Examples include *gin* ‘tense; busy’ 紧 and *gedzir* ‘ring’ 戒指. Note also the place name, Gaizi 街子 ‘place name’, or the phrase *gecoŋ* ‘on the street’ 街上. Like Salar, the latter morpheme, 街 (Standard Mandarin [tɕiɛ⁵⁵]) ‘street’, is pronounced with the g-initial in place names in Xunhua Chinese (Dwyer 2007:238). (However, see 3.4.3.3 for examples in Southwest Mandarin dialects, which also often maintain such velars.)

Synchronically, Dwyer analyzes stops as underlyingly voiced vs. voiceless, but notes that they surface as aspirated vs. unaspirated in phonetic implementation, especially in initial position. Lin (1985:6-11) gives a very similar description. The analysis follows partly from expected Turkic inventory properties, but also from the behavior of those phonemes intervocally and at morpheme boundaries⁸⁶. In any case, she sees the tendency for the contrast to be implemented as an aspiration distinction to be a result of the contact area with Sinitic and Tibetic, where aspiration contrasts are much more phonetically and distributionally salient.

The Salar phonemic vowel inventory is as follows (adapted from Dwyer 2007:121, using her IPA characters and features):

	Front	back
High	i y	ɨ u
Mid	e ø	o
Low		a

The underlying vowel phonemes of Salar are all shown by Dwyer (2007:287) to be reflexes of Common Turkic, though the inventory has been simplified greatly, from a potential inventory of 18 vowels in Common Turkic to eight short vowels. High front vowels following retroflex and

⁸⁶ For example, suffix-initial underspecified stops, see Dwyer (2007:176-178), where the phonetic contrast is closer in VOT values to a voicing distinction than to an aspirated distinction. See Dwyer (2007:98-107) for more discussion.

palatal sibilant consonants are realized as apical vowels. (Uyghur and Kazakh have /i/ in such loans.) Dwyer (2007:120, 124-125) points out that this is a break from Turkic norms, where stem vowels usually determine consonantal features, such as backness.

The maximal underlying Salar syllable is either (C)VCC, as in /ald/ 'front', or CVVC (mostly in loans), as in /tiut/ 'Tibetan', though the range of segments appearing in coda position are more reduced than other Turkic languages. Vowel length appears not to be contrastive. Final nasals often appear as simply nasalization on the preceding vowel (e.g. /goŋdzin/ [gũǎdzĩ] 'kilogram 公斤'), and final /z/ often devoices to [s] (Dwyer 2007:110).

Salar, like other Turkic languages, is atonal, and regular word stress falls on the ultimate syllable. However, final unstressed morphemes will shift stress to the immediately preceding syllable, e.g. [a'wu-tɕhux] 'little boy', from [a'wu] 'boy'. Some disyllabic nouns have initial stress, while some Sinitic loans have non-final stress as the result of tone-to-stress loanword adaptations (Dwyer 2007:155).

Vowels and consonants agree in backness within a word, as is common in Turkic languages.

According to Dwyer (2007:171):

"In roots of Turkic origin, if the leftmost vowel is [+BACK], then all the subsequent vowels in the root and suffixes will also be [+BACK] (with some exceptions). Although some Turkic languages also show rounding ("labial") harmony in vowels, the latter is very weak in Salar. Salar belongs to a branch of Turkic with well-developed harmony systems, yet contact with non-harmonic languages (and harmonic languages with weaker systems) has resulted in a very limited stem-controlled harmonic system in Salar."

In certain Chinese loans disharmonic roots may appear, as in /pibɔ/ 'wallet 皮包' and /ɕeyɕo/ 'school 学校'. However, even such loans with isomorphic front and back root vowels will show vowel harmony on suffixes, if they undergo such morphological processes, as with the verbal

suffix *-la* in /bo/ ‘to wrap 包’ becoming [bola-] ‘to wrap’ and *de-* ‘to fold 叠’ becoming [dele-] ‘to fold’ (Dwyer 2017:176).

The tendency for the dentals /t, d/ to spirantize to [tɕ, dʒ], as in [xadzi]~[xadi] ‘Chinese’, is a process also found in Gansu and Qinghai Chinese, e.g. [tsi¹³] ‘earth 土’ (Standard Mandarin *tǔ*) and [wə̃¹³ ts^hi] ‘problem 问题’ (Standard Mandarin *wèntí*) (Dwyer 2007:187). Another spirantization process shared with Northwestern Chinese, but also Uyghur, is spirantization of voiceless consonants adjacent to high vowels, as in Northwestern Chinese /p^hiao⁵⁵/ [pfiao⁵⁵] ‘ticket’, and /t^heu¹³/ [txeu¹³] ‘head’. Salar has /it/ [ʔij^hth] ‘dog’ and /pit/ [p^hij^hft] ‘louse’ (Dwyer 2007:189). (Cf. Uzbek *it* ит ‘dog’, *bit* бит ‘louse’ Mamatov et al. 2008; Turkish *it* ‘dog’, *bit* ‘louse’ İz 1992). Dwyer sees this as an areal tendency stemming from high stridency in aspirates as a means to enhance local aspiration contrasts on obstruents (ibid.190).

4.2.2.4 *Xining Phonetics and Phonology*

According to Bell (2017), phonologically and lexically there is very little divergence from Mandarin. Perhaps unremarkably, the historical Shang tone and the Qu tone values are the reverse of Standard Mandarin, as they are in Northwest (and Southwest) Mandarin generally. (See 3.4.2 for terminology.) Dede (1999:45) provides the following syllabic initials, referencing Zhang and Zhu (1987:54), while drawing comparisons with the Beijing dialect. The zero-initial is not indicated as part of the set.

	Bilabials	labiodentals	dentals	retroflex	alveolopalatals	velars
Stops	p p ^h		t t ^h			k k ^h
Nasals	m		n			
Fricatives		f	s z	ʂ ʐ	ɕ	x
Affricates			ts ts ^h	tʂ tʂ ^h	tɕ tɕ ^h	
Liquids			l			

The consonantal comparison by Dede (1999:45) shows the only difference from Beijing Mandarin is the initial [z] for non-Sinitic words, as in [za¹²-liɔ] ‘fled, scrambled’. (The [z] is the same initial of Beijing ‘sun 日’, transcribed as [ʝ] in other sources.) The similarity is not as strong, however, for the vowels or tones. The following chart is of Xining vowel phonemes, followed by a chart from Dede (1999:46) showing syllabic finals in comparison with Standard Mandarin. (There is also a series of non-phonemic apical vowels, not shown here.)

	front	Central	back
High	i y		u ʊ
mid-high			ɔ ɔ̃
Mid		ẽ	
mid-low	ɛ		
Low			a ǎ

Table 9 Comparison of Xining and Beijing finals (Dede 1999:46)

Xining	Beijing	example	Xining	Beijing	example
a	a	马	ɔ	au	高
ɛ	ai	买	io	iau	交
ia	ia	加	u	ou	狗
i	iɛ	写	iʊ	iou	究
ua	ua	花	ã	an	肝
u	uo	窝	iã	ian	兼
yu	yɛ	月	uã	uan	酸
ɺ	ɺ	资	yã	yan	捐
ɺ	ɺ	知	õ	aŋ	张
j ⁸⁷	i	衣	iõ	iaŋ	江
v	u	乌	uõ	uaŋ	光
y	y	鱼	ẽ	en, eŋ	真, 崩
uɛ	uai	怪	iẽ	ien, ieŋ	因, 英
ei	ei	给	uẽ	uen, ueŋ	温, 翁
uei	uei	队	yẽ	yen, yeŋ	云, 雍

⁸⁷ Dede (1993:56) notes that this final is not a glide, but a vowel with a value similar to [z], which appears only after labial, palatal, lateral and zero initials, contrasting with [i] in character readings such as /j/衣 ‘clothing’ vs. /i/耶, an exclamation. Such fricative vowels are common not only in Amdo, but throughout the region of this dissertation.

Allophonically, before a high back vowel, Xining has an [f] where SM has [ʃ], as in 水 ‘water’ Xining [fɿ⁵³], SM [ʃuei²¹³]; 耍 ‘play’ Xining [fa⁵³], SM [ʃua²¹³]; and 双 ‘pair’ Xining [fʃ⁴⁴], SM [ʃuaŋ⁵⁵]. The labialization of retroflexes before high, back vowels is a noted areal feature; according to Dede (1993:57), it is even more pronounced in Lanzhou. As can be seen from these examples, there is also a tendency towards simple rhymes, where final nasals have been lost in place of vowel nasalization and glides have deleted or coalesced with the nuclear vowel. Among the finals, there is also a syllabic labiodental fricative, as in the common adverb [xɿ³¹ tɿ⁵³] ‘very, extremely’.

Comparison of Xining and Beijing tones, from Dede (1999:46), following Zhang and Zhu (1987:6)

Philological Tone Name	Xining	Beijing
yinping 阴平	44	55
yangping 阳平	24	25
shang 上	53	213
qu 去	213	51

Kawasumi Tetsuya (2006, 2011) presents an in-depth study on the tonal system of Xining, including its sandhi patterns. Comparing his own field notes to previously published sources, Kawasumi analyzes the Xining dialect as having only two phonological tones, a high-level 44 tone, and a low-rising 24 tone, the latter with a non-contrastive 13 variant (Kawasumi 2006:94). His description differs from previous researchers who found four tones in isolation; apparently the speaker(s) he worked with only identified a two-tone contrast on monosyllables.

However, in combination with other morphemes, sandhi patterns reveal that there are two distinct underlying tonemes for each of the aforementioned values, labelled 44a and 44b, and 34a and 34b, respectively, surfacing with the pitch values 44, 24, or 21, depending on the environment, as described in the chart below.

Kawasumi (2006:112) gives the following chart to show the possible combinations.⁸⁸

Table 10 Xining tone sandhi patterns from Kawasumi (2006)

Syllables	Tone 44a	Tone 24a	Tone 44b	Tone 24b
Tone 44a 阴平	44-44 24-44	44-44 24-24	44-44 21-44	44-44 21-24
Tone 24a 阳平	21-44 24-44	21-44 24-24	21-24 21-44	21-24 -----
Tone 44b 上声	44-21 44-44	44-21 44-24	44-21 21-44	44-21 44-24
Tone 24 b 去声	21-44 24-44	21-44 24-24	21-44 -----	21-44 24-24

From the chart one can see that in the vast majority of cases, when any two tones appear adjacent to each other in a phonological word, there are two possible sandhi outcomes, depending on the individual lexemes. Consequently, the two tones from isolation, Tones 44 and 24, are analyzed as having two underlying distinctions manifest only in sandhi environments, but which accord with the historical Middle Chinese tone categories quite evenly. This seems to be something of a reversal of cases like Shanghai Chinese, or Lhasa Tibetan, where the greater numbers of tonal distinctions appear on monosyllables, but are neutralized in sandhi patterns across the phonological word. Nonetheless, the two-tone distinction reported by Kawasumi speaks to a changing tonal system, where at least for individual morphemes (which are monosyllabic), speakers distinguish only two tones, instead of four.

4.2.2.5 *Phonetics and Phonology Summary*

From the above we can make the following generalizations about the surveyed Amdo sprachbund languages' sound systems. As is indicative of linguistic areas, a number of features or properties are shared by multiple languages of the region, across language family boundaries, but at the same time, there are also individual aspects that have not spread.

⁸⁸ See his article for examples of compound words illustrating each pattern.

1. While Amdo has a 3-way contrast on obstruents (including fricatives) of voiced vs. voiceless unaspirated vs. voiceless aspirated, all the other languages have a 2-way contrast. Turkic Salar differs from Monguor and Xining in having a voiced vs. voiceless contrast, though, word-initially, all three languages have aspirated versus unaspirated distinctions.

2. All languages of the area contrast palatal (in the form of alveolopalatals) and retroflex places of articulation, even if such places of contrast are not present in respective protolanguages.

3. There is an areal trend towards high degrees of spirantization and/or aspiration on obstruents, evidenced in regional Chinese dialects, as well as Salar. Apical/fricative vowels are common throughout, though not specifically mentioned for Amdo.

4. Amdo has the greatest maximal syllabic inventory, at CCVC, though it could be said it is toward the lower end of the spectrum of CC inventory, compared with other Amdo dialects, e.g. Zeku. Due to easily discernible internal changes, Mongghul allows complex onsets as well. Mangghuer allows a glide between an initial consonant and vowel, but is otherwise CVC. Salar allows complex codas if there is only one mora in nucleus position, but not complex onsets, thus CVCC. Xining is maximally CV.

5. Only Xining is tonal, though there is evidence from Kawasumi (2006) that the phonological inventory is reducing to a two-tone system. All other languages lack tone, though both Monguor and Salar show attention to high tones in loanword adaptation to a final-stress based system.

6. Amdo Tibetan has a number of place contrasts not found in other languages, such as four nasal segments, as well as lateral fricatives. This is indicative of the larger overall inventory, with 36 simple initials, versus 28 in Salar, 26 in Mangghuer and 22 in Xining.

7. Neither Amdo, Monguor or Salar contrast for nasality or rounding in their vocalic inventories, though Salar may be in the process of rephonologizing nasal codas to features on the vowel. Xining alone contrasts both rounding and nasalization.

8. Salar alone exhibits vowel harmony, which does not operate in Sinitic loans, but does on their concurrent suffixes in the morphology⁸⁹.

Now we move onto the morphology of the Noun Phrase (NP).

4.2.3 Noun Phrase Morphology

In this section, similar to the last, I give an overview of noun phrase (NP) properties of the region, then a fuller account of the Xining dialect, comparing differences and similarities.

4.2.3.1 *The Amdo NP*

Affixal morphology in Labrang Amdo is quite productive, for not only nouns, but verbs as well. Examples of some productive suffixes are the agentive suffix *-nə* (*sa-nə* ‘person who’s eating’; *hta-nə* ‘person who’s watching’; *ndzə-nə* ‘person who’s putting forth a question’), attached to *sa* ‘eat’, *hta* ‘watch’, and *ndzə* ‘ask’, respectively; or the potentiality marker *tʰɛpɔ* (*sa-tʰɛpɔ* ‘something able to be eaten’; *ŋɔ-tʰɛpɔ* ‘something able to be bought’, the latter suffixing to the root *ŋɔ* ‘buy’). By Gesang and Gesang’s reckoning (2002:230), the negator *ma* can form an infix, as in *ronj-ma-ndzok* ‘a half-agricultural pastoral area’ (lit. agricultural-NEG-pastoral) and *dza-ma-wot* ‘half-Han, half-Tibetan’ (lit. Han-NEG-Tibetan). Finally, like Chinese, Tibetan

⁸⁹ According to Charles Li (1984), Hui Chinese in Linxia involves a degree of vowel harmony between stems and case affixes, e.g. allomorphs of the dative/accusative case in *tʃədʒɪ-ə* (car-ACC), *lɔdʒaŋ-a* (Old Zhang-ACC) and *inyɛ:* (< *inyɛ-ɛ* music-ACC). Researchers on Xining may have failed to mention or take note of this, or it could be confined to Hui and/or Linxia speech.

morphemes are largely monosyllabic⁹⁰, and very productively form compound words,

illustrated below from Gesang and Gesang (2002:217) in (4-3):

(4-3)

lək-sol	system-system	‘standard; norm’
de-htɕət	peace-happy	‘lucky’
sə-ɣaŋ	eat-shop	‘cafeteria’
hnap-ɕi	snot-wipe	‘handkerchief’
ŋə-rdok	sun-blind	‘winter solstice’

Nouns inflect for plurality and for case. The usual plural marker is *-ts^ho*, in casual speech pronounced *tɕ^hawo*, while in polite speech the plural marker is *hnampa*. Examples from Gesang and Gesang (2002:218) include *gergan-ts^ho* ‘teachers’; *lək-tɕ^hawo* ‘sheep’ and *hwetɕ^ha-tɕ^hawo* ‘books’.

Labrang Amdo marks five cases: genitive, ergative, locative, ablative and dative, the latter of which is claimed to be specific to Amdo among Tibetan dialects⁹¹. The locative *-na*, and ablative *-ni* are invariant, and always suffixes, but the other three cases have numerous allomorphs. Generally, case marking is accomplished by final vowel alternation or suffixation. If the final vowel of the noun is non-high, i.e. /a ə e o/, then there is a vowel-raising alternation to mark the genitive and ergative: /a ə e/ changing to [i] and /o/ changing to [u]. If the final vowel is

⁹⁰ That is, if pressed, one could attach a semantic meaning to each syllable of the language. However, where function words seem to be composed of syllables that always combine to serve a grammatical role, and whose constituent parts have no obvious independent value, I am glossing them as polysyllabic morphemes. I do the same for compound words whose internal constituency is usually not broken into individual morphemes. Such is common practice even in Chinese, for lexemes like 老师 *lǎoshī* ‘teacher’ and 苹果 *píngguǒ* ‘apple’, technically ‘old-master’ and ‘apple-fruit’, respectively.

⁹¹ Wang (1995:11-19) lists the cases as genitive, agentive (homophonous with the genitive), ablative, locative and dative, the last of which he claims denotes an indirect object, as well as “direction towards”. Note that in Lhasa Tibetan, the dative and the locative case are fused in one morpheme, *-la* (DeLancey 2017:389).

high /i/ or /u/, however, the suffix /-kə/ is added, which has the variants [ɣə] and [ŋgə]. It also appears that the ergative case marker has the same phonological form as the genitive.

The dative case has four functions: to mark the object of the verb, the goal of the action, the possessor of something in an existential clause and a locative or time adverbial marker. It, too, exhibits a good deal of allomorphy: if the final vowel of the nominal is high, then the vowel [a] is suffixed. If it is not high, then there is no marker, unless the final vowel is a schwa [ə], in which case the schwa changes to [e]. When the nominal ends in a consonant, the dative suffix is -Ca, where generally that consonant will be a geminate of the preceding final, with phonological variants (e.g. /ka/ changes to [ɣa]). However, if that preceding final is /p/ or /t/, then the dative morpheme is [-wa] and [-la], respectively.

All of this is to say, there is a good deal of morphophonemic complexity in stem allomorphy for case marking in Amdo, unlike the relatively straightforward suffixation of Xining, Monguor and for the most part Salar, as will be shown below. However, the particularities of case-marking do not end there. The case of a noun is also often governed by the verb of the predicate. For example, for his described variety of Amdo, Wang (1995:Chapter 11) explains that when the predicate is a spontaneous verb, an adjective or a linking verb (e.g. a copula), the subject is unmarked; when the predicate is an active verb, the subject takes agentive case; when the verb is an existential, the subject takes dative case; and when there is more than one verb in a predicate, the subject is inflected (or not) based on the first verb in the series. Finally, when nominal expressions are used as attributive adjunct modifiers before the noun, they are suffixed with a genitive case marker (Wang 1995:120).

Finally, reduplication is illustrated for Amdo by adjectival expressions. In Labrang adjectives may serve as both modifiers and predicates and often reduplicate for emphasis. Examples of some reduplicated adjectives used for emphasis are found in (4-4), from Gesang and Gesang (2002:226):

(4-4)

karo karo ‘very very white’ 很白很白的

t^honmbo t^honmbo ‘very very tall’ 很高很高的

tɕ^hoŋtɕoŋ tɕ^hoŋtɕoŋ ‘very very small’ 很小很小的

tɕɛzə tɕɛzə ‘basically square’ 四四方方的

4.2.3.2 *The Monguor NP*

Mongghul has derivational suffixes to form elements such as diminutives, essives, causatives and to change verbs to nouns and vice versa. Examples include *kerli-qin* ‘beggar’ (ask.for-AGENT), *shuguo-tu* ‘to become big’ (big-TRANSL) and *xiaoshun-ge* ‘to show filial piety’ (filial.piety-CAUS) (Slater 2003a:311-312). The common Mongolic passive suffixes, however, like all of the regional Mongolic languages except Shira Yughur, are absent, just as passives are absent in Amdo Tibetan (Georg 2003:294). Mongghul shows no sign of ergativity.

In Mangghuer number is marked optionally on nouns, with either singular *-ge* ([-nge] in Mongghul after vowels, [-ge] after consonants, where it is used emphatically) or plural *-si* suffixed to the root. The singular morpheme *ge* may be a syncretic form of historical Mongolic *nige* ‘one’ and Chinese *yige* ‘one’ (ibid.312). The indefinite marker *ge* is in fact part of a wider areal phenomenon of overt indefinite marking, with a similar morpheme in Bonan, and in Amdo Tibetan, as well. Consider the morpheme *zag* in the data in (4-5) below from Amdo Tibetan (cited in Slater 2003:101 from J. Sun 1993:963):

(4-5)

ŋɑ hŋəd tʂo=nə hʌkʰæ zəŋ ji=tʰæ
1.DAT sleep desire=CON yawn INDEF do.COM=DIRECT
'I felt sleepy and yawned.'

Slater (2003b:99) gives the Mangghuer equivalent indefinite marking in (4-6) and (4-7):

(4-6)

shuguobeghe ge bang
big tree SG.INDEF OBJT.COP
'There is a big tree.'

(4-7)

bi tuerghang kong ge=ni ala ge-ba
1SG fat person SG.INDEF=ACC kill do-PFV.SUBJT
'I have killed a fat person.'

In the following sentences (ibid) in (4-8)-(4-9), one can see that no overt morphological indicator is needed for definite entities for Amdo, similarly to Mangghuer below it:

(4-8)

ŋə der tʂag=təŋ
1.ERG dish break=AUX
'I broke the dish (on purpose).'

(4-9)

muni shu zhuozi diere bang
1.GEN book table on OBJT.COP
'my book is on the table'

(Slater 2003b:128)

Six cases are marked on the noun in Mangghuer, four directly descendant from Proto-Mongolic (dative-locative =*du*, ablative =*sa*, instrumental-comitative =*la* and possessive =*tai*), one a merger of two historical cases (genitive and accusative, yielding the “connective” =*ni*) and one being an innovation, the directive =*ji*. The same cases are present in Mongghul, with the addition of a simple locative, =*ri* (similar to Santa) (Georg 2003:295). As is common in Mongolic, the dative form functions also as a locative (Slater 2003a:313). We noted above in 4.2.3.2. that

the Amdo dative marker can also sometimes function as a locative, despite the presence of a separate locative morpheme.

The third-person possessive marker *=ni*, and the reflexive marker *=nang*, are also enclitics. All of these morphemes appear final in the NP, and when case markers co-occur with possession or reflexive markers, the three categories may appear in variable order, as illustrated in (4-10)-(4-11) where the order of possessive *=ni* and dative *=du* occur in opposite orders in the two sentences (Slater 2003a:313):

(4-10)

Bieri= <i>ni</i> = <i>du</i>	banhua	guang	ma
wife= <i>POSS</i> = <i>DAT</i>	method	<i>OBJT.NEG.COP</i>	<i>PTCL</i>

‘(Now) his wife had no recourse.’

(4-11)

Diao= <i>du</i> = <i>ni</i>	han	mula	nughuai	yi= <i>ge</i>	bang
younger.sibling= <i>DAT</i> = <i>POSS</i>	also	small	dog	one= <i>CL</i>	<i>OBJT.COP</i>

‘His younger brother also had a small dog.’

4.2.3.3 *The Salar NP*

Derived words in Salar, the major regional Turkic language, are formed by adding suffixes to the root or stem, e.g. the agentive *-dʒi*, as in *dimur* ‘steel’, *dimurdʒi* ‘steel worker’; *sataχ* ‘to shop’, *sataχdʒi* ‘businessperson’. Many suffixes show variants, depending on the stem vowels, such as the nominalizer *-vusi/-yusi/-gusi/-gusi* that attaches to a verbal root to make a tool or food item related to the root, illustrated in (4-12) (Lin 1985:29):

(4-12)

sanla-	‘to measure’	sanlaʷusi	‘ruler’
ji-	‘to eat’	jiyusi	‘food’
ot-	‘to live’	otgusi	‘residence’
min-	‘to ride’	mingusi	‘draft animal’

Salar marks plurality on nominals with the suffix *-lar/-ler*. It can attach to non-count nouns to make generic nominals, e.g. *ana* ‘girl’ + *-lar*, *analar* ‘girls’; *kif* ‘person’ + *-ler*, *kifler* ‘people’, or to proper nouns to make distributives. However, if the nominal is quantified by a number, then the plural does not appear.

Salar exhibits six morphological cases: unmarked nominative, genitive *-niyi*, dative *-Cə* (discussed below), accusative *-nə*, which often deletes, locative *-də/--de/-ndə/-nde*, which also marks time and range associated with the verb, and ablative *-dən/-den/-ndən/-nden*, which marks an action verb or state’s starting point in time or place, or reason or cause. The dative case expresses indirect objects, directions, goals and locations. It has a variety of forms: *-və/-yə* after vowels; *-gə/-ge* after velar and uvular fricatives; *-e/-ə* after other consonants; and *-nə* when the nominals are headed by a third person possessive.

According to the profiles in the collection by Johanson and Csató (1998), these six cases are common across Central Asian Turkic languages. Turkish, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Uzbek and Uyghur have the same cases, all with the unmarked nominative.

Reduplication is illustrated in (4-13) below. The process involves substituting the initial consonant of the reduplicant with [m], unless the initial consonant is already [m], in which case there is a vowel change (with some exceptions) (Lin 1985:32).

(4-13)

<i>zanzi</i> ‘bowl’	<i>zanzimanzi</i> ‘bowls (in general)’
<i>jaʃ</i> ‘vegetables’	<i>jaʃmaʃ</i> ‘vegetables, etc.’
<i>aʃ</i> ‘noodles’	<i>aʃmaʃ</i> ‘things like noodles’
<i>maʋla</i> ‘soy bean’	<i>maʋla-moʋla</i> ‘things like soy beans’

4.2.3.4 The Xining NP

Like other Sinitic languages, Xining morphology is largely analytic, with regular compounding and a limited set of affixes. Note that, unlike in Standard Mandarin, the plural marker *mã⁴⁴* 们 is quite productive in Xining, as evidenced by the words in (4-14):

(4-14)			
娘儿们	ŋjɔ̃ ^{24>31} ɛ ^{24>53} mǎ ⁴⁴	‘girls’	
花儿们	xua ⁴⁴ ɛ ⁴⁴ mǎ ⁴⁴	‘flowers’	
桌子们	tɕu ⁴⁴ tsɿ ^{53>44} mǎ ⁴⁴	‘tables’	(Zhang and Zhu 1987:243)

Zhang and Zhu (1987:305-307) list a number of morphemes as possible prefixes and suffixes, such as the prefix 生 [sǎ⁴⁴-] ‘birth’, grammaticalized as ‘very; extremely’ in 生疼 [sǎ^{44>24}-thǎ²⁴] ‘very sore’, and the prefix 死 [sɿ²¹³-] ‘die’, as in 死重 [sɿ²¹³-tɕuǎ²⁴] ‘deathly heavy’ or 死不要脸 [sɿ²¹³-pɿ²¹³-iɔ̃²¹³liǎ⁵³] ‘utterly shameless’⁹². Possible suffixes include 的个歪 [-tsɿ⁴⁴kɔ̃⁴⁴uɛ⁴⁴] ‘extremely (极了)’, as in 胖哈的个歪 [phǔ²¹³xa⁴⁴-tsɿ⁴⁴kɔ̃⁴⁴uɛ⁴⁴] ‘extremely fat’ and 疼哈的个歪 [thǎ²⁴xa⁵³-tsɿ⁴⁴kɔ̃⁴⁴uɛ⁴⁴] ‘extremely painful’⁹³. Wang (2012b:472) also lists a nominal suffix, 般的 (Standard Mandarin *bānde* ‘common; plain’; no Xining transliteration given), which means ‘the same as (一样)’, as in (4-15) (Romanization given in Pinyin)⁹⁴:

⁹² The issue of wordhood in Sinitic morphology has a significant literature, much of it from a theoretical viewpoint. It would lead us far astray to pursue it here, and so I take authors’ claims of compounds versus derivationally affixed words in Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman languages at face value, noting that in most of these languages virtually every syllable, with few exceptions, has some identifiable semantic meaning, though not all morphemes are free. Furthermore, in many languages morphophonological changes between the root and additional morphemes are not immediately apparent. See Duanmu (1998) and Packard (2000) for good overviews and discussion of the factors at play.

⁹³ The internal constituency of these morphemes is unclear to me, and also unclear whether the component morphemes would be semantically prominent for native speakers. I have essentially chosen to ignore the characters used to write them, including the fact that they include the same character, with the same pronunciation, as the dative/anti-ergative case marker discussed below.

⁹⁴ In this example, and all subsequent examples of a similar format, the first line of characters is a rendering of the Xining data into Chinese characters, and the line above the English translation is a translation into Standard Mandarin. When either or both lines are provided by the source, I include them here.

(4-15)

小张奸着飞俩，猴儿般的

Xiǎozhāng jiān-zhe fēiliǎ, hóuer-bānde

PN wicked-DUR fly-lia⁹⁵, monkey-like

小张特别狡猾，猴子一样

‘Little Zhang is especially tricky, just like a monkey.’

Reduplication appears to be common in Xining, though the gazetteer does not gloss any added information for the provided examples; that is, the given meaning of the reduplicated morpheme is the same as the single morpheme which forms its base reduplicant. Presumably it operates similarly to Standard Mandarin, in sometimes fulfilling a diminutive/register-softening function, and sometimes an obligatory prosodic function. In many cases tone sandhi is triggered by the process, depending on the category of tones in juxtaposition. The following examples in (4-16) are a small sample of those provided in Zhang and Zhu (1987:274-276).

(4-16)

肝肝 kā ⁴⁴ kā ⁴⁴	‘liver’	鼻鼻 p _j ^{24>31} p _j ^{24>53}	‘nose’
衫衫 sā ⁴⁴ sā ⁴⁴	‘shirt’	腿腿 thuei ⁵³ thuei ^{53>24}	‘leg’
妈妈 mā ⁴⁴ mā ^{44>53}	‘mom’	背背 pei ^{213>31} pei ^{213>53}	‘back’

Finally, Xining has developed a number of postpositional case markers, purportedly under language contact influence. I will discuss each on their own terms below. For an overview of common Xining adpositions, particularly postpositions, see Wang (2012b). He comes to the conclusion that, while Xining has an abundance of prepositional markers (according to him, more overall than postpositions), postpositions are used with a higher frequency, the exact opposite tendency of Standard Mandarin (Wang 2012b:477). Unsurprisingly, Wang attributes this to contact, contrasting it with a tendency towards postposition markers in Wu dialects, such as Suzhou, which he describes as an internal change preferencing topicalization.

⁹⁵ My assumption is that this *lia* is most likely an affirmative modal marker, as discussed in 4.2.4.4. “Flies wicked” must be metaphor for trickiness. However, I can’t be sure that it’s not a perfective marker, or something else.

The marked nominal cases in Xining are ablative (*-tɕia* or *-sa*, its most frequent variant), dative (*-xa*) (or anti-ergative—see below) and instrumental (*-lia*). Keith Dede's (1999a,b, 2007b) work focuses on these postpositional case markers and their proposed contact-origins. For example, Dede (1999b) provides examples of the ablative postposition marker [*-tɕia*], provided in (4-17) and (4-18) :

(4-17)

他昨天北京 tɕia 来了

t^ha⁴⁴ tsu³¹t^hiä⁵³ pɪ⁴⁴tɕiä⁵³-tɕia lɛ³⁵-liɔ
 3 yesterday Beijing-ABL come-PFV/CS
 'He came back from Beijing yesterday.'

(4-18)

我上个礼拜 sa 就不抽烟了

nɔ⁵³ ʂɕ²¹³-kɔ l³⁵pɛ²¹³-sa tɕiɯ²¹³ pv³¹ tɕ^hɯ³⁵iä⁴⁴-liɔ
 1 last-CL week-ABL then not smoke-PFV/CS
 'I haven't smoked since last week.' (Dede 1999b)

In examining the origins of the switch from prepositional ablative [ts^hɔŋ] 从 in other varieties of Mandarin to the postpositional [tɕia / sa] in Xīníng, Dede considers the Monguor ablative postposition [sa], as exemplified in the Monguor examples in (4-19) below:

(4-19)

vaŋdza aade badzar-sa redz a
 PN grandfather town-ABL come to.be
 'Grandpa Wang came from town.'

The conclusion he draws is that the origins of the Xining ablative postposition is from the substratum language of a group of Monguor inhabitants of the region that shifted to Mandarin as a result of Han immigrations in the 14th and 15th centuries. Due to imperfect acquisition of the target language, they inserted the native postposition [sa] into Mandarin, creating a hybrid

dialect (Dede 1999b: 9)⁹⁶. In the 1990s, Dede observed that older-generation speakers tend to use the [sa] postposition, while younger generations use the marker [tɕia]. However, an infrequent marker [ɕia] also shows up in the data. Dede posits that the older form from Monguor has undergone change to an affricate, first passing through the laminal [ɕia] in an intermediary stage.

Though he also considers the Monguor ablative, Wang (2012b:474) compares the marker 吵 [sa] with the Ningbo⁹⁷ ablative 峽 [kaʔ], which itself has a reading pronunciation of [tɕia]. He proposes an alternate origin in the variety of Chinese brought to the region from Han migrants originating in the Jiangnan (Nan Zhili) region during the Ming Dynasty. It could therefore be a case of multiple convergence points for a postpositional marker.

Another interesting structure that forms the basis of Dede's (2007b) argument is the postposition [xa], glossed by most authors as a dative. The marker in question shows up under certain semantic/pragmatic situations to differentiate semantic roles in utterances where those roles may be confused (Dede 2007b: 865). Dede identifies the marker as an "anti-ergative" suffix, marking the "non-actor" topic of the proposition with the same marker as the goal, beneficiary, patient or other non-actor roles in the language, e.g (4-20)-(4-22) (transcription given in Pinyin; the marker in question, as in the source, is glossed as [xa] for present purposes to indicate that its exact function is under analysis):

⁹⁶ Though Amdo Tibetan also has a postpositional ablative marker, its phonetic shape--either [ne] or [ge]--is more distant phonetically than the Monguor marker (Dede 199b:9).

⁹⁷ Ningbo is a Central Chinese, specifically Wu, dialect, spoken in close proximity to Hangzhou and Shanghai.

(4-20)

肉哈狗娃吃上了

ròu hā gǒuwá chī-shàng-le

meat [xa] dog eat-DIR-PFV

'The meat was eaten by the dog.'⁹⁸

(Dede 2007b:867)

(4-21)

家大家哈辦事兒著了

jiā dàjiā-hā bàn-shiér-zhu le

3 everybody-[xa] do-business-DUR PTCL

'He takes care of things for everybody.'

(Dede 2007b:869)

(4-22)

你家哈甬問家的媳婦兒

nǐ jiā-hā béng wèn jiā-de xífù ér

2 3-[xa] don't ask 3-NMLZ wife

'Don't ask him about his wife.'

(Dede 2007b:869)

The conclusion Dede draws is that in every instance the postpositional marker [xa] marks the animate NP that is not the agent of the verb, i.e. an anti-ergative case marker. The language group in the area that most unambiguously marks something like an anti-ergative case is Tibetan, specifically the widely spoken Amdo dialect, as illustrated below in (4-23)-(4-25) (in these sentences the anti-ergative marker is *ra* or *la*, glossed DAT):

(4-23)

nor-ra rtsva byin

cow-DAT grass give

'Give the grass to the cattle.'

(Dede 2007b:872)

(4-24)

ŋa haba-la ftçek taŋ zək

1SG.ABS dog-DAT be.scared DIR.INT AUX

I was scared of the dog.'

(Dede 2007b:872)

⁹⁸ Dede points out that the English passive translation is intended to capture the pragmatic focus, not to indicate a passive construction in the source language.

(4-25)

ŋa	tɕho-la	ga	taŋ	zək
1SG.ABS	2SG-DAT	love:Vp	DIR.INT	AUX

'I fell in love with you.'

(Dede 2007b:872)

As Dede points out, though in the original sources the marker is glossed as a dative, all the examples have in common with Xining an animate, non-actor role. He proposes that the origin for [xa] lies in a merger between a Sinitic intonation unit marker [a] or [ia] with the Amdo dative marker [Ca], (where C= g, ŋ, n, b, m, r, l, or ?), through a mutual accommodation situation that involved speakers “[drawing] focus on relevant, animate noun phrases by placing them before the verb and bounding them with an IU [intonation unit] marker” (Dede 2007b:874). This explanation might also explain why the topic marker in Xining is identical in form to the dative morpheme, viz. *ha* [xa].

4.2.3.5 NP Summary

From the above descriptions, we can make the following observations:

1. All of the languages surveyed display examples of universally common morphological processes: compounding, which is especially productive in Xining and Labrang, affixation and reduplication.
2. Morphophonemic alternation is common in Labrang, as are stem/suffix allomorphic variants. Salar also exhibits stem-suffix allomorphy, but without the vocalic alternations found in Labrang.
3. Affixation, arguably less utilized in Xining than other languages, includes a plural marker for all languages, which is often optional for (quantified) nouns, but extends beyond its quite limited range for Standard Mandarin in Xining.

4. Amdo Tibetan, like other varieties of Tibetan, is ergatively aligned. All of the other languages are accusatively aligned, though Dede (2007b) makes an argument for the Xining dative morpheme to be functioning like an “anti-ergative” marker, suffixing to non-agentive nominals in the predicate.

5. All languages mark nominal case with postpositional suffixes. There are some similarities of form between Xining and Monguor. A chart giving all of the forms is shown below (including Mongghul, absent from the above descriptions). Morphemes that are marked by vowel alternation, i.e. ablaut, are listed as ALT.

Table 11 Comparison of case marking morphemes among surveyed languages

	Nom/Abs	Erg	Acc	Abl	Dat	Inst	Loc	Gen/Poss	Dirc	Conn
Xining	∅	--	--	tɕia	xa	lia	--	--	--	--
Labrang	∅	ALT	--	ni	ALT	--	na	ALT	--	--
Mangghuer	∅	--	--	sa	du	la	DAT	tai	ji	ni
Mongghul	∅	--	--	sa	di	la	ri	di	ji	ni
Salar	∅	--	nə	(n)də/en	(C)ə	--	(n)də/e	niyi	--	--

6. In most of the languages, the dative case does extra work besides marking an indirect object, including sometimes marking locations. Dede (2007b) points out how it may be marking an anti-ergative in Xining. In languages like Salar and Labrang, it is also highly subject to phonological variation.

7. Slater (2003b:101) points to an areal trend of indefinite marking, based on the numeral ‘one’, possibly calqued from Chinese *yige* — 一个 ‘one-CL’ in Mangghuer.

From here we will turn to morphology and marking in the Verb Phrase (VP) in regional languages.

4.2.4 Verb Phrase Morphology

As in previous sections, this section is an areal overview of local language features, focusing on the verb phrase (VP), first illustrating local languages of the Amdo sprachbund, then a fuller account of the Xining dialect, with special attention to similarities where Xining departs from broader Sinitic norms.

4.2.4.1 *The Amdo VP*

In Labrang, many monosyllabic verbs inflect for past tense and imperative mood via a root-internal (consonant and/or vowel) change. The inflected forms depend on the syllabic initial and final of the verb. While some verbs have three distinct inflectional forms, others have only two, as shown in (4-26) below (Gesang and Gesang 2002:232):

(4-26)

non-past	past	imperative	
sa	si	so	'eat'
ŋək	kək	k ^h ək	'distort'
ndzək	tɕək	tɕ ^h ək	'stuff (v.)'
dzək	dzək	dzək	'strike; fling'
ndon	ton	t ^h on	'read aloud; recite'
hkə	hki	hki	'paint; scribble'
go	gi	gi	'distribute'
ɕa	ɕi	ɕi	'sacrifice; kill'
so	si	si	'raise; bring up'
htsot	htsat	htsot	'contend'
hton	htan	hton	'reveal; show'
htsop	htsap	htsop	'teach'
kon	kon	k ^h on	'wear'
hjar	hjar	jor	'loan'

Other verbs in the language lack these kinds of inflected forms, instead taking up to at least five different post-verbal morphemes to express time and aspect in the predicate⁹⁹ (Gesang and Gesang 2002:234-236). These include those listed in (4-27) below:

(4-27)

non-past: *-dzə*
 simple present: *-γə*
 present progressive: *-yonugaŋ*
 simple past tense: *-nə*
 past perfect: *-t^ha*

They are illustrated in examples (4-28)-(4-31) below, from (Gesang and Gesang 2002:235-236).

(4-28)

ŋi	wot-jək-kə	ts ^h akhwar	hta-dzə	jən
1.ERG	Tibet-language-GEN	newspaper	read-NONPAST	COP

我要看藏文报
 “I will read the Tibetan newspaper.”

(4-29)

ŋi	wot-jək-kə	ts ^h akhwar	hta-γə	jot
1.ERG	Tibet-language-GEN	newspaper	read-PRES	EXIST

我在看藏文报
 “I am reading the Tibetan newspaper.”

(4-30)

ŋi	wot-jət-kə	ts ^h akhwar	hti-nə	jən
1.ERG	Tibet-language-GEN	newspaper	read-PAST	COP

我看了藏文报
 “I read the Tibetan newspaper.”

(4-31)

k ^h ə-tɕhawo	wot-jək-kə	ts ^h akhwar	hti-t ^h a
3-PL	Tibet-language-GEN	newspaper	read.PAST-CMPL

他们看了藏文报
 “They have read the Tibetan newspaper”

⁹⁹ In his work, Wang (1995:68-72) lists them as iterative or frequentative, which involves simple verbal reduplication; imminent, which has the reduplicated and affixed structure $V_{\text{red}}V_{\text{red}}V\text{-ni-V-ni}$; durative, involving the past tense verb + $\text{བཟད} \text{ } bsad$ + an existential; the perfect, which is the past tense verb plus an existential; and the progressive, which is the present tense plus $\text{ཤོན་པ་གཞུང་ཅོད} \text{ } V\text{-kono-gdzun-red}$.

Like other Sino-Tibetan languages, verbal complements and resultatives are quite common in Labrang, as shown in (4-32) and (4-33).

(4-32)

k^hə-gi jəke tʃi-no honkə ndzok-kə
3-ERG word write-COND very fast-DIRECT
他写字写得很快

'He writes characters very quickly.'

(Gesang and Gesang 2002:262)

(4-33)

k^hoŋ-tʃ^ho naŋk^ha ndə t^hon-t^həp-wa
3-PL tomorrow here go-arrive-EVID
他们明天会到达这里

'They will arrive here in the city tomorrow.'

(Gesang and Gesang 2002:263)

The Amdo predicate also involves any of a number of post-verbal auxiliaries, such as the modals in the following sentences (4-34)-(4-36) from Labrang, namely *çi* 'can; able to', *hot* 'dare to' and *tʃ^hot* 'bear to', respectively (Gesang and Gesang 2002:244):

(4-34)

k^hə-gi tʃ^hət^hor-kə ʃə-hwot-çi-nə ret
3-ERG machine-DAT groove-place.correct-can-PAST COP
他会安装机器

'He can install the machine.'

(4-35)

ŋi htar-gotkan-na ʃon-hot-kə
1.ERG horse-wild-DAT ride-dare-DIRECT
我干骑那匹野马

'I dare to ride that wild horse.'

(4-36)

ŋi k^hə-ga hkəkrok-mə-tʃ^hot-kə
1.ERG 3-DAT scold-NEG-bear-DIRECT
我不忍心骂他

'I can't bear to scold him.'

Verbs are negated in a number of ways, depending on the tense. Negative sentences use one of four negators--*ma*, *mə*, *mən*, *met*--which are usually preverbal. (It actually seems the

negator is preverbal if the verb is monosyllabic, postverbal otherwise.) Examples are given from Gesang and Gesang (2002:266), in (4-37)-(4-39) below:

(4-37)

ŋi	te-raŋ	hwetɕ ^h a	ma-hti
1.ERG	today	book	NEG-read.PAST
我今天没有看书			
'I have not read today.'			

(4-38)

ŋi	te-raŋ	hwetɕ ^h a	hta-dzə-mən
1.ERG	today	book	read-NONPAST-NEG
我今天不看书			
'I will not read today.'			

(4-39)

k ^h ə-gi	hwetɕ ^h a	hta-kə	met-kə
3-ERG	book	read-PRES	NEG-DIRECT
他不在看书			
'He is not reading.'			

Finally, like many other Tibeto-Burman languages, there are lexical transitivity pairs, which may exhibit a root-internal change to mark valency¹⁰⁰. Such phonological alternations, illustrated in (4-40) from Gesang and Gesang) 2002:247, however are not synchronically productive:

(4-40)

Transitive		Intransitive	
htɕək	'to stir up; cause chaos'	tɕək	'to be in chaos'
ʃok	'to startle'	ndzok	'to be startled'
tɕat	'to chop; to cut'	tɕ ^h at	'to break' 断
dzaŋ	'to practice'	ɕaŋ	'to be skilled'
gu	'to bump into'	ŋgu	'to shake; totter'
dam	'to bind'	tam	'tight; tense'

¹⁰⁰Causatives are more regularly formed by suffixation. The morpheme comes from the special verb *ndzək* (past tense *tɕək*; imperative *tɕak*), which has the lexical meaning 'leads to; causes', and usually co-occurs with the morpheme *kə* (Gesang and Gesang 2002:248).

4.2.4.2 *The Monguor VP*

Similarly to Labrang, a number of categories are marked by suffixes on the Mangghuer verb, most of them coming directly from Proto-Mongolic, though their exact functions may have changed. Such categories include tense, aspect, mood (e.g. imperatives), nominalization (in forming gerunds) and clausal connectives (essentially converbial constructions). This is cross-cut on finite verbs by the subjective/objective perspective system of evidentiality discussed more fully in 4.2.6.2.

Except for in the imperative mood, Monguor verbs are obligatorily marked for the aforementioned categories¹⁰¹. The choice of morphemes depends on whether the verb is in its finite or non-finite form, the final verb usually being in the former. The non-finite tense/aspect morphemes for Mangghuer are listed in (4-41) (Slater 2003a:315):

(4-41)

perfective:	-sang
imperfective:	-ku
imperfective ¹⁰² :	-ji
conditional:	-sa
successive:	-tala, -tula
final (converb):	-la
progressive:	-ser
deontic (“should”):	-der

Monguor finite verbs are marked for three temporal-aspectual categories (perfective, imperfective and futuritive), in two moods (indicative and interrogative), each of the latter having a subjective or objective perspective, that is, an evidential pattern marking the

¹⁰¹ The Monguor imperative mood does have a suffixal system of person agreement, however: it is unmarked for second person (true imperatives), marked with *-a* for first person (voluntatives), and marked with *-ge* for third person (hortatives). They attach to the finite form of the verb (Slater 2003b:117-118).

¹⁰² What has become two imperfective variants in the modern grammar are distinctive historical origins in the participial futuritive morpheme, yielding *-ku*, and the converbial imperfective, yielding *-ji*.

egophoric stance of the speaker. A paradigm for the verb ‘to come’ is given below (Slater 2003a:316):

Table 12 Mangghuer verbal paradigm

ri ‘to come’	Perspective	Perfective	Imperfective	Futuritive
Indicative	Subjective	ri-ba	ri-la bi	ri-ni
	Objective	ri-jiang	ri-lang	ri-kuniang
Interrogative ¹⁰³	Subjective	ri-bu	ri-la biu	ri-nu
	Objective	ri-jinu	ri-leinu	ri-kuninu

When auxiliaries are present, they follow the main verb and take the verbal morphology of the sentence, the main verb appearing in its nonfinite form. (However, with motion auxiliaries, main verbs may take the imperfective suffix *-ji*). Multiple auxiliaries may appear in the same clause, in the following examples, such as *bao* and *ri* in (4-42) and *hu* in (4-43) (Slater 2003:319):

(4-42)

dong+guo ge deghe-la-ji bao-ji ri-ni
 winter+fruit SG.INDEF fall-IMPFV go.down-IMPFV come-SUBJT.FUT
 ‘A winter pear will fall down.’

(4-43)

bi huguer=du=nang di.gha hu-ku
 1SG cow=DAT=REFL eat.CAUS give-IMPFV
 ‘After I let my own cow eat (them)...’

In addition to negative copulas following the verb phrase (for negating predicate adjectives, as well as existential and locative predicates), Monguor negation is conveyed by particles immediately preceding the verb. There are three negative particles, prohibitive *bao* (for imperatives), the marker *sai*, which negates perfective verbs, and the most common verbal negator, *lai*. Examples from Slater (2003b:146-147) are as follows in (4-44)-(4-46):

¹⁰³ The interrogative forms are used for yes/no questions; in WH-questions an invariant form based on the converbal form, in this case *ri-ji*, is used (Slater 2003:316).

(4-44)

bao xi-gha-∅
NEG go-CAUSE-IMPER
'(You) don't let (her) go (with him)!'

(4-45)

tingsa gan-si yang a sai hu-jiang bai
later 3SG-PL what also NEG give-OBJT.PFV EMPH
'because they hadn't given (him) anything'

(4-46)

qi wuge lai maidie-lang
2SG word NEG know-OBJT.IMPFV
'You do not understand the language.'

Verbal complements are expressed by subordinate clauses preceding the main verb. That is, they appear in converbal form as separate VPs (marked by the converbal final aspect marker *la*), rather than as a sequence of verbs, as in Sino-Tibetan. For example, (4-47) below, from Slater (2003a:320):

(4-47)

bersi liang=ge ti kong=ni beila-la ri-jiang gelang
tiger two=CL that person=CONN carry-FIN come-OBJT.PFV HSY
'Two tigers came to carry that person (away), they say.'

4.2.4.3 *The Salar VP*

Like Labrang and Monguor, Salar verbs are root-initial, and take a number of suffixal morphemes to express voice, negation, tense and so on. An example of verbal morpheme order is (4-48) (Lin 1985:34):

(4-48)

root-voice-negator-tense
vur-əf-mə-dzi
fight-RECIP-NEG-PAST
'They did not fight each other.'
没有打架

Unlike most other Turkic languages, but similar to nearby Sarıg Yugir, Salar does not mark verbs for person or for number (Lin 1985:56). It does, however, mark the verb for properties of voice (态), mood (式) and tense (时). Each of the tense/aspect categories—past, present, future, progressive, completive, potential and conditional—usually have both a distinct “certain” (确定) and “uncertain” (非确定) evidentiality morphemic form, and a fixed negator with which they collate. The Salar tense and aspect markers include (Lin 1985:64-72):

Present: -(j)ər/-(j)er /-r (marked only for certain forms, but obligatorily marked in that case)

Past: -dʒi (certain); -mij (uncertain)

Future: -ɸur/-ɸur/-gur/-gur (certain); ɸɑ(r)/-ɸɑ(r)/-gɑ(r)/-gɑ(r) (uncertain)

Progressive: -bər (certain); -bɑ(r) (uncertain)

Completive: -ɸan/-ɸen/-gɑn/-gen (certain and uncertain)

Potential: -il/-əl/-l (certain and uncertain)

Conditional: -sɑ/-se (certain and uncertain)¹⁰⁴

Morphosyntactically, Salar negation is fairly straightforward, with a post-verbal morpheme negating the predicate, though the choice of negator is determined by the tense and aspect of the verb. For some aspects, for example progressive, the negative existential verb *joxdər* is used, as in (4-49); in other cases, a suffix such as *-ma* or *-me* follows the verb, as in (4-50):

(4-49)

men	bedʒin-ə	ɸɑ(r)-ɸan	joxdər
1SG	Beijing-ABL	go-CMPL	NEG.EXIST
我	北京	去	没有

'I have never gone to Beijing.'

我没去过北京

(Lin 1985:68-69)

¹⁰⁴ The distinction of certainty for the completive aspect is in the form of the existential verb that follows the VP, which is obligatory for both registers. There appears to be no distinction for the potential or conditional forms.

(4-50)

bu	guatfux	pij-me-mij
this	melon	ripe-NEG-PRES
这	瓜	熟

'This melon is probably not ripe.'

这瓜大概没熟

(Lin 1985:63-64)

Finally, there are a number of auxiliary verbs that can follow the main verb of the predicate to give extra grammatical information. They include *bar* 'to go', *gel* 'to come', and *vol* 'COP; good', as illustrated in (4-51) and (4-52) below:

(4-51)

men	dienjin vaχ-gusi(-gun)	gel-ər
1.SING	movie watch-NMLZ	come-PRES
我	电影 看	来

'I want to watch a movie.'

我想看电影

(Lin 1985:81)

(4-52)

av(ə)rəχ	vaχ-gudzi	av(ə)rəχ-dzi-nə	vaχ	vol-dzi
sick	see-AGENT(V)	sick-PAST.CERT-ACC	see	good-PAST
病	看	病人	看	好

'The doctor cured the sick person.'

大夫治好了病人

(Lin 1985:81)

There is perhaps a thin line between auxiliary verbs and verb-complement structures in Salar. (They are not listed separately in Lin's (1984:80-82) grammar.) In Monguor, we saw that the Sino-Tibetan-style V-complement/V-Resultative structure is absent, with a converbal subordinate clause serving this function, instead. However, according to Dwyer (2007:80), "long and intense" contact with Chinese and Tibetan have resulted in major restructuring of the Turkic verbal complex in eastern Salar, in particular extending the range of resultative complements. The following examples (4-53)-(4-54) from Lin (1984:81) illustrate such forms:

(4-53)

u	joɣmu-dən	neme	uzat	jyr-mif
3SG	servant-ABL	food/rice	send	walk-PAST
他	仆人	食物/饭	送	走

‘He made the servant go deliver the food.’

他让仆人去送食物

(4-54)

u	ana-niyi	jaʃ	goz-i-nə	sala	be(r)-mif
3SG	girl-GEN	tear	eye-POSS-ACC	wipe	give-past
他	姑娘	眼泪	眼睛	擦	给

‘He wiped away the girl’s tears.’

他把姑娘的眼泪擦了

4.2.4.4 *The Xining VP*

The Xining verb phrase functions much like Standard Mandarin, with an uninflected verb, followed by verbal complements and/or aspect markers. (4-55) and (4-56) illustrate affirmative and future suffixes:

(4-55)

zai	jiu	zhe-ge	wawa-men	ga	le	ha	ban-dao-lia
also	just	this-CL	child-PL	little	PTCL	PTCL	fall-arrive-AFF

‘Also, children are small, (they) will fall over.’ (Bell 2017:136)¹⁰⁵

(4-56)

Zhangsan	chi-bao-lia
PN	eat-full-FUT

‘Zhangsan will eat until full.’ (Bell 2017:137)

As aspect in Xining is a major focal point of Bell’s (2017) dissertation, I will return to it below.

The main verb in Xining may be accompanied by auxiliary verbs expressing potential and other modalities. In Standard Mandarin, these auxiliaries always immediately precede the verb.

Dede (2016), using recorded data from native speakers in conversation, describes three

¹⁰⁵ Note that Bell (2017) makes ample use of the gloss PTCL for his data, the meaning of which is not always possible to recover from the sentence alone. In many cases they are likely verbal pauses or discourse particles expressing some emotive quality; in others they may be serving more morpho-syntactic purposes. When they are not obviously aspectual in function, I leave them here, and in following sections, glossed as PTCL.

patterns of verbal auxiliaries found in Xining speech, given in (4-57)-(4-59) below. Note that in (4-57), the morpheme glossed ‘probably’ (闖 *tʂhwǝ3*) is considered a modal auxiliary, equivalent to Mandarin 可能 *kěnéng* ‘may’¹⁰⁶.

(4-57)

Main Verb—Conditional Marker—Auxiliary Verb

我後日家裏去呵也闖倆

no3 xu4zj2 tɕja1-! tɕhj4-xo je3 tʂhwǝ3 lja
 1SG day.after.tomorrow home-in go-COND also probably FUT/AFF¹⁰⁷
 ‘I’ll probably go home the day after tomorrow.’ (“我後天有可能回家”)

(4-58)

(Conditional Marker)--Auxiliary Verb—Main Verb

大下呵要學習

ta4-xa-xo jo4 ɕyo2ɕj2
 big-COM-COND must study
 ‘...once [they’ve] grown up, they have to study.’

(4-59)

(Conditional Marker)—Main Verb--Nominalizer—Auxiliary Verb

考上說呵趕緊準備的要倆

kho3-ɕǝ fo-xo kǎ3tɕjǎ tʂwǎ3pe4-tsj jo4 lja
 test-COMP say-COND hurry prepare-NMLZ must PTCL
 ‘In regards to taking the test, you have to hurry up and prepare.’

There is a hybrid structure, only in a handful of cases from Dede’s data, where an auxiliary verb is doubly present, both before and after the main verb, as with *jo4* ‘must’ in (4-60) (ibid.):

(4-60)

可要重讀一遍的要倆

kho3 jo4 tʂhwǎ2-tw2 j1-pjǎ4-tsj jo4 lja
 EMPH must re-study one-CL-NMLZ must PTCL
 ‘[You] will have to study again one more time.’

¹⁰⁶ Also, here it would seem the tonal values refer to local correlates of Standard Mandarin tone labels, 1-4; lack of a tone indicates a “neutral tone”, common to unstressed syllables.

¹⁰⁷ In the original source, this morpheme is glossed simply as a particle. It seems to me it could be serving a dual function as a future and affirmative marker; however, the inclusion of the adverb *tʂhwǎ3* may imply more the former.

Dede (2016) draws comparison with Mongghul and Amdo constructions where the auxiliary also follows the verb (though he does not pursue the question of the Xining nominalizer, which lacks a correlate in the non-Sinitic examples). He concludes that the pattern where the auxiliary precedes the main verb is indicative of more recent Standard Mandarin influence (as it follows the SM verbal pattern), and that the post-verbal auxiliaries represent contact-induced phenomena. This is further supported by the fact that the post-verbal constructions, specifically the third example with the nominalization, is found most often with older, rural speakers, whereas the second, pre-verbal pattern, is gaining ground, especially among younger, urban speakers (Dede 2016:560).

Although Xining has the possibility of most of the same negation strategies as Standard Mandarin, a number of ways of negating verbs, especially when objects are present, are distinct in Xining. Xining negation strategies that differ from Standard Mandarin, i.e. where the negation follows the verb, also involve a nominalizer following the object of the verb being negated, as in (4-61) and (4-62), from Wang and Dede (2016:408, 411).

(4-61)

我等一會兒再不去

nɔ53 tʰɿ53 iʒ21xuə24ɛ tɕɛ24 py21 tɕhiz24

1SG wait moment again not go

'I won't go after a moment.' [sic]

(4-62)

我的書不是， 傢的書也不是說

nɔ53-tɕ1 fy44 py21 s113 tɕia24-tɕ1 fy44 i53 py21 s113 fɔ53

1SG-NMLZ book NEG COP 3SG-NMLZ book also NEG COP say

'It's not my book, and he says it's not his book either.'

Some area researchers, e.g. Bell (2017), focus on how the tense and aspect morphemes function differently, often with a wider, more generalized, range of meaning than those of Standard Mandarin, with possible areal influence.

The imperfective aspect marker *zhe* [tʂɛ] 着 (written in affirmative sentences in Xining as 者), and its variant *zho* [tʂɔ], operate in ways in Xining that it cannot in Standard Mandarin (Bell 2017:Chapter 4; Zhang and Zhu 1987:281-283). For example, it can attach to statives conceived of as transitory, as well as those denoting permanent properties of an individual. Compare Xining (4-63) and (4-65) with the ungrammatical Standard Mandarin equivalents in (4-64) and (4-66), respectively¹⁰⁸:

(4-63) Xining

ni shenti hao-zhe
2 body good-IMPFV
'You are healthy.'

(Bell 2017:97)

(4-64) Standard Mandarin

*ni shenti hao-zhe
2 body good-IMPFV
(intended: You are healthy.)

(elicited from native speaker)

(4-65) Xining

jia-men	zhidao-zho,	no-de	tongxue-men-ha	wen-le	zho
3-PL	know-IMPFV	1SG-POSS	classmate-PL-OBJ	ask-PFV	PTCL
'They know. My classmates asked them.'					(Bell 2017:97)

(4-66) Standard Mandarin

*ta zhidao-zhe zhe-ge huida
3 know-IMPFV this-CL answer
(intended) 'He knows the answer.'

(Bell 2017:92)

¹⁰⁸ Much of the data in this section comes from Bell's (2017) dissertation on Xining syntax. He does not indicate characters in glosses, or tones on morphemes, and as such they are not provided here.

Xining *zhe* can also appear in generic sentences, it can mark habitual action, it can be negated, and it can appear on the verb ‘to die’—again all properties not possible with the Standard Mandarin *zhe* (Bell 2017:98-102). Such properties of Xining aspect are illustrated in (4-67)-(4-70) below.

(4-67)

zangzu	ren	chi	zhu	rou	zhe	
Tibetan	person	eat	pig	meat	IMPFV	
‘Tibetans eat pork.’						(Bell 2017:98)

(4-68)

na	meitian	ge	ya	chi-zho	me,	a	qu-gei-zho	li
then	everyday	PTCL	PTCL	eat-IMPFV	PTCL	PTCL	go-CAUS-IMPFV	PTCL
a								
PTCL	‘Everyday he eats and eats. Where does it all go?’							(Bell 2017:99)

(4-69)

Wang Lin	jia-de	na	hai	mei	lai-zho	bei
PN	3SG-POSS	that	still	NEG	come-IMPFV	PTCL
‘Wang Lin’s item still hasn’t come?’						(Bell 2017:101)

(4-70)

Xiao Wang	dao-le	de.shihou,	Zhangsan	si-zhe
PN	arrive-PFV	time.of	PN	die-IMPFV
‘When Xiao Wang arrived, Zhangsan was dying.’				(Bell 2017:102)

Bell (2017:109) believes this wider range of application than in Standard Mandarin is probably due to overgeneralization from originally Huzhu Monguor (that is, Mongghul) speakers, as compared in the following data, which also include generic and habitual sentences, and negated predicates, as in (4-71)-(4-73) (ibid.):

(4-71)

saayuo	niiman	sara	manta-na
potatoes	eight	month	dig-OBJT.IMPFV
‘Potatoes are dug up in August.’			

(4-72)

bu iidaadu ula ghari-la xi-nii
1SG often hill climb-PURP go-SUBJT.IMPFV
'I go often to climb hills.'

(4-73)

bu duo kurdulaa Mongghul pujig suri-ji gui
1SG now ever Mongghul letter study-IMPFV SUBJT.NEG.COP
'I have never studied the Mongghul writing system.'

While *zhe* occurs as only a durative marker in northern Mandarin dialects (and there only on events that have a logical endpoint, thus the ungrammaticality of **si-zhe* 'is dying'), in Jiang-huai Mandarin and Southwestern Mandarin there is the possibility of *zhe* acting as locative preposition and a perfective marker as well. The latter patterning is similar to that of Xining, as well as the nearby Tongxin dialect of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (宁夏回族自治区) (Bell 2017:118). Bell (ibid:120), citing others who have pointed out the local tradition of tracing ancestry to the Jiang-Huai region, claims that this could have an origin in the Ming-era immigrants to the northwestern region around Xining from present-day Nanjing (Nan Zhili), a possible remnant of early Mandarin-Wu dialectal contact. Recall from 4.2.3.4 that a Ming-era, Wu-region origin explanation was also offered by Wang (2012b) for the ablative case marker.

In Xining, tense and mood are marked by *lia* 俩; that is, *lia* is both a future tense and marker of affirmative mood, depending on the sentence. The future tense applies to predicates where the aspect can be internally quantified, not on those that are aspectually homogenous; that is, non-eventive actions, like statives, or events spread over time, such as progressives, do not receive future tense readings, but rather affirmative mood, as in (4-74) below.

(4-74)

jia meizhou Xining qu-lia
3SG every.week Xining go-AFF
'He goes to Xining every week.'
#He will go to Xining every week.

(Bell 2017:148)

I will focus here on the future meaning of the morpheme, which lacks a postverbal correlate in Standard Mandarin. While Mandarin perfective *le* may appear in a future time reference, relative to the utterance, it marks an action as completive there, often with a sequential meaning, as in (4-75):

(4-75)

你的课下完了以后，来找我

nǐ-de kè xià-wán-le yǐhòu, lái zhǎo wǒ
 2SG-GEN class over-finish-PFV after, come find 1SG

‘When your class is finished, come and find me.’ (elicited from a native speaker)

In Xining, *lia* marks future tense when it occurs after the time of utterance. Furthermore, future *lia* is in complementary distribution with the perfective aspect marker *le* (Bell 2017:131, 142), as shown in (4-76)-(4-78).

(4-76)

yaoshi ni name leng-de difang qu-lia, ni yiding gan-mao-lia
 if 2SG that cold-NMLZ place go-FUT 2SG certainly catch-cold-FUT

‘If you go to such a cold place, you will certainly get a cold.’

(4-77)

zuotian xiayu le/*lia
 yesterday rain PFV/*FUT

‘Yesterday it rained.’

(4-78)

mingtian xiayu lia/*le
 tomorrow rain FUT/*PFV

‘Tomorrow it will rain.’

In Xining future tense is obligatorily marked (with some minor exceptions and inconsistencies discussed by Bell), including in resultatives, where the endpoint of the action is known. In the following sentence, despite the presence of a tense adverbial, if the future particle *lia* is left out, the sentence is ungrammatical, as in (4-79) (Bell 2017:134):

(4-79)

jia mingtian lai lia, jintian bu lai
3SG tomorrow come PTCL today NEG come
'He will come tomorrow. Today he won't come.'

Bell (2017:157), as well as Wang (2012b:475), attribute the presence of the future/modal verbal particle *-lia* in Xining to influence from the Mongolic (specifically Mongghul, but perhaps also Qinghai Mongolian) non-past marker *-na*. In the Xining adaptation, the semantics of the Mongolic morpheme *-na* was mapped to the phonological form of the Sinitic emphatic particle *li* 哩. *li* already had a similar syntactic distribution to Mongolic *-na*, viz. post-VP, since at least the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), but lacked any meaning other than emphasis. In Bell's view, this semantic adaptation likely could have been the outcome of local Mongolic-speaking residents' limited-access Chinese learning in an early creolizing stage of language contact, discussed further in 4.3.2 (ibid).

The modern Mongghul suffix, which has the phonological form *-m/-n*, functions similarly, semantically and distributionally, as the Xining particle *-lia*. Like Xining, the internal semantics of the verb determine the meaning of the Mongghul suffix, and with dynamic verbs, it marks the predicate as future, illustrated in (4-80) below (Bell 2017:159):

(4-80)

tingera uro-m
sky rain-FUT
'It will rain.'

A similar construction, implying a systematic areal process, can be found in neighboring Tangwang, a purported Sinitic-based mixed language (see Xu 2017; Xu and Wen 2017; see Chapter 7), where the final suffix is *-li*, here compared with Santa *-nə* in (4-81) and (4-82) from Bell (2017:160, inter alia):

(4-81)

Tangwang
uə224 khě31-li
1.SG look-(Incomplete)
'I will look.'

Santa (Dongxiang)
pi utʂə-nə
1.SG look-(Incomplete)
'I will look.'

(4-82)

Tangwang
tʂɿ31-kie31 jǝ53 xou24-li
this-one sheep cry-(Ongoing)
'This sheep often cries.'

Santa (Dongxiang)
ənə-niə qoni warata-nə
this-one sheep cry-(ongoing)
'This sheep often cries.'

From this overview of Xining verbal morphology and semantics, let us summarize the section.

4.2.4.5 *VP Summary*

All languages surveyed in the region have a verb-final complex that involves any number of suffixes attached to the head-initial VP. The main exception to suffixation is negation, however, which is mostly preverbal in Labrang, Monguor and Xining, only occurring post-verbally in Salar. Nonetheless, most languages of the region, Xining being the exception, involve post verbal use of copulas and existentials in declarative sentences that may carry predicate negation. In Salar, the negation strategy is often dependent on the tense/aspect of the sentence, varying between a suffix and a negative existential.

The Sino-Tibetan languages, Amdo Tibetan and Xining Chinese, make extensive use of complements following the verb, including resultatives. A common strategy in Standard Mandarin, as well, this is perhaps due to their more analytically inclined morphosyntax. While for the most Monguor expresses verbal complements and resultatives in a preverbal converbal construction, Salar has been moving away from Altaic constructions in this regard, and increasing its range of post-verbal complements, as noted by Dwyer.

All languages of the region involve post-verbal auxiliary verbs to express modality, causation and so on. This includes Xining, as well, which differs from the preverbal position where such

verbs appear in for Standard Mandarin. Nonetheless, as discussed in 4.2.4.4 above, both patterns are available for the Xining speaker, and may vary largely along sociolinguistic lines. Though, like other languages, Labrang Amdo has a causative morpheme, it also has paradigms reminiscent of productive valency changing operations of Proto-Tibeto-Burman. No other languages have inflection, or vestiges of inflection, contrasting transitive and intransitive verbs. Finally, Labrang Amdo is also alone in having a basic inflectional paradigm for verbs in the past, non-past and imperative, though the pattern is limited to only a few dozen lexical items.

Languages differ (or perhaps researchers' analyses differ) in terms of what categories are morphologically marked in the verb phrase, though all have a minimum of three morphemes carrying some delineation of tense and aspect meaning. Those paradigms are repeated in (4-83) below:

(4-83)

Labrang Amdo: (5)

non-past: *-dzə*

simple present: *-γə*

present progressive: *-yonugaŋ*

simple past tense: *-nə*

past perfect: *-t^ha*

Monguor: (8)

perfective: *-sang*

imperfective: *-ku*

imperfective¹⁰⁹: *-ji*

conditional: *-sa*

successive: *-tala, -tula*

final (converb): *-la*

progressive: *-ser*

deontic ("should"): *-der*

¹⁰⁹ What has become two imperfective variants in the modern grammar are distinctive historical origins in the participial futurity morpheme, yielding *-ku*, and the converbial imperfective, yielding *-ji*.

Salar: (7)

Present: -(j)ər/- (j)er /-r (marked only for certain forms, but obligatorily marked in that case)

Past: -dʒi (certain); -mij (uncertain)

Future: -ɤur/-ɤur/-gur/-gur (certain); ɤɑ(r)/-ɤɑ(r)/- ɡɑ(r)/-ɡɑ(r) (uncertain)

Progressive: -bər (certain); -bɑ(r) (uncertain)

Completive: -ɤɑn/-ɤen/-ɡɑn/-gen (certain and uncertain)

Potential: -il/-əl/-l (certain and uncertain)

Conditional: -sɑ/-se (certain and uncertain)

Xining: (4)

imperfective *zhe*,

future/affirmative *lia*,

perfective *le*,

experiential *guo*¹¹⁰

Verb phrases surveyed in the region are considerably uniform across language family boundaries, with post-verbal aspect and modal auxiliaries and resultatives, though the Xining VP is rife with variation, perhaps pointing more towards recent influence from Standard Mandarin than an unfixed state resulting from prior language mixing. If such is the case, however, it implies that older northern Chinese patterns had been lost, in favor of adopted regional constructions, then reintroduced in the last generation or two, from in-migration and greater national integration via officialdom and the education system.

Of course, a history of contact-based innovations from Sinitic properties is evident elsewhere, for example the range of verbs with which the imperfective morpheme *zhe* may attach, as well as the form and function of the future/affirmative marker *lia*, which lacks an exact Standard Mandarin correlate, as discussed above.

¹¹⁰ Being an aspect marker shared with Standard Mandarin, and less of a phenomenon in the scholarly literature, the occurrence is rarely noted in Xining. I found one instance in Bell (2017:219):

zai jiu jia-men jia li mei qu-guo a
again just 3-PL home LOC NEG go-EXP PTCL

'He didn't go to their house again.'

4.2.5 Constituent Order and Syntax

This section surveys the syntactic properties of the region, focusing on the order of constituents in and between clauses. First provided are the local Tibetic, Mongolic and Turkic languages, followed by a fuller account of Xining syntax, with reference to its purported areal features.

4.2.5.1 *Amdo Syntax*

Word order in Labrang is SOV, with mostly postpositional morphology, as in (4-84)-(4-85).

(4-84)

ger-gam-kə	ton.ndzəp-wa	dza-jək	htsap-nə	re
teacher-ERG	PN-DAT	Chinese	teach-past	COP.OBJT
老师给邓朱教了汉文				
‘The teacher taught Deng Zhu Chinese.’			(Gesang and Gesang 2002:219)	

(4-85)

ŋi	tə-raŋ	hwetɕha	soma-tɕək	ŋi-nə	jən
1.ERG	today	book	new-one	buy-PAST	COP
今天我买了一本新书					
‘Today I bought a new book.’				(Gesang and Gesang 2002:226)	

The order of elements in the noun phrase is Nominal-Measure Word-Numeral. There are very few specialized measure words; most are nouns grammaticalized as counters (Gesang and Gesang 2002:250). As such, it seems inconclusive to me whether Labrang measure words constitute a case of nominal classifiers in the same sense as in Chinese. Adjectival modifiers appear to follow the head noun and precede the quantifier, as in (4-86) (ibid:226):

(4-86)

çə-mo tçhoŋ-tçhoŋ tçək-kə khə-ga metok ma-ro təm-tçək
child-female little-little one-ERG 3-DAT flower red¹¹¹ bunch-one
mbət-nə re
give-PAST COP.OBJT

一个女孩献给他一束红花

‘A little girl gave him a bunch of red flowers.’

Some other examples of quantified nominal expressions include *ndzi dok tçək* ‘a grain of rice’

(rice grain one) and *ri k^ha səm* ‘three squares of cloth’ (cloth square three) (ibid).

There are two types of conjunctive morphemes in Labrang Amdo: verbal suffixes at the end of clauses and conjunctive content morphemes. The conjunctive suffixes, /i/ and /a/ attach to the past tense form of verbs, and are prone to multiple variant forms, e.g. /i/, has the forms *-ni, -ŋi, -mi, -wi, -li, -ki, -ri*, and /a/, which has the forms *-na, , -ŋa, -ma, -wa, -la, -ka, -ra*. The content morphemes attach finally to the VP of the embedded clause (Gesang and Gesang 2002:266-270). Some of their examples of complex clauses are as follows in (4-87) and (4-88), the first with a conjunctive suffix, the second with a content morpheme *nara* ‘even though’:

(4-87)

k^hə-ge hta-çon-ni u-tç^her-ri wət-t^ha
3-ERG horse-ride.PAST-CONJ gun-shoot-CONJ go-EVID

他骑着马背着枪冲出去了

‘He shot a gun while riding on horseback.’

(4-88)

jontan tç^həzək dzəŋ-nara dəkri ma-ji-na çı-hkamo ret
knowledge what(ever) study-even.though effort NEG-do-if know-difficult COP

不管学什么，不努力就难学了

‘Whatever you study, if you don’t give it effort then it will be hard to learn.’

¹¹¹ Elsewhere Gesang and Gesang (2002:221) gloss the adjective ‘red’ as *hma-ro*. I am not sure what to make of the discrepancy—presumably lexical variation.

4.2.5.2 Mongolic Syntax

Slater (2003:317) characterizes Mangghuer as a stable verb-final language, with variation in preverbal order. Fronting of topics to the beginning of the sentence is very common; however there is no passive construction in the language. Finally, nominal elements obvious from discourse context are usually dropped when speaking. As illustration of simple sentences, Slater (2003:317-318) provides examples of intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbal constructions, shown in (4-89)-(4-91):

(4-89)

gan=ni	aguer=ni	bieqin	ber-jiang
3SG=CON	daughter=CON	illness	get.better-OBJT.PFV
'(and then) his daughter's illness got better'			

(4-90)

ni	muni	aguer=ni	ala	ge-jiang
this	1SG.GEN	daughter=CON	kill	do-OBJT.PFV
'This killed my daughter.'				

(4-91)

kebeghe=nang	bi	mori=du=nang	tiejie-ni
wheat.bran=REFL	1SG	horse=DAT=REFL	feed-SUBJT.FUT
'My wheat bran I will feed to my horses (the brother said).'			

In both Mangghuer and Mongghul, adjectives generally precede nouns without special marking, though there is an alternate construction, calqued from Chinese nominalizer/genitive DE, which uses the genitive enclitic =*ni*, illustrated by (4-92) in Mangghuer below (Slater 2003b:97):

(4-92)

qi=ni	zui-jin=ni	xinxi
2SG=GEN	most-recent=GEN	news
'your latest news'		

The order of elements in the NP are generally Num-CL-Mod-N, with a singular or plural marker of definiteness often appearing after the noun. Note that this is a break from most Mongolic languages, in that Monguor has borrowed classifiers from Chinese, e.g. Chinese *zhang* ‘CL: flat objects’, as in *yi-zhang charsi* ‘a piece of paper’ (Slater 2003b:96). Some examples of modified NPs from Slater (2003b:94-97) are illustrated in (4-93)-(4-95) as follows (brackets in the original):

(4-93)

[liang-ge	kong]	zheng	keli-lang
[two-CL	person]	just.then	say-OBJT.IMPFV

‘Two people were just then saying,’

(4-94)

[khara quequer	erjige	ge]	tao-ser	bang
[black lame	donkey	SG.INDEF]	drive-PROG	OBJT.COP

‘A black lame donkey had been driven (there by Monkey).’

(4-95)

gan-si-du	hudu	zaihang	xujun	ge	bang
3SG-PL-DAT	very	beautiful	daughter	SG.INDEF	OBJT.COP

‘They have a very pretty daughter.’

Non-final clauses bear a number of different non-finite markers to connect clauses in sequence, from zero-markers¹¹² to the imperfective *-ji* to the conditional *-sa*, with the final verb in the sequence carrying the sentential finite marking¹¹³. Such clauses in sequence may be ambiguous as to their state as adverbial expressions modifying the following verb, or a series of sequential events in a chain construction. An example of a complex clause is in (4-96) from Slater (2003b:266):

¹¹² The zero-marking is also used for resultative constructions, such as *di-∅ hangbura-∅* ‘eat finish’, or “finished eating” (Slater 2003:320-321).

¹¹³ This sort of zero-marking, also referenced in fn. 51, could be seen as counter evidence to the divergence from regional norms regarding complement/resultative constructions as sequences of unmarked verbs, as discussed in 4.2.4.2. and 4.2.4. It is unclear to me how much one or the other strategy is normally used in Monguor.

(4-96)

yehu	ti	bo=ni	bari-ji	wower	amang=du=nang
fox	that	drum=ACC	take-IMPFV	cave	opening=DAT=REFL.POSS
kuer-jiang		ma			
arrive-OBJT.PFV		PTCL			

'Fox took that drum and went to the entrance to his cave.'

In addition to verbal forms, clauses may be connected with final conjunctions, as in (4-97)

from Slater (2003:322):

(4-97)

gan.si	ji=ge=la	durasi.si=ni	suer-∅ danang
3SG.PL	several=CL=COM	liquor.PL=CON	buy-∅ after

'After the several of them had bought liquors,

gan=ni	qinla-∅	ti	ruang=du	kuer-jiang
3SG=CON	welcome-SEQ	that	place=DAT	arrive-OBJT.PFV

(they) took him along and went to that place.'

4.2.5.3 Salar Syntax

Salar word order is verb-final, with mostly postpositional morphology, as in (4-98) and (4-99).

(4-98)

u	siliaŋ-dən	gel-dzi
3SG	Xining-ABL	come-PAST
他	西宁	来

'He came from Xining.'

他从西宁来的

(Lin 1985:105)

(4-99)

mi	(niyi)	aba-m	heli-nə	ini-m-ə	ver-dzi
1.POSS	(POSS)	father-1.GEN	money-ACC	brother-3.GEN-DAT	give-PAST
我的		父亲	钱	弟弟	给

'My dad gave my younger brother the money.'

我父亲把钱给了我弟弟

(Lin 1985:102)

Modifiers and quantifying expressions in the NP precede the head noun. This is illustrated in the sentences below. Note also the presence of classifiers in quantifying phrases. Many of these are borrowed from Chinese, but some seem to come from native vocabulary. Classifiers

may also delete, as in the second example among (4-100)-(4-101) below, where the quantified nominal *ana* ‘girl’ appears with no classifier, as it also does in Chinese (Lin 1985:54).

(4-100)

mi	(niyi)	oj-im-de	igi-dyb	muş	dal	var
1.POSS	(POSS)	home-1.GEN-LOC	two-CL	prickly.ash	tree	EXIST
我的		家	二	棵	花椒	树
						有

‘My home has two prickly ash trees.’
我家有两棵花椒树 (Lin 1985:94)

(4-101)

u	ana	si	al	ge(l)-γən	janə	begərəχnə	gi(j)-ba
that	girl	just	sell	come-CMPL	new	clothes	wear-PROG
那	姑娘	才	买	来	新	衣服	穿

‘That girl is wearing new clothes that were just bought.’
那姑娘穿着才买来的新衣服 (ibid.)

However, quantifying expressions may also follow the head noun (Lin 1985:95):

(4-102)

santux	iji-nde	itiux	bər-ɔf	vara
box	inside-LOC	boot	one-pair	EXIST
箱子	里边	靴子	一	双
				有

‘There’s a pair of boots inside the box.’
箱子里有一双靴子 (Lin 1985:96)

(4-103)

ʃyeşən	loşi-ɬə	vunti-igi	sor-dzi
student	teacher-DAT	question-two	ask-PAST
学生	老师	问题	二
			问

‘The student put forth two questions to the teacher.’
学生向老师提了两个问题 (Lin 1985:103)

Complex clauses are combined by clause-final conjunctions, though to express sequences of events, VPs may appear simply in juxtaposition, as in (4-104) and (4-105):

(4-104)

bu	asəd-də	boɔdʒi	ex-genden ¹¹⁴	dafi,	daxə	janjy	ex-ba
this	field-LOC	wheat	plant-CMPL	besides	still	yams	plant-PROG
这	田地	小麦	种	之外	还	洋芋	种

‘In this field, besides planting wheat I also planted yams.’

这块地除了种小麦外，还种洋芋

(Lin 1985:111)

(4-105)

u	igi-si	jan	bar-dʒi	doj-i	et-dʒi
3SG	two-COLL	return	go-PAST	marriage-3.POSS	do-PAST
他	二	回	去	婚事	做

‘They returned home and got married.’

他们俩回家了，结婚了

(ibid.)

4.2.5.4 *Xining Syntax*

Examples of the Xining dialect’s basic SOV word order include (4-106) and (4-107):

(4-106)

你茶喝

ŋj⁵³ ts^ha²⁴ xu⁵³

2 tea drink

你喝茶

‘You drink tea.’ (Zhang and Zhu 1987:278)

(4-107)

你鼻血淌脱了

ŋj⁵³ pj²⁴ ɕi⁴⁴ t^hɕ⁵³-t^hu⁴⁴ liɔ⁴⁴

2 nose blood flow-apart CS

你流鼻血了

‘Your nose is bleeding.’ (Zhang and Zhu 1987:277)

¹¹⁴ I am unsure of the meaning of the morpheme *genden*. *gen* is the completive aspect marker. *den* is ablative, but that shouldn’t apply here. I note one other occurrence of it in the Salar data I read through:

dʒefon	et-genden	ardʒi	aniyi	ʂəŋxuo	bər	gun-dən bər	gun
liberation	do-??	after	3.POSS	life	one	day-ABL one	day
解放		以后	他的	生活	一	天	一

jaɣfi-lan-mif
improve-???-PAST.UNCERT

改善

解放后，他的生活日益改善了

‘After liberation, his life improved by the day.’ (Lin 1985:97)

Though famous in the literature for its predominant SOV word order, SVO sentences do often occur in the Xining dialect. Wang (2012b:469) provides examples, such as the following sentence, transcribed in pinyin, in (4-108):

(4-108)

傢天天喝酒，打麻将，啥活呀不做阿

jiā tiāntiān hē jiǔ, dǎ májiàng, shà huó
3 every.day drink wine, play mahjong what nothing

ya bù zuò ā
PTCL NEG do PTCL

他天天喝酒打麻将啥活都不干

‘Every day he drinks, plays mahjong, and doesn’t do a thing at all.’

The order of elements in a quantified NP is the same as that of Standard Mandarin, namely Num-CL-(Mod)-N, as in (4-109):

(4-109)

Wang laoshi jia-ha yi-ben fu gei-zhe
PN teacher 3SG-DAT one-CL book give-IMPFV

‘Teacher Wang is giving a book to him.’

(Bell 2017:57)

Double-object constructions involve variation between a prepositionally marked indirect object, with the ‘give’ verb, and a postpositionally marked indirect object, with the dative marker, as in (4-110)-(4-111) (Wang and Dede 2016:416):

(4-110)

我給你錢兒不給

nɔ53 ki21 ni53 tɕhiã24ɛ pɤ21 ki53
1SG give 2SG money NEG give

‘I won’t give you money.’

(4-111)

我你哈錢兒不給

nɔ53 ni53-xa tɕhiã24ɛ pɤ21 ki53
1SG 2SG-DAT money NEG give

‘I won’t give you money.’

Adverbial phrases in Xining precede negators, as in (4-112), unlike in Standard Mandarin:

(4-112)

家学校里常也没住着

tɕia²⁴ ɕy²⁴ ɕiə²¹³-l⁴⁴ tʂhɔ²⁴ i⁵³ mɔ²⁴ tʂy²¹³-tʂɔ⁵³
 3SG school-LOC often also NEG live-IMPV

他经常不在学校里住

‘He generally doesn’t stay at school.’

(Zhang and Zhu 1987:279)

Though the locative case is not morphologically marked in the same way as the ablative, dative and instrumental, Dede (1999:77-80) points out that, in addition to the Standard Mandarin pattern of NP-EXIST-LocNP, Xining has a “non-Sinitic” pattern of NP-LocNP-EXIST¹¹⁵, shown in (4-113), similar to regional languages, such as Amdo Tibetan, in (4-114):

(4-113)

Xining

妹子家里有俩

mɪ²¹³tsɿ⁵³ tɕia⁵⁵-l iu⁵³ lia
 little.sister home-LOC EXIST AFF

‘Little Sister is at home.’

(Dede 1999:78)

(4-114)

Amdo Tibetan

khoza khang na yod gi
 3SG restaurant LOC there COP

‘He is at the restaurant.’

(ibid.)

There are a number of common Mandarin sentence constructions that are found in Xining, but have variants or extensions of usage not found in Standard Mandarin, similar to the extensions of aspectual semantics discussed in 4.2.4.4. One such construction is the disposal BA-construction. This is a well-studied syntactic construction in Mandarin (see Li and Thompson 1981:Chapter 15; Huang et al. 2009:Chapter 5 for overviews; also Appendix 9.4) that is used to show action carried out on an object, though the range of objects that may appear in those

¹¹⁵ In Dede 1999, the existential verbs are glossed LocV, probably to parallel the LocNP.

constructions are constrained. Its occurrence is governed by a number of semantic and syntactic constraints, and even in non-Sinologist literature is often glossed simply as BA. Here I follow Dreyer (2017) in glossing it as OBJ.

In addition to Standard Mandarin-style BA 把-constructions, Xining can use BA before intransitive verbs, and can combine it with a following negated verb, as shown in (4-115) and (4-116), two functions not possible in Standard Mandarin (Zhang and Zhu 1987:285):

(4-115)

你把你坐着

ŋj⁵³ pa²¹³ ŋj⁵³ tsu²¹³-tʂɔ⁵³
2 OBJ 1 sit-IMPER

你做你的!

'Sit yourself down!'

(4-116)

我把你没认得

nɔ⁵³ pa²¹³ ŋj⁵³ mɔ²⁴ z̥ɛ²¹³-tʃi⁴⁴
1 OBJ 2 NEG know-CMPL

我不认识你

'I don't know you.'

As another syntactic construction with extensions beyond Standard Mandarin usage, for comparatives Zhang and Zhu (1987:280) point out that, in addition to the Standard Mandarin A 比 B 如何 (*A bǐ B rúhé*, lit. *A compare B what*) comparative construction, Xining has a comparative construction of the form B 把 A 不到 (*B bǎ A bù dào*, lit. *B OBJ A NEG arrive*), illustrated in (4-117) (*ibid.*):

(4-117)

我们的话把你们的话没像着

nɔ²⁴-mã⁴⁴-tsɿ⁴⁴ xua²¹³ pa²¹³ ŋj⁵³-mã⁴⁴-tsɿ⁴⁴ xua²¹³ mɔ²⁴ ʃi⁵³-tʂɔ²⁴
1-PL-GEN words OBJ 2-PL-NMLZ words NEG like-IMPV

我们的话跟你们的话不同

'Our speech is not the same as your speech.'

Wang (2009) also explores comparative constructions specific to the Xining dialect, with comparisons to local Tibetan and Monguor.

Before moving on, it is important to point out that, at least in the data provided by Dede, variation is found in abundant quantity, differing in degree across speakers. Dede (2007) uses the Xining comparative construction as illustration, shown in (4-118), as in the dialect spoken in 尼那 Nina, a small village near 贵德 Guide, in Qinghai¹¹⁶:

(4-118)				
你	哈看呵	我	小	(X 哈 VP 呵 Y)
ni3	ha-kã4-hɔ	nɔ3	ɕiɔ3	
2SG	DAT-see-COND	1SG	small	(X DAT VP COND Y)
'I am younger than you.'				(Dede 2007a:63)

Dede treats the form *ha-kã4-hɔ* as a single postpositional morpheme serving as a comparative marker, but which is “morphologically complex”, made up of a dative case marker, the verb ‘to see’, and a conditional marker. (He does not use hyphens, only spaces; my representation differs from his only in hyphenating the internal structure of the comparative *ha-kã4-hɔ*.) Dede shows this to have a strong morphological correlation with the Amdo comparative structure¹¹⁷, for which he gives an identical morphological parse, as given in (4-119):

(4-119)				
lug	la-ltos-na	balang	chegi	
sheep	DAT-see-if	bull	bigger	
'A bull is bigger than a sheep.'				(Dede 2007a:64)

There is also a very similar construction in Wutun (see Chapter 7), as in (4-120), where the comparative marker *kanla* appears to be formed etymologically from the Sinitic verb *kan* ‘to

¹¹⁶ Dede’s literal translation is “If one looked at Y, X is more VP.” Erika Sandman (2016:323), in describing the same borrowed structure in Wutun, also given in (4-120) below, translates it as “in view of”.

¹¹⁷ Janhunen et al. (2008:62) give a slightly different form, as *hdina* (WT *bitas.na*), from the verb ‘to see, to look, to watch’. I am unsure of what accounts for the differences.

look; to see’, and the Amdo Tibetan “conditional converb” marker *la* (Janhunen et al. 2008:62).

(See also 7.2.4.2).

(4-120)

je-ge jhakai zhungo-kanla xaige ga-li
this-CL country China-CMPR very small-OBJ
‘This country is much smaller than China.’

However, in Dede (2007)’s data, a number of variations on the comparative structure are provided as possible and attested results of contact between the SVO/prepositional Chinese dialect and the SOV/postpositional Amdo dialect, compared in (4-121) below:

(4-121)

- A. X Prep-Y VP (the SM form)
- B. X Prep-Y Post VP (a redundant, double-marked form)
- C. X Y Post VP (B, with redundancy removed in the direction of post-positioning)
- D. Y Post X VP (the above Amdo and Nina form)

As one might expect in a volatile situation where languages in contact are exposed to a prestige variety (here, in contemporary times at least, Standard Mandarin), a number of intermediate forms may appear based on various sociolinguistic factors.

Finally, Xining exhibits evidence of Japanese-style scrambling. Bell (2017:Chapter 7) discusses ways in which object “movement” in Xining occurs in unmarked, discourse-neutral instances, where similar cases of object-fronting in Standard Mandarin would serve to emphasize or otherwise restrict the scope of the highlighted NP. Furthermore, unlike Standard Mandarin, Xining can front NPs that are proper names or pronouns, indefinite objects, WH-phrase objects, certain cleft constructions and clausal complements. An example of scrambling in Xining is provided in (4-122), from Bell (2017:245):

(4-122) Xining scrambling

Wang	laoshi	yi-ben	fu-ha	jia-ha	gei-zhe
PN	teacher	one-CL	book-OBJ	3SG-ha ¹¹⁸	give-IMPFV

'Teacher Wang is giving a book to him.'

Wang	laoshi	jia-ha	yi-ben	fu	gei-zhe
PN	teacher	3SG-OBJ	one-CL	book	give-IMPFV

yi-ben	fu	Wang	laoshi	jia-ha	gei-zhe
one-CL	book	PN	teacher	3SG-OBJ	give-IMPFV

jia-ha	Wang	laoshi	yi-ben	fu	gei-zhe
3SG-OBJ	PN	teacher	one-CL	book	give-IMPFV

yi-ben	fu	jia-ha	Wang	laoshi	gei-zhe
one-CL	book	3SG-OBJ	PN	teacher	give-IMPFV

jia-ha	yi-ben	fu	Wang	laoshi	gei-zhe
3SG-OBJ	one-CL	book	PN	teacher	give-IMPFV

4.2.5.5 Syntactic Summary

All of the languages of the region primarily exhibit verb-final constituent order, generally SOV (leaving topicalization aside). Constituent order in the Noun Phrase is usually head-final, with the exception of Labrang, and some variation in Salar, as summarized in (4-123):

(4-123)	
Labrang Amdo:	N-Modifier-Classifier-Numeral
Monguor:	Numeral-Classifier-Modifier-N(-SING/PL)
Salar:	Numeral-Classifier-Modifier-N
	or N-Numeral-Classifier
Xining:	Numeral-Classifier-Modifier-N

All languages in the region used measure words or classifiers in quantified nominal expressions. For Monguor and Salar, it is believed they were borrowed from Chinese, though at the same time the native lexicon has extended the classifier inventory for both languages.

¹¹⁸ The function of the second *-ha* particle is not clear to me. Though it would perhaps seem to be another object case marker on the indirect object, Bell (2017:245) glosses it by its phonological form, rather than as a case marker, implying it serves some other discourse function.

Xining, however, has a tendency towards reducing the variety of classifiers used, compared with Standard Mandarin, which could be a simplification outcome of contact, but is also quite common across the northern Sinitic area (Xu 2015).

No literature I looked at discussed complex clauses explicitly in Xining, but the other languages of the region all seem to have similar strategies: in addition to simple juxtaposition, there are clause-final conjunctive morphemes that link clauses in complex sentences. Both Labrang and Monguor have special forms of the verb, as well, that link clauses.

Xining is marked by a great degree of variation, in prepositional phrases such as instrumental and locative expressions, similar to its negation and auxiliary verb placement discussed in 4.2.4.4. In all cases, it appears to exhibit both a Sinitic prototype and a pattern reminiscent of Monguor and/or Amdo Tibetan. In other constructions, such as the disposal BA-construction, or in comparatives, it allows for possibilities that extend beyond that of Standard Mandarin, similar to how aspect marking had a wider range of application, as discussed in 4.2.4.4, as well. While the variation described for such sub-clausal constituencies appears to point to sociolinguistic factors of age and urban/rural divisions, the syntax itself formally allows for Japanese-style scrambling.

4.2.6 Discourse Marking

This section presents some features of information marking and evidentiality in the predicate, first for local languages, then turning to what is provided in the literature for the Xining dialect.

4.2.6.1 *Amdo Discourse Marking*

For a Labrang predicate to be complete, the verb must be followed by auxiliary morphemes that express person, tense, aspect, mood, etc. (Gesang and Gesang 2002:237), as discussed in 4.2.4.1. Other post-verbal morphemes include several evidentiality markers, given in (4-124).

(4-124)

-t^ha: attaches to past tense, shows intimate knowledge of action (ibid:237)

-zək: expresses second-hand knowledge, told after the fact (ibid:237)

-Ca: (the consonant alternates depending on the final consonant of the verb) expresses what the speaker expects to happen, based on experience (ibid:238)

-kə: directly lays out an objective situation (ibid:238)

There are also a number of copula “judgment verbs” (判断词), which are copulas expressing how certain the speaker is about the information. Labrang Amdo utilizes five such final constructions, as shown in (4-125):

(4-125)

-jən or -ret: this would appear to be an unmarked form

-jən-t^ha: directly lays out the results of an action (ibid:239)

-jən-zə¹¹⁹: conveys circumstances resulting after the action (ibid:239)

-jən-s^hə-jot-kə: presents an inference based on events taking place at present (ibid:239)

-jən-nə-ret: expresses an inference on something’s occurrence based on experience (ibid:240)

There are also nine forms of the existential, all involving the root *jot* plus additional suffixes, that express a range of verbal information from continuous aspect to the affirmative stance of the speaker, as shown in (4-126)¹²⁰.

(4-126)

-jot: presents a present action of the speaker, or an action of someone else well-known to the speaker, that is continuous or repeated (ibid:240)

-jot-kə: generally expresses frequent or repetitive actions of other people as witnessed from the results of those actions (ibid:240)

-jot-t^ha: directly lays out past events that were directly seen by the speaker (ibid:241)

-jot-zə: presents the results of an action that has happened in the past (ibid:241)

-jot-nə-t^haŋ: an inference based on experience about the results of a behavior (ibid:241)

-jot-ɾap-ser-kə: presents the results of a behavior not directly seen, only heard from others (ibid:242)

-jot-dzə-ret: presents a plain inference (ibid:242)

¹¹⁹ I don’t understand why the final /k/ of this form is missing here, as it is written the same as the *zək* above, viz. ལྟོ་ཚེ་.

¹²⁰ It bears mentioning that it is obvious the below forms are not single morphemes, but rather present morphological configurations built upon the existential and other markers. It is beyond my ability to wade into debates about how best to analyze Tibetic evidential systems, and so I simply present the following paradigms from the source, as illustration of the overall discursual distinctions.

-jot-sa-jot: presents a situation from a subjective experience or from a definite objective phenomenon used to infer what happened¹²¹ (ibid:242)

-jot-nə-ret: generally describes an objective situation (ibid:243)

Among sentence-final particles, there are three question particles: *ni*, which comes sentence-final, *ə-*, which prefixes to auxiliaries, and *ko/ri*, which carries a sense of urgency, and immediately follows the verb root. There are also two imperative particles, *-ra* and a more polite *-a* (Gesang and Gesang 2002:259). Wang (1995:92-98) further gives examples of consultative particles (i.e. elicitations of response), uncertain particles (presenting doubt or hesitation) and conjectural particles, which express the reliability and certainty that an action will happen or a state will obtain.

4.2.6.2 *Monguor Discourse Marking*

VP-final morphemes in Mangghuer and Mongghul have an egophoric category of “perspective”, which refers to the speaker’s personal knowledge (or lack thereof) on an event¹²². This is possibly adopted from Tibetan language-contact, where it is generally referred to as ‘conjunct/disjunct’ marking. See Section 4.2.6.4. on Salar for similar morphemes there. We already saw in 4.2.4.3. that the copula paradigm includes suppletive forms for subject and objective marking. Below I present post-verbal morphemes that do the same.

There are two types of copula in Mangghuer, marked differently only in negative constructions (the last column below). They are the attributive (for predicate adjectives, as well as possessive, locational and existential clauses) and the equational (for equating two noun

¹²¹ 表示依据主观经验和一定的客观现象来推断所发生的事情

¹²² Roque, Floyd and Norcliffe (2018:2) describe egophoricity as: “At its very broadest, egophoricity is a general phenomenon of linguistically flagging the personal knowledge, experience, or involvement of a conscious self...More narrowly, egophoricity is the grammaticalised encoding of the personal or privileged knowledge or involvement of a potential speaker (the primary knower) in a represented event or situation. A narrowly egophoric system comprises a person sensitive, (quasi-)paradigmatic deployment of egophoric and non-egophoric forms that is pervasive across statements and questions.” See also Bartee (2007:132-137) on the meaning and implicational of terms such as conjunct/disjunct and related terminology in the literature.

phrases). The equational copula is optionally accompanied by a morpheme *shi*, borrowed from the Mandarin copula 是 *shì* (see (4-128)), which in Mangghuer appears between the two equated noun phrases. Their forms and examples of the subjective/objective distinction are as follows, illustrated with examples in (4-127) and (4-128) (Slater 2003:318):

Table 13 Mangghuer evidential-marked copulas

	Perspective	Indicative	Interrogative	Negative
Equational	Subjective	bi	biu	puzhi
	Objective	bang	beinu	puzhang
Attributive	Subjective	bi	biu	(u)gui
	Objective	bang	beinu	(u)guang

(4-127)

muni shu zhuozi diere bang
 1SG.GEN book table on.top COP.OBJT
 ‘My book is on the table.’

(4-128)

bi (shi) laoshi bi
 1SG (COP) teacher COP.SUBJT
 ‘I am a teacher.’

In indicative mood, the subjective perspective is marked on predicates with first-person subjects and the objective is marked on predicates with second and third-person subjects. In the interrogative mood subjective marking appears for second-person subjects and objective for first and third-person subjects. The difference between declaratives and interrogatives is found in Bodic evidential systems as well (Slater 2003b:198). A full paradigm from Mangghuer would look like the following, where in the declarative mood, second and third person pattern together, while in the interrogative, first and third person pattern together, as compared in the examples given in (4-129):

(4-129)

bi ri-ba
1SG come-SUBJT.PFV
'I came'

bi ri-jinu
1SG come-OBJT.PFV.Q
'Did I come?'

qi ri-jiang
2SG come-OBJT.PFV
'You came'

qi ri-bu
2SG come-SUBJT.PFV.Q
'Did you come?'

gan ri-jiang
3SG come-OBJT.PFV
'S/he came' (Slater 2003b:195)

gan ri-jinu
3SG come-OBJT.PFV.Q
'Did s/he come?' (Slater 2003b:198)

This system may be overridden, however, by marking objective perspective on the first-person to show the subject lacks control of the event, or by marking subjective perspective on a non-first-person subject to show a “high degree of involvement with the truth of the claim being made” (Slater 2003:316-317). In the following example (ibid), the speaker asserts a high degree of certainty that the statement is true, as shown in (4-130):

(4-130)

taiting=du huguer liang=ge ri-ba
there=DAT cow two=CL come-SUBJT.PFV
'Over there, two bulls have come.'

The Mongghul egophoric system works very similarly to Mangghuer (and Amdo Tibetan). Just as in Mangghuer, in addition to the common correspondence between first-person forms and subjective marking, and third-person forms with objective marking, the possibilities can be interchanged to show surprise, doubt, affirmation, reproach and so on. Consider the data in (4-131)-(4-134) from Georg (2003:303):

(4-131)

qi xji-guni
2SG go-FUT.SUBJT
'You will go.'

(4-132)

bu xji-gua

1SG go-EXIS.NEG.OBJT

'I will go (but it is not my decision to do so).'

(4-133)

ndaa seer ii

1SG money EXIS.SUBJT

'I have money (and I know it very well).'

(4-134)

ndaa seer wa

1SG money EXIS.OBJT

'I indeed have money (rather surprisingly for myself).'

Furthermore, Mangghuer has a number of sentence-final particles to mark emphasis (*viz. bai*), attitude, information source or to elicit the listener's response. The particle *ge-lang* is a hearsay evidential marker, coming from the imperfective objective form of the verb *ge* 'to say', as illustrated in (4-135) and (4-136) below.

(4-135)

bersi liang=ge ti kong=ni beila-la ri-jiang gelang

tiger two=CL that person=CON carry-FIN come-OBJT.PFV HSY

'Two tigers came to carry that person (away), they say.' (Slater 2003a:321)

(4-136)

ni honghuang gan=ni ana bang gelang

this phoenix 3SG=GEN mother OBJT.COP HSY

'This phoenix was his mother, they say.' (Slater 2003b:157)

4.2.6.3 *Salar Discourse Marking*

In the sources I consulted, not a lot was written about Salar information marking. What there is looks a lot like the Monguor system discussed in 4.2.6.2 above. In the language, the certain form encodes the information with the speaker's personal experience, subjective determinacy or marks an event seen with their own eyes; the uncertain form expresses actions that the

speaker has not directly experienced, or seen, and can be used to serve a mirative function in Salar¹²³ (Lin 1985:63).

Salar copulas and existentials (from Lin 1985:82-84) also vary by personal stance, as illustrated in the chart below, followed by examples in (4-137)-(4-141):

Table 14 Salar evidential-marked copulas and existentials

	positive (certain)	positive (uncertain)	negative (certain)	negative (uncertain)
Copula	idər~dər	ira	emesdər	emesa
Existential	var	vara	joxdər	joxa

(4-137)

men salar dər

1SG Salar COP.CERT

我 撒拉 是

'I am a Salar.'

我是撒拉族

(Lin 1985:100)

(4-138)

u tiud

ira

3SG Tibetan

COP.UNCERT

他 藏族

是

'He is a Tibetan.'

他是藏族

(ibid.)

(4-139)

u oj-de

joxdər

3SG home-LOC

NEG.EXIST.CERT

他 家

没有

'He's not home.'

他不在家

(Lin 1985:83)

¹²³ 表达出乎本人意料和意愿的行为, 状态

(4-140)

ɑŋɑ	gəz	igi	var
3SG	daughter	two	EXIST.CERT
他	女儿	二	有

‘He has two daughters.’ (The speakers knows for certain.)

他有两个女孩 (说话者确知) (ibid.)

(4-141)

ɑŋɑ	oβəl	joχɑ
3SG	son	NEG.EXIST.UNCERT
他	儿子	没有

‘He doesn’t have a son.’

他没有儿子 (Lin 1985:84)

4.2.6.4 *Xining Discourse Marking*

Three modal particles are described as being specific to Xining, including the hortative 煞 [sa⁴⁴], dismissive 呗 [pɛ⁴⁴] and the tag particle 佛 [fɔ⁵³], the latter of which is likely to be a sub-function of the grammaticalized ‘say’ verb 说, discussed below. The morpheme [pɛ⁴⁴] has essentially the same function as Standard Mandarin *ba* 吧, however it also has the meanings “forget it; so much for that; just so-so” (罢了, 不过如此) (Zhang and Zhu 1987:286).

In Standard Mandarin, the verb 给 ‘to give’, in addition to its lexical meaning, often follows ditransitive verbs to introduce indirect objects, as it also may do in Xining. (See 4.2.5.4, examples (4-110) and (4-111).) In Xining, however, it also commonly follows transitive verbs, as in (4-142) and (4-143), to give a softening register or present a positive result of the verb¹²⁴.

¹²⁴ Note that Wang and Dede (2016:417) discuss a type of “antonymous imperative” in the Xining dialect, involving the same post-verbal ‘give’ verb, there glossed as *ki*⁵³. In such sentences, no overt negative is used, but the effect, claimed to be clear to the speaker and hearer, is of a negative imperative. Under this interpretation, (4-142) might possibly be construed as ‘Don’t call him!’, though it’s also possible there is overlap in form for these two different functions of positive and negative commands (clearly sharing in common a strategy of softening the tone in an imperative). Presently, I cannot resolve the ambiguity.

(4-142)

把家叫给!

pa²¹³ tɕia²⁴ tɕiɔ²¹³ kei²⁴

OBJ 3 call give

叫他一下

'Give him a call.'

(Zhang and Zhu 1987:284)

(4-143)

炉子生给了

lɥ²⁴tsɿ⁵³ sǎ⁴⁴ kei²¹³ liɔ⁴⁴

stove light give PFV

炉子生好了

'The stove is lit up.'

(ibid.)

Its counterpart in intransitives is 下 'downward' (glossed 'down'--incidentally, the particle often used postverbally in Standard Mandarin to soften the register), where it indicates the resulting action as 'already being thus' (已然), as in (4-144) (Zhang and Zhu 1987:284).

(4-144)

天亮下了

t^hjǎ⁴⁴ liɔ²¹³ xa²¹³-liɔ⁴⁴

sky bright down-PFV

天已经亮了

'The sky is already brightened.'

Finally, at the discourse level, there is a sentence-final quotative 说 [fɔ⁴⁴] (Standard Mandarin [ʂuɔ⁵⁵]), probably with its structural and grammaticalized usage having origins in Minhe Mangghuer *gelang*, which is from the verb 'to say' (though Amdo also has a similar structure) (Dede 1993). The morpheme meaning 'say' has grammaticalized in individual varieties of all branches of Sinitic, for example Taiwanese *kóng* and Cantonese *waa6* (Bell 2017:170, 172)¹²⁵. Drawing from Chappell (2008), Bell (2017:165) notes that the morpheme can serve as a complementizer, a topic marker, a (composite) conjunction, a hearsay evidentiality marker, an

¹²⁵ The Taiwanese and Cantonese morphemes, following Bell (2017), are given in the popular romanizations, Pêh-ōe-jī and Jyutping, respectively. The tone on Taiwanese *kóng* is a falling tone (51), while the tone on Cantonese *waa6* is a low-level (22).

irrealis marker (i.e. in if...then clauses) and a clause-final discourse marker across various Chinese dialects.

In Xining, such a grammaticalized use of the ‘say’ verb exhibits the following functions: reported speech marker, complementizer, evidential/hearsay marker, volitional, clause connective and topic condition. As a reported speech marker, the morpheme can variably appear both before and after the quoted speech. As a clausal complementizer, the form is often *fozho* ([fɔtʂɔ] or [fytʂɔ]), a fossilization of the ‘say’ verb with the durative aspect marker [tʂə]. Similar uses are noted for nearby Tangwang (See Xu 2017:114; See 7.2.5.1).

For present purposes I will illustrate its use in reported speech (4-145), as a quotative complementizer (4-146) and as an evidential/hearsay marker (4-147). The first example exhibits both the reported speech function (marked after the main verb of the second clause, which just happens to be the verb *fo* ‘say’, marked with durative aspect), as well as the complementizer usage. In addition to that, the first clause also contains the verb *fo* ‘say’, totaling four concurrent instances of the root morpheme in one complex sentence¹²⁶.

(4-145) Reported Speech

no	fo	yi-xingqi-ha	chu-yuan-li	a	mei,	[shisi-tian-li-ha
1SG	say	one-week-TOP	exit-hospital-FUT	PTCL	NEG,	[14-day-LOC-TOP
cai	chou-xian-li	fozho]	fo-zhe	fo	a	
only	pull.out-wire-FUT	COMP]	say-IMPV	HSY	PTCL	

‘I said, “Can you get out of hospital in one week?” (He) said that only after fourteen days will they take out the stitches.’ (Bell 2017:166, brackets added)

¹²⁶ Note that, in Bell (2017), all syntactic data is presented in a flexible, toneless Pinyin, and so the morpheme in question, [fɔ44], is notated as <fo>. Since the other morphemes in the examples are not phonetically specific, i.e. in IPA, I will leave the ‘say’ verb as it is presented in Bell’s dissertation.

(4-146) Quotative/complementizer

lang lai-li fozho han lia ko
wolf come-FUT COMP shout PTCL PTCL

‘S/he was shouting that a wolf is coming.’

(Bell 2017:182, 183)

(4-147) Evidential/hearsay marker

jiu Langwan-li-de na-ge gawa-ha yao-ha-le ge xifu fozho
just PN-LOC-NMLZ that-CLboy-TOP want-CMPL-PFV CL wife HSY

‘It is said that boy from Langwan found a wife.’

(Bell 2017:208)

cf. Qinghai Mongolian

ɕiniŋ bol negə saxə gatsə gəne
Xining COP one good place HSY

‘(It is said) Xining is a good place.’

(Bell 2017:210)

The phrase-final nature of the morpheme is cited as evidence for contact-induced change, most likely from Mongolic speakers. Though Amdo Tibetan patterns similarly to Mongolic in this regard, it has a less restricted patterning in relation to the imperfective marker, a restriction that Mongghul and Xining both share in common (Bell 2017:198).

Wang (2012b:476) mentions another evidential marking strategy, the combination of the character 闯 (Standard Mandarin *chuǎng*, ‘rush’; no local pronunciation is given) and the locative particle 俩 *-lia*, or alternately with the particle 呵 [xə], to mean ‘possibly; is possible (可能是)’¹²⁷. Wang attributes this to contact with Monguor, which has a similar morpheme *taŋ* ‘possible’, or Amdo Tibetan *nat^haŋ* ‘possible’, both functioning similarly as Xining, as illustrated in (4-148)-(4-150) (ibid.):

(4-148) Xining

我后日家里去呵也闯俩

Wǒ hòurì jiā-lǐ qù hē yě chuǎng liǎ
1SG day.after.tomorrow home-LOC go PTCL also rush FUT

我后天有可能回家

‘I may possibly return home the day after tomorrow.’

¹²⁷ Wang neither gives a precise meaning for the particle 呵 [xə] (usually a transliterating character in Mandarin), nor explains the exact function of the adverb 也 *yě* in the example sentence. The latter is included in the original text to show that other morphemes may intervene between 呵 and 闯.

(4-149) Monguor

bulaii ulaasa taŋ

child cry possible

孩子 哭 可能

孩子可能要哭

'The child will possibly cry.'

(4-150) Amdo Tibetan

saŋŋin kho-tsho jon nat^haŋ

tomorrow 3-PL come possible

明天 他们 来 可能

明天他们可能来

'Tomorrow they will possibly come.'

4.2.6.5 *Discourse Marking Summary*

All of the languages in the region make use of sentence-final discourse particles to convey emotive and other pragmatic information. A more noteworthy areal phenomenon is the system of evidentiality marking, including the stance-marking conjunct/disjunct morphemes. The latter distinction is carried largely by copula and existential verbs in both Monguor and Salar. While Labrang also makes use of the copula and existential verbs for conveying informational knowledge in the predicate, it has a number of other morphemes utilized for information-marking as well.

Tibetan in general has a more highly evolved system of evidentiality than Altaic, and for the most part Sinitic lacks one altogether (though the 'say' verb may be grammaticalizing in this direction for some dialects—see discussion from Bell (2017)). For now, a clause final 'say' verb in Xining seems to be grammaticalizing into a hearsay marker, in addition to other non-Standard Mandarin functions, but Xining lacks the conjunct/disjunct system of marking

predicates found in Salar or Monguor, as well as the array of postverbal evidentiality morphemes found in Labrang.

4.2.7 The Lexicon

This section collectively comments on what the literature notes about the lexicons of Amdo Tibetan, Monguor and Salar, before turning to a fuller discussion of the Xining lexicon.

4.2.7.1 *Lexicons of other Languages*

There is not much to be said, or at least not much said in the sources I consulted, about the Amdo lexicon. It appears to be a natural development of a Tibetic variety. Gesang and Gesang (2002:181-185) list various ways the Labrang lexicon compares with Lhasa, amounting to most of the natural differences and similarities one would expect from languages sharing a common ancestor, including different compositional elements used in compounds, semantic drift, and variant pronunciations for words sharing the same etymological origin---much like the processes illustrated for Xining in 4.2.7.2 below. They also note a number of words specifically originating in Amdo (i.e. having no cognate in Lhasa Tibetan), not a few of which are basic vocabulary and/or high frequency words, such as *ho* 'belly', *she-ru* 'wind', *li* 'to make; do', *tɕhə-zək* 'what' and *hon-gə* 'very' (ibid:212-213)¹²⁸.

Slater (2003b) describes the Mangghuer lexicon, much like its phonology, to have been highly influenced by Chinese, though, contrary to analysis earlier in his research, he comes to the conclusion that a discernible Mongolic element, mostly from the morphosyntax, is pervasive enough to consider it a Mongolic, not a mixed, language. Slater cites a corpus study on four

¹²⁸ Gesang and Gesang's (2002) practice is to separate every Tibetan syllable with a hyphen, which may or may not (though more often may) reference a historical morpheme. I have kept the transcriptions similarly hyphenated here.

folktales, over 1400 words, as showing about 35% of the Mangghuer lexicon taken from Chinese, but only about 15% of the core vocabulary (Slater 2003b:308).

Georg (2003:304) points out that, though Chinese has had a longstanding effect on the Mongghul lexicon, it has not been as great as in Mangghuer. Though Chinese has recently become the main donor language to Mongghul lexically, historically Amdo Tibetan has had a greater effect, both in terms of vocabulary and phonological changes, though that influence has been waning in contemporary times. Extending beyond just religious and cultural terms, Mongghul has adopted everyday words such as *nangsaa* 'breakfast', *smamba* ~ *smambaa* '(medical) doctor' and *yer* 'summer'. Having said that, Georg (ibid) claims "[t]he knowledge of Tibetan as a second language has probably never embraced more than a fraction of the Mongghul-speaking population." To a large extent, however, the bulk of the Mongghul lexicon has obvious Mongolic origins.

Mangghuer and Mongghul differ from each other in that the former has adopted numerals from Sinitic, with the exception of the numeral one, *nige* and the fossilized form of *ghu* 'two' in the word *ghu-la* 'two together; together with' (Slater 2003:314). Mongghul, on the other hand, uses Mongolic numerals, except for *mbun* '10,000', which is borrowed from Amdo. Slater points out that nearby Santa has dual counting systems, both Mongolic and Sinitic. Neither Labrang nor Salar has borrowed Sinitic numerals, though Lin (1985:46) reports that younger children tend to count in Mandarin above the number ten.

Finally, the Salar lexicon shows considerable similarity as the development of Mangghuer. The language has borrowed extensively from those around it, especially Sinitic and especially in recent times. As a Muslim people, Salar has also borrowed vocabulary from the major Islamic languages. Some examples are given in (4-151) (Lin 1985:25):

(4-151)

	via Arabic		via Persian
'Friday'	džuma	'key'	kirid
'floor (of building)'	ruχ	'saint/prophet's tomb' ¹²⁹	gunbed
'world'	dunja		

According to Dwyer (2017:285), Arabic and Persian loans, largely relegated to religious vocabulary, account for less than five percent of the Salar lexicon, compared with closer to 20% for Uyghur, for example. Much of Salar's Islamic vocabulary was borrowed through the Chinese spoken by northwestern Hui Muslims. By contrast, at least 25% of Salar's lexicon is borrowed from Chinese and Tibetan, and to a lesser extent Mongolian (ibid)¹³⁰.

Borrowings from Tibetan are illustrated below in (4-152), from Lin (1985:25):

(4-152)

'boulder'	palon
'Big Dipper'	lanša
'cheek'	džamba
'neck tumor (颈瘤)'	šovas

Dwyer (2007:228,246) gives the following examples of Mongolic borrowings into Salar, shown in (4-153):

(4-153)

tyderyan 'rice; rice plant' from Written Mongolian <tuturya> 'rice plant'
buydi~buydzi 'wheat' from Written Mongolian <buyudaj>
diuyu 'that' cf. nMg. ti~tig- 'that' (possibly from Monguor)
nixur 'lover' cf. Mongolian noxor 'friend; companion'
džare- 'to use' from Written Mongolian <džaru-> to employ
gadza- 'to bite' cf. Monguor, Santa qaqa- 'to bite'

¹²⁹ In the original: jiàozhǔ língmù 教主陵墓

¹³⁰ In this section of her book, Dwyer does not mention the corpus size from which these percentages come from. However, she (2007:74) refers to a 4000-word vocabulary list she elicited at multiple field sites during her investigation elsewhere, and so presumably the percentage counts are from this.

4.2.7.2 *Xining Lexicon*

Xining's lexicon appears to be primarily composed of Sinitic vocabulary. Li and Zhang's (1994) dictionary and Zhang and Zhu (1987) give extensive word lists. Many authors deal with borrowed vocabulary, particularly in the realm of grammatical markers, but I am not aware of lists dividing the sources of particular morphemes, nor of any lexical counts. It could be similar to the case of Daohua (5.2.7.2), where the overwhelming vocabulary is Sinitic, and Tibetan (or other languages') words apply mostly to local, specialized referents.

Ma Rong (2015) lists instances of ways in which the Xining lexicon has undergone changes separating it from Standard Mandarin (SM). This includes cases of semantic extension, such as the morpheme 抬 (SM *shí*) 'to lift; raise', which in Xining can also mean 'to eat', or 整 (SM *zhěng*) 'to put in order', which has come to mean 'to bully' in Xining. There are also cases of a morpheme's semantic range narrowing, such as 饭 (SM *fàn*) 'cooked rice; food', which in Xining refers to a specific type of bread, or 汤 (SM *tāng*) 'soup', referring to a noodle dish with added seasonings ("一般指加佐料的面条"). In some cases there is a semantic shift, perhaps a case of metonymy, to a related meaning, such as 潮 (SM *cháo*, 'damp; humid; also 'tide'), which has come to mean 'to sweat'.

Similarly, certain concepts are expressed in Xining by different means than in Mandarin. Some examples from Ma Rong (2015) include those in (4-154) (all examples transliterated in Pinyin):

(4-154) Comparison of Xining and Standard Mandarin compounds

Xining	Standard Mandarin	meaning
难心 <i>nán xīn</i> difficult+mind	难过 <i>nánguò</i> difficult+pass	'too difficult, trying'
花泛 <i>huā fàn</i> flower+float	热情大方 <i>rèqíng dàfāng</i> enthusiasm+generous (person)	'enthusiastically generous'

孽障 niè zhàng evil+obstruct	可怜 kělián able to+pity	'to be pitiful'
松泛 sōng fàn slack+float	轻松 qīngsōng light+slack	'to be relaxed'
受活 shòu huó receive+lively	舒服 shūfú leisurely+accustom	'to be comfortable'
耳失 ěr shī ear+lose	理睬 lǐ cài reason+notice	'to heed (in neg.)'

Ma Rong also points out that dumplings (饺子 *jiǎozi*) are referred to as 老鼠儿 'little mice', due to their rodent-like shape, and traditional cloth slippers (布鞋 *bùxié*) are called 八大块, 'eight big pieces' because of the loop holes¹³¹.

There may also be different collocations for verbs than in Mandarin, such as for 'to buy' 买, the first morpheme in the Mandarin examples below. Whereas in Standard Mandarin the same morpheme *mǎi* 'to buy' is used in each of the following verb+noun collocations, in Xining the verbal component of the compound (the first morpheme of the examples in the Xining examples, translated literally in the gloss) differs, depending on the bought object, as in (4-155):

(4-155) Comparison of Standard Mandarin and Xining Verb-Object collocations

Standard Mandarin	Xining	
买点盐 mǎidiǎn yán	称点盐 chēng (weigh) diǎn yán	'buy salt'
买酱油 mǎi jiàngyóu	灌酱油 guàn (fill) jiàngyóu	'buy soy sauce'
买布 mǎi bù	扯布 chě (pull) bù	'buy cloth'

Finally, Ma Rong gives an example of grammatical morphemes with different forms in Xining. For instance, in the Standard Mandarin construction 'to V1 while V2ing', the grammatical morpheme is *(yī)biān* (一)边 '(one) side; (one) limit' following each verb, as in *yībiān zǒu yībiān chànggē* 一边走一边唱歌 'to be singing while walking' (lit. one side walk one side sing). In

¹³¹ Stevan Harrell disputes this etymology, on account of the cloth slippers referred to by 布鞋 being slip-ons.

Xining, the morpheme (transliterated in Pinyin) is *xuán* 旋 ‘to revolve’, as in *chī xuán zǒuzhe* 吃旋走着 ‘eating while walking’ (lit. eat revolve walk DUR). In this case, it appears, the verb for ‘revolve’ has lost some of its semantic meaning, and has been reappropriated as semi-functional converbial collocation.

Ma Rong’s data show something that many analyses and descriptions of Xining do not: a standard process of internal semantic change in a Sinitic variety, whereby lexical items extend or reduce their range, or where certain morphemes take on functional or collocational roles, independent of any contact influence. While there is no mention of similar morphemes in languages surrounding Xining, it is not hard to imagine any of the above changes taking shape for any local Sinitic variety. Consider, for example, similar extensions or contractions of semantic range, or reorganization of compound elements, in Southwest Mandarin dialects presented in 3.4.3.7. Of course, comparative and historical analyses would be needed to verify the claim, but the above data show the expected semantic changes for a regional dialect, taking place alongside external influence on the lexicon, as discussed elsewhere, a perspective perhaps not adequately contextualized when the bulk of research articles focus on “foreign elements” in the grammar or lexicon.

4.2.7.3 *Lexical Summary*

Unfortunately, lexical counts for Xining by origin are not readily available, as they are for Daohua and Bai later in the dissertation. However, there is little indication that any substantial portion of Xining’s content morphemes are non-Sinitic, despite some anecdotal examples of “mixed” utterances mentioned in 4.2.1.1.

Labrang Amdo also exhibits very little lexical borrowing. Such is not the case for Monguor and Salar, whose lexicons are much more substantially mixed, borrowings comprising 35% of

Mangghuer's and 25-30% of Salar's lexicon, as cited above, with the majority of loans for both languages coming from Sinitic. Monguor's vocabulary is so heavily Sinicized, including down to the numerals for Mangghuer, Keith Slater once believed it not to be traceable to Mongolic, though his position has since shifted. Salar, also, is considered firmly Turkic, though the loans from Chinese, and earlier loans from Tibetan, are one of the more noteworthy properties of the languages.

4.3 The Formation of a Linguistic Area

4.3.1 Language Contact and Language Change in Amdo

Here I present a summary and analysis of the linguistic data gathered from various sources in 4.2, considering how the eastern Amdo area constitutes a linguistic area, as a multilingual zone of convergence. In 4.3.2 I discuss the historical setting, to consider what avenues may or may not have contributed to the multilingualism needed to engender such an area. In 4.3.3 I argue against viewing this ethnolinguistic setting in terms of discreet ethnolinguistic groups converging towards an (imperial) prestige variety of Chinese.

4.3.1.1 *Comparison of Local Data*

When we take stock of the eastern Amdo area, as many linguists, anthropologists and historians have pointed out before, we see an area of distinct local cultures, all taking part in a historical culture exchange that appears to be a convergence zone. In linguistic terms, it is easy to see how the Qinghai/Gansu border forms a linguistic area. As discussed in 2.2, there is some debate over the number of languages that must be involved, or the number of features shared, to constitute such an area, but the Amdo sprachbund offers no ambiguity: the involvement of at least four language families (Tibetic, Sinitic, Turkic and Mongolic) spoken in the same region

for centuries has led to the mixture of features at nearly every level of grammar for the languages involved.

We can review the observations on the data considered in the summary sections of 4.2 here:

1. The phonological systems show a number of convergence processes towards a two-way, (heavily) aspirated versus unaspirated contrastive inventory. Fricative, or apical, vowels are common, as are alveolopalatal and retroflex consonants. There is a movement towards a final tonic syllable in non-tonal Salar and Monguor, with the tonal inventory of Xining appearing to reduce, as well. Though Labrang, like most Amdo dialects (and like Old Tibetan) lacks tones, it is an outlier in this area in a few ways: it has a larger syllable inventory than the other languages, if somewhat smaller than other non-pastoral Amdo dialects, and a large consonantal inventory, with a three-way contrast for all obstruent phonemes.

2. Many of the morphological processes noted for Xining, Labrang, Monguor and Salar are probably present in any language of East Asia, namely compounding, reduplication and affixation. The degree to which any of the individual languages tend more towards one process or another, or have undergone a typological shift over time (say, becoming less agglutinative, and relying more on compounding, as I feel could be true of Salar), is not necessarily reflected by the data I have considered here. However, impressionistically speaking, each language's morphological type seems mostly to be as one would expect from its genetic affiliation: Xining and Labrang involve more compounding, and less affixation, as expected for Sino-Tibetan languages, though Xining has gained some inflectional categories, and Labrang, not unlike other Tibetan varieties, has its fair share of inflection to begin with. Monguor and Salar tend towards more agglutination, though the number affixes on a word, especially a verb, are not especially

more numerous than for Xining or Labrang, tending mostly towards aspect markers and complements. Morpho-phonological alternation is not especially widespread, though there seems to be a cline between Labrang having the most alternation-inducing suffixes, and Xining with either the least, or perhaps none at all.

Case and number marking is present in all of the languages involved, while Xining has shown the greatest departure from its Sinitic relatives, the only genetic group that does not ordinarily exhibit case-marking. Slater (2003b:101) also notes a regional tendency for indefinite marking, which involves common usage of the Sinitic general nominal classifier \uparrow *ge*, though I did not notice its mention in other sources. Labrang Tibetan alone, as a typical Tibetan language, shows ergative alignment.

3. The verb phrase is the area where my data are the least illuminating, in failing to capture the big picture. Many strategies—negation, post-verbal copula and existential marking, resultative structures—could be explored more deeply, but still clearly show significant variation at the level of discourse. Keith Dede (2006) has shown this to be partly explained by generational and urban/rural divisions, but mapping such variation remains a project for researchers in the area.

While post-verbal complement/resultative structures seem to be at least present in Monguor, and increasing in Salar, the way such verbal constructions are dealt with for the most part follows family typology, with Sino-Tibetan utilizing verb chains and local Altaic (i.e., Mongolic and Turkic) relying on pre-verbal, morphologically marked converbal clauses. In general, as noted above with respect to morphological typology, Sino-Tibetan marks fewer verbal categories morphologically than Altaic.

All languages in the area mark aspect after the verb, and all but Xining mark tense, with the exception of the future tense, being marked with *lia* in Xining. Besides exhibiting a regular future tense marker, Xining has split from Sinitic norms in other ways as well, making it the language of the region with the most changes to its VP properties from a genetic perspective. Though highly subject to variation, Xining has at least one pattern for both negation and modal auxiliaries that is similar to other languages in the region, though it also exhibits Sinitic patterns for the same constructions, whether they are inherited or re-adopted in more recent times under the influence of recent in-migration.

On a semantic level, Xining aspect marking is also drifting away from Standard Mandarin patterns, extending to a wider range of predicates than is possible in the latter, which may be internal regularization, but also shows similarities to aspect marking in Monguor or Tibetan. If Xining borrowed these morphemes from another language, then it would be an example of what Heine and Kuteva (2005) call grammatical replication, wherein a borrowed grammatical marker's function is transplanted onto the phonological form of the morpheme in the borrowing language. A closer comparison with the restrictions, and allowances, on individual tense/aspect morphemes appearing with different verb types for other regional languages would be illuminating for establishing areal trends in verbal morphology.

4. On a clausal level, all languages are verb-final, typically Subject-Object-Verb. This is a change from family norms only for Xining, as Sinitic is generally considered verb-medial in unmarked constructions. Noun phrases are all head-final, with some variation in Labrang, which is not a change for anyone, even though Sinitic head-final NPs is a departure from implicational typological norms (Dryer 2003 [2017]). Classifiers are utilized by all of the languages involved,

which is considered to be a Sinitic-induced addition to Salar and Monguor grammar, but in general the number of distinct classifiers on the whole are fewer in all the languages, including Xining, than for, say, southern Sinitic varieties (see McWhorter 2007:118, following Yue 2003). Clausal connection strategies may show areal trends, but my data is inconclusive, especially for Xining. Finally, variation, as well as syntactic scrambling, is noted for multiple constructions in Xining, with certain forms (BA-constructions, comparatives) that could be either internal innovations, or the result of contact-induced change. A comparison with such constructions in other branches of Sinitic, of which I know there are more than a few studies, could help contextualize the departure from standard norms in Xining from a genetic perspective—an interesting study for future research.

5. Languages of the region tend to have some sort of grammaticalized strategy for marking knowledge-source, if not speaker stance, especially through extension of the ‘say’ verb as a hearsay marker. This is less pronounced in Xining than in the other languages, the latter of which all make use of egophoric marking on final copula or existential morphemes. Labrang seems to have the greatest number of distinct morphemes, or morpheme collocations, to make fine-grained distinctions of evidentiality.

6. Both Xining and Labrang show relatively little lexical borrowing in the area of content morphemes, though both show plenty of what would appear to be natural internal change. (For purposes of space, I did not include such internal semantic changes that set off Amdo from other Tibetic varieties, but see Gesang and Gesang (2002:181-185) for an overview.) This is in stark contrast to Salar and Monguor, whose lexicons show significant Sinitic borrowing, Monguor to such an extent that it took Keith Slater some time to come around to admitting the

language to be Mongolic (Slater 2003b:1). The fact that Xining, a language showing significant influence from regional languages in its development, from word order to increased category marking to a reducing tonal inventory, has, so far as absence of any count in the available literature implies, an insignificant number of non-Sinitic vocabulary items in its lexicon is striking. Were Xining to be the result of originally Monguor (or Tibetan) speakers replacing their lexicon with Sinitic vocabulary, we might expect a remnant of the older language to still exist, at least in basic vocabulary, as is arguably the case for Bai in Yunnan (6.2.7.1). On the other hand, if Sinitic speakers have borrowed so generously from surrounding languages in terms of grammar, would we not also expect a healthy dosage of lexical items to follow along as well? The significance of the lexicon has been central to discussion of mixed languages, and thus genetic affiliation (see discussion in 2.3.4), and will be discussed further below.

What is striking for the languages involved is that Labrang, that is the selected local variety of Amdo Tibetan, shows far less outside influence than the other languages, having exhibited no contact-influenced change in any of the areas I surveyed. It is also the local language, with the exception of Chinese, that is spoken in a much wider geographical range than only the Amdo border of Qinghai/Gansu. From a number of perspectives, one could make the case that it exhibits greater “complexity” in its quantifiably higher count for phonemic contrasts, both in overall segments and featural contrasts, as well as distinct syllable types; in its greater opacity of forms, such as the highly alternating and irregular dative marker, and a subset of verbs irregularly marked for tense categories, in addition to other alternating morphemes; and in its finer gradation of category marking in grammaticalized evidentiality. In the local setting, Amdo

Tibetan serves as a model for areal convergence (Sandman and Simon 2016) but does not partake in it by departing from genetic Tibetan norms.

As discussed in 2.4 we expect complexity to be maintained, or “left to simmer”, as it were, from languages with dense social networks, usually in rural and/or homogenous areas (Trudgill 2011). It is not clear that the setting for Labrang Amdo, centered on the cosmopolitan Labrang monastic complex, constitutes an isolated, dense, rural network of speakers---not any more so than the surrounding regions where Salar, Monguor and other Sinitic and Amdo varieties are spoken. We will return to monastic settings in 4.3.2 below. However, it is worth noting as well that, as representative of the oldest historical stratum of demographic settlement in the region, Tibetans preceding Mongols, Chinese and Turks in the region, Labrang Tibetan would constitute, at least among the extant groups, the “founders” of the founder principle, discussed by Mufwene (1996, 2001). By this principle, we would expect Amdo Tibetan to have left a lasting impression on all the later-coming languages’ formation, which, as argued by Sandman and Simon (2016), it has. (See discussion in the section on Wutun in 7.3 below). Nonetheless, by most researchers’ accounts, Xining may owe more to Monguor than Tibetan in its Sinitic-divergent developments, speaking more to the granular demographics of the area around Xining city itself than the greater Amdo cultural area.

For both Salar and Monguor, by which we might say, for local Altaic languages, there is very noticeable contact-induced change, but it is largely confined to the lexicon and phonology—two features of a language certainly distinct, but not terribly unrelated. Despite sizeable portions of these Altaic languages’ lexicon having Sinitic or Tibetic origins, as mentioned in 4.2.7.1—though still, it is worth pointing out, well less than half the lexicon—the influence of

outside languages on the morphology and syntax of Salar and Monguor is not especially impressive. That is, they largely retain the typological profile of their Altaic relatives, despite partaking in a “convergence zone” of the local language area.

Finally, for Xining, two prominent features stand out: a change in typological profile at all levels of the grammar and a high degree of variation in structures. The regional varieties of Chinese—the Xining, or “Qinghai” dialect, but also other varieties such as Tangwang, Wutun and Gangou, discussed in Chapter 7—are known to the world largely for their inflectional categories and constituent order that differs so dramatically from Sinitic. But for Xining, these constituent orders stand alongside variant Sinitic patterns, including the use of prepositions versus postpositions, which reflects a language in greater flux than its neighbors¹³².

Furthermore, the reduced tonal inventories are part of a larger trend across northern China, where the Standard Mandarin tonal inventory of four tones is reducing to three or two in some, mostly rural, areas (Shen and Nakano 2015; Xu 2015).

These properties—a less outside-influenced Amdo variety, a highly variable Sinitic variety, lexically/phonologically restructured Altaic varieties with nonetheless Altaic morphosyntax—call for an explanation both in terms of grammar and socio-cultural history. The latter will be discussed more extensively below, but for now let us focus on the changes that characterize Xining when it is not acting Sinitic, especially its most prominent deviation, as noted in the literature, its verb-final syntactic order.

¹³² One certainly does not mean to deny that other regional languages exhibit variation, as all languages do. But of the properties surveyed in 4.2, only the Salar NP prominently stood out as allowing the “regular” degree of variation that at least half a dozen similar features of Xining showed.

4.3.1.2 *The Areal Setting from a Genetic Perspective*

To further measure how much local convergence has played a role in shaping each individual language's profile, below is a comparison of some key features highlighted in this discussion, in terms of their presence in genetically related languages to those compared here. The sources from which each language is drawn from come primarily from anthologies, such as Thurgood and LaPolla (2017 [2005]) for Sino-Tibetan, Janhunen (2003) for Mongolic and Johanson and Csató (1998) for Turkic. Specifically they include Birtalon (2003) for Oirat, Svantesson (2003) for Khalkha, Hugjiltu (2003) for Bonan, Kim (2003), as well as Field (1997), for Santa, and Janhunen (2003b) for Proto-Mongolic. For Turkic languages, Hahn (1998a) for Uyghur, Schönig (1998) for Turkmen, Hahn (1998b), as well as Chen and Lei (1985), for Sarig-Yugur, and Róna-Tas (1998) for Proto-Turkic. For Sino-Tibetan languages, DeLancey (2017a) for Lhasa, DeLancey (2017b) for Classical Tibetan, Häslér (1999) for Dege, and Bauer and Matthews (2017) for Cantonese. The Classical/Middle Chinese and Mandarin data, unless specified in a footnote, I provided from my own knowledge as a student.

Table 15 Comparison of regional features in Amdo

	Retroflex	AlvPala	Obstr. Contrasts	Ablative	tense	classifiers	Word Order	Hearsay
Mongolic								
Monguor	yes	yes	2 (aspir.)	-sa	yes	yes	SOV	SAY
Oirat	No	no	2 (voice)	-As	yes	no	SOV	---
Khalkha	No	no	2 (voice)	-As	yes	no	SOV	SAY
Bonan	yes	yes	2 (voice) ¹³³	-sa/-se	yes	no	SOV	yes
Santa	yes	yes	2 (aspir.)	-se	yes	yes	SOV	--- ¹³⁴
Proto-Mongolic	no	no	2 (voice)	*(-A)-cA	FUT	no	SOV	---
Turkic								
Salar	yes	yes	2 (aspir.)	-(n)dEn	yes	yes	SOV	yes
Uyghur	no	no	2 (voice)	-t/din	yes	no	SOV	---
Turkmen	no	no	2 (voice)	-dAn	yes	no	SOV	---
Sarig-Yugur	yes	no	2 (aspir.)	-(n)dAn	yes	yes	SOV	---
Proto-Turkic	no	no	2 (?) ¹³⁵	*-dAn	yes	no	---	---
Tibetic								
Labrang	yes	yes	3-way	-ni	yes	no (?)	SOV	multi
Dege	yes	yes	3-way	-l/nɛ:	no	no	SOV	multi
Lhasa	yes ¹³⁶	no	2 (aspir.)	-næ(?)	yes	no	SOV	multi
Classical Tibetan	no	no(?)	3-way	-las	yes	no	SOV	---
Sinitic								
Xining	yes	yes	2 (aspir.)	-tɕia/-sa	FUT	yes	SOV	SAY
S Mandarin	yes	yes	2 (aspir.)	No	no	yes	SVO	no
Cantonese	no	yes	2 (aspir.)	No	no	yes	SVO	particle

¹³³ Hugiiltu is somewhat equivocal on this point, allowing that stops may be unaspirated or voiced, though the notation implies voicing, and the lateral liquid has a voiceless counterpart. One could jump to the conclusion that, similarly to Salar, Bonan is shifting from a voicing to an aspiration distinction.

¹³⁴ There is some indication a final particle *dai* is used to express hearsay information. See Kim (2003:362).

¹³⁵ Róna-Tas (1998:71) speculates that the fortis/lenis contrast of Proto-Turkic stops was “maybe aspirated” versus “probably also unvoiced”.

¹³⁶ The modern retroflexes come from an earlier stop + r cluster (DeLancey 2017:386). This is in contrast to the possibility that they may have been borrowed from contact with Classical Sanskrit.

Middle / Classical Chinese	yes	yes(?)	3-way	no	no	yes ¹³⁷	SVO	---
----------------------------------	-----	--------	-------	----	----	--------------------	-----	-----

From the above chart we can note the following:

1. Retroflex consonants are a local innovation for most of the local Mongolic and Turkic languages, as they are found also in Monguor and Salar. They are also found in Labrang Amdo, though they may have emerged as a natural internal change, as retroflexes are also to be found in Lhasa Tibetan and Dege.

2. The subtle difference between postalveolars and alveolopalatals may require more technical, phonetically fine-grained studies than are available for some languages in the region. Nonetheless, from the sources consulted, we see that Bonan and Santa, like Monguor, have alveolopalatals, though Salar seems to be the only local Turkic language to have developed them. Amdo Tibetan has them as well, but then so does Dege in Kham.

3. Obstruent contrasts have held steady for what we would expect both from inheritance in Tibetic, and regular internal change in (northern) Chinese. However, for Mongolic and Turkic languages in the region, at least for some languages, there is a shift from a voicing to an aspiration contrast. Bonan is an exception, though Hugjiltu (2003) seemed somewhat on the fence concerning this.

4. The local ablative marker [tɕia/sa] found in Xining (in Tangwang the form is [ɕiɛ]), as noted by many, bears a close resemblance to the family ablative of Mongolic, though locally the order of the consonant and vowel appear to have changed. Of course, what's significant is that Xining

¹³⁷ According to Peyraube (1995), classifiers appear at least as far back as the early Han (200-100s BCE), but gradually expand in their usage and quantity over the next millennium.

(and other Sinitic varieties) are marking case at all. All of the surveyed Turkic languages share a common form with an alveolar stop initial and nasal final. Likewise, Tibetic has an n/l-initial ablative morpheme in all the varieties considered, which appears to be the basis for the Wutun ablative, *-la*. Interestingly, another local Sinitic variety, the Linxia dialect (also called Hezhou), has an ablative morpheme *-ta*.

5. Altaic languages in general have tense marking, and so do their local varieties. Tibetic tends to also mark for tense, and so Sinitic is the only local language group that would stand to change—and indeed Xining obligatorily marks future tense. It is interesting to note that, though modern varieties of Mongolic have extended the temporal reference of inherited aspect markers, Proto-Mongolic appears to have marked directly only future tense as well. An interesting puzzle I'm not sure anyone has worked out is at what stage of development local Mongolic languages were when they entered into sustained language contact with the areal (northern) Chinese dialects.

6. Obligatory nominal classifiers, as distinct from ordinary measure words, may sometimes be difficult to assess in the Chinese-language literature, as the word *liangci* 量词 seems to encompass both. Nonetheless, Sinitic seems to be the only language family of the region that regularly utilizes them, and so their spread to a number of Mongolic and Turkic languages is remarkable as an example of areal feature spread.

7. All of the languages, but for Sinitic, have an SOV word order as the norm. Only Sinitic varieties show a departure from an inherited word order.

8. Evidentiality is harder to measure, as it may involve different subsystems carried on copulas and existentials, final modal particles, and other morphemes indicating both speaker

stance and source of information. Nonetheless, we see that it is a well-developed system of Tibetic, but absent in Turkic, except for the copula/existential system of Salar. Sinitic and Mongolic have in general taken small steps towards evidential marking, with a development of the 'say' verb *ge-* in Khalkha Mongolian to serve as hearsay (Svantesson 2003:173), and a final particle *wɔʷ* in Cantonese serving the same role (Bauer and Matthews 2017:180). The process is more advanced, however, in Amdo Sinitic and Mongolic varieties, than in branches outside of the region.

From the above, we see a complex interaction of inherited features and borrowing across genetic boundaries. Of course, certain changes, such as word order change or the development of retroflex consonants, could have been internal developments set in motion by the abundance of local precedents. Others, like the borrowing of (ablative) markers in Sinitic, appear more likely to have been contact-induced. (See Bell (2017:Chapter 3) for essentially the same argument.) Nonetheless, as we will see below, there is enough precedent in Sinitic for such categories to have internal sources, perhaps with only a slight contact-induced nudge.

4.3.1.3 *The Inherent SOV Resources of Northern Chinese*

As Dryer ([2003] 2017) notes, the fact that Sinitic is an SVO language is at odds typologically with various other word order configurations in its grammar. That prepositional phrases usually precede the verb in an SVO language is strange, as is the comparative marker preceding the standard in comparative constructions: Mandarin and Hakka are the only SVO languages to fit this description in a survey of 199 (Dryer 2017:76). Both final question particles and genitives preceding nouns are typical of SOV languages, but are nonetheless also found in SVO Chinese. Along with Bai, Chinese (viz. Mandarin, Hakka and Cantonese) is the only SVO

language out of 254 surveyed by Dryer to have relative clauses precede their modified nominal heads, and while he (2017:76) refrains from claiming whether prepositions or postpositions are more common in Chinese, Dryer notes that word order typology would lead one to expect prepositions from an SVO language.

However, Sinitic varieties, like Xining, in the Amdo area exhibit SOV word order, as previously discussed. This would bring the typological profile of the local Sinitic varieties more in line with what's to be expected of an SOV language, thus perhaps reversing an anomalous development in the history of Sinitic, whereby, along with Bai, it turned against the current of SOV word order in broader Sino-Tibetan. Dryer (2017:80), echoing Hashimoto (1986), assumes that this accounts for the historical trajectory of Chinese, but that Altaic influence in the north led to the retention of so many SOV characteristics, including an Altaic-looking retention of modifiers, such as adjectives and quantifiers, preceding the nominal head, differing as such from the majority of Tibeto-Burman languages. He does not discuss the same head-final NPs appearing in southern Sinitic, however, which are supposed to be less Altaicized historically.

The change from SVO to SOV, in fact, would not have been a dramatic shift for Chinese, as the language has ample constructions that involve moving a nominal object to preverbal position. We saw the famous BA construction in 4.2.5.4, glossing BA as OBJ, where the conditions for its application in Xining have extended beyond Mandarin. But its occurrence in Mandarin, as in (4-156) (Li and Thompson 1981:465), is just one example of SOV word order, along with emphatic topicalization in (4-157) (Sun and Givon 1985:333), obligatory object-fronting in light

verb constructions (4-158) (from Kuo 2011:139) and bare object movement (4-159) (in Shyu 2001:96)¹³⁸:

(4-156)

我把一件事忘了

Wǒ bǎ yī-jìan shì wàng-le

1SG OBJ one-CL matter forget-PFV

'I forgot something (i.e. something in particular).'

(4-157)

他连饭都还顾不上吃

Tā lián fàn dōu hái gù-bù-shàng-chī

3SG even food all still attend-NEG-DIR-eat

'He did not even have time to eat.'

(4-158)

张山对这个案子加以调查

Zhāngshān duì zhè-ge ànzǐ jiāyǐ diào chá

PN to this-CL case give investigate

'Zhangshan gave an investigation of this case.'

(4-159)

我张山的书叫他拿走了

Wǒ zhāngshān-de shū jià tā ná-zǒu-le

1SG PN-GEN book let 3SG take-away-PFV

'I asked him to take away Zhangsan's books.'

Indeed, there is even something of a dispute over whether modern Mandarin is really SVO or not, as evidenced by paper titles such as Mei's (1980) 'Is Modern Chinese Really a SOV language?', and the rebuttal by Mulder and Sybesma (1992): 'Chinese is a VO language'.

In the local ecological feature pool of Amdo, where SOV is dominant, and those SOV languages exhibit word order typical of SOV profiles, it would likely exert an influence on Chinese speakers to lean into their object-fronting tendencies as a convergence towards local norms. A higher

¹³⁸ Characters added for (4-156)-(4-159) where not included in the original.

frequency of SOV exposure encourages a higher selection rate of SOV output forms. At the same time, with a change in word order from SVO to SOV, one would expect this predicate restructuring to lead to other typological changes, as a functional trigger.

Other authors have made similar observations. Besides the implicit claims made by Dryer (2017), Carol Myers-Scotton (2003:96) has proposed the same thing. Referencing interpersonal comments by Keith Slater, she views the insertion of case markers in northwestern varieties of Chinese as a compensation for the “loss of syntactic case” resulting from moving the verb to the end of the sentence, thus eradicating the word order differentiation between pre-verbal subjects and post-verbal objects. In her model, not unlike that of Heine and Kuteva (2005) (which forms the basis of Daniel Bell’s (2017) analysis), Monguor provides the abstract grammatical structure onto which the Sinitic variety is using its own lexical content, that is its native phonological forms, to flesh out. What looks at first blush like a highly restructured Sinitic variety in Xining, morphosyntactically speaking, may only be the result of a single change in word order, leading to other predictable shifts in the grammar as a consequence. Therefore, to call the Xining dialect a “creole” or “mixed language” may be overstating the case (no pun intended).

The fact that both Standard Mandarin exhibits a number of postpositions, and Xining has no shortage of prepositions, further demystifies the difference between Xining and other northwestern varieties from northern Chinese in general. Though perhaps the object marker [xa] operates much like a case particle, as illustrated in detail by Dede (2016) (who in 2007b:874 posits it may have developed from a native, focal intonational unit—see 4.2.3.4, as well as 7.2.2.1), the other so-called case morphemes may not fundamentally differ from other

postpositions. With no morphonological alternations to serve as a test, it is hard to say whether the Xining locative or ablative are grammaticalized to something we necessarily need to consider a separate category of case morphemes, an argument similar to that made for Hungarian by Andrew Spencer (2005)¹³⁹. Finally, as discussed in 4.2.1.1 by Zhang (1984), Xining has its fair share of SVO predicates as well, though the author doesn't distinguish what sociolinguistic registers they are more likely to be found in—that is, whether they are more recent (re-)developments among younger generations. Nonetheless, he also points out that the Xi'an dialect, firmly outside the Amdo sprachbund, but still a northern Chinese dialect, also has a tendency towards SOV word order as well.

All of this paints a picture of the Xining dialect as a very ordinary, very Sinitic, language, spoken in an environment of high cultural and linguistic diversity. We expect any language anywhere to undergo internal changes, as indeed we have amply illustrated for Xining phonologically and lexically. We also expect any language anywhere to borrow from its neighbors when multilingualism is common, as has likely been the case on this specific historical frontier. The local Sinitic varieties certainly don't seem so dramatically different from other northern Chinese varieties to call them “creoles”, and the circumstances in which they developed, and the resulting combination of lexicon and grammar don't much resemble descriptions of mixed languages like Sri Lankan Malay, Michif or Media Lengua. We will return to the areal trends as likely indicative of a regionally defined branch of northern Sinitic in Chapter 7, but for the moment, Xining appears mostly like a local variety of Chinese, subject to historical borrowing, albeit more in its stock of functional, rather than lexical, morphemes.

¹³⁹ For more arguments of a similar nature, see Spencer and Otaguro (2005) and Comrie (1986).

Of course this doesn't preclude the possibility that local non-Han people did not shift their language to Chinese, perhaps in some cases entire extended families, just as many Han may have switched their language and identity to Tibetan (or Mongol?) when it served their needs in the community. But with Altaic varieties like Monguor and Salar, as well as Santa and Bonan, spoken in the same region, subject to large portions of their lexicon adopting Sinitic vocabulary and function morphemes, but not losing so much Altaic morphosyntax, the evidence does not point to language shift as a (sole) source of "restructured" varieties of northwestern Sinitic necessarily, much less to a picture of Chinese society sweeping the region, erasing local culture and local languages in its wake. What instead emerges are unique configurations of all local cultural and linguistic traditions, constellations of historical circumstances, evident in attire, festivities and localized versions of historical narratives (Warner 2011, Roche 2016). In the next section, we will further explore this historical setting that, though unique in its local characteristics, shares certain similarities with other border regions on China's western frontier.

4.3.1.4 Xining Chinese as a Member of the Amdo Linguistic Area

In summary, when we consider the local setting, one of great diversity of language families and ethnic groups, we can see that it constitutes a classic linguistic area, as defined by Aikhenvald and Dixon (2001:11) : "a geographically delimited area [eastern Qinghai and southern Gansu] including languages from two or more language families [Tibetic, Sinitic, Mongolic and Turkic], sharing significant traits (which are not found in languages from these families spoken outside the area). There must be a fair number of common traits and they should be reasonably distinctive".

As for the latter point about “traits” not found in other genetically related languages outside the area, we saw in Table 15) that the classifiers in Salar, Sarig Yugur, Monguor and Santa (Dongxiang) are a trait not shared by Altaic languages outside the area. The same is true for retroflexes and alveolopalatals as local innovations, via contact, for Mongolic and Turkic languages. We also note a change from a voicing contrast on obstruents to an aspiration contrast in Salar, Santa, and Sarig Yugur, as well as perhaps Bonan. And of course the primary language variety of analysis in this chapter, the Xining dialect, similar to other regional Sinitic varieties (see Chapter 7), exhibits a number of structures either not found elsewhere in Sinitic (such as postpositional case markers and incipient hearsay evidential marking, as in 4.2.3.4 and 4.2.6.4), or not found with the same unmarked regularity, such as SOV word order and non-Sinitic auxiliary and negator placement, shown in 4.2.4.4 and 4.2.5.4.

On the other hand, local Chinese varieties may have served as the model language for some of the phonological and morphosyntactic areal features just mentioned, bringing with them the aspirated/unaspirated contrast typical of northern Chinese in general, as well as classifiers. The other prestige-carrying, model language of the region (see Sandman and Simon 2016), Amdo Tibetan, also retains its genetically inherited three-way contrast (unlike, one may note, Lhasa Tibetan, which has lost its voiced obstruent distinction, replaced by a tonal contrast) and other phonological properties of a conservative Tibetan dialect, including complex syllabic onsets. In general, at least judging from the available literature, Amdo Tibetan seems not to have adapted non-Tibetic features at the same degree as the Mongolic, Turkic or Sinitic languages of the region.

As discussed in 2.2, linguists bicker over the lower bounds of features shared or families involved, and like all things, whether a locality represents a linguistic area or not a linguistic area is a matter of position on a continuum of exhibited properties. Quantification of the present features misses the larger point that some geographic regions, due to historical and social factors, show a greater affinity to the aforementioned profile than others, while defining a scope too large (continental Europe, for example, or East Asia, generally) also dilutes the fact that some places are unique for the intensity of trans-genetic borrowing. The Balkans are not the same as all of Europe, or even the Iberian peninsula, in their convergent contact, and localities like the Amdo sprachbund, or Muli autonomous prefecture (凉山彝族自治州属下木里藏族自治县) of southern Sichuan (Chirkova 2012) are not the same as either Southeast Asia as a “linguistic area” (6.3.1.2), or even other more circumscribed areas, such as central Kham or the Dali plain, as we will see in later chapters.

Nonetheless, labels have staying power, and their ability to highlight the uniqueness of situations like those of Amdo or the Balkan sprachbund should not be cast aside because scientists cannot agree on an exact quantification of languages or shared features to define them. Putting a lower bound on concession to labelling as a linguistic area is in the end as arbitrary as putting a cut-off point on inherited lexical content for genetic affiliation. What is more important is showing that, by virtue of local conditions, including the diversity of local representation, but extending to the socio-historical circumstances that allowed for mutual interchange, as opposed to a single group’s dominance, a linguistic setting obtains that is compositionally unique from its neighboring settings, but shares in common something at least semi-universal with other areas of the world where the confluence of language family-spread,

local power structures (or lack thereof) and cultural opportunity results in a certain type of contact situation.

From here we can move on to the historical record.

4.3.2 Historical Development

The common story of eastern Amdo goes: the centuries following a steady Chinese presence in the region presumably led to a mixing of the diverse groups, including their languages, and more than once, perhaps, one language group gave up its language to shift to another, resulting in significant interference on the target language, so-called substratal influence. Dede (1999:76) assumes that Xining during the Ming dynasty was primarily Tibetan and Monguor, and takes the similarity in the ablative markers (see Table 15 in 4.3.1.2) as a clue that Monguor-speakers are a good candidate for the group doing the shifting. However, as Dede (1999:76) states:

“There is enough geographic variation in the region to allow for the possibility that in one valley the shifting community was Tibetan-speaking, but in another valley the shifting community was Mongolian speaking. Unfortunately, the detailed historic and linguistic research needed to make these refined judgements has yet to be carried out on an appropriate scale.”

As no known records refer to these shifts specifically, the evidence is deduced largely from the grammar of the languages in question, but earlier researchers always appear to assume a non-Han group shifting to Chinese. That is, linguistics has played the lead in positing how language spread and evolved among the communities of the region, without necessarily correlating it with the nature of societies at the time of contact.

However, with other outlets available for contact, such as local monasteries that served as the de facto power on the ground, especially during turbulent eras of warfare or rebellion, also serving alongside local *xiejia* 歇家 outposts (see below) as trade centers, could the language mixing have evolved in multilingual settings, through contact? Sandman and Simon (2016) note

regional trends, in Salar and in the Wutun language of Tongren County (see 7.1.2), as showing convergence patterns towards Amdo Tibetan, which they promote as being the prestige language. With the sway of Tibetan religious influence also part of the equation (at least for Buddhists, probably less so for Muslims, though as noted below, they found their place in the Labrang monastic tapestry), what incentive would there have been for entire communities to give up their language for that of the Chinese?

One possibility for Tibetan to assert its prestige on local languages through contact could have come from the monastic centers, such as Labrang (拉卜楞寺), in what is now southern Gansu, and Kumbum in Huangzhong County, Xining. As centers of de facto political authority, they certainly held swaying power in the region. For example, Max Oidtmann (2016:39) suggests that the reason for local Mongols' assimilation into Tibetan culture in the region, despite their history of political dominance, was less due to the prestige and awe of Tibetan culture, than to officials at local monasteries, such as Labrang, convincing them to give up their holdings and authority to Tibetans:

“The long-term acculturation of Mongols in Amdo to Tibetan ways was not some sort of organic, inevitable process driven by the magnetic power of a superior Tibetan Buddhist civilization, but rather the contingent outcome of aggressive actions and policies of Gelukpa prelates such as Belmang Pandita, who as abbot of Labrang envisioned the assimilation of the Mongols to be a strategic necessity.”

This would also speak to the predominance of Tibetan cultural prestige regionally, rather than Mongol necessarily, since, as we saw in 4.3, there was as much reason to suspect Mongolic origins for Xining features like case markers. Though the region at various times fell under Mongol sovereignty (during the Yuan, then later under the Khoshut), and Mongol troops were a regular source of militia for even Chinese local rule, Mongols adopted Tibetan Buddhism as an official religion and patronized local monasteries like Labrang (Nietupski 2011). However, as we

will see below, the accounts of social settings around monastic centers does not lend much evidence that this would have been a significant means of intermixing.

4.3.2.1 The Monastery Hypothesis

Since the time of the Second Dissemination, when the Tibetan Empire expanded into Kokonor and the areas along the Tibetan plateau, the forms of lamaist Buddhism and Bön animism it carried with it, subsequently adopted by Mongol peoples and others, have been a central component of local life. To this end, a number of important religious centers have emerged, from Kumbum (Ch. Ta'ersi 塔尔寺) near Lake Qinghai, to Labrang in southern Gansu, southward until reaching Sumtsenling in the southeast corner of Kham in modern Yunnan. Many of these monasteries were built with the patronage of both powerful Mongol rulers and Chinese imperial support.

The estates of monasteries included bureaucratic infrastructure, agricultural property worked by serfs and others, and sometimes their own taxation systems, as well as private militia forces. Such monasteries often served as the sole source of power in many regions where ruling states had a tenuous presence at best (see further discussion in Hayes 2013). Being arguably the most widely known monastery of the region, Labrang monastery in Xiahe county of Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in southern Gansu, served as the standard for analysis in 4.2 above. Though it is one locality, it may serve as a valuable case study for monastic settings throughout the Outer Tibetan region. More importantly, perhaps, Labrang, along with Kumbum Monastery, are located in the heart of the Qinghai-Gansu sprachbund.

Amid political turmoil in Central Tibet, Labrang was founded in 1709, and visited by the Kangxi emperor in 1710 for a groundbreaking ceremony. Over time Labrang would draw in not only predominantly Buddhist practitioners (the majority of whom were ethnic Tibetans from Amdo),

but also a sizeable Hui Muslim population, who lived and worshiped on the grounds of the estate, in a separate but peaceful cohabitation (Nietupski 2002, 2015). The Buddhist monks and teachers themselves were usually educated, sometimes formerly serving office, in Lhasa and practicing at Labrang as instructors or administrators. Patronized both by Mongol aristocrats and Chinese emperors, in Nietupski's words, "[t]hese [lamas] were at once religious leaders, but at the same time political administrators who drew in local support and outside political recognition. This was the 'de facto centralized state institution'. The religious leaders had their lay supporters, their families, primary donors, and protectors; the Tibetans, Mongols, and Chinese all recognized the power and prestige of the religious leaders" (Nietupski 2002:130).

Nietupski (2008:56-57) describes the society outside of the monastery as such:

"In contrast to the central Tibetan administrative districts (*rdzong*), the largest social unit in these regions was called a *shog pa* or *shog kha*. It is understood as a 'village, collection, neighborhood,' alternatively, a unit of "several villages', a 'congregation', or simply, a 'lineage group'. None of these is exactly correct, however. Firstly, in Amdo these *shog pa* were predominantly nomadic communities, not sedentary villages. The primary forces that bound the *shog pa* were kinship, territorial identification and religion. Kinship must be understood in its local context, with its particular family structures and marriage customs, for example, that served to unite and develop regional groups. Further, though perhaps originally bound by family relations...as time went on *shog pas* absorbed unrelated persons and families from neighboring groups. Kinship is thus not an invariable defining characteristic of a *shog pa* group. Identification with a territory must also be understood in the context of nomadic sense of land use and ownership."

As such, the estate of Labrang, with its de facto administrative system, was the primary mode of control and order in the region, in many cases, via religious ties, the only source of power acknowledged by local *tusi* chieftains (Nietupski 2002:125).

Similar to other parts of the Buddhist world, there was a separation between the philosophical, aloof culture of the academic life of the highly educated monks at Labrang, and

the surrounding popular culture, which was an eclectic mix of Buddhist and non-Buddhist beliefs. Nonetheless, as beneficiaries of both Mongol and Chinese largesse, as well as shifting allegiance of not only local Buddhist, but also different local Muslim, groups, the authorities at Labrang were chiefly accommodating and flexible in the ways by which they appealed to outsiders.

One linguistic example of this Nietupski notes is the adoption of the Chinese surname ‘Huang’ (黃) by the primary Tibetan family associated with the institute. This was a means of facilitating recognition with Labrang’s powerful neighbors to the east, and fostering cross-cultural dialogue. Though local Tibetans still refer to the individual family members by their Tibetan names, to local Chinese, as well as Chinese scholars, they are known by self-adopted Chinese names (Nietupski 2008:xvi). In this way, among the elite, a kind of dual culture was possible, depending on with whom they interacted, analogous to the “cultural brokers” presented by Yodru Tsomu and discussed in 5.4 below. Similar to the elite adoption of Chinese culture discussed in 3.2.3, we find trends towards adopting Chinese among an elite monastic class standing to benefit from closer ties to their powerful Chinese neighbors.

The site of Labrang, located as it is on the Amdo-Chinese frontier, has been a multicultural, frontier meeting grounds since its inception. Linguistically speaking, however, Nietupski (2008:71-72) describes the situation as such:

“In some communities in this region, Chinese is the vernacular and Tibetan the liturgical language. Tibetan Buddhism provides religious, ideological and political structures to Tibetans, Chinese and all local peoples, and at the same time Chinese language, culture and the outer limit of Chinese political jurisdiction are noticeable local features.”

As such, it seems that with the rise of Chinese hegemony in the region since the Qing era, the Tibetan language, while robust, may have become an aspect chiefly of religious life, while

Chinese made inroads into the daily life of local residents. Religion may have been one outlet for Tibetan to influence the language of local people, including those Chinese who for whatever reason, either to gain local acceptance or from the adoption of local culture, sent their children to join monasteries, but, outside of discussing religious and academic topics, it may not have been sufficient by itself to restructure Chinese varieties to the extent we see in the region.

Similar conclusions are offered by Isabelle Charleux (2015) in writing of the setting at Wutaishan 五台山, a famous pilgrimage site for Mongol, Tibetan and Chinese sojourners in modern Shanxi province to the east. She concludes that, though the monastic site serves as grounds for “temporary *communitas*” between different ethnic groups, and a tolerant place for “curiosity of the Other”, in general, language played a barrier to cross-cultural communication:

“The cultural and linguistic gap has always existed between Tibetan, Mongol and Chinese pilgrims. Gray Tuttle has in fact shown that interactions between Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism at the level of monastic teaching and practice were, before the 1930s, dampened by language and geographic barriers. Except for Chinese shopkeepers and traders who learned to speak some Mongolian, Mongolian-speaking Chinese monks and some learned Mongols fluent in Tibetan or Chinese, the main cause of mutual incomprehension between the communities was, first of all, language. In 1912 the Chinese lay Buddhist Gao Henian, who enquired about the history and stories about Wutaishan, complained that he could not converse with the lamas.” (Charleux 2015:336)

Finally, though the site of religious study itself may have provided limited opportunity for real language mixing, in the vicinity of such institutions such as Wutaishan or Labrang, market towns often formed, and it was here—notably at the site of commercial exchange—that travel writers often noted signs of multilingualism, including Han people using non-Chinese languages. For instance, Rockhill (1891:62) while residing in the market town of Luser, outside Kumbum monastery near Xining, observes Chinese people using Tibetan:

“For three or four hours I wandered about, no one paying any special attention to me; some took me for a Mongol, others for a Turk, and a few for a foreigner...Most of them were

conversant with Mongol and Tibetan, and had traveled extensively among the border-tribes, so I had an excellent opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of those peoples, and of finding good men to accompany me westward.”

And, again, as they push on into northern Tibet, he meets a Chinese man, “Yi Hsien-sheng” (“Mr. Yi”), who agrees to accompany his group onward as an interpreter with local groups.

From the above, no clear picture of Tibetan spreading from monasteries to Han residents of the region emerges, however important a literary and religious language to the local religious culture. To the extent we find Chinese using other languages in the literature, it is in the context of trade, to which we now turn.

4.3.2.2 *Trade and Multilinguals*

Daniel Bell (2017), too, argues against Keith Dede’s claim that Xining Mandarin was the result of language shift with poor transmission among a native population. What he argues for instead is a *fort-creolization* process. Such a means of creole formation was common to the early West African colonial forts, as well as some localities in the Pacific, and is argued by Bell to have been at play outside the Chinese garrisons in the colonial period, mainly from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) onward.

Fort creolization involves intermarriage (specifically male colonizers and local women), in which the children acquire the medium of communication between the parents. That contact variety could then spread to the community around the fort, who depended on it economically (Bell 2017:21). The same as Dede, Bell assumes the Monguor were the main local group contributing to this creole, alongside Han colonizers. Using Schram (1954) as reference, Bell describes the Monguors as loyal subjects of the Ming state, via the *tusi* system of rule by local chieftains. Monguors were beholden, via this system, to the Ming, both as recruitable militia, and as being settled in key valleys to buffer against invasion, but as such did not mix with

Chinese settlers until the Qing (1644-1912) period---they were actually forcibly removed back to designated Monguor territory by the Chinese if they tried to move there.

The Monguor, as reported by Schram, viewed Chinese culture and language as of a higher prestige than their own, and as such, the substratal influence on the acquired Mandarin need not be explained by lack of desire to formally acquire standard forms of the superstrate language (Bell 2017:30). However, access to native speakers of Mandarin may have been an issue. Since the language is clearly restructured from that of the imported Mandarin, Bell discounts the possibility that intermarriage would have played more than a “minor subplot”; he presumes access would have been available via the Han parent, almost always the father, growing up inside the walls of the fort. Noting that the state often incentivizes frontier settlers to move with their families, Bell assumes trade, particularly the tea-horse trade, of which Xining and nearby Duoba in Huangyuan County were major centers, would have played a prominent role (Bell 2017:30-33). However, Bell also notes that at different times the Ming and Qing states pushed intermarriage as a means of assimilating local peoples, often incentivizing with grain subsidies, especially at times when the Qing state in particular was in a less accommodating mood. Nonetheless, Bell notes, such families would have lived within the fort walls, and presumably had access to native Chinese, in addition to the “pidginized variety” found at home between the Han father and non-Han mother.

Bell therefore sees the major means of restructuring in Xining Mandarin as involving the spread of a “pidgin” Chinese, originally used for trade purposes, but expanding its function in the communities around the major trade center, until it reached the stage of a creole variety. Additionally, beginning in the Qing, certain events and trends would have lessened the usage of Monguor in the community. One of these trends would have been the tendency of Monguor

elites to try and “marry up” their children, often having their sons marry Chinese girls and learn the language, so frequently that at later times local chieftains couldn’t communicate with their own subjects (Bell 2017:36). This tendency for elites to grab at opportunities for their offspring to learn the more prestigious Chinese language was one way in which (partial) language shift could have occurred. Note, however, that Monguor is still spoken robustly in Qinghai today, and so such an explanation must be at least carefully localized to account for a demographically selective shift. (Note also that the Bai and Naxi in Yunnan have a history of admiring, and striving towards, Chinese culture, but their languages have not become creoles. See Chapter 6.)

Another event leading to shift to Chinese among the local Monguor population was the quelling of a Mongol uprising, led by Prince Lobzang Danjin. After the Qing suppressed the rebellion, Bell (2017:38) reports, the government launched violent recriminatory attacks on Tibetans and Mongols:

“According to the oral tradition that is widespread among the six Tibetan tribes of Taersi (Kumbum) monastery, which is about 16 miles from Xining, during this period the use of Tibetan among the six tribes was much reduced as speakers sought to blend into a Han-dominant society (to avoid execution), by abandoning their traditional Tibetan dress, shifting to the Chinese language and through intermarriage (H.-Y. Zhang 2009, cf. X.-R. Jia 1993: 272). Fieldwork by H.-Y. Zhang (2009) has yielded reports to this effect from older members of these clans, such as a 74-year old from the Shenzhong clan who noted that nobody dared to speak Tibetan after the suppression of the revolt. Combined with the large-scale Han immigration into the region that occurred after this time, H.-Y. Zhang (2009) identifies language loss among these Tibetan tribes as beginning with these events.”

That is, following uprisings and violence in 1724, a slow process of language shift and intermixing, which sped up following the Muslim Uprisings of the nineteenth century, would have put an end to the separation of Monguors and Chinese socially (as well as Tibetans, by this account, at least near Kumbum), and contributed to Monguor’s assimilation culturally and linguistically. Though Monguor and other local languages would have been spoken

continuously throughout this period, both Chinese, and crucially, the fort-based Chinese creole Bell hypothesizes, would have gained ground, with the latter extending its grammar and vocabulary to new areas as a target for language learning to the community, in the absence of direct exposure.

Though I have argued in 4.3.1 against considering the Xining dialect a “creole”, as a basis for language contact in general, this explanation certainly makes sense, and follows a clear trajectory of Mongols assimilating, culturally and linguistically, to an expanding Chinese culture, and charts the suppression of local language as the Chinese state expands power regionally. However, when viewed as part of a wider trend in the region, there may be more to the intermarriage and community intermixing than Bell gives credit for. Furthermore, in addition to the nebulous nature of real Chinese rule outside the immediate urban center, as discussed in 4.3.1, one finds plenty of references to Han Chinese “blending in” and adopting local culture and, it would seem, local (Tibetan) language norms.

Bell’s account of a Han inner-city, and a non-Han surrounding community, with Monguor women “marrying up” and entering the city walls, largely matches the description of frontier cities provided by Gabautz (1996), but doesn’t speak to the class distinctions, or the changing nature of city life in the post-Tang era. As Gabautz notes, many cities of the Northwest, including Xining, were originally part of a “frontier of control”, rather than a “frontier of settlement”, meaning the Chinese sent to live there were serving to hold down the margins, rather than integrate the land, with such control waxing and waning with the fortunes of the empire. Such cities developed around walled mazes of neighborhoods, which served to set off

ethnic enclaves, including, most consistently across cities and eras, the Muslim quarters, with the Han residing in the center of the city (Gabautz 1996:19).

However, writing about Lanzhou, Gaubatz (1996:105, 172) notes that the distribution of peoples inside versus outside the walls was regulated by social class, where lower-status Chinese were to do trade, and to trade in lower quality items, outside the central walls of the city, with non-Chinese people. So lesser quality and utilitarian goods were barred from sale in markets within the city walls, along with their sellers, but there was little regulation in the markets outside the city walls. From the Tang period onward, as more people from foreign lands came to reside in China, cities shifted to a “more outward and commercially based neighborhood structure”:

“The increasingly open mercantile nature of the cities created more opportunities for non-Chinese to participate in the urban economy. The development of occupational districts also made the establishment of separate non-Chinese quarters an easy and relatively logical extension of the city. Since non-Chinese districts usually specialized in different trades from those practiced by the Chinese, they were easily separated from them. Non-Chinese enclaves became both ethnic enclaves and distinct economic districts within the urban system.” (Gabautz 1996:177)

That is, as cities became more multiethnic from the Tang era onward, occupation, and social class, began to overlap, but not subsume, ethnicity in determining where peoples might reside. However, as trades specialized, and lower-class Han resided in non-Han areas to make a living, greater movement between neighborhoods would have likely increased. So then, in the upper and middle class, predominantly Han areas, one situation may have obtained quite different from the lower class, mercantile areas around the east gates and surrounding areas of the city, creating communities that may have felt a stronger affinity to their shared social existence than to strictly ethnic ties.

Even as recently as the 21st century, Chris Vasantkumar (2012) paints a picture of small-town life in Gannan, southern Gansu, particularly in Xiahe, as site of considerable amity between Han Chinese and local Tibetans, united in their shared distrust and dislike of Hui Muslims, on the basis of the latter's shrewd business practices, religious devotion and especially refusal to eat pork. He points to a communal fluency in the local Amdo Tibetan dialect among all three ethnic groups, serving as a lingua franca of the working class in many cases of social interaction, as in a restaurant attached to Labrang. Vasantkumar (2012:248) describes the role of local language in this lengthy passage:

“If one looked closely, one could see a regional speech community that transcends ethnic identification coalescing around the Amdo dialect of Tibetan (Chinese Anduohua; Tibetan ‘Amdo-skad). In this refiguring, Amdo Tibetan may be circumscribed geographically and marked in important ways by class inequality (in some ways it is the shared language of the poor), but it has come to mirror Mandarin, the national language, in at least one important way: it is relatively open in terms of its possible constituencies. To be able to speak Amdo dialect is to be marked as a local. Many (but not all) individuals who deem themselves “locals”, whether Hui Muslim storekeepers, Han hoteliers, laborers and waiters, or Tibetans of various stripes, can speak Amdo dialect and almost all outsiders cannot. Or at least this is what locals liked to tell me. Yet I think it is important to take their claims seriously because they can help undo romantic nationalist notions of China (i.e. of the fifty-six minzu living together in harmonious and distinctly non-hierarchical bliss) and begin to provide critical perspective on the sort of politics of the national-linguistic possible that conspires to prompt local Han to say things like, “Hearing our Amdo Tibetan dialect spoken makes me feel at ease” (听我们安多话藏语觉得很舒服).”

Another source of evidence for Tibetanized Han immigrants, this time in the Amdo region of southern Gansu, comes from contemporary anthropological fieldwork done by Mette Hansen, in her *Frontier People* (2005), which includes an account of the Han settlers in Xiahe (Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in southern Gansu) in the twentieth century. Though it is an account of later times in Chinese history, it may represent a likely scenario for premodern expansion of Han people into the region, especially following military campaigns.

Hansen's book contains many accounts of the older generation of Han in Xiahe who were competent in Tibetan, and the many accounts of towns where Han settlers were a minority and had integrated with the local population to the extent that the only discernible difference was whether or not a family sends one son to study in a monastery, a regular practice among Tibetans but something basically never done by the Han (Hansen 2005:91). These Han settlers learned to speak the local Amdo Tibetan variety to coexist, in some cases apparently quite well (Hansen 2005:109):

"When Tibetan women in River Village intermarried with Han men and moved to their homes children were commonly raised and named as Han. However, several cases of intermarriage between Tibetans and Han showed that when a Han man moved into a Tibetan wife's family, children were mainly raised as Tibetans, speaking Tibetan and having Tibetan names." (Hansen 2005: 133)

It should be pointed out, however, this seems to be a tendency only when the Han were the minority in a village, and when they were in the majority this was much less true. This could point to an urban/rural divide, where restructured Sinitic in cities, such as in Xining, shared a different origin than restructured Sinitic in the countryside, as in Xiahe, or Linxia where Tangwang is spoken, which might be reflected in different linguistic outcomes. However, as we will see later in Chapter 7, if there are linguistic differences, they are minor at best. Hansen continues, pointing out for the pre-PRC period:

"The reasons for the earliest immigrants' different approaches towards the local native population were relatively obvious. They had not come in larger groups of Han with a pre-defined political and ideological purposed behind their resettlement. Neither had they (like the immigrants of the reform period) come at a time when Han people, the Chinese language, standard state education and the Communist political system were already well established in the areas." (Hansen 2005: 120)

Finally, writing about Hezhou (modern Linxia), Lipman (1984: 251-252) paints the following picture of the ethnic diversity of the northeast corner of Amdo, what is now part of southern Gansu, on the Qinghai border:

“Kansu has been dominated in numbers, and politics, by the Han. But sharing the space in Kansu are Tibetans, both sedentary and nomadic, Turkic Muslims, indigenous people of uncertain origin called t’u-jen, Mongols, and combinations of these elements. Muslim Mongols, sinified Tibetans, and so forth, have evolved as the races and cultures advanced and mixed along China’s edge. A number of languages were extant in Kansu, including dialects of Chinese, Mongol, Tibetan and Central Asian languages.”

He goes on to describe the areas in terms of “patchwork” and “network” societies. The patchwork metaphor is meant to describe the unique quality of individual local communities, where independent historical factors, especially demographics, created a unique society in each situation, sometimes more Chinese in custom, sometimes more Muslim (sometimes only Chinese, or only Muslim). However, the religious networks, trade and other interregional factors served to connect these individual societies so that they share certain tendencies and trends. In some cases, a de facto segregation existed, with Hui Muslim quarters, or walled off Han areas, but in others one group or another was a minority forced to play down their identity or adopt local practice. The following quote from Lipman (1984:254) illustrates how in some cases Chinese communities had to adapt to majority Hui Muslim custom:

“Almost all the Kansu Muslim communities existed under some pressure from the Chinese and others with whom they shared space and resources. The Muslims responded by a high degree of local cohesion and resistance to outsiders...Non-Muslims who chose, for whatever reason, to live within these ghettos were made to conform to Muslim custom, at least in matters such as abstention from pork.”

Until the 17th century, the Hui Muslims lived in their own quarters, and associated with non-Muslims only at market. The language they used among themselves was nonetheless Chinese, having given up the Arabic and Turkic languages of their ancestors’ generations earlier.

However, as time passed intermarriage became more common, often involving Hui men marrying Chinese women (very rarely would Hui women marry non-Muslim men). It was also common for Hui to adopt Chinese children, either those given up in poverty, or captured as prisoners of war. Finally, to increase trade opportunities, a number of Chinese would convert to Islam (before the 1950s making them ethnically Hui), increasing the size and diversity of the Muslim community. In this way, established ethnic categories intertwine as one moves backwards through history, and cultural, religious, and presumably linguistic trends would have mixed together as well. (Also see Xu (2017), cited in 7.1.1.1, on the role of (Hui) Muslims in the development of the local Tangwang language.)

Robert Ekvall's (1939) accounts contain a variety of other valuable observations on the mixing of Chinese settlers to the society of the sedentary Tibetans and vice versa. The author claims trade with Chinese had some effect on Tibetan culture, but the greatest effect comes through the continued in-migration of Han who followed earlier migrants, the latter of whom, if left alone, would have simply been assimilated. Though he speaks of a slow, but steady, assimilation of local Tibetans to Chinese lifestyles, it is in the present tense, implying that it is a new 20th century development.

Far more impressive are the comments on Han Chinese intermarriage and culture assimilation, quoted here in full (Ekvall 1939:39-40):

“Whenever a likely young Chinese is taken into a Tibetan home as a son-in-law, he naturally becomes as like a Tibetan in dress, mannerism, and speech as he can. If other agents do not operate to bring him into further contact with Chinese culture, he may become very much of a Tibetan. His children will be brought up as Tibetans, and after a generation or so only a Tibetan nickname, such as “Chinese Bo” may be left to indicate that there is any Chinese blood in the family. In the number of children, however, his family will be more Chinese than Tibetan.

When a Chinese man marries a Tibetan wife and establishes his own home, however, he generally makes an effort to set up a Chinese home and to maintain the Chinese manner of

living and outlook. Especially is this true if he has living with him any members of his Chinese connection—mother, brothers, or other relatives. Although the girls of the family will copy the Tibetans in dress and manners the boys will be brought up with the idea that they are Chinese and, even though they acquire Tibetan mannerism and habits of dress, will avoid identification with the Tibetans. When Chinese cultural pressure is thus maintained through the processes of contact, these half-Tibetan homes become foci of Chinese influence and change.”

That is, during this era, the Chinese enter the region not as conquerors but as migrants, and if marrying in as sons-in-law, fully assimilate, though if taking a wife, will

“retain some Chinese usage and technology even though he becomes largely Tibetan in habits, dress, and home arrangements. The wholly Chinese family in a Tibetan community will remain almost entirely Chinese in culture, taking over only such Tibetan practices as are obviously more convenient or make life in the community smoother” (ibid:41).

As for language, Ekvall notes: “There is, of course, not only an outright adoption of the Tibetan language for all the contacts of daily life during the initial Tibetanization of the migrants, but there is also a certain amount of linguistic borrowing. The two most notable aspects of such borrowing are, first, the acceptance of certain distinctly Tibetan forms of construction (most obvious in the matter of word order), and second, the borrowing of Tibetan words that become incorporated into the Chinese language of the border areas.”

Among the Hui Muslims, who also speak a variety of Northwestern Mandarin, Ekvall (ibid: 61-62) observes contact-induced change:

“Some of it has been an outright borrowing of words, with the usual modifications of consonant and vowel quality common in such borrowing, plus, in this case, the addition of tones to make the words of non-tonal Tibetan fit into their Moslem-Chinese speech. Some borrowings have been more subtle; for example a Chinese word will be reinterpreted according to the delimitations or connotations of its nearest Tibetan equivalent....[T]he Tibetans have one word, *mtsho*, for lake and sea, which with a prefix signifying bigness, is also used for ocean. The traders, of course, hear *mtsho* used for the salt lakes and for all the lakes of the Tibetan country, yet know that it really means sea and ocean as well, so they have taken to using the Chinese word *hai* in a new broader sense for lake, sea, and ocean, and have discarded the more particular words *hu* and *ch'i* even when speaking of a very small pond.”

Finally, Rockhill (1891:56), writing of the late nineteenth century, takes note several times of ethnically mixed, or seemingly so, people that he encounters throughout the vicinity of Xining:

“There exists at Hsi-ning, and also at a number of other localities along the Kan-su frontier, a set of men known as Hsi-chia or Hsieh-chia [xiejia], and divided into Mongol and Tibetan ones. In the localities where they reside they act as commercial agents for the Mongols and Tibetans, with whose language they are thoroughly conversant, as all of them pass a certain number of years among the peoples with whom their families have business relations. Their duties are hereditary, and secure to them much influence among the tribes and no inconsiderable profit.”

He goes on:

“Hardly had we lost sight of Hsi-ning than we seemed to have suddenly left China and its people far behind, so great were the changes that everywhere met us. No longer were all the passers-by blue-gowned and long-queued Chinese, but people of different languages, and various costumes...Our road led us towards a high, black line of nude and jagged peaks, rising like a wall across the southern extremity of the valley, and called on our maps South Koko-nor range, through a well-cultivated country dotted with numerous villages, inhabited by Chinese, and Tussu, agricultural tribes of mixed Chinese, Tibetan and Turkish descent.” (ibid:56)

And finally:

“I had no opportunity of collecting much information concerning the T’u-fan [a term he claims the Chinese use to refer to one class of the tribes of the area, i.e. ‘agricultural barbarians’], but, from the few I met and whose language I heard, I have become convinced of their mixed descent. Their language is primarily Tibetan but with a very large proportion of Chinese, Turkish, and Mongol words and expressions.” (ibid:62)

Bianca Horlemann (2012) writes on the xiejia 歇家 (hostel) system in Amdo noted by Rockhill in his travels¹⁴⁰, a food and lodging network run by local Amdo residents as a place of commerce between nomads and trading companies, as well as merchants from inland China and as far afield as Moscow and Armenia (Horlemann 2012:fn.25). The owners of the *xiejia* outposts, very similar to the *guozhuang* 锅庄 proprietors discussed by Tsomu (2016—see 5.4.2) in Kham, as well as “horse shops (*madian* 马店)” in Yunnan, also served as interpreters and mediators in conflicts, first for the Qing, then for local warlords in the early 20th century.

¹⁴⁰ Though Rockhill, using the older spelling *hsieh-chia*, uses the term to refer to the proprietors of such hostels.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Shaanxi immigrant traders usually had their main base in Xining, and local branches at all the smaller major trading markets in Gansu and Qinghai. Having precedent in other border regions in the latter half of the 18th century, *xiejia* began to be mentioned in relation to Amdo beginning in 1822, when Qing governor-general of Shaanxi and Gansu, Nayancheng, declared them to be illegal (Horlemann 2012:113-114). In Amdo the *xiejia* were usually run by multilingual Muslims or Han Chinese from Gansu, Shaanxi or Shanxi provinces, serving Tibetan and Monguor clientele. These *xiejia* hostels popped up in response to the more expensive inns run exclusively by and for Han Chinese traders and travelers, and following the Hui rebellions, became increasingly run by Muslims who had fled south (ibid.114-115).

Nayancheng's account references *xiejia* in Xining, Dan'gaer (modern Huangyuan), Xunhua, Guide, Datong and Bayanrong (modern Hualong). By 1742, Datong would become the major entrepôt for the Qinghai salt trade, which was dominated by Mongols until the early 1800s, when it became the seat of a Qing Dynasty subprefect (厅) in 1829 (Horlemann 2012:121). The town would come to compete in importance for Tibetan trade with Dartsedo in Kham and Lijiang in Yunnan (ibid). Horlemann (ibid.123) reports that in the 19th and early 20th century, Datong had a multi-ethnic population ranging from 10-20,000 Han, Hui, Salar, Mongol, Tibetan and Monguor residents, along with their "mixed marriage descendants". While it seems like self-identified Han were perhaps less likely to be multilingual than, say, Hui proprietors, Horlemann (ibid) claims:

"In general Gansu and Qinghai Muslims were more flexible in adapting to Tibetan ways than the average Han Chinese. For instance, Muslim merchants usually spoke the local Tibetan dialects and adopted Tibetan dress and customs while trading in Tibetan areas. With regard to the *xiejia*, regardless of being Han or Muslim, they often had Tibetan wives or were already of mixed blood themselves, which facilitated intercultural communication with their clientele."

Eventually administration of the *xiejia* system would fall directly under Chinese border officials, and be served as a means to exercise control over Tibetan nomadic tribes' market access, eventually fading out of the picture altogether. However, it is one more instance of multilingual, and multi-ethnic, nature of Amdo society up into the 20th century.

4.4 Conclusions and Open Questions

Unfortunately, it is still difficult to draw any fast conclusions about the most likely route for the Xining dialect of Chinese to have arisen. In fact, contrary to so much linguistic sleuthing in the literature, it is quite likely there is no singular explanation, such as a community en masse shifting from a native language, even over a generational period of time.

To recap, deducing from linguistic evidence, Keith Dede and Daniel Bell make strong cases for either substantial portions of the local (most likely Monguor) population shifting to northern Chinese¹⁴¹, or to a simplified lingua franca of the region based on (transplanted, possibly from the Nanjing area) northern Chinese. By Thomason and Kaufman's proposal, discussed in 2.3.1, the presence of structural interference in a target language, with little lexical borrowing, is supposedly indicative of language shift. While Bell's account of creolization is plausible from a social situation, the Xining dialect, which he claims arose from a regional pidgin, had little structure to simplify from the original Chinese, and the resultant language is more marked, morphologically speaking (e.g., with case morphemes, plurality, future markers and discourse marking), than northern Sinitic elsewhere, and in different ways from Sinitic anywhere. That is,

¹⁴¹ Stevan Harrell raises the very interesting question of Monguor's linguistic origins. Specifically, he asks whether it began as a very plain Mongolic variety, only to develop up to 35% of its vocabulary from Sinitic over centuries of contact, or whether it develop out of Mongolic and Sinitic contact. Though there was not much discussion of origins in the literature I consulted, Slater (2003a:307) does note that, despite his earlier claims to Monguor constituting a "mixed language", upon further examination of its morphosyntax and lexicon, he now firmly believes it to be a Mongolic language.

it is not obvious that there is anything grammatical, as discussed in 4.3.2, that makes the Xining dialect look like a wholly different sort of language, that would have arisen out of “abnormal transmission” in Thomason and Kaufman’s original proposal, as opposed to a local Sinitic dialect with a reconfigured word order. As such, explanations in language shift or creolization remain speculative, and one explanation among others, at best.

On the other hand, the multilingual setting of Amdo cannot be discounted. We know that at least informal registers of language mixing existed, such as the “wind stirring snow (风搅雪)” speech mentioned in 4.2.1, or the Tibetanized versions of speech used by Muslims in Ekvall’s account in 4.3.2.2 above, implying that, at minimum, passive language learning was a mutual phenomenon between ethnolinguistic groups. As such, the regional trend in Amdo, as evidenced by the above travel accounts and 20th century observations, hints at more than simply a trade-based jargon developing into a creole, as in Bell’s account, but rather rises to the level at times of a marker of regional identity, as recounted by Vasantkumar (2012) above.

That is, it seems to have at least partly arisen from more intimate contact in communities involving Tibetan, Chinese, Hui and Mongol speakers, intermarrying and living side by side, if not (originally) in urban areas, then at least in some “patchwork” rural communities, outside of Xining proper. Although in the writings of Rockhill and in the accounts of the *xiejia* system presented above, bilingual or multilingual Han Chinese seem less of a norm than a frequently occurring exception to the otherwise monolingual community, we can read between the lines to assume, as members of local communities, the late coming, immigrant Han would not have entirely “walled themselves” up from the world around them. At any rate, nothing linguistic necessitates holding to that sole position.

What is clear is that, much like the areal convergence of the linguistic area itself, the eastern Amdo setting, on both sides of the modern Qinghai-Gansu borders, is the historical site of intricate cultural fusion, with ethnic (and linguistic) categories likely quite fluid, as is typical of borderland regions on the edge of (multiple) empires. (See 3.3 for broader theories of instrumental ethnicity.) We will return to the geographic scope of such Sinitic varieties of eastern Amdo in Chapter 7, showing that language varieties like the Xining dialect are far more commonplace regionally than a one-off exception one might expect from community language shift.

What requires resolution is the conflict between Bell (and Dede's) accounts of Mongol assimilation, widespread enough to drown out completely the more "normal" Sinitic varieties in setting the regional basis for Chinese, despite the fact that Mongolic languages, as well as Turkic Salar (among others), seem to have been continuously spoken since the arrival of those groups of speakers around the 14th century, shortly before Han administration and in-migration really began to take off. In addition to this fact, Monguor, Salar and other languages like Santa and Bonan, give us a real-time picture of what Altaic varieties heavily influenced by Chinese might look like, so at least we have to say that only some communities gave up their original language, or adopted a "pidginized" lingua franca, and not others.

Added to this is the wide arc of Tibetan religious, cultural and institutional prestige that long predates Chinese arrival in the region, and could perhaps explain why Amdo varieties like Labrang show far less influence from other languages than their neighbors. Though we might expect more cultural insularity among nomadic groups—and indeed we find more conservative phonological inventories, at least—the comparison between agrarian and pastoral communities yields no substantial discrepancy between borrowing and interference between the two. Nor is

Tibetan Buddhism the only major religion of the area: Islam is the faith of at least as many, if not more, local communities, both Mongolic (Santa, Bonan), Turkic (Salar) and Sinitic-speaking (Hui), including not a few Tibetan converts, as well (Horlemann 2012, Horlemann and Nietupski. 2015). It is with these religious, if not local, cultural, identities that individuals have tended to identify, much less so than sweeping ethnic designations (Dwyer 2007, Roche 2016).

Especially in the case of the largest Muslim group, the Chinese-speaking Hui, who so often played the role of cultural intermediaries (Ekvall 1939; Horlemann 2012), the ethnic history of convergence cuts through every group in the region: according to Xu's (2017:30) hypothesis, while many Hui were originally Han Chinese, a substantial number of local Hui in southern Gansu descend from Sinicized Mongols. On the other hand, she goes on to claim, many peoples later identifying/identified as Santa (Ch. Dongxiang) were originally Hui who changed their ethnicity after the 14th century (Xu 2017:40-42), similar to Dwyer's account of Hui converting to Salar as the result of intermarriage around the same time (Dwyer 2007:12). (See Chapter 7, especially 7.1.1 and 7.3 for more discussion.)

At the same time, viewing the Han (or any other ethnic group, for that matter) monolithically as all acting in one way, is bad sociolinguistic practice, to say the least. Accounts point to a rural/urban divide in the region, with some Han intermarrying, and assimilating to varying degrees, while others remain removed, using their own trading stations, and staying in their own walled quarters. While some may have had the class background that led them to live in Han areas, intermarry with Han, and speak only the Han language, many others, particularly migrant laborers of the lower classes, would have not had the cultural capital to cleave so closely to purist Han identity. Therefore, we cannot speak about the linguistic habits of Chinese in premodern Amdo as if they all behaved in concert, any more than we can of local Monguor

or Salar. As many modern historians and anthropologists have pointed out, as discussed in 3.3.2, the ethnic label “Han” deserves its own critical evaluation, rather than being broadly applied to peoples living prior to the Republic, and “far away from the Emperor (皇帝远)”.

To view the history of the region, even linguistically, through the lens of 20th century ethnic categories misses much of the subtlety of human interactions that shaped the cultural evolution of the region. Not only do we see groups changing ethnicity, as was common not only in Amdo, but in Kham and Yunnan as well (see Chapters 5 and 6), but in modern times we see individuals claiming dual ethnicity, as described for Henan Mongols on the Qinghai border¹⁴² by Gerald Roche (2016). There, original allegiance to a local branch of Oirat royals transcended ethnic categories to result in a unique cultural community, drawing from, but distinct from, their Tibetan neighbors, especially in retaining Oirat customs. Other such multi-layered communities, adding to, rather than constituted from, their ethno-linguistic parts, would have no doubt been just as possible, if not more so, in the era before modern state control.

These negotiable categories, and local allegiances, are what allowed local Muslims to sometimes aid the Qing state in campaigns against other uprising Muslims, and for Tibetans and Mongols to be just as likely historically to defend an outside empire’s encroachment as to resist it, depending on the circumstances (Lipman 1997, cf. Weinstein 2013). They point to the primacy of local setting in understanding modern formulations of culture, and this framework, I think, better serves the goal of understanding linguistic evolution than a traditional family tree model of inheritance and conditioned-split divergence, though the latter is probably still quite

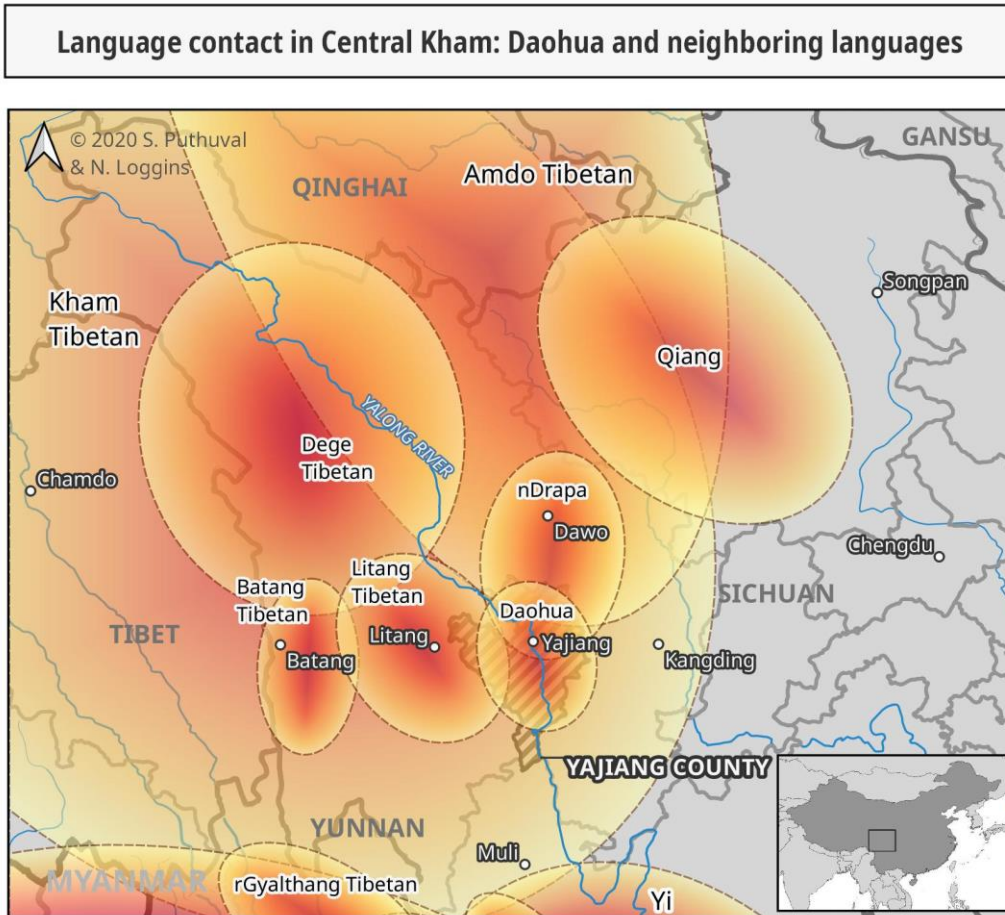
¹⁴² That is, Mongols of Henan Mongol Autonomous Region, Qinghai (河南蒙古族自治县), not to be confused with Henan province.

useful for charting the development of individual morphemes, and thus the spread of languages (Campbell 2006:12, as quoted in 2.2).

Roche (2016) makes a strong case against speaking of the “Tibetanization”, much less the “Sinification”, of ethnic groups, a way of thinking mired in reductionist and simplified notions of ethnicity and historical development. As he puts it: “Recent research on the Sino-Tibetan frontier, its cultural and linguistic diversity, its historical complexity, and its contemporary ethnic politics, is increasingly revealing patterns and dynamics of diversity that cannot be explained as simply the result of two imperial powers exercising incomplete sovereignty in their overlapping margins” (Roche 2016:129). Likewise, as the linguistic analysis of the region makes clear, the same might be said for attempting to understand the language area as the overlapping of discrete language families in overlapping geographic space.

A view that pits one (homogenized) ethnic group against another for linguistic dominance in explaining the evolution of local varieties of Altaic and Sinitic evolution as shift towards a prestige variety masks the rich cultural convergence that helped build the Amdo linguistic area. As previous authors such as Slater (2003:7) have claimed, to understand a local language in isolation from other languages, misses the bigger picture. Only taken together, against the backdrop of the social history, does a full picture become clear. The question then becomes: what do the peripheral zones tell us about the core areas--of Mongolic, of Turkic, of Sinitic? We will return to this question in Chapter Eight.

5 Kham: The Case of Daohua



Map 4. Languages of the Kham region, including Daohua

“The ordinary course of trade is this. A merchant, say at Lhasa, wishing to purchase tea and silk, assembles a caravan of ponies and mules and lades them with Tibetan goods... He proceeds to Tachienlu by the north road through Jyekundo and Kandze... Here he puts up at one of the Tsang or Kwochwang. These are the houses of the local Tibetan gentry, who undertake to entertain the merchants on condition of being their go-betweens and interpreters in dealing with the Chinese... When business is to be arranged, the Kwochwang owner takes the merchant round to the Chinese merchants he wishes to see. In the old days the tea business was a close monopoly of a few Chinese, and the Tibetan, who usually traded with an old-established connection, was practically obliged to take what the seller offered at the latter's price. Circumstances have changed with the decrease of trade and the opening of many new Chinese firms, so that the touting is now on the Chinese.” (Oliver Coales 1919:244-245)

This chapter presents a case study on the Daohua language, spoken by a relatively small community in Yajiang County 雅江县 in Garzê (Ch. Gānzī 甘孜) Tibetan Autonomous Region 甘孜藏族自治州, in central Sichuan. Yajiang is located in the region of Kham¹⁴³ (ཁམས་ Wylie *kham*; Ch. kāng 康), which, like Amdo in Chapter 4, is a traditional regional designation of the ethnically Tibetan world.

As a case study of language contact in this dissertation, Kham is presented in comparison to the Amdo and Dali regions, largely by analyzing similarities with local Tibetic and Qiangic languages, to assess commonalities and differences as to whether it constitutes a classic convergence area, as discussed in 2.2, and the distribution of complexity or simplification of linguistic structures, as discussed in 2.4.

Argued to be a mixed language by Atshogs (2004), a creole by Chen (2017) and a Sinitic language by Chirkova (2012b), Daohua is evaluated based on language contact typology, laid out in 2.3, and its socio-historical setting. Based on the data presented here, it seems most likely, given the historical circumstances and the resulting linguistic features, that Daohua emerged as a mixed language by a local group of people whose ancestry included local Tibetan women and outside Han settlers arriving during the mid-to-late Qing era. This is largely an expansion of the argument put forth by Yeshe Atshogs, whose (2004) monograph is the primary source of data for the language. Nonetheless, its continuation of features in Southwest

¹⁴³ The Tibetan term for both the region and the subgroup of Tibetan dialects ends in an <s> in Written Tibetan, though this segment is no longer pronounced in modern varieties. It is, nonetheless, sometimes included in the Romanization of the name, hence some authors' use of *Khams* as a designation.

Mandarin leaves open the question of whether it is simply a heavily contact-induced, local Mandarin dialect, or only partially formed by language mixing with one.

5.1 Historical Background of Kham

Recent historical accounts of Kham stress the isolation until the 20th century of this region, where communities often were set in remote valleys far from urban centers (Dai 2009; Wang 2011; Hayes 2013). Others emphasize the relative late coming of a Chinese imperial presence to the region (Coleman 2002; Dai 2009; Wang 2011), as well as the unstable conditions that obtained throughout, such as rampant banditry and local uprisings (Lipman 1998; van Spengen 2002; Hayes 2013).

The mountainous terrain was a barrier to intercultural communication. For example, Wang (2011: 21-22) describes a treacherous expedition by Qing emissary Wu Tingmei from the Qinghai provincial capital to Lhasa around 1720, the journey requiring an entire year of travel. Yet we know that groups did interact. The region is dotted throughout with trade centers connecting salt, horses, tea and other goods to the Silk Route between the Chinese capital and Central Asia, and Chinese merchants acted as one group of power holders in the region, in some locales, such as in Batang 巴塘, having a presence going back at least to the late 1600s (Coleman 2002:37).

Moreover, de facto control of many parts of the region was concentrated in the estates of landed aristocracy that functioned like local kingdoms, such as Mili (Tib. *sMili*; Chin. 木里 Mùlǐ) in the south, and Dege (Tib. *sDe.dge*; Chin. 德格 Dégé) in Garzê. Buddhists would have also regularly traveled through this region between local monasteries and onward to Lhasa. These various trade and pilgrimage routes connected larger urban areas throughout Kham, such as

Litang 理塘 and Chamdo 昌都 in what is now western Sichuan and eastern Tibet Autonomous Region, respectively.

The Chinese presence in the region begins more recently than either in Amdo in Chapters 4 and 7 or Dali in Chapter 6. Between the expansion of the Tibetan empire in the 7th century and the conquering of the region by Kublai Khan's armies in establishing the Yuan Dynasty in the early 13th century, the region was mostly under control of small Buddhist kingdoms and estates.

After the assertion of Yuan control, and the administration of the region as the Kham province of the Tibetan region of the Mongol empire, trade with the interior of China began to pick up. This had already been an ongoing process since the establishment of Dartsedo as a major trade depot along the tea-horse route during the Song-era of the 11th century. However, by the 1300s, larger numbers of Chinese businessmen were finding their way to the region (see 5.3.2.2).

In 1662, most of what is now western Sichuan was incorporated into newly established Qing dynasty as part of the same province as Yunnan and Guizhou, at the time considered a veritable backwater of the empire, despite its vast natural resources (Dai 2006:16). However, increasing competition over influence at the Lhasa court with the remnants of the Oirat Mongol federation to the northwest, particularly the Dzungars on the Yili plain, led the Qing to fortify its military presence along the Kham border in the 1690s. In 1701, the Qing and Tibetan armies clashed at Dartsedo, then considered the border between China and Tibetan areas, and following the 1720 invasion of Lhasa by Yongzheng's forces to drive out the Dzungars, the Kham region is incorporated into the Qing empire in 1724 (Dai 2006:97).

However, imperial claims to the region did not necessarily translate to de facto control on the ground, and the state was busy quelling uprisings well into the 20th century, including the

famous Batang (Bathang) uprising of 1905 (Coleman 2002). After briefly returning de facto control to local chieftains in 1735, Qing imperial armies returned a decade later, and were busy with wars in the region until the end of the century (ibid.118). During the 19th century, Qing jurisdiction over Kham, and largely throughout all Tibetan regions, faded to a nominal presence, and by the early 1900s, there were purportedly very few Chinese in the region (Kessler 1986:29). It was not until PRC policies extending a state presence in the 1950s that Kham would function in any significant way as part of the Chinese state, and then as a remote, underdeveloped region, prone to uprising and protest, at that.

Having described the historical and political setting of Kham in the premodern era, let us now turn to the ethnic and linguistic makeup of the region, narrowing our focus to one region of Garzê Tibetan Autonomous County, that around Yajiang County, where the Daohua language is spoken.

5.2 A Sketch of Daohua and Its Neighbors

5.2.1 General Setting and Languages

5.2.1.1 *General Background of Daohua*

The language Daohua 倒话 is spoken in Yajiang County 雅江县 in Garzê (Ch. Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Region 甘孜藏族自治州, smack in the middle of the Kham region. According to Atshogs (2004:1), almost the sole source of information about the language, it has been influenced only by Chinese and Tibetan. In 1995 504 households of 2,685 people spoke the language, spread across eight villages (村寨) in three townships (乡), Hekou 河口, Bajiaolou 八角楼, and Gala 呷拉 (Atshogs 2004:6). Atshogs (2008) is also the only source I could find that offered any description (in the form of a conference presentation) of the local Tibetan variety in

Yajiang County, Chengzhang Tibetan 程章藏语, a member of the Kham Northern Route group (Tournadre 2014).

Practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism, Daohua speakers are ethnically Tibetan, or more precisely Zang (藏族), though they do often have Han family names, such as Zhāng 张, Lǐ 李, Guō 郭, Dèng 邓, Yáng 杨, Rèn 任 and so on (Atshogs 2004:5). Their basic daily necessities (衣食住行), religion and livelihood are more or less culturally Tibetan, but with some differences, such as the placement of shrines to the Kitchen God in some homes, placement of couplets (门联) on doorways, and display of plaques for ancestors, which Atshogs considers Han customs¹⁴⁴ (ibid). Atshogs offers other interesting information about Daohua speakers, such as the fact that they give cattle, oxen and horses Tibetan names, but dogs Chinese names. (Sheep can get names in either language.)

Atshogs places the genesis of the language within the last two centuries, when Han first entered the area. During the Kangxi Emperor's campaigns to take control of Tibet in 1720, troops settled the region to form garrisons, where they intermarried with locals. These settlers also recruited others from the interior of China (内地人) to act as ferrymen across the region's many rivers. As these settlers, including possibly other Han simply passing through, pushed deeper into the interior of Kham, they intermarried with locals, and the linguistic consequence of these unions was Yajiang Daohua (Atshogs 2004:6). We will return to this topic in 5.3.2.

Atshogs (2004:7) considers Daohua to be a fully mixed language (混合语), which he defines by the criteria that the original contributing languages were independent, that the resulting language has structure from different origins, that it is a native language for the group of

¹⁴⁴ Stevan Harrell (p.c.) notes that, besides Han, it is not uncommon for Yi, Qiang and other groups in the region to also have such altars in their homes. That is, there's probably nothing specific to Daohua speakers' background that results in such a phenomenon.

speakers who use it, and that it has a fully structured and comprehensive function, like any natural language. He claims the lexicon to be primarily Chinese, but the syntax mostly Tibetan, with SOV word order, ergative alignment and agglutinative morphology. The phonetic structure has a high degree of correspondences with Chinese, though its “essence” is Tibetan¹⁴⁵. Locally it is not held in the highest social regard, often referred to as *chēgé* 车格 or *tǔhuà* 土话, the latter basically “rustic Chinese” (ibid:8). (The name Daohua itself means “inverted”, or “upside-down” speech.) The language does not have a local written tradition.

Other than Atshogs Yeshes’ PhD dissertation, and his other articles published in the first years of the 2000s, all of which are drawn from his own fieldwork, very few other sources of descriptive work are found in the literature, though they include Chen (2002), who discusses classification. Katia Chirkova (2012b) also makes an extensive comparison with Wutun, and Keith Dede (2015) gives a brief overview in the *Chinese Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*. Both of the latter two authors rely on Atshogs (2004) as a primary source of data.

The following descriptions throughout 5.2 also summarize Atshogs’ work, coming mostly from his first chapter, which gives an overview of the language, with additional data taken from the primarily theoretical later chapters. A complicating factor in the transcription is that, except for morphemes and lexical items under consideration for language contact purposes, most of the Daohua morphemes are given in Chinese characters only¹⁴⁶. Like all Chinese dialectal writing, the choice of an individual character for any given morpheme reflects an assumed etymological connection to either Classical or Standard Chinese; the characters do not indicate pronunciation in Daohua, except for as the morphemes may have a corresponding phonological inheritance

¹⁴⁵ 倒话在语音结构上和汉语高度对应，在语音要素格局上则又与藏语基本一致...(Atshogs 2004:6-7).

¹⁴⁶ The author claims this is to show clearly the Chinese origins of a majority of the lexical stock (Atshogs 2004:10).

from a Sinitic origin. To present this data, I add a line of toneless Pinyin, combined with Atshogs' romanized morphemes, for reading purposes. But the reader should understand that reading these lines of romanization aloud is not a reasonable approximation of the way the utterances are pronounced.

5.2.1.2 *Daohua's Ethnolinguistic Environs*

The geographic expanse of Kham, which comprises the western half of Sichuan, the northwestern corner of Yunnan, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (玉树藏族自治州) in Qinghai and the eastern areas of the TAR, besides the more recent arrival of Southwestern Mandarin speakers, is home mostly to speakers of Tibetan “dialects”, the ill-defined Qiangic languages, a major subset of which are the rGyalrongic [jya] languages, and other Tibeto-Burman languages, such as Ngwi languages, centered in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州) and adjacent areas of Yunnan, Naic languages spanning the Sichuan-Yunnan provincial border and Dulong (a.k.a. Drung [duu], including the Trung [also duu] and Anong [nun] languages) in the Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (迪庆藏族自治州) of Yunnan. There are also Sinitic-speaking Hui people living throughout the region. Although Mongols have played a major role in the centralization of control in the region, linguistically they seem to have left little trace of their legacy.

Ethnic affiliation, historically a frequently shifting category to begin with (see 3.2), is overly simplified in modern PRC designation: most of the people living in Kham are either officially ethnically Tibetan (藏族) or Yi (彝族), with little correspondence to the linguistic distribution of the region. Though speakers of the most well-documented Qiangic language, Qiang (羌语) [N. cng; S. qxs], comprise their own ethnic group (see Wang 2003), all the other Qiangic languages of Sichuan, including the rGyalrongic languages, are spoken by officially ethnic Tibetans, or Zang

(藏族).¹⁴⁷ In their overview of minority languages of the Tibetosphere, Roche and Suzuki (2018:1247) note that among the Zang nationality, there are those that consider themselves Tibetans, some of whom may speak Tibetan dialects, others who speak Mawo Rma (a dialect of Qiang), Northern Prinmi [pmi], Lizu [ers], Duoxu [ers], Namuyi [nmy], rTa'u [ero] and Xumi [sxxg], and then there are those who don't consider themselves Tibetan, but who may speak a Tibetic variety (such as Baima [bqh]), or speak Ersu [ers] or Darang Deng [mhu]¹⁴⁸.

In the immediate vicinity of Daohua Kham Tibetan varieties are spoken, though the local dialect, Chengzhang Tibetan 程章藏语, is not widely described in the literature. For present purposes, I have chosen to use the Dege dialect of Kham Tibetan, to the northwest of Yajiang county, a regional lingua franca centered on the historic Dege kingdom that existed into the early 20th century.

The Tibetan kingdom of Dege (Tibetan sDe.dge ལྷེ་དགེ་; in Chinese 德格王) was an autonomous kingdom, tracing back as far as the 8th century. After a brief period under Manchu influence (1728-1836), it was conquered by Zhao Erfeng 赵尔丰 in 1908. Later it was partitioned into the Chamdo district 昌都市 of the TAR and Dege county 德格县, in Garzê Tibetan autonomous prefecture (Häsler 1999:2). An ethnographic study of the estates of Dege, based on archives and interviews with people who were still living on its estates in the 20th century, is given in Rinzin Thargyal's (2007) *Nomads of Eastern Tibet*.

Thargyal writes that the House of Dege traces its lineage back to Gar Thongsten, the imperial minister serving Songsten Gampo in the 7th century, famous for his role in bringing the Tang

¹⁴⁷ The purportedly Qiangic language Prinmi is spoken by official Tibetans (Zang) in Sichuan, but across the border in Yunnan its speakers are classified as Pumi (普米族), whose language is listed as Southern Pumi [pmj] by *Ethnologue*.

¹⁴⁸ Note that *Ethnologue* considers Lizu and Duoxu to be dialects of Ersu, so they all share the ISO code [ers]. They also classify rTa'u as a dialect of Horpa, which is [ero].

princess Wencheng back to Central Tibet after a historic marriage agreement (Thargyal 2007:45). The scene that Thargyal paints of life in Dege is of a mono-ethnic (in the sense of being only “Tibetan”, anyway) society, occasionally drawing in refugees from other parts of Kham, but rarely if ever Han, where one had to be quite wealthy to travel even as far as Dartsedo for trade (Thargyal 2007:98). Even the ruling class and aristocrats “married virtually endogamously, in order to perpetuate their continuity and ensure political alliances” (ibid.145). As such, one might expect the local language to be fairly free of outside influence.

Nonetheless, Häslers Dege informants mention that a proliferation of pronouns in Dege is the influence of “external contact” in the language, the result of its location on major routes connecting the southeast to Lhasa, though she doesn’t elaborate further (Häslers 1999:3).

Kham Tibetan dialects form a highly variable group of Tibetic varieties, less mutually intelligible than those of Amdo or even Central Tibetan, and in many cases only recently described, often times in only very rudimentary form. On this subject, Phillip Denwood (1999:31) describes the situation thus: “It may be doubted whether the linguistic term ‘Kham’ is much more than a convenient geographical label for a rather heterogeneous collection of dialects which range from extreme cluster dialects to transitional dialects well on the way to being non-cluster.”

Katia Chirkova also claims that, upon close examination, “Kham” may not be a genetic subgrouping at all. In southwestern Sichuan, particularly in the linguistic convergence zone of Muli, local Tibetic varieties lack shared innovations that could point to a period of common history between their speakers, and thus establish a sub-grouping within Kham. They also fail to show a straightforward correspondence to Old Tibetan, via Written Tibetan, which is an otherwise quite common property of most Tibetic varieties (Chirkova 2012b).

Among Kham Tibetan dialects there is a wide range of variation, with the most studied varieties being Batang 巴塘 (Gesang 1989), Dongwang 东旺 or rGyalthang (spoken in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture 迪庆藏族自治州, centered around Shangri-la 香格里拉, formerly Zhongdian 中甸) (Hongladarom 1996; Bartee 2007) and Dege (Qu and Jin 2000; Häsler 1999), the latter described in more detail below. Other varieties are lesser studied, however, and some are on the brink of extinction, including the local variety of Tibetan historically spoken in the important trade center of Dartsedo (Kangding), which Suzuki and Wangmo (2015) call Lhagang Tibetan¹⁴⁹. In their brief sketch of the dialect, they note that it is more endangered than the local Qiangic language, Minyag (also known as Muya 木雅), largely as the result of so many immigrants from other regions of Kham settling in Dartsedo Town, especially the urban center Lucheng.

The general tendency among Kham dialects is for a reduction of the syllabic complexity of Old Tibetan, and a tonal system of two-to-four tones taking its place. For example, Batang (Bathang), a language of the southern Kham group, has four tones (55, 53, 13, 23), plus an unstressed light tone, as well as twelve regular sandhi rules. It allows some initial clusters, mostly pre-nasalized obstruents (which could be analyzed as complex, single segments), but they are rare, and the only final permissible consonant is a glottal stop: Written Tibetan coda stops /b, d, g, p, t, k/ have all merged to [ʔ], while final nasals /m, n, ŋ/ have transferred to nasalization on the preceding vowels and the finals /r, l, s/ have become diphthongs or long monophthongal vowels.

¹⁴⁹ In their classification system, it is a member of the Minyag Rabgang group, known in Chinese as “Middle Route” or 中路, named after one of the six plateaus of Kham. They identify two distinct local dialects of Lhagang. In a footnote on page 262 they point out that Minyag Rabgang has its own reading style, distinct from that of either Dege, Litang, Nyagrang or rGyalthang.

Besides Kham Tibetan, in the region there are also nomadic Amdo dialect speakers, such as Gongrma and Shingyag (Xiya) Tibetan (Suzuki and Wangmo 2016, 2017), spoken among peoples living in the mountainous area along the Yalong River, between Litang and Xialong counties. Like most other Amdo dialects, those varieties have stress (manifested by specified high pitch) and no lexical tones, as well as other non-Kham-like features. In recent years they have been settled in townships, as part of government programs to ground nomads in one place, and the resultant communities are often made up of groups of speakers not sharing the same native language. For this reason, it would be a fruitful site for research on Kham language contact.

There are also several languages spoken near Daohua which purportedly belong to the Qiangic subgroup of Tibeto-Burman. The nearest are the aforementioned Minyag (Muya), spoken in Kangding, as well as Choyo (Queyu [qvy] 却域語) and nDrapa (a.k.a. Zhaba [zhh] 扎巴) spoken in Yajiang and Daofu Counties. A relatively recently documented group of languages, with most of the primary scholarship having only taken place in the last few decades¹⁵⁰, Qiangic is still contested as a coherent genetic subgroup of Tibeto-Burman¹⁵¹; Katia Chirkova suggests it is less a genetic group than a sprachbund (Chirkova 2012).

Some languages of the region, such as Duoxu (多须语 or 多续语), Ersu (尔苏语) and Lizu (里汝语), all considered to be dialects of Ersu [ers] in *Ethnologue*, have very little scholarly agreement as to their place in Tibeto-Burman (Chirkova 2014b). One such language, Shixing

¹⁵⁰ Indeed, it is still taking place: Roche and Suzuki (2018) consider Lhagang Choyu (塔公却域語), spoken in Tage Hamlet, Southwest Tagong Town, Kangding, to be a newly discovered Qiangic language.

¹⁵¹ Chirkova (2012:136) quotes Sun Hongkai in giving thirteen so-called Qiangic languages, divided geographically into the Northern: Qiang, Pumi, Muya, Ergong (a.k.a. Horpa, a.k.a. rTa'u, a.k.a. Daofu), rGyalrong, Lavrung [jiq] and *Tangut; and the Southern: Zhaba, Queyu, Guiqiong [gqi], Ersu, Namuyi and Shixing. rGyalrong (and its dialects Situ, Japhug, Tshobdun and Zbu) is potentially more closely related to Lavrung and Ergong than the rest. (Jacques' 2008 grammar is of Japhug.) Chirkova (ibid.153) suggests, albeit based on impressionistic assessment, that Lizu [sic] and Namuzi may be more closely related to Ngwi languages.

[sɣg] 史兴¹⁵² (a.k.a. Xumi 旭米), spoken by about 1800 Xumi Tibetans in Shuiluo 水洛 Township in Muli, is said to be “possibly Qiangic”, but “probably Naic”, but extremely difficult to tell, due to regional convergence of features (Chirkova and Chen 2013). Most of the purported diagnostic features of the so-called Qiangic subgrouping are “transparently areal”, meaning they are found in Tibetan, Sinitic and Ngwi languages of the same area (Chirkova 2012b).

In this study, largely due to limited availability of resources, I consulted work on one Qiangic language, nDrapa, otherwise referred to by its Chinese name, Zhaba 扎巴, spoken on both sides of the Daofu/Yajiang county border by approximately 9000 people calling themselves *ndzə*⁵⁵ *pj*³¹¹⁵³ (Gong 2007:1). Gong (2007) provides a standard grammar of the two (geographic) dialects of Upper Zhaba (in Daofu) and Lower Zhaba (in Yajiang), which she considers mutually intelligible, with the main differences being in phonetics and vocabulary. The language is also well studied by Satoko Shirai, in a series of articles and presentations on facets of its grammar, from existential verbs (Shirai 2008, 2010), evidentials (Shirai 2007), serial verb constructions (Shirai 2009b), directional affixes (Shirai 2009a), and pronouns, as part of a wider survey of basic borrowed vocabulary in the region (Shirai 2018).

nDrapa is used in the home and local areas in this part of Sichuan. Bilingualism is common among nDrapa speakers, with lots of young people speaking fluent Southwestern Mandarin and many older people speaking a local variety of Tibetan (藏语). Speakers tend to use Chinese or Tibetan to communicate with outsiders, including speakers of other Qiangic languages, such as Horpa [ero] (a.k.a. Ergong; rTa'u) to the north, or Queyu to the south.

¹⁵² The name Shixing comes from Sun Hongkai's transcription of their autonym [ʃi⁵⁵ hi⁵⁵].

¹⁵³ The *pj*³¹ morpheme means 'people' in nDrapa; the 'ba' of the Chinese name comes from the local Tibetan morpheme for 'person', *pa*⁵⁵ (ibid).

It is not clear to what extent the Daohua-speaking community, or the wider community of Yajiang in general, have regular contact with nDrapa, or to what degree people learn nDrapa as a second language. My impression from the literature is not very much. Its inclusion here is to look at a sub-family beyond Tibetic as a representative of the geographic area, and thus to consider what non-Sinitic, non-Tibetic languages look like in this part of Kham. At the same time, it could serve as a contrast to Chinese-Tibetan language mixing locally, in showing that the contact mechanism appears limited to only two languages, if such turns out to be the case.

Having provided an overview of the wider ethnolinguistic composition of the region of Kham, and a focus on Daohua, Dege and nDrapa, I will now turn to the linguistic features that constitute the local language environment, focusing the discussion on these three languages.

5.2.2 Phonetics and Phonology

In this section I will give an overview of the sound properties of Daohua, following that of the other two representative languages of the region, the Dege dialect of Kham Tibetan and the Qiangic language nDrapa (Zhaba).

5.2.2.1 *Dege Tibetan Phonetics and Phonology*

The Dege phoneme inventory involves a three-way contrast on most obstruents, viz. voiced, voiceless and aspirated (including fricatives), and a two-way distinction on nasals and laterals, involving “reduced voicing and slight aspiration” (Häsler 1999:11).

	bilabial	Dento-alveolar	retroflex	alveopalatal	palatal	velar	glottal
Stops	p p ^h b	t t ^h d				k k ^h g	ʔ
Fricatives		s s ^h z	ʂ ¹⁵⁴	ç ç ^h ʝ		x x ^h ɣ	h
Affricates		ts ts ^h dz	tʂ tʂ ^h dʒ	tç tç ^h dʒ			
Nasals	m m ^h	n n ^h			ɲ ɲ ^h	ŋ ɲ ^h	
Laterals		l ɭ					
Rhotic ¹⁵⁵		r					
Approximants	w				j		

There are two types of consonant clusters: prenasalized obstruents and /hj/, the latter of which is attested in only four verbs, all with a common source in Written Tibetan (see Häslér 1999:23). The pre-nasals, which are homorganic to the following stops and affricates, can occur word-initially or in the middle of words. When voiced nasals precede aspirated consonants, they are voiceless and slightly aspirated. The retroflex affricate series yield a homorganic retroflex nasal, which doesn't occur elsewhere, and is transcribed as alveolar.

Häslér divides vowels into four types: 1. short, oral in open syllables; 2. long, oral in open syllables; 3. short, oral, followed by a glottal stop; and 4. long nasal vowels. I have combined her separate charts for oral and nasal vowels, with a few organizational changes, to give a full view of the Dege vowel system, which contrasts nasality and length for many vowels. Those items in parentheses indicate that they may best be viewed as sequences of a short vowel plus glottal stop, apparently contrasting with a plain short vowel; however, those vowels followed by a glottal stop not appearing in parentheses are only found as short, glottalized vowels. Nasal vowels are always long. Finally, Häslér treats all sequences of vowels as belonging to separate syllables, rather than as true diphthongs.

¹⁵⁴ Häslér notes that this phoneme is quite rare (only four instances of it in her data), and that it is realized with aspiration and always appears word-initially.

¹⁵⁵ Häslér refers to this phone as a “vibrant”, and states that a narrow phonetic transcription would be [ɹ].

	Front		Central	Back	
	Unrounded	Rounded		Unrounded	rounded
Closed	i: iʔ ī:	y:			u: uʔ ũ:
	e e: (eʔ) ě:			ɣ (ɣʔ)	o o: (oʔ) õ:
Mid			ə (əʔ)		
	ɛ: ě:	ø: ø̄: ¹⁵⁶			ɔʔ
Open	a a: (aʔ)				ɑ: ɑʔ ǎ:

With the exception of the prenasalized obstruents and /hj/ in initial position, and the final glottal stop, in casual speech Dege syllables are CV with either a high or low tone. In careful speech, however, a few final consonants are produced, viz. underspecified homorganic nasal /N/, as well as /r p k/. Vowel-initial syllables are quite rare, as are those beginning with a prenasalised initial.

The two tones, High and Low, are only partially phonemic: syllables with voiceless nasal initials, as well as syllables with aspirated initials, always carry high tone. In syllables with voiced initial obstruents, tone varies as high or low, even when more than one such syllable occurs within the same phonological word. Only syllables beginning with voiceless, lateral or nasal consonants exhibit truly contrastive tonal properties; those beginning with voiced obstruents, strictly speaking, should be viewed as atonal (Häsler 1999:30). This transphonologization in action, which is not rare in the Kham area, is an extension of sound changes pointed out by Häsler (1999:75), including de-sonorisation of initial consonants and the loss of historical preconsonants.

Hassler differs from earlier researchers, such as Jumian Gesang, Hu Tan and Huang Bufan, in positing only two tones, High and Low, whereas earlier authors counted four tones, maximizing

¹⁵⁶ The nasalized low-mid, front rounded vowel appears to be an unconditioned variant in Häsler's data (Häsler 1999:28).

tonal inventories in order to reduce other suprasegmental contrasts. Her comparison is schematized as follows (Häsler 1999:258):

Pitch value	Syllable length	Register
55	Long	High
53	Short	High
31	Long	Low
13	Short	Low

In using Häsler’s data, I keep with her analysis, and also with her notation, which involves a macron over the vowel for phonologically High tones, and an underlining under the vowel for phonologically Low tones¹⁵⁷.

5.2.2.2 *nDrapa Phonetics and Phonology*

The following consonant and vowel charts illustrate the inventory of nDrapa, a.k.a. Zhaba. Obstruents contrast for voiced, voiceless and voiceless unaspirated, with an aspirated/unaspirated distinction on fricatives, while nasals and laterals may be voiced or voiceless. It is worth pointing out that the organization of the grammar by Gong (2007) follows a typical Chinese description—listing possible initials (i.e. onsets) and finals (i.e. rhymes), rather than a purely segmental approach, as reconfigured at present.

	bilabial	labiodental	Alveolar	retroflex	alveolopalatal	palatal	Velar
Stops	p p ^h b		t t ^h d				k k ^h g
Nasals	m ṃ		n ṇ		ɲ ɲ̣		ŋ ŋ̣
Fricatives		f v	s s ^h z	ʂ ʂ ^h ʐ	ç ç ^h ʑ		x ɣ
Affricates			ts ts ^h dz	tʂ tʂ ^h dʑ	tç tç ^h dʒ		
Laterals			l ḷ [+]				
glides	w					j	

¹⁵⁷ Note that this convention is utilized only for Dege Tibetan, only in this chapter; in the next chapter on Dali, underlined vowels indicate not Low tone, but a glottalized or creaky phonation concomitant with the tone of the syllable, as in Bai or Lisu.

Note that phonologically [ʈ] acts as the voiceless counterpart of the lateral liquid [l], as is the case in many Tibeto-Burman languages. Gong (2007:17) notes that the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] tends to show up mostly in Chinese loans, though modern varieties of Mandarin lack it. As discussed in footnote 193 in 5.2.7.2, the few examples from Gong (2007) seem to imply it is an adaptation of Sinitic morphemes with Middle Chinese velar nasal initials. The aspirated fricative series is described by Gong (2007:17) as follows:

“s^h, ʂ^h, ʧ^h 发音时舌头与相应的发音部位接触轻微，摩擦很弱，而呼出的气流较大”
 “When pronouncing s^h, ʂ^h, ʧ^h the tip of the tongue makes light contact with the corresponding place of articulation, while the friction is weak and the emitted flow of air is comparatively great.”

According to Gong, the phonetic contrast with the unaspirated series is not always clear.

The following chart gives the vowel inventory for nDrapa (from Gong 2007). Note there are also two apical vowels, following the same pattern as Chinese (and Daohua), as well as three contrastive diphthongs /ie, ui, ei/, though the latter are limited in lexical frequency.

	Front		Central	Back	
	Tense	Lax		Tense	Lax
High	i	ɪ		u	ʊ
Mid	e		ə	o	
Low	a				

nDrapa has a regular process of vowel harmony, which most frequently occurs on monosyllabic numerals and directional prefixes (Gong 2007:26). In such occurrences, vowels /e ə/ assimilate to /a o/ when they appear in a quantified expression before certain back vowels¹⁵⁸. Like tone sandhi discussed below, Gong (ibid.) describes such harmony occurrences

¹⁵⁸ 变化的基本规律是高，中元音(e, ə) 同化为低元音(a, o)。同化方向以逆向同化为主，即前一音节的元音在语流中跟着后面的低元音发音相近，一般发成 a 或 o。

as “not especially stable” (不十分稳定). Four of the five examples Gong provides are given in

(5-1) below:

(5-1) nDrapa vowel harmony

	original vowels	changed vowels	
ə > o	ts ^h e ³⁵ tə ⁵⁵ ko ⁵⁵	ts ^h e ³⁵ to ³¹ ko ⁵⁵	‘order vegetables’ 点菜
e > a	te ³¹ za ³¹	ta ³¹ za ³¹	‘one person’ 一人
e > a	ne ⁵⁵ za ³¹	na ⁵⁵ za ³¹	‘two people’ 二人
e > a	ne ⁵⁵ ŋo ³¹	na ⁵⁵ ŋo ³¹	‘two pounds’ 两磅

nDrapa has high-level (55), high-rising (35) and low-falling tones (31), contrastive in the following minimal pairs, listed in (5-2) (Gong 2007:23):

(5-2)

lɪ ⁵⁵ ‘excrement 粪’	vs.	lɪ ³⁵ ‘steamed bun 包子’
ɪ ⁵⁵ ʂki ⁵⁵ ‘back 背’	vs.	ɪ ⁵⁵ ʂki ³¹ ‘to crochet 纺线’
mu ⁵⁵ ptsa ⁵⁵ ‘little hen 小母鸡’	vs.	mu ³¹ ptsa ⁵⁵ ‘hen 母鸡’

Gong (2007:23) describes nDrapa’s tone sandhi as “not so regular” (不[是]太严整). The most common sandhi pattern involves a 35-tone syllable changing to 31 when it appears before other syllables within a prosodic word, as in the example tə^{35>31}ʂtə⁵⁵mu⁵⁵ (‘water’ 水 + ‘start’ 开 + ‘make’ 做 = ‘boil water’ 烧开水). There are also apparent positional restrictions on certain tones within a word: monosyllabic words rarely have falling tones and usually don’t have high-level tones. The falling tone usually appears on polysyllabic words at the beginning or end, and correlates with word stress¹⁵⁹ (Gong 2007:24).

The syllable structure of the language is maximally CCCVV, with three contrastive tones. Words tend to be polysyllabic, usually disyllabic, with just less than half of a Swadesh list being monosyllabic (Gong 2007:31). Gong (2007:15) gives examples of each type, ranging from

¹⁵⁹ Note that Satoko Shirai, who has written considerably about a different dialect of nDrapa, uses a different tonal notation (but still three contrastive tones), which will be introduced in 5.2.6.2, when her data is discussed.

simple $k^h u^{55}$ ‘sky 天’, $z\gamma^{35}$ ‘shoes 鞋’ (CV) to more complex $bdza^{55}$ ‘Han people 汉族’ (CCV), $kə^{31}ndz\gamma^{55}$ ‘to sample, taste 品尝’ (CCVV) and $\text{ʃpt}\gamma^{35}$ ‘castrate 阉’ (CCCVV).

Chinese loanwords ending in nasal codas will either delete, as in the examples for ‘hall’, ‘bank’ and ‘cold starch jelly’ below, or resyllabify to the following syllable, as in the other examples in (5-3) (Gong 2007:24-25):

(5-3)

nDrapa	Chinese source	nDrapa	Chinese source
$\text{ɕ}^h e^{31} nts\gamma^{55}$	shānzi 衫子 ‘shirt’	ta^{55}	táng 堂 ‘hall; room’
$sa^{55} m\pi^{55}$	suànpán 算盘 ‘calculator’	$le^{31} f\gamma^{55}$	liángfěn 凉粉 ‘cold starch jelly’
$pe^{55} nte^{31}$	biāndan 扁担 ‘carrying pole’	$je^{31} xa^{55}$	银行 yínháng ‘bank’

5.2.2.3 Daohua Phonetics and Phonology

The Daohua segment inventory consists of 34 consonants and 19 vowels, including an apical and a nasalized series. There are 4 tones, plus a neutral tone, and a nasal contrast on six vowels. Altogether there are 40 syllabic initials, 34 of which are simple onsets and six are prenasalized.

	bilabial	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	retroflex	palatal ¹⁶⁰	velar	glottal
Stops	p p ^h b			t t ^h d			k k ^h g	ʔ
Nasals	m			n		η	η	
Prenasalized	mb		ndz	nd	ηdz	ηdz		
Fricatives		f	s z		$\text{ʃ} \text{ʒ}$	ɕ	x	h
Affricates			ts ts ^h dz		tʂ tʂ ^h dz	tɕ tɕ ^h dz		
Laterals				l				
Approximants	w					j		

Examples of contrast between the prenasalized velar and the velar nasal are $\eta\gamma^4$ 撬 ‘to pry open; lift’, versus $\eta g\gamma^2(l\gamma^1)$ 秃(头) ‘bald (head)’¹⁶¹. The phonemes /n g dz/ all come from

¹⁶⁰ I follow Atshogs (2004:11) in including alveolopalatals and the palatal glide [j] in the same set.

¹⁶¹ On tonal notation, see below.

Tibetan vocabulary, and tend to be unstable, apparently starting to merge with their pre-nasalized counterparts. Daohua contrasts /n/ versus /l/, but only within the Tibetan vocabulary; in Chinese there is only [l] before vowels, similar to many Southwest Mandarin varieties (Atshogs 2004:12).

The vocalic inventory is as follows:

	Front	Central	Back
High	i y ɿ ʅ		u ɯ
High-mid	e ø ẽ		o ɔ
Mid		ə	
Low-mid	ɛ ǣ		ɔ ɔ̃
Low	a	e	

The low central vowel [e] comes from the local Tibetan dialect. There are also two non-phonemic apical vowels, retroflex after retroflex consonants and alveolar otherwise, and both vowels follow the same distribution as in Standard Mandarin.

There are 17 contrastive complex vocalic rhymes, given in (5-4), with a maximal syllable consisting of (N)(C)(G)V(G):

(5-4)

ia, iɔ, ie, iu, iɛ̃, iõ, iõ̃

ye, yɛ̃,

ui, ue, uɛ, ua, uẽ, uẽ̃, uõ̃

əu

Nasal codas in Sinitic vocabulary are manifested as nasalization on the nuclear vowel, sometimes followed by a variable consonantal coda following the vowel (Atshogs 2004:15)¹⁶².

Lexical tones are listed in (5-5). In glossing, the numerals 1-4 are used as shorthand for the pitch notations given here, following the data from Atshogs (2004). I keep this in place because no alternately transcribed data are provided, it makes for easy reference with Atshogs' writing,

¹⁶² 汉语韵母中的鼻音音尾在倒话中趋于脱落，代之以韵腹元音鼻化。有时在鼻化音后出现鼻尾，但十分随意没有严格要求。

and it saves me a good deal of time in the process of writing. Atshogs (2004:50) also notes that Tones 1 and 4 are long in duration, while Tones 2 and 3 are short, a feature they share with Tibetan, and not Chinese. Similar to Kham Tibetan dialects in general, this could possibly make for a more compact phonological schematization. (As with other Chinese sources, there is a tendency to maximize tonal inventories by distinct pitch patterns, over collapsing tones into larger contrastive categories.)

(5-5)

Tone	Pitch value	Phonological description
1	554	High
2	332	Low or Mid
3	51	High
4	324	Low or Mid

There is also a neutral tone in Daohua, whose tonal values are conditioned by the preceding syllable. Many function words—that is, many of the morphemes you see transcribed in Atshogs’ data in Roman letters—do not carry a lexical tone, including connectives, case markers, modals, etc.

5.2.2.4 *Summary*

A chart summarizing the surveyed features for Daohua, Dege and nDrapa in 5.2.2 is given below. Note that a (?) here indicates that the value may depend to some extent on the original author’s analytic or theoretical interpretation.

I have included in this table some features of Southwest Mandarin from 3.4.3 for reference, as Daohua is argued to be a case of (local) Chinese and Tibetan language mixing. The parallels seem most relevant for phonetics and phonology, and arguments for Daohua as a restructured form of local Northern Sinitic, such as those from Chirkova (2012b) discussed in 5.3.3.1, rely on phonological reflexes from Middle Chinese shared with regional Mandarin. Nonetheless, no

such evidence of similarity greatly shifts the arguments for Daohua as potentially a mixed language, as explored in 5.3.3.2, but rather show that the contributing form of Chinese was the local variety, rather than the standard language of late 20th century Putonghua. In fact, one may point out, from the following comparisons, Daohua differs from Southwest Mandarin far more than it does with either Dege or nDrapa, such as in its segment inventory and contrasts and syllable structure. Nonetheless, those arguing that it is simply a “restructured” variety of Southwest Mandarin could still point to such differences as examples of said restructuring.

Table 16 Comparison of phonological features in Yajiang

Features	Daohua	Dege	nDrapa	SW Mandarin
Retroflexes	Y	Y	Y	N
Alveolopalatals	Y	Y	Y	Y
3-way contrast (stops and affricates)	Y	Y	Y	N
3-way contrast (fricatives)	N	Y	Y	N
2-way contrast (sonorants)	N	Y	Y	N
pre-nasalized obstruents	Y	Y	N (?)	N
nasal vowel contrast	Y	Y	N	N
n/l contrast initially	Y	Y	Y	N
front rounded vowels	Y	Y	N	Y
apical vowels	Y	N	Y	Y
long vowel contrast	N	Y	N	N
“checked” vowels V?	N	Y	N	N
syllable structure	ⁿ CGV ¹⁶³	ⁿ CV ¹⁶⁴	CCCV(G)	CV(V)(N)
number of C	34	43	43	~20
number of V	19	25	10	~9
number of diphthongs	1	0 (?)	3	4 ¹⁶⁵
number of tones	4	2	3	4-5

Among the three languages described here, while all share a few basic similarities, Daohua and Dege appear slightly more similar to each other than either are to nDrapa. All languages have

¹⁶³ Note that Daohua has one diphthong, /əu/, resulting in a possible ⁿCGVG syllable.

¹⁶⁴ Note that Dege has one complex onset, /hj/, which could be analyzed as ⁿCGV or ⁿCCV.

¹⁶⁵ Note that these four diphthongs may combine with the glides /i/ and /u/ to form up to nine distinct rhymes.

retroflex and alveolopalatal consonantal series, and all three exhibit a 3-way contrast on obstruents. But while Dege and nDrapa both extend this voiced-voiceless-aspirated contrast to fricatives, as well as both contrasting voiced and voiceless sonorants, Daohua only has this contrast for stops and affricates, making it appear more Sinitic than Tibeto-Burman, in this regard. This is of course only from a broad Sinitic perspective; Mandarin, including Southwestern Mandarin, has only a 2-way, aspirated vs. unaspirated, contrast for stops and affricates. Also, both Daohua and Dege are described as contrasting pre-nasalized obstruents with plain obstruents. While nDrapa allows for nasal + C sequences initially, it is not clear whether this constitutes a distinct series or simply consonantal sequences.

Both Daohua and Dege contrast oral versus nasal vowels, while nDrapa does not. Both languages also have more rounding contrasts, particularly on front vowels, than nDrapa, which in fact has none. On the other hand, apical vowels are common in both Daohua and nDrapa, while Dege is not reported to have any. The vowel contrasts for Dege are, however, more complex than in either of the two languages, with a long versus short contrast in addition to the oral/nasal contrast, as well as a series of “checked” short vocalic phonemes exhibiting glottal closure, which seem to contrast with short vowels before glottal stops. The latter “checked vowels” of Dege may perhaps phonetically be a type of phonation contrast, but are nonetheless included here as presented by Hässler in her (1999) grammar.

In terms of syllable structure, nDrapa is considerably more complex than the other two languages, allowing for up to three consonants in onset position, as in the morpheme *ʃpt̪a*³⁵ ‘belt’. However, all three languages shun final coda segments, with only the occasional nasal segment in Daohua and Dege appearing in fast speech, and none reported for nDrapa. Daohua

and nDrapa allow a considerable number of diphthongs (though in Daohua they are mostly onglides), but in Häsler's analysis, all adjacent vocoids are treated as vowel sequences in Dege.

Daohua contrasts four tones, which Atshogs analyzes in a typical Chinese, pitch-value contrastive system. nDrapa, which contrasts three, is also given a similar analysis. Dege, however, similar to other Kham dialects, can be analyzed as having a High versus Low contrastive system, which is only present non-contrastively on many syllables as a concomitant feature of the initial consonants' laryngeal contrasts. In nDrapa, too, Gong reports some interaction between the falling tone and prosodic and morphemic boundaries.

In general, there are more phonological processes at play in nDrapa, such as limited vowel harmony and tone sandhi, as well as some morphophonological derivation to be discussed in the next two sections, than in the other languages, though Gong regularly describes them as "unstable" or "irregular". More research is apparently needed on this point.

In sum, while Dege and nDrapa's consonantal systems seem more similar to each other than to Daohua's, Daohua and Dege's vocalic and syllabic inventories seem more alike, versus nDrapa's, though all three tend towards open syllables. In terms of total number of contrasts, Daohua's tones are closer nDrapa's, but this may be a matter of analytic perspective: other researchers give four distinct pitch values to Dege's tones, while Satoko Shirai analyzes nDrapa's tones as High-falling, Mid-level and Low-rising, the latter of which begins to feel more like a High-Low-Mid distinction. That is, cross-linguistic tonal comparisons are complicated by the differing, sometimes indeterminate, phonological status of pitch, treated variously by individual authors.

5.2.3 Noun Phrase Morphology

In this section, similar to the last, I give an overview of noun phrase (NP) properties of the region, with a fuller account of Daohua, following local Tibetic and Qiangic languages.

5.2.3.1 *The Dege Tibetan NP*

Dege utilizes a number of derivational suffixes to change lexical categories, most prominently illustrated with *-pa*, (as in *Kham-pa* ‘Kham person’), which attach to verbs and nouns, generally to derive other types of nouns, adjectives or adverbs. The suffixes, especially *-pa*, often have a number of allomorphs, sometimes occluded by diachronic changes as to their original conditioning environments. Examples¹⁶⁶ include those given in (5-6):

(5-6)

ɕø: ‘to move’	ɕø:pa ‘action’
sã: ‘to think’	sã:ba ‘thought’
rē ‘to wish’	rēwa ‘wish’
ts ^h õ: ‘to sell’	ts ^h õba ‘trader’
zō ‘to work’	zōwa ‘worker’
m ^h ē: ‘medicine’	m ^h ē:ba ‘doctor’

Compounding is a productive process in Tibetan. When two words are combined into a new word in Dege, the second loses its tone and receives high tone (Häsler 1999:90; see Sun 1997).

Affixes such as those in the previous section are dropped in forming compounds. Examples include the following in (5-7) (ibid:90-92):

(5-7)

tākā ‘saddle’	< tā + gā ‘horse + saddle’
m ^h ē:kõ: ‘hospital’	< m ^h ē: + k ^h õ: ‘medicine + house’
rī:t ^h ũ: ‘length’	< rī + t ^h ũ: ‘long + short’
tɕ ^h ēçũ: ‘size’	< tɕ ^h ē + tçũ: ‘big + small’

The maximal Dege Noun Phrase is schematized by Häsler (1999:93) as follows:

¹⁶⁶ For tonal notation, see 5.2.2.1.

Poss. Pronoun + N-GEN + N + Adverb + Adjective + Num + Definite Marker (+ Case Marker)

An example of such is illustrated in the following noun phrase in (5-8) (ibid). (Having no case marker, it is presumably acting as absolutive.)

(5-8)

ŋj: ātɕī-ki tɕap^hō: tʂā:mō tɕū:tɕ^hū:-ŋī:-te
 1-GEN sister-GEN cup very small-two-the
 ‘the two very small cups of my sister’

Nouns do not generally take number or plural markers, though an optional plural marker *-nō:* (མཚན་) exists. Numerals can directly follow the noun to explicitly indicate quantity. Nouns do, however, mark for case, and those cases include ergative, instrumental, genitive, dative, locative, ablative and associative. An unmarked noun carries absolutive case. For the ergative, instrumental and genitive cases, they are marked by the same morpheme, *-ki* (གི/གིས་) and its allomorphs. In historically open-syllable words, case for the ergative, instrumental, genitive and dative is marked by a vowel change. Case markers are always the final in a noun phrase.

Table 17 Summary of the Dege case marking, with variants, from Häslér (1999:96):

	After a consonant	After vowels
Ergative/Instrumental གིས་	-ki (kə) -xə -k ^h e -ke	a -> ε: o -> ø: ɣ -> γ: ə -> i: e -> i:
Genitive གི་	-ki (kə) -xə -k ^h e -ke	a -> ε: o -> ø: ɣ -> γ: ə -> i: e -> i:
Dative ལ་	-le (-lə)	a -> a:
Locative ལ་ and ལ་	-le (-lə) , -na	
Ablative ལས་	-lɛ: , -nɛ:	
Associative དང་	-tō:	
Absolutive	-∅	

Häsler (1999:99) notes that ergative marking is optional in sentences with controllable verbs (that is, verbs which the subject exhibits some control, defined in 5.2.4.1 below), no matter the aspect of the verb (unlike other Tibetan dialects). Locative and ablative suffixes can mark both spatial and temporal location and goals. Examples include (5-9)-(5-11) (ibid:97-102):

(5-9)

tɕap̥θ̥:	pom̥o-te	ndzɔ:pa-le	ȷ̃:-t ^h ē:
king.ERG	girl-the	nomad-DAT	give-PFV.WEAK

‘The king gave the girl to the nomad.’

(5-10)

k ^h ō:kə	k ^h ō̃:ba	tɕ ^h ȷ̃	p ^h ārū:-le	rɛ:ŋgē
3.SING-GEN	house	water	side-LOC	be

‘His house is on the other side of the river.’

(5-11)

āpā	kō̃:ba	nō̃:-nɛ:	tsē-ɕũ:,	ja:	ndzɔ-t ^h ē:
father	house	in-ABL	arrive-PFV.STRONG	up	go-PFV.WEAK

‘The father came out of the house and walked up.’

The pronominal system of Dege is fairly complex. Through suffixes and ablaut, pronouns are marked for gender (on third person singular forms), number and case, distinguishing between singular, dual and plural. The non-singular suffixes include *-ŋi:* གཉིས་ for dual; *-dā:* མམས་, *-nā:* ལྔམས་ or *-ts^ho* ཚོ་ for plural, as well as the inclusive marker, *-ri:* (རིགས་). The plural morpheme *-dā:* marks a collective plural, while *-nā:* marks individual plurals; the marker *-ts^ho* appears to be influence from another dialect (Häsler 1999:107; see Shirai 2018). The following chart gives a sense of the range of variation and sub-categorization involved in Dege’s pronominal system.

Table 18 Dege Tibetan Pronominal Paradigm

Person	Number		Abs.	Ergative	Genitive	Dative
1 st Person	Singular		ŋa	ŋɛ:	ŋɛ: ~ ŋi: ŋa-xə	ŋa: ŋa-le
	Dual	Incl	ŋɛ: rī: nī:	ŋɛ: rī: nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e) ŋɛ: rī: nī: -ŋθ: (-k ^h e)	ŋɛ: rī: nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e) ŋɛ: rī: nī: -ŋθ: (-k ^h e) ŋɛ: rī: nī: -xə	ŋɛ: rī: nī: -le
		Excl	ŋɛ: nī:	ŋɛ: nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e) ŋɛ: nī: -ŋθ: (-k ^h e)	ŋɛ: nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e) ŋɛ: nī: -ŋθ: (-k ^h e) ŋɛ: nī: -xə	ŋɛ: nī: -le
	Plural	Incl	ŋɛ: rī: - nā:	ŋɛ: rī: -nā: -k ^h e	ŋɛ: rī: -nā: -k ^h e	ŋɛ: rī: -nā: -le
		Excl	ŋɛ: -dā: ŋɛ: -dā: ŋɛ: -ts ^h ō	ŋɛ: -dā: -k ^h e ŋɛ: -nā: -k ^h e ŋa: -ts ^h θ:	ŋɛ: -dā: -k ^h e ŋɛ: -nā: -k ^h e	ŋɛ: -dā: -le ŋɛ: -dā: -le ŋɛ: -ts ^h ō -le
	2 nd person	Singular		tɕ ^h θ:	tɕ ^h ɣ: tɕ ^h θ: -kə	tɕ ^h ɣ: tɕ ^h θ: -kə
Dual			tɕ ^h θ: -nī:	tɕ ^h θ: -nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e) tɕ ^h θ: -nī: -ŋθ: (-k ^h e)	tɕ ^h θ: -nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e)	tɕ ^h θ: -nī: -le
Plural			tɕ ^h ē: -dā: tɕ ^h ē: -nā: tɕ ^h θ: -nā:	tɕ ^h θ: -dā: -k ^h e	tɕ ^h θ: -dā: -k ^h e tɕ ^h θ: -nā: -k ^h e	tɕ ^h θ: -dā: -le tɕ ^h ē: -nā: -le tɕ ^h ē: -ts ^h ō -le
3 rd person	Singular	Masc	k ^h ō	k ^h ō -kə	k ^h ō -kə	k ^h ō -le
		Fem	mɔ	mɔ -k ^h e mθ:	mθ: mɔ -k ^h e	mɔ -le
	Dual		k ^h ō nī:	k ^h ō nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e)	k ^h ō nī: -k ^h aʔ(-k ^h e)	k ^h ō nī: -le
	Plural	Masc	k ^h ō -dā: k ^h ō -nā:	k ^h ō -dā: -k ^h e k ^h ō -nā: -k ^h e	k ^h ō -dā: -k ^h e k ^h ō -nā: -k ^h e	k ^h ō -dā: -le k ^h ō -nā: -le
		Fem	mɔ -dā: mɔ -nā:	mɔ -dā: -k ^h e mɔ -nā: -k ^h e	mɔ -dā: -k ^h e mɔ -nā: -k ^h e	mɔ -dā: -le mɔ -nā: -le

There is also a form for referring to households, which Häsler calls the “family plural”. These forms are produced by suffixing *-ts^hō*: (ཚང་ from the word for ‘house, nest’) to the plural pronouns. There are also a second person singular honorific pronoun, *tɕ^hēʔ* རྒྱུད, and a third person honorific pronoun, *k^hō*: རྒྱུད. The reflexive is formed with the morpheme *-rɣ:* or *-rī:* རྒྱུད following singular pronouns, or *-rō*: རྒྱུད following plural pronouns; reflexive pronouns are often reduplicated, as well.

In Dege, relative clauses are subordinated to the noun by a nominalizer particle, not unlike Chinese *de* 的. However, unlike Chinese, the form of the nominalizer differs by the semantics of the subordinating phrase, depending on whether the embedded subject is an agent, patient, a locative oblique or a non-locative oblique. Usually relative clauses appear immediately before the head noun, but can occasionally occur post-nominally, especially with indefinite nominal heads. Examples of such nominalizers used as subordinators (provided in bold font, from the original) in Dege are (5-12)-(5-15):

(5-12) Agent subject

ηε: gɔ ɕ^hē-mā(-ki) nā-te rj: ɕŭ:
 1.ERG **door** **open-NMLZ(-ERG)** person-the see PFV.STRONG
 'I saw the man who opened the door.' (Häsler 1999:240)

(5-13) Patient subject

ηε: tʂ^hū: gɔ:-tɕɣ p^hūrā-te p^həna ηge
 1.ERG **wash** **want-NMLZ** cup-the there be
 'The dishes I will wash are over there.' (Häsler 1999:242)

(5-14) Locative subject

ηε: s^hō:nī: lɿ lǝ:-s^hā k^hō:ba-te (ηε:) rj: ɕŭ:
 1.ERG **tomorrow** **song** **sing-NMLZ** house-the (1.ERG) see PFV.STRONG
 'I saw the house where I will sing tomorrow.' (Häsler 1999:245)

(5-15) Non-locative subject

ηε: k^hɔ: tʂū:xɿ ɕɛ:-ji ty:ts^hɔ:-te x^hē-le jī:
 1.ERG **2.ERG** **child** **make-NMLZ** time-the remember-IPFV be
 'I remember the time when she bore a child.' (Häsler 1999:247)

5.2.3.2 *The nDrapa NP*

The main morphological process in nDrapa is affixation, especially of directional prefixes (see 5.2.4.2) and nominal affixes. Compounding and reduplication are also common. nDrapa does not have grammatical gender, but it does mark number. Nouns have suffixal morphemes for dual and for plural, as shown in (5-16) (Gong 2007:54-55):

(5-16)

singular	dual	plural	
pə ³¹ dzə ⁵⁵	pə ³¹ dzə ⁵⁵ -ne ³¹	pə ³¹ dzə ⁵⁵ -zɪ ³¹	'child 孩子'
tɕ ^h e ³⁵	tɕ ^h e ³⁵ -ne ³¹	tɕ ^h e ³⁵ -zɪ ³¹	'(mountain) goat 山羊'
va ⁵⁵	va ⁵⁵ -ne ⁵⁵	va ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵¹	'pig 猪'

When a specific number is indicated, the dual and plural morphemes are often not used, shown in (5-17) and (5-18), except with a definite reference, as in (5-19) (Gong 2007:55):

(5-17)

pə ³¹ dzə ⁵⁵	sɪ ⁵⁵	ji ³¹
child	three	CL
孩子	三	个
'three children 三个孩子'		

(5-18)

ptsə ³⁵	də ⁵⁵	ʂpa ³¹
chicken	four	CL
鸡	四	只
'four chickens 四只鸡'		

(5-19)

tɕ ³¹ -zɪ ⁵⁵	s ^h ui ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵
that-PL	person-PL
那些	人们
'those people 那些人'	

Case marking is present in nDrapa. Gong lists them, together with similar morphemes, as “structure auxiliaries” (结构助词): genitive zə³¹ (领属), “modification delimiting” (修饰限制), or relativer, mpə³¹zə³¹, object (对象) markers wu³¹, la³¹ and t^ha³¹, instrumental (工具) kə⁵⁵tə³¹, ablative (从由) ŋi³¹, benefactive (为动) markers vi⁵⁵ and tɕe⁵⁵, comitative (随同) mts^ha³¹, comparative (比较) markers t^ha³¹ (for people) and mə⁵⁵ɕ^hu³¹, “nature” (性状) morphemes ŋi³¹ and tɪ³¹ and several locative (处所) morphemes, which include wu⁵⁵ ‘on the surface’; t^ha⁵⁵ ‘above’; vɛə⁵⁵ ‘below’; k^ha⁵⁵ ‘inside’, and so on. A couple of examples, using the genitive zə³¹ and ablative ŋi³¹, are given in (5-20) and (5-21) (Gong 2007:114-125):

(5-20) Genitive $zə^{31}$
 $kə^{31}zə^{55}$ $t^hɪ^{55}zə^{55}-zə^{31}$ $ke^{31}me^{55}$ $zə^{31}$
 this 2PL-GEN clothes COP
 这 她们 (助) 衣服 助词
 ‘This is their (fem.) clothing.’
 这是她们的衣服

(5-21) Ablative $ŋj^{31}$
 $tʊ^{31}zɪ^{55}$ $ki^{55}te^{55}-ŋj^{31}$ $və^{35}tʂə^{31}$ $zə^{31}$
 3PL where-ABL arrive COP¹⁶⁷
 他们 哪里 (助) 到来 (助)
 ‘Where did they come from?’
 他们从哪儿来

As noted, the object case marker has three morphemes, wu^{31} , la^{31} and t^ha^{31} , depending on the sentential role of the nominal. They are illustrated below in (5-22)-(5-24) (ibid.):

(5-22) Patient wu^{31}
 $tʊ^{31}zə^{55}$ $ve^{55}ŋə^{31}p^ha^{31}-wu^{31}$ pi^{31} te^{55} $tɕyi^{55}$ $tə^{35}-k^hɪ^{31}$
 3 brother-OBJ:PAT brush one CL DIRP-give
 他 兄弟 (助词) 笔 一 支 (前加)-给
 ‘He gave [his] brother a brush.’
 他给了弟弟一支笔

(5-23) Patient la^{31} (a borrowing from Tibetan, may serve as a predicate)
 $tʂa^{31}ɕi^{55}$ $zə^{31}ta^{55}$ $je^{31}tə^{55}tə^{31}-la^{31}$ ga^{55}
 PN animal little-OBJ:PAT like
 扎西 动物 小 (助词) 喜欢
 ‘Tashi likes little animals.’
 扎西喜欢小动物

(5-24) Undergoer (遭受) t^ha^{31}
 $ŋj^{55}ma^{31}$ $tɕa^{55}ɕi^{55}-t^ha^{31}$ $kə^{55}la^{55}$ $tɪ^{31}$ te^{55} $ntɕ^hi^{55}$ $ɪ^{55}-ptə^{31}$
 PN PN-OBJ:UNDRG good SUB one criticize DIRP-do
 尼玛 扎西 (助词) 好好 (助词) 一 批评 (前加) 做
 ‘Nima gave Zhaxi a scathing criticism.’
 尼玛把扎西狠狠地批评了一顿

¹⁶⁷ I cannot account for the final morpheme $zə^{31}$, but one wonders whether it is not a typo, and should be the evidential copula final, $zə^{31}$.

nDrapa makes use of a wide range of classifiers, which follow the numeral in the noun phrase, both following the head noun. Gong (2007:70-72) gives examples of different classifiers by semantic class¹⁶⁸, but notes that the classifier *ji*⁵⁵, as in (5-25), can often stand in as an all-purpose classifier, similar to Mandarin *ge* 个. Examples include (5-25) and (5-26) (ibid.):

(5-25)

<i>je</i> ³¹ <i>pə</i> ⁵⁵	<i>te</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵
stone	one	CL
石头	一	块

'a chunk of rock' 一块石头

(5-26)

<i>ptsə</i> ³¹	<i>ta</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ʂpa</i> ³¹
chicken	one	CL
鸡	一	只

'a chicken' 一只鸡

The order of elements within the noun phrase is Noun Head – Adjective – Adverb – Numeral – Classifier (Gong 2007:76). Such is illustrated with two examples in (5-27) and (5-28).

(5-27)

<i>ʂtse</i> ⁵⁵ . <i>nt</i> ^h <i>ɿ</i> ³¹	<i>tɕi</i> ⁵⁵ . <i>tɕi</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ta</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ʂka</i> ⁵⁵
deer.meat	big	one	slice
鹿肉	大	一	片

'a big slice of venison'
一大块鹿肉

(5-28)

<i>tɕo</i> ³⁵	<i>mui</i> ³¹ <i>mui</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kə</i> ⁵⁵ <i>la</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ta</i> ⁵⁵	<i>za</i> ⁵⁵
friend	very	good	one	CL
朋友	很	好	一	个

'a very good friend'
一个很好的朋友

¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, the classifier in (5-26), *ʂpa*³¹, is listed with other (non-sentient-referent) classifiers as those "indicating a thing's shape or part of a thing" (表示事物的形状或事物的一部分) (Gong 2007:71).

Though when modifiers are greater in length, they may precede the head, in which case they are marked with the nominalizer *mpə³¹zə³¹*, which then looks very much like a Chinese relative clause, as in (5-29) (ibid.):

(5-29)

də ³¹ vzɪ ³¹ vzɪ ³¹	mpə ³¹ zə ³¹	mi ³¹ to ⁵⁵
be.beautiful	NMLZ	flower
美丽	的	花儿
美丽的花儿		
'beautiful flower'		

Directional pronouns mark three distal degrees, plus a general reference direction, and can indicate direction towards or away from the speaker, a river, or up or down a mountain (Gong 2007:52-53). The pronoun illustrating a further distance away from the referent is formed by reduplication of the 'over there' form. The paradigm is illustrated in (5-30):

(5-30)

	'here' 近指	'there' 远指	'over there' 极远指	'general ref.' 泛指
upstream 上游方	ɕʰo ³¹ pʰo ⁵⁵	ɕʰu ³⁵	ɕʰu ³⁵ ɕʰu ³⁵	ɕʰu ³⁵ ŋo ⁵⁵
downstream 下游方	ŋɪ ³⁵ pʰo ⁵⁵	ŋɪ ³⁵	ŋɪ ³⁵ ŋɪ ³⁵	ŋɪ ³⁵ ŋo ⁵⁵

Finally, there are two nominalization suffixes, *-ji⁵⁵* and *-ze³¹*. The former marks active verbs or verb-object compounds to create agents of action or instruments (Gong 2007:97). Examples of *ji⁵⁵* are given in (5-31):

(5-31)

pʰu ⁵⁵ -ji ⁵⁵ 'beggar 乞丐'	< pʰu ⁵⁵ 'to go begging 行乞'
fsə ⁵⁵ -ji ³¹ 'knife sharpening stone 磨刀石'	< fsə ⁵⁵ 'to sharpen a knife 磨刀'
gu ³¹ zə ⁵⁵ -ji ³¹ 'head shaver 头剃的'	< gu ³¹ zə ⁵⁵ 'to head shave 头剃'

5.2.3.3 The Daohua NP

Though Daohua is an agglutinative language, a result of its strong grammatical influence from Tibetan, like its lexifier, Chinese, compound words are also quite common. Lexically, many

words correlate with Chinese compounds, but in some cases the morphemes may match the Tibetan order rather than Chinese, as in *lue² da³* ‘to thunder’ (Ch. 打雷 *dǎléi*) or *p^{hi} 2tɕ^{hi} tuɛ̃* ‘short temper (性子急躁), lit. *píqì duǎn* 脾气短 (cf. Ch. *duǎn píqì*) (Atshogs 2004:70). In other cases, compounds may be drawn from both Chinese and Tibetan in the same word, as in *ja¹ ŋju²* ‘yak’ 牦牛, where *ja¹* is from the Tibetan word for ‘yak’, and *ŋju²* is from Chinese ‘cattle’. Or see also *ʔa²ko¹ ŋju²* ‘second generation offspring of a dzo’ (犏牛第二代仔), formed in a similar fashion, *ʔa²ko¹* being the Tibetan word for this animal, the offspring of a yak and an ox (ibid.).

Nouns, as well as pronouns (which are cognate with Mandarin, e.g. 3rd person *t^{ha}1* 他), may inflect for plural number by adding the suffix ‘-cie’ 些 (Atshogs 2004:77), e.g. 花 *cie* /hua-cie/ ‘flowers’, 牛 *cie* /niu-cie/ ‘cattle’, 碗 *cie* /wan-cie/ ‘bowls’, 人 *cie* /ren-cie/ ‘people’¹⁶⁹. It is also possible, though not necessary, to include this plural marking on plural pronouns from Chinese, despite the fact such pronouns have an etymological plural marker *-men* > 们: 我们 *cie* /women-cie/ ‘we’, 你们 *cie* /nimen-cie/ ‘you all’, 人家 *cie* /renjia-cie/ ‘others’. All the same, next to none of the nouns used in example sentences in the text are marked with this plural marker.

Daohua has marked ergative alignment, contrasting agents and patients: the case form of an agentive subject of a transitive verb contrasts with the case form of an object and subject of an intransitive verb. In addition to a zero-marked absolutive, there is the ergative *-ki*, instrumental

¹⁶⁹ As mentioned in 5.2.1, Atshogs (2004) presents a challenge for transcribing, as the original text appears as 花 *cie*. Presumably the reader will read the character 花 in Standard Mandarin, and the romanized morphemes as indicated. As Daohua is not Standard Mandarin, however, but needing some romanization in this dissertation for those not familiar with Chinese characters, I am giving a toneless Pinyin for transcription, only for ease of reading. Presumably a native speaker would pronounce the morpheme indicated by the character 花, including the tones, somewhat close to the local Sichuan dialect.

-ki, possessive (领格) *-ʂe*¹⁷⁰, comitative *-ʂe*, locative *-ʂe*, ablative *-de*, comparative *-de* and genitive (属格) *-di*¹⁷¹¹⁷². That is, there are arguably nine case categories in Daohua, represented by five phonologically distinct case marking suffixes, including the zero marker (Atshogs 2004:63). According to Atshogs, all cases function exactly as they would in the local Tibetan dialect, and each is compared with a similar local Tibetan sentence in the original text. Locative *ʂe* is proposed to be from the Mandarin word *shàng* 上 ‘above; on’, while *di* is said to be from Mandarin genitive *de* 的; the other two case morphemes originate from Tibetan (Atshogs 2004:77).

Some examples of case-marked nouns are given below in (5-32) - (5-36), which also give an introduction to the glosses I have adapted from Atshogs (2004). The first line is as written in the text, in a mixture of Chinese characters and roman script. I have provided phonological forms in the second line, using toneless Pinyin, for ease of reference, but keeping the romanized portion of the original the same on that line (which includes the tone marker on those morphemes carrying tone). The next two lines are morphemes and the Chinese translation, from the source, and the final lines are my own translations.

(5-32)

他病 *dijiu*³-li

ta bing-*dijiu*³-li

3 sick-PROG-OBJT

他正在生病

‘He’s sick right now.’

(Atshogs 2004:63)

¹⁷⁰ This morpheme, “expresses an object’s possessor and a possession of a certain kind of characteristic state and non-volitional beneficiary” (表示某对象的领有者，以及某种性质状态的拥有和不自主的获得者) (Atshogs 2004:66)

¹⁷¹ This case is used to express the relationship between delimitation and modification (限定，修饰的关系). A major difference between it and the possessive case is that the possessor commonly serves as subject, while the genitive commonly serves as an attributive (定语) (Atshogs 2004:68).

¹⁷² The case marker *-ki* has a free variant [ɣi]. When acting as the ergative marker with singular personal pronouns, it may also take the vowel of the pronoun, as is common in the local Tibetan dialect (Atshogs 2004:65).

(5-33)

他山上 de 来了 se

ta shan-shang-de lai-le se
3 mountain-top-ABL come-PFV COP

他是从山上来的

'He's from up on the mountain.'

(Atshogs 2004:53)

(5-34)

他 se 马多多有 se

ta-se ma duo duo you se
3-POSS horse many many EXIS COP

他有许多马

'He has a lot of horses.'

(Atshogs 2004:67)

(5-35)

爸爸 ki 酒糟子 ki 马喂 dijiu3-li

baba-ki jiu zaozi-ki ma wei-djiu3-li
dad-ERG wine lees-INSTR horse feed-CONT-OBJT

爸爸正在用酒糟喂马

'Dad is feeding the horse with wine lees.'

(Atshogs 2004:65)

(5-36)

狗 ki 他 se 咬 e-lo

gou-ki ta-se yao-e-lo
dog-ERG 3-LOC bite-OBJT-PFV

狗咬了他

'The dog bit him.'¹⁷³

(Atshogs 2004:52)

For example, for (5-36), Atshogs (2004:52) gives the same sentence in the local Tibetan dialect,

as shown in (5-37):

(5-37)

tɕʰu⁵¹ge-ki kʰo⁵¹-la so⁵¹tɕ⁵¹-tʰe³¹zə
dog-ERG 3-DAT bite-PFV-OBJT

'The dog bit him.'

Unlike in Tibetan, where the classifiers and measure words precede the numerals, in Daohua, as in Chinese, the classifiers and measure words follow the numerals, one of a minority of ways

¹⁷³ Atshogs illustrates this as being the comitative case, but given the homophony of form, I don't see why it is not locative.

where Daohua grammar follows a Chinese pattern, rather than Tibetan (Atshogs 2004:71). Nonetheless, unlike Chinese, and like Tibetan, NPs are head-initial, with quantifiers and modifiers following the noun. Some examples of numeral + classifier constructions, which are relatively few in the source material, are in (5-38) (Atshogs 2004:71), illustrated in NPs in (5-39) from Atshogs (2004:72). Note that, though Daohua requires a measure word or classifier to accompany a quantified noun, which is unlike Tibetan, where nouns can be directly counted, Atshogs (ibid.) reports that the number of classifiers is quite small, and usually generic *kɔ*⁴ is used, from Chinese *gè* 个.

(5-38)

Daohua Classifiers

ji² kɔ⁴ one CL: ‘一个 one (thing)’

ji² ʂu⁵ one C:L: ‘一双 one pair’

ji² k^ho³ one CL: ‘一颗 one (tree, plant, etc.)’

ji² t^hõ³ one CL: ‘一桶 one (bucket, cannister)’

(5-39)

mɔ⁴tsɿ ji² kɔ⁴

cap one CL

‘a cap/hat’ 一顶帽子

xua¹ ji² kɔ⁴

flower one CL

‘a flower’ 一朵花

tʂu¹ ji² kɔ⁴

pig one CL

‘a pig’ 一头猪

ma³ ji² kɔ⁴

horse one CL

‘a horse’ 一匹马

In Daohua, there are a number of nominalizing morphemes that can attach to the end of a verb or predicate, which vary depending on the volition and transitivity of the verb. They can express the subject, direct object, instrument, location or means of the verbal action¹⁷⁴. Such lexically specified nominalizers, similar to those in nDrapa, are expressed by suffixes on the verb, viz. *-zẽ*, *-di*, *-tʂ^hu*, or *-fa* (Atshogs 2004:62), illustrated in (5-40)-(5-43). These morphemes

¹⁷⁴ 分别表示动作主体，动作直接涉及对象，动作发生地点或凭借工具，动作的方式方法等等。(Atshogs 2004:20)

are claimed by Atshogs (2004:76) to be from Chinese *rén* 人 ‘person’, *de* 的 ‘NMLZ’, *chù* 处 ‘place’, and *fǎ* 法 ‘method’, respectively.

(5-40)

ʂo² ‘speak’ 说

ʂo²-zě ‘the one who’s speaking’ (说话者)

ʂo²-di ‘the content of what will be expressed’ (将要言说的内容)

ʂo²-tʂ^hu ‘the place where it was said’ (言说的地点)

ʂo²-fa ‘the way it was expressed’ (言说的方式方法)

(5-41)

tɕiẽ⁴ ‘see’ 见

tɕiẽ⁴-zě ‘the one who’s discovering’ (发现者)

tɕiẽ⁴-di ‘refers to seeing (only used in the negative)’ (复指‘见’这个动作)

tɕiẽ⁴-tʂ^hu ‘the range of discovery’ (发现对象的范围)

tɕiẽ⁴-fa ‘the way one found out’ (发现方式)

(5-42)

sɿ³ ‘die’ 死

sɿ³-zě ‘the one who’s dead’ (死者)

sɿ³-di ‘refers to dying (only used in the negative)’ (复指‘死’这个动作)

sɿ³-tʂ^hu ‘the place of death’ (死亡地点)

sɿ³-tʂ^hu-fa ‘the way one died’ (死亡方式)

(5-43)

tsəu³ ‘walk’ 走

tsəu³-zě ‘the one who’s walking along’ (行走者)

tsəu³-di ‘refers to walking (oneself)’ (指行走这个动作本身)

tsəu³-tʂ^hu ‘the path, goal or means of walking’ (行走的道路目标或工具)

tsəu³-fa ‘the way of walking’ (方式方法)

5.2.3.4 *Summary*

The surveyed features for the noun phrases of Daohua, Dege and nDrapa are organized into the following chart. Features in parentheses, such (?) or (+) indicate that a value for that category is in many ways open to interpretation of the original source.

Table 19 Comparison of nominal features in Yajiang

Features	Daohua	Dege	nDrapa
ablaut inflection	N	Y	Y
case-allomorphy	NONE	MANY	SOME (?)
nominal plural marking	REGULAR (OPTIONAL?)	OPTIONAL	OBLIGATORY
pronominal specification	VERY LITTLE	VERY MUCH	SOME
semantically specified nominalizers	Y	Y	Y
ergative alignment	Y	Y	N
marked case categories	7	7	7 (+)
distinct case morphemes	4	4	10+
Classifiers	Y	N	Y

Unsurprisingly, all languages exhibit a good deal of compounding, though Daohua is interesting from the perspective of the sometimes multilingual etymology of its compounds' constituent parts. All languages also exhibit more than a little affixation, though impressionistically nDrapa seems to have more. At the level of root-internal morpho-phonological phenomena, both Dege and nDrapa exhibit much more complexity than Daohua, which seems not to have any. Dege has an impressively large number of allomorphs for case markers, while, as we will see in the next section, nDrapa has a similar amount for verbal categories of aspect and mood.

Also complex in Dege is the pronominal system, which is crosscut by gender, number, an inclusive/exclusive distinction, as well as having forms for other meanings, such as the "family plural". nDrapa, too, while not quite as baroque as Dege, does mark for dual and plural as well, and also an upstream/downstream distinction on its demonstrative pronouns. Daohua, on the other hand, imports a very simple pronominal system from Mandarin Chinese. While plurality is optional in Dege, it is marked more regularly in Daohua than it is in Mandarin (using a

Mandarin morpheme *些* ‘some’, sometimes double-marked on pronouns), and is obligatorily marked in nDrapa. Also, all languages have various semantically specified nominalizers, though nDrapa seems to have only two. This feature is also common in Dali, as we will see in 6.2.3.

As for NPs, all three languages have post-nominal modification and quantification, with Daohua and nDrapa patterning together in the order N-Num-CL/MW. (Unfortunately, there is insufficient data for this pattern in Dege, but Atshogs regularly mentions that the local Tibetan variety in Yajiang is N-CL/MW-Num in comparisons with Daohua. Note that Amdo, in 4.2.5.1 does follow this order as well.) Finally, one may note that in cases of lengthier modification, nDrapa may take pre-nominal modifiers, which are marked by a relativizing morpheme *mpə³¹zə³¹*, similar in function to Sinitic nominalizer *de* 的.

While Daohua and Dege are ergatively aligned, nDrapa is accusative. Such distinctions are carried in the languages’ case system, in which all three languages mark several categories post-positionally on nouns. Daohua, which has a mixture of Tibetan and Sinitic-origin morphemes as its case markers, has considerable homophony of form, the same being true for Dege, to a lesser extent, which mostly uses the morpheme *-ki* (which correlates with the Kham Tibetan form borrowed by Daohua) for multiple functions. nDrapa has a more variable system, with some categories, for example the object marker, allowing for multiple different morphemes, making the distinction between true case particles and simple postpositions more blurry, a regularly recurring theme in this dissertation. (See 4.3.1.3 for such a distinction for the Xining dialect and 6.2.3.4 for the same phenomena in the Dali region.)

A comparison of the three languages’ case morphemes highlights their similarities and differences, as shown in the chart below. Note that in Gong’s (2007) grammar, nDrapa also has

complementizers, nominalizers, comparatives, and a “nature” marker tx^{31} , not shown here.

Also, I suspect the Dege associative case functions the same as the Daohua comitative case, being only a difference in terminology between researchers, but a closer comparison would be needed, as there is a formal distinction between the two forms (Haspelmath 2008).

Table 20 Case marking morphemes in Daohua, Dege and nDrapa

	Daohua	Dege	nDrapa
ergative	ki	ki	---
dative/accusative	---	le	wu ³¹ , la ³¹ and t ^h a ³¹
instrumental	ki	ki	kə ⁵⁵ tə ³¹
possessive	ʂe 上	---	---
comitative	ʂe 上	---	mts ^h a ³¹
associative	---	tõ:	---
locative	ʂe 上	le	various
ablative	de	lɛ:	ŋ ⁱ ³¹
genitive	di 的	ki	zə ³¹
benefactive	---	---	vi ⁵⁵ and tɕe ³³

Daohua has a set of Sinitic-origin classifiers, though they are small in number, while nDrapa is described as having a large number of its own classifiers. Dege, representative of Tibetan in general, appears to have very few measure words, allowing numerals to directly follow a noun. Atshogs (2004:71-72) notes the difference in word order between Daohua, which has Numeral-CL/MW, and the local Tibetan variety with CL/MW-Numeral. However, overall Daohua patterns with Dege, as well as nDrapa, in having post-nominal modification, unlike Chinese with its pre-nominal modification.

Finally, note that the only features from Table 19 above that are shared with Southwest Mandarin, as surveyed in 3.4.3.3, are nominal classifiers and plural marking. The latter feature, in the form of 些 [ɕie⁵⁵/ɕi⁵⁵], is one way that Southwest Mandarin differs from Standard Mandarin, and so it is rather unremarkable areally that Daohua would also mark the plural.

Whatever one feels about Daohua's origins, it apparently carries over the SW Mandarin marker to its grammar.

5.2.4 Verb Phrase Morphology

As in previous sections, this section is an areal overview of local language features, focusing on the verb phrase (VP), first providing a broad overview of Dege and nDrapa, then followed by Daohua.

5.2.4.1 *The Dege Tibetan VP*

The minimal verb phrase in Dege consists of simply a verb, as in the imperative. The maximal Dege verb phrase involves modifying elements before the verb head, followed by aspect/modal morphemes, negation, auxiliaries and question and evidential particles following the verb Häsler (1999:133).

Some basic Dege verbs have alternating stems depending on the aspect of the verb (Häsler 1999:147). Dege verbs also show alternating pairs between what Häsler calls "controllable" and "non-controllable" verbs, which other authors sometimes refer to as "volitional" versus "non-volitional" verbs. She (1999:134) describes the distinction as between when the agent has control over the action described by the verb (i.e., controllable) versus "whenever the agent has no direct control over the event, that is, whenever something takes place which cannot be consciously controlled by the subject [i.e. the experiencer or the patient]..." (i.e. non-controllable). In this sense, the distinction goes beyond simple transitive/intransitive pairs, invoking volition, as even transitive action can be out of one's control. She gives examples that include those listed in (5-44), some of which have apparently more abstract relationships:

(5-44)

bō: 'to soak'	vs.	pō: 'to get soaked'
ngō? 'to take off'	vs.	kō? 'to crumble'
p ^h ø: 'to drive out'	vs.	pø: 'to come out'
sø: 'to rear'	vs.	s ^h ø: 'to increase'
tō: 'to scatter'	vs.	nt ^h ō: 'to get scattered'
kō̄: 'to put on'	vs.	kō̄: 'to wear'
ts̄? 'to plant'	vs.	s̄? 'to get stung'

The agent of controllable verbs and the patient/experiencer of non-controllable verbs is marked with ergative case. Both controllable and non-controllable verbs may have transitive and intransitive usages (Häsler 1999:136-137).

Tense in Dege is conveyed by adverbs preceding the verb. More integral to the verb phrase are aspect markers. The aspect and modality morphemes are given by Häsler (1999:166) as follows in (5-45). For example sentences, the first three are illustrated in (5-46)-(5-48):

(5-45)

- le ལེ¹⁷⁵ imperfective
- si སི་ progressive
- zī: ཟིན་ perfective
- tɕɣ ལྷུ་ potential
- dʒi གྱིས་ prospective (PROS) (expressing a wish or strong intention)
- sa ས་ possible (POSB) (expressing the speaker's belief the proposition is true, without definite knowledge)

(5-46) Imperfective

k ^h ø:	pōmō	nde-la	gā-le	re:	
3.ERG	girl	this-DAT	like-IMPFV	COP.IMPFV	
'He likes this girl.'					(Häsler 1999:167)

(5-47) Progressive

talō	lō	ja:mā	ɕē:-si	ŋge	
this.year	grain	good	grow-PROG	COP.INFER.PROG	
'This year the grain is growing very well.'					(ibid.)

¹⁷⁵ Note that this is a phonetic, rather than etymological spelling, as there is debate about which Written Tibetan morpheme the Dege imperfective marker may correspond to.

(5-48) Perfective

ŋɛ: rɑ sɛ-zī: jī:
1.ERG goat kill-PFV COP.PFV
'I killed the goat.'

(Häsler 1999:168)

Negation within the verb phrase usually is marked by a prefix on the final verb, either *mɑ* 𑜇 or *mɑ* 𑜈, though it may follow final existentials and copulas. For disyllabic verbs and auxiliaries, the negative morpheme is infixes after the first syllable, as shown below. Examples of negation are shown in (5-49) and (5-50):

(5-49)

ŋɑ lɛ:kā mō:bo lɛ: mɑ-mø:-dɿ?
1.ABS work much work NEG-like-IMPFV.VIS
'I do not like to work a lot.'

(Häsler 1999:207)

(5-50)

ŋɛ: ndɛ hɑ<mɔ>gō
1.ERG this <not>know
'I do not know this.'

(Häsler 1999:214)

5.2.4.2 The nDrapa VP

A defining feature of nDrapa, as with most Qiangic languages, is the presence of directional prefixes on verbs, many of which are lexicalized to the point of having nothing to do with actual direction. The directional prefixes include *ɿ*⁵⁵- 'upward 向上', *ɑ*⁵⁵- 'downward 向下', *kə*⁵⁵- 'front; upstream 向上游方', *ŋə*⁵⁵- 'bottom; downstream 向下游方' and *tə*⁵⁵- 'at an unspecified orientation 不定朝向'. Examples¹⁷⁶ from Gong (2007:39) include those in (5-51).

¹⁷⁶ Note that, judging from Gong's presentation, there does not appear to be any morphophonological alternation.

(5-51)

- ɪ⁵⁵-bdzu⁵⁵ 跳高 ‘high jump’
- ɪ⁵⁵-ʂtɕɪ⁵⁵ 站 (站立) ‘stand up’
- kə³⁵-bdzo⁵⁵ 扑 ‘rush at’
- tə⁵⁵-bdzu⁵⁵ 跳远 ‘long jump’
- a⁵⁵-mt^ho⁵⁵ 踩 ‘to step on’
- a⁵⁵-ʂt^hui⁵⁵ 用指按 ‘to press one’s finger down’
- ŋə⁵⁵-mŋɪ⁵⁵ 闻 ‘to hear’

Besides existentials, auxiliaries (such as modal verbs) and some optative verbs, most verbs take a directional prefix in speech, marking such spatial references as up/down the mountain and up/down the river, even in the absence of such geographical entities. Such prefixes are not, however, commonly used in the habitual, future or progressive forms. Gong (2007:79-80) provides a paradigm for the verb ‘walk 走’, *zɪ⁵⁵*, shown here in (5-52). The grammaticalization of these properties mean that their semantic values are often abstracted away from any concrete reference to streams or mountains, perhaps similar to directional particles in English verbs such as “to look up” a word in a dictionary. Such lexically bleached usage is illustrated for verbs like ‘marry’ and ‘miss’ in sentences in (5-53) and (5-54):

(5-52)

mountain peak direction	ɪ ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘walk up’	向上走
away from the river direction	ɪ ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘walk away from the river’	背河方向走
down mountain direction	a ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘walk down’	向下走
towards river direction	a ⁵⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘walk towards the river’	向河方向走
upstream direction	kə ³⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘to walk upstream’	向河上游方向走
downstream direction	ŋə ³⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘to walk downstream’	向河下游方向走
no definite direction	tə ³⁵ -zɪ ⁵⁵ ‘to walk’	走

(5-53)

ndza ³⁵	pɪ ³¹	bdza ⁵⁵ -mts ^h a ⁵⁵	tɪ ⁵⁵ te ⁵⁵	ŋə ³⁵	kə ⁵⁵ -t ^h u ³¹
Zhaba	person	Han-COMIT	each.other	relative	DIRP-marry
扎巴	人	汉 (助)	互相	亲	(前加) 结

‘Zhaba and Han people marry among each other.’

扎巴人和汉人之间相互通婚

(Gong 2007:80)

(5-54)

to ³¹ zi ⁵⁵	jo ³¹ zi ⁵⁵ -za ³¹	ji ⁵⁵ k ^{hə} ⁵⁵	s ^h ui ⁵⁵ -zi ³¹	i ⁵⁵ -tʂi ⁵⁵ tʂə ³¹	za ³⁵
3PL	REFL-GEN	home	person-PL	DIRP-miss	COP
他们	自己(助)	家里	人(复数)	(前加)想念	(助)

'They miss their own relatives.'

他们想念自己的亲人们

(ibid.)

Adjectival meaning is expressed through predication in nDrapa. In such cases, adjectival predicates also take directional prefixes, adding the meaning of 'becoming', as in the following example of (5-55) (Gong 2007:98-99):

(5-55)

tʂ ^h yi ⁵⁵ 'fine; subtle 细'	>	kə ⁵⁵ -tʂ ^h yi ³¹ 'to become fine or subtle 变细'
ji ³¹ ji ⁵⁵ 'small 小'	>	kə ⁵⁵ -ji ⁵⁵ 'to become small 变小'
ve ³⁵ 'coarse 粗'	>	ŋə ³⁵ -ve ⁵⁵ 'to become coarse 变粗'

In some instances, the same morpheme may take different directional prefixes, resulting in different semantic outcomes. For example, the adjective ʂ^hi⁵⁵ʂ^hi⁵⁵ 'long 长' may take the directional prefix ŋə³⁵, thus ŋə³⁵ʂ^hi⁵⁵, meaning 'to become long 变长'; however, with the directional prefix i⁵⁵, thus i⁵⁵ʂ^hi⁵⁵, the meaning is 'to become tall 变高' (Gong 2007:99). For more information on nDrapa directional affixes, including verbal and aspectual collocations, particularly from an areal perspective, see Shirai (2009).

Reference to time is expressed through adverbials in nDrapa, rather than tense marking, but verbs do mark for aspect, while a number of modal auxiliaries can follow the main verb in the predicate (Gong 2007:96). Gong (2007:80) lists the following aspects for nDrapa: plain (一般 unmarked), habitual (惯常), futurity (将行), progressive (进行), perfective (已行), completive (完成) and experiential (经验). Some of these have more than one form to mark the same aspect, and for most there are distinctive forms for the first person versus third person. Also,

as mentioned above, most verbs will take a directional prefix, but the habitual, futuritive and progressive aspects generally do not allow for a concomitant directional. Gong (2007:82) provides the following paradigm in (5-56) for the intransitive verb *ntɕ^{hi55}* ‘to see 看’:

(5-56)

First person	Third person		
kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55}	kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55}	‘see’	看
ntɕ ^{hi55} tʂ ^{hɪ55} ; ntɕ ^{hi55} ndu ³⁵	ntɕ ^{hi55} tʂ ^{hɪ55} zɛ ³¹ ; ntɕ ^{hi55} ndu ³⁵ zɛ ³¹	‘often see’	常看
ntɕ ^{hi55} ɕ ^{hu55} zɛ ³¹	ntɕ ^{hi55} ɕ ^{hu55} a ³¹ zɛ ³¹	‘will see’	将看
ntɕ ^{hi55} tʂə ⁵⁵	ntɕ ^{hi55} tʂə ⁵⁵ zɛ ³¹	‘seeing now’	正看
kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} gi ³⁵	kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} ʂti ⁵⁵ (a ³¹)	‘saw’	看了
kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} wu ⁵⁵	kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} wu ⁵⁵ (a ³¹)	‘fully saw’	看完了
kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} nə ⁵⁵	kə ⁵⁵ ntɕ ^{hi55} nə ⁵⁵ (a ³¹)	‘have seen’	曾看过

In the above paradigm, the *a³¹* morpheme appearing in the perfective, completive and experiential aspects indicates that the speaker does not have direct knowledge of the event, thus an evidentiality marker showing conjecture. In 5.2.6.2, we will see other ways nDrapa marks evidentiality morphophonologically.

Besides aspect, there are also five moods marked in the verb phrase: declarative, interrogative, imperative, prohibitive (禁止式; three types) and negative, some of which involve inflection on the final vowel, others a prefix, or both. A simple example of marked imperative inflection is given below in (5-57), where the final vowel of the prefixed verb becomes /u/ (Gong 2007:87-89):

(5-57)

ɪ ⁵⁵ -dzi ³¹	>	ɪ ⁵⁵ -dzu ³¹ 'please sit!'	请坐!
kə ⁵⁵ -tsɪ ⁵⁵	>	kə ⁵⁵ -tsu ⁵⁵ 'please eat!'	请吃!
ɪ ⁵⁵ -ŋj ³¹	>	ɪ ⁵⁵ -ŋu ³¹ 'please have a rest!'	请休息!
(cf. a ⁵⁵ -to ⁵⁵	>	a ⁵⁵ -to ⁵⁵ 'please recite it!')	请念!

Sentences are negated with either *ma*⁵⁵ or *mə*⁵⁵. The latter appears between the directional prefix and the verb, or between the verb and the aspect marker or auxiliary; the former, from the examples given, seems to precede copulas and statives, and follows the verb *və*⁵⁵ ‘to come’ (Gong 2007:90-91). Examples of negated sentences appear in (5-58)-(5-59) (ibid.).

(5-58)

tʊ ³¹ zə ⁵⁵	və ⁵⁵ -ma ³⁵	zə ³¹
3	come-NEG	COP
他	来 (否定)	(助)

‘He’s not coming. (I believe.)’
他不来。(我认为)

(5-59)

ŋɪ ⁵⁵ -zə ⁵⁵	s ^h ɪ ⁵⁵	tsɪ ⁵⁵	tə ⁵⁵ -tɕ ^h ɣi ³¹ -mə ⁵⁵ -wu ⁵⁵
1PL-AUX ¹⁷⁷	wheat	still	DIRP-harvest-NEG-CMPL
我们(助)	麦子	还	(前加)收割 否定 助, 完成)

‘We still haven’t finished harvesting the wheat.’
我家的麦子还没有收完

There are eight different existential verbs, depending on the semantics of the subject and the nature of its existence. Shirai (2008:11) notes that the animacy of the subject will affect the semantic meaning of the existential in certain cases, as can be seen in the examples in (5-60) from Gong (2007:93), illustrated in sentences in (5-61) and (5-62) (ibid.):

(5-60)

nə⁵⁵ ‘existing’ (存在)
pʊ³⁵ ‘possessing’ (拥有)
tɕɣi⁵⁵ ‘having animacy’ (有生命)
ɕi⁵⁵ ‘being on a surface’ (在表面)
tɕə⁵⁵ ‘being inside of’ (在里面)
tɕa⁵⁵ ‘being positioned at’ (放置物)
ndzʊ⁵⁵ ‘colluding with, mixed’ (伙同, 混合)
ndzɿ⁵⁵ ‘mixing with’ (搀杂)

¹⁷⁷ I was unable to clarify exactly what this morpheme is. It appears to be part of the first person plural pronoun, perhaps something like the “family plural” in Dege, described in 5.2.3.1. (See Gong 2007:64.) Or it could be part of the plurality of the pronoun, though the Chinese glossing as “auxiliary” makes this seem unlikely.

(5-61)

tʂo ⁵⁵ mba ³¹	ʒɪ ⁵⁵ ʒɪ ⁵⁵	kʰə ³¹	ndza ⁵⁵	pɪ ⁵⁵	nə ³⁵
village	every	inside	Zhaba	person	EXIS
村子	每	里	扎巴	人	有

'There are Zhaba people in every village.'

村村都有扎巴人

(Gong 2007:93)

(5-62)

ptʂə ³⁵	kʰə ³¹	tə ³⁵	ndzɿ ⁵⁵	ze ⁵⁵
alcohol	inside	water	EXIS	COP ¹⁷⁸
酒	里	水	有	(助)

'The alcohol is mixed with water.'

酒里搀着水

(Gong 2007:95)

Gong (2007:91-93) also discusses transitivity pairs (自动态 vs. 使动态; literally “active voice versus causative voice”) under the topic of grammatical voice (动词的态). The distinction of causative versus non-causative either involves the typical Tibeto-Burman initial-consonant alternation or the addition of a causative suffix *-tʂ^hu³¹*. The consonantal alternation includes both voiced vs. voicing contrasts and aspirated versus non-aspirated, as well as some irregular alternations, as illustrated in (5-63):

(5-63)

tə ⁵⁵ də ³¹ 'to break 断'	tə ⁵⁵ tʰə ³¹ 'to break 折断'
a ⁵⁵ do ³¹ 'to shed 脱落'	a ⁵⁵ tʰo ³¹ 'to peel 剥皮'
la ⁵⁵ la ⁵⁵ 'to roll up 摇摆 (intrans.)'	ʎa ⁵⁵ ʎa ⁵⁵ 'to roll up (trans.) 使摇摆'
tə ⁵⁵ ptʂɪ ⁵⁵ 'to break 断了 (intrans.)'	tə ⁵⁵ ptʂɪ ^h ɪ ⁵⁵ 'to break (trans.) 弄断了'
a ³³ tʂɿ ⁵⁵ 'to fall 落'	a ³³ tʂɿ ^h ɿ ⁵⁵ 'to knock off 使落下'
ŋə ³⁵ ʂtʰe ⁵⁵ 'to come out 出来'	ŋə ³⁵ tʰe ³¹ 'to take out 取出'
kə ⁵⁵ tʂɪ ⁵⁵ 'to eat 吃'	kə ⁵⁵ tʂɪ ⁵⁵ -tʂɿ ^h u ³¹ 'to feed 喂'
ɕa ³⁵ 'to leave 离开'	ɕa ³⁵ -tʂɿ ^h u ³¹ 'to drive out 打发走'

¹⁷⁸ This morpheme, judging from its distribution, is presumably an evidentially marked copula, similar to *ze⁵⁵*. It appears to have a close relationship with the existential/locative verbs, but I did not find a particular passage explaining its usage. See Gong (2007:93-95) for relevant data.

5.2.4.3 *The Daohua VP*

The verb phrase in Daohua is quite complex, as many morphemes collocate with others in discourse, and contribute semantic distinctions in their combinations extending beyond their constituent parts. The two main categories of verbal marking are evidentiality, which has a two-way distinction between subjective and objective (a distinction sometimes termed conjunct/disjunct for other languages), and aspect, of which there are seven distinctions. The same distinctions and collocations are carried by final copulas and evidentials, which are also part of the predicate. As such, it is somewhat difficult to speak of the verb phrase and informational discourse marking, discussed in 5.2.6.3, separately.

Daohua also has a controllable and non-noncontrollable (自主与非自主) category of verb, operating the same as that of Dege, described in 5.2.4.1 above. In Daohua, the choice between such verbs has an interrelationship with the verbs' tense, mood and aspect, non-controllable verbs marking fewer aspects. The overall aspects include progressive (现行), continuative (持续), futurity (将行), inchoative (即行), perfective (已行), completive (完成) and experiential (经验). Non-controllable verbs only mark progressive, continuative and inchoative.

Below is a chart, based on Atshogs (2004:55-60), which lays out the aspect morphemes as he describes them, in concord with their egophoric subjective/objective markers. An explanation of forms, and their collocation, follows the chart. Note here, however, that their functioning as units, rather than as morphologically complex concatenations, even though a partial analysis as such might seem readily available, seems to be a basic assumption of Atshogs, who presents them as below. The complexity of forms taking on unrelated functions in combination when utilized by the verbal-evidential system will be regionally contextualized in 5.3.1.2. Explaining

the same type of system in the Kham Tibetan dialect of Dongwang, in northwest Yunnan,

Bartee (2007:135) offers the following overview:

“These forms not only have multiple functions, but also can combine with other forms to create new functions, and can be skewed by speakers for discourse/pragmatic reasons. The issue of glossing conventions turns out to be a small problem in comparison to these larger substantive issues. So while the system can serve cross-referencing-like functions, it is not exactly a cross-referencing system. Similarly, while the system can serve evidential-like functions, it is not exactly an evidential system. Additionally, while it can mark new and old information, more or less control, more or less empathy, more or less distance in time and space, etc., it does not exactly or only mark any one of these.”

Suffice it to say here, however, that issues related to evidentiality, and their interaction with other grammatical functions, such as verbal aspect and person marking, are still very much open questions in the field. Or, at any rate, it is beyond the abilities of the current presentation to sort out their intricacies, and so I prefer to keep the author’s work as originally presented, in the absence of further data regarding individual morphemes’ function.

Table 21 Daohua Aspect Markers in Subjective and Objective Forms

	Subjective	Objective	
Progressive	k ^h e- ʂl	k ^h e-se	
Continuative	dijiu ³	dijiu ³ li	
Futuritive (interrogatives)	∅	li-ma (2 nd person)	se (3 rd person)
Futuritive (declaratives)	ʂl	se	
Inchoative	ts ^h ɛtsu ⁴ -..... (see below)	ts ^h ɛtsu ⁴ (see below)	
Perfective	lɔ	e-lɔ	
Completive	wɛ̃ ² -lɔ	wɛ̃ ² e-lɔ	
Experiential	ko ⁴	ko ⁴ se	

In 5.2.6.3, the interplay between aspect and evidential marking, and their use in discourse, will be further discussed, as it pertains to the subject of the sentence and the sentential mood. Note that in the chart above most combinations of subjective/objective stance and aspect result in a neat two-morpheme pairing, where morphemes like *se*, *li (-ma)* and *e* can be seen as

morphemes added to the subjective form to mark objective stance. The futuritive aspect, however, consists mostly of zero-marking or copula forms. (Copulas are discussed in 5.2.6.3 on discourse marking.) At any rate, as a function of the Daohua grammatical system, it is best to think of aspects and subjective/objective stance pairings as functioning together as a unit, as their role in discourse is often not recoverable from their constituent parts, and collocations are common in certain environments.

The subjective form is the less marked aspect from an egophoric perspective. For example, the progressive aspect involves the morpheme *k^he*, a Tibetan-origin morpheme, with *ʂl* added for the subjective and *se* added for the objective. While *ʂl* is from the Chinese copula *shì* 是, *-se* seems to be independently from Daohua, perhaps a merger of a Tibetan copula morpheme with similar function, viz. *ze³¹* or *re³¹*, with the Chinese copula *shì* 是 (Atshogs 2004:55, 73, 79).

The continuative is an interesting morpheme, in that its etymological origin, identical with that of Wutun's continuative (see 7.2.3.2), is clear, especially when written with Chinese characters: it is formed by the morpheme *di*, from Mandarin *de* 的, followed by the existential *jiu³*, also from Mandarin, viz. *yǒu* 有. Recall from 3.4.3.5 that it is a common aspect marker in Southwest Mandarin, where I glossed it as POT-EXIST, for reasons stated there. In Southwest Mandarin it plays a role in marking both the durative, analogous here to Daohua's continuative, perhaps, as well as the perfective aspect. However, as the Daohua continuative functions as a unit, and it is difficult to ascribe meaning to both of its syllabic constituent parts in the language based on the data provided, I am treating it, somewhat against intuition, as a single morpheme. (Atshogs universally hyphenates all forms by syllable, and so it is difficult to determine whether he considers it one morpheme or two.) Not followed by any discourse morpheme, *diju³* indicates

subjective stance, while it takes the morpheme *li*, said to be from Mandarin, viz. *哩* (Atshogs 2004:73-74), to mark objective stance.

Other aspects include the perfective *lɔ*, which originates from Mandarin *了*, while the *e*-marker of the objective form appears to be independently from Daohua (Atshogs 2004:75). The completive, which is built upon the perfective, adds the morpheme *wɛ̃²*, originating from Mandarin *wán* 完 'to finish' (Atshogs 2004:75). Finally, experiential *ko⁴* is purported to be from Chinese *guó* 过 'to pass', itself a marker of experiential aspect in Mandarin (Atshogs 2004:75). Like the progressive, it simply takes *-se* to mark the objective perspective.

The futuritive has different forms for the objective evidential when asking a direct question, namely the form *li-吗* /*li-ma*/. In all other occurrences it is marked with the copulas *ɟ* for subjective and *se* for objective, except for subjective interrogatives, which would be conveyed by some other means not discussed by Atshogs (ibid.57).

I include here examples of two aspects, the progressive and the continuative. The distinctions between the progressive, as in (5-64), and the continuative, as in (5-65), to me are not fully clear, as reflected in my translations from Atshogs (2004:26-27).

(5-64)

Progressive

我茶喝 k^he-ɟ

wo cha he-k^he-ɟ

1 tea drink-PROG-SUBJT

我正在喝茶

'I am drinking tea.'

他 ki 茶喝 k^he-se

ta-ki cha he-k^he-se

3-ERG tea drink-PROG-OBJT

他正在喝茶

'He is drinking tea.' (objective stance)

(5-65)

Continuative

我茶喝 dijiu³

wo cha he-djiu³

1 tea drink-CONT.SUBJT

我正在喝着茶

'I am drinking tea.'

他茶喝 dijiu³-li

ta cha he-djiu³-li

3 tea drink-CONT-OBJT

他正在喝着茶

'He is drinking tea.' (objective stance)

The inchoative aspect has a complicated paradigm that differs according to the volition of the verb, the subjective/objective stance of the speaker, the person of the verb and whether the proposition is a statement or question (Atshogs 2004:58). Its basic form is *ts^hetsu⁴*, said to originate from Mandarin *cái zuò* 才做 'to have just/only now done', followed by other aspect markers and/or copulas (ibid:74). For the same reasons as continuative *djiu³*, I also treat it as a single, disyllabic morpheme, differing from Atshogs' hyphenated notation. In examples (5-66) and (5-67) below, illustrated for first person (second and third person, which pattern together, utilize different sequences of such morphemes), alternate forms for the aspect markers, i.e. which morphemes follow *ts^hetsu⁴*, differ as to whether an action or a state is emphasized in the utterance (ibid.58). As is clear from such examples, more than one of the illustrated aspect morphemes may appear in a predicate to form meanings such as "to be about to V".

(5-66)

我饭吃 ts^hetsu⁴-ʃ/ ts^hetsu⁴-djiu³

wo fan chi- ts^hetsu⁴-ʃ/ ts^hetsu⁴-djiu³

1 rice eat-INCH-SUBJT / INCH-CONT.SUBJT

我正要吃饭

'I'm just about to eat (rice).'¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ It is not clear from Atshogs' text whether the doubled aspect morphemes should be taken as agglutinated to the verb or separate.

(5-67)

我病 ts^hɛtsu⁴-k^he-ɣ̣ / ts^hɛ-tsu⁴-li

wo bing-ts^hɛtsu⁴-k^he-ɣ̣ / ts^hɛtsu⁴-li

1 sick-INCH-PROG-SUBJT /INCH-FUT

我[似乎]正要生病

'I am [apparently] just about to get sick.'

More will be said, with further illustration, on the VP in the section on evidentiality and other discourse marking in 5.2.6.3.

Finally, Daohua's verbs can also be marked as causative or passive. Theoretically, any verb can be made causative by adding the prefix *tɕiɔ-*, from Chinese 叫 *jiào*, as in *tɕiɔ-tɕ^hɿ²* 'cause to eat'; *tɕiɔ-ɕui⁴* 'cause to sleep'; *tɕiɔ-tɕ²* 'cause to hurt' and *tɕiɔ-tɕiɛ⁴* 'cause to see' (Atshogs 2004:71). As the author points out, this morpheme order, in addition to the etymology of the causative marker, follows Chinese, rather than Tibetan order.

5.2.4.4 *Summary*

All of the languages in this region mark aspect, rather than tense, the latter carried by adverbials (though note that "futuritive" functions as an aspect in Daohua and nDrapa). This is of course a property they share with all Sinitic languages. As for the aspect markers themselves, which are summarized in the chart below, nothing particularly stands out as striking: Daohua for the most part uses Mandarin-origin morphemes, combined with evidential particles and categories, and other than a Tibetan borrowing in the progressive, *k^he*, not shared with Dege, it has no more in common with Tibetic than with Qiangic, as far as which aspects are marked, or shared forms. Perhaps the local Tibetan dialect of Yajiang is more similar in this fashion than is Dege. Finally, as illustrated in 3.4.3.4, it is difficult to give a concise summary of the exact number of aspects marked in Southwest Mandarin (there appear to be nine, based on

Zhang, Zhang and Deng (2001:57), each with multiple means of indication), and a correlation with the morphemes used to mark each one, given that so much of the literature on SW Mandarin aspect is filled with collocations, variations and periphrastic forms.

Table 22 Comparison of Aspect Forms in Daohua, Dege and nDrapa

	Daohua	Dege	nDrapa
progressive	-k ^h e	-si	-tʂə ⁵⁵
continuative	-dijiu ³ 的有	---	---
futuritive	<i>copula combinations</i>	---	-tʂu ⁵⁵ ze ³¹
inchoative	-ts ^h etsu ⁴ 才做	---	---
perfective	-lɔ 了	-zĩ:	-gɿ ³⁵ (1 st person)
			-ʂtɿ ⁵³ (3 rd person)
imperfective	---	-le	---
habitual	---	---	-tʂɿ ⁵⁵ or -ndu ³⁵
completive	-wɛ̃ ² 完	---	-wu ⁵⁵
experiential	-ko ⁴ 过	---	-nə ⁵⁵
potential	---	-tɕɣ	---
prospective	---	-dzi	---
possible	---	-sa	---

The most striking feature of the verbal systems of the region is their interaction with the evidentiality and subjective/objective marking discussed further in 5.2.6. This is especially true for Daohua and Dege Tibetan, and though there are some ways in which evidentiality figures into the aspectual system of nDrapa, it is not clear it has the same templatic properties as the other two languages. A fuller analysis is certainly¹⁸⁰ called for.

The complex interplay of the verbal systems is not limited to only evidentiality, however. In Dege, some verbs have alternate stems depending on their aspect, and forms differ as to whether they collocate with controllable or non-controllable verbs. The latter is also a feature of Daohua and of nDrapa. nDrapa and Dege also have typical Tibeto-Burman transitivity pairs, inherited from lost prefixes of the protolanguage, the same as Amdo Tibetan in 4.2.4.1, and

¹⁸⁰ No pun intended.

Lalo and Lisu in 6.2.4.2. Nothing of the sort is noted for Daohua, which is only shown to have a causative prefix, cognate with a Mandarin causative verb, and which precedes the verb root.

With the vast majority of Daohua's vocabulary coming from Sinitic, rather than, say, inheriting Tibeto-Burman lexemes, this is probably rather unsurprising.

Finally, nDrapa stands out for having more marked categories than Daohua, or even Dege. In addition to aspect, it has morphologically marked mood, which involves both ablaut and affixation. As mentioned above, its aspectual system is interwoven with its pronominal system, and this is true for the directional prefixes, too. The latter obligatorily appear on verbs, but only for a subset of aspects. They also do not appear on existentials, of which nDrapa has eight distinct verbs, though they do appear on predicate adjectives, often with interesting semantic interplay. Neither Daohua or Dege have this Qiangic feature of directional prefixes.

5.2.5 Constituent Order and Syntax

This section surveys the syntactic properties of the region, focusing on the order of constituents in and between clauses. First it gives a picture of Dege and nDrapa syntax, then takes a look at Daohua, which is in most ways similar to the former two.

5.2.5.1 *Dege Tibetan Syntax*

Like all varieties of Tibetan, Dege is verb-final, with ergative alignment. The predicate, which is verb head-initial, consists of a series of morphemes, including complements, and followed by evidentially marked copulas (to be discussed in 5.2.6.1). Häsler (1999:196) seems to treat verb chains and/or verbal complements as “compound verbs”, noting that up to three verbs may be used together in a compound, and that the V2 verbs--that is the second position verbs, which she explicitly marks as such in her glosses--tend to convey information about movement (often the verbs for ‘come’ or ‘go’, marking direction toward or away from the speaker), position

(utilizing verbs for ‘stay’, ‘sit’, ‘put’ or ‘finish’) and modal, cognition and experiential verbs. A sampling of examples from Häsler (1999:198-208) are given in (5-68)-(5-71) below:

(5-68)

ŋa kʰātsō: tɕʰɿ tɕē:-sʰō:-zī: jī:
 1.ABS yesterday water swim-V2:go-PFV COP.PFV
 ‘Yesterday I went swimming.’

(5-69)

tɛrī: lɿʔ-te pʰi dʒǎ:-ɣa:-le re:
 today manure-the there spread.out-V2:DUR-IMPFV COP.IMPFV
 ‘Today, they are scattering the manure.’

(5-70)

sō:ŋī: ŋa dēkē(-le) ndzɔ-sā:-si jø:
 tomorrow I.ABS Dege(-DAT) go-V2:think-PROG COP.PROG
 ‘I plan to go to Dege tomorrow.’

(5-71)

tā tɛ ŋē:ba-tɕi re:, ŋa tɕā-mə-pʰø:
 horse that mean-one be 1.ABS ride-NEG-V2:dare
 ‘That horse is a mean one. I don’t dare ride him.’

This set of verbs acting as V2s in the VP include morphemes that could be expressed as aspect particles in other languages, such as experiential *guo* (过) in Mandarin. For example, an experiential verb *ŋō:* in (5-72) and habitual verb *tɕ:* (from the independent verb ‘to spread’) are presented in (5-73) below:

(5-72)

ŋa ʎāsā-le wō:ma ŋī: ndzɔ-ŋō:
 1.ABS Lhasa-LOC time two go-V2:experience
 ‘I went to Lhasa twice.’ (Häsler 1999:210)

(5-73)

kʰō tɕūxɿ jī:-ty: kʰø: ŋimā tāpā: õ:mā tʰū:-tɕ:, ŋɛ: rj:
 3.ABS child be-when he.ERG day every milk drink-V2:HAB 1.ERG see
 ɕŭ:
 PFV.STRONG
 ‘When he was a child he drank milk everyday, I saw it.’ (ibid.)

The indirect object usually precedes the direct object in ditransitive clauses, as in (5-79):

(5-79)

tʊ ³¹ zə ⁵⁵	ve ⁵⁵ ŋə ³¹ p ^h a ³¹ -wu ³¹	pi ³¹	te ⁵⁵	tɕyi ⁵⁵	tə ³⁵ -k ^h ui ³¹
3	brother-OBJ	brush	one	CL	DIRP-give
他	兄弟 (助词)	笔	一	支	(前加) 给

'He gave [his] younger brother a brush.'

他给了弟弟一支笔

(Gong 2007:116)

Modifiers usually follow their head in nominal clauses, as in (5-80) (Gong 2007:132):

(5-80)

dzyi ³⁵	ɕi ⁵⁵ tɕi ⁵⁵	zɪ ³⁵	ŋi ⁵⁵ ŋi ⁵⁵
fish	big	cloth	red
鱼	大	布	红

'big fish' 大鱼

'red cloth' 红布

Clauses are often linked by means of adverbials or conjunctions, as in (5-81) and (5-82).

(5-81)

ŋa ⁵⁵	e ⁵⁵ bʊ ⁵⁵	ɪ ⁵⁵ -kɪ ⁵⁵ -ʂɪ ³¹	a ³¹ pʊ ³⁵	ə ³⁵ ŋə ³¹ ,	tsɪ ⁵⁵	zɔ ³¹
1	cotton.clothing	DIRP-wear-PFV	EXIST	although,	but	still
我	棉衣	(前加) 穿 助	有	虽然	可是	还
ɱui ³¹ ɱui ⁵⁵	vi ⁵⁵	ze ⁵⁵	bdi ³⁵	ze ³¹		
very	cold	AUX ¹⁸²	feel	COP		
很	冷	(助)	觉得	(助词)		

'Even though I wore cotton-padded clothing, I still feel very cold.'

我虽然穿了棉袄，还是觉得很冷

(Gong 2007:152)

(5-82)

mə ⁵⁵ ku ³¹	li ⁵⁵	ʂa ⁵⁵ zɪ ⁵⁵ ,	ŋɪ ⁵⁵	ve ⁵⁵ tʊ ⁵⁵	zi ⁵⁵ -tʂə ⁵⁵
weather	good	if	1PL	PN	go-PROG
天气	好	如果	我们	瓦多	去 (助)

'If the weather is good, then we'll go to Waduo.'

如果天气好的话，我们就到瓦多去

(Gong 2007:153)

¹⁸² See footnote to example (5-62). I am not sure what the exact function of this morpheme could be.

5.2.5.3 Daohua Syntax

Daohua has SOV constituent order, as illustrated in (5-83)-(5-85); however, so long as the verb is final, the rest of the sentential elements can have a relatively free word order, as in (5-85).

(5-83)

我走 ʃl

wo zou-ʃl

1 walk-FUT.SUBJT

我将要走

'I will walk/leave.'

(Atshogs 2004:21)

(5-84)

他 ki 饭吃 dijiu³-li

ta-ki fan chi-dijiu³-li

3-ERG rice eat-PROG-OBJT

他正在吃饭

'He is eating (rice) right now.'

(Atshogs 2004:23)

(5-85)

他 ʃe 书多多有 se /书他 ʃe 多多有 se

ta-ʃe shu duo-duo you se /shu ta-ʃe duo-duo you se

3-LOC book many-many EXIST OBJT /book 3-LOC many-many EXST COP

他有很多书

'He has many books.'

(Atshogs 2004:21)

Atshogs (2004:52) gives the same sentence as (5-85) in the local Tibetan dialect, in (5-86):

(5-86)

k^ho⁵¹-la yi³¹ki⁵¹ mǔ³¹tɕ^hɛ̃⁵⁵ jo³¹-lə re³¹

3-DAT book many EXST-OBJT COP

'He has many books.'

As already noted in 5.2.3.3, nominal morphemes are initial in an NP, with modifiers and quantifiers following the head noun (Atshogs 2004:22). An example of a quantified NP is in (5-87), while an NP with a modifier is given in (5-88) (ibid.). Note the order of Num-CL, which is the same as Chinese, opposite of that of Tibetan, when measure words are used.

(5-87)

我们家 ʒe 牛三个有

wo-men	jia-ʒe	niu	san-ge	you
1-PL	home-LOC	cow	three-CL	EXIST

我们家有三头牛

'Our family has three cattle.'

(5-88)

布黄黄 di 个有

bu	huang-huang-di	ge	you
cloth	yellow-yellow-GEN	CL	EXIST

我有块黄黄的布

'I have a (very) yellow cloth.'

Atshogs (2004:53) gives the same example as above in local Tibetan, shown here in (5-89):

(5-89)

re ¹³	se ⁵⁵ bo	tɕi ⁵¹	jo ³¹
cloth	yellow.color	CL	EXIS.SUBJT

'I have a very yellow cloth.'

Complements, auxiliaries and sequential verbs follow the main verb in the predicate, in an agglutinative string of morphemes, as shown in (5-90) and (5-91) (Atshogs 2004:22):

(5-90)

他 ki 车子新 di 骑 de 走 e-lə

ta-ki	che-zi	xin-di	qi-de-zou-e-lə
3-ERG	bicycle	new-GEN	ride-ABL-leave-OBJT-PFV

他把一个新车子骑走了

'He rode away on a new bicycle.'

(5-91)

哭死 ts^hetsu⁴-li

ku-si-ts^hetsu⁴-li

cry-die-INCH-OBJT

哭得要死的样子

'crying oneself to death'

5.2.5.4 *Summary*

With much of the interesting grammatical properties carried in the verb phrase, relatively little is written about these three languages in terms of higher-level syntax. All three are verb-final, and head-initial in the NP and VP, minus various prefixes. All have an array of morphemes that follow the verbal head of VPs, including auxiliary verbs of direction, verbal complements, and evidentiality markers. And all have clause-final conjunctive morphemes that serve to connect clauses in complex sentences. As the researchers for each language focused on different features of the VP for each language (V2 positioning for Dege, for example), there is currently little to compare syntactically. Note that any instance in 5.2.5.3 where Daohua is said to pattern more like “Chinese” or “Sinitic” than Tibetan, it refers equally to local Southwest Mandarin syntax as Standard Mandarin, based on my examination of the literature on the former.

5.2.6 *Discourse Marking*

This section presents some features of information marking and evidentiality in the predicate, first for Dege and nDrapa, then for Daohua.

5.2.6.1 *Dege Tibetan Discourse Marking*

Dege has an extensive system of marking evidentiality (the speaker’s source of knowledge and/or confidence in its validity) and what Häslér calls empathy (the stance of the speaker with regards to identification with the subject, whether first, second or third person), what some others call egophoricity, and which I have been referring to as subjective/objective stance marking¹⁸³. The encoded meanings are expressed by final auxiliaries and particles, which, in the

¹⁸³ See fn. 122 in 4.2.6 for a definition of egophoricity and sources on understanding related terminology.

case of evidentiality markers, in turn take on different forms for the four different aspects. As such, this system looks almost identical to the one described for Daohua above.

At least some of the evidentiality auxiliaries come from grammaticalized instances of verbs meaning ‘to say’, ‘to hear’, ‘to appear’ or ‘to come’ and ‘to go’. The evidentiality markers are given in a chart by Häsler (1999:138):

Table 23 Dege Tibetan Evidential Marking

Evidentiality	Unmarked	inferential	Experiential		Hearsay/narrative
			sensory	visual	
Aux. used to build the:					
Imperfective	<i>j̃i: / r̃e:</i>	<i>r̃e:ngē</i>	<i>t̃saʔ</i>	<i>-d̃yʔ</i>	<i>-t̃saʔ</i>
Progressive	<i>j̃ø: / j̃ø:r̃e:</i>	<i>ŋg̃e</i>	<i>t̃saʔ</i>	<i>-d̃yʔ</i>	<i>-t̃saʔ</i>
Perfect	<i>j̃ø: / j̃ø:r̃e:</i>	<i>ŋg̃e</i>	<i>ŋō̃.¹⁸⁴</i>		
Perfective	<i>j̃i: / r̃e:</i>	<i>r̃e:ngē</i>	<i>ɕ̃ũ:</i>	<i>t^hē:</i>	<i>-s̃yʔ</i>

Empathy, or egophoric, markers come in strong and weak forms, and can be used to strongly identify with another party, or to distance oneself from one’s own statements or positions. The “normal” use of an empathy morpheme is to identify with oneself or group, but “marked” usages can pertain to the aforementioned situations, or cases where the speaker wishes to stress familiarity with a situation (thus overlapping with semantic categories of evidentiality) or to express unexpected or accidental actions (thus a kind of mirativity). Weak empathy markers can also be used to mark background information in discourse, as well as in reported speech, or in the recounting of actions in a dream.

Specific auxiliaries have contrasting morphemes for the strong and weak empathy markers. Namely, existential auxiliaries mark strong empathy with the form *j̃ø:* and weak empathy with *ŋg̃e*; equative (i.e. copular) auxiliaries mark strong empathy with *j̃i:* and weak empathy with *r̃e:*; and other auxiliaries use *ɕ̃ũ:* and *t^hē:* for strong and weak empathy, respectively.

¹⁸⁴ Used as a second verb in a V2 construction.

For example, Hassler (1999:140-143) provides the following examples of copula auxiliaries in

(5-92)-(5-95):

(5-92)

ŋa-tshō dzamə jī:
1PL.ABS Chinese COP.IMPFV
'We are Chinese.' (strong empathy)

(5-93)

k^hō-tshō pø:pā rē:
3PL.ABS Tibetan COP.IMPFV
'They are Tibetans.' (weak empathy)

(5-94)

ŋa tʂɑ:-zī: rē:
1.ABS belch-PFV COP.PFV
'I belched.' (weak empathy)

(5-95)

k^hōnō: sɛ: tō:-ji ndzɔ-si jø:
3PL.ABS food beg-NMLZ go-CONT COP.PROG
'They are going to beg for food.' (strong empathy)
(The speaker has told them to do so.)

Additionally, there are other copula verbs that show an inferred state, and vary by aspect and empathy, such as *rē:ŋgē:*, which indicates a direct observation, as in (5-96).

(5-96)

kōxū-tē māmā rē:ŋgē
apple-the red COP.INFER.DIRECT
'This apple is red.' (The speaker sees the apple)

Dege also has a marker of mirativity, *sɣ?* ལྷག་, denoting an element of surprise from the agent, as in the examples in (5-97) and (5-98), from Häslér (1999:194-195). (Note that, when combined with the perfective verb form, the marker simply denotes a narrative register.)

(5-97)

ndzē:-te tēnē: x^hā k^hȳ jø:-sȳ?
ghost.ABS-the then meat carry COP.PFV-MIR
'The ghost, then, brought meat.'

(5-98)

ŋā nȳ: jø:-sȳ?
I.ABS money COP.PFV-MIR
'I have money!' (The speaker is surprised by this fact.)

5.2.6.2 *nDrapa Discourse Marking*

In 5.2.4.2., we saw a paradigm for the verb 'see', *ntɕ^hi⁵⁵*, in which a final particle *a³¹* indicated conjecture, as in *kə⁵⁵ ntɕ^hi⁵⁵-nə⁵⁵ (a³¹)* 'he has seen (conjecture)'. Another way this is marked is by the addition of a *p-* prefix on the verb root (which will follow an initial nasal or sibilant consonant), as in the following examples in (5-99) (Gong 2007:83):

(5-99)

kə ⁵⁵ pt ^h ɪ ³¹	'(he) drank' (conjecture)	他喝了
kə ⁵⁵ ptsɿ ³¹	'(he) ate' (conjecture)	他吃了
kə ⁵⁵ ŋptɕ ^h i ³¹	'(he) saw' (conjecture)	他看了
kə ⁵⁵ ptə ³¹	'(he) hit' (conjecture)	他打了

Yet another method involves the insertion of a labial feature in the verb root for third person forms when the nucleus contains a high vowel, which may be manifest as rounding on the initial consonant or an onglide before high vowels, as shown in (5-100) (ibid.):

(5-100)

tə ³⁵ ŋɪ ⁵⁵ 'to loan out 借出'	becomes	tə ³⁵ ŋui ³¹ or tə ³⁵ ŋ ^w i ³¹
tə ³⁵ k ^h ɪ ³¹ 'to give 给'	becomes	tə ³⁵ k ^h uɪ ³¹ or tə ³⁵ k ^{hw} ɪ ³¹

Such alternations are in variation with the suffixal forms of marking aspect described above, and tend to only appear on frequent verbs such as "give" or "see" (ibid). Therefore, the various ways of expressing 'he ate', with *tsɪ³¹* 'to eat', could be as in (5-101)-(5-104) (Gong 2007:85):

(5-101)

tʊ³¹zə⁵⁵ kə⁵⁵-p-tɿ³¹ (or p-tɿ³¹)

3 DIRP-PFV-eat

他 (前加) 吃 (已行体)

'He ate' (direct knowledge)

他吃了 (亲验语气)

(5-102)

tʊ³¹zə⁵⁵ kə⁵⁵-p-tʰɿ³¹ (or p-tɿ³¹) a³¹

3 DIRP-PFV-eat CONJEC

他 (前加) 吃 (已行体) (助词)

'He ate.' (indirect knowledge)¹⁸⁵

他吃了 (非验语气)

(5-103)

tʊ³¹zə⁵⁵ kə⁵⁵-tɿ⁵⁵-ʂtɿ⁵⁵

3 DIRP-eat-PFV

他 (前加) 吃 (助, 已行体)

'He ate' (direct knowledge)

他吃了 (亲验语气)

(5-104)

tʊ³¹zə⁵⁵ kə⁵⁵-tɿ⁵⁵-ʂtɿ⁵⁵ a³¹

3 DIRP-eat-PFV CONJEC

他 (前加) 吃 (助, 已行体) (助)

'He ate.' (indirect knowledge)

他吃了 (非验语气)

Like Daohua and Dege, nDrapa also has distinct copulas (判断词) to mark modes of evidentiality. The regular sentence-final copula is zə³¹, but one may use tɿ³⁵ or ji⁵⁵ to express certainty in a reply, question or negative statement (Gong 2007:95). Gong (ibid.) notes that they may appear with any pronominal subject, and as far as I can tell, there are no other paradigmatic factors at play in their usage.

Satoko Shirai (2007) surveys the evidential system of nDrapa, specifically the Mätro dialect (a northern dialect, unlike the southern dialect described by Gong 2007), which in addition to

¹⁸⁵ One wonders whether the aspiration on the root initial is a typo by Gong (2007:85).

evidential particles at the end of the sentence, has a logophoric pronoun *tɰ*¹³, which is a specialized pronoun standing in for anaphoric relations to referents in reported speech, as well as point-of-view verbal suffixes, a conjunct/disjunct system of copulas, disjunct markers for auxiliaries, and a mirative/admirative marker *-sa*. Examples from Shirai (2007) follow¹⁸⁶:

Directly observed information, as well as generally known facts (to nDrapa-speaking people), are unmarked in nDrapa, as in the following sentence in (5-105) (Shirai 2007:132-133):

(5-105)

¹³aHja ⁵⁵ɕjε=rε ⁵³nguʔtɕi-rε ¹³somuŋi ⁵⁵Hgenbε=da ⁵⁵ndzenda
 father say=ST leader-PL tomorrow temple=at worship
¹³vo=d-ε=dε
 come=IMPFV-OBJT¹⁸⁷=HSY

‘Father said, “The leaders will come and worship at the temple tomorrow.”’

Information that is inferred is conveyed with the final particle *ba*, as illustrated in (5-106) (Shirai 2007:129):

(5-106)

¹³moʔgu ¹³a-dε=dλ=ba
 rain DIRP-fall=IMPFV=INFR
 ‘I guess it’s raining.’ (inside a room, on hearing the sound of rain outside)

Reported information is marked with the final particle *dε*, as in (5-107) (Shirai 2007:129):

¹⁸⁶ It will be quite clear that Shirai’s transcriptions differ dramatically from Gong’s. This surely would not all be down to dialectal difference. I have not attempted to reconcile any of the segmental correspondences, but I have made the following adjustments to tonal notation:

Shirai, across several publications, uses a diacritic notation for tones, which she marks word-initially, viewing the phonological word as the basic Tone Bearing Unit—and for good reason. (See 5.2.2.2.) Her transcription is consistent, marking three contrastive tones, except that the level tone is considered mid by Shirai (2007), but high by Shirai (2008). Going with the latter, I have given her three diacritics the following Chao numeral notation:

High Falling (ˊ) = 53
 High Level (ˉ) = 55 (based on Shirai 2008)
 Low Rising (ˋ) = 13

¹⁸⁷ Shirai uses the terminology conjunct/disjunct for what other authors, as well as myself throughout this dissertation, have labelled as subjective/objective egophoric stance. As such I have substituted the terms.

(5-107)

¹³moʔgu ¹³a-dε ¹³d-ε=dε
rain DIRP-fall IMPFV-OBJT=HSY
'I heard that it's raining.'

The logophoric pronoun is exhibited in the following sentence in (5-108) (Shirai 2007:130):

(5-108)

¹³jenλ ¹³tθ ¹³zjε ⁵⁵gə-dzε ¹³Hji=dε
yesterday LOG antiphonal.song DIRP-sing 1.PAST=HSY
'(According to him,) yesterday he sang antiphonal songs.'

Compare also the subtle distinction in the following two sentences, (5-109) versus (5-110), differing by final point-of-view marker *a* in the former (Shirai 2007:135):

(5-109)

¹³jenλ ¹³ηoro ⁵⁵Htεwu ⁵⁵gλ-ʔdj-a
yesterday 3SG PN DIRP-arrive-POV
'He arrived at Tau yesterday (I saw him arrive).'

(5-110)

¹³jenλ ⁵⁵ηoro ⁵⁵Htεwu ⁵⁵gλ-ʔdi
yesterday 3SG PN DIRP-arrive
'He arrived at Tau yesterday (I was in the same bus toTau).'

The nDrapa mirative particle is exemplified by the following in (5-111), which is strikingly similar in form to the Dege mirative marker *sɣʔ* (Shirai 2007:147):

(5-111)

⁵⁵ηoro=rλ ⁵⁵nεvo ¹³duwa ⁵⁵te ¹³ndu=sa
3SG=of sister smoke drink ITER=MIR
'His sister smokes!'

5.2.6.3 Daohua Discourse Marking

As we saw in 5.2.4.3, Daohua verbal aspects also combine with expressions of various instantiations of a subjective/objective stance marking. Additionally, and partly overlapping with the categories from this aspectual-egophoric marking, Daohua has a set of evidentiality

suffixes that marks whether or not the speaker has first-hand knowledge of the events of the predicate. Such degrees of discursal knowledge are partly marked by special copulas and existential verbs (in Chinese literally ‘judgment words’ *pànduàn cí* 判断词), similar not only to Kham Tibetan and nearby Qiangic languages like nDrapa, but also Monguor and Amdo Tibetan further north (see 4.2.6). The auxiliaries differ from other verbs in not marking for aspect themselves when they are the sole verbal element of the predicate, and not appearing in interrogative or conjectural moods.

The morphemes ξl^4 and jiu^3 , from the Chinese copula *shì* 是 and existential *yǒu* 有, respectively (Atshogs 2004:73), mark a statement as subjective, meaning the speaker has strong familiarity or first-hand knowledge of the proposition, while se^2 and *li* mark a statement with objective egophoricity, and are more inferential in evidentiality. Furthermore, the evidentiality markers interact with the sentence type, so that the use of objective markers can add doubt or hesitation to a declarative utterance, anticipation of response to an interrogative and so on (Atshogs 2004:25). This appears very much like the system described by Keith Slater for Mangghuer in 4.2.6.2.

The phonological forms, inherited from Chinese morphemes with a similar, but functionally distinct, meaning, are given neatly in a chart from Atshogs (2004:79), presented below.

Table 24 Daohua Evidential Forms of Copulas and Existentials

		Declarative	Negative	Interrogative	Conjectural
copulas	emphasizes familiarity in subjective mood	ɣl ⁴	pə ² ɣl	ɣl ⁴ bɔ	ɣl ⁴ dijiu ³
	average familiarity in subjective mood	ɣl ⁴ se	ɣl ⁴ pə ² se	ɣl ⁴ seɔ	ɣl ⁴ dijiu ³
	objective mood	se ²	pə ² se	se ² bɔ	ɣl ⁴ dijiu ³
existentials	emphasizes familiarity in subjective mood	jiu ³	mi ² jiu ³ / mo ² te ¹	jiu ³ bɔ	jiu ³ dijiu ³ (about prior events) jiu ³ di- ɣl (about future events)
	average familiarity in subjective mood	jiu ³ se	jiu ³ pə ² se	jiu ³ se bɔ	jiu ³ dijiu ³
	objective mood	jiu ³ li	mo ² te li	jiu ³ li-bɔ	jiu ³ diji ³

Note that all the conjectural forms are built from the familiar declarative by adding the subjective continuative aspectual form *diji³*. Similarly, the interrogative form consists of the corresponding declarative form, plus a negative particle *bɔ*. Negation, for its part, differs for copulas and existentials, as it does in Mandarin, though the “average familiarity” subjective mood existential follows the copula paradigm. The negative existential *mo² te* is parallel to Southwest Mandarin *mòdé* 莫得, as discussed in 3.4.3.5. It is apparently in variation with a more Standard Mandarin-sounding *mi²jiu³*, though the choice between the two could depend on other factors (Atshogs doesn’t mention), such as the aspect of the clause, as it does in Southwest Mandarin (Stevan Harrel, p.c.). Finally, Atshogs (2004:79) believes both *pə²* and *bɔ*

to be from the Mandarin negator *bù* 不; the former precedes the copula or existential if it is monosyllabic, but inserts between the two syllables if it is disyllabic. The negator *bù* 不, as an interrogative tag particle, invariably follows the morpheme, which is not an uncommon means of asking questions in Southwest Mandarin, as shown in examples throughout 3.4.3.6. I conjecture that the *se* in the “average familiarity” rows could be from Mandarin *xīē* 些 ‘some’.

Examples of some of the copula forms are given in (5-112) - (5-116) below (Atshogs 2004).

(5-112) A subjective copula

我 $la^3mu^3 \xi^4$
 wo $La^3mu^3 \xi^4$
 1 PN COP.SUBJ
 我是拉姆。
 ‘I am Lamu.’

(5-113) A subjective copula with the subjective existential

我第一名 $\xi^4 dijiu^3$
 wo $di-yi \quad ming \xi^4 \quad dijiu^3$
 1 number-one name COP.SUBJT EXIST.SUBJ
 估计我是第一名。
 ‘I figure that I’m number one.’

(5-114) A negated subjective copula

我学生 $pə^2 \xi$
 wo $xuesheng \quad pə^2-\xi$
 1 student NEG-COP.SUBJ
 我不是学生。
 ‘I’m not a student.’

(5-115) An objective copula

我好看的 se^1
 wo $hao-kan-de \quad se^1$
 1 good-looking-SUB COP.OBJT
 我是漂亮的
 ‘I am pretty (well, aren’t I?).’

(5-116) A subjective copula and an objective copula

你好看的 η^4se

ni hao-kan-de η^4-se
2 good-looking-SUB COP.SUBJT-COP.OBJT

你是漂亮的

'You are pretty.' (an objective statement)

Likewise, the use of existentials, among other subtleties, conveys either an emphasis on the subjective evaluation of knowledge familiar to the speaker (含有强调主观熟知的情态) with *jiu³*, a plain statement of well-known, subjective knowledge¹⁸⁸ (一般熟知的主观情态) with *jiu³se*, or an objective statement (客观情态) with *jiu³-li*. The first two types are illustrated in (5-117) and (5-118). Atshogs does not provide an illustrative sentence for the objective existential *jiu³-li* (Atshogs 2004:85-88).

(5-117)

我 ηse 刀子 *jiu³*

wo- ηse daozi *jiu³*
1-POSS knife EXIST

我有刀子

'I have a knife/knives. (I tell you!)

(5-118)

我 ηse 马一个 *jiu³ se*

wo- ηse ma yi-ge *jiu³ se*
1-POSS horse one-CL EXIST SUBJT

我有一匹马

'I have a horse'

Atshogs (2004:90) provides a chart comparing the morphemes used for marking aspects involving copulas and existentials in both local Tibetan and Daohua, which point to a striking parallelism between the two languages, despite the Daohua forms for the most part using phonological forms from Chinese morphemes:

¹⁸⁸ I find this statement, and the sentence in (5-118) above ('I have a horse'), confusing because generally *se* appears as an objective stance marker, but in these two examples the translation indicates that the proposition involves subjective knowledge.

Table 25 Comparison of local Tibetan and Daohua Evidential Marking (Atshogs 2004:90)

		Copula	Futuristic	Progressive	Existential	Continuative
Tibetan	Subjective	γĩ ³¹	lə-γĩ ³¹	k ^h e-γĩ ³¹	jo ³¹	ɕejo ³¹
	Objective	re ³¹	lə-re ³¹	k ^h e-re ³¹	jo ³¹ -do	ɕejo ³¹ -do
Daohua	Subjective	ɣl ⁴	ɣl	k ^h e- ɣl	jiu ³	dijiu ³
	Objective	se ²	se	k ^h e-se	jiu ³ li	dijiu ³ -li

Atshogs (2004:25-26) gives the following examples in (5-119) - (5-123) for the progressive aspect, marked by the suffix *-k^he* (one of the few function morphemes coming from Tibetan), and the continuative aspect, marked with *-dijiu³* (Atshogs 2004:26-27). In his text, though divided into two sections, both the progressive and the continuative receive the same translations and explanations, so I include them on the same line here. (According to Atshogs (2004:26), the expression ‘to drink tea’ (喝茶 *he cha*) also means ‘to eat a meal’ (吃饭 *chi fan*.)

(5-119)

我茶喝	k ^h e-ɣl	我茶喝	dijiu ³		
wo	cha	he-k ^h e-ɣl	wo	cha	he-dijiu ³
1	tea	drink-PROG-SUBJT	1	tea	drink-CONT.SUBJT

‘I am drinking tea right now.’

我正在喝茶 (subjective stance)

(This sentence narrates the speaker’s own state.)

(5-120)

你茶喝	k ^h e-ɣl	不	你茶喝	dijiu ³	不
ni	cha	he-k ^h e-ɣl-bu	ni	cha	he-dijiu ³ -bu
2	tea	drink PROG-SUBJT-NEG	2	tea	drink CONT.SUBJT-NEG

‘Are you drinking tea right now?’

你正在喝茶吗? (subjective stance)

(This sentence puts forth a question from the other party’s perspective.)

(5-121)

他 ki 茶喝 k^he-ɿ

ta-ki cha he-k^he-ɿ

3-ERG tea drink-PROG-SUBJT

'He is drinking tea right now.'

他正在喝茶 (subjective stance)

(Here the speaker is very confident in the proposition's meaning.)

他 ki 茶喝 dijiu³

ta-ki cha he-diji³

3-ERG tea drink-CONT.SUBJT

(5-122)

他 ki 茶喝 k^he-se

ta-ki cha he-k^he-se

3-ERG tea drink-PROG-OBJT

'He is drinking tea right now.'

他正在喝茶 (objective stance)

(This sentence states a proposition whose meaning has no subjectivity (称述没有主观态度意味).)

他 ki 茶喝 dijiu³-li

ta-ki cha he-diji³-li

3-ERG tea drink-CONT-OBJT

(5-123)

你 ki 茶喝 k^he-se

ni-ki cha he-k^he-se

2-ERG tea drink-PROG-OBJT

'You are drinking tea right now.'

你正在喝茶 (objective stance)

(This sentence does the same as the last.)

你茶喝 dijiu³-li

ni cha he-diji³-li

2 tea drink-CONT-OBJT

Beyond the evidential marking on the verb stem via copulas and existentials, there is the more familiar pattern of marking hearsay with final SAY-verb particles, such as seen in Xining in 4.2.6.4. In Daohua, the form is *ʂo²li*, from the Chinese morphemes 说哩 *shuō li*. Interestingly, *li* is also the form for the Wutun objective stance marker (see 7.2.5.2.). There are also final particles that mark a conjecture as being supported by evidence or not being supported by evidence, both using Sinitic morphemes. Such forms are illustrated with the verb *tʂ^hɿ²* 'to eat' (from Mandarin 吃 *chī*) in the paradigm in (5-124) below (Atshogs 2004:60-61). Not that the suffix expressing lack of evidence in a conjecture is the same form, with the same proposed origin, as the subjective existential/continuative *-diji³*.

(5-124) Conjectures with tɕʰɿ² 'eat'

no evidence (无根据)

tɕʰɿ²-di-ɕɿ⁴ '2p/3p might eat' < Chinese 的是 *de shì*

tɕʰɿ²-di-jiu³ '3p might eat' < Chinese 的有 *de yǒu*

with evidence (有根据)

tɕʰɿ²-tɕʰu-se '2p,3p might eat' < Chinese 处是 *chù shì*

Hearsay (following aspect or voice markers)

tɕʰɿ²...ʂo²li 'it's said X is eating / will eat / has eaten' < Chinese 说哩 *shuō lǐ*

Sometimes the above forms can be combined in the same predicate to convey complex propositions. For example, /VERB-kʰe-ɕɿ-dijiu³/ with a first-person subject means that the speaker is describing an ongoing action from a subjective viewpoint, and that the condition will hold going forward. With a third-person subject, it conveys that the speaker is stating their ongoing action with a subjective conjecture¹⁸⁹. Another example is the pattern /V- kʰe-ɕɿ-dijiu³-dijiu³/, which is usually used with the third person, expressing that person's ongoing action, and that the condition will hold going forward, with an objective conjecture¹⁹⁰. Final existentials can be negated by insertion of the morpheme *mi*, likely related to Mandarin existential negator 没 *méi*, between the two syllables.

As an example of a highly agglutinated verb form, Atshogs (2004:28) gives the following example in (5-125), which involves a causative prefix, an inchoative aspect, combined with a negated existential verb and double evidential marking, to produce a predicate with the structure¹⁹¹:

¹⁸⁹ 主语是自称表示动作正在进行，状态持续保持，且为主观情态；主语如果是他称，则表示叙述者对他称动作正在进行的主观拟测。

¹⁹⁰ 表示对叙述者对他正在进行，状态持续保持情况的客观拟测。

¹⁹¹ The example in (5-125), taken exactly as it appears in Atshogs (2004), but with my glosses and translation added, is included here to illustrate the potential agglutinative complexity of the Daohua verb. What I gloss as SUB is based on the assumption that the final *di* morpheme functions as it would in Chinese. Another example of a language with a similar morpheme is nDrapa, illustrated in 5.2.3.2, example (5-24), where I gloss *tr*³¹, not discussed by Gong (2007), as SUB on the same assumption, though there it would presumably constitute a borrowing of a highly productive Sinitic morpheme.

(5-125)

叫 V 才做 k^he 是的有的没有

tɕiɔ-V-ts^hetsu⁴-k^he-ɕɿ -dijju³-di-mi-jiu³

CAUS-VERB-INCH-PROG-SUBJT-SUBJT.CONT-SUB-NEG-EXIS

‘they are about to be made to be VERBing (or so it seems to me, based on my little evidence)’
[my interpretation]

The meaning amounts to a kind of subjective conjecture, where the other party is not immediately present, and the action, being caused to happen (是动态), is about to be in progress, with the period of time that is about to unfold serving as the speaker’s point of reference¹⁹² (Atshogs 2004:28).

5.2.6.4 Summary

Evidentiality and egophoricity are major features of the grammatical systems of the languages of Kham, and I can only scratch the surface of their functions and systematicity here. All surveyed languages make use of evidentially specified copulas and existentials (in Chinese publications termed ‘judgment words’ *pànduàn cí* 判断词) that appear at the end of the verb phrase, even after adjectival and verbal predicates. Daohua and Dege exhibit a very similar system, with a major bifurcation between subjective and objective stance, and a further distinction between “strong” or “emphatic” and “weak” or plain egophoricity in Dege (termed empathy by Häslér 1999). In turn, such forms are integrated into a paradigmatic system of verbal marking—collocated with aspect, collocated with sentence type, and so on—that makes for quite a complex system of marking.

nDrapa evidentiality is also carried through the insertion of a labial prefix/infix on the verb stem, quite unlike any other language I have surveyed in this dissertation. However, nDrapa, to

¹⁹² 同样表示一种主观拟测，拟测的内容是，对方没有正处在一种状态：即马上进行某种动作（使动）的状态；并且正要进行的时间也是以叙述者的时间为参照。

a greater extent, seems more reminiscent of Ngwi languages, in terms of evidentiality, in that much of the evidentiality is carried on instantiations of a paradigm of sentence-final particles, though there are some verbal collocation paradigms as well. For their part, Daohua and Dege, on top of the verbal paradigms, also make use of sentence-final particles, such as the hearsay marker for Daohua (developed from the Sinitic verb for ‘say’) and the mirative marker *s̃ɿʔ* for Dege, which is perhaps borrowed—at least through some Kham variety—into nDrapa, as *sa*.

5.2.7 The Lexicon

This section discusses properties of the Daohua lexicon, with reference to the dual nature of its inventory. It first briefly examines what others have noted of the Dege and nDrapa lexicons, with reference to areal borrowing norms, especially as discussed by Shirai (2018). It then looks at the properties of the Daohua lexicon, which although predominantly Sinitic in origin, have certain Tibetic properties reflecting its unique contact-based development.

5.2.7.1 *Regional Lexicons and Borrowing*

Finally, we can mention the lexicons of the regional languages, though there is not much to say from the literature surveyed on Dege and nDrapa. Theoretical comparison of the differences between Daohua’s lexicon and other languages will be discussed further in 5.3.1.

As noted earlier, Häsler mentions that the large number of pronouns in Dege stems from regional contact. This is backed up by Shirai (2018), who uses geolinguistic methods and comparative data, including how pronouns exhibit suppletive behavior across differing paradigms in the same language, finding that pronouns, and some other common vocabulary, are freely borrowed in the roughly half a dozen languages surveyed in the Western Sichuan Ethnic Corridor (川西民族走廊, after Sun 1983) area. In particular, among a number of Qiangic

languages, and different varieties of Tibetan, the Written Tibetan first-person pronoun *nga* has been borrowed, as well as possibly the words for ‘who’ (*su*) and ‘what’ (*ci*), showing different inflectional properties than would have been expected from simple inheritance.

The portion of the nDrapa lexicon borrowed from other languages comes predominantly from Tibetan, with not a few Chinese loans. A study by Huang Bufan (1991), cited by Gong (2007:13), found that, out of a study of 2,150 words, 19% were Tibetan loans, 3% Chinese and 8% were borrowings from an unknown source (非明显借词). nDrapa loanwords from Tibetan include primarily words relating to religion, government, culture and “cultural life (文化生活)”, as well as means of dividing years into months and labelling years by astrological sign (Gong 2007:44). Additionally, there are more commonplace nouns, including animals, plants, tools and ecological phenomena, such as $\alpha^{55}gi^{31}$ ‘monkey’, $\eta\alpha^{31}mu^{55}$ ‘camel’, $t\epsilon^hu^{31}z\alpha^{55}$ ‘embankment’, ϵ^he^{55} ‘glass’ and $t\epsilon^h\alpha^{31}ndz\alpha^{55}$ ‘flood’ (ibid:44-45). Shirai (2018:265-266) shows that the words for ‘sun’, ‘lime’, ‘leaf’ and ‘head’ are also most likely Tibetan borrowings.

From Chinese, the semantic fields of loanwords primarily include words for material supposedly introduced by Han people, including a large number of food terms. Furthermore, the Chinese borrowings represent different lexical layers of chronological contact, e.g. the borrowing for ‘tile’, $\gamma\alpha^{35}$, contains voiced velar fricative onset not found in Southwestern Mandarin, argued by Gong (2007:46) to reflect an earlier borrowing¹⁹³. Also, words for ‘soap’

¹⁹³ This onset appears only rarely in the data provided by Gong (2007). She gives another Chinese borrowing, 芫荽 *yánsuī* ‘coriander’, which, like 瓦 *wǎ* ‘tile’, had a Middle Chinese velar nasal initial (疑声). I found one other form, 喉结 $\gamma\sigma^{55}t\zeta^hu^{55}$ ‘Adam’s apple’ (ibid.191), which does not superficially appear to be a Sinitic borrowing, despite her claim that the sound appears only in a few Chinese loanwords (“仅见于少数汉语借词音”) (Gong 2007:17). I have not made comparisons with other Sinitic loans that have reflexes of a Middle Chinese initial velar nasal, or considered how (reflexes of) Middle Chinese voiced velar initials (匣声) were borrowed into nDrapa, but at any rate the [ɣ] onset is apparently not a direct borrowing from any Sinitic variety. Southwest Mandarin tends to either maintain MC velar nasal initials, or sometimes adapt them as dentals, the same as in Standard Mandarin (see 3.4.3.3). Rather it seems to be a phonological adaptation.

(*ja*³¹ *ntce*⁵⁵ 洋碱), ‘matches’ (*ja*³¹ *xu*⁵⁵ 洋火), ‘light bulb’ (*po*⁵⁵ *tə*³¹ 泡子) and ‘spinning wheel’ (*tʂh*⁵⁵ 车) are all older lexical items for objects, each now referred to in Mandarin as *féizào* 肥皂, *huǒchái* 火柴, *dēngpào* 灯泡, and *fǎngchē* 纺车, respectively. Examples of more modern Chinese borrowings include *to*³¹ *xu*⁵⁵ ‘tofu 豆腐’, *xo*⁵⁵ *sr*⁵⁵ ‘peanut 花生’, *jr*⁵⁵ *p^he*³¹ ‘stamp 邮票’, *tɕ^hi*³¹ *tsɿ*⁵⁵ ‘flag 旗子’, *ptsɿ*⁵⁵ *nt^ho*⁵⁵ ‘scissors 剪刀’, *xu*⁵⁵ *tʂ^he*⁵⁵ ‘train 火车’ and *pi*³⁵ *ŋe*³¹ ‘graduate 毕业’ (ibid:46-47).

Finally, in some cases, for certain lexical items nDrapa has borrowed a word from both Tibetan and Chinese, such *sha*⁵⁵ *ke*⁵⁵ (<Tib.)/*ʂh*³¹ *xu*⁵⁵ (<Ch. 石灰) ‘lime (mineral)’, or *to*⁵⁵ *k^hu*⁵⁵ (<Tib.) / *tɕo*³⁵ *sɿ*³¹ (<Ch. 教室) ‘classroom’. In many cases the words are used interchangeably, but in others, for example *s^ha*³¹ *ja*⁵⁵ (Tib.) / *tʂ^ha*³¹ *xu*⁵⁵ (Ch.) ‘tea pot 茶壶’, the choice of lexical item matches the style of tea being drunk. In other cases, borrowed morphemes from Chinese and Tibetan will combine in compound words to form new nDrapa lexical items, such as *tɕi*³¹ *tʂ^he*⁵⁵ ‘car’ (< Ch. 汽车) + *dze*³¹ *le*⁵⁵ ‘path; road’ (< Tib.)¹⁹⁴, to form *tɕi*³¹ *tʂ^he*⁵⁵ *dze*³¹ *le*⁵⁵ ‘highway’ (Gong 2007:48).

5.2.7.2 *The Daohua Lexicon*

The Daohua lexicon is overwhelmingly from Chinese, including pronouns and numerals, with some vocabulary exhibiting structural changes from the original Chinese. For example, the words for ‘to rain’ and ‘to celebrate New Year’s’ are simply the inversion of those bisyllabic words from the Chinese order, viz. *jy*³ *ci*⁴ and *ŋje*² *ko*⁴, respectively (cf. Standard Mandarin 下雨 *xiàyǔ* and 过年 *guònián*). According to Atshogs (2004:18), 100% of a Swadesh list for

¹⁹⁴ As he does throughout, Gong does not specify whether the Tibetan loan is from Written Tibetan or some local variety. An online dictionary provides the Tibetan word for ‘road’ as ལམ་ཁག་ *lam khag*; I am not sure whether the borrowed form in question here is a local reflex of the term, a different lexical item or a different combination of morphemes.

Daohua is comprised of Chinese-origin vocabulary. Compared to a list of 991 vocabulary items taken from the Tibetan word list appearing in Jin Peng's (1983) *Short Grammar of Tibetan* (藏语简志), in Daohua 981 of the same words are Chinese-origin, one is Tibetan ($tʂl̥^2 k^hʂ^1$ 'loom (n.)' < Written Tibetan $k^hri k^hang$), and nine were original Daohua words, but which included Chinese-origin elements. Finally, in the author's own compilation of a list of 2240 basic vocabulary, 1,984 (88.57%) were of Chinese origin, 115 (5.13%) were of Tibetan origin and 141 (6.3%) originated in Daohua.

The areas of the lexicon that tend toward Tibetan-origin vocabulary are mostly animal and plant names, religious ritual, religious items, daily items and specialized customs, which include such words as those in (5-126) (Atshogs 2004:19):

(5-126)

Daohua vocabulary	(Written) Tibetan origin
$mɛ^3 jia^3$ 'peacock'	< rma bya
$bɛ^2 bɛ$ 'green frog'	< sbal ba
$so^1 ma^1$ 'wheat straw'	< sog ma
$ɕu^1 pɛ^3$ 'cypress leaves'	< shug ba
$jia^3 tɕ^hø^1$ 'Summer prayer meeting'	< dbyar chos
$si^3 tʂʂ^1$ 'a butter oil-fried bread for making sacrifices'	< ksol rtsam
$ka^2 wui^1$ 'a box with symbols for protection'	< ga yu
$tʂi^3 bɔ^1$ 'yak hair'	< rtsir pa

According to Atshogs (2004:41-42), the Tibetan-origin vocabulary in Daohua has the "psychological feel of borrowed vocabulary", while the Chinese-origin vocabulary acts as fundamental vocabulary. But this is only in terms of its overall percentage of the lexicon. In terms of the phonological system, and semantic reference, the Chinese vocabulary acts in a borrowed capacity, while the Tibetan phonology appears native: that is, the vocabulary from Chinese has changed to fit Tibetan phonological patterns and to designate concepts adhering to

Tibetan semantic ranges. For example, the Daohua morpheme for ‘sleep’, 睡[ʃui⁴], can apply not only to humans and animals, as in Chinese, but also to plants as well, as in (5-127):

(5-127)

麦子睡 e-lɔ

maizi shui-e-lɔ

wheat sleep-OBJCT-PFV

麦子倒伏了

‘The wheat is collapsed and lying flat.’

(Atshogs 2004:42)

Such usage more closely parallels the use of the (Written) Tibetan morpheme *ṅal* ‘sleep’ (ibid:40).

Or, to take another example, the Daohua word for clothing, *ji¹ ʃɔ̃²* corresponds phonologically to Mandarin 衣裳 *yīshang*, also meaning clothing. But the Daohua word, unlike Chinese (or at least Standard Mandarin and Sichuanese), may also refer to bedding, making it more closely align with the Tibetan morpheme *ko¹³* ‘clothing and linen’ (Atshogs 2004:93) (See Atshogs (2004:94-97) for an extended analysis along the same lines of the Daohua morpheme for ‘to hit; strike’, *tɔ³* 打.) From this perspective, Atshogs considers Daohua, rather than having a unilinear descent from a single language, to be a language born of two separate languages, underlyingly Tibetan in its semantics, but otherwise Chinese in the great majority of its phonological forms.

5.3 The Mixing of Chinese and Tibetan in Eastern Kham

In this section I summarize the findings of the survey in 5.2, and put them into a linguistic, historical and theoretical context. 5.3.1 looks at the collective linguistic features to assess whether there are trends of convergence that might be properly considered a linguistic area, in the sense of 2.2, while 5.3.1.1 considers issues of complexity in the theoretical views described in 2.4. Before making a case for whether Daohua constitutes a heavily restructured Sinitic

language, as argued by some, and as suggested for Xining in 4.3.1, or a newly formed, *sui generis* mixed language in 5.3.3, it will be necessary to consider possible socio-historical origins in 5.3.2, specifically two potential contributing factors, namely trade in 5.3.2.2 and intermarriage in 5.3.2.3.

5.3.1 The Linguistic Area

When we look at the overall linguistic picture from 5.2, what sorts of areal features and trends are to be seen? Does this set of local features point towards the kind of convergence zone we examined for Amdo in Chapter 4? How does the local setting, considerably isolated geographically, and the local community, quite small and predominantly Tibetan, influence the sort of language development that has given rise to Dege, nDrapa and Daohua?

In this section I synthesize the information presented in 5.2 with such questions in mind.

5.3.1.1 *Comparison of Local Data*

Phonologically speaking, the segment inventories of Daohua, Dege and nDrapa are all similar, with mostly the same place and manner features, and 3-way laryngeal contrasts, differing only in terms of how many segments carry that contrast (5.2.2.4). Daohua has fewer classes of consonants that contrast three ways (fricatives), or two ways (sonorants), when those contrasts would be more typologically marked.

Pre-nasalized obstruents are common, though it is unclear whether they follow in nDrapa from a greater syllabic inventory or count as one phoneme: nDrapa allows up to three consonants in a cluster, while Daohua and Dege, except for pre-nasalized consonants (which could be single segments or clusters, depending on phonological analysis), allow only one onset

consonant. None of the languages, however, allow for coda consonants, though nasality, like in much of the region, varies between being carried on the vowel, or appearing as a final segment.

Both Daohua and Dege contrast oral versus nasal vowels, and while nDrapa has a relatively simple vocalic inventory, Dege has quite a quite complex one, contrasting not only oral versus nasal features, but vowel length and possibly a glottalic feature that Häsler describes as “checked” vowels, distinct from those preceding a glottal stop (5.2.2.1). Finally, tonal inventories are modest, at 2-4, with Dege arguably being only in the early stages of tonogenesis.

With respect to morphology, the languages exhibit a good deal of mostly disyllabic compounds, which is common for Sino-Tibetan languages of China, but also have a good deal of agglutinative affixation, especially in the verb phrase (5.2.3.4). While Dege and nDrapa also exhibit significant degrees of vowel and consonantal alternations, from case and pronoun paradigms, to verbal moods, Daohua seems almost entirely lacking in this type of paradigmatic or allophonic variation.

Pronominal systems for Dege and nDrapa are generally highly specified, especially Dege, which, perhaps due to regional contact (Häsler 1999:3), is flush with pronominal distinctions (5.2.3.1 and 5.2.3.2). Daohua, on the other hand, mostly has a Sinitic pronoun system, in both form and categories. All languages mark case (5.2.3.4), though nDrapa impressionistically feels like the distinction between postpositions and true case markers is more blurry than in Dege or Daohua, at least as treated by Gong (2007). Both of the latter rely on four distinct morphemes to mark seven case roles, however. Daohua follows Tibetan in being ergatively aligned, the only purportedly Sinitic variety in this dissertation to do so, while nDrapa is accusative. However,

Daohua differs from Dege (and probably coincidentally, favors nDrapa) in requiring classifiers for counting nouns, relying on a Sinitic system. Also, all three languages make use of semantically specified nominalizers.

In the verb phrase, which is similarly agglutinative for all three, aspect, not tense, is marked, while time expressions are carried adverbially (5.2.4.4). nDrapa alone morphologically marks mood. The exception, as in other languages of this region (4.2.4 for Amdo; 6.2.4 for Dali), is in marking future events, which both Daohua and nDrapa do, but not Dege. Otherwise, the aspects marked by each language do not overlap in any surprising ways. What is interesting is the degree of collocation between a given aspect and categories of evidentiality, and their relation to pronouns and sentence types, which result in impressive paradigms, especially in Daohua and Dege, namely between which aspect and which evidentiality morpheme are chosen. Finally, all languages distinguish between the subject of a verb's volition in distinguishing control from non-control verbs.

As is obvious from the verb phrase, evidentiality and egophoricity are important properties of the systems of all three languages, and it is in this regard Daohua and Dege look most alike (5.2.6.4). nDrapa carries many of the same distinctions, minus the subjective versus objective distinction of its neighbors, but relies mostly—with notable exceptions—on final particles and auxiliaries to encode such information. Daohua and Dege utilize these means and more to mark the predicate for the speaker's stance, the source of information and its certainty.

Overall constituent order is not as well documented in my sources as the intricacies on the verbal and nominal systems themselves. All of the languages are verb-final, with head-initial nominal clauses, which includes post-nominal quantification and modification, though Daohua

differs from Dege in a Sinitic word order of Num-CL, while Dege, when it utilizes measure words, has MW-Num (5.2.5.4). That is, Daohua is non-Sinitic in its head-initial NP, but Sinitic in the order of its modifying elements. Finally, all languages look similar in the types of morphemes that follow the verb head, though Dege may allow for more verbal compounding than the other two, and all languages combine clauses into complex sentences similarly.

Finally, the lexicons of all three languages show geographic and cultural influence from Tibetan in loanword inventory (5.2.7.4). Obviously, it is the high percentage of Sinitic vocabulary in Daohua, given its Tibeto-Burman-leaning morphosyntax, that has drawn researchers' interest. There will be more to say about this in 5.3.3.1 below, but one may note that, despite the Sinitic forms, whether in functional or content morphemes, the semantic range and usage appears to align in certain ways with areal trends, a theoretical topic that will be discussed more thoroughly in the context of Dali in 6.3.1.1, and compared across all three regions of the dissertation in 8.1. For now, moving on, let us consider the issue of complexity and simplification in the central Kham area of Yajiang County.

5.3.1.2 Features of Complexity in Yajiang County, Kham

In the above survey of the Yajiang area of Kham, a few properties and grammatical subsystems of the three languages analyzed stand out as typologically marked or complex in some way. These include certain contrasts in the phonological system, especially in the Dege vocalic system, as well as the large number of allophonic variations on that language's object (dative) marker and its highly specified pronominal system. At the same time, in addition to a large set of classifiers (an asset perhaps not so impressive in the East Asian context), nDrapa has a set of directional prefixes, often obligatory on its verbs, as well as demonstrative distinctions such as

‘upstream’ and ‘downstream’, often abstracted away from any real directional reference, that makes for a highly specified grammar. Finally, both Daohua and nDrapa utilize a set of semantically marked nominalizing morphemes, a feature not found in Dege Tibetan, or in Sinitic¹⁹⁵, but present in Ngwi and Naic languages discussed in the next chapter. (See 6.2.3.)

Nonetheless, the real complexity shines through in the informational discourse system, with its control/non-control verbs, its subject/object reference marking, and its evidential particles, and the interplay between all of these morphemes and larger predicate properties such as person reference, sentential type and verbal aspect, as explained by Barteo (2007:135), quoted in 5.2.4.3.

Scott DeLancey (2013b) refers to Sino-Tibetan languages with the latter properties as opaque and paradigmatic, and contrasts them with the more transparent grammars of subgroups such as Lolo-Burmese to the south. This dichotomy will be explained and explored further when discussing the relationship of Bai and its neighbors to the broader linguistic setting in 6.3.1.3, but suffice here to say that from a comparative, as well as a descriptive, viewpoint, the languages of Kham, including Dege, Daohua and to some extent nDrapa, exhibit the kind of complexity that authors like McWhorter (2007) lay out in their comparative studies, and which Trudgill (2011) expects to be found in more isolated, smaller communities (2.4.) In that regard, as the historical studies on Kham stress (see 5.1 and 5.3.2), major trade centers like Kangding and Litang notwithstanding, the area certainly fits such a description of geographic isolation.

¹⁹⁵ A perhaps similar, but distinct, variation in nominalizing morphemes is the Cantonese use of classifiers for possessive or subordinating functions. (See Matthews and Yip 1994 :111-113.) Also, as an item of variable complexity in Sinitic, McWhorter (2007:112-113), citing Lamarre (2001), discusses how complementizer morphemes introducing resultative clauses also vary between Yue, Min and Mandarin, with the latter using the same phonological form for all types of complementizers, as well as the possessive/subordinator morpheme. Such examples are different than the semantically marked nominalizers discussed here, but interesting from the viewpoint of contrasting complexity between varieties of Sinitic and the morphosyntactic marking found in the western frontier varieties discussed in this dissertation.

It is worth pointing out here, as it will become more relevant in 5.3.3 below, that while Daohua is in some regards slightly lacking in the areal complexity enumerated above, for example, lacking laryngeal contrasts on fricatives and sonorants or obligatory marking like the nDrapa directional prefix system, it is also in some regards more “transparent”, that is lacking in fused morphemes or morphophonological alternations such as ablaut.

However, Daohua still displays its fair share of the overall complexity of the region, especially in the verbal interactions with evidentiality and egophoricity just mentioned for Dege. (nDrapa, for its part, appears to have a less developed system of information marking than Daohua, though one would balk at calling it simple.) That is, from a Sinitic perspective, especially a northern Sinitic one, it exhibits more examples of complexity, with its greater number of contrasts and segments, its case marking system and intricate discourse marking. This observation appears to hold true for Southwest Mandarin, as well, as no comparable complexity, absent in Standard Mandarin, but present in the Southwest, was uncovered when surveying the region in 3.4. And, as we will return to below, for a language with an obviously heavy degree of language contact in its past, it is far from the truncated grammars often ascribed to such simplification (2.4.3).

However, before further discussing the question of Daohua’s linguistic type and genetic affiliation, which we will return to in 5.3.3., it will benefit us to explore further the socio-historical setting in which Daohua developed. As the question of whether or not Daohua constitutes a mixed language, and given that mixed languages are historically very much the product of unique social circumstances, the discussion of origins cannot proceed without contextualizing Daohua in its historical and cultural context.

5.3.2 Historical Development

The Kham area, not unlike most of Amdo, is frequently referred to in the literature as locally autonomous, prone to lawlessness and highly multicultural, with the boundaries between ethnic groups marked by fluidity and often oversimplified in modern times as “Zang” (藏族). As but one example, Peter Kessler (1986:29), relying primarily on Rockhill’s *Land of the Lamas*, notes of the Tibetan Mili kingdom (present-day Muli County of Liangshan Autonomous Yi prefecture):

“Before 1253 (the conquest of Nan-chao by Khubilai Khan) the Kingdom of Minyag-Chagla (Chala), northeast of Mili, as well as the Gyarong principalities, located further northeast, probably did not form part of Chinese provinces, nor did they belong to the Nan-chao federation. Between 629 and 1253 they formed the eastern part of the Tibetan Empire that arose from the alliance of the Central Tibetan Yarlung Empire with the East-Tibetan Ch’iang tribes and the North-Tibetan Hor, Tang-hsiang and Tukahun tribes (Tu-yu-hun).”

He further claims that in 1900 there were “virtually no Chinese in Mili” (ibid.15).

On the other hand, by the early 20th century, British consular officer Erich Teichmann notes assimilated Chinese in the region, similar to accounts of those in Amdo noted by Robert Ekvall and others:

“He turned out not to be a Tibetan at all, but a Lao Shan...These hardy and courageous traders have been established in this valley [i.e., Tzako Valley in Khams]...for many years for the purpose of tapping the trade of the grass-country nomads...They are completely Tibetanised in dress and customs, and the second and third generation appear to become Tibetans altogether. The Lao Shan are to be found all over the Szechuan-Tibet frontier...They have their counterpart on the Kansu border in the Hsieh Chia [xiejia 歇家-N.L.], the Mahomedan middlemen who monopolise the Kokonor trade in a similar way.” (cited in Horlemann 2012:118)

That is, at a great demographic disadvantage, when Han did arrive in Kham, the pressure to assimilate to local Tibetan culture was probably significant. Where then does the role for Sinitic influence on local languages, particularly in the hypothesized formation of Daohua as a creole or mixed language (see 5.3.3 below) come from? As for the degree of Han assimilation, in some

writings it appears that the Han were not so successful in learning the local language, barely rising to the status of “pidgin Tibetan”. Rather, those accounts point out that it was the role of Tibetan women to become multilingual and thus facilitate communication for trade. However various other authors write of Han Chinese who were bilingual in Tibetan, and some to the degree of full assimilation, such that they lose their Chinese language altogether. Therefore, sources are in conflict, and in all likelihood a continuum of linguistic assimilation existed between these two extremes.

Teichmann’s above reference to the “Hsieh Chia” (Xiejia 歇家; see 4.3.2.2) of Amdo in contextualizing the Chinese traders of Kham (“Lao Shan”, perhaps a reference to the Shaanxi origin of Chinese immigrants; see 5.3.2.2), and the local *guozhuang* 国庄 trade network, is pertinent to the discussion of multiethnic and multilingual interaction, and will be dealt with in 5.3.2.2, followed by an overview of relevant literature on the resulting intermarriage in 5.3.2.3.

First, however, we turn to Chinese imperial expansion into the region, which was largely part of a power struggle between the Qing court, the Dzunggar Mongols to the northwest and the Lhasa court in Central Tibet, and its effects on local demographics. As Daohua is hypothesized by Atshogs and others to have emerged from Qing troops stationed in the region, the following section establishes how those troops arrived, what place they formed in terms of local demographics, and paints a general picture of isolated communities removed from centers of political power.

5.3.2.1 *Imperial Expansion and Demographic Change*

Though rich in natural resources, during the Yuan and Ming, the Sichuan region was considered a backwater, and after being conquered by the Qing in 1662, was grouped together with Yunnan and Guizhou as a marginal area of the empire (Dai 2006:16). Over the coming

century and a half, however, Mongol polities, including the Khoshot Oirat offshoots in the Tsaidam Valley (present Qinghai), and later the Dzungars to the Northwest, would vie for influence at the Lhasa court, and pose a threat to Qing stability across its frontier regions. In fact, it was largely competition and conflict with Tibet that was the impetus for Qing campaigns into Kham, and what ultimately led to its incorporation into Sichuan province in 1724 (Dai 2009). In the 1690s, in a plan to prevent such a Tibetan-Dzunggar alliance, the Yongzheng Emperor moved to strengthen his military forces in Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou, which had “not been under close surveillance by the central authorities” since the Wu Sangui 吳三桂 Rebellions of the 1670s (Dai 2009:54). To this end, he put Yue Shenglong 岳昇龍 in charge of Sichuan province.

Among other measures, Yue pressed for taking control of the important trade center of Dartsedo (Ch. Dajianlu 打箭爐, today called Kangding 康定). Dai (2009:58) says “[h]e reported that the Tibetans occupied, in addition to Dartsedo, thousands of *li* of the native chieftains’ territories and controlled tens of thousands of households in the area. To counterbalance the Tibetan influence, in 1698 Yue transferred 375 soldiers from the Liangshan-Wanxian garrison in eastern Sichuan to the Hualin garrison [in Hualinping to the southeast].” The move was met with swift retaliation by the Tibetan military official in the area, Changcejilie, and both sides began to amass more troops in response to the other.

Following a clash between Tibetan and Qing forces at Dartsedo in 1701, the Qing armies “...inflicted massive slaughter on the town. Consequently, almost all the male Tibetans were killed; most surviving Tibetans were women. On February 20, Tang Xishun arrived in Dartsedo and proclaimed the Qing rulership to approximately twelve thousand households of Tibetans and other non-Chinese peoples in the town and adjacent areas. (Dai 2009:61)”

Later, in 1707, a thousand more troops were sent to upgrade the garrison, following infrastructure building by the Qing. For the first time since at least the Yuan, the Chinese state was actively involved in controlling affairs in this region of Kham, and the oft-neglected backwater of Sichuan became a primary focus of the state as a buffer against Tibetan, and indirectly Dzunggar Mongol, threats.

Since at least the Ming-era, mass numbers of people from Huguang 湖廣 (roughly modern Hunan and Hubei) had begun to migrate into Sichuan as agriculturalists. Then, in the chaotic Ming-Qing transition, following the scorched earth retreat of the rebel leader Zhang Xianzhong 张献忠, the area was laid to waste, the population dropped by as much as 75%, and nature and wildlife overtook even the once-flourishing cities like Chengdu (Whiting et al. 2019; Yuan and Schmitt 2020). As such, in the early period of the Qing Dynasty, the Kangxi emperor moved to repopulate the area through forced relocation. partly due to overpopulation, but also to take advantage of the previous Kangxi Emperor's lenient tax policy on the border. Now, more than a hundred thousand people from a single county alone (Lingling county) poured in between 1697-1713, so that it was said Sichuan was being repopulated by Huguang (湖广填四川). The program worked so well that later the government attempted even to ban emigration, even forcefully returning some migrants (Dai 2009:72).

Meanwhile in the 1690s the Dzunggars were experiencing a renaissance on the deserts and plains north of Tibet. As the Qing was extending its garrisons from Xining northwestward through Kokonor (modern Qinghai) to Hami, in order to counter the Dzunggars, it set out to invade Tibet in late 1717. Its forces were no match for the unfamiliar climate and terrain of Amdo, however, and were eventually sacked by Dzunggar and Tibetan armies. The next invasion in 1720 was planned not only to proceed via Kokonor, but this time through Sichuan,

via Kham. The attack was successful and the Dzungghars were routed from Tibet. From this point Tibet became a protectorate of the Manchu Qing Dynasty of China.

The campaign forever transformed the Sichuan frontier of Kham. Troops were sent to hold Dartsedo, and then Litang. Though the Qing forces faced resistance from the local Tibetans and Mongols, who were under the nominal control of the Khoshot Mongols in Kokonor, by the fall of 1720, not only had the Qing captured Litang and Batang, but also a wide swath of Kham including Chaya, Chamdo and Chawa, leaving 2700 Qing troops stationed locally (Dai 2009: 86).

Following an unsuccessful uprising by the Khoshot Mongols the year before, in 1724 the Qing took direct control of Kokonor and the Tsaidam valley, as well as those areas of Kham that had been administered by the Khoshots or held militarily by Qing forces, and set about reorganizing the region along ethnic lines. At this point, the new border between China and Tibet was set at Jiangka (Markham 芒康), midway between Chamdo and Batang, two hundred miles west of the old border town of Dartsedo (Dai 2009:97).

After the Qianlong emperor ascended the throne following his father's death in 1735, the Qing court took a more conciliatory approach to frontier policy, and the Qing outposts between Dartsedo and Lhasa were "taken over by the local chieftains; the Qing soldiers were sent back to their original garrisons" (Dai 2009:118). However, despite a rather peaceful assumption of power, Dai notes that, with the resumption of border wars in 1745, the Qianlong emperor's reign was more violent than that of either of the previous Qing rulers.

Throughout the remainder of its existence, the Qing court was involved in various military campaigns throughout ethnic Tibet to put down rebellions, including the Jinchuan wars (大小金川之役) against Qiang and rGyalrong highlanders in the mid-to-late 18th century. In such campaigns, it was not uncommon for Chinese troops sent by the Qing to mutiny or run away to

join largely Tibetan bandit forces that patrolled the region (van Spengen 2002). Following the issue of the “Twenty-nine Article Ordinance of Government” in 1793, that had sought to put more capability for self-defense in the hands of local Tibetan forces, the Qing state entering the 19th century was “no longer as proactive in safeguarding Tibet as it had been during the 18th century” (Dai 2009:228). By this time the region was so beset by lack of rule that van Spengen comments:

“One wonders how socially and economically stable these multi-ethnic fringe lands on both sides of the cultural-ecological boundary in fact were, and whether the local populations were able to establish some permanency of existence and social integration over the years in these apparently war-torn frontier lands.” (van Spengen 2002:24)

With attention increasingly focused on the Muslim Hui rebellions on the northwestern frontier, the Qing presence throughout all of ethnic Tibet became even more reduced, and local governance remained in the hands of local chieftains, if it remained at all. Such was the situation leading into the 20th century, and when the PRC government moved into the Kham area in the early 1950s, they were essentially extending control over new lands.

5.3.2.2 *Trade*

Historically the Amdo and Kham regions have belonged to two different, but interconnected, spheres of trade between China and western regions, including Tibet and the easternmost depots of the Silk Road. Corollary routes for trading products such as tea, salt, medicines and horses extended south through the Qinghai-Gansu border and across Sichuan province to Yunnan (Hayes 2013). Even before the campaigns against the Dzunghars brought Chinese traders into Kham and Tibet, as the Qing began to explore copper, salt and coal mines in Yunnan, they already needed to access the region from Amdo as well (Dai 2009:101). As such, approaches to both regions proceeded in similar fashion.

As just discussed in 5.3.2.1, one town preeminent on the Kham trade routes was Dartsedo (Ch. Kangding 康定, formerly Dajianlu 打箭爐). Dartsedo had been an important hub of activity since the development of the tea-horse trade began in the Song Dynasty. After the Tibetan Gelugpa Sect came to prominence in the late 1400s, Tibet moved to strengthen its presence in Dartsedo, and during the Ming-Qing transition, stationed officials and troops in the area. Trade was important for development of the region, with Tibetans providing horses in exchange for tea from China. Trade restrictions during the Ming caused it to decline, though it continued on, largely ignored, until the Kangxi emperor, during the Qing, sent Yue Shenglong to strengthen the troop presence along the Tibetan border at the turn of the eighteenth century.

Seen both as the easternmost town on the Tibetan border with China and the westernmost town on the Chinese border with Tibet, Dartsedo, until quite late in history, was a preeminent frontier town, and as such brought peoples of varying backgrounds together for purposes of trade. In two very enlightening articles, Yudru Tsomu (2016, 2017) examines the role of Tibetan brokers in facilitating this cross-cultural interaction. Though there is evidence of Chinese traders who moved to the region learning Tibetan to gain prestige in the community, much intercultural business was also conducted through multilingual positions held by individuals solely as cross-culture facilitators. (Compare this with the *xiejia* outposts discussed by Bianca Horlemann (2016) in 4.3.2.2.)

Dai (2009:143) notes that in the provincial capital during the Qing era, the *yamen* (衙門, the local office of Chinese government officials) of the governor-general of Sichuan and the Chengdu general hired secretaries specializing in Tibetan language and cultural knowledge to process documents concerning affairs related to Tibet. Further west, these positions were held by ethnic Tibetans, or children of Chinese-Tibetan marriages, in trade centers like the one in

Dartsedo, referred to as *guozhuang* 国庄 “trading houses”, often operated by Tibetan women, seen fit for the job given the assumed domestic parallels at work (Tsomu 2016).

These trade houses were originally a function of the aristocratic families and chieftains of the region as a means of keeping tabs on travelers passing through and maintaining order. As traffic increased, and opportunities arose, they became commercial centers for Chinese-Tibetan trade, at their height drawing in even Europeans, Russians and Indians (Tsomu 2016:295). In 1696 Dartsedo was designated a trading site by the Qing court, and a commissioner was dispatched there as a supervisor, while later in 1702 other Qing officials were sent to set up a customs office and to supervise local trade. By 1730, upgraded to sub-prefecture status by the Qing court, the town was a mix of Tibetan, Chinese and Hui traders, where Qing civil and military personnel cohabited with the indigenous state of the local Tibetan Chakla king (明正土司), one of four *tusi* in Kham) (ibid: 294-5).

Though the Qing court and Chinese traders held a minority position in the community, their role as a source of lucrative trade and looming military power made them a force to be reckoned with, and as such the local aristocracy adopted Chinese cultural habits, and employed private Chinese tutors, to facilitate trade. By the time of the Republican era, the royal Chakla family, similar to the elite family of Labrang monastery (see 4.3.2.1), had begun to use Chinese family names when interacting with the Chinese, in this case the surname ‘Jia 賈’.

At the same time, since the mid-1300s, a growing number of merchants from Shaanxi (Ch. 陝商 *shaanshang*) had been arriving in Dartsedo and establishing their own branch shops to do business (Shi and Zou 2011; Tsomu 2016,2017). By the 1890s, Shaanxi merchants constituted five out of six Han businessmen of the 60% Han majority of traders in the region (Tsomu

2016:7). Such merchants often were not affiliated with an institution or trading firm, but were rather individuals searching for fortune, sometimes through their own personal connections.

Shi and Zou (2011:7) point out that in some cases Shaanxi businessmen, whether ultimately successful or not, did make earnest efforts to learn Tibetan, and formal materials existed to this end. They include a fascinating passage from a textbook meant to teach Tibetan to the Chinese by sounding out Tibetan words using Chinese characters (ibid.):

“To this end, there was a special edition bilingual rhyme book for ease of memorization, “Tibetan Dialogue”, transmitted throughout the day from the “teacher”, to have students practice reading: “‘Sky’ is said “lang”, earth is said “sa”. Donkeys are called “guari”; horses are called “da”. Butter is “ma” (departing tone), salt is “ca” (rising tone), a grown man’s beard is “hasure”. “Que” is ‘you’; “ke” is ‘he’. To drink tea is “jiatong”, rice is “rema”. ‘To come’ is said like “fire” (huo), ‘to go’ is said like “hot” (re) (entering tone), and Tibetans are called “Baimi”, Han called “Jia”.”

“为此，专门编有易于记忆的对译韵书《藏语会话》，由“先生”早晚传授，令学徒习读：“天叫朗，地叫撒。驴叫孤日马叫打。酥油马 [去声]，盐巴擦 [上声]，大人胡子喀苏热。却是你，可是他。喝茶糌统饭热妈。来叫火，去叫热 [入声]，番叫白米汉叫甲¹⁹⁶。”

On the other hand, the women *guozhuang* owners, whose “proficiency in various Tibetan dialects and Chinese provided them with the eloquence required to serve as brokers and to facilitate and successfully seal business deals by prevailing on buyers and sellers in business transactions”, by the twentieth century were using their cultural cachet to receive a Chinese education, on top of their Tibetan schooling (ibid). Tsomu (2016:313-314) describes the basis of trade communication thus:

“Though Shaanxi traders made great efforts to learn ‘pidgin’ Tibetan while doing business in Dartsedo...trade in the early and mid-Qing period continued to be carried out mainly through the owners of *guozhuang*, who acted as brokers...For Tibetan traders, *guozhuang* owners were natural trading allies because of their common faith and language. But equally importantly,

¹⁹⁶ It could, of course, be sheer coincidence that the character chosen to represent Chinese is *jiǎ* 甲, the same character used to indicate the foremost in a list. Note that local Tibetans that adopted Chinese surnames adopted Jia. Tsomu (2016) doesn’t provide a character, and I included 贾 as the most likely possibility. I could, of course, be wrong.

guozhuang were sources of business information and news. A language barrier prevented Chinese traders from dealing directly with Tibetan traders; both parties needed people who were fluent in various Tibetan dialects and Chinese, familiar with market conditions, well informed, and well connected, and who enjoyed a certain degree of popularity and prestige in local society to act as go-betweens in order to facilitate business deals.”

As such, at least in the bustling Tibetan entrepot of Dartsedo, despite some degree of Chinese learning “pidgin Tibetan”, according to Tsomu, much of the multilingualism stemmed from Tibetans learning Chinese for trade purposes, or the children of interethnic marriages being born into a multicultural and polyglot status, a topic we will return to in 5.3.2.2.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, *guozhuang* owners in Dartsedo had begun to decline, and their role as translators, known as *tongsi* (通司) in Chinese, began to dwindle. The reason, as Tsomu notes, was that “[i]ncreasing numbers of Tibetans spoke Chinese, and Chinese traders began to make an effort to learn Tibetan through their daily contacts” (Tsomu 2016:305). (Another factor was the increasing instability of the region, as noted in 5.1.) All in all, while some mutual language learning seemed to take place on an individual level, largely trade was handled by specialists, it seems, sometimes the progeny of mixed marriages, and the possibility for a communal language variety like Daohua to grow strictly out of a necessity for trade communication may have been quite limited, and ultimately obviated by local bilinguals.

With these local, multilingual groups in mind, then, let us examine what the literature has to say about marriages between Han immigrants and local Tibetan women, and the families they raised, who we might assume grew up in bilingual households.

5.3.2.3 *Intermarriage*

A major avenue for cultural exchange in Kham was the development of local Chinese-Tibetan families. This topic has been widely discussed by Tsomu (2016, 2017), Li (2015), Shi and Zou (2011) and Shi, Li and Zou (2010). In some cases, soldiers entering the area remained and

married local women, raising a family there. In many others, intermarriage came about purportedly to shore up ties to the local community among immigrant Chinese men, often from Shaanxi (5.3.2.1), who sought successful trade.

Though Lee (1991) points out it was Ming policy to allow leave for soldiers being relocated to the Southwest (and so presumably Kham as well) to have time to start a family before deployment, later in the Qing, instances of soldiers marrying local women is widely evident. Coleman (2002) cites accounts from European travelers to the region in the late 1880s, who claim:

“...[T]hese civil and military officials [serving as Qing representatives] were stationed there for extended periods of time, and evidence suggests that at least some (but certainly not all) of them maintained amiable relations with local Tibetans. For example, by the early twentieth century, a class of people of mixed ethnic background resulting from intimate relations between Qing officials and local Tibetans had emerged not only in Batang, but also throughout Khams. Known as lo tsā ba or a bu lags in local Tibetan, tongsi in Chinese, such people served as interpreters for Qing officials stationed in the region.” (Coleman 2002:36)

In the introduction to his grammar of Daohua, Atshogs (2004:5-7) hypothesizes that the language originated in 19th century Qing incursions, pushing deep into Kham territory, in campaigns against Tibet proper, intermarrying with local Tibetan women. He also mentions that a significant number of the Han employed in these campaigns, particularly those in charge of ferrying boats, were recruited from the “interior” (内地), which implies they were from different geographical, and perhaps class, backgrounds than the troops themselves. At first, the boatman presence was short-lived, as the government rotated them every three years, until, tired of newcomers’ accidents on the Yalong River, eventually the incoming workers were allowed to stay permanently. Chen (2017), drawing from the Yajiang County Annals, adds that the Chinese boatmen in Yajiang in 1719 amounted to only twenty persons, who intermarried

with Tibetans locally. Subsequently, a small but steady influx of other Han Chinese began to enter the area, following the permanent settlement of the ferrymen (Chen 2017:130).

Far more documented are cases of Han men marrying local women after entering the area, as traders or in some other commercial capacity. As Giersch (2001:86) points out, such cases were frequent enough in the empire's border regions to prompt an imperial ban on intermarriage in the 1720s and again in the 1770s. According to Giersch, such ties served two ends: increased assimilation of the groom to the bride's community, many times dissolving ties to his Han ancestry, and the union of two families and cultures, and thus two ways of life (ibid; cf. Shi and Zou 2011:8). Furthermore, Li (2015:5) offers that because it was so widespread that local Tibetan males should enter the monastic life, marriage with Han immigrants was one means by which Tibetan women could sustain themselves. Finally, recall from 5.3.2.1 that punitive campaigns by the Qing often resulted in gender ratio imbalances that would further incline Tibetan women to "marry out", as it were, perhaps by necessity.

Tsomu (2017:7-15) documents the ways in which Chinese and Tibetan custom intermixed in the offspring of intercultural marriages in Dartsedo. Shaanxi merchants, willing to accommodate local customs, entered the area and hoped for local acceptance to do business, often marrying local Tibetan women. Thus, their children would grow up able to communicate with local Tibetans, in general following a Tibetan way of life, as Shi and Zou (2011:9) note, echoed in a quote by Tsomu (2017:10): "Their daily life mainly reflected Tibetan cultural styles. Having adopted Tibetan dietary and living habits, they dressed in Tibetan clothes, spoke Tibetan in their daily life, used Tibetan names, and believed in Tibetan Buddhism." Though these intermarriages did result in the transfusion of Chinese cultural practice and custom into the community (as well as facilitating trade), and though festival celebrations and agricultural

customs were maintained among those of Chinese descent, many Tibetan customs were adopted, including in funerary practice, clothing, food and “lifestyle” habits (Wang 2010).

For all practical purposes, though, the children of Han-Tibetan marriages could pass as Tibetan, and in many cases, after a few generations, knowledge of Chinese language began to fade (Tsomu 2017: Shi and Zou 2011:9). Nonetheless, reports are conflicted as to how much Chinese was maintained by culturally assimilated Han and their offspring. On the one hand, Tsomu (2017:9) quotes a passage from Eric Teichman’s travel writings of the 1920s, in which the British consul is surprised to find a man “to all appearances a Tibetan” address him in fluent Chinese, but in another account Tsomu (*ibid.*) discusses a Chinese traveler to Kham from the same era¹⁹⁷, Xu Sizhi, encountering an old man descended from Shaanxi immigrants who was unable to communicate more than “a few Chinese sentences” with the traveler, forgetting even his ancestor’s surname.

If this is true, that the Daohua language arose from mixed marriages of Han soldiers and ferrymen and local Tibetan women, or more likely from those Han looking to do trade in the region, perhaps resulting in the “mixed ethnic background” locals serving as intermediaries between Qing troops and locals, then Daohua would have more likely developed in a way similar to intertwined languages like Michif or Mednyj Aleut, rather than relexification through shift or otherwise imperfect learning on Tibetans’ behalf. However, the resulting language structure, where even function morphemes are mostly repurposed Sinitic etymons, is much more a case of relexification than the “intertwining” of grammatical systems as in the North

¹⁹⁷ As an example of another surprised ethnic miscalculation, in modern Gannan, Gansu, see Vasantkumar (2012), where he long mistakes a hostel owner as Tibetan, until he directly queries him on ethnicity, finding out that, despite his Tibetan cultural and linguistic fluency, the owner is in fact Han. See also discussion in 4.3.2.2.

American cases. This would at least be a case more similar to “converted” languages, like Sri Lanka Malay, discussed in 2.3.3 and 2.5.

Like the bilingual children of Szeto, Matthews and Yip’s (2017:510) study of language mixing in L1 acquisition, such cases of mixed ethnic children growing up with both languages may only have resulted in a historical “transient grammaticalization”, before adhering to the norms of Kham Tibetan linguistic practice. The Han immigrant fathers, despite their efforts at picking up some passing Tibetan to impress the locals, may not have been a major driver of language change, either. If they were, what we might see would be a fairly simplified language variety, either through foreigner talk strategies or imperfect learning of Tibetan morphosyntax and evidentiality (see 2.4.3). However, as evidenced by the elaborate discourse-marking in the VP, and the phonologically more elaborate sound system of Daohua, as we will pursue in 5.3.3.2, such is not the case.

So what, then, should we make of Daohua? Like Wutun, discussed in Chapter 7, the speech community is small, and surrounded by Tibetan culture, with many Daohua speakers also fluent in local Tibetan. The two languages certainly share in common a tenacity for holding on to a small local language, despite lacking any apparent distinct social or ethnic identity, identifying locally as Tibetans in both cases.

In Chen’s view (2017:130-131), the rotation of boatmen to Yajiang, starting in the early 18th century, but not stabilizing until somewhat later, set the stage for a “Chinese-based pidgin” to communicate with locals. This pidgin would have found its way into the homes of Han-Tibetan families, even though they may have been quite small in number. As the children grew up, though, the pidgin could have taken on a greater life of its own in the community, thus constituting classic creolization route, but would have taken more than one generation to

stabilize into Daohua. One must assume from this that Tibetan served as a primary means of communication in the local community, and the pidgin was originally fairly limited in speakers' life not to have emerged as a full-blown language. But with the Han in such small numbers, why would the Tibetan community feel the need to accommodate a few local women's Han husbands? Would it not have been incumbent on the Chinese to learn the local speech, which, as we have seen from some accounts, they at least made some attempt at?

Chen (2017:131) uses census data to show that from the early 18th century to the fall of the Qing Dynasty in the early 20th century, when the number of Chinese households numbered 860, the Han presence grew in number to be about even with Tibetans. However, due to cultural (and linguistic) assimilation in the Tibetan community, by the mid-20th century, these previously Han households were counted as Zang for official purposes. Despite this assimilation, both Chen and Atshogs assume the Chinese presence over the two centuries provided enough of a target language in the community for local residents to aim for, which resulted in the Tibetan L1-influenced Daohua. With no schooling in Chinese (the first Chinese language school was established in 1908, but poorly attended, according to Chen), normative tendencies towards a standard language would have been lacking. This community-based Chinese, Daohua, would have then become a local mark of identity in the community (Chen 2017:132).

Chen goes on to say that Daohua further took shape as educational opportunities in Chinese became more common after the 1950's, implicitly making the claim that Daohua is a very new language of the 20th century. It is not clear, though, what form of Chinese he assumes was transmitted through those 20th century educational avenues, or how effectively it penetrated the Yajiang region. It would have likely been a variety of local Southwest Mandarin, rather than any national standard language, given the isolation of the area, however.

Given the circumstances all across China in the last few generations, if this were the case, though, then we might expect Daohua, as a local Chinese variety, to simply disappear or realign with local, if not quite “standard” (i.e. Southwest Mandarin) norms, as access to Chinese-learning became more widespread. However, it also seems possible that exposure to (Southwest) Mandarin would have simply crystallized, or at least made more distinct, the discrepancies with the highly restructured variety of Daohua, which, while certainly showing local influence in the syllable structure and development of Middle Chinese phonological categories (5.2.2.3), is nonetheless still highly distinct from regional Sinitic, not only in certain phonological processes, but in its morphosyntax and highly grammaticalized informational system (5.2.6.3). I will return to these linguistic issues, and explore them in further detail, in 5.3.3 below.

Returning to the social setting, Chen explains that, out of a sense of “intimacy and localness” (Chen 2017:136), a common motivating factor in usage for many mixed languages, but also claimed to be the case for local dialects most anywhere, Daohua developed into a marker of local identity, which may explain how it has survived rather well (compared to local Tibetan dialects, for example). Both Chen and Atshogs report Daohua L2 speakers in the Han and Zang community of Yajiang, as well as Daohua diglossia in urban versus rural settings, varying by degrees of how much Chinese influence is evident. Whether speakers see it simply as a Chinese *fangyan*, or something else, is unnoted, though they are likely aware of its “Tibetan” nature.

So the mystery of when Daohua became a large enough community language to hold its own in the contemporary era still remains. As it stands, the possible avenues for Daohua’s historical development, and the supporting evidence for each, can be summarized as follows:

1. The first possibility is that a local Sinitic language continues its development in a local Han Chinese community, under heavy Tibetan influence from their neighbors (and wives). This is essentially the argument I make for Amdo Sinitic in this dissertation (minus, perhaps, the emphasis on the wives). Presumably such a community would have settled among Tibetan residents of rural Yajiang and maintained their language and some of their customs, while assimilating significantly along both dimensions to local Tibetan norms. No one argues this route explicitly, however Chirkova's (2012b) linguistic analysis of Daohua as a Sinitic language inheriting numerous instances of Middle Chinese properties through its genetically transmitted lexicon and phonology, presented in 5.3.3.1 below, would seem to imply it.

2. The next possibility is that Daohua emerges as a Sinitic-lexified contact language via simplification and/or creolization, as a result of first incoming Han migrants communicating with local Tibetans in makeshift Chinese, and then developing as imperfect Chinese learning in the absence of standardizing education norms. This is essentially what Chen (2017) argues, assuming that Chinese served as a superstrate target language for the local Tibetans in this region of Yajiang as the former's demographic numbers grew. As discussed above, we might expect in this case, as per McWhorter's arguments about creolization's simplifying effects, that the resultant language would be a rather reduced version of the local Tibetan. However, as laid out in 5.3.1.2, with some exceptions like the pronominal system or fewer typologically marked phonological contrasts than its neighbors, Daohua exhibits similar complexity, especially in its discourse marking, to other local languages.

3. Finally, it is possible that Daohua emerged as a new language, the product of language mixing between Tibetans and Han Chinese, as the result of intermarriage in an already small and relatively isolated community. Atshogs' (2004) argument is somewhat between this

proposal and that of Chen's (2017) argument. The two authors in their writing do not appear to be in disagreement, and perhaps the bigger difference between the two is what they mean by the terms "creole" and "mixed language", which perhaps are not intended with the taxonomic precision put forth in 2.3. Nonetheless, such an origin for Daohua is not only predicated on very distinct mechanisms of development but has different implications for its structural outcome and linguistic relationship to other languages.

Chen and Atshogs' accounts, while plausible, take for granted that Chinese has historically constituted a desirable target language locally in Yajiang, considerably before the (very) recent spread of Standard Mandarin education into the area. They thus position Chinese as the superstrate to which Tibetan would play the role of substrate, despite the surrounding Tibetan culture. With children growing up in bilingual households, presumably their default opportunities would have originally been to learn both languages. However, as intermarriage may have decreased in the 19th-20th century, when presumably fewer Han moved to the area with the waning of Qing control, the number of multilingual homes may have also decreased as well, leaving Daohua possibly to serve as the local community form of "Chinese". The prime motivator, then, to continue aiming at a community L2 Chinese, at least before late 20th century educational expansion, would have had to be economic, with the promise of trade connections to the interior—an ironic historical twist, given the early efforts of Han immigrants to pick up some "pidgin" Tibetan in order to gain access to local Tibetan markets.

As such, it seems far more likely to me that the language did develop through such ethnic intermixing, but it was largely unconcerned with Chinese linguistic norms. The assumption that it arose out of a nativized pidgin, given the local isolation and demographics, seems to me less motivated, and that it was from imperfect learning of Chinese even less so. Rather, like mixed

languages elsewhere, it seems Daohua likely evolved on its own as the local home language, perhaps signaling a group identity--if not of mixed-race people, then at least of local Yajiang'ers. I will argue this from a linguistic perspective below in 5.3.3.2. But first, it still raises the question: Is Daohua genetically Sinitic or outside the family tree, as it were. That is, is it classifiable as a proper mixed language?

5.3.3 The Language Type of Daohua

In this section, building on evidence presented in 5.3.2, I consider the likelihood of two possibilities for Daohua's linguistic origins: that it was a local Sinitic variety, genetically transmitted through time, under heavy Tibetan influence, or that it was a mixed language, whose genesis lies in Qing-era Han-Tibetan intermarriage.

5.3.3.1 *The Argument from Lexicon and Phonology*

A central assumption of genetic inheritance in linguistics is that it involves the inter-generational transmission of a stock of vocabulary, which carries with it the defining phonological rules that link the language in question to its genetic relatives sharing that vocabulary and diachronic phonology, so-called local innovations.

By virtue of inheriting such a stock of vocabulary (see 5.2.7.3), Chirkova (2012b) considers Daohua to be a "Tibetanized form of Southwest Mandarin", but having borrowed many Kham Tibetan phonological traits. These include a pre-nasalized consonant series and initial voiced obstruents. The former, while entering the language through Tibetan loanwords, appears to have spread to Sinitic vocabulary via a common Kham Tibetan strategy of coda nasals spreading to a following onset, shown in the Daohua words [zẽ²ɲdzia] 'other people 人家' (Standard

Mandarin [ren³⁵tɕia⁵⁵]) and [tuɛ̃¹ndzɛ̃] ‘upright; good looking 端正’ (Standard Mandarin [tuan⁵⁵tɕeng⁵¹]) (Chirkova 2012b, discussing Atshogs 2004)¹⁹⁸.

Chirkova points out that this integration of Tibetan phonemes into the Sinitic lexicon, as well as the integration of initial voiced obstruents in morphemes like 虹 [gɔ̃⁴] ‘rainbow’ (SM *hóng*; MC *huwng*), having parallels in the Wutun language (see 7.2.1.2), is underdiscussed in the primary research on Daohua. She suggests that a comparison between morphemes of Daohua, Southwest Mandarin and Middle Chinese could more definitively determine the degree to which aberrations from Standard Mandarin forms are retentions or innovations due to contact with Tibetan.

Another sound change, drawn from Atshogs (2004), and discussed by Chirkova (2012b), is the Kham Tibetan rhyme-simplification strategies common to Daohua words, such as [tɕ^hɔ̃²] ‘long 长’ (Standard Mandarin [tɕ^hɑŋ³⁵]) and [p^hɔ̃⁴] ‘fat 胖’ (Standard Mandarin [p^hɑŋ⁵¹]). This simplification of syllable structure, where nasal codas are transferred to nasalization on the vowel, is quite common in Sichuan dialects of Southwest Mandarin (see 4.2.2). Chirkova (ibid.11) does point out, however, that final glides /j/ and /w/ have also disappeared in Daohua vocabulary, resulting in vocalic changes, such as 来 [lɛ̃²] ‘to come’ (SM *lái*) and 好 [xɔ̃³] ‘good’ (SM *hǎo*). While loss of coda nasals is common enough in Southwest Mandarin, generally monophthongization is not a noted regional trend. See 3.4.3.3.

Finally, Chirkova (2102b, inter alia) discusses the tonal phonology of Daohua, for which, similar to many Tibetan varieties’ “word tones” (see Sun 1997), monosyllabic morphemes’ tonal contrasts often are reduced in polysyllabic words, as in Daohua, illustrated in (5-128). (Contrast

¹⁹⁸ Recall from 5.2.2.2 that the same resyllabification of nasals also takes place in Chinese loanwords into nDrapa (Gong 2007:24-25), pointing perhaps to a regional trend, even if still stemming from Tibetan influence.

this with the opposite effect in Xining, discussed by Kawasumi in 4.2.2., and Tangwang and Gangou, discussed in 7.2.1.1.)

(5-128)

[tso⁵¹] ‘left 左’ + [ʂəu⁵¹] ‘hand 手’ > [tso⁴⁴ ʂəu⁵¹] ‘left hand 左手’
[jiu³²⁴] ‘right 右’ + [ʂəu⁵¹] ‘hand 手’ > [jiu³³ ʂəu⁵¹] ‘right hand 右手’

While certain features of Daohua appear to be contact-based innovations, such as the nasal liaison, or the realignment of the tonal system, in Chirkova’s view, the basic vocabulary, and its inherited phonological traits, are largely in alignment with Southwest Mandarin trends. Similar to Southwest Mandarin, Daohua does not contrast initial [n] and [l], as in [lɛ̃²] ‘south’, compared with Standard Mandarin *nán* 南. (She does not point out that these are contrastive in Tibetan vocabulary, further evidence Daohua is primarily Sinitic, and not a language innovated by Tibetans. See Atshogs (2004:12) and 5.2.2.3.)

Additionally, the Middle Chinese initials /k/ and /ɣ/ (見母 and 匣母, respectively) are retained as velars before the /ai/ rhyme, as in [kɛ¹] 街 ‘street’¹⁹⁹, and the Middle Chinese /uo/ rhyme, as in Standard Mandarin *guó* 国 ‘country, is [ue] in Daohua, e.g. [kue²tɕia¹] ‘country 国家’, another common feature of Sichuanese Mandarin dialects (Chirkova 2012b, fn. 11, discussing Atshogs 2004). As in Amdo, such deviations from Standard Mandarin forms are offered as possible evidence of retention from a variety of northern Chinese that arrived in the region earlier than the most recent waves of immigration in the 20th century, largely in line with regional Sinitic norms²⁰⁰.

¹⁹⁹ Note, however, the same “local retention” in the Amdo sprachbund in the Turkic Salar name for the town Gaizi 街子, discussed in 4.2.2.3. That is, such evidence from older Sinitic forms also shows up in borrowings from clearly non-Sinitic languages.

²⁰⁰ Interestingly, as noted in 7.2.1.2, the -uo rhyme in Wutun also differs from Standard Mandarin. There it has become /ek/, picking up a final velar stop otherwise only found in Tibetan vocabulary, even in morphemes that did not have an Entering Tone final /k/ phoneme in Middle Chinese, such as 狗 ‘dog’ (MC kuwX in the Baxter (1992) notation).

These phonological properties certainly seem to speak to a local variety of Chinese, present in Daohua's formation earlier than that which would arrive from 20th century in-migration, thus undercutting some of Chen's (2017) argument in 5.3.2.2, implying that Daohua largely took shape at such a late stage. However, it is remarkable, with only about 5% of the Daohua lexicon from Tibetan (less than the 6% Atshogs suggests is of independent origin—see 5.2.7.3), that such widespread phonological effects as the nasal liaison, monophthongization, and tonal restructuring could enter the Sinitic vocabulary as contact features without bringing with them more Tibetan vocabulary. Recall from 4.2.7.1 that in the Amdo region, Monguor and Salar, whose own phonologies showed effects of Sinitic influence (whether in laryngeal contrasts or in developed alveolopalatals), had roughly a fourth of their vocabularies from Chinese.

Furthermore, it seems in many ways limiting to determine the language type of Daohua simply from the phonological properties of its Sinitic vocabulary, when there is so much more on display in the language that makes it look less Sinitic, and more Tibeto-Burman. While it is standard practice in (Sino-Tibetan) historical linguistics to focus on comparative phonology and local innovation, in a setting like that of Daohua's, with a language so unique in its blending of linguistic systems, a broader picture is needed to account for its full story, linguistically.

5.3.3.2 The Argument from Structure and Social Setting

If we look beyond the set of vocabulary and its phonological correspondence to Middle Chinese and/or Southwest Mandarin, then Daohua looks a lot less Sinitic, though perhaps not significantly less so. It still utilizes a distinctly Sinitic pronominal system, rejecting the more over-specified system of Kham Tibetan. It utilizes a set of nominal classifiers, and within its Tibetic noun phrase, maintains a Sinitic Numeral-Classifier word order. And while Southwest Mandarin differs from Standard Mandarin in many significant ways, such as aspect-marking and

other verbal features, despite exhibiting some of these features as a result of local Southwest Mandarin dialects being one of its input languages, Daohua's grammar is far from simply a continuation of local Southwest Sinitic trends.

It bears pointing out, though, that Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman, belonging as they do to the same language family, are not all that different in morpho-syntactic typology to begin with, and so make for a more difficult comparison than, say, French and Cree, or Malay and Portuguese. Nonetheless, the morphology of the verb phrase looks identical to that of Tibetan, and the elaborate system of evidentiality and egophoricity is a system entirely lacking in Sinitic. As such, one cannot deny the strong input of Tibetan on the formation of Daohua grammar.

There is, then, a strong argument to view Daohua as a kind of mixed language, taking its verbal morphology and informational discourse system entirely, along with case marking and ergative alignment, from Tibetan, while for the most part using Chinese lexical forms for not only its content vocabulary, but also a majority of its functional morphemes, even when such morphemes lack Sinitic counterparts.

This characterization puts Daohua somewhere intermediate between the converted Form-Structure language type, such as in Sri Lankan Portuguese, with morphemes' phonological form from one language and grammatical function from another, and the intertwined Grammar-Lexicon type, such as in Media Lengua, where the lexicon of content morphemes is from one language, and the morphosyntax, along with its phonological forms, is from another. (See 2.3.3.2 for more discussion and illustration of such types.)

Regardless of how neatly it fits the typology, it still makes plenty of sense to view Daohua in this regard, which Atshogs (2004:125) essentially does, all along calling it a "mixed language (混合语)". As such, I am in some ways simply fleshing out his rather straightforward assertions to

that effect. Besides the splits just mentioned, there are also the highly intriguing semantic differences discussed in 5.2.7.3 between the Sinitic vocabulary and its Tibetan usage. The latter is much more subtle and harder to study, especially in a bilingual setting, but would make for a fruitful direction to future research²⁰¹.

In an impressionistic sense, when Daohua is compared alongside intertwined languages like Mednyj Aleut or Michif or Sri Lankan Malay (2.3.3), it has “the feel” of a mixed language in its overall complexity. Unlike the reduced morphosyntax and transparent semantic function of creole languages (2.4.3), Daohua exhibits well-developed morphological marking, and opaque, polyfunctional morphemes as part of its highly paradigmatic aspectual-evidential system. Just as Michif borrows, rather than discards, the nominal system of French and the verbal system of Cree in their full complexity, Daohua also carries over, mostly in full, sub-components of its contributing languages. The major difference is that (northern) Chinese is not a language known for much morphosyntactic or phonological complexity, and so there is less avenue for both of Daohua’s contributing sources to provide the same degree of overspecification or interdependent systematicity. Nonetheless, if one were looking for signs of SLA-based simplification, aside from a slightly less complex phonological system (still more complex than northern Chinese), one would not easily find them in Daohua.

The argument becomes even stronger when one looks at the socio-historical setting, precisely the type that gives rise to mixed languages globally: an outside group, usually male, moving to an area to do trade or occupy territory, marrying locally and raising families. It is not clear

²⁰¹ To let a little wind out of the sails, however, the borrowing of usage patterns, without the borrowing of phonological forms, does not appear to be in any way mysterious, and is highly common throughout the Kham area (see Shirai 2018), as well as Southeast Asia. We return to this topic in 6.3.1.1. To what extent the subtle differences of Sinitic form/Tibetan semantics is distinct from such calquing processes needs closer scrutiny.

whether the early Qing soldiers and ferrymen, quite small in number, were more instrumental in the emergence of truly multilingual families from which a mixed language might have emerged, or whether later-arriving Han businessmen played a stronger role. Indeed, it is an interesting question to consider the differences in long-term linguistic effects of either group.

Nonetheless, from Yodru Tsomu's detailed accounts of local trade in Dartsedo (5.3.2), we regularly see multilingual, often mixed ethnicity--but also, at least according to some reports, Tibetan women--taking over the task of inter-cultural communication in the early modern period, facilitating trade between Chinese and Tibetans. Recall that Yajiang County is just east of Kangding (formerly Dartsedo), with the major trade route linking China to Tibet running through its middle. It is not hard to imagine that the multiethnic, multilingual communities that provided these intermediaries could have been scattered around Yajiang.

The other major component of mixed languages, in typological accounts, is as an in-group, identity-marking function for the language. This element in Daohua is harder to pinpoint. While Chen (2017:136) does speak of an "intimacy and localness" linked to Daohua, this is not strong evidence of an exclusionary linguistic identity marker. Most anyone anywhere in China will state the same feelings for their hometown's local dialect. It is also worth noting a different worldview on mixed-raced or mixed-ethnic peoples in China than, say, that of North America. To the extent that local Tibetans and Chinese set themselves apart from each other historically, they may not necessarily have drawn the same sharp racial boundaries as those between Europeans and Native Americans on that continent. Therefore, the need to distinguish oneself as being neither Tibetan nor Han, but rather distinct from both, even in premodern times, may

have not been a strong desire²⁰². This practice continues into the present, where one's ethnic identity, carried on one's personal identification card (身份证), states what *minzu* one belongs to, with half-*minzu* status not being an option. However, local identity based in a place of origin is strong all throughout China, and an identity based on local Yajiang communities, one rooted in multiculturalism at that (cf. Roche 2016 for Henan, Qinghai), would help explain how Daohua has survived as a local language, better even than the Tibetan dialect of Dartsedo has.

5.4 Present Conclusions and Remaining Questions in Kham

We have weighed a number of factors regarding the origins of the distinctly Chinese-Tibetan language of Daohua, and while the transmission of a clearly Sinitic vocabulary gives it a strong link to a historical Chinese source, the overall social setting, and the overall structure of the language itself, speaks to a more multi-ethnically varied and elaborate history than that of, say, Chengdu Mandarin or other Sinitic varieties of China of the interior.

However, pressing questions still remain only partially answered, particularly in the most likely impetus for one group to do more of the work of language learning than another. Did Tibetans learn Chinese words, but give them Tibetan meanings and pronunciation based on approximate equivalence? Otherwise, how do originally Chinese speaking people come to maintain their vocabulary, but adjust their semantic ranges and phonological rules so accurately? Though access to trade in early modern times has some plausibility as a reason for shift, it would appear that more often than not Tibetans relied on multilingual intermediaries to handle communication in such settings. It also raises the question of why we would find one small

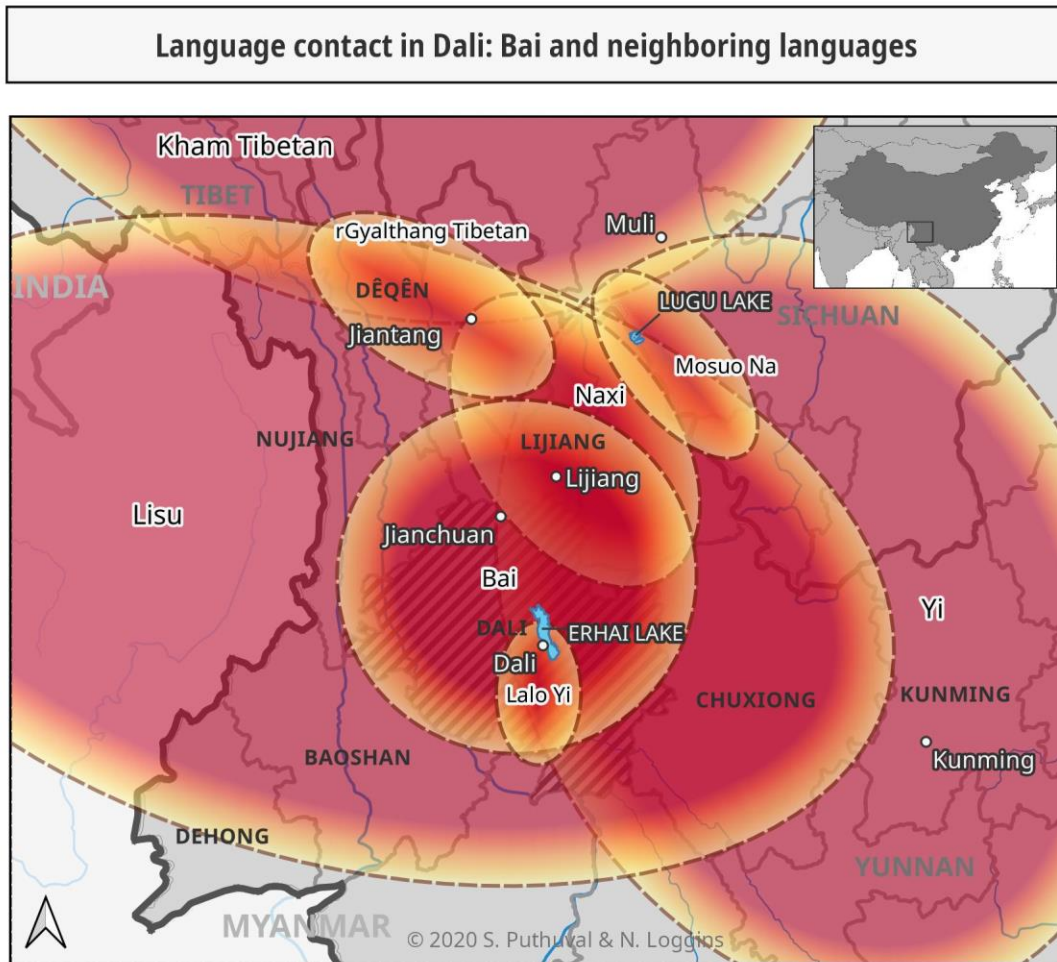
²⁰² See Ebrey (1996:33-34), in the context of discussing pedigrees for claiming Han lineage, where she states "Chinese were never preoccupied with notions of creoles or half-breeds.". This quote is further discussed in the context of Bai ancestry in 6.3.2.2.

community in Kham shifting from Tibetan to Chinese, with so many surrounding communities maintaining their Tibetic language.

The Han Chinese entering the region historically seem to have been largely absorbed, culturally and linguistically, becoming fully Tibetan, though the historical accounts, at least for Kham in general, are conflicting. Where they do conflict, however, they note Han learning of Tibetan, not holding out as a monolingual minority. Nonetheless, were they to have been fully assimilated, we might expect their language to disappear within a couple of generations, leaving little or no trace (cf. Szeto, Matthews and Yip 2017). At best, as they learned Tibetan, we might find trace elements of Sinification on the morphosyntax and phonology of the local dialect. Rather, what we find does not look like a Tibetan variety with mild Sinitic influence, but instead a language with plenty of trappings from both.

A mixed language origin could imply intertwining across a few generations of Han-Tibetan multilinguals, perhaps with ethnic language-learning in both directions, but with the majority of “deep structure”, like phonological rules, semantic ranges and aspect-evidential interaction, coming from Tibetans’ acquisition of a Chinese lexicon, particularly one with the relationship to Middle Chinese that Chirkova notes in 5.3.3.1. Evidence for a more resolute conclusion may never become available, but given the socio-historical background, and the mixture of Chinese and Tibetan elements of the morphology, syntax, informational discourse system and even the semantic usage of common vocabulary items, the above explanation may be the best we have.

6 Dali: The Case of Bai



Map 5. Languages of the Dali region, including Bai

“Since the 1949 founding of the PRC, the state policies [on ethnic identification]...have explicitly encouraged Bái language users to consider their mixed way of speaking as a distinct ethnic language... recognition of Bái people as an official nationality has facilitated the circulation of academic linguistic discourses that problematize some – although only some – Sinitic elements in Bái as loanwords, while the replacement of Literary Chinese with Modern Standard Chinese as the superstrate variety has made salient the phonological contrast between local varieties of Chinese and the standard. The former development provides Bái language users with an incentive to foreground a bilingual contrast between Bái and Chinese; the latter provides them a point of comparison against which to produce and reproduce the contrast.” (Hefright 2011:197-198)

As with Amdo in Chapter 4, and Kham in Chapter 5, this chapter takes a multi-angled view of a geographic region, roughly northwestern Yunnan province, but especially the Bai region centered in Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture (大理白族自治州), to analyze the language area according to theoretical concepts and criteria discussed in Chapter 2 of the dissertation.

It specifically looks at the Bai language in terms of contact typology and its relationship with surrounding languages, primarily Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic varieties. The literature on Bai focuses heavily on its commonalities with Sinitic, especially in its lexicon, which overwhelmingly exhibits origins in Chinese (Lee and Sagart 2008). Less has been written about the nature of Bai's morphology and syntax, or its phonological variation outside of the standard Jianchuan dialect, vis-à-vis Bai's language type. In the present chapter, I will present the language in its relevant social and historical context, the scope of which extends further back in time than either Amdo or Kham, as well as discuss the ideas put forth about Bai's genetic or non-genetic origins, either as a long-dislocated Sinitic variety inheriting cognates from Sinitic (Starostin 1995; Zhengzhang 1999), as a Tibeto-Burman language, either related to Lolo-Burmese or not (see Matisoff 2001) or more admittedly agnostic views (Wiersma 1990).

I confess that the reader looking for a clean conclusion on the nature of Bai's linguistic origins will not find one here. While the most likely scenario for Bai's linguistic origins, given its small but intransigent Tibeto-Burman vocabulary and its more Tibeto-Burman rural features, point towards a non-Sinitic language, its social history lends itself to both a mixed language origin in a cosmopolitan urban setting, and, given the history of Han-indigenous intermarriage in pre-modern times, it is also not entirely possible to rule out its origins as an assimilated Chinese people, remaining in the region since early Han Dynasty colonization, similar to John Phan's (2010) hypothesis about the origins of Vietnamese.

Echoing Louisa Schein (2000:36) on ethnic origins of the Miao, it is not so much that the task of identifying the origins of Bai people, and the exact nature of their language, is a priori impossible, but that it is a task fraught with an overabundance of contradictory evidence, debated over by specialists for decades already, that will not, perhaps could not, receive a definitive resolution at present. As seems to be the case in Amdo as well, the origin of the Bai language, like the origin of its speakers, surely had multiple primary variables. At the same time, the linguistic analysis presented below may add more weight to positing one or another factor as dominant in the early linguistic feature pool.

6.1 [Historical Background of Dali](#)

Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture is located in the northwest of Yunnan province, widely known to be the most ethnically diverse region of China. In the 1950s, when PRC government officials canvassed the local people there to establish how many distinct ethnic groups resided in the province, over two hundred distinct delineations were returned (Mullaney 2011). (The PRC currently recognizes 56 minorities nationwide.)

Dali was one important center along what some scholars call the Southwest Silk Road (see Yang 2008: Chapter 2 for this term), connecting southwest China with India, Tibet, Southeast Asia and the South China Sea. A major source of horses, salt and other minerals, as well as traditional mushrooms and medicines, it became a major grounds of cross-cultural contact through trade, especially following the Mongol defeat of the Dali Kingdom in 1253, leading to its incorporation into the Chinese state under the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). Later, during the Ming Dynasty, massive waves of Chinese in-migration occurred in Yunnan, dramatically shifting the demographic composition of the region, as discussed in detail by James Lee (1982, 2006),

such that by the time of the Qing a new presence of the so-called Yunnan-er (云南人) can be found in the written record (Yang 2008:177-182).

Yunnan has been in contact with Chinese states at a similar time depth as Xining (Chapter 4), beginning with Han campaigns in the region, but has been home to local kingdoms and other developed polities arguably more consistently. Positioned on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, an extension of the Tibetan Plateau, since at least the second century BCE, by virtue of its temperate climate, waterways and fortuitous location, Yunnan has served as an integral part of trade routes including the Silk Road, the Maritime Silk Road, and the Southwest Silk Road, as mentioned above. Among the mountains and rivers are hundreds of small, fertile basins and valleys called *bazi* 坝子, the two most important of which are the localities around Lake Dian 滇池 and Lake Er 洱海, which support the agricultural economy of the capital Kunming 昆明 and Dali 大理, respectively.

For the most part, historically local Yunnan peoples have had more in common with Southeast Asian cultures than with their neighbors to the north, including bone-cleaning burials, elaborate body tattoos, and bronze drums found throughout mainland and insular Southeast Asia. However, evidence of influence from Di 狄 and Qiang 羌 cultures associated with Tibet and Central Asia date back to the Neolithic period (Yang 2009:25-27). The classical kingdom of Nanzhao 南诏, contemporaneous with Tang China, was once a tributary of Tibet, and its rulers, the Baiman 白蛮, are profiled more closely below. The Naxi people (纳西族, in some older sources Nakhi) living in the area from Dali to Lijiang 丽江, and heading their own autonomous kingdoms, also have adopted elements of Tibetan culture, though they also retain their own indigenous religion, propagated by *dongba* priests (ibid:28).

In 279 BCE Zhuang Qiao 莊蹻, a Chu general, passed through what is now Guizhou, to the Dian Lake region and took over the eponymous kingdom. He named himself king, where his descendants ruled for 150 years, until they were conquered by the Han Dynasty in 109 BCE. By the end of the century, the Han had reached central and parts of western Yunnan, dividing the region into four commanderies.

In the first century CE, the frontier city Yongchang 永昌 (now called Baoshan 宝山) became an important trade center for the tea and horses exchanged on routes connecting Southwest China, Tibet, Southeast Asia and South Asia across four main branches called the Southwest Silk Road, or sometimes the Ancient Yunnan-Tibet Tea-Horse Road (滇藏茶馬古道). Records show that, when the king of the local Ailao 哀牢 kingdom submitted to the Eastern Han in 69 CE, the population at the time was over half a million, larger than that of Shu prefecture in ancient Sichuan, the traditional center of Southwest China for much of early history. (Yang 2009:39).

The region, known then as Nanzhong 南中, following the Wei state's conquest of Shu in 263 CE, remained mainly under the control of native chieftains and large clans, or *daxing* 大姓, who had emerged at the end of the Eastern Han. By the mid-fourth century, the Cuan family 爨氏 controlled Nanzhong. According to Yang (2010:107):

“Much evidence exists to conclude that yishuai and *daxing* were biocultural hybrids of the indigenes and Han Chinese. First, many of the *daxing* were descendants of Han immigrants, such as the Yong, the Lü, the Huo, and the Meng families, all of whose family names were Chinese. Their ancestors were usually powerful officials assigned or forced to move to the Southwest. Second, *yishuai* usually referred to indigenous chieftains who were deeply influenced by Chinese culture. Usually they were chosen by the Chinese state to rule their people and territories, frequently with imperial titles, ranks and posts.”

From the seventh century onward, local trade buttressed the rise of local powers in mainland Southeast Asia, and six to eight small kingdoms in the Dali area, known by the indigenous word

zhao 詔 'kingdom', were eventually consolidated under their southernmost member, Mengshe 蒙舍, which came to be known as Nanzhao 南詔 (lit. 'southern kingdom'). Benefitting from its crucial location along the Southwest Silk Road, Nanzhao grew into a powerful regional player, coming into military conflicts and alliances with various Tibetan and pre-Burmese kingdoms in the region, including the Pyu of ancient northern Burma and the famed Nüwangguo 女王國 to the north. In one show of military might, in 829 CE Nanzhao plundered Chengdu and presented Tibet with a gift of two thousand captured Shu people (Yang 2009:44).

East of Nanzhao, the Tang Empire's strategy was to sponsor and ally native chieftains. By the mid-seventh century, Tang China had established over 36 departments (*zhou* 州) and 137 counties (*xian* 县) in the Southwest, most of which were merely nominal. After consolidating his rule of the Erhai Lake region in the 730s, the Nanzhao King, Pi-luo-ge (皮邏閣), brought eastern Yunnan into his empire, rivaling for the first time the Tang Dynasty, who had previously given him the title Prince of Yunnan (云南王). In the 750s, the Tang led a few military missions against the kingdom, only to result in disastrous defeat.

By 794, when Nanzhao and Tang China resumed their previous alliance, Nanzhao had, in the north, reached the banks of the Jinsha River; in the east it was in control of the area previously held by the powerful Cuan family, and in the south and southwest it had expanded and reached today's Burma, imposing a tributary system upon local peoples, conquering and relocating peoples of such states as the Pyu and Michen in southern Burma and the Khmer kingdom of Zhenla (真臘) (Yang 2010:83-86).

During the late Nanzhao era, Buddhism was adopted as the state religion, taking the place of Daoism, largely under the influence of Indian monks traveling through northern Burma to

Yunnan. Then, in 902 a secessionist struggle led to the sudden collapse of the empire, and by the early tenth century, not only Nanzhao, but Tang China and imperial Tibet all disintegrated.

The first four decades after the end of the Nanzhao Empire saw a series of short-lived regimes until 937, when the Dali Kingdom 大理国 (937-1253) was established by Duan Siping 段思平, inheriting Nanzhao's territory, but, partly by virtue of being a Buddhist kingdom, not its imperialist tendencies. As such, the Song largely ignored Dali to focus on its northern borders, and relations between the two powers were cordial.

During the Song era (960-1279), the Chinese state established a dozen markets in Sichuan and Guangxi to trade items for Yunnan horses from Dali for their campaigns against the Mongols. However, after the latter conquered Dali in 1253, and went on to found the Yuan Dynasty, for the first time a "Chinese" state power (that is, the Mongol-ruled Yuan) was able to successfully hold the Dali area under its control, and Yunnan province in roughly its modern form was founded.

Under Yuan rule, an extensive network of postal routes were put in place, partly overlapping with the ancient tea-horse routes, forming the infrastructure basis built on by the later Ming and Qing dynasties. Another outcome of Yuan control was the arrival of many Central Asians and ancestors of Hui Muslims from the Northwest into the region. Represented by Sayyid Ajall Shams Al-Din 赛典赤赡思丁 as regional governor, many Muslims occupied administrative posts, fostering Mongol control in Yunnan. When the Mongols eventually faced defeat in 1368, they retreated north from China, but retained control of Yunnan until the newly founded Ming Dynasty conquered it in 1383, after a series of battles against the regional power-holding Duan family, a clan that had administered the region both independently and for the Mongols for centuries beforehand.

The Ming-Qing period saw the heyday of the local tea trade, which came to be dominated by the Mu 木 clan, recognized as a regional power since the Yuan dynasty, later coming to be called the Naxi, and from their center in Lijiang, dominating the border areas between Tibet and Yunnan, keeping close relations with the former.²⁰³ Also during the Ming, gazetteers for the region began to be published, and they appear to have coincided with the process of sinicization. As Yang (2010:108) points out, while political and military expeditions by the Chinese state altered local societies quickly and dramatically, such expeditions were preceded by commercial interactions that were also transformative to the scores of interdependent ethnic groups engaged in agriculture, husbandry, fishing and hunting throughout the region.

Under Ming administration, the first of several dramatic demographic shifts began with the arrival of state-sanctioned military farms. These soldiers, and the families they brought with them, started a new trajectory for Yunnan society. Though Yang (2010:121) claims these arrivals only held power in cities, Lee (1982) claims that the settlements were largely rural, thus reaching deeper into Yunnanese society than ever before. Nonetheless, the Ming continued to rule largely through local chieftains via the *tusi* 土司 system of governance.

The scale of the migrations to the Southwest (mostly Yunnan and Guizhou) at this time were massive, to the point that, according to Lee (1982:284) one out of every seven people in the southwest (approx. 2 million out of 15 million registered people) were immigrants. In ethnic terms, this trajectory began with very few Han living in the area in 1250, increasing to about a third of the population in the sixteenth century and up to 60% by the 1800s. However, Lee also notes that not all immigrants during the Qing dynasty were Han--they also included Mongols,

²⁰³ The appellation Naxi is argued to be an evolution in a nomenclature that stretched back even farther in the region, to perhaps the Moshā 摩沙 people of the late Han Dynasty. (See 6.2.1.3 more discussion).

Muslims, Miao and Yao--and the Han themselves were from varying different provincial and class backgrounds. In some cases, Han would acculturate to the local culture, but in other places, local populations would acculturate to the Han (Lee 1982:286).

In the government-led resettlement campaigns, thousands were sent to farm arable lands to support troops holding down China's borders. It was not until the second migration that newcomers began to settle in the mountains, and even later that they tended towards urban areas exclusively. Furthermore, during the Ming resettlement campaigns, rather than sending hordes of male soldiers to the frontier region alone, the government gave a grace period before deployment for departing troops to prepare their family--or make one from scratch--so that entire families were brought to the border regions. In cases where soldiers could not find a wife, they were assigned one from the female criminal population (Lee 1982:fn. 40). This may imply that garrisoned soldiers were not always a major source of intermarriage on the frontier. At the same time, Lee (1982:303) also notes that a new urban culture emerged after the second migration, forging a new social identity, the Yunnan'er (云南人) and a new dialect, Southwestern Mandarin, along with its own popular literature.

The relatively hands-off approach to Chinese administration during the Ming gave way to an increasingly boots-on-the-ground, military colonization of the region during the Qing Dynasty. In the 1680s, Yunnan came under direct Qing governance, and the process of *gaitu guiliu* 改土归流, the shifting out of local chieftains for Qing-appointed governors, took place from 1726-1731 under the trusted provincial Manchu governor, Ortai 鄂尔泰, drastically transforming the administrative structure in Yunnan. The number of native chieftains was reduced to twenty-two, and most of them were located in south and southwest Yunnan, where many native chieftains had remained loosely related to the Qing. Though replaced by direct Qing control,

however, Yang (2010:134) points out that indigenous people of power continued to retain prestige and influence for a while to come.

One of the primary groups of indigenous people to maintain that prestige and influence was the Minjia 民家, or as they came to be known in later times, the Bai people.

6.2 A Sketch of Bai and Its Neighbors

6.2.1 General Ethnolinguistic Background

6.2.1.1 *Bai Ethnological and Linguistic Background*

David Wu (1990), in discussing how Bai people have navigated the PRC ethnic designation system, discusses the often-fuzzy boundary between Bai and Han, historically. As he puts it, “The Minjia, or Bai, have a history of fluctuating between a Han Chinese identity and that of an ethnic minority. In the past, a laissez-faire attitude on the part of the dominating or colonizing Han Chinese, who encouraged assimilation into Chinese culture, contributed to this flexible identity.” (Wu 1990:10).

From the Ming dynasty, with the arrival of a large contingent of Chinese military settlers, the locals of the region were called *minjia* 民家 (civilian households), in contrast with the incoming Chinese, or *junjia* 军家 (military households). The term *baizu* 白族 to refer to the ethnic group in question was not created until the mid-50s, during the *minzu shibie* campaigns, drawing from a historical miscellany of terms such as *boren* 伯人, *bairan* 白人 and so on, recorded in Chinese sources as local self-designations. The earliest such source is widely considered to be the *Manshu* 蛮书, by Fan Chuo 樊绰, written in 863 CE, a text which refers to one group as the Baiman 白蛮 (white barbarians) who, along with the Wuman 乌蛮 (black barbarians), established the Nanzhao 南诏 Kingdom (738-937) (Wu 1990:4; Xu and Zhao 1984:1). According

to Xu and Zhao (1984:1) the Bai now call themselves *Pε xo* 白和, *Pε tsi* 白子, or *Pε jǐ* 白尼. Wu hypothesizes that the term *minjia* itself was invented by Bai to distinguish themselves from the local *yi* 夷, or barbarians of the region²⁰⁴.

In 17th century Qing gazetteers, according to Wu, the authors note that the Bai speak Chinese to Chinese, but “Yi” among themselves. By the early 20th century, academics and travelers to the region found no difference between the Bai and Chinese, and noted various ways that Bai distinguished themselves as Han, in exclusion to the other local ethnic groups. In the 1950s, they told interviewers regarding their ethnic origins that their ancestors immigrated from Yingtian prefecture of Nanjing, a claim, incidentally, the same as that of the older residents of Xining, according to Dede (1999a:69-70), among other frontier peoples.

According to Wu, at the time of his fieldwork in the 1980s, in a small village where 70% of the residents were Bai, all the adult Han spoke both Chinese and Bai. The only difference people there could point to in distinguishing Bai from Han was an accent in Chinese among the older Bai people (Wu 1990:7; cf. Fitzgerald 1941 and Hsu 1948). However, later remarks imply this was a functional fluency, as Han people claimed the Bai could speak “in double tongues” so the Han wouldn’t understand them. As such, it is not always clear how much the ability to speak a language is overstated or not in written sources, even in the modern era.

At any rate, this seeming resistance to being non-Han on the part of the Bai is striking, considering that the famous Chinese anthropologist Fei Xiaotong once claimed that many ethnic groups following the *minzu shibie* were rejected on account of the fact they probably

²⁰⁴ Note that in the pre-modern era, this term *yi*, written with the character 夷, was a blanket term for various non-Han peoples living at the margins of Chinese society. It should not be confused with the modern ethnic group Yi, now written with the character 彝, whose languages, particularly Lalo Yi, are discussed in this chapter, though historically, and somewhat confusingly, 夷 was also used to refer to them, as well.

descended from originally Chinese peoples migrating to a region, assimilating locally, then claiming minority status. One such group was the Chuanqing (穿青人) of Guizhou, descendants, in fact, of immigrant Minjia people (civilian households), i.e. the same people who would be called Bai in Yunnan (Wu 1990:2).

Wu does draw a parallel to the Tujia, a local ethnic group on the Hubei/Sichuan (now Chongqing) border, resented by their Han neighbors for getting minzu status, despite the fact that they speak only Chinese, and are thought of as Han by all of those around them. (See Brown (2001) for more details on this group's ethnic history.) One can also compare contrastively the Hakka, who speak a dialect of Chinese, but, treated as outsiders historically, retain their own history and cultural tradition, and yet nonetheless are considered Han officially.

As for the Bai, or rather the Minjia, the prevailing opinion, in the West anyway, is that the language was originally an indigenous Tibeto-Burman language that has all but replaced its lexicon with Sinitic vocabulary, and shows morphosyntactic features of Sinitic as well (Matisoff 2001, Lee and Sagart 2008). How does this highly Sinicized language, paralleled by a history famous for Sinicization, fit into the local multiethnic, multicultural setting of Yunnan? Does it emerge from either the frequent mixed-ethnicity families or bustling markets in the region's history? What role did the assimilating Han, both pre- and post-Ming have on its development, lexically or grammatically, compared with the Minjia who were adopting Chinese culture, including writing?

Even if the scholarly literature seems conflicted regarding the ethnic origins of the Bai, it pales in comparison to the complexity of the linguistic question, with Bai having been designated a

Ngwi language, an independent Tibeto-Burman language, an isolate and even an archaic branching of the Sinitic family tree. Writings concerning this question seem to outnumber actual descriptive accounts of the language, though the latter are available in Xu and Zhao (1984), Dell (1981), Wiersma (1990, 2003), Li (2014) and Wang (2015).

In her dissertation on the historical position of Bai, Wiersma aptly summarizes the situation as below.

“It is interesting that while modern linguists in China consolidated their view of Bai as belonging to Tibeto-Burman either as an isolate or as a member of the Yi (Loloish) group, Bai-speaking literati of the early to mid-twentieth century had relied on their knowledge of Chinese philology to uncover archaic Chinese etymologies for the basic terms of their own language. Western scholars discovered such etymologies independently within the last two decades, and the situation at present is that scholarly opinion in China, as well as in the international community, is sharply divided as to whether Bai is historically closer to Sinitic or to Tibeto-Burman. Meanwhile, the possible roots of intimate borrowing by an autochthonous language from literary Chinese are suggested by recent anthropological work in Dali, which documents the effects of Han Chinese in-migration in local marriage customs, and suggests how autochthonous cultural terms may have been ‘bleached’ by Chinese through the growth of local documentary traditions...”
(Wiersma 2003:652)

Note that the aim of 20th century Bai intellectuals to seek out Sinitic etymologies for their speech to show their historical closeness to the Han is not unlike that of the early 20th century Hakka intellectuals, who sought to show their language, and thus culture, was also connected to the Han, as described by Leong (1987:Chapter 4).

Bai does differ from Chinese in some ways, in that classifier-numeral phrases follow the nouns they modify, negation may take variable forms, either pre- or post-verbally, or as an infix, as well as by the inclusion of a robust pronominal system inflecting for number and case, not an uncommon feature among Tibeto-Burman languages, but as we have seen, not an uncommon feature of purported Sinitic languages of the Western frontier, like Xining and Daohua.

Below I will present a brief sketch of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the Bai language, followed by a detailed account of the lexicon, which has been the subject of much investigation among linguists, with emphasis on ways the language departs from Sinitic forms.

The Bai language is often described as having three distinct subgroupings, Central, Northern and Southern (Xu and Zhao 1984). In a project for the SIL, Bryan Allen (2007) conducted an intelligibility survey and found that the Northern dialect group is entirely unintelligible from the other two groups, and that between the Central and Southern groups, depending on the local dialect, mutual intelligibility between Central and Southern dialects ranges from 93 percent to a low of 25 percent²⁰⁵²⁰⁶.

In his study based on a comparative approach using nine Bai varieties from his own fieldwork, Wang Feng (2006) proposes his own diachronically motivated classification. He considers Bai to have four historical splits, which he bases on nineteen linguistic features ranging from tonal developments and segmental innovations to individual lexical items. Using a computational approach to generate “parsimonious” phylogenetic trees, Wang posits that Proto-Bai first split into an Eastern and Western branch. The Western branch then split between Gongxing 共兴 and the other Western dialects, the latter forming two clusters consisting of Ega 俄嘎 and Tuoluo 妥洛 on the one hand and Enqing 恩棋 and Jinman 金满 on the other. As for the Eastern branch, there was a split between Mazhelong 马者龙 and the other Eastern dialects,

²⁰⁵ I have not made any more extensive use of Allen’s report than to note his conclusions about mutual intelligibility. This was a somewhat arbitrary decision, though his data, which is quite extensive, lacks the same detailed verbal descriptions as other sources. It is presented more as a corpus, perhaps intended for comparative analysis, rather than purely descriptive purposes.

²⁰⁶ For their part, the SIL lists in the *Ethnologue* four entries for Bai: Central Bai [bca], which includes Jianchuan; Lama Bai [lay]; Panyi Bai [bfc], which includes Bijiang and Southern Bai [bfs], which includes Dali. I am not sure upon which source(s) exactly they based their categorization.

the latter consisting of a cluster of Jinxing 金星, Dashi 大石 and Zhoucheng 周城.²⁰⁷ A rough outline visualization of this, based on Wang (2006:121), is given in (6-1) below:

(6-1) Subgrouping of Bai dialects after Wang (2006)

I. Proto Bai

A. Eastern Bai

1. Mazhelong
2. Jinxing, Dashi and Zhoucheng

B. Western Bai

1. Gongxing
2. Others
 - a. Ega and Tuoluo
 - b. Enqing and Jinman

Wang (2006) gives phonetic inventories for all of the Bai dialects that he recorded in his fieldwork. These include not only peoples who identify as Baizu (from the villages of Jinxing 金星, Zhoucheng 周城, Dashi 大石 and Mazhelong 马者龙), but also self-identified Lama people 拉玛 from Tuoluo 妥洛, Gongxing 共兴 and Enqi 恩棋 villages, and Lemo people 勒墨 from Ega 俄嘎 and Jinman 金满, along the Nu River 怒江²⁰⁸.

Wang's approach to comparative analysis, however, is not without its controversies and shortcomings. Without attempting a summary here, I will simply note that his "Distillation Method" is an attempt to use comparative data alongside internal reconstructions to separate loanwords from inherited forms towards establishing a protolanguage. The reader is referred to a critical evaluation by Chirkova (2007). In this study, I mostly make use of Wang's

²⁰⁷ The locations of the dialects are as follows: 1. Tuoluo, in Weixi Lisu Autonomous County 维西傈僳族自治县, Deqen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture 迪庆藏族自治州; 2-3. Gongxing and Enqi, in Lanping Bai and Pumi Autonomous County 兰坪白族普米族自治县 in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture 怒江傈僳族自治州; 4-5. Jinman and Ega, in Jinman Village in Lushui City 泸水市, Nujiang; 6. Jinxing, in Jianchuan County 剑川县, Dali; 7. Dashi, in Heqing County 鹤庆县 in Dali; 8. Zhoucheng in Zhoucheng village, Dali City; 9. Mazhelong is spoken in Qiubei County 丘北县, in Wenshan Zhuang and Miao Autonomous Prefecture 文山壮族苗族自治州, on the other side of the province, at the Guangxi border.

²⁰⁸ Xu and Zhao (1984:1) claim 拉玛 *la³¹ ma³¹* is the term for Bai outside Dali; they report that Tibetans call the Bai *lu³¹ bu³¹* 勒博.

descriptive and demographic data, while taking note of instances when he refers to contact phenomena as an explanatory device.

However, from a language contact perspective it is interesting to note the familial situations briefly sketched for the consultants in Wang's study. For example, the consultant for Ega Bai has a Lisu mother, but the dominant family language is Ega Bai. That consultant is proficient in Lisu as well. The Jinman consultant married a Lisu woman, with whom he communicates in Lisu, but otherwise uses Jinman Bai to speak with other Lemo people. (He also speaks Jianchuan Bai and some Nu²⁰⁹.)

Xu and Zhao use three varieties to illustrate the Southern, Central and Northern dialects, Dali (in Dali City 大理市), Jianchuan (剑川县 in Dali Autonomous Bai Prefecture) and Bijiang (碧江县 in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture), while primarily drawing from Jianchuan to illustrate the phonological system. Wiersma (2003) also focuses on Jianchuan, with occasional references to Dali.

The Dali dialect, even though spoken in the former seat of the historical kingdom, and famous nowadays as the seat of Bai culture due to the booming ethnotourism industry (Notar 2006), is not generally taken as the representative Bai variety. Rather that would be Jianchuan. As Wiersma explains, in the 1950s it was established that the local Dali population was too mixed, especially compared to Jianchuan County. In the latter over 90% of the population was Bai, ethnically and linguistically, and fewer than five percent were Chinese speakers (Wiersma 2003:654). There Bai is used for most official purposes, as well as occasionally inter-ethnic

²⁰⁹ It is not clear what language this refers to, as the Nu minority (怒族), speak a few languages, such as Derung [duu] and Jingpo [kac].

communication, and the orthographic scheme for written Bai, eventually published in the 1980s and introduced in a series of education programs, was based on that of Jianchuan (ibid)²¹⁰.

6.2.1.2 *The Local Language Setting*

Bai is spoken primarily in the Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture of northwestern Yunnan. The same area that Bai speakers call home has a large number of local Naxi, Yi and Lisu, whose own core demographic areas, based on the groups usually taken as their ethnic representatives, are more properly situated in Lijiang prefecture to the north of Dali, Liangshan Autonomous Yi Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州), just across the border with Sichuan, and the Nujiang Autonomous Lisu Prefecture (怒江傈僳族自治州) directly to the west of Dali, on the Burmese border, respectively. (However the affiliation of local Lalo Yi people to the Yi of Liangshan is likely to be a more modern innovation, due to the somewhat fabricated designation of the Yi minzu in the 1950's.²¹¹)

Other languages are also spoken in the vicinity of Bai, such as regional variants of Hmong ([hmn]; spoken by the Miao 苗族) and Dai ([tdd]; a Tai-Kadai language spoken by the Dai 傣族). Not far to the northwest, in the southeastern corner of Kham, several languages, such as Derung, Anong [nun] and Rawang [raw], as well rGyalthang Tibetan, are spoken in the small, hilly Dêqên Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (迪庆藏族自治州). Kachin (a.k.a. Jingpo), spoken in China primarily in the Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture (德宏傣族景颇族自治州), and adjacent areas of northern Burma, is another major Tibeto-Burman language of the region, spoken by the Jingpo 景颇族.

²¹⁰ In 1993, an “inclusive” system, incorporating the dialect of the Dali area, then growing in prestige, was introduced, greatly altering the older system (Wiersma 2003:654).

²¹¹ Harrell (2001:287) mentions that the Shuitian Yi people of southern Liangshan, specifically in the villages of Zhuangshang and Futian, also refer to themselves and their language as Lalo (the Chinese rendering of Lalo), and cites Björverud’s dissertation as a reference.

Nonetheless, I leave the languages of the preceding paragraph out of the discussion, in part because they constitute a smaller demographic percentage of Bai speakers' neighbors (though those speakers of Bai dialects outside of the Dali core area are in greater contact with many of these languages, especially in Dêqên), even when their speakers may reside in Dali. There are also few, if any, claims that Bai may be Tai-Kadai (despite a now disproven assumption that Nanzhao was a Tai kingdom), or closely related to any other branch of Tibeto-Burman other than possibly Ngwi. Rather, Bai is generally considered an independent node on the TB family tree (not unlike Kachin). I do include two Naic languages, Yongning Na and Naxi, as comparison, since the Naxi constitute a significant demographic presence in Dali, and serve as an example of non-Ngwi, Tibeto-Burman languages in the same area as Bai, as a basis of comparison.

6.2.1.2.1 Lalo Yi

Lalo Yi is part of the Western branch of the Ngwi (historically termed Lolo(ish)) branch of the Lolo-Burmese languages of Tibeto-Burman. According to Bradley (2001:201), the Yi, like many southwestern and southern minority groups in Chinese history, have been referred to by various names, which often times did not exclusively reference a single people, such as Man 蛮 or Miao 苗. After the eras of the Dian Kingdom (279-109 BCE) and the Cuan Kingdom (circa 4-12th century CE), the local groups were known in Chinese as Luoluo 徕徕, written in various ways, and rendered into English as Lolo, hence the sometime name of the language family. However, the label is by now considered derogatory, and rarely used, at least by Northern Yi speakers, themselves²¹². During the Ming Dynasty, the Yi of the area, along with some Tai groups like those who would come to be known as Zhuang and Bouyei, were commonly

²¹² For instance, in some iterations, it was written with the 'dog radical', 猓猓. Nonetheless, reflexes of the label are evident in some of the Central Languages' speakers' autonyms, mentioned below

referred to by the appellation Yi 夷. Since the PRC era, the latter term has been replaced with the homophonous label 彝, and refers only to the Yi minzu.

Bradley (2001:201-204) divides the Yi into the geographical Northern, Eastern, Southern, Central, Western and Southeastern groups. Northern Yi, or Nuosu (occasionally rendered into Chinese as 诺苏), is often taken to be the prototypical Yi variety (to whom most would be referring when they use the term Yi in a general designation). Northern Yi is divided into three subgroups, Yynuo, Shynra and Suondi, or Adur. Here I will restrict my discussion to only the groups in and around Dali, namely the Central and Western Yi. The interested reader is referred to Bradley (2001) for more details on other groups.

The Central and Western Yi, who unlike the other groups have never had a written language, and don't connect themselves with the prior Cuan Kingdom, are linguistically closer to groups like the Lisu or Lahu (each a distinct PRC ethnicity, 傈僳族 and 拉祜族, respectively), than to Northern groups like the Nuosu. The Central Yi call themselves Lipo in some areas, and Luoluopo in others, and their language is very much like Lisu. Some Central Yi changed their nationality from Yi to Lisu between the 1982 and 1990 census (Bradley 2001:2020). The Western Yi mostly call themselves Lallo, and their speech, too, is very close to Lisu.

The two major sources of descriptive work on Lalo (Chinese 腊罗) come from Susanna Björverud's (1998) grammar and Cathryn Yang's (2012) SIL report on the language. Using a comparative, reconstructive approach, coupled with tests for phonetic distance and comprehension experiments, Yang finds there to be at least seven closely related Lalo "languages" in Dali, Baoshan, Lincang and Pu'er prefectures. Collectively they comprise three major dialect clusters, all mutually unintelligible, in southern Dali (approximately 213,000 speakers), and four peripheral languages, Eka, Managdi, Yangliu and Xuzhang, representing

“different waves of migration out of the Lalo homeland” (Yang 2012:3). Yang also presents a sketch of the Proto-Lalo sound system and a proposed internal grouping.

Zhou and Hu (2015:226) quote Yang’s dissertation, claiming that the autonym of the Lalo people they surveyed, “Misha-pa” links them by tradition to the ruling Meng clan of Nanzhao. They also find the language to be endangered, in many cases failing to be passed on to younger generations, in favor of local Mandarin. At the same time, Lalo people account for about 80% of the Yi ethnic group in Dali, the other 20% being groups like the Erni Yi (Zhou and Hu 2015:225). The authors report Lalo and Erni to be two Yi languages with relatively low mutual intelligibility.

Björverud’s description comes from fieldwork in Longjie (龙街) township, in Weishan (巍山) county, the southernmost county in Dali, bordering on Baoshan. Estimates of speakers range from 200,000-500,000, spoken in Dali, Baoshan and Chuxiong (Björverud 1998:viii).

Other than Han Chinese, other groups living in the region include Miao and Lisu. Björverud (1998:49) makes the following statement about multilingualism in the area:

“The children of the handful of Chinese families found in the area speak Lalo, which they learn from their playmates. And among the elderly there are still some who do not speak Chinese. But apart from these two categories all Lalo are bilingual. Lalo is sometimes used as a lingua franca alongside Chinese by the Lisu in the area. It is unclear to what extent the local Miao speak Lalo.”

6.2.1.2.2 Lisu

Lisu (Chinese 傣傣语) speakers live widespread throughout the eastern Yunnan area, on both sides of the Yunnan-Sichuan, as well as in Burma, Thailand and Northeast India. They migrated into northern Burma and Arunachal Pradesh between around 1750 and the mid-20th century, as well as to the Shan state of northern Burma and northern Thailand in early 20th century

(Bradley 2017:902). The largest concentration of Lisu speakers is in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture (怒江傈僳族自治州) and Weixi Lisu Autonomous County (维西傈僳族自治县) in Dêqên Autonomous Tibetan Prefecture, as well as Kachin State in Burma.

Yu (2007:11-12) notes that many Lisu consider their ancestors to have arrived from the area of Nanjing or Shanghai, a common refrain along the frontier, as we have seen in the case of Xining speakers, as well as Bai people. Though lacking recorded evidence, some consider their origins in foot soldiers from the armies of Zhuge Liang 诸葛亮 during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 CE), and even today Lisu offer sacrifice to Kong Ming (孔明, the courtesy name of Zhuge) whenever they offer sacrifice to their ancestors. Later, during the Qing, Lisu were involved in a number of rebellions, often alongside Tibetan and Naxi, leading to government campaigns against them, and their subsequent dispersal along the Jinsha river, as well as to areas east and north of modern Nujiang (ibid).

According to Yu (2007:1), 97 percent of the 574,856 Lisu people living in China for the 1990 census reside in Yunnan, with the other three percent living in Sichuan. Lisu serves as a lingua franca in Nujiang, and has been described as a major contributor to the endangerment of at least one smaller language, Anong (Sun 2005, Sun et al. 2009). Bilingualism is highly common for Lisu speakers, and Yu (2007:1) relates the following picture:

“Many Lisu are multilingual. The Lisu villages are mingled with surrounding nationalities. Most Lisu in Nujiang live with Nu, Bai, Jingpo, and Dulong nationalities besides Han-Chinese. As a result many adults can speak Chinese, Nu and Bai. Some can also speak Dulong and Jingpo. Lisu in Ninglang reside with nationalities such as Naxi, Yi, Pumi, Mosuo, and local Han-Chinese. They are fluent in Chinese, Naxi, and Yi but not so much in Mosuo and Pumi. A language consultant for this research can shift languages from Naxi to Lisu when singing traditional songs. Weixi and Deqen Lisu mingle mostly with Tibetan, Naxi and local Han-Chinese. Lisu in Dehong usually live with Jingpo, Han, a few Dai and Achang. Baoshan Lisu are scattered with local Han-Chinese and Jingpo in mountain villages. Lisu in Dali, Chuxiong and Sichuan live in mountain areas with local Han-Chinese and Yi people. Whoever they mingle with, the Lisu pick

up the languages of those people and become bilingual or multilingual in Lisu and those languages.”

Closely related languages include Lipo, spoken by 250,000 in north-central Yunnan and adjacent Sichuan (Bradley 2017:902), Lolopo, spoken west of the Lipo area, Lamu and Lalo. Dialectally, Lisu proper has three main branches, with another cluster of dialects spoken in southwestern Sichuan, somewhat more divergent from the main three. According to Bradley, the three main dialects are “mutually intelligible, with some initial difficulty”. The first is Black Lo (lo³⁵ wu⁵⁵), spoken in northwestern Yunnan and extreme north Burma. Second is Central or Flowery Lisu (ɕɑ⁴⁴ ɕɑ⁴⁴), spoken in western Yunnan and adjacent areas of northeastern Burma. Finally, there is Southern or Yellow Lisu (lo³⁵ ʂ³³), in the extreme southwest of Yunnan, Shan State and in Thailand (ibid).

6.2.1.2.3 Naic Languages

Naic languages are a group of relatively understudied Tibeto-Burman languages spoken in northwest Yunnan and southwest Sichuan, named for the morpheme *na*, which, used as an endonym by the speakers, depending on one’s interpretation either means ‘great; big’ or ‘black’ (Mathieu 2003). According to Michaud et al (2015) they may be closely related to the languages Shixing (which Chirkova (2012) considers heavily restructured Naic) and Namuyi, as well as Ersu, Lizu, and Tosu, and somewhat more distantly to Qiangic and rGyalrongic languages, while even further still to Ngwi. Like the Ngwi languages, the syllabic and segmental inventory of Naic languages are among the simpler branches of Tibeto-Burman. That is, within Tibeto-Burman, Naish languages are vaguely close to both the Qiangic and Ngwi languages, but currently no more closely affiliated. (See Thurgood 2017:18-19 for more discussion.) Jacques and Michaud (2011) give one of the few systematic attempts to work out a Proto-Na phonology.

The two main varieties of Na are Naxi (纳西), as spoken in Lijiang (丽江市), northwest Yunnan, forming the Western branch, and the more diverse Eastern branch, exemplified by Na, sometimes Naze, or Mosuo 摩梭, as it is known in Chinese, with the Yongning 永宁 dialect taken as the primary exemplar for the latter. It is spoken in Ninglang Yi Autonomous County (宁蒗彝族自治县) in Lijiang, and across the border in Liangshan Autonomous Yi Prefecture, Sichuan. In Yongning, near Lugu Lake, the Mosuo people are the largest ethnic group, their local customs such as “walking marriages”, making their area a famous tourist site in contemporary times. Another Naic language is Laze, or Lare (拉热), spoken by Shuitian people in Xiangjiao township (项脚乡) in Muli, so sometimes called Shuitianhua (水田话).

In Yunnan, speakers of Na are ethnically Naxi, by government designation, but in Sichuan speakers of Na languages may be Mongolian—that is, classified by the government as Mengzu 蒙族--claiming a lineage that goes back to Qubilai Khan and the local *tusi* rulers he installed, following his campaigns there from the 13th century (Harrell 2001:236). Some Na, particularly in Yongning and adjacent areas, wishing to emphasize their distinctiveness from the Naxi, in the latter half of the 20th century, petitioned unsuccessfully for minzu status, gaining instead the compromise label of “Mosuo people 摩梭人” (Harrell 2001; Matheiu 2003).

The ethnic group now known as Naxi (纳西族) live in Lijiang, which includes Yulong Naxi Autonomous County (玉龙纳西族自治县), with some Naxi in Zhongdian, Weixi, Deqin, Jianchuan and Lanping counties, totaling a population of 309,500 at the end of the 20th century (Mathieu 2003:1). East of the Jinsha River about 30,000 Nari (known in Chinese as Naze) and Nahu live in Ninglang County in Yunnan, as well as Muli and Yanyuan counties in Sichuan--- groups all belonging now to the Mongol nationality, though not self-claimed by all, and none of

whom objectively speak any Mongolic language. Perhaps the definitive history of the Naxi in English still remains Joseph Rock's (1948) *The Ancient Na-khi Kingdom of Southwest China*.

From the 14th century until the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, the Chinese referred to the groups of people in Yongning and Lijiang as "Moso" (in Chinese variously 么沙, 么些, 摩沙, 摩些 and finally 摩梭), which was until recently never much used by the people themselves. Not unlike the Bai, the Naxi in contemporary times take a certain pride in claiming historically that they have always "followed the Han", their elites having submitted to Chinese rule in the Ming in the 14th century and the Qing in the 17th (as well as forming their own branch of the CCP in the pre-Liberation era). Harrell (2001:206) points out that language is one of very few markers that can reliably distinguish Mosuo people culturally and ethnically from their Qiangic-speaking neighbors, the Primi.²¹³

Michaud et al. (2015) for the most part use data from Lijiang Naxi to illustrate the language, while Liberty Lidz (2007, 2010, 2011, 2017, 2018) focuses on Yongning Na (Mosuo), and He and Jiang (1985) give a *jianzhi* grammar for a dialect of Lijiang. For this section, I have made use of all three sources, but have drawn primarily from the work of Lidz. In her description of Yongning Na, Lidz describes the language as having inherited influences from the linguistic areas of Southeast Asia (shared grammaticalization processes), the Sinitic-speaking world (compounding, tonality and loanwords) and the Himalayas (retroflex allophones, agentive marking, evidentiality, egophoricity and Tibetan borrowings). She further claims that Chinese loanwords, which are considerably reduced phonologically, most likely were borrowed from regional languages, rather than directly from Chinese-speakers. On the other hand, Michaud et

²¹³ The Primi living in Yunnan are granted their own ethnic group, the Pumi 普米族. In Sichuan they are considered Tibetan, by virtue of the politics surrounding the kingdom Mili's (Ch. Muli) incorporation into the PRC.

al. (2015) claim: “Tibetan cultural influence in the area is strong; however, relatively few borrowings from Tibetan are found outside of specific spheres such as religion and proper names”.

From this demographic and language family background, we will turn now to linguistic overviews of the regional languages relevant to Bai.

6.2.2 Phonetics and Phonology

In this section I will first give an account of Bai’s sound system, then an overview of the sound properties of the selected languages of the region, including Lisu and Lalo Yi, and Naxi and Yongning Na, showing similarities or differences areally.

6.2.2.1 Bai Phonetics and Phonology

The following phoneme inventory is from Wang (2015), based on the Lama variety of Western Bai spoken in Enqi village in Lanping county.

	labials	dentals	Palatals	velars	uvulars	glottals
stops	p p ^h b	t t ^h d		k k ^h g	q q ^h ɢ	ʔ
fricatives	f v	s z	ç	x ɣ	χ ʁ	
affricates		ts ts ^h dz	tç tç ^h dʒ			
nasals	m	n	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ	
laterals		l				
approximants			j			

Wang chooses this Western Bai variety, rather than the Jianchuan or Dali variety, for its conservative segment inventory of 35 consonants, which he believes preserves older contrasts lost in the better-known Eastern dialects.²¹⁴ For example, the voiced series and the uvular consonants are not found in most other varieties of Bai. Compare this with the simpler

²¹⁴ Interestingly, Wang (2005:41) notes aspirated fricatives for the Dashi dialect, which he claims are “common in Jianchuan and Heqing”, though the other sources I consulted don’t mention them.

inventory of 22 consonants for Jianchuan Bai, given in Wiersma (2003:655), which lacks voiced obstruents (except /ɣ/ and allophonically [z]), uvulars and glottal stops.

Wiersma does note the presence of a set of retroflex fricative and affricates to accommodate the “educated pronunciation of Beijing Mandarin loans” in Jianchuan Bai, not included here (ibid). Xu and Zhao (1984) list a retroflex series of obstruents-- $t^h, d, tʂ, tʂ^h, dz, ʂ, z$ -- for the Bijiang dialect (classified as Northern in their designations), which also exhibits the uvulars /q, q^h, ɣ/, making it nearly as large an inventory as that of Enqi Bai given by Wang above. As Wiersma (2003) points out, the only segmental difference in Jianchuan from Mandarin are the voiced velar and labiodental fricatives²¹⁵.

In their data, Xu and Zhao (1984) note that voicing contrasts exist only for Bijiang, where it is accompanied by slight pre-nasalization, and is residually present in Dali for syllables carrying tones 33 and 31. They consider the /f/ phoneme to be an import from Chinese. According to them, only a few local dialects distinguish the historical 尖团音 contrast--that is historical velars versus sibilants before high front vowels.

For the most part, the ways in which Bai dialects’ inventories differ from one another seems to follow both natural phonological changes and also changes common to languages in contact with Chinese. For instance, complex initials in Gongxing Bai-- pf, pf^h, bv —developed from pre-labialization in the labiodental series, while apical vowels developed after dental initials in many dialects, similar to the so-called Mandarin “tuan series 团系” of dental obstruents before high, front vowels, e.g. *zi, ci, si*.

²¹⁵ Though Southwestern Mandarin has a voiced labiodental, it appears to be a reflex of the historical zero initial, as discussed in 3.4.3.3 (see specifically fn. 49). The Bai labiodental seems to operate more like the areal syllabic [ɣ] found in Ngwi and Naish languages, which developed out of a syllable rhyme, rather than a syllable onset.

Otherwise, the consonant and vowel systems are largely consistent among Bai varieties. For instance, Wang (2015) gives the following inventory for Enqi syllabic finals, all open syllables, from which I have extrapolated the following vowel phoneme chart.

Enqi Bai syllable finals:

ɿ, ɛ²¹⁶, æ, ɑ, o, ɯ, u

i, ie, iæ, ia, io, iɯ, iu, (iao)

ui, ue, uæ, uɑ

yi, ye, yæ, yɑ

	Front	Central	back
High	i y		ɯ u
high-mid			o
Mid	e~ɛ		
low-mid	æ		
Low			ɑ

Other than the triphthong [iao], which appears only in Chinese loans (where the medial /i/ is realized as a glide [j]), Bai rhymes consist maximally of a nuclear vowel preceded by one of three possible glides. In some varieties, discussed below, a nasalized series is present, partly preserved from older nasal endings, though Wiersma (2003:655) notes previous research that finds some nasalized endings have emerged over time. Also, in some dialects a rhotacized schwa has emerged, which can be preceded by front glides, but otherwise all syllables are open. The only other exception is that most Bai varieties involve a syllabic labiodental [ɣ], sometimes notated [ʋ]. Compare the final inventory of only 17 rhymes for Jianchuan, given by Wiersma (2003:655):

i e ɛ ɑ o u ɯ ʋ ɑo iɛ ia io iɯ ui ue uɑ iɑo

²¹⁶ The exact notation Wang (2015) uses is [E], a non-IPA character common in Chinese linguists' writings, considered to be mid-way between an [e] and an [ɛ] phonetically.

In Jianchuan, each final also has a phonemic nasal counterpart, except -u, -ao and -iao; however Wiersma notes that the Dali variety lacks nasalized rhymes completely. Xu and Zhao (1984) report that in Bijiang, which contrasts nasality on codas, “over half” of recent loans simply delete the nasal segment. Though most authors represent nasality in codas on the vowel (i.e. oral vs. nasal), in his transcriptions, Wang (2006:74) transcribes a segment. However, he finds that only in Jinxing and Tuoluo do final nasals contrast for place, which he attributes to later Chinese loanwords.

Nasality can trigger certain phonological rules in Jianchuan, so that /x/ becomes [h] before nasal vowels, a classic rhinoglottophilial effect, and the syllabic labiodental [ɣ] merges with an initial velar nasal to give the syllable [m̩] on words such as *ŋɣ⁵⁵* ‘fish’ [m̩⁵⁵] and *ŋɣ³³* ‘tail’ [m̩³³]²¹⁷.

With a relatively simple segment and syllable inventory, the scholarly literature has focused more on suprasegmental features, including tone and especially voice quality. Bai has been noted to include a complex interaction of “tense and lax vowels”, constrained by the tonal and segmental properties of the syllable. The implementation is actually a type of phonation, and though their sample did not include Bai, Ladefoged and Maddieson (1986) have studied this feature in languages of Southwest China. They found that depending on whether the origin of the phonation feature was from coda or onset segment, the phonetic correlates in contemporary languages may differ non-phonemically.

²¹⁷ The three groups of researchers I draw data from each use a different method of transcribing tones: Xu and Zhao (1984) use IPA tone letters, while Wiersma uses referential numbers 1-8 to refer to particular tonal values, and Wang Feng (2006, 2015) uses Chao numerals. For typographic and referential ease, I have converted the former two systems to Chao numerals, using Xu and Zhao’s (1984:12) table.

Xu and Zhao (1984) note that tonal inventories tend to vary between six and eight tones across varieties of Bai. They list eight tones for Jianchuan, each with a distinct pitch value, four of which have tense phonation (indicated here by underlining²¹⁸): 33, 42, 31, 55, 35, 44, 21, 55. Wang (2015) gives the following tonal inventory for Jianchuan Bai, which he claims has the most complex interaction between tonal pitch value and voice quality, where some morphemes are determined not by pitch value alone, but by the addition of tense phonation:

<u>Modal Tone</u>	<u>Non-modal Tone</u>
Tone 1 33 'drag' tɕi ³³	Tone 6 33 'leech' tɕi ³³
Tone 3 31 'earth' tɕi ³¹	Tone 7 31 'bracelet' tɕi ³¹
Tone 4 45 'many' tɕi ⁴⁵	Tone 8 45 'mail' tɕi ⁴⁵
Tone 5 23 'anxious' tɕi ²³	Tone 2 41 'chase' tɕi ⁴²

For comparison, the same tonal system, that is, for Jianchuan, is described by Wiersma (2004:658) below, where she gives a composite analysis of the data in Xu and Zhao (1984) and Dell (1981). Note that the 1-8 labels of tones are different from Wang's, but that some tones that likely correspond to each other, e.g. Wang's Tone 8 (45) and Wiersma's Tone 8 (35), are classified differently in terms of modality. In her system, pitch values do all of the work.

<u>Tones (non-modal voice)</u>	<u>Modal voice tones</u>
Tone 1 (66) High, level, tense voice	Tone 6 (55) High, level
Tone 2 (44) Non-high, level, tense voice	Tone 7 (33) Non-high, level
Tone 3 (31) Low, falling, breathy voice	Tone 8 (35) High, rising
Tone 4 (42) Non-high, falling, tense voice	
Tone 5 (21) Low, falling, harsh voice	

A composite chart of the above researchers' tonal accounts for the Jianchuan dialect is given in the following chart. On the one hand, Wiersma's data differ so strikingly in the tones she marks as non-modal (i.e. having some glottalic event, underlined for notation) versus modal,

²¹⁸ The underlined notation is fairly common to denote glottalic features of individual tones in languages of the region. David Bradley uses it to indicate glottalized syllables in Lisu. While Susanna Björverud uses a final <q> letter to indicate it for Lalo Yi, for consistency I have converted each instance of her q-final syllable to an underlined marker.

that were it not for the agreement on Tone 2, I would suspect there was a typographical error in the source. On the other hand, Wang appears to use the same minimal pairs as Xu and Zhao (1984), implying perhaps he drew from their account for his (2015) entry. (The only difference being his use of the morpheme for ‘bracelet’ to illustrate Tone 7, which Xu and Zhao illustrate with *tɕi²¹* ‘to buy or sell on credit’. Chinese translations are from Xu and Zhao (1984). Note that ‘anxious’ and ‘to mail’ are reminiscent of Sinitic morphemes, namely Mandarin [tɕi³⁵] and [tɕi⁵¹], respectively.

Table 26 Bai tonal values of Xu and Zhao (1984), Wiersma (2004) and Wang (2015)

Tone	Xu and Zhao (1984)	Wiersma (2004)	Wang (2015)	
1	33	<u>66</u>	33	tɕi ³³ drag 拉
2	<u>42</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>41</u>	tɕi ⁴¹ chase 追
3	31	<u>31</u>	31	tɕi ³¹ earth; field 田
4	55	<u>42</u>	45	tɕi ⁴⁵ many 多
5	35	<u>21</u>	23	tɕi ²³ anxious 急
6	<u>44</u>	55	<u>33</u>	tɕi ³³ leech 蚂蝗
7	<u>21</u>	33	<u>31</u>	tɕi ³¹ bracelet
8	<u>55</u>	35	<u>45</u>	tɕi ⁴⁵ mail 寄

Wiersma’s (1990) dissertation includes a detailed comparative investigation of the tonal properties and historical development of the Bai tonal system. Making comparisons with historical Sinitic categories and surrounding Tibeto-Burman languages, she attempts to establish whether the tonal system of Bai was an inheritance from a proto-Bai ancestor, or whether it was borrowed from Chinese or another areal language. Though she cautions that the stratified nature of the lexicon renders a single overall explanation of tonogenesis in Bai invalid, she examines whether the tense/lax distinction was more likely to have grown from the loss of final or initial consonantal segments. Noting irregular correspondences between tonal categories of different Bai dialects, she shows that external contact most likely played some role in the process.

According to Wiersma (1990:59), the high, level, tense tone of Jianchuan (66) probably came from borrowed Chinese words ending in a voiced glottal fricative or in /s/, i.e. Qusheng (去声) loans. Xu and Zhao note that tones in syllables with tense vowels have higher and shorter tones than those with lax vowels, perhaps implying an older segmental coda, a property they note is true also of the Ngwi languages Lisu, Hani and Lahu.

Wiersma goes on to consider how this process took place at different stages of time in Bai tonal evolution. Especially if it might have been motivated by external contact, it could have made for a less straightforward correspondence in tonal relation between modern Bai and either historical Chinese tonal categories or Proto-Tibeto-Burman segmental categories. That is: Bai tones formed from either: 1) two languages at different stages of transphonologization of segmental to voice contrasts coming into contact, forming a new language, or 2) Bai was undergoing a change from its ancestral language when it encountered one of these contact languages (Wiersma 1990:147). This would imply, then, that not only would historical reconstruction need to proceed by sequestering the lexicon by historical layer, as is common practice (see 6.2.7.1), but that each layer would need its own independent reconstruction for comparison.

Finally, some Bai varieties exhibit complex tone sandhi processes that involve a phonological alternation depending on lexical class. For example, Wang (2006:36) notes that in Enqi, genitive singular pronouns alternate between Tone 43 and 55 according to the following tone; the same two tones are in alternation for demonstrative pronouns, but in the latter's case, the sandhi values are distinct from those of the genitive pronouns. These phenomena are similar to the complex sandhi paradigms recorded in Naish languages by Michaud (2011, 2017), and illustrated below in 6.2.3.2.

6.2.2.2 Ngwi Languages

I have reworked the organization of Björverud’s (1998) consonantal inventory of Lalo Yi to the more traditional phonetics chart below:

	Labial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stops	p p ^h b		t t ^h d tj tj ^h dj ²¹⁹		k k ^h g kj kj ^h	ʔ ²²⁰
Nasals	m ʔm		n ʔn		ŋ	h ²²¹
Fricatives		f v ʔv	s z	ʃ ʒ	x ɣ	
Affricates			ts ts ^h dz			
Liquids			l ʔl			
Glides	w			j		

The so-called palatalized and non-palatalized velar obstruents contrast before low back vowels, as in (6-2)²²²:

(6-2)

k_a⁴⁴ ‘rake’ vs. k_j_a⁴⁴ ‘prepare’

d_j_a²¹.ŋ²¹d_j_a²¹.ŋ²¹k_h_a⁴⁴l_a⁴⁴l_a⁴⁴ ‘dragonfly’ vs. k^h_j_a⁴⁴ ‘village’

However, palatalized consonants are also allophones of alveolars and velars before high, front vowels in laryngeal syllables. The labiodentals also have palatalized allophones in this environment.

Minimal pairs for glottalized and non-glottalized initials include those in (6-3):

²¹⁹ Björverud refers to this series, and the corresponding velar series, as palatal affricates.

²²⁰ Björverud suggests the glottal stop as more of a zero initial, occurring only in otherwise vowel-initial syllables. It is also the only consonant that may precede the high, front nasalized vowel.

²²¹ One feature that Björverud’s organization captures, that is lost presently, is that the glottal fricative [h] is the glottalized counterpart of the velar nasal [ŋ], contrastive in the pair /ŋ⁵⁵/ ‘cry’ vs. /h⁵⁵/ ‘raise’.

²²² In this dissertation I have tried to keep tonal transcription relatively consistent across languages and chapters. Björverud uses a system of accents and final consonants to indicate pitch and non-modal phonation. I have converted her final -q for those syllables with a glottalic event concomitant with the tone (her “laryngeal syllables”) to underlining on the vowel, similar to the Bai data, and have otherwise indicated the pitch values with Chao numerals, following her (1998:3-4) tonal explanations.

(6-3)

la⁵⁵ ‘come’ vs. ʔla⁵⁵ ‘tongue’
 ma²¹ ‘not’ vs. ʔma²¹ ‘teach’
 ny²¹ ‘smell at’ vs. ʔny²¹ ‘short’

Bradley (2015) gives the following consonantal inventory for the “most conservative Lisu dialect”²²³:

	bilabials	dentals	retroflex	palatals	velars	glottals
Stops	p p ^h b	t t ^h d			k k ^h g	ʔ
Fricatives	(f) v	s z	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	
Affricates		ts ts ^h dz	tʂ tʂ ^h dʐ	tç tç ^h dʒ		
Nasals	m	n		ɲ	ŋ	ɴ
Lateral		l				
approximants	w			j		

As in the closely related languages Lipo and Lolopo, one variety of central Flowery Lisu distinguishes the retroflex series from the alveopalatals. Other Lisu varieties have the two in complementary distribution, with the retroflexes before [ɿ], /u/, /o/ and /w/, and the alveopalatals before “/a/ and elsewhere including before /i/”.

The vowel chart for Lalo, similarly reorganized as above, is given below. As all Lalo syllables are open, it also doubles as an inventory of syllabic finals. Björverud (1998) organizes vowels into plain, labialized and nasal, with [y] and [ɥ] written as <y> and <w>, transcribing the latter phonetically as [u^w]. There is also a syllabic nasal [ŋ], labelled as “other” by Björverud.

	Front	Central	Back
High Oral	i y		u ɥ ²²⁴
High Nasalized	ĩ		
Mid	ɛ	ə	
Low			a

²²³ I have tried to represent Bradley’s (2015) arrangement as closely as possible, though he doesn’t provide a chart and labels. I did however substitute his [ɹ] notation for [ʐ], which reflects his notational choice in other publications, and further makes sense of indicating it forms a minimal pair with [ʂ]. (The notation [ɹ] and [ʐ] is also variable across authors for Standard Mandarin /r/.) I also put the nasalized glottal fricative in the nasal row, rather than fricative.

²²⁴ Her own description is: “In Lalo there are two vowels that must be classified as markedly labialized; y and w. A labialized final is not the same as a rounded final, but a final where there is a marked labial involvement. The front

The occurrence of the high front nasalized vowel is quite rare, less than half of one percent of Björverud’s documented morphemes contain it, but included among those is the common word ʔ⁵⁵ ‘to look’. The only initial with which it combines is the glottal stop [ʔ]. The syllabic nasal never combines with any initial consonant, but takes its place features from adjacent syllables, usually those following it, with labial, velar and palatal forms. For Lisu, Yu (2007:79) shows that in Western and Northern dialects, vowels are nasalized after [ʔ] and [h]. Otherwise, nasal vowels only appear in loanwords and onomatopoeia (ibid.).

Bradley (2015) gives the following inventory for the “maximal Lisu vowel system”, which I have converted into a standard IPA chart:

	front	back
High	i ɣ	ɯ u
Mid-high	e ø	ɤ o
Mid-low	ɛ	
Low		ɑ

/u/ involves some labiodental friction after consonants, namely [f] after voiceless and [v] after voiced, e.g. /tu/ is [t^fu] and /du/ is [d^vu].

In Björverud’s (1998) analysis, Lalo has a total of five surface tones, two with concomitant creaky phonation quality, which are referred to as “laryngeal syllables”. They are a High tone (55), with modal voicing; a Mid laryngealized tone (44); a Mid tone with modal voicing (33); a Low Falling tone, with modal voicing (21) and a Low level laryngealized tone (22)²²⁵. Björverud also mentions that less than 3% of morphemes carry an extra-high laryngeal tone, i.e. a

labialized vowel is rounded, but the back labialized vowel is produced by letting the upper teeth rest on the lower lip. On the other hand, the plain back vowel is rounded, but is not labialized in the sense used here. (Björverud 1998:10)”

²²⁵ As noted in footnote 222, I have used underlining to represent laryngeal effects of these tones, replacing the final <q> letter that served the same purpose in the original source.

laryngealized High Level tone (55), as the result of sandhi, though in scattered instances the presumed origin of the sandhi trigger has disappeared.

Minimal pairs given by Björverud include those in (6-4):

(6-4)

p ^h a ⁵⁵ ‘jacket’	u ⁵⁵ ‘small’	si ⁵⁵ ‘3P Remote’
p ^h a ³³ ‘gust’	u ³³ ‘3P’	si ³³ ‘pull’
p ^h a ⁴⁴ ‘scoop’	u ⁴⁴ ‘blow strongly’	si ⁴⁴ ‘sweep’
p ^h a ²¹ ‘offer gift’	u ²¹ ‘vegetable’	si ²¹ ‘blood’
p ^h a ²² ‘good’	u ²² ‘we’	si ²² ‘thirsty [BD]’

Bradley (2017:905) lists the same exact values for Lisu, but with the addition of a modal rising tone 35, and with the low laryngealized tone having a slight fall, his inventory consisting of 55, 35, 44 (creaky), 33 (non-creaky), 21 (low falling) and 21 (low falling with glottal stop). The rising tone 35 is least frequent, and rare after voiced stop or affricate initials. Lisu’s basic syllable structure is C(G)V with an obligatory tone, with the possibility of a syllabic nasal, which tends to be homorganic with the initial of the following syllable (Bradley 2015). On the Lalo Yi syllabic inventory, Björverud (1998:42) claims the following:

“A limited number of native syllables occur with what at first glance might be interpreted as nasal finals or diphthongs. A closer look reveals that these syllables often take unusual tonal patterns that seems to be mergers of two consecutive tones. These are considered the phonetic realisations of mergers of two syllables. In mergers, any of the five basic tones may be merged with any other tone leading to quite an array of tonal patterns, as well as a number of diphthongs and nasal final syllables.”

6.2.2.3 *Naic languages*

The consonantal inventory for Lijiang Naxi is given in Michaud et al. (2015):

	bilabials	dentals	retroflexes	palatals	velars	glottals
Stops	p ^h p b mb	t ^h t d nd	ṭ ^h ṭ ḍ ɳḍ		k ^h k g ŋg	
Affricates		ts ^h ts dz ndz	ṭs ^h ṭs ḍz ɳḍz			
Fricatives		s z	ʂ ʐ	ç		h
Nasals	m	n			ŋ	
Laterals		l	ḷ			

This differs from the inventory in He and Jiang (1985:5) in lacking certain consonants, for instance labiodentals /f,v/, velar fricatives /x, ɣ/, an alveolopalatal nasal /ɲ/, and the voiced palatal /z/. He and Jiang (1985:6) give a minimal pair (minus tone) for the prenasalized velar and the nasal velar initial, as in *ŋga*³³ ‘drought 旱’ versus *ŋa*²¹ ‘close to; next to 挨’. They also claim the syllabic labial [ɣ] becomes a labiodental nasal rhyme following the velar nasal, i.e. /ŋɣ/, as in [ŋŋ⁵⁵] ‘2.SG (polite) 您’ and [ŋŋ³¹] ‘to cry 哭’. Finally, a number of oppositions are barely contrastive, e.g. retroflex stops are only contrastive in front of /o/, and the palatal and glottal fricatives only in front of /y/ (Michaud et al. 2015)²²⁶.

The Yongning Na inventory differs in a number of ways, both by the absence of prenasalized stops, as well as the presence of a labiodental fricative, a series of alveolopalatals and uvular stops, and also a voiceless lateral fricative (Lidz 2017:841):

²²⁶ In some glosses, e.g. the experiential aspect marker *-ji*, Michaud et al. (2015) give a voiced palatal stop [j], but never mention its distribution.

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Alveolo-palatal	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stop	p ^h p b		t ^h t d		(t ^h ṭ d)		k ^h k g	q ^h q ɢ	
Trill	(p̤ ^h , p̤, b)								
Nasal	m	(m̥)	n		(ŋ)	ɲ	(ŋ)		
Fricative		f	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ		ɣ	(β)	h
Affricate			ts ^h ts dz	tʃ ^h tʃ dz	tʂ ^h tʂ dz				
Lateral fricative			ɬ						
Approximant	w				(l)	j ²²⁷			
Lateral approximant			l						

Though she does not state the conditioning environment, Lidz describes Na phonemes as having allophones for members of the bilabial and alveolar series, as well as the palatal nasal and the velar fricative. For the bilabials, plain stops become trills, i.e. /p, ph, b, m, w/ → [p̤^h, p̤, β, m̥, ɣ], while alveolar consonants become retroflex. The palatal nasal [ɲ] becomes [ŋ], and the velar fricative [ɣ] becomes [β].

The syllabic final inventories for Lijiang Naxi and Yongning Na are given below. Na has 14 vowels, four of which are diphthongs (which in Lidz’s description are wɣ, wɔ, wæ wǣ). Lidz describes the vowel [ɣ] as high, back and “ultra-closed”, with a tightly compressed distance between the first and second formants, with an articulation further back than [u] or [ɯ], and a height similar to /ɔ/ (Lidz 2017:842).

Naxi: i y e æ ɥe wæ ɯ u ɣ o a ə ɣ jɣ ja wɣ wə- wa
Na: i e ε æ ɯ u ɣ o ɔ a ə ɣ wɣ wɔ wæ ǣ wǣ

²²⁷ Note that Lidz (2010) uses <y> to represent the palatal glide [j], to keep closer to Pinyin intuitions for her readers (ibid.25). And so here, and throughout, I have changed her notation for such glides to [j], to keep closer to IPA conventions for readers of this dissertation.

Finally, Yongning Na has four surface tones, 33, 55, 31 and 13, while Naxi has five, 55, 33, 11, 13, and 35²²⁸. Most tones are explained by Lidz as having Tibeto-Burman origins. The high tone however, being quite restricted in the lexicon, is as of yet unaccounted for historically, and could constitute a borrowing. The contour tones can be analyzed underlyingly as a series of level tones undergoing complex sandhi processes, as in Michaud (2008, 2017). Lidz mentions no phonation characteristics, and Michaud et al. state specifically that there are none.

Yongning Na syllables are typically CVT, where T=tone, though CGVT and VT are possible, where the glide is always [w]. Through borrowing, or “through rhinoglottophilia”, i.e. following the glottal consonants /h/ and [ʔ], some vowels may be nasal, and in some varieties a rhotacized vowel occurs.

Na does exhibit regressive vowel harmony for backness, and occasionally height, matching the value of the vowel in the following syllable. It applies to a number of affixes and function words, such as the question word prefix a^{31-} , the negative marker $m\bar{a}^{33}$ and the durative prefix $t^h\omega^{33-}$, as well as within compounds. Lidz gives examples which include the accomplished prefix $l\bar{a}^{33-}$, appearing as [l̄ə] in $l\bar{a}^{33-}t\bar{ɔ}^{33}$ ‘see, look’, as [l̄æ] in $l\bar{æ}^{33-}q\bar{æ}^{13}$ ‘burn up’, and as [l̄ɛ] in $l\bar{ɛ}^{33-}s\bar{w}^{33}$ ‘die’. An example of the kinship prefix a^{33-} exhibiting vowel harmony in (6-5) comes from

Lidz (2010:98):

(6-5) Yongning Na vowel harmony on the kinship prefix a^{33-}

$a^{33-}p^h\bar{y}^{33}$ ‘grandfather’
 $a^{33-}d\bar{a}^{33}$ ‘father’
 $\bar{æ}^{33-}m\bar{i}^{33}$ ‘mother, aunt’
 $\bar{ə}^{33-}z\bar{w}^{33}$ ‘grandmother’
 $\bar{ə}^{33-}y\bar{u}^{33}$ ‘uncle’²²⁹

²²⁸ Michaud et al. claim that no Naish language has distinctive falling contours on monosyllables; however, Lidz lists the 31 tone and illustrates it amply. Perhaps the difference is one of phonological interpretation.

²²⁹ Though it seems to me to be a typo, the syllabic marker is present in the original text.

One of the most striking features of Naic phonology is the complex tone sandhi processes. Much of Alexis Michaud’s work on Naish languages has been documenting the complex tonal operations of the languages’ phonologies. Sandhi operates sensitive not only to word boundaries but also lexical categories. For example, for Yongning Na, there are three distinct surface tone patterns on monosyllabic morphemes, but seven distinct surface patterns in disyllabic words, based on the tones in combination, and certain phonological restrictions that obtain. In addition to this, some of the monosyllabic nouns that have the same tone in isolation yield distinct tonal patterns when combined with the same morpheme. For example, the copula, which also undergoes a tone change, yields what appears to be six distinct underlying tone patterns for monosyllables (Michaud 2013:7). For disyllabic nouns, Michaud identifies eleven underlying tonal patterns. As illustration for monosyllables, (6-6) gives three nouns, all mid-level in isolation, which when combined with the copula (unspecified underlyingly), result in three distinct patterns in combination:

(6-6) Yongning Na noun + copula tone sandhi examples

morpheme	with copula <i>ni</i>
<i>jo</i> ³³ ‘sheep’	<i>jo</i> ¹¹ <i>ni</i> ¹⁵ ‘is a sheep’
<i>z̥wæ</i> ³³ ‘horse’	<i>z̥wæ</i> ³³ <i>ni</i> ⁵⁵ ‘is a horse’
<i>lɑ</i> ³³ ‘tiger’	<i>lɑ</i> ³³ <i>ni</i> ¹¹ ‘is a tiger’

As another example, in numeral + classifier phrases, the tone of the classifier changes depending on what numeral it follows, with a vast array of surface tonal patterns when combined with the numerals 1-100, but which may be analyzed as nine underlying tone patterns for the classifier-numeral phrases. As one example, provided by Michaud (2013:19-20), consider the two classifiers, *ni*⁵⁵ ‘day’ and *k^hy*³³ ‘year’, which change their tones depending on the numeral they combine with, so that *ni*⁵⁵ is high after one and two, but low-rising after

three and mid after four: $k^h\gamma^{33}$ on the other hand is mid-rising after one and two, low-rising after three and low-level after four²³⁰.

numerals ²³¹	classifier	quantified phrase
1 $d\omega^{33}$	ηi^{55}	$d\omega^{33} \eta i^{55}$ 'one day'
	$k^h\gamma^{33}$	$d\omega^{33} k^h\gamma^{35}$ 'one year'
2 ηi^{33}	ηi^{55}	$\eta i^{33} \eta i^{55}$ 'two days'
	$k^h\gamma^{33}$	$\eta i^{33} k^h\gamma^{35}$ 'two years'
3 $s\omega^{33}$	ηi^{55}	$s\omega^{11} \eta i^{15}$ 'three days'
	$k^h\gamma^{33}$	$s\omega^{11} k^h\gamma^{15}$ 'three years'
4 $z\gamma^{33}$	ηi^{55}	$z\gamma^{33} \eta i^{33}$ 'four days'
		$z\gamma^{33} k^h\gamma^{11}$ 'four years'

Michaud (2013:39) considers such underlying Numeral + Classifier tone patterns “irregular morphotonology”, which “can be accounted for neither by sandhi nor regular morphotonological rules”. Michaud et al. (2015) consider Naxi to be the simplest tone system, with one tone per syllable, with Laze more complex and Na most complex of the group.

6.2.2.4 *Summary*

The most prominent similarity among the languages surveyed here are their significantly reduced syllable inventories, mostly CV or CGV, sometimes with a role for nasalization to play, but almost never as a segmental coda. Ngwi and Naic languages have the simplest syllable inventories in Sino-Tibetan, besides Bodo-Garo languages of East India, and Bai is mostly just as simplified. Other observations of the regional sound systems are as follows:

²³⁰ This sort of grammatically conditioned tone sandhi is also found in Nuosu Yi. See Gerner (2013:28-30) for illustration of eight rules, including an instance where “singular personal pronouns...that are patient noun phrases of a monotransitive verb” undergo sandhi. Many of the other rules seem conditioned by word length, though sandhi occurs before the topic marker and classifiers in general, as well. I thank Stevan Harrell for bringing this, and other features of Nuosu Yi that relate to the languages in this chapter, to my attention.

²³¹ The citation tonal values for the numerals are from Lidz (2010:233). Unless I missed it, Michaud (2013) does not indicate an underlying value for numerals in his examples. Only the number three differs from the surface values given in the Numeral + Classifier expressions in his data.

1. Both Bai and Lisu exhibit considerable dialectal variation, and with both languages more rural varieties tend to have larger consonantal inventories, sometimes with retroflex series, and in the case of Bai, uvulars (as in Bijiang and Enqi). While Yongning Na has uvular phonemes, neither Lisu or Lalo, or Naxi, do, and presumably Bai and Na are not in significant enough contact to assume borrowing. As such the limited uvular contrasts for both Bai and Naic must be retentions from Proto-Bai and Proto-Naic, respectively (Wang 2003:71; Jacques and Michaud 2011:24-25). Otherwise, the languages largely tend towards labial-dental-palatal-velar place contrasts.

2. While a 3-way contrast on obstruents is present in a few Bai dialects, such as Bijiang, it is absent in Jianchuan, the standard variety. Conversely, Ngwi and Naic languages standardly have 3-way contrasts in voicing and aspiration, and many involve a possible fourth contrast, either in prenasalization, as in Naxi or Nuosu Yi (Gerner 2013:21), or in palatalization, as in Lalo Yi. Finally, Lalo Yi also contrasts glottalized and plain sonorants, not found in any of the other languages surveyed.

3. Nasality manifests in interesting ways in the region, its local interaction with glottal consonants in languages just to the south having inspired James Matisoff (1975) to coin the term “rhinoglottophilia” based on observations there, for example nasal vowels predictably appearing after glottal consonants in Bai and Lisu. In Naxi, the syllabic fricative becomes a syllabic labiodental nasal following velar nasal initials, as in /ŋʏ³¹/ ‘to cry’ [ŋʏ³¹]. This is not unlike the regular process found in Bai, illustrated in 6.2.2.1 above, as in the Bai words *fish* [m̥⁵⁵] and *tail* [m̥³³]. However, oral versus nasal contrasts on vowels is quite rare, with Bai being the regional exception (although the Dali dialect itself lacks such a contrast). Opposite of Ngwi languages, in Bai the presence of a nasal vowel changes the place of the preceding consonant

from velar to glottal, rather than consonantal place features determining the nasality of the vowel. This is in some ways reminiscent of Mandarin low vowel assimilation to the place features of coda nasals (see Hsieh et al. 2009). Syllabic nasals appear in many of the languages along with the syllabic labiodental, which can often be ascribed to a historical allophone of a high back vowel.

4. The most common place for segmental allophony is before high front vowels, where in most of the languages apicals form after dentals, or velars palatalize. This is of course a very natural sound change, given the friction produced from the narrow opening for the vowel, but it is also a very salient feature of Mandarin Chinese, including Southwest Mandarin. One could easily speculate that in this case Chinese influence helped along a natural sound change already poised to emerge to begin with.

5. All languages of the region, even beyond those surveyed here, are tonal, with inventories ranging from 4-5 in Naic languages, to on average 5-6 in Ngwi languages, to more commonly 6-8 in Bai²³². It is interesting to note that Bai has more, in some dialects twice as many, tones as Mandarin does. Many researchers for these languages show the Tibeto-Burman (or in the case of Bai, Proto-Bai) origins of most of the contrastive tones, but especially among (ultra-)high tones, which tend to be rare across inventories, they hold out the possibility of borrowing for their origins. Bai is similar to Ngwi languages in having concomitant laryngeal features in certain tones, a “tense” or “non-modal” quality, just as Lisu and Lalo Yi have glottalized tones.

6. Speaking of tones, Naic languages exhibit a highly complex system of tone sandhi, where the trigger for sandhi rules goes beyond simply adjacent tones, and relates as much to lexical

²³² Note, however, that Nuosu Yi, the representative “Yi language”, spoken in Liangshan, has only 3 contrastive tones, slightly below the average, though a fourth tonal value appears regularly in sandhi operations.

categories and syntactic configurations, such as classifier phrases. Bai apparently shares this feature, too, though it is not widely discussed. Wang (2006) provides some examples from Enqi, a quite conservative Bai dialect, where the semantics of pronouns trigger tone sandhi.

7. Yongning Na is the language with the most outlying features of all surveyed. It is (one of?) the only language to exhibit vowel harmony, for one²³³. It also has interesting conditioned allophones, including a full labial trill series. Along with Naxi, it also lacks the phonation properties, such as creakiness and tenseness, found in Ngwi languages and Bai. As the lesser known, and in the case of Yongning Na, the less urban, languages of the region, it is perhaps no surprise that their array of phonetic and phonological properties are most diverse.

8. One final property that can be noted about the languages here, which is true as well of other Tibeto-Burman languages, such as Qiang, is that although available minimal pairs supply a certain number of contrasts in inventory counts, certain contrasts are rare at best, and this commonly features in descriptions of languages of the region. For example, Naxi has phonemic contrasts for retroflex stops, as well as palatal and glottal fricatives, but only barely; they appear contrastively only before [o] and before [y], respectively. Yongning Na has a contrastive high tone, but it shows up in only a handful of lexical items, which are perhaps borrowings to begin with. This is similar to other languages of the larger region, particularly Qiang, where two tones carry the vast majority of contrasts, though other contrastive tones exist in the inventory. (See Evans 2001.) The same is true for Naic nasal codas, almost always with no place features, when they are found at all. This may possibly speak to a synchronic moment of emerging

²³³ There are mentions of limited harmony processes applying to specific lexical items in other languages of the region. Stevan Harrell (p.c.) mentions an alternation in the morpheme *mge* for 'buckwheat', in the forms "*mge qu* 'white buckwheat,' *Fagopyrum esculentum*, 甜荞 but *mga nuo*, 'black buckwheat,' *Fagopyrum tataricum* 苦荞". See Chen et al. (1885:21-23, 26) for further observations, though they do not use the term "harmony (和谐)". Also see 5.2.2.2 for limited harmony processes in nDrapa, which Gong (2007:26) notes as "unstable".

contrast, but the immediate result are notably lopsided inventories in terms of contrast token frequency.

6.2.3 Noun Phrase Morphology

In this section I give an overview of noun phrase (NP) properties of the region, first a fuller account of Bai, then local Ngwi and Naic languages, comparing differences and similarities.

6.2.3.1 *The Bai NP*

In Bai, nouns mark for case and number, though neither are entirely unambiguous, as discussed below. In noun phrases, classifiers are obligatory for quantified nouns, while numerals, classifiers and quantifiers follow the nouns they quantify. Adjectives, when serving as modifiers (as opposed to predicates), precede the nouns they modify. The maximal NP projection, adapted slightly from Wiersma (2003:670) would be:

(Modifier) + N + ((CL) + ((DET) + (NUM) + (CL)))

as in (6-7) and (6-8) (ibid):

(6-7)

tsu³¹ mu⁵⁵ fu⁴⁴-tsu³¹
tree those six-CL
'those six trees'

(6-8)

ji²¹ xu³¹ no³³ tɕi⁵⁵so⁴⁴-ja⁴²
boat inside SUB gold.hammers-CL.several²³⁴
'the golden hammers that were inside the boat'

Though Wiersma glosses it as a kind of plural classifier in (6-8) above, Xu and Zhao refer to the morpheme *ja*⁴² as a “generalized reference plural” (泛指复数), and gloss it with the Mandarin morpheme ‘some’ 一些. Wang (2015) provides it as one example of two morphemes

²³⁴ When source material includes a specific semantic gloss for a classifier, I provide it here. Most sources do not, however, and so I leave those glossed simply as CL.

in Jianchuan as simply plural markers: one for people, xo^{44} , and one for objects, ja^{42} . For example: $th\ddot{o}^{42}tsi^{44}xo^{44}$ ‘comrades’, $t\ddot{c}i^{31}ja^{42}$ ‘fields’. He points out that Enqi Bai has only one plural marker, xo^{22} : $\eta o^{24} t^{h}i^{22} xo^{22}$ ‘brothers’.

Other than plurals, affixes are relatively rare in Bai. Wiersma (2003:667) notes that they rarely, if ever, change the category of the word. Wang (2015) gives as examples the verbal prefixes sa^{24} - expressing reciprocity, as in Enqi tsa^{55} ‘hit’, $sa^{24}-tsa^{55}$ ‘fight’, and ka^{44} - expressing fleeting action, as in Jianchuan mi^{33} ‘think’, $ka^{44}-mi^{33}$ ‘think for a moment’.

Authors differ somewhat on how they treat “noun particles”—a regular fuzzy area in describing languages of this region. Many authors, including Wiersma (2003:663) for Bai, group nominalizers/relativizers, complementizers, and sometimes comparatives, together with what seem more like familiar case markers in general linguistics, into a category called “noun particles”. Others, for example Gong (2007) for nDrapa (see 5.2.3), seem to include what may be postposition particles, such as different locatives, together with case markers as “auxiliaries (助词)”. See discussion in 4.3.1 for more about the difficulty of distinguishing these.

Another common occurrence, as with case markers in Kham Tibetan and Daohua, is case homophony, a single morpheme marking what might be expected to be different cases. This is present in Bai, where no^{33} marks objects, nominalizations, locatives, comparatives and what Wiersma (2003) calls “subordinative”, which I assume functions like a complementizer. Leaving aside nominalizer, comparative and complementizer functions, the case markers of Bai are listed in (6-9):

(6-9) Bai Case Markers

no^{33}	OBJ
$no^{33}; \eta u^{55}$	LOC
η^{55}	BEN
$va^{42}; \eta u^{42}$	POSS

Wang (2015) notes of these morphemes only that the “nominalizer” *no*³³ is used to construct relative clauses, which functions similarly to Mandarin nominalizer *de*.

(6-10)

nɯ ⁵⁵	ma ⁴³	no ²²	su ²⁴	e ²²	a ⁴³ -tja ²¹	
1SG	buy	SUB	book	read/see	NEG-good	

‘That book you bought is not interesting.’ (Wang 2015)

Xu and Zhao (1984:50-54) note that *no*³³ has three functions, viz. to serve as object marker, modifier marker and complement marker. An illustration of *no*³³ serving as a case marker comes from Xu and Zhao, illustrated in (6-11) and (6-12) (1984:50-54). Note that here we have an SVO language marking case on objects after the verb. This somewhat undercuts the argument, presented in 4.3.1.3, that case marking is a functional outcome of SOV word order, unless, perhaps, we assume Bai was previously SOV, and maintained case markers after a (Chinese contact-induced) change to SVO.

(6-11)

ma ⁵⁵	xɛ ⁴⁴ tsue ⁴⁴	a ²¹ sã ⁵⁵ tsi ³³	no ³³	la ⁴²
3PL	upbraid	Little.Three.Dim	OBJ	PTCL.CERT ²³⁵
他们	训斥	小三子	助	了

‘They upbraided Little Sanzi.’
他们训斥小三子了

(6-12)

ŋa ⁵⁵	si ²¹	nɯ ⁵⁵	no ³³	pe ²¹ xo ⁵⁵ -ku ⁵⁵
1SG	give	2SG	OBJ	plum.flower-CL
我们	给	你	助	梅花枝

‘We give you a plum flower.’
我们给你一枝梅花

²³⁵ In addition to marking completive/perfective aspect, this morpheme is also presented as a sentence-final particle, *la*⁴², still glossed with the Chinese perfective morpheme 了 *le* in the source (see (6-48) for both in succession), though explained as a modal particle expressing certainty (坚定的语气) by Xu and Zhao (1984:80): *ŋɯ⁵⁵ tu³¹ mu²¹ u⁴² tɕ^hi⁴⁴ la⁴²* ‘One of my pots of beans has been ground out.’ (我的一锅豆磨出来了). Not unlike Chinese *le*, which also functions as a sentence-final change of state marker, it is not clear to me when Bai *la*⁴² is acting as an aspect marker, and when it is acting as a final modal particle indicating certainty. I have thus consistently glossed sentence-final forms as PTCL.CERT, and those immediately following the verb as PFV.

As a verbal complement marker, functioning similarly to Mandarin *de* 的/地/得, the following examples in (6-13) and (6-14) serve to illustrate (Xu and Zhao 1984:53):

(6-13)

ŋɑ ⁵⁵	jō ⁴⁴	ɕo ³¹	no ³³	ɣu ⁴²
1PL	will	good	SUB	study
我们	要	好	地	学

'We will study well.'
我们要好好地学

(6-14)

si ⁵⁵ ɣu ³³	lu ³¹ -tsu ³¹	xɛ̃ ⁵⁵	no ³³	tui ⁵⁵
willow	this-CL	grow	SUB	straight
柳	这棵	生	得	直

'This willow tree grows straight.'
这颗柳树长得直

Note that in all occurrences the morpheme is invariant, regardless of the semantics of the relativized or complementized constituent.

Compounding is a regular morphological process, and Wiersma (2003:669) gives the following list as examples of compound nouns, shown in (6-15):

(6-15)

tɕui ³³ + ŋui ³³	mouth {mouth + eye}
ts ^h ɑ̃ ⁵⁵ + pɛ̃ ³³	meal {breakfast + supper}
ŋui ³³ + xw ⁴⁴	greedy {eye + black}
xɛ̃ ⁵⁵ + miɛ ⁴²	the dark {sky + obscure}
xɛ̃ ⁵⁵ + t ^h ɛ ⁴⁴	thunder {sky + split}
mo ⁴⁴ mi ⁴² + xɛ̃ ⁵⁵	noodles {flour + raw}
fɛ ⁴⁴ + mo ⁴⁴ mi ⁴²	dough {develop + flour}

Wang (2015) notes that Bai features regular reduplication for classifiers and adjectives, e.g.:
to²² to²² t^hiæ⁵⁵ 'every flower is red'; *se⁴³ se⁴³ no²²* 'very small' (*t^hiæ⁵⁵* 'red' and *no²²* 'small').

Wiersma (2003:668) provides other examples of reduplication to create manner adverbials, shown in (6-16):

(6-16)

ηε²¹ηε²¹ja⁴⁴ja⁴⁴

going back and forth (lit. go + go + return + return)

thu⁵⁵thu⁵⁵tsõ³³tsõ³³

going up and down (lit. down + down + ascend + ascend)

Finally, according to Wang (2006), all Bai dialects except Mazhelong have the inclusive/exclusive distinction for first-person plural pronouns, a common feature of the region.

Wiersma (2003:662) lists the following forms:

Table 27 Bai pronominal forms

	Singular	Plural
First-person	ηo ³¹	
Inclusive		ja ⁵⁵
Exclusive		ηa ⁵⁵
Genitive	ηu ⁵⁵	
Second-person	no ³¹	na ⁵⁵
Polite	ji ⁵⁵	
Genitive	nu ⁵⁵	
Third-person	mo ³¹	ma ⁵⁵
Genitive	mu ⁵⁵	

The pronominal paradigm is interesting in that, while the first and second person pronouns have a family resemblance to the Proto-Sino-Tibetan **ŋa(j)* and **na(ŋ)*, the third person pronouns do not seem to have immediately obviously cognates with either Sinitic or Ngwi languages. This is a common occurrence throughout Sino-Tibetan, however, where no third person pronoun seems reconstructable at the proto-level (LaPolla 2017:46).

6.2.3.2 *The NP of Ngwi languages*

Besides Lalo, much of the data in this section discusses Lisu, which Bradley (2015) claims “has virtually no morphology.” Compounding, along with reduplication, are the most common forms of native word formation, though there are also some prefixes and suffixes in Ngwi languages.

One of these affixes in Lisu is the plural marker, *-bu³³* (*-bu³³* in Lipo), which can occur with pronouns to mark a group of people, as shown in (6-17) (Yu 2007:125):

(6-17)

na²¹ a⁵⁵sa³³ mi⁵⁵-bu³³ a³³t^hε²¹³ lε²¹ la³³ o²¹
 2PL third female-PL when homeward come Q
 ‘When did the group with your third sister come home?’

The Lisu pronoun system is given below for five representative dialects by Yu (2007:119). I reproduce her chart here. Note that most dialects have an inclusive/exclusive distinction, as in Bai, but separate genitive forms do not appear to be common. Unlike Bai, plurals are usually formed by suffixation, rather than suppletion, as in Lalo *tʂa³³*, derived from the historical form for ‘family’ or ‘litter’²³⁶. Pronouns in Lalo do not include an inclusive vs. exclusive distinction, but do have a “remote” third person pronoun (*ʂi⁵⁵*, distinct from non-remote *u³³*), translatable as ‘someone’ or ‘people’ (Björverud 1998:51).

Table 28 Pronominal Forms in Five Lisu Dialects

	Shibacha	Nujiang	Ninglang	Dechang	Lipo
1SG	ŋa ³³	ŋua ³³	ŋa ³⁵	ŋua ³³	ŋo ³³
1PL.EXCL	ŋa ³³ nu ²¹	ŋua ³³ nu ²¹			ŋo ³³ bu ³³
1PL.INCL	ʒu ²¹	ʒo ²¹			a ²¹ nε ⁵⁵
1PL			a ³³ ŋi ²¹	ŋua ³³ ŋi ²¹	
2SG	nu ³³	nu ³³	nu ³⁵	nu ³³	ŋi ³³
2PL	na ²¹	nu ³³ wa ²¹	nu ³³ wa ²¹	na ³⁵ wa ²¹	ŋi ³³ bu ³³
3SG	ji ⁵⁵	(ʒ)i ⁵⁵	ji ⁵⁵	ji ⁵⁵	jo ²¹
3PL	ja ⁵¹	(ʒ)i ⁵⁵ wa ²¹	ji ⁵⁵ wa ²¹ /ja ⁵¹	ja ⁵¹	jo ²¹ bu ³³

Reflexive pronouns involve reduplication of the pronoun, with a reflexive morpheme (*tʂa⁵⁵/tʂ³³*, *ɡu³³/ɡo²¹* in Lipo) between the two instances of the pronoun. Emphatic pronouns, which have a similar meaning, are formed in the same way in some dialects, but with the added morpheme *da³³*. Yu (2007:126-127) provides examples from Nujiang²³⁷, listed in (6-18):

²³⁶ Cf. the Dege Tibetan form *-tshō̄*: ‘family plural’, from 5.2.3.1.

²³⁷ I do not know what accounts for the difference in forms for the third person from the chart above.

(6-18) Reflexive Pronouns in Nujiang Lisu

ŋua ³³ tɕa ⁵⁵ ŋua ³³	'I myself'
ŋua ³³ nu ²¹ tɕa ⁵⁵ ŋua ³³ nu ²¹	'we ourselves (incl.)'
ʒo ²¹ tɕa ⁵⁵ ʒo ²¹	'we ourselves (excl.)'
nu ³³ tɕa ⁵⁵ nu ³³	'you yourself'
nu ³³ wa ²¹ tɕa ⁵⁵ nu ³³ wa ²¹	'you yourselves'
ji ⁵⁵ tɕa ⁵⁵ ji ⁵⁵	's/he her/himself'
ji ⁵⁵ wa ²¹ tɕa ⁵⁵ ji ⁵⁵ wa ²¹	'they themselves'
su ³³ tɕa ⁵⁵ su ³³	'they themselves (others)'

Other than Dechang Lisu, all Lisu dialects have a second option of using the borrowed Chinese reflexive pronoun *zìjǐ* 自己, which is phonetically [tsɿ⁵⁵tɕ^ha²¹] in Nujiang (ibid).

The order within the quantified Lalo NP is Noun-Dem-Num-Classifier, with modifiers appearing on either side of the nominal head (Björverud 1998:117). Below in (6-19)-(6-21) are some basic quantifier phrases (ibid.120):

(6-19)

a ⁵⁵ m <u>u</u> ²²	nə ⁵⁵	(tj ^h ə ²¹)-ma ⁵⁵
monkey	that	(one)-CL
'that monkey'		

(6-20)

zɛ ²¹ mɛ ²¹	nə ⁵⁵ -ma ⁵⁵	dj ²¹	tsi ⁵⁵	ji ⁵⁵
woman	that-CL	OBJ	receive	go
'[They] went to fetch that girl [as a bride].'				

(6-21)

ts ^h u ⁵⁵	tj ^h ə ²¹ -ma ⁵⁵	ma ⁵⁵	ka ⁵⁵ l <u>u</u> ⁴⁴	fɿ ⁵⁵	ɿ ²¹	a ⁵⁵
person	one-CL	TOP	stone	white	sell	PFV
'One person sold white stones'			(Björverud (1998:118))			

Demonstratives and quantifier phrases follow the head noun in Lisu. Demonstratives precede numerals, which in turn precede classifiers within the quantified noun phrase, as in (6-22):

(6-22)

a ⁵⁵ na ²¹	go ³³	t ^h i ²¹	hjä ³³	li ⁵⁵	ts ^h ɿ ³³	ku ⁴⁴ -ma ³³	m <u>a</u> ⁴⁴
dog	that	one	hundred	four	ten	nine-CL	NMLZ
'those 149 dogs (on the same level)'				(Bradley 2017:908)			

The Lalo Numeral-Classifier sequence of a quantified phrase can be reduplicated to mean ‘each and every’, as in (6-23) (ibid.120):

(6-23)
 a⁵⁵ŋ²¹ tʃ^hə²¹-k^hə⁵⁵ tʃ^hə²¹-k^hə²¹
 cow one-CL one-CL
 ‘each and every cow’

Yu (2007:151) reports that there are around 40 classifiers in Lisu, which follow the noun + numeral sequence in a noun phrase, and vary “somewhat” between dialects. Each dialect has a general classifier, as well as those referring to humans, animals, rounded off numbers (such as 40, 100, 1000, etc.), shapes and so on, such as *h̃ɛ²¹t^ho³⁵ t^hi²¹ ma³³* (mosquito one CL) ‘a mosquito’ and *a⁵⁵ŋⁱ21 t^hi²¹ k^ha³⁵* (cow one CL) ‘a cow’. Classifiers may be reduplicated, usually functioning with the adverbial marker *be³³* to create manner adverbs, as in (6-24) (Yu 2007:169):

(6-24)
 a⁵⁵nu³³ wa³⁵ t^hi²¹-sⁱ21 t^hi²¹-sⁱ21 be³³ go³³ gɣ³³
 bean that one-CL one-CL ADVB pick PFV
 ‘Please pick up the beans one by one’

Lisu has a number of postpositional nominalizers, including nominalizing morphemes specifically for human beings (*su³³*), male nominals (*p^ha²¹*) and female nominals (*ma³³*), as well as a sometime diminutive, from the morpheme for ‘son’ or ‘boy’ (*za²¹*). Examples include the following list in (6-25) (Yu 2007:173-174).

(6-25)

<i>zø²¹</i> ‘use/do’ + <i>su³³</i>	> <i>zø²¹su³³</i> ‘user/doer’
<i>ʃa⁵⁵</i> ‘poor’ + <i>su³³</i>	> <i>ʃa⁵⁵su³³</i> ‘the poor’
<i>xo²¹</i> ‘lead’ + <i>ma⁵⁵</i> ‘show’ + <i>su³³</i>	> <i>xo²¹ma⁵⁵su³³</i> ‘leader’
<i>xua²¹</i> ‘meat’ + <i>xua³³</i> ‘find’ + <i>p^ha²¹</i>	> <i>xua²¹xua³³p^ha²¹</i> ‘a hunter’
<i>jɛ²¹</i> ‘cloth’ + <i>tʃ^hɿ²¹</i> + <i>ma³³</i>	> <i>jɛ²¹tʃ^hɿ²¹ma³³</i> ‘a weaver’
<i>a⁵⁵ŋ^a21</i> ‘buffalo’ + <i>lo⁵⁵</i> ‘look’ + <i>za²¹</i>	> <i>a⁵⁵ŋ^a21lo⁵⁵za²¹</i> ‘a cowboy’
<i>za²¹</i> ‘son’ + <i>tʃ^hɿ²¹</i> ‘rot’ + <i>za²¹</i>	> <i>za²¹tʃ^hɿ²¹za²¹</i> ‘an orphan’

Additionally, there are locative and instrumental nominalizers.

Similarly, Lalo has a number of relativizing particles for turning clauses into nominals. These include the agentive *pɑ*²², instrumental *pɯ*⁴⁴, patient/theme *lu*⁵⁵, locative *ɣə*⁵⁵ and collective *la*²¹, the latter being a morpheme used to denote group collections. Some examples are given in (6-26)-(6-28) (adapted from Björverud 1998:152-155):

(6-26) Agentive subject

fə ²¹	ɣ ²¹	a ²¹	pɑ ²²	nə ⁵⁵ -ma ⁵⁵	dj ²¹
grass	sell	IMPFV	REL.AGT	that-CL	OBJ
'that grass-seller'					

(6-27) Instrumental subject

kʰɿ ⁴⁴	a ⁵⁵	pɯ ⁴⁴	nə ⁵⁵ -ma ⁵⁵	ni ⁵⁵
rub	PF	REL.INSTR	that-CL	INSTR.Q
'Where is that thing to wipe [the table] with?'				

(6-28) Locative subject

ts ^h u ⁵⁵	ji ⁵⁵	ma ²¹	da ⁵⁵	ɣə ⁵⁵
people	go	NEG	can	REL.LOC
'where people can't go'				

Yu (2207:178) notes that Lisu case markers, which are in many instances optional to begin with, vary in their usage across dialects. She illustrates the agent, or subject, marker *le*³³, which marks agentive subjects, the object, or patient marker *tɛ*⁵⁵, which marks objects or patient-like subjects, the genitive marker *gɯ*²¹ (*ɣɯ*²¹ in Ninglang), which only occurs when a following head NP is absent, and the locative marker, which has the most variation in form across dialects, but usually involves a level mid-tone, with a velar initial and a low back vowel in the rhyme, except in Dechang, where it is *nɛ*³³. Nuosu Yi also has this dual function of role markers, where the agent marker, *-li*, doubles as a contrastive focus marker, making it similar to the common object marker *-xa* in Amdo Sinitic varieties (Gerner 2013:496-502; see 4.2.3.4 and 7.2.2 for Amdo).

Ninglang examples from Yu (ibid) include (6-29)-(6-31):

(6-29)
 la²¹ma³³ le³³ a⁵⁵tɕ^hy²¹ tɛ⁵⁵ k^ho²¹ tia⁵⁵
 tiger AGNT goat OBJ bite DUR
 'A tiger is biting a goat.'

(6-30)
 wa²¹tɕi³³ kua³³ dzi³³
 mountain LOC go
 'Go to the mountain.'

(6-31)
 a⁵⁵t^ha²¹ t^hõ³³ ŋa³³ γw²¹ ŋo³³
 knife this.CL 1SG GEN COP.DEC
 'This knife is mine.'

Bradley (2017:907) also reports an ablative *kwɑ⁴⁴ + tɕo⁵⁵* in Southern Lisu (which he supposes to be the locative, plus a borrowing from Mandarin 从), which has the form *kwɑ⁴⁴ be³³* in other dialects.

6.2.3.3 *The NP of Naic Languages*

In Naic noun phrases, modifying elements follow the head, such as adjectives, numerals, demonstratives, classifiers and case markers. In sentences with other word orders, or with elided patients, the agent is marked with the morpheme *-hi³³*, which can also indicate volitionality, agency, contrastive focus or switch reference in the sentential actor. Adjectivals occasionally appear as post-nominal modifiers, but more typically as stative verbs. The Yongning Na noun phrase, as described by Lidz (2010:211-214), exhibits variation in word order between numerals and demonstratives, though it appears the noun is always first and the classifier always last in the phrase. Examples of quantified and modified nominals in Yongning Na and Naxi are given in (6-32) and (6-33), respectively:

(6-32)

su ³³ -dzu ³³	t ^h u ³³	zwa ¹³	ɕwa ³³	t ^h u ³³	so ³³ -dzu ³³	t ^h i ³³ -di ³³
tree	this	INTS	tall	this	three-CL	DUR-EXIST ²³⁸
树	这	很	高	这	三量词	有

‘There were three very tall trees.’

这个树木有三棵很高的

(Lidz 2010:215)

(6-33)

mi ⁵⁵	ɕi ⁵⁵	tɕ ^h u ³³ -kɿ ⁵⁵	gɿ ³³	sæ ³³
daughter	small	DEM.PROX-CL	POSS	blood

‘the blood of the younger daughter.’

(Michaud et al. 2015)

Na noun phrases have little derivational morphology, though there are some prominent affixes, such as the kinship prefix *a*³³-. A plural marker exists for a limited set of (usually) animate, mostly human, nouns, viz. =*æ*³¹, as in *p^hæ³¹tɕ^hi³³=æ³¹* ‘men’; *su³¹p^hi³³=æ³¹* ‘kings’; *zo³³mɿ³³-zo³³=æ³¹* ‘children’; *wo³¹bo³³=æ³¹* ‘livestock’.

Like Lalo and Lisu, there are semantically marked nominalizers, such as *-hi*³³ (etymologically meaning ‘person’) and *-di*³³ (etymologically meaning ‘land’), the latter used for locative nominalizations and purposive nominalizations. These patterns are highly reminiscent of those in Lisu, as shown in (6-34) - (6-36) (Lidz 2007:845). (Cf. Yu 2007:173-177).

(6-34)

lɕ³¹-ɿi³³-hi³³
 labor-do-NMLZ.AGT
 ‘laborer’

(6-35)

læ³³-zɿ³³-hi³³
 ACCOMP-say-NMLZ
 ‘words’

(6-36)

wɿ³³-di³³
 mountain-NMLZ.LOC
 ‘mountainous area’

²³⁸ Lidz (2010) specifically marks existentials for their semantics. In this example, and in (6-112) and (6-129), she glosses the verb as EXIST.P, meaning “used with items perpendicular to a plane”. See 6.2.4.3 on existentials.

(6-40)

ʒw³³-mi³³ bu³³ tsw³³tæ³³
hearthroom POSS foundation
'the hearth room's foundation'

(6-41)

ʒwæ³³ wɔ³³-ly³³
horse head
'horse head'

(6-42)

lɔ³¹ʒw³³
fingers
'her fingers'

(6-43)

hæ³³pɣ³³
hair
'her hair'

Lidz (2010:216) lists the following semantic categories in Yongning Na, which classifiers, which are obligatory in quantified NPs, mark: a generic classifier, similar in function to Mandarin *ge* 个, shape (e.g. long and flat, stick-like, slice, ball, etc.), living things, selection for number, auto-classifiers (i.e. where a nominal also serves as a classifier), measure, time, quantification and number.

Yongning Na has “non-systemic” agent/ergative marking (Lidz 2010:300). That is, it marks the agent and patient explicitly with postpositions when those categories would be ambiguous in context. The agent marker, in Yongning Na *nw*³³, is derived from an ablative morpheme. The same morpheme has developed as an emphatic marker for non-nominals in the language, as well (ibid). An example of a disambiguating usage of the agentive (to avoid the reading ‘this time he spotted her mother’) is given below in (6-44) (Lidz 2010:303):

(6-44)

t ^h u ³³	ɣ ³³	dʒo ³³	t ^h i ¹³	t ^h u ³³	ɑ ³³ -mi ³³	nɯ ³³	lə ³³ -tɔ ³³
this	time	TOP	so	3SG	mother	AGTV	ACCOMP-see
这	次		所以	她	母	看见	

'This time it was by her mother that he was spotted.'

这次是被她的妈妈看见了

Finally, there are a number of postpositional morphemes in Yongning Na that mark grammatical case. These include the locative *kwɔ³³* (which has extensions beyond spatial to temporal and ablative marking, as well as marking “concern”), the dative *ki³³* (which has a benefactive and a dative meaning, grammaticalized from the verb ‘give’), a comitative *ga³³*, an instrumental *pɔ¹³*, an addessive *tɔ³¹* (which is also used in comparatives), ablative *pi³³*, meaning ‘towards’ and a marker *t^hu³³*, which means ‘until’. Here, once again, the distinction between inflectional categories and general postpositions obtains.

6.2.3.4 Summary

While there is some uncertainty as to exactly how many nominal cases there are in Bai, given the homophony of forms, there is little to no overlap in either grammatical category or phonological form between the possibilities given for Bai and those of surrounding languages. The Bai morpheme *no³³*, which is the form for five of the seven cases listed by Wiersma (2003:663), object, locative, nominalizer, complementizer, subordinator, is different from any of the cases in Ngwi languages (Lisu and Lalo) or Naic languages (Yongning Na and Naxi). Some varieties of Lisu differ in which cases are marked, for example Southern Lisu marking ablative.

The following chart compares Bai, Lisu and Yongning Na case markers. Note that the Bai object marker is the same form as not only the locative, but also the language’s nominalizer, subordinator (which I take to be a complementizer) and the comparative marker, all of which

Wiersma (2003) lists as “noun particles”. I have also chosen to separate “possessive” case and “genitive” case, taking Daohua as an analog, as it marks both. (See 5.2.3.3.)

Table 29 Comparison of Bai, Lisu and Yongning Na Case Markers

Case	Bai	Lisu	Yongning Na
object / dative	no ³³	tɛ ⁵⁵	ki ³³ (also BEN)
locative	no ³³ /ŋy ⁵⁵	kA ³³ (varies)	kwɔ ³³
benefactive	ŋ ⁵⁵		
instrumental		le ³³	pɔ ¹³
comitative		le ³³	ɣa ³³
possessive	va ⁴² /ŋy ⁴²		
genitive		gw ²¹	
subject		le ³³	
adessive			tɔ ³¹
ablative			pi ³³
“until”			t ^h u ³³

The only similarities in case marking appear to be that direct and indirect (i.e. dative) objects are often marked by the same morpheme in all the languages of the area, and in some cases besides Bai, such as Lisu, where the subject marker is homophonous with the comitative and instrumental, there is homophony of forms. Naic languages tend to have a wider array of cases than either Ngwi or Bai.

The pronominal system of Bai marks an inclusive versus exclusive distinction on first person plurals, a feature shared with some Lisu varieties, as well as Naic languages. (Lalo has no inclusive/exclusive distinction, but it does have a “remote” third person pronoun distinction in the form of *si*⁵⁵). However, the forms, beyond the first and second being at least reminiscent of Proto-Sino-Tibetan **ŋa(j)* and **na(ŋ)* (LaPolla 2017:46) seem to show no similarities.

My understanding of egophoricity is too limited to know how the Yongning Na agentive/ergative marking compares with Dede’s “anti-ergative” marker for Xining in 4.2.3.4.

But it raises the question, here and throughout, what to make of the cross-regional comparisons. Are they indicative of a mega-language area, comparable to the “European Linguistic Area” (see 2.2), emergent from shared typological profiles, genetically inherited, or purely coincidence? The fact that the Yongning Na form is related to an emphatic marker, though, does lend even more similarity to the possible origin for Xining *-xa*, and similar regional Sinitic forms (see 7.2.2.).

Naic languages also stand out for having both inalienable and inabsoluble possession, not noted for any of the other languages here. One type of areal feature that Bai appears not to make use of are semantically differentiated nominalizer particles, which are found in Lisu, Lalo and Yongning Na. These forms, as presented in 5.2.3, are common in the Kham region as well, appearing in Dege Tibetan, nDrapa and Daohua. They seem to overlap at least partially with case markers, distinguishing locative nominalizations from instrumental, for example, but all of the languages have a separately illustrated set of case markers. Finally, Naic is again different from Ngwi languages and Bai by marking “non-systemic” ergativity, when agents and patients are not otherwise clear from context.

All languages of the region make use of an assortment of classifiers, similar in semantic specification and overall abundance to Sinitic, and all languages make ample use of compounding. Reduplication is also quite common, and will be discussed in more detail in 6.2.4.1. for the Verb Phrase. Affixation is limited, but present for all of the languages, which includes a plural marker for human nouns. It is somewhat unclear whether the Bai morpheme *ja*⁴⁴ is a more generalized plural, or a classifier, or a simple equivalent to English ‘some’; sources

differ on how limited they claim Bai plural marking to be. Lisu varieties, however, have a generalized plural morpheme *bu/w*³³.

Taken together, Bai shares a remarkable number of nominal features with Ngwi and Naic languages generally, as show in Table 30 below:

Table 30 Comparison of Nominal Features in Dali

Linguistic Features	Bai	Ngwi	Naic
case	+	+	+
number	+?	+ (limited)	+ (limited)
Mod N	+	+	-
N Num CL	+ (also N CL Num)	+	+
few affixes	+	+	+
homophonous case markers	+	-	-
semantically marked relativizers	-	+	+
heavy compounding	+	+	+
heavy reduplication	+	+	+
incl./excl. 1PL	+	+	+
inalienable possession	-	-	-
ergativity	-	-	-

6.2.4 Verb Phrase Morphology

As in previous sections, this section is an areal overview of local language features, focusing on the verb phrase (VP), first giving an overview of Bai’s VP features, then illustrating other local languages of the Dali region.

6.2.4.1 *The Bai VP*

Verbs do not inflect for tense, aspect, number or person, but rather take adverbial modifiers and complements, both before and after the verb, to express information about states or events. Xu and Zhao (1984) give the following examples of time adverbials in (6-45)-(6-47), namely *ke*⁵⁵*ji*⁴⁴ ‘today’, *tci*²¹*ji*⁴⁴ ‘yesterday’ and *tɕi*³³*ɕɛ*⁴⁴ ‘day after tomorrow’, respectively:

(6-45)

ke⁵⁵ji⁴⁴ ηa⁵⁵ ja³⁵ ηε²¹ vu³³pi⁵⁵ la⁴²
 今天 我们 不 去 背盐 了
 today 1PL NEG go Beiyan PTCL.CERT

'Today we will not return to Beiyan²³⁹.'

今天我们不去背盐了

(Xu and Zhao 1984:37)

(6-46)

ma⁵⁵ kō³³-ji²¹ tci²¹ji⁴⁴ sā⁵⁵ kē²¹ ts^hw⁵⁵ kε³¹
 他们 俩个 昨天 相 见 掉 一下
 3PL couple-CL yesterday each see PFV²⁴⁰ PTCL

'The two of them met each other for a while yesterday.'

他俩昨天相会了一会儿

(Xu and Zhao 1984:33)

(6-47)

tsi³³ε⁴⁴ ma⁵⁵ a³⁵ ηε²¹ tso⁴⁴ tci³¹ la⁴² la⁴²
 后天 他们 不 去 犁 地 了 了吧
 day.after.tomorrow 3PL NEG go plow earth PFV PTCL.CERT

'They certainly will not do plowing day after tomorrow!'

后天他们不去犁地了吧

(Xu and Zhao 1984:92)

Wiersma (2006:664) lists the following aspect markers, which appear postverbally: circumfixal experiential *ko⁴²....la⁴²*; completive *la²⁴* (glossed here as perfective); progressive *tsi⁵⁵.tci^hi³¹*, and another progressive *k^hw³³mw⁵⁵-no³³*. Illustrations of the first two are shown in (6-48) and

(6-49), from Xu and Zhao (1984:35-36):

(6-48) Experiential *ko⁴²....la⁴²*

ma⁵⁵ se⁵⁵ ko⁴² ηuε⁴²so²¹ la⁴² la⁴²
 他们 结 过 婚 了 了
 3PL marry EXP marry EXP PTCL.CERT

'They have got married.'

他们结过婚了

²³⁹ N.B. that Beiyan is a Mandarin calque, 'back+salt', from the Bai *vu³³pi⁵⁵*.

²⁴⁰ Note that the Chinese gloss uses the character 掉 'drop', which is a resultative complement in Mandarin. I gloss it here as perfective, largely because Xu and Zhao (1984:35) discuss its usage in perfective constructions that show certain completion of an action, though there they state it occurs alongside a final perfective morpheme *la⁴²*. See also (6-50), where the same phonological form appears sentence-finally, but is there glossed with the Mandarin perfective 了 *le*. Since that sentence otherwise illustrates progressive aspect, I gloss it as PTCL, despite the *le*.

(6-49) Completive/perfective *la*⁴²

mo ³¹	ɣu ²¹	la ⁴²	xã ⁴²	ŋɥ ⁴²	a ³¹	sua ⁴⁴
他	学	了	汉	语	一	年
3SG	study	PFV	Han	language	one	year

'He studied Chinese for one year'²⁴¹

他学了一年汉语

Reduplication is a regular process for forming certain kinds of aspectual meaning. For example, as illustrated in (6-50) and (6-51), Xu and Zhao (1984:34-35) show a regular process whereby a reduplicated verb, followed by the morpheme *tsi*⁵⁵*tɕ*^h*i*³¹ expresses 'in the immediate process of, but stopping' (正在进行而又中断):

(6-50)

xo ³¹	kɛ̃ ⁵⁵	ts ^h <i>ɥ</i> ³¹ ts ^h <i>ɥ</i> ³¹ -tsi ⁵⁵ tɕ ^h <i>i</i> ³¹	ɣu ²¹ tɕi ³¹	no ²¹	kɛ ³¹	suw ⁴⁴	ts ^h <i>u</i> ⁵⁵
house	DIM	cover.~PROG-PROG	suddenly	SUB	space	rest	PTCL ²⁴²
房	子	盖盖	忽然	之	间	歇	了

'[They] abruptly stopped in the midst of building the house.'

房子正在盖着(的时候)忽然停工了

(6-51)

mo ³¹	ŋɛ ²¹ ŋɛ ²¹ -tsi ⁵⁵ tɕ ^h <i>i</i> ³¹	lɛ ³¹	ja ⁴⁴	kw ⁵⁵	la ⁴²
3SG	go.~PROG-PROG	again	return	come	PTCL.CERTAIN
他	去去	又	回	来	了

'Just as he was leaving he turned around and returned.'

他正出去又转回来了

Modal verbs are listed by Wiersma (1990:181) and Xu and Zhao (1984:40), many of which have an alternating or suppletive negative form, which differs from Sinitic. Modals appear post-verbally and include the following examples, illustrated in (6-52) and exemplified in (6-53) and (6-54) below:

²⁴¹ Note: the same Chinese sentence can be expressed in Bai with the addition of the experiential aspect marker *ko*⁴² before the *la*⁴²: mo³¹ ɣu²¹ ko⁴² la⁴² xã⁴² ŋɥ⁴² a³¹ sua⁴⁴

²⁴² See fn. 240.

(6-52) Bai Modals

ta⁴² 'can' 能, 可以
k^hu³³ 'will; able to' 会

pi⁵⁵ 'must' 必
kã³¹ 'dare to' 敢

tua⁴² 'cannot' 不能, 不可以

xõ³³ 'don't need to' 不应该
tsi³¹tso⁴² 'need not' 不必, 用不着
juĩ³³ 'not dare to' 不敢

(6-53)

na⁵⁵ lia⁴² tsu⁵⁵ k^hu³³
你们 这 做 会
2PL this do can
'You all can do it this way.'
你们会做这样

(Xu and Zhao 1984:40)

(6-54)

na⁵⁵ lia⁴² tsu⁵⁵ juĩ³³
你们 这 做 不敢
2PL this do dare not
'You all don't dare to do it this way.'
你们不敢这样做

(Xu and Zhao 1984:40)

Xu and Zhao (1984:40-41) point out that if the auxiliary verb is a borrowing from modern Mandarin, then the Mandarin-based word order, with the auxiliary before the lexical verb, is also possible, as in (6-55):

(6-55)

na⁵⁵ kã³¹ tsu⁵⁵
你们 敢 做
2PL dare do
'You all dare to do it.'
你们敢做

(Xu and Zhao 1984:41)

Similar to the modal verbs, some lexical verbs seem to have negative counterparts which involve vowel alternation or the infixation of an oral or nasal high back vowel in medial position. Wiersma (2003:668) describes such forms as partially grammaticalized verbs acting as coverbs. They typically appear at the end of a sentence and include those listed in (6-56):

(6-56) Internally alternating verbs of Bai (from Wang 2015)

tsɛ̃ ²¹ become, succeed	tsuɛ̃ ²¹ not succeed
ta ⁴² able to, OK	tua ⁴² not permitted to, unable to
sẽ ³³ know	sũi ³³ not know
kẽ ⁴² see	kũi ⁴² not see
ku ²¹ 'buy'	ku ²¹ 'not buy'

For example, in (6-57) (Wiersma 2003:671):

(6-57)

ŋo ³¹	a ³¹ -ŋu ³³ si ⁵⁵	no ³³	tu ³³	mi ⁴²	tua ⁴²
1SG	kin-Auntie	SUB	wait	able	can.NEG

'I cannot wait for Auntie.'

Wang (2015) cites the rules in Dali Bai for such forms as in (6-58):

(6-58)

Positive	->	Negative
/u(ɿ)/		/u/
/i/		/y/
/V/		/uV/

That is, high unrounded vowels and apical vowels become round in the negative form, while other vowels insert a labial onglide before the main vowel²⁴³. Otherwise, the regular process of negation involves prefixation of *a*⁴³.

Finally, Bai has a copula verb *ju*²² and an existential verb *dzu*²². Both occur before the object, as shown in (6-59) and (6-60) (Wang 2015):

(6-59)

no ⁴³	ju ²²	ɬu ²¹ su ²⁴ tsi ²²
1SG	COP	student

'I am a student.'

(6-60)

tu ⁵⁵ ua ⁵⁵	dzu ²²	tio ²¹	a ⁴³ tio ²¹
that.place	EXIS	river	CL [lit. one+river]

'There is a river over there.'

²⁴³ This is my interpretation of Wang's rules, which are given in exactly the same format as he provides them.

6.2.4.2 *The VP of Ngwi Languages*

The Lisu verb does not inflect or otherwise mark for number, person or gender. Reference to time across the proposition is carried by adverbials, which usually immediately precede the verb, while aspect is indicated by post-verbal morphemes. Other post-verbal elements include modals such as *da*³³ ‘can’, *wɑ*⁴⁴ ‘must’, *tɕo*³⁵ ‘need to’, and others. Some modals may be negated directly, others may not. Similarly, Lalo modals are final in the verbal elements of the predicate, which include *da*⁵⁵ ‘can (permission; acceptability)’; *ɛ*⁵⁵ ‘can (ability)’; *pə*²¹ ‘dare to’; *zu*³³ ‘must’; *dzi*⁴⁴ ‘eager to’ (> ‘itch’ main verb); *ji*⁵⁵ ‘want; wish’; *ʔnə*⁵⁵ ‘not embarrassing to’.

Two Lalo examples are shown in (6-61) and (6-62) (Björverud 1998:101-104):

(6-61)

*u*³³-*tsa*³³ *kʰə*⁵⁵ *di*⁵⁵ *tjʰu*⁵⁵ *ji*⁵⁵
 3PL with sit along want
 ‘want to sit along [in the car] with them’

(6-62)

*ʔmi*³³ *tʰu*⁴⁴ *zu*³³
 cooked CAUSE must
 ‘It is necessary to cause [it] to be cooked.’

Yu (2007:184) gives the following paradigm for aspect in Lisu²⁴⁴, shown in (6-63):

(6-63)

<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>gɣ</i> ³³	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He has been bitten’ (perfective)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>tia</i> ⁵⁵	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He is being bitten’ (durative)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>tso</i> ³³	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He used to be bitten’ (habitual)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>ŋi</i> ³³	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He was bitten’ (experiential)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>sa</i> ³⁵	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He is in a state of being bitten’ (stative)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>nɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>o</i> ³³	‘He will be bitten’ (future)
<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>tɛ</i> ⁵⁵	<i>kʰo</i> ²¹	<i>je</i> ³³	<i>o</i> ³³	‘Go to bite him’ (inchoative)
3SG	PAT	bite	ASP	DEC	

²⁴⁴ Bradley (2017:911) gives examples, which he doesn’t explicitly refer to aspect markers, differing slightly in phonological form. His set includes a “continuous” *tɕa*³³.

Marked aspect in Lalo includes the categories perfective a^{55} , imperfective a^{21} , durative $djə^{21}$, commitment²⁴⁵ ly^{33} , two “preparatory” morphemes and that of a “valid proposition”. Examples of the last four, which feel reminiscent of evidentiality markers (one wonders if perhaps there is an overlapping, or emerging evidential system from what are taken as aspect morphemes here), are given in (6-64) - (6-67) (Björverud 1998:116):

(6-64) commitment ly^{33}
 ty^{55} ki^{33} la^{55} ly^{33}
 return into come COMM
 ‘plan to come back in’

(6-65) preparatory $xu^{21}tjə^{33}$
 du^{44} $tʰi^{22}$ $xu^{21}tjə^{33}$
 exit out PRPY
 ‘about to leave’

(6-66) Preparatory xu^{55}
 $ʔnə^{55}$ di^{21} $khɿ^{21}$ la^{55} xu^{55} a^{21} mu^{55}
 you OBJ steal come PRPY IMPFV PTCL
 ‘[He’s] preparing to come and steal from you.’

(6-67) Valid proposition la^{21}
 $ŋa^{55}$ la^{21} $nɛ^{55}$ $dʒi^{44}$ la^{21} si^{21} ma^{55}
 COP VALID like.that be.at VALID yet PTCL
 ‘That’s right. It is still like that,....’

Like elsewhere in the grammar, a productive process in verbal word formation is reduplication. In predicates it usually applies to adjectives, as the reduplication of a verb form often yields an adverb (Björverud 1998:65). In Lalo, generally monosyllabic roots will take an a -prefix (with allomorphs) in reduplication, for example $a^{21}-ʔni^{55}ʔni^{55}$ ‘short of stature’;

²⁴⁵ The “commitment” aspect may be similar to the debitive mood of other languages, such as that of Baltic languages. Not knowing more, I am choosing to use the original source’s label.

*ba*²²*nti*³³*nti*³³ ‘huge’; *ɣa*⁵⁵*fə*³³*fə*³³ ‘soaking wet’ (>*ɣa*⁵⁵ ‘water’). An example of reduplicated adjectives to form the comparative in Lisu is given in (6-68), from Yu (2007:195):

(6-68)

<i>wu</i> ²¹ ‘big’	>	<i>wu</i> ²¹ <i>wu</i> ³⁵ ‘bigger’
<i>lo</i> ³³ ‘light’	>	<i>lo</i> ³³ <i>lo</i> ³⁵ ‘lighter’
<i>mo</i> ³³ ‘high’	>	<i>mo</i> ³³ <i>mo</i> ³⁵ ‘higher’
<i>nɛ</i> ⁵⁵ ‘deep’	>	<i>nɛ</i> ⁵⁵ <i>nɛ</i> ⁵⁵ ‘deeper’
<i>zo</i> ³³ ‘small’	>	<i>zo</i> ³³ <i>zo</i> ³⁵ ‘smaller’

Within the Lalo verb phrase, adverbials, including negators, precede the head, whereas aspect markers follow. There is a class of adverbs which carry the prefix *xa-*, a productive morpheme that derives adverbs from adjectives (taking the tone from the word to which it attaches), such as *xa*³³*gə*³³*gə*³³ ‘good’, *xa*⁵⁵*fɣ*²¹*fɣ*²¹ ‘similar’, *xa*³³*xə*²²*xə*²² ‘new’. Another class of adverbs include four-syllable “elaborated” adverbs, built on different reduplication patterns, such as ABAB, ABAC, ABCB and so on. Examples of this pattern include *fə*²¹*fə*²¹*di*²¹*di*²¹ ‘thoroughly’, *dy*²¹*mə*⁵⁵*dy*²¹*mə*⁵⁵ ‘silently’ and *k*^h*ə*⁵⁵*fɣ*⁴⁴*li*²¹*fɣ*⁴⁴ ‘diligent’, the latter from the words *k*^h*ə*⁵⁵ ‘leg’, *li*²² ‘hand’ and *fɣ*⁴⁴ ‘twist’.

Yu (2007:229-230) lists five distinct existential/locative verbs for Lisu, differing in the semantics of both the subject of the verb and the circumstances of its location, namely *dzo*³³ ‘have/there is’, *tia*⁵⁵ ‘stay, exist (animate)’, *dɛ*³⁵ ‘exists inside’, *da*³⁵ ‘exists on a flat surface’ and *no*²¹ ‘exists attached to’. This is similar to those verbs described for Naic languages, illustrated in 6.2.4.3 below.

Finally, there are a number of causative pairs in Lalo in which the transitive member of the set has a devoiced initial consonant, a reflex of the historical Proto-Tibeto-Burman causative prefix *s- (Björverud 1998:66). The process is no longer productive in the modern language, however, having been replaced by the causative particle *-tu*⁴⁴. Examples include those in (6-69) (ibid:66):

(6-69)

gu ⁴⁴ ‘afraid’	vs. ku ⁴⁴ ‘scare away birds’
dj ⁴⁴ ‘ascend, climb’	vs. tj ⁴⁴ ‘lift up’
du ⁵⁵ ‘drink’	vs. tu ³³ ‘nurse a child’
gə ⁵⁵ ‘melt (in the sun)’	vs. kə ⁵⁵ ‘melt (lard in wok)’
dji ⁵⁵ ‘drip’	vs. (zi ²¹) tji ⁵⁵ ‘entice child to pee’

Lisu also has a similar set of transitive/intransitive pairs from the Proto-TB causative prefix *s-, the modern Lisu reflex being voiced initials for intransitives, voiceless initials for transitives, as in dzə⁴⁴ ‘fear’ vs. tɕə³⁵ ‘scare’, or dza²¹ ‘eat’ vs. tsa⁵⁵ ‘feed (an animal)’.

6.2.4.3 The VP of Naic Languages

Yongning Na verbs do not inflect for person, number or gender, while reference to time (other than the “futuritive aspect”) is carried by time adverbials. Most aspect morphemes appear as post-verbal particles, or in some cases reduplication, but there are two prefixes lə³³- ‘accomplishment’ and t^hu³³- ‘durative’. For Naxi, Michaud et al. (2015) give the aspectual prefix inventory as consisting of durative t^he¹¹-, accomplishment le³³-, perfective -se¹¹, and experiential -ji. For Yongning Na, Lidz (2010) illustrates perfective zɛ³³, completive sɛ¹³, experiential tɕi³¹, and progressive dzɔ³³. Lidz (2010:435-436) also describes a delimitative aspect, which “indicates a short-lived or brief action”, and which may appear with other aspects, such as the progressive or completive. It is homophonous with the numeral du³³ ‘one’, prefixed to the verb. Two examples of the latter are given in (6-70) and (6-71) (ibid.):

(6-70)

t ^h u ³³	gi ¹³	du ³³ -di ¹³	lə ³³ -hu ³³	du ³³ -tsɛ ¹³	lə ³³ -ts ^h u ³³
3SG	after	DELIM-follow	ACC-go	one-go	ACC-come
他	后面	一赶	去	一赶	来

‘(She) went and followed after him a bit, and then came right back.’
 ‘所以一路追去一次赶过来’

(6-71)

tʰi¹³ dw³³-mɔ¹³tɔ³³ dzɔ³³
 so DELIM-ask PROG
 所以 一问 正在
 ‘So, he was asking about it a bit.’
 ‘然后问了一下’

The Na delimitative aspect, in turn, reduplicates to form a “semelfactive aspect”, as in (6-72):

(6-72)

tʰi¹³ dw³³-ŋu³³-dw³³-ŋu³³ zwa³³ qʰwɣ³³bi¹³ kwɔ³³ ɲa³¹bæ³³ gw³¹-su¹³ tsʰw³³
 so cry-DELIM-cry-DELIM horse hoofprint LOC tears fill.up came
 所以 一哭一哭 马 脚印 里 眼泪 装满 来
 ‘So, she sobbed and sobbed; her tears filled the hoofprint.’
 ‘所以哭了又哭眼泪装满了马的脚印’ (Lidz 2010:438)

Finally, the iterative aspect is formed by reduplicating the verb, preceded with the delimitative morpheme ‘one’, *du*³³. An example is given by Lidz (2010:440):

(6-73)

tʰi¹³ ni³³-ku¹³ wɣ³³-tɔ³¹ tɔ³¹ dw³³-ŋu³³-ŋu³³ la³³ dw³³-gwɣ¹³-gwɣ¹³
 so two-CL mountaintop ADESS DELIM-cry-cry and DELIM-sing-sing
 所以 两个 山头 上 一哭 和 一唱
 ‘So, on the mountain the two alternatively cried and sang for a long time.’
 ‘所以两个人山头上哭一次，唱一次，又哭一次，又唱一次’

Michaud et al. (2015) briefly note suppletion for a limited number of high frequency verbs in Naxi distinguishing past and non-past, such as ‘go’ *hu*³³ versus *bu*³³ ‘went’.

Another example of reduplication in the Yongning Na verb phrase is the formation of reciprocals, which involve simply reduplicating the verb. Lidz (2010:372) gives examples that include *si*³³ ‘know’ yielding *si*³³*si*³³ ‘meet each other’; *tu*³³ ‘pull’ yielding *tu*³³*tu*³³ ‘pull back and forth’; and *wɣ*³³ ‘stack’ yielding *wɣ*³³*wɣ*³³ ‘stack together’.

There are eight modal auxiliaries that appear following the verb in Yongning Na, including $zɔ^{33}$ ‘must’, $zɔ^{33}hɔ^{33}$ ‘should’, $zɔ^{33}ku^{13}$ ‘ought’, $wɔ^{33}$ ‘can; able to’, ku^{13} ‘can’, $ʂu^{33}du^{33}$ ‘want’, $hɔ^{33}$ ‘want’ and $t^h a^{13}$ ‘may’ (Lidz 2010:411). An example from Lidz (2010:413) is in (6-74):

(6-74)
 $t^h i^{13}$ $lɑ^{33}$ bu^{33} $ŋɔ^{13}$ tsw^{13} $pɔ^{31}jɔ^{33}$ $zɔ^{33}$
 so tiger POSS milk squeeze bring OBL
 所以 老虎 的 奶 挤 拿来 必须
 ‘So he needed to bring back some tiger milk.’
 ‘所以必须把老虎的奶挤回来’

Examples of negation, which are carried as prefixes on final verbs, are shown in (6-75) and

(6-76), excerpted from narrative texts (Lidz 2010:388):

(6-75)
 $wɔ^{33}tɑ^{33}$ du^{33} $ŋi^{33}$ $lu^{33}ʂu^{13}$ $du^{33}sɔ^{33}$ $mə^{33}-dzɔ^{33}...$
 before one day Luoshui at.all NEG-EXIST
 以前 一 天 落水 一样 没-有
 ‘Before, there was nothing in Luoshui...’²⁴⁶

(6-76)
 $t^h a^{33}$ $hɑ^{33}$ $lɑ^{33}-dzi^{33}$ $mə^{33}-ŋi^{33}$
 often food ACCOMP-eat NEG-be.full
 经常 饭 吃 不-饱
 ‘Often, he didn’t get enough to eat.’
 经常饭吃不饱

There are four future markers in Yongning Na, which Lidz (2010) describes as aspect markers. bi^{33} , derived from the word ‘to go’, describes immediate future, hu^{33} remote future, while $hɔ^{33}$ and ku^{13} both make predictions about the future. Illustrations of each are given below in (6-77)-(6-80) (ibid.443, 446, 450, 455):

²⁴⁶ No Chinese translation is given for this clause in the original text.

(6-77)

lə ³³ -su ¹³	bi ³³	zɛ ³³	pi ³³	ni ³³
ACC-kill	FUT.IMM	CS	QUOT	CERT
杀	去	了		

‘He said, “I am going to kill him.”’

说是去杀掉他

(6-78)

tsɔ ³³	mi ³³	t ^h æ ³³ -kwɔ ³³	ɣ ¹³	ni ³³	hɔ ³³
wooden	barrel	underneath	cover	CERT	FUT.DES
木	桶	下	盖		会

‘He would hide underneath a wooden barrel.’

好像是盖在一个木桶下面

(6-79)

dzi ³³ -q ^h ɣ ³³	t ^h u ³³	du ³³ -lu ³³	t ^h u ³³ -di ³³	ku ¹³	tsi ¹³
spring	this	one-CL	DUR-EXIST	FUT.ABL	REP
泉水洞	这	一量词	有		

‘It is said that there would be a spring there.’

听说会有一个泉水站在（那里）

(6-80)

t ^h i ¹³	du ³³	wɣ ³³	du ³³ -wɣ ³³	t ^h u ³³	kwɔ ³³	hɑ ³³	dzi ³³	hu ³³
so	one	village	one-CL	this	LOC	food	eat	FUT.REM
所以	一	村	一量词	这	里	饭	吃	

‘Everyone in the whole village will eat here.’

‘所以让全村的人在这里吃饭’

Similarly, Michaud et al. (2015) claim that in Naxi that the ‘to go’ verb *bu³³*, is grammaticalized to express immediate future, and *se³³* ‘to complete’ as a completion marker, both appearing post-verbally.

Finally, there are four existentials in Yongning Na (Lidz 2010:356), the most common being the generic *dzo³³*. The other three are *di³³*, *ku³³*, and *zu³³*. They differ, in that *di³³* is used for things that “stand, protrude, or are perpendicular to a plane” (e.g. trees, scars and villages), while *ku³³* is used with passing time expressions. *zu³³* for its part is used for objects within a container.

According to Michaud et. al, Naxi has existential *i³³* (*ji³³*) for noncount nouns (e.g., ‘there is rice

in the granary'), *ɸy*¹¹ for count nouns (e.g., 'there is someone at home/in the house'), and *ɸy*³³ for existence/possession (e.g., 'there is a book/I have a book').

6.2.4.4 Summary

All of the languages of the region tend towards the extreme end of analytic morphology in the VP, and as such generally don't inflect for tense, aspect or mood. Rather time reference, with the exception perhaps of "futuritive" aspect (of which Yongning Na has four separate morphemes), is carried by preverbal adverbials. Modals appear as post-verbal auxiliaries in all languages, though in Sinitic borrowings for Bai modals precede the verb. While Bai's modals, which have vowel alternation to mark the negative, partially come from Chinese²⁴⁷ (e.g., *pi*⁵⁵ 'must', *kã*³³ 'dare to'; cf. Mandarin 必 [pi⁵¹] 'must', 敢 [kan²¹³] 'dare to'), it also shares some forms in common with Tibeto-Burman: Bai *ta*⁴² 'can'; able' with Lisu *da*³³/Lalo *da*⁵⁵ 'can; able', and *k^hu*³³ 'can', with Na *ku*¹³.

Aspect morphemes, in most instances, follow the verb, except for a small number of prefixes in Naic languages and a circumfixed experiential morpheme in Bai, though both Bai and Naic form some aspects via reduplication. There is little similarity from an inter-familial comparison of forms, or categories marked. One can imagine that this is perhaps at least partially down to different terminology used by different researchers, confounded by talking about different languages. However, even assuming some overlap of terms, there is still a significant difference in what categories function as part of aspect-marking across languages, and their phonological

²⁴⁷ Alternation in Bai can happen generally with both Sinitic loans and non-Sinitic loans, as illustrated with the lexical verb *kẽ*³¹ 'see', versus *kuẽ*³¹ or *ku*³¹ 'not see' (Xu and Zhao 1984:39).

forms, to point towards independent development of each language group's aspectual system, devoid for the most part of inheritance or borrowing.

Table 31 Comparison of Bai, Ngwi and Naic Aspect Morphemes

	Bai	Ngwi		Naic	
	Bai	Lisu	Lalo	Naxi	Yongning Na
experiential	ko ⁴² ...la ⁴²	ŋj ³³		ji	tɕi ³¹
completive / perfective	la ⁴⁴	gy ³³	a ⁵⁵	se ¹¹	se ¹³ / ze ³³
progressive	tsi ⁵⁵ tɕ ^h i ³¹ and k ^h u ³³ mu ⁵⁵ no ³³				dʒo ³³
durative		tia ⁵⁵	djə ²¹	t ^h e ¹¹	t ^h u ³³
continuous		tɕa ³³			
stative		sa ³⁵			
futuristic		nɛ ⁵⁵			
inchoative		je ³³			
habitual		tso ³³			
imperfective			a ²¹		
commitment			ly ³³		
preparatory			xu ²¹ tjə ³³ and xu ⁵⁵		
valid prop			la ²¹		
accomplishment				le ³³	lə ³³
delimitative					du ³³

Things become interesting in Bai on the topic of negation, on which more will be said in 6.2.5.4., as it differs noticeably from Sinitic. Bai has a semi-regular process of vowel alternation that distinguishes positive and negative modal verbs, as well as some lexical verbs. Such alternations seem to be lacking in other languages surveyed, though Naic has a limited number of high-frequency verbs with suppletive forms for past tense. The otherwise regular process, which is absent in Mandarin, is *a*-prefixing to mark negation, which is also not reported for the surveyed Ngwi or Naic languages, though in Naic *a*-prefixing is a regular way to form

interrogatives (see 6.2.5.3., (6-110)-(6-111)). The Bai negator resembles in some ways the Nuosu Yi negator, *ap* [a²¹], which regularly appears before the final syllable of the verb, making it a prefix on monosyllables (Gerner 2013:406). The Ngwi and Naic negators local to Dali, however, look more similar to the proto-Sino-Tibetan negators given by LaPolla (2017:45), reflexes of **ma-j*.

Finally, Bai is reported to have only one existential verb, *dzuw*²², while Lisu has five (one of which is a general existential), Yongning Na has four, and Naxi has three. Also, Lalo and Lisu have clear reflexes of Proto-Tibeto-Burman transitivity alternation, but no such pairs are given for Bai or Naic languages. Note that the Bai existential *dzo*³³ bears some segmental similarity with Lisu, but there is no discussion of borrowing, much less regular sound correspondences, linking the two.

A comparison of the languages' verb phrase features is given in Table 32 below. In general, there is less regularity than for the noun phrase features examined in Table 30 in 6.2.3.4.

Table 32 Comparison of Verbal Features in Bai, Ngwi and Naic

Linguistic Feature	Bai	Ngwi	Naic
Inflection	-	-	-
Aspect	V-ASP / circumfixal / reduplicated	V-ASP	V-ASP / ASP-V
Reduplication	adverbial and aspectual	adverbial and adjectival	aspectual and reciprocal
complex aspectual meaning ²⁴⁸	+	+	+?
Suppletion	Negation	-	high-frequency verbs
Modals	V M (Sinitic Mod V)	V M	V M
Negation	V Neg (varies dialectally 6.2.5.1)	Neg V	Neg V
multiple EXIS	-	+	+

²⁴⁸ This is noted by authors such as Matisoff (2001), but is not well-defined for present purposes.

6.2.5 Constituent Order and Syntax

This section surveys the syntactic properties of the region, focusing on the order of constituents in and between clauses. First it looks at Bai syntactic order, with special attention to the variation within clauses. Then it gives an overview of Ngwi and Naic syntax for comparison.

6.2.5.1 *Bai Syntax*

Bai is often described as a Subject-Verb-Object language, similar to Chinese, but different from almost all other Tibeto-Burman languages, except Karen (Dwyer 2017). According to Wang (2003:102) most word orders are the same in all Bai dialects, e.g. 1. SVO, 2. Mod N, 3. Rel N, 4. N Num, 5. “Marked” OV (in negative or interrogative sentences, or when a pronoun is used as one of the two objects). Wang claims these word orders can be assumed for Proto-Bai, while Wiersma claims the greater frequency of SOV word order in Jianchuan, as opposed to the stricter SVO order of Dali, is due to greater Chinese influence on the latter. Sample sentences illustrating basic word order are as follows in (6-81)-(6-82):

(6-81)

ŋo³¹ me⁴² la⁴² su⁵⁵ ŋu³³-ts^huε⁴⁴
1SG buy PFV book five-CL

‘I’ve bought five books.’

(Wiersma 2003:671)

(6-82)

ŋo³¹ ji⁴² lu³¹-k^ho⁵⁵ la⁴²
我 穿 这件 了
1SG wear this-CL PTCL.CERTAIN

‘I wore this one.’

我穿了这件

(Xu and Zhao 1984:44)

Note that the N-Num-CL word order in (6-81) and (6-82) is one of the salient syntactic differences from Sinitic that researchers point to in distinguishing Bai from Chinese, in terms of

grammar. However, also recall from 3.4.3.6, as illustrated there by examples (3-63) and (3-64), that Wu et al. (1989:515) claim this word ordering, according to them under influence from local Bai speakers, is indicative of local Southwest Mandarin speech, as well.

Marked word orders prevail across many syntactic structures in the language, a number of which result in a more Tibeto-Burman-esque SOV order, more common in the Jianchuan dialect than in Dali. For example (Wiersma 2003:671) gives the example in (6-83), and Wang (2015) the example in (6-84):

(6-83)
 a³¹-ne⁴⁴ su⁵⁵-xo⁴⁴ no³³ li⁵⁵ ko²¹ lu³³
 kin-grandma grandkid-PL SUB also love PTCL
 ‘Grandma loves the grandchildren [and that’s a fact].’

(6-84)
 ɕao²²tsa²²-no²² no⁴³ diu²² a⁴³-ta⁴³ ja²⁴
 Xiaozhang-OBJ 1SG wait NEG-able²⁴⁹ CS
 ‘I cannot wait for Xiaozhang any longer.’

These SOV constructions are particularly common when the object is a personal pronoun or name carrying the object marker, as in (6-84) above, as well as for double object constructions.

Also, Wiersma (1990:197) notes alternate word orders for negation and double-object constructions between Jianchuan and Dali, with negation shown here in (6-85):

(6-85)
 Jianchuan: ηo³¹ a³⁵ mi³³ la⁴²
 1SG NEG think PTCL.CERTAIN
 Dali: ηo³¹ mi³³ mu³³ lo³²
 1SG think NEG PTCL
 ‘I don’t want to.’ (lit. ‘I’m not thinking’)

²⁴⁹ Note the difference in negative auxiliary from Wiersma’s (2003) data.

Wang (2006:103-104) also notes that the S-V-O-Neg pattern is “extremely atypical”, limited to Zuocheng Bai. Nonetheless, he attributes this order to a retention from the proto-language, and the more common S-O-Neg-V the result of contact: from Yi in the case of Mazhelong, Lisu in Tuoluo and Pumi in other cases. However, he also weighs the possibility that S-V-O-Neg word order is the result of contact between Zuocheng Bai speakers and Dai speakers in the Dali area, claiming Proto-Kam-Tai had S-V-O-Neg word order.

Double-object constructions are somewhat less clear, at least as illustrated by Wiersma (1990:200) because while Dali exhibits one sentence order, namely S V IO DO, Jianchuan exhibits three, including the same as Dali, but no S-V-DO-IO, or at least none provided in the original text. Rather differing word orders involve preverbal object placement, as shown for the example in (6-86) (Wiersma 1990:200). Nonetheless, predicates with multiple objects are regularly cited as places of syntactic variation by multiple authors²⁵⁰.

(6-86)

Jianchuan:	ŋo ³¹	mw ⁵⁵	no ³³	si ³¹	la ⁴²	ŋe ²¹	a ³¹ -tɕi ³³
	1SG	3.GEN	OBJ	give	PFV	shoe	one-CL.pair
Dali:	ŋo ³¹	si ³¹	la ⁴²	mw ⁵⁵	no ³³	ŋe ²¹	a ³¹ -tɕi ³³
	1SG	give	PFV	3.GEN	OBJ	shoe	one-CL.pair
	'I've given him a pair of shoes.'						

Finally, serial verb constructions are common, as in (6-87) and (6-88):

(6-87)

α ³³ .ne ⁴⁴	ŋe ²¹	tɕ ^h i ⁴⁴	ka ⁴⁴	pe ⁴⁴	
kin-grandma	go	out	try	walk.leave	
'Grandma's going out for a little walk'.					(Wiersma 2003:671)

²⁵⁰ The '?' denoting uncertainty toward the sentence particle is from the original text's data.

(6-88)

ph^hia⁴⁴ lu³¹kw⁵⁵ li⁵⁵ tse⁴⁴ xǎ⁵⁵ tu⁴⁴ mu⁵⁵ tsu⁵⁵
 arrive now also still see obtain 3.GEN track
 ‘Until today you can still see traces of it²⁵¹.’ (ibid.672)

In such sentences, negation may either precede or follow the main verb (Wiersma 2003:672).

Finally, coordinated sentences are formed by either juxtaposition or overt conjunctions, as in

(6-89) and (6-90):

(6-89)

nw⁵⁵ ɕi⁵⁵ li⁵⁵ p^hε⁵⁵ nw⁵⁵ tɕui³³ li⁵⁵ ts^hε⁴⁴ nw⁵⁵ ɕε⁴² li⁵⁵ tɕũ³¹
 你的 心 也 软 你的 嘴 也 红 你的 性 也 急
 2.GEN heart also soft 2.GEN mouth also red 2.GEN nature also anxious
 ‘Your heart is also soft, your words are also fast, your character is also anxious.’
 你的心也软，你的口也快，你的性子也急 (Xu and Zhao 1984:95)

(6-90)

mo³¹ mε⁴² tu⁴⁴ sv⁵⁵ a³¹kε²¹ si⁵⁵tso⁴² a³¹-ts^huε⁴⁴
 他 买 着 书 许多 可是 一本
 3SG buy RES book many but one-CL
 li⁵⁵ tse⁴⁴ xǎ⁵⁵ a³⁵ ko⁴²
 也 还 看 不 完
 also still read NEG finish
 ‘He bought a bunch of books, but he still hasn’t read a single one.’
 他买了许多书，可是一本也没有看完 (Xu and Zhao 1984:96)

6.2.5.2 Ngwi Syntax

Lisu is verb-final, with the possibility of NP-postposing for focus. Though the order of noun phrases is determined largely by discourse, Bradley (2017:906) states that for transitive verbs the usual order is temporal-subject-DO-locative-verb, and for ditransitives it is temporal-subject-IO-DO-locative-verb. NPs delete in speech very frequently, and verb-only sentences are common. Examples of simple Lisu sentences from the Shibacha dialect are in (6-91) and (6-92):

²⁵¹ Wiersma’s (2003) original glosses have two interlinear tiers, one for lexical meaning and one for functional categories. For the morpheme *lu³¹kw⁵⁵* she gives the notation {this+ ladle;skein}, which I can only take to be literal meanings of the morphemes, which themselves have more generalized meaning ‘now’.

(6-91)

a ⁵⁵ na ²¹	le ³³	a ⁵⁵ γu ⁵⁵	gua ³³	te ⁵⁵	k ^h o ²¹	tia ⁵⁵
dog	AGNT	chicken	DEM	PAT	bite	DUR

'A dog is biting the chicken.'

(Yu 2007:184)

(6-92)

la ²¹ ma ³³	ʂ ⁵⁵	ŋ ²¹	dza ²¹
tiger	grass	NEG	eat

'A tiger doesn't eat grass.'

(ibid.)

In Lalo clauses, the only obligatory element is the predicate, which is final. That is, like Lisu, Lalo strongly tends towards SOV sentence structure. Lalo predicates can involve multiple verbs in a chain clause, or one main verb followed by a string of subordinate auxiliaries or complements. When aspect particles delete, as they often do, it can sometimes be difficult to distinguish chain clauses from verb phrases consisting of a main verb and auxiliary elements following, i.e. whether they indicate two separate events or one modified event (Björverud 1998:79). The ability to place a negator in multiple slots is a useful test here. Instances (ibid:86) would include the contrastive examples in (6-93) and (6-94), where the first illustrates two separate events, eating, then not feeling satiated, while in the latter there is a single resultative clause resulting in death by squeezing, and thus insertion of a negator is not grammatical, and presumably the negator can only precede the main verb *tse*²¹.

(6-93)

dza ²¹	b <u>u</u> ⁴⁴	dza ²¹	ma ²¹	b <u>u</u> ⁴⁴
eat	sated	eat	not	sated
'eat one's fill'		'not eat one's fill'		

(6-94)

tse ²¹	fj _i ²²	*tse ²¹	ma ²¹	fj _i ²²
squeeze	kill	squeeze	not	kill
'squeeze to death'		*'not squeeze to death'		

Yu (2007:209-226) gives a thorough overview of serial verbs in Lisu dialects, their semantics and how they carry aspect and modality, as well as their restrictions and component order. A few basic examples are given here as examples in (6-95)-(6-97) (ibid.):

(6-95)

ja ⁵¹	na ²¹	lo ²¹ me ²¹	my ²¹	ga ³³	tɕ ⁵⁵	dze ³³	o ³³
3PL	TOP	Burmese	place	LOC	move	go	DEC

'They have moved to Burma.'

(6-96)

wa ³⁵	se ²¹	xu ³³	si ⁵⁵	tɕ ³⁵	go ³³	do ³³	li ³³
that	breath	free	SEQ	drag	pull	come.out	come.downward

'...try with your strength to get [her] out.'

(6-97)

za ²¹ ny ³³	wa ³³	te ³³	dy ²¹	le ³³
child	that	carry	come.in	come.IMPER

'Bring the child in.'

Directional complements in Lisu follow the verbal head, before the aspect and epistemic/evidential/imperative markers, consisting mostly of directional verbs. The order in Lalo is similar, where the set of verbs available to the second direction verb slot is smaller than those in the first, an organization of verbal elements quite similar to Mandarin. Also, it is rare that a directional and a resultative appear in the same verbal construction (Björverud 1998:88). A couple of examples include those in (6-98) and (6-99) (ibid.):

(6-98)

dj ⁴⁴	ku ²¹	li ³³
ascend	cross.up	away

'go past [somebody] upwards'

(6-99)

ve ⁵⁵	ka ³³	la ⁵⁵
buy	bring	come

'come with what has been bought'

In Lalo Yi, depending on the negator, negation may occur in multiple places in the predicate.

The plain negative *ma*²¹ may precede multiple verbs in a sequence, with some exceptions, while

the imperative negator *t^ha*²¹ can only precede the main verb, as in (6-100) - (6-102), from

Björverud (1998:86):

(6-100)

ty⁵⁵ la⁵⁵ *(ma²¹) γa³³ ma²¹ da⁵⁵
return come *(not) obtain NEG can
'not able to fulfil the requirements for returning'

(6-101)

gə⁵⁵zi²¹ nɛ⁵⁵ t^ha²¹ pi⁵⁵
ticklish like.that NEG do
'Don't do ticklish (=Stop it you're tickling me!)

(6-102)

ma²¹ jy⁵⁵ t^ha²¹ ty⁵⁵ la⁵⁵
not grow NEG return come
'[If the hemp seeds] don't grow, don't come home!'
not: *'Don't grow back the hemp seeds'

Some verbal morphemes have very specific semantic information in a single form. For example, the Lalo resultative verb *dzi*²¹ 'actor sustains some discomfort and endures abstaining from relief', as illustrated below in (6-103) and (6-104) (Björverud 1998:101-104):

(6-103)

ji⁵⁵ dzi²¹ γə⁵⁵ s_i²² dzi²¹
want endure water thirsty endure
'endure wanting [new shoes]' 'endure thirsting'

(6-104)

ma²¹ γə⁵⁵ dzi²¹ ma²¹ da⁵⁵
NEG laugh endure NEG can
'cannot help but laugh'

Subordinate clauses are usually formed by final subordinative morphemes, such as Lalo *va*⁵⁵ 'since; although', as shown in (6-105) (ibid.138):

(6-105)

nε⁵⁵ b_i⁴⁴ la²¹ va⁵⁵ t^hə²¹z_u²² ma²¹ p_u³³
like.that say VALID although anything NEG answer

‘Even though [they] were saying like that, [the older wife] didn’t answer a thing.’

However, subordination and coordination can also be expressed simply through juxtaposition, as in (6-106) from Björverud (1998:149):

(6-106)

xa³³f_y³³f_y³³ ma²¹ b_i⁴⁴ wu²¹ u³³ ma²¹ sa²²
detailed NEG say BEN 3 NEG know

‘If you don’t give detailed instructions, he doesn’t understand.’

6.2.5.3 Naic Syntax

The syntax of Naic languages in neutral contexts is Subject-Object-Verb, where only the verb is required, and for which topicalization of the object is common. Lidz suggests a Topic-Comment analysis is more accurate, where topics can include NPs, independent clauses, dependent clauses or adverbials, and often carry the topic marker *dzo*³³. Michaud et al. (2015) claim that particles indicating semantic roles in Naxi are optional, but the language allows for variable word order. Finally, recall from 6.2.4.3 that negation is pre-verbal in Naic languages, appearing as a prefix to the head, *ma*³³-.

Serial verb constructions, especially when indicating direction of movement, are common. The directional element is drawn from a small set of verbs, *yo*³³ ‘venitive (< come); *bi*³³ ‘andative (< go); *ts^hw*³³ (< come, speaker is not deictic center) and *hw*³³ (< go, speaker is not deictic center), which usually follow the verb head. However other, non-directional serial verb constructions are common, typically resultatives or instances where nominal arguments have deleted in context and the verbs concatenate.

Examples of serial verb constructions from Yongning Na are given below in (6-107)-(6-109), the last of which includes a resultative construction (Lidz 2010:397, 399, 405):

(6-107)

t ^h i ¹³	lə ³³ -wæ ³³	zɔ ³³	t ^h u ³³	zɯ ³³ -mi ³³		
so	ACCOMP-call	CS	this	hearth-room		
所以	叫		这	祖屋		
t ^h u ³³ -lu ³³	lə ³³ -wɔ ¹³		lə ³³ -sɿ ³¹	lə ³³ -ɣɔ ³³	hu ³³	
this-CL	ACCOMP-return		ACCOMP-live	ACCOMP-come	FUT.REM	
这个	回		活	来		

‘Having called it, the hearth room will come back to life.’
 所以把祖屋这个叫醒了，让他重新活回来了

(6-108)

ɕi ³¹ dzi ¹³	la ³³	lɔ ¹³	la ³³	du ³³ pi ¹³	qwa ³¹ qwa ¹³	po ³¹ jo ³³
coals	and	ash	etc.	a.little	dig.up	bring.back
炭	和	灰	等等	一点	挖	拿来

‘(Go to the ancestral home) and dig up a bit of coals and ashes and bring them back.’
 (去老家) 挖一点炭和灰拿回来

(6-109)

na ³³ -tsu ³¹ -mi ³³	dzo ³¹	ʂɛ ³³	mə ³³ -du ³³		
vertical-eyed-woman	EXIST	look.for	NEG-obtain		
眼睛竖的女人	有	找	不得		
na ³³ -tæ ³³ -mi ³³		t ^h u ³³ -wu ³³	ʂɛ ³³	du ³³	zɔ ³³
horizontal-eyed woman		this-CL	look.for	obtain	CS
眼睛竖的女人		这 量词	找	得	了

‘He didn’t find a vertical-eyed woman, although he was able to find a horizontal-eyed woman.’
 竖眼睛的没有找到, 只是找到一个眼睛横的了

Interrogatives are formed in Naic languages by prefixing *a*³¹- to the verb head²⁵² (or suffixing, if the speaker anticipates the answer), but also by using a number of question words such as *a*³¹-*ts*^h*ɛ*³³ ‘what, how’, *q*^h*a*³³-*ni*¹³ ‘how’, *ni*¹³ ‘who’ and *q*^h*a*³³-*ts*^h*ɛ*³³ ‘when’. Lidz reports A-not-A questions occur, but may be due to Chinese influence. Examples from Yongning Na include (6-110) and (6-111):

²⁵² Michaud et al. (2015) gloss this as schwa, giving only Laze as having a low back vowel.

(6-110)

nɔ³³ ts^hu³³-ni³³ a³¹-t^hɛ¹³?

2SG today Q-tired

你 今天 吗-累

'Are you (sg.) tired today?'

(Lidz 2010: 505)

你今天累吗

(6-111)

nɔ³³ t^hu³³ bu³³ mɿ³³ si³³ a³¹?

2SG 3SG POSS name know Q

你 他 的 名字 知道 吗

'Do you know his/her name?'

(Lidz 2010:507)

你知道他的名字

Clause combining can be simple juxtaposition or involve a number of conjunctions and adverbials, or be indicated by the aspectual marking across the verb phrases, i.e. aspect-marked converbial phrases. An example of a Yongning Na coordinated sentence with the conjunction *t^hi¹³* 'so' is illustrated in (6-112) (Lidz 2010:532):

(6-112)

p^hɔ³³bi³³di³³ mə³³-di³³ t^hi¹³ hu³³li³¹ zɔ³³ zɔ³³-hɔ³³

place.to.which.to.escape NEG-EXIST so quickly ADVB child

逃跑的地方 没有 所以 快 的 小孩子

ni³³-lu³³ dzɿ³³ zɔ³³ bɔ³¹gu¹³ kwɔ³³ dzu³¹ tɕi³¹ hu³³

two-CL grab CS pig.trough LOC sit CAUS go

两量词 抓 了 猪槽 里 坐 放 去

'There was no place to escape to, so (she) quickly grabbed the two children.'

逃跑的地方没有，所以很快抓了两个小孩儿

A two-clause complex sentence with subordination is shown in (6-113) (Lidz 2010:546):

(6-113)

zu³³-mi³³ ʂɛ³³ hɔ³³ ʂwæ³³-su³³ ʂwæ³³-hi³³ da¹³

wife look.for DES (type of tree) tall-NMLZ cut down

老婆 找 要 (树的一个种类) 高的 砍

'(If) (he) wants to look for a wife, cut down the tallest shwaesi tree.'

要找老婆的话，要砍最高的 ʂwæ³³-su³¹ 树

6.2.5.4 *Summary*

Bai is said to share some ordering of constituents with local Ngwi languages, departing from Sinitic patterns in such regards. Like Chinese, Bai adverbs always precede the verb, but modals always follow the verb, the latter phenomenon differing from Mandarin, in favor of local patterns. Bai of course does follow Chinese SVO main clause ordering, which would make it an outlier of Tibeto-Burman, other than Karenic (Dreyer 2017), though in certain marked constructions, for instance double-object constructions or instances where the direct object is a pronoun or name, objects may be fronted to preverbal position. Variability of word order, including via object-fronting, is also found in varieties of Mandarin, as well, as discussed for Standard Mandarin in 4.3.1.3. At the same time, the Jianchuan dialect is said to allow more instances of SOV ordering than Dali. All of the Ngwi and Naic languages are strictly SOV, with sometimes specifically emphasized objects moved after the verb in discourse.

The word order differences between Bai dialects, with urban Dali tending more towards SVO than other varieties, are interesting because they get at the heart of the controversy regarding Bai's genetic relationship. If we assume that Bai is Tibeto-Burman, not Sinitic, then we can assume that the (slightly) more rural Jianchuan dialect retains older word order patterns, because it is like almost all other Tibeto-Burman languages, and that Dali has been restructured by Sinitic to that family's SVO norms. This would also match assumptions about rural areas retaining forms lost in contact-heavy, multilingual urban areas. But if we assume that Bai is Sinitic, then we take the Dali SVO word order as a retention, and the Jianchuan SOV pattern to have been possibly restructured under the pressure of neighboring Tibeto-Burman, mostly Ngwi, languages, presumably in contact with Bai speakers across all rural village areas.

However, the NP follows the order N-CL-Num, which is similar, but not identical, to both Ngwi and Naic languages, which have the order N-Num-CL, all differing from Mandarin Num-CL-N. Other modifiers, such as adjectives and relative clauses precede the noun in Bai, while they may appear either before or after the noun in Ngwi and in Naic. (In Na they are somewhat rare; the language usually utilizes predicate adjectives for such purposes.)

Interestingly, Enfield (2001:265-266) points to syntactic variation of the classifier phrase in the NP across the Tai-Kadai language family, with Num-CL-Head-(Mod.) in the north, and Head-(Mod)-Num-CL in the south. There, even when languages show effects of contact in the order of right-headedness in NPs across the syntax, no Tai language shows fully ADJ-N order in all constructions, as no Sinitic language shows N-ADJ in all syntactic configurations, either. That is, there is always a mixture of both orders depending on the elements in the NP, and the discourse situation (Enfield 2001:266). Such NP syntactic variability apparently points to either interesting areal trends, or a broader, typological feature especially prone to variability.

Serial verb constructions are especially common, as is typical for analytic languages generally. The descriptive literature is not particularly elaborate for Bai, but Yu (2007:209-226) gives various restrictions and stipulations for the types of and sequencing of elements in different varieties of Lisu. It is similar to the description Björverud gives for Lalo, where the main verb can be followed by a set of directional morphemes, then a more refined set of different directional morphemes, followed by a resultative morpheme, followed by a modal marker. A similar scenario is described for Naic languages. For Ngwi languages and for Yongning Na, authors tend to highlight the difficulty of distinguishing situations of subordination and coordination from sequential clauses, especially when morphemes that would intervene between verbal elements, such as objects or negation, are absent or deleted in discourse.

Finally, all of the languages make use of both conjunction morphemes and juxtaposition of clauses to form complex sentences, the latter of which can lead to structural ambiguity in Ngwi languages, making multiple clauses hard to distinguish from resultatives and other complement structures.

6.2.6 Discourse Marking

This section presents some features of information marking and evidentiality in the predicate, first giving what is available in the selected literature for Bai, then turning to Ngwi and Naic.

6.2.6.1 *Bai Discourse Marking*

Unlike other languages of the region, methods of marking evidentiality and other speaker stances appear quite limited, at least from their overt focus in the literature. A number of sentence-final particles contribute pragmatic information, as illustrated by Wiersma (1990:165), shown in (6-114) below, and illustrated in sentences above, such as (6-46), (6-47) and (6-83). But most appear to be emotive particles, similar to Sinitic varieties.

(6-114)	
tsɿ ⁶⁶ tso ³³	‘and that’s a fact’
la ⁴²	‘how about that; that’s what’ (see fn. 235)
lu ³³	‘true enough (concessive)’
lɛ ⁴²	‘can you imagine?’
sɛ ³³	‘at least you would think so’
nj ⁵⁵	‘what do you suppose?’
ne ²¹	‘and that’s all it amounts to’
ɕã ³³ la ⁴²	‘as you will surely agree’

Wiersma (1990:172) does give an example of a discourse marker as evidence of Bai retention of ancestral Tibeto-Burman forms, however. She notes that the third-person possessive marker *mu*⁵⁵ can be reduplicated in casual speech to represent a hesitation utterance, similar to Mandarin *zhège* 这个. However, in a single narrative from her dissertation, the pronoun

appears with “the object marker *no*³³” in two different instances, suggesting to her that the pronoun marker, even in discourse functions other than collocating case in a proposition, shows residual elements of a previous Tibeto-Burman system where case-marking is intrinsic, unlike Chinese. This is interesting, if I understand Wiersma’s point correctly, in that pronouns must mark for case (a Tibeto-Burman element), but have been adapted to a pragmatic use of spoken hesitation (a Sinitic adaptation).

6.2.6.2 *Discourse Marking in Ngwi Languages*

In Lalo there are a number of different particles, including topic markers, nominal particles, predicative and aspect particles, clause particles and final particles. Lalo utilizes a few different main topic markers, all of which carry specific pragmatic information, *na*²¹, *ma*⁵⁵ and *be*²¹.

There is also a topic marker that mostly topicalizes objects, viz. *le*³³. Examples of these morphemes with highly specific semantic encodings are given in (6-115) and (6-116):

(6-115) Topicalizer *na*²¹ (strange or unexpected information)

<i>ŋa</i> ⁵⁵	<i>na</i> ²¹	<i>a</i> ⁵⁵ <i>mε</i> ⁵⁵ <i>ɔ</i> ³³	<i>tɕa</i> ³³	<i>zε</i> ²¹ <i>mε</i> ²¹
1	TOP	younger.sister	home	daughter

‘[No] I’m the daughter of the younger sister, [not of the older daughter].’ (Björverud 1998:132)

(6-116) Topicalizer *le*³³:

<i>gu</i> ²¹ <i>p</i> ^h <i>i</i> ²²	<i>le</i> ³³	<i>ŋa</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ma</i> ²¹	<i>ji</i> ⁵⁵	<i>ha</i> ⁵⁵
money	TOP	1	NEG	want	PTCL

‘As for the money, I don’t even want it.’ (ibid.)

There are clause-final morphemes for marking evidentiality in Lalo, viz. *mu*⁵⁵, *fi*⁵⁵ and *p^hi⁵⁵gy²¹*. The first is related to the verb *mu*⁵⁵ ‘to see’ and indicates the speaker has firsthand knowledge of the event. The morpheme shifts its tone depending on the negative polarity of the clause, as well as whether it is final in the sentence or not. However, the tonal patterns are full of exceptions, “as yet unaccounted for” (Björverud 1998). Examples include (6-117) and (6-118):

(6-117)

tʃɛ⁵⁵ ŋa⁵⁵ la⁵⁵ mu⁵⁵
like.this COP come PTCL

'This is how it was (=I know because I was there).'

(6-118)

u³³ ma²¹ dɛ²¹ mu⁵⁵
3 NEG hit PTCL

'He hasn't hit.'

David Bradley has written extensively about evidentials in Lisu. Lisu has sentence-final particles that mark epistemic values (i.e. how certain a speaker is of a proposition) and evidentiality. These particles vary significantly across dialects, but Bradley (2015) notes that the quotative, or reported speech, marker *jo/dzo*²¹ is found in all dialects. Bradley (2010:76) also estimates that the evidential system has developed only over the last couple of centuries, having evolved from lexical verbs or from other evidentials. The most developed system of evidentials is that of Northeastern Central Lisu, spoken in Dehong and Baoshan prefectures, as illustrated by Bradley and shown in (6-119) (2010:73):

(6-119) Northeastern Central Lisu evidential particles

lo ⁴⁴	absolutely certain, based on personal knowledge
dzo ²¹	heard someone say it
ma ⁵⁵	visual evidential
mu ⁵⁵	visual evidential, perfective
dza ³³	hearing/smelling/feeling/tasting evidential
dzo ³³	hearing/smelling/feeling/tasting evidential, inchoative
dzo ³⁵	hearing/smelling/feeling/tasting evidential, perfective
na ⁵⁵	infer from external evidence
pɛ ⁵⁵	infer from external evidence, future
du ³³	guess from intuition
pa ^{55/21}	guess from background knowledge

6.2.6.3 Discourse Marking in Naic Languages

Lidz (2018) discusses the egophoricity of Yongning Na, which she claims is distinct among similar systems of the linguistic area, particularly from Tibetan. As such, as a unique system,

with quite byzantine complexity (in a language noted for both its simple phoneme inventory and morphosyntax), it is worth describing in some detail. As she summarizes it, “Instead of a two-way distinction with respect to person, Na makes a three-way distinction: first-person statements can be made unequivocally; second-person ‘statements’ are formed as interrogatives; and third-person statements are qualified, with the form of qualification dependent upon verbal semantic class: volitional, internal state or observable state” (Lidz 2018: 153). The system, according to Lidz, represents an overlap of evidentiality (that is, the source of knowledge) with the direct versus indirect access to knowledge. Rather than marking on copulas or verb stems, Na uses evidential particles, tense forms and interrogatives. With regard to the latter, such egophoric marking is not present in the interrogative mood.

For volitional verbs like *bi*³³ ‘to go’, i.e. verbs where the speaker exerts direct control over the action (often termed control or controllable verbs in the Tibetic literature, e.g. as discussed in the Kham region in 5.2.4), first-person statements are unmarked by evidential particles, whereas second-person statements appear as interrogatives, as illustrated in (6-120) and (6-121) (Lidz 2018:155):

(6-120)

<i>ŋa</i> ³³	<i>lu</i> ³³ <i>ʂu</i> ³¹	<i>bi</i> ³³
1SG	Luoshui	go
‘I go to Luoshui.’		

(6-121)

<i>no</i> ³³	<i>lu</i> ³³ <i>ʂu</i> ³¹	<i>a</i> ³¹ - <i>bi</i> ³³
2SG	Luoshui	Q-go
‘You go to Luoshui?’		

In the third-person, however, for volitional verbs, the VP must be followed by the future *ho*³³, which is also the way one marks the desire to perform an action, i.e. ‘to want to’, which here

indicates that the speaker does not have direct knowledge of whether or not the subject will indeed carry out the verb, as in (6-122) (Lidz 2018:156):

(6-122)
t^hu³³ lu³³ʂu³¹ bi³³ ho³³
3SG Luoshui go FUT
'S/he will go to Luoshui.'

However, the third-person form differs by semantic class of the verb, e.g. with the verbal form 'to be happy', an internal state verb, the statement will carry an inferential evidential particle, *p^hæ³³di³³*. On the other hand, observable state verbs, like 'to be sick', are marked the same as first-person volitional verbs, that is, zero-marked, as the information is directly accessible, illustrated by examples (6-123) and (6-124) (Lidz 2018:160-161):

(6-123)
t^hu³³ fu³³ ʂwæ¹³ p^hæ³³di³³
3SG happy INTS INFR
'He seems happy.'

(6-124)
t^hu³³ go³³ ʂwæ¹³
3SG sick INTS
'He is very sick.'

Note, however, that even though by the Na worldview being sick is an observable state, as opposed to being happy (which is only known "internally" by the one who is happy or not), in second-person constructions with the predicate *go³³*, the proposition must still be formed as an interrogative, as the second-person referent is a participant in the speech act, as in (6-125):

(6-125)
no³³ a³¹ go³³
2SG Q sick
'You are sick?'

(Lidz 2018:161)

The point is, the choice of evidential, as well as the sentence type (interrogative or declarative) is selected in all cases by the grammar, based on the personal pronoun, as well as the verb class. Note that the grammatical differentiation disappears for all persons in the interrogative mood, as shown in (6-126)-(6-128) (Lidz 2018:163):

(6-126)
 ηɑ³³ ɡɔ³³ ɑ³¹
 1SG sick Q
 'I am sick?'²⁵³

(6-127)
 nɔ³³ ɡɔ³³ ɑ³¹?
 2SG sick Q
 'You're sick?'

(6-128)
 t^hu³³ ɡɔ³³ ɑ³¹?
 3SG sick Q
 'S/he's sick?'

Independent of this system of notating access to knowledge is Yongning Na's five-way evidentiality marking, discussed in Lidz (2007). There different morphemes mark direct knowledge (unmarked), reported, quotative, inferential and common knowledge. As they are clause-final particles, not verbal inflections, after first mention, or in discourse context, they may be omitted. Furthermore, each shows a very obvious grammaticalized source in a lexical verb, implying that the system of evidentiality is quite recent (Lidz 2007). For example, the reported information evidential in Yongning Na, illustrated in (6-129), is marked with the particle *tsi*¹³, from the lexical verb 'to say', illustrated in (6-130) (Lidz 2007:52-53):

²⁵³ Lidz's interlocutors judged the interrogative of a first-person proposition to be awkward on pragmatic grounds, but apparently grammatical with regard to the forms.

(6-129)

dzɿ³³ qv̥³³ tʰi³³-di³³ |i³³-tʰi³³-di³³ ku¹³ tsi¹³
spring this one-CL DUR-EXIST FUT REP
'It is said that there would be a spring over there.'

(6-130)

tʰi³³ tʰi³³ ni¹³ tsi¹³
3SG this way say
'S/he says it's like this.'

The quotative evidentiality marker *pi*³³ is from the verb 'to be called'; the inferential evidentiality morpheme, *pʰæ³ di*³³, consists of the morpheme for 'face', followed by the existential verb for flat objects; and the common knowledge evidential marker, *a³¹ dzɔ³³*, is the question particle followed by the existential/locative verb, which marks statements everyone (or every Na) knows to be true. For Lijiang Naxi, Michaud et al. (2015), in addition to the hearsay morpheme *tsu*⁵⁵, report *ju*³³ for direct observation, *my*¹¹ for affirmation, *me*³³ for exclamation and *ma*¹³ to convey obviousness.

Finally, evidential markers may also co-occur, as in the following, where the reported speech and the quotative evidential markers both appear, rendering the source of information more remote, pragmatically. This is illustrated in (6-131) (Lidz 2007:57):

(6-131)

tʰi³³-kʰuə³³ dzɔ³³ lu³³ mə³³-xi³³ pi³³ tsi¹³
this-CL EXIST till NEG-okay QUOT REP
'It is said this strip of land was untillable.'

6.2.6.4 Summary

There is little information about categories marked for evidentiality or other informational stances in Bai, which, in contrast to other languages in the area, implies Bai is an outlier in this regard, regionally. However, note that, in contrast to Lisu, as illustrated above, Nuosu Yi has only one evidential morpheme, a quotative marker -ddix [di³³] (Gerner 2013:376). Bai does

have an array of monosyllabic, sentence-final particles that carry nuanced pragmatic information, though, as illustrated in (6-114). However, they seem to lack the sort of evidential or egophoric stance and informational function of similar particles in Lisu or Na, which were illustrated as being particularly rich in such distinctions. In this way, Bai is closer to Sinitic, which also has few explicit means to mark such categories succinctly with individual morphemes (even when southern Sinitic varieties, such as Cantonese, boast high sentence-final particle inventories).

It seems clear that many of the evidentially marked particles found in Lisu are recently grammaticalized, as their verbal semantics implies (Bradley 2010:76). At the same time, Yongning Na has one of the most intricate evidential systems in the region, as described by Lidz (2007), going beyond just semantic specification on individual morphemes to involve differences of mood (declarative versus interrogative) and pronominal reference, as well as an array of existential verbs (in the latter fashion, similar to Tibetic and some Qiangic languages).

6.2.7 The Lexicon

This section gives a lengthy discussion of the Bai lexicon, a primary topic of discussion in the literature on the Bai language, and usually the central point of contention in determining its genetic affiliation. Less has been made of the lexicons of Lalo, Lisu, Naxi and Na, and so their lexicons are taken collectively in 6.2.7.2.

6.2.7.1 *The Bai Lexicon and Borrowing*

More has been written on the loanword strata of the Bai lexicon than any other facet of the language, and this has mostly been towards establishing the chronological stage of borrowing across different contact periods with Chinese. (See Luo 1943 [1989], Zhao 1949, both cited in Wang 2015, as well as Benedict 1982, Zhao 1982, Starostin 1994, Matisoff 2001, Wang 2005,

Yuan 2006, Lee and Sagart 2008. Below I focus mostly on the latter, as a recent and thoroughly methodological approach to the question.) Much like southern Sinitic varieties of Chinese, the Bai lexicon has literary strata connected to reading Chinese characters²⁵⁴, and thus pronouncing the Sino-Bai morphemes they represent, which are distinct from the same morphemes that have been borrowed as part of the colloquial vocabulary²⁵⁵. As such, the Sino-Bai lexical strata involve a subset of Bai tones that are historically used for Chinese character reading. It has already been noted in 6.2.2.1 that a retroflex phonological series is available specifically for educated pronunciation of Chinese forms. Xu and Zhao (1984:6-7) note a regular correspondence between Chinese loanwords and the Bai tones used in their phonological adaptation, in which the philological Middle Chinese tonal categories²⁵⁶ are adapted to Bai with the following pitch values:

Yang Ping:	阴平 33
Yin Ping:	阳平 42
Shang:	上声 31
Qu:	去声 55
Ru:	入声 35 (earlier Ru Tone loans read as 44 or 42)

Wang (2006) invokes language contact with non-Sinitic languages as a possible origin for certain irregularities in his comparative-reconstructive data. I present these data here not as an explicit advocacy for their plausibility, which at times seem merely coincidental and other times forced, but rather to show the uncertainty in the literature, complicated by the areal situation, that applies to Bai etymology.

²⁵⁴ The methodology for reading Bai in Chinese characters is called 汉字白读 (Hàn-zì Bái dú, literally, “Han Characters Bai Reading”), and is discussed further in 6.3.2.3 below.

²⁵⁵ Wiersma (2003) also claims that, on top of this situation, later contact with a Wu or Min dialect, following Ming-era in-migrations from eastern China, may have also affected the language.

²⁵⁶ The categories, which to my knowledge have no accepted pitch values or registers attributed to them in Middle Chinese, represent values from medieval rhyming dictionaries and other materials, and are frequently used for diachronic analysis, though they do not represent comparative reconstructions. See 3.4.2 for more explanation.

For instance, Wang (2006:50) claims Naxi or Yi could be responsible for lexical items in which proto-Tone *1a appears on voiced sonorant initial syllables. Wang (ibid:94) also compares the 3rd person possessive pronoun of the Mazhelong dialect, which begins with an aspirated velar stop [k^h], k^hi⁵⁵, to that of Sani Yi k^hi⁴⁴. In most Bai varieties the pronoun developed from a distal demonstrative, which in Mazhelong is pu³³. Therefore the borrowing would account for the irregularity in this form²⁵⁷. Also, he (ibid:99) conjectures a borrowing from Jiulong Pumi (a Qiangic language) du¹¹ ‘this’ to account for the Tuluo Bai dialect’s demonstrative pronoun diu²¹ ‘near’. In the case of individual reconstructions of lexical items, Wang attributes Mazhelong noŋ³³ “breasts” to a Sani Yi borrowing from ŋ³³ “breasts”. Finally, he (ibid.122) proposes borrowing between two Bai dialects historically to account for irregularities in adaptation of Proto-Bai onset clusters.

Perhaps Wang is just grasping at forms that are available in the vicinity. To what extent Bai speakers were in close enough contact with Hani, Hmong and Pumi speakers is not a question he pursues. But perhaps he is correct, and these contacts between Dai, Lisu, varieties of Yi and Bai speak to an older linguistic area, something like what Blench (2009) has called the “Southern Yunnan Interaction Sphere”, with freer cross-cultural communication, and more porous language boundaries, that was eradicated, or at least eclipsed, after the appearance of Chinese as a major regional language²⁵⁸. In any case, these dialectal irregularities likely speak to

²⁵⁷ He also considers the possibility of an Old Chinese loan from distal demonstrative 其 (in Baxter and Sagart, *gə), which underwent a semantic shift to 3p. possessive by Middle Chinese (Baxter *gi*), which Wang reconstructs as *gi1b* in Middle Chinese.

²⁵⁸ Blench is, however, referring to a time depth much deeper than what could account for Wang’s proposed borrowings; the former is posited to show borrowings between Proto-Austronesian, Proto-Austroasiatic and Proto-Hmong-Mien (Blench considers Kra-Dai to be Austronesian); the latter must necessarily have occurred after the divergence of Proto-Loloish, which DeLancey (2010) dates to the Nanzhao period.

a more complicated situation than merely a homogenous, Sinitic-relexified Tibeto-Burman language, with a handful of vestigial remnants of a substrate.

Beyond individual lexemes, much of the work on the Bai lexicon has been an attempt to relegate various Chinese loanwords to their appropriate historical strata of the lexicon, in an attempt to peel back layers and get at a “pure” Bai stratum that represents the language before initial sustained contact with Chinese. This has proven to be no small task. Wang (2006:19) cites previous literature, e.g. by Luo Changpei, claiming that up to 70% of Bai vocabulary comes from Chinese, and some accounts would push that number even higher. This investigation has been at the heart of the controversy to establish Bai’s genetic affiliation, whether as independent Tibeto-Burman language, a Ngwi variety or a conservative Sinitic offshoot.

Mike Opper (2017), as background to his own phonological description of three Dali-based varieties of Bai (spoken in Erhai 洱海 and Heqing 鹤庆, as well as Jinchuan), gives a comparative summary of contending accounts on Bai’s genetic affiliation. The prevailing school of thought, represented by James Matisoff (2001), is that Bai is Tibeto-Burman, but that reconstructive evidence linking it to Lolo-Yi is limited, at best. However, as Opper (2017:13) notes: “If we believe that innovations determine genetic affiliation, then Bai cannot be part of Burmic or either of its subgroups – Ngwi or Burmish – as the innovative features of this family are not attested in varieties of Bái.”

Others have tried to link Bai more directly to Sinitic. For example, Starostin (1995, cited in Opper 2017:18), using lexico-statistical methods of analysis on Swadesh lists, calculates that 68-70% of the basic vocabulary in Bai is cognate with Mandarin, Hakka and Fuzhou Sinitic varieties, and that, by his calculations, Bai would have split from “mainstream” Chinese around 200 BCE.

Zhengzhang Shangfang (1999, cited in Opper 2017:21-22; 2008) offers character etymologies--- often using obscure and obsolete vocabulary from the *Shuowenjiezi* 说文解字 and *Guangyun* 广韵---to show that every item on the Swadesh list for Bai has a corresponding written Chinese character, and by implication a potential Sinitic cognate form. Thus, every morpheme in Bai may possibly have a historically extant written character, and, indeed, across the entire history of written Bai, each may have once been written with a distinctive Chinese character. Though, of course, it may also be that a language with a simple syllable inventory and an analytic morphology can easily map its vocabulary onto a language with similar properties.

The most systematic and internally coherent analysis of the Bai lexicon is Lee and Sagart (2008), focusing on Jianchuan, as described in Huang et al. (1992), and as such it deserves a thorough summary here. I am omitting here details of how the authors relegated one or another morpheme to its appropriate layer through phonological reconstruction, which relied primarily on fine-tuned onset and tonal adaptations between multiple, independently reconstructed stages of Chinese and internal changes in Bai, similar to those mentioned above.

See the original article for details, but suffice here to say that Lee and Sagart have made careful analysis of initial, rhyme and tonal correspondences between Bai words (monosyllabic and disyllabic), leaving out forms that did not fit their exact established phonological correspondences, and questioning when correspondences may have multiple language correlates (such as Old Chinese, Proto-Loloish, etc.). I have not tasked myself with critiquing the validity of their reconstructive claims, or the soundness of their phonological correspondences, but rather accept the purely linguistic argumentation at face value, focusing instead on the proposed chronology of contact, and the percentages of Sinitic versus non-Sinitic forms in the Bai lexicon overall.

Focusing on such regular correspondences between stages of Chinese and Bai, Lee and Sagart establish the following levels of the Bai lexicon, in reverse chronological order. (See each corresponding section of the original article for a chart of tonal correspondences between Sino-Bai forms and Middle Chinese tonal categories for each initial consonant type.)

1. A Local Mandarin layer: This layer is made up of correspondences between the Jianchuan variety of Southwest Mandarin and Jianchuan Bai. It contains at most one basic-vocabulary borrowings, 爪子 *tsua²¹tsɿ³³* ‘claw’, which the authors claim may also belong to the Regional Mandarin layer. Among the many borrowings from this layer are included such forms as: 白鹤 *pɑ³⁵xo³⁵* ‘crane’, 辣子 *la³⁵tsɿ³³* ‘hot pepper’, 调羹 *t^hio²¹kẽ³³* ‘(soup) spoon’, 将来 *tɕã³³le²¹* ‘future’, 客气 *k^ha³⁵tɕi⁵⁵* ‘polite’, 跳舞 ²⁵⁹ *t^hio⁵⁵vɥ²¹* ‘dance’, 老实 *lo²¹sa³⁵* ‘honesty’.
2. A Regional Mandarin layer: This vocabulary should have originated from Southwest Mandarin (i.e. a more generalized Mandarin spoken in the rest of Yunnan, and adjacent areas). The loans here are twice as numerous as those from local Mandarin, but no more frequent among basic vocabulary. Just a few of the hundreds of examples include: 蒸汽 *tsã⁵⁵tɕ^hi³³* ‘steam’, 朋友 *p^hã⁵⁵jo²¹* ‘friend’, 牦牛 *ma⁵⁵niø⁵⁵* ‘yak’, 颜色 *ni⁵⁵sa⁵⁵* ‘color’, 规矩 *kue⁵⁵tɕy²¹* ‘custom’, 懊悔 *ø³³xue²¹* ‘regret’, 商量 *sã⁵⁵niã⁵⁵* ‘consultation’.
3. The Early Chinese layer: The disyllabic loans in this layer point to a stage of Chinese earlier than the development of Mandarin, contact with the latter of which corresponds roughly to immigration during the Ming era of the late 14th century onward. The authors consider this layer of the lexicon to have a number of sub-divisions depending on the era of contact and its corresponding variety of Chinese. These include an early conservative layer (anywhere from

²⁵⁹ Note the transcription of this word involves two v’s; given its origins as a high back vowel, it is almost certainly the syllabic fricative found throughout so many other of this region’s languages, viz. [ɥ], and so I have transcribed it as such.

the Han Dynasty, ending in 220 CE, through the era of the Wei kingdom and the Jin Dynasty, ending in 420 CE), a later innovative layer (the Late Medieval period, running until the late Tang Dynasty, or the end of the first millennium CE), and a middle layer where the two stages overlap (from the Nanbeichao period, 420-589, into the early medieval period) (Lee and Sagart 2008:373).

This subdivision, which is partly due to the long period of sustained contact, according to Lee and Sagart, is further evidenced by the instability of correspondences across the vocabulary of the Early Chinese layer, as would be expected for such a long period of contact. That is, both Bai and Chinese underwent a number of phonological changes during this period, and such phonological changes can be tracked in the tonal and segmental developments in the borrowed vocabulary

This discontinuity over time can be illustrated by three distinct borrowings for Chinese 二 'two': *ne*³³, *ni*²¹ and *za*²¹, which correspond quite closely with the evolution of the Chinese morpheme over time from Old to Middle Chinese, from a nasal to an approximant initial²⁶⁰. These three forms are all part of the Early Chinese layer in Lee and Sagart's analysis. Still, the noticeable continuity is taken as proof that contact was sustained with one local variety of Chinese over time, rather than with multiple standard varieties of Chinese throughout the period (Lee and Sagart 2008:371):

“[T]he continuity can only be explained by supposing a local Chinese dialect whose tone system remained relatively stable during the period of contact, while it was itself becoming stratified through continuous contact with successive varieties of standard Chinese, as is the case with most, if not all, directly observable Chinese dialects.”

²⁶⁰ Note that in fact the actual numeral 'two', used in counting, is argued to belong to the Tibeto-Burman layer below. The 'two' referenced by all of these forms appears in counting above ten and other uses of the morpheme, but not for basic counting.

This earliest layer contains the most numerous borrowings, including much core vocabulary, such as numerals (that is, counting beyond the number two—there are non-Chinese numerals for counting one and two, which the authors take to be Tibeto-Burman), animals (e.g., dog, horse, cattle), directions, seasons and other temporal categories, cultivated plants, Buddhist terminology, and more (Lee and Sagart 2008:375-376). Note however that missing from this set of vocabulary are words for the rice and millet plants themselves (as opposed to cultivated forms), as well as the word for pig, a common source of food in the region (ibid.376). This layer accounts for 47/100 items of a Swadesh list (ibid.376), reprinted here:

big 大 to²¹, long 長 tsō⁴², small 細 se²¹, daughter 女人 nə³³ni²¹, son 子人 tsi³³ni²¹, human (n.) 人間 ni²¹kā⁵⁵, dog 犬 khu³³, tree 樹 tsi²¹, seed 種子 tsō³³tsi³³, skin 皮 pe⁴², bone 骨頭 ku³³tiə⁴², down/hair 毛 mō⁴², hair (of head) 頭毛 tiə⁴²mō⁵⁵, eye 眼 ŋue³³, hand 手 si³³, belly 腹 fu³³, heart 心 ɕi⁵⁵, liver 肝 kā⁵⁵, drink 飲 ə³³, bite 咬 ŋa³³, hear 聽得 tchā⁵⁵tiə³³, swim 游水 nā⁴²ɕy³³, come 來 ɣə³⁵, sit 踞 ku²¹, speak 說 su³³, moon 明月 mi⁵⁵ŋu³³, star 星 ɕā⁵⁵, water 水 ɕy³³, sand 沙子 so⁵⁵tsi⁵⁵, earth 土沙 t^hu³³sa³³, cloud 雲 vā⁴², smoke 煙子 ni⁵⁵tsi³³, fire 火 xue³³, path/road 途 t^hu³³, red 赤 ts^ha³³, green 綠 lu³³, yellow 黃 ŋo⁴², white 白 pa²¹, black 黑 xə³³, midnight 夜 jo²¹, full 滿 mō³³, new 新 ɕi⁵⁵, round 圓 ŋue⁴², dry 乾 kā⁵⁵, fly (v.) 飛 fa⁵⁵, flesh 肌 ka⁴², die 死 ɕi³³

However, the authors note that the above core vocabulary mostly comes from the later stage of their Early Chinese Layer, which they feel points to a foreign source for the vocabulary, rather than retentions from a common ancestor (Lee and Sagart 2008:376-377). Were the forms Sinitic retentions, one would expect them to correspond in earlier stages as well, which they do not, making a strong case for borrowing.

Lee and Sagart assume the Chinese first introduced to Yunnan, under the Han Emperor Wudi, would have been standard Western Han Chinese, which was probably based on the capital of Chang'an's speech²⁶¹. They claim there was continuous contact between Chinese and Bai

²⁶¹ Stevan Harrell asks for the basis of this assumption, which the authors do not elaborate. It seems they work primarily from known varieties of reconstructed Chinese in the linguistic literature, referencing western dialects of

through the Nanzhao years (648-937), as diagnostic Sinitic innovations found in Bai were not attested in Chinese before this period. They also claim there are no signs that contact was maintained through the Dali years (938-1253), however, stating that contact “petered out in the first half of the second millennium CE, to resume in late Ming or Qing times with the introduction of Mandarin to the Chinese southwest” (Lee and Sagart 2008:381). This is evidenced by apparent lack of correspondences between Bai instantiations of Chinese phonological properties of the Dali and Yuan era to early Ming²⁶². From that point onward, the Chinese loans would have fallen into one of the first two above layers, local or regional Mandarin, neither of which contain basic vocabulary, they claim.

Which brings us, then, to the purported non-Sinitic stratum:

4. The Tibeto-Burman layer: Finally, the fourth layer of the lexicon is Sino-Tibetan, but not Chinese. For this layer, the authors included forms for which they could establish no correspondences with Chinese words, and with which they originally had some sound-to-form basis for comparing with Bradley’s (1979) Proto-Lolo-ish reconstructions. The authors first established a list of 25 such candidate items, were subsequently argued down by James Matisoff (2001), and in the end settled on the following list of twelve basic words (i.e. Swadesh list words) they consider to be Tibeto-Burman in character. They are the following (Lee and Sagart 2008:378-379):

Old Chinese in general (which are often shown to have the predicted forms for such dialects in the Bai borrowings), but as to the demographics of Han dynasty military troupes, it seems to me there is still a good deal of speculation involved, even in assuming they were all Han, or Han-speaking, at least. At any rate, were one to assume a greater degree of dialectal diversity in the Han-era troops penetrating Yunnan (but perhaps communicating in a Chinese koine?), it would be in contrast to the fairly regular sound correspondences Lee and Sagart reconstruct for so many of that era’s loanwords.

²⁶² Here I’m making an assumption based on their operating methodology, as the authors do not explicitly state what (lacking) evidence leads to the conclusion concerning this drop off in contact. One can imagine the general shake up of coming under Mongol rule would serve as a disruptive force, but the lack of contact in the Dali era may be harder to account for historically, as compared with, say, the Nanzhao era.

1. ηo^{21} 'I' cf. Tibeto-Burman *nga*, Proto-Yi (PY) *C-nga1*²⁶³²⁶⁴
2. no^{21} 'thou' cf. PY *nang1*
3. ηa^{55} 'we' cf. Wuding Yi ηu^{11} and Sani ηe^{33}
4. no^{21} 'this' cf. PY **no1* 'that (near)'
5. $\text{a}^{33} \sim \text{ja}^{33}$ 'NEG' cf. Jingpo a^{31} , similar forms in Yi
6. a^{21} 'one' cf. Taoping Qiang a^{31} , Aka (= Hruso) *a*, both 'one'; Xixia *a* 'one of a pair'
7. $\text{k}\ddot{\text{o}}^{33}$ 'two' (various Sino-Tibetan languages' word for two, as far as the Himalayas, have a syllable resembling this form, e.g. Jingpo $\text{la}^{55}\text{k}^{\text{h}}\text{o}\eta^{51}$ 'two', Sulung *akuŋ* 'second', Rengma *koŋhu* 'two', and Phun *naikoŋ* 'two'.)
8. sug^{33} 'blood' PY **swe2*
9. $\text{p}\underline{\text{a}}^{21}\text{t}\underline{\text{c}}\underline{\text{j}}^{33}$ 'breast(s)' cf. Wuding Yi $\underline{\text{a}}55\underline{\text{p}}\underline{\text{a}}2$
10. pe^{33} 'walk' PY **p-re2* 'run'
11. $\text{za}^{33} \sim \text{va}^{33}$ 'rain (n.)' cf. PY **r-ywa1*
12. su^{21} 'mountain' cf. Hani $\text{t}\underline{\text{f}}\underline{\text{y}}^{31}$, Naxi dzy^{21}

In the end, Lee and Sagart find about 50% of the Swadesh list to come from Chinese loans in the earliest loanword stratum. There are also many more Sinitic borrowings from the early period showing a strong tendency towards urban vocabulary. This is somewhat in contrast to the “natural world” basis of some of the 12% core vocabulary they claim to be Sino-Tibetan, though note, among Sinitic borrowings beyond the Swadesh list core vocabulary are words for ‘tree’, ‘seed’, ‘moon’, ‘water’, ‘cloud’ and so on. Words for ‘paddy rice’, and ‘pig feed’ are among the list of forms originally thought to correspond to Proto-Loloish forms, but not on the final list of 12 core vocabulary items presented above.

More convincing still of a Tibeto-Burman core layer, however, are the numerals ‘one’ and ‘two’, pronouns and a demonstrative. Nonetheless, note that a further 40% of the Swadesh List

²⁶³ Where tonal numbers are single digits in this list, I have copied them exactly as in Lee and Sagart’s (2008) original text. Some of those numbers, for example those on morphemes from Proto-Loloish, may refer to specific values stated and labeled as such in a common reconstruction, like Bradley’s (1979); others, for individual languages, I can’t account for.

²⁶⁴ Note that for the first-person pronoun, which shows similar Sino-Tibetan reflexes across the entire family, the authors state: “This could represent the modern Mandarin 1sg “I” in layer B1, with trivial correspondences, but if so, that would be the only basic word borrowed in that layer.” That is, it appears to regularly correspond with the Mandarin 1st person pronoun as well, but such is more likely to be a coincidence, assuming no need for Bai to borrow a first person pronoun in the period for the Local Mandarin loans of layer B1.

is not mentioned in the article—presumably because the authors could draw no firm conclusions about it (some of it is on the later reduced list of possible Proto-Loloish correspondents), perhaps making it by default simply Bai in origin.

Thus, from this distribution, and the above basic Tibeto-Burman vocabulary, the authors conclude the language is not Sinitic. They (ibid.382) end the article with the following hypothesis:

“Presumably there was intimate contact, widespread bilingualism in Bai cities, probably also high levels of literacy in Chinese, combined with factors favoring the maintenance of Bai in the face of cultural pressure. *A contrario*, that almost no basic vocabulary was borrowed from Mandarin in the course of 700 years since the Yuan dynasty suggests that present-day generalized Bai-Mandarin bilingualism is recent.”

In conclusion, what seems pertinent here, besides the vast preponderance of the borrowed vocabulary, is that the authors claim one variety of Chinese was the source of loanwords up until the Ming era, when a vast new wave of in-migration significantly shifted the local demographic situation (see 6.3.2.1). Also, the fact that the Chinese loans often speak to urban lifestyles, while fewer such terms are to be found among the non-Sinitic vocabulary, the latter including agrarian terms like ‘paddy rice’ and ‘pig feed’, may speak to a scenario in which Bai-Chinese language contact was mostly relegated to cosmopolitan settings like Dali.

6.2.7.2 *Other Lexicons of the Area*

Below I summarize what the consulted literature had to say about other languages in the region’s vocabulary. Björverud (1998) does not note give much detail about borrowing in the Lalo Yi lexicon. On the topic she has only the following to say:

“Almost all external influences stem from Chinese, not only as loanwords, but also as a model of an alternative phonological system. The phonology of the Chinese loanwords in Lalo is very

much in a flux. Lalo as it is spoken today contains a very substantial number of Chinese loanwords. It is very common for communication to take place in what must be considered a mix of Chinese and Lalo, with speakers switching between the two languages from sentence to sentence or within a sentence.” (Björverud 1998:48)

While the degree of borrowing she describes sounds quite extreme, at the same time the account seems familiar from other regional languages, and is likely a quite recent development, since the founding of the PRC in 1949, and the subsequent spread of Putonghua.

Bradley (2015) reports the presence of many longstanding “old” [sic] Chinese loans in Lisu, reflecting Yunnan Mandarin pronunciation, for example in Central and Southern Lisu $\gamma a^{21} t a^{55} p^h a^{21}$, ‘first-born male’, which combines a Lisu formative prefix and Lisu male suffix on the Chinese loan $dà$ 大 ‘big; elder’. Many Lisu dialects in China have a recent stratum of borrowed terms; however, Southern Lisu, the variety developing for the longest period outside of China, has “the largest number of Yunnan Mandarin loans due to post-1950 intermarriage with Chinese KMT soldiers in Burma” (ibid).

Northern Lisu have commonly intermarried with Anong speakers, and despite the latter language’s moribund status, a number of Anong loans exist in Northern Lisu, e.g. $\gamma a^{55} p^h u^{44}$, from Anong $\gamma a^{55} p^h u \eta^{33}$, ‘first-born male’ (ibid). In Burma, including Shan State, and Thailand, loanwords from local languages are common. Bradley claims “all of Lisu also has some Shan loans”.

Lidz (2010:107) gives a number of technology and food terms borrowed into Yongning Na from Chinese, mediated by the “Yunnanese” dialect, which she claims was the lingua franca of the area, even before modern times. Examples of some food terms include those in (6-132), the last of which is a calque using the Na term $p^h u^{31}$ ‘white’:

(6-132)

p^hi³³ŋ³¹ 'apple 苹果'
tɕa³³yo³¹ 'soy sauce 酱油'
tɕaŋ¹³ 'ginger 姜'
ts^hɣ¹³p^hu³¹ '(nappa) cabbage 白菜'

She also lists some Tibetan borrowings²⁶⁵, given in (6-133) (ibid.108):

(6-133)

svn ³³ gɛ ³³ 'lion'	< senge (itself presumably a Sanskrit word)
tsa ³³ pɣ ³³ 'tsampa'	< tsampa
lɔŋ ³³ bu ³³ tɕ ^h u ³¹ 'elephant'	< glang.po.ce
ma ³³ mu ¹³ 'lamp used in religious rites'	< marme

She notes that many Na have Tibetan names, bestowed upon them by Tibetan priests who visit their homes upon childbirth. Nonetheless, the overwhelming majority of vocabulary in examples shows no obvious Sinitic or Tibetic origins.

6.2.7.3 *Summary*

The proliferation of loanword vocabulary, like other areas of the language, speaks to a long history of multilingual interaction along the Southwest border of the Chinese empire, in the overlap of the Southeast Asian zone of influence. Nonetheless, despite a substantial number of loans in local Tibeto-Burman languages, especially in the widespread Lisu language, Bai alone seems to push the overall borrowed lexicon into a percentage that has drawn attention, along with its Sinitic-like SVO word order, to its possibly restructured nature. Bai differs from the borrowing noted by others, also, in that the “foreign” vocabulary is well-represented in basic word lists, while most examples in other languages involve cultural vocabulary, food items, etc. This could, however, simply reflect what compilers of grammars and sketches chose to note, however, as Bradley’s (2015) examples of local borrowings into Lisu include many kinship terms, given the frequent instances of intermarriage in the region.

²⁶⁵ I cannot be certain as to what Tibetan variety Lidz is providing the Tibetan source forms.

While much has been made of connecting morphemes, particularly in the so-called core vocabulary, to Sinitic, Lee and Sagart's analysis point to a significant enough number of words that appear to be non-Sinitic. What's more, their analysis points to important information about the language setting when early contact would have taken place: that it likely involved a change in lifestyle from an agrarian to an urban setting, and that it seemed to involve one constant local source of Chinese up until somewhere between the founding of the Dali Kingdom and the arrival of the Mongols.

6.3 The Indeterminacy of Bai's Linguistic History

6.3.1 The Local Linguistic Setting

6.3.1.1 *Comparison of Local Data: The View from Dali*

A comparison of the features surveyed for Bai, two Ngwi languages (Lalo and Lisu) and two Naic languages (Yongning Na and Naxi), show some broad typological trends of the region. At the same time, Bai differs from its neighboring languages in interesting ways. All of the languages fit a very similar profile of analytic morphology, tending towards highly productive compounding and reduplication and serial verb formations (6.2.3, 6.2.4), with tonal contrasts and greatly reduced syllable shapes tending towards C(G)V (6.2.2). At the same time, at least judging from what linguists have focused on in grammatical descriptions, the range of meanings that can be indicated by reduplication (6.2.3), and the proliferation of serial verb clauses, as well as the specific constraints upon them, seem more pronounced for Ngwi languages than for Bai (6.2.4). It would be interesting to make a closer comparison, to see whether there are different types of chain clauses between Bai and the other groups (and Sinitic), as there seems

to be a considerable literature on the topic in Southeast Asia (see Enfield 2019:200-224; Bisang 2009).

Bai also exhibits a good deal of ablaut to mark negation on modals and other high-frequency verbs, a morphological process only mentioned for a few basic verbs in Naxi, but not other surrounding languages. Finally, though compounding is frequent, in keeping with analytic norms, there is no shortage of affixation, marking everything from kinship and plurality (for all the languages involved), to prefixed negation (though the forms differ between Bai and the other languages) on verbs and post-positional case markers²⁶⁶. The latter are found in all of the surveyed languages, though there is no overlap in phonological form, and few shared categories, with Bai in particular using the same phonological form to mark multiple nominal relations, including objects, subordination and locatives.

In terms of sound systems, there is also much similarity, beyond the simple syllable structures (6.2). All languages are tonal, with an average of about six contrastive tones in each language. There is an impressive consistency among the sizes of the segment inventories surveyed here, though perhaps only coincidentally: Bai has 35 consonants and nine vowels; Lalo has 37 consonants and nine vowels; Lisu 37 consonants and 10 vowels; and Naxi has 35 consonants, with 11 vowels. (The more conservative Yongning Na has 48 surface segments, and 12 vowels, though the phonemic count is lower). Common to the wider Southeast Asian language area, some tones are concomitant with laryngeal settings, such as glottalization or breathiness in Bai, though pitch values remain contrastive.

²⁶⁶ As we have seen repeatedly, with little or no morphophonemic alternation, however, the perennial question of separating affixes from particles remains an open question.

Nasality on vowels often plays a non-contrastive role in Ngwi languages, usually following glottal onset consonants. It is, however, contrastive in Jianchuan, Bijiang and some rural varieties of Bai, though not in the Dali dialect. 3-way contrasts on obstruents are common throughout the region, but only found in rural varieties of Bai, like Enqi and Bijiang, although Xu and Zhao (1984), found voicing “residually” present on Dali stops, with some tones.

All language groups show regular allophonic variation on high vowels, exhibiting apical vowels after palatal initials, and something like a syllabic labiodental [ɣ] for back vowels in certain environments, trends common all the way north to Amdo. Finally, Ngwi and Naic languages have many types of secondarily articulated or pre-articulated obstruents, such as glottalized or palatalized phonemes, which Bai seems to be lacking altogether. (In Wang’s (2006) survey of Bai dialects, only Gongxing Bai had a series of pre-labialized labiodentals, resulting in the phoneme series /pf pf^h bv/.)

Other similarities in the region include well-developed pronominal systems, with inclusive/exclusive marking in most languages, or otherwise extended distinctions, such as the “family plural” of Lalo Yi (6.2.3). The first and second person pronouns show clear reflexes of Proto-Sino-Tibetan, but then so do most languages of the family, including Sinitic. Other than some subsystems of ergative marking in Naic languages (6.2.3.3), accusative marking is common throughout the region. In verb phrases (6.2.4), time is always indicated by adverbials, never as auxiliaries in the verb complex, though Yongning Na marks future with four distinct morphemes (considered aspect markers by Liberty Lidz). Aspect, however, is marked post-verbally in all the languages, sharing the same syntactic structure as Sinitic, though the aspects

each language marks, and the phonological forms used for marking, share few similarities (6.2.4.4). Naic differs in having a few aspects marked with prefixes, however.

Modals are one way Bai differs, though only slightly, from surrounding languages. It has borrowed a number of modals from Chinese, and those modals allow for variable positioning before or after the verb. Otherwise, they come after the verb like other regional languages, and unlike Sinitic, which has modals only pre-verbally. Bai shares at least a couple of modal forms with neighboring Ngwi languages, namely Lisu *da*³³/Lalo *da*⁵⁵ ‘can; able’, and *k^hu*³³ ‘can’. However, since it has borrowed so many from Sinitic, one cannot rule out borrowing from Ngwi, either.

Word order, both within phrases and across clauses, is the most variable of linguistic parameters surveyed in the region. Bai is distinct from its Tibeto-Burman neighbors in having primarily SVO word order, though Grace Wiersma and others note a number of ways that objects may precede verbs, both in double-object constructions and negated predicates. This word order, however, varies between Bai dialects themselves. This is not unlike the instances of OV order common to Mandarin, discussed in 4.3.1.3, though there it was hypothesized to have played a role in pushing the local Sinitic variety towards an SOV profile, while in Dali, Bai tends to keep towards a typically Sinitic SVO order. Noun phrases are perhaps most interesting, because they are where Bai again departs from Sinitic norms, with quantifiers following the noun, but the order of those quantifiers also differing from that of Ngwi and Naic languages, themselves also variable.

Finally, in terms of discourse marking, Bai looks the least like its neighbors, another property it shares with Xining in the Amdo region, both of which lack many of the sophisticated means of

marking information source and egophoric stance that their neighboring languages exhibit. Though Bai makes use of a number of sentence-final particles with highly encoded pragmatic information, not unlike Sinitic and other families of southern China, it lacks the same kind of evidential information as many of its neighbors, though as noted in 6.2.6.4, Nuosu Yi has only one lonely quotative marker. Nonetheless, as Bradley (2010:76) points out, evident from the semantic transparency of many such forms, for example the Lisu direct knowledge morpheme *mu*⁵⁵ (cognate with Lalo *mu*⁵⁵) grammaticalized from the verb meaning 'to see', these informational systems in Ngwi languages are likely to have been recent developments.

One final regional trend to note here is the high degree of dialectal variation in both Bai and Lalo Yi. In fact, it seems Bai, if not Lalo as well (see discussion of Yang 2012 in 6.2.1.2.1 for Lalo), should be discussed more in terms of a macrolanguage, rather than a single, unitary language, as there seems to be ample variation, especially as one moves out of the urban areas of Dali and Jianchuan. Recall from 6.2.1.1 that Bryan Allen (2007) found between the Central and Southern groups, depending on the local dialect, mutual intelligibility ranges from 93 percent to a low of 25 percent. Most detailed descriptions of the morphosyntax and lexicon in the literature are drawn from the Central Jianchuan dialect, or sometimes from the Southern Dali dialect, and one wonders how less Sinitic things may become, particularly in native-versus-borrowed lexeme counts, if descriptions were based more on Northern Bijiang or Enqi or Gongxing Bai.

Phonological studies have penetrated further into this rural/urban divide, at least, and they show that the more rural, the larger the segment inventory, with rural Bai varieties exhibiting 3-way contrasts on obstruent series, including uvular consonants not found in Dali or Jianchuan,

which parallels the difference between Naxi and Yongning Na, as well. The rural Bai uvulars themselves could perhaps be the best indicators that Bai has inherited morphemes from a Tibeto-Burman ancestor, as they are not found in Southwestern Mandarin. However, further comparative study would be needed, since recent Old Chinese reconstructions include a uvular series, as well. So one would need to establish not only that the uvulars in Enqi, for example, had no relation with Old Chinese morphemes, or that the variety of Chinese Bai was in contact with at its earliest stages, as discussed in 6.2.7.2, had already lost uvular phonemes, or that the same development away from uvulars could be found in Bai²⁶⁷.

6.3.1.2 *Local Data and The View from Southeast Asia as a Whole*

The Mainland Southeast Asia linguistic area is a heavily studied region, with equal attention to inheritance from the protolanguages of the half dozen or so language families, and language contact, reaching far back into prehistoric areas. The edited volume *The Mainland Southeast Asian Languages* (Vittrant and Watkins 2019) contains grammatical sketches of 13 languages, with an eye towards areal features, including languages as far-flung as Bangladesh Khumi (a Kuki-Chin language of Tibeto-Burman), Yongning Na, Wa (Austroasiatic), Malay and “Colloquial Eastern Cham” (both Austronesian). Other publications tend to narrow the scope to Southwest China (Guangxi and southern Yunnan especially), northern Vietnam, Laos and northern Thailand and northern Burma. A far-from-complete list of articles on the language area would include

²⁶⁷ Lee and Sagart (2008) rely primarily on tonal adaptations to partition their data on the Bai lexicon, and though they discuss some reflexes of Old Chinese onsets, Old Chinese uvulars are not one of them. This does not necessarily mean that the morphemes under consideration throughout the article do not exhibit them, showing modern reflexes in Bai vocabulary, but I have not consulted OC reconstructions where they are not given in the paper.

Enfield (2000, 2001), Matisoff (2001, 2004), Ballard (1981), Bisang (1996, 2008), Migliazza (1996), Clark (1989) and Holm (2010, 2020).

For a list of candidate areal features, one may see the Preface to the above volume (Vittrant and Watkins 2019), or Matisoff's chapter (Matisoff 2001:301-301) on prosodic diffusion, which includes nine grammatical features, six lexicosemantic, and eleven phonological features, reproduced in abbreviated form in (6-134) below:

(6-134) A selection of Southeast Asian Areal Features from Matisoff (2001:301-302):

- syllable is prime unit of phonological structure
- prenasalized obstruents
- apical vowels
- no manner contrasts in coda stops
- “tone-proneness” and tonogenetic effects at varying levels of transphonologization
- topic-prominence
- aspect more important than tense
- verb serialization
- sentential nominalizations
- complex system of particles
- classifier systems
- compounding key morphological process
- highly lexically specified verbal morphemes
- mixing of native and foreign items in compounds and collocations
- various areal semantic features of calqued formulations, verbal meanings and expressions

N.J. Enfield also gives an overview of Southeast Asian areal features, noting their general presence or absence in each of the language families of the region, shown in the chart below.

Note that the families start to differ the more specific the features become, moving down the chart, with Tibeto-Burman having the fewest positive features among all families.

Table 33 Areal Features of Southeast Asian Languages (adapted from Enfield 2001:259-260)

	Austroasiatic	Tai-Kadai	Hmong-Mien	Sinitic	Tibeto-Burman
Case-marking	-	-	-	-	-
Cross-referencing	-	-	-	-	-
Fusional affixing	-	-	-	-	-
Classifier Constructions	+	+	+	+	+
Verb serialization	+	+	+	+	+
Lexical Tone	±	+	+	+	±
Verb-Object	+	+	+	±	-
Prepositions	+	+	+	±	-
Adjective-Standard of Comparison	+	+	+	±	-
Head-modifier	+	+	+	-	±
Head-Relative Clause	+	±	+	-	-
Possessed-Possessor	+	+	-	-	-

Enfield (2009:259) notes that languages of the Mainland Southeast Asian linguistic area share both broad typological traits and “quite specific features, with varying degree of overlap among languages”. Some of these features go beyond grammatical traits to the level of pragmatics. For example, Enfield (ibid.) claims they are “extremely open to leaving interpretation (e.g. of predicate-argument relations, tense, aspect-modality) to context, and both constituent order variation and ellipsis are common.”

Matisoff (2004:369) gives the following chart of some basic verb forms that have grammaticalized in parallel fashion across unrelated languages, but which don’t involve a

borrowing of phonological form. (For the unlikelihood that Old Chinese and Proto-Tai descend from the same genetic source, see Enfield 2001:280.)

Table 34 Areal Grammaticalized Verbal Forms in Southeast Asia (Matisoff 2004:369)

	Dwell ('progressive')	Obtain ('manage to; must; able to')	Give ('causative; benefactive')
Chinese (Sinitic)	zài 在	dé; děi 得	gěi 给
Thai (Tai-Kadai_)	Jùu	dâj	hâj
Hmong (Hmongic)	Nyob	tau	---
Mien (a.k.a.Yao Samsao) (Mienic)	yiəm	túʔ	pun
Vietnamese (Austroasiatic)	ở	đượс	cho
Khmer (Austroasiatic)	---	baan	ʔaoy
Burmese (Tibeto-Burman)	Ne	ra	pê
Lahu (Tibeto-Burman)	Chê	gã	pî

So, although we clearly can describe a linguistic area, does it constitute a convergence zone, as we saw in eastern Amdo, or as seen in some corners of Kham, such as the Mili region of southern Sichuan (Chirkova 2012)? Perhaps it does at the broadest typological levels—analytic morphology, chain clauses, tonal phonology with reduced syllable structure—and maybe, pending investigation, at finer levels of areal semantics and grammaticalization (Matisoff 2004; Heine and Kuteva 2005). However, the transparent sharing of case forms and functions, and word order alignment of Amdo is clearly absent, perhaps speaking to the shallower depth of contact in the latter setting than in Dali. One proposal, perhaps, could be to distinguish a “sprachbund” for those cases like Amdo, or Mili in Sichuan, from the more broadly convergent areas, spread across a wider geographical area, as in Southeast Asia and/or the northwestern Yunnan region.

What seems to matter greatly is the time depth at which the relevant languages have been in contact. In terms of present-day families, the multilingual settings of Amdo and Kham, as analyzed as potential language areas in this dissertation, are much more recent ethno-linguistic configurations than in northwest Yunnan, and even more so than southwest China generally. Blench (2009) has analyzed shared vocabulary in Kra-Dai (which he considers an offshoot of Proto-Austronesian), Austroasiatic and Austronesian, and posits a period of time about 4000 years ago when the protolanguages for these families were likely in contact, as agriculture was spreading throughout the region. This accounts for certain surprisingly shared core vocabulary among the families, as well as likely for general typological trends among Southeast Asian languages more generally, which have led some researchers, past and present, to attempt larger genetic groupings of East Asian language families, such as Austric and Sino-Austronesian.

It would be tempting to connect Blench's observations with those pointed out in this section, but the chronology is not aligned. Even though definitive periods of genetic splits are still debated, he seems to be looking at a depth of three millennia or more, long before we see the divergence of Proto-Lolo-Burmese (see 6.3.2.1 below). Even if structural features like highly productive reduplication, reduced syllable inventories and semantically specified nominalizers can be traced to protolanguages of subgroups within Tibeto-Burman, it is still not clear at what time depth the contact may have occurred to form language areas within language areas, as in northwest Yunnan. On the other hand, some of the features of these analytic languages have been said to look as if they may owe more to the kind of contact-based simplification that results from multi-ethnic states and mass migrations, a topic we return to in the next sections below.

6.3.1.3 *Typological Complexity and “Transparent Languages”*

The region of northwest Yunnan, particularly the Dali area, is an interesting case study for studying effects of complexity and simplification in languages. At first glance, the analytic languages studied here—Ngwi, Naic and Bai—are textbook examples of “simple languages”. (And indeed, in the context of Tibeto-Burman, they have often been taken as such, e.g. by DeLancey 2013b.) As we have seen, their verbs do not inflect for tense or mood, there is little morphophonological alternation, and the syllable inventory is quite small, being mostly (C)V. In 2.4.2. I noted Trudgill’s (2011) criteria of complexity, namely redundancy, irregularity, allomorphy and distinct category marking. With perhaps the exception of the last point, which would need to be further quantified, most of these are lacking in Bai and local languages.

However, further examination beyond broad typological categories shows some local features that stand out as carrying their own specific complexity, if not unique in the regional context (many such features exist in some form in Tibetic and Qiangic languages), then at least exemplifying elaborated sub-systems of grammar. In this regard, they are better understood by McWhorter’s (2007) first two criteria, exhibiting overspecification (“overtly and obligatorily marking semantic distinctions”), and structural elaboration (“number of rules or elements required to generate surface forms”), the latter of which includes inventories, from phonemes to pronouns and so on.

We saw in 6.2.2.3 that languages such as Naxi and Nuosu Yi (as well as to some extent, Bai) have very elaborate systems of tone sandhi that require not only reference to phonological features such as adjacent tones and prosodic boundaries, but also word classes and even specific morphemes. This is a far cry from the handful of tone sandhi changes exhibited in

Standard Mandarin, and involves a number of rules that must be kept in order in the mental grammar of the speaker.

Another example of “structural elaboration” in Naic languages, this time in Yongning Na, as described by Lidz (2010) in 6.2.6.3, is the elaborate system of evidentiality, cross-cut by egophoricity in the pronominal and sentential mood of the utterance. Finally, McWhorter (2007:28) himself notes Lahu (not a language often thought of in terms of its complexity) particularly its sentence-final particles, as an example of a large inventory, heavily specified for semantic distinction. We noted in 6.2.6.2 that varieties of Lisu, Lahu’s close cousin, exhibit such paradigms, with morphemes marking fine informational distinctions such as *lo*⁴⁴ ‘absolutely certain’, versus *du*³³ ‘guess from intuition’. Bai has a similar example of a fine-grained semantic distinction, built into its aspectual system, in suffixing the morpheme *tsi*⁵⁵*tɕ*^h*i*³¹ to a reduplicated form to mean ‘in the immediate process of, but stopping incomplete’²⁶⁸.

Nonetheless, when compared with other neighboring languages to the north, the comparative picture around Dali does point toward simpler overall systems than, say, rGyalrongic languages or conservative varieties of Tibetan. (See, for example, Dege case-marking—not even a conservative Tibetan dialect—in 5.2.3.1.) This could partly be due to the recent grammaticalization of certain functional morphemes, easily revealing their lexical origins in verbs of seeing or knowing, making for a shallower time depth to accrue complexity.

Taking cues from McWhorter’s analysis, DeLancey (2013b), contextualizing the typology of the region within the grammaticalization cycles of word formation described early on by Matisoff

²⁶⁸ Stevan Harrell (p.c.) adds to this list the Nuosu Yi aspect marker *vex* [vw³³], which Ma, Walters and Walters (2007:161-162) define as a literary “dynamic aspect marker”, and Harrell explains has the connotation of “coming into being slowly and gradually”.

(1989, 1990), uses the terms “transparent” and “opaque” languages. Transparent and opaque languages, which he defines mostly by collections of linguistic features, differ in the cohesion and opacity with which grammatical meaning is encoded by morphemes attached within the phrase. DeLancey uses two examples from Tibeto-Burman to illustrate, with rGyalrong as an example of opaque and Boro (a Boro-Garo language of East India) as an example of a transparent language. Those examples, following his glosses, are given in (6-135) and (6-136):

(6-135) rGyalrong (Sichuan)

a-γw-t^hw-tw-k^hγm

Irrealis-Cislocative-Perfective:downstream-2-give

‘You will give it to me.’

(6-136) Boro (Northeast India)

dán-so-hwi-zwb-phin-lia-mwn

cut-bisecting-at.a.distance-exhaustive-again-no.longer-past

‘no longer intend to cut all into two pieces horizontally someplace else again [sic]’

In rGyalrong, each slot in the affixed verb chain, which in the language can include both prefixes and suffixes, alternates with other morphemes of the same category in that slot, many of which are morphologically fusional (e.g. fused aspect and person markers, or fused aspect and directional marker), and some of which express purely syntactic, rather than lexical, function (agreement markers; switch reference)²⁶⁹.

In Boro, the verb is initial, and it is followed by a number of morphemes, most having only one meaning and easily attributable to recently grammaticalized verbs, with no agreement. The order of the elements, with a few exceptions (for example the negator always following the verb root) follows a semantic-pragmatic, rather than a fixed, structural order. That is, no

²⁶⁹ I do not take this to mean the same thing as “position class templates” in languages like Itelman, on the Kamchatka peninsula (Bobaljik 2000). In those formations, the presence of some morpheme in a “slot” is dependent on the presence or absence of a morpheme in a different slot in the morphological word. I take DeLancey’s wording here to mean simply that, for any given position in the morphological word, there is a set of morphemes that may paradigmatically appear there, depending on the intended meaning of the speaker.

morphological template is needed to account for the Boro verb phrase, which relies on pragmatic context and semantic scope alone.

It is easy to see how the Boro example, while more elaborated, is similar in the semantically specific morphemes of aspect and evidentiality that we saw in Ngwi languages, and to some extent in Naic languages. DeLancey takes opaque languages as representing the older state of Tibeto-Burman, and the latter, “creolized” variety (his term) to represent newer innovations. Furthermore, he attributes the structures of the latter to Tibeto-Burman being adopted by speakers of other languages in its spread throughout the region, including, but also prior to, the Nanzhao era, a topic we will return to in 6.3.2. (For a similar argument charting the spread of Tibetan across the plateau, and its subsequent simplification in some regions, see Zeisler 2009.)

At any rate, what is satisfying about DeLancey’s categorization, besides how rooted it is in the morphosyntactic typology of the family, is that, when taken with Matisoff’s “re-loading of the syllable canon”, it posits the languages of the region on a cycle of grammaticalization and marking, as syllables expand and reduce, swallowing earlier morphemes that made for a more agglutinative marking, resulting in fusion and in tonal or laryngeal contrasts like those we see across the Dali region, such as illustrated in 6.2.4.2. It also takes account of the significant degree of flux each language group of the region exists in, with heavy internal variation defining the norm, not the exception, as perhaps reflected in the difficult-to-pin-down, optional-in-discourse, often homophonous nominal particles described here as case markers. This variation is especially true when one compares urban to rural settings, as has been emphasized throughout for the Bai language.

While it is outside the scope of the current discussion to attempt an exact measure of grammatical complexity against relative social isolation of the regions involved (Dali City,

Jianchuan, Lijiang and Yongning, for example), impressionistically from this chapter's investigations, not only does one find larger inventories of segments and contrasts as one exits the cities (for example, between Dali and Enqi Bai), but also one finds a greater range of overall complexity as one moves from the relatively cosmopolitan settings of ancient kingdoms and empires in Dali and Lijiang, to more (until quite recently) isolated regions, such as the Na-speaking communities of Yongning. In Yongning Na, in addition to the aforementioned discourse marking, we also find finer gradations of possession (6.2.3.3), "non-systemic" ergativity (6.2.3.3), multiple existential verbs (6.2.4.3), multiple future markers (6.2.4.3), a wide array of surface allomorphs, such as bilabial trills and lateral approximants (6.2.2.3), and, shared with other languages in the region (such as Daohua and nDrapa, discussed in 5.2.3), but not apparently with Bai, semantic distinctions on nominalizing particles (6.2.3.3 and 6.2.3.2 for Lalo Yi). As we caught a glimpse of from discussion of nDrapa in Chapter 5, this complexity only increases as one moves further north, into the more isolated and smaller communities of Kham.

Bai, for its part (at least judging from what is available in the descriptive literature), seems to opt out of all of these markers of complexity, showing only perhaps latent tendencies towards the kind of tone sandhi rules described for Naic languages in general. Journeying out of Dali and Jianchuan, the phonological systems do begin to look a little more elaborate in inventory count, but one can only wonder about the grammatical variation, which has received less attention from researchers than the varieties spoken in the more metropolitan settings.

6.3.1.4 Searching for the Linguistic Origins and Language Type of Bai

So then what should we make of Bai, in terms of linguistic origins or language type? Is it a non-Sinitic language, inheriting certain phonemes, word orders and at least a rural-based core vocabulary from a Tibeto-Burman language, but heavily restructured, mostly lexically, by

Chinese? Is it a long-lost Chinese dialect, somewhat assimilated to local Tibeto-Burman languages, heavily influenced by the vocabulary of later arriving Chinese settlers, but maintaining vestiges of its older forms? Or is it a creole, or a mixed language, perhaps like Daohua, emerging from intermarriage or other multilingual practices in the towns around Dali?

I will have more to say about the social setting of premodern Dali in 6.3.2, but the dialectal variation, with the larger inventories of segments and laryngeal contrasts, and greater grammatical variation, pose a problem for claiming Bai is a creole or mixed language. To call it such would imply genesis in a single contact event (see 7.3.2 and 8.1.3 for more discussion of this assumption), and while no doubt subsequent dialectal variation would make sense for any language, regardless of its origins, one expects such variation to follow from the system of the original creole or mixed language, not from the earlier Tibeto-Burman language that gave way to the creole.

Yet the Bai varieties of urban Dali, presumably the site of the creole or mixed language's genesis, are more simplified (in smaller sound inventories and contrasts, at least), than the rural varieties, to where presumably its speakers would have eventually migrated. That is, if Bai were born of contact in urban Dali, it would have had to move quickly to regain so much lost Tibeto-Burman phonology after it migrated to rural areas. As such, it seems unlikely Bai emerged in a classic creole formation, and so I don't pursue it further here.

If it is true that Bai looks more Tibeto-Burman the more rural its setting (and this remains to be investigated, at least morpho-syntactically), then unless those Tibeto-Burman features can be shown to be based in local contact, subsequent to the language's genesis, then the trajectory looks more like heavy contact, perhaps even simplification, in the urban settings of

Northwest Yunnan. And while mixed languages seem less characterized by phonological and morpho-syntactic simplification than pidgins or creoles (see 2.3 and 2.4), Bai does not bear much of a linguistic resemblance to any prototypical cases of mixed languages, lacking any dual-origin systems, either in grammar or in lexicon. That is, unlike mixed languages, the Sinitic vocabulary and the non-Sinitic vocabulary do not seem divided in any way, and all operate like part of the same unified lexicon, rather than having a Sinitic form and a Tibeto-Burman semantic range, like Daohua for example (see 5.2.7.2), or using Chinese for NPs, but Ngwi forms for VPs, similar to languages like Michif or Mednyj Aleut (see 2.3.3).

Stevan Harrell (p.c.) raises the question of whether or not Bai looks like a mixed language in having, for example, a Tibeto-Burman NP but a Sinitic VP. This is an interesting question, complicated by the similar typologies of Sinitic and the local branches of Tibeto-Burman, especially in their similarly analytic VPs. Nonetheless, a comparison of Table 30 and Table 32 do not point to any clear sort of divergence along the lines of, say, French/Cree distribution in Michif. Bai does share a lot in common with Ngwi and Naic nominally, but also certain verbal features which differ from Sinitic, as well, such as post-verbal modals (except in Chinese borrowings). Bai does lack certain Tibeto-Burman paradigmatic complexity, such as Naic's multiple future morphemes, or Ngwi and Naic's multiple existentials, but in other ways that it differs from TB, it also differs from Sinitic, such as suppletive negation patterns as well as post-verbal negation, though the latter varies by dialect (6.2.5.1). Finally, Bai has a variety of ways to form different aspects, vaguely reminiscent of the many ways noted for forming aspect in Sichuanese (Zhang, Zhang and Deng 2001; see 3.4.3.5), but they are not necessarily the same patterns, nor the same aspectual categories, and Yongning Na also has some aspectual

formation patterns besides simple post-verbal auxiliaries, such as prefixation and reduplication. In general, it is hard to say firmly whether Bai's VP looks more Sinitic, more Tibeto-Burman or simply idiosyncratic and prone to variation. More investigation, especially among non-standard varieties, would surely be a worthwhile pursuit.

As for a long-standing Sinitic variety, heavily restructured by a local language, it is worth asking what that might look like. As a recap, let us first consider what Bai does look like, if we were to assume that it is an originally Sinitic language, restructured by local contact: It retained an overwhelming amount of its vocabulary, including a majority of its core vocabulary, from Sinitic, especially for concepts pertaining to urban culture, but borrowed a selective amount of (only) basic vocabulary for rural items from a Tibeto-Burman language—presumably as it branched out of towns and cities, only to later return to Dali's urban centers to come under the influence of Ming-era Sinitic influence. The tone system, or whatever may have preceded it, remained intact, but Tibeto-Burman borrowings were assigned tone in apparently random ways, as they are not cognate in most cases with nearby languages, even as the syllable structure reduced to areal norms. And, in many rural areas, it seemed to pick up a set of 3-way contrastive uvular stop consonants, unless it retained them from Old Chinese, only to be lost in Dali proper. Along with that, it developed a system of marking negation on modals and certain high-frequency verbs not found in Sinitic or in Ngwi languages.

Furthermore, if it were originally Sinitic, it would have acquired case-marking, despite maintaining its predominant SVO main clauses, where word order alone could distinguish subjects from objects and possibly locative relationships. But it would have borrowed no case forms from local languages, and only barely overlapped with them in the categories marked. It

also would have missed out on developing evidential morphemes, despite having clause-final particles that could carry such information, though admittedly this is likely a later regional development, taking place after the language would have crystallized. Finally, despite maintaining its main clausal word order, unlike the potentially Sinitic varieties in Amdo and Kham presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 7, it would have changed the order of quantifiers in the noun phrase, without importing any greatly substantial amount of non-Sinitic nominal vocabulary, and it would have loosened up the order of predicate morphemes, allowing modals to sometimes follow the verb.

There is perhaps something of a conflict between the urban-to-rural movement of peoples hypothesized by Scott (2009), and the urban-metropolitan, SLA-based simplification of languages put forth by McWhorter (2007) and Trudgill (2010). At the same time, in terms of linguistic development, to allow for an event of such simplification, one has to assume a congregation in a multi-ethnic, likely urban center, and to allow for complexity, one has to assume a relatively isolated, smaller community, likely in a rural setting. As such, it seems safe to assume that Bai speakers either moved into Dali urban centers, or lived there as it developed, rather than fleeing to the hills and soon after sprouting linguistic complexity.

So, with an assumed analytic profile and reduced syllabic inventory similar to the local language restructuring Chinese (as, for example, claimed for Proto-Ngwi (“Proto-Loloish”) by Bradley (1979) or DeLancey (2013b)), what might we expect the new Sinitic variety to otherwise look like? To some extent, if we follow John Phan’s (2010, 2013) hypothesis, then we might expect it to look like Vietnamese.

Vietnamese is an interesting case study for comparison, which I can only touch on here. But both Vietnamese and Bai share a number of similarities, not the least of which is that both the area of Dali and that of the Red River valley of northern Vietnam were occupied by the Han Dynasty in the early centuries of the first millennium. In both cases, researchers tend to assume a lasting Chinese presence that remained following the collapse of Han rule (in the case of Vietnam, the country was occupied almost continuously until the fall of the Tang Dynasty in the early 10th century), which was subsequently absorbed into the local population. And literacy in both societies developed originally from use of Classical Chinese, with local adaptations to represent the vernacular language when needed (6.3.2.3.). However, Vietnam would go on to become, for the most part, independent, while Dali was further incorporated into China, and subject to massive Han Chinese in-migration from the Ming Dynasty onward.

Just as they have for Bai, scholars have marveled and argued over the high percentage of Chinese loans in Vietnamese and staked out methods of layering the chronological strata into early periods and later (literary) periods (Alves 1999, 2007,2009; Hashimoto 1978; Phan 2010, 2013). Echoing ideas nascent in previous scholarship, John Phan (2010) shows that the donor language of the loanwords considered “Sino-Vietnamese” did not exhibit certain major sound changes indicative of Late Middle Chinese. This argues against the standard assumption of a purely literary source for such loans (as Late Middle Chinese is intimately connected to the literary tradition that carried the language not only across southern China, but also to Korea and Japan, as well as Vietnam), in favor of a local, southern dialect of Middle Chinese (ibid.). Phan calls this dialect of Chinese, “Annamese Middle Chinese”, positing it was spoken in the local Red, Ca and Ma River basins.

Phan accounts for the massive amount of Chinese loanwords in Vietnamese by proposing that the speakers of this Annamese Middle Chinese shifted their language to the local Proto-Viet-Muong in the 9th and 10th centuries²⁷⁰, as part of their cultural assimilation, inducing an adstratum effect on Proto-Viet-Muong that was then adopted by the larger Austroasiatic-speaking community of Annam (Phan 2010:15). The shift Phan proposes would not have been instantaneous, but rather would have involved several generations of bilinguals, slowly moving towards adopting Proto-Viet-Muong. He also proposes that the hybrid language was eventually adopted by the whole community, because the original group of innovating bilinguals, or at least the shifting Annamese Middle Chinese speakers, were a prestige group in the society.

Phan differs from other scholars, however, in promoting such a late stage for the birth of Vietnamese, as well as arguing for a native Chinese source for the Sinitic vocabulary. Mark Alves (2001, 2009) minimizes the role for a local, native-Chinese speaking community lasting in any significant degree beyond the initial Han military excursions, and also claims that the syntactic structure of Vietnamese has remained largely unaffected by Chinese, retaining at its core a fundamental “Southeast Asian typological template” (Alves 2007). Rather, he maintains the traditional analysis of a literary source for Sinitic influence on Vietnamese. (See Alves 2001, 2007, 2009 for more support for such claims.)

Interestingly, both Phan and Alves follow Keith Taylor’s (1983) *The Birth of Vietnam* for historical information on the assimilation of Chinese immigrants into Vietnamese society, forming the aristocratic “Sino-Vietnamese families” of the early centuries CE. Yet they draw

²⁷⁰ Based on comparisons with Muong languages, which share much of the same Sinitic vocabulary, but can be shown not to have inherited it at a later stage from Vietnamese, Phan (2010, 2013) considers the language in question to have been at a proto-stage, not yet having split into Vietic and Muongic languages.

opposite conclusions from it: while Phan sees a major role for multiple generations of bilinguals, gradually restructuring the local language as they shift to Proto-Viet-Muong, Alves considers their assimilation to have been rapid, with little but superficial lasting effect on the language that would evolve into Vietnamese.

In other ways, however, Vietnamese also differs from Bai, and such difference could make for fruitful analysis in future research. For instance, a majority of core vocabulary and “everyday speech” are non-Sinitic in origin, including body parts, numerals and interrogatives. Kinship terms are Chinese, but stem from the imposition during Han rule of Chinese systems of marriage and household registration (Alves 2007). Function words have shifted from their mostly content-based usage in Chinese, to the grammaticalized, functional usage in Vietnamese, to appear more like neighboring Austroasiatic languages in their function. (Besides, not many authors have stressed the Sinitic influence on Bai’s functional vocabulary.) Finally, it is worth considering that local Austroasiatic languages are predominantly SVO, just like Sinitic (Jenny, Sidwell and Alves 2020:8), and so there was no opportunity to change main clause word order under shift, as would have been the case for shifting Chinese speakers in the SOV, Tibeto-Burman area of Dali, or as was the case in Amdo and Kham.

Nonetheless, whatever the ultimate conclusions, the two cases have enough similarities, both in historical and linguistic settings, to serve as important analogues to each other in uncovering the effects of very early historical Chinese influence on a local speech community that would rise to significant prominence regionally, though Vietnam’s power and regional prestige would last longer than either Nanzhao or Dali’s. The fact that only one constitutes the standard

language for a modern nation state may have served to obscure such stark similarities.²⁷¹

However, the ways in which they differ could point to interesting differences in their ethnohistorical origins.

From here, then, let us turn to the historical setting of Dali, and consider the open questions of who settled in those metropolises, and how they viewed themselves as Han or non-Han.

6.3.2 Language Development and the Historical Record

The nature of the task of analyzing the historical development of Bai, and its relationship to Sinitic and Lolo-Burmese, is clearly distinct from the task of similarly analyzing Amdo varieties or Daohua. This is largely due to the greater time depth involved for pinpointing the crucial language contact in Bai's formation: to a large extent, where the story of the Xining dialect begins (by general consensus the Ming Dynasty, roughly the 15th and 16th century), much less that of Daohua (the middle of the Qing Dynasty, in the 18th century), the important chapters of Bai's history have already been written. Certainly, the influx of Han Chinese settlers to the Southwest during the Ming era (6.1) was a watershed moment for transforming the region ethnically, and linguistically. But by this time, Bai had already absorbed (or inherited) a massive amount of Sinitic vocabulary, had locally made use of written Chinese for record keeping, and had seen two indigenous empires rise and fall. In some sense, as with post-Tang-era Sino-Vietnamese lexical strata discussed in 6.3.1.3 above, the Ming in-migrations in Yunnan divide Bai into an early and a later state of Chinese contact. (See 6.2.7.1 for more fine-grained chronological distinctions.)

²⁷¹ Alves (2001) does make an interesting side remark about the differences between Vietnam's Vietnamese and that of the small Vietnamese minority residing in China, the Jing (京族), in terms of influence from Sinitic, though he doesn't provide any details for comparison.

If the origins of Bai were potentially as chronologically shallow as Xining or Daohua, we might more easily identify the original nature of the local language as at least Ngwi or not, Chinese or not. Rather, it seems, the instrumental period for Bai's emergence as a distinct language is probably no later than the early Han Dynasty (somewhere in the first or second century BCE), in a time for which the historical record is much more a matter of inference from less explicit historical documents, archaeology and folklore, than directly attested. In the following centuries, as local people had more frequent encounters with both the Chinese and local groups, the distinction of what was Bai and what was Chinese, or even who were Bai and who were Chinese, becomes more and more difficult to tease apart.

The history of the Dali region, even more so the wider Yunnan area, and the people and polities that have existed there, is a heavily documented topic, upon which conflicting messages of local ethno-linguistic convergence versus gradual Sinification have been put forth. The conclusion that one or another group was originally of some ethnic category, and later shifted to another category, is in some ways too dynamic over time to posit for a region where ethnic affiliation so fluidly shifted back and forth. It is not exactly that the time depth is too remote, but that the party interested in staking one or another claim in contemporary debates on origins and ethnic/linguistic classification can usually find support for their claims among the vast written record. As such, many modern ethnologists have, if not given up the search for the original "Yi", the original "Miao" or the original "Zhuang", then at least shifted to analyzing what the historiographical debate says about contemporary academic and political ambitions (Schein 2000; Harrell 2001).

The case of the Bai is similar to other groups in the region, with perhaps the added complexity of determining whether or not the Bai may have been originally Chinese(-speaking),

as the debates on the Sinitic nature of the lexicon illustrate (6.2.7.1). This question is further weighed upon by the fact that, as David Wu (1990) mentions, the Bai have historically shifted between being Han and being “Minjia”, up until the PRC government pinned them down for good in the era of the modern minzu taxonomy as Bai (6.2.1.1.). Additionally, speakers of such rural varieties of Bai as Gongxing and Ega identify as neither Bai nor Chinese, but as Lama or Lemo or some other distinct ethnicity.

Below I present accounts both for local assimilation of arriving Han people and sinification of local groups, especially the Bai, beginning with accounts of the ethnic fluidity on China’s Southwest borders described in recent literature. I then make use of the insights from a dissertation by Brooke Hefright (2011) on the nebulous difference between Bai and Chinese—what he terms the “Bai-Han contrast”—as a cautionary note for proceeding with too much confidence on the assumption that Chinese and Bai can be separated as distinct languages, or historically as distinct peoples.

6.3.2.1 Migration and Assimilation in Yunnanese History

Writing of the Southwest, Pat Giersch (2001:82) describes a typical market scene of a southwestern town during the Qing era:

“Towns situated on the major trade routes had important markets. Inside the Simao walls, hill people sold tea leaves to Han and Tibetan merchants; cotton was also for sale. Like most market towns, Simao²⁷² provided services for travelers from afar. Inns and restaurants catered to merchants; stables sheltered the mules and horses, which carried most of the goods. Important market towns existed to the north and south of Simao. To the south, in Sipsong Panna’s larger towns, Han merchants purchased tea, cotton, metals, and, by the mid-nineteenth century, British textiles. Along the roads leading to nineteenth-century Simao, one encountered Han merchants, hill tribe women, and Tibetan tea merchants.”

²⁷² Simao 思茅 is the prefectural capital, in the southern half of the district just south of Dali, now known as Pu’er City 普洱市, famous for its earthy, fragrant bricks of tea.

The question one might ask from this is how such communication proceeded. Was there a lingua franca, and if so, what was it and how did it gain currency in the area? Would a functional pidgin or jargon have emerged for trade purposes only? Or did people there somehow sustain enough contact to become multilingual, and communicate with different languages depending on the background of their interlocutors, and in that case, who took the initiative to learn whose language? The answer often seems, from the secondary literature, to be all of the above, depending on the exact locality and people in question. Below I expand on the history of migration and intermarriage, and the societal spread of Chinese influence, to provide a context in which Chinese may (or may not) have influenced local languages.

Large waves of forced or voluntary migration have long marked Yunnan society, and the Southwest in general, since early times. Han immigrants included both military colonists and captives of war from the Western Han onward, but they were always accompanied by merchant sojourners. During the Han period (109 BCE-220 CE), there were over a dozen such military campaigns. During the Nanzhao era (738-902 CE), tens of thousands of Chinese were moved to the Southwest in campaigns against Nanzhao, though many died in service, while many others settled, voluntarily or not, in local society. The Nanzhao state itself often brought back tens of thousands of captives from its conquests, as well, some going on to serve the royal court. Finally, Chinese and others arrived on their own, fleeing famine, war, or state exploitation, or seeking a better life as merchants for the exotic goods found in markets along the Southwest Silk Road.

As such, many local, “native” people in the Ming were descendants of earlier Chinese arrivals, or descendants of families composed of Han and local marriages, including those “daxing”

families holding de facto power through the pre-Tang era (6.1). Yang (2010) refers to many such families were “biocultural hybrids of the indigenes and Han Chinese”, descendants of earlier Han immigrants. Yang (2010:145-146) further claims that the

“Man Shu [text] mentions that the tribe in northeast Yunnan, called Shangren, were originally Han people (*ben hanren ye*). [The] Tong Dian mentions that local peoples either included many Han Chinese (*huaren*) or regarded themselves as descendants of the Han (*ziyun qixian ben hanren*). In 1074, when envoy Yang Zuo volunteered to travel into Yunnan to purchase horses, he met an old woman who stated that she had moved from Sichuan over two decades before, fleeing famine.”

Other accounts from these early texts, of self-claimed descendants of Han people, whose Chinese language ability had disappeared or become “rusty”, abound. (Yang 2010:164).

Conversely, Yang claims that the Ming period saw a major reversal of trends, in that those Han who arrived prior to Ming control were almost entirely absorbed into the indigenous population, but that those who came after Ming conquest began to exert a tremendous effect on the local cultures, initiating a process of top-down Sinicization, as well as pushing into more rural areas in the last decades of the fourteenth century, largely capitalizing on the postal station roads set up by the earlier Yuan Dynasty. That is, in Yang’s account, while Han Chinese made up part of the local ethnic community in the Southwest prior to the Ming, assimilation to Chinese culture was not significant before then, and perhaps not so different from in Amdo, as described in 4.3.2.2.

Under the Ming, native aristocrats all across the Southwest began sending their children to Confucian schools, and when allowed, to sit for the imperial exams. (See, for example, Herman 2007 on “Miao” aristocrats in Guizhou). Yang (2010:156) quotes Xie Zhaozhe in the early 17th century observing that “occasionally” there were “some barbarian” students in otherwise Han schools, not striking in number. However, the Dali area is identified by Yang as being the “core”

area of sinicization, and the Bai ethnic group was among those groups most inclined towards assimilation to Chinese culture. Yang (2010:159) quotes the Dianzhi 滇志, the final gazetteer of the Ming era, in saying:

“Because they mingled with Han Chinese, many ethnic peoples became bilingual. They spoke their own language among themselves, and they spoke Chinese to the Han people. The Bai people certainly were the most sinicized ethnic group in Yunnan.”

Nonetheless, for quite some time, the Han/indigenous divide seemed to be an urban/rural divide. Yang (2010:152) mentions that regional bureaucrat Wu Duxun, serving in Yunnan between 1772 and 1782 claimed that “inside cities are all the Han people, while the indigenous live in valleys and wide fields.” There appeared also to be a gender divide. Yang (2010:16) quotes H.R. Davies in his (1909) *Yunnan: The Link Between India and the Yangtze*: “...After the adoption of Chinese dress by the men, their next step is the learning of the Chinese language. After a few more generations perhaps even the women will learn to speak Chinese...”

It is therefore likely that the reference to “Han people” in the city may have included Bai (then called Minjia) who were already remarkably assimilated to Chinese culture, and also the “indigenous” of the “valleys and wide fields” could have also included more assimilated, possibly bilingual Han. This, again, is reminiscent of the inner/outer wall, class divisions around Xining that cut through ethnic divides. Recall, also, from 6.2.7.1 that Lee and Sagart (2008) found a rural/urban divide in the Tibeto-Burman/Sinitic vocabulary that made up the core vocabulary of the language, with most Chinese loans tending to be more urban, and proposed Tibeto-Burman cognates more rural.

At the same time, indigenous influence on Han arrivals, even during the Ming, is amply documented. Especially in the early days of military farms, Chinese families could be surrounded in unfamiliar terrain by native peoples, where they would gradually assimilate in

clothing, cuisine, and language to their surroundings. Even during the Ming-Qing transition, many Ming loyalists, in acts reminiscent of James Scott's anarchist hill-dwellers, fled to the borderlands and became fully assimilated to local culture (Yang 2010:170). The mining boom in the late Ming brought many Han men of their own accord, where they often married locally, in contrast to the Ming soldier-farmers, who were sometimes incentivized to bring their own families, and at times forbidden from intermarrying by the state, when the latter became alarmed by the rate of sinicization.

Nonetheless, Yang (2010:167) points out: "Many Han soldiers married indigenous women, a result of the imbalanced sex ratio in the frontier society. The "barbarian" mother-Han father...combination was quite popular, and facilitated the indigenization of the Han population, since in most cases children mainly stayed with their "barbarian" mothers." Such intermarriages, very similar to the circumstances described in central Kham in 5.3.2.2, linked the Han arrivals to the community, creating cultural and commercial bonds that they would have otherwise lacked. Since local women, again as in Kham, were such key players in regional trade and negotiations, this gave Han men access to local politics and the elite sphere (Yang 2010:167; see Brown 2004 for similar observations about Qing-era Taiwan).

The effects on the Chinese language are noted by Yang (2010:167), my italics added:

"Native languages were accepted and spoken by Han migrants. The word *dian* [滇], an indigenous term, refers to the whole of Yunnan, and has survived as the official abbreviation of Yunnan. Dianren (Dian people), a new Chinese word, appeared in the Ming period and referred to all people in Yunnan, including the natives and Han migrants...The Han people learned native languages to communicate (i.e. trade) with the indigenes, for example, in Mengzi county. *In the case of isolated Han communities, after several generations, these Han descendants could hardly speak their original dialect of Chinese, and daily communications were by means of native languages.* Some gazetteers compiled in the Ming-Qing provided room for native languages (under the category of fangyan, namely, dialects)."

The emerging picture of Yunnanese society became one of multiculturalism and fluid ethnic categories, as described by Yang (2010:168):

“More importantly, descendants of Han immigrants identified themselves multiethnically and multiculturally. They both recognized their Han ancestors and accepted local labels. In some cases, they were also glad to have Burmese names, titles, or other associations. Sometimes they identified more with their local labels than their Chinese ones. In some other cases, Han immigrants stood with native chieftains against the imperial state, as it was the native chieftains who ruled the region and controlled resources.”

From this broader picture of ethnolinguistic multiplicity, let us then turn to more specific accounts of Bai people’s ethno-historical trajectory.

6.3.2.2 *Finding the Bai Amid Regional Diversity*

As mentioned in 6.2.1.1., the origins of the Bai, before and after Nanzhao, have been pondered by archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and linguists for many decades²⁷³. In approaching the question, it seems there are at least two stages of Bai history, pre- and post-Ming colonization, that serve as opposing forces on the Sinicization cline. In a study of Bai family lineages, Lian Ruizhi (2013) explains how Bai people of Dali, on the cusp of this historical tipping point, manipulated their genealogies, in the process adopting Han clan names, in order to integrate themselves into the new power structures that took hold as the result of Ming colonization. She notes that early on Bai people referred to themselves as “Bër Wa Dser”, or ‘People of the White King’, a legendary ruler of a pre-Nanzhao Kingdom. However, with the advent of outside rule (beginning with the Mongol-controlled Yuan Dynasty), the local leaders began to adjust their genealogy to fabricate a more advantageous ancestry.

²⁷³ In 2008, Minzu Press in Beijing published a four-volume set on “100 Years of Bai Ethnic Studies” 白族研究百年 (Zhao 2008), the first two volumes of which are largely devoted to questions of early Bai origins. See also Wang (1988) on locating Bai origins in major clans of the early Southwest, viz. the Bo 樊, Sou 叟 and Cuan 爨.

As Lian argues, regionally ancestry was not limited simply to a unitary (paternal) line, but could be expanded through clan affiliation by kinship, social class, location, or Buddhist legend. As post-Han states began to form in the Erhai region, leading to the supremacy of the Nanzhao kingdom, “surnames were adopted as group signifiers to centralize power among otherwise diverse social groupings (known in the records as “well-known families and big surnames”, 名家大姓 *mingjia daxing*) (Lian 2013:88). Under Yuan control, Dali authority basically continued as before; it wasn’t until Ming control was established in 1382, and the ensuing registration of households (立家), that significant changes to social structure started to take hold, leading to “manipulations of local genealogies among the local elite to legitimize their continued status” (Lian 2013:88).

Though indigenous records of lineages were maintained on steles and gravestones, new Han pedigrees were written into local genealogies, in order to align with newly empowered officials connected to the Ming state, in many cases through reference to ancestors that arrived from Nanjing, e.g. the Zhao clan (which had some legitimacy, given the actual military migration from Nanjing—see Lee 1982) (Lian 2013:100). As Lian (2013:105) summarizes:

“Before 1550, the people in the Erhai area did not recognize themselves as Han Chinese. People of the Zhao surname, for instance, traced their lineage from ancestors who were close to the Dali royal court. Between the mid-fifteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries, however, as the Ming dynasty government promoted household registration and education, local people were drawn into the government bureaucracy, and those with the Zhao surname subscribed to the belief that their ancestors had not only visited Nanjing but had also originated from there.”

Compare this to a similar observation from nearby Guangxi by Wiens (1954:34): “In a recent investigation of the 152 clan names in a certain [Guangxi] district, every one of the clans claimed to have migrated there from some other province or other district at the end of the Ming Dynasty or during the early [Qing] Dynasty. Not one recognized itself as indigenous.”

Finally, while discussing Helen Siu and Zhiwei Liu's work on the Dan people (疍家, a.k.a. Tanka) of Guangdong (Siu and Liu 2006), Giersch (2012:209) makes the following characterization which could just as easily apply to Bai appropriations of Han clan names: "...by settling on the land, registering their households, establishing lineages, and claiming cultural ascendancy by preparing sons for the exams...they appropriated the label Han for themselves as part of a strategy of local competition."

Manipulating one's ancestral genealogy to align with a particular identity was common practice in pre-modern China. This has not always been in the direction of Han, either. For example, Hui Muslims looking to align themselves with early Arab and Persian traders in China, such as the Ding lineage in Fujian, to whose genealogy Muslims elsewhere in China explicitly link their family line, have fabricated family histories to such ends (Turnbull 2015:494-495). In this regard, it's easy to see how a local ethnic group, looking to set themselves apart from the local Yi (俚) "barbarians", would concoct a family history shared with the Han.

But it is also not possible to fully rule out earlier Han ancestry prior to the Ming era, even given the above practice. The term "Minjia 民家", which appeared during the Ming, was specifically in contrast to the "Junjia 军家", or military families, and may not have specifically ruled out descendants of earlier Han immigrants, especially those who would have fully assimilated into local culture, or who were of mixed ancestry²⁷⁴. As Patricia Ebrey (1996:33-34) points out:

"Chinese were never preoccupied with notions of creoles or half-breeds. One Han Chinese migrant in the Han, Tang or Song Dynasty could be enough to allow thousands or tens of thousands of patrilineal descendants to lay claim to Chinese ancestry and thus Chinese identity

²⁷⁴ However, note that Wu (1990) hypothesizes the term originated among the ancestors of the Bai themselves, who wanted to set themselves apart from the local "Yi" barbarians of the region, as mentioned in 6.2.1.

(though naturally unless they had absorbed some Chinese culture, they would have had no reason to want to claim such ancestry).”

In exploring the reason for Lolo-Burmese languages to be so massively eroded among Tibeto-Burman groups in terms of verbal morphology, DeLancey (2010), following McWhorter’s (2007) thesis concerning “interrupted” languages (see 2.4.3), claimed that Proto-Lolo-Burmese must have been a regional lingua franca in the pre-Nanzhao era (i.e. pre-8th century), such that the large-scale, adult-language learning of urban settings would have shorn it of the complexity one finds in the closely related Qiangic languages, for instance. Were there no substrate speakers, then the subfamily might look much more like Qiangic, at least until the era of Nanzhao, when the cosmopolitanism, and the forced capture of peoples around the Southeast Asian area, including ethnically Han regions of Sichuan, would have necessitated a local lingua franca, presumably that of the Bai Man Nanzhao rulers. As DeLancey (2010:48-49) puts it (my emphasis added):

“The Lolo-Burmese languages are the most resolutely “Sinospheric” languages, to use Matisoff’s term, in the family, which is to say they have many Chinese-like features of grammar and phonology. This is necessarily a reflection of language contact, and contact sufficient to bring about such systemic change must involve bilingualism (LaPolla 2001). In fact it must involve the adoption of L-B languages, and probably of Proto-Lolo-Burmese or some precursor of it, *by Chinese-speaking populations.*”

That is, in order to become so “Sinitic” in the basic features that set Lolo-Burmese languages apart from the rest of Tibeto-Burman, the proto-language would have most likely included a substrate of Sinitic speakers. DeLancey meanders a bit here, tossing out a few contending historical eras. He clearly wants to link the simplification to the Nanzhao state, with its expansive campaigns of pulling in multiple ethnicities to the Dali plain, including captured Chinese-speakers, but he also realizes that, while the collapse of Nanzhao around 900 set in motion certain events, such as the migration of the Burmese southward, thus distinguishing

Burmish from Ngwi, it is probably too late to account for the linguistic structure of the protolanguage. He briefly considers a possible lingua franca, something non-Sinitic, for the Shu-Han 蜀汉 state to the north (221-263 CE), before claiming that perhaps a lesser known, even earlier state, part of Blench's (2009) "Yunnan Interaction Sphere" (discussed in 6.3.1.2), may ultimately be the source of this complexity levelling in Proto-Loloish. As Stevan Harrell points out (p.c.), Nuosu Yi, which has many of the trappings of "transparency" or "simplicity" DeLancey and others point to as evidence of mass L2-learning, including probably Sinitic speakers, has been removed from Chinese influence in the region of Liangshan for about 2000 years prior to the modern era. Therefore, whatever the simplifying event, it is likely that it long pre-dated the rise and fall of cosmopolitan Nanzhao, though no doubt the setting of Nanzhao would have had its own effect on languages of the region, including Bai.

However, Bai is an enigmatic in-between case. As noted in 6.2.7.1, Bai does not share the innovative features that mark Lolo-Burmese as a legitimate subgroup of Tibeto-Burman, though it shares the analytic, monosyllabic structural features often attributed to simplification. This means that the early Bai, while no doubt influenced by the social circumstances DeLancey proposes to account for complexity levelling in the region, were likely somehow separate from the groups of speakers who spread out regionally to form communities of Ngwi language speakers and so on. The exact people of the era that would eventually become the Bai, or the Minjia, and by the 20th century perhaps Han, then back to Bai again, thus becomes an archaeological and philological guessing game, though we cannot discount the larger ethnolinguistic formations leading up to, and culminating in, the Nanzhao state.

Han Dynasty records, and later ethno-historical accounts like the *Man Shu*, from the 9th century, usually cited as the first mention of the “Bai-man”, certainly point to enough ethnic groups and prestigious ancient states, such as the famously Tibeto-Burman speaking Bailang (see Coblin 1979), to make this scenario possible. What this would mean, then, is that, even given the “shift” from local ethnicity to a more (Han) Chinese-aligned genealogy and tradition, as described by Lian (2013) above, the group that would become the Bai, could have in fact been, at least partially, descended from Han settlers from the Han Dynasty era, if not earlier. This would make sense if Bai were perhaps a mixed language from an early local Ngwi language, perhaps even a sister language to Proto-Ngwi, and some form of Sinitic.

Finally, recall from 6.2.7.1 that the bulk of Chinese loanwords, perhaps unsurprisingly, fall into Lee and Sagart’s (2008) “Early Chinese Borrowings” stratum, which they claim came from a variety of Chinese local to the area from the early Han, up through the Nanzhao period, only then “petering out” during the Dali reign until a new wave arrived with the Ming migrations. During this period, then, in an era before strictly regulated state space and modern minzu terminology, how meaningful might it have been to draw a distinction between “Bai” (not yet called Bai, not even yet called “Minjia”) and “Han”? How meaningful might it have been, even, to draw a distinction between (spoken) Bai and Chinese?

6.3.2.3 *The Intertwined Ethnolinguistic Categories of Han and Bai*

Brook Hefright’s (2011) dissertation on Bai language identity casts a light on the fuzzy edges and ambiguous notion of the discernible difference between Bai and Chinese. Though largely a synchronic account, one can assume that such boundaries between Han and Bai, and thus Chinese and Bai language, would have likely been more ambiguous, rather than less, the further

back in history one proceeds. Furthermore, his account highlights complexities glossed over in both synchronic and diachronic accounts of the language, which usually group together all varieties of “Bai”, including those spoken by peoples such as the Lemo and Lama people (Wang 2006), as at least a single language cluster, where the reality may be more akin to a “macrolanguage” like Zhuang or Hmong (see 6.3.1.1). That is, such descriptions present the idea of a somehow unified speech community, defined primarily on linguistic terms, present historically, whereas communities of “Bai speakers” may have been more subdivided along urban-rural distinctions, whether they had access to positions of power (as during the Nanzhao and Dali eras) or not, or possibly even whether their family was descended from Han or non-Han ancestors.

Hefright points out that communities are constituted on factors besides language, but when language does play a role in constituting a community, they often overlap in membership with other communities based on shared elements, including communicative codes, that traverse such boundaries. That is, social networks are open systems, and relatively well-defined communities may not be isomorphic with either languages, cultural traits or communicative codes, nor their subjective identification with any of these elements. Hefright uses this theoretical insight to explain how not all Bai language use can be aligned with a single, definite language, nor will all Bai language users constitute a discrete speech community (Hefright 2011:124). At the level of idiolectal variation, the difference between Bai and Chinese becomes even more fraught with ambiguity.

One can see this clearly from the accounts of other varieties of Bai, incomplete though they may be. For example, the phonological inventories for dialects of Bai outside of Dali and

Jianchuan begin to look a lot less Sinitic, and a lot more Tibeto-Burman. Recall from 6.2.7.1 an abundance of proposed loanwords by Wang (2006) from languages other than Chinese, including Hani, Hmong, Lisu, Naxi and Pumi, which speak to, if not actual language contact, then at least more in the history of Bai's development than just Sinitic relexification. Or in 6.2.2.1, where other varieties of Bai, particularly Enqi (spoken by the Lama people), have a wider array of phonemes (3-way contrasts, uvular series, etc.) than in Jianchuan or Dali, or the dialectal variation in word order described by Wiersma (1990) and Wang (2006) in 6.2.5.1. To speak of Bai as a single language variety, especially in terms of its adhering to Sinitic tendencies, is to deny the wide variation of Bai, especially as one travels to less urban settings.

In Hefright's words, the boundaries between Bai and Chinese depend to a large extent on the perspective of the observer, not the speaker. Elements that might be considered "Chinese" (by researched etymology or historical reconstruction) occur in different dialects and registers of Bai and are not universally agreed upon by Bai language users to belong to one language or the other (Hefright 2011:125). (Compare, again, Alves' (2001) claim that the majority of Sinitic morphemes in Vietnamese are both literary and later borrowings.)

Very often the language users that descriptive linguists choose to represent in their written grammars, and which utterances they choose to exemplify, play a role in representing the boundaries between supposedly discrete languages, in this case Bai or Chinese (ibid). Recall from 2.3.4.1 the nature of texts over time in Chamorro as being more or less heavily influenced by Spanish, or the statement by Emonds and Faarlund (2014:53), mentioned in 2.3.4.2, that the close genetic proximity between the Old English and Old Norse lexicons may have biased etymologies that count many Old Norse borrowings as native English vocabulary.

At the same time, as particular registers, or even languages, may index a certain type of speaker in (multilingual) communicative practice, Hefright points out that certain linguistic practices, such as heavy codeswitching, may come to have the same indexical effect in delineating speech communities, perhaps blurring the boundaries of individual languages over time, or crystallizing into new languages, such as Mednyj Aleut or Michif (Hefright 2011:156). Drawing on Auer's (1999) work, which advocates codeswitching as a way for mixed languages to come into being, Hefright (2011:195) claims "individual language users merely reproduce bilingual contrast until the aggregate effect of code switching "dulls" the contrast to the point where language mixing ensues [i.e. the emergence of mixed languages]". In other words, a community may come to identify itself linguistically not by one language or another, but by the simultaneous use of more than one, to the point that a new language emerges.

Though Hefright's focus is on contemporary speakers, who often disagree on what constitute distinct "codes", much less whether or not they are codeswitching, the observation holds historically, wherein a language may exist "between codes", so to speak, prone to differing forms depending on the language background of the individual speaker, the linguistic context, and so on. Where a stronger non-Sinitic background may lead a speaker to use a form less seemingly "Chinese-influenced", one with a stronger Chinese background may produce more Chinese vocabulary or other Sinitic speech forms. This view of language is similar to Blommaert's (2010:Chapter 4) reconfiguring of languages as not monolithic, discrete entities, but assortments of linguistic repertoires, each of which may be more skillfully or frequently wielded in differing communicative settings. At the same time, the ethnic identity of the interlocutor, the speech setting, and the desire to appear more or less "Yi", more or less "Han",

all may influence the degree of codeswitching and/or the choice of code. Such variation may be glossed over, or even avoided, then when the descriptive linguist in the modern era attempts a “grammar of Bai”, whatever that is, or collects vocabulary for reconstructive purposes. What’s more, this is nothing unique to the setting in Dali, but likely indicative of most multilingual settings, where speakers have been in close communicative contact.

As another linguistic index, and as mentioned above in 6.2.7.1, alongside the historical usage of Classical Chinese, the Bai have long had their own way of representing their language with Chinese characters, called Hànzì Báidú 汉字白读, or “Han characters-Bai reading”. As a system for representing Bai language via characters, it resembles the early writing of ethnic languages in Korea, Japan or Vietnam, apparently utilizing primarily what Handel (2019:19-20) terms directly adapted, phonetically adapted and semantically adapted logograms. This written practice of Bai, which is still maintained by a significant portion of Bai speakers (more so than the portion who use the official Bai orthography, according to Hefright), offers another site for bilingual contrast, where Bai ethnicity can be enhanced or muffled, given the context, by using what are understood to be Chinese or Bai readings of characters, by writing in “Chinese” or writing in “Bai”²⁷⁵.

However, this variable practice of representing Bai using written Chinese becomes even more complicated when modern scholars attempt to project it back in time anachronistically, to a time before a distinction between a written and a spoken language were such clear-cut,

²⁷⁵ For a brief overview of the chronology of texts purportedly representing Bai in written form, see Wiersma (1990:28-33), where she claims that it was not until the post-Tang period, probably early Ming, that “inscriptions are encoded by Chinese graphs, but reflect texts that were composed in the local vernacular and committed to writing by speakers of that language who were literate in Chinese”.

culturally accepted literary notions. Deciphering texts from the Nanzhao (Duan 1994) and Dali periods (Duan 1993) involves careful readings of passages referring to specific styles of speech, and poring over the referents and etymology of vocabulary. As Hefright (2011: 326) points out, such accounts, which analyze writing from the Nanzhao period as “the Nanzhao language”, pointing to anomalous characters and passages as representations of “vernacular speech”, make a number of assumptions about Nanzhao-era conceptualizations. For one they assume that the people in Dali in the pre-Ming era were definitively, self-identifying Bai, projecting back from modern minzu categories. They also assume that authors using non-standard language in their compositions were consciously choosing to represent a vernacular, rather than being unconsciously influenced by it (ibid.326), and finally they make assumptions about a pre-existing high/low diglossia in an assumed monolingual context (i.e. standard Chinese and vernacular Bai) (ibid.327). (They also assume no variation at all in the Chinese written language of the period (ibid.330).)

In summary, Hefright examines the long history of Chinese and “Bai” usage since the early era of Chinese writing in the region, to the modern practice of code-switching, and subjective disagreement about what constitutes “Bai” and what constitutes “Chinese” in a given discourse setting—that is, is one speaking Chinese, is one speaking Bai with Sinitic forms, or is one codeswitching between the two? With the linguistic intertwining paralleling the historical intertwining of Han-Minjin ethnicity in Dali, Hefright shows that determining clear boundaries between the two languages in actual usage, at least from a native speaker’s perspective, is not always possible. As he sums up his analysis of Bai language users’ practice in contemporary

times: “Bai and Chinese are separate languages because – but only to the extent –that language users treat them as such²⁷⁶” (Hefright 2011:191).

6.4 Inconclusive Conclusions: Many Roads Lead to Bai

The study of the Dali area in this chapter proceeded methodologically in much the same way as the study of areas in other chapters: by reading mostly grammars of the surveyed languages, then zeroing in on articles related to particular points of interest. While this methodology seemed to work quite well for Amdo and Kham, in the Dali region, being on the cusp of the large Southeast Asian linguistic and cultural area, it may have failed to build on the insights of much previous scholarship and insights that I briefly presented in 6.3.1.2 and 6.3.1.3. Also, as various references to features of Nuosu Yi scattered throughout the chapter shows, while Bai may be an outlier in terms of, say, minimal evidentiality marking, or prefixed negation, expansion of the scope of comparison reveals it not to be the only such language with these otherwise divergent features. As such, it leaves much open to future research regarding Bai’s place in the larger geographical setting.

Another thing this study of the Dali area was not able to investigate fully, but which would have no doubt been fruitful, is the range of borrowing exhibited not by shared phonological forms, but rather shared morphosyntactic and semantic function, a phenomenon well-documented in the area, and in general well-theorized in the work of Bernd Heine and Tania Kuteva (2005)²⁷⁷. Others, such as James Matisoff (2004) and N. J. Enfield have pursued this line

²⁷⁶ I believe the implication here is for Bai language users, specifically. There is no mention to what extent local Han people in the area Hefright did fieldwork could understand Bai, or use it for communication. One would guess that it varies significantly by individual.

²⁷⁷ They characterize this linguistic phenomenon not as borrowing, as it does not involve a transfer of form-meaning units, but as “grammatical replication”, involving the transfer of meaning and/or function. They presuppose not just a simple transfer between languages, but an equivalence relation that is established through discourse between the meaning and structure of a “model” language and the “replica” language that is copying the

of research in great depth throughout the region, focusing on individual lexemes and constructions that, regardless of phonological shape, point to intimate contact historically.

In 2.3.4 we considered the unsolved problems concerning the nature of languages like English and Chamorro, and differing views of their typology between mono-lineal, genetically descendant languages and creoles or mixed languages. Even with a language like English, surely among the most studied and analyzed in the world, debates continue as to whether it formed from a multilingual melding of Scandinavian immigrants and local Anglo-Saxon intermarriage or a more direct route of Old English development. It would seem as if Bai is of an analogous ambiguity. In a tangle of ethnic identity, continuously twisting over time, the language, too, has become an undisentangleable knot of linguistic features.

In the course of its long history, the language that would end up identified as Bai, and (officially) connected to the Bai people, may have started off Tibeto-Burman and “become” Chinese through shift, accelerated especially following the Ming era, before it once again “became” Bai (not so unlike the Bai people). That is, existing on a kind of continuum between Bai and Chinese—not a creole continuum per se, but a continuum like that between Changsha and Standard Mandarin, for example (cf. Chappell 2001:341-343)—the language, in urban settings at least, could have undergone a process of de-Sinification in more recent times.

Or it may have started off as an early form of Chinese, local to the region at least since the early Han, and adopted local ((Proto-)Lolo-Burmese) forms between the fall of that dynasty and the arrival of the Ming, only to drift back towards Chinese in the later centuries. No doubt, as Han people (under whatever ethnic label they may have identified--see 3.2.2.) spread out

linguistic material into its own (Heine and Kuteva 2005:3). As such, their work builds theoretically on what has been traditionally called calques or “metatypy”. For discussion of distinctions among terms, see Heine and Kuteva 2005:Chapter 1.

across southern and southwestern China since the early Han Dynasty, many languages may have formed from an assimilated Han substrate, perhaps leaving no trace of it by the modern era of documentary linguistics, or even not yet having been revealed. Nonetheless, in the case of Bai, explanation in the tracing of a single, Sinitic genetic line, even if it may have once served Bai claims to Han lineage, seems to miss too much of the linguistic and ethnological picture developed throughout this chapter, and so I would cast this theory out as overly simplistic.

Furthermore, Bai could have begun life as a mixed language, perhaps a cousin to a Proto-*Ngwi/Proto-Lolo-Burmese* lingua franca, existing in a fluctuating form and originating in the state of some pre-Nanzhao rulers. It might have differed in its mixture of Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman depending on the speaker and his or her family background, or whether that speaker was literate or not in written Chinese, before centuries later ending up crystallized as the “ethnic language” of the Bai ethnicity. With the intermarriage of immigrant Han and local people, represented at least in part by the “*daxing 大姓*” and “*yishuai 侯帅*” rulers throughout the pre-Tang region (Yang 2010:107), a case of language contact not unlike that of Daohua in Kham centuries later could have also contributed to the local “stew” of language mixing.

But if Bai indeed did emerge from such a setting, it remains to be seen what accounts for its lacking any of the usual trappings of mixed language grammatical systems--grammar/lexicon splits, for example, or sub-components of one system drawing from multiple languages.

Perhaps it is due to the opposite power differential from say, Michif or Mednyj Aleut, where the immigrant power holders (the Han) went on to become an assimilated minority in Yunnan until much later. Or maybe it has to do with the greater depth of time, roughly a millennium before the emergence of better known mixed languages resulting from European colonialism. Or perhaps both.

A summary of these hypothetical trajectories is given in (6-137):

(6-137) Hypothetical Trajectories of the language now known as Bai

1. Tibeto-Burman origins:
Local TB language (Bai) → becomes “Sinified” through contact since Han → becomes Bai through ethnic crystallization in 20th century, but retains Chinese-to-Bai continuum
2. Sinitic origins:
Local Chinese arrives during Han era → influenced by local languages during centuries of intermarriage and assimilation → becomes “re-Sinified” since Ming arrival of Chinese → becomes Bai through same process as #1 above
3. Mixed language origins:
Emerges as a mixed language, possibly as a lingua franca in pre-Nanzhao era → exists in a flux of Tibeto-Burman and Sinitic instantiations, depending on the speaker, due to highly multilingual society → trends dominantly towards Sinitic since Ming-era migrations of Chinese → becomes Bai through same process as #1 and #2 above

Any or all of these scenarios are technically possible, given the ancient demographics of the region, the typological nature of the Bai language, and the complications involved in teasing apart ethnicities, and even distinct languages. While the analytic morphology speaks to an early language “interruption”, à la McWhorter (2007), a persistent core vocabulary, albeit one constituting of less than 50%, speaks to an early, rural Tibeto-Burman element. My feeling, though, is that the oversized attention to the lexicon, such as those studies cited in 6.2.7.1, no doubt led by the neo-Grammarians insistence on regular sound laws and inherited vocabulary defining the pure, genetic “essence” of the language, points us in the wrong direction. I will generalize this topic across the dissertation in 8.1.3.

Rather in this region, on the multi-ethnic frontier of numerous empires, where contact plays a larger role than monolingual descent, the intricacies of grammatical structures, and their underlying semantic and pragmatic equivalencies across languages (Heine and Kuteva 2005), tell us more about a language’s history than what words it uses, a major topic I return to in 8.3.3. Furthermore, clearly the way forward on understanding Bai’s history is a closer

examination of its rural dialects. Understanding better their relationship with Chinese, including its written tradition, and accounting for their differences, which appear less Sinitic than the better studied Jianchuan and Dali varieties, will paint a fuller picture of the language overall.

In any case, in concluding, to give a nod to Richard O'Conner's formulation, quoted from Scott (2014:329) in 3.2.1: Bai is a language, with a history, and at least now, since the mid-20th century, it officially has a people.

7 Return to Amdo: Evidence from Other Contact Languages

da hua je-ge sho-ma qhi-la
then language this-REF say-COORD start-COND

da zaige xxandang mezzha-la-de-ge
then a.little (be).different (be).different-INCOMPL-NMLZ-REF

hai-li sho-li=mu ra gangdajhang zowo da
COP-SEN-INF say-INF=INTERR but anyway main.thing then

nga-n-de je-ge raigong be-ten-de²⁷⁸
1-COLL-ATTR this-REF Rebgong NEG-(be).harmonious-ATTR

“Then, to say something about the [Wutun] language, it is somewhat unique, they say, but the most important thing is that our [language] is different from Rebgong [Amdo Tibetan].”
--recorded in Sandman (2016:347)

As was mentioned in Chapter 4, Xining is not the only potentially restructured, potentially Sinitic, language in the Amdo area (see Map 3 in Chapter 4), but rather, as Dwyer (1995) puts it, “[w]hen Northwest China is viewed as a linguistic and cultural region, one discovers that most of these features repeat throughout the area’s languages.”

As something of a coda to the case studies in this dissertation, the purpose of this chapter is to further contextualize the Xining dialect from Chapter 4, where it was compared to its Mongolic, Turkic and Tibetic neighbors, by now examining some of the other, arguably Sinitic, varieties spoken at the eastern border of Amdo, on either side of the Qinghai-Gansu border. Like the Xining dialect, researchers differ as to whether they should be considered “creoles” (e.g. Lee-Smith 2011a, b for Tangwang and Hezhou; Velupillai 2015 for Wutun) or Sinitic varieties (e.g. Xu

²⁷⁸ Throughout this chapter, Wutun data is transcribed in the orthographic system presented by Janhunen et al. (2008) and utilized by Sandman (2016). The graphs’ phonetic values are presented in 7.2.1.2.

2017 for Tangwang; Janhunen et al. 2008 for Wutun), and whether they arose from Altaic speakers' language shift to Chinese or from unilinear development of local Northern Chinese varieties historically brought by Chinese-speakers to the region. Furthermore, to conclude this dissertation without their inclusion would seem incomplete, as some, particularly Wutun, are fairly well-documented and analyzed in the scholarly literature on language contact in western China.

As such, data considered here, and analyzed in the context of theories applied throughout this dissertation for all regions, will help establish a more complete picture of language contact, not only of the Amdo region, but of the western frontier of imperial China, in lands historically influenced by Chinese, Tibetan, Mongolic and other cultural and linguistic traditions. Taken together, along with the Xining dialect from Chapter 4, the material in this chapter shows that, far from an anomalous exception, as one might expect from a single community's shift-with-substratal-effects, Xining is one of many regional varieties of Sinitic that has adopted areal features from the surrounding Altaic and Tibetic languages.

7.1 Ethnolinguistic Background of Other Chinese Varieties

Many linguistic descriptions of regional Sinitic varieties have been published beyond the three focal dialects of this chapter, Tangwang 唐汪话, Gangou 干沟话 and Wutun 五屯话, though none besides Tangwang and Wutun at the monograph level (in English) that I am aware of. Due largely to availability of resources, I am focusing the discussion here on Tangwang and Wutun, and to a lesser extent, Gangou, as illustration of the geographically dispersed distribution of the same sorts of linguistic features discussed in Chapter 4, beyond solely the jurisdictional boundaries of Xining municipality. Other language varieties mentioned more

sporadically in this chapter include Linxia 临夏话, spoken in Gansu, and Xunhua 循化话, spoken in Qinghai, among others.

In Chinese, the number of articles on particular morphosyntactic configurations, borrowed vocabulary and word order are immense, and can be found by picking up almost any article on any of these varieties and checking the references, a fact that further supports my claims in this chapter. In English, Charles Li (1984) has written about the Hui dialects of southern Gansu and other SOV properties of “Northwestern Chinese”. Under the label of either Linxia Chinese, or Hezhou (河州, the older name of the area), others have written about the SOV, post-positional Chinese spoken in Linxia, in a heavily Hui-populated jurisdiction of Linxia City (临夏市) (Chen 1999). Arienne Dwyer (1995) has an often-cited paper on the Xunhua dialect, spoken in the Xunhua Salar Autonomous County (循化撒拉族自治县), on the Qinghai-side of the provincial border with Gansu.

As such, let us now turn to the three main dialects of this chapter, Tangwang, Gangou and Wutun.

7.1.1 Tangwang and Gangou

7.1.1.1 *Tangwang*

Tangwang is spoken in northeastern Dongxiang Autonomous County (东乡族自治县), in Linxia Hui Autonomous Prefecture (临夏回族自治州), Gansu province, just east of the Tao River (洮河). The speakers identify as either Hui or Dongxiang²⁷⁹. According to Xu (2017:29), the township of Tangwang (唐汪川) historically is comprised mainly of two families, Tang and Wang, who make up 73% of the population. Oral legends and historical documents both point

²⁷⁹ Recall from 4.2.1 that Dongxiang is the Chinese designation for the Santa people and their language, a Mongolic-speaking group. Salar, who speak the Salar language, are Turkic-speaking.

to Tang settlement in the region in the late Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), with the Wang family arriving shortly afterward. Prior to this period, the area was governed locally by the Tibetan Gusiluo 曷廝囉 (*rgyal sras*) family, who entered the area after the fall of the Tuyuhun in the 7th century, and supposedly became subjects of the Song (960-1279 CE), and then the Yuan (Xu 2017:32). The clan this family belonged to was bestowed the family name Zhao, and was claimed to have been completely Sinicized and integrated into the Han population (ibid.33).

The common ancestor of the Tang family was said to be a retired Mongolian general, who settled locally, and whose family “rapidly Sinicized and mixed with Han people”. They later divided between Muslim converts (who would eventually be referred to as ethnically Hui) and those who did not convert (the Han) (ibid.30). At the same time, Xu (2017:33) cites evidence that points toward the Santa (Dongxiang) becoming a distinct Mongol ethnicity in the 14th century, with their conversion to Islam after the arrival of a Central Asian missionary, Hamuze 哈木则, in 1340. This religious event would have put the Han-turned-Hui converts of the Tang family in close relations with the Santa.

According to Xu (ibid), many current Dongxiang (Santa) are descendants of Hui who changed their ethnicity to Dongxiang. Thus, the Dongxiang/Santa language is the most influential regional language on the Tangwang dialect spoken by Hui Muslims, and, argues Xu (2017:41-42), the variety of language spoken by the Hui has in turn had an enormous impact on the local Han population of Tangwang’s speech²⁸⁰. As such, Xu (ibid.46), in the end, believes the Tangwang language to have developed “among Han people and some Sinicized Mongolian people (in the Tang family), but not among Dongxiang (Santa) people who learned the Chinese

²⁸⁰ Constraints of time and space prevent me from giving a full overview of Santa grammar in this dissertation. For grammatical overviews see Liu (1981) (in Chinese) and Field (1997) (in English).

language as a second language”. That is, she believes Tangwang to have taken its distinctive shape primarily among Han first-language speakers, not Santa people learning it as a second language, though some of the Han may trace ancestry to earlier Mongols.

7.1.1.2 *Gangou*

Another variety that has received more scholarly attention than others in the area is the Gangou dialect spoken in Gangou Township, Minhe Hui and Monguor Autonomous County (民和回族土族自治县), Haidong (海东), Qinghai. I have included some examples from it as further corroborating evidence in this chapter, drawing from the work of Yang Longcheng, as well as the English-language article by Zhu et al. (1997) and a 2017 MA thesis by Richard Kerbs, the latter of which focuses on its phonological system. I include Gangou here together with Tangwang, partly because they are spoken in relatively close vicinity, on either side of the Qinghai/Gansu border, between Xining and the Gansu provincial capital of Lanzhou (兰州), but also because the materials I drew from were not as thorough and complete as those that I was able to access for Tangwang and Wutun.

Gangou is one of two dozen townships comprising the Minhe Hui and Monguor Autonomous County. The township is highly multicultural, with high degrees of ethnic intermarriage (excepting for the most part Muslim Hui), and in the late 1990’s, older Tibetan and Monguor residents were monolingual in those languages. However, Zhu et al. (1997) claim that the vast majority spoke Gangou, and describe a local identity, towards which the mountain-dwelling locals felt a solidarity:

“It is also important to note that many Gangou Monguor, Tibetans and Han feel closely united. This comes from a sense of a common language (Gangou Chinese Dialect), and the fact that people dwelling in plains areas tend to denigrate the mostly mountain-dwelling residents, who are known, regardless of ethnicity, generally as Gangou ren (Gangou people).”

Kerbs (2017) has a more recent study, though confined only to describing the phonological system. He cites the figure of 15,000 speakers in Gangou and adjacent areas, slightly more than the population of Gangou Township itself²⁸¹. Kerbs (2017:4) stresses the geographic isolation of the township (it lacked even its own highway exit in 2017), allowing Gangou to be shaped by local development only. The second largest ethnic group are Monguors, many of whom still speak that language, but apparently Tibetans in the township speak only Gangou Chinese, the same as the Han and Hui (ibid.) Nonetheless, younger generations are noticeably shifting to Standard Mandarin, away from Gangou. Besides Islam, the major religion of the community is Tibetan Buddhism, and the Kadikawa temple is a mainstay of the local community.

7.1.2 Wutun

Wutun is a relatively small language variety, spoken in Tongren County 同仁县, Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture 黄南藏族自治州, Qinghai, numbering about 4000 residents. In comparing Wutun with Gangou and Tangwang, Janhunen et. al (2008:22) point out that the latter two are more strongly “Altaicized”, while Wutun is more “Tibetanized”. Wutun speakers are culturally Tibetan, and fluent in most cases in the local Amdo dialect, though their official government ethnicity status is Tu, which is also the Chinese designation for Monguors (土族). Janhunen et al. (2008), as well as Chirkova (2012b), consider the language to be a Sinitic variety deeply influenced by Amdo Tibetan. In the language contact literature, however, it is usually referred to as a creole, or a “converted” mixed language (see, e.g. Velupillai 2015:75-76).

Erika Sandman and Camille Simon (2016:89) note that Wutun probably emerged through intermarriage of imported Chinese soldiers and local Tibetan and Mongol women. The Wutun

²⁸¹ Kerbs (2017:3-4) uses two published sources for demographic data, one from 1992 and another 2011, which seem to show a slight drop in population between those times.

people became Tibetan Buddhists, and regard Tibetan as a prestige language. Sandman and Simon (2016) claim the language's emergence was in the 14th century. What they consider Wutun to have in common with other languages of the region is restructuring on the morphosyntactic level, and in the semantic extensions found there (similar to the extensions of the aspect markers and other auxiliary verbs in Xining), stemming from Amdo patterns, which they point to as a regional prestige language.

In contrast, for the Xining dialect, Keith Dede and Daniel Bell more often point to Monguor as a source of non-Sinitic structures, but assume that they arose from substratal interference. However, they do at times note that similar structures are also found in the local Amdo Tibetan, though the Amdo phonological forms are not as similar as those shared by Xining and Monguor. This alone, however, as was discussed in 6.3.1 for Dali, does not necessarily preclude borrowing. That is, a correlation between form and meaning between two languages is not always necessary to establish borrowing, as languages may borrow patterns or semantic functions without borrowing the phonological forms themselves from the model language (Heine and Kuteva 2005; Sandman and Simon 2016).

Whatever the origin of the linguistic features that distinguish Tangwang, Wutun, Gangou, Hezhou/Linxia and other regional dialects apart from the Chinese spoken in northern China outside of the Amdo setting, it is clear that the nature of phonological and morphosyntactic structuring surveyed for the Xining dialect—reduced tonal inventory, postpositional case marking, verb-final syntax—is not a single isolated case, but rather the trend across the broader eastern Amdo region. Some properties are even identified as far east as Xi'an (see Zhang 1984). To further this point, let us examine the language varieties on the Qinghai-Gansu border.

7.2 Language Features of the Region

7.2.1 Phonetics and Phonology

7.2.1.1 *Tangwang and Gangou*

The following phoneme inventory is based on that presented by Xu (2017:50) for Tangwang²⁸², which she claims is similar to the Lanzhou dialect (兰州话, spoken in the capital of Gansu), though the latter has the additional phonemes /pf, pʰ, z/, plus the so-called zero-initial²⁸³.

	bilabial	labiodental	alveolar	retroflex	Palatal	velar	uvular
plosive	p p ^h		t t ^h			k k ^h	
nasal	m		n				
fricative		f v	s	ʂ ʐ	ç	x	
affricate			ts ts ^h	tʂ tʂ ^h	tç tç ^h		
lateral			l				
approximant					j		

As Dwyer (2007) pointed out for Salar and other regional languages (see 4.2.2.3 and 4.2.2.5), Xu (2017:51) notes high degrees of frication in aspirated obstruents [p^h] and [t^h] for Tangwang, which before a high front vowel she describes as affricated [ps^h] and [ts^h], respectively. Before certain other vowels a uvular frication can be detected after the same consonants.²⁸⁴ Examples include 皮 [ps^hi] ‘skin’ (cf. Standard Mandarin [p^hi³⁵]) and 泡 [pχɔ] ‘soak’ (cf. Standard Mandarin narrow transcription pào [p^xau⁵¹] Duanmu 2007:24).

The Tangwang vowel system described by Xu (2017: 63-65) is charted below:

²⁸² I have removed the allophones from Xu’s original table, which I mention in the following text.

²⁸³ The zero initial may be phonemic or not, depending on one’s analysis. In Tangwang, it has developed into an initial palatal glide, or as a nasal in the historical glottal stop-initial [ʔ] (影母) category from Middle Chinese. Xu claims this tendency is true throughout the region, including in Xining, though no other sources used in this dissertation have pointed it out. The zero initial is discussed further below.

²⁸⁴ Phonetically, this is similar to Standard Mandarin aspirated obstruents before back vowels (Duanmu 2007:24), but the implication by both authors is that it is much more pronounced in the Amdo region. The same could be said for the Tangwang reflexes of the zero-initial.

	Front	central	back
high	i ĭ y ỹ		u ǔ
high-mid	e		
low-mid	ɛ ẽ	ə ǝ	ɔ
low			ɑ ǎ

The loss of historical Sinitic final codas has resulted in phonemic nasal vowels in Tangwang, and many historical diphthongs have been monophthongized, though not as many as in Gangou, discussed below. The so-called apical vowels, [ɿ, ʅ], are also present, in their same distribution as Standard Mandarin, namely after fricative and affricate sibilant initials.

There are also occasional discrepancies between historical development between Standard Mandarin and Tangwang from Middle Chinese, such as aspirated initial consonants in historical Departing tone (去声) syllables, which, while aspirated in Tangwang, would be unaspirated in Standard Mandarin. Examples include 步 ‘step’ Tangwang [p^hu], SM [pu⁵³]; and 柜 ‘cabinet’ Tangwang [k^hui], SM [kui⁵³] (ibid.50)²⁸⁵. Though such discrepancies seem to be lexical exceptions (for the most part Tangwang has the same laryngeal adaptations as SM), one regular correspondence between Tangwang and Standard Mandarin is that, where the latter has the alveolars [t, t^h] before high, front vowels, Tangwang has the spirantized [tɕ, tɕ^h], as in the phrase ‘Tiantian’s money’, 田田底²⁸⁶钱, [tɕ^hiɛ̃ tɕ^hiɛ̃ tɕi tɕ^hiɛ̃] (cf. Standard Mandarin [t^hian t^hian tɕ^hian]) (ibid.51). This is a common feature of the region, for example in Xunhua, where not only are voiceless initial stops spirantized before high vowels, but laterals also undergo a sort of spirantization, in becoming lateral fricatives before high vowels, e.g. 犁 [ɬi⁵³] ~ [ɬj⁵³] ‘plow’ (SM lí) 吕 [ɬu⁵³] ~ [ɬɰ⁵³] ‘Lü (a surname)’ (SM lǚ) (Dwyer 1995:151).

²⁸⁵ Tangwang tones, here and throughout, are omitted in the original.

²⁸⁶ Xu takes the high front vowel to be indicative of Tangwang’s retention of a Middle Chinese possessive particle, written as 底 (SM [ti²¹³]), unlike the modern Mandarin possessive 的 (SM [tɿ]).

The Gangou consonant and vowel inventories are given below for comparison. Unlike Tangwang, for which Xu uses a broad phonemic transcription, I include for Gangou the Romanization developed by Kerbs (2019), adapted from Pinyin conventions to capture the phonological properties of the language, though the reader is referred to his thesis for their illustrations with individual morphemes.

	Labials	Labiodental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Labio-palatal	Velar
Stop	p p ^h b p		t t ^h d t				k k ^h g k
Affricate			ts ts ^h z c	tʂ tʂ ^h ʂh ch			
Fricative		f f	s s	ʂ sh			
Nasal	m m		n n				
Approximant		ʋ w			j y	j ^w yu	
Liquid			l l	ɭ r			

	Front	central	back
High	ɹ ɹ ^w i i y ei		ʋ ʋ eu u
Mid	ɛ ai	ə e	ɔɹ o
Low	a a		

Like most northern Sinitic varieties, Gangou has an alveolopalatal series in complementary distribution with the velar stops and retroflex and alveolar fricatives and affricates before high front vowels and glides, viz. <j q x> [tɕ tɕ^h ɕ]. Kerbs also notes that the palatal glides [j] and [j^w] have the allophones [ɹ] and [ɹ^w], respectively, in such environments. Gangou exhibits the same

labiodentalized initial consonants noted for Xining and other varieties, namely in morphemes such as [fʊ] 书 ‘book’ (cf. SM [ʃu⁵⁵]) and [f^wə] 说 ‘to say’ (cf. SM [ʃuə⁵⁵]). (See 4.2.2.5.) Also like other varieties, such as Tangwang and Xunhua, Gangou regularly has (heavily) aspirated and/or spirantized alveolar stops before high front vowels, as in 地带 [tsz̥tɛ] ‘zone; belt’ and 梯田 [tʂ^htɕ^hxi̯] ‘terraced field’ (cf. SM [ti⁵¹tai⁵¹] and [t^hi⁵⁵t^hiɛn³⁵], respectively).

Kerbs (2019:24-25) notes two examples where a Standard Mandarin unaspirated bilabial stop corresponds with a Gangou aspirant: 尾巴 [jep^ha] ‘tail’ and 萝卜 [l^wəp^hʊ] ‘radish’ (SM [uei²¹³pa] and [luə³⁵pə], respectively), constituting not regular, but idiosyncratic, differences from Standard Mandarin, such as those noted for Tangwang above. Kerbs also notes, referencing Sandman (2016:24), that Wutun also exhibits such unexpected correspondences, as in the morpheme 薄 [p^hə] ‘thin’ (SM [pə³⁵]). Finally, in many morphemes where Standard Mandarin has a zero-initial (developed from the loss of a Middle Chinese velar nasal initial 疑母), Gangou has an alveolar nasal [n], e.g. 饿 [nwə] ‘hungry’ (SM [ɣ⁵¹]) and 眼 [njæ] ‘eye’ (SM [iɛn²¹³]).

Gangou’s vowel system has developed such that what were originally high vowels have developed into surface fricative vowels, and what were originally diphthongs have, with the exception of [ɔ̥], developed into monophthongs, which include the high vowels [i] and [ɯ]. Examples include 走 [tsw] ‘go’ (SM [tsou²¹³]), 菜 [ts^hɛ] ‘vegetables’ (SM [ts^hai⁵¹]), 吹 [tʂ^hwi] ‘blow’ (SM [ts^hui⁵⁵]) and 小 [çə̥] (SM [çiau²¹³]). A similar monophthongization process in Xunhua is described by Dwyer (1995:152).

Kerbs (2019:36-37) distinguishes fricative vowels from what others would term apical vowels (which he transcribes as syllabic consonants, taking their place feature from the onset). The

latter correspond to the more familiar Standard Mandarin /i/ allophones following alveolar and retroflex sibilant initials, as in 四 [sz̩] ‘four’ (SM [sɿ⁵¹]), 字 [tsz̩] ‘character’ (SM [tsɿ⁵¹]), 词 [tʂ^h] ‘word’ (SM [tʂ^h35]), 日 [ɹ̩] ‘sun’ (SM [ɹ̩⁵¹]), 纸 [tʂz̩] ‘paper’ (SM [tʂz̩²¹³]), 翅 [tʂ^h] ‘wing’ (SM [tʂ^h51]). (Note that Kerbs transcribes the syllables with aspiration as having a voiceless nuclear syllabic consonant, while those without aspiration have the addition of a voiced syllabic fricative. The latter is also another convention for transcribing Mandarin apical vowels.)

The Gangou fricative vowels, which are alveolopalatal after palatal consonants, are part of a regional trend of frication on high vowels in all environments, for example [lʒ] 哩 LOC, [lʒ] 鹿 ‘deer’, and [lʒ^w] 旅 ‘travel’ (cf. SM [li⁽⁵⁵⁾], [lu⁵¹] and [ly²¹³], respectively). Taken on its own terms, the Gangou segment inventory is unremarkable in this regard, as the fricative vowels synchronically contrast with high front vowels, such as in the morpheme 累 [li] ‘tired’²⁸⁷. However, as mentioned earlier, Gangou high vowels developed from historical diphthongs. As such, from a comparative perspective, it is interesting that /i/ only surfaces as [i] from historical diphthongs, as in 累 [li] ‘tired’²⁸⁸ (SM [lei⁵¹], or when a nasal coda was historically present, the latter phonetically appearing as nasalization on the vowel in Gangou, as in [lĩ] 零 ‘zero’ (SM [lĩ³⁵]), while all of the original high vowels have now spirantized.²⁸⁹

There are also rhotacized finals, as in other northern Chinese varieties, and as in Monguor, which involve deletion of the nasal ending when they appear together. Examples include 花儿

²⁸⁷ Kerbs (2019) translates this as ‘must’, which I take to be a typo, unless there has been some semantic shift.

²⁸⁸ Note that Kerbs (2019), like many other Sinologists, uses this diachronic information to posit underlying forms for Gangou, where ‘tired’ would be /lei/ [li] and ‘zero’ /lĩ/ [lĩ].

²⁸⁹ A such, Zev Handel (p.c.) points out: “This suggests a pull chain: high vowels spirantized; the lack of high vowels then pulled diphthongs into their space.”

[x^wa~] ‘flower’ and 门 [mə~] ‘door’. See Kerbs (2019) for various other allophonic rules operating at the level of the segment, such as effects on the vowel of underlying glides and nasals.

The syllable structure of Tangwang is (C)(G)V(G)²⁹⁰. Xu (2017:66) claims that the Tangwang tonal system is different for Han Tangwang-speakers than for Hui Tangwang-speakers, a dialectal distinction that is cross-cut by differences between monosyllabic and polysyllabic words. For Hui, monosyllabic words are pronounced with no tonal contours, while for Han there is a two-tone distinction between a level and a falling tone. In polysyllabic words, both Han and Hui people utilize a High vs. Low pitch accent system, where the Standard Mandarin tones 55 and 213 (Tones 1 and 3) correspond to Tangwang 22, and the SM tones 35 and 51 (Tones 2 and 4) correspond to 24, yielding a phonetically subtle distinction of 22 versus 24. Homophones are then distinguished in most cases by alternate HL versus LH patterns. Xu (2017:76) attributes this tonal reduction to influence from neighboring Santa (Dongxiang), which lacks tones, but has a similar stress system, with prominence marked by high pitch²⁹¹.

Gangou has a maximal surface syllable of CV, with the exception of the final [ɔɿ], as in 早上 [tsɔɿʃǎ] ‘morning’. As we saw above, what would be phonemic nasal codas and diphthongs in Standard Mandarin, with few exceptions, all surface as nuclear features on this CV template²⁹².

Kerbs notes that most syllables are nonetheless bimoraic, but that monomoraic syllables,

²⁹⁰ Xu (2017:64) indicates the glides as V.

²⁹¹ Lee-Smith (2011), who considers Tangwang a “creolized language” of Mandarin phonology and lexicon, but Santa grammar, gives a slightly different analysis of Tangwang tones. Though Lee-Smith indicates four distinct tones for the four historical Middle Chinese categories (though Yinping is given as 24, while Shang tone is given as 224), they also note the tones are in the process of merging. Velupillai (2015) uses Lee-Smith (2011) as her source in calling Tangwang a mixed language.

²⁹² Note, however, that nasal coda segments tend to surface word-internally, as can be seen in (7-1).

similar to the “light syllables” (轻声) of Standard Mandarin, are greater in number than in the standard language, as illustrated by the second syllable in the just mentioned word ‘morning’.

Tones in Gangou operate similarly as that described for Xining in 4.2.2.5. That is, on monosyllables, only a 2-tone contrast of Low (35) versus High (55) is observed, as in the minimal pair 钉 [tʰi³⁵] ‘nail; spike’ versus 钉 [tʰi⁵⁵] ‘to drive in a nail’ (Kerbs 2019:57). However, on disyllabic words, Kerbs (2019) notes three underlying tones (as opposed to the four underlying patterns noted by Kawasumi 2006 for Xining), viz. low, rising and high, as in (7-1) from Kerbs (2019:58)²⁹³.

(7-1)

筐子 [k^{hw}ãŋ¹¹tsz⁵] ‘basket’

猴子 [xw³⁵tsz⁵] ‘monkey’

種子 [tʂũŋ⁵⁵tsz¹] ‘seed’

Finally, among tonally reduced inventories of the region, Dwyer (1995:152) mentions that Xunhua has three contrastive tones, with pitch values 13, 53 and 55. She does not describe their distribution in the phonological word, but notes that there are a “large number” of toneless or tone-reduced syllables and morphemes in her data.

7.2.1.2 *Wutun*

The consonantal inventory for Wutun is given below, following Sandman (2016:21). All Wutun materials by Janhunen et al. (2008) and Sandman (2016) are transcribed in an adaptation of Pinyin romanization, which is followed here, and given in italics alongside the IPA in the chart below.

²⁹³ Note that the second syllables are moraicly reduced, and thus carry only one TBU. I am unsure from where they gain their exact pitch value. Pitch assignment to unstressed syllables is a widely discussed topic in Mandarin phonology. (See Duanmu 2007:241-247.)

	Labial	Dental	retroflex	palato-alveolar	palatal	velar
stops	b p p ^h bb b p	d t t ^h dd d t				g k k ^h gg g k
affricates		dz ts ts ^h zz z c	dʒ tʂ tʂ ^h zzh zh ch	dz tɕ tɕ ^h jj j q	tɕ cɕ cɕ jjh jh qh	
fricatives	f f	z, s ^h ss, s	ʂ ^h sh	ʒ ʑ xx x		ɣ/ʁ x/h gh h
nasals	m m	n n				ŋ ng
liquids		l ɭ l lh	ɻ r			
glides	w w				j y	ɥ xh

The vowel inventory, from Sandman (2016:33) is given below:

	Front	central	back
High	i ij i ii		u uw u uu
Mid	e ai	ə e	o o
Low	a/a a		

Note that the orthographic <ai> represents a monophthong [e], so there are no diphthongal segments in the language. There are, however, two phonemes analyzed as “tense” vowels, as in voice quality (rather than tongue root placement), shown in the pairs given in (7-2) :

(7-2)

<ii> 踢 tii [t^hij] ‘to kick’ vs. 地 ti [t^hi] ‘place’
 <uu> 绿 luu [luw] ‘green’ vs. 路 lu [lu] ‘path’

Altogether Wutun has a vocalic inventory of eight contrasting vowels, and a very Amdo-esque initial system of 35 segments, notably including a lateral fricative, a dorso-palatal approximant [ɥ] (e.g. *xha* [ɥa] ‘deer’ and *xhen* [ɥə̃] ‘to go’, cf. Amdo *xha*, Mandarin 行 [çiŋ³⁵]), as well as two allophonic guttural fricatives [ɣ] and [ʁ], and a contrast between aspirated and non-aspirated

/s/, [s^h] vs. [s]--though the last feature seems to be fading from the language (Janhunen et al. 2008: 36). In syllable-final position, an allophonic homorganic nasal is found (alternating with vowel nasalization for some speakers), as well as a final /k/, realized phonetically as an offglide [ʎ] ([x] after back vowels), in the Tibetan lexicon. This final /k/ has extended into the Sinitic lexicon, which, as [eʎ], corresponds to Standard Mandarin syllables with final /ou/²⁹⁴ (Janhunen et al. 2008:46; Sandman 2016:40 for examples in (7-3) below).

(7-3)

Wutun	Standard Mandarin	
gek [kəʎ]	[kou ²³⁵]	狗 ‘dog’
shaitek [ʂ ^h et ^h əʎ]	[ʂɤ ³⁵ t ^h ou]	舌头 ‘tongue’

Prosodically, Wutun has something of a dual phonology, to such an extent that the Sinitic vocabulary has one syllable type, viz. (Init)(Med)V(Fin), or CGVN, while the Tibetan has another, historically (preInit)(Init)V(Fin), or CCVC. However, Sandman (2016:35) notes that the preinitials, which used to be realized as nasal or glottal onglides to the syllable, are no longer pronounced by today’s speakers. She (2016:38) also points out that the preservation of the medial glides in Sinitic vocabulary is one of the most salient phonological features of the language, from a historical point of view, though they are beginning to appear in Tibetan-etymological lexical items, such as *huaiqa* [hwetɕ^ha] ‘book’ (cf. Written Tibetan དཔེ་ཆ *dpe cha*; transliterated as *bēja* by Goldstein 2001:650).

Wutun, like Amdo Tibetan, is completely non-tonal, with “no evidence suggesting that the original tonal patterns would have been replaced by any other types of suprasegmental distinctions, or that they would be synchronically reflected by functional differences at the segmental level” (Janhunen et al. 2008: 26). (Note the reference to “original tonal patterns”

²⁹⁴ Note that the morphemes listed here for Wutun are not historically Entering Tone syllables, and did not have a velar consonant coda in earlier forms of Chinese.

implicitly assumes the language has a Sinitic origin.) However, Wutun, like neighboring Amdo and Bonan, according to the authors, all have a pitch-prominent stress system, occurring on the second syllable of the word, and “possibly, on other even-spaced syllables” (ibid.27).

7.2.1.3 *Summary*

Phonetically and phonologically, the region’s Sinitic varieties are marked by high degrees of aspiration and frication, the former resulting in diachronic spirantization of stops before high vowels, the latter resulting in fricative vowel phonemes like the ubiquitous [ɣ]. These trends are reported by Dwyer (2007) for non-Sinitic languages like Salar as well. The phonological systems all contrast retroflexes and alveopalatals, and other than Wutun, stick to 2-way contrasts of aspiration on stops and affricates. This is true, too, for non-Sinitic local languages.

Suprasegmentally, all syllabic profiles, much like elsewhere in northern China and beyond, are trending towards CV, with most languages carrying final nasal features on the vowel, and many undergoing monophthongization. Finally, tonal inventories are reducing, too, another northern Chinese trend, though by how much is a matter of analysis, differing by author. Most varieties tend to be moving towards a two tone system, prosodically circumscribed by word boundaries.

7.2.2 *Noun Phrase Morphology*

7.2.2.1 *Tangwang and Gangou*

Xu (2017:77-79) focuses on two morphological processes to illustrate word formation in Tangwang, affixation and reduplication, though it goes without saying that, like most Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman languages, compounding plays an enormous role in the morphology. The suffix that Xu chooses to focus on is the Sinitic nominalizer [-tsɿ] 子, literally ‘child’, but often denoting a diminutive meaning. (The phonetic form is the same as Standard Mandarin.) While

many nouns obligatorily take this suffix as lexicalized forms in Standard Mandarin, resulting in the loss of any diminutive connotation, Xu (ibid) points out that its frequency of occurrence in individual words lacking diminutive qualities is far higher in Tangwang, as in [kɛ̃²²-tsɿ⁴⁴] 肝子 ‘liver’ (cf. SM 肝 gān), [nɛ²²-tsɿ⁴⁴] 奶子 ‘milk’ (cf. SM (牛)奶 (niú) nǎi), and [ŋ₂iɛ̃²²tɕi²⁴- tsɿ⁴⁴] 眼镜子 ‘glasses’ (cf. SM 眼睛 yǎn jìng), none of which would take the suffix in Standard Mandarin. Recall from 3.4.3.4 that this phenomenon is also widely documented in Southwest Mandarin varieties of Sichuan.

In Tangwang, plurality is marked on inanimate as well as animate nouns (Xu 2017:123), though only one such example appears in the data (the morpheme is clearly cognate with the Standard Mandarin animate plural *men* 们), as shown in (7-4) (ibid.122):

(7-4)
 zɿʂã-mə liɔ kuə ki liɔ
 clothes-PL throw RES CAUS PFV
 ‘The clothes were thrown away.’

The other major derivational process Xu describes is reduplication, highly productive in noun and adjective formation. Again, the process builds on what is possible in Standard Mandarin, extending the range of morphemes subject to this process. The diminutive or endearing meaning found in Standard Mandarin is often not present in Tangwang, as in [tɕ^hy⁴⁴tɕ^hy⁴⁴] 渠渠 ‘canal’, a lexical item not reduplicated in SM. That is, reduplication is simply the basic form of the word, with the non-reduplicated form not existing. Additionally, different patterns of reduplication other than AA are present, such as ABB or ABBtɕi⁴², for example [ts^hɛ̃²² jyɛ̃²⁴jyɛ̃⁴²] 菜园园 ‘vegetable garden’, or [ʂɛ̃²²sɿ⁴⁴sɿ⁴⁴tɕi⁴²] 膾腥腥的 ‘fishy’. Like the nominal suffix described above, a wider sphere of reduplication is a common property of Southwest Mandarin to Tangwang’s south.

Xu (2017:93-99) further discusses three suffixes borrowed from Santa (Dongxiang), with cognates in Mongolic Eastern Yughur and Monguor: a “reflexive-possessive” suffix [-nə], that relates a nominal to the subject pronoun as the subject’s own; a third person possessive marker [-ŋi], forming an alternate pattern, found in Mongolic, to the Sinitic pattern also present in Tangwang; and the suffix [-t^hɔlɔ], which is called a “terminative” marker (Chinese 止格, literally ‘terminating case’), meaning something like ‘rather than, better than’ or ‘until’. The latter is interesting because it has correlates not only in several Mongolic languages (e.g. Bonan, Santa, Monguor, but also Dagur, Buryat and Kalmyk), but also in Qinghai and Linxia Chinese, as well as Wutun, all with similar phonetic forms. The regional forms are illustrated from Xu (2017:96-99) in (7-5)-(7-7):

(7-5)

(Tangwang)

tsu-t ^h ala	ʂui	lɪ			
sit-TERM	sleep	PTCL			

‘Sleeping is better than sitting.’

(7-6)

(Qinghai)

烟吃塔拉, 糖哈不吃召

yān	chī-tǎlā	táng-hā	bù	chī	zhào
smoke	eat-TERM	candy-ACC	NEG	eat	PTCL

‘It is better to eat candy than to smoke.’

(7-7)

(Linxia)

ʂaŋu-t ^h ala	ʂui	liɔ
midday-TERM	sleep	PFV

‘to have slept until noon’

As we saw with Xining, though case marking is absent in most Sinitic languages, it is present in Amdo varieties. Tangwang is one of those varieties, marking accusative (*xɑ/a/ǎ*, depending on the stem), ablative (*ɕiɛ*, which also serves as a comparative) and instrumental/comitative *la*

obligatorily on pronouns, and optionally on nouns. Nominative case is the unmarked case, though the situation for pronouns is slightly more complex, as discussed below. This marking makes Tangwang, by definition, a nominative/accusative language, rather than ergative/absolutive.

Xu (2017:4, 79) notes that the forms for case markers are similar for the accusative/dative (i.e., object) and instrumental (or comitative) cases in the region, but that local forms of the ablative differ, implying a shared origin for the first two, but localized, perhaps later, developments for the last. Compare the accusative (sometimes labelled dative) marker in Qinghai, Linxia and Tangwang, all [xa] or [a], or the instrumental marker, [la] or [lia] in all three varieties. This differs from Linxia's ablative [ta], Qinghai's [sa] and Tangwang's [ɕiɛ], which have different forms in all three localities. Some examples of the case markers are as follows in (7-8) and (7-9):

(7-8)

ɕiɔ vǎ	ɕiɔ li-xa	ta	xa	liɔ	
Xiao Wang	Xiao Li-OBJ	beat	RES	PFV	
'Xiao Wang has beaten Xiao Li.'					(Xu 2017:80)

(7-9)

nə-pǎ	ʂu-a	ŋj	ake-a	kɪ	kɪ	liɔ
DEM-CL	book-OBJ	2SG	who-OBJ	give	to	PFV
'Who did you give that book to?'						(Xu 2017:81)

In Tangwang, fusion of pronouns, at least the first and second person pronouns, with the accusative/dative marker has led to what appears to be a vowel alternation between nominative and accusative/dative forms of pronouns, and shown in the chart provided by Xu (2017:82):

Table 35 Pronominal Paradigm for Tangwang (Xu 2017:82)

	1 sing	1 plural	2 sing	2 plural	3 sing	3 plural
Nominative	və	am(u)	ŋi	ŋim	nə/t ^h a ²⁹⁵	nəm/t ^h am
Accusative	va	ama	ŋa	ŋama	nəxa/t ^h axa	nəm(x)a/t ^h am(x)a

While the 1st person accusative pronoun *va* has diachronic origins in the fusion of the first person form marked with the object case morpheme, viz. *və-(x)a* > *va*, since the fused form *va* appears to be a distinct pronominal form from 1st person nominative *və*, the language has evolved a variable, etymological double-marking, wherein the form *va* takes the case suffix *-xa*, a process Xu (2017:83) shows to be present in Linxia Chinese, as well as Wutun. (The same process happens for 2nd person pronouns, as well; since 3rd person pronouns have not fused, they only served to reinforce the etymological double-marking pattern.) The following examples illustrate ordinary and double-marked forms of the first person, in (7-10) and (7-11), respectively (Xu 2017:81-82).

(7-10)

ŋi va khě lɛ liɔ
 2SG 1SG.ACC see come PFV
 ‘Did you come to see me?’

(7-11)

ŋi va-xa ta kɪ liɔ zi-tũ
 2SG 2SG.ACC-ACC beat CAUS PFV one-CL
 ‘You have beaten me.’

The sentences in (7-12) and (7-13) illustrate case functions of ablative *ɕiɛ* and instrumental *la*:

(7-12)

və tɕiã ɕyɛɕiɔ-li-ɕiɛ lɛ liɛ
 1SG just school-LOC-ABL come PTCL
 ‘I have just come back from school.’²⁹⁶

(Xu 2017:88)

²⁹⁵ Tangwang has two competing forms for the 3rd person pronoun. The form [t^ha] is from Standard Mandarin [t^hɑ⁵⁵] 他 ‘3.SING.’

²⁹⁶ The ablative often co-occurs with the postposition morpheme [li], cognate with Standard Mandarin 里 [li²¹³] ‘inside’. Xu (2017) glosses it as POST and points out that postposition + case marking is common in Mongolic languages, such as Santa. She makes a perspicacious distinction between adpositions and case markers: “Case

(7-13)

və kǎpɪ-la ɕiɛ xa tɕɪ
1SG pen-INST write RES PTCL

'I have written [those characters] with a pen.'

(Xu 2017:91)

Gangou, for its part, is accusatively-aligned, following the Monguor model, rather than the Amdo Tibetan (Yang 2015:17). Besides an unmarked nominative, 5 case suffixes are described by Zhu et. al (1997): accusative/benefactive 哈 *ha*, locative 里 *li*, ablative/comparative 叻 *sha*, instrumental/comitative 俩 *lia(r)* and genitive 的 *zhi*²⁹⁷. The accusative and the locative are illustrated in (7-14) and (7-15), respectively:

(7-14)

zhige-liar-ha ali-ma yuanyuan-zhi song-diao...
this-two-ACC where-ever far-GEN send-PFV...

'Let's send these two daughters outside far, far way....'

(Zhu et al. 1997:444)

(7-15)

shan-li zou-liao-shi huar zhe-gei zou
mountain-LOC go-PFV-then flower pick-CAUS go

'We'll go to the mountain and I'll pick flowers for you.'

(Zhu et al. 1997:445)

Yang and Zhang (2016:32) add an additional case to the above: an allative (向格) 看着 [k^hantɕ], as illustrated in (7-16):

(7-16)

暖傢我啊这里看着手摇着哩

aijia vo-a zheli-k^hantɕ] shouyao-zhe li
3SG 1SG-OBJ here-ALL wave-DUR PTCL

'He's waving at me.'

他朝我招手呢

shows a noun's relationship to other words, while adpositions refer to real-world entities like space, position, time, etc. So this book will continue to take [li]...as [a] postposition in the Tangwang language."

²⁹⁷ The written characters are from Yang and Zhang (2016). Though they cite previous researchers who wrote the genitive as 之, it follows the Gangou phonological adaptation of spirantized stops before high vowels. Hui people pronounce it as [tɕi], while many younger generation speakers pronounce it as [ti] (Yang and Zhang 2016:29).

The ablative has four phonetic variants, all with neutral prosody: “些” [ɕie], “撒” [sa], “吵” [ʃa], “是” [ʃ]. The authors posit that the first variant is from a grammaticalization of Mandarin 下, while the second corresponds to Monguor [-sa], and the last is mostly used by Hui speakers (ibid.30). The Gangou ablative is illustrated in (7-17).

(7-17)

我们八月吵麦子啊割。

vomen bayue-ʃa maizi-a ge

1PL August-ABL wheat-OBJ cut

‘We start harvesting the wheat from August.’

我们从八月开始收麦子

(Yang and Zhang 2016:30)

Finally, Yang (2014) provides an in-depth look at the Gangou object marker 哈 *ha* [xa], including its role in marking the dative, the “causee” nominal and the “experiencer” nominals in an utterance (ibid.231-232). Yang (2014:238-239) discusses whether the marker should be seen as an auxiliary²⁹⁸, a suffix or a postposition, and concludes that, since it has functional and phonological properties of both typical suffixes and postpositions, from a cross-linguistic perspective, it can’t be definitively described as either, probably reflecting its in-between status from an original postposition and a grammaticalized case-marking suffix²⁹⁹.

7.2.2.2 *Wutun*

Wutun exhibits highly agglutinative morphology, with far more suffixes than prefixes (Janhunen et. al 2008:52). The authors claim most of the morphological markers are etymologically Sinitic, though some show origins in Amdo Tibetan. Nevertheless, we saw from Daohua in 5.2.3.3 that Sinitic morphemes can be put to use for purely non-Sinitic functions.

²⁹⁸ As Yang explains, “auxiliaries” (助词) in Chinese are a fairly vague category of function morphemes that include nominalizers, adverbializers and subordinators, but also aspect morphemes.

²⁹⁹ Yang’s wide-ranging article also touches on the question of whether [xa] is a topic marker or simply a case marker, concluding that the latter is a more accurate depiction.

The only clear-cut examples of segmental morphophonological alternation are in the personal pronoun declension, for example the 1st person oblique *nga*, which consists of the 1st person singular pronoun *ngu*, plus the oblique marker *-a* (ibid.53). Nouns optionally mark number in Wutun, where unmarked nominal stems may be plural or singular, e.g. *nek* ‘cow(s)”; *lhakang* ‘temple(s)’ (Janhunen et. al 2008:55). The number markers are given, with examples, in (7-18):

(7-18)

-ge SINGULAR	<Chinese ge 个 ‘piece; CL’	daijhe-ge ‘a knife’
-jhege PAUCAL	<Chinese jǐ gè 几个 ‘some’	lhoma-jhege ‘some students’
-dera PLURAL	etymology unclear	ren-dera ‘(the) persons, people’

Instead of plural *-dera*, personal pronouns, which are Sinitic in origin, mark an associative plural (the person and his/her associates) with the suffix *-mu*, likely to be cognate with Mandarin *-men* (们) (Janhunen et al. 2008:65). This morpheme has the allomorph *-n-* in the 1st person genitive *nga-n-de*, as in the name of the language itself, *ngande hua* ‘our speech’. The paucal and associative marked forms function as an inclusive/exclusive contrast for the first person, respectively (ibid.66). There is only one nominal classifier in the language, *-ge*, from the Standard Mandarin general classifier *ge* (个), which follows quantifiers (Janhunen et al. 2008:71).

Unlike Tibetan, Wutun has accusative, and not ergative, alignment for its assignment of verbal roles. Nouns mark for seven cases, in addition to the unmarked nominative case. Janhunen et al. (2008:57) list those cases as genitive (*-de*, from Mandarin 的), locative (*-li*, from Mandarin 里), superessive (*-she*, from Mandarin 上), distributive (*-na*, identical to Amdo Tibetan *-na*), ablative (*-la*), sociative (*-liangge*, from Mandarin 两个, with similar forms in Bonan) and comparative (*-kanla*, probably from Mandarin 看 + conditional *-la*). Two examples from Janhunen et al. (2008:58) are given in (7-19) and (7-20):

(7-19)

ggaiggan lhokang-li huaiqa kan-di-li
teacher classroom-LOC book read-PROG-OBJT
'The teacher is reading books in the classroom.'

(7-20)

gu congkang-li qhi-gu-lio
3SG shop-LOC go-CMPL-PFV
'S/he went to the shop.'

The comparative parallels the same structure mentioned by Dede (2007) in 4.2.5.4, also found in Amdo Tibetan, Amdo using the particle *hdina* (WT *bitas.na*), from the verb 'to see, to look, to watch' (Janhunen et al. 2008:62). (7-21) illustrates the comparative construction in Wutun.

(7-21)

je-ge jjhakai zhungo-kanla xaige ga-li
this-CL country China-CMPR very small-OBJT
'This country is much smaller than China.'

Sandman (2016:323) translates this construction literally as 'in view of', which helps one understand how 'to look', present in the root of the form of the comparative marker *kanla* (presumably from Mandarin 看了 *kànle*), enters into the comparative construction.

Janhunen et al (2008:62-65) analyze the Northwestern morpheme *-ha* as a focus marker, stopping just short of calling it a case marker, as in Xining or Tangwang, though noting that it "comes close to an accusative marker". With the exception of singular first and second person pronouns, it is restricted from co-occurring with case markers, though it may replace them, which, interestingly, makes it similar to Japanese *-ha* は [wa]. Wutun so-called focus markers are illustrated in (7-22)-(7-24).

(7-22)

gek shai-ha nio-se-lio ze-li
dog snake-FOC bite-die-PFV EXEC-OBJT
'The dog bit the snake to death.'

(Janhunen et al. 2008:63)

(7-23)

ngu	aba-ha	je	huaiqa	ka-gu-lio	
1SG	father-FOC	this	book	give-CMPL-PFV	
'I gave this book to father.'					(Janhunen et al. 2008:63)

(7-24)

gu	selang-ha	lhojjhong	qhi-de	re	
3SG	Xining-FOC	study	go-NMLZ	COP.FACT	
'S/he will go to Xining for study.'					(ibid.)

7.2.2.3 *Summary*

Morphologically, all of the languages rely heavily on compounding, aligning with the Sinitic analytic profile. However, all make at least somewhat more use of affixation than does Standard Mandarin, particularly in marking cases post-nominally. (Though see 4.3.1.3 on the difficulty of strictly separating case markers from postpositions.)

In general, there seems to be tendencies to regularize typical Mandarin features, such as plural markers or diminutives, or even reduplication. Interestingly, no varieties, not even Wutun, are ergatively aligned, unlike Daohua in Kham. Classifiers, while not always overtly discussed by authors, seem to be used for all varieties, though it is noted that Wutun has only one generic classifier.

A few have developed vowel-alternating pronominal paradigms, like Tangwang and especially Wutun, but mostly pronouns look much as they do in northern Chinese generally. Sometimes, though, plural markers end up double-marking plurality on pronouns, from an etymological perspective. Finally, function morphemes in most languages seem to be a combination of Sinitic adaptations and apparently borrowed forms (e.g. the ablative /sa/), though Wutun, with more markers, has a more Sinitic form-to-Tibetic function profile, very reminiscent of Daohua in that regard.

Among the case markers there are a few categories that are consistently marked, and even share similar forms. All the regional Sinitic languages surveyed, like their non-Sinitic neighbors, mark the ablative, usually with some sort of sibilant initial consonant, though Linxia and Wutun mark it with a dental-initial, *-ta* and *-la*, respectively (cf. Tibetan locative case marker *-la*). Almost all mark the instrumental, in each case with a lateral approximant and a low back vowel. And all have a kind of object marker, generally considered dative (though only Salar, among all regional languages, has distinct accusative and dative morphemes), but doing extra duty in a variety of functions.

The latter morpheme's shape is $(x)a$, and it is noted as marking objects, signaling an "anti-ergative" role, giving emphasis, marking a topic, and even acting as a locative. Whether it constitutes one morpheme, either diachronically or synchronically, or is a matter of homophony with different morphemes, is an open debate among researchers, some of whom feel emphatically it either is a topic marker (Janhunen et al. 2008 for Wutun) or that it is not (Yang 2014 for Gangou).

7.2.3 Verb Phrase Morphology

7.2.3.1 *Tangwang and Gangou*

Tangwang verbs, as in all Sinitic varieties, take a handful of post-verbal aspect morphemes that convey a combination of temporal and aspectual information. As with Standard Mandarin, the Tangwang aspect categories are perfective, progressive/durative and experiential. An example of each is provided in (7-25)-(7-27):

(7-25)

tʃhutɕhi ta liɔ sɛ̃ ŋjɛ̃ tɕi kũ
go.out do PFV three year GEN work
‘[He] left his family and worked for three years.’

(Xu 2017:115)

(7-26)

və tʃə̃ tʃhɿ tʃɛ
1SG being eat PROG
‘I’m eating.’

(Xu 2017:116)

(7-27)

tɕiəu mə/muə huə kuə
alcohol NEG drink EXP
‘[I] have never drunk alcohol.’

(Xu 2017:118)

Zhu et al. (1997) note several “verbal suffixes” for Gangou, which include a perfective marker similar to Standard Mandarin *le* and a progressive suffix *-zhili*, which also indicates habitual action, and seems to be a combination of two separate durative markers, *-zhi* and *-li*. They also give a causative developed from the Standard Mandarin ‘give’ verb, as in (7-28), which they claim functions like Monguor causative *-gha*:

(7-28)

ada zhi-ge huar-ha wo-liar-ha zhe-gei
father this-CL flower-ACC 1PL-two-BEN pick-CAUS
‘Father, pick a flower for us two.’

(Zhu et al. 1997:443)

Xu (2017:115-116) notes that perfective aspect in Tangwang is also carried by a post-verbal morpheme [xa], which in such instances creates a resultative verbal construction. (Though she does not conjecture, I assume it is cognate with the Mandarin morpheme 好 [xau] ‘good’, which has a similar function.) [xa] is not only homophonous with the dative/aspect case marker, but is also a topic marker, as illustrated below in (7-29) and (7-30):

(7-29)

piɛpiɛ xa liɔ
distinguish RES PFV
‘to have distinguished’

(Xu 2017:115)

(7-30)

jǎ-xa tʂʰ tʂɛ
sheep-TOP eat PROG

‘Sheep are grazing [on the grass].’ (my brackets added) (Xu 2017:116)

There is also a Tangwang morpheme [tʂə] which marks the durative, as opposed to [tʂɛ], which marks progressive and tends to appear sentence-finally. The former carries a static semantic flavor, and as such is used to form modifying phrases with verbs, whereas the latter is dynamic in nature. In addition to an aspectual morpheme, [tʂə] serves as a converb connecting two verbal states, a function that Xu (2017:118) ascribes to Mongolic influence, in (7-31):

(7-31)

nə pu jɔ tʂə və jɛ mə pɛ̃fa
3SG NEG wish CONV 1SG also NEG means

‘If he doesn’t want [it], I have no idea what to do.’ (Xu 2017:117)

This converbal function, formed from the Chinese durative morpheme 着 [tʂə], Xu (2017:10, inter alia) points out, is found in other Sinitic varieties of the area, such as the Linxia dialect, shown in (7-32), and so-called Qinghai Chinese, illustrated in (7-33)³⁰⁰ (ibid.):

(7-32)

Linxia

qiche kai zhe guo le
car drive CONV pass.by PFV

‘The car has passed by.’

(7-33)

Qinghai

ta fan chi zhe zou le
3SG meal eat CONV go PFV

‘He has left after eating his meal.’

³⁰⁰ The Linxia and Qinghai examples are transcribed in a toneless Pinyin, as is the case in the original text.

It is also noted as a “serializer” in the Xunhua dialect (with the same pronunciation), a function it shares in that dialect with the morpheme 给 [kei⁵³] (Dwyer 1995:154), and is amply illustrated in data from Gangou from Zhu et al. (1997:445), where its form is *zhi*, as in (7-34):

(7-34)

jia-zhi	fangshang	shang-liao-zhi	tian-chuang-sha	ge	kan-shi....
home-GEN	roof	go.up-PFV-CONV	heaven-window-ABL	one	look-when...

‘They went up to the roof, looked through the smoke hole, and...’

Zhu et al. (1997:442) note another converbal morpheme, *shi*, that functions similarly, but carries a conditional meaning of ‘when’ or ‘if’, which they connect to the Monguor morpheme with the same function, *-sa*, though I would note there is the obvious Mandarin correlate 时 *shí* ‘time; when’. The Gangou conditional converbal morpheme is illustrated in (7-35), where it follows the durative aspect morpheme, *-zhi*, also identified as converbal by Zhu et al.

(7-35)

houtou	dao-zhi- shi	aijie-zhi	ada	jia-li
later	arrive-DUR-CONV.COND	she-GEN	father	home-LOC
qi-guo-liao	bai			
go-intense-PFV	EMPH			

‘Unimaginably, their father had gone home alone.’ (Zhu et al. 1997:442)

Finally, Xu (2017:120) explains that a final modal particle [li], and its alternate form [liε], can carry non-perfective aspectual meaning, which she compares to Mandarin *ne* 呢, and which functions similarly. In Tangwang, it often serves to mark future tense, for example in (7-36) and (7-37) (ibid.):

(7-36)

və	tsəu	li
1SG	go	FUT

‘I will go.’

(7-37)

ŋi tsuəjɛ ɕiɛ tɕhi li pu
2SG homework write go FUT NEG
'Aren't you going to do your homework?'

There is an interesting use of a light verb structure, a typically Altaic device³⁰¹. The construction follows a VO combination, the two being connected with a converbal morpheme [tʂə]. According to Xu (2017:117), "almost any VO can be used", and the light verb is necessary for syntactic grammaticality. The following example in (7-38) is provided:

(7-38)

və tʂ^hɿ fɛ̃ tʂə tsu tʂɛ
1SG eat food CONV do PROGR
'I'm eating.'

(Xu 2017:117)

7.2.3.2 *Wutun*

Janhunen et al. (2008:74) claim that "Wutun is best characterized as a serial verb language with an elaborate system of grammatical markers". The serial chains involve a main verb and a series of complement verbs, with the former occupying the first slot in the sequence. They form a phonological word and share the same argument structure, with grammatical markers following the final complement verb. The first verb often takes a morphological serial marker, which is akin to a converb structure in other regional languages, such as Mongolic (ibid.75, 89).

(7-39) serves as illustration.

(7-39)

gu yidaze qe-ma lio-gu-ge-ma-li
3.SG all eat-SER get.finished-CMPL-CAUS-RES-OBJT
'He has eaten up everything.' (Janhunen et al. 2008:79)

All verbs in a serial chain may take serial morphemes, except for the final, which carries the tense/aspect or perspective marking. There are three distinct serial morphemes:

³⁰¹ See Sugar (2017) for Uyghur light verbs formed from Chinese verbal borrowings, similar to the example here.

generalized *-ma* (which is likely related to the homophonous conjunction meaning ‘and’, as in (7-40)), glossed SER; consequential *-da*, shown in (7-41); and conditional *-la*, in (7-42).

Interesting to note, also, is the OSV word order in (7-40), as well as the Sinitic etymology of the Tangwang word for Tibet, rather than something like the Tibetic *Böd*, in (7-41).

(7-40)

huaiqa	je	ngu	kan-ma	lio-gu-lio	
book	this	1SG	look-SER	complete-CMPL-PFV	
‘I finished reading this book.’					(Janhunen et al. 2008:90)

(7-41)

ni	zang	jja-la-gu-da	wa-la-li
2SG	Tibet	visit-INCOMPL-CONSEQ	possible-INCOMPL-OBJ
‘If you go to Tibet, there will be no problem.’			(ibid.)

(7-42)

ni	je	huaiqa	kan-gu-de	hong-la	ngu	xaige
2SG	this	book	read-CMPL-NMLZ	VOL-COND	1SG	very
gga-la-li						
glad-INCOMPL-OBJT						
‘If you read this book, I will be very glad.’					(Janhunen et al. 2008:91)	

There is another possible serial marker, common in form and function to other languages of the Amdo sprachbund, viz. terminative *-tala* ‘until, in order to’. The morpheme seems to have Mongolic origins, having an identical usage in Bonan, which the authors use to point to an earlier period of Wutun-Mongol contact, though I wonder if it may have been possible to have entered the language through a third party. Also note that it was illustrated for Tangwang and other varieties in 7.2.2.1, where it appeared to have more of a nominalizing effect. A Wutun example from Janhunen et al. (2008:92) is given in (7-43):

(7-43)

zang-li do-tala san-ge yai-ma she-wu tian
Tibet-LOC arrive-TERM three-CL month-and ten-five day
xhen-dio-de re sho-li
go-NEC-NMLZ COP.FACT QUOT-OBJT

'They say that, in order to arrive in Tibet you had to walk three months and fifteen days.'

Janhunen et al. (2008:80) list a number of complement verbs that encode a resultative aspectual meaning, as well as directional complementation and completive aspect. (For example, *man* 满 'to get full', *qhe* 起 'to start; to rise', and *gu* 过 'to pass', respectively.) In this regard, the verbal morphology looks quite Tibetan, in its quasi-grammaticalized second-slot verbal elements. (Consider similar grammatical analysis for Dege in Kham in 5.2.4.1.) Similar to Mandarin, in such sequences the negator *be-*, from Mandarin *bu* 不 'NEG', can be inserted between the main verb and the complement to give the modal meaning 'cannot V' (ibid.81), as in example (7-44):

(7-44)

nga gu yegai kan-be-jhan-li
1SG.OBL that letter see-NEG-see-OBJT

'I cannot see those letters.'

(Janhunen et al. 2008:81)

In the case of other modal complementation, the main verb is usually marked by a serial morpheme, as in the following example (7-45) (Janhunen et al. 2008:82):

(7-45)

jeda co-ma ma-la-li
here live-SER impossible-INCOMPL-OBJT

'It is impossible to live here.'

Janhunen et al. (2008:83) list four marked aspects in Wutun, three of which appear to have an etymological correlate in Standard Mandarin: perfective *-lio* 了, continuative *-zhe* 着, progressive *-di* 的有 and resultative *-ma*, which is of unclear origin. (Note that, while the phonological form is more truncated, the proposed etymology for the progressive is the same

as that of Daohua, discussed in 5.2.4.3 and 5.2.6.3.) Predicates may also be neutral, with regards to aspectual marking, in which case, all else being equal, they have a “default interpretation of...present (or general) tense and imperfective aspect” (ibid.). Example (7-46) shows perfective marking, final in the VP (ibid), while (7-47) gives an instance of a predicate with no aspectual marking.

(7-46)

cui	to-ze-gu-lio		ze-li		
thief	escape-do-CMPL-PFV	EXEC-OBJT			

‘The thief has escaped.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:84)

(7-47)

gu	sho-de	be-kuai-li	nga-mu	yidaze	sawo	jedo-li
3SG	speak-NMLZ	NEG-fast-OBJT	1-ASS	all	clear	know-OBJT

‘He speaks not fast, [so that] we all [can] understand clearly.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:83)

The aspectual marker *-zhe* is also used to convey future tense, as in (7-48):

(7-48)

rongwo	gguanba	jja-la-qhi-zhe	
Longwu	monastery	visit-INCOMPL-go-FUT	

‘I am going to visit Longwu monastery.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:85)

Copulas and existentials often appear following predicates, quite reminiscent of Tibetan

(Janhunen et al. 2008:94). Some of their examples follow in (7-49)-(7-51).

(7-49)

zho	zowo-ge	hai-de	re
singing	main.thing-CL	COP-NMLZ	COP.FACT

‘Singing is [certainly] the most important thing³⁰².’

(7-50)

gu	ngu-jhege-de	yida	qhi-de	yek
3SG	1-PAUC-GEN	together	go-NMLZ	EXIST

‘He agrees to go together with us.’

³⁰² Here and in the Erica Sandman quote that opens this chapter I have changed the glossing abbreviation EQUI, from equitative, to COP for copula, on the assumption that they are not distinguished in Wutun. No data I have utilized appears to contradict this.

Finally, the “give” verb, correlating to Standard Mandarin 给 *gěi*, is commonly utilized for functions regionally that would be considered colloquial in other varieties of Mandarin-- predominantly as a causative marker, but sometimes a dative indirect-object marker, the same as in Xining.

7.2.4 Constituent Order and Syntax

7.2.4.1 *Tangwang and Gangou*

The dominant word order of Tangwang is SOV, illustrated in (7-54) and (7-55).

(7-54)

nə	tɕhã	ɕu-xa	kʰɛ̃	tɕɛ	
3SG	often	book-ACC	read	PTCL	
'He often reads books.'					(Xu 2017:109)

(7-55)

ka	vã	tɕl-ke	pʰĩkuə-xa	tɕhɿ-ã	liɔ
little	Wang	DEM-CL	apple-ACC	eat-RES	PFV
'Little Wang has eaten the apple.'					(Xu 2017:104)

The basic word order in Gangou is SOV, as well, as illustrated in (7-56):

(7-56)

暖傢的	尕妹	我啊	家些	挎包俩	馍馍三个
aijia-tɕl	gɛmei	vo-a	jia-xie	kuabao-lia	momo-san-ge
他领格	小妹	我与格	家离格	挎包工具格	三个馍馍
3SG-GEN	little.sister	1SG-DAT	home-ABL	satchel-INST	bun-three-CL
装给了					
zhuang-gei-le					
给。。。装了					
pack-give-PFV					
'His sister used a book bag from home to pack me three steamed buns from home.'					
他的小妹从家里用书包给我装了三个馍馍					
					(Yang and Zhang 2016:27)

However, in Tangwang SVO order does occur frequently enough, particularly in V-O compound collocations, and in serial verb constructions, illustrated in (7-57) and (7-58), respectively (Xu 2017:103):

(7-57)

nə tɕia-li kʰɛ̃ ʂu tɕɛ
 3SG home-at read book PROG
 ‘He is reading [looking at a book] at home.’

(7-58)

lɔʂl va-xa tɕʰi tɕə tɕʰl fɛ̃ tɕɛ
 teacher 1SG.ACC-ACC invite CONV eat meal PTCL
 ‘The teacher has invited me for dinner [to eat a meal].’

In some cases, the same proposition may be expressed in either SOV or SVO order, as in (7-59). When the object precedes the verb, as in SOV constructions, the accusative mark [xa] may or may not be included, as in (7-60), where it is absent. However, in SVO orderings, as in (7-61), the object marker is never used.

(7-59)

a.	ŋi	ɕixɛ̃	ʂəma	b.	ŋi	ʂəma-a	ɕixɛ̃	
	2SG	like	what		2SG	what-ACC	like	
	‘What do you like?’				‘What do you like?’			(Xu 2017:105)

(7-60)

ŋi	kʰɛ̃	ʂu	liɛ	muə(ʂl)	kʰɛ̃	tɕiɛ̃ʂl	liɛ	
2SG	read	book	INTER	or	look	TV	INTER	
‘Do you read books or watch TV?’								(Xu 2017:106)

(7-61)

ŋi	ʂu	kʰɛ̃	liɛ	muəʂl	tɕiɛ̃ʂl	khɛ̃	liɛ	
2SG	book	read	INTER	or	TV	look	INTER	
‘Do you read books or watch TV?’								(ibid.)

Not only is there variation in word order, but in some instances there is semantic redundancy in certain syntactic constructions. When elements that, from a Standard Mandarin perspective, would adequately convey certain information in the proposition are present, in Tangwang there

is a tendency for double indication, utilizing forms or functions between the local language and Standard Mandarin together (cf. Dede 2007 for similar “hybrid” instances in Qinghai, as discussed in 4.2.5.4). Xu (2017:110-113) mentions two such examples, the co-occurrence of the accusative marker [xa] with the disposal BA-construction, which shows action upon an object, and the Tangwang copula construction, the latter of which is illustrated in lines of discourse given in (7-62)-(7-64) (ibid):

(7-62) Noun + Noun + ʂɿ

nə	lɔʂɿ	ʂɿ	və	ɕyɛʂɿ	ʂɿ
3SG	teacher	COP	1SG	student	COP

‘He is a teacher; I am a student.’

(7-63) Noun + ʂɿ + Noun + ʂɿ (the double-marked structure)

nə	ʂɿ	lɔʂɿ	ʂɿ	və	ʂɿ	ɕyɛʂɿ	ʂɿ
3SG	COP	teacher	COP	1SG	COP	student	COP

‘He is a teacher; I am a student.’

(7-64) Noun + ʂɿ + Noun (the Standard Mandarin structure)

nə	ʂɿ	lɔʂɿ	və	ʂɿ	ɕyɛʂɿ
3SG	COP	teacher	1SG	COP	student

‘He is a teacher; I am a student.’

Yang (2015) provides an in-depth study of various syntactic configurations in the Gangou dialect, finding that the majority tend towards a typological OV profile. Some examples of OV word order are given in (7-65) and (7-66):

(7-65)

狼家们的羊哈吃过了

lang	jia-men-de	yang-ha	chi-guo-le
wolf	3-PL-GEN	sheep-OBJ	eat-RES-PFV

‘The wolf ate up all their sheep.’

狼吃掉了他们的羊

(Yang 2015:16)

(7-66)

你这本书哈王老师哈给上

ni	zhe-ben-shu-ha	Wang	laoshi-ha	gei-shang
2	this-CL-book-OBJ	PN	teacher-OBJ	give-RES

'You give this book to Teacher Wang.'

你把这本书给王老师

(ibid.)

The order of the direct object and indirect object in Gangou are variable, as shown in the same sentence from (7-66), but with different order, as in (7-67):

(7-67)

你王老师哈这本书哈给上

ni	Wang	laoshi-ha	zhe-ben-shu-ha	gei-shang
2	PN	teacher-OBJ	this-CL-book-OBJ	give-RES

'You give this book to Teacher Wang.'

你把这本书给王老师

(ibid.)

Yang (2015) found that, of 16 different morphosyntactic constructions she surveyed, Gangou has 14-15 that exhibited typological patterns of an OV language, such as Amdo Tibetan or Monguor, where Standard Mandarin has only 6-8³⁰³.

The order of Num + CL + N is standard in Tangwang, whether in preverbal or postverbal position, as illustrated in (7-68) and (7-69) (Xu 2017:107):

(7-68)

axũ	tse	xa	liɔ	liã-ke	tçi
imam	kill	RES	PFV	two-CL	chicken

'The imam has killed two chickens.'

(7-69)

axũ	liã-ke	tçi-xa	tse	xa	liɔ
imam	two-CL	chicken-ACC	kill	RES	PFV

'The imam has killed two chickens.'

³⁰³ The variation includes configurations where both word orders are possible, as well as the structure Noun + Plural, to which Yang gives both languages a '?', on that grounds that it is unclear whether the plural marker for people, 们 men, is an inflectional ending or a suffix.

Conversely, in Gangou, quantifiers follow the nominal head, as shown in (7-70), from Zhu et al.

(1997:440-441) (characters added):

(7-70)

石板一个	花儿个
shiban-yi-ge	huar-ge
stoneboard-one-CL	flower-CL
'a slate; a slabstone'	'a flower'

(7-71) - (7-72) below illustrate pre-verbal negation in Gangou, of a copula clause and an action verb, respectively.

(7-71)

嚟傢老师不是	
aijia laoshi	bu-shi
3 teacher	NEG-COP
他不是老师	
'He is not a teacher.'	(Yang 2015:17)

(7-72)

ta	mermerdi	bu-zou,	kuaikuaidi	zou-li
3	slow.some	NEG-walk	fast.some	walk-HAB
'He doesn't walk slow; he walks fast.'				(Zhu et al. 1997:440)

On the other hand, Zhu et al. (1997:446) note that negatives often follow predicate adjectives, unlike in Standard Mandarin, a pattern similar to Monguor. For example, the negative *mei* in *hao-mei* 'not good', is similar to Monguro *guang*, in *gezai-guang* 'not good'.

Finally, in Gangou, complex clauses are connected with adverbial subordinators. In general, Gangou does not have the pre-clausal conjunctions of Standard Mandarin in complex predicates, only the post-clausal subordinators, as illustrated by the morpheme [a] in (7-73), from Yang (2015:25).

(7-73)

今儿个雨下是啊， 大来不下

jnr ge yuxia shi-a, da lai-bu-xia
today CL rain COP-SUBJT big come-NEG-rain

‘Even if it rains today, it won’t be a lot.’

今儿个就是下雨也不会大

7.2.4.2 *Wutun*

Wutun, the same as all its neighbors, is a verb-final language, with a tendency towards topic-comment structure (Janhunen et al. 2008:103). Examples of SOV Wutun sentences can be seen in (7-74)-(7-76) below:

(7-74)

san nian-na jjhayek jjhang-la-gu-lio ze-li
three year-DISTR Chinese study-INCOMPL-CMPL-PFV EXEC-OBJT
‘[S/he] has studied Chinese for three years.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:59)

(7-75)

ngu ha-hua zai-ge sho-hai-yek
1SG Chinese a.little speak-can-SUBJT
‘I can speak a little Chinese.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:82)

(7-76)

danzhen-ha jhenze zai-ge tian-la-lio
PN-FOC gold a.little-CL draw-INCOMPL-PFV
‘Danzhen found a little gold.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:73)

Numerals, with and without a classifier (of which there is only one—see 7.2.2.2), may precede nominals in an NP, as in (7-77), but more generally they follow them, shown in (7-78), as is the case in Amdo Tibetan (ibid.72). Conversely, demonstrative pronouns usually precede the noun they modify, as in (7-79), though they may follow the noun, as in (7-80), matching the pattern found in Amdo Tibetan (Janhunen et al. 2008:68):

(7-77)
san-ge yai
three-CL month
'three months'

(7-78)
ma liang-ge
horse two-CL
'two horses'

(7-79)
gu(-ge) joze
that.NOM.DIST(-CL) table
'that table'

(7-80)
lhoma je
student this.NOM.PROX
'this student'

Adjectival expressions, unlike relative clauses, which always precede the head, may either precede or follow the head noun, as illustrated in (7-81)-(7-82) (Sandman 2016:101-102):

(7-81)
da ngu-jhege jjekzhen je-ge-li zui xho-de ti
then 1-PAUC world this-REF-LOC most good-ATTR place
she-li qhi-de
on-LOC go-NMLZ
'We will go to the best place in the world...'

(7-82)
ngu hu yak-la~la-de-ge mai-lio
1SG flower beautiful-INCOMP~INCOMP-NMLZ-REF buy-PFV
'I bought a very beautiful flower.'

Negation precedes the main verb, as a prefixed morpheme *be-*, from the Mandarin negator *bu* 不, as in *be-jedo-li*, '(s/he) does not know' (marked with objective perspective morpheme *-li*).

Also like Mandarin, there is a distinct negative form for negating existential constructions, which is the same for negating past tense expressions, as in (7-83). Note that in Mandarin, the

perfective aspect marker would not occur with the negative past tense marking, unlike the Wutun example in (7-83).

(7-83)

liang	tian-na	sama	mi-qe-lio	ze-li	
two	day-DISTR	food	NEG-eat-PFV	EXEC-OBJT	

'[S/he] has not eaten anything for two days.'

(Janhunen et al. 2008:59)

Sandman (2016:345) points out that combinations of more than one independent clause are quite rare in Wutun, with clausal combinations usually appearing as verb chains or nominalizations. However, independent clauses, each with an inflected verb, may appear, either in juxtaposition, as in (7-84), or with conjunctive clause-final particles:

(7-84)

ngu	yenze	yek	ngu	huaiqa	mai-qhi-lio
1SG	money	EXIST	1SG	book	buy-go-PFV

'I have some money (so) I went to buy books.'

(Sandman 2016:346)

7.2.4.3 *Summary*

Syntax looks quite uniform in the region, with a proliferation of verb-final sentences, though most researchers point out a significant enough number of SVO structures that appear in specific configurations or discourse settings, such as in verbal compounds or relative clauses. Many involve scrambling with a fixed verb-final form. As Stevan Harrell points out (p.c.), the addition of the accusative marker *-xa* seems to imply that the SVO word order is perhaps more basic, whereas the use of the case marker is an addition to further specify syntactic roles when the verb appears in sentence-final position, thus allowing for scrambling in the syntax.

All seem to create complex sentences of combined clauses in the same way—either by juxtaposition or final adverbial connectors, though Wutun appears to favor serialized verbs. On that point, almost all languages are noted as creating converbial structures in much the same

way, making use of the durative aspect marker to link verb phrases, a process often noted as having parallels in Mongolic. Here Wutun differs again, in using what appear to be conjunctions instead. Negation of predicates is almost always pre-verbal, as it is in Sinitic, though variable patterns are noted by Wang and Dede (2016) for Xining. (Salar is the only local language where negation is regularly postverbal.)

The order of elements in the NP allows for slightly more variation: some follow a Tibetic (and Altaic) pattern of post-nominal quantification, like Gangou and Wutun, but both those languages, like Daohua in Kham, have a different order of numeral and measure words, favoring Num-CL/MW over the Tibetic MW-Num. Otherwise, most languages have Sinitic word order: pre-nominal Num-CL-N.

7.2.5 Discourse Marking

7.2.5.1 *Tangwang and Gangou*

Xu (2017) does not provide much information about any kinds of evidentiality systems in Tangwang. It does appear to utilize the ‘say’ verb as an evidentiality marker, though in Xu’s (2017:114) data it seems to only follow actual quotations (where it doubly marks quoted speech). The second occurrence of the verb marks the end of the discourse, and as such the first occurrence of the verb may be omitted. Xu notes that the clause-final iteration of the verb “suggests that the information was heard from someone else or that the speaker is not sure of the information because a third person is involved” (ibid). Two examples are as follows in (7-85) and (7-86):

(7-85)

z̥t̥t̥cia **ʂuə** t̥ʂə z̥t̥t̥cia ɛ ɪ **ʂuə**
 3SG say CONV 3SG come PTCL say
 ‘He said he would come.’

(Xu 2017:114)

(7-86)

ŋj	tapě	tchi	liɔ	ʂuə	
2SG	Daban	go	PFV	say	

‘It seems that you have gone to Daban. (I heard that....)’ (ibid.)

This predicate-final use of the ‘say’ verb matches the same burgeoning evidentiality pattern described for Xining in 4.2.6.4, and is also observed in the Xunhua dialect (Dwyer 1995:154) and Gangou (Zhu et al. 1997:447). Zhu et al. (1997:446) note a number of sentence-final modal particles that Gangou shares with Monguor, including among them an emphatic *bai*, an exortative *sha*, and an apparent hearsay marker *fo*³⁰⁴. The latter is illustrated in (7-87):

(7-87)

aijie	amen	mei-lai	shuo	
3SG	why	NEG-come	HSY	

‘Why didn’t he come?’ (Zhu et al. 1997:447)

Similar to the same Tangwang construction in (7-85), the Gangou hearsay marker is clearly derived from the verb ‘to say’, as shown in (7-88) (ibid.):

(7-88)

aijie	shuo-zhi	aijiae	bu-lai	shuo
3SG	say-CONV	3SG	NEG-come	HSY

‘He said he did not come.’

7.2.5.2 *Wutun*

Similar to Amdo Tibetan (as well as Monguor), Wutun has a system of marking perspective and evidentiality at the end of the clause. The two types of perspective in Wutun are subjective (conjunct), marked by *-yek* (which is identical to the existential verb), and objective (disjunct), which is marked by *-li*, incidentally the same form as in Daohua (Janhunen et al. 2008:97). This system has already been seen in Monguor in Amdo (4.2.6.1), as well as Daohua and Dege in

³⁰⁴ There is some confusion, as Zhu et al. claim they are illustrating the particle *fo*, which is the same as Xining’s hearsay marker (and fits the phonological correspondence mentioned in 7.2.1.1); however, in their glosses, they give the particle the Standard Mandarin phonetic form *shuo*.

Kham (5.2.6). The tendency is for sentences with first person subjects to be marked with subjective perspective, while non-first-person sentences receive objective perspective, as illustrated in (7-89) and (7-90) (Janhunen et al. 2008:97):

(7-89)
 je ngu-de huaiqa hai-yek
 this 1SG-GEN book COP-SUBJT
 ‘This is my book.’

(7-90)
 je ni-de huaiqa hai-li
 this 2SG-GEN book COP-OBJT
 ‘This is your book.’

However, for any sentence type, this correlation can be reversed for pragmatic effect (as in Monguor and Dege Tibetan, among other languages). An example of such is shown in (7-91):

(7-91)
 ni ma-ge nian-di-yek
 2SG what-CL read-PROG-SUBJT
 ‘What are you reading?’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:98)

In some constructions in Wutun, a dummy morpheme *-ze*, termed an “executive auxiliary (EXEC)” by the authors, is present, in order to serve as a root for attaching the perspective marker. The following example in (7-92) illustrates:

(7-92)
 ngu koshe-gu-lio ze-li
 1SG sleep-CMPL-PFV EXEC-OBJT
 ‘I fell asleep.’ (Janhunen et al. 2008:95)

The Wutun quotative, from the Sinitic ‘say’ morpheme *sho*, also seems to function similarly to other languages in the region, with regards to marking evidentiality, as shown in (7-93) (Janhunen et al. 2008:95). There it serves the purpose of describing events of another person’s actions, as understood by the speaker.

(7-93)

gu	je-ra	qhi-zhe	sho-li
3SG	this-also	go-CONT	QUOT-OBJT

'S/he will also go.'

7.2.5.3 *Summary*

In terms of discourse marking, some languages are analyzed as having a topic or focus particle, either homophonous with the object marker $(x)a$, or as an extension of it (depending on one's analysis). There are also regular sentence-final modal particles, for expressing pragmatic effects like emphasis, but also to mark incipient evidentiality, especially in a hearsay particle developed from the quotative 'say' verb. Some of these particles seem shared in form and function among each other, for example Xining and Gangou emphatic particles (Zhu et al. 1997). Wutun appears to have a more developed evidentiality system than its other Sinitic neighbors, with subjective/objective (conjunct/disjunct) marking, in keeping with its Tibetic and Altaic neighbors.

7.2.6 *The Lexicon*

Not a great deal of attention has been paid to the lexicons of these three varieties in the literature, other than to note that they are primarily Sinitic. In fact, Xu's (2017) monograph on Tangwang, which also includes a comparative study of Wutun, was the only study specifically counting lexical items by language source.

Wutun, geographically isolated in a Tibetan enclave and spoken by ethnic Tibetans (though classified as Tu ethnicity), appears to have a good deal more loans from Amdo, however, than does Tangwang. Xu (2017:139) claims that, in a 2100-word corpus--a modest sampling--Wutun has only 63% Sinitic vocabulary.

The lexicon of Tangwang is calculated to be over 98% Sinitic, from a list of 2964 words (Xu 2017:42). The small percentage of non-Sinitic vocabulary comes mostly from Santa (Dongxiang), which Xu claims is borrowed not directly from the Mongolic language, but through contact with Chinese-speaking Hui Muslims. In the religious sphere, which is more prominent for Hui, many items of religious vocabulary have origins in Arabic or Persian, as is to be expected (see Xu 2017:43). A few examples are included here from Santa (Dongxiang) in (7-94), and from other languages in (7-95).

(7-94) Tangwang loanwords from Santa (Dongxiang) (Xu 2017:42)

extremely	pa ²² ve ²⁴	< bawi
method	χa ⁴⁴ ʂu ⁴²	< 'χaʂu
uvula	t ^h ã ²² ka ²² lɪ ⁴⁴	< taŋg ^h alei
friend	tʂɛ̃ ²² liɛ̃ ²⁴²	< dzənliən
now	ə ² tə ⁴⁴²	< ədə

(7-95) Tangwang loanwords from other languages³⁰⁵ (ibid.43)

God	xu ²² ta ⁴⁴²	< Pers. χuda
tomb	mẽ ²² tʂa ²⁴²	< Pers. maidza
imam	axũ	< Pers. akhund ³⁰⁶
saint's tomb	kũpe	< Arabic qubba
corpse	mɛ̃ ²² tʂ ^h i ⁴²	< Arabic maitç ^h i

Thus, and tellingly to many linguists, each of the varieties surveyed—Xining, Tangwang, Gangou, Xunhua, Linxia and even Wutun—have overwhelmingly Sinitic-majority lexicons, although Wutun less so, at 63%, according to Xu (2017:139). Tangwang was clocked at 98% Sinitic (Xu 2017:42), while all others were described as “majority Sinitic”, often implied to be in

³⁰⁵ Note that some of this vocabulary, particularly those closely related to Islam, surely could have been transmitted through an intermediate language, rather than directly from Arabic or Persian. Also note that I do not know what accounts for the two toneless items.

³⁰⁶ Though Xu (2017:42) does not give the etymological source forms for ‘imam’ and ‘saint’s tomb’, Stevan Harrell (p.c.), points me towards their etymological origin, widely use in Hui dialects as 拱北 *gǒngběi* (> Arabic قُبَّة) and 阿訇 *āhōng* (> Persian آخوند).

the 90% range. This is in stark contrast to non-Sinitic languages of the area, e.g. Mangghuer, at 35% (from a corpus of over 1400 words, considered a big deal at that) and Salar, at less than 25%, from a 4000-word corpus³⁰⁷. (See 4.2.7.)

7.3 Restructured Sinitic as Local Han Chinese Norms

When we take the above linguistic survey into account, the argument put forth here for a regional Sinitic subgroup only grows stronger. However, given the prominence of assumed morphosyntactic restructuring via contact, as well as broader areal trends, such a subgroup would, in order to more accurately capture the nature of the grouping, by necessity be based in local contact-based innovations, rather than solely genetic retentions (though we saw in 7.2.1 examples of those, as well).

7.3.1 Back to Defining a Language Area: More Support for Regional Sinitic

As a recap and an extension of discussion in 4.3.1, let us consider what the features in this group, roughly covering the region between and around the provincial capitals of Xining and Lanzhou, south toward the Sichuan border (but not necessarily stopping there, if further areal research extends the range onward into Kham), look like linguistically. (See the map at the head of Chapter 4 for city and provincial boundary locations.) Here I combine the general trends from this chapter with those of Chapter 4.

I also take into account the rather unique properties of Wutun, which is spoken in a much smaller community, in a more isolated setting, than is Tangwang or even Gangou. Many properties that set Wutun apart from other possibly Sinitic varieties of the region may be attributed to this contextual fact of the language's history, as well as the predominant role of

³⁰⁷ So far as I can tell from Dwyer's (2007) study. See fn. 130.

Tibetan culture in the area, Wutun speakers themselves identifying as Tibetan and considering their language a Tibetan dialect. As such, and as also observed by Xu (2017), Wutun patterns much more like Daohua, as presented in Chapter 5, than its closer neighbors in Qinghai and Gansu.

7.3.1.1 *The Linguistic Features of Amdo Sinitic*

Phonetically, perhaps the most salient property in Amdo is the proliferation of aspiration and frication on both obstruents and vowels. There is also a strong tendency towards a CV profile, not unlike most of northern and southwestern China, and a reduction in tones. According to Shen and Nakano (2015), as well as Xu (2015), tone loss is a phenomenon common across most of northern China, checked only by urbanization, where tones appear more stable in cities, probably due to greater access to standard forms.

Other general features are captured in (7-96):

(7-96) Phonetic and Phonological Properties of Amdo Sinitic³⁰⁸

2-way Aspiration Contrast on Stops

Tangwang, Gangou, Xunhua, Xining

Retroflex and Alveolar Series of Obstruents

Tangwang, Gangou, Wutun, Xunhua, Xining

Labiodentals/Pre-labialized fricatives replacing retroflexes before [u]

Gangou, Xining, Lanzhou, ~Xunhua (varies)

Final Nasal Contrasts Carried on Vowels

Tangwang, Gangou, ~Wutun (variable), Xining

Fricative vowels

Tangwang, Gangou, Xunhua, Xining

(Near Complete) Monophthongization of all Rhymes

Tangwang, Gangou, Wutun

Reduced Tonal Inventory (from Standard Mandarin 4 tones)

Tangwang (2), Gangou (2-3), Wutun (0), Xining (3-4)

³⁰⁸ The listing of language varieties in this section is not meant to be exhaustive; as it was based on the resources I had at my disposal at the time of writing, it captures all known (to me) varieties carrying this feature. I duly note this introduces some ambiguity, in that Wutun's absence from the feature of 2-way contrasts here signals that it instead has a 3-way contrast, but could be read to infer incorrectly that I simply lacked the data (though it was presented in 7.2.1.2).

Nasal Zero-Initial

Tangwang, Gangou

Heavy aspiration on Stops/Spirantization of Stops

Tangwang, Xunhua, Gangou, Linxia (Xu 2017:56)

Morphologically, there is a greater tendency for affixation in the region than elsewhere in northern China, especially in suffixation. There is regular post-positional case-marking, and there is also regular marking of the plural. Just like plural marking, other features present in Standard Mandarin are further regularized in Amdo Sinitic, such as a lexically empty use of the diminutive and reduplication patterns. Recall from 3.4.3.4 that all of these features are common to Southwest Mandarin dialects as well.

There is also a tendency in Amdo, at least from a diachronic perspective, for double-marking, especially on pronouns. Finally, there are a number of shared morphemes with similar phonological forms, such as the ablative, instrumental and object case markers, as well as the “terminative” marker *-t^hala*, similar in form to the Monguor “successive” aspect marker, *-tala*, given by Slater (2003a:315) in 4.2.4.2.

A summary of the local features is given in (7-97):

(7-97) Noun Phrase Properties of Amdo Sinitic

Regularization of Mandarin Suffixes

Tangwang, Xining

Plural Marking on All Nominals

~Tangwang (optional), ~Wutun (optional), Xining

Ergative Alignment

none

Nominal Classifiers

Tangwang, Gangou, Xunhua, Wutun (1), Xining

Vowel-alternating Pronominal Paradigms

Tangwang, Wutun

Double-Marking on Sinitic Pronouns

Tangwang, Linxia, Wutun

Amdo-esque Comparative

Wutun, Xining

Heavy Work for the Nominal Morpheme (*h*)*a*

Tangwang, Gangou, Xining

Object Case Marking

Tangwang (*x*)*a*, Gangou (*x*)*a*, Wutun *xa* (considered focus marker), (*x*)*a*, Xining *xa*

Ablative Case Marking

Tangwang *ciε*, Gangou *ciε/sha*, Linxia *ta*, Xining *tciɑ/sɑ*, Wutun *la*

Instrumental Case Marking

Tangwang *la*, Gangou *lia(r)*, Xining *lia*, Linxia *la*

Terminative Suffix *-t^hala*

Tangwang, Linxia, “Qinghai”, Wutun

The verb phrase for all of the varieties surveyed is quite Sinitic in nature, with the expected aspect markers and resultative constructions. There is a greater tendency for there to be a future/futuritive marker, as well as a usage of the durative aspect for forming converbal constructions.

A summary of VP properties is given in (7-98):

(7-98) Verb Phrase Properties of Amdo Sinitic

Post-verbal Resultative/Complement Verbs

Tangwang, Gangou, Wutun, Xining

Causative use of “give” verb

Tangwang (Xu 2017:121), Gangou, Xunhua, Wutun (Sandman 2016:110)

Converbal clause linking using the Durative Aspect

Tangwang, Gangou, Linxia, “Qinghai”, Xunhua

Perfective, Progressive/Durative, Experiential Aspect Marking (as in Standard Mandarin)

Tangwang, Gangou, Xunhua, Xining

Future Marker

Tangwang, Wutun, Xining

As for the syntax, all of the language varieties are predominantly SOV in unmarked occurrences, with scrambling of pre-verbal elements a common phenomenon. Though as pointed in 7.2.4.1, the addition of the accusative case marker in SOV sentences, but not in SVO, similar to the analysis for Xining explored in 4.3.1.3, suggests perhaps a disambiguation strategy common to languages allowing freer word ordering via case marking. Such an analysis may give further weight to considering SVO an earlier form of the language. Finally, the noun phrases of

the region show more variation, differing between a Sinitic Mod-N order and a Tibetic N-Mod order across languages. (Mongolic has the same higher-level NP word order as Tibetic).

This kind of Sinitic ordering of Num-CL, even when post-nominal, has been hypothesized to result from wholesale copying of a classifier system from Chinese, with the numbers and classifiers adopted intact, an argument similarly made by Alves (2007) to account for Sinitic word ordering in Vietnamese. Sandman and Simon (2016) see it as a part of a greater trend of accommodating the semantic properties of nominals, and their patterns, in the model language, presumably Tibetan, without copying the phonological material along with those patterns. They assume that changes in overall clausal word order, as well as non-Sinitic patterns of direct and indirect object ordering, are part of the same process. In this case, assuming all of the varieties to be Sinitic, we may assume the ordering is inherited, and such an argument is only needed for languages like Salar or Monguor, where classifiers are presumed to be borrowed (see 4.2.5.3).

The syntactic features noted are given in (7-99):

(7-99) Syntactic Properties of Amdo Sinitic

Verb-final Word Order (perhaps with scrambling)

Tangwang, Gangou, Linxia, Wutun, Xunhua, Xining

SVO Order Noted for Various Structures

Tangwang, Xining, Gangou (noteably less; Yang 2015)

Numeral-Classifier-Noun Order

Tangwang, Xining

Noun-Numeral-Classifier Order

Gangou, Wutun

Pre-verbal Negation

Tangwang, Wutun, Gangou, Xunhua, ~Xining (varies)

Reports of Hybrid Structures/Heavy Variation

Tangwang, Xining

Finally, at the discourse level, there is a strong tendency to have a morpheme functioning like a topic or focus marker, often homophonous with the object case marker. There is also a trend of adapting the ‘say’ verb to serve as a final hearsay evidential marker, as well as some shared modal particles across varieties.

A collection of discourse marking trends is given in (7-100):

(7-100) Discourse Properties of Amdo Sinitic

Topic/Focus Particle (h)a

Tangwang, Wutun, Xining(?)

Final Hearsay Particle from ‘Say’ Verb

Tangwang, Xunhua, Gangou, Wutun, Xining

Subjective/Objective (Conjunct/Disjunct) Marking in Predicate

Wutun

Finally, the only point to note about the lexicon is that all varieties have a majority of their morphemes from Sinitic sources, though Wutun considerably less so. As was the case in discussing Bai in Dali (6.2.7.1, 6.3.1.4), the Sinitic nature of the local varieties’ lexicons, particularly Tangwang and Wutun, have been at the center of the discussion as to language type and relationship. As such, we will return to this topic in 7.3.2. However, first it is worth considering the unique properties of Wutun as a member of the Amdo sprachbund.

7.3.1.2 Wutun’s Outlier Properties and Other Regional Idiosyncrasies

Among the languages surveyed in this chapter, Wutun stands out in some ways, especially in terms of its relative complexity. This is perhaps most evident in its phonological inventory, which, as noted in 7.2.1.2, has an almost split syllabic inventory between Sinitic and Tibetic vocabulary, the latter allowing for complex onsets from the cluster-heavy Amdo Tibetan lexicon. However, we also saw, in the case of phonologically adapted Sinitic vocabulary ending

in /ou/, that features of the Tibetan syllable, viz. a final [k], are creeping into the Sinitic syllabic phonology, nonetheless.

Additionally one may speak to other ways that Wutun has a greater degree of specification, and thus by John McWhorter's (2007) standards, a more complex grammatical system overall: it is the only Sinitic language of Amdo to have a three-way contrast on obstruents, in which it is more like Daohua in Kham; it is the only one to contrast aspiration on fricatives, or voicing on laterals, in which it differs from, and appears even more Tibetan than, Daohua in Kham (see 5.2.2.3); it has interesting segments, such as uvular fricatives and tense vowels and a dorso-palatal approximant. In all of these ways, it patterns with Amdo Tibetan, in having large phonological inventories, unlike the other languages, including Monguor and Salar, which are more constrained along the same parameters.

In terms of other linguistic properties, we find more pronominal distinctions, such as 3-way deixis on demonstratives, dual and paucal number marking, as well as Tibetan-esque evidentially marked copulas and existentials at the end of predicates, further ways in which the structure appears more Tibetan than many of Wutun's neighbors.

Besides Wutun, there are also several linguistic varieties noted for having unexpected phonological adaptations for individual lexemes presumably inherited from Sinitic, namely in the development of aspirated initials from what in other varieties of Northern Chinese would be unaspirated. Examples included Tangwang 步 'step' [p^hu], the second morpheme in Gangou 尾巴 'tail' [jep^ha] and Wutun 薄 'thin' [p^hə]. Other seemingly one-off adaptations, unexpected by the regular rules of Middle Chinese-to-Northern Sinitic adaptations, are noted by authors, speaking to unique local developments, such as failure to palatalize velars where otherwise expected. It is also interesting to note that in Gangou and Tangwang, Hui speakers have

distinctive sub-dialects, especially noticeable in tonal phonology, within these language varieties themselves.

It should be pointed out that Wutun is spoken in a particularly tight-knit community, consisting of only three villages “covering hardly more than one square kilometer” (Janhunnen et al. 2007:11), though between Xining and Lanzhou, technically all areas are rural, and relatively more isolated. Nonetheless, compared with Xining (and Lanzhou), one might consider Wutun to be more isolated, perhaps even cut off socially from the broader Amdo linguistic area, comparatively speaking, and thus primed for greater complexity by Peter Trudgill’s criteria--- which indeed it exhibits. Interestingly, though, Trudgill (2011), and to some extent McWhorter (2007), would argue these settings foster retentions of complexity, whereas Wutun’s complexity comes primarily from its Tibetic properties, argued here not to be inherited, but rather borrowed.

7.3.2 [Back to Linguistic Arguments for Amdo Chinese](#)

In many ways the same questions from earlier chapters obtain here, obviously as applied in Chapter 4 for Xining, but also in Chapter 5 for Kham as well. Though Tangwang and Gangou look a lot like Xining linguistically, in some senses, as noted in 7.3.1, Wutun patterns more like Daohua, in exhibiting more Tibetic features in its phonology and discourse marking, than the other Amdo Sinitic varieties considered. In Chapter 5 I argued that, while Daohua shows evidence of regional Sinitic forms distinct from modern Standard Mandarin, when considering its morphosyntax and its historical social setting, it fits many of the criteria usually ascribed to a mixed language. So, then, is there an argument in Amdo for treating Wutun separately from Tangwang, Gangou, Xining and others? And further, do we assume that Wutun is the result of local Tibetans learning Chinese, and disregarding tones, or do we think that Wutun represents

the logical conclusion of broader geographic trends of depleting tonal inventories (cf. Shen and Nakano 2015)?

Unfortunately, though it is conceivable that the same Qing armies, moving to counter Dzungar influence in Tibet, passed through Tongren county, and thus the Wutun area, on their way to Kham, accounts (available to me) of this locality are lacking, as compared with those of Kham³⁰⁹. Whereas in Kham, numerous observations of intermarriage and multilingual, multiethnic trade brokers are available in the literature (see 5.3.2), here similar descriptions, other than for the *xiejia* trade houses and multilingual encounters around Xining (see 4.3.2.2), are lacking. Therefore, at present, the argument from socio-historical factors for Wutun, Tangwang and others discussed in this chapter is not possible. This only leaves the discrepancy in linguistic features.

In 5.3.3.1 I noted Chirkova (2012b) considered Daohua to be a “heavily Tibetanized Sinitic language” on the basis of an inherited Sinitic vocabulary, which exhibited developments from Middle Chinese that align it with Northern Sinitic in general. She makes the same argument in that paper for Wutun as well, claiming that all of the features that set Wutun apart from Mandarin, including the “reversal of diagnostic trends”, such as loss of coda obstruents and loss of 3-way onset contrasts (that is, the Wutun innovations that restore the assumed Sinitic language back towards a Middle Chinese-esque phonology), can be attributed to later Tibetan influence and areal convergence. That is in opposition to (extending her argument here) the possible development of an entirely new language in accounting for Wutun.

This would fit the case I have made for Xining in Chapter 4, and for Tangwang, Gangou and others in this chapter. However, as it conflicts with the analysis I made for Daohua in Chapter 5,

³⁰⁹ Though, as mentioned in 7.1.2, Sandman and Simon (2016:89) ascribe Wutun’s origin to just that.

we have to consider, in the absence of paralinguistic evidence, whether Wutun is different enough from those languages to account for it like we did Daohua. Specifically, it becomes a question of looking beyond lexical statistics, to ask whether Wutun grammar looks like the merger of two intertwined languages, or simply outside influence on a single inherited system. Let us therefore compare it to its neighbor Tangwang, presented in this chapter, using the arguments put forth by Xu Dan (2017) based on statistical comparisons of features.

Xu (2017:126) declares that Tangwang cannot be anything other than a Sinitic variety, in part because of the many historical features it shares in common with neighboring Chinese varieties of the northwest, but also because, by Thomason and Kaufman's definition, a mixed language must be impossible to trace back to a single ancestor, and Tangwang has too many features, particularly in phonology and lexicon (see also 7.2.1.1), to trace back to Sinitic.³¹⁰ As she states:

"If some scholars think that Wutun and Daohua are mixed languages, it is in fact due to their heavy syntactic borrowings which are alien to Chinese. However the Chinese lexicon constitutes basic vocabulary in Wutun and Daohua (Xu 2017:134)."

However, such an analysis takes Thomason and Kaufman's definition too much at face value, and values a quantitative percentage-based explanation, which lends itself to quite arbitrary judgments (as discussed below and in Chapter 8), over a more holistic approach to both the grammar of the language and the socio-historical setting it belongs to. From the perspective of mixed languages, a variety with a Sinitic lexicon but a predominantly non-Sinitic morphosyntax would by definition characterize a mixed language---even more so if the social setting from which it "emerged" were the same as more familiar mixed languages around the world.

³¹⁰ Xu's study also uses population genetic studies to show that a majority of the Tangwang speaking population share chromosomal traits with Han people. I do not pursue genetic arguments in this dissertation, and am wary of them in general, given the possibility of historical multilingualism and language shift.

Xu (2017:49) claims that the phonological system of Tangwang is inherited from Middle Chinese, and even Old Mandarin, the latter of which she uses the 14th century 中原音韵 *Zhongyuan Yinyun* to conclude. While it retains some features of Old Mandarin lost in Standard Mandarin, it also exhibits allophones not found in either. For instance, one diagnostic Xu uses for distinguishing Tangwang and other regional language varieties as distinct from Modern Mandarin is the development of the historical velar-nasal initial³¹¹, such as [nɔ] 傲 ‘haughty’ (SM [ao⁵³]), [ŋi] 硬 ‘solid’ (SM [iŋ⁵³]) and [nuə] 俄 ‘hungry’ (SM [ɤ⁵³]), as nasal onsets. From this historical category Tangwang also has the unique allophones [ʋ ŋ ʑ χ] initially, depending on the following vowel. Furthermore, Xu (2017:51) gives examples of the historical glottal stop-initial category from Middle Chinese (影母), which has developed into Tangwang nasal initials, but the zero initial (i.e. an onset-less syllable) in Standard Mandarin, e.g. [nɛ̃] 安 ‘peace’ (SM [an⁵⁵]), [nɛ] 爱 ‘love’ (SM [ai⁵¹]), and [nɔ] 袄 ‘Chinese jacket’ (SM [au²¹³]). As can be seen from the Standard Mandarin pronunciations, that variety has simply lost the Middle Chinese initial in most morphemes of the language. Though note also that a velar nasal is a common variant pronunciation of the zero-initial among speakers of Standard Mandarin, along with [ʔ] and [ɣ], as discussed by Duanmu (2007:72), and as such, using the pronunciation of the zero initial, an inherently variable feature, and an allophone at that, may be not the most compelling

³¹¹ Xu (2017) mentions other such MC-to-Old Mandarin changes that are not present, or not present in full, in Tangwang, such as palatalization of velars before high front vowels, as in [ta kɛ] 大街 ‘main street’ (SM [ta⁵³ tɕiɛ⁵⁵]). The same morpheme, with its unpalatalized initial velar stop, is discussed as a borrowing into Salar, by Dwyer (2007) in 4.2.2.3, and as a retention in Daohua by Chirkova (2012b) in 5.3.3.1. However, in a qualifying statement, Zev Handel (p.c.) notes: “Lack of palatalization of velars in second-division words (like ‘street’) is typical of SW Mandarin. I presume we do see palatalization in third- and fourth-division words (e.g. *jian* ‘see’).”

diagnostic criterion, perhaps more on par with the noted “heavy aspiration” of obstruents noted for regional languages, as mentioned in 7.2.1 and 4.2.2.3, in the context of Salar.

Xu (2017:53) pinpoints this development as happening toward the end of the Yuan dynasty in the 14th century, based on corroborating historical evidence and philological information from the *Zhongyuan Yinyun*. (See her original argument in text for tracking the changes to these initial categories in Middle Chinese, Old Mandarin, Tangwang and Standard Mandarin.) That is, she sees these regularities as indicative of a vocabulary inherited from Old Mandarin, rather than as borrowed into an Altaic language present in the region at a subsequent time (Xu 2017:62). Since they are missing from later forms of northern Chinese to have entered the region at a later period, they cannot be borrowed forms, but rather part of the natural development of a local Sinitic variety.

As opposed to the inherited vocabulary and phonology, morphosyntactically, the situation in Tangwang is quite different. Xu (2017:128) points out that, while Tangwang morphosyntax is heavily restructured, with an otherwise Sinitic lexicon, the language it has the most contact with, Santa (Dongxiang), remains a morphosyntactically Mongolic language, yet with heavy lexical borrowing from Chinese. By her count (which draws mainly from three dissertations on Santa), Chinese borrowings into that Mongolic language stand at 35%, slightly less than in neighboring Shira Yughur, which is also Mongolic (ibid.140)³¹².

According to Xu (2017:107), 34 sentences from a “2000-word story” in Tangwang exhibited OV word order, while 19 sentences were VO. In Xu’s (2017:108) view, SVO was the original order

³¹² Interestingly, however, Xu makes the assumption, partly supported by genetic studies, that the Dongxiang population was originally Turkic, or even Arab or Persian, and so counts that percentage of the lexicon as “native”, and the roughly 60% Mongolic vocabulary as borrowings, or at least not “ancestral”.

of Tangwang (i.e., implied to be spoken by Han settlers in the region, in line with their Middle Chinese-descended Sinitic language), and it has been moving to OV over time, in alignment with languages of the region. (This tracks easily with the argument for Xining's change to SOV word order put forth in 4.3.1.3.) One may add to this evidence the adaptation of the accusative marker as a functional strategy to deal with the shifting word order, as suggested by Stevan Harrell in 7.2.4.3, and analyzed for Xining in 4.3.1.3.

This change over time results in a situation of syntactic variation, according to Xu, where the older SVO forms, remaining in less frequently occurring syntactic structures, are taken as being retentions, on the assumption that degree of language change is correlated with token frequency. This argument is opposed to (re-)alignment with standard Chinese norms brought by more recent immigrants, as is argued by Dede (2006) for the hybrid forms in Xining. Whether both trends, older retentions and newly (re-)introduced SVO forms, are present in the data, and how to distinguish them, is an interesting question for future research.

Operating on the assumption that a language may "become mixed" if a majority of its morphosyntax shifts away from its ancestral language, and aiming to quantify syntactic borrowing by applying a comparative list of 53 syntactic features to analyses of Tangwang, Wutun, Santa, Daohua, Standard Mandarin and "Tibetan", Xu (2017:132-139) produces percentages of borrowed morphosyntactic content in the purportedly Sinitic languages in question. Her conclusion is that Tangwang, Wutun and Daohua all maintain at least 50% Sinitic grammar, but with different degrees of restructuring.

While Santa is Mongolic in almost every way, by Xu's (2017:Chapter 6) calculations, Tangwang shares around 38% of its grammar with Santa, versus about 56% with Mandarin. In a

tallying of syntactic features shared between Wutun or Daohua, on the one hand, and Tibetan on the other, Xu (2017:135) determines that Daohua shares around 49% of its morphosyntax with Tibetan, while Wutun shares around 45%³¹³. This roughly half-Tibetan, half-Sinitic breakdown of Daohua, which has an almost 90% lexical count from Chinese, leads Xu (2017:138-139) to claim that Daohua is “more mixed” than either Wutun or Tangwang, though Wutun also constitutes a high percentage of non-Sinitic morphosyntax (including over 5% Mongolic). On the other hand, unlike Daohua, Wutun’s lexicon is only 63% Sinitic (Xu 2017:139), pointing towards (on the assumption Wutun is a Sinitic language) a heavier lexical borrowing from Tibetan in Wutun, somewhat similar to the Sinitic borrowing in Santa.

In creating a statistical program to sort languages along morphosyntactic difference and borrowed structures, Xu and her team found that, among the 96 typological features selected for testing, Daohua plots closer to Tibetan (Amdo and Lhasa), while Wutun, Tangwang, Linxia and Gangou all cluster closely together, nearer to (relatively speaking) the Mandarin group. Xining and Qinghai (it is not obvious what represents Qinghai, if it is not Xining) plot even closer still to Mandarin. That is, plotted as a continuum between Tibetan and Mandarin, Daohua is closest to the former, with Tangwang, Gangou and Linxia closest to the latter, and Wutun falls midway between the two groupings (Xu 2017:147-148). I provide an adaptation of Xu’s resultant “Neighbor-Joining Tree” diagram in (7-101) below:

(7-101) Schematization of a Tibetan-to-Mandarin typological continuum from Xu (2017:148)
 --Lhasa---Amdo----Daohua-----Wutun----Tangwang-Gangou-Linxia-----Xining---Lanzhou--SM

³¹³ Xu refers to the Tibetan variety exerting influence on both languages as Amdo, even though Kham Tibetan is spoken in the vicinity of Daohua. This likely means that the morphosyntactic features she compiles for comparison are all collected from an Amdo grammar alone, namely a study by Robin Françoise.

Taking Xu's methodology at face value, then, and especially if we are treating Daohua as a mixed language, we can see how blurry the picture is for Wutun, and how helpful it would be to apply socio-historical criteria to better contextualize its development. Spoken in an isolated setting, where the residents consider themselves to be ethnically Tibetan, rather than Han, despite their arguably Sinitic language, it feels then likely that Wutun may have arisen from the same inter-ethnic marriages and multilingual origins as Daohua in Kham. Whether more decisive evidence to support this origin for the language, as opposed to a directly transmitted Sinitic variety, as argued by Chirkova (2012b) and Xu (2017), exists in the historical record is a question for future research. Additionally, an analysis of the semantic ranges of vocabulary being more Sinitic or Tibetic (as explored for Daohua in 5.2.7.2) would also be a fruitful project to pursue.

Whether we take Wutun as a mixed language outlier or whether we consider it another case of a long-standing Han community that has moved towards local assimilation (in this case, significantly more so than other Amdo varieties), when taken together, all of the languages of this chapter, in addition to Xining in Chapter 4, speak to a broader areal trend of lexically Sinitic languages, influenced by but significantly distinct from, neighboring non-Sinitic languages.

Recall that in Chapter 4 I argued that we need not assume any historical language shift or substrate influence on Xining to account for its non-Sinitic structure (though we don't necessarily have to rule it out, just as we cannot rule out immigrant Han shifting to Tibetan), nor an account of a wholly different language, such as a creole or mixed language. The same argument continues to apply here, perhaps only diminished slightly in the face of a more

(mixed?) Tibetic profile for Wutun. If we set aside the fairly elaborate, and admittedly significant, egophoric system of Wutun, which has clear origins in Tibetan, then still no new areal trends have emerged that show an extreme departure from either minor patterns already evident in Sinitic (SOV word order, postpositions, and final particles ready to pick up the work of functional restructuring) or from borrowing/contact indicative of areal trends (such as ablative case marking, or reduced tonal contrasts).

The major features presented in this chapter, but not present in the data for Xining, is perhaps the subordination of clauses using a durative aspect morpheme, which in Sinitic might instead appear as a converbal structure, as well as the presence of fused pronominals, which sometimes result in double-marking. Nonetheless, these examples still do not greatly tip the scales away from an explanation in borrowing to a radical restructuring of the grammar. Rather they appear as an areally borrowed grammatical pattern, with Sinitic function morphemes (namely, durative markers) repurposed for their form, or straightforward internal developments following the loss of morphological transparency.

To speak of language shift, or to speak in terms of language genesis, as with creoles or mixed languages, one necessarily speaks of entire communities abandoning a language or developing a new one en masse. As such, if they are spoken in contiguity with their ancestral language, as is typical of mixed languages (2.3.3), they would appear as islands in the geographic linguistic environment, such as perhaps Monguors shifting to Chinese in Xining would be set apart from Monguor-speakers outside of Xining. But the features surveyed for Xining, Tangwang, Gangou, Linxia, Xunhua and to some extent Wutun, all speak to broader, more geographically expansive instances of definitively Sinitic varieties spoken alongside non-Sinitic languages, influenced by their neighbors, but carrying on their Sinitic profiles.

This characterization of mixed languages emerging rather abruptly, rather than as centuries-long developments from language contact, is broadly reflected in the literature on such languages as Michif, Mednyj Aleut, Sri Lankan Malay and so on, but conflicts with Xu's (2017) conceptualization of languages "becoming mixed" by crossing thresholds of borrowed material, whether lexical or morphosyntactic. While her clustering of variables helps to plot languages like Daohua or Wutun on a scale of more Tibetic or more Sinitic, it does not give a socio-historically pleasing picture of how mixed languages come into being. At the same time, however, it shows perhaps the arbitrariness or even futility of trying to claim a language like Wutun or Daohua is or is not a mixed language, simply by virtue of the number of morphosyntactic elements in its grammar from different languages.

Just like the case of Chamorro discussed in 2.3.4.1 (and to a lesser extent, perhaps, English, discussed in 2.3.4.2), some languages, in their long history of contact, can take on dramatic levels of borrowing, both lexically and morphosyntactically. While about half of Bai's basic vocabulary, and upwards of 70% of its non-basic vocabulary, are Sinitic in origin (6.2.7.1), as well as word order features of its syntax patterning with Sinitic (6.3.1.4), based on the unlikelihood that the Tibeto-Burman features of Bai, including the phonology of its more rural, non-standard dialects, were borrowed, we were still led to conclude that it started life as a Tibeto-Burman language, and was vastly restructured by Sinitic. As such, to arbitrarily quantify a threshold for a mixed language, versus a genetically inherited language, even at 50% tipping points, loses the viewpoint of the unique socio-historical settings that give rise to mixed languages, if not also the unique way in which the subcomponents of grammar and semantics operate in such languages.

As for “Amdo Chinese” as a subgrouping of Sinitic, future research can better define how far this geographic area extends, and whether it gradually fades into other regions of the northern Sinitic area, or whether there exists an abrupt isogloss, separating “Amdo Sinitic” from, say, Central Plains or Southwestern Mandarin. (With regards to the latter, as mentioned in 7.3.1.1, there is some evidence that certain phonological and nominal features gradually fade across the Amdo-Kham borders.)

In closing, echoing remarks made by McWhorter (2007:132-135), where he refers to regional languages like Wutun as “Altaicization to the Max”, it is interesting to note, as is commonly assumed following Hashimoto (1986), that if all of northern Sinitic is “Altaicized”, the Chinese varieties spoken in (and around?) Amdo constitute an enhanced extension of that typological trend. How we see the difference between Beijing, Xi’an and Xining Mandarin, as well as perhaps Xining and Wutun, may present to us a more refined narrative of how the Chinese language itself has developed at the margins of the old empire alongside its cultural carriers’ historical and demographic trends.

8 Language Change and Contact in Ethnological History

“The conventional subgrouping procedure based on prioritizing a limited number of similarities that may be indicative of common ancestry (common innovations) and essentially favoring one linguistic subsystem (lexicon), in the absence of objective criteria to factor out diffusion, cannot guarantee objectivity of results in an area of considerable historical, ethnic, and linguistic complexity...especially in the absence of previous attestations of its languages. A reliable alternative consists of subgrouping based on a maximally large number of synchronic similarities, that are further not prioritized as to their historical significance, that is, overall synchronic similarities, whatever these similarities may signify (genetic inheritance or results of diffusion).”
(Katia Chirkova 2012:152)

“If one doubts the sinicization model for empire-building in China, one does not start an analysis with the notion that the dynasties actively and deliberately spread from the center to open frontiers, either by cultural persuasion or by conquest. ...[T]he imperial state was but a cultural idea, ...its authoritative metaphors permeated frontier society in the South not through laws and edicts imposed from above, but through the efforts of aspiring local populations...[who] adopted notions from the political center in particular historical moments and applied them as the language of the imperial order in the process of making local society.”
(Helen Siu and Zhiwei Liu 2006:289)

In this conclusion chapter, I summarize the main findings from the case studies of Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, and discuss how they relate to the theoretical and analytic questions raised in Chapters 2 and 3. In 8.1, I recount the main findings about the focal languages of this dissertation, their respective language areas, and the problematic theoretical issues pertaining to their classification as mixed languages or as members of their most-often assumed language families. In 8.2, I review the social settings of Amdo, Kham and Dali, and how likely language contact and language genesis followed certain plausible routes of development. There I claim that trade, and perhaps even more so, intermarriage between Han and non-Han, were the major avenues driving contact-based language change in these regions. I then discuss thorny issues in doing historical linguistics in localities where ethnic identity and group affiliation are difficult to trace through the historical record. In 8.3, I generalize from the findings of the first

two sections, and the dissertation as a whole, to issues in defining Sinitic as a language family, particularly placing languages into subgroups, given continua of contact, as well as thinking of the family as a whole from a creolist perspective, including what to make of language varieties like those in this dissertation. Finally, in 8.4, I summarize and conclude, acknowledging outstanding problems and possible projects for future research.

8.1 Comparison of Language Contact on the China-Tibet Frontier

In this section I summarize the findings from Chapters 4-7 regarding the language settings of Amdo, Kham and Dali. In 8.1.1 I give a brief summary of the focal languages of this dissertation, the Xining dialect, Daohua, Bai, Tangwang and Wutun, noting their similarities and differences, vis-à-vis family prototype and contact-influence. In 8.1.2, I speak to the criteria and problems in defining language areas, as discussed in 2.1 and 2.2, and the similarities and differences across these three regions. Finally, in 8.1.3, I note the problems in describing each as either Sinitic, creole or mixed language.

8.1.1 General Characteristics of the Case Studied Languages

This dissertation has profiled in depth several language varieties that have been viewed at least by some researchers as Sinitic, namely Southwest Mandarin (3.4.3), the Xining dialect of eastern Qinghai (4.2), Yajiang Daohua of Sichuan (5.2), the Bai language of Dali in northwestern Yunnan (6.2) and a handful of other Chinese-lexified varieties in Amdo, especially Tangwang and Wutun (7.2). Besides all being potentially Sinitic, each—with the exception of Southwest Mandarin, which serves as an example of a group uncontroversially taken to be a case of historically “normal transmission” (Thomason and Kaufman 1988)—are well-known in the

literature for language contact playing an outsized role in their evolution, to the point that some have been considered creoles or mixed languages, a point I will return to in 8.1.3.

As case studies in language contact in a Chinese frontier setting, Bai, Daohua, Xining, Tangwang and Wutun all share a number of features in common: they all exhibit verb-final word order, except for Bai, though SOV word orders do show up in Bai embedded or marked or variant occurrences. They all make use of classifiers in quantified NPs, which always follow the numerals, though they differ in headedness: Daohua, Bai and Wutun have post-nominal quantification, the same as Tibetan (and Ngwi), while Tangwang and Xining have pre-nominal quantification, the same as Chinese. They also all mark nouns for case, particularly accusative/object marking and locative marking, with ablative being common in Amdo. They all have rather reduced syllable inventories overall, from CV to CV(G)/(N), though Wutun and Daohua have more Tibetic onsets of pre-nasalized stops and clusters in some Tibetan borrowings. Except for Wutun, they are all tonal, though in keeping with regional trends, Xining and Tangwang appear to be losing purely pitch-based contrasts (4.2.2.4 and 7.2.1.1, respectively). Finally, they all draw a majority of their lexicon from Sinitic, with Xining, Tangwang and Daohua almost completely Sinitic (over 90%), with Bai and Wutun less so, at over 70% and 63%, respectively (6.2.7.1 and 7.3.2).

The main differences we find are the degree to which discourse features of evidentiality and egophoricity have been incorporated into the morphosyntax. Daohua and Wutun are the only languages which have done so, being spoken in predominantly Tibetan communities, by culturally Tibetan speakers. Though Xining's neighbor Monguor, the language of the group assumed to have shifted to Chinese, thus restructuring the language in Dede (1999) and Bell's

(2017) accounts, does have such a system of evidentiality, aside from a single hearsay particle grammaticalized from the ‘say’ verb, Xining, like Tangwang, lacks such a system.

The adoption of an entire discourse system of marking, which has global effects on the morphosyntax, is interesting from a language contact perspective, as it could serve as what McConvell (2008) calls a “center of gravity”—the carrier of a language’s primary morphological marking, that could serve as a point of crystallization in codeswitching practice (2.3.3.3).

Nonetheless, both Daohua and Wutun rely on Sinitic forms to transplant the Tibetic system into their language (or develop it originally, if we assume either are new languages—see 8.1.3), implying that what occurred is not borrowing but pattern replication in the sense of Heine and Kuteva (2005)—that is the borrowing of structure or meaning without the borrowing of form.

Were one to rely on an account of language shift for Xining and Tangwang, it would be hard to account for why the speakers did not carry along (or develop, as may have been the case in Monguor) a similar system, which presumably originates from Tibetan³¹⁴. On the other hand, Daohua and Wutun are spoken in overwhelmingly Tibetan areas, isolated at that, which could have given more force to local Sinitic speakers to implement such a system in their language (using, mostly, their own re-purposed morphemes). Tangwang, spoken in a more multicultural, and more Altaic-speaking area, though isolated, may have received less input than in Tongren or Yajiang, and Xining, in the least isolated region of all, even less so.

The question then arises to what extent the similarities and differences between these varieties stem from the specific linguistic settings in which they evolved, and how much that differs from expected genetic inheritance. Are these languages the only ones to undergo such

³¹⁴ While there appear to be some trends of adapting ‘say’ verbs to hearsay markers in other Mongolic languages (see Table 15 in 4.3.1.2), they pale in comparison to the informational system of Tibetan. See also Sandman and Simon (2016) on Tibetan as a regional “model language” throughout Amdo.

significant changes? In other words, how much are they a product of the local feature pools of which they form a component part? Let us then turn next to the topic of local language areas.

8.1.2 The Areas of Amdo, Kham and Dali

A primary concern of this dissertation was considering the dynamics of regions that count as language areas, or sprachbunds, and how they differ from other regions, given that language contact is common in all spaces of multilingual interaction. The following lists in (8-1)-(8-3) illustrate the features that were shared across most (not all) of the surveyed languages in each area of Amdo, Kham and Dali (see the head maps for Chapters 4, 5 and 6, respectively for location), with Amdo, the most typologically diverse among the three regions in terms of linguistic profiles, having about twice as many shared features as the other two regions.

Note that these inventories, which are surely not exhaustive, are not meant to be comparative in the sense of some master set of features that each individual area either has or does not have; rather, as unique language settings, they each exhibit their own set of features, though being adjacent to each other, they may share some overlap, with each other or to the Northern Sinitic regions to the north or the Southeast Asia linguistic area to the south.

(8-1) Linguistic Features of Amdo (4.3.1.1 and 7.3.1.1):

1. 2-way, heavily aspirated versus non-aspirated obstruent contrasts
2. fricative/apical vowels
3. alveolopalatals
4. retroflexes
5. transphonologization of nasality from codas to vowels
6. reduced tonal inventories, moving towards final-stress patterns
7. case and number marking on nominals
8. indefinite marking (not explored, but noted by Slater 2013a:315)
9. future marking in the verb phrase
10. SOV constituent order
11. Modifier + Noun NP order
12. classifiers, but fewer than in other Sinitic varieties
13. extension of 'say' verb to evidential marking

14. subjective/objective marking of egophoricity, especially with final copulas or existentials
15. a verb-phrase that tends towards V + Complement structure

Among the Sinitic varieties of Amdo specifically one could add: nasal zero-initials, extension of lexically bleached diminutives and reduplication patterns, double-marking on pronouns, causative usage of the 'give' verb and durative converbial clause-linking.

(8-2) Linguistic Features of Kham (5.3.1.1)

1. 3-way contrasts on obstruents
2. pre-nasals
3. (C)CV syllable structure
4. low tonal inventories, perhaps in an intermediate stage of phonologization
5. nominal case-marking
6. semantically specified nominalizers
7. aspect marked in the verb phrase, not tense
8. complex evidentiality systems, with cross-constituent collocations
9. volition and/or control verbs
10. SOV constituent ordering
11. Noun + Modifier NP ordering
12. similar verb phrase profiles of post-verbal agglutination

(8-3) Linguistic Features of Dali (6.3.1.1)

1. analytic morphological profiles
2. plural marking
3. affixed negation
4. case particles, but different cases marked in each language
5. CV syllable structure
6. larger tone inventories than in Amdo or Kham
7. tone concomitant with laryngeal settings
8. rhinoglottophilia
9. 3-way obstruent contrasts, except for urban Bai dialects
10. apical vowels and the phoneme [ɣ]
11. lots of secondarily articulated consonantal phonemes (but not in Bai)
12. highly specified pronominal paradigms
13. post-verbal aspect marking
14. SOV word order for Ngwi and Naic languages
15. recently grammaticalized evidential particles (Bradley 2010:76), but not in Bai

One may add the possibility, though not found in my reading, of frequently stated Southeast

Asian sprachbund features to Dali: highly lexically specified verbal morphemes, calquing, or

function borrowing without form copying, and parallel grammaticalization of verbal morphemes, such as those described by Matisoff (2001) or Enfield (2001, 2019) (6.3.1.2).

The precise definition of a sprachbund has been a point of some contention among scholars, as described in 2.2. One way of putting it is that languages in a sprachbund look less like their genetic relatives in certain shared respects, and more like their neighbors. In 4.3.1.2 I considered how the local features compared to related languages outside of the region. From a genetic perspective, Sinitic appears to have undergone fewer changes than Mongolic or Turkic languages: those languages gained retroflex and alveolopalatal phonemes, shifted from voicing to aspiration as a primary contrast on obstruents, adopted classifiers in noun phrases, and adopted evidentiality morphemes in the predicate, all features of Sinitic not found in Mongolic or Turkic languages outside of Amdo. Local Sinitic, on the other hand, besides minor adjustments to local tonal and sub-contrastive phonetic trends, only adopted certain changes to its constituent order, along with case-marking, which I argue in 4.3.1.3 has precedent in internal Sinitic constructions, or what Heine and Kuteva (2005) term “minor use patterns”. On the other hand, local Amdo Tibetan appeared not to have shifted in its profile in any of the ways noted for other languages.

One may note a few features that appear to extend across all regions, though some languages may be lacking: apical vowels and syllabic labiodental phonemes developed from high, back vowels, usually transcribed as [ɣ]; morphologically marked future on verbs; SOV word ordering (Bai is the significant outlier here, along with Southwest Mandarin); case marking, but not clearly different in function from postpositions, sometimes with the same phonological form for multiple, seemingly distinct, cases; alveolopalatal consonants; reduced or reducing syllabic profiles (with Amdo Tibetan, and Qiangic languages generally being outliers) and developing or

highly developed evidential systems, the latter apparently under the influence of Tibetan. Note also that, while Tibetan is a (partially) ergatively aligned grammatical system, only Daohua shows evidence of ergative alignment, all the other languages of this dissertation being accusatively aligned.

The most striking comparison, however, comes from noting the tendency in the Amdo region for sharing of forms, at least among Altaic and Sinitic varieties, versus the parallel function of morphemes in Kham, without the copying of phonological forms, the latter a process much discussed in the literature on the Southeast Asian sprachbund. That is, while the ablative marker, for example, has a similar phonological shape across family lines in Amdo, the case markers in Daohua and Dege Tibetan, though functioning similarly, have Sinitic forms in the former and Tibetic forms in the latter.

The reasons for the greater sharing of forms in Amdo, and the implications for this possible distinction among sprachbund types (convergent-form sprachbunds versus functional-replication sprachbunds, one might call it) would be an interesting topic for further investigation. Would the explanation follow from socio-historical circumstances, such as residential distribution or access to prestige languages, from patterns of multilingualism, or would it be purely linguistic (the languages of the Amdo sprachbund come from many different (sub-)families, with more variable typologies, while those of Kham and Dali are more uniform, being, besides Sinitic, all Tibeto-Burman)?

Or, to form a hypothesis comparing the Amdo sprachbund to the Southeast Asia sprachbund, perhaps would it relate to time depth, with language areas like Southeast Asia, which formed in ancient times (see, e.g. Blench (2009), discussed in 6.3.1.2), tending more towards replicating grammatical patterns, without borrowing forms, while those of shallower time depths, like

Amdo, tending towards more borrowing of form? One should note that in Kham, at least viewing the setting from the perspective of Daohua's locality, the time depth is perhaps shallower than that of Amdo by at least a century, but Kham looks more like Southeast Asia: Daohua makes use of a largely Tibetic grammatical system, but with mostly Sinitic phonological forms, while the semantic range of individual morphemes, again Sinitic in form, match the usage pattern of Tibetan, not Chinese, morphemes.

Conversely, based solely on the current study, are we prepared to call Yajiang, or Dali for that matter, a language area in the same way we would call Amdo? Most certainly language contact has been pervasive in each area, but only in Amdo do we find extensive convergence of form and function. Nonetheless, this observation could be the result of the way the present study was conducted. Investigating this topic from the perspective of pattern replication, such as that put forth by Heine and Kuteva (2005), an under-utilized framework in this dissertation, unfortunately, may yield more parallels with Kham and Dali. See, for example, the apparent borrowing of the Tibetan comparative construction with Sinitic morphemes in Xining and Wutun, discussed in 4.2.5.4 and 7.2.4.2, respectively. Also see a pattern discussed by Sandman and Simon (2016:110), where the semantic function of the verb meaning 'to sit' marks durative aspect in Salar and Wutun, an extension common in Tibetic, but non-existent in Sinitic or Turkic, and also absent in Mongolic (outside the Amdo sprachbund).

Note also that researchers have attempted alternate areal typologies, focusing on broad typological profiles (and linking them to historical contact situations in the same vein as McWhorter 2007), such as DeLancey's "transparent" versus "opaque" languages of the region, discussed in 6.3.1.3, which, if the correlation holds, may tell us more about the local evolution of languages than a simple inventory of similar features or patterns could.

This dissertation also explored the question of linguistic complexity, as defined and illustrated by authors such as McWhorter (2007) and Trudgill (2011), and how it relates to historical language contact. Roughly the idea is that, owing to their cosmopolitan setting of (mostly adult L2-learner) linguistic interaction, urban settings lead to more contact, and result in simplification or regularization of linguistic structure, while isolated communities, with smaller, denser social networks, retain complexity and foster opacity and redundancy of forms.

Interestingly, when grammatical or phonological complexity is noticeable in any settings of this dissertation, it is usually not evident in the focal languages of this dissertation, with Daohua and Wutun being exceptions: Daohua has a fairly complex system of evidential marking, whereas Wutun exhibits much of the same phonological complexity as its Tibetan neighbor. Otherwise, Amdo Tibetan exhibits complex syllable margins and typologically marked contrasts such as aspirated fricatives and voiceless sonorants. nDrapa has a highly specified grammar, with directional prefixes, multiple future and existential verbs, and its own set of complex onsets. And Yongning Na, with its own large phoneme inventory, has both a highly specified evidential system, which interacts with sentential mood and subject reference, and a complex system of tone sandhi, which is sensitive to lexical category, such as in the Na classifier system.

What all of those languages have in common, other than some marked metric of complexity, such as overspecification of marking or opacity of forms, are more isolated settings, and smaller speech communities, relative to the urban varieties of Xining, (Jianchuan or Dali) Bai, and perhaps Dege. Though Dege served as a regional lingua franca, related to its role within the prominent Dege kingdom (5.2.1.2), it is not entirely shorn of complexity, with highly opaque and idiosyncratic case marking and complex pronominal specification. Nonetheless, for the most part Peter Trudgill's criteria for "maintaining" complexity in rural, isolated, dense social

networks discussed in 2.4.2 seems to be mostly borne out across this dissertation, while the assumption that language contact, particularly in multilingual, urban settings leads to simplification is somewhat upheld, though only in comparison to these rural varieties. I return to this topic in 8.3.2, considering the relative complexity of Amdo and Kham Sinitic in light of the larger family.

Finally, recall from 2.2 that linguists argue over how many languages, or language families, constitute a language area, and how many shared features, and whether anywhere can be a language area if one is simply observing historical contact in geographic space (and thus nowhere is a language area). Perhaps investigation of Yajiang is not comparable to Amdo or Dali, given that only three languages were compared. However, interestingly, though Daohua seems to be a mixed system of Tibetan and Chinese, in the summary sections throughout 5.2, Daohua appeared to pattern with nDrapa almost as much as it did Dege Tibetan, as illustrated in Table 16 and Table 19 from Chapter 5.

Note, however, that convergence, and borrowing in general, can be hard to distinguish between internal development when languages are of similar typological profiles or from the same language family, where inherited forms may differ from borrowings only in minor tonal or vocalic reflexes (Mithun 2013; Na'ama Pat-El (2013); see 2.3.1). Satoko Shirai (2018; discussed in 5.2.7.1) has shown this to be the case in Kham, especially with regards to basic vocabulary and pronoun distribution, while Chirkova (2012a,b) claims that the so-called Qiangic languages, and possibly Kham Tibetan as well, may be areal, and not genetic, groupings after all. (See 8.3.3 below for more discussion on utilizing areal trends in language classification.)

8.1.3 Language Types and the Messiness of Terminology

The case studies of this dissertation were chosen both because they are all spoken in a wide, but geographically contiguous, region that marks the historical frontier between China and Tibet, and as such share reasonably similar historical trajectories, but also because they all have received similar attention in the linguistic literature regarding their history of language contact. Each has been argued to be Sinitic by some authors, most have been called “creoles” or “creolized” by some, and some have been considered “mixed languages” (under more and less precise employments of the term) by others. A stated goal at the outset of this project was to determine which label best fits the facts.

8.1.3.1 *On the Inadequacy of Structural Classification*

The main problem for “seeking truth from facts” here is that the labels themselves are not exact, nor universally agreed upon, and underpinned by too disparate of assumptions by different researchers examining the same sets of data. These contentions, some of which were explored globally in 2.3, involve issues of typological prototypes (must creoles be simple grammars? do mixed languages involve sub-component “intertwining?”), of posited origins (must creoles emerge from pidgins? are mixed languages always products of social identity?), of deducing such origins from contemporary structure (does grammatical restructuring towards one language with a lexicon drawn from another necessarily point to language shift?) and of developmental path (do creoles and mixed languages emerge abruptly or gradually over time?), as well as whether there is a quantifiable methodology for ascribing a language synchronically to one or another category versus considering it a dialect or offshoot of some established language family or subgroup.

To recap the points of contention for each language (group), the arguments may be summarized as such:

1. Xining is considered a “fort creole” by Bell (2017), on the grounds of morphosyntactic restructuring and the presumption of local non-Han groups, primarily Monguors, wishing to learn Chinese, but finding inadequate access to the language outside the inner walls of the Xining urban setting. While not necessarily calling it a creole, Keith Dede, following Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) methodology, takes the overwhelmingly Sinitic lexicon, with what he sees as a non-Sinitic grammar—SOV word order, non-Sinitic negation strategies, case markers and variable dative marking—as evidence of language shift, with resultant substratal effects, in Xining’s past.
2. No one puts forth an argument specifically for Xining’s status as a Sinitic variety, but we can extrapolate from analyses about neighboring languages, especially Tangwang by Xu (2017) and Wutun by Janhunen et al. (2008) (as well as Chirkova 2012b), that they would agree even more so, given the language profile of Xining, that it is a local Sinitic language. This argument proceeds primarily from lexical percentages, and from the phonological correspondences with Middle Chinese that are carried on that lexical stock, with varying degrees of relegating the morphosyntactic departures as contact-based in origin. In these accounts, the lexical stocks, which vary from about 63% in Wutun to over 90% for Tangwang (and presumably Xining), are evidence of inheritance, as they are traceable to Middle Chinese, and thus Sinitic.

My own view for both Xining and other Amdo varieties, though perhaps with less conviction regarding Wutun, is that they are all Sinitic, and I predicate this not only on the lexicons, but the still largely Sinitic morphosyntactic profiles, once functional

considerations of a (minor) shift to SOV word ordering are taken into account. Added to this is the historically multilingual, multicultural setting of the Amdo frontier, where we would expect inter-group borrowing, and the overall picture looks simply like borrowing.

3. On similar grounds as 2 above, Daohua is argued by Chirkova (2012b) to be Sinitic, with (heavy) influence from Tibetan, in that the vast majority of its vocabulary (90% by Xu's 2017 count) is Sinitic, though she acknowledges that its correspondence with Middle Chinese, while likely to be for the most part regular, is understudied. She does not discuss morphosyntax explicitly, but like certain syllabic and tonal processes that are not Sinitic, she writes it off essentially as contact-induced, doing little to lessen the Sinitic profile of Daohua's status, as evidenced by its clear affinities with Southwest Mandarin (*ibid.*).

Atshogs (2004) on the other hand, considers the language to be a Tibetan-Chinese hybrid on account of its incorporating two linguistic systems, evidenced perhaps most clearly in its Sinitic form-to-Tibetan function for content morphemes, as well as the semantic range of individual lexical items. Chen (2017), mostly following Atshogs, differs by calling Daohua a "creole", which he assumes grew out of local learning of Chinese, but without proper access to standard norms at the time of its emergence. I tend to agree, almost wholesale, with Atshogs, though less so with Chen, especially in the latter's use of the term creole.

4. Finally, Bai has been argued to be Sinitic, a likely sister language to Sinitic (Wang 2006:175), Tibeto-Burman (either Loloish or independently branching) or a mixed language of some sort by various researchers (see 6.2.1.1), most of the arguments, not unlike those for Tangwang or Daohua, resting on the nature of its lexicon, which is overwhelmingly Sinitic in origin. I did not pursue any arguments that considered it a creole or mixed

language specifically, but in 6.3.2 did note high degrees of intermarriage, and references to “mixed” populations, in its regional history. (For more on this, see 8.2.2 and 8.2.3 below.)

At the same time, Lee and Sagart (2008) make a convincing argument that the Sinitic vocabulary, despite being upwards of 70%, and despite being a majority of its “core vocabulary”, can be assumed to be borrowed and not inherited. (See 6.2.7.1.) Add to this the more Tibeto-Burman features of non-standard varieties, and it appears that Bai looks less like a mixed language or Sinitic dialect, and more like Chamorro from 2.3.4.1, in featuring a persistent stock of “native” vocabulary, despite centuries of copious borrowings, or otherwise imported forms and structures.

What is obvious here is that any published study that looks at the lexicon exclusively, ignoring morphosyntax and ignoring the social setting in which the language developed, tends toward conclusions that show inheritance from the language which provided the bulk of that vocabulary more than other conclusions. That is, not considering the language as a whole, but rather one subcomponent (usually the lexicon, however large or small the corpus sample may be), biases the analysis towards one conclusion or another.

Daohua and Bai present interesting contrastive cases in the literature, in that the former is argued by some researchers to be Sinitic based on its majority vocabulary (and the phonological features linking it to Middle Chinese), whereas Bai, on the other hand, while famous for its outsized Sinitic “borrowings”, which carry enough of the late Old Chinese and Middle Chinese correspondences to allow for it to be more or less lexically layered chronologically, is still considered (by most) to be non-Sinitic. In this regard, Vietnamese equally fits this characterization. For the latter two languages, however, the argument goes the other way: Bai

and Vietnamese are non-Sinitic, largely due to a core vocabulary, however diminished in Bai, that points to a non-Sinitic language involved in their earliest (recoverable) stages of existence.

One may wish to point out that, at least in Daohua's case, the percentage of Sinitic vocabulary, however arbitrary the threshold for cutoff may be, is still greater than in Vietnamese, or even Bai, at over 90%. But if percentage count alone can serve as a crucial factor, then we would certainly lose Wutun in this argument, as its Sinitic component is perhaps as low as 63% (Xu 2017:139), about on par with Japanese or Korean. That is, if Wutun still counts as Sinitic on lexical percentage alone, then not only Bai, but Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese are also ushered in, as well.

We then might want to start making the case that Wutun is a Tibetic language, by analogy with Bai, perhaps, having around 40% of its vocabulary from Tibetan. Note, also, that arguments positing that reflexes of Middle Chinese follow the same developments as regional Sinitic dialects, like Southwest Mandarin, thus verifying the language as Sinitic, ignore the fact that borrowings in clearly non-Sinitic languages also show such parallels, by virtue of the fact that they borrowed from regional Sinitic. For example, Salar exhibits the same lack of palatalization of historical velars before high front vowels in Chinese loanwords and place names (as does Japanese!), the same feature that Xu (2017) uses to link Tangwang to Sinitic, and Chirkova (2012b) uses to link Daohua to Southwest Mandarin (7.3.2 and 5.3.3.1, respectively). Also, nDrapa, as noted by Gong (2007:46) in 5.2.7.1, retains distinct reflexes of MC velar initials before high front, vowels (as voiced velar fricatives), one defining feature of Southwest Mandarin generally (3.4.3.3).

In 2.3.3.1 Sarah Thomason (2003) is quoted as stating that a mixed language is one where “the grammatical and lexical systems cannot all be traced back primarily to a single source

language". But one must ask: to what extent traceable? What is the tipping point for subsystems to trace to this or that source? That is, how much work does the word "primarily" do in her sentence? Languages across East Asia differ only by degrees in how much Chinese has exerted a restructuring force throughout all levels of their linguistic structure. In many such languages, borrowing exceeds 50% thresholds, often including basic vocabulary, such that so-called Sinoxenic languages like Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese have alternating sets of numerals, switching between native varieties and those borrowed from Chinese, while scholars still debate what language family, or families, nominal classifiers arose from (Adams 1991; Wang 1994; Her and Li [n.d.]), or the exact origins of tonogenesis. Japanese, as one prominent example, has changed not only its phonemic inventory and its syllabic profile and phonological weight under Chinese influence, but also features of its morphosyntax, from patterns of accusative marking (Shibatani 1990:344-345) to adjectival marking (Frellesvig 2010:235).

Furthermore, it is now generally assumed that there is no core vocabulary that may not be borrowed under the right circumstances (Curnow 2001), and languages like Japanese (60% Sinitic according to Shibatani 1990:142, with many more borrowings from Indo-European sources) and Korean (also about 60% Sinitic, according to Sohn 2001:13, with an additional 5% of foreign origin), whose majority of the lexicon has a foreign source, lead one to conclude that either all languages in East Asia (and beyond) are mixed languages, or that lexical stock and percentage cannot be a primary indicator of mixed language status.

There is, then, nothing inherently superior in methodology about relying on lexical percentage, or phonological innovations, to classify a language as belonging to a certain genetic family, since so many non-Sinitic languages have such vast Sinitic vocabularies, which themselves carry

the innovative phonological features of the Sinitic variety with which they had contact³¹⁵.

Rather, the precise nature of the lexicon, and how it relates to speakers' history, is what matters. Though only a minor portion of Bai's lexicon is apparently Tibeto-Burman in nature, it is the type of vocabulary, rooted in rural and natural settings, and lexemes like demonstratives and pronouns, that makes Lee and Sagart's (2008) conclusions from 6.2.7.1 convincing that Bai is not Sinitic. That is, it is a long-view, historical assessment, not a synchronic, quantified analysis, that is revealing about the Bai's status.

Another contending position is to equally, or perhaps more so, weigh the overall morphosyntactic profile of the language, to see whether it fits the structure of the family in question. This was the main proposal of Emonds and Faarlund (2014), described in 2.3.4.2, in arguing that Middle English constituted the emergence of a mixed language, arisen from the intermarriage of local Anglo-Saxons and immigrant Scandinavians in the 11th century Danelaw. However, morphosyntax creates a thornier problem for diagnostics, lacking the discrete variables that morphemes and phonemes provide. The determination of what morphosyntactic features should be counted, and how to characterize them, including under what theoretical framework (at some abstract level of generative theory, everything begins to look the same anyway), presents methodological hurdles that the field of linguistics seems far from tackling. On top of this, for analytic languages it can be excessively difficult to tease apart whether their structures exist due to family inheritance or language contact, even more so when the languages in contact are from the same larger genetic stock, such as Sino-Tibetan.

³¹⁵ Recall, as well, from 5.3.3.1 for Daohua and 7.2.1.2 for Wutun that such phonological properties don't always stay relegated to one set of lexical stock, either, with syllabic profiles and phonological rules bleeding from Tibetic into Sinitic within those languages, and vice versa.

In analyzing Tangwang and other contact varieties, Xu (2017:144-149) presents an attempt, nevertheless, at such an undertaking, finding that Xining and Tangwang present a point on a Sinitic-to-non-Sinitic continuum closer to the Sinitic pole than Daohua, which is very near, just not quite, 50% Tibetan in its morphosyntax. Wutun is somewhere in between. This then brings us back not only to arbitrary thresholds of quantification--if a language is exactly 50%, then is it mixed? if 51% Tibetan, then Tibetan? if 49% Sinitic, then not Sinitic?--but is also subject to the problem of all languages changing over time, both internally and from language contact, or from the two working together to enhance one another. A language with 51% of its morphosyntax from one source may grow much higher in later generations to look more like one of its contributing languages, or it may realign with a regional standard to appear less mixed over time, giving us shifting impressions depending on what point in time we base our analysis. This problem is raised by Sagart (1998) and Chappell (2001) in the context of Sinitic, and returned to in 8.3.2 below.

8.1.3.2 The Problem of Language Genesis Versus Genetic Development

Additionally, there is also the problem of first causes: where, exactly, does a language begin its life? If we can see, in the historical record, the progression of an extant language away from some (genetic) prototype, as we saw from Chamorro in 2.3.4.1, becoming less Austronesian, and more Romance, over the centuries, then do we want to consider it still Austronesian? Or do we want to say that it has “become Romance”? Or even that it has “become”, once and for all, a “mixed language” once it crosses, say, the (arbitrary) 50% threshold away from its ancestral language?

Such a view of language classification depends partly on how we understand the category “mixed language”, and how it relates to theories of language classification. On the one hand,

we have to ask whether a mixed language is a type of language that emerges historically out of the merger of at least two distinct varieties, as seems to be the obvious position in discussing languages like Michif or Media Lengua or Sri Lankan Malay. Before the historical circumstances from which they arose were created, those languages did not exist, and there was only French and Cree, or Quechua and Spanish, and so on. If we can claim that Michif is neither Cree nor French, or some offshoot of one or the other, then it makes sense to view it as a “new” language, as a product of its environment. (If we do not take this view, then we’re back to the previous problem of counting morphemes and syntactic constructions to quantify whether it is more Cree or more French, more Quechua or more Spanish.)

But if, as Xu (2017) measures it, a mixed language is something a language may become, once some sub-component of its system becomes proportionately descendant from more than one language, then languages are always in flux, part of the way towards becoming mixed by some (again, arbitrary) metric. (Recall that her argument is still that, however non-Sinitic Tangwang or Wutun or Daohua may be in grammar, the Sinitically dominant lexicon still allows us to say the varieties are traceable to one language, namely Chinese, apparently elevating the lexicon above morphosyntax.)

It does not seem that viewing languages on a continuum between mixtures of “purer” forms of their component languages (how “pure” are the component languages, to begin with?) tells us much about the unique properties of those that grew out of specific contact settings common to mixed languages, particularly as a result of intermarriage like that discussed in 8.2.2 below. Nor does an overall percentage of this or that borrowed element reveal anything particularly moving about the language, either. Rather the history of the language—which is, of course, the history of its speakers—and how it has incorporated, or even been born from, other

languages (communities) is what is truly revealing. Slapping a label like “creole” or “mixed language” (or not slapping such a label, perhaps, as could be the case in calling Daohua a “restructured” Southwest Mandarin dialect) on an individual language may serve more to obscure this history, or its commonality with other languages of a similar type, by predisposing other researchers to make implicit assumptions about this language’s background, and its distance from either its purported genetic relatives (as in arguably the case of Xining) or the languages around it (as perhaps could pertain to Altaic languages in the Amdo sprachbund, or Qiangic varieties in southern Kham). To the extent that the term “mixed language” actually picks out a set of world languages, it seems that it should capture something of the kind of historical settings from which classic mixed languages emerge.

As such, both gradualist and abruptness-based accounts of mixed languages tell us something about the social development of the language—its history of contact or its original genesis—rather than the type of language itself (compared to, say, John McWhorter’s Creole Prototype approach). But since all languages undergo contact, and differ only by matters of degree of restructuring, only an abruptness-based categorization marks something as unique about mixed languages and the settings from which they arise. (Though perhaps the disagreement is more about the process by which the mixing occurs—borrowing, codeswitching, relexification, calquing, etc.—and not the speed with which it is carried out³¹⁶.)

³¹⁶ See Ansaldo and Matthews (2001), for the argument that, in the context of so-called creoles and creolization, the uniqueness of those languages is not that they are “new languages”, but rather is found within a measured ratio of the structural distance to communal multilingualism in their historical development, a viewpoint which they call the “Hybridity Cline Hypothesis”. Specifically, they claim that: “...language contact necessarily leads to some kind of restructuring, whether it be it borrowing or shift. The abruptness and drasticness of this restructuring is inversely proportional to the structural affinity between the varieties involved and to the degree of multilingual competence of the speakers concerned (ibid.321).”

Nonetheless, it may be precisely the kinds of multilingual social settings that set creoles apart from mixed languages, in that, from Ansaldo and Matthews’ view of creoles, the languages that emerge in, say, Haiti or Mauritius or Macau, are simply abruptly restructured varieties of the lexifier languages, developed under extreme

It may also be worth pointing out that, in multilingual communities, where codeswitching is the norm, the cutoff point between a register of codeswitching and a newly formed, fully crystallized, language may be difficult to identify, with some researchers, such as Thomason (2003) (see 2.3.3.1), emphasizing a criterion of stability for identifying a mixed language from an unfixed code. Though all of the languages discussed in this dissertation appear to be languages in their own right—if only because they are discussed in the literature as such, or labelled by speakers as some sort of “话 *hua*”—their boundaries with Standard Mandarin, and perhaps other local varieties, may be as negotiable at the individual level as are the blurry edges of Bai and Chinese in Hefright’s (2011) community observations. The fact that Putonghua, and/or some local rendition of it (see 8.3.2 for details), is by now spoken alongside all of these varieties only serves to complicate the situation further.

At the same time, the literature on China’s western regions abounds with descriptions of language mixing, such as that seen in travel accounts of Amdo in 4.3.2.2. Not only are other varieties of “restructured Sinitic” spoken regionally (see Li 2010 on the SOV, postpositional case-marking dialect spoken in Muli County, a hotspot of Qiangic, Naic, Ngwi and Tibetic language mixing), community registers of language mixing are also quite common. In 4.2.1 we saw examples of “wind stirring snow” (风搅雪). Stevan Harrell (2001:139) mentions language mixing in multiethnic areas of Liangshan:

“Here as elsewhere, Nuosu has borrowed a lot of Han words, and Han speech has borrowed Tibeto-Burman syntactic and phonetic patterns: people often say, in Han, things such as “Fa[n]

multilingualism, whereas, as discussed above, it is harder to pin down mixed languages, partly due to their structural intertwining, to any language variety pre-existing before the contact event, as being the one undergoing “restructuring”.

See 2.5 for arguments from Salikoko Mufwene and others that creoles may not have actually developed so abruptly as commonly thought, anyway. However, also see 2.5 for Ansaldo’s (2009) account of Sri Lankan Malay, a mixed language, with all the structural complexity that term implies, which he claims did develop quite abruptly.

chile meiyou?” (lit., “Rice eaten not eaten?”, or “Have you eaten yet?”), which adopts the Tibeto-Burman subject-object-verb word order....”

The difference seems to be that Daohua and Wutun (and Xining) crystallized into a full-fledged language, or at least a dialect, while the other cases of mixing remain community, even idiolectal, registers, although the exact reasons for this remain unclear. Or perhaps they simply await a researcher to write them into a stable language, rendering the variability stable in the academic literature as such.

Finally, with regards to genetic affiliation, the other question we have to ask is whether language classification is primarily based on the transmission of some core component of a protolanguage, say its lexicon or even a constellation of its morpho-syntactic “essence”, or is it based on local innovations linking it to other languages with those same innovations. I will return to the topic of traditional Stammbaum tree-classification in a more general sense in 8.3.3, but for now it bears asking: If the latter case is true, that local innovations bind languages in a (sub-)family relationship, then what if those innovations stem from regional contact, either transparently from recent settings, or more remotely in an unrecoverable past? Are they thus ruled out, and if so, what does genetic classification really tell us about the nature of a given language in multilingual areas?

It does make some sense to stick to the traditional methodology of tracing a set of inherited features from a protolanguage backwards from its contemporary varieties, especially considering the aforementioned nature of mixed languages as emerging ex nihilo from socio-historical settings. Of course we are not talking about complete nihilo, as there are obviously two or more languages involved in their emergence, but typologically speaking from case studies, they appear to form a special case, perhaps primarily due to the social circumstances from which they emerge: they in general involve an incoming group, e.g. traders or soldiers,

settling in an area where they are a demographic minority, intermarrying and starting families of mixed ethnic, and probably multilingual, background³¹⁷.

Either way, contrasting this type of mixing—what Stoltz (2003) calls the “right kind of mixture”—and the kind of diachronic drift of English or Chamorro (or Wutun? or Xining?) seems to be a meaningful distinction. To return once again to the previous problem: we can trace the Austronesian elements in Chamorro back across the centuries to a precolonial set of vocabulary and morphosyntax; we cannot trace the phonemes or the verb phrases of Michif back to any earlier than the emergence of French-Cree families that formed in the 1800s.

Or can we? Again, it is based on one’s assumption about classificatory categories. We trace English back to Old English and Proto-Germanic because we assume English is Germanic. If we take English strictly to be a mixed language, then we would only trace it as far back as the Danelaw, when it emerged, or else we are tracing separately Old Norse and the branch of West Germanic that ended with pre-Danelaw Old English, a kind of dual parenthood which most historical linguists reject for language classification. But if we assume that Michif is, say, French, then we can indeed trace it back to before the 1800s, all the way back to the Roman Empire, even, observing vocabulary and sound changes that relate it to Latin and Indo-European, just as we do with English in regards to Proto-Germanic.

In the case of Bai, as we saw in 6.2.7.1, we trace it back *specifically* assuming that it is not Sinitic, perhaps because it is spoken by a (nowadays) non-Han people, peeling back the layers of Sinitic borrowings, to find its Tibeto-Burman core. Were we not beginning from a consideration of ethnic difference, however, would we instead show Bai to be an offshoot of Old Chinese,

³¹⁷ Or they emerge as a kind of in-group code among multilingual groups who suddenly find themselves in a shared setting, such as Media Lengua or Tsotsitaal, though such language settings did not apply in this dissertation, and thus remain unexplored here. One may rightly ask: where are such languages in the East Asian context?

splitting before the Middle Chinese period, with a significant substratum layer of “language interference” (as indeed some have done)? To what extent, then, do ethnic and paralinguistic factors enter into the fundamental groundwork of the way that we do historical linguistics? To what extent does a pure bloodline of sorts lead us to paint skewed or uninformative narratives of a language’s history? These questions are returned to in 8.2.3 below.

For now, there is no universally accepted way to distinguish between languages that have a relatively stable line of transmission (not involving, for example, a merger with another line of transmission), but with heavy contact-influence, such as Chamorro or English, as discussed in 2.3.4.2, and actual mixed languages, such as Michif or Sri Lankan Malay³¹⁸. Indeed, if one takes a gradualist approach, as does Thomason (2003) or Scott-Meyers (2003) or Xu (2017), then there is no dividing line, and languages may “become mixed” over time, thus making mixed language “status” a perhaps inevitability for most languages around the world, midpoint between shifted family affiliation, as perhaps Bai has done from Tibeto-Burman to Sinitic. By such a view, then, one has to ask what traditional language family models amount to, other than temporary resting spots, for languages of multilingual areas to anxiously bounce back and forth between, across the between ether of “mixed language” or “creole” territory.

From these purely linguistic questions, let us now turn to an overview of social history presented in this dissertation, the parallels and differences noted across regions, and the implications they have for (historical) language analysis.

³¹⁸ It may be worth noting, as well, that internal change can also be quite disruptive, and lead to typological aberrations equally as dramatic as the contact scenarios described in this dissertation do. See Blevins (2004, 2006) for phonological cases. Note again, also, the (apparently internally driven) lexical differences between Southwest Mandarin, such as the Chengdu dialect, from Standard Mandarin, as reported by Cui (1996:130).

8.2 Language Change Through a Historical Lens

This section draws a comparison across chapters regarding the historical settings of Amdo, Kham and Dali on China's historical western frontier with Tibet and Mongol-controlled areas. As a frontier zone of multicultural (and multilingual) interaction, at the intersection of expanding and contracting empires, each region shares some commonalities with the others. At the same time, of course, there were unique historic events around the Qinghai-Gansu border, Yajiang County in Kham and in Dali.

In 8.2.1 I look at the driving factors that brought peoples into contact in the three regions and how such events may have led to language contact. In 8.2.2 I consider the unique role that intermarriage must have played, and what implications it has for the type of languages that could have emerged, and those that did emerge. Finally, in 8.2.3 I consider the special problems of ethnic affiliations, which have shifted over time, and how they bear on discussing the historical reality of discrete linguistic varieties on China's frontier.

8.2.1 Cultural and Linguistic Pluralism in Spaces of Overlapping Empires

In linguistic studies, language contact is often offered as a pre-packaged explanation for unexpected or aberrant features of a language when genetic ancestry would lead us to expect some differing feature. Such claims are not always backed up with rigorous studies of the historical record to corroborate the plausibility of contact in the first place, the nature of those interactions, or the power dynamics that may influence the directionality of contact. Of course, authors differ in what degree they attempt this endeavor: Bell (2017) and Dede (1999) for Xining, Xu (2017) for Tangwang, Chen (2017) and, to some extent, Atshogs (2004) for Daohua and Lee and Sagart (2008) for Bai all make significant attempts to connect their language contact proposals to historical stages. The goal of the in-depth exploration of the historical

record throughout this dissertation has thus served as an attempt to expand upon or push back against some of the claims from the aforementioned authors and fill in the gaps when such explanations were entirely lacking in the work of others.

The present study relied mostly on secondary sources for historical information, supplemented by theoretical insights from history, anthropology, and ethnology throughout. A closer examination of primary sources will need to wait for further research. Nonetheless, the emergent picture is one both underspecified and overspecified for drawing present conclusions. Perhaps unsurprisingly, no one seems to have documented language shift in any of the frontier regions in its own right. No statements to the effect of “local Yi-speaking communities made the decision to discontinue use of their language during the first decade of Ming rule” or “Monguor speakers gradually replaced their lexicon with Sinitic vocabulary over three generations, starting during the Yongle reign”. It was never my expectation to find such direct claims; rather my goal was to collect all of the relevant information and draw a reasonable conclusion from the available data provided.

On the other hand, from the perspectives provided by late 1800's/early 1900's travel accounts, reports on community interactions that recent researchers have drawn from gazetteers and other local records, and the available descriptions of pre-modern and early modern societies in the region, what emerges are sometimes conflicting accounts of Han bilingualism, language loss, Tibetan “pidgins”, frequent intermarriage, cosmopolitan hubs and multicultural markets of trade and other accounts that could lead one to draw any conclusion one wished---which is not as illegitimate as it sounds: no doubt at the individual level Monguors, Tibetans and others were learning Chinese, while Han traders and husbands, surrounded by non-Han in their community or homes, were learning local languages, ranging

from near fluency to broken, makeshift codes, with multilingual communities often serving as the norm. The questions then are what this multilingual anarchism means for the way language developed, and what similarities in sociohistorical settings we can find between the Chinese-Tibetan frontier and better understood settings from other language studies outside the region.

The initial hypothesis was that language contact had a few avenues from which it could have arisen in Amdo, Kham and Dali. One of these was by sheer imposition, as the Chinese empire exerted control over the regions, perhaps early on, and with little staying power, during the Han, and then more significantly following the Yuan conquest, and the ensuing Ming and Qing dynasties' rule, where nominal incorporation included a fluctuating imperial presence--most thinly felt in Kham, and somewhat more so directly reflected in Amdo and Dali.

This hypothesis was ruled out in 3.1.3 as having little community-wide influence across the frontier, owing to the mostly local autonomy stemming from both imperial absence and the rule-through-chieftainship (*tusi* 土司) system that characterized much of the era of Yuan-Ming-Qing rule, even after the *gaitu guiliu* 改土归流 reforms of the Qianlong Emperor in the 18th century imposed more imperial representatives in the region. Authors such as John Herman (2007) note the constant issue of edicts for education reforms, implying that the attempt to civilize the barbarians with a Confucian education, particularly in the Southwest, fell flat more than a few times. Nonetheless, especially in the case of the Bai, we do see some uptake of Chinese culture and Chinese education in minority areas, especially among the elite. The Bai are noted as historically moving to distance themselves from the local non-Han (Wu 1990), even to the point of becoming near-Han themselves, taking up the moniker of *minjia* (民家 'civilian households'), a term that also broadly referred to any local people living in Yunnan

before the in-migration of military families during the Ming, who were contrastively known as *junjia* (军家 ‘military households’). (See 6.2.1.1).

Another hypothetical means by which language contact could have ensued involved the monastic system stretching from Labrang and Kumbum in Amdo all the way south to Samtseling in Yunnan, linked to the prestige of Tibetan religion, especially Tibetan Buddhism, which has been a mainstay in the lives and dealings of many minority peoples, as well as many Han residents, for centuries. Nonetheless, in 4.3.2.1, focusing on the Amdo area, but assuming similar parallels in Kham (religious experience in Dali, while still heavily influenced by Buddhism, has been more eclectic, with more Chinese influence---see Bryson 2016), it was shown that those writing about social encounters and hierarchies within monasteries, such as described by Nietupski (2011) for Labrang, do not point to significant language exchanges. Rather than giving Han adherents a reason to learn Tibetan, most multilingual accounts point to the monastic elite as adopting Chinese surnames and learning Chinese. Again, the elite seem to be the ones seeking benefit from adopting linguistic markers of Chinese affiliation, where the lower classes tend to follow their own pathways.

However, just outside of the monasteries, similar to the scenes just outside walled frontier cities like those of Xining and Lanzhou (Gabautz 1996), bustling markets of diverse ethnic and linguistic groups seem to be one place where true multilingualism, and no doubt code-switching and language contact, occurred. That it is, it appears the pull of both State prestige from the conquering Chinese empire and spiritual prestige from the Tibetan network tracing back to Lhasa both pale in comparison to the currency (no pun intended) carried by trade connections and business practices, such as the running of trade houses (歇家 *xiejia* in Amdo; 锅庄 *guozhuang* in Kham; 马店 *madian* in Yunnan) and the in-migration of itinerant Han

moving from the interior to strike it rich in an era before Chinese-learning could be taken for granted among the non-Han of the region.

In this sense, language usage can be viewed as a primary means of autonomy among individuals. In 3.2, exploring the implications of James Scott's anarchist rejection of social assimilation, language was posited as a means by which one could assume a certain (ethnic) identity, albeit by a presumably time-consuming and intellectually challenging means, in order to achieve one's ends to personal autonomy. (On fluid ethnicity in the region, see 8.2.3 below.)

On the other hand, Weinstein (2013), in profiling the Zhongjia people (discussed in 3.2.3), makes clear that autonomy is not always in the form of resistance, but that rather complying with State power, and selectively playing by the rules was sometimes the most useful tool for achieving one's financial or livelihood goals—not necessarily an advocacy of the awesome State prestige described by Ho (1998) (also discussed in 3.3).

In this light, language shift, when it occurred, becomes a more theoretically complex and morally ambiguous phenomenon than the simple narrative of language loss in the shadow of imperial conquest. Leaving aside for now the fact that an unknown number of Han likely shifted to non-Han languages throughout many eras across all regions, we have to assume that when indigenous peoples of Outer Tibet did shift their language to Chinese, as must have sometimes been the case, at least in Amdo, they did so usually outside the inner walls of Xining, and likely away from the normativizing trends of Confucian education. That is, less a matter of coercion, it must have appeared in the best (financial?) interests of those individuals, families or communities to shift to Chinese, rather than continue their ancestral language, not unlike the case of modern linguistic communities in China (e.g. Bulag 2003), the difference being that

in modern times many such communities have become linguistic minorities in a Han-ruled, Chinese-speaking society, and for some groups, the choice has not always been their own.

But do individuals exert such far-reaching consequences on a language's development as the restructuring described in this dissertation? While it would be impossible to rule out cases of individual families shifting to Chinese—Xu (2017) assumes a foundational early origin of Tangwang was a shift in the “heavily Sinicized” Mongol lineage of the local Tang family—is it necessary to account for any of the case study languages in Chapters 4-7? As was argued throughout, especially for Amdo, where the notion is given the most prominence by writers such as Dede (1999), or in Yajiang for Daohua, under a slightly different guise by Chen (2017) (rather than shift to Chinese with substratal effects, Chen posits a kind of creole emerging), we need not assume major shift from non-Han languages to Chinese to account for the kinds of language structure we find. Rather, as argued from the point of typology and areal features, and furthermore by the pluralistic, multicultural settings of each region, the divergences from Sinitic norms in Amdo, and the proclivity towards Sinitic features, mostly in vocabulary for Bai, appear just as likely to have emerged through multilingual, language contact avenues that don't necessitate the assumption of historical shift.

There remains, however, one further avenue for language contact, perhaps the most instrumental in accounting for the kinds of language structures we do find among the present case studies, especially in the case of Daohua, and that is the mixed marriages that emerged from Chinese imperial and economic forays into the region, to which we now turn.

8.2.2 Intermarriage and Ethnic-Mixing in Amdo, Kham and Dali

In the case of relatively isolated communities, such as those where Tangwang, Wutun and Daohua are spoken, it is hard to find an explanation in cosmopolitanism or cross-cultural trade,

considering that the closest of such centers are likely several days' journey away. Would we expect such language reconfiguration based on weekly, if not monthly, trips to trade centers like Xining, Lanzhou or Dartsedo? Rather, in the case of Wutun or Daohua, the language mixing seems that it must have occurred locally, and thus been the response to local needs.

In addition to accounts of soldiers (and defectors—Coleman 2002, see 5.1) moving into rural areas and marrying (usually Tibetan) local women in Kham, there are reports of translators (通司) and *guozhuang* (锅庄) owners around Dartsedo (Tsomu 2016; see 5.3.2.2) and other western descriptions of “mixed-race peoples” throughout Kham (see 5.3.2.1). In Yunnan, there are the “*daxing* [prominent families] biocultural hybrids of the indigenes and Han Chinese” recounted by Yang (2010:107) in 6.3.2, and in Amdo there are the culturally assimilated, but bilingual, households reported by Hansen (2005) and Vasantkumar (2012, 2014) on the Qinghai/Gansu border regions. That is, there are plenty of accounts of intermarriage that point to language mixing with the household all along the historical frontier.

In this regard, particularly in the case of Daohua, these situations show the closest parallels to classic mixed languages, such as Michif or Mednyj Aleut discussed in 2.3.3. It was this scenario, alongside the seemingly split-system of grammar-to-phonological form, that led me to conclude that Daohua was more likely the case of an emergent mixed language than simply a heavily reconfigured Sinitic variety (with the very likely theoretical extension to Wutun, as well). Like Michif, with its French nouns and Cree verbs, arising out of French colonial traders marrying local Cree women in the 19th century Canadian interior, Daohua very likely arose from Han soldiers, and possibly traders arriving in their wake, via Qing military incursions throughout Kham in the 18th century. There the marriages between Han men and Tibetan women led — through either codeswitching practice or some other intertwining process—to next generation

mixed-ethnicity speakers using Tibetan morphosyntax and semantic categories carried by Sinitic phonological forms. One could imagine a similar scenario for Wutun, though that language, in the context of this dissertation, appears to exist on a continuum between the half-Tibetan, half-Sinitic Daohua, and the mostly Sinitic Xining.

Interesting parallels can be drawn to the work of Melissa Brown (1996, 2004, 2010), who has written extensively on the development of native Austronesian aboriginal societies under the influence of Han immigration following the Qing colonization of Taiwan. Brown (1996:44) notes the central importance of homelife and parenting as inculcating values and practices, and playing a primary role in cultural change, in this case from Plains Aborigine to Han. She (1996:45) further claims that intermarriage was the primary means of introducing and spreading Chinese culture and values, at least in Taiwanese (Plains) Aborigine society, but that the local organization of society “greatly influences the extent, pace, and direction of change that intermarriage introduces”. The process of Sinicization is delineated into a “short route” and “long route” to becoming Chinese, the short route stemming from greater rates of intermarriage and their subsequent structural changes in communities, while the long route involved fewer cases of intermarriage in a predominantly non-Han community with a “relatively stable social structure”, that only “years later” concluded in identity change (ibid.46).

It seems clear that Kham, if not Amdo and pre-Ming Dali, would parallel Brown’s “long route” to Sinicization, to the extent that Sinicization has occurred (in, for example, a language emerging with the majority of the lexicon being Sinitic, perhaps). Han were always the minority in these regions until present times, or following the Ming-era in-migration to Yunnan (which was much more concentrated in the eastern half of the province, to be sure). But unlike in Taiwan, where the Han population greatly outnumbered the indigenous Plains Austronesian

speakers, the demographics in, say, western Sichuan remain overwhelmingly non-Han, where perhaps Han inroads have left more effect linguistically than culturally or ethnically.

Nonetheless, the spread of Chinese culture in Amdo and Kham, if it wasn't primarily imposed by the State in pre-modern times, would have most likely grown out of the inter-ethnic family structure, perhaps similarly to how Brown described in Taiwan. (This would have been, of course, in addition to the local indigenous elite who sought to translate their local power-holding into a Chinese power structure.) Brown, echoing David Johnson's (1985) arguments, claims that Han men, who tended to marry lower class non-Han, transmitted the "gentry hegemony" of Chinese culture in the expansion of the Chinese cultural sphere, but it was the women who were responsible for transmitting non-elite, popular culture, thus contributing more greatly to the cultural variation throughout China and Taiwan. In both cases, however, intermarriage was the key instrument to cultural expansion, it seems.

In Taiwan, those offspring of mixed marriages increasingly found it opportunistic to claim their Chinese lineage as social demographics tilted towards majority Chinese, and as political control eventually fell under Chinese rule. These constituted Brown's "short route" takers on the path to becoming Chinese. In these cases, Chinese (patrilineal) ancestry was of prime importance to identity. Lian (2013) described a very similar shift in identity formation among local Bai in the early Ming. In the settings of this dissertation, then, if there were any "short route" Sinicizers, the Bai, at least until the mid-20th century, would be them.

Finally, recall from 5.3.3.2 that the difference between the conceptualization of race and ethnicity in the colonial Americas, and that of frontier China, is likely split between two very different worldviews, and as such the prominence given to mixed-ethnic families in Amdo, Kham or Yunnan socially would likely have been far less than that of the societies that

developed from the US or Canada. Rather, in the settings of this dissertation, ethnic categories were likely subsumed under other labels, such as Buddhist, merchant, soldier families (军家), Ming or Qing loyalists, even home-place identities (Joniak-Lüthi 2015) and so on. In fact, if there is one thing that is clear from writings on the region, from James Scott to Pat Giersch and so on, it is that multiple identities, and thus multiple ethnicities, were not simply the purview of individuals with Han and non-Han parents, and that no category was fixed until the State interventions of the mid-20th century.

8.2.3 On Tracing Language History Across Historically Fluid Ethnic Borders

One question I had at the outset of this project was to what extent 20th/21st century fixed ethnic categories, especially those established or solidified by the 1950-1970s *minzu* classification projects in the PRC, had influenced the classification of languages on China's multi-ethnic frontier, and whether a Han versus non-Han dichotomy had led linguistic explanations to assume a shift towards an all-encompassing Chinese linguistic imperialism. While I think these are valid questions to keep asking, I did not find any bald assumptions about ethnicity of this sort; linguists, too, can do their anthropological homework. Nonetheless, some interesting questions regarding the alignment, or not, of language and ethnicity, remain worthy of reflection here.

One very interesting question, inspired by Pamela Crossley's (1990:9) observation that "[t]he languages of Inner and Central Asia have proven to be more stable than the peoples with which they may be associated in the historical record", is whether a language, traced by historical linguists through its diachronic changes, can be more stable than its community of speakers. The most obvious case for exploring this idea concerns the Bai of Dali, who have been Bai(man), Minjia, Han and Bai again throughout their history.

However, the Bai have received much attention because we now know them as a people, distinct from the Chinese, distinct from the Naxi, distinct from the Yi, and so on, and as such we want to know their history as a distinct people. But what of Tibetans--that is the Zang minzu--who are composed of numerous distinct cultures and peoples, from the Baima to the Prenmi to the Zhaba and so on, including those who speak Daohua and Wutun? Even more so, what of the Xining and Tangwang speakers, who are nowadays full-fledged Han, a category of majority people that has expanded and contracted in reference almost as much as the Chinese empire itself (3.2.2), but whose ethnic origins may be more demographically and ethnically complex?

As discussed in 3.2.2, what makes one “Chinese”, or even “Han”, has rested as much on theoretical constructs of Confucian learning and Chinese literacy, as it has in the popular practice of appearance and drawing descent from a Han patrilineal bloodline (Ebrey 1996). Nonetheless, as many authors have pointed out, genealogies could be spruced up, or even purchased, if necessary, to achieve one’s social goals in moving closer to the Han. Lian (2013) discussed how, between the decline of the Dali Kingdom and the advent of Ming Dynasty rule, local Bai in Yunnan adjusted their genealogies and adopted surnames that would ingratiate themselves to those in power, thus drawing “close to the Han”, and distancing themselves from the local “Yi” (that is, “barbarian” (夷), not ethnic (彝), Yi) (6.3.2.2).

Brooke Hefright’s (2011) dissertation on what he calls “Bai-Han contrast” in linguistic practice, discussed in 6.3.2.3, presents a most interesting case study on the intertwining of language and identity. The extent to which the two languages are kept separate in the minds of their users mirrors the ways in which Bai/Han ethnicity were intimately bound in local practice by the early 20th century. The use of Chinese and Bai to signal differing aspects of local identity mirrors the “registers of self-identification” described by Scott (2009) in 3.2.1. In Dali, codeswitching

between the two forms, quite possibly the origins of the Bai language itself, has come to constitute the community as much as any feature of cultural practice, and Bai language users can adjust the tonal or phonological properties of their speech to be more or less Chinese depending on the speakers' communicative goals.

The descriptive linguist, then, is faced with the challenge of distinguishing the two languages in practice, perhaps against the insistence of the native speaker when etymological evidence conflicts with reported usage, and will in turn be guided consciously or unconsciously in linguistic descriptions by the desire to present "the Bai language", just as early 20th century researchers like Fitzgerald (1941) or Hsu (1948) originally wanted to portray the distinct "Bai people", and not just local Han. (See 6.2.1.1 for background on such studies; see 6.3.2.3 on Hefright's observations.)

At the same time, with apparently fewer Sinitic forms in the more rural dialects, a true continuum between a Tibeto-Burman "Bai language" and a Sinitic "Chinese language" may exist, similar to the situation with Afrikaans and English in South Africa, where the two languages are not always separable for certain classes of, mostly Afrikaaner, speakers (Mesthrie 2009). This continuum would thus link urban and rural settings linguistically, further blurring the already fuzzy lines between the two languages. In such a setting, it may be more useful to think in terms of differing levels of individual "language repertoires" (Blommaert 2010) than of discrete language entities employed on consistent levels by individuals. I return to such continua, quite common in contemporary China, in 8.3.2.

But just as the Minjia/Bai, and other groups such as the Tujia (Brown 2001; see below), have followed a trajectory that made them Almost Han³¹⁹, so too have many Han historically crossed over into becoming non-Han, as discussed most prominently by Pat Giersch (2001, 2006) in the context of Yunnan, and James Scott on the Burma-Chinese border. For example, Chen (2017) notes local census data in Yajiang that shows a majority of the local Han residents changed their ethnicity to Tibetan in the early years of the 20th century. (See 5.3.2.3).

It is here that the effects on language contact remain far understudied. Though in the setting of Yajiang, it may have been the case that Han, partially assimilated to Tibetan culture, played a role in the genesis of Daohua, what happened to the more fully de-Sinicized Han? What sorts of families did they belong to? To what extent did their children retain Chinese linguistic ability, or transfer it to the structure of the local languages? Were their Sinitic languages absorbed without a trace into the community, or did they form a component part (a substratum? or a superstratum?) of a mixed language that emerged in such turbulent social settings, one that may have looked a lot like early Vietnamese (Phan 2010; see 6.3.1.4) or Proto-Loloish (cf. DeLancey 2013b; see 6.3.1.3) or even Proto-Bai?

To return to the question opening this section, what does the fluidity of ethnic affiliation, and the crossing of borders between Han and non-Han in both directions mean for the historical linguistics reconstructive paradigm? What does “intergenerational transmission” without “interference” entail, and how purist is it in tracing ethnic bloodlines? Do we count only Han as

³¹⁹ An interesting between-case would be the Manchu, who in almost every respect became culturally and linguistically Han by the 20th century, but largely on their insistence that they were Manchu—and by Han (or Hakka) revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-sen emphasizing Manchu Otherness as such—they remained Manchu, one of only two groups (the other being the Hui) that by sharing the same language as the Han, violate the Stalinist dictate that a people (a *minzu*) should have their own language. See Elliott (2001, 2006) on how affiliation with the Eight Banner system helped keep the Manchu, under extreme Sinification, from fully becoming Han, even when they have been accused of losing all Manchu-ness by historians of the 20th century.

transmitting Old Chinese through Middle Chinese to modern Mandarin dialects? Do we count only Tibetans as transmitters of Amdo and Kham varieties from Old Tibetan?

This question is posed as something of a middle ground between the accusations of colonialism levied towards those separating (Caribbean) creoles from the European dialects of Indo-European languages, as deconstructed by Mufwene (2007) and DeGraff (2003) and presented in 2.5, and the assumption that Chinese is passed down vertically via Chinese, Tibetan via Tibetan, and so on. In 2.5 the argument was, based on the actual setting of early colonial plantations and the intermixing of peoples, that Jamaican Creole or Haitian Creole, which likely developed more gradually than is often thought, were simply the local varieties of English or French, differing from those varieties of Britain or France only in the greater diversity of language features in the local feature pool. In the context of, say, Amdo, where Han Chinese were one group among others engaging in multilingualism, would not, then, the local variety of Chinese, including perhaps Tangwang (claimed by Xu 2017 to have its origins in an original Mongol Tang family) and Wutun, also be the local leaves of the northern Sinitic family tree?

Unlike actual creoles, which are generally kept out of the picture by historical reconstructionists, the “macrolanguages” of southern and southeast China are usually reconstructed as if they have been passed down unilinearly, with a more or less fixed demographic population. Those who used such languages, but hailed from different speech communities, were then considered “substrata”, and sources of “linguistic interference”. But if the Yi or the Zhuang--or the Bai--as we know them are a circumscribed group largely because of mid-20th century constructs, then whose language (and whose ethnicity) are we tracing back in time when we reconstruct Proto-Loloish or Proto-Zhuang or Proto-Bai? What communities of speakers are represented as speaking “pure Zhuang” or “pure Bai”, and how does this skew the

reality of how the speakers' language exists in real life? These questions weigh on not only what we are doing when we engage in historical linguistics but have implications for topics such as language education and language preservation, as well³²⁰. It is this sort of reality that Pamela Crossley (1990), or Richard O'Conner (cited in Scott 2014:329), is referring to when they say a language may or may not "have a people".

There are many fruitful opportunities for comparison with other peoples in China whose historical identities have been similarly distorted as the Bai, or who otherwise have an interesting interplay between linguistic and ethnic affiliation. Melissa Brown (2001, 2004, 2010) has written of the way that local Tujia (土家族) communities of western Hubei have shifted from historically non-Han, to Han, and back to non-Han over history, the classification hinging on cultural practices, such as mortuary rites, ancestor worship and family genealogies. As Xu, Lu and Hu (2017) note, the Tujia's traditional Tibeto-Burman language has also been disputed as either a Ngwi or Qiangic or an independent branch of the Tibeto-Burman tree, making it sound even more parallel with the case of Bai.

Pang (1996, 1998) has written about the Muslim Utsat community of Hainan, who as a small minority group resident on the island for centuries, have negotiated identities as Cham, Hui-zu, Muslim (in a cosmopolitan sense) and non-Han—identities that are framed differently depending on whether they are speaking Utsat, a Chamic Austronesian language, Southern Min or Putonghua. Their language, too, shows a history of heavy language contact, shifting its typological profile away from its agglutinative origins to an analytic, Sinitic-esque profile, and no shortage of Sinitic vocabulary (Thurgood 1992, 1999; Thurgood et al. 2014). Thurgood et al.

³²⁰ See Mufwene (2017) for more on these social topics, discussion of which resulted in an entire volume of the journal *Language* (2017: Vol 93, No. 4) devoted to responding to his provocations.

(2014:264, inter alia) estimate the language has at least a quarter of its vocabulary, including over 40% of its prepositions and over 75% of its conjunctions, from Sinitic loans, making it similar to Altaic languages of Amdo, but with far more grammatical restructuring, and perhaps higher rates of borrowing among functional morphemes as a result.

Finally, the Hakka are a classic example of a people whose ethnicity has overlapped with that of other groups, sometimes predicated on their history of migration, and thus permanent outsider status (Leong 1997; Constable 2005), but who were nonetheless firmly established as Han by the 20th century, partly by the emphasis given from elites such as Sun Yat-sen on the Chinese properties of their language (Leong 1997:29), which is considered to form its own branch of the Sinitic family tree, traceable to Middle Chinese. (Though see Braner (2000) and Coblin (2002) on difficulties in distinguishing Hakka and Min dialects locally.)

At the same time, it would be interesting to examine contrastively those settings where local ethnicity has not been quite so problematic, and linguistic reconfiguration either not as dramatic, or evolved in different forms (such as Chinese-Russian pidgin), such as in the northwestern frontiers, in order to establish key differences. See, for example, Zhou (2000) on ethnic Korean (朝鲜族 *Chaoxian*) minority practice that differs from those peoples who have been more forcibly integrated into PRC society, such as the Uyghurs, or Dwyer (1998a) on resistance to borrowing between Qumul Chinese and Uyghurs.

Let us turn now to how the above observations and considerations relate to current understandings of the Sinitic sub-family of languages as a genetically defined group.

8.3 Borrowing, Mixing and Creolization in Sinitic

The Sinitic family is marked by extensive contact over time, both with indigenous groups it has encountered over millennia of territorial expansion, as well as with internal varieties of spoken

and literary forms of Chinese, spread southward over millennia of successive waves, to the extent that Chinese itself forms a kind of “diachronic sprachbund”. In this section I consider the conclusions of 8.2 and the resultant insights on language change, language contact and socio-cultural history in how they relate to the Sinitic family of languages.

In 8.3.1 I begin by contextualizing the nature of the data involved in studying Sinitic varieties, both as they exist in publications and across physical space. In 8.3.2 I consider the ways that Sinitic varieties exist as overlapping continua, much like many creoles do, and I note how the Sinitic typological profile has been interpreted in creole studies, specifically connecting this to how its relative lack of linguistic complexity has driven theories of Sinitic evolution, and how languages like Daohua and Wutun complicate this view. Finally, in 8.3.3 I consider the ways in which the above analyses create problems for the traditional Stammbaum tree model view of the family, and following other authors, advocate for a more areal approach.

8.3.1 Doing Sinitic linguistics: The Nature of the Data

In writing about Chinese dialects, it is relevant to qualify the nature of scholarship within Sinitic, captured adequately enough in a quote by McWhorter (2007:120):

“Engaging in comparative Chinese language research from outside of the subfield is like finding that there are full grammars of only French and Spanish, briefer ones of Italian and Portuguese, and only scattered articles on Romanian, Occitan, Catalan, and Rhaeto-Romance mostly analyzing inflectional paradigms, with the further obstacles that most of the languages' dialects are as divergent as Italian's and a goodly portion of the literature is written in Arabic.”

On the one hand, if equipped with literacy in Chinese, if one spends enough time searching, depending on what one is looking for (there seems to be more on the Chengdu dialect, for example, than Xining or Gangou), there is literature, of varying degrees of quality and depth, on a number of varieties, though often times it amounts to collections of vocabulary, sometimes as

dictionaries, sometimes as comparative word lists. But nonetheless, the quoted passage above still holds a good deal of validity.

In my opinion, besides McWhorter's inability to make use of the Chinese-language descriptive literature, there are linguistic and non-linguistic reasons for this uneven availability of data. The non-linguistic reason has to do with the purpose behind much of the documentation of varieties of Chinese over the last century. To a large extent, the goal of many scholars of the 20th century in recording Chinese dialects has been less to understand or record the variation of Sinitic languages than to work out the sound system of Middle Chinese. (See 3.4.2). Though there are genuine attempts to document Sinitic varieties, they are still intimately bound to the enterprise pioneered by Bernhard Karlgren and others to understand Middle Chinese, and very rarely presented on the dialects' own terms, rather than from a comparative perspective.

In the traditional descriptive literature, this has led to a heavy emphasis on reflexes of phonological categories of Middle Chinese as reflected in regional pronunciations of cognate vocabulary, and the tacit assumption that syntactic and lexical variation is minimal or uninteresting. Some notable exceptions to the latter trend are works by Anne Yue-Hashimoto (2003) and Hilary Chappell (2001a). While scholars like Jerry Norman and South Coblin have argued for a more bottom-up approach to Chinese reconstruction using the comparative method, and fieldwork that pays more attention to unique local forms than character readings, the philological tradition has nonetheless left behind a framework that has guided many descriptions, resulting in the somewhat uneven situation described by McWhorter above, so that much of the information published about a given dialect must be gleaned from short articles focusing on narrow, usually phonological, topics, and usually in the service of phonological reconstruction at that. Full length descriptions are considerably rare for varieties

other than Standard Mandarin, Cantonese and a few others, and virtually non-existent for those not literate in Chinese.

We saw that the relatively uneven treatment of Xining holistically matched this trend. Though exceptional descriptions of its case system, its aspect markers and other features of its grammar or phonology exist, and though there is the high-quality “Xining Dialect Gazetteer” (方言志) of Zhang and Zhu (1987), there is no proper descriptive grammar in the same way there is a grammar of Mangghuer, or Salar, or nDrapa. Even Daohua, represented by Atshogs (2004), is mostly a volume about language contact, with somewhat piecemeal descriptions appearing only in the first two chapters. This seems to be for the same reason there is no grammar of Pingding or Poyang: grammars of *fangyan* are usually skipped in favor of character readings, or illustrations of exceptional phenomena, like infixation or postpositional case-marking. This is likely on the tacit, and very likely misguided, assumption that Sinitic syntactic variation is too limited to warrant description in its own right, a notion that a reading of the grammatical sections in 3.4 on even Southwest Mandarin should dispel.

Another reason, more relevant to the current project, that varieties of Chinese are at best sporadically described in grammar treatments is that it is not always obvious what constitutes a discrete linguistic entity, this due to widespread multilingualism in local dialects, in addition to multiple layers of outside influence from other Sinitic varieties, especially the literary form of Classical Chinese. This is related to the conundrum of delineating a “dialect” from a “language”, sidestepped by the Chinese term 方言 *fāngyán* (literally ‘speech of a place’), which is at a level of hierarchy somewhere between the two. The result may often be the arbitrary choice of describing the dialect of a particular city or town to which the field worker has access (or even a particular district of a city or town), even if the speech there may generally be mutually

intelligible with that of a nearby locale. With the added problem of mutual influence over centuries of drifting populations and power centers, not to mention contemporary pressures from the propagation of Standard Mandarin through education and media, it becomes particularly hard to classify a specific form as belonging to one or another genetic subgrouping (see, e.g. Sagart 1998 on Yue and Hakka; Branner 2000 on Min and Hakka, and Simmons 1999 on Mandarin and Wu), to the extent that many argue a Stammbaum family tree is inadequate for China, as it is in other parts of the world (Sagart 1998; Chappell 2001b; Chirkova 2013; see also 3.2). The following quote by Randy LaPolla (2001:233) nicely illustrates the point:

“Centres of population concentration developed, and languages in those centres came to be quite distinct from each other, with each having prestige within its own area, and then spread out from those centres. The result is languages forming something like prototype categories rather than areas with sharp boundaries (see, for example, Iwata 1995). For example, comparing Guangzhou city Yue with Xiamen city Southern Min (each the prototype of its category), the differences are quite clear, and the languages are easily distinguishable, but in the areas of Guangdong where the two languages meet, there are many forms of each dialect that to different degrees differ from the prototype of their category while having characteristics of the other category. In some cases it is difficult to distinguish whether a certain form of speech is a Yue dialect or a Southern Min dialect, as the two have leached into each other to form something that cannot be uncontroversially put into either category.” LaPolla (2001:233)

While LaPolla’s point may be true of many dialect continua found around the world, the point I want to make from this discussion is that, in drawing from a grammar or descriptive article in isolation, what one may be seeing is not a unique linguistic variety set apart from surrounding varieties, but a small piece of a greater areal puzzle due to the results of available fieldwork, so that, say, the lack of tones in Wutun may seem surprising until one realizes that, according to Shen and Nakano (2015), as well as Xu (2015), tone loss is a phenomenon common across most of northern China, checked only by urbanization, where tones appear more stable in cities, probably due to greater access to standard forms. Or, as we saw from Chapter 7, when

compared to its regional neighbors, Wutun looks less exceptional, and more a (perhaps noteworthy) extension of regional trends, thus more Sinitic, than if one focuses solely on how it differs from Standard Mandarin. However, viewed in isolation, and compared to, say, Mandarin, or Cantonese, Wutun may appear more like a “creole” to non-specialist linguists, based on its dramatic departure from those standard Sinitic varieties. The same argument applies even more so for Xining, which itself is far less of a departure than Wutun is.

As noted in 2.1, for well over a century there has been an inherent tension between intergenerational transmission accounts, like those of a Stammbaum family tree, and more areal, geographically defined accounts, like those of wave theory, with the latter in most cases better capturing the way languages truly evolve in space. As such, the history of Chinese dialects is better viewed areally, as the history of settlement and place, rather than branching and intersecting nodes on a family tree—hardly a novel observation at this point, though the traditional Stammbaum presentation still persists, as in 3.2.3.1, if only as a convenient, if approximate, short-hand.

Wutun stands out not because it is a possible Sinitic variety that lacks tone, but because it lacks tone, marks case, has SOV word order, complex syllabic initials, evidentiality and other signs of Tibetan features, all part of its local linguistic setting. Nonetheless, when compared to Wutun, Xining begins to look a lot more like standard northern Mandarin after all. By the time one reaches Xi’an, the old imperial capital, arguably a more ethnically homogenous area historically, there is less talk of “restructuring” and foreign “interference”, except in the bigger picture studies of Sinitic, such as those of Hashimoto (1976, 1986) and McWhorter (2007) discussed below. What may be more interesting, however, are all the points in between, gaining a more isoglossic view of features across northern China, to see if typological mixing

forms as gradual a cline as in those overlapping dialectal areas found between Guangzhou and Xiamen, as painted by LaPolla in the quote above. Geolinguistic work like that of Iwata (2010) and Shirai (2018) lead the way in promoting and adapting this framework.

Finally, in the case of Bai, a similarly unexplored question in the literature is what to make of its dialectal variation? Wang's (2006) volume is remarkable in that it draws data from a dozen or more dialects of Bai, some from outside of Dali, that give a more nuanced picture of the language's vocabulary and phonology. Some of those varieties are spoken in multilingual areas, like Nujiang or Diqing, and so show different types of contact than Dali (see 5.2.7), but the broader implications are left unexplored. Wiersma (1990:197) shows examples of syntactic variation between the two largest dialects of Bai, both spoken in or near Dali city, but how much of a varied picture would emerge from further investigating, say, Enqi Bai, with its 3-way contrasts on obstruents, including a uvular series not found in (most) other dialects? Would Bai come to look considerably less "Chinese"? Would more rural varieties come to look even more "Yi"? Again, when taking a single (urban, standard) dialect as an exemplar for description, too much is lost from the greater areal setting to which it belongs, and generalizations run the risk of being too simplistic and misleading as to the language's typology and history.

So with these qualifications and disclaimers in mind, given what we do know of Sinitic, what implications does the current study have for how we should view the family as a whole? How do the cases of Xining, Tangwang, Wutun and Daohua, or even Bai for that matter, inform our understanding of Chinese?

8.3.2 Sinitic as Creole

As was the case with English in 3.3.4.2, there are good reasons to be tempted to compare Sinitic varieties to classic creole languages and contact settings. As discussed below, some

authors do so specifically on the grounds of Sinitic, especially Mandarin, morphosyntax, which has the analytic morphology and simple syllable structure typical of many creoles. At the same time, especially in the western regions at the crossroads of numerous trade routes and imperial frontiers, the contact settings are in some ways reminiscent of those giving rise to creole languages, either through trade or conquest.

However, substantial differences remain, especially between China and the Caribbean plantations that gave rise to New World European-based creoles. Chinese expansion historically has involved displacement on a much smaller scale than the Atlantic slave trade or indentured servitude in the South Pacific. Furthermore, while campaigns against resistance along China's west and southwest should not be played down in terms of scale of violence³²¹, they did not quite approximate the near genocidal measures taken in the Americas³²². Finally, for centuries China controlled its newly acquired territories indirectly through co-opting indigenous elites in the so-called *tusi* (土司) system, and as such the situation on the ground stayed much the same as before imperial conquest in many regions. Therefore, while certain parallels are useful to draw from, the overall picture of imperial conquest between the imperial powers is still only loosely analogous.

Hashimoto (1976, 1986 and elsewhere) first provided the hypothesis that Sinitic is a language family marked by heavy Altaicization in the north, and heavy Tai (but also other language families) influence in the south, leading to the type of areal typologies found in those locales.

³²¹ See, for instance, Herman (2007) on the campaigns against the historical Miao peoples in China's colonization of Guizhou, or Lipman (1998) on the scorched earth tactics of the Hui-hui Wars, or Zhao Erfeng's bloody subjugation of Kham in the early 1900s, a legacy that gave him the nickname "the Butcher of Kham (赵屠户)", mentioned in Coleman (2002).

³²² Broad, sweeping statements like this are always subject to exceptions, the Qing campaigns against the Dzungar Mongols in the 18th century being the first to come to mind.

Most scholars accept this hypothesis (Norman 1988), though they may disagree with Hashimoto that the contact necessarily involved a pidginized form of northern Chinese extant in the Mongol Yuan Dynasty, as Hashimoto posited.

One in-depth account that specifically tries to draw from history to answer questions of linguistic structure is McWhorter (2007:Chapter 5), in which he argues from reduced syllabic and tone inventories, fewer initial laryngeal contrasts, and a number of morphosyntactic phenomena, including overspecified complementizers and resultative-aspect concatenations, negator allomorphy, tone sandhi rules and in more limited instances, specification of number and gender³²³ on pronominal systems, that Mandarin Chinese is a simplified variety of Chinese, compared with southern Sinitic varieties. That is, while Sinitic as a family is generally taken to be significantly lacking in complexity (perhaps an observation overly fixated on inflectional paradigms), there is enough internal variation in grammatical complexity, not only phonological but morphosyntactic, to investigate the origins of these differentials.

McWhorter then seeks a historical explanation in keeping with his theory that such “interrupted” languages are the result of a mass influx of adult language learners in the past. He cites as evidence the narrow time gap between the Mongol conquest at the end of the 13th century, and the dramatic reduction in complexity that separated northern Chinese dialects from their more complex southern relatives, as well as the fact that most Chinese people would have been both illiterate³²⁴ and cut off from the Altaic rulers of both the Yuan and Manchu Qing Dynasty, thus leaving little room for such a major foreign influence to trickle down through the

³²³ McWhorter (2007:117) cites Lau (1999) as a source documenting suffixal gender-marking on inanimate nouns in Hakka, Xiang and other southern varieties of Sinitic. I have not consulted the original source.

³²⁴ This may not be as much a given as tends to be assumed. For example, Charles Sanft (2019) surveys local writings from the Northwest border during the Han imperial era and finds a wide range of literary practices and interaction with texts that presents more of a spectrum of literacy than a simplistic literate/non-literate divide.

population. Rather he looks to fix the simplifying event further back in time, and does so by citing massive repopulation campaigns of the Tang Dynasty during the seventh and eighth centuries, and possibly even further back to Han Dynasty conquests of the Xiongnu 匈奴, a probably Turkic or Mongolic (their ethnic identity is disputed) federation who were resettled in the region of modern Gansu and Shaanxi provinces (McWhorter 2007:127; see 3.1.1 for more context on North-South Chinese “barbarian” divides).

McWhorter relies primarily on Allsen et al. (1994) for information on the demographic shifts of the region. Specifically, he points to Tang campaigns in the 600s as responsible for settling tens of thousands of “Turks, Uighurs, Khitan, Sogdians, Ch’iang, Tangut, T’u-yü-hun and Tibetans” into northern frontier provinces, from eastern Qinghai to Hebei, formerly inhabited only by Han Chinese, as well as even greater numbers of non-Han refugees fleeing war-struck areas into traditional northern Han lands.

According to McWhorter’s argument, these forcibly displaced people assimilated to Chinese society as farmers and “herdsmen”, many also enlisting in the army, often serving as commanders, especially at outposts on the frontiers, while their children often ended up as slaves or serfs (McWhorter 2007:127). These large, displaced groups, settled throughout the arid plains of northern China, from Hebei to Qinghai, would by McWhorter’s account supposedly have been greater in number than the Han Chinese living sparsely along these northern borders of the empire, such that cohabitation and intermarriage would give rise to the simplified form of northern Chinese that would constitute the prestige variety of the capital of Chang’an (modern Xi’an), located square in the middle of this region. Note that this scenario is something of a reversal of trends as those in Amdo and Kham, where in the latter Han soldiers and traders entered the area, marrying local non-Han women.

McWhorter's argument, however, presupposes that simplification is a given by-product of intermarriage, though cases such as Michif and Mednyj Aleut show that it is not a guarantee, and Daohua or Wutun may be a better picture of what happens when languages arise out of households speaking Chinese and a language that looks like Tibetan or Altaic. Children growing up in communities with multiple languages as input need not resort to simplification strategies for communication, as they have access to both languages at home. In this situation we might expect some type of mixed language to emerge instead, not necessarily a reduction in the relative complexities of Sinitic that McWhorter contrasts with those of the south³²⁵.

Similarly, arguing from Sri Lankan Malay, Ansaldo and Nordhoff (2009) show that, despite the historically documented shallow time depth between the arrival of Malays in Sri Lanka and the present, the mixed language that has emerged there is considerably more complex than many authors like McWhorter ascribe to creole structures, and so complexity itself cannot stand in as a marker of time depth, such as when Trudgill (2011) speaks of the accruing of complexity over long periods of time. Likewise, Atshogs (2004) assumes Daohua was a nineteenth century development, making it a much younger language than even Sri Lanka Malay, and yet it retains much of Tibetan dialects' complex morphological structures and informational marking.

Whatever the source of the simplification in northern varieties, Sinitic in general is usually taken to be a family of simple grammars par excellence. In their lack of inflectional morphology, gender or case marking, reduced plural marking (limited to animate nouns and pronouns in the standard language), and so on, many descriptions in the literature of so-called simple grammars, such as McWhorter (2001) or Trudgill (2011), sound a lot like ordinary

³²⁵ The picture is still likely being painted in too broad of strokes, however. It depends on the specific setting, and likely the overall demographics. Consider DeLancey's (2013b) assumptions, recounted in 6.3.1.3, that posit a Sinitic-shifting origin for the simplification in early Loloish languages in the Southwest.

Chinese grammar (or even more, one may hasten to add, Ngwi-Burmese, perhaps Bai as well).

As Trudgill (2001:40, *inter alia*) puts it:

“[I]n absolute terms one could say that analytic languages are easier than synthetic languages, and there are two arguments for this claim. Firstly, children always learn a more analytic version of their native language; inflectional and derivative suffixes are learned later on. Secondly, pidgin languages from around the world are typically analytic.”

These statements seem to capture tendencies at best (see Velupillai 2015 for illustrations of pidgin grammar that would lessen this argument’s weight) and may ignore finer areas of even surface structures in analytic languages like Mandarin or Yoruba that would show a considerable area of complexity not met in superficial generalizations of overall complexity.

However, it remains the case that when authors make generalizations about simplified grammars, or about creole prototypes, their descriptions often resemble analytic languages like Chinese or Bai, “transparent languages” in DeLancey’s (2013b) phrasing, with less marked specification and fewer opaque forms, equating creole grammar and analytic grammar in practice.

Viewed from the opposite perspective of contact and simplification, Amdo and Kham forms of Sinitic constitute an interesting case study for theories of complexity, in that, compared to other Chinese varieties, they are in many ways more complex—more highly specified in marking, more redundant in form, for example in double-marked pronouns, higher segment inventories in languages like Wutun or Daohua--than their more easterly relatives, with case marking and evidentiality systems, new phonological contrasts and tonal processes, as well as complex onsets in certain subsets of the lexicon, as in Wutun, or the prenasalized onsets of Daohua. (Note this argument takes for granted we are talking about varieties of Chinese, since, when compared to local Tibeto-Burman languages, they would not necessarily appear as more

complex.) Other individual phonemes and morphological markers, while maybe not on their own more complex than Mandarin (e.g. it probably cannot be argued that ergative alignment is more complex than accusative), are still cross-linguistically less common.

This is not so different than other mixed languages around the world, which tend towards larger phoneme inventories, including tones, as well as more complex morphology than creole languages, as a result of incorporating, not simplifying, two linguistic systems. Here, then, is something of a fly in the ointment of arguments like Trudgill's and McWhorter's, in that language contact is supposed to have generally the opposite effect, by simplifying complex structures.

However, both of those accounts depend crucially on adult second language acquisition, which may not have been the story along the Sino-Tibetan frontier, where mixed ethnic families, as discussed in 8.2.2, may have been a driving force in language change. Accounts of the region that assume language shift of a local community presumably would have involved (primarily) adults, but if the so-called mixed languages evolved as the by-product of bilingual households and language intertwining, possibly through grammaticalized code-switching (Auer 1999), then perhaps adult second language acquisition would have played a less dominant role. Szeto, Matthews and Yip (2017) make a similar point, that first-language (multilingual) acquisition is generally downplayed in studies of creolization and the emergence of mixed languages.

However, Szeto, Matthews and Yip also point out that, as children grow older, and are exposed to more monolingual trends in the community, all but the most subtle traces of their altered speech disappear, realigning with community norms. This means there must be a certain critical mass for the changes multilingual children make to the community language to take hold. As noted in 4.3.2 for Xining and 5.3.2 for Daohua, the frequent references to

multilingual Han people in the region are usually to individuals, implying they stand out from the norm. It is also just as plausible that the children of mixed household grow up to be more Tibetan, and thus over time quit speaking Chinese altogether. While many Han all over China may have once been some other *minzu*, likewise in heavily ethnic regions, some Zang, or Yi--or Bai--may have once been Han.

At the same time, isolation appears to play its role, as well, and this is reflected in variation among the varieties themselves. Compared to the more isolated Wutun or Daohua, Xining, spoken in a larger, urban area, looks quite simplified—quite a lot more like a regular Sinitic variety, actually. Wutun and Daohua are spoken by a small number of speakers, in quite isolated villages; Xining is spoken in and around a provincial capital, itself historically a major trade depot. Among other languages of the region, the Qiangic varieties spoken in highland areas, or Yongning Na, until quite recently a very remote community, exhibit larger phonetic inventories, more complex rules of paradigmatic alternation, and more idiosyncratic structures across the region, such as overspecification in evidentiality marking, or directional verbal prefixes. Bai, if we take it to be originally a Tibeto-Burman language, is no less simple in grammar (and other than a medium-sized tonal system, has a rather simple phonological system, as well), just as we might expect from being spoken in an accessible lowland area, the site of major regional powers, historically.

As one final illustration of the “creolized” nature of Sinitic, Ansaldo and Matthews (2001) note that, given the historical contact situation, defined by successive waves of migration and access to prestige literary forms, contact has not only had such a dramatic effect on the dialects of Chinese as to appear much like what is described as a typical creole grammar, but that, due to continued access to prestige forms, both locally and nationally, it would be accurate to describe

the situation for many Chinese speakers, especially in the south, as having a continuum available ranging between a High form, in modern times being Standard Mandarin, and the most local form, with no clear-cut demarcations between different varieties. That is, rather than a High/Low diglossia, “Chinese” for many people of the south is a language more akin to the sliding scale of a creole continuum found in the Caribbean, for example, or possibly to the Bai-Han continuum that I propose for Dali in 8.2.3 above. (See Hefright 2011.)

Chappell (2001b) describes this situation for Xiang and Standard Mandarin, as spoken in Hunan, in which an intermediate form, “plastic Mandarin” (塑料普通话 *Sùliào pǔtōnghuà*), serves as a converged language between local Xiang and standard forms. Dede (2006) reports a similar situation in the Xining dialect, what he calls New and Old Xining, in which local pronunciations of morphemes are persistent, but are being replaced by Standard Mandarin lexical forms different from what would be used in Old Xining, while Dwyer (1999b) notes the same trend elsewhere in Qinghai, under the moniker 青普话 *Qingpuhua*, that is Qinghai-*Putonghua*. The process is highly interesting because it involves mapping Mandarin morphemes to local pronunciations, even in the absence of a local tradition of literacy, presumably via an implicit analogic process shared by the speech community—one way that Standard Mandarin is replacing local dialects, but not necessarily with Standard Mandarin being the result.

An example provided by Dede (1999) for New and Old Xining is the pronunciation of the morpheme 楼 ‘building’, Standard Mandarin [lou³⁵]. The Xining dialect usually has correspondences between SM /ou/ and Xining /u/, as in 头 [t^hu³⁵] ‘head’ and 后 [xu²²] ‘behind’. At the same time, Xining final /ɤ/ corresponds to Standard Mandarin -u, as in 五 [ɤ⁵³] ‘five’ and 布 [pɤ²²] ‘cloth’. However, historically (i.e. in Dede’s “Old Xining”) 楼 ‘building’ has

patterned with the latter group, being pronounced [ly⁵³]. In the “interdialect” of New Xining, the regular correspondence mentioned above has been noticed by speakers, and so younger, urban speakers now tend to pronounce the morpheme as [lu³⁵] instead (Dede2006: 324-325).

Therefore, similar to how Haitian Creole speakers have a veritable range of mesolects to vary between the basilectal creole and local French acrolect, so too do many Chinese speakers have a range of structures and pronunciations midway between standard and purely local forms, with a range of “localized” or “official sounding” fixed registers emerging as in between, leading Ansaldo and Matthews (2001) to claim that the only substantive difference between what are traditionally termed creoles and languages like Chinese is the speed with which restructuring occurs. One may again add to this comparison the apparently fuzzy boundaries between what is Bai and what is Chinese in the everyday usage among Bai speakers in Dali.

All of the above considerations, especially the fact of continuous, overlapping dialect continua and differing registers then leads to questioning the efficacy of a traditional family tree model for capturing the true reality of Sinitic varieties in time and space. As such, given the emergence of “New Xining” or “Plastic Mandarin”, and the erasure or replacement through contact of previously diagnostic criteria in all varieties, I am led to the same conclusion, extended in the next section, as Chappell (2001b:353), when she states:

“The family-tree model appears to work reasonably well for Sinitic as far as phonology and some aspects of morphology are concerned; nonetheless, this only accounts for a small part of a much more complex linguistic picture: the family-tree model is unable to capture the effect of successive waves of Mandarinization of Southern Sinitic languages, stratifying lexical and syntactic components....Nor can it handle the cases where convergence is well under way.”

Nor can it adequately contextualize the place of varieties that may simultaneously have formed from the merger of two languages, like Daohua and possibly and Wutun, but still fit into

broader regional trends of their contributing languages' genetic relatives. I now turn to this final question, on the efficacy of family trees in providing an account of language development.

8.3.3 Against a Stammbaum Tree Model for Sinitic?

One may finally ask how different Sinitic varieties of the Amdo-Kham region are from other varieties of Sinitic and whether they should be termed dialects of Chinese in the sense of *fangyan*, or whether they are mixed languages in the sense of Velupillai (2015) and others.

That is, do we view the Chinese of these areas as another node on the Sinitic family tree, or are they divergent enough to constitute languages separate from Chinese, the products of “abrupt” breaks in Sinitic “transmission”, to use Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988) terminology?

When I began this dissertation, I expected to make a call for an “Amdo-Kham” branch of the Sinitic family tree, but by now it seems rather obvious that the local varieties represent continuations of areal trends between Central Plains Mandarin (see 4.2.1.1 for some ways Xining shares similarities with Lanzhou and Xi’an dialects to its west) and Southwest Mandarin (see, for example, 5.2.2.3 or 5.3.3.1 on local features of Daohua). Chirkova (2012b) calls for more application of the Middle Chinese philological methodology for establishing phonological reflexes between Wutun, Daohua and local Mandarin varieties to establish how aberrant they really are³²⁶.

Nonetheless, as amply illustrated throughout this dissertation, what gives these languages their particular flavor are precisely the ways they have incorporated non-Sinitic elements (or been constituted from them) into their phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical profiles. To

³²⁶ See 7.2.1 for data on how Tangwang and Wutun involve certain irregular, but ultimately perhaps minor, deviations from expected phonological developments.

discount these features in favor of a set of syllabic and tonal correspondences does little service to describing what Sinitic on the Qinghai/Gansu border or in western Sichuan actually looks like.

If we classify a language as Sinitic or Tibetic or Germanic based on whether it can be traced back to a protolanguage, then our view is one based in reconstruction methodology and (monolineal) genetic inheritance. (See 8.1.3 on open questions regarding this methodology for languages with a history of heavy contact, whatever their origins.) Since borrowings are not useful to our reconstruction, as they have their origins, by definition, outside of the line of transmission, then contact phenomena have to be factored out of the equation, as they often have been in the reconstruction of protolanguages.

To what extent language contact phenomena are allowed to play a role in subgroup diagnostics as “defining innovations”, however, is a matter of some debate among linguists. (See, for example, Kessler 2001, mentioned in 2.3.1.) But in South China, where language contact is assumed to have taken place in a murky, distant past, we cannot be sure that, say, vowel length in Yue or tonal adaptations by syllable type or other defining features were internal or externally motivated, whether they constitute “vertical transmission” or “horizontal transmission”, or some combination of both. This is the perennial question in tracing languages too far back in time, such as the difficulties inherent in establishing Altaic as a family, or super-families like Austric: with fewer documentary records, separating contact from inheritance appears perhaps impossible.

Comparatively speaking, the historical setting from which Amdo and Kham varieties of Sinitic emerge may not differ greatly from other parts of China, except that in northwestern China those varieties are spoken in a more ethnically, and linguistically, diverse setting. In fact, the only substantive difference between Xining, Wutun or Daohua, and Chinese dialects within

other Sinitic branches like Xiang, Gan or Min may be the composition of the local linguistic setting when foundational Han communities first arrived.

From the perspective of feature pool theories like Mufwene (2001) or Croft (2000), introduced originally in 2.5, we can think of the languages in contact across the frontier as communities contributing their inherited existing structures, and so being available at the time that varieties like Xining or Daohua or Bai were either emerging as distinct languages or restructuring as typologically dissimilar from their closest relatives. Mongolic and Tibetic languages are SOV and mark case with postpositions, and this higher frequency of such inputs than elsewhere in China, together with the fact that Mandarin dialects also involve a number of postpositions and object-preposing strategies as precedent in Chinese (4.3.1.3), would naturally imply that local Sinitic varieties, or emergent mixed languages, would exhibit such features as well. On the other hand, language families native to southern China, such as Tai (Ostapirat 1999), Austroasiatic (Sidwell and Rau 2014) and Hmong-Mien (Ratliff 2010), tend to lack case marking and exhibit SVO word order, and so would not contribute such structures conflicting with Sinitic norms in the that region, thus resulting in the sort of typological cline first pointed out by Mantaro Hashimoto (1976).

The above argument is supported by genetically balanced corpus studies in Moran and Blasi (2014). There the authors used corpus studies to examine whether increase in one domain of inventory size leads to reduction in another, e.g. number of consonants versus number of vowels. Using a large database of over 2,000 segment inventories worldwide, the authors found a significant, but small, inverse correlation between the number of vowels versus the number of consonants. However, the correlation was better shown to be an effect not of an

inherent cross-linguistic law of language evolution (such as McWhorter's sarcastic "strange attractor" effect), but rather an effect of the distribution of language families geographically.

That is, the correlation effects that were shown as trade-offs in complexity could be explained by common genetic descent and population movement, rather than typological universals, quantifying a point made earlier by William Croft (2002). As such, the complex structures and anomalies (from a Sinitic perspective) in frontier Chinese dialects, and the non-Sinitic nature of those in Kham, are perhaps likely explained more straightforwardly by the juncture of typologically opposing languages than by any kind of sociolinguistic conditioning (Trudgill 2011) or universal of language learning process (McWhorter 2007).

In short, much as evolutionary accounts of language change like those of Mufwene or Ansaldo collapse the distinctions between creoles and non-creoles, they also unify the typological differences found throughout China among different groups of Sinitic languages that have come into contact not only with indigenous languages, but other varieties of Sinitic as well. In the end, there may not be any meaningful distinction between "normal" and "abnormal" transmission, but rather only local linguistic features of an exact time and place.

So then, returning to questions discussed in 8.1.3, the place of mixed languages in traditional family trees, whether we imagine a mixed language as appearing from the "merger" of two languages or as a gradual process of contact-induced change, becomes a great terminological difficulty. Given its absorption of non-genetic features locally, but its retention of cognate vocabulary in at least one of the languages, can a single language be both mixed and genetically related to other languages? Can Daohua be both a Sinitic variety and a mixed language? Can English be both a mixed Old Norse-Old English(-Old French) language and a West Germanic

language? These are not simple questions to answer, and they involve not only working out the particulars of methodology, but also agreeing on which factors carry what weight when making cross-linguistic comparisons.

This of course depends on what one wishes the family tree model to achieve. For reconstructing protolanguages, one needs lines of transmission for comparative purposes. And if a language borrows a word from some other language family, or even if it “inherits” a word filtered through a local group who acquired it as a second language, with the concomitant phonological and semantic restructuring involved in that process, then it makes some sense to filter that word out, as we know it came not from the protolanguage, but from the historical circumstances of language contact.³²⁷ But in the end, given all of the discussion above, and given the multilingual, interactive history that so many languages proceed through, what narrow, incomplete view of a language’s history are we left with, when we have “factored out” so much of the defining properties of a language—defined primarily by how it evolved and adapted in the context of its (historically) unique environment?

If what we care about, ultimately, is capturing a narrative about how language families evolve, then we by necessity need to broaden the parameters of our framework, to make greater room, if not give center stage, to the “punctuations” and “interruptions” of historical events, and mutual influences that in the vast majority of cases make up the story of human history, and thus language history. To some extent this may in fact separate two opposing goals in

³²⁷ One may further strengthen this argument by pointing out, as Mufwene and DeGraff have already amply done, that such “corruptions” of transmission from populations of “non-native speakers” carrying on the line of transmission are not fundamentally different from transmission among populations of “native speakers” with varying dialectal and sociolinguistic backgrounds, as is true for mostly any language, and that to draw a sharp divide between them is drifting towards a kind of colonialist mindset of pure and impure bloodlines, as it were.

historical linguistics: between an exclusive, filtering reconstruction of a protolanguage, and an inclusive, all-encompassing subgrouping based on (internal and external) innovations.

Which brings us to a final question: if history and ethnology and cultural anthropology can better inform our understanding of language change, to what extent can historical linguistics, and language typology inform our understanding of those subjects? To what extent can we rely on reconstructions and contact typology to make empirical claims about societies and settings underrepresented in the written historical or archaeological record? Examples we have seen include using the presumably Qiangic nature of the Bailang songs to date the arrival of peoples to southern Sichuan (3.1.2) to the Austroasiatic vocabulary in early Sinitic to show the geographic range of non-Han peoples along the eastern Yangtze (3.1.1).

Given all of the above, at present one would hope to proceed with great caution. Leaving aside the difficulties involved even in agreeing on definitive reconstructions of morphemes³²⁸, it becomes obvious from the questions raised all throughout this discussion that our classificatory terms themselves need finer tuning, especially in the vocabulary we use for discussing mixed languages. If we don't agree upon the best diagnostic criteria that highlight the fundamental differences between the history of Cree and the history of Michif—or even the history of Cantonese and the history of Xining—then we can't draw firm conclusions about premodern societies by noting the typological structure of a local language, or the presence of a set of vocabulary and phonological correspondences linking it to another linguistic groups. We risk drawing faulty conclusions about the past based too much on de-contextualized synchronic features that may be explained by more than one historical source.

³²⁸ And also leaving aside problems in descriptions of synchronic systems, as we saw with distinguishing case markers from postpositions or adequately explaining the structure of tonal or evidential systems, with all their implications for internal versus external change.

8.4 Conclusion: Implications and Future Directions

On the one hand, this dissertation has had something of an empirical flavor, in that it has collected information on languages and their typological profiles, regional historical settings and pertinent factors of ethnic affiliation to paint a multi-dimensional picture of the regions on the historical China-Tibetan frontier. At the same time, I have argued that only by taking such a holistic approach to studying language areas, and unraveling the relationship between genetic affiliation and language contact, can one have a clear view and a full understanding of how languages change in multilingual spaces. And only by comparing ostensibly complicated cases of language contact, such as Xining or Daohua or Bai, not only to their neighboring languages, but also other languages that have evolved under similar circumstances, can one have an informed view on whether they constitute “new” languages, such as creoles or mixed languages, or historically restructured, localized offshoots of pre-existing language families.

Part of the process in drawing together all of these contending strands of inquiry involves a re-examination of terminology in the field, both in a presumed taxonomic classification of contact languages like creoles and mixed languages, as well as for genetic labels like Sinitic, Mongolic, Ngwi and so on. As should be quite clear from the above discussion, difficult, fundamental issues remain in distinguishing between each type when all of the case studies are taken together in consideration. Likewise, depending on one’s theoretical viewpoint on how “new languages” emerge, or on the relationship of creoles and mixed languages to their historically contributing languages, the utility of such terminology becomes clearly questionable.

Does the logical conclusion then become to toss it all out? Are we better off without such labels as “creole” or “mixed language” or “Sinitic” altogether? I don’t think so. For one, much of the investigation throughout this dissertation likely would not have been possible, or at least

likely wouldn't have come about in the first place, without these sorts of terms leading me, the researcher, to ask the right questions to begin with. By now these terms are firmly embedded in the scholarly discourse, and not without good reason: the structural patterns put forth by McWhorter (1998, 2005) or Bakker and Muysken (1994) speak to strong, repeatedly observed tendencies, even if others may show where they fail to rise to the status of universals. (How many true universals are there in linguistic theory, anyway?)

At the same time, the Neo-grammarians, historical method, which rests on its tried-and-true principles of regularity of sound change and the comparative method, gives us an admittedly small picture of language history, but a nonetheless very powerful one. Through such comparisons we can see the relationships between Xining, Chengdu and Beijing varieties, and we can explore the chronological layers of the Bai lexicon to find the different etymological strands of vocabulary that give us a chance to link that language to one or another community in the first place. We cannot even begin to proceed with a discussion on Monguor's linguistic history without comparing its features to those of Khalkha and Classical Mongolian, for example, or the patterns in Amdo and Kham Tibetan to those fossilized in Written Tibetan, those in Chengdu and Kunming to Middle Chinese, and so on. Even as they are critiqued and re-evaluated, these categories, and their constituent methodologies, give us the ability to engage in diachronic linguistic research in the first place.

The real problem lies not so much with the terms themselves, but the constant human tendency for wanting absolute, exclusive categories with which to apply them³²⁹. We have

³²⁹ In this context, Sharon Hargus raises the very pertinent, but thorny, question of ISO codes for identifying languages for ease of scholarly access in publications such as *Ethnologue*. Indeed, it is an unenviable task to document consistently all of the discrete, individual languages of the world, given the difficulties discussed in this dissertation for separating one language (variety) from another, from drawing structural, isoglossic lines in the geographic space of dialect (and language) continua, and for deciding how restructured a variety of, say, Northwest Mandarin needs to be to receive its own listing and identity code, separate from that of its regional

these terms at our disposal, and we have fairly uncontested, classic prototypes as best exemplars: Michif and Mednyj Aleut, say, for a typical mixed language; Haitian or Hawai'ian Creole for a typical creole; Southwest Mandarin, say, for a typical (genetic) group of Northern Sinitic. However, what this dissertation shows is that, viewed holistically and comparatively, these labels cannot be rigid boxes in which to force individual languages, but rather serve as fuzzy-edged distributions of shared classificatory features, both structural and socio-historical, which include much overlap and entanglement at their edges, very much mirroring the messy edges of historical societies at the margins of empires and State spaces like those discussed throughout this work. With all these many caveats, the terminology inherited from the history of the field remains a potent tool for examining language change, only such labels, and how we arrive at them, require a re-thinking of the relative importance they hold for leading us to the richest possible portrait of a language's history and current reality.

Language contact, being so common, is ultimately a mundane fact of language change, and a language with little of it to show in its history is really the case that requires special explanation, not vice versa. Nonetheless, it is always contact that is viewed as departure from the genetically transmitted norm, and factored out in historical linguistic studies. We know that over long periods, languages may replace more than half their lexicon with borrowings, adopt grammatical subsystems wholesale, or abandon them, and change constituent ordering. We saw all of these occurrences in Amdo, Kham and Dali.

grouping. In China, where essentially every village claims its own dialectal variety, its own 话 *hua* that is, the task of the descriptive linguist cataloguing and classifying languages is not so unlike the task of the 1950's sociologist or anthropologist in making sense of the proliferation of distinct peoples that became whittled down by the PRC to the 56 *minzu* so deconstructed in later literature.

Nonetheless, as such publications give the non-specialist linguist a reference to the local language setting, so as not to misinform, the questions raised in this dissertation cannot be ignored in cataloguing the languages of a country, however much messy stipulation per entry may be needed to sort the picture out.

The case studies in this dissertation show that geography and history, and holistic approaches to linguistic description, matter for classification, for example in showing the Tibeto-Burman origins of Bai, or the likely mixed language origins of Daohua. While reflexive assumptions about a language's history may follow from popular narratives of cultural or political prestige, the historical facts of how ordinary people(s) interacted, and what sorts of societies they actually belonged to in the past, matter not only for understanding why contact occurred, but for assessing the nature of the language itself³³⁰. Those that emerge from trade settings, or from intermarriage, may differ in lexical and structural ways from those that simply accrued borrowings from a history of multilingual interaction. To the extent that adoption of or shift towards Chinese seemed tied to notions of power and political sway, in every region surveyed it appeared only as a mechanism to enhance such social capital for the local elite, with other avenues more likely pursued by the majority of the population.

It is simple enough to construct a hypothetical narrative or typological label for any one of the languages profiled here in isolation—Xining, Tangwang, Wutun, Daohua, Bai—but only when considered together, as contrastive case studies, do the problems and complications of such labelling and explanations become clear. Only when considered against local, historical records can a more distinct argument for a language's genesis, and its relationship to other languages (and thus other language communities) be made. And only when compared against similar case studies can the fuller context of the outcome of language contact be made clear.

As such, no linguistic structure alone, including percentages of the lexicon, definitively point towards origins as a new, contact-produced language. Quantification is ultimately arbitrary, as

³³⁰ Of course, by the end of the 20th century, the newly added element of Standard Mandarin (Putonghua), propagated through the integrated education system of the PRC, absent in premodern times, adds a new, and likely much more severe in terms of language viability, contact factor to the overall picture.

the lexicon shows us, and there is nothing intrinsic about, say, 60% of a language's syntax coming from one source that reveals anything about the language's origins or classification, especially when implicational universals and functional considerations are taken into account. If percentages are to be the ultimate deciding factor, then only the rare language with exactly 50% of its lexicon or structure drawn equally from two distinct languages is truly mixed; any more or any less then it must belong to the family contributing the most input.

In cases where languages are of radically different typologies, as is the case with Cree and French in Michif, or Russian and Aleutian in Mednyj Aleut, such origins may appear more obvious, but for languages with similar typologies, or from the same language family, the typological results may not be so clear, and in some cases the linguistic borders between languages, even, may be murky. While agglutinative languages may drift towards analytic profiles, as did Manchu as a Tungusic language under Chinese influence (Gorelova 2002:5-6), or the Austronesian Chamic language Utsat did under Chinese and Tai influence (Thurgood 1992, 1999; Thurgood et al. 2014), analytic languages tend to pick up derivational affixes quite readily, and the boundary between, say nominal case inflection and adpositions is not readily discernible, as we saw in Amdo and Kham Sinitic. That is, just like arbitrary thresholds tell us very little of a definitive nature, so too do synchronic structure and departure from genetic norms when taken in isolation from other considerations.

We also saw from multiple studies the need to analyze language contact at the fine-grained level of individual lexical items, from grammaticalized forms used as accusatives and passives and converbal linkers to content morphemes that may combine semantic features from multiple languages, not just that from which they take their phonological form (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2005). Sweeping typological generalizations, like those of McWhorter (2007) or Trudgill

(2011) fail to capture the micro-level at which language mixing occurs, perhaps driving change just as much as code-switching practices or language shift does.

Finally, in keeping with contemporary trends problematizing Stammbaum trees and direct descent from a single ancestor, relegating languages whose primary character has developed through multilingual contact to separate status, or considering contact as secondary in some way, mischaracterizes the way languages exist in social settings and change over time. As such, the dialects spoken in and around Qinghai, Gansu and western Sichuan described in the literature may typify how Sinitic evolved across all of China, but simply represent a more highly diverse setting of linguistic features, due to the overlap of more typologically diverse language families. To give primary attention to language contact thus paints a fuller picture of what the Sinitic language family actually looks like “on the ground”, as it were, and tells us more of the family’s history than do the philological and neo-grammarians accounts.

That is to say, perhaps a more accurate view of a language’s history, and the reality of its contemporary range of variation, is better served by centering the areal features that constitute the geographic expanse of its speakers historically, and the peoples with whom they had close contact. The historical linguistic method of privileging unilinear retentions from a reconstructed ancestor only tells a narrow slice of the story, designed for homogenous areas and monoethnic populations, and as such fails to reflect the fluidity and diversity that marks real language evolution. While narratives of Chinese history recounting a monopolizing, Yellow River culture sweeping over benighted borderlands to the South and West are out of date, so too, perhaps, are accounts of the Chinese language as a monolineal, genetic descent from Old Chinese to Middle Chinese to Modern Mandarin. While one would never dream of telling the story of China without including the outside influences of the Xiongnu, the Xianbei, the

Mongols and the Manchus, one likewise should not imagine the story of the Chinese language could be complete without including varieties such as Xining, Daohua or Wutun.

9 Appendix: Overview of Standard Mandarin Chinese

A brief description of Standard Mandarin is in order here for those readers not already familiar with the language. In the sections below I provide an overview of the sound system and basic properties of the morphosyntax, analogous to the other languages in this dissertation. When more specific information is needed in comparative contexts of other chapters, such as discussing SOV structures in Standard Mandarin, as in 4.3.1.3, those forms are provided in that chapter's context.

Standard Mandarin in this dissertation is taken to be synonymous with Putonghua, the standard variety officially promulgated in the People's Republic of China, since the nation's establishment in 1949. It may also refer to the standard variety of Taiwan, where it is called 國語 *Guóyǔ*, and Singapore, where it is called 華語 *Huáyǔ*, but all three varieties have been separated socio-politically since 1949, and obviously that form spoken in the PRC is what is relevant for the language areas discussed in this dissertation.

Like many standard languages around the world, it is something of an idealization, meant as an educated standard or koine for national standardization. Its modern origins begin in the first few decades of the 20th century, as China was transitioning from empire to nation state, and changing its official written language from Classical, or Literary, Chinese (文言文 *Wényánwén*) to something more resembling the modern vernacular. Just whose vernacular, and how closely it should be resembled, was a matter of social and political debate, the story of which has recently been examined by historian Gina Tam (2020). Linguistic discussions of the process of standardization can be found in Ramsey (1987:1-18), Norman (1988:133-139, 245-257), and Chen (1999:13-30, 67-91).

Though Standard Mandarin, or Putonghua, is based on Northern Chinese, especially that around the capital of Beijing, it is not synonymous with the Beijing dialect. The latter is distinct in many ways, phonologically, lexically and morpho-syntactically. For a brief discussion of some differences, see Chen (1999:37-41), Chirkova (2004:11-19), and Chirkova and Chen (2015).

Rather, as a 1956 government policy document put it, after a year of deliberating conferences:

“The foundation for the unification of the Chinese [Han] language is already in existence. It is the Common Language [Putonghua], which has as its standard pronunciation the Peking pronunciation, as its basic dialect the Northern dialect, and as its grammatical model the exemplary literary works written in the modern colloquial. The principal method of achieving the complete unification of the Chinese language is to promote the use of the Common Language in cultural and educational systems and in all phases of the daily life of the people.”
quoted in Ramsey (1987:14)

From this brief contextualization of the standard language, I now turn to its linguistic features in the sections below.

9.1 Standard Mandarin Phonetics and Phonology

Standard Mandarin has a 2-way contrast of aspiration on stops and affricates, as well as a set of dental, retroflex and alveolopalatal fricatives and affricates. (In recent times, in many rural varieties the first two series have merged into dentals.) The following chart presents the consonantal system, with Pinyin romanization provided in italics. For easy access to the reader who wishes to confer one chart for Pinyin values, I include on the consonant chart the alveolopalatal series, which is in complementary distribution with the sibilants and velars before high, front vocoids (i, y, j, ɥ); as such, they are included in parentheses.

Consonants	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Retroflex	Alveolopalatal	Palatal	Velar
Stop	p p ^h b p		t t ^h d t				k k ^h g k
Fricative		f f	s s	ʃ sh	(ç) (x)		x h
Affricate			ts ts ^h z c	tʃ tʃ ^h zh ch	(tç) (tç ^h) (j) (q)		
Nasal	m m		n n				ŋ ng
Central Approximant	w w/u			ɻ r		j y/i	
Lateral Approximant			l l				

The below chart provides the contrastive Mandarin monophthongs and, if one treats them as single units (rather than V + glide/vocoid combinations), diphthongs. Authors differ as to what degree of economy is preferable in reducing the inventory to minimally contrastive units. See Duanmu (2007:12-17) for discussion. A perhaps more illuminative chart is provided below, showing all of the possible surface rhyme combinations in Standard Mandarin, similar to those given for Southwest Mandarin in 3.4.3.3.

Vowels	Front		Central	Back	
	unrounded	rounded		unrounded	rounded
High	i	y			u
High-Mid	ei			ɤ	ou
Mid					
Low	ai			a au	

A set of minimal pairs illustrating the above phonemes includes: 力 lì [li⁵¹] ‘power’, 绿 lǜ [ly⁵¹] ‘green’, 路 lù [lu⁵¹] ‘road’, 漏 lòu [ləu⁵¹] ‘leak’, 乐 lè [lɤ⁵¹] ‘joy’, 累 lèi [lei⁵¹] ‘tired’, 赖 lài [lai⁵¹] ‘to rely’, 辣 là [la⁵¹] ‘spicy’, 烙 lào [lau⁵¹] ‘to brand (an animal)’. There are also two apical vowels, [ɿ] and [ɿ̚], which follow dental and retroflex sibilant onsets, respectively. Examples include 字 zì [tsɿ⁵¹] ‘character; letter’, 次 cì [ts^hɿ⁵¹] ‘next’, 四 sì [sɿ⁵¹] ‘four’, 之 zhī [tʃɿ⁵⁵], 吃 chī

[tʂʰ⁵⁵], 诗 shī [ʂɿ⁵⁵]. Mandarin can also be analyzed as having the rhotacized vowel [ə̃], as in words like 二 èr [ə̃⁵¹] ‘two’ and 耳 ěr [ə̃²¹⁴] ‘ear’.

A chart of the possible syllabic rhymes, termed “finals” in Sinitic tradition, is provided below. There are many gaps in syllabic possibilities, some of which may be attributed to phonological constraints, others of which seem to be historical accident (Duanmu 2007:64; Lin 2007:117). (The below chart does not show initial consonants, many of which have constraints against occurring with certain vowels.) The overall syllable structure of Standard Mandarin is (C)(G)V(G/N), where the final nasal coda, which is pronounced without full oral closure, is relegated to only [ŋ] and [ŋ].

Table 36 Finals (syllabic rhymes) of Standard Mandarin

	a	ɔ	ʏ	ə̃	ai	ei	au	əu	an	ən	aŋ	əŋ	oŋ
i / ɿ	ia		ɛ				iau	iəu	ian	ɪn	iaŋ	iŋ	ioŋ
u	ua	uo			uai	uei			uan	wən	uaŋ	uəŋ	
y			ɛ						yan	yn			

In Chinese, syllables with no onset consonant are usually said to begin with a “zero onset” (零声母 *língmǔ*). Authors differ as to whether they consider this part of the phoneme inventory or not. Among other things, it has been argued for to account for lack of onset maximization in polysyllabic words, where non-initial syllables beginning with a vowel are analyzed as having an underlying place holder in onset position, the “zero onset” (Duanmu 2007). The reasoning is that coda segments do not re-syllabify because syllables ostensibly beginning with a vowel already have an onset consonant (Lin 2007: 113-115). A syllable with a high vowel takes the corresponding glide as its onset consonant, while mid or low vowel nuclei take [ŋ] or [ʔ], as shown in (9-1) below, the latter varying depending on speaker (Lin 1999; Duanmu 2007). Bao (1990) claims the zero onset may also be a “frictionless velar or uvular consonant”, and that it

may still appear phonetically in a syllable beginning with a high front vowel, but not a high back vowel. The consonants are non-contrastive in such occurrences, and speakers are often unaware of their existence. In weak, toneless syllables, the onset is articulated with the preceding coda consonant or [j] or a voiced glottal [h] if the preceding syllable ends in a mid or low vowel. However, this is interpreted as gemination, rather than resyllabification, as the segment also remains in the preceding coda.

(9-1) Phonetic values of the zero initial (Lin 2007:115)

nán a! /nan ³⁵ a/	>	[nan ³⁵ na ²] ‘Difficult!’	难啊
kuài a! /k ^h wai ⁵³ a/	>	[k ^h wai ⁵³ ja ¹] ‘Hurry!’	快啊
wǒ a! /wo ²¹³ a/	>	[wo ²¹ ja ⁴] ‘[Oh] Me!’	我啊

It should be pointed out that, contra Lin (2007), Duanmu (2007) argues against this analysis in non-initial syllables, claiming it is unneeded formally and inaccurate phonetically. The interested reader is referred to Duanmu (2007:75) for further analysis.

Standard Mandarin contrasts four tones, and also utilizes an underspecified neutral tone (轻声), which largely takes its pitch value from the preceding syllable (Lin 2007:201-204), appearing on particles, function morphemes and on second elements of some compounds, especially those made up of a reduplicated morpheme. The four contrastive tones of Standard Mandarin, as pronounced in isolation (the final rise of the third tone, for example, is often absent in combination with other morphemes), and their Pinyin notation are as follows, from Lin (2007:89):

Tone number	Pitch pattern	Pitch value	Example
1	high level	55	[ma ⁵⁵] <i>mā</i> ‘mother’ 妈
2	high rising	35	[ma ³⁵] <i>má</i> ‘hemp’ 麻
3	low falling-rising	214	[ma ²¹³] <i>mǎ</i> ‘horse’ 马
4	high falling	51	[ma ⁵¹] <i>mà</i> ‘to scold’ 骂

Standard Mandarin exhibits a limited amount of tone sandhi, occurring on a few high frequency lexical items, such as the numeral one in quantifying expressions, as well as a general rule that changes a third tone 213 to a second tone 35 before another third tone. The latter rule is subject to morpho-phonological phrasing, and has been the subject of much analysis. See Duanmu (2007:Chapter 11).

Finally, Mandarin has what is sometimes referred to as a dual vocabulary, whereby almost every “word” has both a monosyllabic and disyllabic form, with various restrictions on collocations and usage. This has led San Duanmu to claim the following:

“The presence of the dual vocabulary makes it hard or meaningless to answer a seemingly simple question, namely, are most Chinese words monosyllabic or disyllabic?...What we can say is that nearly all syllables in Chinese are words, although most of them can also appear as disyllables. Also, in a modern text or in speech, most words used are disyllabic, although most of them also have a monosyllabic form.” (Duanmu 2007: 165)

Duanmu (2007:160-161) cites statistics from previous corpus studies that show the prevalence of disyllabic words throughout Mandarin vocabulary, reproduced in (9-2) below:

(9-2) Percentage of tokens per syllable type (from Duanmu 2007:160)

Length	1 syllable	2 syllables	3 syllables	4 syllables	All
Count	809	2,094	89	8	3,000
%	27.0	69.8	3.0	0.3	100.0

9.2 The Standard Mandarin Noun Phrase

As just mentioned, Standard Mandarin tends towards a fairly monosyllabic, isolating profile, morphologically. Nouns do not inflect for case, nor do they morphologically indicate gender. Only a fairly limited set of animate nouns mark plurality, via the bound suffix 们 *-men*, e.g. 我们 *wo-men* ‘1-PL’, 姑娘们 *gūniáng-men* ‘girl-PL’, 学生们 ‘student-PL’ *xuéshēng-men*.

Though they do not present any theoretical analysis for distinguishing affixes from particles or other types of morphemes, Li and Thompson (1981:36-45) present an overview of affixation in

Mandarin. Their examples include the prefixes 老 *lǎo*- ‘old’ and 小 *xiǎo*- ‘small’ for preceding names (or numbers, in traditional child naming practice), the ordinal prefix 第 *dì*-, the morpheme 可 *kě*- ‘able to’, forming such words as 可爱 *kě-ài* ‘loveable; cute’, 可靠 *kě-kào* ‘dependable’, 可信 *kě-xìn* ‘credible’ and 可怕 *kě-pà* ‘dreadful’, as well as the morphemes 好 *hǎo*- ‘good’ and 难 *nán*- ‘difficult’, in words like 好看 *hǎo-kàn* ‘pretty; attractive’, 好听 *hǎo-tīng* ‘euphonious’, 难说 *nán-shuō* ‘hard to say’, 难吃 *nán-chī* ‘unpalatable’.

They illustrate seven different suffixes, including the “non-syllabic” 儿 *-ér* (i.e. it attaches as a coda consonant, the only sub-syllabic morpheme in Mandarin), of the famous 儿化 “er-hua” process, as well as 学 *-xué* ‘-ology’, 家 *-jiā* ‘-ist’, 化 *-huà* ‘-ize’ and the non-productive nominalizer 子 *-zi*, which, like 儿 *ér*, historically derives from a diminutive. The latter is illustrated in the words 梯子 *tīzi* ‘ladder’, 辣子 *làzi* ‘hot pepper’, 椅子 *yǐzi* ‘chair’, 屋子 *wūzi* ‘room’ and 驴子 *lúzi* ‘donkey’, none of which synchronically would have a diminutive meaning for the second element. The authors also consider aspect morphemes to be suffixes, and state that suffixes are far more common in Mandarin than are prefixes. Finally, they point to one pair of morphemes as examples of infixation, namely the morphemes 得 *-dé*- ‘obtain’³³¹ and 不 *-bù*- ‘not’, which insert between the morphemes of disyllabic verbs to indicate positive and negative potential mood, respectively, as in 看得见 *kàn-dé-jiàn* ‘can see’ and 看不见 *kàn-bù-jiàn* ‘cannot see’.

Far more productive in modern Mandarin is compounding, discussed by Li and Thompson (1981:45-84). Here the discussion becomes necessarily more theoretical, especially in distinguishing verbal compounds from chain clauses, modified nouns from compounds and

³³¹ Note that this morpheme, whose etymological meaning is ‘obtain’ (and with which it can still function independently), is discussed in the context of Southwest Mandarin in 3.4.3.5 and regarding its role in Daohua in 5.2.4.3, where it is glossed by its functional meaning as a potential marker.

their relationship to the subordinator 的 *de*, and so on. These topics are not crucial to my presentation of Mandarin, and I will note only that, compared to English, there are far more occurrences of bound roots, similar to English ‘-struct’ in *construction*, *destruction*, *structure*, etc., and a greater proliferation of exocentric compounds than English, as well. Li and Thompson describe a subset of the latter as having a “metaphorical, figurative or inferential connection between...its component parts”. Examples include 矛盾 *máodùn* {spear+shield} ‘contradiction’, 热心 *rèxīn* {heat+heart} ‘enthusiastic’, 入神 *rùshén* {enter+spirit} ‘fascinated’ and 开关 *kāiguān* {open+close} ‘switch’.

Li and Thompson (1981:28-36) discuss reduplication in word formation extensively. The process seems to be most productive in the verb phrase, where it plays a role in softening the discursal tone (see (9-24) below for Li and Thompson’s illustration of the ‘delimitative aspect’), and in the noun phrase mostly occurs in classifier reduplication, to indicate the meaning of ‘every’, such as 棵棵树 *kē-kē shù* ‘every tree’ and 篇文章 *piān-piān wénzhāng* ‘every essay/article’, where 棵 *kē* is the classifier for trees, and 篇 *piān* the classifier for written articles. It is also common for kinship terms to be reduplications of a single morpheme (sometimes with loss of tone on the second occurrence of the morpheme), such as 爷爷 *yéye* ‘paternal grandpa’, 哥哥 *gēge* ‘older brother’, 姥姥 *lǎolao* ‘maternal grandma’ and 妹妹 *mèimei* ‘younger sister’, as well as in proper names. Finally, adjectives commonly reduplicate, often giving a semantic enhancement of vividness (Li and Thompson 1981:32), with disyllabic adjectives following an AABB pattern of reduplication. Not all adjectives allow for such reduplication, however, and while 红红 *hóng-hóng* ‘really red’ and 干干净净 *gàngān-jìngjìng* ‘very clean’ (from 干净 *gānjìng* ‘clean’) are acceptable, according to the authors *吵吵 *chāo-*

chao ‘very noisy’ or *纷纷红红 *fēnfēn-hónghóng* ‘really pink’ (from 纷红 *fēnhóng* ‘pink’) are not.

As is evident from the preceding paragraph, Mandarin is a language with mandatory classifiers for most quantified nouns. (Exceptions mostly include those nouns which may also function as measure words.) Classifier-nominal collocations are idiosyncratic, and opinions vary on the best characterization of the over 100 different classifiers and the classes of nouns each is used to quantify. Examples from Li and Thompson (1981:104-105) are given in (9-3)-(9-8) below. Though, like most authors, Li and Thompson (1981) gloss the classifier simply as ‘CL’, they are given specific glosses here. However, such inclusion of semantic information in the gloss is not to imply the classifiers exclusively quantify those categories, nor that the lexical content is related to the morpheme itself. For example, the classifier 盏 *zhǎn* means ‘little cup’, but is used to count lamps; the classifier 架 *jià*, which means ‘rack; shelf’, counts airplanes, but also various machines, pianos and cameras, when they are implemented on a tripod, as well as mountains, in some dialects. Note also that the first classifier, 个 *gè*, also serves as a generic classifier for nouns, and is frequently used in place of certain more specific classifiers casually.

(9-3)

三个人

sān-gè	rén
three-CL.person	people
‘three people’	

(9-4)

这盏灯

zhèi-zhǎn	dēng
this-CL.lamp	lamp
‘this lamp’	

(9-5)

几件衣服

jǐ-jiàn

how.many/a.few-CL.garment

'how many/a few garments'

yīfú

garment

(9-6)

五架飞机

wǔ-jià

five-CL.airplane

'five airplanes'

fēijī

airplane

(9-7)

那六本书

nà liù-běn

that six-CL.book

'those six books'

shū

book

(9-8)

整个房子

zhěng-gè

whole-CL.generic

'the whole house'

fángzi

house

Any level of constituency can be nominalized using the “particle” 的 *de*, which Li and

Thompson gloss as a nominalizer NOM. Examples are given below of nominalized sentences

functioning as a noun phrase (9-9), as a modifying relative clause (9-10) and as a complement to

an abstract head noun (9-11).

(9-9)

你没有我喜欢的

nǐ méi yǒu wǒ xǐhuān de

2SG NEG EXIST 1SG like NOM

'You don't have what I like.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:576)

(9-10)

种水果的农人

zhǒng shuǐguǒ

grow fruit

'(the) farmer(s) who grow fruit'

de nóng rén

NOM farmer

(Li and Thompson 1981:580)

(9-11)

我们租房子的事

wǒ-men zū fángzi de shì
1-PL rent house NOM matter

'the matter concerning our renting a house' (Li and Thompson 1981:586)

Beyond nominalization and relative clauses, the particle 的 *de* is used in a variety of other noun modification processes, including simple possession, as in (9-12), what Li and Thompson (1981:113-116) call “associate phrases” (where the two noun phrases are “connected” in some way, and nature of the relation is determined by the meaning of the nouns), as in (9-13), and in attributive adjectival modification, the latter of which sometimes required the particle 的 *de* and other times does not, depending on the adjective, as in the examples given in (9-14). I follow Li and Thompson by glossing the possessive 的 *de* as GEN, but use SUB for the “associative” usage, in keeping with other sources, including for other languages.

(9-12)

他们的家

tā-mende jiā
3-PL GEN home

'their home' (Li and Thompson 1981:113)

(9-13)

科学的发展

kēxué de fǎzhǎn
science SUB development

'the development of science' (Li and Thompson 1981:114)

(9-14)

红(的)花

hóng (de) huā
red (SUB) flower
'a red flower'

圆(的)桌子

yuán (de) zhuōzi
round (SUB) table
'a round table'

舒服的椅子

shūfú de yǐzi
comfortable SUB chair
'a comfortable chair' (ibid.118-123)

9.3 The Standard Mandarin Verb Phrase

Generally speaking, reference to time in Mandarin is made through the use of adverbial clauses, as in (9-15) and (9-16) below, rather than through additional morphemes within the verb phrase. Instead, Mandarin is said to mark aspect on the verb via post-verbal morphemes which Li and Thompson (1981) consider suffixes. However, much has been written on the interaction between tense and aspect for each of the canonical aspect markers illustrated below. (To name only a few, see Smith and Erbaugh 2005; Sybesma 2007; Wu 2005, 2009; Lin 2000, 2010; Li 2012.) In interests of space, I will not attempt to tease apart the semantic manifestation of time reference in aspectually marked predicates; the interested reader is referred to Klein et al. (2000) for a detailed and rewarding explication.

(9-15)

今天我不舒服

jīntiān wǒ bù shūfú
today 1SG NEG comfortable

'Today I don't feel comfortable.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:321)

(9-16)

我暂时住在这儿

wǒ zànshí zhù zài zhèr
1SG temporarily live at here

'Temporarily I live here.'

(ibid.)

In terms of explicitly aspect marking morphemes, Mandarin has three main morphemes that mark the perfective, durative and experiential³³², though some of these morphemes, especially the first, serve a variety of interrelated and overlapping functions. For ease of exposition, I will focus only on the use of 了 *le* as a perfective marker here, leaving aside its function in indicating

³³² Li and Thompson (1981:226-227) emphasize the fact that the action marked by *-guo* has been experienced, and has been done so at least once with respect to the reference time. They contrast it with the perfective *-le*, which they define as marking "an event...viewed in its entirety or as a whole...[and] is *bounded* temporally, spatially, or conceptually (ibid.185)", in that "the perfective *-le* signal[s] a bounded event typically convey[ing] the message that the event took place, while *-guo* signals that an event has been experienced at least once".

resultative states, changes of state and mirativity in the verb phrase, as well as its interaction with the lexical aspect of the verb. The interested reader can consult a number of publications on its multi-faceted properties, e.g. Klein et al. (2000); Lin (2000); Wu (2005); Ljungqvist (2007), Soh et al, (2007); Sybesma (1997, 1999); Fang (2018).

Examples of the three marked aspects of Standard Mandarin are given in (9-17)-(9-19) below:

(9-17)

他睡了三个钟头

tā shuì-le sān-gè zhōngtóu

3SG sleep-PFV three-CL hour

'He slept for three hours.'³³³

(Li and Thompson 1981:186)

(9-18)

她在床上躺着

tā zài chuáng shàng tǎng-zhe

3SG at bed on lie-DUR

'She is lying on the bed.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:220)

(9-19)

我吃过日本饭

wǒ chī-guo rìběn fàn

1SG eat-EXP Japan food

'I've eaten Japanese food (before).'

(Li and Thompson 1981:226)

As the perfective *le* often appears in statements of past actions, Li and Thompson (1981:213-214) are careful to point out various constructions that are not read as past propositions, wherein *le* occurs. Examples include certain imperatives, simple future statements and future/conditional sequence-of-action sentences. The latter two are illustrated in (9-20)-(9-21):

³³³ In Li and Thompson's (1981) original glosses, the gender specification on pronouns is left unspecified as 's/he'. As they do not include Chinese characters, and the spoken pronominal form *tā* does not indicate gender, this practice makes sense. However, since the 20th century, especially following the introduction of the "female" third-person pronoun character 她, which replaces the older, gender-neutral character, 他's human radical component with a female radical, it is standard practice to interpret the latter as male. As such, I have edited the glosses to indicate the gender of the written, not spoken, Chinese. See Wong and Zhang (2000) on novel usage of such pronominal characters in the 1990s' feminist and LGBT communities in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

(9-20)

明天我就开除了他

míngtiān wǒ jiù kāichú-le tā
tomorrow 1SG then expel-PFV 3SG

'I'll expel him tomorrow!'

(Li and Thompson 1981:213)

(9-21)

我吃了饭再走

wǒ chī-le fàn zài zǒu
1SG eat-PFV rice then go

'I'll go after I eat.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:213)

Similarly, though *le* often also is used with verb phrases that result in completed events, it is not simply a completive marker, as indicated in the sentence from Li and Thompson (1981:216)

in (9-22):

(9-22)

她跑了两个钟头了

tā pǎo-le liǎng-gè zhōngtóu le
3SG run-PFV two-CL hour CS

'She has run for two hours.'

In (9-22), where the endpoint of the action is left open ("for two hours", thus incomplete), the "change of state" *le*, which appears at the end of the sentence, also appears, serving to bind the event in discourse between the start of the action and some undetermined endpoint in the discourse context³³⁴ (ibid.).

The durative aspect is also commonly marked by a preverbal 在 *zài*, which independently functions as a locative converb, sometimes in concordance with a final particle 呢 *ne*, the latter of which Li and Thompson (1981) gloss as REx (Response to Expectation). All three appear in the sentence in (9-23):

³³⁴ For more on this function, see Lee and Thompson (1981:244-263).

(9-23)

张三在打着李四呢

Zhāngsān zài dǎ-zhe Lǐsì ne
Zhangsan DUR hit-DUR Lisi REx

'Zhangsan is hitting Lisi.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:219)

Also, Li and Thompson (1981:232-236) give special attention to what they deem a delimitative aspect, which they define as “doing an action ‘a little bit’, or for a short period of time”, which is structurally indicated by reduplication of the verb. Such constructions appear optionally with the morpheme ‘one’ appearing between the two reduplicated morphemes, but only if the verb is monosyllabic. An example is shown in (9-24):

(9-24)

你试(一)试看

nǐ shì-(yī)-shì kàn
2SG try-(one)-try see

'Try it a little and see.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:232)

Verbs are negated with a few different morphemes, depending on the verb, its tense, the sentential mood, and/or specific syntactic constructions. All negators appear immediately before the verb. The morpheme 别 *bié*, a contraction of 不要 *bùyào*, negates verbs in the imperative mood. The morpheme 没 *méi* negates the existential verb 有 *yǒu*, as well as completed actions. In the latter instance, *mei* and the existential function together as a unit, though the existential often is deleted. The morpheme 不 *bù* is a more general negator, mostly of action verbs, which sometimes adds a habitual meaning to the verb phrase. Each of these five properties of negators in Standard Mandarin are illustrated in (9-25)-(9-29) below:

(9-25)

别关门

bié guān mén
NEG close door

'Don't close the door!'

(Li and Thompson 1981:415)

(9-26)

没有人在外面³³⁵

méi yǒu rén zài wàimiàn
NEG EXIS person at outside

'There's no one outside.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:416)

(9-27)

我没(有)看见你

wǒ méi (yǒu) kànjiàn nǐ
1SG NEG (EXIS) see 2SG

'I didn't see you.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:417)

(9-28)

我不记得他

wǒ bù jìdé tā
1SG NEG remember 3SG

'I don't remember him.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:416)

(9-29)

她不喝酒

tā bù hē jiǔ
3SG NEG drink wine

'She does not drink wine.'³³⁶

(Li and Thompson 1981:423)

9.4 Standard Mandarin Constituent Order and Syntax

As Li and Thompson (1981:19) explain, Mandarin is not an easy language to classify in terms of overall word order. For one, the notion of subject is somewhat ill-defined, and topic-comment structures are extremely common in discourse, leading LaPolla (1993), among others, to claim that the language is better understood through such a framework, rather than as an ordering of subjects, verbs and objects. (See also Li and Thompson 1981:85-103.) Generally speaking, however, Mandarin is often characterized as an SVO language, though many sentence

³³⁵ When the main verb of the sentence is a negated existential, the existential itself is optional, e.g. compare 没有人在外面 *méi rén zài wàimiàn*.

³³⁶ Other interpretations of this sentence include: 's/he refuses to drink wine' and 's/he refused to drink wine' (ibid.).

types involve SOV type constructions³³⁷. On the other hand, typologically speaking, Mandarin’s word order does not neatly correlate with either SVO or SOV expectations, having constituent ordering reminiscent of both (Li and Thompson 1991:19-26; Dreyer [2003] 2017; See 4.3.1.3 for more discussion in the context of Amdo dialects.) With the caveat from Li and Thompson (1991:19) that in Mandarin “the order in which basic words and phrases occur is governed to a large extent by considerations of meaning rather than of grammatical functions”, for ease of presentation, I will discuss Mandarin here as a primarily SVO language, as illustrated by the following sentences in (9-30)-(9-32):

(9-30)

我喜欢吃苹果

wǒ xǐhuān chī píngguǒ
1SG like eat apple

‘I like to eat apples.’

(Li and Thompson 1981:87)

(9-31)

我昨天碰见我叔叔

wǒ zuótiān pèngjiàn wǒ shūshu
1SG yesterday run.into 1SG uncle

‘I ran into my [paternal] uncle yesterday.’

(Li and Thompson 1981:115)

(9-32)

我寄了一封信给他

wǒ jì-le yī-fēng xìn gěi tā
1SG mail-PFV one-CL letter give[=to] 3SG

‘I mailed a letter to him.’

(Li and Thompson 1981:167)

Li and Thompson (1981:124) schematize the maximal order of elements in the NP as follows:

associate phrase + classifier/measure phrase + relative clause + adjective + noun

where the classifier/measure phrase and relative clause may sometimes be in the reverse order.

Some examples are given below in (9-33)-(9-35):

³³⁷ For arguments about whether Chinese should be considered an OV or a VO language, see contending views by Mei (1980) and by Mulder and Sybesma (1992).

(9-33)

两盆水

liǎng pén shuǐ

two bowl water

'two bowls of water'

(Li and Thompson 1981:131)

(9-34)

我的那个好朋友

wǒ dì nà-gè hǎo péngyǒu

1SG GEN that-CL good friend

'that good friend of mine'

(Li and Thompson 1981:124)

(9-35)

你们学校得那位从中国来的科学家

nǐ-men xuéxiào de nà-wèi cóng zhōngguó lái de kēxué-jīa

2-PL school SUB that-CL.POL from China come SUB science-expert

'that scientist at your school who came from China' (Li and Thompson 1981:125)

Generally, information presented in prepositional phrases, such as locative constructions, benefactive constructions³³⁸, passive constructions and other structures, precede the verb in what Li and Thompson (1981:Chapter 9) label as coverb constructions, largely to acknowledge that many of the morphemes that introduce such clauses are also used as verbs, either synchronically or diachronically (ibid.360). A few examples include (9-36)-(9-38):

(9-36)

妈妈给我做饺子

māmā gěi wǒ zuò jiaozi

mother give[=for] 1SG make dumplings

'Mother made dumplings for me.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:358)

(9-37)

我们按他的意思办

wǒ-men àn tā de yìsi bàn

1-PL restrain[=according.to] 3SG GEN thought do

'We'll do it according to his/her ideas.'

(Li and Thompson 1981:357)

³³⁸ Benefactive constructions and locative also commonly occur following the verb, as well. See Li and Thompson (1981:387-388) for the former and (ibid.397-409) for the latter.

(9-38)

在山上下着大雨呢

zài shān shàng xià-zhe dà yǔ ne
[be.]at mountain on descend-DUR big rain REx
'It's raining hard on the mountain.'
(Li and Thompson 1981:396)

However benefactives and locative phrases may also appear following the verb, as well, sometimes in free variation, and at other times mediated by the semantics of the verb or the presence of other arguments in the sentence. See Li and Thompson (1981:387-388) for the explanation of the former and (ibid.397-409) for the latter. An example of a post-verbal locative construction is given in (9-39), and of a post-verbal benefactive is given in (9-40):

(9-39)

汽车停在路中间

qìchē tíng zài lù zhōngjiān
car stop at road center
'The car stopped in the middle of the road.'
(Li and Thompson 1981:398)

(9-40)

我唱歌给你听

wǒ chàng gē gěi nǐ tīng
1SG sing song to 2SG hear
'I'll sing for you to hear.'
(Li and Thompson 1981:389)

Chain clauses are quite common in Standard Mandarin, as is often the case for analytic languages. Li and Thompson (1981:594) describe such a construction as “a sentence that contains two or more verb phrases or clauses juxtaposed without any marker indicating what the relationship is between them”, and particularly “the property [Mandarin chain clauses] all share is that the verb phrases in the serial verb construction always refer to events or states of affairs which are understood to be related as *parts of one* overall event or state of affairs” (italics in original). (See Aikhenvald 2006 or Enfield 2001:200-225 for more typological and theoretical expositions on chain clauses.)

Li and Thompson divide serial verb constructions into four different types³³⁹, the one I am choosing to focus on here being those that indicate two or more separate events. These may include events that are consecutive, that are alternating, where the first is done for the purpose of the second, or where the first describes the circumstances in which the second occurs (ibid.595). Examples of such chain clauses include (9-41)-(9-43) (Li and Thompson 1981:595):

(9-41)

我买票进去

wǒ mǎi piào jìn qù

1SG buy ticket enter go

'I bought a ticket and went in.' or 'I bought a ticket to go in.'

(9-42)

他天天唱歌写信

tā tiāntiān chàng gē xiě xìn

3SG everyday sing song write letters

'Everyday he sings songs and writes letters.'

(9-43)

她上楼睡觉

tā shàng lóu shuì jiào

3SG ascend stairs sleep sleep

'She's going upstairs to sleep.'

Common among these sorts of chain clauses are resultative constructions, where the second verb phrase is a result of the first in the sequence. An example from Li and Thompson

(1981:596) is given in (9-44):

(9-44)

喝点酒壮壮胆子

hē diǎn jiǔ zhuàngzhuàng dǎnzi

drink a.little wine strengthen gall.bladder

'Drink a little wine, and it will give you some courage³⁴⁰.'

³³⁹ The other three are pivotal constructions, descriptive clauses and those where "one verb phrase or clause [serves] as the subject or direct object of another verb" (Li and Thompson 1981:594).

³⁴⁰ Other interpretations of this sentence could be 'Drink a little wine to give yourself courage' and 'Get some courage by drinking a little wine' (Li and Thompson 1981:596).

One syntactic construction that has received outsized attention in the literature (as Audrey Li (2022) puts it: “a tall mountain that everyone wants to conquer”) is the BA construction, sometimes referred to as the disposal construction. (For an overview and references see Li 2022.) Li and Thompson (1981:463) explain the interest of this construction as such³⁴¹:

“From a structural point of view, the ba construction is straightforward; in general, the direct object is placed immediately after ba and before the verb...Somewhat less easy to specify are what kinds of direct objects and what kinds of verbs occur in this construction, what can precede and follow the verbs, and what communicative function the construction serves.”

For the purposes of this dissertation, it is only necessary to point out that this common structure is found throughout Sinitic, and its form in local dialects is often a point deemed noteworthy by most researchers. Though most sources, including Li and Thompson (1981) simply gloss the dynamic marker as BA, I am following Dreyer (2017) in glossing it as OBJ, as it marks a fronted object syntactically. A few examples from Li and Thompson (1981:463-464) are given in (9-45)-(9-47) below³⁴²:

³⁴¹ They also include discussion of the term ‘disposal construction’, coined by Chinese linguist Wang Li, whom they quote as explaining: “The disposal form states how a person is handled, manipulated, or dealt with; how something is disposed of; or how an affair is conducted.’ (Li and Thompson 1981:468). This explanation accounts for the fact that the first sentence below is grammatical, but the second is not (ibid.467-468).

我把句子写得太长了

wǒ	bǎ	jùzi	xiě	dé	tài	zhǎng	le
1SG	OBJ	sentence	write	SUB	too	long	CS

‘I wrote the sentences too long.’

*他把歌唱了

*tā	bǎ	gē	chàng	le
3SG	OBJ	song	sing	PFV/CS

Intended: ‘He sang the song.’

³⁴² Note that in the original, Li and Thompson gloss the morpheme simply as BA, which is common in publications on the topic.

(9-45)

你把他的意思讲出来了

nǐ bǎ tā de yìsi jiǎng chū lái le
2SG OBJ 3SG GEN meaning talk exit come CS

'You have explained what s/he meant.'

(9-46)

我把椅子仔细地看了一下

wǒ bǎ yǐzi zǐxì de kàn-le yīxià
1SG OBJ chair carefully ADVB see-PFV once

'I took a careful look at the chair.'

(9-47)

她有的时候把盐当糖吃

tā yǒudeshíhòu bǎ yán dāng tang chī
3SG sometimes OBJ salt take.as sugar eat

'She sometimes eats salt thinking it's sugar.'

Finally, Standard Mandarin complex clauses are usually joined by conjunctive and adverbial elements that link the information predicated by both clauses, sometimes with that of the first clause being dependent on the second, and sometimes vice versa (Li and Thompson 1981:632).

An example is given in (9-48):

(9-48)

她虽然没钱，可是她还是很慷慨

tā suīrán méi qián, kěshì tā hái shì hěn kāngkǎi
3SG although NEG money but 3SG still very generous

'Although she has no money, she's still very generous.' (Li and Thompson 1981:632)

In other instances, there is no overt linking element between clauses, and their relationship is to be understood by the hearer from context, as in (9-49) below.

(9-49)

你不相信，我做给你看

nǐ bù xiāngxìn, wǒ zuò gěi nǐ kàn
2SG NEG believe 1SG do to 2SG see

'If you don't believe it, I'll do it for you to see.' (Li and Thompson 1981:642)

9.5 Standard Mandarin Discourse

Standard Mandarin does not appear to have any specific evidential morphemes or constructions that would constitute egophoricity, evidentiality or speaker stance like many of the other languages described in this dissertation. Quotatives are introduced by the ‘say’ verb, 说 *shuō*, but it appears not to have grammaticalized in any form, as it has for the dialects of Amdo discussed in Chapters 4 and 7. Nor are there morphemes marking the topic of the sentence, topicalization taking place through fronting of the element syntactically.

Mandarin, like all Sinitic languages, and most East Asian languages, does have a set of sentence-final modal particles that convey subtle pragmatic and emotive information in discourse. Li and Thompson (1981:300-317) discuss a few high-frequency particles³⁴³, including 呢 *ne* ‘response to expectation/question particle’ (REx/Q), 吧 *ba* ‘solicit agreement’ (SA), 哦 *wo* ‘friendly warning’ (FW) and 啊/呀 (*ya*) ‘reduce forcefulness’ (RF). Though their glosses are rather idiosyncratic, they are a rare example of authors using a specific gloss for such sentence-final particles, perhaps because Mandarin modal particles are relatively few in number (or at least the subset that Li and Thompson choose to illustrate are few in number), compared with other Sinitic varieties, such as Cantonese. For example, Matthews and Yip (1994:338-358) give a non-exhaustive list of 33 particles, and an overview of their syntactic and pragmatic usage.

In general, I have left such particles glossed as PTCL throughout this dissertation, as the pragmatic information they encode tends to be quite subtle, recovery of which from published works is beyond my level of familiarity with the languages discussed herein. As examples of Mandarin usage, (9-50) and (9-51) are given from Li and Thompson (1981:310-311):

³⁴³ All Sinitic particles lack lexically specified tone.

(9-50)

他很好看吧

tā hěn hǎo kàn ba

3SG very good look PTCL(=SA)

'He is very good looking, don't you agree?'

(9-51)

小心哦

xiǎoxīn ó

careful PTCL(=FW)

'Be careful, OK?'

9.6 The Standard Mandarin Lexicon

Assessing the role of loanwords in Mandarin, much less in “Chinese”, is a thorny issue, the scope of which expands far beyond the limits of this overview. The complexity of the problem is constituted of many factors, chief among them being the relationship between Classical Chinese and modern Mandarin. Distinguishing between what is a loanword in Mandarin and what is a loanword in Classical Chinese (specifically, entering the language before Mandarin developed from Middle Chinese) is made difficult by the fact that Classical, or Literary, Chinese was the written language of all of China until the first decades of the 20th century (Chen 1999), and thus there is no clear boundary separating the two. As such, studies of pre-modern loanwords, going back to Persian, Tocharian and other languages of Middle Eastern/Central Asian antiquity, are vast, and bound up in analysis of the early writing system and transliteration. A good overview of the historical stages of contact with languages “outside of China”, and thus importation of loanwords, is Miao (2005:22-29). Also see Miyake (2015a, b) for pre-modern loans.

“Chinese” as a language has something of a reputation for resisting borrowing, especially where borrowings are transliterated into native Sinitic phonology (Norman 1988:16-21), though of course this reputation becomes quickly complicated upon deeper analysis, especially when

one considers the role of calquing in borrowings throughout the 20th century. To some extent, this is perhaps an outcome of the Chinese language's logographic script, which encodes both sound and meaning, the issue of semantic connotation thus being a factor in choosing how or when to adapt foreign words (Miao 2005:32-34).

Miao (2005:36-39) illustrates many examples of words that were borrowed from Western languages as transliterated loans in the first decades of the 20th century, only to later be replaced by semantic calques, or hybrid loans later. Hybrid loans involve a partial transliteration of a foreign morpheme and a native morpheme combining to form a compound word, such as 啤酒 *píjiǔ* 'beer' or 摩托车 *mótuōchē* 'motorcycle', consisting of the Sinitic morphemes 酒 *jiǔ* 'alcohol' and 车 *chē* 'vehicle', plus added syllables to transliterate German *Bier* or English *moto-*, respectively.

Another major import of loanwords in the 20th century came via Japanese, but since the vast majority of the words were written in Japanese, in Chinese characters, the borrowings came in their written form, spoken aloud with the characters' Chinese, not Japanese, pronunciation. Examples are copious, and include 民族 *mínzú* 'ethnic group; nationality', 共和 *gònghé* 'republic', 大学 *dàxué* 'university', 科学 *kēxué* 'science', 民主 *mínzhǔ* 'democracy', 抽象 *chōuxiàng* 'abstract' and 人道 *rendao* 'humanity'³⁴⁴. See Wang (1958) for more illustration and discussion.

Unfortunately, no sources I consulted attempted a corpus study of Modern Mandarin by source language³⁴⁵. One difficulty in such a study is that different percentages would emerge

³⁴⁴ Some of these lexical items, like other borrowings from Japanese, may have originated in the Chinese language, used for pre-modern purposes, only to be borrowed into Japanese, repurposed for modern or Western concepts, and then borrowed back into Chinese in the early 20th century (Sun 2006:138).

³⁴⁵ One exception is the study by Wiebusch and Tadmor (2010), which attempts a synthesis of loanwords from the Han Dynasty period to modern times, using a variety of dictionaries and corpora. Nonetheless, by their restrictive criteria, they reach a baffling conclusion that the Mandarin lexicon contains only 25/2000 words in their corpus, or

depending on which variety even of Mandarin (Beijing Mandarin, for example, versus Taipei Mandarin) were chosen, much less which variety of Chinese (e.g. Hong Kong Cantonese, itself a source of many loanwords into Standard Mandarin), given each region's differing histories of contact. (See Chen 1999:106-108.) Even Miao's (2005) historical overview explicitly excluded languages from "inside Chinese territory", however that controversial delineation may be intended, and thus excludes classical examples of southern minority groups who left their imprint on Chinese, as discussed by Norman and Mei (1976), among others.

Nonetheless, there are many sources to consult on any given stage of China's lexical contacts with other languages, with Gao and Liu (1958) being an early source, Masini (1993) and Shi (2000, 2004) providing full monograph treatment of loanwords, Miao (2005) being a thorough overview of loanword phonology, Norman (1988:16-22), Chen (1999:99-106) and Sun (2006:133-141) providing many examples for each stage, and Wang (1958) and Zhao (2006) providing thorough analyses of loanwords from Japanese.

Finally, though it goes beyond the bounds of the lexicon specifically, the argument has been made that in the early decades of the 20th century, as Chinese scholars looked to the West for ideas about modernization and nationhood, the grammar of European languages had a significant effect on the grammar of modern Written Chinese (the written basis for Standard Mandarin). Much of the argument centers around longer modifier clauses and an increase in derivational affixes, especially in the modern literary language. See, for example, Wang (1947:58, cited in both Chen 1999 and Peyraube 2000), Kubler (1985), Chen (1999:82-87), He

1.2%. This is because they only count directly transliterated loanwords, with unanalyzable morphemic structure (thus no compounds or blends), which for purposes discussed above, is something of a last-resort option, reserved mostly for proper nouns, in contemporary Mandarin. As such, it seems to be a significant underestimate of the role of borrowing in the Chinese lexicon. (For example, in their article they cite Zhao (2006), who claims about 30% of the modern Mandarin lexicon is made up of recent borrowings from Japanese.)

(2008), and Cordes (2014). For purposes of space, the interested reader is referred to the previous sources, as well as Peyraube (2000) for critical discussion, of this under-analyzed topic.

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