

The development of temporal coding in Tibetan: some suggestions for a functional internal reconstruction. Part I: Unexpected use of the 'imperative' stem in Old Tibetan and Themchen (Amdo Tibetan)¹

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According to traditional Tibetan (as well as European) grammatical descriptions, the OT/CT verb has at most four forms or stems whose names are analogous to their presumed function: '*daspa*, '[what is] gone', for 'Past Tense', '*daltaba*, '[what] is now', for 'Present Tense', '*ma'onspa*, '[what] has not [yet] come', for 'Future Tense' (hence the traditional term *dusgsu*, 'three tenses', for the verbal system), and *skultshig*, 'word of command', for 'Imperative'.² Yet, on closer inspection, it turns out that such a description in terms of ABSOLUTE TENSE is not adequate as, e.g., the so-called 'Future Tense' seems to be an instance of MOOD (necessitative) rather than of temporal reference. Even more disturbing is the fact that the 'Past Tense' might appear in future time contexts and the 'Present Tense' with present, past, and future orientation. Thus the indigenous concept of ABSOLUTE TENSE as a whole might be questioned as naive or as a mere translation of Sanskrit terminology which cannot be applied to a Non-Indo-European language. The question, therefore, is: do we have a better concept, namely, does the concept of ASPECT make more sense than the concept of TENSE?

Whether the first two verb stems are better described in terms of 'aspect' (of the English type), as the contemporary standard opinion holds, in terms of prototypical and non-prototypical employment of TENSE (Denwood 1999), or, as the author would suggest, in terms of RELATIVE TENSE,³ it becomes apparent, that the (never fully developed) system of the four verb stems as visible in OT and CT⁴ must be of a comparatively late date. Contradictory functions of the 'past' stem surviving even in

¹ Unexpected 'imperatives' in Themchen were first presented at the 2nd project meeting of the European Cooperation Project on Himalayan languages, Paris 1997 by Felix Haller (HALLER [1997]). The Themchen data will be published in HALLER (in preparation). I am very much indebted to Felix Haller for his consent in presenting his data in advance.

² Cf. Skalbzung 'Gyurmed (1992: 183ff).

³ I.e., ordering with respect to a contextually given reference point as anterior, simultaneous, or posterior (for a detailed discussion see ZEISLER forthcoming).

⁴ For all abbreviations see page 10f. below.

some of the modern varieties as well as a quite unexpected employment of the 'imperative' stem in OT and in a phonetically archaic dialect of Amdo Tibetan (THEM), give us the opportunity to reconstruct the former semantics of these two stems and to formulate some hypotheses about the PrT verb stems and to sketch the development of the later verb system. In this paper, however, the discussion will be confined to the so-called 'imperative' stem.

Of the modern Tibetan varieties, THEM is quite particular in that the 'imperative' stem (or a homophonous modal stem) appears in contexts that are obviously not commands. Restricted to negation and questions, this stem form signifies that the attempt to act was not or will not be successful, i.e. the agent is not able to achieve the intended result, or the speaker questions the ability of the agent to attain the intended result. The function of the stem may thus be termed *potentialis*.

- (1) $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n-y\text{\textcircled{a}}}$ $\text{yja}\text{\textcircled{x}}$ $\text{\textcircled{s}hok-k\text{\textcircled{a}.mek\text{\textcircled{a}}}$.
 a $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n-Erg yak}$ *kill-nc/pot(Ng1-CPrs)*
 Rta·mgrin·gyis g.yag sod·gi·med·gi
 # $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n}$ cannot/tries in vain to kill the yak.
- b $\text{m\text{\textcircled{a}}-s\text{\textcircled{h}ol!}$ – $\text{m\text{\textcircled{a}}-s\text{\textcircled{h}ol}$.
kill-nc/pot(Ng1-SPrs/Fut(St.ntr)) - kill-nc/pot(Ng2-SPtt(St.ntr))
 mi·sod – ma·sod
 # [You] won't be able to kill [it] (the speaker knows the strength of the adversary). - [I] couldn't kill [it].
- c $\text{\textcircled{t}\text{\textcircled{s}ho}$ $\text{k\text{\textcircled{h}eri}$ $\text{l\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{\textcircled{c}}}$ $\text{\textcircled{a}}-s\text{\textcircled{h}ol?}$
you alone-Erg sheep kill-nc/pot(Q-SPrs/Fut)
 khyod kher·pos lug e·sod
 # Are you able to kill the sheep alone?
- d $\text{\textcircled{t}\text{\textcircled{s}hi}$ $\text{l\text{\textcircled{a}}\text{\textcircled{c}}-nd\text{\textcircled{a}}$ $\text{m\text{\textcircled{a}}-s\text{\textcircled{h}on-na}$, $\text{\textcircled{n}a}$ jun!
you-Erg sheep-this kill-nc/pot(Ng2-CD) I come(SPrs/Fut)
 khyod·kyis lug·'di ma·sod·na, $\text{\textcircled{n}a}$ $\text{yo\text{\textcircled{n}}}$
 # If you are unable to kill the sheep, I'll come [to help you]!
- e $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n-y\text{\textcircled{a}}}$ $\text{\textcircled{f}\text{\textcircled{t}\text{\textcircled{r}a\text{\textcircled{n}k\text{\textcircled{h}}\text{\textcircled{a}}}$ $\text{m\text{\textcircled{a}}-s\text{\textcircled{h}ot\text{\textcircled{h}}-t\text{\textcircled{h}a}$.
 $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n-Erg wolf}$ *kill-nc/pot(Ng2-ExpPtt)*
 Rta·mgrin·gyis spyañ·ki ma·sod·thal
 # $\text{\textcircled{S}tamdz\text{\textcircled{a}n}$ did/could not kill/tried in vain to kill the wolf (THEM).

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Some of the verbs that HALLER ([1997]) showed in his examples still have a potential counterpart or a related noun in CT:

- CT: 'geñs | bkañ | dgañ | khoñ, 'to fill (ctr)', 'kheñ | kheñs, 'to be full, filled', gañ, 'full'; cf. khoñ·pa, 'the inside, inward parts, veins [? = the container?]', khoñs, 'middle'; THEM: [kwaŋ; kwaŋ ; khuŋ], 'to fill (ctr)', [kaŋ], 'be full', [ma-khuŋ-tʰa], 'couldn't fill';
- CT: gcog | bcag | gcag | chog, 'to break (ctr)', 'chag | chag, 'to break (nc)', chogs, 'to be broken' (according to JÁK a rare form, found in Milarspa); THEM: [çtɕox ; pɕax ; tɕʰox], 'to break (ctr)', [ɕtɕʰax ; tɕʰax], 'to break (nc)', [ma-tɕʰox-tʰa] 'couldn't break';
- CT: 'jig | bšig | gzig | (b)šig, 'to destroy', žig, 'be ruined'; THEM: [φɕəç ; φɕəç ; ɕəç], 'to destroy', [ɕəç], 'to collapse', [ma-ɕəç-tʰa], 'didn't collapse / couldn't destroy'.
- CT: sbyor | (*b-)sbyar*d | (*b-)sbyar | sbyor, 'to affix, fasten, apply', 'byar, 'to stick, adhere to', 'byor, 'to stick, adhere to', cf. also žar-la, 'following, succeeding', žor-la, 'together'; THEM: [rdzɔr ; bɕzar ; rdzɔr], 'to glue (ctr)', [mɕzar], 'to stick (nc)', [ma-rdzɔr-tʰa], 'couldn't glue';
- CT: gsod | bsad | gsad | sod, 'to kill, extinguish', cf. also gñid sad, 'to wake up', sod, id.; THEM: [çsol ; φsal ; shol], 'to kill', [ə-shol], 'are you able to kill?', [ma-shon-na], 'if you have been unable to kill'.

Compare also the potential verbs [tɕʰot] and [lon] in WT (in WT, the imperative stem, in contrast to the potential stem, has undergone de-aspiration and has lost *Ablaut* e → o):

- CT: gcod | bcad | gcad | chod, 'to cut; to decide', 'chad | chad, 'to be cut; to be decided', chod, 'to be cut off; to be decided'; Ladakhi: [tɕat ; tɕats ; tɕot], 'to cut, tear', [tɕʰat], 'to be cut, torn', [tɕʰot], 'be cut (of crops), be cuttable (of substance), be cutting (of instrument)', *Lower Ladakhi Version*, FRANCKE (1905-41): *rdo·chod*, 'able to cut (even) stones, stone-cutter', *kenning* of a sword;
- CT: len | blañs | blañ | lon(s)/lon, 'to take (away)', OT lon, 'to be able to take', Ladakhi: [len ; lens ; len] or [nen ; nens ; nen], 'to take', Ciktan [lon], 'to be able to obtain'⁵; given the two Ladakhi variants of

⁵ The form appears in a Ciktan narration, collected and transcribed by Silke Herrmann (unpublished manuscript; by courtesy of Silke Herrmann).

the verb 'to take', the CT verb *non*, 'to reach (a certain age)', is apparently semantically related, cf. also Ladakhi: [non], 'to be able to reach, overtake'.

As it is quite unlikely that an imperative stem should appear in contexts of mere attempt or in questions about ability, there must have been in PrT either a secondary derivative stem expressing the *potentialis* function, which became homophonous with the imperative stem or the imperative function must have emerged as a secondary function from the original *potentialis* stem. Since the *potentialis* and imperative function are almost in complementary distribution with respect to negated and affirmative statements, the second alternative seems to be more likely. The use of a *potentialis* stem as imperative could, perhaps, be explained as a sort of polite command: 'You can do it [therefore, do it!]'. In course of time, the imperative function would then have become more and more prominent, and with the exception of rather few examples such as WT [ṭəhot], 'to be cut, be cuttable (of substance), be able to cut (of instrument)', CT *chogs*, 'to be broken', and some other so called 'secondary forms', these potential verbs did not enter the vocabulary of CT and most MT languages.

HALLER ([1997]) has further pointed to the fact that the negated 'imperative' stem with *potentialis* function can likewise be found in [early] CT, (2). Meanwhile I have come across several further examples of the *potentialis* function in OT, (3) to (5), which are all found in close connection in a handbook for *mo* (dice) divination. The handbook lists the possible number of 'eyes' and their interpretation. Each prediction is preceded by some verses that describe the character of the prediction. (3) is the introducing verse picturing the negative character of the lot, (4) is the negative prediction immediately following, (5) is the positive counterpart.

- (2) khyod·kyis me·mar 'di bsad sñam sems·sam |
you-Erg butter-lamp this extinguish(St.Ptt) mind think(SPrs/Fut)-QF
 me·mar 'di ni khyod·kyis mi·sod·do ||
butter-lamp this θ you-Erg extinguish-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))-F
 # Do you think [in your] mind [you] have [really] extinguished this
 butter lamp? This butter lamp, you won't [ever] be able to extin-

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- guish (?CT: *Mzansblun*, XI, 37, 384⁶).
- (3) kye bya bran ni 'bab žan·bas ||
intj bird servant θ come-down(St.Prs-ŋf) be-weak(VNntr)-Instr
- dguñ·gyi ni mtha myi·sleb ||
heaven-Gen θ height reach-nc(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.ntr))
- myi chuñ ni kha žan·bas
man small θ mouth be-weak(VNntr)-Instr
- byams·na ni lan myi·lon ||
kindness-Loc θ answer receive-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))
 [len | blañs | blañ | loñ(s)/lon]
- phyag·na ni mtshon žan·bas |
hon-hand-Loc θ weapon be-weak(VNntr)-Instr
- stad[=sdañ?].gyi ni dgra myi·chod ||
hate(St.Prs)-Gen θ enemy be-able-to-fell-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))
- rte'u chuñ ni bañ žan·bas ||
colt little θ race be-weak(VNntr)-Instr
- skyus·gis ni sla myi·sñogs ||
continuation-Instr θ easy overtake-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))
 [sñeg(s) | bsñegs | bsñeg | sñog(s) (TCH: sñegs)]
- šre'u [=še'u?] chuñ ni sgyid žan·pas ||
fawn little θ knee be-weak(VNntr)-Instr
- ri·ka ni rgyug myi·chod ||
mountain θ run(St.Prs-ŋf) be-able-to-cut-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))
- # Oh! The servant bird being weak when alighting, [it] *will/cannot reach* the end of sky. A little man with weak mouth, [he] cannot receive an answer in kindness. With a weak weapon in the hand, [one] cannot fell the hateful enemy. A little colt being weak [in]

⁶ *Mzansblun žes byaba thegpa chenpo'i mdo*. Edited by Bzodpa Rgyamtsho. Xining 1994: Qinghai nationalities publishing house. This edition goes back to an early but undated print of Blabrang (p. 475). SKALBZANG 'GYURMED (1992:15) gives the version *khyod·kyis mar-me 'di gsad-par sems·kyañ | mar-me 'di khyod·kyis mi·sod·do* || (the edition is not mentioned). The *Mzansblun sūtra* was current in Tibet as early as the first half of the 9th century when it was translated from Chinese by Chosgrub (Fa-ch'eng) and a fragment of the *sūtra* was excavated in Tun-huang (Terjék 1969:289). Although many OT traits of the early version(s) were quite probably adjusted by later editors, it is not unlikely that certain phrases that were not longer productive might have been kept intentionally or might have escaped the attention of the editors. The *Mzansblun sūtra* as a whole might, therefore, not really be representative for CT.

racing, [it] cannot easily overtake in the long run (lit. by continuation (skyus = rgyun, TCH)). A little fawn with weak knees, [it] cannot run across (lit. cannot cut [the distance in] running, cf. GOL) the mountains (OT-AFL VI:125/95-97).

- (4) mo 'di ni khyim·phyā dañ srog·phyā·la btab·na ||
mo this θ house-fortune and life-fortune-D/L cast(St.Ptt-CD)
- myi khyod rmañ·po žig·ste || ci byar yañ *myi·sleb·ciñ-'dug* ||
man you single one-LC; what do(St.Fut-cc) also reach(Ng1-CPrs/Fut)
- 'og·rta ñan·bas dgra dañ ri·dags *myi·sod* ||
saddle-horse mean-Instr enemy and game kill-nc/pot(Ng1-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))
- [...] don gñer·na *myi·grub* ||
purpose make-efforts(St.ntr-CD) achieve-nc(Ng1-St.Ptt:fFutPerf)
- 'dron[='gron]·po·la btab·na *myi·'oñ* ||
traveller-D/L cast(St.Ptt-CD) come(Ng1-SPrs/Fut)
- tshoñ byas·na khe myed || [...] *trade make(St.Ptt-CD) profit exist(Ng1); ...*
- mo 'di ñan·bas gži non·la 'dug
mo this be-bad(VNntr-cc) ground press(St.ntr)-D/L be(St.ntr)

If this *mo* is cast for the fortune of home and the fortune of life, man, being all alone, what[ever] is to be done, you are not arriving/ will not arrive [at it]. With a miserable saddle horse [one/you] cannot kill enemies and game. If [you] make efforts for [any] purpose, [it] *will not be achieved*. If cast for one abroad, [that one] *will not come* [back]. If [you] go for trade [there] is no profit. [...] This *mo* being bad, it is on firm (lit. pressed) ground (OT-AFL VI:125/97-100).

- (5) mo 'di ni khyim·phyā dañ srog·phyā·la btab·na ||
mo this θ house-fortune and life-fortune-D/L cast(St.Ptt-CD)
- lhad [!] dpal bzañ·po·'am sman dkar·mo žig yod·pas ||
god glory good-or medicine white some exist(VN-cc)
- de·la mchod 'phras [!] legs·par byas·na ||
that-D/L offering ?minute be-good(VNntr-cc) act(St.Ptt-CD)
- khyed·la 'go·žin·'dug·pas |
hon-you-D/L ?be-ahead(CPrs/Fut-VN-cc)

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rigs [=ri·dags] bšor·na sod | [...]
game pursue(St.Ptt-CD) kill-nc/pot(SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp')) ...

don gñer·na grub |
purpose make-efforts(St.ntr-CD) achieve-nc(St.Ptt:fFutPerf)

‘dron[=‘gron]·po·la btab·na ‘oñ ||
guest-D/L cast(St.Ptt-CD) come(SPrs/Fut)

[...] tshoñ byas·na khe *phyin* ||
... trade make(St.Ptt-CD) profit come(St.Ptt:fFutPerf)

mo ‘di [ci]·la btab·kyañ bzañ ||
mo this what-D/L cast(St.Ptt)-even excellent

If this *mo* is cast for the fortune of home and the fortune of life, there is a good glorious god or a white medicine, and, therefore, if you perform a minor offering to him well, [he] will guide (lit. be ahead of) you, and thus if [you] pursue game, [you] **will be able to kill** [it]. [...] If [you] make efforts for [any] purpose, [it] will be achieved. If cast for one abroad, [that one] will come [back]. If [you] go for trade, profit will have come. This *mo*, cast for [what purpose ever], is excellent (**OT-AFL** VI:126/ 115-118).

In this context, *sod* cannot be a command or a wish that the killing might be achieved, but is the prediction that the questioner will be able to kill game. The last two examples show that the *potentialis* stem occurs in competition with the present stem of accidental event verbs (i.e. verbs referring to events not controlled by an intentional agent), (4), line 5, (5), line 7, with a periphrastic present tense construction, (4), line 2, (5), line 4 as well as with the past stem of accidental event verbs (4), line 4, (5), lines 6 and 8. While the present stem and the periphrastic construction rather neutrally express an expectation about the future, the past stem stresses the fact that the intended result of acting will or, in case of negation, will not be achieved (irrespective of the agent’s ability). In such cases, the combination of the past stem with the Negation Particle *mi* is not uncommon in Old Tibetan (for the resultative use of the past stem see also the second part of the reconstruction). There seems to be a diachrone tendency to replace the *potentialis* stem form by the corresponding accidental event verb. Whether the former construction has become completely intransparent for a speaker of the modern central varieties or is merely felt to be quite old-fashioned, (6) gives an idea how insecure contemporary scholars become about the adequacy of this construction.

The 1st edition of 1981 cited by SKALBZANG 'GYURMED 1992:20, has the accidental event verb *phoñs*, 'has become devoid of' which appears to be more acceptable to a speaker of the central varieties. But it also has an erroneous 'future' stem in the first half of the sentence for the expression of mere attempt which is the exclusive domain of the 'past' stem (see part II). Obviously, the 2nd edition of 1989 is a revised version, and it appears to me that the original spelling *spon̄s* was restored (as if the new editor was a native speaker of an archaic Amdo dialect and, thus, quite accustomed with the *potentialis* function of the 'imperative' stem).

- (6) *phyi lus sems spañs·kyis* [*spañ·gis*]
outer body mind give-up(St.Ptt[Fut!]-Anti)

mi·spon̄s ~ mi·phoñs kyis
give-up-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp'))-emp ~ be-deprived-of(NgI-St.Ptt)-emp

Though [you] try (have tried) to give up your outer body and mind, you will never be able to do so ~ [you] will never be devoid of (CT: *Milaraspa'i rnammgur*, p. 431⁷)

There are further cases where the *potentialis* stem form is identical with the 'present' or 'past' stem of the corresponding accidental event verb, and accordingly two readings are possible. Nevertheless SKALBZANG 'GYURMED and his translator NICOLAS TOURNADRE opt for the *potentialis* reading: 'tu n'y parviens pas', for both, (6) and (7).

- (7) *phyi snañ ba btul gyis*
outer appearance subdue(St.Ptt-Anti)

mi thul gyis
subdue-nc/pot(NgI-SPrs/Fut(St.'Imp')) ~ be-subdued(NgI-St.Ptt)-emp

Though [you] try (have tried) to subdue the outer appearances, you

⁷ *Rnal'byorgyi dbañphyug chenpo Milaraspa'i rnammgur* of Gtsaṅmyon Heruka Ruspa'i Rgyalchen (1488), Qinghai 2nd edition 1989: *Mtshosñon žinchen žinhua dpekhañ* [Kokonor Province Qinghai publishing house]. Note that the verb '*phoñs* (TCH: *phoñ*) | *phoñs*, 'to be devoid of, poor', corresponds to the 'imperative' stem of the cognate verb: '*phen* | '*phañs* | '*phañ* | *phoñ* (TCH: '*phoñs*), 'to throw away'. Note also the double function of the verb final particle {*kyi(s)*}: following the first verb, it stands in place of the antithetical particle {*kyañ*}, following the second verb it is an emphatic particle, indicating (imminent) future time reference. For the resultative use of the 'past' stem in future time context see part II).

will never be able to do so ~ they will never be subdued (CT: *Milaraspa'i rnamngur*, p. 435).

As all these examples show, the *potentialis* function is most often found with negation. This makes it quite plausible that the imperative function is a secondary development, derived from the positive statement of ability and then generalized to the extent that the original meaning of the stem form is fully preserved only in negation. In contrast to the positive assertion of ability, the statement 'you cannot do it' might have been, too straightforward to be a suitable candidate for a polite expression of prohibition. Another possibility is that the expression of non-ability was simply much more in use than the expression of ability, so that any other connotation was blocked. As the *potentialis* function has remained prominent with negation, the so-called 'imperative' stem is not suitable for prohibitions, and is thus rarely found (such instances could perhaps be 'errors of the scribe'). In the apparently more standardized texts of OT: *Documents de Touen-Houang*, (BACOT et al. 1940) and *The story of Rāma in Tibet* (DE JONG 1989), present or future stem plus Negation Particle *ma* is the preferred prohibitive construction, whereas the apparently less standardized texts of AFL have present or past stem. In CT and most MT languages, present stem with Negation Particle *ma* is the standard prohibitive construction, whereas future and past stem are rarely found. Only in Balti and Purik (WT) is the imperative stem used regularly in prohibitions, but this is certainly a secondary adjustment (the fact that WT phonology shows archaic traits does not necessarily imply that the syntax must be archaic, as well).

4. Conclusion

Reconstructions of PrT or even PrTB are more often than not based on formal similarities in the morphology of different TB languages on the presumption that the function of formally identical or similar elements is identical or similar. This approach is certainly valuable as a heuristic means. But since the TB morphological elements in question are often quite reduced, formal similarities may be merely accidental.

As shown above, the function 'command' of the so-called 'imperative' stem cannot be taken for granted, as the derivation originally seems to have expressed the agent's ability in PrT. With the *potentialis* function,

the stem form can be found in OT as well as in early CT texts, and is still productive in non-assertive sentences (questions and negations) in THEM and perhaps other Amdo varieties. In assertive employment, the stem form underwent a considerable shift of meaning: from the mere description of the ability to perform an action or to obtain a result via the wish that one may be able to perform and the wish that the action will be performed (optative) to the command that the action should be performed (imperative).

As a consequence, the 'imperative' stem has to be regarded as a derived stem form. The kind of derivation and particularly the shift of meaning may be peculiar to Tibetan and may thus not be transferable to other TB languages without further evidence of similar developments. This outcome is also of some importance for the reconstruction of Tibetan verb roots. Unlike imperatives in the Indo-European languages, the Tibetan 'imperative' stem can no longer be taken as the simplest form that would come closest to or would even be identical with the underlying verb root. This means that the 'imperative' stem cannot serve as an immediate evidence for any hypothesis about Tibetan verb roots.

In the second part, to be published in *Zentralasiatische Studien* 31 (2001), I will show that although the traditional Tibetan grammatical description of the Tibetan verb stems in terms of ABSOLUTE TENSE might be a mere translation of Sanskrit terminology, the alternative description in terms of ASPECT is likewise not adequate: both the 'present' and the 'past stem' are aspectually neutral. The 'past' stem of control action verbs may express a mere attempt as well as the result of this attempt. This apparent anomaly offers the possibility to reconstruct its original semantics and to sketch a possible line of development from the set of up to ten derivative stem forms to the never full fledged set of four (plus two) stems in OT and CT.

Abbreviations:

Sources:

AFL *Ancient folk-literature from north-eastern Tibet*, THOMAS (1957), OT;

Dictionaries and verb lists:

GOL GOLDSTEIN (1994);

TCH TIBETAN TIBETAN CHINESE DICTIONARY (1993);

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Tibetan languages:

CT	Classical Tibetan (written; 11 th - 19 th century);
MT	Modern Tibetan (vernaculars, without specification; 20 th century);
OT	Old Tibetan (written; mid 7 th - end of 10 th century);
PrT	Proto-Tibetan;
PrTB	Proto-Tibeto-Burman;
TB	Tibeto-Burman;
THEM	Themchen, Amdo in China (vernacular; 20 th century) - by courtesy of Felix HALLER;
WT	West Tibetan: Ladakhi and Purik in India, Balti in Pakistan;

Grammatical terms :

Anti	anthithetical particle;	LC	<i>lhagbcas</i> , clause-chaining conjunction;
cc	conjunctive case particle;	Loc	Locative Particle;
CD	conjunctive case particle with function of: conditional;	nc	[-control];
CPrs	Common Present (Themchen);	nf	'non-finite', (ø-) conjunction;
CPrs/Fut	Compound Present/Future (OT/CT);	Ng1	Negation Particle <i>mi</i> ;
ctr	[+control];	Ng2	Negation Particle <i>ma</i> ;
D/L	Dative/Locative Particle;	ntr	neutral (verb stem not inflecting);
emp	emphatic future marker;	pot	<i>potentialis</i> ;
Erg	Ergative Particle;	Prs	present;
ExpPtt	Experiential Past (Themchen);	Ptt	preterit/past;
<i>f</i>	function of;	QF	Question Marker;
F	Final Marker;	SPrs/Fut	Simple Present/Future;
FutPerf	Future Perfect;	SPtt	Simple Past;
Gen	Genitive Particle;	St.	stem;
hon	honorific;	VN	verbal noun,
Imp	Imperative;		participle;
Instr	Instrumental Particle;	θ	Theme/Topic Marker;
intj	interjection;	#	non-narrative discourse.

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