Ralf Vollmann

Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity
A historiographical account

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Ralf Vollmann
01. The Tibetan language

01.01. Introduction

The Tibetan language is spoken in a huge area spanning from Baltistan (Kashmir) in the West across Central Asia (Tibet, Himalaya) until Amdo (Northeast, Central China) and Kham (East), with an additional minority population in Yunnan (South China). Thus, the main country hosting this language is Tibet, but also Bhutan is a country of Tibetan language (Dzongkha). Similarly, Ladakh and Baltistan (occupied by Pakistan), but also other (smaller) Himalayan regions are areas where varieties of Tibetan are spoken. Many people in Nepal adhere to communities which speak Tibetan varieties.

Tibet is a huge, but sparsely populated country with 3 to 6 million speakers of that language. Tibetan used to be one of the important Asian languages, being the sacral language of Tibet and various other nations in Central Asia with Buddhist faith: Mongolians, Buryats, Kalmycks, etc.

Tibet has been invaded and occupied by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1951 (cf. van Walt van den Praag 1984). The so-called ‘Cultural Revolution’ (beginning in 1966) led to the killing of about one third of the population (cf., e.g., Tapontsang 1997; Dalai Lama 1986) and to the destruction of almost the whole culture of Tibet, including an immense loss of literary resources. Therefore, about 150.000 Tibetans live in exile nowadays, among them many Buddhist masters who have restored the Tibetan culture outside of their homeland. Since the 1980s, many Tibetans from China settle in India temporarily, specifically in order to receive the traditional Tibetan education in the newly built exile monasteries. In Tibet itself, the influx of Chinese speaking population makes Tibetan a minority language both in the Eastern areas (Amdo, Kham) and in TAR (‘Tibet Autonomous Region’). Therefore, many Tibetans are nowadays bilingual (or multilingual), with Hindi, Kannada, or Chinese being the dominant language in the sociolinguistic situation.

Tibetan has a long literary tradition, since the 7th century, forming an enormous body of literary resources (which has only been drastically reduced by the so-called ‘Cultural Revolution’); the Indian Buddhist heritage is most comprehensively conserved in the Tibetan translations. There exist even still earlier texts in this language from Central Asia (Khotan, Tunhuang, Amdo). The language is therefore the most prominent representative of one of the two branches of the second-largest linguistic family, Sino-Tibetan and therefore of importance to diachronic research.

Due to the earlier isolation of the country which tried to escape various imperialistic interests from Russia, China, and British India, information about Tibet was difficult to achieve for Europeans (who therefore often related to Mongolia, Ladakh (East Tibet), or the Indian Himalayas and not to Tibet itself). As a result of the exile of Tibetan Buddhist masters, monks, and many other people since the ‘Cultural Revolution’ – and the subsequent opening of the country in the eighties, the Tibetan culture and language became finally more accessible to western researchers – and thus also to linguists. Although there had been few

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1 With the areas not belonging to today’s so-called ‘Tibet Autonomous Region’ (TAR), i.e., large parts of Kham and Amdo, most probably, one can speak of 6 million people.

2 Kannada is the local South Indian language in the area where Tibetan settlements have been founded.
01. The Tibetan language

academic specialists since the 19th century, the interest in the Tibetan language and culture has grown considerably during the last few decades. Furthermore, an increasing interest in Tibetological studies in China and Japan create a body of literature in languages which do not belong to the classical canon of linguae franae in the European sciences.

01.02. Dialectal diversity and the written language

By Tibetan, philologists and Buddhists mean predominantly Classical or Written Tibetan. Although there are of course different styles in the Written language over the 1400 years of written records, this is still a relatively homogeneous data set. One can probably distinguish an 'early' or 'classical', a 'later', and a 'modern written' variety, the latter being influenced by, but still different from the spoken language (cf. Shefts Chang & Chang 1982: 21, Fn. 1).

The spoken language, on the other hand, is more varied. While lacking a common standard language, Tibetan dialects (cf. Matisoff & Lowe & Baron 1996; Bielmeier 2003) differ considerably from each other: “The present language of the people has as many dialects, as the country has provinces.” (Jäschke 1881: iv).

The use of the Tibetan script (and the grammar of Written Tibetan) is an important factor to identify the sociocultural unity of the language; this holds true for the ‘classical’ language of written texts, but also for the modern written language in the exile community and inside Chinese-occupied Tibet, respectively, both of which are based on Lhasa Tibetan. The spoken language probably forms a dialect continuum where interregional understandability is practically impossible at a certain distance, so that it is the script and written language which defines the language and culture.

As is well-known in sociolinguistics, the term 'language' covers mainly a (socio-)political and not a linguistic notion (cf. Moosmüller & Vollmann 1995), whereby national borders (or political interests) usually play a decisive role in the decision whether a language is identified as a language or as a dialect. Hindi/Urdu or Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian are examples of languages which were created out of political (religious) reasons. On the other hand, convergences and divergences of Tibetan dialects are often less important for their speakers than the religious unity of the Tibetan Buddhists.

The Tibetan language can thus linguistically be defined as the language of the adherents of the Central Asian Buddhist (and Bon) culture, including, of course, Dzongkha (i.e., BhutaneSE), with the merely dialectological addition of the Balti and Purik varieties spoken by Muslim Tibetans (in Jammu and Kashmir); at the southern margins of the Tibetan area in India and Nepal, people adhering to Buddhism, Hinduism or other (small) religions also speak Tibetan languages (i.e., 'dialects': cf., e.g., Sharma & Krishan 2001). Even the non-Buddhist/non-Bon groups of people in North India have (or had) some (commercial) contact to Tibet (or Ladakh) and are partially bilingual (in their own language/dialect and in other Tibetan varieties). Although the dialectal and social variation of this language is considerable even within the culturally more uniform Buddhist/Bon area of Tibet, it can be considered to form one cultural entity, with a common written language and a dialect continuum for the spoken language. Modernity and mass media, however, endanger this unity even more, since both linguistic norms of a standard language and the use of unfamiliar varieties in media restrict the degree of understanding, so that many radio listeners (e.g., in Ladakh) finally prefer to listen to other stations than a Tibetan one. Fast and diverging lexical change between Tibet
and the exile community makes it difficult, e.g., for exiled Tibetans, to read Tibetan newspapers from inside Tibet.

Table 01: Tibetan dialects – Overview of the main dialect groups in their geographical distribution (cf. Bielmeier et al. 2002-2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Tibetan Dialects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAT</strong></td>
<td>Western Archaic Tibetan</td>
<td>Balti dialects (Pakistan, India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Purik dialects (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIT</strong></td>
<td>Western Innovative Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CT</strong></td>
<td>Central Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ST</strong></td>
<td>Southern Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NKT</strong></td>
<td>Northern Kham Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EKT</strong></td>
<td>Eastern Kham Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EAT</strong></td>
<td>Eastern Amdo Tibetan</td>
<td>Ladakhi dialects of Upper Ladakh and Zanskar (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North West Indian Border Area dialects: Lahul, Spiti, Uttarakhand (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngari dialects: Tholing (Tibet Aut. Region: Ngari Area)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beside the many dialects, we can conventionally distinguish ‘Old’, ‘Classical’, and ‘Modern Written’ Tibetan for the long tradition (of 1400 years) of Written Tibetan. Therefore, all these linguistic competences may of course cooccur in one speaker of Tibetan, depending on his or her education and profession. A separation of these styles and dialects into ‘different languages’ is a normative act based on a specific concept about grammars, one which does not allow the cooccurrence and heavy overlapping of different norms within one system, i.e., a reductionist approach. It is virtually impossible to reduce an investigation of the Tibetan grammar to one homogeneous set of rules. This is not a surprising fact, since grammatical variation should be considered the normal state of affairs in most languages of the world. Highly standardized normative monolingualism as postulated for Central European languages is unusual, monodialectality (to a relatively high extent) as in French being very rare.

When written and spoken varieties of Tibetan are compared, it seems as if there had been a considerable language change since the introduction of the script. This may be a bit mislea-
01. The Tibetan language

ding, however, since scripts are often introduced together with already existing idiosyncrac-
cies alien to the spoken language (cf. the Gothic < Greek script development, or the norm-
tive effort in defining Standard German over centuries, imposing the norms of the written
language on speakers of quite different dialects; cf., e.g., Weiβ 1998). One may therefore hy-
pothesize that a deviant written grammar may have also been introduced normatively, or
from only one 'dialect', together with the script. It is also possible that translation literature
influences the use of the written language (as was the case with styles in Old High German).
To sum up, written varieties have their own regularities and may not reflect spoken varieties
which therefore remain undocumented. The Tibetan custom to separately mention bod skad
and bod yig ('Tibetan speech' and 'Tibetan script') may mean that learning to write means
learning serious additions to the system, or practically another grammar; this situation may
have been the normal approach during all centuries – 'linguistics' being the art of learning to
understand the subtleties of the grammar of Written Tibetan, and not the art of understand-
ing grammars as such.

Since the written language transmits the cultural heritage, it is probably important
enough to influence the spoken varieties. If these considerations are not implausible, one has
to be careful in finding 'language change' when comparing 'Classical Written' with 'Modern
Spoken' Tibetan. It may be assumed that written styles strongly influenced language educa-
tion ever since, so that the 'real' standard language of Tibetan is the written idiom. For mo-
dern written texts, this standard might be characterized as a kind of 'reformed written gram-
mar'. The written language with its grammar remains a kind of more or less active or passive
linguistic knowledge of many speakers of the language, at least for educated people.

Some differences between written and spoken varieties could also be explained by other
reasons than diachronic processes; e.g., the use of evidential markers is rare in written styles,
but this makes sense also from a discourse-pragmatic viewpoint, since statements in a writ-
ten text (on Buddhist concepts) usually do not contain event construals which are to be em-
bedded in truth value structures referring to the writer. On the other hand, evidential en-
dings are found in direct speech in some older texts as well (e.g., in the mi la ras pa'i rnam
thar, cf. Saxena 1989) – where they make sense. In short, we find here a complex multi-level
grammar with various competing sets of regularities.

For the reasons enumerated here, the widespread view of Written and Spoken Tibetan as
being 'practically two different languages' is not upheld, but with the restriction that one
will find an interwoven system of (partially competing) grammatical characteristics partially
belonging to different 'subgrammars' of the grammar.

01.03. Linguistics in Tibet

Wylie (1967: 766) stated: "Linguistics, as a scientific analysis of the phonemic and grammati-
cal structure of a language, did not develop'. This evaluation is a harsh judgement based on
very specific Euro-American preconceptions ('as a scientific analysis ...'). Linguistics, gram-
maticography does exist in Tibet; it is considered to be a 'minor art'\(^3\) in the traditional

\(^3\) cf. "You will achieve nothing of deep meaning, and will be like a person attached to sugar-cane who does not
extract any of the juice. Some of the lesser of the ten sciences are of so little benefit, why bother mastering
them?" (Pabongka Rinpoche 1991 [= 1924]: 652)
(buddhist) educational system, i.e. one of the topics considered less important; linguistics serves a better understanding of the subtle meanings in old texts. The Tibetan grammatical treatises are often organized along orthographic rules and mainly deal with (orthographic) prefixes referring to morphonological rules and the (highly obsolete, mainly orthographic) verb inflection; therefore, early authors sometimes doubted their value for grammarians:

Denn die Tibetischen Wörterbücher und Sprachlehren lassen uns, so weit sie mir bekannt sind, über so manche grammatische Spracheigenheit in völliger Ungewissheit; sie verbreiten sich hauptsächlich mit viel Aussichtlichkeit über die Gesetze der Rechtschreibung, und wenn man auch zugeben muss, dass diese scrupulöse Genauigkeit in Feststellung von bestimmten Regeln, bei einer Sprache mit einer so höchst schwierigen Orthographie wie die Tibetische, a priori den größten Nutzen gewährt, so muss man beim weiteren Verfolg der Untersuchung bald schmerzlich wahrnehmen, dass in den erwähnten Sprachlehren die eigentlichen Bestandtheile der Sprache, deren Ordnung, Classifizierung und Verbindung zum Ganzen, die wir bei einer wissenschaftlichen Behandlung der Sprache als unerlässlich betrachten, fast gänzlich vernachlässigt sind. (Schmidt 1839: XI.)

Nonetheless, a number of Tibetan grammars do contain semantic-syntactic information: The grammar of Bacot 1946 relies on indigenous linguistic works.

**01.04. Grammatical characterization of Tibetan**

This section provides only a very short overview over those categories which will be relevant in the discussion of the early grammaticography. A more detailed description of verbs and case marking will be discussed later.

**01.04.01. Words**

The Tibetan language, a member of the (genetic) Sino-Tibetan language family, has traditionally been described as a monosyllabic (cf. Adelung 1806: 68), isolating or analytical language. ‘Monosyllabiety’ seems to be a category which is difficult to define or to find – it is therefore outdated in contemporary linguistics, but sometimes used in more traditional descriptions.

On the one hand, a traditional Tibetan analysis of written text usually gives explanations or a meaning for each syllable. On the other hand, most words in Tibetan are bisyllabic, some are polysyllabic, either from a process of compounding or of derivation, the latter mostly with the ‘particles’ or ‘suffixes’ pa, ma, po, mo (‘nominalizers’, henceforth NS). These affixes/particles can get lost again from an already formed word in further word formation processes (Vollmann 2006). Compounding and (other) derivations are further sources for bi- or plurisyllabic words. Finally, loan words are often plurisyllabic. All types of plurisyllabic words, however, can easily lose syllables, as can be seen from these examples of honorific formation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 02</th>
<th>noun vs. compound</th>
<th>loan word vs. honorific prefixation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>skar ma</td>
<td>skar rtsis</td>
<td>mo Ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>star NS</td>
<td>star count</td>
<td>car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>star</td>
<td>astrology</td>
<td>car (polite)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'Monosyllabic' thus means that morphemes (of basic vocabulary) are usually monosyllabic, or that each syllable has a specific (lexical or grammatical) meaning – since words can consist of one or more morphemes, the difference is one of quantity. Additionally, since in language history the meaning of some morphemes may be darkened or lost, this finding refers specifically to the written language and to a diachronic perspective. Goldstein (1977: 23, Goldstein & Narkyid 1984: xi) therefore coins a new grammatical term 'syllabic': "In contrast to English, meaning in Tibetan is basically syllabic in that most Tibetan syllables have meaning independent of the compound word (morpheme) in which they are found." (Goldstein & Narkyid 1984: xi) The Tibetan script, however, distinguishes only syllables, not words; grammatical and lexical syllables alike are treated like independent entities and are separated from each other by dots (tsheg). This avoids some problems of segmentation, since 'monosyllabic' seems to refer to another characteristic which has been discussed by Skalička (1979: 180ff.): the fact that the seemingly opposing categories of 'polysynthesis' and 'isolation' are in a way related: in other words, an 'isolating language' has a weak concept of what is a 'word': it has morphemes and syntactic units, the boundaries of the words are (sometimes) difficult to define (cf. Skalička 1979: 187). In this way, it is understandable that Tibetan (with the exception of Balti and Purik Tibetan) shows the feature of 'group inflection', i.e., inflectional markers occur only at the end of constituents, not after words (cf. 'phrasal affixes', Anderson 1992, 1993). Group agglutination in Tibetan also means that coordinated NPs take only one case marker (ex. taken from Tournadre 1996: 114):

```
(01) khang pa chen po de tsho la
     house     big     DEF PL ALL to/at the big houses
```

This characteristic has been described already in early grammars, together with dvandva compound formation (cf. last example):

95. Lorsque plusieurs noms se suivent dans une enumeration, il est rare qu’ils prennent plus d’un signe de cas, et alors ce signe se met après le dernier. EXEMPLES: 'Ha klu mi la sogs kyis 'par les dieux, les dragons, les hommes et le reste'; rgyal blon 'bangs thams cad kyi skyabs geig po 'le seul refuge du roi, des ministres et de tous les sujets'; rang gi pha ma la "à mon père (et à ma) mère". (Foucaux 1858: 89)

Due to this characteristic, bound morphemes remain on a syntactic level which makes them similar to clitics. The bound morpheme inventory has therefore been called 'grammatical

* This reminds also of the obvious difficulties of German orthographic reforms to find a way how to deal with verb prefixes ('zurück-kehren', 'hierhinfahren') and incorporated nouns ('blut-spender', 'blutspende').
particles' (e.g., in Hahn 1994, Kelzang Gyurme 1992). This particle grammar could be characterized as such: Morphological and syntactic processes are very close to each other; almost all syllables carry meaning, and they immediately enter a syntactic level, without a clear-cut distinction of the levels of 'word' and of 'morphology'; grammatical morphemes are mainly organized as particles (similar to clitics), i.e., syntactic instead of morphological entities. Nonetheless, morphophonological processes between syllables (not lexemes) and particles are frequent, thus weakening this distinction in some ways. Due to group inflection, however, the system is unable to achieve permanent 'univerbation' (Jakobson 1971: 22) with words of particular word classes in order to form paradigms for these word classes; cf. the genitive suffix in the following examples:

(03)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>khang pa chen po de tsho'i</th>
<th>khang pa chen po'i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>house-NS big-NS-DEF-GEN</td>
<td>house-NS big-NS GEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the big houses</td>
<td>of big houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khang pa de'i</td>
<td>khang pa'i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house-NS-DEF-GEN</td>
<td>house-NS-GEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the house</td>
<td>of houses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In short, the traditional category of 'analytic languages' cannot be maintained for Tibetan (cf. Agha 1993: 4).

Lhasa Tibetan is both isolating and fusional. It is 'isolating' in the sense that only a very limited degree of formal affixation is allowed within words. It is 'fusional' in the sense that grammatical categories are not generally segmentable into distinct morphemes within the word. (Agha 1993: 4)

Historically, Tibetan seems to have been more synthetic than it is now; some dialects have kept the old (Sino-Tibetan) system of verb inflection consisting of pre- and suffixes together with ablaut – i.e., 'concatenative' and 'nonlinear' formatives (cf. Bickel & Nichols 2005a: 86). The variables discussed here include the morphotactic distinctions of phonological fusion, formative exponence, and flexibility (cf. Bickel & Nichols 2005a: 86); in this respect, Tibetan has mono-exponential,\(^5\) concatenative (suffixed) formatives, and an unproductive system of 'nonlinear' (= 'introjective') formatives (= ablaut).

The distinction of lexical categories, or at least the one between verbs and nouns (Lalou 1950: 74f), is said to be less clear or weaker than in SAE\(^6\) languages (cf. Lalou 1950: 53; Hahn 1994: 64 [= 1985: 57f]); adjectives and subordination (conjunctions) are not clear-cut phenomena on their own; most (case?) particles of the old and many particles of the modern language occur with both nouns and verbs. Diachronically, correlations between nouns and verbs become visible, making nouns one of the 'stems' (often the base form) of the morphologically complex verbs; thus, by adding verb inflection, a word becomes a verb.\(^7\) This old verb inflection, therefore, is a clear-cut difference between verbs and nouns at the syntactic level. Nonetheless, Tibetan nouns can also derive from inflected verb forms, both simplex and

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\(^5\) i.e., having a 1:1 relation between meanings and forms (biumiqueness), a subcharacteristic of semiotic transparency (cf. Dressler 1990).

\(^6\) 'SAE' = 'Standard Average European', a term coined by Whorf (1984) for the typological denomination of the traditional modern-linguistic reference languages (English, French, German, etc.); cf. the newer concept 'Eurotyp'. The justification for such a terminology lies in the theory of areal typology.

\(^7\) cf. Germanic word pairs such as 'Lag' ‘a lie’ and ‘Rugen’ ‘to lie’.
compound forms. Synchronically, many words lexically adhere to one word class only, and verbs are also recognized by their syntactic position (strict verb-end structure).

The most important derivational device is a set of 'nominalizers' (specifically pa, ma, po, mo, ko (and morphonological variants) as well as some more transparent ones (e.g., mkhan agentive suffix, lit. 'know'), but they also occur in verbal morphology (e.g., V+pa+ AUX), and they frequently disappear in compounding processes (due to the weak 'word status', as mentioned above); more specifically, in compounding morphology, the word class of the head is not inherited to the compound. In other words, derivation and compounding occur on a syntactic level, whereby a notion of 'disyllability' overrules derivational particles (and even parts of compounds).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(04)</th>
<th>khang pa</th>
<th>khang mig</th>
<th>tshong khang</th>
<th>skar rtsi</th>
<th>mtho dman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>house NS</td>
<td>house (eye)</td>
<td>sell house</td>
<td>star count:V</td>
<td>high low</td>
<td>astrology:N height</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This behavior explains also the fact that morphological processes considered as 'marginal' (cf. Zwicky & Pullum 1987) or as 'extragrammatical' (cf. Dressler 1988, 2001) play a more important role as compared to SAE; for example, 'clipping' is a regular morphological process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(05a)</th>
<th>byang chub kyi sens</th>
<th>byang sens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enlightenment-GEN mind</td>
<td>'enl-mind'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bodhicitta</td>
<td>bodhicitta (abbrev. form)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tibetan Autonomous region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(05b)</th>
<th>dbyin [ji dang]</th>
<th>bod [dang]</th>
<th>rgya [nag kyi skad]</th>
<th>gsun</th>
<th>shan sbyar gyi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tshig mdzod</td>
<td>syllable-collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like various other Asian languages, Tibetan has an elaborated system of honorific speech, i.e., lexical and morphological marking of politeness (cf. DeLancey 1998). In this system, clipping plays a decisive role, even with loan words, whereby the syllabic parts of words are treated like simplicia, as if they had a 'monosyllabic status', e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(06)</th>
<th>bisyllabic words:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mig shal</td>
<td>spyen shal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye glass</td>
<td>eye:H glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glasses</td>
<td>glasses:HON</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without going into further details here, it can be assumed that this type of particle grammar results in a rather 'flat' grammar with a syntactic-morphological level dealing mainly with 'bound morphemes' which are not formed as 'impermeable' words. This coincides with the Tibetan terminology tshig, 'syllables/words', thus not distinguishing 'syllables' and 'words'.

8 This is comparable to verbal nouns such as INF or PP in IE languages.
Similar to Chinese linguistics (Harbsmeier 1979: 159ff.), traditional Tibetan grammar distinguishes 'lexical words' and 'particles'; these particles are classified into 1. case particles (*rnam dbyer gtopics pa'i phrad*), 2. variable particles (*phrad gzhana dbang can*), 3. invariable particles (*phrad rang dbang can*), and 4. other particles (cf., e.g. Kelzang Gyurme 1992). The class of functional particles has core elements and an almost open class of more or less semantically transparent particles (e.g., *skabs*, 'time' or ‘at the time, when’ or ‘when’, and similarly *dus*, ‘at the time of’, ‘when’; or *thabs*, 'means' or 'by means of' or other meanings; etc.). The core elements are mainly the so-called case markers which, however, apply also to verbs or entire predications.

In spite of the monosyllabic nature of the grammar, there are important morphonological changes in some (i.e., quite a few) of the inflectional and derivational particles. Many of these morphonological changes are today morphological variants, since the original phonological motivation of the phonotactic assimilations are no longer present. The forms, however, relate to orthography, i.e., to earlier stages of phonology. However, segmental and suprasegmental features interact with these forms, e.g., open syllables with long vowels and tone 3 (LL) or 4 (HL) correlate with the loss of a coda consonant which has earlier influenced the phonological form of the following particle.

**01.04.02. Tone**

The dialects of Baltistan and Ladakh (Balti, Purik, Lower Ladakhi, Leh Ladakhi) in the west as well as the dialects of Amdo (with some exceptions, cf. Haller 1999) in the east do not have lexical tone (cf., e.g. Häsl 1999: 257). Among the remaining dialect groups of Ngari, Tsang, U, and Kham, the ‘outer dialects’ of Ngari and Kham have only two tones (H[ghi], L[ow]) (cf. Haller 1999). Finally, Central Tibetan dialects such as the varieties of Lhasa and Shigatse have 4 lexical tones; cf. (Haller 1995: 1.2.1.2.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 03</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>H-FALLING</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>L-FALLING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>💡 (=&quot;khrī&quot;)</td>
<td>💋 (=&quot;khrīs&quot;)</td>
<td>💬 (=&quot;gri&quot;)</td>
<td>💋 (=&quot;bris&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>near</td>
<td>knife</td>
<td>written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The system of four tones consists of 2 register tones (H, L; tone 1 and 2) and two (secondarily developed) contour tones (falling (HL), rising-falling (LL), tone 3 and 4). The tone system probably is a late development spreading from the Central Tibetan varieties: When comparing the script with the tones of Spoken Central Tibetan, syllable-initial letters expressing voiced obstruents correspond to devoiced obstruents plus low tone. A correlation between devoicing and L tone is oft-described in phonetics.

The two contour tones are combinations of onset tone trigger and falling tone due to a coda consonant (cf. Edgar 1932, Hari 1979, Shefts Chang & Chang 1981: 304, Bielmeier 1984, Sprigg 1990, Sun 1995, and others; cf. also Weidert 1987); when the coda consonant has disappeared diachronically, the contour tones correlate with long vowel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>falling</th>
<th>rising-falling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teʰčː</td>
<td>chos [H+L]</td>
<td>ḏː</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

9 Earlier stages of phonology correlate better with orthography, although orthography does not simply represent an earlier phonological state. While the prefixes may predominantly reflect an older morphological system, the loss of coda consonants (except additional -s) may have been purely phonological. Therefore, old sandhi rules which are no longer recognizable are (except old -t+s) reflected in orthography.
As in other languages, there are occurrences of tone sandhi rules in compound formations (cf., e.g., Haller 1995: 1.2.1.2.). Since the peculiarities of the tonal system of Tibetan play no role for our purpose, it will not be explained in more detail. It may be sufficient to say that some dialects have no tones, two tones (HIGH, LOW), or four tones (H, L, + two (composite) contour tones).

01.04.03. No person agreement

There is no syntactic agreement between the verb and a subject or object. On the other hand, one could say that in (Lhasa) Tibetan there are two systems which allow the interpretation of who is the 'subject' in a phrase: (a) verbs are marked for the 'participant role perspective' (Agha 1993: 13), and (b) the use of 'honorable language' involves the use of 'polite' verb forms which give a hint to the pragmatic orientation of the event. The first system can be exemplified with the following example:

(07a) ngas deb cig bkra shis la sprad pa yin/
I_ERG book INDEF Tashi-DAT give-NS-speaker-related (CONJ)
I gave Tashi a book.

(07b) ngar deb cig bkra shis kyis sprad pa red/
I-DAT book INDEF Tashi-ERG give-NS-speaker-unrelated (DISJ)
Tashi gave me a book.

Honorable concord can be seen here (Denwood 1999: 196):

(08) khong nga btag gnang pa red/
3:HON 1 send-HON-NS-DISJ He sent me.

In a situation with one animate and an inanimate participant, both the person and the object are honorific-marked; in this case, however, the animate/inanimate distinction allows to distinguish the actor from the involved object. One can therefore say that these are not grammatical distinctions, but indirect, grammatically independent correlations.

(09) khong zhal lag bzes kyi 'duŋ/
3:HON meal:HON take-HON-VC-DISJ He is having a meal.

This 'interpretation' of AUX or HON verb forms, however, works well in elliptic clauses (for the meaning of these AUX, cf. 08.06.01.):

(10a) deb cig bkra shis la sprad pa yin/

(10b) ngar deb cig sprad pa red/

With the help of the second system (honorable usage), additional information on the persons involved can be deduced:

(11a) bla ma de la deb cig bkra shis kyis sprad pa red/
Lama DEF ALL book INDEF Tashi-ERG give-NS-DISJ
Tashi gave the lama a book.

(11b) bla ma des phyag deb cig bkra shis gnang pa red/
Lama DEF:ERG HON-book INDEF Tashi give-NS-DISJ
The lama gave Tashi a book [of his].
Again, this function is syntactically independent:


Though the categories of the verb are complex, a person agreement system cannot be found in Tibetan.

01.04.04. Word order

According to syntactic word order typology, Tibetan is an SOV language. More exactly, it is an 'NP-NP-...-VP language', since the order of the nominal constituents is not restricted.10 A change of the order triggers differences in meaning, however.

Although the order of constituents in clauses is relatively free, 'SOV' order is perhaps most frequent in a statistical sense. However, word order cannot be evaluated as coding syntactic information alone, for, as we shall see, differences in word order yield contrasts of semantic and pragmatic categories even in the most basic clauses. The only categorical constraint regarding word order is that the predicate must occur clause-finally. (Agha 1993: 12)

This can be exemplified as follows:

(13) bbraska shis kyis deb tshe ring la sprad pa red/ Tashi-ERG book Tsering-ALL give-NS-DIS
      deb bbraska shis kyis tshe ring la sprad pa red/ book Tashi-ERG Tsering-ALL give-NS-DIS
      tshe ring la bbraska shis kyis deb sprad pa red/ Tsering-ALL Tashi-ERG give-NS-DIS
      bbraska shis kyis deb sprad pa red/ Tsering-ALL book Tashi-ERG give-NS-DIS

Tashi gave the book to Tsering. (Agha 1993: 13)

The language observes a strict verb-end structure (SOV) and has postponed attributes, but the attributive case (GEN) can reverse this order:

(14a) khang pa' chen po de la (14b) khyi so ring po de house big DEF ALL dog tooth long DEF
to the big house ... the dog with long teeth
(14c) chen po' khang pa de la big-GEN house DEF ALL to the big house
(14d) so ring po yod pa'i khyi de tooth long have-NS/GEN dog DEF the dog with long teeth

to the big house

La construction de la langue tibétaine diffère complètement de celle des langues d’Europe, et souvent une phrase tibétaine est justement l'inverse d'une phrase française. EXEMPLE: bdag gis mthong pa'i dpe zhig na "dans un livre vu par moi" (littéralement: "moi par vu livre un dans"). (Foucaux 1858: 88)

10 "The invariable rule is this: in a simple sentence all other words must precede the verb; [...]" (Jaschke 1865: 80);
"Les verbes sont placés à la fin de la proposition" (Foucaux 1858: 99), etc..
Since many particles occur both with noun and verb phrases, and since many lexemes act both as function words and as lexemes (e.g. dus, 1. 'time’, 2. 'when’), grammatical hierarchic ordering often appears dissatisfying. Traditional representations of grammar are thus simple enumerations of particles (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992).

01.04.05. Non-obligatory of constituents

In a Tibetan sentence, only the verb phrase is obligatory for a sentence to be grammatical (cf. Tournadre 1996: 69): 'Moreover, any and all of the arguments of the verb can be dropped optionally in connected discourse, [...]’ (Agha 1993: 14), "deletability" (Agha 1993: 15), "telegram principle” (Beyer 1992: 258), "The subject may be implied, if it has just been mentioned” (Chang & Chang 1980: 19); "If subject and/or object/complement are absent, this is usually through ellipsis, though there is a sub-class of two-argument verbs where this may not be so” (Denwood 1999: 192), zero-anaphora (Andersen 1987). I.e., nominal phrase categories (NP, PP) are not syntactically obligatory in a single sentence. In the following, any omission (marked by the brackets) leaves the clause grammatically correct:

(15) [bkr shis kyi] [deb] [tsh ring la] sprad pa red/ [Tashi-ERG] [book] [Tsering-ALL] give-NS-DISJ [Tashi] gave [the book] [to Tsering]. (Agha 1993: 13)

Non-obligatory of nominal constituents means in the first place that constituents, once introduced on the text level, remain 'active' or 'present' across sentence boundaries (without being represented by pronouns). One should probably not speak of (syntactic) 'government', since sentences with omitted NPs are not always 'elliptic'. Cf. the following examples (Tournadre 1996: 69, 71):

(16a) rtsam pa bzas bzhag/ Tspa eat:PFV-INFER [He/she] has eaten the Tsampa! (= The Tsampa has been eaten!)

(16b) khos bzas bzhag/ 3:ERG eat:PFV-INFER He has eaten [it].

Of course, 'a person' must have 'eaten the tsampa' in the example above; the omission, however, can leave the conceptual place free or empty: therefore, the translation 'The tsampa has been eaten' can render the meaning appropriately. As will be seen later, this phenomenon intrigued early scholars who tried to find here a 'passive'. But the sentence also simply means: [Somebody] has eaten the tsampa.

Since verbs do not require ('govern') obligatory syntactic roles, obviously all NPs represent (semantic) participant roles and are introduced at the text level, i.e., a topic is introduced once, and can remain implicit over a longer stretch of text, without necessarily being represented by a pronoun. Cf. the following passage from an 'interview' (Sopa 1983: 2):

(17) nga dgon pa khag gnyis la 'dzul pa vin/ dang po 'dzul sa 1 monastery different two-ALL enter-NS-CNJ first enter-place
de gtsang la dga’ ldan chos 'khor zer ba’i dgon pa che chung DEṭ Tsang-ALL Gandan Chökh kor call-NS-GEN monastery big small

11 This characteristic, untypical for SAE, is quite common in the languages of the world (cf. DuBois et al. 2003, Dryer 2005).
01. The Tibetan language

I entered two different monasteries. The place [I] entered first was in Tsang, a monastery of a moderate size called 'Ganden Chökhor'. [I] entered there. There were about 500 monks there.

This does not only occur in the case of 1st person and CONJ verb marking (i.e., *rin* refers to the speaker); repetitions of text passages can generally show 'pro-drop' behavior (ex. from an oral explanation about Shantideva’s life, speaker of Lhasa Tibetan):  

(18) de dus mi gzhani dag tshang mas khong gis chos bshad thub
DEF-time man other all:ERG 3:HON ERG dharma speak can-
kyi ma red zer gyi 'dug/ PRG-NEG-DISJ say-VC-DISJ dharma teach can-VC-NEG-DISJ say-VC-DISJ
gang yin zer na/ khong nyi ma rtog par kha lag za yas dang nyal
what-CONJ-say-IF 3:HON day each:ILL food eat-VC SOC sleep-
chas ma rtog chos byed kyi yod ma pa ma red/
-VC except dharma do-GEN-DISJ:GEN:NEG
At that time, all the other people said that he will not be able to give a teaching. [They] say that [he] cannot expound the dharma. Because, each day, beside eating food and sleeping, he obviously did not do any dharma practice.

In the following phrase from a Jatuka, the Buddha is mentioned only once in a longer sequence, regardless of different case frames for the various verbs ('put on', 'take', 'go'):

(19) de'i tshe boom ldan 'das bsod snyoms kyi dus la bab nas/ sham thabs
DEM:G time bhagavan alms-GEN time-ALL fall-ABL lower cloth-
dang chos gos bgos nas lhun bzdes bsams te/ kun dga‘ bo dang
-SOC dharma cloth put-on-ABL begging bowl take-CONT Ananda-SOC
bsod snyoms la gshegs so/ alms ALL go-FIN
At that time, the bhagavan, when the time for alms had come, put on the shamthab and the chögö, took the begging bowl and went for alms with Ananda.

Similarly, Herforth (1989: 81) concludes that the omission of NPs is related to their having been introduced on the text level:

It is not difficult to uncover in text examples of agent-less clauses whose main verb is in a form designated "A-prominent" by the Tibetans. All such apparent exceptions to our formulation, however, are instances of zero-anaphora in clause-chaining, i.e. contexts where a specifiable A-argument can be retrieved from the immediately preceding discourse. (Herforth 1989: 81, Fn. 72)

Although in many examples, the choice of an auxiliary implies certain missing participants (see above), this characteristic is not to be confused with 'pro-drop' languages, however, since these are not cases of agreement marking.

12 The second khong 'he' in this passage has no ERG marking, although za 'eat' and chos byed 'do dharma prac-
tice' (but not nyal 'sleep') would suggest ERG marking.
13 *sems can chen pos stag mo la las byin par i'le'u* 'The story of the Mahasattva's giving his body to tigress' from the *mdo mdzangs blur* (the sutra of the wise and the foolish).
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01.04.06. Case marking morphology

Tibetan case markers are postponed to the NP. The language makes the following morphological case distinctions: there is an unmarked case (absolutive, ABS), an ergative/instrumental (ERG/INS), an allative/experiencer/dative (DAT/ALL/EXP/POSS), an ablative (ABL), a sociative (SOC) as well as a few other case markers (locatives (LOC), a topic (TOP) and a longer list of nominal postpositions (for nominal adpositions, cf. Lehmann 1982, 1995) with mostly locative meaning; finally, there is an attributive case (GEN). In Spoken (Central) Tibetan, the ‘grammatical cases’ seem to be ABS, ERG, and ALL/DAT; considering a few rare examples, SOC and ABL could be called ‘grammatical cases’ as well. For Written Tibetan, we may identify the following case particles:

Table 05  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>absolutive</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>ergative/instrumental</td>
<td>gis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>locative/dative</td>
<td>la, na, tu [etc.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>ablative</td>
<td>las, nas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>genitive/relative</td>
<td>gi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>sociative</td>
<td>dang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>topic</td>
<td>ni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the classical language, the locational case system might be further distinguished as such:

Table 06  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>allative</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>inessive</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>illative</td>
<td>tu, du, ru, r, su</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>elative</td>
<td>nas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>ablative</td>
<td>las</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The case system of Central Tibetan seems to have one ALL/EXP/DAT meaning with all forms 4.1.-4.3. and one ABL nas, whereas las is used as a comparative particle (for the compared entity). Many other, mostly locative, relations are expressed by nominal adpositions or postpositions with more or less grammaticalized status depending on language history, style, or dialectal variant:

Table 07  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>location-interior</td>
<td>nang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>location-surface</td>
<td>thog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>location-between</td>
<td>bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These latter particles are the core elements for nominal adpositions in the written language and in various dialects (e.g., ‘GEN+ nang+ la’), like English ‘by means of’, ‘in front of’, etc.. Grammaticalizations, however, did occur (e.g. nang, ‘in’). To sum up, we find three grammatically relevant case forms: ABS, AG/INS, and ALL/EXP/DAT (cf. Tournadre 1996: 75ff.), as well as an open class of locative or other semantic relations. Contrary to traditional European notions from NOM/ACC languages, the grammatical cases are semantically motivated as well, the unspecific form (ABS) denoting either ABSOLUTE PARTICIPANT or PATIENT (and GOAL) roles (ergativity); the ALL/EXP/DAT has the function GOAL/EXP and ALLA-
The Tibetan language is an ergative system in which it contrastively marks the AG/SRC and not the ABS/PAT/GOAL roles (cf. Dixon 1994). There are no such operations as antipassive or passive (cf. Tournadre 1996: 87ff). Mainly for the written language, the existence of a topic particle is remarkable with respect to a discussion of 'subjecthood'.

The evaluation of the Tibetan system of case marking patterns is difficult because of two very specific features. The first problem consists of the non-obligatoriness of grammatical representatives for participant roles. Additionally, Tibetan grammar allows for 'case fluctuation' (Zeisler 2004: 258), i.e., the same participant can be marked with different case markers, depending on pragmatic aspects of its construal (Zeisler 2004: 258). Although this phenomenon is not completely unknown in SAE languages, it seems to be relevant to a greater extent in Tibetan grammar – the various types of fluctuating case will be discussed below.

01.04.07. Morpho(no)logy of the ergative, instrumental, and genitive

The agent/instrument (AG/INS) particle of Tibetan also has different forms according to the phonological (or orthographic) environment; these changes depend historically on the (ancient) codas of the preceding syllable and are thus predictable from the historical orthographic conventions (cf., e.g., Goldstein 1977: 31ff., Goldstein et al. 1991: 46ff., Hahn 1994: 60):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>form</th>
<th>phon.</th>
<th>rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kyis</td>
<td>[k'i]</td>
<td>after -d, -b, -s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gyis</td>
<td>[k'i]</td>
<td>after -n, -m, -r, -l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gis</td>
<td>[k'i]</td>
<td>after -g, -ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-s</td>
<td>umlaut</td>
<td>after open syllables and -' (ha chung) (which is replaced) (ex. dpa' &gt; dpas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yis</td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>after open syllables in metrical texts if needed for filling the verse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Tibetan grammars, this reads as follows (Noble Ross Reat 1982: 23f. (27.-33.)):

(20) gi kyi giyi i yi inqa po/ rnam dbye drug pa 'grel sgra dang/ de rnaams sa mtha' can nga ni/ rnam dbye gsum pa byed sgra ste/ sbyor tsul na ma ra la gyi/ da ba sa kyi ga nga gi/a dang mtha/ med 'i dang yi/

gi, kyi, gyi, 'i, yi, these five, are the sixth declensional case, "relation"; and those five having an -s ending, are the third declensional case, "agent"; the method of use: after n m r l: "gyi"; after d b s: "kyi", after g ng: "gi"; after ' [= ha chung] and open syllables: "i" and 'yi".

The assumed morphology underlying the written language does not directly correlate with the phonological situation in any dialect. In Central Tibetan, unpronounced coda consonants had an effect on the syllable tone, producing a falling contour tone (i.e., HIGH-FALLING or LOW-MID-FALLING, respectively). Therefore, a synchronic morphological description of the written system would rely on tones as well:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>form</th>
<th>rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>-k'i / C [+front]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>-k'i / V [+derived tone]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>-k'i / C [+back]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 There is actually no dialect which makes this distinction. For readers not acquainted with the language, this 'theoretical' pronunciation is added.

15 Voicing appears intervocically, but is not phonemic.
01. The Tibetan language

ERG  →  [+long] / V___  i.e., with preceding CV-syllables (tones 1,2)
ERG  →  [-back] / V [+back] _____  i.e., umlaut

This system is further reduced in non-normative Spoken language to a distinction ki/umlaut; it seems as if ki can even replace the umlaut rule in many contexts, so that the whole morphological system seems to be disappearing. Tournadre (1996: 42f) gives only one realization [ki'] for Lhasa Tibetan. Similarly, Amdo has [ka], Kham [ki’], Dzongkha [gi] (Tournadre 1996: 42). In other dialects, the forms also vary from the above-mentioned patterns: In some dialects, the system is more extensive, e.g. in Kyirong, where [ge] and a number of tone changes in the final vowel account for ERG marking (falling tone contours, Huber 2002: 72f.). In Dege, the (sandhi?) forms or variants [ki, xa, k’e, ke] are found (Häsler 1999: 96). In Ladakhi, there is full assimilation with the preceding consonant, vowels trigger -yi, except for schw and o which trigger -e (Koshal 1979: 66). Some dialects have two forms, such as Themchen [ya, ka] (Hall 2004: 62). In Balti, -(i) is used after vowels and -i is used after consonants (cf. Bielmeier 1985: 89f.; Ghulam Hassan Lobzang 1995). But Drokpa has [ki, i, ji, jin] and umlaut for AG/INS/GEN (Kretschmar 1986: 51ff.).

In some dialects, there is no sandhi rule, e.g. Shigatse [ki] (Hall 1994: 50), and also, e.g., Tibetan languages in Uttarakhand: Rongpo [ja] (Sharma 2001a: 203), Byangsi [sr, se] (Sharma 2001b: 287), Darma [so] (Krishan 2001a: 359), Chaudangsi [sa] (Krishan 2001b: 413), Raji [yi] (Krishan 2001c: 461). Manage in Nepal has an ERG/INS [tse] (and a GEN [lxa]) (Hildebrandt 2004: 70), but Sherpa has [ki, i] for ERG, [ki] for GEN (Kelly 2004: 230f.). For Nagchen (Northern Khams), Causemann (1989: 74f.) reports the following situation: ERG, INS, and GEN can be marked with [ki], but ERG and GEN can also be marked by umlauts with CV syllables ([e] > [i], [ou] > [y]); with ERG, however, umlaut is more rare;19 and with the vowel [a], there are two different umlauts: [i] for GEN, and [e] for ERG.20 And so forth.

The AG/INS homonymy – as reported from most Tibetan dialects (cf. Tournadre 1996: 43), i.e. the non-distinction between animate and inanimate participants in source marking, is quite widespread in the languages of the world; even IE derivational agentive noun formation (cf. Benveniste 1948) neglects the distinction: ‘a washer’ can be a machine (INS) or a person (AG). If a language has ERG/INS syncretism, one may assume a complex concept of SRC (or EFFECTOR, cf. Foley & van Valin 1984, van Valin & Wilkins 1996), but, on the other hand, AG and INS are distributed complementarily (and represent distinct grammatical relations, cf. Blake 1994: 49f.), so that it may also be a case of polysemy. The similarity between AG and GEN is also reported from other languages, e.g., from Inuktikut. Following the concept SOURCE (SRC), a connection between ABL and ERG has also been proposed; indeed, in Lepcha, the particle /num/ has ABL/AG meaning. A similar situation is reported for Darma, where the AG/INS so is regularly used as an ABL; cf. (Krishan 2001a: 360):

(21a) s[iŋ] tɔ so pɔtɔ bir ni
   tree LOC ABL leaf fall NONPAST
   A leaf falls from the tree.21

but cf. section 10.0.1, footnote 121
17 [jin] is restricted to words ending in nasals and replaces the nasal – an infix?
18 Raji has a distinct INS marker [(g/k)p] (Krishan 2001c: 462).
19 e.g., with pronouns, one gets (1S) [ŋŋ] for gen and [ŋŋ k] or [ŋŋ] for ERG, respectively.
20 Additionally, there are forms such as [-j] and [-j] after cv syllables.
21 cf. the respective Chaudangsi example with a distinct ABL in Krishan (2001b: 414).
Additionally, AG/INS is phonologically, not orthographically, homophonous with the GEN/REL case. Although there are ERG languages with GEN/ERG syncretism, it is rare that a language has both ERG/INS and ERG/GEN syncretism, i.e., ERG = INS = GEN. The Tibetan syncretism exists only synchronically, and can be seen as the by-product of a mere sound change phenomenon, the loss of final -s which is still present in orthography.

According to the historical phonological process kyis > [ki:] (tone 4), Tournadre assumes that there is a tonal difference (cf. GEN kyi > [ki] (tone 1)). But particles (at least usually) do not have full tone and are more reduced, so that both forms are simply [ki], cf.

Similarly, Haller (1994: 4.11.2.) remarks for Shigatse Tibetan (a Tsang dialect) that ERG/INS and GEN are distinguished by a tonal difference, but that 'most of the time', both case markers are identical. In Themchen Tibetan, on the other hand, ERG/INS and GEN are formally identical: [ŋa], except for differences in the pronominal system (cf. Haller 2004: 62f.). There is no phonemic tone in Themchen Tibetan; but also in tonal dialects, the distinction is questionable: Although Kelzang Gyurme (1964: 193ff.) mentions a low-short (GEN) vs. low-long (ERG/INS) distinction for Kham Tibetan, Häsl on Dege Tibetan (1999: 96, fn. 115) is not able to confirm this finding; instead, she reports a different umlaut rule for GEN and ERG/INS in Kham Tibetan (cf. Häsl 1999: 98, 100; cf. also Causemann 1989: 74f.). To conclude, although the differences are small, the two categories seem to be distinct in most Tibetan dialects. Since ERG and INS are not distinguished, this case marker can occur twice in a sentence, according to its two distinct functions; cf. Themchen (Amdo):

On the other hand, ERG and INS are different in Ladakhi, where i (probably derived from the same diachronically reconstructed demonstrative particle *hyi which accounts for both GEN and AG/INS in Tibetan) is the marker for ERG (and GEN, cf. Koshal 1979: 73), and nang = [nag, dan] (obviously from SOC dang 'together with', and unrelated to nang 'inside') is the marker for the instrumental (Koshal 1979: 70). Cf. the following example with two variants of the INS; the second form correlates with Central Tibetan forms dang (SOC) and nyam bu 'together' (Koshal 1979: 70):

01. The Tibetan language
I wrote a letter with (by means of) a pen.

To sum up, the ergative in Classical Tibetan has a number of morphonological variants, while in Central Tibetan, it basically has the form ki; in most variants of the language, ERG and INS are one case, the GEN being phonologically identical with the ERG.

01.04.08. Ergativity

With respect to case marking, Tibetan can be viewed as an ‘ergative language’, i.e., there is a case marker for agentive subjects (A), while both subjects of intransitive verbs (S) and objects of action verbs (O) are unmarked. The situation is of course more complicated. Let us here consider only the situation in Central Spoken (i.e., Lhasa) Tibetan. First of all, ergative marking is ‘optional’ in many (if not all) cases (cf. Agha 1993: 13). This subtype of ergative syntax has been termed ‘fluid S marking’. Agha (1993: 14) exemplifies this in the following examples:


If this occurs with bivalent transitive verbs, the result are sentences with two unmarked NPs; in this case, word order or world knowledge defines who is the agent and who is the patient (ex. from Agha 1993: 14):

(25a) bkra shis [kyis]  sha  zas song/  Tashi-[ERG]  meat  eaten-AUX  Tashi ate the meat.


(25c) bkra shis [kyis]  yi ge  mthong song/  Tashi-[ERG]  letter  see-AUX  Tashi saw the letter.

If one participant is inanimate or an animal, it is clear from world knowledge who is the agent. If there are two animate/human participants, word order determines the interpretation (ex. from Agha 1993: 15):

(26) bkra shis  the ring  zas song/  Tashi  Tsering  eaten-AUX  Tashi has eaten Tsering.

If both the omission of the ergative marker and of one of the nominal constituents cooccur, world knowledge defines who is agent and patient, respectively; if, theoretically, both participants are animate/human, then ambiguity could be assumed (ex. from Agha 1993: 15, 16 – but cf. Chonjore 2003: 277f;):

(27a) bkra shis kyis  zas song/  sha  zas song/  Tashi-ERG  meat  eaten-AUX  [x] ate the meat.

Tashi ate [x].
01. The Tibetan language

(27b) [su kha lag zas song/]  bkra shis zas song/ [Who ate the meat?  Tashi ate it.]
[who meal eaten-AUX]  Tashi eaten-AUX

(27c) [stag gis su zas song/]  bkra shis zas song/ [Who ate the tiger?  It ate Tashi.]
[tiger-ERG who eaten-AUX]

If the unmarked form can be a NOM, ABS, or ACC, respectively, on the basis of some grammatical parameter (e.g., aspect, tense) one typically speaks of a 'split ergative system'. Split systems such as those found in the Indo-Iranian languages are highly grammaticalized systems, in that the use of a case marker is triggered by specific verbal categories (tense) and is used obligatorily. In Tibetan, on the other hand, the omission or use of the ERG marker is partly dependent on aspect, but is also a matter of choice by the speaker, dependent on intended connotative meaning. It may be added that the construed examples of Agha quoted above may have one shortcoming: It seems as if proper nouns in spoken Tibetan are often uninflected, while a pronoun takes the inflection for them; cf. (lifestory of Shantideva, Lhasa speaker):

(28) de nas zhi ba lhA khong gis rgya gar kyi lHo phyogs bad de yul la phyin song/ phin-PFV Then, Shantideva went to southern India, to B. (?) county.

01.04.09. Genus verbi

There is no morphological device or syntactic ‘transformation’ distinguishing active and passive or antipassive clauses (cf. Tournadre 1996: 87ff.). Partly, this function can be expressed with the help of the non-obligatoriness of constituents (as presented above); omitted constituents are also in a way 'demoted', similarly to the demotion of agents in passive formation. On the other hand, there exists a morphological system of verb morphology whose primary function is the regular derivation of causative and resultative verb forms. With the help of this system which is present in the written language and which is broadly used in some dialects, while it is more marginal in some other dialects, many verbs can have forms which imply an agent or which imply a patient, as their 'main participant role', respectively. In other words, this system is an orientation device of verbs towards the source or the goal of an action. This system, in combination with the general non-obligatoriness of constituents, can lead to minimal pairs such as the following (ex. from Kelzang Gyarme 1992: App., X):

(29a) khang pa bshigs song/ house destroy-AUX CAUSATIVE The house was being destroyed.

(29b) khang pa zhip song/ house destroyed-AUX RESULTATIVE The house collapsed.

Many source-oriented verbs could be termed transitive, while goal-oriented verbs are mainly monovalent and intransitive. Since the notion of valence is difficult to use in a language
with regular omission of constituents, the definition of 'transitivity' is also not simply described as a syntactic expression of valence, but has to be defined semantically. Tibetan verb grammar is treated in chapter 08. of this contribution. For readers unfamiliar with Tibetan, it may prove useful to refer to this section before continuing with chapter 02.

01.04.10. The Tibetan script and its transliteration

Because of the unifying force of the Tibetan script, this contribution will try to give Tibetan examples in this script and its transliteration, except for cases where this is impossible or would lead too far away from the original language data. Nowadays, there exists a modern written standard grammar which is based on Lhasa Tibetan. Therefore, Lhasa Tibetan, in spite of its deviating pronunciation, will be represented mostly in orthography, whereas other dialects are written with phonetic letters (according to the sources from which they were quoted), with a Tibetan spelling added where possible in order to simplify comparisons. For the transliteration of the original Tibetan orthography, the system proposed by Wylie 1959 has been chosen, as it seems to be the most widespread system of transliteration nowadays, although some problems (which are not important here) remain unsolved.22 Earlier contributions often relied on slightly diverging systems; specifically, the ha chung, transliterated as ' by Wylie, has been rendered as 'a, â, ā, h etc.. These variants may be found in some of the quotations from the literature.

The Tibetan script and the orthography underwent almost no changes during a time period of 1400 years. Therefore, the script, or the transliteration, does not directly reflect the actual spelling of the words (of any dialect). Among other things, the Tibetan script has retained a system of verbal pre- and suffixes which in Central Tibet are no longer pronounced. They do play a role, however, for the classical language and for the Eastern and Western dialects of Tibetan. Therefore, the Tibetan spelling provides some evidence about diachronic developments.

For sociolinguistic reasons mentioned above, the term 'Tibetan language' refers to socially, regionally, and historically quite different varieties, which are held together by this very system of orthographic spelling. Therefore, it appeared to be most appropriate to try to transform all language data to the scriptural form, even if some modern grammatical features are rendered in a way which is diachronically incorrect: in the case of Modern Written Tibetan, the writing rules had to jump from a very old (and probably artificial) state of affairs to a much later one.

The following table gives all Tibetan basic letters and the Roman letter of the transliteration, together with a phonological representation. Any phonetic or phonological representation of the letters may appear controversial, since phonological symbols may diverge from one transcription to another; the following phonetic symbols are therefore meant as a very general hint to a phonological and normative pronunciation23 of Central or Lhasa Tibetan (cf. Goldstein 1977: 15, Chonjore 2003: XXIXff.).

22 There is, however, a need for an "Extended Wylie method" (cf. Fukuda, http://www.toyo-bunko.or.jp/Tibetan/EWylie1.html) especially defining Roman transliteration standards for the Tibetan transliteration of Sanskrit.
23 The phonological symbols used here reflect phonological distinctions; they do not display the actual phonetic realizations which differ considerably even among Central dialects.
Additionally, there are 4 vowel symbols (i, e, o, u), the [a] being inherent in the unmarked case.

Finally, some consonants combine to special ligatures. The (written) syllable is not linearly ordered, but cluster around a central consonant (similar to, e.g., the Korean script). The syllable ends with a dot (tsheg) (cf. Losang Thonden 1984: 40):

As mentioned above, the phonological (not phonetic) rendering of the Central Tibetan pronunciation shall give the reader only a hint to the synchronic state. It may especially be added here that in some dialects, the aboveshown consonant clusters are pronounced.

The Tibetan writing system distinguishes three main variants of the script, the dbu can script for printing, the dbu med script for beautiful handwriting (cf. Csona de Körös 1834, and other textbooks), and ‘khyug yig (écriture cursive) for ordinary handwriting. Beside these three, various other scriptural systems were in use (cf. Bacot 1912; 1946: 81f), but these are much less known today. Additionally, beside regular ‘ligatures’, many more special gra-
pheme contractions were in use (Bacot 1912 lists 700 such contractions). The base form for all scripts undoubtedly is the dbu can which is usually not written by hand, but engraved:

Les lettres capitales, aussi immuables depuis treize siècles que le sont restées les capitales romaines, sont celles de l’épigraphie et de l’imprimerie. Leur rigidité a été motivée et maintenue par la technique de la gravure en creux sur la pierre, et en relief sur les planches d’impression. (Bacot 1946: 8)

The spelling system, since it is taught all over Tibet, facilitates the mutual understanding among Tibetans of different areas.24 The spelling of words is an important aspect of cultural unity, since mutual understanding of dialects can be secured by reference to spelling (for this type of language use, cf. Rose 2001).

24 cf. “[...] so helfen sich die Sprechenden mit den Fingern, und schreiben die Buchstaben in den Sand.” (Adlung 1896: 68)
02. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

02.01. The early European scholars of Tibetan

Actually, the very first contribution to tibetology was the Latin-Tibetan dictionary of Giuseppe da Ascoli & Francesco Maria da Tours & Domenico da Faro (1708-1713) with 2500 words in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (BN), which has disappeared. Thus, the earliest available resource is the dictionary of A. Georgi 1762 [1778], the 'Alphabetum tangutanum sive tibetanum', Rome. Adelung 1806, for example, only quotes the latter. Following the judgment of Adelung 1806, earlier works did not bring forth many insights into the language (cf. Vollmann 2001a), and Schmidt 1839 harshly criticizes Georgi's work in his foreword. Therefore, it can be assumed that the 'real' study of Tibetan started with Csonka de Körös:

The earliest contribution to the field of Tibetan language studies by a Western scholar appears to be that of Georgi in 1762; however, the credit for the true beginning of such studies should be given to Alexander Csonka de Körös, whose original studies in Tibetan grammar and lexicography were published in 1834. (Wylie 1967: 770).

Alexander Csonka de Körös (1784-1842), as was his Westernized name for Hungarian Körösi Csonka Sándor, was a Hungarian (Székler) scholar who, after a long journey since 1820 through Turkey, Egypt, Persia and Central Asia, finally arrived in Western Tibet (Zanskar) and stayed there for several years (in Zangla and Phugthal monasteries as well as in Kanam, Kinnaur; cf. Rón-Tät 1985: 218f.), studying the Tibetan language, culture, and literature. Afterwards, he moved to India and started publishing his most important contributions to Tibetan studies with the British Oriental Society. On the way to Lhasa, he died in Darjeeling in 1842. His work greatly increased the European knowledge of the Tibetan culture and language by putting an end to the mostly pre-scientific approaches of all predecessors (cf. Vollmann 2001a). His grammar (1834) was published in 500 copies and has been called the 'first systematic' work (Parfionovich 1982). It was reprinted in 1983 in India and in 1984 in Hungary (as part of the 'Collected Works').

The next author, Isaac Jacob Schmidt (1779-1847) (cf. Babinger 1920) was a German scholar (Moravian missionary of the Herrnhut Brotherhood) who had lived (since 1789) in the Kalmuck area and subsequently (1812, Moscow) translated one gospel (St. Mathew, St. Petersburg 1815) into the Kalmuck language. Later, on the request of the Buryats, he helped translate two gospels into Mongolian (St. Mathew & St. John, St. Petersburg 1819). On the other hand, he also got interested in Buddhism and therefore learned the sacral language of the Mongolian peoples – Tibetan. He translated, e.g. from the *mdo 'dzangs bluṅ* 'Sutra of the wise and the foolish', and he wrote a Tibetan grammar in German which appeared in 1839 in St. Petersburg. Due to his other works, he is considered the founder of European Mongol studies. In the foreword of the Tibetan grammar, he appreciates the grammar of Csonka de Körös, and tells the reader that he has taken it as the basis for his work – except for a few topics such as the treatment of AG/INS which Csonka "seems not to have really understood":

Durch die Grammatik des Herrn von Körös sind nun die bisher zweifelhaften Punkte be- seitigt und [sic!] Alles hat seine nötige Beglaubigung erhalten; daher ich um so weniger Anstand nahm, diese Grammatik zur Grundlage der meinigen zu machen, als in der

It must be said that Schmidt’s grammar in some passages is more than ‘based on’ Csomó’s grammar, it is almost a mere translation (”Nachschreiber”, cf. Conrady 1896: 1). One of the few deviations, as mentioned in the above quote, is the interpretation of the instrumental case as an emphatic nominative by Schmidt. In most other points, Schmidt does not propose any new interpretations. Even the analysis of the the derivational particle pa (and its variants) – another complex category of Tibetan grammar – as an ‘article’ is adopted in both books (and repeated in a number of subsequent early contributions). Similarly, the transposition of all Latin verbal (tense) categories into the categorization of the new language is common to both works – which comes as no surprise in works of that era.

On the other hand, both contributions are good descriptive works. Large parts of the grammars are simple enumerations of words, and a good part of the book is an appendix with additional information. The spelling rules of the writing system are explained at length. This is the typical approach for the early time of formation of modern European linguistics.

I.J. Schmidt was followed by Franz Anton Schiefner (1817–1879) in St. Petersburg; Schiefner, a livander, i.e., a German Balt from Reval (Tallinn), was an eminent scholar of various languages of the Russian empire, such as Caucasian languages, Mongolian, Tibetan, and Finnish. He did not write another grammar of Tibetan, but published a series of articles mainly about the verb prefixes (Schiefner 1851).

After an English and a German grammar of Tibetan, Philippe-Édouard Foucaux (1811–1894), professor of Tibetology at the Collège Impérial de France, is the author of the first French grammar of Tibetan in 1858. Therefore, he is considered to be the first French tibetologist. Foucaux’s grammar is quite similar to the two earlier works. It deals in large parts with morphological paradigms which are enumerated in the traditional European order. To give an example, Singular and plural are enumerated, although the plural forms diverge from the singular forms only in the plural particle. In other words, this is traditional European grammar emphasizing paradigms and word lists. In the chapter on ‘syntax’ (p. 88ff.), Foucaux gives many examples of the use of case markers, whereby he seems to observe many noteworthy ‘deviations’ from his expectations (cf. p. 93–99), especially after the enumeration of the ‘ordinary uses’ of the case markers, cf. ”Le nominatif s’emploie quelquefois là où les autres langues se servent du génitif” (Foucaux 1858: 90), etc.. This type of description departs

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25 This analysis is perhaps based on common knowledge of a traditional grammatical concept, the function of the Greek ἑσθοφόρος.
from a presupposition about an objective and universal function of the predefined cases of traditional grammar.

The proselytizing Herrnhut Brotherhood had made first contacts to the Mongolian cultural area from afar with I.J. Schmidt. A few decades later, it was still not possible for the brothers to cross Russia in order to work in Mongolia. Hence, the missionaries Heyde and Pagell tried to cross Tibet, but were stopped at the Indo-Tibetan border by the Tibetan authorities, and therefore started (in 1854) to missionize the people of Kyelang (Lahoul, Ladakh). Heinrich August Jäschke (1817-1883), an especially gifted language learner who had earlier learned 14 languages, followed his two colleagues a bit later and studied the Classical Tibetan language and various dialects. He wrote a grammar (1865) and a dictionary (1881), and then translated the New Testament into Tibetan (1885, posthumously). In 1868, he had to return to Herrnhut for health reasons, but still worked, with his health continually deteriorating, on the bible translation and the preparations of the print until his death in 1883. Jäschke's grammar is relatively short and not well-structured (cf. Hahn 1994: 366), and unfortunately does not contain very much information relevant to our research interest, but it has been later expanded with additions by Francke & Simon in 1929 ("Addenda by A.H. Francke in collaboration with W. Simon") – which, of course, is another era of linguistic interest. August Hermann Francke (1870-1930) was a missionary of the Herrnhut community like Jäschke (and Schmidt) who has spent years in Ladakh and who has written the first grammar of Ladakhi (1901); he thus disposed of extensive knowledge of one dialect of Tibetan which has certain characteristics deviant from Central Tibetan varieties (such as Lhasa Tibetan). Walter Simon (1895-1981), probably due to his expertise in Sino-Tibetan reconstruction cooperated with Francke. This interest in the non-standard language of the people had to do with his desire to promote the Christian religion; it was also in 1904 that Francke launched a newspaper in a more 'colloquial' style of Tibetan, the 'Ladakh News' – which was, however, closed down in 1908, since it was on the whole not accepted by a general public due to its tendentious attitude. It was, however, an early attempt for a literary reform, trying to approach written and spoken styles of the Tibetan language to each other.

Tibetan and its peculiar case marking system was known to early general linguists (cf. Hans Conon von der Gabelentz 1861; Georg von der Gabelentz 1891: 102). Franz Anton Schiefner (1851) laid the foundation for diachronic morphological studies, and August Conrady (1864-1925), professor in Leipzig, made a contribution to the diachrony of verb morphology (the causative derivation) in 1896 which will be of interest here for the interpretation of the Tibetan ergative.

Had there been a primary interest on the written language in the 19th century, the focus of attention changed towards the spoken language following the British attack of 1904 on Lhasa (cf. Petech 1966: 343; Bell 1968 [= 1996]; Barraux 1995: 275ff.; thus, in 1905, Sir Charles Bell, Indian Civil Officer and Political Officer in Sikkim, and in this position also in charge of the diplomatic relations with Tibet and Bhutan (cf. Bell 1919: iii), published a 'Manual of Colloquial Tibetan' (enlarged eds. 1919, 1939). His short grammar (1905 [1919]) represents an early practical grammar of the colloquial language (of Central Tibet). Therefore, the book also gives a phonological transcription for all Tibetan forms, and one finds descriptions of the use of spoken language AUX forms. This is a significant change based on the more practical interests of the British Empire to get in contact with Tibet and Bhutan. Thereby, the spoken language appeared to be more useful. Also, the grammar has a separate chapter on
honorific use, followed by monetary matters, weights and measures, and so on, until it leads to chapters on conversation.

Similarly, Sarat Chandra Das, an Indian teacher, when confronted with a Tibetan-speaking population, wrote an Introduction to the Grammar of the Tibetan Language (1915) (and a Tibetan-Sanskrit-English dictionary). Apart from geopolitical considerations and the efforts of scholars such as Das, there was also the proselytizing profession of missionaries who since Georgi 1762 tried hard to "hasten the spread of the Christian religion and of Christian civilization, among the millions of Buddhists, who inhabit Central Asia, and who speak and read in Tibetan idioms." (Jäschke 1881: III). As has been observed in other parts of the world, missionaries usually tried to disconnect the people from their original culture (cf. Nowak 1999b, 1999d, Hovdhaugen 1996) by way of language usage. One strategy was putting the emphasis on the spoken language and also writing texts in this variety instead of the culturally burdened existing written variety. The missionary Herbert Bruce Hannah (1912), author of a less significant grammar of Tibetan, seems to be unsatisfied with his own work of grammar writing for Tibetan, since he deplores the "labyrinthine obscurities of its [the Tibetan language] construction" (Hannah 1912: v) – a case of external attribution of one's understanding of the object of knowledge on the object itself.

In the meantime, there was of course still a scholarly interest in the classical or written language of Tibet. The medical doctor Palmyr Cordier (1871-1914), correspondent of the École française d’Extrême Orient (EFEO) and a specialist of Indic medicine, published an autographed grammar in 1907-1908 in Hanoi, "for the listeners of the sanskrit conference". This is again a grammar of Classical or Written Tibetan. There exists no reprint of this grammar, but it seems to have influenced some later works, especially the one of Lalou. Jacques Bacot (1877-1965) was a French researcher (geographer) who made several trips to parts of Tibet from 1907 onwards. He wrote and translated books on Buddhism, i.e., about Milarepa, Marpa, and the Buddha, and described his travels to Tibet. He also published Tibetan indigenous grammatical resources for the first time in Europe (1928), and also finished a grammar in 1946, a second volume of which ('Morphological Index') appeared in 1948. The grammar from 1946 does not refer to a second volume. In France, his work was followed by another grammar in 1950, written by Marcelle Lalou, which seems to rely strongly on Cordier (and Bacot).

02.02. The Tibetan case system

Due to the (mono-)syllabic character of the particle grammar, the morphological status of the case markers has to be discussed by the early authors. Thus, for Csoma de Körös (1834: 106), all case markers are "postpositive particles or postpositions", but he already distinguishes "simple" and "compound" postpositions (p. 101), i.e., case particles and nominal adpositions. This terminology is also used in Bell (1919: 99 [114]). Similarly, Schmidt (1839: 167) makes the following distinction on the basis of their degree of semantic bleaching (grammaticalization):

§.172. Die Präpositionen der Europäischen Sprachen werden im Tibetischen, wie in mehreren andern Asiatischen Sprachen, durch Postpositionen dargestellt. Es gibt deren zweierlei; nämlich solche, die an und für sich keinen Sinn haben, sondern bloß als Flexionsuffixe die verschiedenen Casus bezeichnen und solche, denen eine wirkliche Bedeutung oder ein Wortsinn unterliegt. [Schmidt 1839: 167]
Cordier uses the term "suffixes modo-casuels" for the case markers, while the nominal postpositions of Tibetan get the name "bisuffixes modo-casuels" (Cordier 1907f.: 15). Since the nominal postpositions do not play a role in syntactic case assignment, they are usually not treated among the case markers. In the early grammars, the case names are typically the traditional ones from traditional ('Graeco-Latin') grammar which also implies that there will be no ergative. This is understandable from the fact that in Tibetan the ergative and instrumental case are marked by the same marker. We may therefore expect to find the term 'instrumental' for the ergative in early contributions.

In Schmidt 1839, f.ex., we find the following declination tables, with a tiny anomaly concerning the accusative: the declination table at p. 177f. has an accusative, the one on personal pronouns at p. 195(f.) has to numbered locatives, but no accusative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>Tib.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>die Hand.</td>
<td>lag pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>der Hand,</td>
<td>lag pa'i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>mit der od. durch die Hand</td>
<td>lag pas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>der Hand,</td>
<td>lag pa la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Accus.</td>
<td>die Hand,</td>
<td>lag pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Locat.</td>
<td>in der Hand,</td>
<td>lag pa na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in die Hand,</td>
<td>lag par od. lag tu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>von od. aus der Hand,</td>
<td>lag pa nas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>Tib.</th>
<th>transl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nom. u. Acc.</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>ich, mich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instr.</td>
<td>nga od. nga yis</td>
<td>durch mich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>nga'i od. nga yi</td>
<td>mein, meines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>nga la</td>
<td>mir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 Loc.</td>
<td>nga na</td>
<td>in, an mir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 Loc.</td>
<td>ngar</td>
<td>in mich, zu mir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>nga nas od. nga las</td>
<td>von mir.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These charts show that la is termed 'dative', whereas na and tu (and -r, etc.) are termed 'locatives'. This is interesting, in that Schmidt identifies the la as one of the structural cases, a function which cannot be expressed in the written language by the forms of tu. Nominative and accusative are unmarked, a fact that is not discussed, except for the information that sometimes the dative seems to play the role of the accusative:

Der Accusativ hat keine Zusatzpartikel oder Flexiou [sic!] und erscheint ganz wie der Nominativ. Bisweilen begegnet man ihm jedoch mit der Partikel la des Dativs. (Schmidt 1839: 62)

Unnoticed or ignored by these authors, Schiefner 1851, with his background in Finnish grammar, was the first to apply new case names to the Tibetan case markers as they came to be used for Finno-Ugric: he called na inessive, la allative, nas elative, las ablative, and tu (etc.) illative (cf. Hahn 1994: 373 [= 1985: 361]); unfortunately, this useful more accurate locative terminology was not adopted by other researchers except Cordier 1907f.. Therefore, for Foucaux (1858: 25f.) again, the order of the case names is: nominative, instrumental, genitive, instrumental, locative, nominative.

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26 The syncretism of linguistic markers for AG and INS is widespread (cf. Laragi 1987a) and can also be found in word formation (cf. e.g. Benveniste 1948, Panagl 1975, 1977, 1978, Dressler 1980a,b).
02. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

dative, accusative, vocative, locative, and ablative – very similar to Csoma and Schmidt, and again different from the canonical sanskrit model. As is the case with many early works, the case markers are described mainly morpho(no)logically. The nominative is the unmarked form:

1° Le nominatif singulier n’est suivi d’aucune particule.
2° L’instrumental se forme avec ’is his, yis yis ou s s. [...] (Foucaux 1858: 25)

Hence, the case names for the grammatical case forms found in Foucaux’s work are "nominatif" for the ABS case and "instrumental" for the ERG/INS case (Foucaux 1858: 25), as well as "datif" for la (Foucaux 1858: 27). On the other hand, Foucaux also identifies an accusative (and a vocative) without morphological difference (Foucaux 1858: 26):

3° L’accusatif est semblable au nominatif; il prend quelquefois la comme le datif (comparez le français attendre à la hauteur; toucher à une chose).
4° Le vocatif est aussi semblable au nominatif, à moins qu’on ne le fasse précéder de la particule kye kye, signifiant "ô", ou de quelque autre du même genre. [...]

The idea that accusative sometimes takes la seems to be a viewpoint which relies on the idea of a universal parameter of transitivity; it seems as if differences in the translations led scholars to believe this. But by thinking in this way, they may also rely on indigenous resources which identify the la with the sanskrit accusative. The traditional declension table (cf. Das 1915: 20; Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 3), compared to the Sanskrit scheme, goes as follows:

Table 02: Traditional declension table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>skt. term;</th>
<th>tib. term;</th>
<th>form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>pratham (nominative)</td>
<td>nram dhye dang po: ngo bo tsam (the object itself)</td>
<td>0 (ABS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>dvitiya (accusative)</td>
<td>nram dhye gnyis pa: las su bya ba (‘object to which the action is directed’)</td>
<td>la [etc.] (OBL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>tritiya (instrumental)</td>
<td>nram dhye gsum pa: byed sgra (‘action marker’)</td>
<td>gis (ERG/INS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>caturthu (dative)</td>
<td>nram dhye bshi pa: dgos shed (‘finality’)</td>
<td>la [etc.] (OBL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>pancani (ablative)</td>
<td>nram dhye bng pa: byung khang (‘prevenance’)</td>
<td>las, nas (ABL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>sasthi (genitive)</td>
<td>nram dhye drug pa: ‘brel sgra (‘relation marker’)</td>
<td>gi (GEN/REL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>saptami (locative)</td>
<td>nram dhye bdun pa: gnas gzh (‘location [of the action]’)</td>
<td>la [etc.] (= OBL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>amantrika (vocative)</td>
<td>nram dhye brygad pa: ‘bod sgra (‘call marker’)</td>
<td>[vocative] [interj.]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from this chart, the Tibetan author obviously also applies a ‘traditional’ case marking scheme which does not really fit the Tibetan grammar; there are three cases which are all marked by la and the other forms (tu, du, ru, -t, -su, na). The ergative/instrumental of Tibetan is equated with the third case of sanskrit which is the instrumental. The Tibetan case name, however, refers to its agenteive function: byed sgra, the ‘action marker’. The vocative has no morphology, but is listed among the cases, because the Tibetans rely on the Sanskrit model. On the other hand, the locative na and the sociative dang are not listed among the cases of Tibetan. For Foucaux 1858, there is also a locative na which is sometimes replaced by the dative, and there are two ablatives nas and las:

27 ming tsam (ston pa) ‘shows only the name/word” (cf. Das 1915: 20).
2. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

7° Le locatif est formé avec na na, signifiant "dans, sur un lieu". Il prend aussi, comme on l’a vu, les particules du datif.

8° L’ablatif se forme avec nas nas ou las las ajoutés au nominatif et signifiant "de, hor de". (Foucaux 1858: 27)

Thus, we find a quite suboptimal use of case markers with respect to postulated functions: The accusative is identical with the nominative, but some verbs have instrumental subjects; on the other hand, sometimes the dative plays the role of the accusative, and it is identical with the locative, but there is another locative. Formally similar, there are two ablative particles. This explanation is thus not an efficient paradigm of Tibetan, but is instead entirely based on the European classification of case. Jäschke 1865 does not contribute much on this level of description; he also mentions that dative sometimes has functions which ’should’ be realized in the accusative:

In common ḻɕ, the object has often the form of the dative, khyod la, to facilitate the comprehension. But often, in modern talk as well as in the classical literature, the acting subject, if known as such from the context, retains its Nominative form. Especially the verba loquendi are apt to admit this slight irregularity. (Jäschke 1865: 40f.)

Francke & Simon apud Jäschke (1929) add some notes also on the dative in ’accusative function’:

p. 22. The dative. The dative is not only the case of the indirect object, but an intensified form of the direct object; khos-mi-la-rdung, he beat the man; khos-de-la-byams, he loved him. [...] It would be useful if in a Tibetan dictionary, all the verbs that put the direct object in the dative case, would be specially marked. (Francke & Simon 1929: 114)

The case markers du, tu, ru, su, -r – na – la (la don) seem to have very similar functions.

The dative case is often used instead of the locative and terminative cases. Khang-pa-na-yod, he is in the house; khang-pa-ru-song. He is gone to the house. Instead of this, people generally say: khang-pa-la-yod; khang-pa-la-song. With regard to this, the native grammarians speak of the dative, locative, and terminative cases as of the la-don cases, i.e. the cases which have all the meaning of la. (Francke & Simon 1929: 114f.)

Francke 1901, on Ladakhi, states that there is a nominative and an instrumental case with complementary subject-marking qualities, and the accusative is identical with the nominative (cf. Francke 1891: 11). In a more recent grammar of Ladakhi by Koshal (1979), the description of the case markers is listed in a partly similar way, as regards the role of the dative case:

Table 03: Ladakhi (Koshal 1979: 64ff, 76ff.)

A. Direct Case [= ABS] a) subject of intransitive verbs, b) subject of some transitive verbs, c) direct object
B. Ergative Case (subject of most transitive verbs)
C. Dative Case a) indirect object, b) possession, c) allocative relationship, d) direction, e) direct object of certain verbs
D. Instrumental Case (instrumentality of an action)
E. Associative Case (association)
F. Ablative Case (separation)
G. Genitive Case (relation)


This listing, however, is not traditional, but results from a functional analysis of the available case markers of the language. This more empirical approach is started by Bell 1905 [1919] on Spoken Central Tibetan. In the chapter on 'declension' (Bell 1919: 26f. [30f.]), after brief explanations of the morphonology of the language, Bell gives the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>Nom. and Acc.</th>
<th>g.yag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gen.</td>
<td>g.yag gi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat.</td>
<td>g.yag la</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent.</td>
<td>g.yag gis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abl.</td>
<td>g.yag nas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen, the nominative and the accusative are mentioned as being unmarked, while there is another case marker for agent (Bell 1919: 27 [31]); Bell, undisturbed both by tradition and by theoretical linguistic considerations, therefore does not maintain the viewpoint that the 'subject' is a universal category. The chart is also shorter, since some of the above-mentioned case markers are only relevant for the written language or some other dialects. Again, the dative la receives specific attention as the marker of some 'direct objects':

8. With some verbs the accusative may be formed in la e.g., kḥos nga la (or nga) brdungs song/ kḥo nga-la dungs-song, HE BEAT ME. Its use in these cases is optional. With other verbs la cannot be used, e.g., kḥos lṭo chas (not lṭo chas la) za gi 'dug/ kḥo top-chhe sā-ki du, HE IS HAVING FOOD. (Bell 1919: 27 [31])

Thus, the particle la can also represent an accusative with some verbs, which reflects, before all, interlingual differences in 'transitivity'; the agent-experiencer scheme is obviously (sometimes) marked ERG-DAT. Thus, again for this author, 'accusative' is a universal category which can be treated differently in a language. In the chapter on postpositions (p. 99ff. [114ff.]), Bell comes back to the matter of 'deviant' uses of the dative la, in nominal adpositions (e.g., GEN+ nang+la, 'in') and in its original locative meaning (la, 'in, at'), a function which is mainly replaced by more specific nominal adpositions in the modern spoken language:

2. Simple Postpositions. — (a) la la besides its datival sense dealt with in the Chapter on the Noun (Cap. III), is sometimes used where in English we should use at, on or in, though sgang la gang-la is more commonly used for on, and nang la nang-la for in. Thus, ri'i sgang la g.yag 'dug/ ri-i gang-la ya du, THERE ARE YAKS ON THE HILL; chu tshod bzhi la shog/ chhu-tshö shi-la sho, COME AT FOUR O'CLOCK. la la should always be used where in English for is used in the quotation of prices, e.g., g.yu 'di sgor mo gnis la nyos pa yin/ yu-di gor-mo nyi-la nyö-pa-yin, I HAVE BOUGHT THIS TURQUOISE FOR TWO RUPEES. (Bell 1919: 99f. [114f.])

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, la is the object case for some semantic verb classes, which would require accusative in English; but these are mainly verbs requiring semantic locative, GOAL or experiencer objects; the possible omission of case marking in la in many of these cases, which may also be favored by the phonological reduction (r-vocalization) of the alternative suffixed case marker -r, gives this case a weak morphotactic status:

And the following verbs may take la namely, verbs of giving, showing, teaching and telling; also the following common verbs, namely, dad pa byed pa te-pa che-pa to have
faith in (a lama, etc.), zhed pa she-pa to be afraid of, 'phog pa phok-pa to hit against, zhu ba shu-wa to offer to, to petition, to beg of, rogs byed pa ro-che-pa to assist, 'khyer yong ba khe yong-wa to bring to, and many others. But with all the above verbs and classes of verbs the la may be omitted and the simple accusative form used. (Bell 1919: 100 [115])

The grammar of the missionary Hannah (1912) deals again with the spoken language, and in a partly traditional, partly innovative way. For the case particle system, Hannah makes the traditional Tibetan distinction between particles and words, when he states in §.25. (p. 61ff.) that there are "divers [sic] monosyllabic primitive particles" and "words compounded" (= nominal adpositions) (p. 62), and he mentions the following:

Table 05: Hannah (1912: 62)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>form</th>
<th>p.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.</td>
<td>Nominative Case</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>62f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02.</td>
<td>Vocative Case</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.</td>
<td>Objective or Accusative Case</td>
<td>—, la</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04.</td>
<td>Genitive Case</td>
<td>gi, etc.</td>
<td>63ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05.</td>
<td>Dative Case</td>
<td>la</td>
<td>65ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06.</td>
<td>Agentive Case</td>
<td>gis, etc.</td>
<td>67ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07.</td>
<td>Locative Case</td>
<td>la, na, bṛgyud nas, tu, etc.</td>
<td>69ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08.</td>
<td>Periodal or Durational Case</td>
<td>na, la, tu, etc.</td>
<td>71ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.</td>
<td>Modal Case</td>
<td>nas, dang, s, rkyen kyis, etc.</td>
<td>73ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Ablative Case</td>
<td>dang, nas, las, na</td>
<td>75ff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Terminative or Transitive Case</td>
<td>tu, etc.; dang, nas, las</td>
<td>77ff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It remains unclear from which source Hannah derived this scheme. This system clearly has been developed deductively (i.e., as a universal set of case definitions), since it does not fit particularly well on the Tibetan case markers: Furthermore, his ordering of the elements seems to assume an m:n relation between meaning and form, between traditional case concepts and various case forms. Apart from this less explanatory rendering of a case systematics, he gives much simpler ‘practical’ declension tables from p. 139 onwards; cf.:

Table 06: Hannah (1912: 139)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>term</th>
<th>form</th>
<th>p.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.</td>
<td>Nom., Voc., Acc.</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>I.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 02. | Gen.           | nga'i      | Of me.
| 03. | Agent.         | ngaas      | By me.
| 04. | Dat.           | nga la     | To me.
| 05. | Loc.           | nga na     | On me.
| 06. | Per.           | —          | —    |
| 07. | Mod.           | nga dang   | Against me.
| 08. | Abl.           | nga las    | Than me.
| 09. | Term.          | nga'i phyogs la | Towards me.
| 10. | Term.          | nga nas    | From me. |

*m:n certainly is the normal mode for the relation between linguistic meanings and forms (grammaticalization theory), but Hannah’s conception does not seem to belong to this kind of research in the narrow sense.*
As can be seen, he tries here to get a 1:1 relation between case names and case markers, and he succeeds by distinguishing *la* and *na* on the one hand, and *lus* and *nas* on the other hand. The agentive is translated as an instrumental ‘by’, the sociative *dang*, somewhat more curiously, with ‘against’. The ablative gets the secondary meaning of the marker of the compared element, whereas the ‘terminative’ has an ablative meaning. In the description of the dative case, Hannah (1912: 65ff.) mentions experiencer subjects with *yod* (e.g. *nga la dngul yod* ‘I have money’), ‘[...] after the manner of the Russians when the latter, instead of saying *YA IMÊYU, I have, say U MENYA YEST, ‘To me is, or To me there is.’ The example, however, is erroneous, since he quotes a nominal adposition with the meaning ‘location-surface’ ending in *la*:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
(01) & ri & rtse & de’i & steng la & gangs yod/
\end{array}
\]

mount. peak DEF-GEN ON-ALL snow EX-CONJ

*There is snow on that hill-top.* [Hannah 1912: 66]

As for the unmarked case (‘nominative’), Hannah (1912: 62) provides the following commentary:

Except in connection with Intransitive Verbs (Active; Neuter or Inactive; and Inceptive, i.e. implying a beginning or change of state), and also with the verbs yin pa To be (the mere copula which is used attributively); [...] mentioning all possible COP and AUX forms [...] and one or two other forms of the verb To be used in Literary Tibetan; there is practically no such thing in Tibetan as a verb governed by the Nominative Case. (Hannah 1912: 62)

In other words, Hannah lists quite a few exceptions to his rule of there being no nominative. Since the NOM does not govern a verb, as he puts it, it may be asked whether an AG marker would do. But first, he tries to collect all instances of NOM and quotes even a transitive setting, where AG/INS ‘may be omitted’, although this would be ‘less correct’ (Hannah 1912: 62); i.e., the fluidity of ERG marking is due to sociolinguistic reasons (dialect against normative grammar). Finally, he mentions that the nominative appears in – passive sentences:

The subject, however, is always put in the Nominative Case in sentences like the following, where, though the verb is Transitive, it is also Passive: – *nga (la) rdung gi yod*/ I am being beaten.

**bu mo (la) byams po byed kyi ’dug*/ The girl is loved. (Hannah 1912: 62)

The verb *rdung* ‘beat’ is described with *la* objects in Francke & Simon (1929: 114) and Bell (1919: 27 [31]), and without *la* in Csoma de Körös (1834: 112), Hannah (1912: 196) himself, and Bell (1919: 28f. [33]). The (fluid) case marking with *la* is seen by some authors as a passive. But literally, the first phrase simply says ‘[Somebody] is beating (on) me’;29 the second phrase says ‘[Somebody] makes [= applies] love to the girl’. *byams po byed pa* must be understood as ‘to love’ (a light verb construction), and this can have an EXP role marked with *la*, although byed as a full verb clearly is a (strongly transitive) action verb.

The contribution of Cordier 1907f. deals again with the classical or written language: He is the only scholar of Tibetan who followed the more accurate case name terminology propo-

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29 Gothic *wairpan* ‘throw’ can also be construed either with an DAT-ACC or ACC-INS pattern (cf. Rousseau 1998: 21), i.e. ‘throw stones on him’ or ‘throw him with stones’, respectively.
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sed by Schiefner 1851: (génitif kyi, instrumental kyis,) allatif la, inessif na, étatif nas, ablatif las, illatif tu, du, ru, -r, su (p. 16). Due to their complex functions both with nouns and verbs, Cordier uses the terminology "suffixes modo-casuels" for the case markers (Cordier 1907f.: 15). Baco's grammar (1946, 1948) is also more concerned with the written language; he distinguishes only the traditional cases of Tibetan grammar which he translates as such (p. 19ff.):

Table 07: Baco 1946, 1948

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nr.</th>
<th>name / tib. / transl.</th>
<th>forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nominatif (= ngo bo tsam), rien que la chose en soi</td>
<td>[unmarked]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Accusatif (= las su bya bo), action transitive</td>
<td>[la, su, r, ru, du, tu, na]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Détérminatif (= de nyid), objet intégré au verbe</td>
<td>[su, r, ru, du, tu]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Datif (= dgos ched), objet bénéficiaire de l'action</td>
<td>[la, su, r, ru, du, tu, na]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Locatif (= rten gnas), localisation sans mouvement, et (= tse skabs) circonstance de temps</td>
<td>[la, su, r, ru, du, tu, na]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Instrumental (= byed pa po), agent</td>
<td>[k'is, gyis, gis, 'is]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Génitif (= 'brel pa), dépendance</td>
<td>[k'yi, gyi, gi, 'i]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ablatif (= 'byung khungs), provenance</td>
<td>[las, nas]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, there is not much concern about the fact that these case names do not match particularly well on the described system. They are thus taken as universal categories which are not well used by the language.

Similarly to Hannah (1912: 62), Baco states that the nominative is "rare", a statement which seems to refer to the use of the ergative marker used instead of the unmarked (nomi-

native) form. Francke & Simon apud Jäschke (1929) later mention that the instrumental case is "used much in Tibetan, as it is the case of the subject with transitive verbs." (Francke & Sim-

on 1929: 114; cf. also Francke 1901: 11).

The denomination 'accusative' for la (etc.) is again repeated by Baco and receives this discussion as a GOAL marker ("object to which the action is directed"):

L'accusatif tibétain est le cas de tout objet directement affecté, sans profil pour lui, par l'action d'un agent: le lieu où va l'agent, la personne ou la chose sur quoi il porte effecti-

tvement son action ou a quoi il l'adresse. (Baco 1946: 22)

Calling the la accusative refers both to the Western descriptions and to the Tibetan and thus Indic sources. But now that he has given the name of 'nominative' to the unmarked form and the name 'accusative' to the la (etc.), he needs to explain the non-use of the 'accusative' for many 'direct objects', and so he postulates, in a sense, an unmarked 'absolute participant' (ABS), i.e., the role of an unaffected participant:

Un objet transféré d'une personne à une autre n'est pas à l'accusatif tibétain. L'objet transféré n'est pas affecté par la transmission, au moins en principe. (Baco 1946: 22)

(02) khyi la rdo rgyab pa/
dog-ALL stone throw-NS

to throw a stone at the dog ('lancer une pierre au chien')

It needs to be mentioned that 'direct objects' receive this 'nominative' in all other contexts as well. Misguided by the terminology ('accusative' for la), he does not recognize that la ob-
02. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

viously is the 'location' and that the absolutive obviously is the case marker both for the patient and the absolute participant of an event construal.

Finally, in this chapter, there is a short characterisation of the INS as "[..] l'instrumental, cas de l'agent et de l'instrument intermédiaire" (Bacot 1946: 25). Following the Tibetan sources, Bacot thus also terminologically recognizes the two functions of agent and instrument.

Regamey 1946f. also discusses the 'problem' of la, and so did Lalou 1950. The first chapter of the grammar of Lalou 1950 deals with the 'particles' of Tibetan. Again, the case marker la is called an accusative, although its functions are said to be broader, involving a locative function and its role with verbs ("[..] can play the same role as the continuable [verbal] particle"): 20. Particule la la dite accusative. Son emploi est plus varié que son nom ne peut le faire croire. En effet, elle exprime aussi la localisation; entre deux impératifs, elle est conjonctive et elle peut jouer le même rôle que la particule continuable (§ 32).

Lalou (p. 15), following Cordier (1908: 19), gives the following examples for the use of la:

Particule de l'objectif
a. lo ma la reg pa 'toucher une feuille'
  b. mi la 'bod pa 'appeler un homme'
  c. bdag gi sha la los nas 'ayant mangé de sa propre chair'

Particule du locatif
a. dans l'espace: rgya mtsho la nor bu gnas\(^{30}\) 'il y a des joyaux dans l'océan'
  b. dans le temps: dpyid kyi dus la 'au moment du printemps'

Particule conjunctive (entre deux impératifs)
lon la song cig 'prends et va-t-on'

Particule continue (voir § 32)

a. mchod rten zhig yod pa la de dag yid dge bar gyur ro 'Comme il y avait un stûpa, ils se réjouirent'
  b. bdag ni kha cig bzod la kha cig mi bzod do 'Je supporte certaines [ choses] et ne supporte pas certaines [ choses]'

Thus, Tibetan la indeed covers some instances (with 'touch', 'call', or 'eat') which in a European understanding would be plainly transitive patterns. What is called 'objective' function here seems to be a specific GOAL function of la which seems to have intrigued many scholars.

The next section deals with the "Particule locative et hypothétique na na." (p. 15.), followed by (§ 22.) the ablative (p. 16ff.). Again, this latter case is said to be more complex, being described as having also instrumental (p. 18) and partitive functions, as well as its role in comparation, and temporal subordination with verbs. § 23. deals with nas "indiquant l'origine, la distance, la subordination dans le temps, l'instrument, le moyen, la manière", i.e. very similar to las. § 28. (p. 28ff.) is about the "Particule dite 'locative' ", i.e. ILL tu (etc.) in our terminology. § 27. (p. 25) deals with the INS particle, being described as having agentive and instrumental meaning – cf. Bacot. With respect to verb syntax, there seem to be functional overlappings with some other particles:

\(^{30}\) This example stems from Bacot (1948: 116); cf. rgya mtsho la nor bu yod, Bacot (1946: 25).
27. Particule dite 'instrumentale'. En dehors des cas où elle indique l'agent, l'instrument ou le moyen, la cause ou le motif, cette particule, comme na, nas et kyi (cf. § 21, 3; 23, 3; 26, 7), sert à former une construction verbale absolue. Comme la particule las (§ 22, 4), elle exprime la comparaison, le degré. Comme la particule kyi (§ 26, 10), elle peut indiquer l'action à venir, le futur. (Lalou 1950: 25)

Here ends the discussion of early case terminology. As could be seen, there are two influences: the traditional European case terminology, but also an equally inadequate Indic terminology, as it was applied by the Tibetans. While the Indic sources enumerate cases, the semantically motivated terminology in the Tibetan tradition gives information about the functions of, e.g., the ergative. On the other hand, both systems prove inadequate in that they both give an m:n relation between Tibetan case markers and assumed case functions. This shows that both paradigms are deductively applied on Tibetan. What we can observe, though, is the fact that Tibetology until then did not adopt any new research from general linguistics on ergativity. Even the term ‘ergative’ remains unmentioned. The earliest contributions speak of an ‘instrumental’, some later authors mention an ‘agentive’ function. This is a very basic recognition of the phenomenon only.

The lack of a linguistic meta-theory which would justify the grammatical distinctions and subcategorizations made, and the use of certain terms (such as ‘terminative’ for the illative/locative (tu, etc.) make the grammars difficult to read. This state of the art can therefore be seen as the basis for further publications which appeared since then. What comes to the mind immediately after this discussion is Hahn’s textbook of the classical language which appeared between 1971 and 1996 in various (revised) editions. Hahn’s classification of the particles is much clearer than those of the earlier scholars, in that it is based on morphotactics and avoids multiple case name attributions; but he also runs out of traditional terminological distinctions and therefore creates numbered case names such as ‘ablatival 1 and 2’ – where the adoption of Schiefner’s and Cordier’s terminology would have helped. However, this alternative terminology is mentioned in the postface of the 5th edition (cf. Hahn 1994: 373 [= Hahn 1985: 361]), but not applied in the text itself. Hahn takes great care in creating a 1:1 relationship between case name terminology and morphological form. But Hahn does not have a reliable case theory with semantic and syntactic functions at hand, therefore he uses the traditional terms from a subject-language, ‘nominative’ and ‘accusative’. Perhaps following a statement by Hannah (1912: 62), he assumes that Tibetan has an accusative, but no nominative. Although written and elaborated during a long period of time, from 1971 until 1996, Hahn does not even mention the term ‘ergative’ for the phenomenon under examination in the text. Actually the first grammar that mentions the term ‘ergative’ seems to be Beyer 1992. The ergativity of Tibetan, has been described, however, already since 1980 by Chang & Chang and DeLancey in a number of articles.

Other languages — including Basque and Eskimo and Tibetan — syntactically identify the intransitive and transitive patients. In Tibetan they are both given the PATient role particle -0 (as in slob-dpon-0 Ngod "the teacher grieves" and slob-ma-s slob-dpon-0 mthong "The pupil sees the teacher"), and the transitive agency is given the AGency role particle -kyis (as in SLOB-DPON-GYIS slob-ma-0 mthong "the teacher sees the pupil"). In some descriptions of these languages the patient is said to be in the ABSolute case and the agency in the ERGative case (from Greek ergates "worker"). (Beyer 1992: 260)
Thus, even Beyer only refers to this 'possible' terminology. He gives a short explanation of the phenomenon, but sees it more as a theoretical problem (of translation). He sees an accusative system as one which does "syntactically identify the intransitive patient and the transitive agency" (Beyer 1992: 259f.), whereas ergative systems such as the Tibetan one identify 'patients'. He thus assumes that the unmarked (or, for him, the zero-marked) participant is the main participant, a plausible hypothesis which nonetheless would have to be discussed on the typological level (cf. Dixon 1994). On the whole in congruence with standard works (cf. Dixon 1994), Beyer contemplates the difference between these two types of system as singling out either the patient or agent role as a special, marked case. Beyer gives four 'grammatically relevant' case roles, namely patient (PAT), agency (AG), locus/source (LOCs & ABLs), and accompaniment (SOC). Indeed, all these cases can be seen as markers of 'obligatory' participant roles of specific verbs. These cases are defined semantically, since Beyer seems to agree to the following hypothesis:

[...] Interestingly, it seems that classical Tibetan can be thoroughly described without resorting to the notion of grammatical subject or object at all; it is, in that sense, what some linguists have termed a role-dominated language. (Beyer 1992: 264, fn. 11)

In other words, Beyer agrees with those who think that the (written) Tibetan language marks semantic participant roles and not syntactic roles. This leads now to the discussion of the historiography of the description of ergativity and case syntax in Tibetan.

02.03. The active and instrumentive case

The ERG/INS marker is named 'active or instrumentive case' by Csoma de Kőrös (1834: 101), thus recognizing its two different functions, but abbreviated only as 'Instr.'. For Csoma, there is no 'problem' with this case except that it may appear twice in one sentence, due to its semantic double nature (cf. also Francke & Simon 1929: 114):

§211. Examples of the agentive and instrumentive cases being used in the same sentence; as *khong gis lag pas* by him, with the hand, or *he with ditto* *khong gis khyod cis* (or *ci yis*) brdungs with what has he beaten thee? (or with what thing has thou been beaten by him?) (Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 112)

§222. The case denoting the agent, *by whom*, or the instrument *with which*, any action is produced, is called the instrumentive. This case occurs very frequently, since it is used both before active and passive verbs, and before every verb denoting a transitive action on an object or person. (Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 114) 31

The terms 'active' and 'agentive' (as well as 'instrumentive') are semantic descriptions of the case functions. The underlying preconception for these examples is the fact that in one predication, only one participant can play a specific role at a time; therefore, two INS markers in a sentence are markers for AG and INS, respectively. In the following, Csoma gives a chart of varying sentences (p. 112); the second example contains a nominal postposition inflected with INS:

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31 This passage is literally the same with Das (1915: 59) with the exception of one word ("... This occurs ...").
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Thus, he identifies two distinct meanings for the AG/INS marker. Schmidt (1839) deviates from this view by relying more on the concept of 'subjecthood' in a traditional sense. Most authors adopt the term 'instrumental' for the AG/INS case (e.g., Francke 1901: 13; Cordier 1907f: 48); only somewhat later, in descriptions of 'Colloquial Tibetan', the term 'agentive' is used (Bell 1919: 27ff. [31ff.] [~ 1905], Hannah 1912: 62, 67).

13. As regards the cases they are used in the ordinary way except that the agentive is employed in place of the nominative with transitive verbs, thus, g.yog pos kho rdung gi 'dug/ yok-pô kho dung-gi-du, the servant is beating him, lit. g.yog pos by the servant, kho HIM, rdung gi 'dug is beating; but sang nyin g.yog po 'gro gi red/ sang-nyi yok-po dro-ki-re, the servant will go to-morrow, lit. sang nyin TO-MORROW, g.yog po the servant, 'gro gi red/ will go (see also postpositions, Cap. XI, paras. 1 to 3). (Bell 1919: 28f. [33])

Agentive case:] This case, which expresses the idea of anything being done by a person or thing, should always be used instead of the Nominative case with Transitive Verbs. (Hannah 1912: 67)

In Hannah 1912, however, the particle kysis is also listed among the particles of the 'Modal Case' which comprises the instrumental function ('by', 'through', p. 73ff.). Francke & Simon apud Jäschke (1929), with Francke having performed his language studies in Ladakh (cf. Francke's 1901 grammar of Ladakhi), mention that the use of the SOC dang for the INS kysis should be preferred:

If the subject performing an action, avails himself of any instrument, the instrumental case in kysis, gyis etc. may be once more used, but the meaning of the sentence becomes clearer, if here dang with, is used: rgyal-pos-mi-ni-gri-yis-bsad. the king killed the man with the knife; or, rgyal-pos-mi-ni-gri-dang-bsad. (Francke & Simon 1929: 114)

This idea probably has to do with the fact that Ladakhi distinguishes an ergative marker (Ci) from an instrumental case [naŋ, dan] which correlates to the Tibetan sociative dang (cf. Koschal 1979: 70)
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02.04. The emphatic nominative

In three chapters of his grammar, Schmidt stresses the active character of the AG/INS, which could be paraphrased as 'nominative marked with the instrumental particle, but not getting the meaning of an instrumental'. Firstly, in the chapter on declination (p. 61ff.), he states that the NOM can occur unmarked, with TOP ni, or with the INS particle – whereby the meaning is not one of an instrumental. This statement also implies that he does not consider these sentences as passives.

§.65. Der Nominativ des Singulärs ist die primitive Form und hat, ob mit oder ohne Artikel, durchaus keine Zusatzpartikel, es sey denn zur Hebung seiner Eigenschaft als Subject die Syllbe ni (S. §.49, Art. 21), welche aber dieser ihrer Eigenschaft wegen nie auf die andern Casus übergehen kann, wie dies der Fall mit andern artikelartigen Partikeln ist. Sehr oft trifft man auch den Nominativ in seiner Subjecteigenschaft mit der Partikel des Instrumentals an, ohne dass er deshalb die Bedeutung des letztgenannten Casus übernehme. (Schmidt 1839: 61)

Secondly, in the chapter on pronouns, he again states that the instrumental particle is often used as the 'marker of the nominative marking the subject of transitive verbs'; and he stresses the fact that the 'meaning' of INS does not affect this kind of 'nominative':

§. 105. Sehr oft steht das persönliche Fürwort mit der Partikel des Instrumentals, ohne dass der Sinn oder die Bezeichnung dieses Casus auf das Fürwort überginge; im Gegenentwurf bezeichnet diese Partikel eine Hebung des Nominativs und stellt vor transitiven Verben diesen Casus in seiner bestimmten Gestalt und Eigenthümlichkeit als den des Subjectes dar. (Schmidt 1839: 92)

Thirdly, in the chapter on interrogative pronouns, he again stresses the active character of the AG/INS, comparing Tibetan to Russian uses of INS:

Als Subjecte stehen diese gemeiniglich im Instrumental, bleiben jedoch dessen ungeachtet Nominative, obgleich bei ihnen im Tibetischen, wie in mehreren andern Sprachen, namentlich in der Russischen, auch die Bedeutung des Instrumentals nicht selten zulässig ist. Dasselbe gilt von der Antwort, welche in Betreff der Wiederholung der Casuspartikel, Postpositionen u. s. w. mit der Frage übereinstimmend bleiben muss. (Schmidt 1839: 187)

Thus, Schmidt does not want to believe that there is a kind of general passivity in Tibetan transitive clauses which, on the other hand, makes clear that for him the use of the instrumental marker is problematic, and he wants to solve the problem. Therefore, at p. 184, he offers another solution: the instrumental marker kyis is a 'subject particle' marking an 'emphatic nominative': "kyis [...] bezeichnet hier nach §. 159 den mit Nachdruck belegten Nominativ und ist demnach Subjectpartikel." (Schmidt 1839: 184). He thus assumes a pragmatic meaning for the INS particle, which otherwise would turn out to be 'meaningless'. On p. 197, the AG particle is again called a 'determined nominative'. Interestingly, in this passage, he states that sentences with a passive reading have an INS, while sentences with an active reading have also an INS, which in this case is merely an emphatic marker. In other words, he assumes a morphological conversion process between INS and NOM as a function of active and passive verbs:
Es erhellet hieraus, dass der Gebrauch des Passivs vom Instrumental bedingt wird, während die Partikel des letzteren beim Activum den bestimmten Nominativ anzeigt. (Schmidt 1839: 197)

As can be seen, for the description of ERG marking, knowledge of the verb system is needed.

### 02. Active and neutre verbs

For Csoma de Kőrózs (1834), the ERG/ABS pattern and the fluidity of ergative marking together with the possible omission of (agentive) participants leads to another hypothesis: First, the direct object case ('objective' [case], i.e., the unmarked patient), on the other hand, is described as syncrastic with the nominative (i.e., the ABS case), cooccurring with 'neuter and intransitive verbs' - verbs which are incapable to get passivized:

§221. The objective is the same with the nominative in Tibetan, and this case is used before neuter and intransitive verbs, even when it denotes the object of action; as, nga 'gro'o I go; de ci yin what is that; rgyal po ga na bzhugs where is the king? kho gnyid ma log he has not slept; khyod ci byed 'dug what are thou doing?' khyed nam phebs when are you come, (or arrived)? nyi ma shar song or shar tshar the sun has arisen; zla ba nub song the moon has set; kho rdung bar byed he is beaten; ’jig rten ’jig par byed the world is destroyed. (Csoma de Kőrózs 1834: 114)

Cf. Foucaux:

106. Quand le verbe actif n’est pas transitif, on emploie le nominatif. EXEMPLES: nga 'gro'o "Je vais". — nga mi ‘grul ‘Je ne marche pas". — khyod nams phebs "Quand es-tu arrivé?" — nyi ma shar song 'Le soleil est levé'. — zla ba nub song 'La lune est couchée'. — ’jig rten ’jig par byed 'Le monde est détruit'. (Foucaux 1858: 101)

As can be seen, the description of the use of AG/INS and ABS enters into a description of verb classes at this point. Csoma distinguishes three verb classes, transitive, intransitive, and neuter verbs. The last two examples are clear 'transitives', with the analytical formation V + par byed, and these are translated as passive sentences in English. Schmidt, on the other hand, stresses the fact (once again), that agent marking is not a passive construction and provides the argument that the possibility of having two instrumentals in a sentence (cf. Csoma de Kőrózs 1834: 112ff.) proves that in such cases, one INS particle must be understood as AG, in order for the sentence to be meaningful at all (cf. also Csoma de Kőrózs 1834: 114):

To conclude, Schmidt takes great care not to interpret 'instrumental subjects' as signs of a passive and therefore construes the INS particle as an emphatic marker, although he is not entirely consistent in his descriptions of this case. For Csoma, the reading of this particle as AG or INS case has to do with 'active and passive verbs', i.e., transitive verbs which can undergo passivization (cf. also Foucault 1858: 79). The translation of the AG/INS into SAE languages therefore leads to free variability of an active or passive translation as NOM or as passive INS. Thus, Csoma continues (cf. also Schmidt 1839: 197):

In the languages of Europe, it may be rendered properly by the subjective or nominative case, and by the preposition 'with' or 'by' (when any instrument, manner, or way of action is to be expressed); and in the passive form or voice, with the particle 'by'; as de bdag gis rang gi lag pas bris wrote it with my own hand, or it is written by me; rgyal po kun gyis bkur or bkur par byed the king is respected by all, or, all do respect the king. chos 'di sungs rgyas kyi's gsungs so gsung ngo gsung par 'gyur ro/ this doctrine has been, is, and will be taught (commanded) by the BUDDHA; or, BUDDHA has taught, is teaching, and will teach this doctrine. (Csoma de Körös 1834: 114)

Csoma thus thinks that active and passive cannot be morphologically expressed in the language. But those in V + par byed, i.e. the analytic tense (or aspect) marker for active-transitive verbs, can have an exclusively passive form, in that they do not mark an agent. But there can be AG marking. The fact that the AG role is not obligatorily marked, leads Csoma to believe that sentences without explicit AG are passive:

§163. Active and passive verbs ending in byed or byed do can be discriminated only by the instrumentive and the nominative cases expressed before them; as, nga srdung bar byed/ -do/ (he) is beaten by me, or I do beat (him); nga srdung bar byed/ -do/ I am beaten.

§164. All such verbs as end in byed/-do/ and have the instrumentive case before them, may be rendered in English, both in an active and passive sense; as, nga srdung srdung bar byed do/ I beat thee, or thou art beaten by me; but, with the nominative case, only in the passive voice; as, srdung srdung bar byed/ thou art beaten; 'jig rten 'jig par byed/ the world is destroyed; 'jig rten 'di ni chu yis (or chus) me yis (mes) dang srdung gis 'jig (or gzhig) par bya'o/ this world is to be destroyed by water, fire, and wind. (Csoma de Körös 1834: 89)

Schmidt writes the same:

§. 153. Diejenigen Activa und Passiva, welche beide die Hülfspartikeln byed und byed do als Endung haben, können gegenseitig nur dadurch von einander unterschieden werden, dass der Nominativ der Person des Activs die Flexion des Instrumentals annimmt, (Siehe §. 104. ), während die Person des Passivs die reine Form des Nominativs beibehält; z.B. Act. nga srdung srdung bar byed/-do ich schlage (ihn), Pass. nga srdung srdung bar byed/-do ich werde geschlagen; oder auch Act. nga srdung srdung bar byed do ich schlage dich. Pass. srdung srdung bar byed du wirst geschlagen. Fernere Beispiele des Passivs: 'jig rten 'jig par byed die Welt wird zerstört; 'jig rten 'di ni chu yis (od. chus) me yis (od. mes) dang srdung gis 'jig (od. gzhig) par bya'o diese Welt wird zerstört werden durch Wasser, Feuer und Wind. (Schmidt 1839: 143)
And Foucaux (1858: 79) as well:

86. Les verbes actifs et passifs terminés par byed ou byed do byed do (no 70, 30) ne peuvent être distingués que par l'instrumental ou le nominatif placés devant eux.

EXEMPLES: ngas khyod rdung bar byed do ngas khyod rdoung bar byed do "tu es battu par moi" ou "je te bats"; nga rdung par byed do nga rdoung par byed do "je suis battu". (Foucaux 1858: 79)

Also, Dṣ (1915: 59) sɛṭɛ̠s, quoɛ̱ng Csomʈ's ̠xʈmpl̠ (ngʈ(s) + ədung pʈə b̠̊d): "Acɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd pʈss̱ʌ̠ ʌ̠əbs ̠nḏng ̱n b̠̊d oə b̠̊d do/ cʈn b̠ ḏs cə̱m̱nʈɛ̠d onl̊ b̊ ɛh̠ ̱nsɛəum̠nɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd ɛh̠ nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌ̠ cʈs̠s ̠xpə̠ss̠d b̠ɕoə̠ ɛh̠m."

Thus, ɛh̠ non-obʒʈɛoə̊ oɕ consɛ̱ɛu̠nɛs mʈk̠s Cs omʈ, Schm̱dɛ, ṭoucʈux, ʈnd Dʈs con-

sɛəu̠ ʈ poss̱bl̠ oppos̱ɛ̱on oɕ ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd pʈss̱ʌ̠ s̠nɛ̠nc̠s. Th̠̊ sɛə̠ss ɛhʈɛ ɛẖs hʈpp̠ns onl̊ ̱n V+pʈə-b̠̊d consɛəucɛ̱ons.

Tẖs ̱nɛ̠əŋpə̠ɛʈɛ̱on oɕ ɛh̠ ɕʈculɛʈɛ̱ʌ̠ AG əol̠ ̱s b ʈs̠d on ɛh̠ pə̠conc̠pɛ̱on ɛhʈɛ ʈ ʌ̠əb
goʌ̠əns obʒʈɛoə̊ cʈs̠ əol̠s ʈccoəḏng ɛo ̱ɛs ʌʈl̠nc̠. In Ṭb̠ɛʈn, hoɨ̠ʌ̠ə, ʈn ̠xpḻc̱ɛ AG
cʈn b̠ om̱ɛɛ̠d, ̱ɕ ɛh̠ AG hʈs b̠̠n ̱nɛəoduc̠d ̠ʈəḻ ̠ə ̱n ɛh̠ ɛ̠xɛ. Csomʈ ɛhus ̱nɛ̠əpə̠ɛs ɛẖs
cʰʈəʈcɛ̠ə̱c oɕ ɛh̠ lʈnguʈg̠ ̱n ɛ̠əms oɕ ʈ knoɨn cʈɛ̠goə̊, b̊ ʈppɭ̊ng ɛh̠ conc̠pɛ oɕ 'd̠-
moɛ̱on oɕ ɛh̠ subj̠cɛ' (pʈss̱ʌ̱̤ʈɛ̱on) ɛo such ̠xʈm pl̠s. Tẖs ə̠ ɕ̠əs ɛo ɛh̠ cʈusʈɛ̱ʌ̠/ə̠sulɛʈɛ̱ʌ̠ ʌ̠əb pʈ̱əs,
ɨẖch ʈə̠ h̠ə̠ ɛ̠əm̠d 'ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠' ʈnd 'n̠uɛ̠ə', ə̠sp̠c ɛ̱ʌ̠l̊. H̠ ̱s ʈlso ʈɨʈə̠ ɛhʈɛ moɛ̱on ʌ̠əbs
ʈə̠ ʈlso ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠, buɛ ɛh̠̊ ʈə̠ noɛ ɛəʈns̱ɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd ɛh ̠ə̠ɕoə̠ do noɛ g̠ɛ AG-mʈək̠d əol̠s; ɛẖs ̱s
ɛo ẖm ʈ d̠ʌ̱ʈɛ̱on, ̱ɛ s̠̠ms.

Csomʈ (ʈnd Schm̱dɛ) ḏsɛ̱ngu̱sh̠s 'ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠' (ʈnd 'cʈ usʈl') ʌ̠əbs, ɨẖch ʈlloɨ ʈn AG əol̠,
ʈnd 'n̠uɛ̠ə oə pʈss̱ʌ̠' ʌ̠əbs ɛʈk̠ ɛh̠ ABS. Tẖs ə̠ ɕ̠əs ɛo ɛh̠ cʈusʈɛ̱ʌ̠/ə̠sulɛʈɛ̱ʌ̠ ʌ̠əb pʈ̱əs,
ɨẖch ʈə̠ h̠ə̠ ɛ̠əm̠d 'ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠' ʈnd 'n̠uɛ̠ə', ə̠sp̠c ɛ̱ʌ̠l̊. H̠ ̱s ʈlso ʈɨʈə̠ ɛhʈɛ moɛ̱on ʌ̠əbs
ʈə̠ ʈlso ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠, buɛ ɛh̠̊ ʈə̠ noɛ ɛəʈns̱ɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd ɛh ̠ə̠ɕoə̠ do noɛ g̠ɛ AG-mʈək̠d əol̠s; ɛẖs ̱s
ɛo hwnd ʈ d̠ʌ̱ʈɛ̱on, ̱ɛ s̠̠ms.

§170. Acɛ̱ʌ̠ ʈnd cʈusʈl ʌ̠əbs ə̠qu̱ə̠ b̠ɕoə̠ ɛh̠m, ̱n g̠n̠əʈl, ɛh̠ ̱nsɛəum̠nɛ̱ʌ̠ cʈs̠ (̱.̠.̠ ɛh̠ nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌ̠ ɨ̱ɛh ʈn̊ oɕ ɛh̠s̠ pʈəɛ̱cl̠s; ḵ̊s, g ̱s, g̱̊s, -s oə ̱̊s, ʈccoəḏng ɛo ɛh̠ ɕ̱nʈl l̠ɛɛ̠ə oɕ ɛh̠ nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌ̠ cʈs̠), ʈnd ɛh̠ n̠uɛ̠əs ʈnd  pʈss̱ʌ̠s, ̱n ḻk̠ mʈnn̠ə ə̠qu̱ə̠ ɛh̠ nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌ̠ oə obj̠cɛ̱ʌ̠ cʈs̠. Buɛ, ɨh̠n ɛh̠ ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠ ʌ̠əb ̱s ̱nɛəʈns̱ɛ̱ʌ̠, ɛh̠ nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌ̠ ̱s
us̠d; ʈs, khong ̤hʈbs 'chʈg b̠̊d/ h̠ ɨʈlks; ngʈ m̱ 'gəul/ I do noɛ ɨʈlk oə go. (Csomʈ d̠
Kőəös 1834: 90)

Schmidt:

§. 159. Ḏ̠ Acɛ̱ʌʈ und Cʈusʈzłʈ ̱m Allg̠m̠̱n ̠əɕo əd̠ən, ɨ̱̠ b̠ə̠̱ɛs §. 153. b̠m̠əkɛ,
ʌoə s̱ch ḏ̠ Insɛəum̠nɛʈlɕl̠x̱on, dʈs h̠̱ssɛ d̠n No m̱nʈɛ̱ʌ d̠ə P̠əson ̱n s̠̱n̠ə E̱g̠n-
schʈɕɛ ʈls Subj̠cɛ m̱ɛ ̠̱n̠ə d̠ə Pʈəɛ̱k̠ln kyʈs, ʌʈs, ʌyʈs, -s ̠də yaʈs ̤s ɾɔ̀mmung
d̠s Schlussbuchɛʈb̠n d̠ə Gəundɕoəm (S̱̠h̠ §. 33.);  dʈg̠g̠n b̠hʈlɛ̠n ḏ̠ N̠uɛəʈ und
Pʈss̱ʌʈ ḏ̠ ə̠̱n̠ ṭoəm d̠s Nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌs, d. h. ohn̠ j ̠n̠ Insɛəum̠nɛʈlɕl̠x̱on
dsts Nom̱nʈɛ̱ʌs d̠ə P̠əson sɛ̠h̠ ẖ̠ə
khonʌ ʔhʐbs 'chʐʌ byed ̠ə ɨʈnd̠lɛ, ngʈ m̱ 'gəul ̱ch g̠h̠ od̠ə ɨʈndl̠ ṉchɛ, ɨʈnd̠ə̠ ṉchɛ. (Schm̱dɛ  1839: 145ɕ.)

Unɛ̱l h̠ə̠, on̠ could ʈssum̠ ɛhʈɛ ɛəʈns̱ɛ̱ʌ̱ɛ̊ ̱s ɛ hus ɛh̠ ɛə̱gg̠ə ɕoə ̠əgʈɛ̱ʌ̠ mʈəḵng, buɛ
ɛẖs ̱s noɛ ɛh̠ cʈs̠. Th\( (ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠) ʌ̠əbʈ ḏc̠nḏ su ch ʈs\( zer\( ('cʈll', 'sʈ̊') do noɛ ɛʈk\( AG ɨh̠n\( ʈ DAT ̱s pə̠s̠nɛ (ʈccoəḏng ɛo Csomʈ); ɛẖs sugg̠sɛs ʈ noɛ̱on oɕ s̊sɛ̠m ̠conom̊, ḏsɛ̱ncɛ̱ʌ̠
02. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

case marking, or different emphasis. He also mentions the topic marker (‘emphatical’) which replaces any case marker, i.e. also AG (cf. also Schmidt 1839: 61). Thus, he continues:

Instead of the instrumentative case, the nominative is also used with the emphatical I: as, *nga ni de ma smras so* / I have not told (or not said) to (or by me it has not been said).

As also, when the objective case takes the la particle, the nominative (or accusative) is used, instead of the instrumentive; as, *bdag khyod la zer to* / I have told thee (or you), it has been said to me by you. (Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 90)

In other words, although the use of AG is dependent in principle on the class of active(-transitive) verbs, there are some exceptions of use. Csoma gives also a short description of the analytic distinction of V + *byed pa* and V + *’gyur ba*, which is, however, not satisfying to the reader:

§171. The two auxiliary verbs that most frequently occur are: *byed par* to do, make; and *’gyur bar* to become, grow, wax, change, turn. By the first are formed many active and passive verbs; and by the second the neuters, actives and passives. (Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 91)

The specific problem for the early scholars is the fact that these AUX verbs do not apply to some specific verbs, but make verbs ‘active’ or ‘neutral’, or, more exactly, make them AG- or PAT-oriented (a causative and resultative orientation). The auxiliary construction *par byed* and *par ’gyur* may thus apply both to active and inactive verbs, respectively, but they may also transform a verb into the opposite status. There seems to be more capacity of *’gyur* to form resultative forms from originally causative verbs, and so Csoma concludes that *par* *’gyur* forms ‘neuters, actives and passives’. Both authors are thus struggling with unexpected data: non-obligatory NPs, ergativity, probably fluid S-marking, etc. In spite of the apparent lack of any morphosyntactic operation such as passivization, they depart from the idea that passive as a universal concept does exist. They identify, however, two classes of verbs, those which can have active or passive reading (active verbs), and those which cannot (neuter verbs). This distinction is generally accepted and repeated by later authors; cf. Cordier’s statement about genus verbi (voice): Although there is no morphological passive voice, the omission of the ERG marker is interpreted as a sign of passive (inactive) reading.

De même, les deux voix, active et passive, ne peuvent être discernées que par l’analyse du sujet, aidée le plus souvent de [l’]examen du contexte, – la forme verbale elle-même ne différant point à l’Actif et au Passif.33 (Cordier 1907É: 48)

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33 In the ms. there is an additional note: “Sauf le rôle dans le 2e suffixes [sic].”
This finally almost leads to the view that Tibetan sentences with active verbs are 'in principle' passive sentences: "In a sense, every Tibetan sentence, even when the verb is what we call Active, is permeated with the Passive idea" (Hannah 1912: 299). But this does not lead to the same theoretical conclusions of a general passivity of ergative constructions, as were brought forth by some authors (Schuchardt 1896) on other languages:

In a sense, every Tibetan sentence, even when the verb is what we call Active, is permeated with the Passive idea. For, even such a sentence as yab kyis sras la byams so The father loveth the son, may be rendered equally correctly The son is loved by the father; for, literally translated, it is By the father, to, or as regards the son, a loving is. It practically therefore comes to this, that, when the subject is in the agentive case, the Active Voice is intended; but, when the subject of a transitive verb is in the nominative or objective case, the Passive Voice is intended, unless some other structural peculiarity in the sentence indicates otherwise. (Hannah 1912: 299f.)

The same remarks hold as regards the Colloquial. The subject in the agentive case indicates the Active Voice; the subject in the objective (with or without la) indicates the Passive Voice. As a matter of fact, the Tibetan language strongly favours the agentive construction; and therefore the Passive Voice, or what passes as such, should be avoided as much as possible. (Hannah 1912: 300)

The theories on Tibetan ergativity thus considered genus verbi to be expressed by the presence or absence of ERG marking, but brought forth a theory of 'verbal nouns'.

02.06. Impersonal verbs, verbal nouns

It was clear to the early scholars that there is no person agreement in Written Tibetan, cf.

66. Les verbes n’ont pas de terminaisons pour indiquer les personnes; c’est le nom ou le pronom précédent ou le sens qui les distingue. On emploie un grand nombre de locutions impersonnelles ou indéfinies formées par les participes. (Foucaux 1858: 53)

In fact, Foucaux generalises this observation of non-agreement and in a later chapter introduces all stem forms of Tibetan verbs as 'particules'; he also mentions that these inflectional forms can be the basis for derivational word formation processes.

85. Les participes présents, passés et futurs appartiennent à la classe des noms et des adjectifs. Employés comme verbes, ils servent à exprimer le présent, le passé et le futur. comme: smra smra “il parle”; smras smras “il parla”; smra bya smra bya “il parlera”. Employés comme noms, ils peuvent avoir plusieurs sens. EXEMPLES: smra ba smra va “disant”, ou "l’action de dire”; smras pa smras pa “chose dite, ou celui qui a dit”; smra bya smra bya "devant parler", ou "celui qui parlera, chose à dire". (Foucaux 1858: 78f.)

While Csgma (and Schmidt) has interpreted the nominalizing particles (pa, etc.) as 'articles', Foucaux identifies their nominalizing function, and specifically with verbs: he interprets V+pa/ba as 'present participle' or as a 'verbal noun' ('nom verbal').

67. Le participe présent peut être regardé comme le thème du verbe, et c’est en effet la forme adoptée par les Tibétains pour en fixer la signification dans leurs dictionnaires. Ce
participe se termine toujours par l'une des particules pa ou ba et peut être pris dans le sens du substantif, comme: byed pa byed (tched) pa "faisant" ou "un fait"; 'gro ba hgro va "marchant" ou "la marche". (Foucaux 1858: 53)

The analytical verb forms V + par [byed/gyur] (cf. Csoma de Körös 1834: 91) are identified by Foucaux as the infinitive in the form V+pa-r (Foucaux 1858: 54); he refers to the original meaning (locative of the verbal noun: V + pa + r, 'V-NS-ILL') and compares the form to English verbs such as 'to do' which are similarly formed by a verb and a locative 'to' (Foucaux 1858: 54, fn. 1). At the same time, V+ILL (i.e., without the nominalizer pa/ba) is called 'gerund' ('géondi') (p. 55; cf. also Cordier 1907f.: 55ff.). Similarly, in Baco (1946: 49), the nominalizers pa and ba are described as forming infinitives and participles (i.e., verbal nouns).

Jäschke 1865 also distinguishes two verb classes, the 'active' and the 'neutral' verbs, and he also considers the 'impersonality' of the verb (i.e., its non-agreement with a subject). For him, this characteristic is connected with the use of the instrumental case marker for the acting subject, as this is for him a substitute for this lack of connectedness of the verb. Since the unmarked case of an ergative language is also the subject of intransitive verbs, Jäschke tries to give the explanation that the unmarked nouns of Tibetan (the 'nominative') should be understood as accusatives related to impersonal verbs. Therefore, he gives a 'literal' translation of the verb as: "an X happens", for the absolute case: 'regarding Y', and for the ergative: "by Z".

30. Introductory remarks. The Tibetan verbs must be regarded as denoting, not an action, or suffering, or condition of any subject, but merely a coming to pass, or, in other words, they are all impersonal verbs, like taedet, miseret etc. in Latin, or it suits etc. in English. Therefore, they are destitute of what is called in our own languages the active and passive voice, as well as of the discrimination of persons, and show nothing beyond a rather poor capability of expressing the most indispensable distinctions of tense and mood. From the same reason the acting subject of a transitive verb must regularly appear in the Instrumental case, as the case of the subject of a neutral verb – which, in European languages, is the Nominative – ought to be regarded, from a Tibetan point of view, as an Accusative expressing the object of an impersonal verb, just as 'poenitet me' is translated by 'I repent'. But it will perhaps be easier to say: The subject of a transitive verb, in Tibetan, assumes regularly the form of the instrumental, of a neutre verb that of the nominative which is the same as the accusative. Thus, ngsas khyod rdung is properly: rdung a beating happens, khyod regarding you, ngsas by me = I beat you. In common life, the object has often the form of the dative, khyod la, to facilitate the comprehension. But often, in modern talk as well as in the classical literature, the acting subject, if known as such from the context, retains its Nominative form. Especially the verba loquendi are apt to admit this slight irregularity. (Jäschke 1865: 40f.)

From then on, the 'nominal character' of the verb is taken for granted. Conrady (1896: 22), Cordier (1907f.: 26), Francke & Simon (1929: 136), Bell 1919: 43 [51], Baco (1946: 49), Regamey (1954: 369f.) and other authors until Hahn (1994: 33 [= 1985: 28], 56 [= 1985: 50]) stress this fact. Some authors also give auxiliary translations which try to transmit the idea of the nominal verb:
1. The Tibetan verb denotes an impersonal action, a state of being, doing, happening, etc., and is in effect a verbal noun. Thus: *khos lug sha gi 'du/* *khö luk-sha sa-ki-du*, HE IS EATING MUTTON, lit. BY HIM, AS REGARDS MUTTON, AN EATING IS; *tshong pa de sang nyin bslebs yong/* *tshong-pa te sang-nyi lep-yong*, THE TRADER WILL ARRIVE TO-MORROW, AN ARRIVING WILL BE. (Bell 1919: 43 [51])

Auxiliary translations of Jäschke's and Bell's kind are also found in the much later grammar of Hahn 1994 [1971-1996]:

**de'i tshe bu pho mdzes pa skyes so**, "Zu jener Zeit wurde ein hübscher Sohn geboren."
Genauer: "Zu jener Zeit fand ein Geborenwerden statt in bezug auf einen schönen Sohn (als an der Verbalhandlung Beteiligten)." (Hahn 1994: 57 [= 1985: 50])

### 02.07. Causative formation

The early authors rely on traditional categories also for verb morphology and thus identify 'tense forms'. Foucaux, for example, gives the following description of the 'present indicative' as being characterized by one of the following forms (Foucaux 1858: 55f.):

1. V (verb)
2. V+o (verb plus final particle, WT)
3. V+par+byed(+do) (analytic verb formation of WT)
4. V+bszhin pa/kyin+'dug/kyin+snang (analytic verb formation with 'bszhin pa' and with 'kyi'+AUX')

The presupposed categories such as present indicative seem not to map too well on Tibetan morphosyntax: There are various forms which all seem to express one (universal?) category. On the other hand, various other presupposed categories (e.g., imperfect, preterit, and passive participle) are represented by one form (e.g., the 'past participle'; Foucaux 1858: 56); cf.

§131. The root of the perfect participle, preterite, or past tense, and of the participle passive, is the same. (Csoma de Kôröös 1834: 73)\(^{34}\)

However, Foucaux mentions the 'regular' pattern of s-suffixion for the formation of 'past participles'. There was a need for an analysis of Tibetan verb morphology, and by this is meant of Classical or Written Tibetan, and this was undertaken by Conrady 1896. In his diachronic analysis of the causativization in Indo-chinese languages, Conrady follows Foucaux's and Jäschke's conception of a 'verbal nouns' without temporal reference ("zeitlose Verbalnomina", Conrady 1896: 32) in discussing the use of ergative marking in combination with an 'active or neutral meaning' of the verb, i.e., their possible morphological conversion (between causative and resultative forms); and he thinks that the facultative use of ergative has to do with this rule.

Denn die verbalnominale Eigenschaft ihrer Zeitwörter zwingt die Sprache, die neutrale oder aktive Bedeutung durch den Casus des Subjekts zu verdeutlichen: dem Transitiv,

\(^{34}\) The term 'root' refers to the four stems of the verb; in fact, these verb forms are neither roots nor stems, since they are inflected and cannot take further inflections. On the other hand, there is no base form, so that the authors usually call these variants of one verb 'roots', 'stems', or 'verb forms'.
02. Descriptions of Tibetan ergativity

und von Rechtswegen nur ihm, gehört der Instrumentalis, dem Intransitivum der Nomi-
nativ. Da man aber doch neben nga-'agum-pa 'ich (mein) Totsein = ich sterbe' sagen
konnte ngas-'agum-pa 'durch mich (ist) Totsein = ich töte', so war es möglich, dass sich
die ursprünglich intransitive Form beim Transitiv einbürgte. Den Anstoss dazu mögen
die Reihen gegeben haben, wo Trs. und Intr. nur durch die Qualität des Stammanslauts
unterschieden sind. (Conrady 1896: 22)

He is the first to thoroughly discuss the old Tibetan verb inflection which consists of up to
4 tense forms and a dichotomic category for 'active' and 'neutre' verbs, if we remain in Cso-
ma's terminology. Conrady understands virtually all verbal pre- and suffixes of Written Ti-
betan as original causativization (and very few decausativization) devices.

So gewinnen wir also statt einer sorgfältigen Tempusbildung eine Serie von Formen, die
wir zunächst als Parallelformen bezeichnen müssen. Mit diesem Ergebnis stimmt die Be-
deutung der Tempuspräfixe auf das Schonste überein. Denn weit entfernt irgend ein zeit-
lisches Element zu enthalten, kommen sie vielmehr sämtlich (g., das damit wechselnde d-,
und b-) als – kurz gesagt – transitivierende Vorsetzlinge, d.h. in allen Funktionen des s-
vor, an dessen transitivierender Kraft ja nicht gezweifelt werden kann, nämlich so dass
sie stets eine Handlung, eine Einwirkung bezeichnen (dass also das nachfolgende Stamm-
wort ihr Objekt, nicht wie bei a1-Prädikat ist): durch die sie gebildeten Formen sind je
nachdem transitiv-causative, denominative, aktiv-intransitive, reflexive Verba oder na-
türlich auch Nomina, aber mit deutlich wahrnehmbarem Einwirkungsbegriff. (Conrady
1896: 32)

Whatever the functions of the other affixes (b-, d-, g-, l-, r-; 'm-, m-), one unquestionable
causativization can be observed with the s- prefix of Tibetan verbs, e.g., 'gyur 'to become',
sgyur 'to translate, change'. But Conrady advances his hypothesis still further; he thinks that
the INS (AG) marker of Tibetan is diachronically analyzable as GEN+s (kyi-s), and that this -
s may be historically the same affix as the verbal affix s- and -s, respectively. If this were so,
we would have to do with an original 'agreement' between the verbs and agentic noun.

Und sollte nicht auch das -s des Instrumentalis, das übrigens schon Gabelentz (Die
Sprachwissenschaft S. 214) mit dem "sinnverwandten Verbalaffix" (also mit "s"? oder mit
dem s-?) zusammenbringt, eben dieses transitive Zeichen sein? Denn der Instrumentalis
(oder besser: der Aktiv) des Subjekts wird gebraucht, um das Verbem des Satzes als tran-
sitives zu charakterisieren – gerade wie letzteres zu demselben Zwecke das Prf. s- erhalten
kann. Er ist nun bloss durch dieses -s vom Genitiv unterschieden (Gen.-Partikel -kiy,
Instr.-Partikel -kiy-s); denn ob das -s, das hinter vokalischem Auslaut für -kiy eintritt,
aus diesem kontrahirt (vgl. die Instr.-Partikel yis = s in der Poesie) oder stets das nackte
-s gewesen ist, wage ich nicht zu entscheiden. Trennt man also -s als das transitive Suff.
ab, so stünde das Subjekt im Genitiv. Aber das ist nach meiner Auffassung der Konstruk-
tion ganz richtig: das ist das logische Subjekt grammatisch in der That das genitivische
Attribut zu dem nachfolgenden Trs. -s (= 'machen'). Denn die Uform des trs. Satzes
(wenn wir einmal "si als ursprüngliche Form des -s, s- ansetzen wollen) stelle ich mir et-
wa so vor: khyod-kyi "si mi(-la) "si gab-pa [khyod-kyi-s mi(-la) s-gab-pa] 'du – dessen")
(= dein) Machen Mann (oder in Bezug auf den Mann) Verborgen-Machen (ist) = 'du ver-
birgst den Mann, das Mann-Verborgenmachen ist dein Machwerk'. (Conrady 1896: 44)
Conrady's analysis leads to the view that Tibetan originally had verb morphology for causative and resultative formation, which was probably reinterpreted by normative grammar in terms of 'tense' forms. But ergative formation and at least one (old)\textsuperscript{35} causative formation seem to depart from the same historical affix which implies a form of agreement. The 'nominative hypothesis' upheld by Conrady is especially useful in the explanation of this correlation and explains to him the origin of the ERG marking with respect to a GEN function – as we could find in descriptions for some other languages as well.

Die "befremdende Verteilung der Funktionen, wonach sozusagen nicht das Verbum, sondern das Subjekt Träger der Handlung ist" (Gabelentz, Lc. 161) ist damit meines Bedenken ganz einfach erklärt. (Conradi 1896: 44)

Georg von der Gabelentz (1891), following his father Hans Conon von der Gabelentz (1861) quotes Tibetan, Basque, and an Australian language in connection with a special kind of case system, interprets the typological difference between accusative and ergative languages as follows: Some languages do not have a genus verbi distinction such as SAE languages, but express this difference by using two cases, namely a casus activus [= ERG] and a casus neutro-passivus [= ABS]. This casus activus, so to say, performs a function usually assigned to the verb possessing agreement, namely to assign 'activity' (or 'transitivity', cf. also Bacot 1946: 25). The Tibetan case is translated as "act. instr."


\textsuperscript{35} Prefixes which are orthographic superscripts may be 'older' or earlier 'unsyllabic' as compared to orthographic prefixes (Conradi 1896: 49, 54); in this respect, s- is an older affix.

\textsuperscript{36} This abbreviation in the original book is quoted in Seely 1977 as 'casus activo-instrumentalis'.

\textsuperscript{37} The Tibetan sentence given in the quotation below is the habitual first phrase of sutras, cf. 'di skad bdag gis thes pa dus gcig na' 'This have I heard at one time' (for examples in early translations, cf. Schmidt 1839: 217, 231; Schmidt 1843).
Conrady comes to another important conclusion: Since most verbal prefixes can be reconstructed as causativization devices, while only two prefixes (’, m-) seem to have originally a resultative meaning (cf. Shfts Chang & Chang 1977: 230), it is clear that causative verb forms are more complex. Indeed, it is said that causative (active) verbs can have up to 4 stem forms, while resultative (inactive) verbs can only have one or two forms. Without repeating the detailed discussion, it may be summarized that future tense seems to be an artificial normative formation (on the basis of Indian grammatical concepts); since imperative is also a special modal form, there are in fact only two (PRS and PFV) stem forms which remain. In Tibetan dialects, we find verbs usually with one or two forms, and in dialects with verbal prefixes, these are used as a causativization device.

As can be seen here, Conrady is the first one of a number of scholars who tried to reconstruct the original functions of the verb prefixes as seen in Written Tibetan and as mentioned in the indigenous grammars. Conrady points to the most fundamental distinction of 'causative' vs. 'resultative' verb forms, i.e., verb forms which either involve an AG or a PAT/ABS as their primary participant. This distinctions seems to have been morphologically marked in Old Tibetan, it is marked in Written Tibetan by morphologically opaque forms, and it seems to have reflections in the spoken varieties. Conrady also mentions for the first time that the Tibetan tense forms seem to be of a secondary nature, reflecting some normative effort of the Tibetan grammarians towards the Indic model.

In 1929, Stuart N. Wolfenden in his 'Outlines of Tibeto-Burman Linguistic Morphology' continues and refines this analysis of Tibetan verb morphology. This system of prefixed consonant letters in the written language has not been described systematically in the previously mentioned grammars, because it does not seem to present a 'logical' or paradigmatic morphological system with identifiable functions. It is the merit of Schiefner, Conrady and Wolfenden to attempt the reconstruction of both the morphological and the semantic system historically underlying the highly opaque system of Written Tibetan. Unfortunately, the findings from historical linguistics were not integrated too thoroughly in the grammatical descriptions. The verb morphology system of Written Tibetan – probably an artificial, construed grammar, is not fully understandable in a purely synchronic analysis – or without reference to certain spoken varieties which still have a similar inflectional system. Therefore, later grammars can partly rely more and more on findings about Tibetan dialects. Unfortunately, Central Tibetan dialects, e.g. Lhasa Tibetan, have the most reduced systems of verb morphology among all dialects and therefore did not urge grammarians to analyze this topic very deeply. Cf.

5. The student is warned against using the different roots for the present, future, perfect and imperative given in general dictionaries. These hold good only for the literary language and would often lead him astray in the colloquial. For instance, the Lhasa man, educated or uneducated, will always say btab kyi ’dug/ tap-kyi-du, HE SOWS (the field), never ’debs kyi ’dug/ dep-kyi-du; btab being the perfect and ’debs the present root. (Bell 1919: 45 [53])
03. Continuation 1

03.01. The subject of transitive verbs

The analysis of Tibetan verbs and indigenous grammar is soon continued by Laufer 1898 and others, on a quite specialized linguistic level. On the other hand, there was still a need to improve the grammars of Tibetan for learners and philologists. The first grammar written in the 20th century is presented by Cordier (1907f.), unfortunately only in autographed form. It has been, however, thoroughly used by Lalou for her grammar in 1950. For the ‘instrumental’, Cordier lists various (= 6) functions, whose first three are of importance here: INS is used for the agent, the instrument/means, and for the cause/motive (Cordier 1907f.: 18, Lalou 1950: 26f.). As the marker of the agent, INS marks the subject of the "verbes transitifs, plus rarement à celui des intransitifs" (Cordier 1907f.: 18). Lalou repeats:

La particule dite ‘instrumentale’ peut indiquer: l’agent, et, comme telle, s’ajoute habituellement au sujet des verbes transitifs (cf. § 55, tableaux), plus rarement à celui des intransitifs: [...] (Lalou 1950: 26f.)

Contrary to the earlier contributions which considered an active vs. neutre distinction of Tibetan verbs, this description refers to the linguistic concept of 'transitivity'. And so does Bacot (1946) in his explanations of the agentive meaning of INS:

Généralement, énoncé le premier, ce cas désigne l’agent et signale à l’avance la nature de l’action, une action transitive. Son absence a la signification contraire: expression d’un état ou une action intransitive. Cette remarque ne s’applique qu’à l’instrumental affectant le sujet ou agent de l’action. S’il affecte un instrument intermédiaire, il est évident que le verbe peut être intransitif. (Bacot 1946: 25)

This refers to the same thought as brought forth by von der Gabelentz (1891: 102): the ERG case marker expresses the nature of the verb as being transitive or intransitive. As will be seen later, Bacot’s idea is based on the causative vs. resultative distinction of Tibetan verbs. In the grammar of Hannah (1912), ERG (i.e., the ‘agentive case’) use in the written language is attributed to transitivity and causativity, but there are various reasons to omit the ERG marker: topic marking, or objects with la:

In Literary Tibetan, as a rule, the subject of a transitive active verb, or of a causative verb, is put in the agentive case, and the subject of a neuter or of a passive verb is put in the nominative or the accusative (objective) case[.] When, however, the active verb is intransitive, the subject is put in the nominative case. Moreover, when the subject, even of a transitive verb, is a pronoun emphatically used (as, for instance, with the particle ni annexed to it), the subject is put in the nominative case. Further, when the subject is obviously the agent or instrument, as, for example, when the postposition la is expressly used with the objective, then it is not necessary, though quite allowable, for the subject to be put in the agentive case; in other words, it may appear in the nominative case. (Hannah 1912: 299)
One late contribution which makes a particular effort to 'explain' the nature of the ERG is Hahn's textbook (1994 [1971-1996]). All contributions, however, take much greater care in the classification of the Tibetan verbs which seem to be the key for the understanding of the ergative case.

03.02. The parameter of transitivity

In the early contributions, a dichotomy active vs. neutral verbs was described. As argued by Conrady, there seems to be in the Tibetan grammar, a fundamental (diachronic?) dichotomy of causative vs resultative verb forms. In the contributions of the 20th century, however, the (formerly known, but not applied) parameter of 'transitivity' is introduced in the descriptions of Tibetan. Transitivity can be seen as a syntactic feature based on the semantic difference between actions and events/states, i.e., between situations with an agent-patient relationship on one extreme end, and a mere occurrence of something to an unaffected participant ('absolute participant') on the other extreme end. A language with syntactic ergative typically marks subjects of transitive verbs with ERG. Transitivity is thus similar, but not identical, to the distinction causative, or agent-oriented, and resultative, or patient-oriented. Since actions involve two participants, transitivity typically, but not exclusively, correlates with bivalence in European languages. Valence is difficult to observe in a language with non-obligatory participants and a causative-resultative distinction, such as Tibetan.

The first author of a Tibetan grammar using the term 'transitive' is Cordier (1907f.); he correlates transitivity with instrumental (i.e., ERG) case marking. For Cordier, the unmarked NP ('Syntaxe des formations nomino-qualificatives et pronominales dépouvrues de suffixe modo-casuel', Cordier 1907f.: 26) has 5 functions: most importantly, this is the subject of a verbal noun ('verbe substantif'), of an intransitive verb or of a transitive verb 'which is used intransitively'; similarly, the direct object ('régime direct d'un verbe transitif') is unmarked. Thus, Cordier gives up the distinction 'active/inactive' and, since 'transitive verbs can be used intransitively', seems to distinguish a surface transitivity and an underlying transitivity. Cordier's distinction of 'change vs. becoming' could be equated to the above-mentioned model of action vs. event/state. Whether a verb has a voice-neutral 'active' reading, depends solely on the use of the INS case for the subject. Due to this characterisation, Cordier thinks that the 'verbal function' resides in the subject and not in the verb:

Le verbe tibétain présente essentiellement un caractère verbo-nominal; toutes ses modalités simples peuvent, sans nuance d'action, s'employer comme substantifs. Il n'exprime par lui-même, à proprement parler, ni un état, ni une action, mais un changement ou une venir, et c'est le suffixe casuel du sujet ou l'absence de ce suffixe qui permet de déterminer sa valeur active neutre. Le support de la fonction verbale réside donc dans le sujet et non pas dans le verbe.  

(Cordier 1907f.: 48)

The use of the INS (= AG) marker for subjects seems to be uncontroversial for 'transitive' verbs, but there is a third class of 'active-intransitive verbs'.

Au point de vue de cette fonction, et aussi, dans une large mesure au point de vue morphologique, les verbes se répartissent en trois classes principales: 1/ Transitifs, 2/ Intran-
sitifs, 3/ Actifs-intransitifs (mixtes). En principe, le Nominatif (sujet dépourvu [de] suffixe casuel) appartient à l'Intransitif et à l'actif-intransitif, l'Instrumental à l'actif, et l'allatif au Transfix usité intransitivement. (Cordier 1907f.: 48)

Thus, the case scheme of Tibetan seems to be the following – with a discrepancy between the short explanation at p. 18 and the extensive explanation at p. 48:

### Table 01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>p. 48</th>
<th>p. 18</th>
<th>verb class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>active-transitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>inactive-transitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS (ERG)</td>
<td>ABS (ERG)</td>
<td>active-intransitive verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there is no morphological genus verbi, the absence of INS is interpreted as a passive form (cf. Cordier 1907f.: 48). In order to exemplify this claim, Cordier construes the following examples (Cordier 1907f.: 48; cf. also Lalou 1950: 54):

(01) nga `gum pa/ je meurs.   nga rdung byas pa/ f’ai été battu.  
    nga `gum pa/ je tue.   nga rdung byas pa/ f’ai battu.  
    nga sdom pa/ je me lie (je m’engage).  nga sdom pa/ je lie; j’attache.  
    nga sdom pa/ je lie; j’attache.  nga slob/ j’apprends.  
    nga slob/ j’apprends.  

This representation is problematic because of the verb forms. First, the example with ‘gum as an instance of a dichotomy ‘die/kill’, first mentioned in Conrady (1896: 22), shows the particular difficulty to get reliable information about the correct verb forms which seem to be a highly theoretical topic even for speakers of the language. Nonetheless, this example is repeated in the literature, but sometimes with diverging verb forms (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 254; Hahn 1994: 373 [= Hahn 1985: 361f.]; Tournadre 1996: 206):

(02) khon gis dgra bo `gums (= bkums) so/ dgra bo `gum (= gum) mo/   
    3-ERG enemy kill-FIN enemy kill-FIN   
    He kills his enemy.   The enemy is killed.

In fact, ‘gum’ is the inactive (IPV or FUT) verb stem ‘to die’ and cannot be used as ‘je fais mourir’ (‘je tue’). ‘gum’ ‘to die’, has only one verb stem and is used only in Classical Tibetan. For ‘to kill’, there exists a verb form bkum IPV, bkums PFV which would therefore serve the purpose here; in Modern Central Tibetan, ‘die’ is shi, ‘kill’ is gsod IPV, bsad PFV, gsad FUT, sod IMP. Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 258) gives skum ‘shorten, contract’ and khum ‘be contracted’; Das 1985 [1902] has skum IPV, bskums PFV, bskum FUT, skums IMP ‘to contract’ and ‘khum IPV, ksams PFV ‘shrink’, ‘contracted’. But Hahn (1994: 280) notes ‘gum IPV, bkum PFV, ksams FUT ‘kill, execute’, and ‘gum IPV, gum PFV, khum IPV ‘to die’ (HON of ‘chi) – Cordier’s proposal. Secondly, in the case of the verb rdung ‘beat’, as already seen in previous sections, these two participants do not fill the same slot: ngs khyod rdung ... ‘I beat you’ vs. khyod kyis nga rdung ... ‘you beat me’. Thirdly, slob means ‘study’ and ‘teach’ and would require AG marking for both a teacher and a pupil, cf. ngs bod skad slob sbyong byas pa yin ‘I have learned Tibetan’. ngs la slob could be interpreted as ‘I was taught’. Finally, Cordier describes here the difference between causative and resultative meanings of verbs, and

39 Here, Lalou (1950: 54) adds: "Je fais mourir".
40 The sdom examples are omitted in Lalou (1950: 54).
not their transitivity. It remains unclear in how far Cordier distinguishes these two kinds of classification; probably, he does not (cf. Cordier 1907f: 49ff.). These examples suggest that it is the ergative marker alone which decides about the orientation of the event encoded in the verb. In this respect, all verbs would be neutral. Cordier thus does not entirely solve the troubles of different verb forms, the non-obligatoriness of nominal constituents, and the fluidity of ergative marking.

Cordier further states that the various verb forms are not tense, but aspect markers (‘Duratif, Parfait, Intensif, Causatif, ...’, Cordier 1907f: 48) which are morphologically marked; due to a lack of aspect terminology or for the sake of uniform representation, Cordier keeps the traditional tense terminology while referring to the language samples. The system of verb inflection is characterized as highly variable: some verbs have only one form, other verbs have two or three; periphrastic formations can replace these forms. Cordier assumes that we find here different types of morphology which have been added to the grammar at different times (cf. Cordier 1907f: 48). Tibetan verb morphology, however, serves another function, the formation of words (derivation); Cordier thus gives examples of lexical relations (Cordier 1907f: 48):

Table 02

| grang ba | froid | > | grangs pa | se refroidir. |
| gad mo | rire; éclat de rire. | > | rgod pa | rire (verbe). |
| gab pa | se cacher. | > | sgab pa | couvrir; |
| grogs | ami, associé. | > | 'gebs pa | déguiser. |

As can be seen here, mainly the prefixes s- and ‘- seem to play a role (in word formation) – the main affixes for causative and resultative verb forms identified earlier by Conrady 1896. Lalou (1950: 53), in close relationship with Cordier’s manuscript, states that the s-prefix (and, in other cases, morphological conversion) serves as a denominal verb formation, e.g.:

Table 03

| bug pa | ‘un trou’ | > + préfixe s- = | sbug-pa | ‘percer, perforer’ |
| ‘khor | ‘un cercle’ | ‘khor | ‘encerceler’ |

Concerning the system of Written Tibetan verb morphology, Cordier distinguishes prefixed and superscribed initial consonants, whereby he attributes a higher status of autonomy to the prefixes, a lesser one to the superscripts; he concludes that all affixes are reduced to s-alone (‘Les suffixes verbaux se réduisent à la siffante dentale s’, Cordier 1907f: 48) – in accordance with Conrady (1896: 32). To conclude, Cordier seems to assume that case marking (ERG vs. ABS) alone decides about the active vs. passive, or a causative vs. resultative meaning of the clause. The orthographic differences of verb forms are not described in detail and are not recognized as the necessary counterparts to the case marking patterns.

41 The original meaning of CAUS for s- and RES for ‘- should be visible from these examples: ‘grogs means ‘to be associated’ and not ‘to associate’ (cf. sgrogs ‘cord, rope, fetters’), while sgdab should mean ‘cover’ and not ‘be covered’: ‘gebs, on the other hand, should be a RES form ‘be covered’. The actual forms, however, are more complex than suggested in these examples: gab ‘shelter’ (cf. kha gab ‘the cover, lid’) is related to the CAUS verb ‘gebs pa (PPV khab FUT dgab IMP khab) ‘cover’ – with a “secondary form” (Jäschke 1987 [= 1881]) sgab; and a RES verb ‘khab ‘to be spread over’, khebs pa ‘be covered’, ‘the covering’.

60
03.03. Ladakhi and (Central) Tibetan

Both Csoma and the Herrnhut missionaries Jäschke and Francke learned Tibetan in Ladakh which has its own dialect with important differences to Written and Spoken Central Tibetan. Missionaries had an interest in the Spoken language; thus, in 1901, Francke was the first to publish a grammar of a spoken variant of Tibetan, Ladakhi. Ladakhi is related, but remarkably different from Central Spoken Tibetan. Nonetheless, this Tibetan variant may present a similar range of phenomena concerning ergativity, and there is a later contribution of the same author dealing with [Central] Tibetan which can be related. Francke (1901) distinguishes the active and neutral as well as transitive and intransitive verb classes for Ladakhi: active-transitive, active-intransitive, inactive-transitive, and inactive-intransitive (Francke 1901: 24). He gives the following explanation for the use of the ABS and ERG cases:

This case takes no ending but the optional article. The use of the nominative is more limited in Ladakhi than in most Aryan languages, because transitive verbs are construed with the instrumental. (Francke 1901: 11)

This looks like a syntactic ERG system, which is emphasized by the following 'note' following shortly afterwards in the text:

NOTE. – Beginners must take care not to consider all active verbs as transitive; active intransitive verbs, such as go, run, etc., must be construed with the nominative. (Francke 1901: 11)

In this case, it would be clear that ergative is triggered by transitivity:

The instrumental with a case ending is the case of the agent. In transitive sentences it takes the place of the nominative in English, Example: ngsa specha de silpen, I have read that book. (Francke 1901: 13)

This seems to be the same in Written Tibetan:

The verb in Tibetan is of nominal character. It expresses a coming to pass and is construed either with the instrumental or nominative case, according to its being considered transitive or intransitive. (Francke & Simon 1929: 136)

But in fact, Francke (1901) departs more from a the 'prototypical' setting or 'strong hypothesis', because he immediately gives exceptions to these rules: firstly, some transitive verbs don't take INS subjects: "The verbs to have, to get, to need, to desire take the nominative for the thing needed, desired, etc." (Francke 1901: 11); similarly, some other verbs, obviously inactive-transitive ones (which have no agentive participant), don't take INS:

NOTE. – Only in a few idioms is this instrumental not used instead of the nominative. Examples: kho miggis dzinna midug, he cannot see well with the eye; ringgo khas khors, the summits are covered with snow; khas hlobba zum, learn it with the mouth (by heart). (Francke 1901: 12)

Ladakhi opposes nominalizer suffixes in the ABS case to the case markers, i.e. -po applies only to nouns which are not case-marked.
On the other hand, the accusative (identical with the nominative) is used "for the direct object as in the Aryan languages, but not so often, as the dative with la is often used instead of it" (Francke 1901: 12) – an early observation (cf., e.g., Schmidt 1839: 62). This is repeated in the following characterization: "The dative is not so particularly the case of the indirect object as an intensified form for the direct object" (Francke 1901: 13). Apart from its locative function (Francke 1901: 14), the DAT is also described for more specific functions, namely to mark the possessor, and finally for further uses which are described as an 'indirect passive formation':

The dative is especially used to denote the possessor, etc., with the verbs to have, to receive, to need. Example: ngala khangpa zhig, yod-thob, rgos, I have, have got, need a house. (Francke 1901: 13)

In many cases the dative points out the sufferer in the indirect passive formation (see Verb, passive). Examples: ngala yasha corug, I am loved; khyi des mi zhigla thamstog, a man was bitten by the dog. (Francke 1901: 14)

Contrary to the 'rules' formulated, this description gives evidence for a semantic GOAL case (DAT, la) and a semantic application of AG (INS) with active-transitive, but not with inactive verbs, be they transitive or intransitive. The word 'transitive' is here used as a synonym for 'bivalent'; this is somewhat misleading, since the transitive verbs which are exceptions are only bivalent, but all have 'low transitivity' in modern models of (gradual) transitivity (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1980, Tsunoda 1981). If a gradual concept of transitivity is considered, the system described here is a semantic system of case marking in which case marking depends on a parameter of transitivity which is defined independently from mere valence (semantic ergativity). In the chapter on verbs, Francke states that in the classical language individual verbs can be construed either with ERG or ABS (semantic use), while in Ladakhi, case marking is predictable from an inherent property (case frame) of the verb. The reason for this difference is interpreted as a language change, whereby Ladakhi has become more syntactic.

General remarks. – On the whole the verb in the Ladakhi dialect seems to show a progress in respect to its verbal function, as compared with the verb in the classical language. The verb in the classical language may properly be considered as a verbal noun, for, as Conrady distinctly points out, in the classical language the verbal strength of a sentence lies less in the verb itself, than in the subject of the sentence, whether that be used in the nominative or instrumental. From this cause it happens that in the classical language the same verb may be construed with the instrumental or with the nominative, according as it is employed in a transitive or intransitive sense.

The advance which the verb of the Ladakhi dialect exhibits rests in this, that generally speaking it can no longer be alternately construed with nominative and instrumental, but that each separate verb takes one or the other case alone. (Francke 1901: 24)

On the other hand, Francke is able to mention deviations from his rule, where verbs can be construed with either ABS or ERG, thereby changing their semantics (Francke 1901: 24):

There exist a few verbs which are alternatively used with the instrumental and nominative. They are the following: –
The here-mentioned perception verbs clearly show that the use of INS gives the verb a causative, or AG-oriented reading, while the omission of the INS gives them a resultative, or PAT-oriented reading.

The dichotomy for ‘learn’ and ‘teach’ – two transitive and bivalent verbs in SAE, can be seen as ‘A teaches B’ vs. ‘B [is] taught [something]’. Francke adds that for *hlabces* there exists another form *hlobces* which has the meaning ‘learn’ only (Francke 1901: 25). This difference seems to refer to Written Tibetan *slob* (PRS stem, IMP *slobs*), as opposed to *bslabs* (PST stem) or *bslab* (FUT).

The semantic differences between ‘meet/touch’ and ‘be-ashed/abuse’ can also be described as an orientation of the verb towards the ABS/PAT or the AG, respectively: ‘A touches B’, ‘B is touched’, ‘A abuses B’, ‘B is abused’.

This fluidity of case marking together with this kind of meaning change is observed by Francke & Simon (1929: 137) – among other authors – for [Central] Tibetan. They give the following verbs which are neutral with respect to AG-/PAT-orientation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thugces with Nom.</th>
<th>With Instr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>threces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to meet</td>
<td>to touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be ashamed</td>
<td>to abuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes also:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>thongces</th>
<th>to look like</th>
<th>to see</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>theorces</td>
<td>to sound like</td>
<td>to hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hlabces</td>
<td>to learn</td>
<td>to teach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Francke & Simon (1929: 136f.) state that Tibetan verbs were originally (i.e., diachronically) neutral with respect to transitivity, i.e., their transitivity was displayed only by the presence of an ERG marker:

In other words, originally all the Tibetan verbs may be transitive as well as intransitive. What they are to be taken for in a particular sentence, is shown by the agent. The development of the language seems to have gone, however, in this direction that the transitive or intransitive force has pervaded a certain number of verbal stems to such a degree that they can be said to belong exclusively to the transitive or intransitive side. (Francke & Simon 1929: 136f.)

Francke (1901) thus concludes that the verbs of Ladakhi have diachronically ’gained’ some predicative force (”Thus it comes that the transitive or intransitive force of the sentence no longer lies in the subject alone, but has been partly transferred to the verb”, Francke 1901:

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33 -ces is the suffix for infinitives in Ladakhi.

34 Koshal (1979: 178) mentions that some ‘transitive’ verbs, such as *mja/’meet’, za/’eat’, are construed without ERG marking.
25), and by doing so, they have become based on a dichotomic category of transitivity – so that it remains unclear why the category active/neuter is maintained at all:

From the above it follows, that the Ladakhi verbs fall into two great groups, transitive and intransitive, according as they take the nominative or instrumental. According as they denote an action or a condition, they can be divided into active and neuter verbs.

(Francke 1901: 25)

In contradiction to the above-mentioned exceptions, Francke thus gives the following chart for a syntactic ERG system based on a syntactic type of transitivity Francke (1901: 25):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 05</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>active transitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>neuter transitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>active intransitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>neuter intransitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Francke (1901) adds that this type of schema is "observed strictly by educated people" while "others are not always quite strict" (Francke 1901: 25) – in other words, it seems to be a normative rule. A normative linguistic rule in Ladakhi means that it is probably more related to Classical or Written Tibetan which is taught at schools, used by educated people, and which is considered to be the ‘better’ language (cf. Koshal 1979: 2f.). Thus, Francke should have put it the other way round: In Ladakhi, contrary to normative language, ERG marking is occasionally omitted.

This rule is observed strictly by educated people. Others are not always quite strict. Though they will never use the instrumental with intransitive verbs, they may occasionally use the nominative with transitive verbs. Thus we may hear: nga cospin, I did it; nga shesdeg, I know it. (Francke 1901: 25)

For [Central] Tibetan, Francke & Simon (1929) give a slightly different description: Again, there are the two binary categories, transitivity and activity Francke & Simon (1929: 137):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 06</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Active-transitive, rdung-ba, to beat;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Neutral-transitive, shes-pa, to know;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Active-intransitive, agro-ba, to walk;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Neutral-intransitive, abyung-ba, to happen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between these verb classes is the following (Francke & Simon 1929: 137f.): active-transitive verbs always require ERG marking. Neutral-transitive verbs, probably perception verbs and other kinds of verbs which have only low transitivity, take an ERG in normative language, but a DAT in colloquial language (= Ladakhi?); the authors give the following example: ngas de shes, 'I know that', or, nga la de shes, 'I know that'; ngas de thsor, 'I feel (or: hear) that' (see below). Neutral-intransitive verbs, according to the authors, always take ABS (ex. sdu-gbsng-bzhig-byum, 'an accident happened'), while active-intransitive verbs, such as mover verbs, can take ERG at least in the literary language (Written Tibetan). Thus, ERG marking is reduced and at the same time not simply attributable to a triggering parameter such as transitivity or activity. If ERG can be chosen by the speakers, it may have an independent semantic function, which can be added to the meaning of the verb.

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45 This behavior of the mover verbs is attributed by the authors to the possible influence of Sanskrit or more modern Indian dialects.
There is some difference between Francke’s (1901) syntactic rules and the semantically motivated realizations. To make things more complicated, he reports that not only ERG is omitted, it can even sometimes be replaced by DAT.

Occasionally transitive neuter verbs, especially in Lower Ladakhi, may take the dative instead of the instrumental. Examples: ngala thorsong, ngala shessong, I heard it, I knew it. (Francke 1901: 25)

This description mentions for the first time a phenomenon in Ladakhi, the use of experiencer subjects with verbs describing involuntary actions. Most ERG languages either take ERG or ABS with such verbs, but Ladakhi takes an EXP subject – at least with some verbs, while other verbs with similar semantic predisposition don’t show this pattern. For Francke, however, this is an exception from his concept of transitivity, which he tries to apply ‘universally’:

On the whole the views of Ladakhis as to which group a verb should be placed under agree with those of Europeans. An exception is that ces, to like, which always takes the nominative. Example: nga dela thaddug, I like it. (Francke 1901: 25)

Cf. Francke & Simon (1929) for [Central] Tibetan:

Although on the whole, the views of the Tibetans, as to which group of verb should be placed under, agree with those of Europeans, an exception is made with regard to the verbs dgā-ba and thad-pa, to like. These verbs ought to be construed with the instrumental case, according to our ideas, but in Tibetan, they are construed with the nominative: nga-nyi-ma-la-dgā, ‘athad, I like the sun; not: ngas-nyi-ma-la-dgā, ‘athad. (Francke & Simon 1929: 138)

After explaining the ‘tense’ stem forms of Ladakhi, Francke (1901: 35) explains the still intact morphological causative formation of Ladakhi with a prefix s-, e.g., nyalces ‘to lie down’ and snyalces ‘to make lie down’, a formation which seems to be gradually replaced by a ‘new’ causative auxiliary: chuges – the Written Tibetan verb ‘jug’ ‘let, make’. Koshal (1979: 184, 259) also mentions ‘bri ‘jug ces’ ‘to make somebody write’. Francke & Simon (1929: 138) mention the two types of causativization, (a) by prefixing s- to the verb (ex. ‘khor ‘something turns’ vs. skor ‘somebody turns’) and (b) analytically with the causativizing verb ‘jug’ (ex. ‘bri ‘jug’ ‘make somebody write’).

Francke & Simon (1929), on [Central] Tibetan refer to the dialect of Ladakh in order to explain the ‘old’ system of s-prefixation in Ladakhi, and he gives more examples which are also classified in four types Francke & Simon (1929: 138f.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>C/sC</th>
<th>C/Ch</th>
<th>Ch/sC</th>
<th>Ch/C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>gang ba</td>
<td>bud pa</td>
<td>khor ba</td>
<td>thon pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to be full</td>
<td>to cease</td>
<td>to surround</td>
<td>to come out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skang</td>
<td>phud</td>
<td>skor</td>
<td>bton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to fill</td>
<td>to stop</td>
<td>to turn</td>
<td>to pour out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Francke & Simon (1929: 138) also point out one important fact: the so-called ‘tense forms’ in Written Tibetan are always much simpler in the spoken varieties, with one or two stem forms for PFV and IPV. In such an environment, the changes between CAUS and RES verb forms becomes more salient:
The fact that the Tibetan verb in the classical language has not only one, but three or four roots, makes it very difficult for a beginner, to observe the workings of the causative. I therefore propose, first to give examples taken from the dialects. In the Western as well as in the Central dialect the perfect root is used for all the tenses and may justly be called the principal root of the verb. (Francke & Simon 1929: 138)

Contrary to Written Tibetan, Ladakhi causative formation is said to be more regular, especially due to the fact that there are not various tense-defined stem forms (Francke & Simon 1929: 140ff.). First, dialects do not have future stems (~ future stems in the written language are often used with the meaning of intention rather than future tense which is often represented by PRS stem or analytic formations with AUX verbs); in Western Tibetan, there remain three stems Francke & Simon (1929: 142):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to give</td>
<td>[b]tang</td>
<td>[b]tangs</td>
<td>tong;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to look</td>
<td>ita</td>
<td>itas</td>
<td>its;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to write</td>
<td>bri</td>
<td>bris</td>
<td>bris.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this way, there is a recognizable morphological mechanism: PFV -s, IMP ablaut+-s, whereas the situation in Written Tibetan is very complicated and practically does not allow to find simple rules organized in productive and unproductive paradigms. Thus, the authors come to an important hypothesis about Tibetan verb morphology:

Thus the conjecture may be ventured that the Tibetan verb, when first approached by the native grammarians who had received an Indian education, showed two large groups. One of them contained all the intransitive and durative verbs. The other contained all the transitive and active verbs. Tense, past or present, was possibly not meant to be expressed at all by the difference of these groups. It was perhaps expressed within both groups by s-suffix for the past. But the grammarians, for the purpose of forming an averbo similar to that of the Indian grammar, took, as may be conjectured, the intransitive and durative roots, and the corresponding transitive and active roots, and formed one averbo out of both, enforcing thus on them the main function of tense which originally they had not or rather not to this degree. (Francke & Simon 1929: 145f.)

It is very interesting to see that the native grammars, when treating the system of prefixes before the verb, do not only speak of the power, which these prefixes have to form tenses, but particularly of the power they have to form transitives or intransitives. (Francke & Simon 1929: 146)

The important conclusion of the discussion of Tibetan verbs contains the understanding of the original system as one with a fundamental morphological distinction between CAUS and RES verb forms, here termed transitive/intransitive, probably with some variation, on which a tense model has been applied artificially, leading to a grammatical representation of normative grammar which does not account for the real or underlying categories. This fact obscures the application of the ERG case, because it does not rely on the main triggering factor for ERG application, the orientation of verbs towards an AG. It is also remarkable that Francke & Simon here refer to 'native grammarians' and their works; their views will have to be discussed below. Francke & Simon 1929: 139f. thus have readily adopted Conradi’s (1896) contribution on the causative/resultative (active/neutral) distinction, and and Laufer’s (1898) contribution on indigenous grammar.
Due to the non-obligatoriness of NPs in the Tibetan clause, earlier authors have already mentioned that 'active' (AG-oriented) verbs can be understood both as active or passive; Csoma proposed that the omission of ERG can be viewed as a kind of passivization. Francke, in favor of a 'nominalist view' of the Tibetan verb (cf. Francke & Simon 1929: 136), makes clear at first that Tibetan ERG constructions are not to be understood as passives: "The construction ngas cospin, etc. must not be considered as passives; ngas cospin does not mean 'it was done by me', but 'by me was doing'" (Francke 1901: 37, fn.). On the other hand, he identifies the CAUS/RES morphology as a difference of active and passive meaning:

In verbs with two stems (see ancient causative) the simple or neuter form is used for the passive, the causative form for the active. Example: khangpa zhig thsar, the house was destroyed; khangpa de shigkanni mi, the man, destroying the house (who destroyed the house). (Francke 1901: 37)

In other words, Francke identifies the fundamental difference in orientation of the two Tibetan verb forms (zhig is PAT-oriented, bshigs is AG-oriented), but assigns them a traditional grammatical category (genus verbi). Since verbs are viewed as nominal elements (verbal nouns), they are interpreted by Francke as participles; the 'tense' forms for present (imperfective) and perfect(ive) are thus seen as 'active present participles' and 'passive past participles':

Of the two participles the present participle has an active meaning, the past participle a passive meaning. Example: tangkhanni mi, the sending man, tangskhanni mi, the sent man, the man who was sent, is passive. (Francke 1901: 37)

On the other hand, in the past stem (perfective), active verbs can be understood both as active or passive, according to the presence or absence of an NP with INS case (Francke 1901: 37) – the old explanation of Csoma de Kórös (1834: 114):

In the active the subject takes the instrumental and the object the accusative or dative. Example: ngas las de cospin, I have done the work. — In the passive the object of the action is put in the nominative. Example: las de cothsar, the work was done. (Francke 1901: 38)

Another strategy for passivization is seen in word order changes and the use of DAT (ALL) la for the object:

All active transitive verbs form the passive indirectly by changing the order of the sentence. Thus the nominative of the English passive sentence is changed to the dative or accusative of an active sentence. Thus instead of 'I am loved', we say 'he, she, it loves me'. Examples: khos ngala yasha corug, he makes love to me, I am loved; khos ngala rdungdug, he beats me, I am beaten by him. (Francke 1901: 38)

Finally, a special construction in Ladakhi is described involving the continuative particle te and giving the clause a PAT-oriented reading:

A passive of some active transitive verbs is formed by putting them in the gerund in te and taking dug and yod for auxiliary. Examples: khyongste dug, it is brought; ige driste dug, the letter is written. This form cannot be used with all verbs but is idiomatic with many verbs. (Francke 1901: 37)

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46 Written Tibetan gtong, btang. Ladakhi tang, tangs.
Francke thus describes verb orientation, aspect/tense forms, and the structural strength of the DAT la – which is more specific for Ladakhi – but relates these facts to known traditional grammatical categories such as passivization and verbal nouns. His rules for ERG application are syntactic, but the exceptions and examples point out that this is a fluid and semantic case marking system. There seem to be sociolinguistic differences in the application of ERG, between a normative language and the dialect. Francke refers to a parameter of 'transitivity' whose function is not entirely clear, since it cannot be separated from the older distinction of active and inactive (neutral) verbs.

The next grammar of Ladakhi appeared only much later: Koshal 1979 describes this important CAUS/RES distinction only as a lexical(ized) feature of verbs (Koshal 1979: 178ff.). She states that most CAUS/RES pairs are unrelated (morphologically suppletive), but few verbs do have more or less regular phonological relations with each other ("[...] by pre-fixation and devoicing of the initial consonant of the transitive or by only devoicing or aspirating or deaspirating of the initial consonant and prefixation of the intransitive stems", Koshal 1979: 183). She gives the following examples (Koshal 1979: 183F) – here correlated with Written Tibetan forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ladaki</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>Written Tibetan</th>
<th>transl.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bar</td>
<td>be burnt</td>
<td>bar</td>
<td>catch fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spar</td>
<td>burn</td>
<td>spar</td>
<td>raise, incite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>be uprooted</td>
<td>'bud</td>
<td>put off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td>uproot</td>
<td>spud</td>
<td>bellows (n.)^7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>žik</td>
<td>be destroyed</td>
<td>'jig, bzhig</td>
<td>destroyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šik</td>
<td>destroy</td>
<td>bshig</td>
<td>destroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čat^48</td>
<td>cut intr.</td>
<td>'chad</td>
<td>be cut off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čhat</td>
<td>cut tr.</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čhak</td>
<td>break intr.</td>
<td>chag</td>
<td>broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čag</td>
<td>break tr.</td>
<td>gcog, beag</td>
<td>break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khor</td>
<td>move in a circle</td>
<td>khor</td>
<td>rotate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skor</td>
<td>move around</td>
<td>skor</td>
<td>turn round</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to both Written Tibetan and Ladakhi, Central Tibetan seems to have lost most of these morphological differences in the verbs. Approximately at the same time as Francke (1901), Bell (1905) has published his grammar of 'Colloquial', i.e., Central (Lhasa) Tibetan; he describes the situation as follows:

2. There is no separate inflection in the verb itself, by which one can distinguish between the singular and plural numbers, or between the active and passive voices. Even the different tenses are often the same in the colloquial as used by ordinary, uneducated persons. By the accompanying noun or pronoun one can tell whether the singular or plural is meant. The accompanying auxiliary verb, and sometimes an alternation in the root, gives the tense. From the context and from the inflexion of the noun or pronoun, if any, one must judge whether the voice is active or passive. (Bell 1919: 43 [51])

^7 Das (1902 [1985]: 937) gives the example sbud pa ‘bud pa ‘to blow the bellows'. The PFV of ‘bud pa is phud pa.
^48 This pair seems to be inverted, cf. the written forms ‘chad/gcoa.
As described by all earlier authors, genus verbi results only from the presence or absence of ERG marking. The verb inflection has disappeared and is only reflected by some alternations in the verb itself (the 'root'). Again, this is correlated with education, so that the use of different verb stems for different tenses correlates with knowledge about the normative (written) language. Nonetheless, he gives an example for this kind of language, the pronunciation of the 'correct' written forms, which later he does not recommend to use (cf. Bell 1919: 45 [53]):

The verbal root-inflections, i.e., the changes in the roots of the verbs for different tenses, are of less importance than they otherwise would be, since in the colloquial of uneducated persons the great majority of verbs use the perfect root for all tenses. Thus, the verb to put in has in the literary language four roots, viz.: —

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jug</td>
<td>chu</td>
<td></td>
<td>gzhug</td>
<td>shu</td>
<td>chug</td>
<td>chhu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But the ordinary colloquial employs the perfect root bcug for all the tenses. (Bell 1919: 43f. [51f.])

This points now to a new difficulty for the description of Tibetan ergativity: the spoken dialects are morphologically quite different from Written Tibetan, although there is some normative interest of the speakers to relate to the written forms.

03.04. The influence of indigenous grammar

It is clear that authors such as Csoma de Körös who learned Tibetan from a Tibetan teacher in Zanskar got explanations which were based on indigenous viewpoints: ' [...] I have endeavoured, with the aid of authentic grammatical works, to express every word in its proper characters', Csoma de Körös 1834: vii). Indigenous views were transmitted from their teachers already to the earliest European scholars.

[...] dass Missionare wie Gelehrte, welche die Sprache unter den Eingeborenen selbst zu erlernen Gelegenheit gehabt haben, von Anfang an unter einem geradezu beherrschenden Einfluss der heimischen Sprachanschauungen standen, von dem sie sich nur schwer zu befreien vermochten. (Laufer 1898: 521)

However, with respect to the description of the ergative, these cannot be identified with certainty in Csoma's grammar (1834). Schmidt (1839: xfl) mentions that Tibetan grammars are mainly concerned with orthography, which probably means that he did not consider these sources to be very significant for grammatical theory. Foucaux (1858: 53) gives as an example of word formation the term byed pa po (and feminine byed pa mo) which identifies as a linguistic term for 'agent'. In 1898 appeared the first edition of a Tibetan grammatical text in Europe (Laufer 1898). Among the authors of grammars, Palmyr de Cordier (1907f.: 18) quotes the Tibetan case name for AG, byed pa po'i sgra. It is Bacot who edits a grammatical text in 1928 and in his grammar (1946) explicitly relies on a Tibetan concept for the description of (verb grammar and) ergativity. Therefore, it will be necessary to discuss briefly the historiography of Tibetan linguistics.
04. Tibetan indigenous grammaticography

04.01. Introduction


Although the earliest European scholars were familiar with indigenous grammatical concepts (cf. Laufer 1898: 521), these early researchers did perhaps not always grasp correctly traditional concepts (cf. Tillemans 1988: 497-498, Tillemans 1989: 23-26, cf. Miller 1993: 25), which should be said only with awareness of their merits: "Without the efforts of such hardy pioneers [...] we would today know but little of the achievements of the Tibetan grammatical tradition [...]" (Miller 1993: 234). First of all, in indigenous descriptions, ERG (and syntax) are not central topics:

The questions which occupied the grammarians of Tibet certainly did not include the problem of developing a definitive analysis of ergative structure and then drawing explicit contrasts between it and the accusative pattern (as represented by Sanskrit, for example). (Herforth 1989: 77)

Denn die Tibetischen Wörterbücher und Sprachlehren lassen uns, so weit sie mir bekannt sind, über so manche grammatische Spracheigenheit in völliger Ungewissheit; [...] (Schmidt 1839: XI.)

The Tibetan treatises on grammar are primarily providing rules for orthography and for historical verb morphology patterns (cf. Herforth 1989: 77), which already in historical times are completely unproductive remnants of an older system – although the categories still play an important role. In this way, orthographic rules are in a way grammatical rules – of the written language:

[...] wie hier graphische und grammatische Fragen aufs innigste zusammenhängen; das schwierigste Problem der Rechtschreibung ist immer das, ob dies oder jenes Wort ein Präfix oder mehrere erhält, und welches Präfix, und diese Präfixe treten eben als grammatische Funktionen auf. Es erhellt also daraus, dass unter Umständen eine Frage der Orthographie mit einer grammatischen in eins zusammefallen kann. (Laufer 1898: 527)

The verb and its various orthographic forms are central topics for the Tibetan grammarians, because these forms give a fundamental distinction of 'causative' vs. 'resultative' and up to four 'tense' forms per verb which seem not to be 'tenses' both diachronically and synchronically. As far as the pronunciation is concerned, these verbs are pronounced with, without, or with other phonological differences than those marked in the script, according to the respective dialects.

Grammar in the Tibetan perspective serves the understanding of traditional written texts. Therefore, there is no need to include spoken varieties in the descriptions. Only in the last decades, a Tibetan linguistics in the European sense has developed. In a traditional view, the written language and its grammar, like any other knowledge system, is an unchangeable
corpus of knowledge transmitted from the old authors, or, in this case, from the one old author.

Die Schrift ward und wird als ein Heiliges, Unverletzliches betrachtet, woran man nicht rütteln und ändern darf, und so kommt es, dass wir heute noch die Wörter in der alten Schreibung, wie sie zur Zeit ihrer erstmaligen Fixierung bestand, vor uns sehen, obwohl in den meisten Fällen die Aussprache zu dem Schriftbild in gar keinem Verhältnis steht.

(Laufer 1898: 526f.)

But there was some historical change; therefore, in a rough overview, according to Tillemans & Herforth 1989 and other researchers, four historical layers for Tibetan linguistics may be distinguished: first, there is the Sanskrit-based approach to grammar, second the two grammar treatises of Thonmi Sambhota, and third, the landmark work of Situ Panchen; lastly, the work of modern Tibetan linguists trained both in traditional and foreign (Chinese, Russian) linguistic theories. These groups of grammatical treatises will be dealt with in the following section in chronological order.

04.02. Sanskrit grammar sources

The Tibetan culture is completely impregnated by the late Indian Buddhism of the 7th to 13th century. Therefore, Tibet has adopted at that time all sciences and all the knowledge from Indian sources, including grammaticography.

The spread of Buddhism from its place of origin and first development, the South-Asian subcontinent, over Tibet entailed the adoption by Tibetan culture of an enormous complex of cultural elements, including dogmas and ideas, traditions and liturgies, forms of social organisation, material culture, literature and art, etc., all originating from the Indian subcontinent. As a result the influence of Indian culture on Tibet has been immense.

(Verhagen 1994: 1)

The Tibetan culture of the last millenium served the purpose of transmitting the most complete teachings of the BuddhaDharma, as it has been taken from Indian Sanskrit literature.

[...] that in the undisturbed shelter of this region, [...] were to be found, in complete preservation, the volumes of Buddhist faith, in their original Sanskrit, as well as in faithful translations, which might be sought in vain in the continent of India. (Csoma de Kőröss 1834: vi)

The tradition of grammar writing is equally dependent on Indian traditions (cf. Verhagen 1994). As is well-known, the Indian linguistic tradition was a highly developed science. Thus, we can be sure that Tibetan grammarians since ever relied on Indian linguistic works; thus, Indian grammatical resources remained the reference point for Tibetan linguistics, just as European linguistics has to be settled in its historical development and historical resources (until the Greek philosophers).

Voici brièvement les caractéristiques fondamentales de la grammaire tibétaine: tout d'abord, la tradition dès son origine a été profondément influencée par la tradition grammaticale de l'Inde, cela pour des raisons culturelles et religieuses évidentes. Cette tradition a été importée de l'Inde par les Panditas en même temps que le bouddhisme. L'im-
plantation du bouddhisme au Tibet n’a pu être réalisée que grâce à l’énorme travail de traduction des Lotsawas (lo-tsa-ba) qui en dehors du Dharma ont apporté de nombreux éléments culturels provenant pour plusieurs raisons: le grand rayonnement de la science grammaticale sanscrite (Grammaire de Panini) d’une part faisait du sanscrit la langue de référence, de plus la parenté entre les deux systèmes d’écriture (tibétain et sanscrit) favorisait encore ce lien et de ce fait les traités chinois, essentiellement lexicographiques (Fang yan, Shuo wen jie zi, Shi ming, Er ya, etc.), n’ont pas exercé d’influence sensible dans ce domaine. (Tournadre 1996: 346)

Although Chinese and Central Asian influences can be found in abundance (cf. Verhagen 1994: 1f.), the main influence on the formation of Tibetan Buddhist culture was exercised by the Indian Buddhist culture which was flourishing until its complete eradication through the islamic invaders of India (cf. Verhagen 1994: 108). This influence of India is also predominant in Tibetan linguistics.

Tibetan indigenous grammar and other linguistic disciplines are […] predominantly patterned after the models of the Indian traditions of vyākarana, the science of grammar, and related branches of linguistics. (Verhagen 1994: 2)

Interestingly, however, in the early period of the first Tibetan grammars, no original sources of Sanskrit grammar in Tibet seemed to exist, although the grammar and language have been well-known to scholars.

Nevertheless it is evident from the extensive literature of translations from Sanskrit that was being produced at the time that the eighth- and ninth-century Tibetan scholars must have occupied themselves with mastering the intricacies of the grammar of Sanskrit. We find literary evidence of Sanskrit linguistic studies in the royal pre-classical period in Tibet only in original Tibetan scriptures, not in translations of Indic treatises. (Verhagen 1994: 11)

Detailed general accounts on the influence of Sanskrit grammar on Tibetan linguistics are given in Verhagen 1994 and also Miller 1993.

04.03. Names and ordering of case markers

In traditional Tibetan descriptions, the case particles are listed within a Sanskrit-based framework (cf. Tournadre 1990), where the Tibetan AG/INS is placed as nr. 3, which equals the Sanskrit ‘instrumental case’ (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 3); but the Tibetan scholars gave semantically relevant names to the case particles, calling the 3rd case the ‘doer case’ (byed sgra)\(^\text{49}\), which in modern works has the semantic subclasses agent, instrument, and source (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 11f.). While Sanskrit case marking is of the more syntactic type, Tibetan case marking is semantic; thus, the semantic denomination of case markers is also more obvious.

Also in traditional Indian grammar, INS and AG are treated as one concept. It may be noted that in Indian and Tibetan grammatical discussions, “agent” [byed pa po = kartr] can span both the animate being responsible for the action – i.e. the so-called "principal"

\(^\text{49}\) sgra is the Tibetan rendering of skt. śabda, ‘word, name’.
or "primary" agent [byed pa po gtso bo = Skt. pradhânakartr] – as well as the typically inanimate instrument (byed pa = Skt. karaṇa) by which this action is accomplished. The latter is known as the "secondary agent" [byed pa po phal ba = gûnakartr]: [...] (Tillemans & Herfôrth 1989: 6)

The transposition of one grammatical tradition on another culture has occurred also in early European culture where the 'national' languages (such as German, 'deutsch' < 'theodisce', lit. 'people's speech') was described in terms of Graeco-Latin grammatical concepts. Later, the same concepts were applied to 'foreign', 'exotic' languages, where the available grammatical concepts were simply looked for in the new language (cf., e.g., Adelung (1806-1817)). As mentioned earlier, the Sanskrit case list did not fit the Tibetan situation. Hence, DAT/ALL/EXP la occurs three times in the listing, and although there is no vocative case in Tibetan, it is listed as one of the cases, as if this enumeration of cases was a universal one. Asking what early Tibetan grammars really are historiographically, Miller concludes:

A solution imposes itself as soon as we agree to focus attention not upon what Tibetan grammarians' tradition is not [...] , but instead upon what it very obviously is: an intricate reworking of Indic grammatical models ingeniously recast in order to fit the structure of Tibetan, much as a century ago in the West Greek- and Latin-model grammars were generally made to serve as the basis for the description of all 'exotic languages'. (Miller 1993: 38)

As far as ergativity is concerned, it can be seen here that the Tibetan ERG/INS is ordered as the Sanskrit instrumental (3), the ABS as a nominative (1), and one of the functions of la is the equivalent of the accusative (2) (cf. Miller 1993: 184). That early European scholars unanimously mention that la can stand for the ACC may also have a relation to this fact.

The concept of Tibetan grammar as a mere imitation of Sanskrit sources, however, is too shortsighted. Miller (1993: 191) remarks that the Tibetan tradition is not "a mechanical equation of the case-forms of two different linguistic systems with one another":

Instead, it is a treatment of Tibetan case grammar in terms of the much-discussed, and enormously involved, Indic theory of káraka, the set of analysis and description that has accurately been defined as the "syntacto-semantic categories" of the Indic grammarians [...] (Miller 1993: 191)

Verhagen 1994 gives many more far-reaching insights into the historiography of Tibetan grammar writing and Indic resources, which will not be exposed here in length – because, on the other hand, the Tibetan grammatical treatises are also distinct works which soon used the borrowed – or known – terms from Sanskrit grammar for their own needs.

Strictly speaking, it is somewhat odd to speak of equivalences at all in that the texts we are dealing with are indigenous Tibetan works and not translations from Sanskrit. (Tillemans & Herfôrth 1989: vii)

Only later than the basic cultural contact of Tibet with India, Indian grammarians approached the split ergative systems (ERG in past tense) in Indian languages with the terms 'kar-tani-prayoga' ('actor-construction') and 'karmani-prayoga' ('goal-construction') (cf. Matthews 1953: 394). Additionally, the Indo-Iranian ergative systems are diachronically and syntactically considerably different from Tibetan ergativity.
04.04. Thonmi Sambhoṭa

Thonmi Sambhoṭa (thon mi saMbHoTa) (cf. Miller 1963) is said to have created the Tibetan script and grammar. According to Tibetan history, Thonmi was a minister of the first 'dharma king' (chos rgyal) Songtsen Gampo (strong btsan sgam po) who (officially) introduced Buddhism in Tibet and sent Thonmi to India in 622 in order to create a Tibetan script and grammatical descriptions. It is more than doubtful whether the generally reported historical facts (or assumptions) about Thonmi (as the inventor of the script and the grammar) can be correct (cf. Miller 1993: 13f.); it is possible that he (or other people) merely introduced a probably already existing script from elsewhere (West India or Khotan) which he learned in Kashmir. The origin of the Tibetan script cannot be traced back until now, although there exist interesting proposals (cf. Róna-Tás 1985 for an overview). Eight grammatical treatises are ascribed to Thonmi, two of which have survived until today, the sum cu pa (SCP, 'The thirty verses') and the rtags kyi 'jug pa (TKJ).

[...] Thonmi Sambhoṭa, ostensibly the founder of Tibetan literary culture, the inventor of the alphabet, and the First Grammarian in his role as author of the SCP and TKJ, the two texts upon which with only a few exceptions the entire subsequent bulk of the indigenous grammatical literature depends. (Miller 1993: 13)

Since Tibetan culture is basically concerned with the maintenance of knowledge traditions, practically all grammar work in Tibet is based on these two works of Thonmi Sambhoṭa. Some authors, however, treated the subject more freely than the majority of commentators.

Il faut considérer la tradition grammaticale comme une tradition vivante encore à l'heure actuelle qui, bien qu’étant très conservatrice comme d’ailleurs le reste de la culture tibétaine, n’a cessé d’évoluer, fut-ce à l’intérieur d’un cadre bien déterminé. (Tournadre 1996: 346)

As he is seen as the forefather of linguistic culture, Thonmi’s treatises are the undisputed traditional basis for any further work on the grammar of the language. ‘Conservative’ (‘conservatrice’) should be understood as ‘philologically very careful’; contrary to modern European culture, Tibetan culture focusses mainly on the necessary measures to transmit old knowledge (cf. Laufer 1898: 526f.). In this respect, ‘Tibetan linguistics’ has to be understood as a means to preserve the knowledge of the meanings of the old scriptures rather than a synchronic interest in grammar writing (cf. Wylie 1967: 766). The rules in Thonmi’s works are formulated so concisely (cf. Miller’s “terse aphorisms” (1993: 14), “terse, enigmatic style of statement” (1993: 63), etc.) that commentary literature flourished.

This early "root text" (rtsa ba) [the rtags kyi 'jug pa] is terse in the extreme, and in the latter commentaries to it we can frequently observe a conflict between the traditional authority of Thon mi’s gnomic formulations and the exegete-grammarians instinct for a degree of empirical accuracy far beyond that attainable within the confines of Thon mi’s brief verses. (Herforth 1989: 77)

On the other hand, commentaries, even from more creative authors, do not introduce new topics, but only comment on Thonmi’s concepts. At least in early times, the written word

50 Thonmi is mentioned only later in history books, while the annals do not allow to identify him.
was not seen as the main means of historical tradition, but rather as a mnemonic technical aid for learned individuals who by hearing, learning, and understanding transmitted the meaning of the concepts to their disciples. It can be seen from all Buddhist cultures to what surprising extent these traditions have been maintained across times of unwritten transmission, or across translations (cf., e.g., cross-cultural concordances in biographies of the Buddha). Therefore, it may be thought of an oral tradition for the explanation of these verses, which, as in the Buddhist traditions, later surfaced as commentaries of these root texts.

It is also doubtful that Thonmi simply invented an artificial literary language, as was thought by Bacot (cf. Miller 1993: 20f.). Thonmi may be the person who imported such material into Tibet. Finally, it has to be accounted for the fact that these treatises date from the period before the prosecution of Buddhist culture in Central Tibet in the 8th/9th century (cf. Petech 1966: 322f.); thus, it may well be that the oral tradition for these texts was broken at that time (cf. Miller 1993: 34f.). For all these reasons, it is therefore questionable which type of grammar is described in these two works, whether it is an exhaustive description of the facts, whether this description can be related to the language which we know, and finally, whether there is an unbroken tradition of commentary literature which can give the necessary explanations to some of the less obvious statements. Miller 1993 even doubts the authorship of only one author for both texts. Apart from these philological considerations, it is clear that these two works are the very basis of Tibetan grammar writing. The sum cu pa ('the thirty', cf. Miller 1993: 63-90) treatise mainly explains morphological forms. On the ERG/INS particle, it teaches this much (sloka 11.1):

\[\text{(01) } /\text{de dʐʌ}\text{ I sbyɾ } \text{bɾəl bɔi sa } \text{de nyid la ni/ } /\text{bcu pa} \]

\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{DEM-PL} & \text{'i' put} & \text{V>Cect-GEN} & \text{place} & \text{DEM} & \text{ABSTR} & \text{LOC} & \text{TOP} & \text{ten-th} \\
\text{sbyɾ} & \text{byed pa po ru} & \text{shes par bya/} & \text{put} & \text{agent-ILL} & \text{understand:FUT} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[11.1. \text{"If you put 'i' on these, they become the 'relational case'; if you put the tenth [suffix 's' additionally], it will be understood as agent."}\]

This verse does not explain when the ERG is used, but it tells the reader, that the ERG is formed by adding s to a genitive; this may very well retain a historical development of the Tibetan ERG from a nominal adposition X 'hi s[a] (cf. Simon, quoted in Hahn 1994: 156f.; cf. also Conrady 1896: 44, and Wolfenden 1929 about the s affixes), but it does not give any further information on the grammatical use of this particle.

As far as the function of ERG is concerned, we have to turn our attention to the other work which introduces the concepts of bdag 'self' and gzhan 'other' (or rong dbang and gzhan dbang, ruled by oneself, 'ruled from elsewhere'). It represents a classification of syntactic phrases which is not easily understood from the few lines Thonmi is giving (see below). The original reads (\textit{thon mi saM bHo Ta, rtags kyi 'jug pa} (cf. Miller 1993: 91-111), verse 12, transl. in Laufer 1898: 542f., Tillemans 1989: 1 and in Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 191):

\[\text{(02) } \text{ci phyir 'jug par byed ce na/} \text{pho-ni 'das dang gzhan bsgrub-phyir/} \text{why affix-applied-ALL masc.-TOP past SOC other establishfor} \]

\[
\begin{array}{llllllllllll}
\text{ma ning gnyis ka da ltar ched/} & \text{mo-ni bdag dang ma 'ongs phyir/} & \text{neutral both present for fem.-TOP I SOC FUTURE-for} \\
\text{pho-ni 'das dang gzhan bsgrub-phyir/} & \text{why affix-applied-ALL masc.-TOP past SOC other establishfor} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[51 \text{ i.e., the 'genitive'.}\]
Zu welchem Zweck treten sie [- die Präfixe] an? Das Männliche (b) zur Bezeichnung der Vergangenheit und des Aktivs [- OTHER], Das Neutrale (g, d) zum Ausdruck der Gegenwart, Das Weibliche ('a) zur Bezeichnung des Passivs [- I] und der Zukunft, Das sehr Weibliche (m) zum Ausdruck eines unveränderten Zustands. (Lauffer 1898: 543)

Why are the prefixes applied? The masculine [prefix b-] is for establishing the past and other; The neutral [prefixes g- and d-] are both [self and other] [and] the present; The feminine [prefix 'a-] is for self and the future; The extremely feminine [prefix m-] is for [self, other and the three tenses] all alike. (transl. in Tillemans 1989: 1)

PHO (la lettre masculine) crée le passé et l'objectif (GZHAN), les deux lettres neutres (MA NING) sont (utilisé) pour le présent. La lettre féminine MO est (utilisé) pour l'agentif (BDAG) et le futur, la lettre très féminine SHIN TU MO s'emploie indifféremment. (transl. in Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 191)

First, the generic classification ('masculine', etc.) refers to classes of consonants which are attached to verb forms. There is a small difference between the translations of Tillemans and Kelzang Gyurme in line two (on 'neutral'), Kelzang Gyurme's rendering being more probable (Lauffer 1898: 543 does not translate gnyis ka). This gives the following scheme for verb prefixes ('prescripts'):

Table 01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>masc.</th>
<th>past</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g/d</td>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>future</td>
<td>self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>the three tenses alike</td>
<td>self &amp; other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The generic classification of the consonants is another specific feature of Tibetan grammar. The classification is elaborated in the Zamatog (Lauffer 1898: 540ff.) and perpetuated until today (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: app. 2: iv, Chjongore 2003: Lff.). It is also explained in various European grammars (cf. Cso 1834: 2f.; Foucaux 1858: 106f.) and linguistic contributions (e.g. Wolenden 1929: 13f.). Verse 11 of the rtags kyi 'jug pa reads (Lauffer 1898: 542f.):

(03) ci liar 'jug par byed ce na/ pho ni drag pa'i tshul gyis te/ why affixe-applied-ALL masc.-TOP strong:GEN manner-INS CONT
ma ning ran par 'jug pa yin/ mo ni zhan pa'i tshul gyis 'jug/ neutral balanced-ILL follow-AUX fem.-TOP weak:GEN manner-INS follow
shin tu mo ni mnyam pas so/ extreme-fem.-TOP equal-NS:INS-FIN

In welcher Weise lässt man sie antreten? Das Männliche (also b) tritt an unter starker Erhebung der Stimme, Das Neutrale (g, d) in mässiger Weise; Das Weibliche ('a) tritt mit schwacher Stimme an, Das sehr Weibliche (m) mit gleichmäßiger Stimme. (Lauffer 1898: 542f.)

How are the prefixes applied? The masculine [b] is in the manner of forcefulness; The neutrals [g, d] are balanced; The feminine ['a] is in a weak manner; The extremely feminine [m] is in an equalized [manner].
This suggests a phonological value. If we compare this to the traditional phonetic (articulatory) distinction (voiceless, aspirated, voiced & fricatives & ..., nasals, etc.), we find some irregularities between the two schemes (Csoma 1834: 2f., Foucaux 1858: 106):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>name</th>
<th>tib. name</th>
<th>graphemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masc.</td>
<td>pho</td>
<td>ka ca ta pa tsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutr.</td>
<td>ma ning</td>
<td>kha cha tha pha tsha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fem.</td>
<td>mo tsam</td>
<td>ga ja da ba dza wa zha za 'a ya sha sa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very fem.</td>
<td>shin tu mo</td>
<td>nga nya na ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'barren woman'</td>
<td>mo gsham</td>
<td>ra la Ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undetermined</td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kelzang Gyrme (1992: app. 2: iv) remarks that sha and sa should be considered 'masculine', Ha should be neutral, and A should be undetermined. He concludes that 'masculine' refers 'in principle' to voiceless consonants, 'feminine' to voiced consonants, and 'neutral' to aspirated consonants. Wolfenden (1929: 14) remarks the apparent parallelity of the terms ma ning 'sterile (man)' and mo gsham 'barren woman'; this implies a binary classification in which the first three classes are considered 'masculine', while the following are 'feminine'; in this light, Kelzang Gyrme's reclassification seems to make 'masculine' refer to high tone and 'feminine' to low tone which has been suggested by Wolfenden (1929: 14) as well. But Wolfenden (1929: 15, Fn. 2) also remarks that Tibetan phonetic terms (originally) do not relate to "the idea of tones as known to us". In short, there are many theories and considerations about this terminology, but any such classification does not make sense in the light of the above-mentioned rule. Therefore, one must know that the prefixed letters are reclassified (Csoma 1834: 2f., Foucaux 1858: 106):

Puis on a classé de nouveau les lettres qui servent de préfixes, et ba est devenue masculin; 'a est restée féminine, ma très féminine; ga et da sont devenues neutres. (Foucaux 1858: 106)

This reclassification of prefixed consonants does apply to the above-mentioned rule. Kelzang Gyrme (1992: app. 2: iv) gives a reason for the reclassification, namely the possible pronunciation of these consonants in this context: ba is devoiced ("sans doute prononcée sourde"), 'a and ma are voiced ("sans doute prononcées sonores"), and ga, da are pronounced with an aspiration and 'do not classify' for voiced/devoiced ("sans doute prononcées avec une légère aspiration et une neutralisation de l’opposition sourde/sonore"). Thus, the reclassification has understandable phonological reasons. Foucaux 1858: 105ff., quoting an anonymous Tibetan rule from Schiefner 1851, gives a more sophisticated correspondence between root and prefixed consonants, the use of which is not recognizable ('positive' part of the rule only; it continues with 'exclusion rules'):

La préfixe masculine (ba) se met devant les masculines (ka, ca, ta, tsa) et les féminines (ga, da, zha, za, sha, sa); La féminine ('a) se met devant les féminines (ga, ja, da, ba, dza) et devant les neutres (kha, cha, tha, pha, tsha); Les neutres se mettent devant les masculines et les féminines (ga devant les masculines ca, ta, tsa et les féminines nya, da, na, zha, za, ya, sha, sa; da devant les masculines ka, pa et les féminines ga, nga, ba, ma); La

---

52 ma ning, according to Jäschke (1987 [1881]: 409), has the meaning 'without sexual distinction; impotent; barren; hermaphroditic'. Both translations, 'neutral' and 'sterile', can be applied.
très-féminine (ma) se met devant les neutres (kha, cha, tha, tsha) ainsi que devant les fé-minines (ga, ja, da, dza) et devant les très-féminines elles-mêmes (nga, nya, na). (translation of the Tibetan original, Foucaux 1858: 106)

It seems as if the introduction of a terminology has triggered rules which refer to the terminology without checking the usefulness of the once introduced terminology for the explanation of the system. These rules are obviously highly artificial. Based on this scheme, the later commentaries distinguish ‘regular’, ‘special’, and ‘irregular’ inflectional verb forms. This does not seem to correlate with quantitative measures of regularities, but with the mere fact of recognizing postulated regularities. Within the verb system, one finds various regularities of ablaut patterns as well as pre- and suffixes. The contemporary linguist Kelzang Gyrme refers to this classification and gives examples for ‘regular’, ‘special’ and ‘irregular’ verb forms, a few of which will be quoted here (Kelzang Gyrme 1992: 191ff.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 03</th>
<th>class</th>
<th>PRESENT</th>
<th>FUTURE</th>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>IMPERATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>regular:</td>
<td>-'khrab</td>
<td>d-krab</td>
<td>b-krab-s</td>
<td>khro-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'gog</td>
<td>d-gaq</td>
<td>b-kaq</td>
<td>khaq-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g-cod</td>
<td>g-cad</td>
<td>b-cad</td>
<td>chod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g-cog</td>
<td>g-cag</td>
<td>b-cag</td>
<td>chag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-'dogs</td>
<td>g-dags</td>
<td>b-tags</td>
<td>thogs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special:</td>
<td>rkyong</td>
<td>b-rkyang</td>
<td>b-rkyang-s</td>
<td>rkyang-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sgrub</td>
<td>b-sgrub</td>
<td>b-sgrub-s</td>
<td>sgrub-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>snyom</td>
<td>b-snyam</td>
<td>b-snyam-s</td>
<td>snyam-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irregular:</td>
<td>-'khru-d</td>
<td>b-kru</td>
<td>b-kru-s</td>
<td>khru-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sku-d</td>
<td>b-sku</td>
<td>b-sku-s</td>
<td>sku-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b-gyi-d</td>
<td>b-gyi</td>
<td>b-gyi-s</td>
<td>gyi-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>s-pong</td>
<td>s-pang</td>
<td>s-pang-s</td>
<td>s-pong-s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without going into a thorough analysis, one can see that there are regularities and deviations from the postulated system; the entire morphological system is more or less lexicalized. However, some affixes are more regular than others, and some seemingly affixed letters may simply belong to the original verb stem. Many scholars both in Tibet and in Europe have tried to reach a conclusion on this system. Bielmeier 2004 mentions an important shortcoming of all these considerations about Tibetan verb paradigms – the fact that there are no early verb lists, and that verb lists seem to derive from these rules, and not these rules from empirical data:

We do not yet know who first put up these paradigms. There is no trace of them in the first known treatises of the Sum cu pa or the Rtags kyi 'jug pa, which are traditionally ascribed to the 7th century. They can be found, however, more than one thousand years later in the work of the native grammarian Situ (1699-1774), cf. the edition of Das (1915). […] The paradigms, having been taken over from the indigenous tradition, then show up in the first grammars written by western authors […] Most of these analytic attempts have certain common features of approach. They take the verb forms from the dictionaries, of indigenous or western origin, rather than from texts. The danger with such material is that it reflects to a large extent the philosophical and often pseudo-linguistic ideas of the native grammarians and lexicographers. (Bielmeier 2004: 6)
According to Bielmeier, thus, the Tibetan verb lists largely reflect a desire for the application of these rules, i.e., the rules may shape the formation of normative verb forms to a certain extent. Bielmeier 2004 gives some exemplary insight in the quite deviant and diachronically multifaceted situation of verb forms in some Tibetan dialects. The Tibetan verb paradigms have been analyzed by a number of western scholars from Conrady 1896 until Coblin 1976 and Beyer 1992: 164ff.; cf. also Hahn 1994: 207ff. (= 1985: 189ff.)), but none of these contributions has lead to a conclusive hypothesis, and they cannot account for empirical facts about dialects of Tibetan.

Therefore, those attempts usually try to (re)construct a comprehensive synchronic grammatical system, where all the changes to be met with in the paradigms of all Tibetan verbs can be explained by linguistic functions within one descriptive system minimizing the exceptions. In my opinion, such an approach is a typically synchronic and descriptive approach and not a historical one. And this seems to me to be one of the reasons why it has not worked out so far. (Bielmeier 2004: cf.)

It has to be mentioned here that contrary to the Eastern and Western varieties, spoken Central Tibetan dialects largely do not reflect the above-mentioned orthographic system. This seems to have largely been the case even at the time of Thonmi (7th century). Although the evaluation of foreign script transcriptions, especially Chinese ones, is a complex and difficult task (cf. Li 1979), Miller 1955 concludes an analysis on 9th century Central Tibetan as follows:

The most note-worthy single feature of this early ninth-century dialect, then, is its sweeping simplification of the initial consonant clusters which the WT script would lead us to believe were striking features of the earliest stages of the language. On this point, the modern western and eastern forms we have been able to cite above are, in a sense, remarkably 'archaic', though the expression must be used with caution. The point is that they stand, both in point of their initial and final clusters, and in point of their vocalisation, much nearer the language reflected in the WT orthography than does the language of the early ninth century. By this time, the language of Central Tibet seems to have reached, as far as its phonetic structure is concerned, very nearly the same status in which we find it today, and the distance, phonologically speaking, which separates the language of the inscription from the modern dialects of Central Tibet, is so small as to make all but impossible a comparison with the gulf between the early ninth century language and that reflected in the script. (Miller 1955: 290f.)

Wolfenden (1929: 16) who tries to reconstruct a deeper meaning of the old verb affixes states that these functions at least were no longer available at the time of the introduction of writing: "Gradually, some time before the language was reduced to writing, the system fell into decay".

Clearly, the verse of Thonmi does not explain but two patterns of verbs (and even not all changes that can happen in them; cf., e.g., Wolfenden 1929), so that any reader will be left insatisfied. Indeed, zha lu pa, the author of the Zamatog (Lauffer 1898), makes an introductory remark about his motivation for writing a grammar: he states that Thonmi has made an orthography which is a door to an easy understanding of the canonical writings, but later many interested scholars had to elaborate the system; and since not all questions are yet solved, the usefulness of his grammar is implied:
(04) mkhan po 'di yi mdzad pa'i brda/ gsung rab bde blag rtogs
wise NS DEM-GEN make NS/GEN orth. scriptures easily realize
-pa'i -NS:GEN sgo/ blang dor gsal bar ston pa'i tshul/ 'bad pa
do mas bsgrub par rigs/ [4] mkhas pa du mas mang bshad
many:ERG achieve-NS:ILL type wise many-ERG many say-
kyang/ thams cad brjod par mi nus pas/ 'dir ni 'khrul
-CONC all discuss-NS:ILL NEG-can NS/INS DEM:ILL-TOP error
gahi can gyi brda/ 'ga zhi g rang gzhan don du 'god/
basis-POS-GEN orth. some self other mean-ILL posit


[3] The orthography made by this scholar [is] the door to the easy realization of the scriptures; [but the task was of the] type that many interested [had to] achieve the manner of showing what exactly has to be accepted or rejected; [4] although many scholars made various statements, they could not discuss everything, so that some posited orthographic [rules] for themselves and others which contained the basis for errors.

This passage makes clear that the Tibetan grammar tradition is not satisfied with and cannot rely on the terse verses of Thonmi. Although they pretend to rely solely on his words, they have to undertake the detailed analyses themselves, and indeed it will be difficult to find out what is empirical work and what is a normative approach to the 'canonical' ordering of the grammar of Written Tibetan.

Passing now to the next point of our analysis, we have to consider the Tibetan 'tenses' as mentioned in this verse. First of all, it may be pointed out that the Tibetan terms for the 'tenses' themselves rely on a prototypical semantic interpretation of tense, i.e., on aspectual values: da lta ba, lit. 'now', 'das pa 'passed', ma 'ongs pa lit. 'not [yet] come' for present, past, and future, respectively, may equally apply to the linguistic meaning of imperfective, perfective, and future/intention. This is mentioned with respect to the fact that in most modern descriptions of Tibetan, scholars identify aspects, not tense. The threefold description seems to relate to an Indian concept, however:

And as the Rtags kyi 'jug s pa, according to the native tradition the second oldest grammatical treatise written by Thonmi Sambhoṭa, mentions in verse 12 the "three tenses" or better the "three times" (dus gsum) da lta for present, 'das for past, and ma 'ongs for future, it seems possible that later grammarians who usually refer in their writings to these two first "canonical" treatises have styled the paradigms according to the three times mentioned, adding the imperative. And behind this system we may suppose the Indian philosophical and not linguistic concept of the "three times" or "three periods" (Skt. trikā-la: aṭīta 'past', adya 'present', anāgata 'not yet come'. (Bielmeier 2004: 6)
As remarked here, Thonmi makes no mention of the imperative, the fourth class in traditional verb paradigms. Additionally, this system adopted by the Tibetan scholars does not include the equally obvious morphological relation between causative and resultative (nowadays often called 'control and non-control') verbs – a concept found already in the early European grammars – the Tibetan viewpoint of which will be discussed in the next section. In Central Tibetan varieties, the above-mentioned scheme of verb inflection shows but weak reflections in the pronunciation of some verbs, such as oppositions of aspirated and unaspirated forms. On the other hand, among all dialects of Tibetan which have a kind of morphological variation of the above-mentioned type in their verbs, there are no verbs with more than three different forms, because there are no future stems:

A major difference between the Written Tibetan paradigms and those occurring in the conservative Amdo varieties is that there is no separate future stem in any of the Tibetan dialects. The imperfective stem of the dialectal variety either corresponds with the present stem or with the future stem of Written Tibetan. Therefore, we find three stems in Amdo Tibetan at the most. (Bielmeier 2004: 7)

In Themchen Tibetan (cf. Haller 2004), a Northern Amdo dialect, verbs inflect in the following way (cf. Haller 2004: 73) – with no separate future form (compared with WT):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>PFV</th>
<th>MOD</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>PFV</th>
<th>IMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>çol</td>
<td>ḃsal</td>
<td>s'ol</td>
<td>gsd</td>
<td>bsd</td>
<td>sod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čtouŋ</td>
<td>ptaŋ</td>
<td>t'ouŋ</td>
<td>gtsaŋ</td>
<td>btsaŋ</td>
<td>gtsong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʃchɔx</td>
<td>ḃchɔx</td>
<td>ʃɔx</td>
<td>bshig</td>
<td>bshigs</td>
<td>zhig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m'cha</td>
<td>p'tswi</td>
<td>t'gi</td>
<td>'bri</td>
<td>'bris</td>
<td>bri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These facts lead to the view that the system of Thonmi and especially of later grammarians on the written language seems to be highly artificial, or normative, especially as far as future forms are concerned. It can be seen from these examples that a b prefix is often the marker of the perfective stem, perhaps more regularly than in Written Tibetan.

Finally, there is mention of verbs with a prefixed m. Verbs with m are invariable, such as mthong 'see', i.e. they have only one morphological form for all tenses (cf. Laufer 1898: 543). Wolfenden (1929: 251) understands this m prefix as a marker of "inactive verbs", as opposed to the b of "active transitive verbs"; this distinction is indeed reflected in the fact that, in the written language, 'inactive' verbs usually have only one or two stem forms, while 'active' verbs have up to four stem forms – this fact will be considered later. Therefore, Wolfenden states the following:

§ 26. The description of m- by the native grammarians as mán "the same, unchanging", probably carries a deeper meaning than that attributed to it by Laufer, that m- verbs are not capable of assuming other formative elements, but always retain their m- form. It seems also to have been the intention to convey here the statement that m- verbs are those of intransitive nature, or which at most describe an act on the part of such subject, or an indirect object when present. (Wolfenden 1929: 26)

This far-reaching conclusion points to the possibility that Thonmi’s verse probably contains more implicit information than might appear to a diachronically naive reader on the first sight. To conclude these considerations, the verse is not easily understandable in terms of existing morphological patterns. But the verse contains another type of information, one
which relates the terms SELF (bdag) and OTHER (gzhan) to the tense forms. These two terms are the very core of Tibetan indigenous syntax, but they are far from well explained in the Western (and Tibetan) literature. As can be seen, this verse is not at all informative by itself. The concept, however, has to do with ergative assignment in that it specifies which verbs or verb forms can have a 'distinct agent' (which is marked with ERG). Laufer (1898: 543) remarks already that bdag and gzhan" are 'technical terms', and he thinks that they are formed after Sanskrit terms:

gzan bsgrub, gewöhnlich einfach nur gzan abgekürzt, und bdag sind Termini technici, die bisher noch niemand erklärt hat. Von gzan bsgrub weiss Jäschke, Dict. 479b, nur zu sagen: seems to be some logical term. Es kann aber kaum einem Zweifel unterliegen, dass dieses eine Nachbildung des indischen Parasaimadam und bdag die von Atmanepadam vorstellt; für diese sehr sichere Vermutung wird sich aus der Bearbeitung von Situ rin po che's Commentar der volle Beweis ergeben; [...] (Laufer 1898: 543)

Thus, Laufer proposes that this distinction be the rendering of 'active and middle voice' from the Sanskrit grammars, but this was refuted as improbable by Durr (1950b: 13) or as unprovable (cf. Tillemans 1989: 11ff.);53 whether Thonmi adopted this concept from Indian sources or not, his conception of bdag and gzhan differs considerably from active/middle in Sanskrit (cf. Inaba 1986: 148) – this will be discussed below. It should also be noted that Thonmi wrote his treatise earlier than Indian languages turned towards split ergativity, so that it does not also refer to any foreign concept of ergativity.

Tillemans (1989: 12, from Moto'ori Nobunaga [= Norinaga Motoo] 1792) also provides parallels to other Asian grammatical models, e.g. the Japanese terminology jidoishi 'self-verb' for intransitive verbs and tadoishi 'other-verb' for transitive verbs. In fact, this terminology is introduced in Japanese linguistics in the 12th century (cf. Sohar-Yasuda 2003: 3.2.1.) and similarly first describes the difference between 'I' and 'other' orientation of the verb, and, at the same time, between 1st and non-first persons:

Der Ausdruck jita no kubetsu (= die Unterscheidung zwischen ji und ta) weist daher nicht nur auf die Unterscheidung zwischen zwei Subkategorien von Verben, sondern auch auf die Trennung zwischen dem Sprecher und den anderen, die auch in anderen Bereichen eine wichtige Rolle spielt. (Sohar-Yasuda 2003: 3.2.1.)

The tadoishi ('other') verb forms are morphologically derived verb forms (with -ru). More interestingly, this distinction was also used as the explanation for meaning differences in word formation (Sohar-Yasuda 2003: 3.2.1.); e.g., in 1164, (a) kudaku kokoro and (b) kudakuru kokoro ('broken heart') are explained as meaning (a) the writer's broken heart, (b) somebody else's broken heart (cf. Hayatsu 1995: 208 quoted in Sohar-Yasuda 2003: 3.2.2.) (for Tibetan word formation with oriented verb stems). Finally, in Norinaga Motoo 1792, one finds examples such as toku himo vs. tokuru himo 'loosening string' which has to be understood as '[somebody] loosening the string' vs. '[the event of] string-loosening'. Sohar-Yasuda 2003 concludes that the original uses of the terminology did not relate to 'transitivity', but to a speaker/other dichotomy.

53 Laufer erroneously identifies gzan [bsgrub] for gzhan.
04. Tibetan indigenous grammaticography

The description in Norinaga Motoori 1792 is perfectly equivalent to the Tibetan system of present vs. future verb stems in word formation – which are here (in Thonmi's treatise) described as being 'I' and 'other'-oriented. Thus, *bdag* (I) and *gzan* ('other') as described in Thonmi Sambhoṭṭa's work are a categorization of syntactic constituents which relates to certain inflected verb forms for specific tense forms (= aspects), namely present (imperfective) and future (intentional-imperfective). It has to be noted that the concept *bdag* seems to be restricted to two of various morphological verb forms. When taking into account modern functions of present and future verb forms, it is difficult to understand which role this concept has to play in modern grammar (but see below). It is therefore highly probably that the category may have evolved over time, so that we find a very rudimentary description of an early phenomenon in Thonmi which, of course, need not reflect later stages of the grammar.

The most comprehensive description of the modern-day meaning (i.e., understanding) of *bdag*/*gzan* is found in Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 262ff.). For the moment, to maintain the chronological order, we may simply state that this concept is far from clear from the original textual passage, but the idea may be retained that the inflected verb forms of present (i.e., imperfective) and future are somehow related to a syntactic scheme of verb orientation.

### 04.05. Agentivity and 'differentiative' verbs

As mentioned above, 'agentivity', 'transitivity', 'syntax' did not develop as explicit concepts in the linguistic tradition of Tibet. Symptomatically, Tournadre 1996 quotes a Tibetan linguist from the 18th century stating simply:

(05) \[ \begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{rnám} & \text{dbye} & \text{gsum} & \text{pa} & \text{byed} & \text{pa} & \text{zhes} & \text{bya} & \text{ba} & \text{byed} & \text{pa} & \text{po} & \text{gtso} & \text{bor} & \text{ston} & \text{pa'i} \\
\text{case} & \text{third} & \text{make} & \text{so-called} & \text{agent} & \text{essentially} & \text{show:GEN}
\end{array} \]

Wherever the ERG has been described (in more recent publications), Tibetan linguistics holds on the fact that the status of the verb decides whether a (volitional) agent has to be distinguished:

Mais que disent les grammairiens tibétains à propos de l’agent ou de sa marque? / Ils insistent sur le fait que l’agent ne peut être employé qu’avec des verbes de type *thad-pa*,[fn] que j’ai traduits par le terme "différentiatifs", c’est-à-dire des verbes qui différencient l’agent de l’objet contrairement aux verbes *tham-mi-dad-pa*, les "indifférentiatifs" qui eux ne distinguent pas l’agent de l’objet. La formulation *thad-dad-pa* et *tham-mi-dad-pa* référence dans la terminologie linguistique moderne aux verbes respectivement biactanciels et monoactanciels (ils sont d’ailleurs traduits actuellement en chinois par les termes jiwu dongci "verbe transitiel" et bu jiwu dongci "verbe intransitiel").

In other words, Tibetan linguistics speaks about two verb classes, *tha dad pa* and *tha mi dad pa* which has been translated into French as '(in)différentiatif'. In Losang Thonden 1984, *tha dad pa* is translated as 'intentional'. Other modern Tibetan linguists such as Kelzang Gyurme have changed the meaning of *tha dad pa* 'differentiative' into 'volitional' verbs (cf. Tournadre 1996: 348). Tournadre himself refers to valence, and for the Chinese translation, it is transitivity. But Tournadre gives another terminology in the footnote which refers to 'verbs bound to (= orientation towards?) the agent or 'verbs without agent'.

Thus, the Tibetan concept of *tha dad pa* 'differentiative' or byed 'brel (AG-connected) does not simply translate the modern syntactic concept of transitivity. Instead, it seems to refer to the degree of control of the agent over the action. Therefore, Western scholars nowadays prefer the terminology 'controllable verb' (CTRL, c) and 'not-controllable verb' (NO-CTRL, nc). In the next section, we will see why the term 'differentiative' was chosen in the first place by Kelzang Gyurme (i.e., by the European translators), and why early European scholars thought at 'transitivity' or 'active/passive' with respect to Tibetan ergative main clause syntax.

*bya tshig tha dad pa* means lit. 'difference-verb'. By this is meant a verb which describes an action whereby two distinct participant roles can be implied (but need not be realized). This is the class of verbs which do not imply actions where one participant is modifying herself, himself, or itself; the term implies that both a volitional agent and a fully-affected patient distinct from the agent is involved. The nature of the thing itself (process, motion, action) is rather secondary.

This concept is not a theoretical topic such as the three tenses. Wolfenden 1929 in his analysis of verb forms points out that there seems to be a fundamental distinction between 'active' and 'inactive' verbs which diachronically relates to, e.g., m vs. b" prefixation, whereas many basic vocabulary nouns (mi, pho, mo, ra, khang, etc.) are phonetically simple, i.e., roots without prefixes. While the m prefix is identified by Wolfenden for inactive verbs (*mthong* 'see', *mkhyen* 'know'), a verb with, e.g., the '/b prefix "represents an acting subject", as can be seen in word pairs like the following (Wolfenden 1929: 33):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 05</th>
<th>'chu ba, P bchus, F bchu I chus, chu</th>
<th>to ladle or scoop up water, water (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bzho ba, P bzhos pa, F ˙jo ba, zho</td>
<td>to milk, milk (n). etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, s subscripts (i.e., letters written on top of the main letter) are commonly identified as causative markers, thus making a distinction between causative and resultative forms; they often stand in opposition to the 'a prefix (cf. Wolfenden 1929: 46). One example for such an opposition:

| Table 06 | sgyur | 'gyur, gyur | change become |

Thus, one can find another morphological distinction, similarly opaque than the formation of the three tenses, which seems to distinguish causative and resultative verb forms. s and b prefixes are involved, and it seems to be slightly more regular than the 'tense' formation. When looking at the data from Themchechen Tibetan (Northern Amdo), we equally find a quite regular pattern for this distinction (cf. Haller 2004, ex. 601b, 602b, 565b):
A causative verb form is a verb which profiles an event in which somebody performs an action on something or somebody; a resultative verb, on the contrary, profiles an event in which something happens. In Tibetan grammar, this is seen as the difference between bya tshig tha dad pa and bya tshig tha mi dad pa, or ‘differentiativity’, ‘volition’, or ‘control’. It is clear that such a distinction might be related to the agentivity of one participant, and this is the reason why these early Tibetan contributions are mentioned here at all. Therefore, in the following section, a description of the difference between these two classes of verbs will be dealt with.

04.06. Situ Panchen

As has been said before, almost all works on grammar in Tibet refer to Thonmi Sambhota’s works. The first written commentary on Thonmi’s work, the ‘Zamatog’ by Zhalupa (zha lu pa rin chen chos skyon bzang po) appeared in 1513 of our time (Lauffer 1898: 524). On the other hand, Tibetan grammarians distinguish between ‘earlier’ (srong) and ‘later’ (phyi) grammar writing (cf. Tillemans 1989: 2), the landmark for this distinction being the 8th Situ Rinpoche (si tu paN chen chos kyi ’byung gnas, 1699-1774). The eighth holder of the title ‘Kuang Ting Tai Situ’ (conferred to Chokyi Gyaltse, a disciple of the 5th Karmapa, in 1407 by the Ming emperor Yung Lo) from Karma Gon (ka rma dgon) in East Tibet, Chokyi Jungne (chos kyi ’byung gnas) with the epithet PaN chen (‘great pandit’), lived from 1699 or 1700 to 1774 and became the most famous in the succession of all Situ Rinpoches. When the 12th Karmapa (karma pa) and the 8th Shamarpa (zhwa dmar pa) both died in China, Situ Panchen became the head of the Kamsang Kaygyu (bka’ brgyud) lineage. In 1727, he founded the monastery Palpung (dpal spungs) which became famous by its Printing Press. As a scientist, he revised the Kanjur (bka’ ‘gyur, the canonical ‘Words of the Buddha’), and the Tanjur (bstan ’gyur), the canonical ‘commentaries’ which were printed in the Printing Press of Lhundrup Teng (I Hun grub steng) or Gonchen (dgon chen) (cf. Kolmaš 1971: 10); copies of this edition were subsequently installed all over the world. He also composed texts on astrology and medicine, and he established styles of drawing and painting.

Most interestingly for our purpose, he was also a linguist with expertise in Sanskrit, Nepali, and Chinese. His treatise on Tibetan grammar, the Sum-tag (sum rtag), which had been published in 1684 of our time is most interesting also to our research question. The first Western edition of some chapters of this work can be found in Durr 1950a, together with the Dangshel Melong (dwangs shel me long) of Dondrub (don ’grub), another grammarian.

Situ (1700-1774) est un des grands grammairiens du Pays des Neiges et son commentaire “Les instructions de Situ” (Si-tu zhal-lung ) tient une place importante dans la grammaire. Pourtant sa présentation reste très fidèle à celle des “Trente Ślokas” et l’analyse syntaxique demeure inexistante, les notions de tha-dad-pa / tha-mi dad-pa n’étant pas encore in-
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Tournadre quotes the following passage:

(06) rnam dbye gsum pa byed pa po'i sa ru shes par bya ste dper na case third agent:GEN 's'-ILL know-ILL INT-CONT f.ex.
bdag gis bstan kyod kyis nyan de'is byin 'di yis blangs 1-ERG show 2-ERG hear DEM:ERG give DEM-ERG taken
gser gyis nyos lta bu'o/ gold-ERG bought like-FIN

Le troisième cas l’agent, est reconnu grâce à la présence əe s. Par exemple, ‘dag+gis bstan “Je l’ai enseigné”; kyod+kyis nyan “Tu l’as écouté”; de’is byin “Celui-ci l’a donné”; ‘di+yis blangs “Celui-ci l’a pris”; gser+gyis nyos, “[Il l’]a acheté avec de l’or.

This is an exemplaric explanation for the use of the AG/INS marker. But apart from this simple explanation, Situ Panchen was also elaborating the above-mentioned concept of Thonmi Sambhoṭa’s grammar, namely that of bdag ‘self’ vs. gzhan ‘other’ on the basis of the verb forms of Written Tibetan – as can be found in Durr’s 1950 edition and translation and as is analyzed in Tillemans & Herforth 1989.

Un seul nom semble s’imposer et, en tout cas, fait loi dans l’interprétation des cléoks du rTags ‘jug, celui de Situ. Toutes les spéculations sur les formes verbales viennent se cristalliser autour de son nom: seul l’enseignement qui s’inspire de Situ est orthodoxe, tout le reste est hérétique ou hétérodoxe. (Durr 1950a: 11)

Durr 1950a edits and translates the relevant passages from Situ Panchen’s work. In Tillemans (1989: 4, longer excerpt in 1989: 62) we find English translations of a passage from Situ’s mkhas pa'i mgul rgyan (full title sum cu pa dang rtags kyi 'jug pa'i gzhung gi rgyas 'grel mkhas pa'i mgul rgyan mu tig phreng mdrzes bya ba). On the occasion of the second line of Thonmi’s verse 12, Situ gives the following introductory explanation on the Tibetan linguistic concepts of bdag and gzhan (Das 1915: 43; Durr 1950a: 82, 50; Tillemans 1989: 62):

las gang zhig byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su ‘brel ba’i dbang du byas nas/ byed pa po'i dngos po de nyid dang de’i byed pa dang bcas pa la ni bdag ce bya zhing/ des bsgrub par bya ba’i yul gyi dngos po dang de’i bya ba dang bcas pa la ni gzhan zhes bya'o// Dans toute action, si un agent (byed pa po) agit matériellement (dngos su) et directement ('brel ba) sur un objet (gzhan), cet agent ensemble avec son action s'appellent bdag; d’autre part, la réalité (dngos po) du terme ou objet à réaliser (bya ba’i yul) par l’agent et l’action passive (bya ba) de cette réalité s’appellent gzhan. (Durr 1950a: 82)

Given some act directly related with a distinct agent (byed pa po gzhan), then that very entity (dngos po) which is the agent and its ‘doing’ (de’i byed pa) are termed‘self’. The entity which is the focus (yul) to be established by that [agent] as well as that thing which is to be done (bya ba) are termed‘other’. (si tu paN chen chos kyi ‘byung gnas, quoted & translated in Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 4)

First of all, some terminological problems should be avoided: Durr 1950a, following Bacot 1946, understands byed pa as ‘active’ and bya ba as ‘passive’. This is misleading, although
based on good grounds. First of all, byed pa is the imperfective (present) and bya ba the intention (future) stem of the verb 'do' which is also used as an auxiliary in analytic verb inflection; thus, it is 'action' and 'intentional action', or 'factual' vs. 'non-factual'; these meanings are explained by referring to verb orientation: byed is AG-oriented, bya is PAT-oriented; therefore, the first stem means 'action', the second one means 'thing-done', 'object'. This is why Bacot, in allusion to genus verbi relations, terms these two 'active' and 'passive'. In the following, an interlinear translation is provided, so that the meaning of the original phrase can be reconstructed more clearly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(07)</th>
<th>las</th>
<th>gang zhig</th>
<th>byed pa po</th>
<th>ghan dang</th>
<th>dngos su</th>
<th>brel ba'i</th>
<th>dang du</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>act</td>
<td>what-INDEF</td>
<td>agent</td>
<td>other-SOC</td>
<td>truly</td>
<td>relation-GEN</td>
<td>interms:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>byas nas/ byed pa po'i</td>
<td>dngos po</td>
<td>de nyid dang</td>
<td>de'i</td>
<td>byed pa dang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of-ABL</td>
<td>agent:GEN</td>
<td>substexist</td>
<td>DEF-ABSTR-SOC</td>
<td>DEF:GEN</td>
<td>action-SOC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bcas pa la ni</td>
<td>bdag</td>
<td>ces bya zhing/ yul gyi</td>
<td>dngos po</td>
<td>dang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establ.-ALL-TOP</td>
<td>BDAG</td>
<td>so-called</td>
<td>GER</td>
<td>goal-GEN</td>
<td>entity</td>
<td>SOC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de'i</td>
<td>bya ba dang</td>
<td>bcas pa la ni</td>
<td>ghan</td>
<td>zhes bya'o/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEF:GEN</td>
<td>do:FUT-SOC</td>
<td>establ. ALL TOP</td>
<td>GZHAN</td>
<td>so-called:FIN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whatever action, an agent with another [entity] after having entered into a true relation, the actual realization of the agent together with its doing – is called BDAG ('I'); if this [agent] intends to accomplish [something], the realization of the object/goal of the intended action together with the intended action – is called GZHAN ('other').

Thus, the AG (and INS) and the action itself are termed bdag 'T', whereas the goal and the so-called 'future' tense (or non-factual, intentional aspect) are ghan 'other' (cf. also Kelzang Gyurme 1992). In sentences without AG, the event and the involved entity are ghan. This provides a distinction between ERG and non-ERG settings – within the class of differentiative verbs (to which alone this distinction is applied).

The inclusion of verb forms into the bdag – ghan system is not really clear to European scholars (cf. Tillemans 1989: 20fl.). It could be seen as a semantic distinction of ERG vs. ABS, but the inclusion of both the verb form and the participants into one syntactic category is confusing for a European approach to syntax. In a way, this seems to express a kind of agreement. Since there is no morphological agreement in Tibetan, this terminology relates to a conceptual agreement, or an 'orientation' of the verb towards one of the participants. Situ stresses the fact that one needs to distinguish 'verbs related to distinct agents and verbs unrelated to an agent' (cf. Situ in Tillemans 1989: 8fl.). He states that the verbs requiring an AG have a semantic feature of representing an act directly related to a distinct agent (byed pa po ghan dang dngos su 'brel ba'i las') (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 66; Herforth 1989: 79).

In the European, Indian, and Chinese traditions (cf. Herforth 1989), 'transitivity' is defined with relation to an obligatory direct object; for Situ Panchen, however, it is the existence of a 'volitional agent' in the action that makes a verb 'transitive' (if at all this term is meaningful here) (cf. Herforth 1989: 79fl., Tillemans 1989: 4); i.e. the presence of an object is not necessary. This would rid us of the problem of 'intransitives' taking ERG NPs – although
it is not an explanation of the phenomenon itself. The emphasis Situ Panchen puts on the presence of a 'distinct agent' must have another background. Bacot (1946: 65), without giving a reference to his source, quotes a very similar text, this time in verse form:

\[(08)\] las gang zhig la byed pa po/ gzhan dang dngos su 'bre' ba yi/ dbang du byed na byed po dang/ de'i byed pa gnyis po ni/ dngos po bdag yin bya yul dang/ bya ba gnyis pa dngos po gzhan/

Dans toute action, si un agent (byed pa po) agit matériellement [*1] (dngos su) et directement ('bre' ba'i dbang du) sur un objet (gzhan), cet agent et son action [*2] (byed pa) sont spécifiquement bdag'. L'objet (bya yul) sur lequel l'action est exercée et son devenir [*3] (bya ba) sont spécifiquement gzhan.

*1 ou effectivement
*2,3 Les mots complets sont byed pa'i las et bya ba'i las qu'on peut traduire par action active et action passive. (Bacot 1946: 65)

First, this translation may be questionable in some aspects; the text may say gzhan dang dngos su, 'distinctly and effectively' (cf. the above-mentioned quote) or gzhan dang ... 'brel ba 'connection with an other' (dang as governed case), and not byed pa po gzhan 'an agent [acts on] an object' (cf. Tillemans 1989: 4, fn 06). Let us review the translation:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{las} & \quad \text{gang zhig la} \\
\text{byed pa} & \quad \text{po} \\
\text{gzh} & \quad \text{anz dang} \\
\text{dngos} & \quad \text{su} \\
\text{'bre} & \quad \text{ba yi} \\
\text{dbang} & \quad \text{du} \\
\text{byed} & \quad \text{na} \\
\text{byed pa} & \quad \text{po dang} \\
\text{de'i} & \quad \text{byed pa} \\
\text{gnyis po} & \quad \text{ni} \\
\text{dngos} & \quad \text{po} \\
\text{bdag} & \quad \text{yin} \\
\text{bya} & \quad \text{yul dang} \\
\text{bya ba} & \quad \text{gnyis pa} \\
\text{dngos po} & \quad \text{gzhan} \\
\end{align*}
\]

In whatever action, if the agent acts by force of an effective connection, both the agent and its action are termed SELF; both the object and the becoming-action are termed OTHER.

It may be important to carefully investigate the meanings of Tibetan linguistic terminology, but by doing so, the analysis must already rely on the fundamental grammatical distinction of verb orientation; FUT bya andPRS byed are used here as specific terms: byed pa 'the action [of an agent]', byed pa po 'agent', bya ba '[thing:]done', 'object', bya yul, 'object' or 'goal', and also yul 'object' (lit. 'place'). To repeat once more, what is termed PRS and FUT in fact is originally and basically a morphological verb orientation device.

Table 09: Tibetan linguistic terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>byed tshig</td>
<td>l'action présente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bya ba</td>
<td>l'action future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>byed pa</td>
<td>l'instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>byed pa po</td>
<td>l'agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>las</td>
<td>focus of the action, object (las)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bya ba'i yul</td>
<td>focus of the action, object (las)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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55 Durr here relates to Bacot (1946: 65) (falsely quoting p. 56), but Baco's original text (in verse form) is not completely the same text as here (see below).

56 In the original erroneously dbag.

57 'according to Kelzang Gyurme'.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>byed pa’i las</th>
<th>A-prominent action</th>
<th>AG-oriented act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bya ba’i las</td>
<td>l’objet de l’action</td>
<td>P-prominent action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the philological tradition of Indological and Tibetological research, interesting equations between Tibetan and Indic terminology lead to the following translation of Situ’s passage – as “provisional indications” for this connection:

When a situation is actually (dngos su) concerned with a specific kartr (byed pa po ‘agent’) and a specific other kart (byed pa ‘action’), then the bhāva (dngos po) itself of the kartr together with its kriyā (byed pa ‘action’) are termed ātman (bdag ‘self’), while the bhāva of the viśaya (yul ‘domain’) to be accomplished by that [kartr] together with the kārya (bya ba ‘operation’) are termed para (gzan ‘other’). (transl. by Miller 1993: 226)

Although these evident correlations give clear evidence for the influence Indic grammar has exercised over the Tibetan tradition, and although these connections are the object of research in Tibetology (Verhagen 1994), it has to be said here, from the point of view adopted here, that, nonetheless, the differences in the two described languages (Sanskrit, Tibetan) may have led to significant reinterpretations of any of the original concepts. Even if it were the case that, e.g., the concept of bdag and gzan may have originally been derived from specific concepts in Skt. grammar, this does not necessarily mean that they are understood in a completely identical manner in Tibetan grammar.

In order to get the ‘real’ meaning of Situ Panchen’s commentary on bdag/gzan, it may be useful to consider the examples Situ is giving in the text; thus, in the mkhas pa’i mgul rgyan, Situ enumerates exemplarily the semantic roles which are SELF and OTHER (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 62f.). Since their translation alone might not render the real differences, they will be quoted here in a chart in more detail (for the complete list of examples, cf. the translation in Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 62f.):

Table 10: Self and Other according to Situ Rinpoche

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGENTS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER:</td>
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<tr>
<td>OBJECTS:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>INTENDED ACTS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEITHER SELF NOR OTHER:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFECTIVES:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90
04. Tibetan indigenous grammicography

grub, chad, byung, ...

has been established, split, emerged, ...

IMPERFECTIVES:
da lta sgrub bzhin pa, ston --, good --, ‘byin bzhin pa, ...

is just establishing, showing, cutting, expelling, ...

‘grub --, ‘chad --, ‘byung par byed, ...

makes established, makes it split, makes emerge, ...

‘grub bzhin pa, ‘chad bzhin pa, ‘byung bzhin pa, ...

is being established, splitting it, emerging, ...

‘grub --, ‘chad, ‘byung par ‘gyur, ...

will be established, will split, will emerge, ...

‘grub bo, ‘chad do, ‘byung ngo, ...

will be established, will split, will emerge, ...

FUTURE ACTS:

‘grub par bya, ‘byung par bya, ...

is to be established, is to emerge, ...

Morphological notes:

A. SELF:

01. CAUS/IPV verb stem + pa po deverbal agentive noun, like English ‘-er’

02. CAUS/IPV verb stem + byed compound with FACT/IPV verb stem as head: ‘somebody/something which is doing’

03. CAUS/IPV verb stem + par byed analytical verb form for FACT/IPV aspect: ‘somebody is doing’

B. other:

04. RES/FUT verb stem + par bya ba nominalization (/ba/) of FUT verb form: ‘intended doing’

05. RES/FUT verb stem + bya compound with FUT verb stem as head: ‘something which is done’, ‘object of ...’

06. RES/FUT verb stem + par bya analytical verb form for FUT aspect: ‘something will be done’

07. RES/FUT verb stem + ‘o FUT verb stem plus old final particle: ‘something will be done’

C. neither self nor other:

08. PFV verb stems
09. RES verb stems
10. CAUS/IPV verb stem + bzhin pa IPV
11. RES verb stems + par byed
12. RES verb stems + bzhin pa
13. RES verb stems + par ‘gyur
14. RES verb stems + ‘o
15. RES verb stems + par bya analytical FUT aspect

Thus, present actions, the agent, and the instrument are bdag ‘self’, while future actions and the object involved are gzhan ‘other’. All other clauses do not classify for bdag/gzhan. Synchronically, this does not make sense for any variety of Tibetan, including Written Tibetan. This distinction must describe an older state of grammar, in which the present and the future stem form of the verb are opposed in the same way as are nowadays the causative and resultative forms (c/nc, active/neuter verbs). Specifically, it may be mentioned once more that in
fact no spoken variety of Tibetan does have a future form – it has obviously been normatively introduced in the written language, and thus it must have been taken ‘from somewhere’. If this hypothesis were true, the bdag/gzhan distinction describes a morphological verb orientation and thus draws the line between ERG and non-ERG settings (in the old, ‘preclassical’ language). Additionally, although this does not derive from the traditional distinction, Situ himself mentions examples from the causative/resultative distinction in Written Tibetan:

(10) with vs. without direct AG:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>leags</th>
<th>gser du</th>
<th>bskyuvr zin</th>
<th>leags</th>
<th>gser du</th>
<th>gyurd zin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iron</td>
<td>gold-ILL</td>
<td>change:PFV-ready</td>
<td>iron</td>
<td>gold-ILL</td>
<td>change:RES-ready</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The iron has been changed into gold. The iron has changed into gold.

The wood has been cut. The wood has split.

The first phrase, about the iron changing into gold, gives two different meanings, as Situ explains: contrary to the first sentence, where somebody acted in order to perform this change of the gold, if this process happens instead due to the karma and not due to the action of a person, then there is an AG (the merit, or positive karma, of the person), but it is not directly (drogos su) appearing. Equally, when an individual is leaving a place, he or she is an AG, but not a distinct one (byed pa po gzhan), as Situ explains (cf. Situ in Tillelmans & Herfordth 1989: 68).

In another passage, Situ hints at the fact that if iron changes into gold by itself, then the changer, the iron and the gold are the same entity, thus there is no distinction of self and other (cf. Situ in Tillelmans & Herfordth 1989: 5, Fn. 7). Similarly, in cases of ‘going’ or ‘falling’, there is no distinction between the goer/faller and the going/falling object. Again, bdag and gzhan do not apply (cf. Situ in Tillelmans & Herfordth 1989: 5f., Fn. 8). This explanation may justify now the choice of the verb terminology bya tshig tha dad pa and bya tshig tha mi dad pa for what has been translated as ‘differentiative’ and ‘undifferentiative’. Most importantly, the bdag – gzhan concept applies within one phrase, and it does not apply to ‘undifferentiative’ sentences:

[…] this means that self, other and the two sorts of acts will only make sense when the verb is transitive: intransitives cannot be analyzed this way. (Tillelmans & Herfordth 1989: 6)

Contrary to the short statement in Thonmi’s śloka, Situ’s commentary is a comprehensive explanation of this aspect of Tibetan grammaticography. Situ does not talk about obligatory syntactic arguments, nor about a concept of ‘transitivity’, but about the semantic participant role of a volitional, apparent, and distinct AG. This role needs to be implicit in the event construal. Tibetan causative forms account for parallel verb forms which do not have a volitional, apparent AG. It remains to note that the remarkably rich Tibetan literature contains many more grammatical treatises of which Tillelmans & Herfordth 1989, but also Tournadre (1996: 348ff.) give mention. This shall not be repeated here, although a thorough investigation into these works for the sake of non-European linguistic historiography remains to be done.
05.01. Tibetan influences on European descriptions

As has been said before, even the earliest European scholars were acquainted with Tibetan grammatical concepts. Already in 1898, Laufer edited the grammar of Zhalupa, followed by further translations and discussion by Bacot 1928, Schubert 1928, 1929, 1937 and Durr 1950a. The first author of a grammar of Written Tibetan thoroughly and obviously familiar with Tibetan gramaticography therefore is Bacot (1946). As in both the earlier works and Tibetan contributions, the focus of attention has to shift again towards the description of the verbs, away from the ERG itself. Bacot (1946: 49), distinguishing the particle grammar of Tibetan from SAE morphology, the verbs alone have morphological inflection. Following earlier European lines of thought, he states that 'nominatives' are rare; in fact, only stative verbs such as yod, or the copula yin, and finally intransitive verbs in durative aspect (present tense) are 'subjective', i.e., they do have a 'subject':

As for the action verbs, Bacot describes a fundamental typological difference between Indo-European (IE) languages and Tibetan: In IE, he states, the subject is the central part of the clause which controls (or 'governs') the verb; in Tibetan, on the other hand, the verb is for him the main part of the clause which relates both to the agent and the object. By choosing the term 'agent' instead of 'subject', Bacot clearly refers more to the semantic role (in an event) – as opposed to a subject case (which interacts with a predicate). Since there is no such thing as a subject, both main participants are seen as equipollent in the clause, one being the source, the other being the goal of the action.

As 05. Continuation 2

58 "Presque toute la morphologie du tibétain, selon les pandits grammairiens, syllabique et flexionnelle, est réducible, la première à trois cas de déclinaison, à quelques particules conjonctives, négatives-feminines, et personnelles; la seconde au jeu de quatre lettres préfixes et de deux lettres suffixes." (Bacot 1946: 63)
This interpretation of Tibetan syntax is quite new, when compared to what has been said about ergativity and subjects earlier. But this is not simply a new theory of the author, rather, it is a reference to indigenous grammar: The action verb stands for both the action which has been performed by an agent and the action which has been imposed on an object. Thus, the Tibetan concept of bdag/gzhan, as described above, translates as 'subjective' (AG-oriented) and 'objective' (PAT-oriented), respectively. The verbs themselves, however, are entirely indifferent (neutral) as to which participant they will be oriented in an actual clause.

Bacot argued for a so-called double-faced ("deux aspect ou deux faces") Tibetan verb, one which admits of two different interpretations depending on whether we understand it in terms of self, viz. the agent’s action, or in terms of other, viz. the action which is undergone by the object. (Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 23)

This is a very simple and clear explanation of what bdag and gzhan means, although it does not refer to present and future tense forms here as in the original theory: Bacot states that transitive verbs can be bdag-oriented or gzhan-oriented, and this orientation can be changed. This feature of the verbs is similar, but not identical to active/passive (genus verbi), so that Bacot proposes a new terminology:

Si, faute d’une meilleure terminologie, on appelle voix ces deux aspects du verbe transitif, il conviendrait, en raison de ce qui va suivre, de les dire non pas active et passive, mais subjective et objective. (Bacot 1946: 50)

But, for Bacot, this differentiation expands also over the so-called tense forms of the verb: a verb which describes an past action inherently relates also to the present and permanent state of an object (telicity); and a present action of an agent also implies the future state of an object. In this way, the tense forms are also but functions of the bdag/gzhan distinction.

La particularité du verbe tibétain est de tenir compte, dans une large mesure, du rapport qui existe dans la réalité entre la voix et le temps et de déduire celui-ci de celle-là. En effet, un verbe qui exprime l’action passée de l’agent, exprime en même temps l’état actuel et permanent de l’objet (comme notre participe passé). Et le verbe qui exprime l’action présente de l’agent, exprime en même temps l’état futur de l’objet. Une même forme peut donc présenter deux interprétations logiques et deux aspects concomitants d’une même action. Pour une même forme, le temps variera selon le terme considéré, agent ou objet. Le temps est pour une part fonction de la voix, c’est-à-dire fonction du terme, bdag ou gzhan envisagé. (Bacot 1946: 50)

Based on this relation, Bacot states, the Tibetan verb can express PST/PRS and PRS/FUT relations by simply changing the orientation of the verb. He gives, among many others, the following example (with the PST bṣad (from gṣod, 'kill')):
nga’i gcen po thams cad kyi bsad/ Tous mes frères sont tués par les Tibétains ou Les Tibétains ont tué tous mes frères. La copule est sous-entendue. Le sens littéral est: Tous mes frères par les Tibétains tuer (il y eut) [bdag] ou tués (il y a) [gzhan], ou plus exactement encore: avoir tué [bdag] ou être tués [gzhan] (il y a). (Bacot 1946: 50f.)

Here, we find again the auxiliary translations of the type 'X happens' ('X il y a') for X = verb, this time based on the undetermined orientation of the verb (cf. impersonal, 'nominal' verbs). As pointed out by Bacot, the function of orientation of PRS and FUT verb forms is directly reflected in Tibetan linguistic terminology: byed tshig 'do:PRS-word' or bya tshig 'do:FUT-word' derive their meaning difference from the bdag/gzhan concept:

Le terme grammatical bya tshig signifie à la fois futur et objectif (ou passif), par opposition à byed tshig qui signifie présent et subjectif (ou actif). Les données des dictionnaires: présent, passé, futur (souvent la même forme pour les deux derniers) seraient plus exactement nommés subjectif et objectif des verbes. (Bacot 1946: 55)

According to Tibetan word formation in accordance with the bdag/gzhan concept, byed tshig translates (literally) as 'do(er) word', while bya tshig translates as 'object [= doing] word'. Therefore, Bacot’s terminological proposal leads into the right direction, in that it points to the fact that these verb forms are oriented towards AG and PAT/ABS, respectively. Finally, Bacot discusses fluid ERG marking, e.g., with mover verbs:

Le tibétain a une tendance à prendre tout verbe transitivement ou intransitivement, avec la même forme. 'gro ba, aller, intransitif de nature, devient transitif quand il y a un objet à l'accusatif, le lieu ou l'on va. L'instrumental, cas du sujet, indique que le verbe est transitif, mais il n'est pas absolu. Voulu par le grammairien, il est littéraire et il est remplacé par le nominatif dans le langage. Il en est de même des particules accusatives que l'usage a tendance à supprimer quand il n'y a pas mouvement, ni objet transféré déjà sans particule, ou quand le verbe ne peut être pris intransitivement soit par nature soit par sa forme. (Bacot 1946: 59)

As pointed out first by Tillemans & Herforth (1989: 23ff.), Bacot’s explanation of verbs and case marking rely on Situ’s grammar. Additionally, however, this is also an ingenious expansion or reinterpretation of the above-mentioned, far from clear concept from Tibetan grammar.

05.02. Tibeto-European influences on European descriptions

Standing in the French tradition of Tibetology, the grammar of Lalou 1950 is heavily based on Cordier 1907f. and also Bacot 1946. The relations to Cordier have been shown in an earlier section. Here, the focus lies on the bdag/gzhan concept. Like Bacot and earlier authors, Lalou (1950: 54) states that genus verbi depends on the presence/absence of agentive or objective NPs. Lalou equates genus verbi (active/passive) with Bacot’s terminology, but inversely (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 24):<sup>59</sup>

2. La forme verbale ne différant pas toujours à l’actif, ou objectif, et au passif, ou subjectif (§ 104), la voix active ou passive se reconnaît par des indices extérieurs au verbe:

---

<sup>59</sup> The (problematic) examples are repeated from Cordier (1907f.: 48).
a. Par l’analyse de l’agent, la voix active se reconnaissant à la présence de la particule instrumentale qui l’affecte, et la voix passive à l’absence de cette particule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOIX ACTIVE OU OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>VOIX PASSIVE OU SUBJECTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngas 'gum pa</td>
<td>nga 'gum pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je tue: je fais mourir</td>
<td>je meurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngas rdung byas pa</td>
<td>nga rdung byas pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j’ai battu</td>
<td>j’ai été battu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngas slob</td>
<td>nga slob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenseigne</td>
<td>j’apprends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This opposition construed by Cordier (1908: 48) and repeated in Lalou (1950: 54) is of course erroneous: In the left column, the verbs are not ‘active’ and ‘have an object in the INS case’, but they are AG-oriented verbs and therefore can have AG participants; equally, the verbs in the right column are not ‘passive’ and ‘have a NOM marked participant’, but they are PAT-oriented verbs and thus have FAT/EXP participants. The change in terminology is a clear turning away from its original meaning in Bacot who had taken it from the Tibetan concept of bdag/gzhan. The inversion of Bacot’s terminology probably has to do with the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’: in order to maintain the idea of an unmarked nominative, Lalou claims that passive voice equals the ‘subjective’ and active voice equals the ‘objective’ form of the sentence. As all earlier authors, Lalou discusses the syntactic role of DAT la; Lalou also sees a correlation between la marking and genus verbi:

2. Par la présence de la particule accusative désignant l’objet (§ 20, 1), la voix passive ou subjective étant signalée par l’absence de cette particule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOIX ACTIVE OU OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>VOIX PASSIVE OU SUBJECTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngas chos la nyams su blangs pa yin/</td>
<td>nga chos nyams su blangs pa yin/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J’ai compris la Loi.</td>
<td>La Loi est comprise par moi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngas nyams su blangs pa i chos/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La Loi qui [est] comprise par moi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This example is again a bit problematic. First of all, *nyams su blang ba* means ‘practice, implement’; secondly, it has to be mentioned once again that the concept of *bdag/gzhan* from Tibetan grammar would not deal with PST stems (*blang-s*) at all, and thirdly, the omission or use of *la* has no relation to *bdag/gzhan* neither historiographically nor grammatically (cf. also Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 23, fn. 47). We find here a completely new invention of grammatical categories, obviously driven from the desire to have a zero-marked NOM case: in the second phrase, chos is unmarked and therefore NOM for Lalou, which requires a passive translation in French. Finally, *nyams su blang ba* is not reported elsewhere to have *la* objects at all, cf., e.g. (from *thun drug dang ’brel ba’i dus ’khor bla ma’i rnal ’byor nag’ gros su mdzad pa* by H.H., the 14th Dalai Lama):

(01) de yis dgyes bzhin btsal ba’i gdams pa las/ theg pa gsum gyi
    DEM-INS joyously speak-NS:GEN instructions-NS-ABL vehicle three-GEN
    chos rnams bsdu ba’i tshu/ shes shing de don
dharma-PL gather-NS:GEN by/way of know-GER DEM meaning
    nyams su blangs pa las/ thun mong lam gyis bdag rgyud smin par shog/
    practice:PFV-NS-ABL ordinary path-INS 1 continuum ripen-NS:ILL-IMP
After [having received] the instructions which they joyously bestowed, by way of gathering
the dharmas of the three vehicles, by knowing [them], after having put into practice their
meaning, may my [mental] continuum ripen through the common paths!

Thus, the notion of 'subjective' and 'objective' sentences in Lalou 1950 is highly questionable,
derived from a misunderstood earlier theory (the one of Bacot) and the very weak argument
that Tibetan verbs don't have agreement: "Noter l'invariabilité des formes verbales: toute la
phrase s'articule autour du verbe." (p. 54), weakly reminding the reader of Bacot's concept of
the core function of verbs in Tibetan syntax (Bacot 1946: 49f.). According to Lalou (1950:
74f.), Tibetan verbs are morphologically classified as transitive or intransitive. It is clear that
this is her terminology for causative and resultative stems, and that she refers to the findings
of diachronic analysis such as Conrady 1896, or Wolfenden 1929, or of Thonmi Sambhota's
rules -- Bacot 1928. Intransitives are said to be simplex forms or have ' or m prefixes, transis-
tive verbs have one of the other possible prefixes (g, s, r).

L'intransitif normal est d'une remarquable simplicité de structure; son étude doit donc
logiquement précéder celle des verbes transitifs. Tous deux sont des noms verbaux et il
n'y a aurait pas, à cet égard, à faire distinction entre eux. (Lalou 1950: 74)

Underived intransitives (nyal ba 'être couché', na ba 'être malade', dar ba 'être répandu', dro
ba 'être chaud') are base forms, intransitives with prefixes are derived from nouns and adject-
ives:

Par exemple, l'adjectif gyag pa 'diminué, amoindri', préfixé par ' [a chung], deviendra le
verbe neutre 'gyag pa 'être épuisé'. Le substantif gril 'rouleau, cylindre', deviendra, de la
même façon, le verbe neutre 'gril pa 'être enroulé'. / Ces deux préfixes alternent, car m
n'est qu'une articulation nasale de la semi-voyelle. On aura donc des formes 'thun
pa/mhun pa 'être d'accord'; 'kho ba/mkho ba 'être utile'. (Lalou 1950: 74f.)

Lalou (1950: 75) adds that, synchronically, not all verbs with ' or m are intransitives; the
rules are not always observed in synchronic grammar. Finally, intransitives usually do not
have more than two stem forms (PRS, PST):

L'intransitif se réduit régulièrement à deux formes: Présent et Parfait, et beaucoup de ra-
dicaux, même, ne comportent qu'un Présent. L'Impératif, peu fréquent, se confond avec le
Parfait, sauf lorsque la vocalisation de la racine est a, e ou o. / Le Futur est extrêmement
rare dans les verbes intransitifs. (Lalou 1950: 75)

As for the transitive verbs (or active, causative verbs), Lalou stresses the fuzziness of word
class distinctions of the 'verbal nouns'; the 'tense' form is thus not always relevant:

Le transitif est un nom verbal actif-passif essentiellement polymorphe; ses divers formes
peuvent, sans acceptation de temps, s'employer substantivement, et aussi, pour la plupart,
en qualité de participe. (Lalou 1950: 75)

Présent: stod-pa 'louer, célérer';
Parfait: bstod-pa 'loué, qui loue; louange'.

The causative verb prefixes, with the exception of perfective b-, are seen as derivational
morphology:
Les consonnes préfixes des transitifs autres que b, qu’elles soient suscrites ou antécédentes, n’expriment aucune idée de temps, mais une action ou une influence. (Lalou 1950: 75)

a. leb-po ‘plat’ > gleb-pa ‘aplatir’;
b. kor ‘rond, circulaire’ > skor ba ‘entourer’;
c. grag-pa ‘bruit’ > sgrog-pa ‘proclamer’;
d. nyog-pa ‘perturbation, trouble’ > myog-pa ‘troubler’.

To conclude, Lalou (1950: 77ff.) gives the following original regular verb morphology indicating genus verbi (causative/resultative), tense (aspect), and mode:

Si tous les verbes étaient réguliers et fléchis, la voix, les temps et le mode impératif seraient suffisamment différenciés:

la voix active par le préfixe s;
la voix passive par le préfixe ‘(’);
le Présent par le thème nu;
le Parfait par le préfixe b et le suffixe s;
le Futur par les préfixes d, g ou b et, surtout, par l’absence constante du suffixe s;
l’Impératif par l’aspiration de l’initiale radicale et la vocalisation o.

This is the reconstruction of Tibetan categories, but it does not map very well on the present system of written forms. Therefore, Lalou (1950: 77) comes once again (cf. Lalou 1950: 54) to the conclusion that active and passive sentences are distinguished by the presence or absence of an AG marked NP, or, alternatively, the presence or absence of the ‘ACC marked’ (= la) NP.

La voix active peut être révélée soit:

1 par la présence de la particule instrumentale de l’agent, l’absence de cette particule étant le signe de la voix passive (§ 55 a);
2 par la présence de la particule accusative désignant l’objet, l’absence de cette particule étant le signe de la voix passive (§ 55 b)

Les temps peuvent être indiqués par les auxiliaires variables et par des formations complexes et nuancées. Et ceci nous conduit de l’étude de la morphologie du verbe à celle de son fonctionnement. (Lalou 1950: 77)

Thus, Lalou explains in her grammar the findings from diachronic reconstruction and remains faithful to earlier grammars, especially the one of Cordier 1907f; interestingly, however, she has inverted the concept drawn from Bacot 1946 which originally described the Tibetan explanation of ergativity. This is probably due to her applying the NOM/ACC concept (subjective, objective) on a language with an assumed systematic verb orientation, as described earlier by Bacot. It remains unclear whether this was construed as an innovative explanation or simply a misunderstanding. The old distinction of active vs. neutre verbs is now termed transitive vs. intransitive. Since the Tibetan verb is actually a ‘nominal’, the transitive verbs can be rendered as active or passive. The distinction of genus verbi is realized by adding or omitting the agent, or the object, respectively. Lalou’s new terminology, however, was taken up by Regamey 1954 whose contribution is discussed in the section on the ‘nominalist hypothesis’.
05.03. The compilation of grammars

Following Lalou 1950 and Roerich & Lhalungpa 1952, the next grammars of Written Tibetan start to appear in the seventies. This gap coincides with the darkest era of Tibetan history: occupation (1951), exile (1959), ‘Cultural Revolution’ 1966 (cf. 01.01.). Access to Tibet became impossible, and the refugees were not yet established in exile. During and after this time, the Tibetan culture, and also language use, was completely remodeled. But it was probably also the cultural changes in Europe which led to an increase in linguistic works in the seventies. In the seventies, the universities grew, and many new institutes were founded, leading to an increase in linguistic writings.

The textbook grammar of the ‘Classical Tibetan written language’ by Michael Hahn appeared in 1971 and has seen various (revised) editions until 1996. It is a valuable source for beginning Tibetologists ever since. This work is still strongly based on the predecessors; later works will rely gradually more on modern linguistic approaches. Melvyn Goldstein started to travel the country. He met new (‘modern’) demands by writing grammars and dictionaries of both ‘Spoken Central Tibetan’ and ‘Modern Written Tibetan’. Grammar being not his main interest, these books are more to be considered textbooks with grammatical information. In the meantime, a new Tibetan indigenous linguistics, rooted both in traditional and in ‘modern’ (Russian) linguistics, developed, mainly represented by Kelzang Gyurme whose grammar of Tibetan appeared in French in 1992 (Tibetan original: 1981). Another grammar of Classical Tibetan, written in English by Stephen Beyer, appeared in 1992.

Since about 1980, linguistic interest in Tibetan increases. Chang & Chang 1980, and a number of articles by DeLancy (1980–...) describe the Tibetan ergative. Agha 1993 gives a syntactic account of ‘Lhasa Tibetan’. Finally, in 1996, Tournadre presents an entire monograph on Tibetan ergativity. A grammar of Tibetan by Denwood (1999), however, tries to remodel completely the viewpoint on Tibetan ergativity. The Tibetan exile community contributes a textbook by Losang Thonden 1984. A great number of textbooks from various Tibetan and western authors appear in the eighties and nineties, most of them being unsatisfying, as far as the grammatical descriptions are concerned. The last of these efforts, Chonjore 2003, adds some fuel to the ‘fluid ERG marking’ problem, however.

Thus, a distinction between ‘old written language’ and ‘modern Lhasa Tibetan’ is often found in this list of publications. Research performed within China is also concerned with the dialects (cf. Kelzang Gyurme & Kelzang Yangcan 2002). The linguists of India do research on Himalayan, i.e., ‘geographically marginal’, Tibetan languages, including, of course, Ladakhi (cf. Koshal 1979). Western linguists work on Nepalese and Indian dialects, and on Dzongkha (‘Blutanese’, cf. van Driem 1998).

A bridge between historical grammar of the written language and dialectology is provided by an ongoing project in Berne, leading to a ‘lexicon of Tibetan Dialects’ (cf. Bielmeier et al. 2002-2003) and a number of descriptive grammars of various Tibetan dialects, spanning the whole area from Baltistan to Amdo.
05.04. New theories on instrumental case

05.04.01. Hahn

Meeting needs as a language teacher, Hahn compiled a grammar textbook in 1971 in German language. This has been a very successful endeavour (cf. Hahn 1971-1996). Hahn is a faithful compiler of earlier assumptions: He recognizes that the Tibetan verb is impersonal, i.e. 'nominal', and voice-neutral:


The described quality translates into German as, e.g., mthong ngo 'Ein Sehen findet statt' (lit. 'A seeing takes place') (cf. Jäschke 1865: 40f.), and so on. The unmarked case is called 'accusative' (or, in the relevant contexts, vocative) (Hahn 1994: 54 [= 1985: 47]). According to Hahn's very specific grammatical distinctions, this accusative is described as having many different functions, such as the functions of 'direct object' (7.6.a. and 7.6.b.), 'stereotypical object' of light verbs (e.g. *bdag mo btag po* 'to laugh laughter', "figura etymologica", 7.6.b.), and in 'temporal' (de'tshe, 7.6.c.), and 'modal' (7.6.d.) use. As "modal", he again distinguishes three types: 'qualifying use' (e.g. *ting zab po* 'base-deep', 7.6.d.1.), 'proleptic use' (7.6.d.2.), by which Hahn understands left extraposition (or simply word order change) of an unmarked NP (or marked with TOP ni), as in 'The brahman, [he] was given ...', and finally the 'accusative of relation', i.e. the "case of the logical subject of intransitive verbs and of nominal predicates" (Hahn 1994: 60 = 1985: 50). Some earlier authors have stated that the nominative is 'rare' (cf. Hannah 1912: 62, Bacot 1946: 20); Hahn pushes the theoretical model further by saying that there is no nominative at all. In order to retain the category NOM for ERG-marked participants ('agentive subjects'), Hahn decides to interpret the unmarked ABS case as an ACC. The auxiliary translation for this accusative is: 'concerning' + ACC, lit. 'in bezug auf', 'was ... betrifft'. The fact that the 'logical subject' of intransitive verbs is an accusative must have further consequences for intransitive sentences. Therefore, he describes them as having only an ACC and no real subject, although this ACC becomes a so-called 'logical subject'.

Das logische Subjekt kann in zweierlei Beziehung zur Verbalhandlung stehen: es ist entweder ihr Urheber oder aber dasjenige, was an der Verbalhandlung Anteil hat bzw. in bezug worauf die Verbalhandlung geschieht. Diese Klassifikation ist praktisch identisch mit der Einteilung der Verben in transitive und intransitive. Das logische Subjekt bei intransitiven Verben steht nun im Tibetischen stets im Akkusativ der Beziehung, der in diesem Fall die zweite der oben beschriebenen Beziehungen ausdrückt. (Hahn 1994: 56 [= 1985: 50])

The idea that the NPs are marked for being the origin of the action or the unspecified participant follows the earlier concept that the nouns express what otherwise is expressed by verbs

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16 The term 'sujet logique' is mentioned in Regamey 1954: 363 from Dirr 1928.

"Coming' or 'Being born' cannot have a SOURCE, according to the Tibetan view, because one cannot influence a direct object by this action. From the Tibetan viewpoint, the logical subject in sentences with intransitive verbal predicate has to be seen more as an object of the action."

By trying to define the commonalities between patients and absolute participants, Hahn's interpretation of 'transitivity' is probably close to Bacot's orientation of the verb. But Hahn does not mention the 'subjective' and 'objective' forms of the verbs.

Defining an accusative, but no nominative in a language goes against the basic definition of these dichotomic case forms. Hahn is aware of the shortcomings of this approach. In the postface of the 5th edition, Hahn mentions that the term "Kasus absolutus" might be more appropriate (cf. Hahn 1985: 361; Hahn 1994: 373). He explains that his model was created on the basis that it did not seem logical to assume a NOM and an ACC function for the same (zero-marked) entity. Moreover, he admits that one could equally call the unmarked form a nominative:


1. blon po gum "Der Minister ist gestorben" (von 'gum pa, Perfekt gum, 'sterben', intransitiv).
2. blon po bkum "Der Minister wurde zum Sterben gebracht, wurde getötet" (von 'gum pa, Perfekt bkum, 'sterben lassen, töten', transitiv).
3. dgras blon po bkum "Der Minister wurde vom Feind (als Agens oder Mittel) zum Sterben gebracht, getötet".

Diese Interpretation hat den Vorzug, daß der gleiche "Kasus" (d.h. der gleiche Partikelgebrauch) immer durch die gleiche Funktion erklärt wird, auch wenn man dabei einen "Genuswechsel" beim Verb in Kauf nehmen muß. (Hahn 1994: 373 = Hahn 1985: 361f.)

The driving force behind Hahn's model is uniformity of marking, but with the means of traditional grammar of nominative/accusative languages: One has to either understand Tibetan
transitive sentences as passives, or the intransitives as having an accusative instead of a nominative. Additionally, he finally remarks here that this change in meaning has to do with the function of causative and resultative verb forms. The example given here is, by the way, oft-quoted (cf. Cordier 1907f. 48; Lalou 1950: 54; Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 254; Tourandre 1996: 206).

In the main text, however, Hahn maintains the accusative hypothesis and finally assumes that this procedure must also be applied to 'nominal predicates' such as khyim de chen po yin 'This house is big', which 'means' in Hahn's understanding 'There is a being-big concerning this house' (Hahn 1985: 50). Here, we find a slight change in the text of the 1985 and 1994 edition; in the later edition, this is changed: *khyim de chen po yin* has the auxiliary translation 'Was jenes Haus (als Gesprächsgegenstand) angeht, (so ist es) groß.' ('As far as this house is concerned, (it is) big') (Hahn 1994: 57). And the conclusion of 1985 is omitted in 1994: 'Ein Nominativ ist also bei der Aufstellung eines Kasussystems für das Tibetische nicht erforderlich.' (Hahn 1985: 50) Now that the accusative and the nature of the verb are defined, the instrumental case can be introduced: It is described as having the following functions: "Instrument of Agent" (8.2.a.), "I. of Means or Tool" (8.2.b.), "I. of reason" (8.2.c.), "Modal I." (8.2.d.), "I. of compensation" (8.2.e.), "I with verbs" (8.2.f.). The auxiliary translation for transitive sentences is exemplarily the following:

\[
\text{mi des 'di skad ces smras so 'Jener Mann sagte Folgendes.' / Genauer: 'Durch jenen Mann' (als Agens) fand ein Sagen folgendermaßen statt.} \]

(Hahn 1994: 60 = 1985: 53)

This translates into English literally as 'By this man (as agent), a saying took place in the following way.' Equally, *dgra bos bsod pa* may translate into German as 'der vom Feind Getötete', lit. 'the [one] killed-by-the-enemy', with 'vom' 'by', the typical marker of transformed subjects in passive sentences, and a past (passive) participle. Because of the homophony of ERG and INS and with an implicit necessity for strict uniformity of (principal?) meaning and form, Hahn tries to find an INS reading ('by', 'through', 'with') for ERG subjects. In chapter 8.4. on verbs, however, Hahn once again mentions that there is no active-passive distinction in Tibetan:


To conclude, Hahn's contribution to the discussion of Tibetan ergativity is on the one hand faithful to earlier descriptions, on the other hand more 'theoretical' in that he tries to give justifications for the auxiliary translations which serve to adjust the unfitting syntax on the traditional European (accusative) syntax. Although all authors including Hahn never go so far as did Schuchardt 1896, we find here some proximity to both the nominalist and passive hypothesis of ergativity, as has been discussed at the beginning of the 20th century by Schuchardt, Finck, and others. Hahn also gives detailed explanations on the morphology of Tibetan verbs. Nonetheless, in Hahn's contribution, due to the terminology used, the distinction between causative and resultative (or active and neuter) verbs is not very obvious.
05.04.02. Goldstein

As mentioned above, Goldstein's textbooks of 'Modern Literary Tibetan' (1973, 1977, 1991) and of 'Modern Spoken Tibetan: Lhasa Dialect' (1978) are not reference grammars. The instrumental case is not discussed at all, instead one can derive some information from the description of the verbs. The usual features as discussed above are enumerated:

There are four basic types of verbs in Tibetan (active, involuntary, linking, existential) each of which defines a type of sentence and clause. "Active" verbs (and constructions) express action done by actors; "involuntary" verbs (and constructions) express unintentional, non-purposive actions or states; linking verbs link a subject to an attribute; "existential" verbs express the idea that something exists. (Goldstein 1977: 23)

Goldstein then continues:

The syntactic structure of Tibetan verbs is considerably different from that of English. For example, the basic English dichotomies of "active/passive" and "transitive/intransitive" have no exact correspondences in Tibetan. The difference between the first two classes of Tibetan verbs turns on the dichotomy of intentional/unintentional and factors such as the presence or absence of a direct object are irrelevant. The English sentence "He slept" illustrates this aptly. Tibetan has two separate verbs meaning "to sleep". One of these is active and the other is involuntary. With the active verb "to sleep" the sentence connotes sleep resultant from an intentional act, but with the involuntary verb "to sleep", the sentence connotes unintentional sleep, i.e., falling asleep without wanting or trying to do so. (Goldstein 1977: 23)

In Goldstein et al. (1991: 46), this fundamental distinction is explained similarly:

In addition to linking and existential verbs, Tibetan has two categories of verbs we shall call active and involuntary. These verbs convey intentional and unintentional action. For example, the English sentence "I went to sleep" can be constructed with either an active or involuntary verb meaning "to sleep". With the active verb "to sleep" (nyal), the sentence "I went to sleep" connotes sleep resultant from an intentional act, but with the involuntary verb "to sleep" (gnyid khug), the same English sentence connotes unintentional sleep, i.e. falling asleep without wanting or trying to do so. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 46)

As can be seen, the Tibetan distinction between intentional and unintentional actions, or between AG-oriented (causative) and PAT-oriented (resultative) verbs, is explained by using the terms 'active' and 'unintentional'. Goldstein thus changed only one of the two traditional terms ('active' and 'neutre'). Without a background on earlier grammars, this terminology is not clear; finally, the term 'active' is usually associated to the genus verbi distinction.

The main (and only obligatory) element in Tibetan active sentences (and clauses) is the main active verb, although most active sentences usually also have both a subject and an object. When these three sentence components are filled, the normal sentence order is subject + object + main verb. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 46)

In 1977, Goldstein gives the following description of the instrumental case (modal, agentive, instrumental functions):
The subject in active constructions consists of a noun or noun phrase followed by the instrumental postposition. The instrumental postposition is a grammatical marker that expresses how or by whom or by what means the action of the active verb occurred or occurs. (Goldstein 1977: 28)

In 1991, however, Goldstein et al. first simply give a descriptive account without bothering about the theoretical implications of the grammatical terms he is using:

Active sentences require that their subjects be placed in what is called the instrumental case. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 46)

In spite of the terminology ('instrumental'), this case particle has agentive and instrumental functions:

Instrumental case particles indicate the agent or the means by which an action took or takes place. For example, in the sentence "He killed the yak", the agent or actor is "he" (kho). However, unlike English, Tibetan grammar requires that "he" be placed in the instrumental case so that the sentence literally means: "By him yak killed." Thus, as explained below, kho becomes khos. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 46)

The above-mentioned example of the verb 'sleep' in active and unintentional forms follows (Goldstein 1977: 41, G. et al. 1991: 83f.):

(02) khos nyal ba red/ kho gnyid khug pa red/
k'o phr-bo-reê k'o pi (_.) ila bo-reê
3:ERG sleep-NS-DISJ 3 sleep-NS-DISJ
He slept (went to sleep), He slept (fell asleep).

But due to the non-obligatory of constituents, Goldstein can also give a 'minimal pair' example for the two verb classes without an ERG/ABS marking difference (Goldstein 1977: 41):61

(03) dmag 'khrug bslang pa red/ mag 'khrug langs pa red/
war begin:CAUS-NS-DISJ war begin:RES-NS-DISJ
Somebody started a war., A war started.

This example is explained at length:

The differences between these sentences is the difference between the two verbs bslang and langs. While both could be translated as "started" in English, the first is an active verb and the second is an involuntary verb. The first sentence therefore conveys the idea that a subject (he, they, etc.) intentionally started or incited a war while the second merely expresses the idea that a war unintentionally started. This difference would be more accurately expressed if the above sentences were translated as "They caused a war to start" and "A war broke out (got started)". This, however, is not to say that involuntary actions or states are not caused by something or someone. The key factor is that the causal element is unintentional, e.g., "Because the soldiers shot at the crowd, a revolt broke out". The cause of the revolt is the shooting but since the shooting was not intended by the actors to cause a revolt, the involuntary verb would be used. (Goldstein 1977: 41)

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61 cf. also rgya gar dang pa ki si than bar du dmag khrug byung pa red/ 'A war occurred between India and Pakistan' (Goldstein 1977: 83)
Goldstein et al. (1991: 83) give a variant of this example, with basically the same, but more extensive explanation, obviously in an effort to make this point clear:

(04a)  America:ERG start a war.  
(04b)  America-ILL start a war.  

[...] Note that America, the subject of the first sentence, is in the instrumental case, whereas in the second sentence America is in the dative-locative case since it is the recipient or site of the action – the war broke out in America. [...] (Goldstein et al. 1991: 83)

The explanation given by Goldstein et al. states that ‘involuntary’ verbs do not take the instrumental, except for verbs such as *mthong* ‘see’, *shes* ‘know’, etc. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 84, Fn. 1). In other words, there are exceptions to the rule stating a relation between active verbs and ergative marking.

The examples quoted above are, however, clear examples of a grammatical verb orientation change, on which case patterns are said to depend. The auxiliary translation involves a causative element (‘caused’) for active verbs, and a resultative element (‘got’) for the unintentional verbs. It is therefore a description stressing the causative/resultative distinction.

Hence, we find in this account that ERG (instrumental case) is used with active verb forms and with perception verbs. This is a correct subset of ergative use.

To conclude, throughout the books, there are ad hoc descriptions of grammatical phenomena as they occurred. Goldstein therefore partially follows traditional terminology, but does not justify its use and seems not to care in general about the grammarians’ ‘problems’.

**05.04.03. Beyer**

Beyer 1992 is in fact the first modern reference grammar of Written Tibetan. Beyer terminologically distinguishes ‘transitive’ and ‘intransitive’ verbs (i.e. active/neutre, causative/resultative verbs). He is the first to use the term ‘ergative’ among the grammars described so far. He also discusses earlier assumptions and the (questionable) value of auxiliary translations, such as passives or nominal verbs:

We can observe that an ergative system such as Tibetan is patterned very much like the PASSIVE of an accusative system such as English. In the English passive, for example, the agency of a transitive verb is given the distinctive marker by (compare English The pupil is seen BY THE TEACHER with Tibetan SLOB-DPON-GYIS slob-ma-0 mthong), while the patient participants share the unmarked position before the verb (compare English THE TEACHER grieves and THE TEACHER is seen by the pupil with Tibetan SLOB-DPON-0 Ngyod and slob-ma-s SLOB-DPON-0 mthong). This is the reason for the assertion, common in older textbooks, that “all Tibetan constructions are impersonal” or that “all Tibetan verbs are passive.” In fact, Tibetan apparently lacks any syntactic structure corresponding to the passive of an accusative system; [Fns.] Tibetan transitive constructions can, of course, be TRANSLATED by an English passive (for example, rgyal-po-s dgra-0 bsad “The king slew the enemy” or “The enemy was slain by the king”), but this, again, is a peculiarity of English and not of Tibetan. (Beyer 1992: 260)
In fact, the earlier authors have used such translations, but have equally usually stressed the fact that this is only a matter of translation, not of the language itself. Nonetheless, if there had been the view of a generalized passive for transitive sentences, this contribution then marks the historical end of this assumption. But his own descriptions are not so different from earlier approaches: he explains the agentive function as an ‘instrumentality’, and one is reminded of the ‘nominal verb’ viewpoint (‘action of killing’):

The AGENCY of an event is the means or instrumentality whereby the event occurs: in dgra-s rgyal-po-ð bsad “The enemy killed the king” or ser-ba-s rgyal-po-ð bsad “A hailstorm killed the king” the participants dgra “enemy” and ser-ba “hailstorm,” respectively, are the agencies of the action of killing. (Beyer 1992: 264)

On the other hand, agentive and instrumental function are not entirely identical. Although morphologically not expressible, but on the basis of the complementary use of animate agents and inanimate instruments, the agentive function is equated with intention (‘responsible for the event’):

The agency whereby an event takes place is quite often animate, although the initiator of an event can also be a natural force, an institution, or a magic spell: where we read an agency as being in some sense RESPONSIBLE for the event we can speak of an AGENT. On the other hand, the agency may be some inanimate object wielded by an agent, or in some other way not subject to its own inclination: where we read an agency as being is [sic!] some sense NOT RESPONSIBLE for the event we can speak of an INSTRUMENT. (Beyer 1992: 265)

Thus, Beyer makes mention of the fact that ergatives in Tibetan serve indeed the function to mark intentional agents. The distinctive force of case-marking is not challenged by the syncretism of agentive and instrumental, since the concepts are used complementarily, and are interchangeable only in few ‘borderline’ contexts (natural forces, irresponsible agents). Another type of problematic case is the omission of the agentive due to the non-obligatoriness of participant roles in the syntactic context (‘telegraphically omitted’):

 […] with the agent telegraphically omitted: is the proposition dug-gis rgyal-po bsad to be processed as “Poison killed the king” or as “(Someone) killed the king with poison”? (Beyer 1992: 265)

In systems with ERG/INS syncretism, one could speak of a complex concept SOURCE (SRC) which neutralizes the distinction of AG and INS, making them also exchangeable in specific contexts. But this is also only a translation problem: An agentive could be added to this sample sentence, which immediately makes the first translation impossible. Nonetheless, the ambiguity of agent/instrument marking, together with the causative/resultative distinction and the facultative omission of NPs leads Beyer to construe the following scheme, called ‘responsibility hierarchy’ which expresses various degrees of control (‘responsibility’, i.e. gradual transitivity) (cf. Beyer 1992: 265):

Table 01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bsha mas</th>
<th>sgra chen pos</th>
<th>bya spur</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lama:ERG</td>
<td>noise big:INS</td>
<td>bird frighten:PFV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“The lama frightened away the birds with a loud noise.”
Both the presence/absence of the ergative and the use of causative/resultative verbs create an event construal of particular meaning, but they act independently of each other. It is certainly difficult to find a full list of such examples in empirical data, but it can be assumed that these variants are theoretically possible; this makes it difficult to evaluate one single clause; cf. (Lifestory of Shantideva, oral explanation, Lhasa speaker):

(05) de dus le'u bcu par gsungs dus khong nam mkha' la phur song/
then chpt.-10th say-time he sky-ALL fly-PST

While reciting the tenth chapter, he ascended into the sky.

05.05. Modern Tibetan grammaticography

Kelzang Gyurme (skal bzang 'gyur med) is a Tibetan linguist working in Beijing. He has studied with Soviet linguists and is knowledgeable of traditional Tibetan grammar writing. He is also the coauthor of a book on Tibetan dialects (Kelzang Gyurme & Kelzang Yangcan [skal bzang 'gyur med & skal bzang dbyang can] 2002). Fortunately, in recent years, his grammar of Tibetan has been translated (and commented) into a European language (French) by Stoddard & Tournadre 1992 (from Kelzang Gyurme 1981).

05.05.01. On verbs

Kelzang Gyurme, in part 5 on verbs, first gives a kind of traditional formal classification of verb forms, according to how many stem forms a verb can have. Next, a chapter deals with modal verbs, serial verbs, and auxiliaries of Tibetan, the latter section already pointing towards the important parameter of volition (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 229f.). Finally, in chapter 29, we find a classification of verb categories, specifically 'differentiativity', 'volitionality', and 'causativity/resultativity' (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 245ff.). The term 'differentiativity' (tha dad pa) applies to the fact that in an event construal, an agent applies an action on a distinct patient or object. In other words, it seems to be a kind of transitivity, but with emphasis on the fact that source and goal be distinct.
Lorsqu'un agent donné et l'objet de l'action qu'il accomplit sont distinct, la présence de l'un impliquant celle de l'autre, il s'agit alors de verbes différentiatifs. Autrement dit, dans le cas des verbes différentiatifs, il faut concevoir l'agent comme distinct de l'objet. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 245ff.)

And the categories \textit{bdag} and \textit{gzhan}, Kelzang Gyurme continues (p. 246), will be applied only to this type of verbs (see below). Differentiative verbs have the following case marking pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 02</th>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>OBJEKT</th>
<th>GOAL-OBJEKT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ERG (byed sgra)</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>ALL ('la') (if present)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, Kelzang Gyurme applies a traditional concept from Tibetan grammar (\textit{tha dad pa}), and it is seen as the triggering parameter for ergativity, as well as the traditional \textit{bdag/gzhan} distinction, which seems to be equated with the ergative rule. As Stoddard & Tournadre, the translators, mention in a commentary (p. 246), affective verbs do not adhere to this category. They also make clear that the structural notion of 'transitivity' does not apply to this type of verb classification:

Nous avons préféré utiliser le terme de différentiatif traduisant littéralement le tibétain \textit{tha dad pa} plutôt que celui de transitif car ce dernier réfère davantage à un caractère syntaxique (le verbe admet un objet). La notion de verbe différentiatif (bya tshig \textit{tha dad pa}) est par contre essentiellement sémantique. [...] La différentiativité ou encore "transitivité tibétaine" n'a pas d'incidence sur la morphologie verbale, contrairement à la notion de contrôle ou volition qui, elle, a des conséquences importantes du point de vue morphosyntaxique (présence ou absence d'impératif, d'auxiliaires volitifs, de couples verbaux causatifs/résultatifs.) Les seuls critères formels donnés par les auteurs tibétains pour déterminer le caractère différentiatif d'un verbe sont liés aux marques actancielles. (Stoddard & Tournadre in Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 246)

Stoddard & Tournadre thus don’t want to apply the notion of transitivity (which is understood as bivalence), but one of an AGENT-PATIENT relation. This relation only will be marked with ERG case. Contrary to control and volition, this concept does not surface morphologically, except for the fact that one will find ERG noun phrases. In order to understand this distinction, one may consider undifferentiative verb examples: 'turn, break down, come to an end; enter, hide, sit down, stand up; be afraid, hate, love', but also 'lose, cry, accept, believe, ...' Some of these verbs would be classified as transitive in some European languages, while they are 'undifferentiative', i.e., non-ERG verbs, in Tibetan.

As can be seen here, we find a more semantic view on transitivity; in Tsunoda's (1985) 'effectiveness hierarchy' (Tsunoda 1985: 388), we can easily mark the range of ERG use in Tibetan: Verbs with direct effect on the PAT, perception with attained PAT, and, as an irregularity, some knowledge verbs. All verbs having an orientation towards the result of the action ('resultative'), or involving some movement, and affective verbs, as well as all verbs not having a goal which is distinct from the source ('to become angry [oneself]', 'get decided [by itself]', 'become besieged', etc.) do not have the ERG pattern.

But there still remain a few open questions: A verb such as \textit{yid ches} 'believe' could be classified as knowledge verbs, but is undifferentiative – maybe because this knowledge is
not certain. Therefore, it may be classified as a ‘feeling verb’. Most importantly, we see that Tibetan ERG marking depends on a semantic parameter of affectedness (Tsunoda 1985: 388) or involvement of two participants semantically defined as AG and PAT, as opposed to other possible semantic relations (EXP – ABS, MVR – LOC, AFFECTED – AFFECTOR, etc.).

Next, Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 250) introduces the concept of control or volition – it remains unclear inhowfar differentiability and control (or volition) are different; although the definitions are slightly different, they seem to refer to the same distinction: Volitional (rang dbang can) and non-volitional (gzhan dbang can) actions are said to be distinguished by the ability of the former to have imperative verb forms and volitional auxiliaries. This definition relies on two features which can also be seen as effects of volition: unvolitional events cannot be done volitionally, therefore IMP would not make sense. AUX which occur with VOL verbs can of course be called ‘volitional’, this is a circular argument. This grammatical topic is not traditional, and it has probably been introduced in order to account for the fact that ‘differentiability’ does not explain the case of perception verbs with controllable or non-controllable aspects.

### Table 03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sgrub</th>
<th>[I] realise [something]</th>
<th>CAUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>’grub</td>
<td>[something is] realized</td>
<td>RESULT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’grub par byed</td>
<td>to make it be accomplished</td>
<td>CAUS OF RESULT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lastly, Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 254) mentions the difference between causative and resultative verbs. Although the translators’ commentary seems to define ‘causativization’ (‘make somebody do something’), the examples clearly indicate that Kelzang Gyurme speaks of AG and PAT orientation; cf. the following Central/Standard and Themchen Tibetan examples:

### 07a

ngas dkar yol bcag pa yin/ yin na’ang chag ma song/
1:ERG cup broke-NS-CONJ but broken-NEG-PFV:GEN
I threw [= ‘broke’] the cup, but it didn’t break. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 255)

### 07b

standzön yo karu ptauxt’a-ra ma-te’ax-t’a
rta mgrin gyis dkar yol bcd thal rag ma chag thal
Tamdrin-ERG cup break-NVOL:EVID-CONC NEG-break:RES-NVOL:EVID
Tamdrin tried to break the cup, but [it] did not break. (Haller 2004: ex. 602b)
Again, it is clear that only CAUS verb forms can take ERG noun phrases. But this holds true only for most cases. Indeed, in both spoken and literary Tibetan, examples of RES verbs with ERG are found; the distinction being one of volition (ex. from Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 255f.):

(08) ngas dkar yol bcag pa yin/  
1:ERG cup broke-NS-CONJ  
I broke the cup. (volitional, differentiative, CAUS)

ngas dkar yol chag song/  
1:ERG cup broken-PFV:GEN  
I broke the cup. (non-volitional, differentiative, RES)

The second sentence means that one broke the cup involuntarily, by accident. Thus, the ERG can also have a non-volitional actor context. This exhibits once more that the case marker is not governed by certain verb classes. Rather, it is polysemous within the range of agenthood, volition, source, whereby its meaning cooperates with the verbal aspect to construe an event.

Kelzang Gyurme 1992 thus seems to suggest that for the description of Tibetan main clause syntax, three partly overlapping categories need to be distinguished: distinctivity of AG and OBJ, a degree of control (CTRL) performed by the AG, and affector orientation of the verb (CAUS). This relates to the universal-linguistic transitivity parameters of AFFECTEDNESS OF O and VOLITION. The morphological CAUS/RES distinction, however, seems to be the formal expression of these verb classes. Since the system is based on a purely semantic classification of verb meanings, there are seeming formal exceptions to the rule, in that in some marked contexts, ERG and RES/CTRL can overlap, whereby ERG has to be understood as the semantic SRC marker instead of volitional AG marking.

05.05.02. On bdag vs. gzhan

In chapter 30, Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 262) finally turns towards the above-mentioned Tibetan concept of bdag vs. gzhan (bdag gzhan gyi go don 'the concepts of bdag and gzhan'). Literally, bdag means 'I' and gzhan means 'other'. These two categories, as exposed above, are taken as the traditional core notions of Tibetan syntax. In other contexts, these categories have been translated as the opposition 'agentive' vs. 'objective' (dngos po bdag gzhan) (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 262ff.) — or 'autonomous' vs. 'other-dependant' verbs (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 27ff.). Stoddard & Tournadre (in Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 270) propose these concepts to be derived from Buddhist philosophy, an idea also expressed in other works (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989). In a sentence with a differentiative verb, according to Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 262ff.), we will have the well-known distinction of bdag concepts and gzhan concepts:

Table 04

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agentive (dngos po bdag):</th>
<th>Objective (dngos po gzhan):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agent (byed pa po), instrument (byed pa) and non-future actions (byed tshig)</td>
<td>object of the action (byed ba'i las), place or goal of the action (byed ba'i yul), future actions (bya tshig, bya ba)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, this classification sees a coreference between AG, INS, and all factual verb forms, and a non-reference of these to OBJ, GOAL (LOC), and unaccomplished/non-factual verb forms. Among many other explanations, Kelzang Gyurme gives again the traditional example of the woodcutter (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 262) with four participants (AG, INS, LOC, PAT):
The woodcutter is cutting wood in the forest with an axe.
The woodcutter will (intend to) cut wood in the forest with an axe.

Similarly, the bdag/gzhan classification is exemplified in the following examples (cf. Kelzang Gyarme 1992: 263f):

(10a) bzo pas 'phrul 'khor gyis bzo grwar lcags brdung/
worker:ERG hammer:INS factory:LOC iron hammer:FUT
AG INS LOC PAT ACTION
[BDAG] [BDAG] [GZHAN] [GZHAN] [GZHAN]
The worker intends to hammer iron in the factory.

(10b) kun dgas pir gyis rtsig ldebs la ri mo 'bri bar byed/
Künga:ERG paintbrush:INS wall:ALL picture draw-VC-make
AG INS LOC PAT ACTION
[BDAG] [BDAG] [GZHAN] [GZHAN] [BDAG]
Künga is painting a picture on the wall with a paintbrush.

(10c) sgrol mas rgya skad kyis slob grogs tshor sgrung bshad pa red/
[BDAG] [BDAG] [GZHAN] [GZHAN] [GZHAN]
[BDAG] [BDAG]
AG INS LOC PAT ACTION
Drolma has told her school pals a story in Chinese (language).

Kelzang Gyarme thus concludes that the concept of bdag/gzhan is applied only in factual/imperfective (= present) actions, i.e., neither in perfective nor intentional (= future) settings. There is no apparent morphological or syntactic distinction between these examples, thus it is far from clear what can be expressed by these categories. To sum up, in a Tibetan sentence, according to Kelzang Gyarme, the following concepts adhere to either bdag or gzhan:

Table 05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BDAG</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>byed pa po</td>
<td>doer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INS</td>
<td>byed pa</td>
<td>instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fact/tp</td>
<td>byed tshig</td>
<td>do-word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GZHAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOAL, LOC</td>
<td>bya ba'i yul</td>
<td>location of doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>bya ba'i las</td>
<td>action of doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intent</td>
<td>bya ba</td>
<td>intention to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This theory obviously expresses that in transitive settings, the verb either corresponds to the agent or to the patient. It remains unclear why this should be only so with present and future verb forms, but this is the traditional viewpoint. Another point which seems to rely on the bdag/gzhan distinction, is word formation with verb stems (cf. the linguistic terminology.
above using byed 'do:IPV' and bya 'do:INT'). If compounds are formed which contain verb stems, there are differences in the meaning of the various stems. Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 268) explains these meaning differences by the application of *bdag* and *gzhán*, respectively. Indeed, the 'present' (imperfective) and 'future' (intention) stems are used here, and they are interpreted as the source of an action or the location of an action; Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 268ff.) gives several examples, cf. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 271):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 06</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>rjod byed</em></td>
<td><em>rjod bya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say-do:IPV</td>
<td>say-do:INT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>signans</em> [that which means]</td>
<td><em>signatum</em> [that which is meant]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relevance of the verb stem for morphology makes clear that *bdag/gzhán* is not merely a philosophical concept with no reference to grammar; instead, one finds a clear function in word (phrase) formation, and, as will be discussed later, there is a connection to the CONJ/DISJ pattern, which has not yet become obvious.

As can be seen from these commentaries, the grammars provide explanations which do not simply explain the phenomenon in a domain in which we are able to understand easily. This account does not make entirely clear what *bdag/gzhán* really means, since the described concept does not surface morphologically or syntactically in main clause syntax, so that the reader may ask whether this is a grammatical feature at all, or merely a traditional concept. It appears to be of importance, however in (lexicalised?) deverbal compounds, where the choice of the verb form plays a decisive role. Interestingly, compounds are derived from either present or future stems, which gives further evidence that these stem forms are not tenses. The translation of the terms *bdag* and *gzhán* as 'agentive' and 'objective' seem to refer to verb orientation. In this respect, one may paraphrase the concept of *bdag/gzhán* as one of verb forms 'looking' either in the direction of the agent or in the direction of the patient of the action. If this is the case, then 'present' and 'future' may originally have represented the same or a similar distinction which we find in the CAUS/RES distinction. Thus, Thommi's concept may refer to an old type of verb orientation which is not understandable from a synchronic perspective even on Thommi's contemporary language. It remains incomprehensible how the terminology for 'present' and 'future' adopted from Indian grammars (*da lta ba* 'nowhood', *ma 'ongs pa* 'not-come') came to be applied on these forms. After all, Thommi's concepts do not explain everything, but focus on one of various verb classifications, and seemingly not the most important one. It may therefore be hypothesized that Thommi's explanations refers most probably to an early (pre-historical) feature of the grammar.

### 05.05.03. Against the 'passive hypothesis'

In European linguistics, ergativity has for some time been viewed by some scholars as being a generalized passive (passive hypothesis). Kelzang Gyurme spends one critical chapter on this foreign idea; he remarks that the idea of passive voice is only a question of European reading (Lesart) and not of Tibetan grammar; he gives this example:

(11) mar pas deb 'di brtsams pa red/
Marpa:ERG Buch DEM schreiben:PFV-VC-DISJ

*Marpa has written this book.* = *This book has been written by Marpa.*
This interpretation is largely in accordance with the earliest authors such as Csoma who stated that transitive verbs can be both active or passive without morphological operation. Kelzang Gyurme 1992 also points to the fact that the choice of CAUS and RES verb forms in Tibetan have a similar, though not identical effect to European ‘passivization’: the main distinction in Tibetan being ‘volition’ of the AG, cf.:

(12a) khang pa bshigs song/ 
house destroy-PFV-GEN

The house was destroyed. [The house was being destroyed.]

(12b) khang pa zhiig song/ 
house destroyed-PFV-GEN

The house was destroyed. [The house collapsed.]

This looks more like antipassive constructions, since only the first clause could have had an AG participant, e.g. bsod nams kyis khang pa bshigs song ‘Sonam has destroyed the house’. But since the AG participant is not obligatory, there is no obvious demotion of a participant in the second clause. The only difference lies in the fact that bshigs implies somebody who performed the action, while zhiig implies something on which the action is performed. Such statements by native speaker linguists of languages which do not fit SAE ideas of universality are therefore valuable evidence for the inadequacy of certain traditional linguistic concepts of syntax which turn back on such models of explanation time and again.

05.05.04. Linguistics in exile

The Tibetan exile community founded the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala which is a library and research institute. Losang Thonden 1984 published a good textbook of (normative) Spoken Tibetan there which, however, does not give many explicit explanations, although the ordering of the grammar is useful. Other Tibetans went to western universities as native language teachers. Some published textbooks which mostly consist orthographic rules and lists of sentences. Tseten Chonjore from Kathmandu is a teacher of Tibetan in the USA. His textbook (Chonjore 2003) is influenced both by his traditional knowledge of Tibetan linguistics (e.g., the ‘gender’ classification of the Tibetan consonants) and the Western-style approach. It is the first textbook which includes some of the newer linguistic viewpoints, e.g., on verb inflection. Chonjore’s approach is clearly rooted in another tradition than is the effort of Kelzang Gyurme. Contrary to Kelzang Gyurme’s grammar, the emphasis of the textbook clearly lies more on the descriptive explanation for language learners. Chonjore 2003 can avoid ERG/INS case use until chapter 12 (p. 225), by simply not using the ERG in all sentences (e.g., with verbs such as byed ‘do’). In this chapter, finally, Chonjore explains that there is a nominative (= ABS) and an instrumental (= ERG/INS) case. I.e., Chonjore takes the Western traditional terminology which generally uses the term ‘instrumental’, whereas Kelzang Gyurme remains in the Tibetan tradition with the term byed pa po (‘agent’) and byed pa (‘instrumental’). Consequently, he tries to translate the INS as ‘by’ (Chonjore 2003: 228). Concerning the function of these two markers for subjects, Chonjore gives the following explanations: “The Tibetan nominative case places the emphasis on the action that is being performed by the agent” (Chonjore 2003: 226), and “The Tibetan instrumental case places the emphasis of the sentence on the agent of the action” (Chonjore 2003: 227). First of all, this clearly implies that ERG is not syntactically obligatory,
but a semantic choice of the speaker in all (?) sentences. This description speaks of ‘emphasis’ which is placed on the agent by the use of the ERG, but it is also a description of the ‘orientation’ of the event construal. The use of the ERG is seen as ‘insisting’ on the agenthood, probably a strong ‘intention’ of the agent. These are the examples (Chonjore 2003: 226f.):

(13a) nga kha lag bzo bgyi yod/
     1 food eat-VC-CONJ
     I make / am making food.
(13b) ngas kha lag bzo bgyi yod/
     1:ERG food eat-VC-CONJ
     I make / am making food. [made by me/being made by me]
(13c) khong tsho bod skad slob sbyong byed kyi ’dug/
     3-PL Tibetan study do-VC-DISJ
     They study Tibetan. / They are studying Tibetan.
(13d) khong tshos bod skad slob sbyong byed kyi ’dug/
     3-PL:ERG Tibetan study do-VC-DISJ
     They study Tibetan. / They are studying Tibetan.
     ... literal translation: “by them the studying is being done”

In order to stress the ‘emphatic’ meaning of the ERG, Chonjore (2003: 227f.) gives a literal translation with an English passive: He explains that although the translation with ‘by’ may not be used in the English translation, it is implied in the Tibetan sentence: his example: ‘Sonam is giving Kunga a camera’ = ‘A camera is being given to Kunga by Sonam’. Chonjore (2003: 227f.) discusses also sentences with la objects; again, the ABS-DAT pattern places emphasis on the action, the ERG-DAT pattern places emphasis on the agent. In order to show this ‘emphatic function’, Chonjore gives questions and the respective answers (Chonjore 2003: 277f.; cf. also p. 230):62

(14) padma ga re byed kyi ’dug/
     Pema what do-VC-DISJ
     What is Pema doing?
padma rin chen la blsa bgyi ’dug/
     Pema Rinchen-ALL look-VC-DISJ
     Pema is looking at Rinchen.
рин чен la sus blsa bgyi ’dug/
     Rinchen-ALL who:ERG look-VC-DISJ
     Who is looking at Rinchen?
padmas rin chen la blsa bgyi ’dug/
     PemaRinchen ALL look-VC-DISJ
     Pema is looking at Rinchen.

Apart from the agent-emphatic function, according to Chonjore, monovalent verbs usually do not take ERG – but it is also possible:

“...In sentences where there is no object, generally the nominative case is used. If one wants to emphasize that a particular action was carried out by the agent, however, then it is correct to use the instrumental case” (Chonjore 2003: 228)

Unfortunately, the example given by Chonjore contains a cognate (i.e., incorporated?) object which makes the evaluation of valence difficult:

(15) khong lus rtsal brtse bgyi ’dug/
     3 body exercise-VC-DISJ
     He is exercising.
khong gis lus rtsal brtse bgyi ’dug/
     3-ERG body exercise-VC-DISJ
     He is exercising. [Lit. The exercising is being done by him.]

62 Opposite examples without ERG are mentioned in Agha (1993: 15, 16).
Throughout the textbook, however, there are many examples of 'transitive' sentences (with and) without ERG, e.g., with *za/zas ‘eat’ (Chjonjore 2003: 190, 276, 280, ...) or *las ka byed ‘work’ (p. 192), cf. (p. 243):

(16) nga *bras dang tshal zas pa yin/
1 rice-SOC vegetables eat:PFV-NS-CONJ
I ate rice and vegetables.

Concerning the DAT case, Chjonjore mentions its multifunctionality as DAT/ALL/EXP:

In English, the dative case only refers to indirect objects. However in Tibetan, this case includes not only the recipient of the action, but the place, as well as the time when the action takes/took place. (Chjonjore 2003: 230)

As for the EXP/BEN function, cf. the illustrative examples:

(17a) A ma lags phru gu tshor kha lag bzos gnang gi ’dug/
mother child-PL:ALL food made-HON-VC-DISJ
Mother is making food for the children.

(17b) nga khon la nga'i par bstan gyi yod/
1 3-ALL 1:GEN photo show-VC-CONJ
I am showing him my photograph.

To sum up, we learn from Chjonjore that ERG has emphatic meaning and that ALL is used in more semantic contexts than DAT in English. There is no obvious relation to verbs, except for the fact that monovalent verbs take ERG more rarely. It can be assumed that the semanticity of the ERG marker does not require more explanation on its use. The number of 'transitive' sentences without ERG are remarkable in this textbook, however, in contrast to many other descriptions of the written (and probably normative standard) language (cf. Losang Thonden 1984), but conformly with some descriptions of Spoken Lhasa Tibetan (cf. Saxena 1991: 113; Agha 1993; Denwood 1999). There is no mention of the Tibetan concept of *bdag/*ghan, however. Therefore, this textbook should probably be posited among the western and not among the traditional-indigenous descriptions.

05.06. Linguistics and Tibetan

While Tibetology as a philological field is interested in written materials, modern (Saussurean) linguistics is predominantly interested in spoken languages. Therefore, since the 1980s, there is an increase in descriptions of Tibetan dialects. This section will be restricted to early and very important contributions to Central Tibetan ergativity. Linguistic interest is often related to a typological discussion of the phenomenon. It turns out that ergative application is far from being a simple syntactic phenomenon. The first article on Spoken Tibetan ergativity within a modern linguistic framework seems to be the one by Chang & Chang 1980, addressing some previously undescribed features of ergativity in 'Spoken Tibetan' (Central Tibetan). Approximately at the same time, DeLancey started a series of articles on Spoken Tibetan case marking, stating that Tibetan typologically has an active-stative pattern. Saxena, followed suit, and Tournadre published a monograph on Tibetan ergativity in 1996. In publications on the spoken language, sometimes phonetic, more rarely phonological, transcription systems are used instead of the Tibetan script. This is justified, because all dialects
differ considerably from the written language with respect to grammar so that writing spoken forms is not (or, at that time, has not been) a simple task, but this also makes it difficult to identify the respective Written Tibetan forms. Therefore, the Tibetan script has been used here predominantly and wherever possible.

05.06.01. Fluid S-marking

Chang & Chang (1980: 15f.) give a definition of ‘ergative’ as the ‘subject of transitive verbs’, semantically as ‘the case of the agent’. The verbs are classified as transitive and intransitive being correlated with ERG-ABS and ABS case patterns. Secondly, all verbs can independently be classified with respect to controllability, whereby the distinction between transitivity and controllability remains unclear. This is the description of a syntactic ergative. But then, Chang & Chang mention that transitive verbs can occur without ERG subjects, and controllable intransitive verbs such as te (sdod-bslad) ‘stay’, tso (thon) ‘come out’, to (‘gro) ‘go’, teii (phyin) ‘went’ also take ABS as well as ERG subjects. Thus, the authors conclude that Tibetan is not an ergative language.

To the extent that subjects of intransitive verbs appear in the ergative – and to the extent that subjects of transitive verbs appear in the absolutive – spoken Tibetan is, of course, not an ergative language (Chang & Chang 1980: 16).

Therefore, they discuss the classification as a “fluid S-marking” language which is based on the degree of control of the agent over the situation (cf. Dixon 1979: 80ff.). Transitive (and controllable) verbs can take a ‘copula’ (i.e., auxiliary) ji (yin) for 1st person subjects – i.e., the speaker-oriented auxiliary. Chang & Chang do not discuss the other functions of this auxiliary and the system of auxiliaries on the whole. They remark that this auxiliary is replaced with the opposing auxiliary re (red) in every case where the agent does not properly control the situation. This is the typologically interesting example (Chang & Chang 1980: 17):

(18) ngas lHa sar phyin pa yin/ ngə lHa sar phyin pa red/
     ɲɜ̃ Pê̂zšâa ɕhipa jìi ɲa Pê̂zšâa ɕhipa reé
     I went to Lhasa (myself).    I went (= was taken) to Lhasa.

For Saxena 1991, ERG is facultative with AG-taking intransitive verbs in the perfective aspect, impossible in the imperfective aspect – a slightly deviant pattern (Saxena 1991: 112):

(19) ngas Seattle-la phyin pa yin/ nga Seattle-la ’gro gi yin/
     I(ERG) Seattle-ALL gone-NS-CONJ I(ABS) Seattle-ALL goIMPV-VC-CONJ
     I went to Seattle. (PFV)     I will go to Seattle. (IPV)

Because Chang & Chang do not mention that phyin is the suppletive perfective stem for imperfective ’gro, it is also not mentioned here that this use of ERG seems to be restricted to

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63 Both transitive and controllable verbs are said to have the 1st person auxiliary [ji] (yin) (Chang & Chang 1980: 16, 17). Transitivity is probably understood as controllable and bivalent. It is mentioned that “many transitive verbs have been formed through the affixation of a causative prefix to intransitive base” (p. 18) which have left phonological traces (e.g., aspiration).

64 “[chii] and [ystand, almost completely, in suppletive relationship to one another.” (Chang & Chang 1980: 26) – This viewpoint is due to AUX-ascribed temporal meanings (e.g., ’gro + myong).
05. Continuation 2

perfective aspect. Avoiding the term 'perfective', Chang & Chang merely state that -\(pa\) (the
nominalizing suffix) triggers ERG use with intransitive verbs: "Generally, ergative subjects
occur in this construction with intransitive verbs when the base is followed by \(pu\), not \(gi\"
(Chang & Chang 1980: 20). But later, it is said: "In other words, the ergative with intransitive
verbs is correlated with accomplished fact" (Chang & Chang 1980: 21). This suggests an as-
teptual ergative split for monovalent controllable verbs. With transitive verbs, both ERG and
ABS marking is applied with unaccomplished aspect (Chang & Chang 1980: 21):

\[
| \text{20) } & \text{di} & \text{nga} & \text{tshos} & \text{sprad} & \text{gyi} & \text{yin} & \text{bu} & \text{mo} & \text{nga} & \text{sprad} & \text{gi} & \text{yin} \\
| \text{ti} & \text{ŋa-tsoö} & \text{tš-e-qí-yíí} & \text{p'omo} & \text{ŋa} & \text{tši-qí-yíí} & \text{DEM} & \text{1 PL} & \text{give-VC-CONJ} & \text{girl} & \text{1} & \text{give-VC-CONJ} \\
| \text{We'll give you this.} \\
| \text{I'll give the girl.} |
\]

The distinction between \(yìn\) und \(red\) is interpreted as person agreement, although it can both
be applied to the same verb with 1st person subject (distinguishing control or intention);
therefore, Chang & Chang make a hypothesis:

Where \(r̂xi\) replaces \(yíí\) with transitive verbs (that is, with first-person subjects), we see
the emergence of a passive construction. (Chang & Chang 1980: 18)

\[
| \text{(21a) } & \text{ngas} & \text{pu} & \text{gu} & \text{'di} & \text{bzos} & \text{pa} & \text{yin} & \text{ŋe} & \text{pūqū} & \text{ti} & \text{söö-pa-yíí} \\
| \text{1:ERG} & \text{child DEM fed-NS-CONJ} \\
| \text{I raised this child.} \\
| \text{(21b) } & \text{ngas} & \text{lo} & \text{cig} & \text{tšam} & \text{cig} & \text{bzos} & \text{pa} & \text{red} & \text{ŋe} & \text{lo} & \text{tʃī} & \text{tša} & \text{tʃ'í} & \text{söö-pa-r̂xi} \\
| \text{1:AG} & \text{yr. one about fed-NS-DIS} \\
| \text{[It] was fed by me for about a year. (I made [it] be fed ...)} |
\]

There is thus a distinction in control which is interpreted by Chang & Chang as a genus
verbi distinction. An additional argument is found in the AG/INS syncrasy:

With the replacement of \(yíí\) with \(r̂xi\) in examples such as these there is a severing of
the connection between the agent and the action. The instrumental case of examples [with
\(yíí\)] is the ergative; that of [with \(r̂xi\)], though formally the same case, has rather the
function of an animate instrument or means. (Chang & Chang 1980: 18)

More sharply, the use of \(r̂xi\) "means that \(ŋe\) is not the subject." (p. 18). This is a clear diffe-
rence to early descriptions of Written Tibetan where the absence of an ERG phrase or of an
ERG marker was equated with passive. In these Spoken Central Tibetan examples, however,
the ERG marker is used also in uncontrolled actions/events. This means that ERG marks the
agent regardless of his or her volition with transitive verbs. With the auxiliary verb [\(qo\]
\((dgos) 'need to', (1st person) ERG is used and has the connotative meaning 'for you', 'for
your sake' (Chang & Chang 1980: 19f.). A function of ERG with intransitive verbs is "to sig-
ify either achievement or the guarantee of an act directed toward a goal" (Chang & Chang
1980: 21). The examples given show that the choice of the ERG marker encode a volitional
decision: "To stay in another person's home indicates purpose; staying in one's own home
may require less purpose but still be a controlled action." (Chang & Chang 1980: 22):
05. Continuation 2

Similarly examples are discussed for [thåø] (thon) 'come out', [lëø] (slebs) 'arrive', [yøø] (yong) 'come', [te³ni] (phyin), [to] ('gro) 'come'. Finally, Chang & Chang discuss the behavior of noncontrollable perception verbs (mthong 'see', go 'hear', Ha go 'understand'). Most languages treat these verbs like transitive verbs (cf. Dixon 1979: 103; Chang & Chang 1980: 29); Tibetan (also) applies the ERG-ABS pattern, but the auxiliaries used here are usually applied to intransitive (i.e., noncontrollable) verbs, specifically the '1st person GOAL'-oriented AUX byung which usually refers to a DAT marked participant of noncontrollable verbs:

(23) ngas kho mthong byung/ khos nga mthong song/

I saw him.      He saw me.

For Chang & Chang, the ABS case is seen as the subject of these sentences, therefore, a passive translation is appropriate. Based on the assumption that a case marker can be multifunctional, Chang & Chang (1980: 30) assume that in such cases the ERG marker is an instrument, not an agentic. The perception verb kha ‘smell’ is more noncontrollable, it is construed with an EXP subject (Chang & Chang 1980: 31):

(24) ngar snum gyi dri ma kha byung/

I smelled oil.

But there is an additional pattern, according to Chang & Chang: With 1st persons, it is even possible to have red with causative verb forms. Cf. the following examples (Chang & Chang 1980: 18):

(26a) ‘di nas lam kha khag gnyis po ‘di bzos tshar nas tog tsam chag

then road.diff. two-NS DEM built-ready-ABL a bit lower-RES-
When they finished making these two different roads, it [= the price of barley] came down a little.

When they finished making these two different roads, it [= the price of barley] came down a little.

The first clauses is agentless and has a resultative verb form (čag); the second clause, however, has a causative verb form (gcač) and an ERG, but the AUX is not speaker-oriented and therefore implies that the action was uncontrolled, or performed unvolitionally.

To conclude, the description of a spoken variety suddenly adds a number of new parameters to the use of the ergative marker: First, the ERG marker is not syntactically obligatory, but semantically triggered. It marks the volitional agent with any verb assigning a controllable action. It is omitted when the action is not controlled. Noncontrollable perception verbs trigger ERG use for the experiencer, but do not allow the speaker-oriented yin auxiliary. Instead, the speaker-oriented goal-marking auxiliary byung is used, which generally applies with a 1st person experiencer role (DAT). With speaker-related activities (in declarative sentences), the ergative marks the agent, but volition is marked by the auxiliary yin. In all other situations, with actions of 2nd or 3rd person, only red can be used. Chang & Chang 1980 propose to view the AG/INS marker as being used as an AG marker in yin contexts (‘I did’), and as an INS marker in red contexts (‘done by me’), thus proposing a kind of passivization. This proposal, similar to earlier ones, is a new attempt to apply an existing category (passive) on a similar phenomenon (PAT-orientation). Spoken Tibetan verbs seem to allow – quite frequently – a reading as AG- or PAT-oriented activity, a distinction which has been grammaticalized in Old Tibetan as the morphologically regular causativization with s-. The data show a general grammatical unconnectedness of the verbs and the ERG, but, of course, an ‘interactive’ development of various connotative meanings concerning the ‘actual’ role of the agent in the event. The interaction with the AUX yin/red is not described for Written Tibetan and many dialects of Tibetan. This is mainly a Central Tibetan characteristic.

**05.06.02. Multifunctionality of the ERG**

For DeLancey (e.g., 1990: 308), the Tibetan ergative (‘causal actant’) is two-fold, being triggered by transitivity and by volition. For the volitional aspect of ERG marking, DeLancey distinguishes a semantic and also a discourse-pragmatic feature:

1. transitivity
2. volition  
   2.1. semantic (perfectivity)
   2.2. discourse-pragmatic

Before turning to the semantic aspect, it is helpful to view the pragmatic use of ERG. Therefore, DeLancey (1990: 306) states that ERG marking is obligatory in perfective clauses with two-argument verbs, while optional in other tense/aspect-categories, and optional in per-

---

fective clauses with some monovalent verbs, while not occurring in other tense/aspect-categories; to sum up (DeLancey 1990, cf. also Saxena 1991):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb type</th>
<th>perfective</th>
<th>other TAM categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two-argument verbs</td>
<td>obligatory</td>
<td>optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monovalent volitional verbs</td>
<td>optional</td>
<td>not occurring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-volitional verbs</td>
<td>not occurring</td>
<td>not occurring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, for DeLancey, the basic parameter is a ‘semantic/pragmatic’ one, volition. For the three types of verbs, cf. the following examples from DeLancey 1985b (also quoted in Tournadre 1996: 85; cf. Saxena 1991: 111):

(27) ngas stag bsad pa yin/
1:ERG tiger kill:PFV-NS-CONJ
I have killed tigers.
ngas ngus pa yin/
1:ERG cry:PFV-NS-CONJ
I have cried. [on purpose]
nga shi byung/
1:ABS die:1:GOAL
I have died.

The second phrase shows that volition is the main parameter. Tournadre points out that ERG (i.e., volition) with ngu 'cry' is uncommon (Tournadre 1996: 85):

(28) nga ngu shor byung/
1:ABS cry:let:go:1:GOAL
I started to cry. [unvoluntarily]

For the optionality of ERG with transitive verbs in non-perfective aspect, cf. (Saxena 1991: 111f.)

(29) ngas stag bsad pa yin/
1:ERG tiger killed:NS-CONJ
I killed a/the tiger.
ngas stag bsad kyin yin/
1:ERG tiger kill:VC-CONJ
I will kill a/the tiger/s.

With non-volitional verbs, ERG marking is reported to be obligatory in future tense, while volitional verbs do not allow ERG (DeLancey 1990: 307):

(30) ngas kho’i ming brjed kyi red/
1:AG he:GEN name forget:VC-DISJ
I will forget his name.
ngas dkar yol beag gi yin/
1:AG cup break:VC-CONJ
I will break the cup. (intentionally)
ngas dkar yol beag gi red/
1:AG cup break:VC-DISJ
I will break the cup. (unintentionally)

In these cases where the ERG marker is used with non-agents or sources of the event, the semantic parameter of volition seems to play a role; the erg in such a case means ‘I want/intend to forget ...’ – a metaphorical agent. Similarly, with ‘lexicalized verb phrases’ (i.e., noun + light verb – constructions), such pragmatic uses are found (DeLancey 1990: 307):

(31a) nga hab brid cig brgyab byung/
I sneeze INDEF throw-1:GOAL
I sneezed.

(31b) ngas hab brid cig brgyab pa yin/
1:AG sneeze INDEF throw-NS-CONJ
I sneezed (deliberately).
The use of the intentional verb inflection (PFV CONJ pa yin) instead of the reception verb (byung, lit. 'got') interacts with the role of an AG and not with the role of an EXP. Thus, DeLancey can conclude that all occurrences of ERG marking are dependent on semantic grounds, in accordance with a parameter of 'volition':

In Lhasa, the distribution of ergative case with intransitive and complex predicates correlates precisely with volitionality: all and only volitional predicates can take an ergative argument. The conditioning is semantic, not lexical; any verb that can plausibly be interpreted as volitional will, if so interpreted, have an ergative actor in perfective and perfect aspects; and a verb that can be interpreted as non-volitional will, if so interpreted, have a nominative actor. (DeLancey 1990, ms.)

But with transitive predicates, volition is irrelevant (DeLancey 1990: 300):

(32) ngas dkar yol bcag song/
    1:AG cup break-PFV:EVID
    I broke the cup (accidentally).

Tournadre (1996: 84ff.), however, shows that not all occurrences of ERG in Tibetan simply transmit the meaning of volition:

(33a) ngas khong mjai byung/
    1:ERG 3 meet-EXP-oriented
    I have met him. (unintentionally)

(33b) ngas jo bo mjai gyi yin/
    1:ERG Jowo meet-VC:CONJ
    I will visit the Jowo. (Tournadre 1996: 86)

(33c) khos lo nyi shu btson khang nang la bsdad pa red/
    3:ERG year twenty prison in-ALL stay-NS:DISJ
    He stayed in prison for twenty years (Tournadre 1996: 87)

05.06.03. Topical subject

Saxena 1991 discusses a quantitative study showing that the application of ERG in facultative contexts coincides with topicality. Furthermore, she reports on one speaker from Lhasa who was entirely educated in Chinese. The informant has only facultative ERG marking with transitive verbs:

(34) blo bzang (gis) lug cig bsdad song/
    Lobzang-(ERG) sheep one kill-PFV:GEN
    Lobzang killed a sheep.

Instead, the informant seems to rely on word order for case role marking; as can be seen in the second sentence, the speaker has also no use for the CONJ/DISJ marking (Saxena 1991: 114):

(35) dge rgan nga 'dams pa red/
    teacher 1 choose-NS:DISJ
    The teacher chose me.

This speaker also does not use the sandhi forms of the ERG marker, but stereotypically uses [kɛ] (kyis) alone:
There are also instances of double use of ERG markers:66

Finally, Saxena (1991: 115) mentions the fact that this informant was even treating the DAT/EXP/ALL marker la and the honorific marker lags in the same way, interpreting all cases of la as instances of honorific marking.

Saxena’s contribution for the first time discusses the ‘optional’ use of ERG in (Central) Tibetan. The use of the ERG marker, according to Saxena, depends on a ‘topical’ function of ERG marking. Furthermore, there may be individual differences in usage which could also signal a language change under a repressive language policy. The various data discussed above show, however, that ERG marking in Central Tibetan seems to be multidimensional and therefore difficult to classify. A similarly ‘weak’ application of the ERG marker is also described in Agha 1993 and later publications.

05.06.04. Discussing typology

The canonical definition of ergativity seems to be challenged by some of the descriptions. Although Tibetan served as an early model for the shaping of the concept of ergativity, the typological question was variously reopened. Herforth 1989, on Written Tibetan, discusses a similarity between Tibetan and Pacific languages, i.e., languages which have been characterized as ‘active’ by some authors. For Herforth, Tibetan "adheres to the canonical ergative pattern" (Herforth 1989: 77); in order "to avoid using the highly ambiguous term 'subject' "., Herforth (1989: 77) uses a pattern similar to Dixon’s (1994) concept (of S/A/O); he proposes to distinguish for (Classical) Tibetan (CT): THEME (T), AGENT (A), PATIENT (P), and the BENEFICIARY ROLE (B), whereby T and P are marked by ABS, A by ERG (and instruments as well). Herforth finds an equally important role in the system for B. This ‘relative strength’ of DAT or ‘equality’ with the other two grammatical cases is mentioned variously in the literature (cf., e.g., Tournadre 1996: 77). Based on the discussion on the Tibetan concepts bdag vs. gzhon, Herforth proposes a new terminology of ‘argument prominence’ for the language. Departing from the phenomenon of CAUS/RES verb pairs (being called here ‘transitive/intransitive verbs’), Herforth gives the canonical example of verb pairs being differed by aspiration/nonaspiration, here chag ‘break:INTRANS’ vs. bcog ‘break:CAUS’ (cf. Herforth 1989: 79):

66 The form [ŋɛ: k/i] can be interpreted as nged kyis, i.e. the humble form of T taking the ERG marker kyis instead of ‘s as with ngs > ngas.
The mirror broke. Tshering broke the mirror.

When compared to passivization, this feature and the non-obligatory of syntactic NPs can better be explained in terms of 'prominence', as Herforth proposes:

In generalizing about the patterns of co-occurrence of a given transitive verbform with a specific semantic role or roles, we will make use of the neutral expressions, "A[gent]-prominence" (~ Tibetan bdag) and "P[atient]-prominence" (~ ghan). This will permit us to characterize transitive clauses purely in terms of the foregrounding of one or the other of the two arguments without at the same time implying obligatory changes in either the verb or in case-assignment. (Herforth 1989: 81)

Herforth compares this characteristic to the syntax of Tongan, a Pacific language which has been variously characterized as an 'active language'. Cf. (ex. from Keenan (1985: 248, 255):

(40a) na'e tamate'i 'a Koliate
PAST kill-TR ABS Goliath
Goliath was killed.

(40b) na'e tamate'i 'e Tevita 'a Koliate
PAST kill-TR ERG David ABS Goliath
David killed Goliath. Goliath was killed by David.

In this example, the verb is derived with a (so-called) 'transitivizer' '-i which makes the verb bivalent. The underived verb, on the other hand, is monovalent. Cf.

Additionally, the verb tamate, 'kill', is inherently AG-oriented, and there-fore, the ERG need not be applied. But if two participants are involved, the verb needs to be explicitly reoriented towards a PAT, so that now it can additionally take an ERG participant. By avoiding the explicit naming of the AG ('truncated active', Keenan 1985: 248, 255), the translation of the sentence gets a passive meaning in the reference language (English). For the investigated language, however, there has not been any 'transformation' of genus verbi, participants simply not being syntactically obligatory.

Herforth thus concludes that ERG languages lacking antipassives need this alternative strategy of 'prominence' – or orientation – of the verbs. Herforth thus proposes Tibetan to be of a similar type as Tongan. The distinction of bdag and ghan is seen as the Tibetan terminol-ogy for this type of distinction, especially when compared to similar terminology in Japanese on a similar phenomenon (cf. Tillemans 1989: 12; Sohar-Yasuda 2003: 3.2.1.).

It may be added here that languages lacking passivization or antipassive formation remain with semantic cases and seem to be in principle unable to change the focus of the event construal. Therefore, the distinction of causative/resultative verb forms is indeed another strategy which allows to have varying types of construals of one fact. Therefore, although this phenomenon is not restricted to one language type, it seems to be more important for certain types of systems. For DeLancey, 'Standard Lhasa Tibetan' has a 'split active-stative pattern' (DeLancey 1984b), a viewpoint repeated in Saxena (1991: 110), but not explicitly dis-
cussed further. Probably, semantic and fluid case marking is the main parameter for this characterisation. Tournadre, however, is critical about the need for a concept of ‘active/inactive’ for Tibetan (p. 31ff., 84ff.). The evaluation of this classificatory statement, left out by DeLancy, would have to be based on a specific definition of the active/inactive language type (e.g., Klimov 1979, Nichols 1986). Rejecting the traditional concept of ‘subject’ (Tournadre 1996: 65ff.), Tournadre gives three syntactically relevant case-markers: agent, patient and ‘destinaire’ (i.e., beneficiary) (Tournadre 1996: 75ff.).

Ces trois concepts sont les piliers qui soutiennent le fonctionnement grammatical du tibétain. lequel se fonde non pas sur l’opposition binaire majeure sujet/objet mais sur [une représentation ternaire agent/patient/destinataire]a[iие. La relation prédicative ne privilégie pas un élément au détriment d’un autre. L’agent, le patient et le destinataire sont grammaticalement égaux (par rapport au prédicat). (Tournadre 1996: 77)

Tournadre’s contribution is a monograph on Tibetan ergativity covering both the case system and the verb system of Tibetan, as well as the communicative-pragmatic functions of case and of word order (Tournadre 1996: 283ff.). Nonetheless, it does not reach a simple conclusion, but refers to a number of parameters which interact in ERG marking: "[...] une série de paramètres dont les plus importants sont les classes verbales, la complexité syntaxique de l’énoncé, le temps-aspect verbal, la visée communicative et la volition" (Tournadre 1996: 369).

Tournadre’s con-tribution being the most important recent publication on Tibetan ergativity, these parameters will be later, in the chapter on Tibetan case marking.

05.06.05. Unclassified

The need for a comprehensive modern grammar of (Spoken) Tibetan led to the contribution of Denwood 1999. Ergativity is mentioned in chapter 12, ‘clauses’, under the notion of ‘subject-marking particle (sm?)’ – thus introducing new terminology which should have better been avoided; the term ‘subject’ is conventionally defined in a different way. Denwood (1999: 191) distinguishes transitive and intransitive verbs on the basis of their semantic valence, including cases of elliptic omission of participants (cf. Denwood 1999: 192). Obviously, he is doubtful about the notion of ergativity for Tibetan, cf. "[...] which is often regarded as a marker of ‘ergative’ case. (There is no object-marking particle or any other morphological means of marking objects in Tibetan.)" (Denwood 1999: 193). His view becomes implicitly clear, when his ‘subject-marking’ model is considered; the following chart gives the possible contexts for the sm? (i.e., the ERG marker) in the last line (Denwood 1999: 193):67

Table 08: Denwood’s representation of ERG marking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 trans.</th>
<th>2 cop.</th>
<th>3 intrans. int.</th>
<th>4 intrans. unint.</th>
<th>5 exist.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sm?’</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>imposs.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>imposs.</td>
<td>poss.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ergative is thus an ‘option’ in certain syntactic settings. Of course, this is not an ERG pattern – and not a ‘subject pattern’ either. A marker for subjects of transitive settings and of

---

67 This chart is terminologically simplified. Denwood says, f.ex. ‘two-argument lexical (transitive)’, and so on.
intentional settings is a marker for volitional AG – more or less DeLancey’s viewpoint. It remains unclear why Denwood calls the AG/INS marker an smp (subject-marking particle) and not ERG, while he considers also unmarked ABS to be ‘subjects’ of unintentional actions/events (p. 193). The notion of subject is again applied with confidence in its universality, thus leading to inconsistencies in the model. He gives the following examples for the above-mentioned verb classes (Denwood 1999: 194):

\[(41)\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{khos las ka byas song/} \\
3:ERG work do:PFV-PFV:GEN
\]
\[
\text{He did the work.}
\]
\[
\text{kho bod pa red/} \\
3S Tibetan DISJ
\]
\[
\text{He is Tibetan.}
\]
\[
\text{khos phyin song/} \\
3:ERG go:PFV-PFV:GEN
\]
\[
\text{It was he who went.}
\]
\[
\text{kho na song/} \\
3 sick-PFV:GEN
\]
\[
\text{He was ill.}
\]
\[
\text{kho yog red/} \\
3 EX:GEN
\]
\[
\text{He is there.}
\]

This is seen, however, as but a general scheme which does not describe the situation:

However the actual presence or absence of the subject-marking particle in a given clause of a type where it is possible correlates with a rather complex set of lexical, grammatical, textual and pragmatic factors, including animacy, grammatical concord and the Systems of given/new and theme. (Denwood 1999: 194)

Before all, ERG is normatively (i.e. in the written language) described as obligatory with causative, i.e., controllable verbs and disallowed with resultative, noncontrollable verbs. This does not seem to be the case, though (cf. Denwood 1999: 195). Denwood approaches the problem of ERG marking in Tibetan in terms of system economy and by considering five types of clauses. For Denwood, the ‘obligatory ERG contexts’ are the following (Denwood 1999: 196ff.)

(a) transitive clauses,
(b) clauses with volunteering modal particles (chog, dgos, ga),
(c) who-questions + responses,
(d) cases of contrastive focus on subject,
(e) clauses with two animates, and
(f) clauses with only one agentive participant

(b) is described for dgos in Chang & Chang 1980: 19f. with the connotation ‘for your sake’. It is a kind of emphasis on the speaker’s initiative; cf. (Denwood 1999: 197)

\[(42a)\]

\[
\text{chang ngas nyos dgos/} \\
\text{beer 1:ERG bought-NEED:TO}
\]
\[
\text{Let me buy the beer!}
\]
\[(42b)\]

\[
\text{ngas yi ge btang chog/} \\
\text{1:ERG letter send-MAY}
\]
\[
\text{I can easily send the letter (don’t you bother).}
\]
\[(42c)\]

\[
\text{ngas kha lag bzos-ga/} \\
\text{1:ERG food make:PFV-VOL}
\]
\[
\text{Shall I prepare the food? (No one else seems to want to.)}
\]
(e), who-questions, also put emphasis on the person who is asked for. This pattern is explained by Chonjore (2003: 277f.) as an emphasis on the agent, as list entry (d) states: The 'smp' is said to mark "a particular referent" which is "singled out":

(43)  khon gis lde mig bsnam phebs song/
    3:HON-ERG key bring:PFV-come:H PFV:GEN

It was HE who brought the key.

(e) suggests a facultative marking in case of necessity; Agha (1993: 12), however states that in such cases word order can also make the distinction between the two roles, without recurrence to case markers. Denwood's example is with a noncontrollable perception verb which is described as a case of obligatory ERG marking in Chang & Chang (1980: 29).

(44)  mos kho mthong pa red/
    3:F:ERG see:NS-DISJ She saw him.

(f) covers the cases of intransitive controllable verbs, but the example is probably an elliptic clause with a transitive controllable verb:

(45)  ngas bzos pa yin/
    1:ERG make:PFV-NS-CONJ I made it.

Finally Denwood (1999: 198) mentions the aspectual split of Tibetan: he states that in the context of 1st person subjects and 'other-centered' predicators, transitive controllable verbs do not trigger ERG marking. Here, Denwood terminologically refers to the Tibetan grammatical bdag/gzhan distinction with respect to future tense verb forms. In the example, he also uses a DISJ auxiliary, i.e., non-speaker-orientation (cf. Denwood 1999: 198):

(46)  sang nyin nga las ka byed kyi red/68
    tomorrow 1 work make:FUT-VC-DISJ

I shall be doing this work tomorrow (due to circumstances beyond my control).

To conclude, the description of the 'subject-marking particle' is innovative, but does not seem to give a convincing new interpretation of the known facts.

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68 In this example, there is obviously a mistake in the original text in that the ERG marker is encoded in the inter-linear translation.
06. The general historiography of ergativity research

Ergativity is one of the most apparent fundamental differences between SAE languages and some languages which were considered ‘exotic’, not the least because of ergativity. The apparent structural dissimilarity between the well-known European NOM/ACC case marking system together with its traditional (Greco-Latin) description and certain languages with ERG/ABS case marking schemes depicted by the traditional means of description led to an early linguistic discussion of a universal- typological nature.

06.01. Historiography of the nomenclature

It is generally assumed (cf. Regamey 1954: 363; Seely 1977; Dixon 1994: 3) that it was Dirr (1912, 1928) who applied the term ‘ergative’ (ergativnyi stroi ‘ergative structure’) for the first time for his description of a Caucasian language (Rutul), the word being most probably derived from Greek ‘érgon’ (‘work, deed’) (cf. Seely 1978: 49). Although the term became more widely known only after the Dirr’s (1928) overview of 35 ergative languages, it has already been used by Trombetti 1923 (‘ergativo’); Trubetzkov 1929, Lafon 1930 and Dumézil 1931 all mentioned the term ‘ergative’. Its introduction into the ‘Lexique de terminologie linguistique’ in 1943 by Marouzeau (1943: 89) probably made the term more conventional.

Manaster-Ramer (1994), however, found earlier traces of the use of the term in Haddon & Ray 1893; in their work, this term is used for the description of a kind of locative (or associative) case (whereas the ‘real’ ergative is called ‘nominative of the agent’ or ‘instrumental’); in 1902, however, the Austrian anthropologist Pater Wilhelm Schmidt uses the term (in a work on the languages of Deutsch-Neuguinean) with the modern meaning: "[...] das Vorkommen eines Casus ergativus, eines besonderen Kasus des Subjekts bei transitiven Verben" (W. Schmidt 1902: 88, quoted in Manaster-Ramer 1994: 211). Thus, Manaster-Ramer concludes that Schmidt must have remembered the term, but obviously made a mistake in applying it to another case role than originally intended, in false association to Greek ‘érğáлēs’, ‘worker’ (1994: 213), while the original meaning may have referred to Greek ‘érğā’, ‘works’.

The opposing case of the ergative was first named ‘absolutive’ in Thalbitzer 1911 (cf. Seely 1977: 191); Meščaninov (1945, 1948) seems to have taken up this term (cf. Regamey 1954: 368), and Meščaninov 1967 remarked that it is ‘inappropriate’ to use the term ‘nominative’ for the opposing case.

But before the term ‘ergative’ was introduced or has been widely accepted, there is a variety of other terms. A detailed presentation of the nomenclature denoting ergative and absolutive cases is found in Seely 1977 and Seely 1978: 44ff. In the following passage, a very short summary will be enriched with few additions and compared to the literature on Tibetan. Fabricius (1801: 78f.) called the ERG the ‘Nominativus transitivus’ and the ABS the ‘Nominativus intransitivus’; Kleinschmidt 1851 ‘subjective’ (ERG) and ‘objective’ (ABS) (both on Inuktikut), thus referring to the traditional syntactic pattern of subject and object. Wilhelm von Humboldt on Basque (1817a,b [1801—...]) called it ‘handelnder Nominativ’ (‘acting no-

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69 This quotation is from a ms.; there is one publication in 1902, “Die sprachlichen Verhältnisse von Deutsch-Neuguinean”, pp. 354-384 [sic!] (available online: edocs.uni-frankfurt.de/volltexte/2007/3791/ pdf/E001357692.pdf) which, however, does not mention the ergative.
minative’) (cf. Vollmann 2002). It should be mentioned here that there is an early indigenous tradition of grammar writing on Basque which dealt with the ERG and partitive case (e.g. Ohenart 1683), but this has not yet been analyzed historiographically.


Uhlenbeck (1916: 213f), on American Indian ‘passives’, classified the ‘casus energeticus’ or ‘casus emanativus’. On Mayan (with split ergativity), researchers talked about ‘set A’ and ‘set B’, but also about ‘verbal pronouns’ (ABS) and ‘nominal pronouns’ (ERG) (Tozer 1921). Jespersen (1924: 166) on Eskimo called it ‘casus activus’ or ‘casus transitivus’, as opposed to ‘casus passivus’ or ‘casus intransitivus’. Thublitzer (1930: 324) used the definitions ‘relative’ (ERG) vs. ‘absolutive’ (ABS). Lormer 1935/1936 on Burushaski calls the ERG ‘transitive nominative and agential’, and ABS ‘nominative, vocative, and accusative’. Trombetti (1923: 265) and Tagliavini 1937 on Georgian called the ERG ‘emphatic’. Vogt 1938 on Georgion preferred the term ‘narrative’, a translation of the indigenous name ‘mothchrobiti’ (due to the fact that ERG marking occurs only in the aorist). Strehlow 1942–1944 on Aranda and others similarly named ERG and ABS ‘Nominative I’ and ‘Nominative II’. Smythe (1948: 153) on Gumbainggar used ‘operative’ (ERG), and ‘radical’ or ‘objective’ (ABS). Capell (1956: 63f.) preferred ‘operative’ for ERG/INS. Frei 1956/1957 on Chinese talked about ‘energetic’ and ‘inertial’.


To sum up, the proposed terms always relied either on semantic, pragmatic, or syntactic characteristics: ERG was seen as a marker for agents, for emphasis, or for transitive subjects. This may partly be due to the languages which had been investigated, whether they distinguish semantic or syntactic roles, and whether they show phenomena such as split ERG. On the other hand, theoretical assumptions on the nature of grammar may have played a role as well. The concept of a ‘casus/nominativus passivus’ or of a ‘casus activo-instrumentalis’ points to an inherent interest in the question inhowfar genus verbi interacts with case marking.

Table 01: Overview of various terms used for ergative and absolutive, including some grammars of Tibetan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Ergative case</th>
<th>Absolutive case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thommi 7th c.</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>byed pa po ‘agent’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(variant in)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricius 1801</td>
<td>Inuktikut</td>
<td>byed sgra ‘doer case’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>von Humboldt 1801</td>
<td>Basque</td>
<td>Nominativus transitivus</td>
<td>Nominativus intransitivus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1817</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelung 1809</td>
<td>Basque</td>
<td>handendner Nominativ, ’acting’</td>
<td>Nominativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Case</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Csoma de Körös</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>agentive or instrumentive case</td>
<td>nominative, accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brosset[1] 1837</td>
<td>Georgian</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schmidt 1839</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>Instrumental, mit Nachdruck belegter (= emphatic) Nominativ</td>
<td>Nominativ, Accusativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bopp 1846</td>
<td>Georgian</td>
<td>Narrativ</td>
<td>objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kleinschmidt 1851</td>
<td>Inuktitut</td>
<td>subjective</td>
<td>nominatif, accusatif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foucaux 1858</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>instrumental</td>
<td>nominativus passiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pott 1873</td>
<td>Basque</td>
<td>Instrumental, Instruktiv; be-stimmter Nominativ</td>
<td>Nominativ-Accusativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Müller 1887</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Instruktif</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>von Uslar 1889</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>casus activo-instrumentalis</td>
<td>casus neutro-passiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. v.d. Gebelent 1891</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Casus ergativus (?)</td>
<td>Nom. and Acc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Schmidt 1902</td>
<td>Papuan</td>
<td>Agent.</td>
<td>nominatif, accusatif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell 1905</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordier 1907f.</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>relative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thalbitzer 1911</td>
<td>Inuktitut</td>
<td>relative</td>
<td>absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirr 1912, 1928</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Ergative</td>
<td>Nominative, Objective or Accusitive case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah 1912</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>Agentive case</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uhlenbeck 1916</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>casus energeticus, casus emanativus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tozzer 1921</td>
<td>Mayan</td>
<td>set A</td>
<td>set B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombetti 1923</td>
<td>Georgian</td>
<td>emphatic, ergativo</td>
<td>Nominatif, Accusatif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jespersen 1924</td>
<td>Inuktitut</td>
<td>casus activus/transitivus</td>
<td>casus passivus/intransitivus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trubetzkoy 1929</td>
<td>Chechen</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafon 1930</td>
<td>Basque</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thalbitzer 1930</td>
<td>Inuktitut</td>
<td>relative</td>
<td>absolute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumézil 1931</td>
<td>Obykh</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorimer 1935/1936</td>
<td>Burushaski</td>
<td>transitive nominative,</td>
<td>nominative, vocative, and agential accusative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vogt 1938</td>
<td>Georgian</td>
<td>narrative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strehlow 1942-1944</td>
<td>Aranda</td>
<td>Nominative I</td>
<td>Nominative II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marouzeau 1943</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baco 1946</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Nominatif, Accusatif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smythe 1948</td>
<td>Gumbalgar</td>
<td>operative</td>
<td>radical, objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathews 1953</td>
<td>Indo-Aryan</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capell 1956</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>operative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frei 1956/1957</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>energetic</td>
<td>inertial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafitte 1962</td>
<td>Basque</td>
<td>cas actif</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmer 1963</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>agentive</td>
<td>objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chafe 1970</td>
<td>Onondaga</td>
<td>agent</td>
<td>patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hahn 1971</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Akkusativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koshal 1979</td>
<td>Ladakhi</td>
<td>Ergative case</td>
<td>Direct case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bielmeier 1985</td>
<td>Balti</td>
<td>Ergativ</td>
<td>Nominativ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyer 1992</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>agency, ‘ergative’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denwood 1999</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
<td>subject-marking particle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This terminology is sometimes in close relation to verbal categories, e.g., genus verbi. Referring to Tibetan, von der Gabelentz (1891: 161) developed a remarkable terminology by naming these cases 'casus activo-instrumentalis' and 'casus neutro-passivus'; this refers to a different classification of verbs which is found in Tibetan and which is described in most grammars of the 19th century: the classes of 'active' and 'neutral' verbs.

Table 02: Dichotomic verbal categories in grammars of Tibetan related to the idea of genus verbi, or verb orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>active/causative/control verbs</th>
<th>inactive/resultative/nocontrol verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thommi 7th c.</td>
<td>bdag T</td>
<td>gzan 'other'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Csonka 1834</td>
<td>active and passive</td>
<td>neutre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>active and causal</td>
<td>passive and neuter verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schmidt 1839</td>
<td>Activa und Causalia</td>
<td>Neutra und Passiva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jäschke 1865</td>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foucaut 1858</td>
<td>verbes actifs et passifs</td>
<td>verbes neutres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conrady 1896</td>
<td>transitiv-causative</td>
<td>aktiv-intransitive, reflexive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francke 1901</td>
<td>active, transitive</td>
<td>inactive, intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordier 1907</td>
<td>transitif, actif</td>
<td>intransitif, inactif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>changement</td>
<td>devenir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francke 1929</td>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacot 1946</td>
<td>personnels ou subjectifs</td>
<td>extérieurs ou objectifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lalou 1950</td>
<td>voix active ou objective</td>
<td>voix passive ou subjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regamey 1954</td>
<td>subjectif/objectif (?)</td>
<td>objectif/objectif (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldstein 1977</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>unintentional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bielmeier 1985</td>
<td>Kausativ, transitiv</td>
<td>Faktitiv, intransitiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelzang Gyurme 1992</td>
<td>differentiatif</td>
<td>indifferentiatif</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the beginning, the ‘active (and passive)’ verbs were described as being able to distinguish genus verbi; these were also characterized as ‘causal’ in that they possibly involve a cause of the action (i.e., an agent). The other verb class is a restricted one in that it is only ‘neutr’ with respect to such a distinction. This terminology changed to the expression ‘transitive’ across an intermediate state of ‘(in)active’ plus ‘(in)transitive’ verbs, a terminology which is used again in modern contributions, thus creating four verb classes. Bacot introduces the Tibetan concept ‘T’ vs. ‘other’ in his explanations, which is reversely used by Lalou and equated with genus verbi; Regamey’s understanding of this pattern remains partly confused (cf. 06.05.). Goldstein descriptively points out the action aspect and the unintentionality of inactive, agentless events. Finally, Kelzang Gyurme (in translation) follows an older Tibetan concept referring to AG-PAT and ABS-only patterns (‘differentiatif’).

To sum up, the ergative is identified either as an agentive (semantic prototype) or as a case related to passivity (syntactic model), or, taken traditionally, as the instrumental case (with a specific function: agentive).

**06.02. Early descriptions of Basque ergativity**

The European language Basque (for a short overview cf. Kerejeta & Hurch 1999: 201) was more easily accessible to European language scholars and attracted interest also by its obvious deviance from SAE language structures: Basque is a language isolate in the Pyrenean mountains (most probably the descendent of the Aquitanian language, cf. Michela 1964;
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Trask 1997: 411)\(^{70}\) with ergative marking and with complex subject & object agreement including indirect objects on the auxiliary verb; the NP is group-agglutinating; cf.:

\[(01)\]

\| Giltz-ak | gal-du | zi-tza-i-zki-da-n & (ni-ri) .
\| I lost my keys. [= The keys got [me] lost.] (Joppen-Hellwig 2001: 68)
\| Etxe-a-ren | Etxe | polit-a-ren
\| house-DET-GEN | house | beautiful-DET-GEN
\| of the house | of the beautiful house

Although Basque was mentioned earlier in linguistic literature (cf. Vollmann 2001a), the interest in this language was probably most effectively launched by Wilhelm von Humboldt who thoroughly studied the language and its various indigenous descriptions (cf. Hurch 2002). While the ergative is not mentioned in Adelung's (1806) description of the Tibetan language (cf. Vollmann 2001a), it is mentioned by the same author for Basque in 1809 as 'nom. agendi'; Wilhelm von Humboldt, who writes "additions and corrections" (1817a) to Adelung's article on Basque, also mentions the Basque ergative as an 'acting nominative' which he describes as "appearing only in Basque" (cf. Vollmann 2002). Humboldt left behind a huge amount of manuscripts, but relatively few publications on Basque; the grammar itself has never been published. In his various ms. on Basque grammar, time and again, he started to make sketches for a unified account of grammar writing, but the grammar itself was never finished nor published. Therefore, these ms. are interesting for the historiography of linguistics, showing partly more explanations than found in Humboldt's published texts. In the published material, the ergative is mentioned as being 'of importance for general grammar':

\[\text{Daß die Vaskische Sprache ein eigenes Casus-Zeichen für den Fall besitzt, wenn das Sub-
\text{jekt im Handeln begriffen ist, scheint mir auch in Rücksicht auf die allgemeine Gramma-
\text{tik nicht unwichtig. [...] (Humboldt, GS III: 256f.)}\]

That the Basque language has a case sign for the situation in which the subject is performing an action seems to be of some importance to me in regard to general grammar.

In his unpublished ms., it is called 'handelnder Nominativ' ('acting nominative'), and we find the following judgements: 'Der Handelnde Nominativ ist mir nur in der Vaskischen vorge-
\text{kommen.' (Humboldt, GB, Fn. 3. for p. 50) (transl. 'I have encountered the acting nominative only in the Basque [language']); and 'Eine, die ich in keiner andern Sprache kenne, ist das c, welches der Nominativ an sich trägt, sobald das Subjekt als handelnd vorgestellt wird.' [Humboldt, GK, p. 389] (transl. 'One that I don't know in any other language is the c which the nominative carries when the subject is construed as acting.'). In another passage, he states that 'most languages leave out this case' (Humboldt 1817a: 317f.). Being based only on written resources for non-European languages (cf. Mueller-Vollmer 1994), he could not find this characteristic elsewhere. At the beginning of the 19th century, most researchers did not doubt the universality of traditional European concepts of case; they just looked for markers for NOM, ACC, DAT, GEN, ABL, VOC, ... Adelung (1809: 17) on Basque may serve as an example:

\[^{70}\text{not, as has been believed earlier, pre-Romance Iberian (cf. Humboldt 1821).}\]
Die Declination des Basken ist ziemlich vollständig; sie hat die gewöhnlichen sechs Cas-
sus, nur daß der Nominativ in manchen dreyfach, in andern nur doppelt ist. Der Accusat-
tiv und Vocativ werden nicht besonders bezeichnet, sondern der Nominativ vertritt ihre
Stelle. (Adelung 1809: 17)

The declension of the Basque man is quite complete; it has the usual 6 cases with the
exception that the nominative in some [of the declensions] is threefold, in others only
doubled. The accusative and vocative have no special sign, but the nominative takes
their place.

However, Basque is nowadays described as having these case markers (cf. Kerejeta & Hurch
1999: 205): absolutive (unmarked), ergative -k, dative -i, genitive -en, instrumental -z, parti-
tive -ek, gen.loc. -tako, associative -ekin, destinative -entzat, motivative -engatik, inessive
-engan/-tan, adlative -engan/-tara, adl. direct. -enganantz/-tarantz, adl. term. -engan-
aino/-taraino, ablative -engandik/-tatik. Even when leaving aside the case markers with
-en- (GEN) which are similar to nominal adpositions, there are still seven different case
markers beside the unmarked form which do not neatly map onto the classical Latin scheme. But
the use of these case markers was exclusively understood within a traditional framework.

Humboldt, with a more thorough knowledge of Basque, developed a conceptual (semi-
tic) model for case marking which was basically independent from grammatical traditions
and which allowed to account for languages such as Basque as well. He gives the following
chart for the Basque case system (1817: 316):

Table 03: Humboldt’s declension table for Basque

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>case</th>
<th>mugagabe</th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom. des Handelns</td>
<td>c/ed</td>
<td>a-c</td>
<td>a-c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nom. des Leidens oder neutralen Zustandes; Accus. u. Vocat.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>a-c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitiv</td>
<td>en/ren</td>
<td>a-r-en</td>
<td>en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dativ</td>
<td>i/r-i</td>
<td>a-r-i</td>
<td>a-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a footnote, he adds the partitive -ici/-ric 'for 0' in some instances. The reader may be
surprised to find this chart equally restrictive. But contrary to Adelung, he gives good reasons
for this reduced chart, in that he distinguishes formally between case markers and nominal
adpositions, and semantically, which is the relevant argument to him, between ‘necessary-lo-
gical’ relations and ‘accidental’ relations, i.e. grammatical and other cases; therefore, he can
now reduce the number of cases to the grammatically relevant types (cf. Humboldt, GK, p.
383):

Fallbeugungen muß es daher so viele und kann es nicht mehr geben, als in der Tafel der
Kategorie der Relation verschiedene Verhältnisse aufgefunden werden. Alle Sprachen
müßen, genau genommen, gleich viele haben. Praepositionen sind so viele möglich, als
es Nuancen der Beziehungen bildenden Mittelbegriffe geben kann. Daß eine Sprache bei-
de auch in der Bezeichnung deutlich unterscheide, ist von in die Augen fallender Wicht-
tigkeit. (cf. Humboldt, GK, p. 383)

Case declensions must therefore be, and can only be, as many as are distinct in the
table of the category of ‘relation’. The number of prepositions is defined by the number
of nuances of relational concepts. That a language distinguishes these two [kinds of re-
lations] morphotactically is of obvious importance.

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It is clear that the 'necessary, logical' cases are historically derived from 'accidentally' formed relation markers – these are Humboldt’s much earlier (1801–) notes on grammaticalization which can be found published in Humboldt 1822 (cf. Hurch & Kerejeta 1995). Thus, he tries to develop a scheme of necessary relations which involve an ACC which is the expression of the transition of the action towards a GOAL/PATIENT (ABS), the NOM as the SOURCE/AGENT (NOM), and an EXPERIENCER (DAT) through which the action may be transferred. Additionally, there is RELATION (GEN). Cases such as the ABL are not part of this scheme. Now that he has put each concept at its place, he can finally talk about the ERG/ABS – and he is not surprised, since it fits easily into his scheme: He remarks that the NOM in sentences with neutral verbs (intransitives) is not really a NOM, because he does not enter in relation to another entity – it is an ABS, cf. Humboldt (1817a: 317f):

Der Nominativ bei Verbis neutris ist eigentlich gar kein Casus, da er gar keine Beziehung auf einen andern Gegenstand anzeigt, und auch der des Leidens (oder bei Verbis ein Pass.) wird es erst, wenn man die Ursache des Leidens hinzunimmt. (Humboldt 1817a: 317f)

The nominative with verbis neutris is not really a case, since it does not mark a relation to another participant, and also the marking of suffering [i.e., patient/undergoer] (or with verbs in the passive) develops only when the cause of the suffering [i.e. undergoing] is expressed.

Therefore, a language may well distinguish ERG/ABS as well as NOM/ACC, because any distinction plays a role only in the setting with two participants, in transitive contexts. By stating this, Humboldt formulates the discriminatory function of case marking as case definition. To conclude, we find this researcher in the very early days of ERG research with a cognitively plausible model of semantic case roles which account well for both the NOM and ERG systems. With more knowledge and more linguistic 'problem consciousness', some successors develop more theoretical models of ERG marking, as will be shown in the next sections.

06.03. The 'passive theory'

In ergative languages, there seems to be a fundamentally different connection of the ergative and absolutive case to the verb. This was soon interpreted as a difference in genus verbi, with Schuchardt 1896 being the most eminent partisan of the theory.

3.42. Passive and active hypotheses accored to the ergative construction. The heated debate as to the active or passive nature of the ergative construction was launched by Schuchardt 1896, who however was not the first to suggest the passive nature of the ergative. H.C. von der Gabelentz 1861 and Pott 1873 had interpreted respectively Tibetan and Basque as passive. Müller (1887: 7) considered the Basque verb ‘ein echtes Passivum’ and the transitive subject ‘ein unzweifelhafter Instrumental’. Stempf 1890 argued that Basque was passive, and Winkler 1887 also attributed a passive interpretation to the ergative. In his many monographs on Caucasian languages the Baron Uslar (e.g., 1889) had considered the ergative a passive construction. (Seely 1978: 61)
Regamey (1954: 367) additionally mentions R. de la Grasse 1899 to this list of passivists. For these authors, a verb, e.g., in Basque was portrayed as being by its very nature 'passive', so that the subject must be rendered in a kind of instrumental case, producing sentences such as this one: 'By the boy a dog is beaten'. This 'passive theory' of the Basque verbs was extended by Schuchardt to all languages (Schuchardt 1896; for Basque cf. 1888, 1923). Schuchardt thought that the verb is passive and intransitive: either 'Ich schreibe mit dem Brief' or 'Der Brief wird von mir geschrieben' (Schuchardt 1896: 23):

(02) GER  Ich schreibe den Brief.  I am writing a letter.
BAS  'Ich schreibe mit dem Brief',  I am writing with a letter
   'Von mir wird der Brief geschrieben'.  By me a letter is written

In the grammars of Tibetan, we find discussions of the voice-neutral character of the verbs which allows both active and passive translations. There is mention of the possibility of a passive auxiliary translation. But Schuchardt takes this model seriously, and he is eager not to allow any watered down of his conception:

Léon is RB 5, 489ff. für die passivische Theorie eingetreten und erklärt sie auch jetzt für erwiesen, aber zugleich dass er "um zu vereinfachen" die Ausdrücke sujet und complément direct im Sinne der französischen Grammatik (also für mein Aktivus und Nomina-tiv) gebrauche. Diese Vereinfachung beeinträchtigt die wissenschaftliche Klarheit; er übersetzt nakark nicht: von dir werde ich gebracht, sondern: du bringst mich; und er übersetzt es nicht nur so, er versteht es auch grammatisch so. (Schuchardt 1913: 1)

Finck (1905, 1907), Schuchardt’s chief adversary (cf. Schuchardt 1921)\(^{71}\), claimed the ERG to be a dative. He considers Georgian forms such as mti-qwar-s, 'I love-[him]', as lit. 'mir ist er lieb (geliebt)', or m-dzul-s, 'I hate [him]', as lit. 'mir Haß ist', or ge-smi-s 'you hear [him]’, as lit. 'dir-Erleben ist' for 'du hörst [ihn]' (Finck 1910: 133). Finck (1907: 266) distinguishes thus four means for expressing 'Vorgangsausdrückungen' ('expressions of processes'), possessive or passiv representation, representation with experiencer verbs, and indifferent expression. Although the verb was considered active, the ergative was still not considered to be a subject (cf. Seely 1977: 62). For Inuktikut (Eskimo), Finck gives this example (Finck 1905: 283):

(03) teriangniap orssok takuvå
    fo-Erg bacon saw
   Der Speck erscheint dem Fuchs. (lit. 'the bacon appears to the fox'.)

Both hypotheses are based on the frequent ERG/INS and ERG/GEN-DAT syncretisms in ergative languages, as well as language change scenarios, but they were 'rich interpretations', i.e., theoretical overestimations, of the facts. Apart from the scientific debate, the least we can say about any common ground is that both camps did not see the ergative as a 'subject' (with a connotation of 'deficiency'). The real common ground, however, is the fact that both fractions got lost in theorizing, fascinated by the idea of a universal description, based, as it turned out only later, on wrong preconceptions of universality. It seems as if it were the 'lite-

\(^{71}\) Schuchardt and Finck had a fierce exchange of articles on the topic, but there may be less real anger in it as it may seem; in 1921, Schuchardt depletes the death of his adversary so that the discussion is no further nourished. Letters of Finck to Schuchardt (unpubl., Schuchardt legacy, University of Graz), one announcing a visit in Graz (where Schuchardt was living), give the impression of great politeness.
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ral translations' taken literally which contributed to the overinterpretations of the conceptual background of such patterns: The auxiliary translations, such as 'by a man something was done', or 'the doing of the man', in combination with a firm belief in the universality of European (Eurocentric) grammatical concepts suggested such hypotheses (cf. Seely 1978: 60).

None of the grammarians working on Tibetan went so far in the description, maybe with the exception of Hannah who stated that "In a sense, every Tibetan sentence, even when the verb is what we call Active, is permeated with the Passive idea" (Hannah 1912: 299). In Lalou (1950: 54), however, ergative use is equated with active voice. It is also worth mentioning that indigenous grammarians usually did not develop or accept these views (cf. Seely 1977: 198; Regamey 1954: 367):

On a conclu à la passivité de tout le verbe basque. Cette théorie ingénieuse est une simple interprétation sans portée pratique, quoique très à la mode chez les bascologues. Nous n’avons pas cru devoir l’adopter dans cette grammaire. (Laftte 1944: 342)

On ne peut pas, du seul fait qu’une langue possède un ergatif, c’est-à-dire un cas distinct du nominatif et qui sert à indiquer l’auteur d’une action, conclure que le verbe transitif y est conçu, ou construit, passivement. (Lafon 1971: 327)

Even a Tibetan grammarian (i.e., the translators and commentators) commented on this theory:

Certains tibétolesques européens ont utilisé le concept de passif pour décrire les verbes tibétains. Cette tentation est due au fait que l’ergativité a souvent été assimilée à la passivité. ngas deb ‘di mthong myong/ ‘Par moi ce livre a été vu déjà.’ En réalité, cette traduction littérale est liée au fait que "ngas" "par moi" est une forme agentive qui dans les langues européennes demande une construction passive "a été vu" alors que le verbe "mthong" est non orienté comme tous les autres verbes tibétains. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: App., X)

There were also opposing views among linguists, not only Finck (against Schuchardt), and Sapir 1917 (against Uhlenbeck 1916); Dirr and other followers of Marr were passivists. Trombetti (1923: 281) and also Martinet 1958 criticized that a passive interpretation without an opposition to an active voice is meaningless. Indeed, the category ‘passive’ is obviously taken as a universal phenomenon by the proponents of the passive hypothesis, independent of its dichotomic counterpart; but if virtually all (transitive) sentences be passive in a language, then there is no point to have this category at all, and the model turns out to be of purely theoretical value for (early) universal typologists. Additionally, the passive theory would be unable to account for the appearance of passive forms, and although passivization is rare among ergative languages, at least the existence of the ‘antipassive’ shows that there is a kind of transformational device for genus verbi (cf. "[...] que dans plusieurs langues à structure ergative existent des constructions où l’agent du verbe transitif est au ‘cas absolu’, et où le patient est exprimé par un cas oblique", Regamey 1954: 369). Moreover, we find that the category ‘passive’ is not a universal category (cf. Andersen 1990; cf. also Seely 1978: 59).

Thus, Regamey confirms: "[...] la clé de la structure ergative doit être cherchée en dehors de l’opposition actif-passif et des rapports syntaxiques entre le nominatif, l’accusatif et l’instrumental" (Regamey 1954: 367f.).
The proponents of the 'stadiational theory' (developed by Marr), according to Regamey (1954: 368), introduced the terms 'active' (≡ AG) and 'passive' (≡ PAT) case. But in this way, the subject of the intransitive verb was then seen as the same 'passive' case. Therefore, Meščani-nov 1945, 1948, according to Regamey (1954: 368), introduced the term 'absolute case'. Nonetheless, the problem of an entirely inversed syntactic structure for transitive and intransitive sentences remains. Hendriksen (1946-1948: 64ff.) points out that the distinction of the semantic roles AG and PAT on the one hand, and of syntactic categories SUBJECT and OBJECT on the other hand will help: In an ergative language, the subject of an intransitive verb is the agent (!), the subject of a transitive verb, however, is the patient (cf. Regamey 1954: 368, Fn. 20). It was Langacker (1991b: 238) who pointed out that the 'patient' in a transitive setting is not the same semantic role than an 'absolute' participant in an intransitive setting. Pointing to the same fact, Dixon (1979, 1994), again mixing syntactic and semantic categories, introduced the distinction between subject, agent, and object (S/A/O).

After the passive hypothesis seemed to have been finally given up in the 1960s, generative grammar with its innate deep structure of syntax quickly fell back into this theoretical view: Hale 1970 claimed ergative structures to be but nominative-accusative structures with an obligatory passive transformation. The view later changed slightly towards being a diachronic hypothesis (ergative having developed from passives; cf. Comrie 1973: 252, Silverstein 1976: 114).

**06.04. Early descriptions of Inuktikut ergativity**

Outside of Europe, it were the missionaries who had first hand access to new linguistic data. Thus, some of these missionaries in Newfoundland gave early descriptions of the Inuktikut grammar (for a detailed description, cf. Nowak 1996). In 1755, Beck identifies the ABS as nominative and accusative, the ERG as (homophonous) genitive; Königseer 1777 identifies the 'double nominative transitive nouns'. Finally, Kleinschmidt 1851, due to the homophony of ERG and GEN, avoids the 'opposition subject/object' altogether and introduces a new term, 'project', for all participants, and, as a more 'traditional' terminology, he distinguishes a 'subjective' (ERG) and an 'objective' (ABS) form (cf. Nowak 1996: 59ff.). Kleinschmidt thus identifies two cases directly related to the verb, 'actor/possessor' and 'object', with intransitive sentences being 'actorless'.

Later researchers (e.g. Schultz-Lorenzen 1945) introduced another linguistic model for the ergativity of Inuktikut which may be termed 'Nominalist Hypothesis'. These authors stated that Inuktikut has 'no genuine verbs'; this was especially due to the partial identity of morphological units for verbs and nouns, and it 'helped' to explain the ERG (which is identical with GEN/POSS) as the 'subordinate case'; in this respect a genitive attribute and an ERG NP have the same behavior with respect to the noun or 'verbal noun' (Nowak 1996: 64ff.). Cf.:

(04a) πiiniartup takuvā [= hunter-ERG sees]  
*lit. 'the sight of the hunter exists' = 'The hunter sees (sth.)' (ex. from Hammerich 1951: 21, quoted in Nowak 1996: 66)*

Schultz-Lorenzen 1945 even adds a passive interpretation to the verb:

(04b) qingmip kivā, the dog bit him (lit. the dog's is bitten)  
(ex. from Schultz-Lorenzen 1945: 97, quoted in Nowak 1996: 68)
Once again, an ergative language is described with the by now well-known theoretical assumptions. Traditional linguistic categories from the European linguistic tradition are used in order to apply them to whatsoever phenomenon has to be described.

Still, later grammarians were more daring than those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The conviction that Eskimo languages were different led to rather adventurous use of the terminology. They nonetheless relied upon it unquestioningly. In their certainty that categories like "noun", "verb", "subject", and "object" were perfectly neutral and therefore applicable to any language, one finds a direct parallel to the security with which the early grammarians applied their temporal systems, for example. If the latter made the language appear extremely uniform with the same forms repeated over and over, the former made it look downright bizarre - but at least brought out its foreignness. (Nowak 1996: 64)

As pointed out by Nowak (1996: 64, 1999a,b,c), the application of traditional, but non-fitting European categories leads to two effects, a 'simplification' and the 'exoticization' of the grammars. Both played an important role in the (biased) anthropological evaluation of linguistic data disadvantageing foreign cultures (linguistic racism).

06.05. The nominalist hypothesis and the impersonality of the verb

The 'nominalist hypothesis' (for verbs) was made popular by Wundt 1900, Winkler 1909, and Finck 1910; it relied on the parallelity of possessive marking and verbal person affixes. On the whole, the passivist view was brought forth on languages with ERG/INS syncretism, while the 'nominalist view' was developed on the basis of ERG/GEN syncretism. Another parameter to be considered is verb agreement. Many ergative languages have no person agreement at all (e.g., Tibetan), or subject and object agreement (e.g., Basque). In both cases, the preeminence connection between subject and verb is not morphologically marked, the verb being 'indifferent' in this respect (cf. Schuchardt 1925: 34). Languages with 'impersonal' verbs seemed to invite the nominalist view, those with ERG/INS syncretism favoured the passivist view.

We find thus another possibly distinctive element in ergative languages, the morphological non-orientation of the verb towards a subject by agreement: Verbs are either polypersonal or insular (cf. Seely 1977: 198). As seen earlier, this 'insularity' of the verb and its 'impersonality' has been described for Tibetan in every grammar of Tibetan. The impersonality, i.e., its non-agreement, was sometimes interpreted as its 'nominality'. This was also used from the beginning as a justification for the voice-neutrality of the (active/passive) verbs.

It may be interesting to discuss the most outspoken linguistic contribution in this field related with Tibetan: The nominality of the verb is the core element of Regamey's explanation of Tibetan ergativity, cf.

La structure ergative ne représente qu'un cas particulier du système plus général des langues 'concentriques', dans lesquelles la structure de la proposition ne repose pas sur deux pôles, sujet-prédicat, mais sur un seul pivot – un verbe nominal pourvu de prédicat d'existence. (Regamey 1954: 369f.)

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The main points for Regamey (1954: 370) are the following: Tibetan verbs have a morpho-
ylogy equal to that of nouns, they are declinable (case with verbs). They are ‘almost never’ con-
jugated (person agreement). And “surtout il ne peut pas exprimer le transfert de l’action de
l’agent sur le patient”; this point may be derived from the non-agreement. He therefore pro-
poses an auxiliary translation: "Là ou nous disons [il] dort, [il] prit, les langues ‘centen-
triques’ disent plutôt: il y a [le fait de] dormir, il y a la prise [accomplie]”. This translation is a
repetition from Jäschke (1865: 40f., ‘happens’) and Baco (1946: 50f., ‘il y a’). The added ‘il y a’
(‘happens’, ‘there is’) is for Regamey an existential predicate which, however, ‘remains
implicit’ in the nominal verb of almost all ‘concentric’ languages. In this way, the nominal
verb does not enter in a syntactic contact with the nominal participants.

Dans cette structure, l’agent et le patient ne sont que des compléments du prédicat, deux
éléments secondaires de la proposition, et leurs fonctions respectives ne peuvent être
exprimées ni par l’accusatif [...] ni par le nominatif (qui, dans ce système, devient
egalement superflu, à moins qu’on interprète le ‘cas’ du prédicat nominal comme l’unique
nominatif possible dans cette structure). (Regamey 1954: 370)

This model seems to have been partly adopted in Hahn 1971-1985, weakened later (1994),
where it is said that a nominative is not necessary in the Tibetan case system (cf. Hahn 1985:
50). The auxiliary translation once again helps to understand the foreign way of thinking:

Nous pouvons illustrer cette construction en remplaçant, dans nos langues, le verbe fini
par un nom déverbal. Si au lieu de la phrase l’ennemi prend la ville nous disons [il y a]
prise de la ville par l’ennemi, le mot prise ne suffit plus pour marquer les fonctions de
ennemi et ville. Pour distinguer l’agent du patient, nous devons les caractériser par les
marques des ‘cas obliques’ par et de. En tibétain, l’agent sera marqué par la postposition
de l’ergatif-instrumental et le patient par celle du datif, comme dans la phrase signifiant
‘le père frappa le chien’:

1’ yab-kyis khyi-la brdungs
‘par le père au chien [il y a] l’avoir frappé’ (Regamey 1954: 370)

For Regamey, the ‘central role of the verb’ is emphasized by two opposing modes of the verb,
the ‘subjectif’, the ‘action done or proved by the agent’, and the ‘objectif’, the ‘action under-
gone by the patient’ (Regamey 1954: 371). This is partly identical to Baco’s (1946: 50f.) de-
scription of the causative/resultative distinction: ‘avoir tué (il y a)’ or ‘être tué (il y a)’; i.e., his
descriptions gives the verb a connection to either the agent or the absolute participant. Rega-
my points out that this is different from active/passive in that the latter describes a syntac-
tic relation between the predicate and the subject, while the former describes a semantic re-
lation. Thus, Regamey suggests a semantic verb orientation for Tibetan verbs. Regamey fi-
nally comes to the meaning of the absolutive and proposes the auxiliary translation ‘quant à’
(‘as far as X is concerned’) (p. 371) – which reappears in Hahn’s textbook (1994: 56 [= 1985:
50]) as ‘was ... betrifft’. Finally, Regamey mentions, in a way, fluid S-marking and aspectual
split, and this somehow spoils the theory developed so far. He tries to explain when ERG has
to be applied on the basis of the following four sentences (Regamey 1954: 371f.):

(a) dpyod-pa-po dpyod-byed l’examineur examine'
(b) bum-pa dgang ‘on remplira la vase'
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(e) sangs-rgyas-kyis čhos bstan-to 'Buddha enseigna la doctrine'
(d) yon-tan-ladan-pa yon-tan-la dga' 'les savants aiment la science'

For Regamey, both (a) and (b) do not have subjects, but absolutive participants. (c) and (d), involving an AG and a PAT, usually mark only one participant (marking economy), namely the one which is farther away from the action. Thus, (c) is said to be an objective clause (PAT-oriented), and (d) is said to be a subjective clause (AG-oriented), with respect to the unmarked role.

Table 04

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<th>AG (KYIS)</th>
<th>PAT (0)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>AG (0)</td>
<td>PAT (LA)</td>
<td>VERB</td>
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There are two mistakes in this explanation: First, bstan is even morphologically AG-oriented (s-prefix); this phrase is ‘subjective’, in his terminology. Second, based on the old assumption about the DAT=ACC la, the second phrase is neither subjective nor transitive at all: dga' '(be) happy (at something)' has the pattern ABS-DAT for the experiencer and the goal, respectively. There are no AG and PAT involved in this event. It is probably only the French translation with a (syntactically) ‘transitive verb’ ('X aime Y') which suggests to Regamey a transitive (AG-PAT) setting (cf. Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 93). In spite of his introductory claim about the necessity to distinguish semantic and syntactic roles, he still takes the semantic roles as something which is identically represented by formal structures; in other words, as syntactic roles.

(05a) sangs-rgyas-kyis čhos bstanto
  Buddha-ERG dharma show-CAUS-FIN
  The Buddha taught the dharma.
(05b) yon-tan-ladan pa yon-tan-la dga'
  excellence-POSS-NS excellence-ALL happy
  Those of excellence enjoy (in) excellence.

This error surprisingly approaches Regamey’s contribution to the terminological inversion performed by Lalou (1950: 54) with respect to Bacot (1946: 49f.). In spite of this final mistake in his description, Regamey’s contribution is especially important, because it influenced later description of Tibetan ergativity (cf. Dixon 1979: 95; Hahn 1971-1996).

To conclude, at the beginning of linguistic history, we find relatively adequate semantic descriptions of the (prototypical) meaning of the case markers. With more consciousness on the structural differences between the known model and the new data, however, authors engage in theory-building, but again on the basis of traditional linguistic concepts (cf. Klímov 1973: 10). There are no objective categories to rely on: there are only existing concepts which can be applied, undergo meaning changes, be applied again. The passive hypothesis and the nominalist hypothesis can be characterized as models which try to apply traditional European linguistic concepts to an ‘exotic’ phenomenon which becomes ‘exotic’ just by being described in terms of traditional European linguistic concepts, within the framework of a still naive universal-typological view on these linguistic categories. Therefore, the oldest descriptions are partly based on more ‘more realistic’ categories in that they are not yet even fully aware of the linguistic problems they are going to uncover.

Most descriptions of Tibetan which rely longer on their own traditional descriptions without too many influences from general grammar therefore never are fully affected by this
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theory-loadened hypotheses. The description of Regamey, theoretically opposing syntactic and semantic patterns, gives an interesting account for Tibetan. Probably, the semanticity of the Tibetan grammatical categories helped make this distinction. This may be more difficult with languages showing a conjugation scheme and syntactic ergative marking.

06.06. The causative hypothesis

In order to be exhaustive in historiographical terms, it shall be mentioned here that the term 'ergative' has also been used with another meaning unrelated to what is meant here by this term. Fillmore (1966: 21) used the term 'ergative' for the ABS – which is later corrected (in Fillmore 1968: 25 as a 'mistake'; and in 1969: 364 by the replacement with the term 'objective'). But then, a new 'history of ideas' was already launched: Fillmore's (1966, 1968: 25), Halliday's (1967: 15), Lyons' (1968: 352) and Pahlavani's (1972: 53) interpretation of 'ergativity' could be termed a 'causative hypothesis', since they saw a connection to causative constructions (cf. Seely 1977: 195, Seely 1978: 51ff; Nowak 1996: 74). Since then, certain English constructions where 'objects are promoted to subject position', or with causative meaning were termed 'ergative', such as, e.g., 'The woollens washed well', or 'The officer marched the soldiers' (for 'somebody washed the woollens', and 'The officer made the soldiers march'). In this way, the term 'ergative' was applied to a syntactic pattern in non-ergative languages. The term 'ergativity' was thus given a new dimension and led to subsequent confusions – in fact the definition was inverted. In sentence pairs with orientation-neutral verbs such as 'John moved the stone' and 'The stone moved', the latter is seen as 'ergative'. If compared to an ergative language with a regular causative/resultative distinction (Written Tibetan), the terminological confusion becomes evident (ex. taken from Herforth 1989: 79):

\begin{align*}
(06) & \quad \text{me long} \quad \text{chag go/} \quad \text{tshe ring gis} \quad \text{me long} \quad \text{bcag go/} \\
& \quad \text{mirror broke-FIN} \quad \text{Tshering-AG} \quad \text{mirror broke-FIN} \quad \text{Tshering broke the mirror.}
\end{align*}

The generative tradition (Burzio 1986, Pesetsky 1982, Grewendorf 1988, 1989) have taken up this new meaning of 'ergativity' in connection with, as they put it, \( S = O \) sentences (e.g. 'The window broke' vs. 'X broke the window') and other phenomena. Specifically, the term 'ergative verbs' is introduced for "intransitive verbs whose surface subject's grammatical behavior is similar in many respects to that of objects of transitive verbs" (Grewendorf 1989: 1). Unfortunately, 'ergative verbs' are before all intransitive verbs and do not involve an AG.
07. The transposition of linguistic categories

07.01. Early descriptions of foreign languages

With European economic and imperialistic (i.e., colonialist) expansion towards other continents, Europeans met with foreign cultures and languages, which increasingly attracted the interest of scholars from the 18th century onwards. In the beginning, scholars of language are mainly surprised by the variational wealth and the possible origins of the many languages. This is concluded already by von der Gabelentz:

Seltsame Dinge aus fernen Ländern, von Reisenden heimgebracht, sind zuerst nur Gegenstände neugierigen Ergötzens; erst später werden sie zu wissenschaftlicher Forschung gesammelt. (Georg von der Gabelentz 1891: 27)

Curious things from far-away countries brought home from travellers are first subject to curious surprise, only later were they collected for scientific purpose.

At that time, linguistic belief was firmly rooted in a traditional grammar view based on Latin and Greek traditions as well as a biblical understanding of the world as having been created by a creator god, together with an original language which was identified in most cases as Old Hebrew. All languages were thus seen in a historic perspective as derivations (or degenerations) from this original language of the so-called ‘holy book’. The descendence of Romance languages from Latin was evident and taken for granted. A bit later, the quest for the ‘original language’ is finally given up, cf.

Ich hatte keine Lieblingsmeinung, keine Hypothese zum Grunde liegen, sondern ging unmittelbar von dem aus, was ist, und wie es ist, ohne mich um das zu kümmern, was sein kann, oder was sein sollte. Ich leite nicht alle Sprachen von Einer her; Noah's Arche ist mir eine verschloßene Burg, und Babylons Schutt bleibt von mir völlig in seiner Ruhe.

(Adelung 1806: xi)

I did not base [my work] on a favorite opinion, or hypothesis, but departed immediately from that which is, and how it is, not caring about that which may be or might be. I do not derive all languages from One [language]; Noah’s ark is a barred fortress for me, and the debris of Babylon remains completely untouched by me.

07.02. Missionary linguistics

The earliest contacts with foreign languages are due to missionaries entering upon new regions with a specific interest to communicate with the original inhabitants which were not yet baptised to a religious belief considered universally valid and necessary for everybody. Unfortunately, it was usually not intended by those missionaries to investigate foreign cultures and languages, but actually only opened those cultures to systematic cultural change towards the so-called ‘Christian civilization’ (and, in many cases, to genocide), cf.

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72 Writing of grammars for modern languages departed from the idea of creating a unified, imperial language (cf. Nebrija 1492); only later and in response to such obvious concepts of dominance developed grammars of smaller languages such as Basque (e.g., Asturkou’s work (1803) which is a reply to a Castillian author).
We had to take primarily into account the needs of missionaries entering upon new regions, and then of those who might thereafter follow into the same field of enterprise. The chief motivation of all our exertions lay always in the desire to facilitate and to hasten the spread of the Christian religion and of Christian civilization, among the millions of Buddhists, who inhabit Central Asia, and who speak and read in Tibetan idioms. (Jäschke 1881: III)

Even for laicistic researchers it seemed to be necessary to give statements such as these (undeniably ironical, turning the tables on European superiority by praising the scholarship which the church did – on the whole – not favor):

But it is to the honour of Christianism to observe that, while learning has been continually declining among the Muhammedans and the Buddhists, Christianity has not only carried its own literature and science to a very advanced period of excellence, but in the true and liberal spirit of real knowledge, it distinguishes itself by its efforts in the present day towards acquiring an intimate acquaintance with the two rival religious systems, and that too, in their original languages. Hence, in the north-western parts of Europe, in Germany, England, France, where a thousand years ago, only the Latin was studied by literary men, there are now found establishments for a critical knowledge both of the Arabic and the Sanskrit literature. (Csoma de Körös 1834: iiif.)

Adelung also deplors the bad linguistic work done in Tibet by the capuchin monk who lived in Lhasa for 17 years:

[...] Der Capuciner, Horazio della Penna Bella, welcher sich von 1732 an 17 Jahre als Missionar in der Hauptstadt Lassa aufgehalten und die Sprache erlernt hatte, hätte diese Lücke ausfüllen können, wenn er weniger Capuciner gewesen wäre. (Adelung, 1806: 66)

[...] the Capuchin, Horazio della Penna Bella, who dwelled since 1732 for 17 years as missionary in the capital Lhassa and learned the language, would have been able to fill this gap, if he had been less [of a] Capuchin.

Similarly, Humboldt deplors missionary linguistics in many areas of the world:

Da sie überhaupt nur mit der Bekehrung der Wilden beschäftigt waren, so war ihre erste Sorge, mit den alten Gebraüchen alles auszurotten, was mit Tradition und Nationalerinnerung zusammenhing, und auf diese Weise die ganze Denkungs- und Empfindungsweise der Völker umzudrehen. Sie zerstörten daher zum Theil selbst den Gegenstand, den man durch sie ergründet, entwickelt und dargestellt wünscht. (W.v. Humboldt GS, Bd. IV: 238).

Since they were only concerned with converting the savage people, it was their primary aim to root out, together with the old customs, everything which has to do with tradition and national history in order to change the whole world-view and the feelings of the peoples. Thus they were partly destroying the topic which we hoped to get researched, developed and described.

More specifically, missionaries were eager not to transmit serious religious knowledge from other cultures to Europe and to actively avoid or destroy existing religious terminology (cf. Nowak 1999a, b) in order to terminate traditions (which was earlier performed in Europe,
e.g., by trying to change the pagan weekday terminology, cf. 'Mittwoch' for 'Wednesday' (< 'Wotan'), etc.:


If missionaries reported cultural-religious information at all, they usually attested the foreign cult or culture the same underlying bad intentions which they themselves seemed to have against the people they want to 'save' – a classical case of external attribution:

Óm, Ssk. ..., mystical interjection, in later Hinduism the symbol of the Hindoo triad, in as much as it consists of the three sounds, a (Vishnu), u (Shiva), and m (Brahma). This interjection frequently occurs in the prayers of the northern Buddhists of Tibet, and especially in the famous 'six-syllable prayer', ôm mani pad-me hum, the literal version of which is: 'O thou jewel in the lotus, hum!' The person addressed in these words is not Buddha, but Spyan-ras-gzigs (v. spyan); by some he is thought to be the author of them. Concerning the import of this short apostrophy the best information is to be found Köpp. II, 59-61. — The Tibetans themselves are ignorant of the proper sense of these six syllables, if sense at all there be in them, and it is not unlikely that some shrewd priest invented this form of prayer, in order to furnish the common people with a formula or symbol, easily to be retained by the memory, and the frequent recital of which might satisfy their religious wants. And though there may be no obvious meaning in such exclamations or prayers, yet their efficacy is sure to be firmly believed in by a people, whose practical religion chiefly consists in the performance of certain rites and ceremonies, in a devout veneration of their Lamas, combined with frequent oblations to them, in abstaining from gross sins (regarding even the killing of live animals as such), and in the Pradakshina (v. skor ba 2). — The numerous attempts that have been made to explain the Ommanipadmehum satisfactorily, and to discover a deeper sense or even a hidden wisdom in it, have proved more or less unsuccessful. The most simple and popular, but also the flattest of these explanations is derived from the purely extrinsic circumstance, that the Sanskrit words of the prayer consist of six syllables, and accordingly, it is suggested, that each of these syllables, when pronounced by a pious Buddhist, conveys a blessing upon one of the 'six classes of beings'. — The conjecture with which Köpp. closes his disquisition, is certainly nothing but a smart thought of that learned author. (Jäschke 1881, pp. 607f.)

73 The six syllables are the most well-known mantra of Mahayana buddhism; mantras can be seen as meditational devices for remaining concentrated on a mind state. Although they had Latin masses, Europeans had in earlier times big difficulty to understand that a prayer need not be literally understood, as long as the involved mind state is correct.
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As can be seen from this example, Christians usually knew well the mode of functioning of their own system, which was then attributed to the exotic culture: It may well be that in Christianity some ‘shrewd priests’ furnish the people with barely rational beliefs, but this proved to be completely wrong with, e.g., Tibetan culture which keeps very high standards of both rationalistic and psychological insights, if such terminology can be applied at all outside the culture in which they were defined.

Also, in the case of Tibet, a superficial similarity of the theocritical structure of Tibetan society (cf. Wernsdörfer 1998) with the catholic pope and the vatican state made missionaries think to have met a kind of negative counterpart of their own system. Bogle, however, described the situation the other way round (cf. Bogle 1775 (1984): 275f.). This author also reported of the strong irritation born from the behavior of the Christian missionaries (cf. Bogle 1775 (1984): 258f.).

07.03. The paternostrists

Nonetheless, missionary work led to a huge increase in knowledge of linguistic data. In most cases, however, missionary linguistics did not only transmit much less ethnolinguistically interesting material to Europe than they could have done (cf. Humboldt (1903-1936, IV: 238), but instead translated core Christian material into all available languages. This led researchers, after earlier attempts of lexical field collections (cf. Katharina die Große 1787)73 and number word collections (e.g. Hervás 1785), to rely on the standard text of the Lord’s Prayer (‘Pater noster’) to compare languages. The few attempts to collect other kinds of texts usually were often not published74 because comparable material was practically not available. Thus, the 17th and 18th centuries saw a number of collections of the Christian Lord’s Prayer in many languages (‘Paternostrists’, ‘Vater-Unser-Polyglotten’). The enterprise started with Gesner 1555 (cf. Peters 1974, Trabant 1999, 2000), involved lesser known persons such as Nicolas Erythree Venitien up to the famous ex-missionary Lorenzo de Hervás and, for the German-speaking community, to Johann Christoph Adelung’s (1732-1806) great work entitled "Mi-thridates oder allgemeine Sprachenkunde mit dem Vater Unser als Sprachprobe in bey nahe fünfhundert Sprachen und Mundarten"75 which appeared in four volumes 1806, 1809, 1812, 1815.

74 The Capuchins (i.e., Francesco Orazio della Penna di Billi) who, with intrigues, had successfully destroyed the earlier efforts of the Jesuits (de Andrade, Grueber and d’Orville, Desideri and Freyrey) had been expelled themselves in 1760, and except for a short visit in 1844, no missionaries entered Central Tibet ever again. Missionaries in India continued their work (e.g. the Protestant F.C.G. Schroeter in Serampore, India, who seems to be responsible for the original translation of the Lord’s prayer), Francke and others in Ladakh.

75 The ‘vocabulario comparativum’, or ‘Svavitielnyi Slovari vsekh jasykov i naretschie sobrannye desniteju vswyotschaschei osobi. Oldeleenje perwoj, soderschaetscheje w seb’ jwopovediiskei i asiatskije jasyki’ – ‘Comparative wordbooks of all languages and vernaculars, collected on supreme request: first part: European and Asian languages’; The work was made by Baeoemister (European languages) and Pallas (Asian languages).

76 e.g. Hartwig Ludwig Christian Baeoemister from St. Petersburg who, since 1773, distributed a ‘Nachricht und Bitte wegen einer Sammlung von Sprachproben. St. Petersburg, 18°’ (message and request concerning a collection of language samples) in Russian, French, Latin and German language’, asking for numeralia and 21 ‘formulae’ (’idioms’, ‘Redensarten’). During 16 years he tried to collect data and finally received 70 language samples of very different quality. To give an example, Murr (1809: 371ff.) on Tarahumara (Mexico) refers to this list and gives the samples in his own publication.

77 The term ‘Mi-thridates’ refers to the king (-132 – -63) who was famous for his knowledge, among other things his fluency in 22 languages. The term was first used in this respect by Gesner 1555.
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and 1817, mainly posthum, edited by Johann Severin Vater. In the foreword of vol. I, he defends the method:

Man hat mehrmals darüber gespottet, daß man gemeinhin das Vater Unser zu wählen pflegt. Allein es ist denn doch die einzige Formel, welche man in so vielen Sprachen haben kann; und denn hat sie auch in Ansehung der Richtigkeit große Vorzüge. (Adelung 1806: xvi)

People have criticized variously about the method to choose the Lord’s Prayer. But it is the only formula one can get in so many languages, and secondly, it has also advantages concerning its correctness.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, on the other hand, who was invited by Vater to write "corrections and additions" to Adelung's article on Basque (vol II, 1809) – which appeared only in vol. IV (1817) – has a more careful than quantitative approach to languages and thus criticizes the method for its lack of grammatical variation:

Das Vater unser enthält so einfache und kurze Sätze, dass kaum die Construction einer Sprache, viel weniger aber das, was den Stil in derselben bildet, darin sichtbar werden kann. (Humboldt 1817a: 346)

The Lord’s Prayer contains so simple and short sentences that the [grammatical] construction of the language can barely be recognized, and less it can become visible what forms the 'style' in it.

In order to give an example of paternostrist activities, the prayer is presented here in Tibetan language (Adelung 1806: 72f. (and corrections in vol. IV, 1817; cf. Vollmann 2001a; cf. Paulmann 1990 [= 1880]: 483), for the historical background of the Tibetan translation cf. Jäschke 1881):

\[(01)\]

\begin{verbatim}
Jesu Christi mit eigenem Munde gelehrtes Gebet. Unser Vater
Jesu Kristo-ji rangh Schel ne lap-behi Mon-lam. Nge-nam khji Jap
Himmeln der in sitzest, Euer Nahme allen von
Nam-khei longh tu sgu-bhehi, Khje-khji Tzen Tham-tschieh ne
geheiliget sey; Euer Reich bald komme; Euer
sangh-kje-bare ghjur; Khje-khji Jul-kham dschiom-bhare-schio; Khje-khji
Wille wie Himmel in so Welt in gethan sey;
Thu-do tschi-tar Nam-kha la te-thar Dschik-ten tu tze-bhare ghiur;
Tägliches unser Brot heute uns gegeben werde
Gnin-re-schin nghe-nam khji Pah-leb te-rin nghe-nam la nangh-vare
macht und; Wie wir unsern Schuldern
zto-bha tangh; Tsch-tar nghe-nam-khji nghe-khji Pu-lon-ken la
vergeben so uns unsere Schulden vergeben
zo-bhare-tsje, te-thar nghe-nam la nghe-khji Pu-lon zo-bhare-zo-bha
und; Uns Versuchung geschehe nicht überlasset; Sondern
fang; Nghe-nam-la Khjul-va ghjungh-vei ma thangh-vare; Ma-se
uns Bösen von befreyet. So geschehe es!
nghe-nam Mi-le-bha le trol-vare-tzo. Te-thar jin-bha jin!
\end{verbatim}

78 The last such enterprise seems to have been undertaken by Auer von Welsbach 1845.
Mistakes\textsuperscript{79} and a partly Italian spelling system\textsuperscript{80} as well as erroneous interlinear references make it difficult or impossible to identify grammatical features of the language on the basis of these data.

\textbf{07.04. Grammatical standards}

In the early phase of European linguistics, one main topic is the quest for the original (‘godly’) language, a language before the event of Babylon – an idea which is already given up in Adelung (1806: xi). It is replaced by another idea, the notion of evolution in language history, leading from the primitive cultures of early (or exotic) man to civilisation which is believed to be directly expressed in linguistic structure. Thus, language was unhesitatingly seen as the direct expression of a culture, so that it could also be used as a measure of cultural development on a scale which had at its beginning savage man and at the end European culture. Thereby, ‘evolution’ was unhesitatingly equalled with ‘evaluation’. Foreign languages had to pass the test ‘how far’ they have already proceeded in this evolutionary development. It is not by accident that Adelung’s Mithridates starts with the monosyllabic languages, since they were seen as the most primitive linguistic pattern. Thus, the structure of the language became an important factor in the evaluation of non-European civilizations. This viewpoint was upheld much longer, as can be seen in one of von der Gabelentz’ lesser known publications:

\begin{quote}
Die Leute denken eben anders als wir, und durch ihre Sprache wollen wir erfahren, wie sie denken. (Gabelentz 1892: 5)
\end{quote}

\textit{These people think differently than we do, and by their language we want to get to know how they think.}

The languages of foreign cultures with unexplainable structures were thus a challenge to this linguistic thought. There are, however, two historiographical stages: In the very early days of European linguistics, the descriptive character of these attempts does not lead too far away from the actual state of affairs. E.g., Adelung (1809) and Humboldt (1817) state on Basque – a European, but still ‘exotic’ language with respect to some grammatical categories – that there is a ‘nominativus agendi’, thus giving a semantic description of the ergative. In other words, they do not have problems in adapting their (mainly semantically defined) categories on another system. Additionally, Humboldt realizes that this feature is rather remarkable and may have consequences on theory-building (cf. Humboldt, GS III: 256f.). Adelung (1809), on the other hand, also stated that Basque has the ‘ordinary six decensional cases’ - a statement which proves that he did not doubt the reliability of traditional (Latin) grammar (cf. Adelung 1809, p. 17). Similarly, for Tibetan case marking, it is said: "As regards the cases they are used in the ordinary way except that ..." (Bell 1919: 28).

In a second phase which can be observed from the second half of the 19th century onwards, scholars had a more universalistic approach to languages which mainly implied a

\textsuperscript{79} Some of the errors are corrected in the 4th vol. ([Adelung &] Vater 1817: 31ff.).

\textsuperscript{80} The lack of an ‘international phonetic alphabet’ (as deployed by Humboldt already in his Basque manuscripts, when confronted with French and Spanish styles of Basque spelling) made it difficult for the early scholars to deduce the spelling of foreign languages from literary resources. This is another example of partly uncontrolled categorical transpositions (of grapheme values).
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Theoretical presupposition of the universality of linguistic structures which, in the meantime, had been defined more clearly than in the early days. This led to a qualitative change in the explanations of foreign structures, in that they were not simply described (such as the ‘nominativus agendi’), but became a ‘theoretical problem’ for linguistics. Ergativity was finally described as a deviant way of applying European structures: The concepts of the ‘passive hypothesis’ and the ‘nominalist hypothesis’ stating that all transitive sentences of a language be passive or all verbs be nouns, respectively, somehow leads away from common sense, but fulfills theoretical presuppositions on universal structures.

As was said before, since the early scholars departed from a grammar highly adapted to SAE languages, it was very easy to consider other systems less capable, when matched against European categories. Any non-fitting was interpreted as a disadvantage, a shortcoming of the foreign system. In the case of Tibetan, where European scholars found an existing grammar tradition, we find a remarkable variant of this evaluation, in the lemma for the word ‘case’ in a dictionary, where the quantitative ‘advantage’ is but an influence from IE (also quoted and discussed in Miller 1993: 184ff.):

rnam dbye case or cases, of which the Tibetan grammarians, from an excessive regard of the SSk. language and in fond imitation of its peculiarities, have also adopted seven in number. (Jäschke 1881: 314ff.)

To conclude, the knowledge system of the conceptual analysis of grammatical phenomena departed from a structure-determined viewpoint which was firmly rooted in traditional categorizations of European languages (i.e., SAE). This biased approach led to two phenomena, namely that many non-European languages did not expose as many appropriate grammatical phenomena from the ‘table of categories’ (a term used by Humboldt) as did European languages, whereas foreign categories were not recognized (appropriately) as having equal importance. By this analysis, the ‘natural’ inferiority of foreign languages (and cultures) was easily proved with ‘objective facts’, and by the ‘exotic’ categories, their foreignness was further proved as fact. A few contemporaneous authors deplored this fact:

Manche dieser Geistlichen quälen erst sich und ihren Stoff durch alle Kapitel der lateinischen Grammatik hindurch, theilen aber dann in Form eines Anhanges mit, was eigentlich den Geist der Sprache ausmacht. (G. von der Gabelentz 1891: 26)

Firstly, some of these patres torture themselves and their topic through all chapters of Latin grammar, to tell us in the appendix what really makes the spirit of the language.

07.05. Structure-determination of linguistic descriptions

From a systemic point of view, an observer (linguist) approaches a new field of observation (research) with a specific systemic state of his world knowledge. He/she cannot simply observe ‘objective facts’, but can only adapt the observed phenomena in terms of his/her categorization of phenomena (cf. Maturana 1988). Therefore, the naive linguistic observer will observe categories which seem to be present in both his/her reference system and the new data, but will not correctly observe, or not observe at all categories which are present in the observed system, but not in the reference system. Instead, the observer may find ‘deviations’ from what his reference system believes to be an inherent quality of the observed entity. This will inevitably lead to observing fewer phenomena (which are estimated important or
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imperative for a linguistic system). The idea of a so-called 'UG' (universal grammar) consisting of grammatical categories (instead of cognitive conceptual categories, is thus quite naive and does not account for the fact that we have no opportunity to find out which would be the 'objective viewpoint' to decide on categories. Our understanding of (foreign) categories is not free from a bias of categories which we have already developed.

In other words, if structure-determined knowledge systems are perturbed by new facts, they can only react in their usual structure-determined way, by integrating the new perturbation as if it were an old perturbation. Since a knowledge system is based on its very own structures, only its own structures seem to be 'logical' or 'normal', because structural coupling gives the system the feeling of a smooth interaction, where expectations and reality meet. New information, on the other hand, may get an unsmooth interaction with the actual conceptual apparatus.

Salient, but deviant characteristics of the foreign system are recognised, but understood within the existing theoretical framework, within the linguistic presuppositions; thus, researchers were led to believe that exotic languages have a lot of 'exceptions from the rules'; Hence one often finds statements in older textbooks about 'unexplainable' structures of the language, such as Hannah's description of the Tibetan language characterized by the "labyrinthine obscurities of its construction" (Hannah 1912: v).

The alleged uniformity of universal grammar stands in sharp contrast to the fact that the three main reference languages of the early times of European linguistics, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin are themselves quite different from each other. This fact obviously did not hinder the development of a presupposed concept of universal well-formedness of grammar, or the concept of one grammar (in evolutionary development). Thus, the whole early concept of grammar is completely untenable: The prototype does not exist, the adherent languages are deviant (especially English), and the foreign languages are inadequately incorporated into the conception, so that the comparison and the conclusion are questionable. Although universal-typological research is aware of this fact, popular beliefs about language (and, it seems, some formal models in linguistics) are still based on such misleading assumptions.

07.06. 'Primitive' languages

The description of foreign cultures in earlier times is usually seen in an evolutionary setting, as the description of 'earlier' and 'more primitive' precursors of European culture. The evidence for this view is abundant, cf., for Tibetan, Bacot:

La langue tibétaine appartient à un groupe primitif général dit sino-tibétain, ... (Bacot 1946: 7)

... and also:

Il semblerait qu'à l'époque de Thonmi Sambhoṭta le langage tibétain ne dût servir que les pensées rudimentaires de barbares nomades, préoccupés de leur subsistance, de chasse, de guerre, de magie. (Bacot 1928: I)

The language family is considered 'primitive', and what those people used to talk, at least before the introduction of Indian culture, used to be 'rudimentary'; this judgement is based on mere imputation of the superiority of one culture over the other one, and its direct effects on
language. The evaluation of pre-Buddhist culture as well as the effect of cultural change on the 'quality' of the language are not proved, but postulated.

Nonetheless, all resources state that the introduction of Indian culture alone improved the language, beginning with the vocabulary; but this improvement seems to be an 'artificial', or non-factual improvement, in that it is done by morphological word formation operations on simplices – one wonders what may be the difference to, e.g., Sanskrit word formation:

The Tibetans had to create an entirely new (and therefore artificial) vocabulary of religious and philosophical terms, mainly by ingenious compounding of simple terms available in their own language. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, article on Tibetan Literature, http://www.britannica.com/)

Similarly, any grammatical feature may be taken negatively, e.g., the Tibetan verb formation with N+do (light verb) called de-nyid:

We thus learn that 'light verbs' are 'less evolved', and that the pre-Buddhist Tibetan language was lacking buddhist terminology – which we might compare to any modern European language. But, since Tibetan has the means of grammaticalisation, it could overcome this shortcoming by forming abstract nouns with light verbs. By denying the abstracting force of grammaticalisation, Bacot seems to think that, contrary to European languages (which have similar word formation processes, cf. 'cordiale-ment', etc.), the 'primitive' language retains the original meaning in spite of grammaticalisation.

07.07. 'Primitive' languages as evolutionary precursors

Sociologically, cultures and languages were described in terms of norm deviance (cf. Lamnek 1990). In Linguistics, this aspect surfaced especially with regard to the so-called monosyllabic languages, e.g. Chinese, the 'classical' 'language without grammar' (cf. Joseph 1999). Due to their lack of affixing morphology in combination with their segmental-phonological simplicity, they were described not as having a different, but rather no grammar. Neither tonal systems nor particle grammar were properly recognized.

Since in European transcriptions these languages exposed homophonies and since traditional grammar (morphology) seemed to lead to very few pattern-matchings, the general inaptitude of these languages for complex thoughts was postulated – a view which can be found outside linguistics even today as folk linguistic belief.

Since there was also a firm belief in an evolutionary kind of historic language development, these languages were considered '(historically) most basic'. Thus, it is not surprising, that Adelung, in an attempt to organize his work, starts with those 'most primitive' languages and comes to this conclusion:
Der Sinese mag sich anstrengen, wie er will, so lange er nur bey seiner Sprache bleibt, ist er ganz unvermögend, sich die Künste und Wissenschaften des Europäers zuzueignen. (Adelung 1806: 28)

Try as he might as long as a China man remains in his language alone, he is totally unable to adopt the arts and sciences of the European.

The so-called 'monosyllabic languages' are seen as the evolutionary precursor of the other language types. Interestingly, Adelung is not blind to the fact that the Chinese society had developed 'some culture' – but it is well-known that prejudice cannot be weakened by evidence; thus, he states in the same passage:

[...] es bleibt doch immer merkwürdig, daß so zahlreiche Völker, welche es zum Teil sehr frühe zu einem gewissen Grade der Cultur gebracht haben, so viele Jahrtausende bey ihrer armeligen Einsylibigkeit geblieben sind. (Adelung 1806: 28)

[...] it is nonetheless noteworthy that so many nations have in part reached some level of culture, but have remained for many thousands of years in an impoverished state of monosyllacticity.

We find a similar, empirically worse, characterisation of Tibetan in the same work:

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As can be deduced from this passage, the alleged more complex phonotactic structure (with regard to Chinese) is seen as an ‘evolutionary process’ (but a still insufficient one). The importance of tones is known, but not described in detail. The spelling system which helps bridge dialectal variation is seen as the sole way to allow Tibetans to understand each other, an untenable ‘hypothesis of dysfunctionality’ of such a language – interestingly enough, the writing system seems to be more developed than the spoken language.

Georgi’s misunderstanding of the then famous Tibetan text (the ’Siberian manuscript’) is not seen as Georgi’s shortcoming, but as a problem of the language. Shortly afterwards, the puzzle of the above-mentioned Tibetan text piece was solved by Csoma de Kőrös who concludes the discussion with "... and the attempts at translation and correction were most ludicrously erroneous." (Csoma de Kőrös 1832 = 1986: 10), as well as Rémusat who wrote: "Je ne sais comment on peut traduire ou corriger un texte qu’on n’est pas même capable de lire." (Rémusat, quoted after Csomá de Kőrös 1832/1986).

Finally, the whole consideration of the 'evolutionary process' is in vain, since the quoted 'more complex' forms of Tibetan are synchronically pronounced [tyː] for (s)prul, [se] for sre (which is in fact written sras), and so on. The 'more complex forms' are orthographic forms which relate to a possible earlier stage of the language. To sum up, the whole description is entirely based on prejudice and not on any facts about the language.

07.08. The debate on Chinese

Chinese is a typical language with so-called monosyllabic structure and a particle grammar, i.e., the levels of morphology and syntax cannot be distinguished, grammatical morphemes surfacing in syntactic slots. This characteristic did not meet the morphological expectations of early European scholars. Together with the iconic writing system which preserves original meanings in iconic characters, this led to the view that Chinese has ‘no grammar’, or, more specifically, ‘no bound morphemes’ such as case or tense markers.

Thus, many authors, such as Adelung, heavily criticised the grammar of Chinese as dysfunctional for culture (see above). Few authors, however, such as Rémusat and Humboldt, defended the language against such evaluations. On the basis of modern grammaticalisation theory, it is clear, however, that the following quotation from Humboldt denies the historical development of grammatical particles:

Fast alle Wörter, die man Praepositionen im Chinesischen zu nennen pflegt, sind Verba, und bilden in ihrer Construction zwei abgesonderte Sätze.  сумму нив изо жин wird (Gr. 159.) von Rémusat übersetzt: ex imperio donare hominem, donner l’empire à un homme. Aber es ist da weder von einer Praeposition, noch einem Dativ (einem geradzu im Chinesischen sehr schwer auszudrückenden Casus) die Rede. Wörtlich heißt der Satz: verfügen über das Reich, beschenken den Mann. (Humboldt 1906 [1826]: 314)

The ‘Siberian manuscript’ was a page of the Kanjur, Buddha’s Collected Words, which found its way to Europe, and because it contained Sanskrit mantras, it led to much discussion among European linguistic scholars.
Almost all words which are usually called prepositions in Chinese are verbs, and they form in their construction two separate sentences: *I thían hiá iù jín is* (Gr. 159.) translated by Rémusat as: *ex imperio donare hominem, donner l'empire à un homme.* But there is neither question of a preposition nor a dative (a case which is particularly difficult to express in Chinese). Literally, the sentence is: *rule the empire, present (to) the man.*

For Humboldt, the Chinese model represented a specific language type which attracted his linguistic interest:

Die Chinesische Sprache besitzt nichts, was auf irgend eine Weise eine Flexion genannt werden könnte. Ihre einzigen syntaktischen Hülftmittel sind Partikeln (grammatische Wörter) und die Wortstellung. Allein auch diese beiden scheinen nicht auf die Bezeichnung der grammatischen Formen zu gehen, sondern bestimmt zu seyn, das Verständniss auf andere Weise zu leiten. (Humboldt 1906 [1826]: 316)

These considerations lead to the following classification of languages: (a) no marking of grammatical categories (Chinese), (b) grammatical categories as the basis of grammar (Indo-Germanic), and (c) grammatical systems which are either deficient or have an overblown multiplicity of grammatical forms; the hierarchy of excellence being b, a, c:

Vergleicht man das Chinesische mit andren Sprachen, von dem hier gefassten Gesichtspunkte aus, so giebt es Sprachen dreifacher Gattung.

- Die Chinesische hebt sich einer genauen, ja im Grunde aller Bezeichnung der grammatischen Formen.
- Die Indo-Germanischen und vielleicht noch andre machen diese Bezeichnung zur Grundlage ihrer Grammatik, und ertheilen derselben die sorgsamste Ausführung.
- Die Sprachen, die nach jenen beiden Classen übrigbleiben, streben nach grammatischen Formen und bezeichnen dieselben, erreichen aber nicht eine vollständige und angemessene Bezeichnung, haben bald eine mangelhafte, bald eine überflüssige und fehlerhafte.

Die Chinesische Sprache unterscheidet sich von diesen Sprachen durch die Reinheit, Regelmäßigkeit und Consequent ihres grammatischen Baues; durch diese Vorzüge stellt sie sich unbedingt den vollkommensten Sprachen an die Seite, unterscheidet sich aber von ihnen wieder dadurch, dass sie, soweit es nur immer die allgemeine Natur der Sprache zulässt, ein dem ihrigen entgegengesetztes System befolgt. Sie darf umso weniger mit den ungebildeten Sprachen roher Volksstämme verwechselt werden, als diese meisten- theils, wie schon Rémusat bemerkt hat, gerade von grammatischen Bezeichnungen, ja mitunter von grammatischen Spitzfindigkeiten wimmeln. (Humboldt 1906 [1826]: 321)

Although the ‘purity’ of the Chinese solution is admirable, it does not suffice to equate it with the Indo-European class:

Dieses Vorzugs ungeachtet, steht aber, meiner innersten Überzeugung nach, das Chinesische den Sprachen, mit welchen es hier verglichen wird, bei weitem nach. Der Gedanke erhalt einmal bloss durch die Sprache Deutlichkeit und Bestimmtheit, und diese Wirkung ist nur vollständig, wenn alles auf ihn Einwirkende auch in der Sprache einen analogen Ausdruck antrifft. Jede Sprache, die darin zu ergänzen übriglässt, befindet sich in dieser Rücksicht im Nachteil. (Humboldt 1906 [1826]: 323)
The famous discussion about the alleged primitivity of monosyllabic languages between Ré-
musat, Burnouf, and Humboldt (cf. Rémusat 1820, Rémusat 1822, Humboldt 1827) is well de-
scribed in Joseph 1999. It was Humboldt who, in agreement with Rémusat, criticized the sim-
plistic view that morphological complexity be the exact image of conceptual complexity. His
description is based on his experience with morphologically quite complex 'primitive' lan-
guages such as Basque and American idioms, and also accounting for 'civilized' isolating lan-
guages such as English. Therefore, he did not intend to be less eurocentric, but to get a
sharper distinction for 'civilized' and 'primitive'. For him, the benchmark is whether, e.g., a
case system accounts well for the expression of the 'basic' syntactic relations which he iden-
tifies as agent, object, and indirect object (for his arguments, see below). Therefore, accord-
ing to his view, the many case forms of, e.g., Basque are thus a sign of the 'unordered'; or
more chaotic primitive mind (see the above-mentioned view of Humboldt in an earlier sec-
tion). Chinese, on the other hand, by means of word order, expresses well those relations
and is therefore considered civilized (see above). In other words, Humboldts arguments are
more sophisticated, but not free from the view of other cultures and languages as being funda-
damentally weak or wrong or bad.

At those times, Humboldt was only contradicted by Pickering who, in letters to Hum-
boldt, defended the languages of the North American Natives from Humboldt's reproach of
being chaotically complex (cf. Mueller-Vollmer 1976). The entire discussion centers around
the fact that the process of grammaticalization is denied for 'primitive languages', presup-
suming that their function words keep lexical meaning forever, probably mainly because of the
writing system of Chinese. It is clear, however, that all languages are full of function words
which morphotactically relate back to lexical words – cf. the following examples from Ewe,
ex. taken from Heine & Claudi & Hünnemeyer 1991, and German:

\[(02a)\] me-wi dō vévē ná dōdōkō la
1SG-do work hard give exam DEF
I worked hard for the exam.

\[(02b)\] Mittels eines Werkzeugs kann man dies reparieren.
by:means of INDEF-GEN tool-GEN can:3S 3S:IMPERS DEIX reparer:INF
This can be repaired by means of a tool.

07.09. Grammar contains morphology

The early discussions on the primitivity or the genius of languages often leads to the ques-
tion of morphology in a SAE sense which seems to have been considered imperative for a
'good' grammar. The morphonological forms of particles at the end of NPs ('group inflection')
did not fulfill such requirements:

Les quelques désinences casuelles à forme flexionelle (génitif et instrumental des mots
terminés par une voyelle ou par 'a') ne sont pas de véritables flexions mais des mor-
phèmes syllabiques usés, restés indépendants, car dans une énumération de mots au
même cas, ces désinences, ainsi que les particules, n'affectent pas chaque terme de l'énu-
mération comme en indo-européen, mais seulement le dernier terme. (Bacot 1946: 19)

Interestingly, Chinese and Tibetan have not always been as 'morphotactically simple' as they
seem to be nowadays – these languages have not 'remained' (see above), they have 'become'
isolating (cf. Baxter & Sagart 1997). An evolutionary evaluation of languages based on phonotactic and (specific) morphological complexity quickly leads to a few problems: quite a few exotic languages, such as the North American languages, exhibit considerably more morphological complexity than SAE, especially when compared to English. Thus, it is problematic to postulate European superiority on the basis of such parameters.

Humboldt adapted his model to this evidence. In some unpublished manuscripts (cf. Vollmann 2002), he considers his typological model and its evaluative consequences: Languages mark grammatical relations by 1. word order, 2. inflection, and 3. ‘use of special words’. 2. historically develops from 3. But then, Humboldt distinguishes (few) ‘logical-rational’ relations and (many) ‘accidental-specific’ relations, and he finds the latter specifically in group 3.

It is clear that more semantic relations are more often expressed by ‘special words’ (function words, adpositions, nominal adpositions), whereas more grammatical relations usually exhibit fusional affixes. This is in line with grammaticalisation theory. In these unpublished manuscripts, however, Humboldt goes further, stating that languages (and not only different functions within a grammar) exhibit this difference; for him, the latter type 3. is attributed to ‘raw nations, hardly undistanced from nature’ (‘rohen und wenig vom Naturstand entfernten Nationen’). While English is an exception in his system (‘derived language’), Basque with its rich morphology belongs to the ‘primitive languages’:

Die Vaskische Sprache muß daher immer als eine, dem frühesten Bildungszustande des Menschen angemessene angesehen werden, und diejenigen welche man am zweckmäßigsten mit ihr vergleicht, sind die rohen und barbarischen Völkerstämmme, vorzüglich die Amerikanischen. (Humboldt, GK, p. 371)

Humboldt’s line of thought is based on a subtle observation, the difference between grammatical and semantic relations, and their historical relation to each other. But his evaluative conclusion is untenable: He thinks that while civilised nations develop only logical relations (who defines ‘logical’, based on what?), ‘barbarian’ nations simply name this and that (‘accidental-specific’) without having a meta-concept for doing so. This view is subsumed in the following way.82

Ueberladende Vielfachheit der grammatikalischen Formen, verbunden mit ausnehmender Einfachheit in ihrer Bildung, ist das grammatikalisch charakteristische Merkmal aller Sprachen roher, unkultivirter Völker. (Humboldt, n.d., GK, Abschnitt 5)

An overblown multiplicity of grammatical forms combined with an extreme simplicity of construction is the feature grammatically characteristic of all languages of raw, barbarous nations.

Humboldt’s model itself is contradictory: His notion of ‘case’ throughout these manuscripts is completely semantic (cf. Vollmann 2003) so that even the languages with ‘logical-rational’ relations are in fact semantic systems in his model. Therefore, Humboldt’s distinction is more based on the fact that (agglutinating) languages such as Basque not only exhibit regular expressions of both semantic (locative) and regular expressions of grammatical relations, whereas fusional morphologies often exhibit a clear distinction between fusional case mar-

82 This is formulated quite directly, contrary to other instances of this thought; this is due to the fact that it comes from an unpublished paper, and it shows that Humboldt was quite careful in the choice of words before really publishing a text.
king and the use of adpositions; this is a mere morphotactic fact based on accidental historical developments.

To conclude these considerations, it seems clear that early scholars used to distinguish before all morphotactic phenomena (isolation/agglutination/inflection, or relative systemic affixal complexity) which are but one feature of grammars. Considering the modern view of 'local optimization', it is evident that such characteristics do not tell us much about the whole system, or at least do not allow far-reaching interpretations of the cognitive-conceptual system.

The 'alleged primitiveness of ergative languages' (Seely 1977: 196) is already well-described in Seely (1977, 1978) and in Dixon's (1994: 214ff.) chapter "What it means for a language to be ergative"; similarly, we find some examples in Tournadre (1996: 36-41), thus, we may repeat these facts only in most compressed form.

Ergativity was one of the most prominent features deviating from SAE grammars. After what has been said in the previous sections, it is clear that it must have played a particular role in the evaluation of foreign languages and cultures.

The fascination that the ergative construction has had is derived from the idea that languages with such constructions might be associated with a differing mentality, another 'Weltanschauung'. [...] Ultimately, not only different but inferior mentalities were attributed to speakers of ergative languages. (Seely 1978: 55)

While Humboldt in his manuscripts on Basque (cf. Vollmann 2003) considered the ERG pattern a second 'plausible' possibility of case-marking, soonl̊y afterwards, with the 'passive hypothesis' and other auxiliary concepts, it became clear that ERG was considered 'exotic', and, subsequently, less convenient to thought.

Les premières descriptions des langues ergatives ont tellement surpris les philologues par leur côté "exotique" qu'ils les ont trouvées anormales et ont pensé qu'elles présentaient une logique moins naturelle que celle des langues accusatives, ou encore qu'elles reflétaient une mentalité primitive. (Tournadre 1996: 36)

Interestingly, the marking of the ERG was soonl̊y not interpreted as a marking of the AGENT as in earlier linguistic works, but rather as the explicit non-subjecthood and therefore non-agentivity of the ERG. The unmarkedness of the PATIENT was interpreted as the patient role being the default worldview of 'primitive man'.

The origin of the ergative construction was explained by the belief that for the 'primitieve taalgevoel' ('primitive linguistic feeling') 'the actual agent is a hidden power' (Uhlenbeck 1916: 213). In a similar vein, 'Savage man apparently feels that most events are not due to his own volition' (Entwistle 1953: 214), and, 'La langue est l'expression de l'esprit humain, et l'homme. à un stade où son développement spirituel est encore peu avancé se sent un instrument docile, à la merci de la nature toute-puissante' (Erichsen 1944: 69) (Seely 1978: 56)

Lévy-Bruhl 1949 and also Cazeneuve (1972: 5ff.) and others considered ERG as part of 'prelogical thought' attributed to primitive man (cf. Seely 1978: 56). In the same line of thought, the grammaticalization channel was postulated as proceeding from ERG/ABS to NOM/ACC systems. The speculation on ergativity in Indo-European furthered this idea. This is why
Uhlenbeck (1948: 72) saw a "mentalité archaïque" in languages with transitive/intransitive distinction, but without having a NOM/ACC distinction. Similarly, Sommerfelt 1937 called Aranda "archaïque", and Entwistle (1953: 19) found but "embryonic words" in this language. And Martinet (1962: 72f) states (cf. Tournadre 1996: 36f):

We might, for instance, assume that on a certain cultural and economic level we stand a good chance of coming across what has been called an ergative construction. On another level, which we might consider more advanced, the ergative construction will probably have given way to an active-passive verbal opposition. (Martinet 1962: 72f.)

Also, Tesnière (1965: 112) called ergative languages a 'type très archaïque'. Within the 'stadi-al theory' of Marr (cf. Thomas 1957), largely determined by morphological typologies (analytic, synthetic, agglutinative, and inflectional), ERG systems had place 3 in the hierarchy (Chinese stage 1). It was Kuryłowicz 1946 who showed the reversibility of antipassive and passive transformations, being for him only 'stylistic'. Even sexism had to do its share in ergative typology: van Ginneken (1939: 91f., quoted in Fillmore 1968: 60), thought of ergative languages as being representative of feminine-oriented, hence 'passive' cultures. And Brandenstein (1967: 4) described the alleged evolutionary change from ERG/ABS to NOM/ACC as the result 'of a change to more individualistic thinking'.

In this discussion, language typology is taken as an objectivist measure for racist arguments, making socio-cultural statements of questionable content. Again, the problem is the incapability to have insight into the functioning of one's own mind and one's own knowledge system. Since it works structure-determinedly, it proceeds from strong presuppositions about what basically has to be in a grammar (and in a culture). The perturbation of the system by unfitting data does not lead to a reversal of the knowledge system, but to the integration of the new data on the basis of the existing system of explanation, be it adequate or not. Since this inevitably leads to badly-fitting constructions of explanations, the new data are blamed for being badly-fitting. This is what is behind all social constructions of reality, and it is the basis of all our erroneous judgements.

On the other hand, it is impossible to judge on an objective basis; every knowledge system has to adapt gradually to new facts based on its subsequent historical conceptualizations. It is usually easy to see this in historiography, but, due to our structure-dependent judgements, we are usually completely blind towards our own or contemporaneous work, or the work done within our own theoretical framework.

Since all our judgements are necessarily based on presuppositions, we have to admit that all our work is thoroughly embedded in our own responsibility for the judgements we make. Thereby, 'science' is no longer merely the question of 'fact-finding', but of how we treat phenomena.

07.10. Theories of ergativity

As has already been described earlier, the phenomenon of ergativity was soon identified by basically two models of grammar, the passive hypo-thesis and the nominalist hypothesis. The passive hypothesis stated that all transitive verbs be inherently passive in ERG languages; thus, the sentence 'John broke the cup' should literally (!) be understood as 'The cup was:broken by John'. Schuchardt (1913: 1) makes this point quite clear. Native speakers of
ERG languages usually did not agree with this interpretation (cf., e.g., Kelzang Gyuume 1992: App., X). Other researchers came to the conclusion that ERG (and lack of verb agreement) be the feature of languages with 'nominal' verbs – which was not only stated linguistically, but also in terms of language & thought: "[...] that to the Eskimo mind the nominal concept of life is predominant" (Thalbitzer 1911: 1059). A new terminology often marks that a phenomenon is singled out in a specific way. Dirr (1912, 1928), a follower of Marr and his stadal theory, who made the term 'ergative' more generally known in linguistics pointed to ergativity as an 'early' 'evolutionary' phenomenon, cf.

On sait que l’école de Marr considérait la construction ergative comme la marque distinctive d’un type structural totalement différent du type indo-européen, sémite, etc. et antérieur à celui-ci; il s’agirait d’une étape de l’évolution générale des langues, à laquelle, selon la théorie de la "stadiálité", une langue ayant atteint un degré supérieur d’évolution (type indo-européen, sémite, etc.) ne pourrait plus retourner. (Regamey 1954: 364)

Whatever the theories about the 'real', or 'underlying' structure or meaning of ERG (and other grammatical phenomena), it has to be concluded that these were 'rich interpretations'. As stated in Nowak (1996: 64), these grammarians were completely convinced of the universality of SAE (European) grammatical concepts and therefore indiscriminately applied them to any other system. This approach basically led to two effects: (a) It proved the universal reliability of the existing categories (by being applied), and (b) it provided the linguists with extremely deviant, or 'exotic' grammars – eurocentric categories and the exotism of foreign languages. The latter point was but a reflection of the Europeans' view on foreign cultures: that they be 'exotic', 'bizarre', or even 'barbaric'. In the light of the fact that language was attributed to be narrowly related with thought (see above), this inevitably led to linguistic racism, by way of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Ergativity was a phenomenon deviant enough from European categorialities to become one of the major distinctions between civilised and barbaric thought. Dixon 1994 gives a number of quotes from various researchers about 'What it means for a language to be ergative', in a chapter devoted to this type of linguistic racism.

07.11. The alleged lack of abstractness

Exotic categories in general were attributed to 'uncivilised man', 'hardly undistanced from nature' (see above); their main characteristic (i.e., one unquestioned prejudice) could be paraphrased as 'delivered to the forces of nature' and 'prelogical thought' (see above). The main

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83 The underlying construction of reality for such arguments assumes that (a) 'we Europeans' be not delivered to the forces of nature (or do not experience the world in this way) and (b) that we have 'logical reasoning'. Firstly, most people in the occident usually do not act 'logically', but 'emotionally' (and even 'prototypically logical' personages such as Mr. Spock are quite eclectically 'logical': 'logic' seems to mean that one is able to control the situations, and not the mind (i.e., 'mental calmness'); this is the mistaken view expressing itself as 'coolness'; secondly, 'logistic' in the academic sense pretends to be able to 'objectivize' 'facts' – a science-theoretical construction of reality which was successfully dismantled by researchers such as Maturana (e.g. 1980) or von Foerster. Thirdly, it is quite unreasonable to believe that Europeans be not (from time to time) delivered to the forces of nature (and statesmen). The underlying presupposition for not being delivered in this way is technology. Since technology does not ultimately save people from death and suffering, this turns out to be a mere presupposition of superiority based on the concept that the cultural construction to which one is used to seems to be more
characteristic of 'primitive' case systems for Humboldt was the fact that they exhibit a great number of cases which are purely semantic and not a small set of highly grammaticalized cases as in SAE. The same line of view was upheld in lexicology and in other areas of grammar much later:

They were all in nearly the same primitive stage of development, characterized by minute exactness of description with almost entire absence of broad classification. Thus the Cherokee, living in a country abounding in wild fruits, had no word for grape, but had instead a distinct descriptive term for each of the three varieties with which he was acquainted. In the same way, he could not simply say "I am here", but must qualify the condition as standing, sitting, etc. (The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. VII, 1910)

In many publications can one find references to examples such as '35 words for snow in Eskimo, but no cover term', etc. (for satirical critique, cf. Pullum 1991); also, the here-mentioned feature of local classification agreement in the verb is not seen as a plus, but as evidence for the un-logical, un-systematic cognitive approach. Such an analysis is completely wrong and unjust, since it does not account for the functionality of the system, but only for the SAE view of what is considered good and bad. Usually, just to give an example, classification leads to various other interesting effects, e.g. in what 'we' consider to be word formation (ex. from Navaho, cf. Unterbeck 1999: 427):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(03a)</th>
<th>(04a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>běésò sì-ˈá</td>
<td>beeldléi sí-łtsóóz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>běésò sì-nil</td>
<td>beeldléi shi-jool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money spf-SRO</td>
<td>blanket spf-FFO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A single coin lies [there].</td>
<td>A blanket lies there. (plain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>běésò sì-łtsóóz</td>
<td>beeldléi sì-ˈá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money spf-FFO</td>
<td>blank spf-NCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money spf-SRO</td>
<td>A blanket lies there. (loosely bunched)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, the mistake to identify such cases as simple solutions lies in attributing universal force on non-universal categories, in expectations about grammars which are not met.

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plausible (‘logical’) than others (which is of course true for most adherents of all cultures). Quod erat demonstrandum.
07.12. Conclusion

The intimate relation of language and thought is thus largely a construction based on extra-linguistic values. Languages exhibit variously different grammatical patterns, but not on a level which can account for language-conditioned differences in thought. The evolution of categories, i.e., language change, is highly unpredictable, based more on accidental changes on the basis of existing material (cf. the ‘invisible hand’ theory, cf. Keller 1994). The similarities in both grammars and thought are much bigger than the differences. Most categories are grammaticalized in some languages, and only marginal in others. They are, however, not unthinkable and not fundamentally exotic. Asian languages often have a honorific system – but the German pronoun ‘Sie’ (plus 3rd person plural agreement in the verb for 2nd person) is also a grammaticalized honorific; in many cases, lexical choices depend on politeness. English has a grammaticalized aspect system, but a German sentence ‘Ich lese.’ (‘I read:1S’) as a reply to ‘Was tust du gerade’ (‘What are you doing just now?’) does also apply conceptually the progressive aspect; grammatical (‘Ich bin am Lesen’) and lexical solutions (‘Ich lese gerade’) are also available for the expression of progressive aspect; they are, however, facultative means, and this is the difference to the English system. The absence of a grammatical expression for a concept does not mean that the concept is absent from this event construal. Nonetheless, especially outside of linguistics, the ideas of ‘lack of abstraction’, ‘lack of hierarchical categorizations’, and ‘exotic grammatical features’ are repeated time and again, cf.

Forty years ago, it was still possible to find whole communities of the Khant, a west Siberian people, where their language was spoken. Today, only the elderly keep it alive. Though a somewhat primitive tongue (in that it lacks a capacity for abstraction), it is evocative and vivid, with a poetic particularity all its own. A photograph, for example, becomes by analogy “a pool of still water”; a hat, “a wide-crowned tree that keeps off the rain.” (Benson Bobrick: review of Anna Reid: The Shaman’s Coat: A Native History of Siberia. in: New York Times Book Review, Dec 15, 2002. Quoted on the LinguistList in 2003)

Although all languages use the technique of metaphorization (etc.) in word formation, e.g. when forming the term ‘cover term’ for naming words which – metaphorically – ‘cover’ a number of other terms, or ‘wing’ for a technical construct on airplanes (which serve only one of the functions of birds’ wings), or ‘open jaw flights’ for a kind of flight booking, or ‘elephantiasis’ for a human sickness which among other things makes legs grow thicker, or ‘genealogical tree’, and so on. Similarly, German ’Kotflügel’ (‘mudguard’) or ’Klobrille’ (‘toilet seat’) are quite ‘evocative’ in the sense of the quotation. It seems as if metaphorical compounds often appear funny to foreigners, but remain unnoticed in one’s own language.

Thus, statements about a ‘lack of abstracting capacity’, ‘evocative and vivid’ words/languages, and ‘strange’ ways of construing sentences, as opposed to ‘civilized’ languages, are mere statements of norm deviance from a prescriptive grammatical viewpoint on grammar in order to prove cultural inferiority.
07. The transposition of linguistic categories
08. Tibetan verbs

Case marking has to do with the verbs of a language and their inherent or morphological properties. It could be seen in previous chapters that many authors did mainly discuss the verb classes and not so much the use of the ergative itself. Tibetan verb morphology is probably the most elaborated part of the Tibetan grammar. First, there is a highly opaque system of verb inflection which nowadays forms more or less related ‘stems’\textsuperscript{34} of a verb. The paradigmatic organization of these forms is rather weak; we have to do with a number of possibilities which are morphologically more or less systematic. Then, both Written Tibetan and the dialects of Tibetan have different systems of morphological or analytic verb formation which seems to have developed later than or independently from Classical Tibetan. This chapter does not pretend to solve the numerous open questions about Tibetan verb grammar, but simply tries to report (most of) the facts. Verb morphology is, however, the key for the understanding of indigenous grammar, case marking, and the typological question to be discussed in this contribution.

08.01. Morphotactics of verbs

The majority of verbs in Classical (and Written) Tibetan is monosyllabic, and the majority of polysyllabic verbs is reanalyzable (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 195ff.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 01</th>
<th>byed</th>
<th>good</th>
<th>nthong</th>
<th>Ha go</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>cut</td>
<td>see</td>
<td></td>
<td>understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spoken varieties, however, verbs are often composed of two elements. Thus, e.g., the verb ‘study’ in Classical (and sometimes in Modern Written) Tibetan is either slob or sbyong, whereas the usual spoken form is slob sbyong (byed pa); many verb forms are composed of incorporated noun plus cognate verb, i.e., constructions with ‘light verbs’ (for a listing, cf. Losang Thonden 1984; Tournadre 1996: 183, 185ff., Chonjore 2003: 186ff.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 02</th>
<th>las ka byed</th>
<th>bsam blo gton</th>
<th>sgo brgyab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>work-do</td>
<td>thought-do</td>
<td>door-put</td>
<td>close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These semantically unspecific verbs which form new verbs with cognate objects (lit. ‘to do a work, to do a thought’, ‘to handle a door’) can be found in other dialects as well (ex. Themchen Tibetan, Haller 2004: 134ff., with possible WT correlations):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 03</th>
<th>k’a phi</th>
<th>k’a śto</th>
<th>k’i bla</th>
<th>pən yəde</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>open</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>khas blangs</td>
<td>confess</td>
<td>stand in a row</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{34} The use of the word ‘stem’ is deviant from traditional morphological terminology, where ‘stem’ usually is one level of morphological organization, between ‘root’ and ‘word’. In Tibetan grammar, ‘stems’ are monosyllabic verb forms which are partially suppletive or partially similar to each other and represent various (morphological) categories of one lexical verb.
08. Tibetan verbs

08.02. The historical system of verb inflection

08.02.01. Tense forms

In the written language, about 1200 verbs (cf. Durr 1950b, Coblin 1976, Goldstein et al. 1991: 465ff., Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 182ff., Hahn 1994; 207ff. (= 1985: 189ff.), and many others) have up to four different morphological forms for the so-called ‘tense’ forms present (PRS), past (PST), future (FUT), and imperative (IMP), e.g. ‘to do’ byed, byas, bya, byos. In the spoken varieties, however, these orthographic differences are either nonexistent or have led to other distinctions (see below). Another group of verbs is invariable even in the classical language – ‘indeclinable verbs’ (bya tshig ‘gyur ba med pa). These verb forms can hardly be represented in a morphological paradigm. In other words, even in the classical language, this inflectional system is morphologically quite opaque. Nonetheless, traditional grammar distinguishes ‘regular’, ‘irregular’, and ’special’ verbs (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 191), based upon a statement from the earliest Tibetan grammar. In a regular case, it is possible to reconstruct an old morphology in the orthographic form: bskor {{somebody} turn[ed something]} can be understood as an inflected form b-s-kor PST-CAUS-turn of a stem –kor- ‘turn’ (cf. Tournadre 1996: 183). Alternatively, verbs are ordered according to the number of different verb forms: thus, there may be 4, 3, 2, or only one form for a verb (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 182ff.); since the paradigmatic system is only reconstructible diachronically (cf. Coblin 1976), this ‘practical’ ordering may serve here to exemplify this system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>PRS</th>
<th>FUT</th>
<th>PST</th>
<th>IMP</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:</td>
<td>klog</td>
<td>bklag</td>
<td>bklags</td>
<td>klogs</td>
<td>4 different forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a:</td>
<td>gtum</td>
<td>gtum</td>
<td>btums</td>
<td>thums</td>
<td>PRS=FUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b:</td>
<td>'khrol</td>
<td>dkrol</td>
<td>dkrol</td>
<td>khrol</td>
<td>PST=FUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c:</td>
<td>bgod</td>
<td>bgo</td>
<td>bgos</td>
<td>bgos</td>
<td>PST=IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a:</td>
<td>'khrid</td>
<td>'khrid</td>
<td>khrid</td>
<td>khrid</td>
<td>PRS=FUT &amp; PST=IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b:</td>
<td>gdod</td>
<td>gdad</td>
<td>gdad</td>
<td>gdod</td>
<td>PRS=IMP &amp; PST=FUT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c:</td>
<td>nyar</td>
<td>nyar</td>
<td>nyar</td>
<td>nyar</td>
<td>PRS=FUT=PST &amp; IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d:</td>
<td>'grub</td>
<td>'grub</td>
<td>grub</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>PRS=FUT &amp; PST; NO IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:</td>
<td>gon</td>
<td>gon</td>
<td>gon</td>
<td>gon</td>
<td>invariable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pronunciation of these forms would require a completely different classification – one which is, morphotactically, substantially weaker:

Dans la langue actuellement parlée au Tibet central, le nombre des formes employées a diminué et, en règle générale, on ne trouve plus que deux allomorphes voire une seule forme (Tournadre 1996: 179)

I.e., in Spoken Central Tibetan, there are many verbs with only one stem, a number of verbs having two or three stems (PRS, PST, IMP). Cf. (Shefts Chang & Chang 1981: 303ff.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 05</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>MT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>PST</td>
<td>IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'jib(s)</td>
<td>bzhibs</td>
<td>‘suck’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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08. Tibetan verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'gog</th>
<th>bkog</th>
<th>khog</th>
<th>'take away'</th>
<th>qoø</th>
<th>qöø</th>
<th>qöö</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(b)za</td>
<td>bzas</td>
<td>zo(s)</td>
<td>'eat'</td>
<td>sa</td>
<td>seč</td>
<td>soč</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>byed</td>
<td>byas</td>
<td>byos</td>
<td>'do'</td>
<td>cheč</td>
<td>chęč</td>
<td>chęč</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The phonological differences between these (two or three) forms, if there are still any, usually involve ablaut, aspiration, or tone. In Dege Tibetan (Kham), the following verb forms are found (Häsler 1999: 147ff.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 06</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Dege</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>PST</td>
<td>IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lta</td>
<td>btaas</td>
<td>los(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)za</td>
<td>bzas</td>
<td>zo(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'debs</td>
<td>btab</td>
<td>thob</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'br'</td>
<td>'brs'</td>
<td>'br'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the full list in Häsler’s contribution, the verb forms of Dege Tibetan do not always straightforwardly correlate with orthographic forms (cf. last example). Some dialects have retained the original verb prefixes in the spoken language of today. One of these dialects is Themchen Tibetan, an Amdo dialect; again, the forms are not always in full correlation with what would be expected from the spelling of Written Tibetan (ex. from Haller 2004: 73):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 07</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Themchen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>PST</td>
<td>IMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>bsad</td>
<td>sod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gtang</td>
<td>btang</td>
<td>gtong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bshig</td>
<td>bshigs</td>
<td>zhig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'bri</td>
<td>'bri'</td>
<td>'bri'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Balti Tibetan, a regular s-suffixation can account for many perfective forms: oŋ-et, oŋ-s-et 'come' (Biemeier 1985: 104f.). Thus, Tibetan does have a system of verb stems which seem to distinguish IPV, PFV, and IMP verb forms. Interestingly, a future stem is not documented in any dialect.

08.02.02. Aspectual meaning of the 'tense' forms

Every Tibetan verb occurs in one of four tenses. The tense of the verb is signaled by various more or less regular changes in its phonetic shape — for example, Nthub⁶⁷ "chops," btubs "chopped," btub "will chop," thubs "chop!" A verb may have a maximum of four such distinct shapes — for example, from the root TU "gather" we find Nthu/btus/btu/ thus, and from the root TSHAD "cut" we find gcod/bcad/gcad/chod. These four forms of the verb have been denominated, by the native grammarians, da-lta-ba "present," Ndasp-a "past," ma-ongs-pa "future," and skul-tshig "imperative." It is evident that a simple linear concept of tense — stretching from the past into the future — does not adequately account for the meanings of these four verb forms. (Beyer 1992: 261)

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⁶⁶ [qøø] and [qöø] are morphonological variants, [qøø] being an assimilation to the following vowel [i] (Shefts Chang & Chang 1981: 304).
⁶⁷ Beyer uses his own transliteration system with a diachronically motivated ‘N’ for certain initial ha chung which are usually transcribed as ‘(i.e., with an apostrophe).
08. Tibetan verbs

In Tibetan, the tense forms are thus called: da _ita ba_ 'present' (PRS), _ma_ 'ongs _pa_ 'not yet arrived' (FUT), _das _pa_ 'surpassed, passed away' (PST), and _skul _tshig_ 'imperative' (IMP); but they seem to refer primarily to aspectual concepts, if aspect is seen as 'situation-internal tense': situation as an unanalyzable whole is 'perfective', a situation in progress is 'imperfective' aspect (cf. Shets Chang & Chang 1981: 303). FUT being more problematic, the main distinction in Tibetan seems to be the dichotomy 'imperfective' (IPV=PRS) vs. 'perfective' (PFV=PST), with an additional imperative (IMP) or modal (MOD) form. If we have a look at indigenous grammatical resources, we find an aspectual description, cf. Situ Panchen:

 [...] cette action, si elle exprime le terme du procès (bya ba) définitivement atteint (byas zin), connote le passé (das pa); si elle exprime le procès dans son avenir ('gyur ba), le futur (ma 'ongs pa); si elle exprime le procès dans sa durée (bzhin pa), le présent (da _ita ba_). (Situ Panchen, in Durr 1950a: 82; transl. in Durr 1950a: 51)

Thus, the traditional and widespread rendering of the Tibetan terms as (English) 'tense' names is another typical example of the fallacies of translation of abstract (linguistic) conceptualizations. For 'avenir' ('future'), it would be as good to translate 'devenir' ('becoming'), which would give a different interpretation. The explanation involving the ideas 'définitivement atteint' ('achieved definitely', 'perfective') and 'durée' ('durative', 'progressive') point to aspectual meanings. Semantically, we may thus rename these verb forms as parts of an aspect system distinguishing perfective (PST or PFV), imperfective (PRS or IPV), and intention (FUT or INT). To sum up the discussion in Beyer 1992, Classical Tibetan distinguishes (1a) accomplished and (1b) unaccomplished facts, and (2) the potentiality between (2a) anticipated facts and (2b) facts expected to get accomplished (cf. Beyer 1992):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 08</th>
<th>unaccomplished</th>
<th>accomplished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fact</td>
<td>PRESENT (PRS)</td>
<td>PAST (PST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectation</td>
<td>FUTURE (FUT)</td>
<td>IMPERATIVE (IMP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This reads in aspectual values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 09</th>
<th>unaccomplished</th>
<th>accomplished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fact</td>
<td>IMPERFECTIVE (IPV)</td>
<td>PERFECTIVE (PFV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectation</td>
<td>IPV IRREALIS (FUT)</td>
<td>IMPERATIVE (IMP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are, however, some unresolved puzzles with respect to these four verb forms: First of all, it is clear that Classical Tibetan is a normative, artificial language and that the grammar is based on earlier non-Tibetan concepts – such as 'tense forms'. No Tibetan dialect has a 'future stem', i.e., all spoken variants distinguish only IPV, PFV and IMP. This holds true even for an older text, the _mi la ras pa'i rnam thar_, for which Haller 2004b states:

Der vorliegende Text kennt keinen gesonderten Futur-Stamm, wie er aus verschiedenen Beschreibungen des "klassischen" Tibetisch bekannt ist (vgl. Hahn 1971, 71). Zum Ausdruck des Futurums wird der Imperfektiv-Stamm verwendet. Es kommt aber vor, daß der

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88 There is no dialect which has a future stem; it is restricted to the written language, but even there future tense is often expressed by other means than these verb forms.

89 It has to be added, however, that the term 'tense' in early linguistics included aspectual values.

90 It should be mentioned, however, that one main contribution to Tibetan verb categories refutes the concept of 'aspect' and speaks about 'taxis', or 'relative time' (cf. Zeisler 1999–2004).
08. Tibetan verbs

Imperfektiv-Stamm ein- and desselben Verbs in zwei oder mehreren Schreibungen belegt ist, von denen eine nach den gängigen Wörterbüchern ein klassischer Futur-Stamm ist.
(Haller 2004b: 45)

Future stem formation is even more irregular than the IPV and PFV stem formation, and it is only attested for ‘classical’ texts and grammaticography. There is generally some uncertainty about the ‘correct’ spelling of verb forms, or, in other words, there seem to be competing written forms. If the use of FUT stem forms in the biography of Milarepa is equated to IPV stems, and since no dialect preserves anything which may derive from the classical FUT stem forms, we may assume that probably FUT is an artificial concept of Tibetan grammar introduced by the grammarians, in accordance with Sanskrit grammar. Therefore, existing or newly invented stem forms may have been brought into a theoretical system, without regard of their original usage.

Finally, IMP is not a tense form, but a modal category. As in many other languages, the Tibetan IMP forms are usually the shortest forms of the verbs; often, however, the Tibetan IMP involves an ablaut or aspiration, i.e., a derivative element. More interestingly, the IMP stem, both in Written Tibetan and in (some) dialects, has the meaning of ‘(somebody) cannot V’, ‘can (you) V?’, ‘if (you) cannot V ...’ (for Themchen, cf. Haller 2004: 73; 141, 84, 146, 162). Haller 2004 therefore uses the term “Modus-Stamm” (mode stem) instead of ‘IMP’. Often, IMP stems can be found in so-called conative expressions of the type ‘you try to V, but you cannot V’. This use will be analyzed later.

IPV and PFV stems can be distinguished in Central Tibetan in many cases, but are also often neutralized with respect to the written forms. This is due to the fact that the old prefixes of the verbs have been lost, often without leaving a (mor)phonological trace. In some cases, aspiration or ablaut indicate the stem change, cf. WT btang/btong which is LT [tan/ton]. Dialects which have retained the prefix system have up to three forms (PFV, IPV, and IMP), e.g. Themchen Tibetan (Haller 2004): here, the forms [çsol/ʃsal/sʰol] relate to WT gšod/bsad/sod. Therefore, all dialects of Tibetan have developed an analytical verb inflection expressing similar and further distinctions which will be described below.

08.02.03. AG- and PAT-oriented verb forms

Additionally, there is a further ancient morphological correlation between verbs whose function is summarized as such:

Les verbes causatifs consistent sur le fait que l’agent est la cause du procès tandis que les résultatifs consistent sur le résultat obtenu, sur l’état du patient. (Tournadre 1996: 199)

This dichotomy therefore distinguishes a causative (AG) and resultative (PAT) orientation (CAUS/RES), or describe a controllable and the respective non-controllable event (CTRL / NOCTRL, or c vs. nc) (cf. Bielmeier and many others). This distinction has been called ‘differ-entiativ/undifferentiativ’ by Kelzang Gyurme (1992), or ‘transitive/intransitive’ by others (e.g. Beyer 1992). Some authors called the distinction ‘active’ vs. ‘neutral’ (e.g., Csoma 1834 – Goldstein et al. 1991).

The terminological differences reflect different emphasis on grammatical concepts: Semantically, a verb can involve an AG and a PAT, and therefore be called ‘causative’ or AG-oriented, and an event described by this verb can be characterized as a ‘controlled action’, as
opposed to an 'uncontrolled event' which at the same time is oriented towards a PAT/ABS
and might be called 'resultative'. The term 'differentiative' stresses the causative relation of a
distinct AG and PAT. The notion of 'transitivity' is similar and refers to a syntactic scheme
expressing typically an AG-PAT relation, opposing agenthood and affected entity on a gra-
dual scale. This has, however, nothing to do with valence, although typical causative verbs
are more often bivalent than not.

All languages have lexical verbs which distinguish CAUS and RES forms, but Tibetan,
along with some languages has a morphological device for distinguishing these two types of
verb meaning (cf. Bielmeier 1998: 595). The fact of having a morphological device is an indicator
for the importance of the distinction in the grammar; before all, the distinction has to
be included in the verb paradigms at least for the classical language (cf. Tournadre 1996: 209).
It seems as if this is the oldest layer of Tibetan verb morphology and should therefore
be considered as diachronically interesting. Synchronically, however, the CAUS/RES distinc-
tion is also much less regular, even morphologically opaque (i.e., lexicalized) in central var-
ties, but preserved again in the marginal areas (West and East Tibetan).

Some 180 verb pairs show a systematic similarity in Written Tibetan (cf. Kelzang Gyur-
me 1992: 254); causativization is predominantly expressed with an s-prefix (cf. Li 1933, Biel-
meier 1988), resultative forms often have a 'a chung prefix. This causativization rule was still
productive until the 9th century in Central Tibetan (cf. Nishida 1994: 4). It is still present in
West Tibetan (e.g., Ladakhi, cf. Koshal 1979: 183), and it is partly productive in East (Amdo)
Tibetan (Bielmeier 2004: 7), together with IFV stem formation (Bielmeier 2004: 15); The dia-
lect of Gyarong (Amdo), for example, has s-, s-, sa- (Shefts Chang & Chang 1977: 234). It

In Modern Central Tibetan, there is no s-prefix, but about thirty verb pairs are still in use
in Lhasa Tibetan today (Tournadre 1996: 199); they are mainly distinguished by tone diffe-
ences or aspiration vs. non-aspiration of the onset (Tournadre 1996: 255) – thus not being
much more regular than, e.g., English 'rise' and 'raise', or German 'fallen' ('fall') and 'fallen'
('chop'). To exemplify, cf. the following few examples of PFV CAUS and PFV RES verbs in
Sherpa (Kelly 2004: 256), Lhasa (Tournadre 1996: 209f.), Dege (Häsl er 1999: 135), and
Themchen Tibetan (Hallor 2004), as compared to Written Tibetan (WT):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sherpa</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cê</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bcag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c/h.superʈorɛ/ʌrʐve.cʐp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bcʐd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chʐd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sʌroʃ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unɦasten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

91 The German and English examples are diachronically related as well (causativization with -jan for 'fallen').
Both CAUS and RES verbs can have 'tense' forms. The RES forms (chad, chag, zhig, etc.) can have up to two forms (IPV, PFV, usually no IMP, FUT, cf. Tournadre 1996: 179, 209, this statement being weakened in Zeisler 2004: 251). Thus, including CAUS and RES verb forms in one paradigm, one verb can usually have up to five different morphological verb forms (CAUS: IPV, PFV, IMP, RES: IPV, PFV) in the written language. In Central Spoken Tibetan, there are usually less forms, cf.:

The verbs causatif s ont dans la langue vernaculaire la plupart du temps une même forme pour les trois temps, une forme spécifique étant parfois réservée à l’impératif. Quant aux résultats, ils ne distinguent que rarement le présent-futur du passé et ne présentent donc qu’une forme unique. Ainsi, si l’on réunit autour d’une même racine les causatif s et les résultats, on obtient à l’oral en général deux ou trois formes. Le présent-futur est employé avec l’aspect inaccompli tandis que le passé est réservé à l’accompli [...]. (Tournadre 1996: 209)

To conclude, while we cannot be sure about the above-mentioned 'tense' forms (especially FUT tense) from traditional grammar, it can be concluded that Tibetan morphologically distinguishes IPV and PFV aspects, as well as IMP, and RES vs. CAUS forms. Here, it should be added that in Written Tibetan sometimes nouns represent the simplex (i.e., uninflected form) of this cluster of word forms.

08.02.04 Morphological regularities

In the following section, the systematicity of the verb inflection will be dealt with. Various analyses have been performed, mainly within the framework of diachronic Tibetan studies (cf. Durr 1950b, Coblin 1976, etc.). Beyer 1992 gives a comprehensive diachronic overview for these verb forms which is very much obscured by layers of subsequent morphological processes. As the main distinction, CAUS/RES (c/nc) verbs are identified:

The distinction between those verbs that form their past stem with a b- prefix – that is, transitive verbs – and those that do not form their past stem with a b- prefix – that is, intransitive verbs – is thus the primary distinction in verbal types. We may separate b-prefixing verbs from 0-prefixing verbs as the fundamental division of the verbal system. (Beyer 1992: 163)

RES verbs take ‘a chung’ (‘prenasalization’\(^{93}\)) and -s suffix for the past stem (Beyer 1992: 164). Therefore, the original (or most regular system) showed the following basic distinction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11</th>
<th>PRS</th>
<th>PST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>0-STEM</td>
<td>b-STEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES</td>
<td>‘-STEM</td>
<td>0-STEM-s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CAUS (CTRL) verbs, however, are more complicated to categorize:

[...] there are four different transitive paradigms, depending on how the present and future stems are formed. We can distinguish transitive verbs that signal the future stem

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\(^{92}\) Beyer’s terminology for CAUS/RES (c/nc) is ‘transitive/intransitive’.

\(^{93}\) The so-called ‘prenasalization’ (ha chung ’small it’) does not have a segmental phonetic value on its own (cf. Shefts Chang & Chang 1977).
with a b- prefix from those that signal the future stem with a G- prefix; we can distinguish transitive verbs that signal the present stem with a G- prefix from those that signal the present stem with prenasalization. All transitive verbs signal the past stem with a b- prefix and -s suffix. (Beyer 1992: 164)

Finally, classes 3 and 4 also involve an ablaut rule, namely \( a > o \), for the PRS form. And all 4 classes can have \( a > o \) ablaut and aspiration of the onset consonant. This results in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRS</th>
<th>PST</th>
<th>FUT</th>
<th>IMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 1</td>
<td>N__</td>
<td>b__ s</td>
<td>b__</td>
<td>_s, a &gt; o, ASP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 2</td>
<td>N__</td>
<td>b__ s</td>
<td>G__</td>
<td>_s, a &gt; o, ASP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 3</td>
<td>G__, a-o</td>
<td>b__ s</td>
<td>b__</td>
<td>_s, a &gt; o, ASP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 4</td>
<td>G__, a-o</td>
<td>b__ s</td>
<td>G__</td>
<td>_s, a &gt; o, ASP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further exceptions are these: 'a chung (N) can occur only before stops (‘g..., not ‘n...\(^{94}\)); g- can occur only when there are no other prefixed letters (‘g-sg...), and before velar and labial stops, it is dissimilated to d (d-g..., d-b...). The prefix b- is blocked before aspirated, labial and nasal onsets (*b-kh..., *b-m..., *b-n...) as well as before prefixes (*b-g-...). The suffix -s does not occur after n, r, l and d; this is an assimilation between the (old) allomorphs d and s, which surfaces in old spellings such as ...rd (and ...ld) and the application of a sandhi rule for final particles (‘gyur to instead of ‘gyur ro). Finally, apparent prefixes may be part of the stem. In other words, the system has become extremely opaque by historical phonological processes, so that the reconstruction is quite tricky.

The morphotactics and diachronic reconstruction of these verb forms has been treated in various publications including Durr 1950b, Coblin 1976, Beyer 1992, and others, but is still being discussed; the comparison of various dialects leads to new insights also for reconstruction (e.g., Bielmeier 2004). For this contribution, only the fact of finding some old morphology may be of some relevance for hypotheses on possible diachronic developments in grammar; the unsolved problems of the reconstruction of the morphotactic system of these forms cannot be solved here, so that we may simply follow Zeisler’s statement:

The riddles of Tibetan verbal morphology are far from being solved, and the discussion would only be confusing and does not contribute to the understanding of the functions of the verb stems. (Zeisler 2004: 251)

The only way to successfully analyze this system is to find spoken varieties which retain the system of verb prefixes. Such dialects can be found at the borders of the Tibetan speaking area (Bielmeier 1998, 2004). Thus, the loss of the verb prefixes is a Central phenomenon which did not spread until the limits of the linguistic area – there are still productive prefixes in West Tibetan (Balti, Ladakhi) and East Tibetan (Amdo). In order to illustrate this, cf. the following verbs (cf. Bielmeier 1998: 595):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>to be(come) warm (by itself)</th>
<th>to make warm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written</td>
<td>dro, dros</td>
<td>sro, bsros, (bsro), sros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balti</td>
<td>tros, tros</td>
<td>stro, stros, stros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themchen</td>
<td>ṭši, ṭši</td>
<td>ṭo, ṭši, ši</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{94}\) Beyer mentions exceptions with ‘l... which cannot be verified.
Some regularities in these dialects may be mentioned here: \(b\) is a PFV marker for CAUS verbs in Themchen, but also in West Tibetan; \(-s\) suffix is a PFV marker in CAUS verbs in West Tibetan. In the following, we find the \(b\)– ([p-]), the \('\) ([n-]), and the \(-s\) affixes (Bielmeier 1998: 598):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>[somebody] breaks</th>
<th>[something] breaks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written</td>
<td>gcog, bcag, (gcag), chog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chag, ’chag, chag, (chag)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balti</td>
<td>tʃa,q, tʃaχs, tʃoq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tʃʰa,q, tʃʰaq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themchen</td>
<td>cʈcɔχ, pʈcɔχ, ʈcʰɔχ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pʈcʰaχ, ʈcʰaχ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To conclude, dialect morphologies show that the system of Written Tibetan is similar to, but not directly the precursor of the dialect systems. It may be hypothesized that Written Tibetan forms were compiled in order to fill up a normative system of 4 tenses. This compilation of verb forms in fact never ‘succeeded’, since the various dictionaries often give deviant variants; there is in fact some degree of uncertainty in many forms, so that a reconstruction departing from these highly irregular forms does not seem to be useful. The main difference, CAUS/RES, however, has not received the same amount of attention in normative grammar – although, together with a perhaps greater number of similar verbs denoting similar events, it may be held responsible even for the different tense forms, especially the dialectally unattested FUT stems. In the light of this hypothesis, Thonmi’s rule for bdag/gzhan in relation to FUT, and the data from word formation with PRS/FUT stems begin to make more sense (see below).

### 08.02.05. Further (ir)regularities

It is said that the RES verbs can only have the perfective/imperfective distinction, i.e. there are no FUT and IMP forms (cf. Tournadre 1996: 179, 209) – thus, in terms of Beyer 1992, they are said to have no expectation aspect (see below). On the other hand, this observation does not hold true for all verbs of this type – some do have IMP (and FUT) forms (in the written language) (Zeisler 2004: 251). At least ‘usually’, only CAUS verbs can have up to 4 verb forms, but they show systematic similarities between IPV/FUT and PFV/IMP; PFV and IMP have typically an \(-s\) suffix, while IPV and FUT usually do not; this leads to the hypothesis that PFV and IMP forms are derived separately from IPV and FUT forms. There are additional regularities: IPV and FUT take the NEG \(m\i\), PFV and IMP take \(m\) (cf. Beyer 1992: 261f.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fact</th>
<th>Verb class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>unaccomplished</td>
<td>IPV Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplished</td>
<td>IMP Imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verb class</td>
<td>all verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If this rule were correct, it could be explained in terms of possible event schemes: A goal oriented (∗resultative) verb usually does not construe expectations or intentions of an agent. However, these observations on CAUS and RESULT verbs may be meaningless in the modern varieties, or they may at least be overthrown in single cases. For the classical (or the old) language, however, it is possibly meaningful to combine the CAUS and RESULT forms in one paradigm, cf. two examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variety</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>FUT</th>
<th>PFV</th>
<th>IMP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grub</td>
<td>grub</td>
<td>’grub</td>
<td>(’grub)</td>
<td>grub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sgrub</td>
<td>bsgrub</td>
<td>bsgrub</td>
<td>sgrubs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRANSLATION**

[projects which are] realize[d]

[somebody] realizes [something]
08. Tibetan verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gyur</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>FUT</th>
<th>PFV</th>
<th>IMP</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2b:</td>
<td>sgyur</td>
<td>sgyur</td>
<td>bsgyur</td>
<td>bsgyur</td>
<td>translate, change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d:</td>
<td>'gyur</td>
<td>'gyur</td>
<td>gyur</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>change[d], become, got</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the system of verb inflection is thus only weakly represented in the phonology of the spoken varieties in Central Tibet, it seems to be more complicated than exposed so far in Classical Tibetan. There are sometimes many more forms of a verb, e.g.:

Table 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>skum</th>
<th>bskum</th>
<th>bskums</th>
<th>skums</th>
<th>contract, draw in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'khum</td>
<td>('khum)</td>
<td>('khums)</td>
<td></td>
<td>shrink, be reduced, restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'gum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bend, curve, make crooked (Jäschke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'gums</td>
<td>dgum</td>
<td>bkums</td>
<td>khum(s)</td>
<td>kill, slaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'gum</td>
<td>'gum</td>
<td>gum, 'gums</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>to die (eleg.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not clear how the language could acquire such a variety of forms – perhaps it is a reflection of dialectal diversity which has entered the written language at different times or different places. There may have also been diverse normative changes in grammaticography, hypercorrections of authors, mistakes and misunderstandings of the theoretical models. Bielmeier (2004: 6) points out that both the Tibetan grammar, basing itself on the Sanskrit example, and Western analyses, referring to an assumedly homogeneous historical layer from which the known forms have derived, cannot explain these forms. Rather, the written or classical language is derived from a non-central dialect (an Eastern dialect, according to Shafer 1951:1020, cf. Bielmeier 2004: 7). To sum up, for the CAUS/RES distinction, we can find (a) morphological conversion (i.e., neutral verbs), (b) phonotactically unrelated verb pairs (i.e., suppletive pairs), and (c) a certain number of verbs showing the above-mentioned morphotactic correspondences (if not ‘rules’).

Suppletive patterns (and verbs with more distant similarities) are also a frequent class of verbs, cf. (cf. Zeisler 2004: 253; ex. cf. Losang Thonden 1984: 224f):

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>causative, control</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>resultative, no-control</th>
<th>verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ha ba</td>
<td>to watch</td>
<td>mthong ba</td>
<td>to see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nyan pa</td>
<td>to listen</td>
<td>go ba</td>
<td>to hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dbral ba</td>
<td>to tear</td>
<td>ral ba</td>
<td>to get torn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sreg pa</td>
<td>to burn</td>
<td>'tshig pa</td>
<td>to get burned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bsam blo gtong ba</td>
<td>to think</td>
<td>bsam blo 'khor ba</td>
<td>to be thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yar rgyas gtong ba</td>
<td>to improve</td>
<td>yar rgyas 'gro ba</td>
<td>to get improved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even these suppletive pairs as listed in the literature seem to contain some non-suppletive entries, cf.:

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>causative</th>
<th>resultative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dbral [ɾt]</td>
<td>tear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ral [ɾt]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inflectional system described above is morphologically opaque, but nonetheless still existent and relevant in the grammar of the spoken varieties. First of all, many verbs do have phonetically different forms distinguishing causative and resultative forms – all verbs can be considered to lexically belong to one of these two classes; secondly, the AUX system (see below) carries out distinctions related to this parameter of CAUS/RES or c/nc (control), such as volition; finally, verbal morphology even plays a role in word formation, where com-
pounds can be built from IPV or PFV verb forms, respectively, with meaning differences derived from the orientation of these verb forms. Following the many earlier approaches to analyze the system of Tibetan verb forms, the dialectological and diachronic comparison of verb forms led Bielmeier (2004: 8ff.) to offer a different approach: Apart from the regular formation of causative verb forms from resultative verbs or nouns (with - and/or -s), Bielmeier describes verbs which can be traced back to suppletive origins, i.e., involving various verbs, which sometimes were already formally similar, although they were now reassembled paradigmatically in independence from earlier relations.

The basic principle is that certain verb paradigms with stem alternation in Written Tibetan and in Themchen consist of originally two separate but semantically close verbs, which still exist as separate verbs in other varieties of Tibetan. Sometimes, the verbs are etymologically related, and sometimes the suppletive present or imperfective stem is based on the etymologically corresponding nc-verb. (Bielmeier 2004: 8)

I.e., the basic verb form is the PFV; the IPV stem is often derived from the corresponding RES (nc) verb in WT or in various dialects. In other cases, the usage of suppletive verb stems in WT show sometimes different semantic meanings for the suppletive IPV stem which relates to the original verbs involved. E.g., the verb WT ‘dren, drangs has the meanings ‘to draw, pull’ and ‘to serve (food), invite’. In Old Tibetan, Bielmeier shows the use of ‘dren, ‘drend ‘to invite’ (in a Dunhuang ms.), but drang, drangs ‘to lead’ (in the Zhol inscriptions). The dialects are shown to have developed independently of the WT paradigm. To sum up, the Tibetan varieties “integrate etymologically related and semantically close ‘new’ present or imperfective stems into the verb paradigm” (Bielmeier 2004: 9f.). This state of the art leads to an important observation about the ‘future’ stems which cannot be found in any dialect:

And even in Written Tibetan, traces of the older separate usage can be found in some cases. The present stem is to be considered suppletive and the future stem may represent the old present stem. (Bielmeier 2004: 9)

Although the formal patterns for the CAUS/RES distinction are highly opaque and involve many suppletive forms and only 180 (WT) to 30 (LT) paradigmatic forms, it is a very basic grammatical concept in Tibetan grammar. The paradigmatic diversity and the changes described in Bielmeier 2004 point out that the semantic concept seems to survive since long diachronic developments which render the system highly unsystematic from a morphological viewpoint. The difference between CAUS and RES verb forms is so prominent that many examples involving both forms in one utterance are found in textbooks and in grammars, e.g., in so-called ‘conative’ expressions (and some other instances). These forms will be discussed later.

08.02.06. Verb stems in word formation

Deverbal compounds in Written Tibetan involve inflected verb forms, and this has interesting consequences; we find, for example, within the framework of the 'twelve interdependent links', a Buddhist topic, the following explanation of a translation:

The causes of existence (‘grub-byed-kyi yan lag, drub-j’e-kyi yăn-lag; “grub” is the future tense of the verb "to try to obtain") (Dhargyey 1974: 100)
First of all, 'grub' is a resultative verb form for unaccomplished aspect. It is said that resultative verbs don't have future forms; on the other hand, it is said that in these casesPRS (IPV) and FUT (INT) stems are 'equal' (i.e., these verb forms do not distinguish factual (= present) and non-factual (= 'future') aspect). Thus, one can agree to find here a FUT form ('future tense'; the translation 'try to...'; however, is remarkable, since it implies an intentional aspect and not 'future'). Compounds based on the causative form of this verb, e.g. rigs pa'i sgrub byed 'logical proof', or lung gi sgrub byed 'scriptural proof', translates literally as 'action [of] attainment [by logic/scripture]'. The compound 'grub byed, however, literally translates as 'action [of] attainment'; in fact, it is an abbreviated compound:\footnote{It is interesting for theoretical morphology that 'clipping' is a regular morphological technique in Tibetan.}

\textbf{(01)} \begin{align*}
\text{yang sr} & \quad \text{name of person} \\
\text{byed} & \quad \text{IPV} \\
\text{rnam} & \quad \text{GEN} \\
\text{shes} & \quad \text{IPV} \\
\text{k} & \quad \text{GEN} \\
\text{yan} & \quad \text{link} \\
\text{lag} & \quad \text{link}
\end{align*}

\begin{flushleft}
\text{link of consciousness that establishes a rebirth}
\end{flushleft}

What is important here is the fact that Dhargyey points to the difficulty of translating compounds derived from accomplished and unaccomplished forms. This is even more crucial with the heads of compounds, where 'grub bya (with INT bya for IPV byed) would lit mean 'object of attainment', etc. The function of IPV and INT stems can be seen very clearly in examples with byed, cf.

\textbf{(02)} \begin{align*}
\text{jigs} & \quad \text{IPV} \\
\text{byed} & \quad \text{IPV} \\
\text{bsgom} & \quad \text{INT} \\
\text{bya} & \quad \text{IPV} \\
\text{bya} & \quad \text{IPV}
\end{align*}

\begin{flushleft}
\text{terror-make:IPV} \\
\text{meditation-make:INT}
\end{flushleft}

The first compound, 'jigs byed, contains the IPV stem; it is oriented towards the agent of the doing and therefore literally means [somebody who] terrifies', an epithet for 'Bhairava, the destroyer'. The second compound, bsgom bya, is formed from the INT stem and is therefore oriented towards the patient of the action; this is why it literally means [something which is] meditated [on]; 'object of meditation'. This understanding is even found in the meaning of the simplex forms byed pa (po) and bya ba which mean 'agent' and 'to be done' (action'), respectively. Similarly, dbul po is a 'poor (person)', but 'bul pa is 'that which is given'. In this example, however, dbul relates to an EXP, not to an agent of the giving. Similarly, sometimes the distinction is neutralized: 'khur pa 'one who carries' and 'khur po 'that which is carried' depend solely on the (weak) semantics of the nominalizer particles pa and po and are therefore probably only 'conventional' (cf. byed pa po 'doer', 'agent'). In a further example given by Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 271), the nominalized simplex forms ston 'show', IPV/IMP and bstan PFV/FUT differentiate person vs. result orientation; IPV is oriented towards the person, FUT is oriented towards the result:

\textbf{(03)} \begin{align*}
\text{ston pa} & \quad \text{sangs rgyas} \\
\text{t} & \quad \text{IPV-NS} \\
\text{t} & \quad \text{Buddha} \\
\text{bs} & \quad \text{GEN} \\
\text{stan pa} & \quad \text{sangs rgyas ki} \\
\text{t} & \quad \text{FUT-NS} \\
\text{t} & \quad \text{Buddha} \\
\text{The teacher} & \quad \text{Buddha} \\
\text{The} & \quad \text{teachings of the Buddha}
\end{align*}

Cf. the following passage from the Bodhisattvacharyāvatara (07.037) involving the nominalized inflected verb forms ston ('that which is showing'), bstan ('that which is shown'), and bya ('that which is done'):
This use of the verb inflection is not entirely clear from the verbal meaning alone and is rather a diachronic feature: There are no modern varieties of Tibetan which distinguish a FUT from the IPV stem. This feature has to do with the indigenous Tibetan grammatical concept of *bdag* vs. *gzhan*, however.

In the traditional grammar of Modern Tibetan of Kelzang Gyrme (1992: 268), this distinction is elaborated also for the modern language, but mainly with another type of examples where specific particles intervene; in the example below, the particles *sa* 'place', and *byed* 'do' have the function to indicate whether the 'house' is the location of the action or not. In order to perform this distinction, different verb forms have to be used in the compound:

(05a) *gyon gos bku* *kang pa*

*clothes* *wash* *house*

*(laundry; house where clothes are washed)*

(05b) *sa yom 'gog byed kyi khang pa*

*earth-quake* *stop* *house*

*(anti-seismic house; house which brings earth-quakes to stop)*

This example, however, can be explained differently. The particles *sa* and *[tse]* (cf. Kyirong [chê], Balti *chas*, Shigatse [shie, jie]) are relativizers (Huber 2003: 10f.). The orthographic form *byed* is questionable. *[tse]* is described as 'patient-oriented' with a 'perspective' meaning, *sa* with IPV STEM is LOC-, but also typically PAT-oriented (Bielmeier, pers. comm.). In Shigatse Tibetan, it is reported also as INS-oriented (Haller 1994: 114f.). In short, this reference seems to be misleading and triggered by the need of traditional grammar to always build on traditional concepts. Kelzang Gyrme’s combining of a traditional feature with modern word formation (or syntax?) leads to further confusion. But in Classical or Written Tibetan, we find some evidence for a different orientation of IPV and FUT, and of PFV and IPV stems.

### 08.03. Verb classes

The fundamental morphological and lexical distinction of CAUS/RES verbs in Tibetan has a direct effect on case marking patterns. In order to exemplify the distinction, consider the following two verb forms *bskor* and *'khor* (Tournadre 1996: 201):

(06a) *rmo lags kyi* *ma ni bskor pa red/

*grandmother ERG* *man* *turn-NS-DISJ*

*The grandmother turned the prayer wheel.*

(06b) *ma ni 'khor bsdad bzha/

*man* *'khor* *turn-continue-INFER*

*The prayer wheel continued to turn around.*

The distinction of causative/resultative verb forms is not mentioned in the traditional verb listings, since those verb forms are considered lexemes on their own, comparable to suppletive verb pairs such as *ita* 'look' and *mthong* 'see'. As mentioned above, causative and resultative verbs are also called control and non-control verbs (*c/nc*, Bielmeier, Zeisler 2004: 250f.), according to the Tibetan grammatical terms *rang dbang* can *gyi bya tshig* 'self-con-
trolled verbs' and gzhan dbang can gyi bya tshig 'other-controlled verbs' (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 250ff.). Similarly, 'volition' is a terminology which has been used (DeLancey 1990, Haller), Kelzang Gyurme (1992) introduces the Tibetan concept tha dad pa (translated as 'differentiative'), while the translators' commentary in Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 250ff.) mentions and prefers the term 'volition' over 'control', and adds the causative/resultative distinction (p. 254) with the same verb forms – mentioning that "ca. 80%" of the 'causative' verbs are both 'volitional' and 'differentiative'. Similarly, Tournadre (1996: 208) states that most resultative verbs are nonvolitional. This seems to indicate that the function of this distinction may be plurifunctional, involving the following distinctions: controllability of the action/event, volition or intention of the agent, and orientation of the verb towards an agent or a patient (causative/resultative). It may also be an indicator for a situation which is more complex than a simple conceptual dichotomy.

In indigenous Tibetan grammaticography, a semantic distinction is made which covers a similar distinction as found in the CAUS/RES distinction: the one between 'differentiative' and 'undifferentiative' verbs (bya tshig tha dad pa and bya tshig tha mi dad pa, cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 245ff.). The name of this category ('differentiativity') is derived from the fact (stated by Situ) that a 'differentiative' verb involves an AG which is distinct [from the PAT]; differentiativity therefore triggers ERG use. In other words, the concept describes a kind of 'transitive' relation between AG and PAT. It may be considered as a semantic characterisation including CAUS/RES pairs and suppletive verb pairs, as well as single verbs belonging to only one of the two classes (cf. also Zeiser 2004: 253). For Bielemier and others, the main verbal distinction is termed c/nc (controllable/not controllable events). It would be good to find that c verbs trigger ERG use. But the following scheme is given in various empirical works:

Table 20

| cEA   | controllable actions which require (allow) ERG marking |
| cA    | controllable events which do not trigger ERG marking |
| ncA   | noncontrollable events and states which do not cooccur with ERG marking |
| ncEA  | noncontrollable events which allow ERG marking |

In other words, controllability is not the trigger of ERG, although most ERG applications occur with CTRL verbs: cEA and ncA are numerous classes, ncEA and cA are smaller classes.\(^6\) For Zeiser, the main distinction seems to be whether the AG has control over the intended event (Zeiser 2004: 251). Therefore, Zeiser (2004: 251) calls these two verb classes 'accidental event verbs' and 'controlled action verbs', respectively, and gives a more detailed semantic subclassification:

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accidental event verbs:</th>
<th>controlled action verbs:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>state (gdung/gdungs 'desire, love')</td>
<td>position (sod/bgad 'sit, stay, dwell, live')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>process ('dzag/gzags/gzag 'drip, flow')</td>
<td>activity (byed/hasa/bysa 'do')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development ('bri/bri 'diminish')</td>
<td>achievement (gsod/bsgad/gsod 'kill')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transition (inchoative) ('gyur/gyur 'become, turn into')</td>
<td>accomplishment (rtsig/brtsigs/brtsig 'rtsig 'build (up)')</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distinction between actions, events/processes and states is a fundamental semantic distinction of possible verb meanings. Actions can be viewed as 'controlled changing situations',

\(^6\) It should be mentioned that other case patterns are also observed, e.g. DAT-ABS, ABS-ABS, ABS-DAT, ERG-DAT, and of course trivalent patterns (ERG-DAT-ABS).
events as 'uncontrolled changing situations', and states as 'static situations'. This distinction surely is the basis for all verb classifications, or at least can account for 'exceptions' in the application of formal patterns. Thus, f.ex., not all German bivalent patterns can be passivated, because not all bivalent patterns are transitive, cf. the verb 'kosten' ('cost'). On the other hand, it can be expected that some (non-prototypical) verbs are interpreted differently in different languages; e.g., 'to dwell' is not a clear universal candidate for 'controlled action'. Indeed, Chang & Chang (1980: 22) give contrasting examples where 'dwell' in Lhasa Tibetan can be construed with ABS or ERG, respectively, according to circumstances, ABS being the unmarked pattern. Provided that control is expressed by the ERG, then, although *sdod* has an *s*-prefix, it often does not take ERG and is therefore probably not seen as controlled action. Similarly, the 'neutral' (*m*-prefixed) verb *mjal* can be seen as a volitional or nonvolitional action (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 250) (which is expressed by AUX *yin* or *byung*, respectively).

Verb classification in Tibetan is thus entirely semantic, and therefore, case marking directly reacts to verb semantics rather than to syntactic patterns. The fact that Tibetan can (could) change exactly this semantic characteristic, the orientation of the verb, makes it possible for the language to have different patterns with one verb, i.e., one part of case marking is performed on the verb.

At this point, it may be useful to come back on a detailed verb classification, e.g., the transitivity scale of Tsunoda 1985; Tibetan takes ERG with strongly transitive verbs (kill, break, bend; hit shoot, kick, eat); it also takes ERG with perception verbs (look, listen), even if they are un-volitional (see, hear); similarly pursuit (search, wait) and knowledge verbs (know, understand, remember, forget) take ERG. Feeling, relationship, ability verbs do not take ERG. This would therefore be a syntactic ERG covering almost all bivalent settings. But this is not the case. First of all, ERG marking is fluid, i.e., ERG can be omitted. Secondly, the choice of ERG or ABS depends on aspect (split ERG). Thirdly, verbs can switch between ERG and ABS patterns (CAUS/RES distinction). Fourthly, ERG-DAT and ABS-DAT patterns have to be considered as well. In short, the listing of Tsunoda focusses on only one problem of case marking, the required degree of transitivity. This does not lead very far for Tibetan. To begin with, an action verb with high transitivity, especially when in perfective aspect, can have an ERG-marked agentive participant:

(07)  khos las ka byas song/
      3:ERG work de:PFV-PFV:GEN

He did the work. (Denwood 1999: 194)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. ACTION VERBS</th>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>AUX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1. telic</td>
<td>kill, break, bend</td>
<td>ERG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. non-telic</td>
<td>hit, shoot, kick, eat</td>
<td>ERG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Telic (result-oriented) verbs, verbs which involve an accomplishment or achievement, both lexically and aspectually, are the most likely candidates for allowing an agent role. Some authors claim, however, that ERG can be omitted in these cases. These verbs, however, are typical 'differentiative' verbs with CAUS/RES forms.

The next class of verbs on a scale of decreasing transitivity are perception verbs (sensory experience, i.e. watch/see, listen/hear, feel, smell, think, ...); conceptually, they do no involve an agent, but an experciencer who is either volitional ('watch') or unvolitional ('see'). If a dis-
tinction on the basis of volition is meaningful, formally, these verb pairs are usually supple-
tive (like English ‘listen’ and ‘hear’) in Tibetan. These verbs trigger ERG, but nonvolitional
verbs cannot take the speaker-oriented ‘conjunct’ CONJ auxiliaries:

(08a) ngas bsod nams ltu gi yod/
      1:ERG sóönam watch-VC-CONJ
      I am watching Sönam. (differentiative action)

(08b) ngas bsod nams thong gi ‘dug’/
      1:ERG sóönam see-VC-DISJ
      I am seeing Sönam. (affective verb)

2. PERCEPTION VERBS

2.1. patient more attained: see, hear, find ERG DISJ

2.2. patient less attained: listen, look ERG CONJ

Pursuit verbs (‘wait’, ‘search’, ‘lose’) also can trigger ERG. A distinction on the basis of voli-
tion is not meaningful with such verbs, but the same verb could possibly be understood as a
volitional or unvolitional event, with different ‘natural’ construals (‘find accidentally’, but
‘search’ with volition).

The following example from Themchen Tibetan has an ERG-DAT pattern (Haller 2004:
112, ex. 438):

(09) rta mqrin gyis bde skyid la sgug go gi/
      ṭanḍẓan-ylo bdeṣṭol-rollo ṭgoc-koko
      Tamdrin-ERG Dekyi-DAT wait-IPFV-NVOL:EVID
      Tamdrin is waiting for Dekyi.

3. PURSUIT VERBS

search, wait, await ERG DISJ

Similarly, knowledge verbs take ERG, but are more probably unvolitional. Again, the use
of auxiliaries is restricted to disjunct (DISJ) forms, cf. (Losang Thondon 1984: 224):

(10) ... ngas bsam gyt ‘dug’/
      ... 1:ERG think-VC-EX:DISJ
      I am thinking ... (‘natural flow of thoughts’) (affective verb)

Constructions with light verbs (‘do’, etc.), however, seem to change the verb class to ‘highly
transitive’. These formations complicate the semantic scheme, of course; cf. (Losang Thonden
1984: 224):

(11) ngas ‘di bsam blo gtong gi yod/
      1:ERG DEF thought-make:CAUS-VC-EX:CONJ
      I am having this thought. (action)

On the other hand, examples without ERG marking can be found as well, and for first
person subjects, a different construction with a DAT is often used, cf. (Lhasa speaker, field
notes):

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97 The relation between ‘listen’ and ‘hear’ is also not the same as between ‘somebody breaks’ vs. ‘something
breaks’; both ‘hear’ and ‘listen’ do not change their valence, the change being only the volition, not absence
of the main participant role.
Tibetan verbs

(12a)  byang chub sms dpa’  rtag par  bsam blo  yag po  btang gi ’dug/
Bodhisattvas always have positive thoughts.

(12b)  nga’i  bsam pa la  ’di  dpe  yag po  ’dug  bsam gyi yod/
I think that this is very good.

The pattern ERG + DISJ is frequent with a number of verbs which inherently describe unvol-itional events, cf., e.g. (ex. from Losang Thonden 1984: 226):

Table 22
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dran pa</td>
<td>remember (perception verb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nor ba</td>
<td>make a mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bo ba</td>
<td>spill (something)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’khyog pa</td>
<td>be able to carry (something)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge verbs, being inherently unvolitional, follow the same pattern (ERG + DISJ):

4. KNOWLEDGE VERBS
   know, understand, remember, ERG DISJ forget

Finally, all other classes, i.e., verbs of feeling, relationship (affective verbs), ability do not trigger ERG use, cf.:

(13)  nga  ’di  dga’i ’dug/  nga  sms  pham-gyi ’dug/
      1  DEM  like-VC-EX:DISJ  1  mind  disappointed-VC-DISJ
I like this.  I am disappointed.
      nga  so  na  gi ’dug/
      1  tooth  sick-VC-DISJ
I have tooth-ache.

In the light of Tsunoda’s 1985 proposal, Tibetan ERG is used like a syntactic ERG for most bivalent verbs expressing actions/events. On the other hand, it has become clear that the verb class only specifies that in some cases, volition is a choice, in others, it is not: Volitional verbs can be understood unvolitionally, which is expressed by the choice of the AUX, if possible, another verb stem (CAUS/RES), and possibly word order; cf. (ex. from Losang Thonden 1984: 226; cf. also Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 255f., and others):

(14)  de  ngas  chag song/
      DEF  1:ERG broken-PFV-DISJ  1:ERG cup  DEF  break-NS-CONJ
I broke it (by accident).  I broke the cup (deliberately).

With a telic action verb (’break’), the (Central Tibetan) ERG applies even in an unvolitional context. In other cases, the difference between the CAUS and RES form also coincides with the difference of ERG and ABS use; in the following examples, light verbs (gtong, ’gro) account for the classification as CAUS or RES verb, respectively:

(15a)  khyed rang gis  bod skad  yar rgyas gton  dgos ’dug/
      2:ERG  Tibetan  improve-CAUS  must-EX:DISJ
You need to improve your Tibetan!
      khyed rang gi  bod skad  yar rgyas ’gro  gi ’dug/
      2:GEN  Tibetan  improve-RESULT  VC-EX:DISJ
Your Tibetan is improving (Losang Thonden 1984: 229)
Mover verbs are another intermediary category: They describe events which can classify as a kind of action, i.e., an event involving an AG without a PAT, but a LOC instead. Although mover verbs usually do not take ERG, volition seems to trigger ERG use – but only in PFV contexts (cf. Chang & Chang 1980). PFV aspect is by itself a telic event with a certain result. Therefore, an AG is possible.

To sum up, ERG can be applied with a wide variety of verbs (or verb classes). Strongly transitive verbs (CAUS verbs) can take ERG even without regard to volition, if the RES verb form allows an AG role. Perception verbs behave in a similar way, and both classes make distinctions of volition in the AUX. Weakly transitive verbs take ERG, but can usually not be construed as volitional events. Affective verbs and verbs denoting states take ABS, if bivalent, they take two ABS. These facts lead to the conclusion that case marking and AUX forms react differently to different verb classes, although the case marking patterns themselves are simply 'ergative'. The main problems are to be found somewhere else, in the non-obligatoriness of constituents on the sentence level, and the fluid marking of ERG. Thus, a clear parameter of what is transitive and what is not cannot be found. Therefore, there are also no reflexive pronouns and no passive or antipassive operation – the choice of a RES form avoids the need for such devices. Such systems have been termed 'pseudotransitivity' (Drossard) or 'fundamental intransitivity' (Nichols). The facultative omission of nominal constituents follows certain regularities, however. ABS marked constituents are the least likely to be omitted. This may be interpreted as a hint to the relative closeness of the ABS role to the verb. The next important participant is the AG, followed by the other possible participants (Nichols).

08.04. Analytical TAM formation in Written Tibetan

In Classical Tibetan, clauses end in an inflected full verb plus a ‘final particle’ (FIN) ‘-o (in full assimilation), e.g., ... bcag go [somebody] broke ...'; ... ces smras so [somebody] said so’. However, the verb inflection of Classical Tibetan became unproductive at some point, so that periphrastic constructions came into play. AUX constructions can be observed already in earlier texts for verbs which have no inflectional forms; in later styles of Written Tibetan, these AUX constructions are applied to all kinds of verbs, thereby reassigning both TAM marking and the distinction between causative and resultative verbs: CAUS verbs combine mainly with the inflectional forms of byed ‘make, do’ in order to form the four TAM forms (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 208ff.); RES verbs often combine with the TAM forms of ‘gyur ‘become’ (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 210ff.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 23</th>
<th>PRES</th>
<th>FUT</th>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>byed</td>
<td>bya</td>
<td>byas or zin</td>
<td>make, do</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bzhin</td>
<td>‘gyur</td>
<td>gyur</td>
<td>change[d], become, got</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within this pattern, an alternative form zin and a suppletive form bzhin exist as well. Therefore, the three tenses are formed as follows:

(16) bsgrubs par byas [somebody] has realized
    sgrub par byed  [somebody] realizes
    bsgrubs par bya  [somebody] will realize
"bar bar gyur" [something] has burnt
"bar bzhin" [something] is burning
"bar bar 'gyur" [something] will burn

But with the advent of analytical forms, the grammar seems to profit from a new possibility for verb formation: Some differentiative (CAUS, CTRL) verbs can be combined with 'gyur'; in this case, the meaning of the verb changes towards an undifferentiative (RES, NOCTRL) meaning; it can be observed from the translations, that AG and PAT are no longer distinct, as it has been stated for the definition of differentiativity (ex. from Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 211, transl. as 'se blocker'):

(17) bkag98 bar gyur [something] has blocked [itself]
    'gog bzhin [something] is blocking [itself]
    'gog bar 'gyur [something] will block [itself]

Similarly, byed can have either the above-mentioned tense (?) meaning or a causativizing function with RES verbs (cf. Hahn 1994: 168).

(18) zhi bar byed [somebody] makes [something] peaceful = pacifies
    thar par byed [somebody] makes [somebody] free = frees

According to Hahn (1994: 163ff.), however, the above-mentioned functions of these analytical verb forms is listed only among other AUX forms. To begin with, the use of 'gyur/gyur is described more variedly and less systematically in its use for tense marking; e.g., 'gyur can occur also with IPV and IMP stems; in some cases, it has an optative function; finally, 'gyur is used as the standard translation of Sanskrit passives. bzhin is described as a 'durative' form in Hahn (1994: 170). zin, together with tshar ('be finished') represent perfectivity (Hahn 1994: 170), similar to 'grab and rdzogs ('be finished'). In short, the above-mentioned 'tense formation' table seems to be a normative rendering of the use of some of the auxiliary verbs in order to construe a systematic system. The AUX verbs according to Hahn form a number of semantically derived aspectual meanings.

The enumeration of analytical forms must therefore be completed with a number of further AUX forms which can also interact with full verbs (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 212, Hahn 1994: 161ff.). A number of additional forms are mainly recruited from 'do' verbs (e.g., gnang, bgyid, mdzad); in few cases, some even more semantic needs are served, such as with byung 'get', myong 'experience', song 'gone'; These forms will play a role in later stages of the grammar (see below).99 The following example with two bgyi (IPV bgyid, PFV bgyis, FUT bgyi, IMP gyis) is taken from the Bodhisattvacaryavatara (byang chub sms dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa) of Arya Shantideva (zhi ba lHa):

(19) rgyal dang da sras rnam la bdag gis ni/ bdag gi lus kun
    winner SOC now son-PL-ALL 1-ERG TOP 1-GEN body all
    gtan du dbul bar bgyi/ sms dpa' mchog rnam
    permanent-ILL offer-NS:ILL do:FUT:HON bodhisattva precious PL

There seems to be a blending of two verb paradigms in Kelzang Gyurme's example, cf. IPV 'gogs PFV bkag FUT dzog IMP khoq 'hinder'; IPV 'gog PFV bkog FUT dzog IMP khoq 'take away' Another dictionary has PFV 'gags for 'gog.

These forms are found mostly in the spoken varieties (cf. Hahn 1994: 171).
In many instances, however, the analytical forms are not used in written texts. First of all, sentences usually end with case (and other) particles, a technique for joining sentences (like ‘subordination’, clause linking); the analytical marking of aspect thus only occurs at the end of longer pieces of text. In generic statements about ‘facts’, however, the only possible aspect is – ‘general statement’. The analytical imperative (of differentiative verbs) is formed with cīg (and its other morphological forms): zo zḥig ‘eat’! sgrubs zḥig ‘realize’ shod cīg ‘speak’!, for the verbs za, sgrub, and bṣhad, respectively. A further widespread particle is shog (IMP of gshhegs ‘come’) which appears in combination with par, e.g. gyur bar shog ‘may become’, similar to the above-mentioned paradigm. Although undifferentiative (RES, NO-CTRL) verbs do not have an IMP form in the classical verb inflection, analytical IMP forms can be used with them (cf. Hahn 1994: 171f.). They are used for wishes concerning non-controlled actions (opitative); consider the following example with a (IPV/INT) RES verb form gṛub [sth.] is achieved [by itself] and two ERG/INS markers (for the AG and the INS, respectively) (refuge & bodhicitta prayer):

To the Buṣṭhas, the Dharma(s), and the precious ones of the assembly, until enlightenment, I go for refuge: through the merits of the practice of giving etc., for the benefit of [all] beings, may Buddhahood be achieved by me!

The ERG should not occur with RES verb forms. Hence, it may perhaps be interpreted as relating to sbyin (‘I give’: nominalized in English: ‘my giving’); if it relates to gṛub, the possibility of emphatic use of ERG with IMP might also be considered. In the following passage, the CAUS (differentiative) verb form implies that the speaker, after having achieved the prerequisites, will perform the action (from a dedication of merit prayer):

Through this merit, when omniscience has been achieved, after having conquered the enemies [= disturbing emotions], may [I] liberate the beings from the ocean of existence [= samsara] which is disturbed by the waves of birth, old age, sickness, and death.
In this example, IMP cig applies to an RES verb (wish for bodhicitta):

(22a) byang chub sms ni rin po che/ ma skye ba rnams skye gyur cig/

skyes pa nyams pa med par yang/ gong nas gong du
      born:PFV NS          diminish  NEG:NS:ILL-CONC  more:and:more

'phel bar shog/
      increase:NS:ILL-IMP

May the precious bodhi mind, not yet born, arise and grow.
May that born have no decline, but increase forever more.

With some verbs, the IMP suffixes can be omitted (Hahn 1994: 47):

(23) ... bla ma dang 'bral ba med par byin gyis rlob
guru-SOC-free-NS  NEG:NS:ILL  give-IMP
... Give [your] blessing that [I] am never separated from gurus!

To conclude, the analytical formation of verb forms in Written Tibetan seems to retain the original CAUS/RES distinction, although now one gets further possible verb forms (causativized resultatives). Probably, the assumed original system of CAUS/RES (CTRL/NOCTRL, diff/undiff) verbs is further obscured by these additional forms. The system may even partly be influenced by the needs of the translation effort, where analytical forms seem to have been stereotypically used for sanskrit forms. Finally, the spoken varieties probably developed independently of this system. Nonetheless, the original distinction of CAUS/RES verb forms still plays a role in the interpretation of the meaning of verb phrases.

**08.05. Future tense**

As can be deduced from examples of direct speech in the literature, analytic use of AUX probably occurs early (cf. Saxena 1991) and is traditionally described as representing the three tenses. But these are in fact already represented by the morphological inflectional verb forms. Thus, in order to represent the three tenses, one has to use the correct morphological form of the verb, i.e. 'gro gi yod ‘is going’ with IPV stem, and phyin pa yin 'has gone' with (suppletive) PFV stem. The so-called FUTURE tense (ma 'ongs pa, lit. 'not yet arrived'), however, behaves slightly differently. It shows the following patterns (in the written language):

Table 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FUT STEM</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>FIN</th>
<th>final particle (original use)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>par bya</td>
<td>future stem bya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>par 'gyur</td>
<td>undiff. 'gyur 'become'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>pa yin</td>
<td>PFV marker pa yin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>rgyu yin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>gi yin/red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>'gro/ong</td>
<td>'go', 'come'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, some of these forms derive from PRS stems and not from FUT stems. It must be noted that pattern 3 usually leads to resultative reading (see above), since future is unaccomplished; thus, one may distinguish two degrees of resultativity:

(24) 3.1. sgrub par 'gyur will realize
      3.2. 'grub par 'gyur will get realized [by itself]
Hahn (1994: 164 (= 1985: 149f.)) gives more possibilities for the use of 'gyur; he shows that FUT meaning is carried out only by the par 'gyur affixation (to any verb stem), while the use of the FUT STEM would only add a necessitative meaning. This is further evidence for a modal meaning of FUT stems. The use of PST STEM with par 'gyur is described as 'accomplished future', similar to 'futurum exactum' in, e.g., German, or as a 'pluperfect' (cf. 1994: 165 (= 1985: 150)). Pattern 4 is also described as 'durative' or 'progressive' or 'general statement' by Hahn (1994: 162 (= 1985: 147)). Pattern 5 is given 'necessitative function' (Hahn 1994: 161 (= 1985: 158)). Pattern 6 which is commonly seen as the 'ordinary' pattern is described as having the connotative meaning of 'obligation' (Zeisler, pers.comm.); according to Chonjore (2003: 273ff.), it has also other functions, such as present continuous aspect ('is going to') and even past habitual aspect ('used to'). Finally (pattern 7), the use of mover verbs ('gro, 'ong) as FUT AUX is also reported (Hahn 1994: 171 (= 1985: 156f.)).

FUT is also formed with FUT STEM + INS (pattern 8). This use of the ERG/INS has for the first time been described by Foucaux 1858 and later authors (e.g., Lalou 1950: 27f., Hahn 1994: 202 (= 1985: 186)). Sometimes, the GEN is used in the same function, but Hoffmann 1955 proposes this to be a late orthographic error (kyi and kyis for [kyi]). A combination of FUT STEM - ILL + 'gro + kyis is attested in Hahn (1994: 171 (= 1985: 157):

```plaintext
(25) gsd du 'ong gis
    kill:F-ILL come-INS We are (probably) going to be killed
```

This variety of FUT marking and the many possible interpretations ascribed to these forms shows that FUT is not a basic simple category of Tibetan grammar, especially not for the so-called FUT STEM. In the spoken language, future tense is the least possible environment for ERG marking\(^{100}\). This points towards a gradual scale of volition from PFV via IPV and par 'gyur (RES) until gi yin (FUT = INT). In Tillemans 1991, a description of the known problem of 'future tense' is found:

INABA (1955) had already argued that future forms as one finds them in Tibetan dictionaries or in the grammarians' lists of verbs have little or nothing to do with the future. [FOOTNOTE: See AACT p. 82, n. 73 and p. 90] Indeed, it seems true that the so-called "future" is the most problematic of the Tibetan grammarians' classifications and is often an odd misnomer for something quite different. Comparisons with Sanskrit give a working idea of the anomalies: (1) In Tibetan translations of Sanskrit future tenses, the future simplex forms which we find in dictionaries are rarely used; instead, the Sanskrit future is typically translated by what the grammarians would term a present (da ita ba), or by a periphrastic form using this present form plus par 'gyur. (2) The grammarians future (e.g. gzung) is frequently used to express a Sanskrit present passive, or this "future" and its related forms in par bya (e.g. gzung par bya), are used to translate Sanskrit terms ending in the suffixes of obligation (kṛtya) -ya, -tavya and -aniya: Pāṇini speaks of a number of uses of kṛtya, such as in cases of permission (sarga), opportunity (prāptakāla), fittingness (arha), etc., but /488/ while the sense may on occasion be a simple future, the explicit mention of "future" does not seem to figure in Pāṇini's account. (Tillemans 1991: 487f.)

Tillemans 1991 gives interesting data from an indigenous Tibetan grammarian, the fifth gser tog rin po che, by the name blo bzang tshul khrims rgya mtsho (1845-1915), of Kumbum mo-

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\(^{100}\) In case ERG is combined with future, it emphasizes or puts more focus on the AG.
nastery (sku 'bum mgon pa) in Amdo, East Tibet (today Qinghai province). This author tried to give an alternative account of the tense system, whereby he relied on two distinctions: (a) on the traditional 'three tenses' (dus gsum), and (b) on the concept of the triad of 'object/agent/action' (bya byed las gsum). According to this model, verbs are oriented towards either the agent or the object, whereby 'differentiative' 'present stem verbs' are oriented towards the agent, and 'future stems' are oriented towards the object. This gives an entirely new idea about the original meaning of the 'future tense' form.

By way of a typical case, take a verb such as "to seek", 'tshol ba, with a dictionary future form bstal ba [sic]. For grammarians, the simplex, bstal or bstal lo, and its related forms in par bya / bar bya and bya (i.e. bstal bar bya, bstal bya) are future (ma 'ongs pa). This type of action is categorized under the rubric gahan ("other") and is invariably explained in the context of the triad, actions, agents and objects (bya byed las gsum) as being related to the object (las) of the action. The present simplex, 'tshol ba, or the continuative form 'tshol bzhin pa, are taken as a type of active, "present act-qua-doing" (byed pa'i las da lta ba), are classified under bdag ("self") and are related to the agent (byed pa po). As for the past, bstald [FOOTNOTE: We follow gSer tog in conserving the old supplementary -d suffix (da drag).] or bstald zin pa, there is some controversy as to how it should be taken, but gSer tog and others (such as A kya Yonga 'dzin) clearly relate it to the object. The result is that we have a schema where the three tenses are correlated with members of the triad, bya ba, byed pa (po) and las: gSer tog can thus speak of this schema as being "the three times in terms of the triad, actions, agents and objects" (bya byed las gsum gyi dus gsum). A simpler way to resume the point is that these are essentially tenses being classified according to the "dictionary forms" used. In most occurrences these dictionary forms will also have their corresponding temporal values, but gSer tog brings up the point that sometimes this dictionary based classification does not reflect the actual temporal value of verbs. This can be in the following cases: (1) contexts where present dictionary forms have to be understood as actually expressing an action in the future; (2) verbs which make no distinction between their "dictionary presents" and "futures" and hence have to rely on auxiliaries (tshig grogs) to make periphrastic forms expressing such distinctions; (3) the special case of future act-qua-thing-done (bya ba'i kas ma 'ongs pa), viz. bstal par bya, etc., which, in itself, just expresses the modal sense of "... to be done ..." "... ought to be done", and not the strictly temporal future. (Tillemans 1991: 489)

In other words, the Tibetan 'future tense' is an intentional mode; historically, it seems, this mode category formed a dichotomy with the 'present tense' and represented another verb orientation. To sum up, Tillemans conclusion on this conceptualization of tenses is as follows:

gSer tog, then, seems to be maintaining that the actual future temporal value is not expressed by the dictionary future forms in par bya, but rather by the context, i.e. the words "tomorrow" and "still". His remarks imply that the "future" in par bya is much less of a real future than a type of modal form, a position which would, of course, tally well with our earlier observations about Tibetan translations using dictionary futures + par bya for the Sanskrit suffixes of obligation (kṛtya). To go gSer tog one step further, the fu-
tule act-qua-thing-done would, as in the Sanskrit kṛṭya, show an essentially passive, or "patient-prominent" action, which is/was to be done, this form in par bya being in itself virtually temporally neutral. And although gSer tog does not explicitly say so, he would presumably have to agree that the future simplex forms, bklag go, etc. would also receive their real temporal value from elsewhere – context, or perhaps even auxiliaries. (Tilmans 1991: 494)

This philological-historical finding is of importance for the understanding of the indigenous grammatical concept of bdag/gzhan (self/other). As mentioned earlier, Thonmi’s rule for the application of verb prefixes especially distinguishes IPV and FUT forms. The FUT stem turns out to have some notion of PAT orientation. As will be seen below, FUT stems have another function which has nothing to do with ‘future’, but with orientation – in word formation. Finally, in the modern spoken language, the so-called FUT tense is in strong relationship with the construction expressing ‘intention’; thus, the following distinctions can be made:

(26) za khang nang la ’gro gi yin/ ... rgyu yin/ ... dgos yod/ ... restaurant into go-VC-CONJ ... cause CONJ ... must CONJ ...
I intend to, will, must go to the restaurant.

08.06. Verbal morphology in Spoken Central Tibetan

In Spoken Tibetan, most verb lexemes are invariable; a small number of verbs retains two different forms for perfective and imperfective aspect. All other verbal categories are expressed by obligatory AUX forms, which are attached to the lexicatic verb. Again, the systematicatization of this system can be performed in various ways.

In Lhasa Tibetan, the inflectional system is substantially weakened with respect to the morphotactics of the written verbs, most probably due to historical phonological change, but it is still (partly) in place in a number of words. In other (especially peripheral) dialect groups, more verb forms can still be distinguished (e.g., in Amdo, or Ladakhi and Balti), and they are usually closer to the written forms.

Due to the modern non-distinction of these verb forms with many lexemes, a system with AUX has been introduced, possibly much earlier than usually found in the texts; it is reported that direct speech samples in old texts already exhibit these AUX patterns (cf. Saxena 1989).

However, emphasis is put on the fact that the morphological systems of written and spoken languages are different. Nevertheless, the categorical distinctions seem to have in principle remained. Thus, it is possible to put the forms of Modern Written Tibetan into the same schema of morphosemantic aspect as it is presented above:

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101 The Tibetan script may have come from another dialectal area than Central Tibetan. Therefore, we should not assume historical linearity from the written to the spoken language – just as Romance languages derived from Vulgar Latin and not from Classical Latin.

102 Since analytic verb morphotactics is entirely different in Classical and Spoken Tibetan, and due to the above-mentioned assumption of Written Tibetan being derived probably from another dialect, it is also possible that the whole written verb morphosyntax has been introduced instead of Central Tibetan forms. This is, of course, only a hypothesis based on the comparison with other cases of script (and written language) introductions.
Although many verb forms seem to have lost their distinct phonological shape, there are still various forms which differ even phonologically for IPV, PFV, and IMP. The obvious morphotactic weakness of the contemporaneous system should not lead us to believe that the system does no longer exist, as will be seen below.

### 08.06.01. The speaker-hearer relation (‘conjunct/disjunct’)

The above-mentioned pattern is not the only AUX construction pattern, however. In the spoken language, there are further AUX forms with various meanings, especially the EQUATIONAL (EQU) AUX forms *yin* and *red*, and the EXISTENTIAL (EX) AUX forms *yod* and ‘*dug*, but also the GENERAL PFV STATEMENT AUX *song* lit. ‘gone/come’, INFERENCE *bzhang*, as well as EXPERIENCER ORIENTATION *byung* lit. ‘get’, *snang* ‘seem’, *mdzad* ‘make, do’, etc. The latter AUX forms being partly more semantic (i.e., less grammaticalized, or morphosemantically more transparent).  

Usually, the verb inflection of Modern Spoken Central Tibetan is represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUX Type</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IMPERFECTIVE</td>
<td>V + ky/gy/gi + yod/‘dug’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERFECTIVE</td>
<td>V + pa/ba + yin/red, and V + byung or song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTURE/INTENTION</td>
<td>V + ky/gy/gi + yin/red</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *kyi, gyi, gi* forms, although homographic with the GEN particles, are morphonological variants of an old connector particle *kyin,* introducing the meaning of ‘progressive aspect’, cf.

(27) kho rang nang la bsdad-gi-‘dug/ 3 at home stay VC DIS  
He is staying at home.

(28) kho rang gis nang la phyin pa red/ 3-ERG at home go:PFV-NS-DIS  
He went home.

The verbs *yin/red* and *yod/‘dug* as ‘full verbs’ have the status of a copula (COP), in equative (EQU) and existential (EX) functions; thereby, the EQU verb equates two ABS entities, while the EX verb is construed in an EXP-ABS scheme (with DAT/ALL and ABS), similar to Latin ‘mihi pecunia est’ (‘I have money’):

---

103 While *yin* and *yod* are old AUX forms, ‘*dug* already has a bleached meaning ‘dwell’ (cf. Hongladarom 1997, Vol-kart 2000)

104 The CONN *kyi/gyi/gi* resembles the GEN *kyi/gyi/gi/’, but its morphology is different, cf. GEN ‘i (umlaut) in nga’i khang pa ‘my house’ vs. ‘gro gi yin [I] will go’.
08. Tibetan verbs

(29a) kho rang bod pa zhig red/
3 Tibetan INDEF EQU:DISJ
He IS a Tibetan.

(29b) kho rang la dnung mang po 'dug/
3-ALL money a lot EX:DISJ
He HAS a lot of money.

Additionally, they encode another distinction which has been termed ‘conjunction/disjunction’ (CONJ/DISJ) by Hale 1980 on Newari, departing from a kind of ‘agreement’ between a dependent and a main clause or between a subject of a (subordinate) phrase to the speaker (see below). This terminology was then adopted for Sherpa (Schötteldreyer 1980) and Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 1990, 1992a). In textbooks on Tibetan, ‘verb inflection’ is often explained as a kind of ‘subject agreement’ with a ‘subject’, cf. (Modern Spoken Central Tibetan):

### Tables 29 & 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declerative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRON/PERS</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 nga</td>
<td>bod pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 khyed rang</td>
<td>bod pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 kho rang</td>
<td>bod pa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am, you are, he/she is Tibetan. Am I, are you, is he/she Tibetan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Declerative</th>
<th>Interrogative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRON/PERS</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 nga la</td>
<td>dngul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 khyed rang la</td>
<td>dngul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 kho rang la</td>
<td>dngul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I,you have, he/she has money. Do I, you, he/she have money?

This seems to lead to the following analysis of the verbal paradigm:

### Table 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERS</th>
<th>EQUATIONAL</th>
<th>EXISTENTIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SG/PL</td>
<td>QU SG/PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>yin</td>
<td>red (pa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>yin (pas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>red (pas)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SG and PL are not involved in this agreement pattern, but solely marked (with PL tsho) on the first NP:

(30) kho rang de tsho chen po red/ nga tsho bod pa yin/
house DEF-PL big DISJ 1-PL Tibetan CONJ
These houses are big? We are Tibetans.

This pattern looks like a suppletive paradigm with a syncretism between 2nd and 3rd person which would be difficult to explain in terms of grammaticalization. The analysis as a person agreement paradigm is based on traditional IE concepts about verb categories and leads to further ‘irregularities’ (see below). Additionally, an agreement pattern with two suppletive AUX which behave differently in declarative and interrogative sentences (see above) would be morphologically strange, i.e., it would lack plausibility in terms of grammaticalization. There is, however, a more adequate explanation of the phenomenon: The distinction of yin/ red and yod/dug has been termed ‘conjunction’ vs. ‘disjunct’ (CONJ/DISJ) on the basis of the
fact that it encodes the conjunctness or disjunctness of the event construal with the event construer. The event construer of a declarative sentence is the speaker; the event construer of an interrogative sentence is the addressee. yin and yod therefore mark the conjunctness of the main participant of the event construal with the speaker or the addressee. It is therefore erroneous to speak of person agreement with a 'subject'; rather, to view it as one of the functions of the evidential system relating the speech act to the speaker (or addressee) feases the phenomenon more adequately. Moreover, such an explanation accounts for and explains all marginal cases exposed below. The CONJ/DISJ distinction is observed in several Tibeto-Burman languages, however, in these languages, it is a more recent development (DeLancey 1992: 49); in Classical Tibetan kho rang bod pa yin would still be used instead of ... red. In non-central dialects, the situation can differ considerably from this description (cf. various descriptions in Bickel (ed.) 2000). Therefore, this description was finally seen more like a subsection of the evidential distinction old vs. new knowledge (see below). It is an empathy system (Häsler 2001) which has developed in variants in some languages and dialects of the area. This gives some evidence for a typological, areal, or other underlying concept (empathy). The diachronic phenomenon did not lead to a final conclusive hypothesis; the CONJ/DISJ system has also been related to direct/inverse systems (cf. also Bauman 1975 for diachronic reconstruction). Thompson 1994 sums up on Tibeto-Burman inverse patterns:

The inverse construction used to be viewed primarily as a construction involved in the ranking of person. There is, of course some variation from language to language, but the basic system is that the inverse is used if the object is a speech-act participant (SAP) and the subject third person. In some languages, there is ranking between first and second person as well. [Thompson 1994: 57]

For the above mentioned distinction, Kelzang Gyrme (1992: 220) (i.e., the translators of his work) uses three terms: 'egophoric' (yin, yod, byung), 'heterophoric' (red, 'dug, song), and 'non-personal' AUX (yong, myong, bzhag). Denwood (1999: 135) terms the verbs yin/yod vs. red/dug 'self-centred' and 'other-centred', respectively. Haller (1994, 2000) terms these forms volitional/nonvolitional (VOL/NVOL). van Driem 1998 for Dzongkha distinguishes only old vs. new knowledge on the basis of these AUX forms. Finally, Chonjore (2003: 127) on Lhasa Tibetan uses the terms 'personal' and 'impersonal'. Whatever the final theoretical outcome of the analysis of this system, the terminology 'conjunct' (CONJ) and 'disjunct' (DISJ) will be used here to distinguish yin/yod and red/dug in Spoken Central Tibetan. Although yin/yod and red/dug, in a superficial analysis, seem to coincide with first and non-first persons, the above-mentioned definition of CONJ/DISJ can be proved with further evidence, namely with cases where CONJ/DISJ forms do not agree with the respective status of the alleged 'subject'. In the following two sentences, the speaker uses both yod and 'dug with a first person subject, but with different meaning as regards the conjunctness of this linguistic 'I' with the speaker (ex. from Denwood 1999: 136f.):

(31a) ngas yi ge eig 'bri kyi yod/
1:ERG letter INDEF write-GEN-CONJ
I am writing a letter.

Although such hierarchies seem to largely cooccur with direct/inverse systems, a distinction of this kind can also be recognized (as a less central feature) for languages belonging to other language types (cf., e.g., Benveniste 1946).
Conversely, with typically DISJ agents, one also finds yod, if the speaker is conjunct with an EXP role in the sentence:

(32a) khon gis gzas bslab gnam gi ’dug/ 
3:HON-ERG song teach-do:HON-VC-DISJ
She is teaching songs.

(32b) khon gis nga la gzas bslab gnam gi yod/ 
3:HON-ERG 1-EXP song teach-do:HON-VC-CONJ
She is teaching me songs.

Similarly, in the following sentence, yod appears seemingly unexpected:

(33) ’dzam gling du skad grags che ba’i pho brang chen po po ta’ la ni bod rang 
world-LOC famous-GEN palace big Potala-TOP Tibet-self-
skyong ljong kyi grong khyer lte ba Hs sa’i nub byang gi ri 
-govern-region-GEN province-capital Lhasa:GEN west-north-GEN mountain
steng du bzhengs yod The world-famous big palace POTALA was built on the 
on built:H-CONJ northwestern hill of the capital of the TAR, Lhasa. (from a 
Tibetan newspaper).

This sentence is formed with a CAUS (CTRL, VOL) verb and without an explicit AG; the implied AG should – from our perspective – be a third person – the action being accomplished since long. The sentence is, however, terminated with yod; according to the explanation given by native speakers, yod, in this case, has the function to establish an identification with the constructors, equating them with ‘us Tibetans’; in other words, yod allows the reading [‘our] potala’ or ‘built [by us]’. This construction has to be interpreted as implying a first person EXP.

The ’normal’ pattern, referring to a third person constructor, would have been (ex. from Hu Tan 1989, quoted in Tournadre 1996: 93 – and a similar ex. in Losang Thonden 1984: 83):

(34) pho brang rnying pa de ni dus rabs bdun pa’i nang la srong btsan 
palace old DEF TOP century 7-NS:GEN in-ALL Songtsan

Similarly, in the following passage from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama’s book ‘My country and my people’ (cf. Dalai Lama 14th 1963), Mao Tse Tung is quoted; the use of CONJ yod together with ERG in the first phrase, and DISJ red together with ABL in the second phrase, expresses the ‘affiliation’ of Mao to China, but not to Tibet (Dalai Lama 14th 1986: 131 (= 1983: 118):

(35) da lta rgya nag gis bod la rogs byed kyi yod kyang/ de mtshams 
now China-ERG Tibet-LOC help-make-VC-CONJ-CONC subsequently
bod nas rgya nag la rogs byed thub kyi red ces dang/ ... 
Tibet-ABL China-LOC help-make-can-VC-DISJ so-SOC ...

*Now China (ERG) helps Tibet, but later Tibet (ABL) may help China*, [he] said, [...]

---

106 This edition is quoted in Tournadre (1996: 106).
This example also furnishes evidence for the pragmatic exchange of ERG to ABL in some sentences (common concept: SRC). If you/yin are used with third person subjects, however, the participants are obligatorily expressed in the clause, because otherwise the clause would be understood to refer to the speaker (cf. Häsl er 1999: 142). This is one restriction of the usual syntactic ‘non-obligatoriy’ of nominal constituents. The behavior of CONJ/DISJ can also be tested with subordination, whereby conjunctive is established between a participant of the main clause and the subordinated clause (DeLancey 1990: 295f., 1992a; cf. also Häsl er 2001: 2f.):

(36a)  kʰo s a  b o ḏ p a  y i n  z e r  g y i  ['d u g']
        h e: A G  h e  T b i t a n  C O N J  s a y  I P V  D I S J
       He, says that he, is a Tibetan.

(36b)  kʰo s a  b o ḏ p a  r e d  z e r  g y i  ['d u g']
        h e: A G  h e  T b i t a n  D I S J  s a y  I P V  D I S J
       He, says that he, is a Tibetan.

(36c)  kʰo s a  n ga  b o ḏ p a  r e d  z e r  g y i  ['d u g']
        h e: A G  I  T b i t a n  D I S J  s a y  I P V  D I S J
       He says that I am a Tibetan.

DeLancey shows the same phenomenon with another AUX for CONJ contexts, byung, whereby byung agrees with a GOAL/EXPER/PAT role of the conjunct participant (DeLancey 1990: 301):

(37a)  n g a  t s h o 'i  g y o g  p o  t s h o  k h a m s  p a  d e  t s h o  m t h o n g  b y u n g  n g a s /
        I - P L: G E N  m a n s e r v a n t - P L  K h a m p a  D E F - P L  s e e : E X P o r - Q U
       Did [you] see those Khampa servants of ours?

(37b)  t h u b  b s t a n  g y i s  b l o  b z a n g  g i s  g z h u s  b y u n g  z e r  g y i  ['d u g'] /
       T h u b t e n - E R G  L o b s a n g - E R G  h i t : E X P o r  s a y : V C - I P V : D I S J
       Thubten says that Lobsang hit him. 

(37c)  t h u b  b s t a n  g y i s  b l o  b z a n g  g i s  g z h u s  p a  r e d  z e r  g y i  ['d u g'] /
       T h u b t e n - E R G  L o b s a n g - E R G  h i t - N S - D I S J  s a y - V C - D I S J
       Thubten says that Lobsang hit him. 

The CONJ marker thus refers to the participant dominating the event construal. In case a speaker refers to his or her own actions, he or she will use CONJ forms. In case the participant relates to the dominating participant in a subordinated clause, CONJ is used. In questions, however, conjunctive with the addressee is required. This leads to uniformity in AUX in the dialogic structure of question and response (but cf. another ex. below):

(38)  k h y e d  r a n g  g s o l  j a  m c h o d  ' d o d  y o d  p a s /
        2  H O N - t e a  c o n s u m e : H O N  w i s h - C O N J - Q U
       Would you like to have some tea? — Yes, please.
historical grammar as well. The CONJ/DISJ scheme has thus two forms and two categories, which are, however, different from an SAE notion of person agreement:

Table 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONJUNCT WITH</th>
<th>speaker/addressee</th>
<th>'other'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQU</td>
<td>yin</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EX</td>
<td>yod</td>
<td>'dug'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, speaker reference is a category which is not based on 'syntactic rules', but on external (extragrammatical) causes. It looks similar to agreement, because saying 'I' implies a CONJ speaker. In interrogative sentences, and in subordinated clauses, however, it is clear that it is not this grammatical reference which is encoded. Moreover, apparent 'irregularities' (see ex. above and below) are explained on the basis of the CONJ analysis. Conjunctness is a basic feature of an evidential system, a system which encodes relations between a speaker and the the event construal.

Apart from the above-described function of conjunctness, further evidence is found in aspectual and evidential differences in the use of these AUX forms when opposed to other AUX (see also below). yod pa red, 'dug and yod can all three be used in similar clauses, with the exception that the speaker relation to this information is different; cf.

(39a) bod la da lta mo Ta mang po yod pa red/
Tibet-ALL now car many GENERAL

[As is generally known.] in Tibet, there are many cars nowadays.

(39b) bod la da lta mo Ta mang po 'dug/
Tibet ALL now car many PERSONAL

[I have seen that] in Tibet, there are many cars nowadays.

(39c) bod la da lta mo Ta mang po yod/
Tibet ALL now car many CONJ

In [my] Tibet, there are many cars nowadays.

Similarly, one finds the following differences:

(40a) ja 'di tsha po yod/
tea DEF hot CONJ

The tea is hot. (personal experience)

(40b) ja 'di tsha po 'dug/
tea DEF hot DISJ

The tea is hot. (personal perception)

(40c) ja 'di yag po yod pa red/
tea DEF good GENERIC

The tea is [usually] fine [here]. (established knowledge)

Therefore, an additional feature, namely the distinction between generic and new information, has to be added to the paradigm:

Table 29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONJ/PERS</th>
<th>DISJ/GENERIC</th>
<th>DISJ/NEW_INFO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQU</td>
<td>yin</td>
<td>red, yod pa red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXIST</td>
<td>yod</td>
<td>'dug'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parameters of CONJ and other evidential meanings can come into conflict. In the following example, the foreign interviewer asks a question about Tibet, using the rhetorical interrogative suffix pa. The person answering the question incorporates his personal experienc-
ce; therefore, the (rhetorical) question (posed by a foreigner) uses DISJ red, whereas the answer relates to conjunction between person 2 and the situation and uses yin (Sopa 1983: 1):

(41) Ẹnirinpoche grwa tshang bzhidbo de tsho’i nang nas sgo mang
        INTERJ Rinpochecollegefour-NS DEF-PL-GEN in-ABL Gomang

grwatshangba redpa/lagsyin/
college-NS DISJ-QU HON CONJ

So then, Rinpochepo, among these four colleges you were Gomanger, weren’t you? — Yes, I was.

Conversely, DISJ forms can also apply with first person main participants, when the participant is exercising indirect control over the action (Chang & Chang 1980: 17):

(42a) ngas las kazerdrag byas payin/
        I:ERG workvery make:PFV-NS-CONJ
        I have worked a lot.

(42b) ngas las kazerdrag byas pa red/
        I:ERG workvery make:PFV-NS-DISJ
        A lot of work was done by me. / A lot of work was done under my guidance.

Since ERG is usually omitted in future tense, futuric (‘intention’) sentences with 1st person agents show a cooccurrence of ERG and CONJ AUX in order to distinguish degrees of volition (Denwood 1999: 137f):

(43a) sang nyin ngas laskadi byed kyi yin/
        tomorrow I:ERG workDEM do-VC-CONJ
        I shall do this work tomorrow (of my free will).

(43b) sang nyin nga laskadi byed kyi red/
        tomorrow I workDEM do-VC-DISJ
        I shall do this work tomorrow (whether I like it or not).

Certain unintentional events cannot carry CONJ markers at all, e.g., being sick;

(44) nga na gi’dug/
        1 sick-VC-EX:DISJ
        1 I am sick.

The Tibetan CONJ/DISJ pattern has thus an orientation towards ‘default’ persons, or, in other words, it has a hierarchical organisation of the category ‘person’. Just like in American languages showing such characteristics, we find also an inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person plural — which is another feature which concerns the speaker-hearer relation and which is an extension of CONJ/DISJ across more than one person:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 30</th>
<th>nga rang tsho</th>
<th>vs.</th>
<th>nga tsho</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-self-PL</td>
<td>nga rang tsho</td>
<td></td>
<td>nga tsho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we:INCL (and you)</td>
<td>ich inkl PL</td>
<td></td>
<td>ich PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we:EXCL (not you)</td>
<td>gehen HORT</td>
<td></td>
<td>gehen-VC-CONJ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(45) nga rang tsho thegs’gro/ nga tsho ‘gro gi yin/
      ich inkl PL                  ich PL                  gehen-VC-CONJ
      Let us (all) go!

Thus, Tibetan has no person agreement markers on the verb; and the AUX forms in Spoken Tibetan are solely semantically motivated, relating to the speaker-hearer-third-person relation and thereby exposing a type of person hierarchy (empathy hierarchy). Thus, the finding
of Schmidt 1839 concerning the absence of syntactic concord for Written Tibetan is still equally true for spoken Tibetan:

§.206. Weil bei den Verben in Betreff der Personen und Zahlen keine Veränderung der Form Statt findet, so werden die Personen und Zahlen durch das vorstehende Subject bestimmt, dieses möge nun ein Pronomen, Substantiv oder Eigennamen seyn; [...] (Schmidt 1839: 195)

This fact is emphasized here, because it is not considered in most textbooks. E.g., in Goldstein et al. (1991: 54), the CONJ/DISJ patterns are interpreted by way of person agreement:

Tibetan verbs themselves do not indicate gender, number or person. "I buy," "He buys," and "They buy" all use the same stem of the verb "to buy." Person, however, can be expressed through the modern verb complement, although traditionally it was determined solely through context. (Goldstein et al. 1991: 54)

As a solution for the above-mentioned counterarguments, Goldstein et al. (1991: 55) reports: "These rules, however, are not hard and fast, and the reader will sometimes encounter the pa red complement used with first person subjects, e.g. (ngas) zas pa red." Grammatical rules can theoretically be 'not hard and fast', but often a difference in coding encodes a conceptual difference, at least on the basis that an 'exploitable' difference is there (cf. Moosmüller & Vollmann 2001). But differences can be different under different circumstances. Therefore, it may indeed be quite difficult to give a single explanation of a linguistic phenomenon, especially if the grammatical categories developed so far by a linguistic tradition have been developed on another kind of conceptual system.

Only the CONJ forms yin/yod of the AUX system are generally used in Classical Tibetan with general AUX functions (EQU, EX). Additionally, they seem to be the 'default' forms of the system. This can be proved by the fact that they are used for CONJ relations in embedded structures (cf. DeLancey 1990: 301), see ex. with verba dicendi above). Similarly, although with unintentional actions/events, it is in principle impossible to use CONJ AUX, this restriction does not apply in subordination:

\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{(46) } & \text{nga} & \text{mgo} & \text{na gi ’dug’} & \text{’yod’} & \text{nga} & \text{na gi yod tsang} \\
& 1 & \text{head} & \text{ache VC DISJ} & \text{’CONJ} & 1 & \text{sick-VC-CONJ-because} \\
\text{I have a headache.} & & \text{...} & & \text{because I have a headache.} \\
\end{array}
\]

To conclude, the CONJ/DISJ pattern of (Central) Tibetan is a complex system involving conjunctness and evidentiality, especially mirativity (new/old information, etc.; cf. DeLancey 1997b). Equally, it is closely related to the use of ERG, in that it plays a role in the definition of volitionality in an event construal. In this way, CONJ/DISJ is another type of agreement with an agressive participant. DeLancey (1992: 57) gives the following summary on the functions of this patterns:

The Lhasa conjunct/disjunct/evidentiality system is the most elaborate that I know of at present. I take several characteristics of the Lhasa system to define the true conjunct/disjunct system. First, there is an evidential system including a "mirative" distinction between sentences which relate information which is part of the speaker's established representation of the world and those which relate information which the speaker has not yet assimilated. The peculiar development which constitutes the conjunct/disjunct system
per se is a grammaticalization of the interaction between this mirative distinction and person, such that the non-mirative forms occur in conjunct contexts, and the mirative forms elsewhere. Conjunct contexts are: with 1st person actors in statements and 2nd person in questions; and in complements of verbs. When the actors of the higher and lower verbs are coreferential. Finally, in a fully-fledged system such as that of Lhasa the same formal devices are used in the verbal system to distinguish volitional from non-volitional predicates. [...] We can show [...] that the restriction of the indication of volitionality by the choice of conjunct forms to 1st person reflects the fact that the conjunct/disjunct opposition is fundamentally evidential. It is clear that the conjunct/disjunct pattern in the copulas is a grammaticalization of what would be the natural tendency, once the mirativity contrast has come to be explicitly marked, for statements about 1st person to represent old, and about non-1st persons to represent new, knowledge. (DeLancey 1992a: 57)

After having introduced this system, it must be mentioned that there are alternative descriptions. Haller (1994, 2000) on Shigatse Tibetan calls these AUX classes VOL vs. NVOL. In the description of an action, VOL is defined as the 'intention of the speaker' for performing the action. Therefore, VOL is also evidential (EVID; the speaker has full evidence), while NVOL events can be differentiated for evidentiality. In the description of the actions/events performed by 3rd persons, the 'initial act of volition' of the agent (actor) is not evident for the speaker so that DISJ forms apply across the board; With 1st person, however, VOL can vary; this explains the examples discussed in Chang & Chang 1981 and DeLancey (1990: 300) where 1st person subjects take DISJ AUX forms. On the other hand, the intention (not the 'initial act of volition') of a 3rd person actor may be hypothesized by the speaker. In the chapter on evidentiality, some such examples will be explained.

It should be mentioned that many dialects do not have the AUX red (or equivalent forms, such as Shigatse [pír]), and some do not make any such distinction at all, using only yin/yod or other AUX in a system indicating evidentiality and related categories. It would lead to far to describe these various systems in this context, the reader is referred to various contributions in Bickel (ed.) 2000.

08.06.02. Mirativity

Mirativity, the "grammatical marking of unexpected information" (DeLancey 1997b: 33), is another grammatical feature which has not been described often in earlier literature.106 A number of Tibeto-Burman languages (cf. DeLancey 1992c) qualify for this category, among them Spoken Central Tibetan. Mirativity does not encode in a separate morphological system, but is included into the above-described CONJ/DISJ distinction. It can therefore basically occur only with 1st person main event participants (in declarative sentences and 2nd person in interrogative sentences, as explained above). Consider the following examples (DeLancey 1997b: 44):

106 The 'admire' (Friedman 1986) or 'mirative' (Jacobsen 1964) has first been described for (Balkanic) languages such as Albanian, Bulgarian-Macedonian, Turkish, and also for Georgian.
08. Tibetan verbs

(47) ngar dngul tog tsam yod/  ngar dngul tog tsam 'dug/
1-ALL money a/bit CONJ 1-ALL money a/bit DISJ
I have some money. (i.e., I brought some with me) I have some money. (i.e., quite to my surprise)

Similarly, with full verbs, the mirative is expressed by the DISJ red or song (DISJ:PFV) instead of CONJ yin. A second example from DeLancey (1997b: 54):

(48) ngas ja btungs pa yin/  ngas ja bos song/
1:ERG tea drink-NS-CONJ 1:ERG tea spill-PFV:GEN
I drank tea. (i.e., intentionally) I spilled tea. (i.e., inadvertently)

It seems as if this system of mirativity is another effect of the CONJ/DISJ distinction, maybe the one described as VOL/NVOL or OLD/NEW (knowledge) (see above). Similarly, the following categories give additional functions to a wider system of AUX verbs with varying degrees of abstractness in meaning. The CONJ/DISJ distinction in the way it has been explained here is found only in Central and Kham Tibetan. It is itself a subphenomenon of the evidential system of Tibetan. This system will shortly be explained in the following section.

08.06.03. Evidentiality

The verb morphology of Spoken Tibetan comprises some more AUX particles which make the above-described system more complex, further specifying the above-mentioned categorical distinctions. Additional categories of aspect and evidentiality (cf. Hongladarom 1993a) can be identified. Among all the possible constructions, the following lists of particles contain probably the most important ones for Spoken Central Tibetan. Specifically, byung, song, and bzhag, as well as yod pa red108, yin pa red, yong, and myong shall be explained shortly. The CONJ/DISJ distinction turns out to be a more grammaticalized concept, which still interacts with more semantic meanings of the AUX forms. Thus, yin, red, and so on, have also evidential meaning. Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 219) gives the following aspecual meanings for a list of AUX:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUX</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yin</td>
<td>certitude, volition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yod</td>
<td>knowledge ahead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'dug, song</td>
<td>direct evidence, constative (song &lt; 'gone/come')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yod pa red</td>
<td>habitual or general, non-constative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yin pa red</td>
<td>hearsay, inference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>byung</td>
<td>movement towards speaker, reception (&lt; 'got')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bzhag</td>
<td>inference, result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>myong</td>
<td>experience (of speaker) (&lt; 'experiment')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yong</td>
<td>unaccomplished fact, (&lt; 'come')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>assertive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, the CONJ/DISJ distinction is but a grammaticalized case of aspecual and evidential marking. In fact, even more AUX forms could be listed, such as, e.g., the combinations yin pa red, yin kyi red, or A yod which would represent some of the possibilities to express degrees of certainty, doubt or non-belief. These forms will not be explained here, however, the reader is referred to Tibetan grammars, e.g., to Denwood (1999: 129ff.), Kelzang Gyurme.

108 The diachronic origin being unclear or uncertain, yod pa red is often spelled yog red.
1992, and others. The main AUX verbs, *yin, red, yod, ‘dug, and yod pa red*, apart from their functions as COP verbs, form the three basic ‘tenses’, perfective (*V + pa yin, red*), imperfective (*V + gi yod, ‘dug*), and intentional aspect (*V + gi yin, red*). But the other verbs play similar roles with slight changes in meaning, mainly in evidentiality. E.g., *yong* can only be used in accordance with unaccomplished events (imperfective), and *byung, song, bzhag, and myong* are related to accomplished acts (perfective) (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 220). Some of these AUX also express the CONJ/DISJ distinction; thus, *EQU yin, EX yod,* and PFV:RECEPTION *byung* do only occur as CONJ markers (i.e., in ego-centered contexts). On the other hand, *EQU red, EX ‘dug, GENERAL:IPV yod pa red,* and CONSTATIVE:PFV *song* occur as DISJ markers (i.e., in non-ego-centered contexts). Finally, ‘unaccomplished’ *yong,* ‘experience’ *myong,* and ‘inferential’ *bzhag* are, according to Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 226f.), not CONJ/DISJ-related. It seems clear, however, that this is not entirely true for *bzhag* which refers to the speaker’s inferential knowledge (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 227):

(49a) kha sang gangs btang bzhag/
yesterday snow do-INFER
Yesterday, snow has fallen. [inferential from snow lying on the fields]

(49b) kha sang gangs btang song/
yesterday snow do-PFV:GEN
Yesterday, snow has fallen. [having directly witnessed the event]

Thus, the CONJ/DISJ system refers more to the speaker’s position towards a reported event and not to a syntactic position, in other words, it is the core part of the evidential system. The speaker perspective is thus deeply rooted in the Tibetan event construal. It is clear that the evidential system, when implying degrees of volition, will be found to interact intricately with ERG application (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 229f.). In a number of papers, DeLancey (e.g., 1990) gave comprehensive descriptions of the evidential and aspectual system of Spoken Lhasa Tibetan verbs. He gives the following main forms, which are only allusively comparable to the list given above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 32</th>
<th>verb form</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>abbrev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V + pa red</td>
<td>disjunct perfective</td>
<td>DISJ:PFV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + pa yin</td>
<td>conjunct perfective</td>
<td>CONJ:PFV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + gi = V + gi ‘dug’</td>
<td>disjunct imperfective</td>
<td>DISJ:IPV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + gi yod</td>
<td>conjunct imperfective</td>
<td>CONJ:IPV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + gi yod pa red</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>INFER:IPV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + gi red</td>
<td>disjunct future</td>
<td>DISJ:INT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + gi yin</td>
<td>conjunct future</td>
<td>CONJ:INT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + song</td>
<td>evidential perfective</td>
<td>EVID:PFV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + zhag</td>
<td>inferential perfect</td>
<td>INFER:PFV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + byung</td>
<td>perfective with speaker as GOAL</td>
<td>PFV:GOAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the above-mentioned CONJ/DISJ meaning and evidential aspects, the system of COP verb forms can be summed up in the following way (cf. Goldstein 1973: 21f., DeLancey 1986, 1990):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 33</th>
<th>verb form</th>
<th>meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yin, yod</td>
<td>the speaker’s personal understanding of the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>generic statements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dug’</td>
<td>new knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This leads to the following distinctions:

**New knowledge, direct perception, and newly acquired information:**

As mentioned above, the CONJ/DISJ system of *yod* and *’dug* distinguishes also 'established knowledge' (*yod*) from 'new knowledge' or 'direct perception' (*’dug*) (cf. 'mirativity'); the distinction is relevant only with 1st person main event participants (cf. DeLancey 1990: 296f.):

(50a) nga la dngul tog tsam yod/
    I-DAT money some EX:CONJ

*I have some money. (personal, assimilated knowledge, experienced)*

(50b) nga la dngul tog tsam ’dug/
    I-DAT money some EX:DISJ

*I have some money. (newly acquired information)*

(50c) kho rang la dngul tog tsam ’dug/
    he-DAT money some EX:DISJ

*He has some money. (direct perception)*

With non-first persons (in declarative sentences), the use of *’dug* contrasts with verb forms described below, such as *yod pa red*. The combination of *yin* and *red*, and of *yod* and *red*, led to additional autonomous verb forms, pronounced [jimbær] and [yoerre].

**Hearsay, inference**

*yin pa red*, more rare in its application, has the meaning of inference (cf. DeLancey 1990: 297):

(51) kho rang gi skye dman bod pa zhig yin pa red/
    he-GEN wife Tibetan INDEF EQ:CONJ+NS+EQ:DISJ

*His wife seems to be a Tibetan [so I have been told].*

Denwood (1999: 149) gives two examples for inferential *yin pa red* and refers to its specific use in narrative discourse: while rare in conversations, *yin pa red* is said to be frequent in narrations, construing a 'narrative distance to a story which was certainly not witnessed by the narrator' (Denwood 1999: 277).

The form *yin pa red* is not documented in Shigatse (cf. Haller 1995). It has been described in Kyirong Tibetan: [jimbær] (= *yin pa red*) 'new knowledge', and also [jobajimær] (= *yod pa yin pa red*) 'new knowledge (by indirect evidence, inference)' (Huber 2001: 165, 167; 2002: 134, 137, 140).

**Established, not-new knowledge**

*yod pa red* is the normal expression for established knowledge, contrasting with *’dug* (see above) (cf. DeLancey 1990: 297):

(52) kho rang la dngul tog tsam yod pa red/
    he-DAT money some EX:CONJ+NS+EQ:DISJ

*He has some money. (i.e., as everybody knows)*

Furthermore, some other AUX add additional aspects to the system, such as *song, bzhag*, and *byung*; *song* and *bzhag* are DISJ, and *byung* relates to a DAT/EXP/GOAL conjunct participant (cf. Jin 1979, DeLancey 1985c, 1990: 310f); especially *byung* once again shows that the CONJ/DISJ pattern clearly is not a syntactic type of agreement:
**Witnessed (evidential perfective) vs. inference:**

The verb forms *song* and *bzag* contrast witnessed and inferential knowledge (visual perception of the result) (cf. DeLancey 1990: 299):

(53a)  kho rang gis  dkar yol  bcag song/
        he-ERG    cup       break EVID:PFV
      *He/she has broken the cup.*

(53b)  kho rang gis  dkar yol  bcag bzag/
        3-ERG    cup       break INFER:PFV
      *He/she has broken the cup.*

The verb form *song* stands also in opposition to V + pa *yin/red*, when the non-intentionality of the action by the agent is to be marked:

(54a)  kho rang gis  dkar yol  bcag pa red/
        he-ERG    cup       break-NS-DISJ
      *He/she has broken the cup. (i.e., intentionally)*

(54b)  kho rang gis  dkar yol  bcag song/
        he-ERG    cup       break-EVID:PFV
      *He/she has broken the cup. (i.e., unintentionally)*

In events which cannot be construed as intentional, ERG + *song* is used:

(55)  [khyed rang gis]  Ha go song nas/
       [2-ERG]          understand-EVID:PFV-QU
      *Did you understand?*

**CONJ with GOAL (EXP):**

Conjunctness can also be stated with EXP roles in non-3rd person. In other words, if a 1st person EXP participant is involved in a phrase, the AUX *byung* indicated CONJ with this participant (cf. DeLancey 1990: 300f.):

(56a)  khoŋ  nga’i  nang la  phebs byung/
        3:HON 1:GEN  home ALL  come-PFV:GOAL
      *He/she came to my house.*

(56b)  kho ŋ  nga la  yi ge  zhig  bris byung/
        3:ERG 1-ALL letter INDEF written-PFV:GOAL
      *He wrote me a letter.*

(56c)  kho rang gis  nga la  gzhugs10 byung/
        3-ERG 1-ALL hit-PFV:GOAL
      *He hit me.*

(56d)  ngas  kho rang ts ho  mthong byung/
        1:ERG 3-PL see-PFV:GOAL
      *I saw them.*

With *byung*, a first person EXP is implied, even if not explicitly mentioned (ex. from Denwood 1999: 143):

(57)  kho ŋ gis  gnang byung/
        3:HON-ERG  do:HON-PFV:GOAL
      *He gave it [to me].*

(57)  kho ŋ gis  gnang song/
        3:HON-ERG  do:HON-EVID:PFV
      *He gave it [to you, to somebody].*

---

10 *gzhugs* [sic] in DeLancey (1990: 301).
The use of *byung* vs. *V + pa yin* vs. *song* can thus imply the semantic role of the speaker (1st person) (cf. Tournadre 1996: 233):

(58)  

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
g.yar\;byung/ & g.yar\;pa\;yin/ & g.yar\;song/ \\
\text{lend-GOAL} & \text{lend-NS\;CONJ} & \text{lend-PFV-GEN} \\
[S/he] borrowed [it] to me. (GOAL = 1st person) & I borrowed [it to her/ him]. (SRC = 1st person) & a. [s/he] borrowed [it from him/ her/me]. (SRC unspecified) \\
& & b. [s/he] borrowed [it to him/ her/me]. (GOAL <> 1st person)
\end{array}
\]

There seem to be further implications in the use of these AUX verbs, since the following example cannot be explained by the above-mentioned scheme (ex. from Denwood 1999: 138):

(59)  

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
g.nyas\;di\;Ha\;go\;byung/ & g.nyas\;di\;Ha\;go\;song/ \\
1:ERG\;DEM\;understand-PFV-GOAL & 1:ERG\;DEM\;understand-EVID-PFV \\
I knew that (already). & I've understood that (just now).
\end{array}
\]

Intention, volition:

It has to be pointed out once more that CONJ verb forms usually occur with event construals in which the speaker is a volitional agent (cf. Jin 1979, DeLancey 1990: 300, Tournadre 1996: 208f.):

(60)  

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
g.nyas\;dkar\;yol\;bcag\;pa\;yin/ & g.nyas\;dkar\;yol\;chag\;song/ & \\
1:ERG\;cup\;break-NS-CONJ & 1:ERG\;cup\;break-EVID-PFV & INTENTIONAL\;ACTION \\
\text{I broke the cup.} & \text{I broke the cup.} & \\
*\;g.na\;na\;gi\;yod/ & *\;g.na\;na\;gi\;'dug/ \\
1\;sick-VC-DISJ & 1\;sick-VC-DISJ & \\
*I\;am\;sick.* & *I\;am\;sick.* & 
\end{array}
\]

Some actions can be performed intentionally or unintentionally, such as 'cough', which surfaces in different AUX forms (Denwood 1999: 139):

(61)  

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
glo\;rgyab\;byung & glo\;rgyab\;pa\;yin/ & \\
cough-PFV-GOAL & cough-NS-CONJ & \\
I\;coughed\;\text{(involuntarily).} & I\;coughed\;\text{(deliberately).} & \\
\end{array}
\]

Similarly, Tournadre (1996: 85) discusses an example given by DeLancey 1985c, where a similar opposition in terms of volition becomes visible (note also the case-marking difference)\(^\text{111}\):

(62)  

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
g.nyas\;ngus\;pa\;yin/ & g.na\;ngu\;shor\;byung/ \\
1:ERG\;cry-PFV-NS-CONJ & 1:ABS\;cry-let-go-GOAL & \\
I\;have\;cried,\;\text{[on purpose]} & I\;started\;to\;cry.\;\text{[involuntarily]} & \\
(DeLancey\;1985c) & (Tournadre\;1996) & 
\end{array}
\]

To sum up, the system of verb inflection in spoken Tibetan does not show a syntactic person agreement with a specific syntactic participant; rather, the EVID system specifies the personal involvement of the speaker, the hearer, or, in embedded clauses, another conjunct participant.

---

\(^{111}\) Agha (1993: 14) takes this verb as one of the examples to show the fluidity of ERG marking: *khong [gis] ngus song/*’He cried’. 
Probability:

Finally, it shall be mentioned here that many more AUX construction could be described with more or less evidential meanings. These forms are more morphosemantically transparent and often listed in beginners' textbooks (cf., e.g., Chonjore 2003: 136f.):

(63) khrom kyi ‘khris la za-khang yod pa red/
market GEN beside ALL restaurant GENERIC
There is a restaurant beside the market.
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-khang yod kyi red/
There is probably a restaurant beside the market.112
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-khang yod pa ‘dra/
There seems to be a restaurant beside the market.
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-zhang yod ‘gro/
There may well be a restaurant beside the market.
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-zhang A yod/
I doubt there is a restaurant beside the market.113
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-zhang yod kyi ma red/
I don't think there is a restaurant beside the market.114
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-zhang med pa ‘dra/
It seems there is no restaurant beside the market.
khrom kyi ‘khris la za-zhang med ‘gro/
Probably, there is no restaurant beside the market.
...

The dependent verb form in all these constructions is always the CONJ form which is the 'default' form. The Tibetan AUX and combined AUX patterns with slightly varying meanings represent a wide class which can hardly be put into a paradigmatic structure. Therefore, in textbooks, these phenomena are often simply enumerated. The following list is Goldstein's et al. (1991: 55f.) description of 'present tense endings':

V + kyi yod, V + kyi yod pa red, V + kyi 'dug, V + kyin yod, V + kyin 'dug, V + bgyi yod, V + bgyi yod pa red, V + bgyi 'dug; V + bzhin yod, V + bzhin yod pa red, V + bzhin h'udug, V + bzhin du yod, V + bzhin du yod pa red, V + bzhin pa red, V + bzhin pa yin pa red, V + bzhin par, V + mus yod pa red, V + mus yod, V + mus yin, V + mus yin 'dug, V + mus red.

It becomes clear from this short overview that the evidential system of Tibetan seems to be the most intricate point of Tibetan grammar. Its relation to ERG marking, however, remains unclear for the moment.

08.07. Conclusions

The Tibetan language does not rely on a parameter of 'transitivity', but exhibits instead a more complex verb classification. There is a fundamental distinction between CAUS and RES verb forms which are distinguished morphologically, both by an old, now highly opa-

112 In fact, this clause is the above-described FUT: ‘There will be a restaurant ...’
113 This form A yod is a question marker in Eastern Tibetan: ‘Will there (really) be a restaurant ...?’
114 Again, this is the above-described FUT form: ‘There won't be a restaurant ...’
que inflection which surfaces only in form of segmental phonological changes of the syllable onset, an, in some cases, by ablaut; quite a number of words are synchronically neutral in this respect, i.e., the two oriented verb forms cannot be distinguished morphologically. Finally, a part of the lexicon is entirely suppletive. Cf.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 34</th>
<th>CAUS</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>RES</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>morph.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bcad</td>
<td>[somebody] cuts</td>
<td>chad</td>
<td>cut [something]</td>
<td>aspiration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sgyur</td>
<td>transform</td>
<td>‘gyur</td>
<td>become</td>
<td>neutralized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lta</td>
<td>watch</td>
<td>mthong</td>
<td>see</td>
<td>suppletive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘tshol, btshal</td>
<td>search</td>
<td>rnyed</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>suppletive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, there exists a (more recent) analytical means to make non-volitional contexts volitional or causative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 35</th>
<th>mthong par byed</th>
<th>rnyed par byed</th>
<th>za ru ‘jug</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>make somebody see</td>
<td>make somebody find</td>
<td>cause to eat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somebody sees</td>
<td>somebody finds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, Tibetan verbs distinguish VOLITION or INTENTION, with CAUS forms being volitional and RES verbs being nonvolitional. Some verbs can show both features: motion and perception verbs can take ERG in order to express degrees of volition. Finally, Spoken Central Tibetan has a distinction which has been termed CONJ/DISJ (egophoric, heterophoric), in combination with an elaborated EVID system. As will be seen below, the fundamental distinction of CONJ/DISJ (‘ego’ vs. ‘non-ego’), IPV/INT (+/- intention or volition), and of the concept of bdag vs. gzhan (T vs. ‘other’) play a specific role both in grammar and in grammar writing.

The exposition of Spoken Central Tibetan verb grammar did not lead to any conclusive (or new) insights. Probably, various competing distinctions are upheld in this system, the most important or most basic distinction being the IPV/PFV and CAUS/RES verb pairs which seems to have been elaborated with a number of other categories, of which only the CONJ/DISJ system can be seen as relatively ‘systematic’. Nonetheless, this system is only one aspect amidst a longer list of AUX verbs which convey some aspectual or evidential meaning.

It is not entirely clear which categories of the verb could (‘really’) be identified as triggers for ERG use. In this context, it is, however, interesting to note that many grammar books of Tibetan do not give elaborate descriptions about ergativity, but emphasize instead on the verbs. It seems as if the interest for ERG marking leads to the search of verbal categories. The verbal categories interact with ERG, ABS and DAT in various ways. The ergative and the verbal categories create degrees of agentivity, volition, control over the situation.
09. The case markers of Tibetan

09.01. Absolutive

The unmarked case in Tibetan is the non-agentive, non-experiencer, thus either the patient or an unaffected participant, a participant not being involved in the energy flow. This is the typical definition of an ABS case. The ABS will be dealt with in the following sections in contrast to the marked cases for AG/INS and GOAL (EXPER/LOC).

(01) nga mgo na gi’dug/
    1 head sick-VC-DISJ I have a headache.

Since the case system is semantic, ABS can occur twice in a sentence, in case the participants play the described roles in the event construal – this is similar to the double application of ERG/INS in sentences with both an AG and an INS, cf.:

(02a) khyed rang ‘khrung yul ga nas yin/
    2HON birth-land:HON QU ABL CONJ Where do you come from?

(02b) nga skyes sa khams nas yin/
    1 birth-place Khams-ABL CONJ I am from Khams.

(02c) 'di gong che chung ga’dras red/
    DEM price big small how DISJ What is the price for this?

Similarly, in clauses where ERG is omitted, two ABS (i.e., ’unmarked’) NPs are met:

(03) bkra shis klog nyan de lta gi red/
    Tashi film DEF ita gi red/ Tashi will watch this film.

As explained earlier, the omission of the ergative marker passes case role marking over to word order, at least, if two animate participants are present (Agha 1993: 15):

(04) bkra shis tsho ring zas song/
    Tashi Tsering eaten-AUX
    AG (TOP?) PAT (NON-TOP?) VERB Tashi has eaten Tsering.

Thus, ’double case marking’ is possible in case of the unmarked ABS case. The unmarked (not zero-marked!) case role is the unspecified participant. Typically, it is the absolute participant or the patient, but it can also represent agents.

09.02. Ergative/instrumental

The ERG is identical with the INS – a common pattern in a number of ERG languages. The semantic distinction between ERG and INS is derived from the complementarity of application: they apply to animate and inanimate nouns, respectively. Therefore, it is probably not one concept, but a syncretism of two similar concepts: Both ERG and INS encode participants at the source of the energy flow (Langacker 1991b: 238). Hence, this case can be characterized as having the function to code SRC, regardless of animacy; since they cannot be distinguished, metaphorical agenthood of inanimates is a possible interpretation.

That ERG and INS are semantically differentiated has been discussed already in Csoma de Kőröss (1834: 112) and Francke & Simon (1929: 114), by showing sentences with two iden-
tical case markers. However, the ERG marker marks both volitional and unvolitional agents, thereby showing a difference in the verb morphology. Therefore, it has been claimed in various contributions (Chang & Chang 1980: 18; Tournadre 1996: 138; Zeisler 2004: 258) that in involuntary clauses the ERG is in fact an INS. Consider the following two examples (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 138, 141 (quotation from the literature)):

(05a) \[ \text{ide mig des sgo phyed kyi red/} \]
key DEF:ERG door open-VC-DIS

\text{The key opens the door.}

In the first sentence, an inanimate (agent/instrument with a causative (c) verb form \text{phyed}^{115} occurs, in the second, however, the animate \text{kysis}-marked participant is not a 'real' agent, due to the resultative (nc) verb form \text{khengs}. The English translation needs to use a passivization in order to express the patient-orientation of the sentence. For the first example, Tournadre translates 'On ouvre la porte avec cette clé', thus relying on the possible omission of constituents, in this case an AG role. While the discussion of such examples out of their textual context is problematic, in German, it would be normal to say 'X öffnet die Tür mit dem Schlüssel' (X opens the door with the key), with a possible variant 'Dieser Schlüssel öffnet alle Türen im Haus' (This key opens all doors in the house) restricted to certain contexts. If there is no context for an AG role, this INS of 'key' is the 'agent' in the event construal: 'The key opens the door'. In the second example, the verb is PAT-oriented, and therefore, one could rather speak of an INS instead of an AG: It is not 'The guests filled the table', but 'The tables filled [themselves] [with guests]'. Nonetheless, for the more basic case-marking patterns, it is useful to distinguish the two distinct functions of AG and INS. In modern Tibetan grammar writing (Kelzang Gyrme 1992: 11ff.), the functions of the particle \text{kysis} (’ERG/INS’, tib. \text{byed sgra}, lit. ‘doer case’) are the following:

1. marker for the agent (\text{byed pa po ston pa})
   1.1. marker for an animate agent (\text{sems ldan shes pa’i byed sgra})
   1.2. marker for an inanimate agent (\text{sems med bem po’i byed sgra})
   1.3. follow-up of two agents (\text{byed pa po gnyis rim gyis ’jug pa})
   1.4. marker of a non-volitional agent
2. marker for the tool (\text{byed pa ston pa})
   2.1. tool for direct connection with an agent (\text{byed pa po dang dngos su ’brel ba’i byed pa})
   2.2. tool which is not directly connected with an agent (\text{byed pa po dang dngos su ma ’brel ba’i byed pa})
3. marker of cause (\text{rgyu mtshan ston pa})
4. adjunctive connector
5. adversative connector

^{115} The written verb form \text{phyed(d)} is CAUS:PFV of 'byed' and can be used in spoken varieties also as IPV; the RES forms are \text{bye}; bye. A resultative meaning for \text{phyed} is erroneously proposed in Goldstein 2001, 'to be separate, differentiated'.

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This list of functions covers the SRC case functions (1, 2) as well as the use of ERG/INS with verbs (3, 4, 5). 1.4. have been discussed above. Inanimate agents and non-volitional agents will be most interesting, since they are not typical occurrences of agentivity. It will also be interesting to discuss cases where agents remain unmarked.

09.02.01. Agentive

Most AG markers occur in clauses with CAUS (CTRL) verbs which denote actions, i.e., with a lexical class of verbs. This class is identified as 'cEA' in some publications (control verb with ERG-ABS pattern). A smaller group of CAUS (CTRL) verbs denoting events does not take ERG ('cA'). As mentioned earlier, even verbs with weak transitivity such as 'find', 'know', etc., are considered cEA – or require ERG marking. Whether a verb takes ERG or not is obscured in some cases by the non-obligatoriness of constituents and the formal identity of ERG/INS with GEN:

\[
\begin{align*}
(06a) & \quad \text{kho rang gis nga'i deb de brlags-bzhag/} \\
& \quad 3-AG \quad 1-GEN \quad \text{book DEF lost-INFER} \\
& \quad \text{He lost my book.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(06b) & \quad \text{kho rang gi deb de brlags song/} \\
& \quad 3-GEN \quad \text{book DEF lost-PFV-GEN} \\
& \quad \text{His book got lost [by somebody].}
\end{align*}
\]

On first view, the system seems to be one of '(syntactic) ergativity', in that 'transitivity' decides about ERG application (Kelzang Gyarme 1992: 12):

\[
\begin{align*}
(07a) & \quad \text{nga tshos rig gnas sbyang/} \\
& \quad 1-PL:ERG \quad \text{culture study:INT} \\
& \quad \text{We will study culture.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(07b) & \quad \text{nga tsho grong gseb tu 'gro/} \\
& \quad 1-PL \quad \text{village-LOC} \quad \text{go} \\
& \quad \text{We will go to the village.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(07c) & \quad \text{blo bzang da dung yang gnyid khug bsad 'dug/} \\
& \quad \text{Lobzang now still asleep stays-DISJ} \\
& \quad \text{Lobzang is still asleep. (Poczik & Rikha 1984: 21)}
\end{align*}
\]

Semantically, the first phrase describes a volitional action, in the other sentences, the verbs are construed as events and states, respectively; consequently, an AG marker is used in action construals, not for (agentless) events and states. The ERG marker can be omitted in strongly transitive settings, however. The mover can also be seen as an agentive semantic role. Therefore, in Tibetan, mover verbs (and a few other kinds of verbs) can have ERG marked roles in the perfective aspect, if volition is implied (cf. Chang & Chang 1980: 17). Perfective (accomplished) aspect is more likely to imply an agent in that the action has been successfully performed. Ergative with mover verbs, however, is said to be more often omitted than with other verbs (cf. Goldstein & Nornang 1970: 62, 100; but Tournadre (1996: 197f) states that speakers usually reject the variant without ERG except for certain contexts of 'non-volitional travelling'. To conclude, this is clearly a semantic application of the ERG

\footnote{The examples of Kelzang Gyarme with inflected verb forms but no AUX are obviously normative written style. It seems as if this type of transitivity-based ERG application is normatively preferred.}
marker (‘volition’). On the other hand, the ERG seems to be indiscriminately used in transitive patterns, without taking into consideration the semantic agenthood – even involuntary perception verbs are construed with ERG-ABS patterns (cf. Chang & Chang 1980; ...; Agha 1993: 1a). Since this includes EXP roles, one can assume some degree of grammaticalization of ERG with bivalent verbs. Cf.

(08) ngas kho rang la bglas pa yin/
    1:ERG 3-ALL looked-NS-CONJ  
I looked at him.

ngas kho rang mthong byung/
    1:ERG 3 see-1:GOAL  
I saw him.

In other words, when mapping the default ERG use on a semantic verb classification scheme, we find a far-reaching application of ERG over strongly and weakly transitive verbs (cf. Tsunoda 1985: 388) – a typical case of ergativity. On the other hand, the AUX marking is different in these weakly transitive cases lacking an agent; byung usually applies with DAT marked (1st person) participants. Thus, there is some meaning change involved, reducing the function of the ERG marker to the feature of ‘distinctive case marking’. But, as can be seen in the causative (controllable) example with ‘look’, in such cases, the ALL case is applied to the objects, semantically being LOCATIONS/GOALS, not patients. This is, by the way, identical to the English pattern. The ERG marker is usually not omitted with weakly transitive verbs. ERG applies also to certain ‘intransitive’ verbs in certain contexts, or to verbs with apparently unintentional meanings. In these contexts again, ERG carries the meaning of volition/intention of the participant, cf. (ex. from Goldstein et al. 1991: 84)

(09a) khos nyal ba red/
    3:ERG sleep-NS-DISJ  
He slept. (he went in order to sleep).

(09b) kho guyid khug pa red/
    3 sleep-NS-DISJ  
He slept. (he fell asleep)

(09c) ngas deb klog bzhin par guyid khug byung/
    1:ERG book read-PRG-NS:ILL sleep-1:GOAL  
I fell asleep while reading the book.

In the third example, ERG may be triggered by the verb ‘read’, but the participant is not repeated in the ABS case for ‘fall asleep’. Ellipsis of coreferent participants is observed with ERG/ABS neutralization, while an identical participant with ALL/ABS case roles is usually mentioned twice, cf.:  

(10a) khong nang la bsdad nas chos byed pa red/
    3:HON at:home stay-ABL dharma do-NS-DISJ  
He stays at home and [he] does his religious practice. (Chonjore 2003: 247)

(10b) A ma lag kyis nag byams po ma gnang pa’i skabs la nga
    mother-ERG 1:ALL nice NEG-do:HON-NS:GEN time-ALL 1
    ngu ba red/  
When my mother did not show affection to me, I used to cry. 
(Chonjore 2003: 245)

However, many examples can be found (in Spoken Central Tibetan) where ERG marking seems not to be required, although the verb would qualify as transitive, controllable, or as an action verb. In Chonjore 2003, verbs such as ‘work’ (p. 192), ‘eat’ (pp. 190, 276, 280, etc.),
'look' (p. 227), 'do exercise' (p. 228), etc. are construed without ERG, or are mentioned both with ERG and ABS. Chonjore's (pp. 275ff.) explanation seems to view the ERG as an emphatic marker (cf. also Schmidt 1834, Saxena 1995); Chonjore (cf. also Denwood 1999: 196ff.) proposes that ERG applies, e.g., if one asks a who question or replies to such a question: the question puts the focus on the agent. The pragmatic value of ERG in focal or emphatic use is also reported in other contributions on Lhasa Tibetan, cf. (Denwood 1999: 211):

\[(11a)\] khong zhal lag bzhes kyi 'dug/
3:HON meal:HON take:HON-VC-DISJ He is having a meal.

\[(11b)\] zhal lag khong gis bzhes kyi
meal:HON 3:HON-ERG take:HON-VC-DISJ It's he who is having a meal.

Although the verb 'eat' involves both an acting participant and an affected object (not a patient, however), it does not seem to trigger ERG marking, at least in certain contexts. In Shigatse Tibetan, it is a cEA verb (controllable, i.e., with ERG-ABS pattern); Goldstein & Norgang 1978: 65, 75 report the same for Lhasa Tibetan. Chonjore 2003, however, gives many examples throughout his textbook of za/zas 'eat' without ERG (e.g., pp. 190, 243, 276, 280); and so does Denwood (1999: 173, 196, 211), cf.:

\[(12a)\] kho kha lag zas byas ngas khor kha par btang pa yin/
When he had eaten, I telephoned him. (Denwood 1999: 173)

\[(12b)\] nga 'bras dang tshal zas pa yin/
1 rice-SOC vegetables eat:PFV-NS-CONJ
I ate rice and vegetables (Chonjore 2003: 243)

These are the two extreme viewpoints: grammaticalized ERG (transitivity, aspectual split) or facultative, emphatic ERG (fluidity). Additionally, the aspectual split is a gradual phenomenon: perfective has obligatory ERG, imperfective has facultative ERG, and future tense (intention/wish) usually is not ERG-marked. Cf.

\[(13a)\] ngas bod skad slob sbyong byas pa yin/
1:ERG Tibetan study do:PFV-NS-EQU:CONJ I have studied Tibetan.

\[(13b)\] nga(s) bod skad slob sbyong byed kyi yod/

\[(13c)\] nga bod skad slob sbyong byed kyi yin/
1:ABS Tibetan study do:IPV-VC-EQU:CONJ I will study Tibetan.

ERG can occur with FUT aspect, however, thereby having an emphatic meaning; it is an anticipation of the volitional and successful acting, a decision to act; cf.

\[(14)\] ngas tog tsam nyo gi yin/
1:ERG abit buy-VC-CONJ I will buy a little.

This split ERG system can distinguish further degrees of volition. ERG in intentional ('future') phrases distinguishes volition; since the auxiliary expresses volition already, ERG and ABS can interact with the CONJ/DISJ AUX (ex. from Denwood 1999: 137ff.; cf. also Chang & Chang 1980: 17):
09. The case markers of Tibetan

(15a) sang nyin ngas las ka 'di byed kyi yin/
tomorrow 1:ERG work DEM do-VC-CONJ
I shall do this work tomorrow (of my free will).

(15b) sang nyin nga las ka 'di byed kyi red/
tomorrow 1 work DEM do-VC-DISJ
I shall do this work tomorrow (whether I like it or not).

In connection with the CONJ/DISJ pattern, one can have various nuances of volition and intention; cf. (ex. from Denwood 1999: 135):

(16a) ngas byed kyi yin/
1:ERG do-VC-CONJ
I shall do it. (voluntarily)

(16b) ngas byed kyi red/
1:ERG do-VC-DISJ
I shall do it. (I have no option)

(16c) khong gis byed kyi red/
3-ERG do-VC-DISJ
He shall do it. (DISJ only)

(16d) ngas lHa sa la yin cig min cig 'gro gi yin/
1:ERG Lhasa-ALL absolutely go:PRS-VC-CONJ
I will certainly [one day] go to Lhasa. (Tournadre 1996: 198)

The interaction of ERG with CONJ/DISJ forms is also found in other aspects/tenses; Chang & Chang (1980: 18) give examples for this interaction in perfective aspect. It can be seen from these examples that CONJ verb forms and ERG do not form agreement patterns. They interact however; in some cases, ERG seems to express agentivity with or without volition, but sometimes, it seems to express volition – when volition is not expressed by a CONJ AUX form. Thus, ERG also has discourse functions (Tournadre 1996). In other cases, ERG expresses control in an event which is in principle uncontrolled (DISJ). Thus, in certain contexts, VOLTION, CONTROL, or PURPOSE may be encoded as ERG, as in the example with bsdad 'stay': ‘special’ places to stay require a special volitional decision by the actor, so that ERG marking is necessary (cf. Chang & Chang 1980: 22).

The ERG can also mark volitional AG which are subordinated (and thus nominalized) (cf. Denwood 1999: 201):

(17) mi stag gis bsdad pa cig ...
man tiger-ERG kill:PFV-NS INDEF ...
A man who was killed by a tiger ...

Single verbs can show divergent behavior with respect to ERG marking. The verbs ‘smell’, contrary to other perception verbs, has an EXP subject in Lhasa Tibetan (cf. Chang & Chang 1980: 31). Similarly, the verb ‘know’ is only weakly transitive: the main role is an EXP (‘the one who knows’), and the affected entity (PAT or ABS) is only weakly affected, if at all. The event construal in Spoken Central Tibetan, however, can refer to unaffected or more affected

117 The Dzongkha verb bsou ‘smell’, however, has an ERG-ABS pattern (van Driem 1998: 317), and similarly, Themchen (gama nam) ( dri ma snam) ‘smell (a smell)’ is mentioned as controllable verb with ERG-DAT pattern (Haller 2004: 111, ex. 434).
participants and leads to ERG application in certain contexts, but is also reported with ABS (Denwood 1999: 173, 186):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(18a)</th>
<th>khyed rang gis bla ma bsod nams ngo mkhyen gyi yod pas/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2HON-ERG</td>
<td>lama Sonam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know lama Sonam?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(18b)</th>
<th>khong bod skad yag po mkhyen gyi ’dug/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:HON</td>
<td>Tibet speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He knows Tibetan well. (Denwood 1999: 186)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case, one might argue that the question involves a stronger affectedness of the EXP-agent, but this is only a continuation of ad-hoc explanations. This seemingly unpredictable or unruly behavior of ERG marking can only be explained in terms of an interference of both semantic case marking and distinctive case marking: ERG marks agents (and topical experiencers), and it does so especially in those cases where another interpretation would also be possible. This aspect may explain why there is ‘case fluctuation’ (Zeisler 2004: 258) in Tibetan: the ERG marker has both agentive and pragmatic value (volition) (cf. DeLancey 1990: 289), and the distinctiveness of roles is especially crucial for case application.

Finally, due to the non-obligatory use of ERG and ABS, which are in fact cases of verb orientation with neutral verbs (i.e., verbs which do not change their form when their orientation is changed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(19)</th>
<th>kho bsad song/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 kill:PFV PFV:GEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He was killed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This leads back to the above-mentioned dichotomy of CAUS/RES (c/nc, etc.) verb pairs. But although CAUS verbs do have a semantic AG participant, they do not always trigger ERG application, or they can omit the AG role. Due to the structure of SAE, sentences with CAUS verbs and without an explicit AG are frequently translated as passives in European languages (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: App., xi). This is, however, not so much an inherent property of Tibetan, but rather one of the translation; cf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(20a)</th>
<th>khong lam seng sman khang la khrid pa red/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3HON quickly hospital-ALL bring-NS-DISJ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He was quickly brought to the hospital.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(20b)</th>
<th>khong tshos khong lam seng sman khang la khrid pa red/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3HON PL:ERG he quickly hospital-ALL bring-NS-DISJ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They brought him quickly to the hospital.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering what has been said by earlier authors and what has been recollected here, it is clear that ERG marking in Tibetan is obscured by a huge number of parameters. This explains in fact all theoretical approaches seen so far, and it makes us understand why finally all authors shift to verb classes and take the fluidity of the ERG for granted.

**09.02.02. Instrumental**

With inanimate nouns, the particle kyis marks the instrument; cf. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 16):
09. The case markers of Tibetan

(21a) bzo bas 'phrul 'khor gyis lcags rdung/
worker:ERG machine-INS iron beat

The worker beats the iron with the machine.

Mental attitudes can also be instruments of actions – a metaphorization to the domain of thought/mind:

(22a) nga tshos blo gcig sms gcig gis mi dmangs la zhab 'degs zhu/
1:PL:ERG intellect one mind one-INS people-ALL serve

We serve the people with equal spirit. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 16)

(22b) bdag gis gus pas phyag 'tshal-lo/
1:ERG devotion:INS HON-bow-down-FIN


Again, the missing (non-explicit) AG may lead speakers of SAE to a passive inter-pretation of the sentences with INS (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 17):

(23) sta RES shing good/
axe:INS wood cut
pir gyis ri mo 'bri/
brush-INS picture draw

The wood is being cut with an axe. The picture is drawn with a paintbrush.

INS is also a marker for MANNER. These cases would most frequently be rendered as adverbs in SAE – therefore this function has been called 'adverbializer', although the construction in Tibetan does not distinguish this translation problem (e.g., rlung gis 'by the wind', and Hur brtson gis 'diligently'; cf. Goldstein et al. 1991: 132). Kelzang Gyurme (1992: 17) calls these cases 'INS independent of an AG' (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 16):

(24) dal gyis 'gro lhun gyis grub
slow-INS go spontaneous-INS achieve
walk slowly achieved spontaneously

Therefore it is not surprising that these cases lead to word formation (from frozen phrases) in several instances in Written Tibetan (Hahn 1994: 62 (= 1985: 55)). Similarly, few postpositions are construed with AG/INS. They all have to do with instrumental meaning, thus being emphatic INS formations (cf. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 18f.), such as stabs kyis 'by means of', dbang gis 'because of', etc..

09.02.03. INS with verbs

Additionally to these case-marking functions, case particles in Tibetan apply also to sentences, i.e., they occur after verbs; this is common in many languages (cf. Mithun 1991: 167). In the case of ERG/INS, the verb has to be nominalized, so that we have to deal primarily with the forms pas and bas (morphophonological variants of pa plus ERG/INS -s – phonologically [ps:] and [w̃s:] in Lhasa Tibetan). The meaning of the particle is that of reason or cause (causalis); thus, the most common translation is 'because'.

(25a) nga la dngul byor bas be se kob la 'gro thub kyi yin/
1-ALL money receive-NS:INS cinema-ALL go-can-NS-CONJ

Because I have received money, I will be able to go to the cinema.

(25b) stag mang po yod pas ngas gcig bsd pa yin/
tiger many EX:CONJ NS:INS 1:ERG one kill:PFV-NS-EQU:CONJ

Because [there] were many tigers, I killed one. (Goldstein 1973: 51)

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These examples are congruent with Classical Tibetan (ex. taken from Hahn 1994: 61 & 133 (= 1985: 54 & 119ff.)). The auxiliary translation 'by V-ing' can account for all more elegant translations. In negative sentences, due to the fact that the intention gives no results, AG/INS may also be translated as 'although', 'and', 'in that' (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 20). Cf. from the Jātaka "The Mahāsattva’s giving his body to a tigress" (ex., e.g., in Hahn 1994: 158):

(26) de dag shin tu dad pa’i sens brant par gyur nas/
DEM-DUAL very faith-NS:GEN mind stable-NS:ILL become-ABL
becom ldan ‘das kyi’ ci rigs par chos bstan pas
Bhagavat-ERG what right-NS:ILL dharma taught-NS:INS
rdul dang dri ma zad de/ dgra bcom par gyur to/
dust-SOC defilement finish CONT arhat:NS:ILL become FIN
After they had developed complete confidence, in that the Bhagavat taught them the necessary dharmas, their obscurations and defilements came to an end, and they became arhats.

09.03. The dative/locative/experiencer

Apart from the allative la, Tibetan grammar distinguishes 7 locative forms, called the la don in indigenous grammar, namely la, na, and tu/du/ru/-r/su. In present day Tibetan, la and -r are the most frequently used forms. The former inessive na is nowadays mostly used as a marker of subordination (conditional) and does no longer occur with noun phrases in Lhasa Tibetan. It seems that especially tu (etc.) has some pragmatic meaning, representing probably a more ‘archaic’, written, learned style. The frequent replacement of la by suffixed -r, followed by the phonological process of r-vocalization, leads to a mere lengthening of the preceding vowel, which is perceptually very similar to zero-marking. Cf.

(27) nga Ha sar ‘gro gi yin/
ŋä lásà to-gi-jì
1 Lhasa:LOC go-VC-CONJ
I will go to Lhasa.

09.03.01. DAT with nouns

Historically, la is a locative, cf. phrag pa la ‘khur ba’ ‘carry on the shoulder’ (Hahn 1994: 95 (= 1985: 86)); in Spoken Tibetan, it can mark the location of an event, although for spatial locatives, other nominal adpositions are used. Predominantly, la has other functions: It marks the possessor in sentences with an EX verb, also metaphorically:

(28a) nga la deb yag po zhig yod/
1-DAT book good INDEF EX:CONJ
I have a good book.

(28b) khang pa ’di-la khang mig bu cu yod pa red/
house DEM-DAT room 10 EX:GEN:DISJ
This house has 10 rooms.

It does not occur with non-controllable verbs which (semantically) require patients (which are never conjunct with the event); on the other hand, it marks locations of the body that hurt (ALL function):
09. The case markers of Tibetan

Patterns of ABS + ALL (ABS – EXP) exist as well ('object-goal' relation, cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 23; 'affective-benefactive construction', cf. Tournadre 1996: 75). These constructions have variously attracted the attention of (early) researchers in search of an ACC, especially if the SAE reference language (i.e., English or French) prefers to construe a transitive verb (NOM-ACC pattern). Some occurrences of DAT, however, are classified differently from the English example; consider the following case marking patterns:

(30a) btsan dbang ring lugs la ngo rgol byed/
harsh:force-worldview-ALL revolt CAUS
to fight imperialism (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 23)

(30b) kho rang гnam гru la zhed snang 'dug/
3 planes-DAT fear appear EX:DISJ
He has a fear of planes. (Goldstein et al. 1991)

Written (Classical) Tibetan:

(31a) гnam la kha 'bab rta-la 'bab
sky-DAT snow fall horse-DAT comedown
Snow falls from the sky [He] descends from the horse (Hahn 1994: 97)

In event construals with 3 participants, the ALL case marks the third participant:

(32) ngas slob phrug de la sgrung zhig bshad-pa-yin/
I:ERG pupil DEF ALL story INDEF tell-NS-CONJ
I told the pupil a story.

The experiencer (EXP) role is expressed by la in sentences with so-called 'experiencer subjects' only in very few cases; usually, this is a pattern for the ERG. Certain verbs with the general meaning 'receive, get', however, mark the main participant with ALL:

(33a) kho rang la khyed rang gi yi ge 'di dga' bo'i ngang nas
3-ALL 2-GEN letter DEM joy NS:GEN with:ABL
'byor-song/
receive-PFV:GEN
He received your letter with great joy.

(33b) ngar byung/
1:ALL PFV:GOAL
I got (it). (Losang Thonden 1984: 230)

Cf. Themchen Tibetan (Haller 2004: 132f):

(34a) шtandzon-a jay o-mdzor-t'a
rta mgrim la yi ge 'byor thal/
Tamdrin-DAT letter receive-NVOL:EVID
Tamdrin received a letter. (= Tamdrin bekam einen Brief.) (ex. 634)

(34b) jay e-na lax-a ngs'ot-t'a.
yi ge nga'i lag la 'byor thal/
letter 1:GEN hand-DAT get:PFV-NVOL:EVID
I received a letter (= Ich bekam einen Brief.) (ex. 637a)

Some other events also imply an EXP (omitted agent!):
The case markers of Tibetan

(35) khon la dngos su skyon brjod byas pa red/
3-ALL openly critique done-NS-EQU/DISJ
He was openly criticized. (Losang Thonden 1984: 126)

la in combination with zer (HON zhu), 'being called', marks the bearer (experiencer) of a name:

(36) nga’i ming la bsod nams zer gyi yod/
1GEN name-DAT Sonam call-VC-EX:CONJ
My name is Sonam.

This holds true for all verbs of saying, such as bshad 'speak, tell', gsung 'HON:say', zhus 'tell'; in all these cases, the DAT/ALL/EXP equally marks the recipient or experiencer of the action of telling, with an agitative main participant:

(37) ngar gsungs rogs gnang/ ngas khyed rang la zhus-pa-yin/
1:ALL say-please-HON 1:ERG 2-ALL say-PFV-NS-CONJ
Please tell me! (But) I have told you (already)! (Reisinger 1987: 42)

Some samples of ALL are a bit suspicious. Losang Thonden (1984: 184) gives the following data, which, however, in other sources are written as a GEN; both forms ‘di plus ALL in -r and GEN ‘di’i are pronounced alike [də]; thus it may merely be an orthographic problem of Spoken Tibetan:

(38) ‘dir gong ga tshod red/ ‘di’i gong ga tshod red/
DEM:ALL price how much DISJ DEM:GEN price how much DISJ
What is the cost of this? What is the cost of this?

It is variously claimed (cf. Goldstein et al. 1991, Losang Thonden 1984) that the verb (or particle) myong ‘experience’ triggers DAT use, but this does not seem to be the case. It has an ERG(ABS)-ABS pattern, and marks locatives with ALL.

(39a) nga kham la ‘gro myong/
1 Kham-ALL go-experience
I have already (once) been in Kham. (Tournadre 1996: 238)

(39b) kho rang tsho btson khang nang la dka’ngal myangs pa red/
3-PL prison IN hardship exper:PFV-NS-DISJ
They experienced hardships in prison. (cf. Losang Thonden 1984: 101)

Haller (2004: 132) for Themchen Tibetan marks ‘DAT’ (which probably relates to byung in this example), but the DAT form [ŋa] is homophonous with ABS (Haller 2004: 62):

(40) ŋa nat to ɸung-mp Böyle-
ŋa nad de byung myong A/
1 illness DEF get-exp.-VOL:EVID
I have had this illness [already].

To sum up, the ALL case marker is used semantically for EXP roles, but only rarely as EXP subjects. The system of Tibetan case marking seems to consist of three semantic cases, AG, ABS, EXP, with two formal markers, ERG and ALL. ALL, contrary to ERG and ABS, is only rarely used in EXP subject position; instead, these cases are also covered by ERG marking. But both ERG and ALL obligatorily mark roles which have to be stressed as being agitative or experiencing, but they are facultative in cases where AG and EXP are self-evident.
09. The case markers of Tibetan

Il existe non seulement une symétrie sémantique entre l’Ag[ent] et le D[atif] qui dé-
signent respectivement l’origine et la fin (ou la finalité) de l’action par rapport au Pa-
tient], mais aussi une symétrie fonctionnelle. En effet, l’ergatif et l’oblique servent par-
fois à créer une emphase respectivement sur l’agent et le patient. [Tournadre 1996: 161]

Tournadre (1996: 161) gives the following minimal pairs for sentences which show how the
non-agentive (inactive) participant of the event can be construed either as an absolute partici-
 tant (ABS) or as a goal (ALL); but the meaning has to do with emphasis, i.e., the case-marked participant is more topical:

(41a) g.yag gzhon pa red/ Yak ride-NS-DISJ
       g.yag la gzhon pa red/ Yak-ALL ride-NS-DISJ
  He rode a yak. It is a yak that he rode.

This is similar to the above-mentioned difference between ERG and ABS use with motion
verbs, whereby in certain contexts emphasis is expressed by the use of ERG (Tournadre 1996:
161):

(42a) kho phyin pa red/  (42b) khos phyin pa red/
     3 gone-NS-DISJ 3:ERG gone-NS-DISJ
  He went. It was he who went.

Thus, emphasis or topic can be marked by word order, or by the application of case markers
which would not occur in normal settings, cf. (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 162):

(43a) blo bzang g.yag gis brdung song/
       Lobzang Yak-ERG hit-GEN:PFV
  Lobzang [received] a hit from the yak.

(43b) g.yag gis blo bzang la brdung song/
       Yak-ERG Lobzang-ALL hit-GEN:PFV
  [It was] Lobzang [who received] a hit from the yak.

This fluid DAT marking probably explains why all early scholars stated that DAT can play
the role of a direct object (cf. Schmidt 1839: 62; Foucaux 1858: 27; Jäschke 1865: 40f.; etc.).

09.03.02. DAT with verbs

la also applies to verbs carrying the meaning of temporal coordination; i.e., it translates basi-
cally as ‘and’, ‘as well as’ (cf. Goldstein et al. 1991: 257).

(44) tshogs pa de'i nang du zhing pa yod la brog pa yang 'dug/
    association DEF:GEN in-ILL farmer EX ALL nomad CONC EX:DISJ
  There are nomads as well as farmers in that association.

09.04. Other (old) locative particles

In the spoken language, la has the variants tu, -r, probably with morphopragmatic differ-
cences in their use. The old inessive na, however, seems to have no longer the meaning of a lo-
09. The case markers of Tibetan

cative; instead, it has only the meaning 'if' (conditional, after verbs). Cf. the meaning of na and la in the following passage (Kalu Rinpoche 1987: 12)\footnote{cf. the French translation of this passage: 'Il n'y aurait pas lieu de s'inquiéter si, au moment de la mort, on disparaissait comme s'étant une flamme soufflée ou comme l'eau s'évapore. Mais l'esprit est vacuifié et le vide ne saurait mourir.' (Kalu Rinpoche n.d.: 21)}

(45) \hspace{1cm} de yang 'chi ba mi rtag pa byung ste/ me shi pa'am/ chu skam pa and so death impermanence got-CONT fire die-NS-or water dry-up
ltar med pa gyur na sla ste/ sens stong pa nyid la 'chi rgyu
like NEG:AUX become-IF easy-CONT mind emptiness-ALL death 'cause'
med de/
NEG:AUX-CONT

If, be there death and impermanence, there would be nothingness, just like extinguishing fire or evaporating water, then it would be easy; but the mind being emptiness cannot die; [...]

The old illative tu and its morphonological forms (du, ru, -r, su), nowadays equivalent to la in Lhasa Tibetan, has mainly two functions in Written Tibetan: illative case (ILL) and the combination of verbs (mainly with nominalizer pa/ba: V+par/bar+V), both between V+AUX (e.g., rdung par byed 'beats', 'is beaten') (cf., e.g., Foucaux 1858: 79) and in verb series (e.g., nyo bar phyin 'went in order to buy') (cf. Goldstein 1991: 106ɕ). Cf.

(46a) ngas kho 'gro (ru) bcug pa yin/
1:ERG 3 go-(ILL) CAUS-NS-CONJ
I made him go. (Denwood 1999: 175)

(46b) yin na yang/ byang phyogs la sla ba brgyad pa nas gangs btang nas/ but north-ALL month eighth-ABL snow fallen-ABL
lo gsar bar du gangs ma bzhus par sdod kyi red/
Losar until snow NEG-melt-NS:ILL stay-VC-DISJ
... but in the north, after snow has fallen from the eighth month (october) [onwards], it stays without melting until Losar (march). (Denwood 1999: 275)

09.05. Ablative

The ABL is the marker of a localistic source or of a local origin.

(47a) nga skye sa bod nas yin/
I birth place Tibet ABL CONJ
I am from Tibet.

In Classical Tibetan, we find two ABL forms, ablative las and elative nas. In Modern Tibetan, their meaning or use has slightly changed: nas has the meaning of ABL and of temporal anteriority when attached to verbs, while las marks the compared element in comparative constructions ('than').

(48a) nga bod nas phyin nas rgya gar la bsdad pa yin/
1 Tibet-ABL come:PFV-ABL India-ALL stay-NS-CONJ
After having come from Tibet, I stayed in India.

(48b) kho rdo rje las yag ga/
3 Dorje-COMP better
He is better than Dorje. (Tournadre 1996: 122)
More interestingly, ABL can replace ERG in some contexts (cf. "[...] mais l'instrumental et l'ablatif sont souvent confondus en tibétain." (Foucault 1858: 99, FN 1)), which is shortly mentioned for the written language in Tournadre (1996: 105ff., 133ff., 153ff.), e.g.:

(49)  
\[
\begin{align*}
gong sa & \quad \text{chen po} & \quad \text{mchod nas} & \quad \text{bka’ slob gnang song/} \\
& \quad \text{highness} & \quad \text{big} & \quad \text{supreme-ABL teaching give:H-PFV-GEN} \\
& \quad \text{His Supreme Highness (i.e., His Holiness, the Dalai Lama) has given a teaching.}
\end{align*}
\]

The shift from ERG to ABL has been observed in other languages and usually involves pragmatic consequences, such as in Samoan, where, in official speeches, ABL instead of ERG has the function to diminish the degree of ascribed volitionality, intent, or control for what has been done. For Tibetan, Tournadre (1996: 134) remarks that this use of ABL is mainly restricted to written language or high registers. In these speech styles, the shift has the function to emphasize the agenticity of important persons.

Incidentally, ABL=ERG morphotactics (ABL/ERG syncretism) is found in Amdo Tibetan and in Newari, as well as in some other Tibetan languages (cf. Tournadre 1996: 134, Genetti 1990, and others), e.g. the Lepcha ABL nun has also AG function (Plaisier, pers. comm.). Interestingly, Tibetan ABL cannot replace ERG in undifferentiatives settings, such as khos phyn pa red/ ‘He went’, a restriction which is probably explained by the original locative meaning of the ABL (cf. khos lHa sa nas dga’ ldan la phyn pa red/ ‘He went from Lhasa to Gaden’). Tournadre (1996: 139) mentions also that metonymic use of ABL can be replaced with ABL, cf.:

(50)  
\[
\begin{align*}
bod & \quad \text{ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang gis/nas bskrun pa} \\
\text{Tibet province people printing house-ERG/ABL printed-NS} \\
\end{align*}
\]

With respect to the INS, a difference in meaning has to be noted: ABL marks the SRC, and INS marks the means (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 154):

(51a)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{blo bzung gis lag pas zin-song/} \\
\text{Lobzang ERG hand:INS hold-GEN:PFV} \\
\text{Lobzang held [him/her] with [his] hand.}
\end{align*}
\]

(51b)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{blo bzung gis lag pa nas zin song/} \\
\text{Lobzang-ERG hand-ABL hold-GEN:PFV} \\
\text{Lobzang held [him/her] at [his/her] hand.}
\end{align*}
\]

ABL with verbs has the meaning of temporal anteriority, cf. (Kalu Rinpoche 1987: 12):

(52)  
\[
\begin{align*}
‘khrul snang & \quad \text{mgon zhen can gyi lus sems kyi tshogs pa gyes te/} \\
\text{illusions manifest att.-poss.-GEN body mind GEN collection split CONT} \\
\text{ya bral du song nas/} & \quad \text{slar yang nyon mongs pa dang/} & \quad \text{las dang} \\
\text{separate-ILL PFV-ABL furthermore afflictions-SOC karma-SOC} \\
\text{bag chags sog/} & \quad \text{rgyu rkyen sna tshogs pa las/} & \quad \text{gro ba drug} \\
\text{tendencies-ETC cause cond. various-ABL beings 6} \\
\text{gang rung du skye bar’gyur la/} & \quad \text{what-suitable-ILL born-NS:ILL-become-ALL} \\
\text{When the collection of body and mind – which is an illusory appearance [to which we] are attached – is split up, and after it has been dispersed, one will be [re]born, [in dependence] from the various causes and conditions [such as] the emotional afflictions, the karma, the habitual tendencies, etc., in whatever [type of] birth [= sentient being] is appropriate.}
\end{align*}
\]
09.06. Attributive/genitive/relative

09.06.01. Attributive

In Tibetan, attributes can be posed left and right to the noun, but the position on the left needs a marker. Therefore, the Tibetan GEN can be characterized as the left-hand attribute marker. In Tibetan linguistic terminology, it is called ‘brel gzhi ston pa,’ ‘marker of relation’. Cf. (left ex. from Denwood 1999: 201):

(53a) \(\text{mi \ stag \ gis \ bsd \ pa} \ \text{cig} \ldots\)
\(\text{man \ tiger-ERG \ kill:PFV-NS \ INDEF \ ...} \quad \text{A man [killed by a tiger] ...}\)

(53b) \(\text{mi \ chen \ po \ de} \quad \text{man \ big \ DEF}\)
\(\text{The big man}\)

(53c) \(\text{stag \ gis \ bsd \ pa'yi} \ \text{mi \ cig} \ldots\)
\(\text{tiger-ERG \ kill:PFV-NS:GEN \ man \ INDEF \ ...} \quad \text{A man [killed by a tiger] ...}\)

(53d) \(\text{chen \ po'yi} \ \text{mi \ de} \quad \text{big:GEN \ man \ DEF}\)
\(\text{The big man}\)

As can be seen here, the syntactic positions for ‘modifier’ and for ‘complement’ can both take any type of attribute, but the ‘complement’ position is marked with GEN.

Additionally, the GEN can subordinate verbs (sentences), often adding an adversative meaning (see below). Finally, various attributes can be coordinated with one GEN marker (group inflection), cf. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 7)

(54) \(\text{nang \ don \ phun \ sum \ tshogs \ la \ gsal \ zing \ snyan \ pa'yi} \ sgrung \ yig} \ldots\)
\(\text{inner \ meaning \ together \ assembly \ ALL \ clear \ CONC \ simple \ NS:GEN \ story}\)
\(\text{A simple and interesting story with an instructive meaning.}\)

With verbs, GEN usually has adversative meaning (‘although’, ‘contrary’); sometimes it is necessary to assume concessive, restricting, temporal, conditional, or causal functions as well (cf. Hahn 1994: 133 (= 1985: 120)).

09.06.02. Confusions between GEN and ERG

Tibetan has many nominal adpositions of the type N-GEN+ADPOS-ALL/ABL/INS (cf. 08.11.); Tournadre (1996: 155f) reports on an overlapping use of GEN and ERG in few cases, especially with ADPOS with instrumental meaning, e.g., sa ‘gul gyis(s) rkyen gyis ‘because of the earthquake’; this is clearly a kind of double-marking which is also favoured by the homophony of GEN and INS. On the other hand, in some cases, a human participant can relate either to the action or to the main object of the action, cf. (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 157):

(55) \(\text{nga'i/ngas} \ \text{yi ge} \ \text{bris \ pa \ yin/} \quad \text{nga'i/ngas} \ \text{bsam \ pa \ la} \ldots\)
\(1:GEN/1:ERG \ \text{letter} \ \text{write:PFV-NS:CONJ} \quad 1:GEN/1:ERG \ \text{thought} \ \text{ALL} \ldots\)
\(\text{I have written a letter.} \quad \text{in my opinion} \ldots\)

This is another clear case of semantic case marking, since the ERG marker can depend on a verb form even if it is used nominally (ngas bsam pa la). Moreover, GEN and ERG marking identical participants (e.g., ‘I’ + ‘my’) are usually exclusively used (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 157):
It may be suspected that this rule, the avoidance of ERG and GEN marking of the same participant in one phrase is mainly due to the homophony of the forms, in combination with the general syntactic non-obligatoriness of all participants.

09.07. Sociative

The Tibetan comitative or sociative (SOC) dang interacts with some possessive verbs in Written Tibetan (e.g., with ldan). It may be more conventionally seen as ‘and’, ‘together with’ in the spoken language. dang after verbs is an imperative particle. The particle dang has INS function in Ladakhi (where it also has the form nang); i.e., Ladakhi has a separate agentive case marker.

09.08. Topic

The Tibetan topic marker (TOP) ni is predominantly used in Written Tibetan. It usually replaces other case markers. The use of the topic marker is rare, however, and seems to be restricted to certain dialects and to the written language. It is described for some dialects, such as Kham Tibetan (Häsler 1999: 235):

As for the fieldwork, I like such work a lot.

09.09. Nominal postpositions

As mentioned above, Tibetan – among other Tibeto-Burman languages (and among other language families) – has the specific means to form new case markers from nominal adpositions (cf. Lehmann 1982, 1995), cf. English examples such as ‘by means of ...’, ‘in reach of ...’, ‘with respect to’ which are of the same quality. Nominal adpositions continually grammaticalize over time; first, the ADPOS are independent lexemes, but soon, they obey certain restrictions (cf. ‘with a *big respect to ...’), until finally, they lose their still independent status and become a grammatical particle or affix. In Basque, a number of case markers clearly show their diachronic descent from GEN-NomAdpos constructions, but are nowadays analyzed as one form, e.g. -(a)rentzat, ‘for’, which is composed of GEN (a)ren and *tzat. While some languages (e.g. in Africa) develop such markers from (serial) verbs (cf. Heine & Claudi & Hünnemeyer 1991), in Tibeto-Burman languages these markers are derived from nouns. In Tibetan, a regular pattern of ‘N GEN NomAdpos ALL/ABL/ILL’ can form new, mainly locative cases, e.g.
There is also variation in the use of GEN and ALL without apparent reason, however; cf. (Kalu Rimpoché 1987: 16):

(59) dud 'uro nʈ byʦnʌs nʐ sʦ pʐ rʌyʐ mtʃo'ʈ nʐnʌ dʐnʌ 'oʌ nʐ dʈvnʈls TOP d̠pɛh LOC dɨ̠ll oc̠ʈn:GEN-̱n-SOC ʈəɛh und̠ə sʈnʌ pʐ ʈṉmʈls TOP d̠pɛh LOC dɨ̠ll nâgʈ-ETC PL-ṭIN or unəerneath the earth, like the Nâgas, etc..

After all, the development of new locatives frees the marker la to resume its grammatical function as DAT; whereas newly formed case markers take over locative functions. Nominal adpositions are usually marked with la, but they can in fact be specified by different case markers, specifically by ABL and INS; in these cases, however, the case marker adds some specific meaning:119

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 01</th>
<th>N + kyɹ bar la</th>
<th>N + bar nas</th>
<th>N + rkyen kyis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in the middle of</td>
<td>from the middle of</td>
<td>by means of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the NP marked with an ADPOS is in an attributive position, the GEN replaces the ALL:

(60) chos kyɹ skor la gsunɹ pa chos kyɹ skor kyɹ dɾis pa dhrma GEN about ALL talk dhrma-GEN about-GEN question talk about the dhrma

This leads to an almost regular pattern GEN+ADPOS+CAS. The la derivation GEN+ADPOS+ALL obviously is a kind of base form (cf. Chonjore 2003: 107f.) which is much more frequent and also more general in meaning; while ALL la does not add any new meaning, the ABL nas form adds an additional SRC meaning; cf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 02</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khanɡ pa da'ɾi bduɾ na khanɡ pa de'ɾi bduɾ nas</td>
<td>behind the house from behind the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khanɡ pa da'ɾi 'krham la khanɡ pa de'ɾi 'khrum nas</td>
<td>beside the house from beside the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khanɡ pa da'ɾi thob la khanɡ pa de'ɾi thob nas</td>
<td>on the house from the top of the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khanɡ pa de'ɾi nang la khanɡ pa de'ɾi nang nas</td>
<td>in the house from inside the house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grammaticalization of words into cases or complementizers is an ongoing process in the language. But all these relatively new function words have mainly semantic, often locative, meanings. Cf. (Lobsang Thonden 1984: 125f.):

(61a) nga tsho'ɾi khanɡ pa dpe mdzod khanɡ gi 'khris la yod/ 1-PL:GEN house library-GEN near-ALL EX:CONJ Our house is near the library.

(61b) grong gaeɾ de ri gnyis kyɾi bar dbrag la chags yod/ village DEF mount two-GEN between-ALL situated-EX:GEN The village is situated between two hills.

(61c) skad cha 'diɾi shugs la go rgyu yod/ speech DEM:GEN behind-ALL indir:meaning EX:GEN There is an indirect meaning behind this talk.

119 Other dialects, such as South Mustang distinguish also the old locative particles khanɡ pa'u nang la translates as ‘in the house’, while khanɡ pa'u nang tu means ‘into the house’ (Kretschar 1995: 74).
09. The case markers of Tibetan

09.10. Other particles

The importance of the particles mentioned above for the question of Tibetan ERG became decreasingly less important. They have been listed in order to complete the description of the system. But Tibetan has many more (more or less grammaticalized) particles many of which have been derived from nominal adpositions (e.g. steng ‘on’) or from verbs (e.g. byas ‘done’). Particularly interesting is the ‘etcetera’ particle (ETC) sog which seems to be an areal phenomenon of Central Asia (cf. Unterbeck 1993: 18ff.). Cf. (Schmidt 1839: 184):

(62) Ha klu mi sog kyis sangs rgyas la phyag byas\(^{130}\) so/
  god naga man ETC ERG Buddha-ALL worship:HON FIN
  The gods, nagas, men, and so on worshipped the Buddha.

09.11. Diachrony of case markers

The diachrony of the Tibetan case markers has been shortly mentioned in Hahn (1994: 156f. [1971]), referring ‘to the works of Walter Simon’. DeLancey 1984c follows suit, and LaPolla 1995 reconstructs a proto-Bodish ERG marker, but no common proto-Tibeto-Burman marker. The Tibetan case marking system is transparent enough to lead to diachronic hypotheses: Historically, the AG/INS marker is said to have been derived from a nominal adposition with GEN: X+GEN(\(ki\)+s). As mentioned earlier, some dialects have ERG/INS markers such as \(si\) (Balti), \(su\) (Tabo), etc. – i.e., \(s\) without a preceding \(ki\). Conrady (1896: 44) brought forth the interesting hypothesis that ERG \(-s\) and CAUS verb prefix \(s\) may have been coreferent in earlier times (agreement). This would also be compliant with the indigenous description of [causative] verb and ergative phrase being one categorie (\(bdag\)). Thus, whatever the original meaning of this \(s\), the Written Tibetan \(kyis\) obviously correlates with GEN + \(s\).

As for the diachronic development of the markers \(la\), \(na\), \(tu\), it can be hinted to the fact that they show similarity with \(bla\) ‘above’, \(nang\) ‘inside’, \(drung\) ‘near’, and the ABL (\(las\), \(nas\)) can be understood as ancient nominal adpositions \(la/na\) + \(s\). DeLancey (1990: 313) states: “This \(s\) then is clearly a marker of source; it apparently reflects an older motion verb "\(sa\)." – cf. the noun \(sa\), ‘place’. With reference to the conceptual proximity (SRC) of ABL and ERG, it is interesting to see that both ERG and ABL involve an \(s\) element.

The so-called GEN/REL \(kyi\) is said to have been derived from a demonstrative particle \(*\{\}y\) which used to show total assimilation (\(*\{\}y, gi, gyi, kyi\) to the preceding syllable. Dialects, however, do not have \(yi\), but have \(i, i\) instead. The assumed historical development as proposed here, however, has not been ascertained by systematic studies. In historical times, the writing of these particles did almost not change, except for differences in orthography (i.e., morphonology?, see ex. below), and except for the fact that Central Asian manuscripts sometimes have reversed vowel symbols in case particles – a fact which cannot be related to a specific phonological characteristic.

\(^{130}\) recte \(stsal\).
09. The case markers of Tibetan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>case</th>
<th>form</th>
<th>from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>kyi</td>
<td>&lt; DEM yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG/INS</td>
<td>kyis</td>
<td>&lt; GEN kyi + s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>la</td>
<td>&lt; LEX, e.g. bla ‘top’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>&lt; LEX, e.g. nang ‘interior’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>las</td>
<td>&lt; ALL la + s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>nas</td>
<td>&lt; ALL na + s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>du, tu</td>
<td>&lt; LEX, e.g. drung ‘near’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the development of ERG in Tibetan, ERG in its present form is found already in the earliest scriptures of Tibetan (cf. Takeuchi & Takahashi 1994, Takeuchi 1995). Tournadre (1996: 366f.) gives a few examples of early occurrences of ERG, thereby criticizing some interpretations of ERG with ‘intransitive verbs’ (which may well be causative verb forms); interestingly, however, ERG occurs already also with motion verbs, but, as Tournadre remarks, in cases where these verbs have ‘derived meanings’ [which are more CAUS] (ex. from Pelliot tibétain (1287: 205), in Takeuchi & Takahashi 1995: 280, quoted from Tournadre 1996: 366):

(63) khyɔ ‘da’s’ dmaŋ dpon ‘ɔŋgpa̱m/
    2:ERG general come-QU


09.12. Case marking with verbs


| LOC     | → | if/although, when/while/after |
| ABL     | → | when/while/after, because, non-final |
| ALL     | → | purpose                           |
| DAT     | → | purpose                           |
| ERG/INS | → | because, when, while              |

Genetti (1991: 232), applying the "localistic framework" (Diehl 1975), gives this chart of categorical metaphorizations of concepts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>sociative</td>
<td>ergative</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>locative</td>
<td>ablative</td>
<td>allative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>when/while</td>
<td>since (abl.)</td>
<td>until</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical</td>
<td>if</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>purpose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This conceptual pattern is also realized in Tibetan. In the grammaticalization process, the marker passes from a simple to a more abstract domain, sometimes losing its old domain, giving way to new nominal adpositions in the simple domain. This is the case with some of
the above-mentioned case markers which in Modern Tibetan occur exclusively with verbs. This also hints to a historical process of separating these two domains of grammar. Cf.

(64) khyed rang la rtsis pas ‘di’i gong ru piii brgya tham pa red/
    2-ALL calc:PFV-NS:INS DEM:GEN price rupee 100-THAMPA DISJ

Because I have calculated [it] for you, the price is 100 rupees.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

Given these prerequisites, we end up understanding that ERG case marking in Tibetan is dependent on a number of factors which can be subsumed under the heading ‘optional’ case marking. Let us therefore sum up here the most important findings.

10.01. Introduction

Spoken variants of Tibetan have the following structural case markers: an unmarked absolute case (ABS), an ergative/instrumental case (ERG/INS) [ki] (phonological form) = kyi (orthographic form), an allative(locative)/dative case (ALL/DAT) [la] = la. The genitive (attributive) case (GEN) [k] = kyi is (synchronously) formally identical with ERG/INS in many varieties of Tibetan. Furthermore, we find an ablative case (ABL) [nu] = nas, and a sociative (comitative) case marker (SOC) [tʰan] = dang. Various other semantic case meanings are expressed by suffixes, postpositions, or relational nouns (GEN-Adpos-ALL), e.g. illative [nā:] nang (or GEN-nang-la, respectively).

Nonetheless, all these forms can deviate phonologically, morphologically, or morphotactically from the above-quoted forms in single dialects (cf. 01.04.07.). To give an example, (Leh) Ladakhi has two distinct markers for ERG/GEN [i] und INS [naŋ] (cf. Koshal 1979: 73), whereby one INS marker is diachronically related to the Tibetan SOC dang. 121

One peculiar feature of Tibetan case grammar is the fact that ERG is ‘optional’ in most variants. This phenomenon, well-known since the first grammars, has been thoroughly described for Lhasa Tibetan (Chang & Chang 1980) and has influenced the discussion on the status of the Tibetan ERG ever since (Chang & Chang 1980, DeLancey 1990, Saxena 1991; Agha 1993; Tournadre 1996). In this contribution, an overview of ERG case marking patterns will be given, as far as it can be deduced from various descriptions.

10.02. Fluid S-marking

Tibetan ERG marking is morphological (i.e., ERG is expressed by suffixes or attached particles). Transitive verbs can occur with or without ERG subjects, and ‘control[able]’ intransitive verbs such as [tʰi] = sdoṅ/bsdad ‘stay’, [tʰiɲ] = thon ‘come out’, [tʰi] = ‘go’, [tʰi] = phyin ‘went’ take ABS as well as ERG subjects (cf. Chang & Chang 1980: 16f., Saxena 1991: 112). Based on a distinction of various motivating factors for ‘transitivity’ (Hopper & Thompson 1980, Tsunoda 1985, McGregor 1992: 284ff.), Tibetan ERG qualifies for being an Agent (AG) and Actor (ACT) marking device; both agents and actors actually ‘act’, but actors do so without being embedded in an AG-PAT-relationship (cf. McGregor 1998: 500). According to Dixon (1979: 80ff.), this has been classified as ‘fluid S-marking’. Thus, ERG marking in Tibetan seems to imply volition, control, or intention, as can be seen from the following examples (Chang & Chang 1980: 17):

However, this description does not seem to fully account for the real distinctions; in Kenhat Ladakhi (to which Leh belongs), ERG/INS/GEN are described as being identical, SOC [tāŋ] being used for INS arguments, not ‘real’ instruments. In Shamskhat Ladakhi, the situation is again different (cf. Zeisler 2007).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

(01) ŋɛ̀ ʃ/h.superʈorɛ̄ɛ̄sʐ̄ʐ̄ chĩpʌ yĩ̠ĩ̠ ʃ/h.superʈorɛ̄ɛ̄sʐ̄ʐ̄ chĩpʌ re̠è

1:ERG  Lhʈsʈ:ALL  gone-NS-CONJ  1  Lhʈsʈ:ALL  gone-NS-DISJ

I went to Lhasa (myself).  I went (= was taken) to Lhasa.

With ‘future tense’ (intention), ERG is usually not used; this can also be described as an ERG marking sensitive to the transitivity parameter of control (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1980: 252; McGregor 1992: 285). Consequently, if ERG is used, it puts the focus on the marked participant (“It is me who will do this”). With the verb [go] = dgos ‘need’, the use of ERG would imply a meaning of ‘I’ll do it [for you]” (Chang & Chang 1980: 19f.). The following example is taken from DeLancey (1990: 307):

(02) ŋas kho’i ming brjed kyi red/

1:ERG  he/GEN  name  forget-PR-DISJ

I will forget his name.

In Lhasa Tibetan, ERG interacts with CONJ/DISJ forms of the verb (see example above) with 1st person subjects; with CONJ forms, ERG implies volition, with DISJ forms, the focus is on the object, however (Chang & Chang 1980: 18):

(03) ŋ̠̊ʈə ɛɨo ʈlo cʈn ʈlso b̠ d̠scə̱b̠d ʈs ʈn ERG

1sɛ p̠əson subj̠cɛs; ɨ̱ɛh CONJ/DISJ ɕoəms, ERG ɨ̱ɛh əoɭ ɨ̱ɛh DISJ ɕoəms, ɨ̱ɛh ɕocus ɨ̀s on ɨ̱ɛh obj̠cɛ, hoɨ̠ʌ̠ə (Chʈng & Chʈng 1980: 18):

(04) khos nyl ba red/

3:ERG  sleep-NS-DISJ

He slept.

There are, however, quite a few counter-examples, such as the following example (Tournadre 1996: 87):

(05) k̠̊ʈə sə  yni shu bʈson kʰaŋ  nang la bsdad pa red/

kʰo lo nɨfu tsɔk’oŋ nʊ̠ o-la  drê-ба-ре̠è

3:ERG  year  twenty  prison  in-ALL  stay-NS-DISJ

[He/she] has eaten the Tsampa!

He has eaten [it].

10.03. Optional ERG marking

Word order in Tibetan is relatively free (obligatorily verb-final), cf. (Agha 1993: 13); additionally, all nominal constituents are syntactically facultative, cf. (Tournadre 1996: 69, 71):
This characteristic is not uncommon (cf., e.g., Yacapultec Maya, Du Bois 1987); McGregor (1998: 501) describes ellipsis as a pragmatic connection of AG marking to ‘givenness or predictability’ for Gooniyandi (Australian). Schultze-Berndt 2006 analyzes a Jaminjung corpus (Australian) and finds out that actually more than three quarters of all transitive clauses lack overt agentive NPs; overt agentive NPs occur almost exclusively (89%) when a new topic is introduced. Similar results have been obtained with other languages. Additionally, there is “variation between the use and non-use of the ERG marker within its normal domain of application” (McGregor & Verstraete 2005: 1, quoted in Meakins & O'Shannessy 2006: 3) in a number of ERG languages (including Tibetan), usually with some pragmatic distinction. Meakins & O'Shannessy (2006: 3) remark that in a number of cases, the “variable use of the ERG marker is attributed to language contact” (and language obsolescence, cf. McGregor 2002: 170). In Tibetan, ERG marking on an overt agentive NP is frequently omitted (cf. Agha 1993: 14). Saxena 1991 reports a rare use of ERG in Lhasa. Similarly, the textbook of Chonjore (2003: 226f.) gives quite a few sample sentences with omitted ERG, cf.

For Chonjore, ERG use is basically founded on the ‘emphatic function’ (= focus), as can be shown in question/answer sequences (Chonjore 2003: 277f.; cf. also p. 230):

(08a) padma ga re byed kyi ’dug/ padma rin chen la bta bgyi ’dug/
péma k’are tʃeẽ-ki-tuũ pémã rinʃʰɛ̃la tă-ki-tuũ
Pema what do-PR-DISJ Pema Rinchen-ALL look-PR-DISJ
What is Pema doing? Pema is looking at Rinchen.

(08b) rin chen la sus bta bgyi ’dug/ padma ... rinʃʰɛ̃la sus yũ tă-ki-tuũ pémã ... Rinchen-ALL who:ERG look-PR-DISJ Pema:ERG ...
Who is looking at Rinchen? Pema is looking ...

Probing questions are of course a good example for the marking of identificational focus (Kiss 1998). Similarly, new referents are typically focal elements (Comrie 1981: 62), and two agents may be contrastively marked. Focus, however, is not the only possible candidate for optional ERG marking (see below).

10.04. Substitution of ERG by ABL

ABL can replace ERG in some contexts (cf. “[...] mais l’instrumental et l’ablatif sont souvent confondus en tibétain.” (Foucault 1858: 99, FN 1)), which is shortly mentioned for the written language in Tournadre (1996: 105f., 133ff., 153ff.) and thoroughly discussed in Zeisler this vol., e.g.:

(09) gong sa chen po mchog nas bka’ slob gnang song/
highness big supreme-ABL teaching give:H-PFVGEN
His Supreme Highness has given a teaching.

---

124 A similar hypothesis was made by Saxena 1991 for (modern) Lhasa Tibetan, but optional ERG is more widespread in Tibetan synchronically and diachronically.

125 The orthographic rendering of the connector particle as bgyi is interesting here; this implies the connector to be a stem form of bgyid.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

The shift from ERG to ABL has been observed in other languages (e.g., in Jaminjing, cf. Schultze-Berndt 2006) and usually involves pragmatic consequences, such as in Samoan, where, in official speeches, ABL instead of ERG has the function to diminish the degree of ascribed volitionality, intent, or control for what has been done. For Tibetan, Tournadre (1996: 134) remarks that this use of ABL is mainly restricted to written language or high registers for the agentivity of important persons – or institutions (cf. Tournadre 1996: 139, cf. also Zeisler 2007). Thus, we have to do here with a 'social function' (McGregor 1998: 496). Incidentally, ABL=ERG morphotactics (ABL/ERG syncretism) is found in Amdo Tibetan and in Newari, as well as in some other Tibetan languages (cf. Tournadre 1996: 134, Genetti 1990, and others); e.g., the Lepcha ABL nun has also AG function (Plaisier, pers. comm.). ABL, INS, and ERG mark 'origins' (spatial origin, origin of force, origin of action; cf. DeLancey 1982: 27, Tournadre 1995: 267f); ABL for ERG being rare in general, it is regularly used for authors of books. In Kenhart Ladakhi, ABL can be used for corporate bodies (Zeisler 2007).

The Tibetan ABL cannot replace ERG with mover verbs which is probably due to locative source meaning of the ABL; with respect to INS marking, ABL but marks the source, while INS marks the means (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 154):

(10a) blo bzang gis lag pas zin-song/
Lobzang ERG hand/INS hold-GEN-Pfv
Lobzang held [him/her] with [his] hand.

(10b) blo bzang gis lag pa nas zin song/
Lobzang-ERG hand-ABL hold-GEN-Pfv
Lobzang held [him/her] at [his/her] hand.

10.05. Optional DAT (EXP) marking

The traditional Tibetan ALL/DAT case [-la, (-ya, -a)] = la case has posed problems for Western authors with regard to transitivity statements ever since (cf. Schmidt 1839: 62; Foucaux 1858: 27; Jäschke 1865: 40f.; etc.); this case has not only been identified as a dative marker, but has instead variously been named a ( facultative) accusative case. Interestingly, Tibetan grammaticography has identified a la with the accusative (second case) of Sanskrit (for an extensive discussion cf. Zeisler 2006) as well. The frequent omission of ERG marking (or of ERG NPs) in clauses with DAT-marked NPs led to the view that the DAT marker can play a similarly distinctive role with regard to the ABS, as does the ERG case, cf. (Chonjore 2003: 230):

(11) A ma lags phru gu tshor kha lag bzos gnang gi `dug/
mother-HON child-PL:ALL food made-HON-PR-DISJ
Mother is making food for the children.

This definition includes an underlying locative meaning (or, more generally, the GOAL) which occurs also in few settings considered transitive in European languages. Additionally, with few specific verbs, there are EXP subjects, e.g. with 'byor 'receive' or byung 'get' (cf. ex. in Losang Thonden 1984: 230). Bickel 2001, however, remarks that there are only 9 verbs with EXP subjects in Read’s (1934: 64) description of Balti, and mostly (or only) dative pos-

---

126 A “discriminatory function” of optional ERG marking has been proposed by some researchers working on other languages as well (cf. McGregor 1992: 276, 1998: 495; e.g., Meakins & O’Shanessy (2006: 9) find a frequent omission of ERG in ‘semi-transitive’ clauses (with DAT objects) for two Australian mixed languages (Light Warlpiri and Gurindji Kriol).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

sersors in Central Tibetan (as in the example above); most 'real' EXP roles are ERG-marked (e.g., 'he/she:ERG saw/is ashamed/etc.'). Nonetheless, the discriminatory role of the DAT is somewhat specific in that it can optionally occur with objects of certain verbs, thereby shifting focus (Tournadre 1996: 161); see the following examples:

(12)  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
g.yag & gzhon pa red/ & g.yag la & gzhon pa red/ \\
Yak & ride-NS-DISJ & Yak-ALL & ride-NS-DISJ \\
He rode a yak. & It is a yak that he rode. \\
\end{array}\]

This is similar to the above-mentioned difference between ERG and ABS use with motion verbs, whereby in certain contexts focus is expressed by the use of ERG (Tournadre 1996: 161):

(13)  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
khos & phyin pa red/ & kho & phyin pa red/ \\
3 & gone-NS-DISJ & 3 & ERG & gone-NS-DISJ \\
He went. & It was he who went. \\
\end{array}\]

Thus, focus can be marked by word order, or by the application of case markers which would not occur in normal settings, cf. (ex. from Tournadre 1996: 162):

(14a)  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
lozang & g.yag gis & brdung song/ \\
Yak-ERG & hit-GEN/PFV & Lobzang [received] a hit from the yak. \\
\end{array}\]

(14b)  
\[\begin{array}{ccc}
g.yag gis & blo bzang la & brdung song/ \\
Yak-ERG & Lobzang-ALL & hit-GEN/PFV & [It was] Lobzang [who received] a hit \\
& & from the yak. \\
\end{array}\]

10.06. Outlook

Thus, we find all or most characteristics of optional ERG marking as it has been described for some other languages: The facts of the possible and widespread omission of agentive NPs, AG marking with intransitives, and non-overt AG marking might correlate with the following list of functions (cf. also McGregor 1992: 276ff.; 1998: 495ff.; Meakins & O'Shannessy 2006):

agent and actor marking

discriminatory function

contrastive marking  

social factors

- newness,  
- focus  
- and intention

question/answer pairs (< newness/focus)

other functions

- intensification  
- ERG and word order

---

127 Contrasting the agentivity of two agentive participants (cf. Meakins & O'Shannessy 2006: 16); word order may also play a role here.


129 McGregor (1998: 496), referring to Saxena, originally enumerates "topicality or givenness", but remarks that in Gooniyandi "topical subjects are actually less likely to be ergatively marked than non-topical ones". This has been described in the same way by Agha 1993, Che 1992, Zeisler (2004: 51ff.) for (Lhasa) Tibetan.

130 E.g., in intentional aspect (ERG with 'future tense'), or in 'emphatic subject chaining', i.e., "subject chains where the subject is not reduced to an anaphoric pronoun" (Meakins & O'Shannessy 2006: 18E).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

Additionally, the model of Tibetan transitivity has to be extended in order to distinguish various aspects as proposed in Hopper & Thompson 1980, Tsunoda 1985, McGregor 1992:

- degree of affectedness of the PAT
- degree of intentionality and control of the AG
- degree of stativity of the process

Additionally, the use of ABL for ERG has to be considered.

10.07. Dialect overview

The above-mentioned patterns, exemplified with samples from Modern (Lhasa) Tibetan (MT), are not equal in all dialects (or varieties) of Tibetan. Unfortunately, with the exception of MT (DeLancey 1980 etc., Saxena 1991, Tournadre 1996, and others) and Ladakhi (Zeisler to appear), the question of optional ergativity has not been thoroughly discussed for most dialects. Thus, a preliminary and tentative overview of various variants of Tibetan as given below does only give few hints on what should be elaborated in later studies.

10.07.01. Written Tibetan

Although most speakers of Tibetan varieties are ignorant about its exact rules, Written Tibetan is widely perceived as the 'standard' language of Tibet. Among the different written styles, the biography of Milarepa\(^{131}\) has sometimes been chosen for textual analysis (cf. Saxena 1989; Dempsey 1993, Haller 2005) or as literary examples (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992). The text itself appeared in 1488 (cf. gtsang smyon he ru ka ras pa'i rgyal mtshan 1981). Haller 2005 (ms.) gives a detailed analysis of the verbs and case frames in this text which can be interpreted for our purposes.\(^{132}\) Haller (2005: 47ff.) distinguishes controllable and noncontrollable verbs as a lexical feature. The difference is based on AUX usage. However, ERG marking does not exactly correlate with these categories: The classification of case patterns is as follows (E=ERG, A=ABS, D=DAT):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 01</th>
<th>controllable verbs</th>
<th>noncontrollable verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cA (46 verbs)</td>
<td>ncA (114 verbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cEA (95 verbs)</td>
<td>ncEA (34 verbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cEDA (72 verbs)</td>
<td>ncAD (41 verbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cED (13 verbs)</td>
<td>ncDA (18 verbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since all nominal constituents are facilitative, the counting has to be evaluated for omissions. Haller 2005 finds that A in cEA frames seems to be usually present, E and A in cEDA, and D in cED frames. A in ncA seems to be usually omittable, but it is more or less 'obligatory' in the majority of ncAD frames. ncEA usually requires A, not D. ncEA seems to need mainly the A role. The few verbs governing SOC obligatorily require the SOC role. In other words, the unmarked ABS NPs are less omittable than the case marked NPs; among these, ERG and also DAT are omittable, while more specific cases (e.g., SOC) are not. The list of verbs from this text gives this result:

\(^{131}\) mi la ras pa'i rnam mthar

\(^{132}\) Zeisler (to appear) gives another (similar) description of Written Tibetan case marking patterns which will be described in section 7.3., however.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

Additionally, Haller (2005: 45ff.) reports an aspectual split in the use of ERG marking with c verbs: cA verbs in perfective aspect can take ERG roles with focus function. cEA verbs have cE in PFV and sometimes cAA in IPV; here, volition seems to play a role; with topical A, E is obligatory. cED can become cAE with topIALIZED GOAL. Similarly, topIALIZED DAT in ncAD and ncDA results in ncA₂A₁.

Table 02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>cEA</th>
<th>cED</th>
<th>cED(A)</th>
<th>cED(D)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cA</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cAS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cAD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cAD(S)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unspec.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>cEA</th>
<th>cAD</th>
<th>cDA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ncA</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ncAS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ncAA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ncAS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ncA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unspec.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, Haller (2005: 45ff.) reports an aspectual split in the use of ERG marking with c verbs: cA verbs in perfective aspect can take ERG roles with focus function. cEA verbs have cE in PFV and sometimes cAA in IPV; here, volition seems to play a role; with topical A, E is obligatory. cED can become cAE with topialized GOAL. Similarly, topIALIZED DAT in ncAD and ncDA results in ncA₂A₁.

Table 03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PFV</th>
<th>IPV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cA</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cEA</td>
<td>EA</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cED</td>
<td>ED</td>
<td>AE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cED(A)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cED(D)</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semantically, c verbs are verbs which allow control over the situation. But monovalent controllable verbs predominantly take ABS. The category cED contains verbs such as dgon [gon] 'think', ltu [ta] 'see', gnod [nös] 'harm', phug [pʰuk] 'bite'; some of these verbs are perception verbs which actually relate an EXP to an 'attained' (not affected) PAT. As in many other ERG languages, this EXP is perceived as an actor and therefore ERG marked (e.g., 'I:ERG see you'). The PAT, or GOAL of this event, is DAT marked in some cases (e.g., 'I:ERG look at you:DAT'; 'directed activity' (Zeisler)).

Among the nc verbs, ncAD shows a grammaticalized DAT: skrag [täk] 'be afraid of', ha las [hālɛ] 'be surprised about', dad [dɛ] 'believe in', etc. all take DAT. The class ncDA contains verbs which mark experiencers with DAT; only few cases can probably be understood as experiencer subjects ('byor [tʃor] 'receive' vs. phan [pʰɛ] 'benefit'); skyes [kʰɛ̩] 'beborn') is similar in taking a syntactically focussed LOC/EXP object. Finally, the category ncEA describes events with EXP-ABS patterns: lobs [lɔp] 'learn', chod [tʃɔd] 'doubts disappear', dgon [gon] 'think', gsan [sɛ] 'hear', bzhes [že] 'experience, understand'. To sum up, ERG marking in this text is fluid and often facultative, being sensitive to focus, aspect, and volition.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

10.07.02. Balti

Balti (cf. Read 1934, Bielmeier 1985), the language of Baltistan, is the westernmost dialect of Tibetan. The ERG marker in Balti is [-i] and [-si] (Hassan Lobsang 1995: 26), the dative is [-a]; the GEN, on the other hand, is [-i], i-umlaut, and sometimes e-umlaut. Hassan Lobsang 1995 distinguishes transitive and intransitive verb forms. In various cases, these verb forms are morphotactically related, showing [s+C] (e.g. sk-, zb-) onsets for transitive verbs and [C, C'] (e.g. g-, b-) onsets for intransitive forms, respectively (e.g. skol/khol, but also other forms, cf. Zeisler 2001: 188). This regularity reflects the common Tibetan distinction of CAUS/RES verb pairs, or the parameter of 'control' in other terminologies; cf. (Hassan Lobsang 1995: 30f.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>skang-</th>
<th>fill</th>
<th>gang-</th>
<th>be full</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spar-</td>
<td>light</td>
<td>bar</td>
<td></td>
<td>burn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skar-</td>
<td>weigh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skal-</td>
<td>entrust</td>
<td>chhat</td>
<td>be cut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zba-</td>
<td>hide</td>
<td>chham</td>
<td>be finished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chaq</td>
<td>break</td>
<td>chhes</td>
<td>believe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitivity, or bivalence, however, does not seem to play a role for case marking; instead, we find examples of causative or controllable verbs with ERG marked NPs; the following examples can be drawn from the grammar (ex. extracted from Hassan Lobsang 1995: 32ff., 38).

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(15) examples with ERG:

Nadiri hlket                      khosi hltek  Ahmadi sha zos  Aslami las byaset
Nadir looks.                     He will look.  Ahmad ate meat  Aslam has done work

examples with ABS:

chhu kholet                      nga chheset   bomo ongen dugetpa  Aslam goet
Water boils                      I believe      The girl used to come  Aslam goes

bomoi ongetpa                    bomoi khoren yotpa
A girl had come                  A girl was wandering

examples with DAT:

ngala thongset                   I have seen

From what can be seen in the data, ERG marking is restricted to transitive control verbs. Mover verbs trigger only ABS subjects. As for EXP (or dative) subjects which is widespread in Western Tibetan, Read (1934: 64) gives a list of 'impersonal verbs', and so does Bielmeier (1985: 139f.), e.g., thonma 'see', rgospa 'need, be necessary', šespa 'to know', etc. (cf. also Zeisler 2004: 626). The Tibetan causative verb 'jug, here described as a verb suffix -chuk, transmits the agenthood to the causer and makes the causee an experienicer of the event (Hassan Lobsang 1995: 35).

133
134
135

These data were given for another reason and therefore, unfortunately, do not always contain complete sentences so that not all case marking patterns can be derived from these examples.

The above-quoted forms bomo-i are not ERG forms, but translate as bomo-INDEF; the ERG case would be bomo-i-st.

This is not the case in Purik and Ladakhi (Zesiler, pers. comm.).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

(16) khoʃʐ ʌochuk

Let him go

Ahmatla zachuk

Let Ahmad eat

mola onʌchuk

Let her come

Atala zerchuk

Let the father tell

Hassan Lobsang also mentions a category of ‘genus verb’ (‘active and passive voice’). As in the other dialects of Tibetan, we do not find a morphological passive in Balti, but a syntactic retopologization with no changes in case marking; the only morphological change lies in the increased referentiality -po of a topicalized PAT/ABS; specifically, the verb form does not change, e.g., between CAUS and RES forms (Hassan Lobsang 1995: 49):

(17) Aslami-ERG  zan  zet

Aslam-ERG  meal  eats

Akbartə-ERG  zgo  chaqs

Akbar-ERG  door  broke

Aslami  zetpo

meal-DEF  Aslam-ERG  eats

Akbartə  chaqs

door:DEF  Akbar-ERG  broke

In these examples, the Tibetan morphological CAUS/RES distinction is not exploited, and there is no case marking ‘split’ as described for Central Tibetan varieties. Except for one EXP subject, the grammar distinguishes only control verbs which take ERG subjects and no-control verbs which take ABS subjects, regardless of valence. There is no mention of facultative case marking.

10.07.03. Ladakhi

A closely related dialect (group) is Ladakhi (cf. Koshal 1979, Zeisler this vol.). Descriptions of Ladakhi are more extensive and offer interesting data with respect to case marking patterns. Similar to Indic languages, non-agentive actors\(^{336}\) are DAT-marked, i.e., there are EXP subjects in Ladakhi, cf. (Zeisler 2004: 257):

(18) nga:  thakpa  drol

1:DAT  rope  get:lose

I got the rope untied.

škuna:  kulungpo  chakste

thief:DAT  window:DEF  break

The thief got the window broken.

All case markers are used ‘semantically’, not only ‘distinctively’, so that the number of different patterns is very high; Zeisler (to appear) lists 11 main and various marginal case marking patterns for Ladakhi (and Tibetan in general):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(main patterns:)</th>
<th>10. ERG ABL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01. ABs</td>
<td>11. ERG ABS COM, ERG COM ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02. ABS ABS</td>
<td>(marginal patterns:)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03. ABS LOC, LOC ABS</td>
<td>14. ERG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04. ABS ABL</td>
<td>15. ABS GEN/INS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05. ABS COM</td>
<td>20. ABS ABS ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06. DAT ABS</td>
<td>21. ABS ABS LOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07. ERG LOC</td>
<td>25. ABS LOC LOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08. ERG ABS</td>
<td>30. ERG ABS ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09. ERG LOC ABS</td>
<td>etc. (31. – 50.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{336}\) Actor is, in short, a cover term for both agents and movers.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

Contrary to Central Tibetan where EXP subjects are restricted to possessive expressions (*nga la dngul yod*/*I have money*), there are many examples of EXP subjects, e.g. with 'like' or 'see' (Zeisler to appear, ms.):

19a) ad 01. kho song/ 
    s/he went

19b) ad 03. kho kushu-a thadet/ 
    s/he apple-DAT like

19c) ad 06. kha-a bila thongse/ 
    dog-DAT cat see-cc

19d) ad 08. aba-s cogtse-a rdungs/ 
    father table-DAT beat

19e) ad 12. kha-ze muak/ 
    dog-AG bark

19f) ad 13. dzing chu-i gangseduk/ 
    pond water-GEN fill-PERF

It is noteworthy, however, that there are thus various different patterns with LOC: facultative actors as in (20) (cf. Zeisler to appear: 3.3.5.), object marking as in (21a), and EXP-subjects with perception verbs as in (21b). Thus, we find AG also with 'intransitives' (12), and there is a pattern for the partitive (13). A broader range of EXP subjects is marked with the DAT (EXP/ALL/LOC/GOAL) [-a] (called 'AESTHETIVE' by Zeisler). Specifically pattern 06, is an EXP subject as one would not find in Central Tibetan, where this pattern is restricted to the expression of possession (*nga la dngul yod*/*I have money*, but *khyi de-s zhi mi mthong gi 'dug'/ 'The dog-AG sees the cat.'). Zeisler’s pattern 25.-27, with perception verbs give more evidence:

19g) ad 25.–27. kho-a le-eka ngar-mo tshor/ 
    s/he-DAT tongue-LOC sweet perceive

She perceived the sweetness on the tongue.

Pattern 12, on the other hand, is equivalent also to Central Tibetan (*khyi-s chang gi*/*A dog is barking*, *kho-s ngus song*/*He cried*) (Goldstein & Ngawangthondup Narkyid 1984), etc. and is a core argument against using a concept of ‘transitivity’ in the definition of Tibetan ERG (cf. Tournadre 1996: 214). Additionally, AG marking can be omitted or seems to be optional – a general tendency for Tibetan (for Lhasa, cf. Saxena 1991, Denwood 1999: 196), but the reasons remain unclear:

Marked cases, in particular the Ergative might be replaced with the Absolutive in neutral statements. Although the replacement of the Ergative seems to follow a general tendency (Bielmeier 1985: 141-143, also for the replacement of the Genitive), it occurred only from time to time and unpredictable in my interviews, without obvious semantic (or pragmatic) reason. [...] Quite frequently, however, the informants rejected an alternative with the Absolutive. Typically, the marked cases correspond to the classical pattern. [Zeisler 2004b, ms., p. 12]

---

Zeisler 2004b mentions that she did not find another use than the one with the verb ‘fill with’.
AG marking is described as partly optional, with a preference for temporal or spatial distance (Zeisler (to appear), ms., p. 13); in some cases, a semantic difference can be defined between the possible case marking patterns, e.g. (Zeisler (to appear), ms., p. 13ff.):

(20a) kho zdukzpul-na drol
3 suffering-ABL free
She succeeded to get free from suffering.

(20b) kho-a zdukzpul drol
3-DAT suffering free
She happened to get free from suffering.

(20c) gaw-sa sers-na kagul zos
smith-AG gold-ABL amulet made
The smith produced an amulet out of gold.

(20d) gaw-sa ser kagu-a zos
smith-AG gold amulet-DAT made
The smith shaped the gold into an amulet.

(20e) kho-s tri rdaa: truts/
3-AG knife stone-DAT sharpen
S/he sharpened the knife on a stone.

(20f) kho-s tri-a sakdar truts
3-AG knife-DAT rasp sharpen
S/he sharpened the knife with a rasp.

In other words, case marking highly depends on semantic roles and not so much on ‘syntactic patterns’; therefore, one finds a high number of case marking patterns which are able to distinguish aspectual values of the event construal. This syntactic variability of event construals may appear relatively unusual in comparison to English, but has been described also for many other languages, such as Latin or Gothic (cf. Rousseau 1998: 24). Ladakhi is an example for a relatively extended semantic use of the GOAL case. AG (i.e., ERG) case marking is mainly dependent on ‘distance’ (temporal, spatial, emotional). This also closely relates to Zeisler’s earlier analysis of Lhasa data (Zeisler 2004: 514ff.).

The Ladakhi examples show the multifunctionality of a semantic locative-experiencer-goal case -a in different settings. The semantic value of the case markers is, however, remarkably strong in Ladakhi dialects, and one even finds ‘EXP subjects’, i.e., patterns with a central participant experiencing something and being marked with DAT. This is not the case in Central Tibetan. This leads to the question whether Ladakhi offers an older state of affairs or a new deviant development, maybe in relation to the areal typology of surrounding Indo-Aryan languages – the viewpoint of Zeisler (2004, 2004b). If it is a new development, it would have to be viewed as a case of degrammaticalization of a more grammaticalized pattern. Within the model of grammaticalization theory, however, we may assume that the difference between Ladakhi and Central Tibetan case marking is not as big, since also in Central Tibetan, the semantic values of the three main case markers is present. Equally, both varieties give some evidence for case fluctuation. The only difference lies in the fact that Central Tibetan seems to rely gradually more on the distinctivity of case markers, favoring ERG-ABS and ABS-ABS over EXP subject constructions.

Zeisler (2004: 257) concludes that ERG case in EXP subject positions in Central Tibetan has to be considered INS, because it “does not mark a first argument but a secondary or peripheral argument (instrument/cause), which is shifted to the topic position”. This propositions remains hypothetical, however: Tibetan does not formally distinguish volitional agents and nonvolitional instruments. It is, however, interesting to note that EXP ‘subjects’ in Central Tibetan are not expressed by ALL, but by ERG. The use of EXP in such cases in West Tibetan, however, is an interesting evidence for a much more ‘semantic’ system.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

10.07.04. Drokpa

The nomads of Western Tibet who call themselves simply Drokpa ('brog pa, 'pasturer', 'nomad') live in the area between Nepal (Dolpo, Mustang) in the south and the Changthang (byang thang) in the north. With respect to ERG marking, Kretschmar (1986: 87) states that ABS subjects are used if the person is not 'active'. With transitive verbs and more rarely with intransitive verbs, the AG (ERG) marker is used only if the event construal puts focus on the acting participant – ERG is facilitative, cf. (Kretschmar 1986: 87):

(21) tā cʰeː tʂ̄ c/h.superʈorœ̄ː ŋɛ̠ː sɛː fok-ci-jin ... now 2 1:AG eat-must-VC-AUX 1:AG go-FIN
    ta khoyd ngas zas chog(?) kyi yin ... I will have to eat you ...
    khyod nga zas chog(?) kyi yin
    2 1 eat must-VC-AUX I will go.

Weakly transitive verbs\\(^\text{138}\) trigger ERG marking, cf. (Kretschmar 1986: 87):

(22a) tī tàŋpo pʰuки kʰoa-jinci Beggar's son had understood
    DEF beggar son-AG understand-AUX-PR

(22b) mī tʃī-kī mzą-tʃuk
    man one-AG see NEG-allow

The verb [tɛː] = bsdad 'stay', 'dwell' is mentioned as an inactive verb. Cf. (Kretschmar 1986: 87):

(23) tā kʰɔːɾaŋ pʰuːkʰ tʃiːk nɔːŋ-lə te-fak
    now 3 cave INDEF inside stay-INFER

Then he stayed in a cave.

Kretschmar (1986: 87) reports that there are EXP subjects in Drokpa, cf.:

(24a) nʒa-lə sɛː tʰɔp-ci-re' I will get gold.
    nɡa la gser thob kyi red
    1-DAT gold get-VC AUX

(24b) komā tʃi-mɛ-lə tʃi-kī cː Colts were born to the mare which
    rgbɔd ma tʃiːg med la tʃiːg gi skyes
    mare colt-NEG-EX-DAT colt born skyes

The first example is a possessive clause (thob 'get'; cf. WT 'byor 'receive' with DAT-ABS pattern); the second one does not contain an ERG; [tʃi-kī] is the bisyllabic WT tʃiːg gi 'colt'.\\(^\text{139}\) The verb [cː] = skye(s) 'be-born' also occurs with ABS-ABS; cf. (Kretschmar 1986: 87):

\\(^\text{138}\) According to Hopper & Thompson 1984 and Tsunoda (1985: 388), transitivity is seen as a gradual semantic feature, in which perception verbs and the more so knowledge verbs may be considered 'weakly transitive'.

\\(^\text{139}\)
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

(25) ɲa ŋa ngam phru gu skyes sōŋ cē: sōŋ nʌʐ phru ʌu skyes sonʌ cẖld boən AUX

I have born a child.

10.07.05. Sherpa

Sherpa, one of the Tibetan languages of Nepal, may serve as an example for South Himalayan variants. Its case marking system is described as a split ergative pattern with typically DAT-marked objects (Kelly 2004: 248);\(^2\) the use of the ERG marker is described as follows (cf. Kelly 2004: 248):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 06</th>
<th>ERG is...</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>aspect</th>
<th>person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>obligatory:</td>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>perfective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>optional:</td>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>2nd, 3rd persons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impossible:</td>
<td>transitive</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>1st person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, ERG marking fluctuates with ABS in "rare instances" (cf. Kelly 2004: 249). It does not occur with inanimate agents (which are marked as unvolitional actors on the verb) (Kelly 2004: 258):

(26) ɲima k’a fi-ci-suŋ sun snow melt-CAUS-NVOL The sun made the snow melt.

As in all (other) Tibetan dialects, there is a morphological opposition of CAUS and RES verb forms with a number of verbs (mainly aspirated/unaspirated and voiced/unvoiced opposition). These verb forms both take ERG-marked participants, whereby volition is expressed by the verb form and the auxiliary (Kelly 2004: 255):

(27) ɲe-ki nged kyis kap ca-ki ɲe-ki nged kyis kab chag gi
1-ERG cup break:CAUS-VC 1-ERG cup break:RES-VC
I break the cup (intentionally). I break the cup (accidentally).

Nonvolitionality is expressed by the AUX song, but only with RES verb forms (Kelly 2004: 255):

(28) ɲe-ki nged kyis kap c’ak-suŋ ɲe-ki nged kyis kab chag song
1-ERG cup break:RES-NVOL I broke the cup (accidentally).

Volition is inherent in some verbs, such as a class of perception verbs; this is expressed by the AUX as well; but this verb class does not take ERG (Kelly 2004: 255):

---

\(^2\) This may be a diminutive formation which is omitted when another derivational process is applied, cf. rtig med ‘coltless’ in this example.

\(^3\) Sherpa has a split ergative pattern of grammatical relations. In the imperfective, Sherpa exhibits a nominative/accusative type patterning where subjects of transitive clauses (A) are treated the same as subjects of intransitive clauses (S) and differently from objects of transitive clauses (O), which typically have a dative casemaker. In all perfectives and some imperfectives the S subject is treated the same way as the O of a transitive clause, with absolute casemarking, and differently from the transitive A subject which is marked with the ergative casemaker (Kelly 2004: 248)
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

(29) ŋà tʰoŋ-suŋ ŋà l’u-i
1 see-NVOL 1 watch-PST:CONJ
I saw.

10.07.06. Kyirong

Kyirong (skyid grong) is a valley at the Tibetan-Nepalese border, north of Kathmandu (cf. Harrer 1952: 62ff.; Huber 2002: 2, 2005). The dialect of Kyirong is a Tibetan idiom of Western Central Tibet. Huber 2002 remarks the following about ERG case marking in Kyirong Tibetan:

The conditions for the distribution of ergative case marking in KT are quite complicated. In short, verb type (control, valence) and aspect determine whether the use of the ergative is allowed at all. When it is allowed, its use seems to have a purely pragmatic function (cf. the "emphatic function" below), the speaker having mostly the aim of emphasizing the A or S argument. (Huber 2002: 73f.)

Huber states that Kyirong Tibetan has a kind of split-S system (cf. Dixon 1994: 71); all controllable verbs trigger ERG use in perfective aspect, while imperfective aspect does not combine with ERG. Additionally, ERG marking "is very often omitted in spontaneous speech" (Huber 2002: 74), cf. (p. 74, 75):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb type</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>PFV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V1 c</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>ERG or ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V1 nc</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V2 c</td>
<td>ABS or ERG</td>
<td>ERG or ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V2 nc</td>
<td>ABS or ERG</td>
<td>ERG or ABS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V3 c</td>
<td>ABS or ERG</td>
<td>ERG or ABS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That is, bivalence, controllability, and perfectivity seem to influence the application of ERG. Additionally, ERG is used in these contexts only with pragmatic function (Huber 2002: 75, 117), as e.g. in:

(30) k’o ma: jar so mə̈: jar-so
3:M NEG-leaped-AOR.SENS 3:F-ERG leaped-AOR.SENS
He didn't hurry, but she hurried.

One interesting observation is the fact that while ERG can be omitted, the homophonous INS cannot (Huber 2002: 77).

10.07.07. Shigatse

Shigatse is the capital of Tsang (gtsang), one of the Central provinces of Tibet (U-Tsang dbus gtsang). Haller (1995: 4.11.2. [p. 51]; cf. Haller 2000: 88) states that in Shigatse Tibetan, ERG is applied in the PFV aspect, but omittable in the IPV aspect, which describes an aspectual split, complicated by the fact that there are also exceptions.

Das Subjekt von einfachen Sätzen mit einem kontrollierbaren, transitiven Verb als Prädikat ist in Konstruktionen, die mit dem Imperfektiv-Stamm gebildet werden, sowohl im

Specifically, Haller gives examples of the use of ERG as an emphatic marker:

(31a) \[ \text{kʰɔ̀tý r̥a t̥o soɛ̱-ki} \]
khos dus rang lto bzos kyi
DEM-time 2 food make:PFV-VC
\text{At that time, you were cooking.}

(31b) \[ \text{kʰɔ̀tý r̥a-ki t̥o soɛ̱-ki} \]
khos dus rang gis lto bzos kyi
DEM-time 2-ERG food make:PFV-VC
\text{At that time, you were cooking.}

The use of ERG is said to be related to an action which is performed with intention (Haller 1995: 4.11.2. (p. 51)). In some cases, ERG seems to have distinctive function, e.g., when the word order is changed to OSV due to a topicalisation of the object; in Haller’s example, a tonal change marks the ERG application:

(32) \[ \text{ci cumpû sà-ki} \]
\text{ci sà-ki}
khyi zhu̱n bu̱ zà-gi/ zhu̱n bu̱ khyis za gĩ/ dog cat eat-VC cat dog:ERG eat-VC
\text{The dog is eating the cat. It is the cat which the dog is eating.}

There are other examples which depend on non-default word order as well (cf. Haller 1994: 5.1.2., p. 93). Finally, Haller gives examples for merely pragmatic usage of ERG:

(33) \[ \text{nį́ njà t̥o-ki} \]
ngas mar ‘gro-gĩ/
1:ERG down go-VC
\text{I go [accidentally] downwards!}

In Haller’s definition, ERG occurs with controllable verbs; but ERG can occur also with non-controllable verbs; as in other descriptions, this is called INS case marking (instead of ERG), and Haller refers to the German translation ”Mir ging die Tasse zu Bruch” (lit. ‘the cup got me broken’) in order to describe the involuntariness of the action (Haller 1994: 52, 94):

(34) \[ \text{kā:jœ̄ ko nį́ t̥e‘a-so} \]
dkar yol ko ngas chag-song/
cup DEM 1:ERG break:RES-PFV-GEN
\text{I broke the cup (accidentally).}

Similarly, with ‘forget’ (Haller 1994: 5.1.3., p. 94):

(35) \[ \text{kʰɔ̀cø t̥êp ko tænæ} \]
khos deb ko brjed nas/
3:ERG book DEM forget-AUX
\text{He forgot the book.}

The use of ERG is said to be related to an action which is performed with intention (Haller 1995: 4.11.2. (p. 51)). In some cases, ERG seems to have distinctive function, e.g., when the word order is changed to OSV due to a topicalisation of the object; in Haller’s example, a tonal change marks the ERG application. On the other hand, ‘find’ is construed with an EXP subject in the DAT case: \text{nɡa la dngul bṛnyed byung/’I found money’ } (cf. Haller 1994: 5.1.3., p. 94). From these data, it seems as if ERG is an optional marker of volitional agentivity.
which can also have an emphatic meaning. ERG does not cooccur solely with controllable verbs, as might have been expected. Instead, it seems to occur more regularly in marginal settings, such as in pragmatic use and with non-default word orders.

10.07.08. Lhasa

In Tibetan, beside ABS vs. ERG-ABS, a third case is involved among grammatical case patterns, as follows (Tournadre 1996: 75):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 08</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ERG ABS</td>
<td>'construction ergative'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>ERG OBL</td>
<td>'construction ergative mixte ou contrastive'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>OBL ABS</td>
<td>'construction possessive-bénéfactive'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>ABS OBL</td>
<td>'construction affective-accusative'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>ERG OBL ABS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples are (also) taken from Tournadre (1996: 75ff.).

(36a)     ad 1. tshe ring kyis    par   khyer bzhag/
           tš'er guarantees par   kā'ěr-jaā
           Tsering-ERG photo bring:INFER

*Tsering brought photos.*

(36b)     ad 2. grwa pas    bu mo la   bltas song/
           ŋapzę   p'umo-la   trē-sōō
           monk:ERG girl-ALL look:PFV:GEN

*The monk looked at the girl.*

(36c)     ad 3. ngar     ide mig   brayed byung/
           ɲąā  temik    pēe-tʃüü
           I found the key.

(36d)     ad 3. khong la  deb    mang po yod red/
           k'oō-la t'ep  mūbo   jow'-ẽe
           3:HON ALL book   many   GEN EQU:DISJ

*I have many books.*

(36e)     ad 4. phyi rgyal mi  de   bod jar   dga' po   'dug ga/
           tf'icāmāi  t'ę  p'oo-tʃaā  gaśo   tuu'-ga
           foreigner DEF tib.tea-ALL enjoy EX:DISJ-QU

*This foreigner likes Tibetan tea!*

(36f)     ad 4. kho stag la   zhed song/
           k'o  taʔ-la   jee-sōō
           3 tiger-ALL afraid:PFV:GEN

*He is afraid of tigers.*

(36g)     ad 5. nga rang gis   rgan lags la  kha btags phul ba yin/
           nārūū-ki  gêlãʔ-la   k'atā  p'yīša-ʒiī
           1-self-ERG teacher:HON-ALL Katag offer:PFV-CONJ

*We have offered a Kata to the teacher.*

As a conclusion, one could state – with respect to Tsunoda’s (1985: 388) transitivity hierarchy (see table below) – that ERG in Tibetan has a far-reaching function of subject-marking...
in that ERG occurs with strongly transitive verbs as well as with perception, pursuit and knowledge verbs the event construal of which do not contain semantic agents and sometimes no patients. Additionally, mover verbs trigger ERG marking. This is, it seems, actor-marking. Perception verbs with 'less attained patients' (e.g., 'look'), pursuit, and knowledge verbs, on the other hand, require ERG-EXP schemes. Feeling, relationship and ability verbs trigger ABS-EXP patterns:

Table 09: Transitivity hierarchy and Tibetan case marking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. DIRECT EFFECT ON PATIENT</th>
<th>ERG – ABS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Resultative [= telic]:</td>
<td>kill, break, bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Non-resultative:</td>
<td>hit, shoot, kick, eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PERCEPTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. patient more attained:</td>
<td>see, hear, find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. patient less attained:</td>
<td>listen, look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PURSUIT:</td>
<td>search, wait, await</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. KNOWLEDGE:</td>
<td>know, understand, remember, forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. FEELING:</td>
<td>love, like, want, need, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. RELATIONSHIP:</td>
<td>possess, have, lack, resemble, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ABILITY:</td>
<td>capable, proficient, good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, case marking is strongly semantic and depends on semantic verb classes. In a traditional analysis, this is of course unusual, cf.

Il reste à envisager un problème théorique important. Nous venons de constater les affinités évidentes existant en tibétain entre les marques casuelles et les rôles sémantiques, cependant, dans le cadre d’une étude syntaxique, il est très gênant de ne se fonder que sur des critères sémantiques. [Tournadre 1996: 78]

Although most authors try to find a way to define 'transitivity' in order to explain Tibetan ERG use (cf. discussion in Tournadre 1996: 78ff.), it is obviously not the case that ERG applies to 'transitive verbs'; Kelzang Gyurme proposed the Tibetan term bya tshig tha dad pa which was translated (by Stoddard & Tournadre) as 'differentiative', because there has to be a 'distinct agent' (which is in fact the traditional definition). This definition does, however, obviously not imply a syntactic subject/direct-object relation. Semantically, the affectedness of the GOAL concept plays a role, but most importantly, the volition of an agent seems to be predominant for the selection of ERG in Tibetan. There are even further patterns (e.g., ERG-LOC, ERG-INS) favoring a semantic analysis, cf. (Tournadre 1996: 80f., DeLancey 1982c: 24):

(37a) blo bzang gis nag spang steng 'bri gi 'dug/
llopsū-ki ńakpāñ-tēŋ tī-ki-tū Lobsang-ERG blackboard-on write-VC-EX:DISJ

Lobsang is writing on the blackboard.

(37b) blo bzang gis sa smyuug gis 'bri gi 'dug/
llopsū-ki sāphū-ki tī-ki-tū Lobsang-ERG chalk-INS tī-ki-tū Write-VC-EX:DISJ

Lobsang is writing with chalk.

This adds the following possibilities to the above-mentioned list of syntactic patterns:
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10</th>
<th>6. ERG LOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. ERG INS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zeisler (2004: 253f.) proposes the following model of case marking in Lhasa Tibetan, thereby including the possibilities of alternative case marking (‘case fluctuation’, Zeisler 2004: 258):

1. The AG of transitive controlled action verbs is usually marked with ERG, but in Lhasa Tibetan only in PST tense; the AG role can also remain unmarked if in TOP position or if it is the only animate participant in an AG-PAT construal; the AG must be ERG marked, if a recipient or an instrument are named.

2. The AG of the intransitive controlled action verb is usually unmarked, but can bear ERG marking for emphatic, contrastive meaning.

3. EXP subjects of transitive accidental experiential verbs (e.g. *mtong ‘see’) are always marked with ERG (INS); a small set of such verbs has ALL, i.e., true EXP subjects.142

4. "Affected" subjects of affective verbs (e.g. *dga’ ‘like’) are always unmarked.

5. The "undergoer" subject of intransitive accidental event verbs is always unmarked.

6. The PAT of transitive controlled action and accidental event verbs is always unmarked, GOAL roles are marked with ALL, except for Lhasa Tibetan where ALL is usually omitted.

This enumeration shows that the motivation for ERG case marking is not restricted to a single parameter of one specific semantic (or, metaphorically, pragmatic) agentivity (in combination with volition), but has to be seen as ‘distinctive’ in the sense that ERG (and DAT) are actually used more in ‘untypical’, ‘marginal’ cases of agentivity rather than in transitive, controlled, bivalent constructions. In a model of agent marking, optional ERG would be expected with a high degree of agentivity (McGregor 1998: 518); but indeed, a more complicated pragmatic use is described by various authors on Australian languages (e.g., McGregor, 2006, Schultze-Berndt, 2006). As for the DAT, it also plays a decisive, although lesser, role among the three structural case markers of Tibetan. It can be the subject case only in possessive relations and with few other verbs, but it can increase the affectedness of a patient (e.g., ‘ride a yak’ vs. ‘ride on a yak’). Therefore, we find predominantly an ERG-ABS-based syntactic system, but with quite a few alternative patterns (cf. Zeisler 2004: 255).

10.07.09 Dege

Dege is an important town and monastery in Kham, East Tibet, considered a cultural centre for the Kham region (Häslér 1999: 1). The Dege edition of the Kanjur and Tanjur has been printed there, and it was the place of residence of the famous Situ Rinpoche whose grammatical commentary has been discussed earlier in this contribution. As a cultural centre in the East, Dege Tibetan is seen as the main dialect or lingua franca (Häslér 1999: 1). Concerning ergativity, Häslér (1999: 97; cf. also p. 136) states:

142 Zeisler (2004: 254) says "INS", with some good reason: In West Tibetan, these roles are marked with ALL/DAT/DIR. It may be added that in Central Tibetan this case role is usually not CONJ with the verb. Since Chang & Chang 1980, various authors have stated that in some cases, the ERG has to be seen as an INS, in order to account for the involuntary meaning.

143 West Tibetan has ALL/DAT in most cases (Zeisler 2004: 254).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

The ergative case is used to mark the agent or the experiencer of a transitive sentence. It marks both an agent of a controllable verb [...] or an experiencer/patient of a non-controllable verb [...]. (Häsler 1999: 97)

In other words, Kham Tibetan is described as having grammatical ERG marking (including experiencers or patients), cf. (Häsler 1999: 97):

\[(38a) \quad \text{lama:}\quad \text{tsas:}\quad \text{no-o-cui:}\]
bla mas  dam rdzas  gnang byung/
\[\text{lama:ERG}  \text{holythings}  \text{give-GOAL:oriented}\]
\[\text{The lama gave me these devotional objects.}\]

\[(38b) \quad \text{kho:}\quad \text{po-le}\quad \text{nu-tu-si-nge}\]
khos  ra  bor le  nyug ‘dug-sri’ gi/
\[\text{goat}  \text{lose-CJ}  \text{search-V2:DUR-PROGR-be}\]
\[\text{He searched for the goat he had lost.}\]

The verb 'give' is controllable, but the verb 'search' is not. Nonetheless, both verbs trigger ERG use. This looks like a system of syntactic ergativity, i.e., a system where ERG marks the subjects of transitive verbs, with a desemanticized concept of transitivity (which is close to mere bivalence). Therefore, Häsler (1999: 97, fn. 119) refutes the concept of active/inactive for this case marking scheme, and uses control and (syntactic) 'transitivity' to describe the system (+c/+TR, -c/+TR, +c/-TR, -c/-TR) (cf. Häsler 1999: 136, referring to Francke 1929: 137), whereby both control and transitivity trigger ERG use:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{class:} & +c/+TR & -c/+TR & +c/-TR & -c/-TR \\
\hline
\text{verb:} & sbyar & shor & skor144 & skyug \\
\hline
\text{transl.} & \text{stick} & \text{lose} & \text{turn} & \text{vomit} \\
\hline
\text{case:} & \text{ERG} & \text{ERG} & \text{ERG} & \text{ABS} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

On the other hand, with controllable verbs, ERG is also 'optional' in this dialect (Häsler 1999: 98; 136, fn. 145); the usual triggers for 'split ergativity' do not apply:

In transitive sentences with a controllable verb the ergative marking is optional. An agent does not need to be marked ergative, it often occurs in the absolutive instead. So far I have not found rules which regulate the occurrence of the ergative with controllable transitive verbs. Unlike in other dialects, there does not seem to be any influence of aspect on the occurrence of the ergative marker, that is, both in the perfective and in the imperfective aspect the marker is not obligatory. Maybe ergative marking in the Dege dialect is used, like in some other dialects, to emphasize the agent. (Häsler 1999: 98)

Indeed, the sample sentences of Häsler's study sometimes show divergent data; e.g., the verb 'drink' ('thung') triggers ERG and also ABS subjects (Häsler 1999: 174, ex. 109, 111; 173, ex. 106):

\[(39a) \quad \text{ngas}\text{:}\text{nyima}\text{:}\text{tapa}\text{:}\text{tea}\text{t’u-le-ji}\]
ngas  nyim ma  rtag par  ja  ‘thung le yin/
\[1:ERG  \text{day}  \text{every:ILL}  \text{tea}  \text{drink-IPV-be}\]
\[I\ \text{drink tea every day.}\]

144 In 'I turned (walked) around the jokhang', i.e., a secondary meaning.
In the third example, the speaker distances himself from the action which can also be viewed as a potential or future action. Most probably this is the reason why the ERG does not apply in this case. The second example shows that the ERG-marked NP is not deleted, although the participant is introduced already in the first clause (no ‘conjunction reduction’). To sum up, the Dege dialect seems to show a facultative, but more ‘syntactic’ ERG marking semantic AG and EXP in controllable actions.

10.07.10. Themchen

Themchen is the name of a region north-east of the Blue Lake (Retsho sngon po), north of the Tsadam basin (tshwa ’dam gzhong sa) in Amdo. Both ERG/INS and GEN is marked by [ŋa], ABS is unmarked, and DAT is marked by [-a] (but cf. Haller 2004: 62). Due to its ‘archaic’ characteristics with respect to verb morphology, Amdo dialects are an important source for the reconstruction of the original Tibetan verb system, similar to Balti and Ladakhi. Contrary to Central Tibetan, Themchen verb morphology is more elaborated in accordance with the WT system: 1-3 TAM stem forms (IPV, PFV, IMP) and a CAUS/RES (c/nc) distinction can be found (cf. Haller 2004: 73ff).

Themchen Tibetan verbs have up to three different stem forms, namely IPV, PFV, and IMP; additionally, CAUS/RES verb pairs can be deduced from the data (cf. Haller 2004: 73ff). The system is partially similar to WT forms, but seems to be slightly more regular than WT forms, but they are still quite irregular: the b-prefix is more or less typical for PFV stems, and IMP usually does not have a prefix, but the onset can be aspirated. Finally some verb paradigms are suppletive – for the full data, cf. Haller 2004: 73f. The base form of the verbs is, however, the PFV stem. This is peculiar, since this stem often has a regular prefix b-. The form without b-, on the other hand, is in some (many?) cases the PFV stem of the RES equivalent:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-3 TAM forms</th>
<th>1-3 TAM forms</th>
<th>1-3 TAM forms</th>
<th>1-3 TAM forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>has destroyed</td>
<td>is destroyed</td>
<td>has opened</td>
<td>is open(ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta</td>
<td>pta</td>
<td>te(at)</td>
<td>chad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...</td>
<td>[...]</td>
<td>bead</td>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has extinguished</td>
<td>is extinguished</td>
<td>has cut</td>
<td>is cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pMywa</td>
<td>ts'a</td>
<td>pte(n)</td>
<td>te(nx)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’dral</td>
<td>phral</td>
<td>bcag</td>
<td>charg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has drilled</td>
<td>get a hole</td>
<td>has broken</td>
<td>is broken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I.e., the formation is similar; the morphological markers are partly different, however.
These forms are quite similar to WT forms, and frequent enough to speak of a morphological correlation between control and non-control verbs. As for case marking, Haller distinguishes the following possible patterns: cA (control verbs with ABS), cEA (control verbs with ERG and ABS), ncA (non-control verbs with ABS), ncEA (non-control verbs with ERG and ABS). Practically all these patterns are found, such as ERG/ABS, ABS/ABS, ABS/DAT, ERG/DAT, etc. When reducing the data to the ERG question, we get quantitatively the same distribution as described for WT (Haller 2005):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MILA</th>
<th>THEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c with ERG</td>
<td>42,55%</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c with ABS</td>
<td>10,87%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nc with ERG</td>
<td>9,69%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nc with ABS</td>
<td>36,88%</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is thus a strong correlation between the categories c/nc and ERG/ABS marking, but the categories are not entirely identical. c verbs without ERG (cA) usually imply involuntary actions (for the complete list, cf. Haller 2004: 75ff.):

accompany, apologize, approach, assemble, avoid, baa, bark, bend, bounce, change into, climb, cling, come, cough, creep, creep in, cross, cry, deny, dismount, enter, flee, fly, glide, go, go one after the other, go out, come, growl, grunt, hang oneself, hide, jump, laugh, lay down, lean against, lie in the sun, meet, move, move upwards, neigh, play, quarrel, raise oneself, ride, run around, run, gallop, sit down, sit, stay, sleep, stand up, stay (on somebody’s side), step on, take path, trot, twitter, visit, vomit, wake up, wiggle, wind

Themchen Tibetan also applies ERG with weakly transitive verbs, with the exception of the small class of verbs which is RECIPIENT-oriented (get, need, ...). Some verbs in the material occur under different headings, such as ‘ride’ which is mentioned both as cA[D] and cED (rta zhon, H: chibs pa beibs [-’chib’] (PFV) ‘ride a horse’), cf. (Haller 2004: 81, ex. 132 and 110, ex. 425):

(40a) šṭamḏzon yja-a con-tap-t’a. Tamdrin rode on a yak. (Haller 2004: 81, ex. 132)
| rta mgrün | g yag la | zhon bang thal |
| Tamdrin | Yak-DAT | ride-NVOL-EVID |

(40b) bḷa ma gis tepa teap-koka. The lama rode a horse. (Haller 2004: 110, ex. 425)
| bḷa ma gis | chibs pa | beibs go gi/ |
| Lama-ERG | horse/H | ride-H-NVOL-EVID |

The cED class contains the following verbs (Haller 2004: 111f.): avoid, bash, beat, listen, make, read, respect, revile, singe, smell, wait, watch/listen/smell/learn. Many of these verbs construe a relation AG-GOAL. There are interdialectal differences in single cases, however; e.g., klog ’read’ has ERG-ABS in Central Tibetan (cf. Goldstein et al. 1991: 84). The ncEA group contains knowledge verbs (know, understand, remember, forget), perception verbs (see, think) and even some feeling and ability verbs; such as achieve, afford, be able to lift, cope with, err/mistake, experience, find, forget, guess, hear, keep pace, know about, know sth., make, make/feel, outplay/dare, see, think, think at. (cf. Haller 2004: 129ff.) As for
the ncDA verbs, i.e., verbs with possible experiencer subjects, cf. (Haller 2004: 133f.): be-born, be-called, bedurable, beenough, beequal, catch (a cold), find, get (a book), get, haveenough, need, receive, receive/get, remain. This class contains a number of possessive verbs with DAT marked possessors and a few reception verbs:

(41a) ʃtəmdɔn-ə ʦʰo wat-taŋ-zac.  
    rta mgrin la tsho bud btaŋ zig/  
    Tamdrin DAT fat become-LV-NVOL:EVID  
    2004: 132, ex. 633)  
  Tamdrin fattened. (Haller)

(41b) ʃtəmdɔn-ə tʰɔampa hoy-taŋ-tʰa.  
    rta mgrin la cham pa phog btaŋ thal/  
    Tamdrin DAT acold catch-LV-NVOL:EVID  
    2004: 133, ex. 636)  
  Tamdrin caught a cold. (Haller)

(41c) ðɔŋ gɨŋ tʰɔampa hoy-jøkø.  
    mo rang la cham pa phog yod gi/  
    She has caught a cold. (Haller)  
    2004: 144, ex. 707)

(41d) ʃtəmdɔn-ə ñweʈʰa ɲtʰot-tʰa.  
    rta mgrin la dpe cha ’byor-thal/  
    Tamdrin DAT book got-NVOL:EVID  
    2004: 133, ex. 637b)  
  Tamdrin got a book. (Haller)

'Besick' (lit. 'boil'), however, is construed with ABS (Haller 2004: 147, ex. 732). Verbs such as 'need' take DAT subjects as full verbs, but do not trigger DAT case marking as AUX verbs:

(42a) ʃtəmdɔn-ə ñweʈʰa-nda rgo-公益性.  
    rta mgrin la dpe cha ’di dgos gi/  
    Tamdrin DAT book-DEF need-NVOL:EVID  
    Tamdrin needs this book. (Haller 2004: 133, ex. 640a)

(42b) ʃtəmdɔn-公益性 ñweʈʰa-nde ñta-rgo-公益性.  
    rta mgrin gyis dpe cha ’di la tyt dgos gi/  
    Tamdrin-ERG book-DEF:DAT read-need-NVOL:EVID  
    Tamdrin needs to read this book. (Haller 2004: 133, ex. 640b)

In some examples, there seems to be a partitive function of what is glossed as ERG (and which formally could also be a GEN); the ‘real’ orientation of the verb would play a decisive role in the interpretation of these clauses (‘The money suffices’, or ‘There is enough of the money’):

(43a) ʃtəmdɔn-公益性 rgɔnɾ-公益性 luŋ-yokø.  
    rta mgrin la sgor mo kyis long go gi/  
    Tamdrin-DAT money-ERG suffice:IPV-NVOL:EVID  
    The money suffices for Tamdrin. (= Tamdrin hat genug Geld.) (Haller 2004: 132, ex. 631)

(43b) ʃtəmdɔn-公益性 rgɔnɾ-公益性 teʰɔ-公益性 tʰa.  
    rta mgrin la sgor mo kyis chog thal/  
    Tamdrin-DAT money-ERG haveenoughPV NVOL:EVID  
    Tamdrin had enough money. (= Tamdrin hatte genug Geld.) (Haller 2004: 134, ex. 646)

Since most verbs belong to the CEA and ncA classes, the system seems to be a more grammaticalized ERG system. The detailed list of verbs from this dialect does not clarify which semantic class of verbs takes which semantically motivated case pattern. The few exceptions to this rule, before all, show a class of possessive verbs taking DAT-ABS patterns. Some semantically similar verbs seem to imply different event construals, such as the following examples (ERG-ABS, DAT-ABS):
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

(44a) štamdgon-ga bdevtshak-kha ḥwetca pet-tag-t’a.
Tamdrin-ERG Dekyi-GEN book find-LV-NVOL:EVID
Tamdrin found Dekyi’s book. (Haller 2004: 131, ex. 617b)

(44b) štamdgon-a ḥser ḥtaka-zac t’em-t’a.
Tamdrin DAT gold piece INDEF find-NVOL:EVID
Tamdrin found a piece of gold. (Haller 2004: 134, ex. 643)

Additionally, Haller’s data provide a number of examples of the morphological CAUS/RES distinction. This will be dealt with in the next section.

10.07.11. Discussion

In spite of strong variation between dialects, case marking in Tibetan also shows commonalities. All dialects do have an ERG marker marking volitional agents. To a certain degree, ERG marking seems to be always optional, as far as this can be deduced from existing grammatical descriptions. In order to investigate optional ERG, however, a sample of similar clauses spontaneously produced under different circumstances is needed, and except for Lhasa Tibetan and Ladakhi, the descriptions are not accurate enough in this respect.

The specific usage of ERG marking can deviate considerably among the dialects. While in the center of Tibet, ERG marking seems to be more ‘rare’ marking ‘special cases’ rather than typical agents, in the western varieties, there seems to be more ‘functional equality’ between the three main case roles (ERG-ABS-DAT) for the syntactic description of semantic roles. In the east, however, ERG seems to be used more ‘regularly’ for subjects of transitive constructions. The pragmatic use of ERG is described for the western and central dialects, but to a small degree for the eastern varieties. In this respect, the westernmost dialect of Tibetan, Balti, is similar to the westernmost (Amdo) dialects.

10.08. Conative and similar constructions

The CAUS/RES verb pairs seem to be often used in Tibetan to construe the so-called conative constructions. The term ‘conative’ refer to the fact that in such examples, an intention of an agent is not fulfilled. Examples have been quoted in some grammars (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992) and theoretical works (Tournadre 1996: 202ff). It was Haller who in 1997 pointed more thoroughly to this phenomenon in Themchen Tibetan, which was taken up in Zeisler 2002 for Classical Tibetan. Sentences with two identical verbs, one CAUS and the other one RES, are good examples of how verb orientation works: The conative sentences of Tibetan involve change-of-state verbs and have the structure “X changes Y, Y does not change”. Their translation renders an attempt to act which is not successful: “X tried to change Y, but Y did not change”. As can be seen from this generalization, the verb change can be oriented towards an AG: “X changes (Y)”, or it can be oriented towards the PAT: “Y changes/is changed”. This works well with quite a number of English verbs: “X breaks Y”, “Y breaks”; “X sinks Y”, “Y sinks”; “X boils Y”, “Y is boiling”; and so on. In other words, English change-

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146 in a presentation at the 2nd Meeting of the European Cooperation Project on Himalayan Languages in Paris (1997).
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

of-state verbs are often lexically 'neutral' in their orientation. But in Tibetan, these verb are usually morphologically distinguished which makes this distinction a clear-cut category of the grammar. On the other hand, as will be seen below, this is not yet the complete set of phenomena.

10.08.01. Conative sentences with CAUS/RES pairs

For Literary and Spoken Tibetan, the CAUS/RES can be sometimes found in an interclausal opposition of the following type (Tournadre 1996: 202); the opposition is often used to formulate the failure of an action, or, "to confirm the result by pairing the controlled action verb with an accidental event verb" (Zeisler 2004: 252):

(45a) ngas dkar yol bca\-
\-
gi yin te chag ma song/
\-
\-
1:ERG cup break-NS-CONJ-VC break-NEG-PFV-DISJ
\-
\-
CAUS RESULT

\-
I tried to break the cup, but it did not break. (Tournadre 1996: 204)\textsuperscript{147}

(45b) spar yang mi 'bar/
\-
light:PFV-CONC NEG-lighted:RES

Although he tries to light the fire, it does not light. [= Même s'[il] essaye d'allumer le feu, il ne s'allume pas.] (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 57)

A typologically similar construction in Themchen Tibetan is the following:

(45c) \textipa{št\text{\check{a}}m\text{\check{z}}\text{\check{\i}}}n-\text{\check{u}} n\text{\check{a}}k\text{\check{a}} mn\text{\check{a}} f\text{\check{\i}}wi-t'a-ra ma-ngi-t'a.
\-
Tamdrin-ERG hand:DAT medicine lube-NVO-EVID-CONC NEG-lube:RES-NVO-EVID

\-
Tamdrin tried to lube the medicine on his hand, but it did not smear (= Tamdrin (versuchte), sich die Hand mit Salbe einzuscmieren, aber es ging nicht.) (Haller 2004: 133, ex. 639b)

This function of the CAUS/RES opposition in these examples can be characterized as such: The ERG case role is not a successful agent; it therefore only focusses on the effort of the AG ('conative function', cf. Tournadre 1996: 204; 94, 194, 205).\textsuperscript{148} The CAUS verb form emphasizes the intentionality of the agent; that the result is not achieved is stressed by the GOAL-oriented RES verb form (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 251; Tournadre 1996: 194; Zeisler 2004: 252). As will be seen in the next section, there is a further complication, however. These examples all involve a CAUS verb plus a negated RES verb; accordingly, Tournadre (1996: 194, 204) and Zeisler (2004: 252f.) stress the fact that volition/intention and (possibility of) control are narrowly linked to telicity of the action, while the failure ("unforeseen instances") must be made explicit. Of course, such constructions also occur with suppletive verb pairs (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 57):

(46a) bl\text{\-\check{a}}s kyang ma m\text{\check{a}}m\text{\check{h}}o\text{\check{g}}n/\text{\check{a}}
\-
looked-CONC NEG-see

[He] has watched, but did not see.

\textsuperscript{147} cf. also Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 255 for a similar example: ngas dkar yol bca\-
\-\-
gi yin te yin na'ang chag ma song/
\-
\-
('J'ai cassé la tasse, mais elle ne s'est pas cassée.').

\textsuperscript{148} 'Conative' is originally defined as 'oriented toward the addressee' in Jakobson 1960; in other contexts, it is understood as 'attempt' (Lat. conatio) and translates as 'try to X'; it seems to refer here to both the 'attempted' action (cf. Levin 1993: 5ff., Polinsky 2005: 439) and subsequent 'GOAL orientation'. In Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 251, the translators state in a footnote to their commentary on 'volitional verbs': "On voit ici le rapport entre la volition et l'aspect conatif (exprime l'idée d'effort de la part de l'agent pour accomplir l'action)."
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10.08.02. Conative sentences with IMP stems

As mentioned above, the description given so far, is not complete: A number of such examples from the literature do not involve a CAUS/RES pair, but two CAUS verb forms, a PFV and an IMP. This is highly surprising, since a category 'imperative' cannot explain the conative meaning. Let us first consider a few examples:

(47a) phyi snang ba btl gyis mi thul gyis/
appearance master:PFV-INS NEG-master:IMP-INS
Although you try to master the appearances, they will not be mastered. [= Tu t’efforce de maitriser les phénomènes extérieurs, mais tu n’y parviens pas.] (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 20)

(47b) khong tshos khong bkag kyang ma ’khog pa red/
3-PL:ERG 3 stop:PFV-CONC NEG-stop:IMP-NS-EQU:DISJ
Though they [tried to] stop him, [he] was not stopped. (Losang Thonden 1984: 133, Tournadre 1996: 204)

(47c) nga tshos shing ’di geod thabs byas kyang ma chod pa red/
Though we tried to cut this tree, [it] was not cut (or: we could not). (Losang Thonden 1984: 133)

If this is a regular use of IMP, then the IMP stem must have had or must have another meaning than imperative mood. Haller 2004 remarks that the IMP stem in Themchen Tibetan additionally has a non-IMP function, and he therefore calls it "Modus-Stamm" (MOD). This IMP or MOD stem has a remarkable peculiarity: In negated or interrogative contexts, and even in declarative utterances, it has the meaning 'somebody cannot + V' (Haller 2004: 73). This can be exemplified with the following examples (Haller 2004: 141, 84, 146, 162):

(48a) ma-s¹ol!
NEG:VOL:EVID:kill:IMP
You cannot kill him! (689)

(48b) te⁰ k′eri lać o-s¹ol?
hyod kher pos lug A sod/
2 alone:ERG sheep VOL:EVID:INT-kill:IMP
Can you kill (a) sheep alone? (167g)

(48c) stamdžon-yə φtečiŋkʰə ma-s¹ot-tʰa.
rta mgrin gyis spyang khu ma sod thal/
Tamdrin-ERG wolf NEG-kill:IMP NVOL:EVID
Tamdrin could not kill the wolf (726)

(48d) tʰi lać nda ma-s¹on-na na juŋ
hyod kyis lug ’di ma-s¹od-na nga yong/
2:ERG sheep DEF NEG-kill:IMP-COND 1 come
If you cannot kill the sheep, I will come [and do it]. (772)

This function can also be used in ‘conative constructions’ of the type ‘X tried to V, but he could not V’, cf. (Haller 2004: 84, 86):

Ex. taken from the bibliography of Milarepa, Qinghai 1981: 435.
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(49a) štəmʐon-ye łaɕ ʂat-t’a-ra, ma-s’ot-t’a.
    rta mgrin gyis lug bsad thal ra ma sod thal/
Tamdrin [tried to] kill the sheep, but [he could] not kill [it]. (167b)

(49b) štəmʐon-ya ʂkəpə ɨtɕ-t’a-ra, ma-te’-ot-t’a.
    rta mgrin gyis skud pa becad thal ra ma chod thal/
Tamdrin [tried to] cut the thread, but [he could] not cut [it]. (187b)

(49c) štəmʐon-ya kərʊ ɨtɕx-t’a-ra, ma-te’x-t’a.
    rta mgrin gyis dkar yol beag thal ra ma chog thal/
Tamdrin [tried to] break the cup, but [he could] not break [it]. (188b)

These (frequent) examples contrast with very similar CAUS/RES pairs, cf., e.g., (Haller 2004: 128, 129):

(50a) štəmʐon-ya ʂkəpə ɨtɕ-t’a-ra, ma-te’-at-t’a.
    rta mgrin gyis skud pa becad thal ra ma chad thal/
Tamdrin [tried to] cut the thread, but [it did] not cut. (601b)

(50b) štəmʐon-ya kərʊ ɨtɕx-t’a-ra, ma-te’x-t’a.
    rta mgrin gyis dkar yol beag thal ra ma chag thal/
Tamdrin [tried to] break the cup, but [it did] not break. (602b)

The full list of these sentence pairs is listed in Haller (2004: 73, fn. 4): The first clause ends with a concessive (CONC) particle, in the second clause, either the MOD (IMP) stem or the uncontrolled (RES) particle is negated. The difference in meaning relates to the orientation of the verb stem: The first verb is AG oriented, but the action is relativized with the concessive particle (‘tried to V’); in the second clause, the MOD stem is also oriented towards the AG, but it is negated and thus receives the ‘cannot V’ meaning. The RES verb, on the other hand, is oriented towards the GOAL of the action and has the respective meaning. From the non-conative examples of use of IMP (MOD) stems, it is clear that they are not simply resultative verb forms (Haller 2004: 73). Haller 2004 therefore distinguishes these two meanings with the following standard translation:

AG tried to V the PAT, but the PAT could not V.
AG tried to V the PAT, but the PAT did not V.

The use of IMP stem in conative constructions is also reported for Written Tibetan, although it seems not to have been explicitly described before Zeisler 2002. In the following example, the verb PFV bsad IPV gso’d FUT gso’d IMP sod is used:

(51a) khyod kyis mar me ‘di gsd par sens kyang/
    2-ERG butter lamp DEM kill:FUT-NS-ILL mind-CONC

(51b) mar me ‘di khyod kyis mi sod do/
    butter lamp DEM 2-ERG NEG-kill:IMP-FIN

Although you think that you [can] extinguish the butter lamp, you will not extinguish this butter lamp. (= Vous pensez éteindre la lampe à beurre, mais vous ne réussirez pas.) (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 15)350

350 Ex. taken from mdo mdzangs blan.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan

In the following example, we seem to have to do with a CAUS/RES pair (PFV *spang* IPV *spong* FUT *slangs* RES *phongs*):

(52) phy lus sens spang gis mi phongs kyis/
    body mind give-up-INS NEG-give-up:RES-INS
    Although you try to give up the mind with the body, it will not be given up. (= Bien que tu t'efforces de fuir (d'abandonner) l'esprit avec le corps, tu n'y parviens pas. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 20))

This example is discussed in Zeisler (2002: 448f.); Zeisler mentions that in the new edition of the biography of Milarepa (Qinghai 1989), this phrase is corrected to *slangs* for *phongs*. This change between RES and IMP in two editions points to the conceptual similarity. Zeisler 2002 therefore assumes an older potential meaning for the IMP stem which seems to be preserved in Themchen Tibetan.

10.08.03. Similar sentences

Although this phenomenon has become known as 'conative' examples, 'conativity' also works with affirmative sequences:

(53a) ja bskol te 'khol/
    tea boil-CONT boiled
    (On) a mis le thé à bouillir et il a bouilli. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 61)

(53b) me spar te 'bar/
    fire light:PFV-CONT lighted:RES
    [On] a allumé le feu et il a pris. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 61; cf. p. 57)

(53c) 'khor lo bskor te khor/
    wheel turned:PFV-CONT turned:RES
    [On] a fait tourner la roue et elle a continué à tourner d'elle-même. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 61)

In one example, the second verb form is an IMP:

(54) mda' phangs te phog/
    arrow shoot-CONT struck:IMP
    (Il) a décoché la flèche et elle a atteint la cible. (Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 61)

Finally, textbooks sometimes exemplify the CAUS/RES distinction in sentence pairs. In the following example, the change of verb orientation involves either an AG and an EXP participant, respectively (Goldstein et al. 1991: 83):

(55a) A me ri kas dmag 'khrug bslang pa red/
    America:ERG war begin:CAUS-NS-DISJ America started a war.

(55b) A me ri kar dmag 'khrug langs pa red/
    America:ILL war begin:RES-NS-DISJ In America, a war started.

This is not a valid opposition, however, since *A me ri kar* is a locative and not an EXP, but the example shows that the verb orientation of *langs, bslang* plays a role in the interpretation

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311 Ex. taken from the bibliography of Milarepa, Qinghai 1981: 431.
312 The two occurrences of INS case with verbs has to be explained as well here: in the first instance, it is concessive, in the second, it is a future meaning which is expressed by the INS markers, respectively.
of the meaning; phonologically, the two verb forms are distinguished by tone ([lāŋ] – [ləŋ]). Goldstein et al. (1991: 83) paraphrase the difference as

America caused a war to start.
A war broke out in America.

The following similar example with an ABS and an ERG-ABS pattern is therefore a more appropriate example of grammatical case assignment (Tournadre 1996: 202):

(56) rmo lags ’di langs thub mi ’dug ngas bslangs pa yin/
    grandmother  DEM raise:RES can-NEG-DISJ  I:ERG rise:CAUS-NS-CONJ
    This grandmother could not stand up, thus I helped her.

Only in few cases, the morphological distinction of the verb has been neutralized in the spoken language, so that the CAUS meaning is expressed by the presence of AG and PAT, the RES meaning by the absence of one of the NPs; an example would be bang(s) and sbang (‘be/make wet’). This would be a situation as in English neutral verbs ‘break’, ‘sink’. In most cases, however, there remains a phonological (e.g. tonal) difference. The above-mentioned verb dbral vs. ral (‘tear’ vs. ‘get torn’) is [rɛː] (dbral) and [rɛː] (ral), respectively.

10.09. Summary

Tibetan ergativity is a highly varied phenomenon: a) There are dialectal differences in the use of case markers and the ERG; b) ERG marking is facultative in some contexts (‘fluid S marking’); c) ERG marking is related to aspect (‘split ERG marking’); d) ERG applies to ‘intransitive’ verbs such as ‘go’ in certain contexts; e) is the expression of volition (VOL) in some contexts; f) the ERG marker is used for a wide range of non-agentive roles, such as experiencer subjects; g) in some contexts, it is an emphatic marker; h) there is no grammatical agreement between ERG and the verbs, but with 1st person subjects, a verbal category of VOL semantically interacts with ERG.

Early descriptions of Tibetan mostly followed the same scheme of description, relying on similar linguistic concepts. ERG is seen as an agentive or emphatic marker. More importantly, the need for an alternative classification of verbs is felt. Only later, the terminology ‘transitive’ – ‘intransitive’ is introduced, but used for the same distinction of ‘active’ and ‘neutral’ verbs. While case marking itself is more ‘fluid’ and therefore less well observable, the verb
classes receive the main attention. The Tibetan indigenous grammar already focussed on a morphological distinction of active and inactive verbs, or verbs which are oriented towards an AG or a PAT, respectively. This differentiation is partly reflected in analytical forms of the written language and the spoken dialects.

The distinction of 'active and inactive' verbs stands in contrast to the absence of passive and antipassive formation. The 'reorientation' of an event construal is performed by the change of the verb form (or by the use of AUX verbs). ERG marking seems to play a semantic or pragmatic role, but not so much a syntactic role.

The description of Tibetan ergativity seems to expose a highly varied system. Before all, the semanticity of case marking seems to be prevalent. On the other hand, ERG marking extends over agents and experiencers. The fluidity of case marking seems to occur more often in 'typical' settings. A historical development cannot be assumed with certainty. It seems as if case marking is a rather secondary phenomenon as compared to the complexity of verb forms – which are also quite varied in the dialects. Lexical and morphological categories of the verbs produce different kinds of environment for the interpretation of the meaning of the ERG marker. Historically, a dichotomic morphologically marked category of AG- vs. PAT-oriented verb forms seems to play a major role.

A diachronic 'development' from ERG to NOM or from NOM to ERG cannot be observed in Tibetan. We also do not find a clear system of 'syntactic government'. Rather, we find a 'cooccurrence' of case and verb categories which lead to various interpretations of the respective clauses.

It may be asked now whether the system described here is 'fundamentally different' from SAE grammars, or whether 'irregular' behavior with respect to an assumed category of 'syntactic government' can be found also in SAE languages.
10. Optional ergative case marking in Tibetan
11. Theoretical considerations

It has been shown that Tibetan ergativity is itself a varied phenomenon, and Tibetan has been termed an ERG or ACT language, respectively. In the following, different kinds of relevant theoretical linguistic constructs are discussed. This section tries to expose similarities and divergences between certain concepts and Tibetan grammar.

11.01. Ergativity

11.01.01. Nominative vs. ergative systems

One obvious typological distinction with respect to case marking is the distinction between nominative and ergative systems. Some languages have an opposition of nominative and accusative, while other languages oppose an ergative to an absolute case. First of all, it therefore represents two distinctive case marking systems for bivalent clauses; cf. (German and Basque):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 01</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. German</td>
<td>macht</td>
<td>einen Tisch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Mann (NOM)</td>
<td>makes</td>
<td>a table (ACC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Mann (NOM)</td>
<td>stirbt</td>
<td>is dying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Basque</td>
<td>mahaia</td>
<td>egin d-u.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gizonak (ERG)</td>
<td>table (ABS)</td>
<td>makes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The man (ABS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gizon-a</td>
<td>hil d-a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The man (ABS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from these examples, languages of type 1 distinguish a 'subject' or 'main' participant and a possible secondary participant marked with a so-called 'accusative'. Languages of type 2, however, seem to have a different way of marking the three roles in these two sentences. Based on some generally accepted linguistic categories (such as transitivity, subject, agent), we can tentatively define the difference as follows:

NOM/ACC languages distinguish a 'subject' (S) from an 'object' (O), whereby each clause contains a S. ERG/ABS languages, on the other hand, distinguish an agent (A) from a non-agent. Since only transitive verbs do actually have an opposition of two (or three) case roles, the distinction is necessary only in transitive settings.

As far as distinctiveness is concerned, both systems do exactly the same by opposing two different markers to two participants in transitive clauses. The difference lies only in the choice these languages made for the co-marking of the sole participant of an intransitive verb. Therefore, Dixon (1972, 1979) introduced the distinction between A, S, and O; whereby A represents the AGENT role of transitive verbs, S the subject of single-actant verbs, and O the PATIENT role of transitive verbs. These three roles are commonly expressed by only two linguistic concepts, whereby one can mark either A and S, or S and O with only one sign. Indeed, A and S do not cooccur, nor do S and O. Thus, this explanation refers to the discri-
11. Theoretical considerations

minatory function of case marking; note, however, that S is defined as 'the subject of single-actant verbs' which is not a semantic role such as A, but the formal property of not cooccurring with either A or O. Languages usually encode one or two (and more rarely three) participants in one main clause. Thus, languages have to describe three different roles in two sentence types. 'Technically', two markers suffice (indexing function; cf. Song 2001: 159f.):

Table 02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>ERG</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>ABS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Therefore, Comrie 1978 proposed to use the term P[atient] instead of O[bject]. This is an improvement, since A is opposed to a P, while a single participant is – whatever; A and P are termed according to semantic roles, whereas S is a category of topic or prominence which is not part of the same set of distinctions: an A or P can also be topic, or prominent.

Table 03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>ERG</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>ABS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

On the other hand, the distinction of A and P does not account for all cases of bivalent event construals (e.g., 'John(EXP) saw Bill(ABS)'). Thus, a merely grammatical distinction of 'A', 'S', and 'P' would indeed only serve the syntactic distinction of syntactic participants. In this respect, languages have two logical possibilities, and both can be found in the languages of the world: NOM/ACC, ERG/ABS. If distinctiveness is thus the trigger for case marking, we have found out that the languages of the world simply do whatever is theoretically possible.

It may therefore be asked whether there are languages which distinguish all three roles (S vs. A vs. P; 'tripartite systems') or none at all (S=A=P, 'isolating languages'); tripartite systems seem to be extremely rare, and S=A=P systems usually have another device for case marking, e.g., word order. English is an example for S=A=P, as long as we do not consider the pronominal system. Finally, one should check for A-P vs. S systems:

(01) Hypothetical language

man-A table-A makes.
man-S dies.

As can be seen from this example, this system is dysfunctional in terms of distinctiveness, which may account for its rarity among the languages of the world.\(^{155}\) In other words, "a main task of the grammar is to distinguish between A and O" [Dixon 1994: 224]. Thus, we can identify two important functions of case marking: distinguishing the roles of two participants appearing in one event, and being economical with markers. So far, this short description is far from exhaustive concerning the variability of case marking systems in the languages of the world. In fact, there are languages with similar, partly similar, and entirely different case marking systems. Additionally, the nominative and ergative systems seem to be much more varied than was implied by this description. As could be seen, Tibetan is an ergative language – in principle. The grammatical use of ERG, however, seems to be much more complex than what has been said in this short characterization.

\(^{155}\) Languages sometimes do have dysfunctional systems. This may be due to historical developments which led to unsatisfying grammatical structures. It is known that such structures are synchronically often avoided and diachronically more easily eliminated, however.
11. Theoretical considerations

11.01.02. Event construals and case marking

The above-described ERG case marker is a challenge to the concept of 'subject', however; it seems to involve an idea of agentivity, i.e., a semantic concept, whereas subjects seem to be able to represent any semantic role:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02a)</th>
<th>Der Hund bellt. (intransitive) AG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02b)</th>
<th>Der Hund iß-t Fleisch. (transitive) AG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02c)</th>
<th>Der Hund läuft herum. MVR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02d)</th>
<th>Der Hund zittert. EXP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02e)</th>
<th>Der Hund stinkt. SRC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02f)</th>
<th>Der Hund bekommt Fleisch. BEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(02g)</th>
<th>Der Hund bekommt Schläge. PAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEF:M:SG:NOM</td>
<td>dog</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, we have to distinguish first the level of the 'event construal' (cf. Fillmore 1968, 1977, Croft 1991, DeLancey 1991b, etc.) from the level of 'grammatical categories'. Seen from the semantic or functional perspective, a language user construes an event involving a marker for the event and markers for involved participants. Secondly, the participants may be marked for their respective roles in the events. Finally, the event is 'anchored' in time and space (and other conceptual 'domains').

Apparently, most languages have verbs and nouns, and most verbs and nouns express an event and participants, respectively, in a specific event construal. Moreover, grammatical marking on verbs usually expresses 'am categories, while participants are marked with 'case' markers. Thus, the event construal is basically grammaticalized in the relation of a verb phrase with noun phrases. Focussing now on case markers, this gives a 'semantic' background to case marking; but this does not seem to be the main aspect of case in most systems (see ex. above). One of the 'problems' to be solved by language lies in the fact that the world consists of innumerable possible or actual events which have to be grouped together in some way to form smaller amounts of grammatical patterns which are able to express all these events. Thus, the linguistic event construal is but a representative of a class of similar events. Similarly, linguistic utterances usually focus on only one, two, or three participants at a time.

Actually, languages do have very few syntactic patterns, so that it is almost predictable that there should be a remarkable difference between semantic event construals and many syntactic clauses. On the other hand, 'profiling' an event in a linguistic operation is not a
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simple rendering of an objective world onto linguistic patterns; instead, it is a choice of the
language user. Whether we say ‘Charles met Mary’, or ‘Charles entered the coffee shop
where Mary was waiting’, or even ‘The owner of the coffee shop had a headache’ may all
refer to the same ‘objective’ situation, giving quite different construals of the event.

Moreover, in order to shape attention and informativity, languages must provide tools
for changing the focus, etc. It is therefore self-evident that language will have some mecha-
nisms for changing aspects of an event construal, such as in ‘Charles met Mary’ and ‘Mary
met Charles’, or ‘Charles saw Mary’ and ‘Mary was seen by Charles’.

It is probable that the few syntactic patterns are based on prototypical event construals
and then extended to similar events. This may explain our general difficulty in giving se-
matic definitions of case markers, although we are tempted to do so. On the other hand,
‘grammatical irregularities’ are usually based on conceptual incompatibilities.

In short, it proves useful to distinguish semantic (conceptual) and formal (grammatical)
properties of linguistic signs. Concerning the marking of case, therefore, we will have to look
first how the main semantic roles of AGENT (AG), INSTRUMENT (INS), MOVER (MVR),
EXPERIENCER (EXP), PATIENT (PAT), and ABSOLUTE PARTICIPANT (ABS) are repre-
sented in grammars (cf. Langacker 1991b: 236). Then, the obvious difference between this
classification and grammatical case systems will be discussed. Similarly, it will be necessary
to analyze both semantic and syntactic verb classifications, and their interrelations with case
marking.

11.01.03. Subjects and agents

Subject and object seem to be a widespread linguistic phenomenon, cf.:

(03a) Der Junge schläft.
DEF:M:NOM:SG boy sleep-3S
The boy is sleeping.

(03b) Der Junge kauft einen Gameboy.
The boy is buying a gameboy.

In these examples, grammatical particles mark the case roles of NOM and ACC. The role of
the THING marked with NOM is in both cases the topic of the event construal, and in the
second case, it also has the participant role of an AGENT (AG); the ACC, on the other hand,
marks the THING which has the PATIENT (PAT) role. Since in the first sentence, the NOM
marks the role of an ABSOLUTE PARTICIPANT (ABS), while in the second sentence, it is
the marker of a participant who is an AG, we must state that NOM is not (biuniquely) an ex-
pression of AG. Biuniqueness, the reciprocal relation between meaning and form, can thus
not be maintained: NOM can mark agents, but it is not a marker for AG. In the second sen-
tence – which we have conventionally termed a ‘transitive verb sentence’, because it in-
volves two direct participant roles, we can also apply a specific operation, passivization:

(04) Der Gameboy wird von dem Jungen gekauft.
The gameboy is bought by the boy.

Thus, it becomes evident that now NOM does not have the meaning of an AG, but of a PAT.
Whatever be the reasons and deeper meanings for this syntactic change of passivization, it is
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clear that in this example NOM represents the opposite role and can therefore not be seen as a linguistic sign for AG. The AG role is now expressed by an adposition which is composed of an instrumental (INS) marker together with another case marker, the dative (DAT). Consequently, AG is not expressed by a specific case marker. Thus, NOM seems to be a case expressing ‘subjecthood’, while ACC and DAT could be characterized semantically. The semantic participant roles are at best indirectly present in complex signs such as ACTIVE + NOM or PASSIVE + INS. In other words, the semantic case roles are not expressed in this system by simple, easily recognizable signs, whereas system-internal relations (subject, object) are well-marked with preposed function words (‘der’, ‘einen’). Such a system is found in many non-SAE languages.

For now, there seems to be no need for semantic case roles in an event (extrasytemic reference), since there seem to be only markers for syntactic roles of words in a clause (intrasystemic reference). But there arise a few problems from this view.

11.01.04. Defining Ergativity

It was one of the major challenges for European linguistics to analyze languages not exhibiting the usual subject-object scheme in their formal grammar. These languages have been subsumed as ‘ergative languages’ (e.g., Tibetan).158 From a European (i.e., SAE) viewpoint, an ergative (ERG) language has an unmarked subject in intransitive sentences and an unmarked object in transitive sentences, while the subject of a transitive sentence has another case marker, the ergative (ERG). This description, heavily based on European traditional grammar, makes ERG systems a ‘special’ or ‘exotic’ case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 04</th>
<th>ERG SYSTEM</th>
<th>NOM SYSTEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRANSITIVE:</td>
<td>ERG — ABS</td>
<td>NOM — ACC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRANSITIVE:</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>NOM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is ERG thus an intrasytemic subject marker for transitive sentences, or is it a semantic agent marker? The first definition assigns the status of a distinctive sign which is therefore not really different from the NOM/ACC solution, the latter functionally refers to extralinguistic information. Let us first review possible definitions of ERG case marking (for more cf. Dixon 1994: 19ff.):

The most widely accepted def. of ‘ergative’ is in terms of grammatical case, namely, the subject of a transitive verb, wherein that case is opposed to a second case, the ‘absolutive’ (‘nominative’), which includes both the subject of an intransitive verb and the object of a transitive. The ergative case thus implies a distinction or lack of association between the subject of an intransitive and the subject of a transitive. The ergative inflection is often used elsewhere – in many languages it appears in instrumental, genitive and locative contexts. (Seely 1977: 191)

158 A great number of languages and linguistic areas in the world use the so-called ergative case marking: Basque, Inuktikut, Caucasian languages, Australian languages, some Polynesian languages, Tibeto-Burman languages, Burushaski, Palaeosiberian languages, Sumerian, Hurrian, some Papuan languages, Indo-Iranian languages, and finally a number of American Indian languages (e.g. Mayan).
Ergativity is a term used in traditional descriptive typological linguistics to refer to a system of nominal case-marking where the subject of an intransitive verb has the same morphological marker as a direct object, and a different morphological marker from the subject of a transitive verb. (Comrie 1978: 329)

The term 'ergativity' is used to describe a grammatical pattern in which the subject of an intransitive clause is treated in the same way as the object of a transitive clause, and differently from transitive subject. (Dixon 1994: 1)

Each of these definitions depends on a linguistic knowledge domain which is built on NOM languages: The definitions talk about 'subjects', 'objects', and 'transitivity', as if these concepts were uncontroversially universal. Since a formal definition is not very helpful, it is perhaps easier to rely on a semantic definition:

Ergative, the grammatical case found usually as subject of a transitive verb but also with intransitives when it denotes an action based on volition, emphasis, or certain other semantic features. It may be indicated by a number of formal means and must be found in conjunction with a base configuration including the Absolutive, a customarily unmarked case found both as object of a transitive verb and either as subject of an intransitive or more exclusively some type of non-agentive subject. (Seely 1978: 12)

This definition is deviant from the above-mentioned definitions in that it does not restrict ERG to transitivity and talks about a semantic meaning, not of an agent, but of a volitional actor, or an emphasis on the acting role. A semantic definition of ergative marking refers to a case marking scheme which is perhaps so atypical for ERG languages that one has argued for another linguistic type of case marking: the active-static case marking systems (cf. Klimov 1979; Nichols 1986). Some authors, however, did not accept this distinction (cf., e.g., Trask 1979: 387).

Conventional definitions of transitivity, e.g., in popular science and normative grammars, often equal transitivity with bivalence. But bivalence does not account for passivization, for example. On the other hand, the nominative is often described as prototypically 'agentive', e.g., in prescriptive grammars or contributions to popular science. But the nominative obviously does not stand for a semantic category. It may be asked now whether the ERG case marker is closer to a semantic category. Again, conventional definitions seem to point into this direction:

ERGATIVE LANGUAGE: a language whose case-marking system distinguishes between the semantic roles Agent (ergative case) and Patient/Theme (absolutive case). Accusative languages like Latin show another widely-attested case-marking pattern: Agent/Theme (nominative) vs. Patient (accusative). Consult COMRIE (1978) and DIXON (1979) for detailed discussion. (Tillemans & Herforth 1989: 106)

The confusion between the syntactic and semantic levels obscure the categorization of the linguistic type, however. This definition describes a 'semantic ergative', or perhaps an 'active/inactive language'.

Syntactic ergative is an alternative endpoint of grammaticalization of semantic roles into syntactic case; this is also reflected by the linguistic discussion about the languages which
are really syntactically ergative (cf. Marantz 1984, Dowty 1991, and others); other authors claim that the only clear case of syntactic ERG is said to be Dyirbal (Australia) (cf. Manning 1996: 10f.). Thus, many contributors imply that NOM/ACC languages are more grammaticalized than ERG/ABS languages: "There are very many languages which are completely accusative in both syntax and morphology, whereas there are few or no languages which are ergative to a comparable degree" (Trask 1979: 387). This finding, however, remains to be proved. We have seen already that many irregularities in NOM/ACC grammar may be attributed to the influence of semantic categories. It may be the same picture for ERG/ABS systems: a mixture of the syntactic and semantic levels. Therefore, the single parameters have to be sorted out.

11.02. Construing Events

11.02.01. Government

The syntactic term 'government' implies that verbs rule over the respective obligatory nominal constituents by assigning them their status (a 'case'): verbs require specific constituents obligatorily. Government may be morphologically expressed by agreement markers. E.g., in SAE languages, there is agreement between verbs and a subject, thus creating a dichotomy between the subject and the predication, cf. (German):

**(05a)** ich schreib-e Maria einen Brief.  
I write a letter to/for Mary.

Other languages, however, have agreement with two or three nominal constituents – or participants of the event, cf. (Basque, ex. from Kerejeta & Hurch 1999: 201):

**(05b)** Ni-k Maria-ri gutun-a-k idaz-ten d-i-zki-o-t  
I write the letters to Mary.

Some other languages seem to have no agreement at all, cf. (Chinese; ex. taken from Shadick 1970: 7):

**(05c)** ya1 ming2 yue2 shu4 shang4  
crow cry-out on tree top  
The crow was crying out on the tree-top.

Some other languages do have morphological agreement markers which refer to something else than syntactic constituents; Central Tibetan, f.ex., shows a system of evidential markers referring to the speaker and hearer, or to conjunctness of a subordinated pronoun with a superordinate participant (cf. DeLancey 1990: 295f.).

Some languages seem to rely more on 'syntactic' case assignment, while others observe more 'semantic' relations. In formal linguistic models, this distinction is often not observed and government is executed only from formal verb classes (e.g., 'transitive verbs') over
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formal case markers (e.g., NOM and ACC). Indeed, the obligatoriness of the subject is so strong in some languages (cf. Givon 1984: 4.2.1.) that in the case of zero-valent verbs, a fictive subject is introduced, cf. (German, Breton, but not Hungarian):

\[(06a)\] Es regnet.  
PRO rain:3S  
It is raining.

\[(06b)\] mond a ra mad (an draou)  
world REL makes gut (the weather)  
It is good (weather).

\[(06c)\] havaz-ik  
snow-3S:IK\(^{155}\)  
It is snowing.

Nonetheless, the inadequacy of a purely formalistic approach can be proved easily with a few examples. Verbs such as German 'scheppern' ('to rattle') are not only monovalent verbs needing a subject; moreover, this verb also specifies the range of possible extra-linguistic objects which can enter into this event construal as subject, namely physically badly integrated things, e.g., a can on the street (cf. Lehmann 1983). Similarly, 'rasieren' ('to shave') requires a human participant in the subject position. Obviously, the notion of 'government' tries to pin down the formal distinctions of case assignment operations, while it is neglecting the accompanying semantic factors. Equally, some verbs have incorporated a role which is not overtly marked as a role participant; Events such as 'Er vergoldet das Dach', 'He gilds the roof' has three participants (he, the roof, the gold), while the linguistic representation has only two. This shows the need for a distinction between syntactic patterns and semantic relations.

Many languages (such as Nahuatl or Maya) allow noun incorporation, which makes it also sometimes difficult to establish the idea of valence. Cf. (Yucateco Maya, Blaha-Pfeiler, pers. comm.; cf. Ayres & Pfeiler 1997):

\[(07a)\] tan in ch'ak-che'  
PRG 1ERG cut-wood  
I am wood-cutting.

\[(07b)\] k-in ch'ak-che'  
IPV-1ERG cut-wood  
I cut wood.

This is obviously also possible in (German and) Tibetan:

\[(08a)\] kho rang gis nga lag thab pa red/  
3-ERG 1 hand-beat-NS-DISJ  
He has beaten me.

\[(08b)\] kha lag za ba mo Ta btang ba  
food eat car LV  
to eat to drive

On the other hand, some verbs have flexible (syntactic) valence, cf. (German):

\[(09a)\] Du soll-st nicht Hans töt-en!  
25 shall-2S NEG Hans kill-INF  
You shall not kill Hans!

\[(09b)\] Du soll-st nicht töt-en!  
25 shall-2S NEG kill-INF  
Thou shallst not kill!

In real-life discourse situations, obligatory constituents are omitted sometimes, cf. (German):

\[(10a)\] [Ich] Bin gleich wieder da.

\(^{155}\) The ‘-ik’-inflection is an intransitive sub-paradigm.
11. Theoretical considerations

11.02.02. Valence

Bühler 1934 employed the term 'Wahlverwandtschaften' (cf. the title of a work of J.W. v. Goethe) for the obvious fact that verbs, adjectives, and relational nouns (by their semantics) open up slots ('Leerstellen', Bühler 1934: 173). The term 'valence' itself was introduced by Tesnière (1953; 1959: 161; cf. also Hockett 1958) who borrowed it from chemistry. In general, 'valence' is a slightly different semantic characteristic naming the fact that event construals involve typical participants; e.g., the event 'know' implies somebody who knows and something which is known.\footnote{Unfortunately, 'valence' is used both for syntactic and semantic arguments – although these two need not coincide.}

Tesnière 1954 in his theory of dependency grammar, developed a model of dependencies between linguistic units. Therefore, he included not only obligatory, but also free constituents. The difference between free and obligatory constituents is difficult to prove, however. Many lexemes are polysemous and may therefore realize different valence patterns in different situations. Therefore, the attempt has been made to define obligatory in a better way, e.g. in the so-called 'necessity relation' ('Notwendigkeitsrelation', 'NOT') which is realized when the constituent in question cannot be deleted without causing ungrammaticality (cf. Jacobs 1994: 14). But 'grammaticality' is a theory-dependent concept (referring to the so-called 'competence') which cannot account for acceptability judgements. Whatever the problems, it is (somehow) possible to list the verbs of a language and assign valence values to them; by doing so, the values zero-valent, monovalent, bivalent, and trivalent are found, cf. (German):

\begin{tabular}{llllll}
11a) & Es & regnet. & PRO & rain:3S & \textbf{It is raining.} \\
11b) & Er & schl"aft. & 3S:M & sleep:3S & \textbf{He is sleeping.} \\
11c) & Er & schl"agt & die & Crème. & 3S:M & beat:3S & DEF:SG:ACC & \textbf{He is whipping the cream.} \\
11d) & Er & gibt & Maria & ein & Buch. & 3S:M & give:3S & Mary & INDEF:NSG:ACC & book & Mary. \\
\end{tabular}

Valence is said to define the semantic roles of participants in the event; formally, on the other hand, it was 'government' which defines grammatical case for obligatory constituents. There seems to be a fundamental gap between the grammatical assignment of case and the semantic assignment of roles, and for some reasons, most languages do not simply express semantic roles by their respective case markers.
11. Theoretical considerations

11.02.03. Transitivity

The linguistic term 'transitivity' is used frequently in the literature, but sometimes it is not properly defined. It seems as if this concept often names the fact that verbs require the presence of two participants entering a particular (AG-PAT) relation with each other in the event described by the verb. In this way, (semantic) transitivity is but a reduced version of 'bivalence' which would include all kinds of binary relations.

Thus, (syntactic) transitivity has to do with the existence of a direct object, i.e., an ACC (in NOM languages) or an ABS (in ERG languages); 'Charles went to the town' is not transitive, but still involving two participants ('Charles', 'the town') in the event construal. Probably, semantic transitivity is viewed as the most typical binary relation between participants. On the other hand, the overlap in formal case marking between transitive and 'less transitive' events may be due to a dominating discriminatory function of case marking: technically, two-three case markers are sufficient in order to distinguish most relations.

The assumed most basic relation between two participants in an event is thought of as the agent-patient relation. Therefore, we find a semantic definition of transitivity for the energy flow from an agent to a patient: 'Transitivity is traditionally understood as a global property of an entire clause, such that an activity is 'carried-over' or 'transferred' from an agent to a patient' (Hopper & Thompson 1980: 251). Additionally, transitivity implies some degree of 'effectivity' (Hopper & Thompson 1980: 251) of the action, a feature which is therefore usually ascribed to the verb. In other words, transitivity is the central verbal category related to the case marking phenomenon discussed here.

When performing a cross-linguistic survey, it is found that (syntactic) 'transitivity' on a formal level does not mean exactly the same in the languages of the world. Additionally, there are also events with more than one or two explicit participants, as has already been stated earlier.

A short review of only few languages shows that syntactic transitivity is obviously asssigned differently in different languages, cf., e.g., French 'Il a aidé le docteur' (ACC) and German 'Er hat dem Doktor geholfen' (DAT) ('He has helped the doctor:'). Similarly, in Japanese, we find partial convergence and divergence from the English concept of 'transitivity'. In the following examples, these four case particles have to be considered: wa 'topic' (TOP), ga 'subject' (SUBJ), o 'direct object' (OBJ:DIR), and ni directive (DIR) (leaving aside other case patterns with to 'sociative' (SOC), etc.). Cf. (cf. Sohar-Yasuda 2003):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 05</th>
<th>case pattern</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OBJ:DIR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hito o korosu</td>
<td>kill a man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hon o kaku</td>
<td>write a book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hito o odorokasu</td>
<td>frighten a man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hito o shiteiru</td>
<td>know a man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>petora o matsu</td>
<td>wait for Petra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and also</td>
<td>arukōru o gamansuru</td>
<td>abstain from alcohol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>petora o sewasuru</td>
<td>care for Petra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kami o shinjiru</td>
<td>believe in god</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heya ni hairu</td>
<td>enter a room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kenkou ni eikyousuru</td>
<td>influence health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shiai ni katsu</td>
<td>win a game</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kanojo ni denwasuru</td>
<td>call a friend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additionally, in practically all languages, we will find verbs which can be understood either transitively or in transitively, cf. German 'Hans is' ('Hans is eating') and 'Hans is Reis' ('Hans eats rice'). Some verbs may even change the class according to semantic variants of one verb (Latin, van Hoecke 1996: 30f.):

(12a) cāvēre alicuēm
care of someone
(12b) curāre alicuē
take care of someone

Finally, we also find examples of changes in transitivity in language change, as e.g. in Romance (van Hoecke 1996: 31):

(13a) lat. invidere alicuē > fra. envier quelqu’un
(13b) lat. servire alicuē > fra. servir quelqu’un

It is unknown what exactly triggered the change: Are these semantic changes in the verb, new construals of actions/events, or formal adaptations? In German, e.g., there is a normative formation for 'Ich lehre dich' ('I teach you:ACC') (cf. Latin 'doceo te'), which in colloquial language always becomes 'Ich lerne dir' ('I teach[-learn] you:DAT'), since the recipient/experiencer is better represented with a DAT. On the other hand, Tibetan and German differ with respect to the assignment of SOURCE or GOAL case by the verb 'be afraid of, fear': German takes ABL, Tibetan ALL.

Probably due to historical reasons now obscured, languages sometimes require a case marking which is unexplainable synchronically. Thus, in languages with more than one object case, it is sometimes difficult to argue why one case is used instead of the other one (cf. Jacobs 1994: 23); e.g., in German, some verbs require GEN objects instead of ACC objects (e.g. 'gedenken', 'commemorare').

(14) der Opfer gedenk-en
DEFN:GEN victims commenmorate-INF
to commemorate the victims.

Hopper & Thompson 1980 think that transitivity is not a syntactic phenomenon. For them, transitivity is a gradual phenomenon in an interplay of semantic, syntactic, and morphological factors. They suggest that "the defining properties of transitivity are discourse-determined" (p. 251) and propose a set of parameters which favour the occurrence of transitivity in an event construal, a list which will be given here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 06</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>LOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. PARTICIPANTS</td>
<td>2 or more participants, Agent and Object</td>
<td>1 participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. KINESIS</td>
<td>action</td>
<td>non-action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. ASPECT</td>
<td>telic</td>
<td>atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. PUNCTUALITY</td>
<td>punctual</td>
<td>non-punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. VOLITIONALITY</td>
<td>volitional</td>
<td>non-volitional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Theoretical considerations

In a given language, some of these parameters may be more important for the definition of an action as transitive. Thus we may expect the parameter of transitivity to be relevant when, in declining order, 2 participants are involved, in actions, in telic actions, in punctual actions, in volitional acts, and so on. An interesting addition is provided by Tsunoda 1981 on split case marking patterns, who develops (partly overlapping) 'effectiveness parameters' which account for the degree of involvement of A and O into an activity.

Table 07  Effectiveness condition ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(ERG-ABS)</th>
<th>... is met:</th>
<th>... is not met:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) action</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>non-impeingement on O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) impingement on O</td>
<td>O not attained</td>
<td>O partially affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) O attained</td>
<td>O not attained</td>
<td>O partially affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) O totally affected</td>
<td>completed</td>
<td>uncompleted, or in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) completed</td>
<td>durative</td>
<td>atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) punctual</td>
<td>non-resultative</td>
<td>resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(G) telic</td>
<td>potential/ unrealized</td>
<td>potential/ unrealized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(H) resultative</td>
<td>custom</td>
<td>customary/general/habitual activity/situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I) specific or single activity/situation</td>
<td>O indefinite/non-specific/non-referential</td>
<td>O indefinite/non-specific/non-referential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(J) O definite/ specific/ referential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(K) actual/ realized</td>
<td>affirmative</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(L) realis</td>
<td>irrealis</td>
<td>irrealis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) affirmative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a further attempt at grasping transitivity, Tsunoda 1985 remarks that the parameters of Hopper & Thompson have different weight. Specifically, he notes that some of the parameters, e.g. volition and agency, are much more closely linked to each other than they are to transitivity which depends much more on affectedness. E.g., change-of-state (resultative) verbs such as 'kill', 'destroy', 'break', 'bend' are more transitive than non-resultative 'hit', 'kick'. Perception verbs would be still less transitive, followed by pursuit verbs, knowledge, feeling, relationship and ability verbs ('effectiveness hierarchy', Tsunoda 1985: 388). Nonetheless, it is not agentivity and volitionality that account for transitivity in the languages. Instead, it is the degree to which an agent affects an entity. Thus, Tsunoda gives the following decreasing order of decreasing affectedness in two-argument structures (p. 388):

Table 08  DIRECT EFFECT ON PATIENT

| | 1. DIRECT EFFECT ON PATIENT |
| | 1.1. Resultative [= telic]: kill, break, bend |
| | 1.2. Non-resultative: hit, shoot, kick, eat |
| | 2. PERCEPTION |
| | 2.1. patient more attained: see, hear, find |
| | 2.2. patient less attained: listen, look |
| | 3. PURSUIT: |
| | 4. KNOWLEDGE: know, understand, remember, forget |
| | 5. FEELING: love, like, want, need, ... |

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In a cross-linguistic survey, Tsunoda shows that case systems are structured with reference to this 'hierarchy' of transitivity. Thus, for Tsunoda, affectedness of the patient is the (main) parameter triggering 'transitivity'. Volitionality and agentivity, on the other hand, don't seem to play a role in the definition of transitivity. E.g., the (event construal of the) action in 2.2. is more agentive, but in the non-volitional set of 2.1., the patient is more affected. Thus, affectedness of the patient is even an opposite category to agentivity (Tsunoda 1985: 394). This is an interesting argumentation (about the directionality, or orientation, of verbs) with consequences for typological characteristics of ERG- and non-ERG-marking languages. Drossard 1987 takes up the topic of verb classes and transitivity and, more importantly, transitivity. He provides the following basic verb classification (Drossard 1987: 7):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class</th>
<th>roles</th>
<th>examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 effect</td>
<td>AG-PAT</td>
<td>kill, destroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 affect</td>
<td>AG-PAT</td>
<td>beat, hug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 experience</td>
<td>EXPed-EXPed</td>
<td>see, hug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 pursuit</td>
<td>AG-GOAL</td>
<td>search, research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 attitude</td>
<td>AG-ADR</td>
<td>envy, criticize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 control</td>
<td>AG-INS</td>
<td>use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 social interaction</td>
<td>AG-COM</td>
<td>greet, accompany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 object-rel. action</td>
<td>AG-LOC</td>
<td>cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 psycholog. effect</td>
<td>AG-LOC</td>
<td>make-angry, surprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 similarity</td>
<td>ABS-ABS</td>
<td>besimilar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the framework of UNITYP, the distinction of 'inherent' and 'established' categories was very fruitful; therefore, it may be asked whether there are verbs which have both transitive and intransitive patterns and how they establish the respective non-default category. The main point for Drossard is to distinguish the primary orientation of change-of-state verbs (e.g., 'boil', 'burn', 'break'): some languages predominantly derive the transitive forms, some others predominantly derive the intransitive forms, i.e. they are primarily patient- or agent-oriented, respectively.

11.02.04. Changing case patterns

In English, the concept of 'transitivity' can be handled very easily ('Transitivity handles smoothly', see ex. below), because almost all relations seem to be expressed by the same pattern SVO. Drossard 1987, when checking a verb class inventory with two participants in various languages, found only English to have a 100% realization of subject-direct-object relations. Most other languages, however, have to deal with a more complicated case syntax. Thus, some languages such as English seem to have a strong emphasis on the syntactic type of case marking, with practically no concern for semantic case roles; the following examples give semantic roles of INS, LOC, and two PAT in subject position:

(15a) 100.000 pounds won't buy a decent flat in London anymore.
i.e., a decent flat cannot be bought WITH 100.000 pounds.
cf: MIT 100.000 Pf. kann man keine gute Wohnung mehr kaufen.
11. Theoretical considerations

(15b) This tent sleeps five. (Shibatani 1991: 102)
   i.e., five persons can sleep IN this tent.
   cf. IN diesem Zelt können fünf Personen schlafen.

(15c) This car handles smoothly.
   i.e., a person can handle this smoothly.
   cf. Dieses Auto IST leicht ZU handhaben./
   jemand handhabt dieses Auto leicht.

(15d) The paint sprays on evenly. (Fellbaum 1985: 21)
   i.e., somebody can spray the paint on evenly.
   cf. Die Farbe WIRD gleichmäßig AUFGETRAGEN.

This characteristic of English surfaces especially with what has erroneously been called 'ergative verbs' (cf. Grewendorf 1989: 1) in formalist models, verbs with neutral orientation or verbs with an additional causative (CAUS) reading:

   (16) John washed the woolens. vs. The woolens washed well.
   John broke the glass. vs. The glass broke.
   The soldiers marched. vs. The officer marched the soldiers.

This can be seen as a complete loss of semantic obligations for syntactic case roles; in English, practically all possible semantic patterns map on one word order pattern with no further marking:

   (17) John hit Bill. AG – PAT
   John gave Bill a book. AG – EXP – PAT
   John watched Bill. AGENTIVE PERCEIVER – PAT
   John saw Bill. PERCEIVER – ABS
   John felt a cold hand. EXP – ABS
   John has money. POSSoə – POSSd
   John is a teacher. ABS – ABS

On the other hand, case assignment in many languages is not only ordered in simple syntactic patterns, such as NP1 – NP2, or, in other systems, as NOM, NOM – ACC, and NOM – ACC – DAT. In many languages, one event can be construed in terms of different participant roles, as is the case in the following Latin, Gothic (Rousseau 1998: 20, 21), and German (cf. Rousseau 1998: 24) examples:

   (18a) circumdare mur-o urb-em
   surround:INF wall-INS town-ACC
   surround the town with a wall
   (18b) circumdare mur-um urb-i
   surround:INF wall-ACC town-DAT
   surround the wall to the town
   (18c) ina stainam waipan
   3S:ACC stone:PL:INS throw:INF
   throw him with stones
   (18d) imma stainans waipan
   3S:DAT stone:PL:ACC throw:INF
   throw stones at him
   (18e) sich die Aug-en / Tränen wisch-en
   REFL:3S:DAT DEF:PL:ACC eye-PL / tear-PL sweep-INF
   sweep oneself the eyes/tears

The differences lie in various ways to construe the event: while in the first Latin sentence, the town is construed as a PAT and the wall as an INS of the action, in the second sentence, the wall is seen as a PAT, and the town as an EXP. Both descriptions of the event use the semiotic function of metaphorization in order to construe the event, probably from more pro-
11. Theoretical considerations

totypical events with ANIMATE participants. The difference in the construction is a difference in the profiling of the event (cf. Langacker 1991b).

Similarly, in the Gothic examples, either the GOAL of the throwing or the thrown object can be construed as PAT, respectively, while the thrown object could also be seen as an INS of the action, and the goal of the action is also an EXP of the event. Again, the choice is a question of viewpoint (profiling), and not of (an alleged) 'objective' description.

German, on the other hand, shows some tendency to construe various events with only one formal pattern, as was seen with English. The eyes are a LOCATION, but, in this case and in the absence of another direct object, they are construed as an ABS/PAT of the action, whereas the tears are another ABS, or PAT (in a metaphorical sense). This reminds the English situation with trivalent verbs, where there can be two formal constructions:


Hans gab Willi ein Buch. vs. *Hans gab ein Buch zum Willi.

Again, the second sentence formally encodes the ordinary semantic feature of GOAL or EXP for 'to Bill'; the first sentence, however, just encodes all participants of the event, whereby word order (and world knowledge, i.e. stereotypical relations: e.g., only animate participants give and receive) determines the semantic roles: GIVER, RECEIVER, THING (ABS). This construction is therefore limited along a semantic feature, animacy (AN) or 'assigned' vs. 'in-alienable' inanimacy, as was shown by Langacker 1991b:

(20) + John sent Bill a walrus.
    + John sent the zoo a walrus.
    * John sent Antarctica a walrus.

In German, however, there are still many different syntactic patterns, while productivity shows a clear dominance of the syntactic ACC and DAT-ACC pattern (cf. also Draye 1996: 176f.):

| Table 10 |  | DAT – ACC – V jemanden treffen |
|         |  | DAT – ACC – V jemandem etwas schenken |
|         |  | DAT – ACC – V jemandem schwimmen |
|         |  | DAT – ABL – V jemandem vor etwas grauen |
|         |  | ACC – GEN – V jemanden einer Sorge entheben |
|         |  | ACC – INS – V die Wand mit Farbe bemalen |
|         |  | [ ACC1 – [ ACC2 – V ] ] jemanden viel kosten |

As can be seen from the last pattern, incorporation plays a role in German syntax; this relates to the verb prefix schemes which are interacting in many ways with case assignment; the verbal prefixes partly have similarities to prepositions whose argument role is incorporated into the verb meaning (cf. Rousseau 1998: 25):

(21a) sich die Trän-en aus den Aug-en wisch-en

(21b) sich die Trän-en aus-wisch-en
     REFL:3S:DAT DEF:PL:ACC tear-PL VPREF-sweep-INF

     to sweep oneself the tears off the eyes to sweep oneself the tears off
11. Theoretical considerations

It can be deduced from these few examples that case marking even in a language with syntactic case is not at all free from semantic backgrounds. On the contrary, case markers are still vital for the event construal, only surfacing superficially as syntactic construals. On the other hand, we find here ‘structural’ case markers which are not in a simple biunique relation to semantic roles.

11.02.05. Transitivization

In many languages, there are morphological operations which change the valence (or government?) of verbs, e.g. the German verbal prefix ‘be-’ which can transitivize verbs:

(22a) Ich **antwort-e auf den Brief.**

15:NOM answer-1S PREP DEF:M:SG:ACC letter

*I am answering to the letter.*

(22b) Ich **be-antwort-e den Brief.**

15:NOM TR-answer-1S DEF:M:SG:ACC letter

*I am answering [to] the letter.*

(22c) **Er deckt ein Tuch über den Tot-en.**


*He is putting a blanket over the dead person.*

(22d) **Er be-deck-t den Tot-en mit einem Tuch.**


*He is covering the dead person with a blanket.*

In fact, it is not the original function of these prefixes to transitivize; semantically, they add the function ‘put X on Y’ to the verb meaning, cf. ‘beschriften’ (‘put script on sth.’), ‘beman-nen’ (‘put men (on a ship)’), ‘beantworten’ (‘put an answer on sth.’), ‘bedecken’ (‘put a cover on sth.’), and also ‘versilbern’ (‘put silver on sth.’), ‘verkupfern’ (‘put copper on sth.’); these are ‘ornative formations’ which are a kind of causativization device (Drossard 1987: 20) and therefore lead to transitive structures. German verbal prefixes which are diachronically and systemically related with prepositions (cf. Schanen 1998) can interfere in the valence of verbs. Similar operations can be found in Hungarian (cf. Reichert 1986) and other languages. In Hungarian, we additionally find an interplay of definiteness of the direct object and the objective inflection in order to produce or not to produce a ‘transitive’ pattern:

(23a) **A **füü vár-0 egy lány-t**

DET Bub wart-3S INDEF Mädchen-ACC

*The boy is waiting for a girl (INDEF - ACC).*

(23b) **A **füü vár-0 a lány-ra**

DET Bub wart-3S DET Mädchen-SUBL

*The boy is waiting for the girl (DEF - SUBL).*

(23c) **A **füü vár-ja a lány-t**

DET Bub wart-3S:OBJ DET Mädchen-ACC

*The boy is awaiting the girl. (OBJ - DEF - ACC)*

Finally, there are many similar events which can be construed with or without the involvement of agentivity, volitionality, or control, and in many languages, there are morphological operations to switch between these two views. In German (or English), we find (suppletive) verb pairs such as ‘sehen’ (‘see’) and ‘schauen’ (‘look, watch’) which account for such diffe-
rences in the event construal. In Hungarian, the objective inflection can make the necessary
difference (Reichert 1986: 30):

(24) A férfi Péter-t néz-i A férfi egy film-et néz-0
DEF man Peter-ACC see-3S:OBJ DEF man INDEF Film-ACC see-3S
The man is looking at Peter.
The man is watching a film.

Additionally, Hungarian has a transitivizing prefix ’meg-’ which gives a telic component to
the verb meaning (cf. Drossard 1987: 23):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 11</th>
<th>shoot at somebody</th>
<th>shoot somebody (down)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lő-ni</td>
<td>meg-lő-ni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>néz-ni</td>
<td>meg-néz-ni</td>
<td>watch somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kutat-ni</td>
<td>meg-kutat-ni</td>
<td>research (sth.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mász-ni</td>
<td>meg-mász-ni</td>
<td>reach on top climbingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en-ni</td>
<td>meg-en-ni</td>
<td>eat (up everything)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoot at somebody</td>
<td>meg-lő-ni</td>
<td>shoot somebody (down)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look at somebody</td>
<td>meg-néz-ni</td>
<td>watch somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search after</td>
<td>meg-kutat-ni</td>
<td>research (sth.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>climb on something</td>
<td>meg-mász-ni</td>
<td>reach on top climbingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>meg-en-ni</td>
<td>eat (up everything)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The primordial use of these devices is semantic, e.g., adding telicity, which indirectly leads to
a higher degree of transitivity. 'Free attributes', on the other hand, are predications them-
selves and are therefore seen as ungoverned by the verb (e.g. 'John is sleeping on the floor' <
ON THE FLOOR(SLEEP(John)).

Some languages do not necessarily have two obligatory constituents with transitive verbs. This was called ’pseudotransitive’ by Drossard 1986a; the main point here is that tran-
sitivity cannot be defined in terms of 'obligatory participants', but only with reference to the
involvement of an AG in the (semantic) event construal. Object-incorporation, verb serial-
ization, and causativization are the usual means connected to transitivization (and detransiti-
vization) in these languages. In Samoan, there are two morphological devices for the transiti-
vization of verbs: first, the causative prefix fa’a-, among other functions, changes static verbs
to change-of-state verbs (cf. Drossard 1987: 14, 18, 19).

Table 12: fa’a- derivation in Samoan: 1. Causativization, 2. psychological effects, 3. experiencer causas-
tives, and 4. ornative formation (’put x on y’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. leaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lilo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa’u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ofo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malatà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. masima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suva’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suau’u</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Theoretical considerations

This operation promotes the case roles to a clear ERG-ABS scheme (Drossard 1987: 18):

(25a)  sà  ita  le  tama'  i  le  teine.
      IPV  angry  boy  DIR  girl
      The boy is angry at the girl.

(25b)  sà  fa’a-ita  le  tama  e  le  teine.
      IPV  CAUS-angry  boy  ERG  girl
      The girl made the boy angry.

The second device is the transitivizer suffix -Cia which transitivizes intransitive verbs, and surprisingly, transitive verbs as well (Drossard 1987: 21f.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 13</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>deriv.</th>
<th>transl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contact/affect:</td>
<td>fana</td>
<td>shoot at somebody</td>
<td>fana'ia</td>
<td>shoot somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience:</td>
<td>va’ai</td>
<td>look at somebody</td>
<td>va’ai-a</td>
<td>see somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pursuit:</td>
<td>fesili</td>
<td>ask a question</td>
<td>fesili-qua</td>
<td>interrogate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obj.-rel. act.:</td>
<td>a’e</td>
<td>climb on something</td>
<td>a’e-a</td>
<td>climb something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>transl.</th>
<th>deriv.</th>
<th>transl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tui</td>
<td>pierce, stitch</td>
<td>tuia</td>
<td>pierce, cut through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu’i</td>
<td>beat</td>
<td>tu’ia</td>
<td>smash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The transitivizing suffix necessitates the application of an ERG case pattern. It is clear from the examples that in the second group, ‘transitivity’ is not achieved, but further increased in terms of ‘effectivity’ of the action. This pattern is very similar to German verbal prefixes such as ‘er-’, ‘auf-’ which add a telic component to the verb meaning (cf. ‘klettern’ (climb) > ‘erklettern’ (climbingly reach the top), ‘essen’ (eat) > ‘aufessen’ (eat (up everything)). The models for a ‘gradual transitivity’ as a secondary characteristic defined in terms of various parameters valued differently in different languages present an explanation for the diversity of transitivity in the languages of the world. In this view, ‘transitivity’ and ‘intransitivity’ are the (intra-systemic) expression of (semantic) prototypes for event schemes. It may as well be rightfully expected that the varying phenomena in ERG and ACC systems concerning the behavior with respect to the parameter of transitivity are dependent on such semantic verb classes – and morphological reorientation devices.

This model of transitivity reaches a (complex) semantic definition and accounts for different solutions in different languages. Thus, it may be possible that a monovalent event construal can be more ‘transitive’ than a bivalent event construal (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1980: 254), but an individual language may pay more attention to syntactic bivalence than to semantic transitivity. This may be especially the case with mover verbs which are usually considered intransitive, e.g. ‘John left’, but fulfill more requirements for transitivity than, e.g., ‘John loves Mary’. Some languages with an ERG case allow ERG with mover verbs, e.g. Tibetan.

In other words, there are semantically motivated gradual differences in what we understand as ‘transitivity’. Transitivity, in this sense is but a rough, partly language-specific grammatical approximation to these differences. This finding may be due to the fact that different events have varying strength of semantic transitivity. There are usually derivational operations having an impact on the degree of transitivity of a verb.

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11.02.06. Semantic and syntactic roles

On the one hand, most languages seem to produce grammatical verb classes such as (syntactically) 'transitive' (= (syntactically) 'bival lent') and 'intransitive' verbs, on the other hand, semantic roles and types of events may nonetheless influence the application of further grammatical operations. For example, it is not possible to apply passivization to any syntactically transitive clause, but only to semantically transitive ones:

(26a) Der Gameboy kostet viel Geld.
INAN:EXP NOM gameboy cost:3S much money
The gameboy costs a lot of money.

(26b) * Der viel Geld wird von dem Gameboy gekostet.
       much money AUX:3S INS DAT gameboy cost:PP
* A lot of money is costed by the gameboy.

In other cases, it is more or less possible (i.e., acceptability is low) (for further cases, cf. Helbig & Buscha 1984: 171):

(27a) ? Der Brief wurde von mir erhalten.
The letter was received by me.

(27b) * Der Brief wurde von mir bekommen.
* The letter was received by me.

This example reminds of the Tibetan semantic case marking for this clause which is, however, not the general realization of experiencer subjects:

(27c) Ich habe einen Brief erhalten.
1:S:NOM AUX:1S INDEF:SG:ACC letter receive:PP
I have received a letter.

(27d) nga la yi ge zhig byor byung/
1=ALL letter INDEF receive-PFV:GEN:1=GOAL

As first described by early structuralists (cf. A.W. de Groot 1939: 125 and Kuryłowicz 1949: 27), there is a discrepancy between semantic relations on the one hand, and syntactic patterns on the other hand; these two systems interact in manifold ways in grammar. One could perhaps term these two goals of an event construal with respect to 'semantic' and 'pragmatic', or 'semantic' and 'systematic' regularities.

From a formal viewpoint, clauses usually contain 0-3 participants. It is therefore sufficient to have 1-2 case markers in order to distinguish all kinds of relations. In the following example, the DAT plays two different semantic roles in the same syntactic pattern:

(28a) Der Bibliothekar gibt der Forscher Buch.
The librarian is giving the book to the researcher.

(28b) Der Bibliothekar heibt der Forscher Buch auf.
The librarian is reserving the book for the researcher.
11. Theoretical considerations

While German prefers a semantic solution in the following example, French does not apply case-marking — which is not distinctive in this case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(29)</th>
<th>1S:DAT</th>
<th>1S:have:1S</th>
<th>EQU:3S</th>
<th>cold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Clauses like 'Hans sieht Karl' ('John is seeing Charles') with semantic EXP-ABS pattern, however, are treated in many languages like 'transitive' or 'bivalent' settings — although they are remarkably different from 'true' AG-PAT pattern, e.g. 'Hans zerbricht das Glas' ('Hans is breaking the glass'). It seems as if semantic roles play the role to account for some of the 'exceptions' of formal syntactic structures, while the formal patterns prevail in 'most' situations.

11.02.07. Passive, antipassive, orientation

The major semantic distinction among event construals could be termed action, event, state. Actions are typically 'transitive' construals, events typically do not involve an agent, and states do not involve any activity. Since languages usually have two different basic patterns (transitive/intransitive), the main problem seems to be how the middle category, events, are construed: are they more similar to actions or to states? Many languages may consider events with two participants as formally identical with actions and therefore syntactically equal. Similarly to 'transitivity', ergativity and nominativity are usually realized as a binary distinction of transitive and intransitive clause patterns. The semantic (ir)regularities seem not to be more/less frequent in one of the two linguistic types. If clauses are seen, from a functionalist perspective, as 'event construals', it can be assumed that the mere representation of semantic relations (AG-PAT, ABS-EXP, etc.) is not the main goal of linguistic communities. While the relation between participants is usually well-defined by the mere description of the event (i.e., the use of the verb), the possibilities of pragmalinguistic variation, of connotations, need to find expression. Therefore, it is necessary for grammars to account for such shifts in perspective. Therefore, verbs can either allow diverging case patterns, or they have mechanisms for changing perspectives. In NOM languages, one such technique is passivization:

(30b) Hans wird geschlagen. John is being beaten. (process)
(30c) Hans ist geschlagen. John is/has been beaten. (static)

Additionally, in the so-called 'Rezipientenpassiv', it is not the direct object which becomes the subject, but the EXP/BEN role (cf. the third clause):

(31a) Der Vater repariert dem Junge das Fahrrad
The father is repairing the bycicle for the boy.
(31b) Das Fahrrad wird dem Junge repariert.
The bycicle is getting repaired for the boy. (process passive)
11. Theoretical considerations

Additionally, with the help of 'free datives', the factual agent can be construed as the mere experiencer; the following examples show gradually decreasing agentivity:

(32a) Karl zerbricht die Tasse.
    Charles break:3S ART cup
    Charles is breaking the cup. (action)

(32b) Die Tasse wird zerbrochen.
    DEF cup AUX broken
    The cup is being broken. (process)

(32c) Die Tasse ist zerbrochen.
    DEF cup AUX broken (state, telic)
    The cup is/has been broken. (static)

(32d) Mir ist die Tasse zerbrochen.
    1:DAT AUX:3S DEF cup break:PP
    The cup got me broken. (experienced)

Thus, there are syntactic operations which can considerably vary the relational patterns of the participants. With very few exceptions, ERG languages do not have passivization (Song 2001: 182). Many of these languages, however, have a similar kind of technique, antipassivization (AP) (cf. Silverstein 1976, for the terminology). While a passive demotes the subject, antipassivization demotes the ABS, cf. Yidiny (Australia):

(33a) yindyu-ng bunya-ng mayi buga-ng.
    DEF-ERG woman-ERG food eat:PRS
    This woman is eating food.

(33b) yingu bunya buga-dy̱i-ng.
    DEF woman eat-DAT food eat-AP-PRS
    This woman is eating.

Thus, the language needs a verb reclassification device in order to get an intransitive orientation. AP thus allows to leave out (or demote) the ABS role. Similarly to what happens to the AG in passivization, the ABS role in the AP construction becomes facultative and gets an IO marker, cf. Dyirbal (Dixon 1994: 161 & 164):

(34a) yabu nguma-nggu bura-n
    mother father-ERG see-NFUT
    Father saw mother.

(34b) nguma bural-ngu-yu yabu-gu
    father see-AP-NFUT mother-DAT
    Father saw mother.


(35a) inu-up qimmiq-0 takuv-aa
    person-ERG dog-ABS saw
    The person saw the dog.

(35b) innuk-0 qimmiq-mik takuv-uq-0
    person-ABS dog-OBL saw-AP
    The person saw a dog.

(35c) innuk-0 takuv-uq-0
    person-ABS saw-AP
    The person saw (something).

In the AP construction, the AG appears in the unmarked (ABS) case, and the PAT appears in an indirect case, DAT or INS – which may look misleading because of AG/INS syncretism (cf. Jacobsen 1985 for Dyirbal):
11. Theoretical considerations

(36a) ba-lan dyugumbil baŋ-gul yaran-gu bura-ŋu-0 pina-ŋu
DEF-ABS woman-ABS DEF-ERG man-ERG see-REL-ABS sit-down-TMP
The woman whom the man saw is sitting down.

(36b) ba-lan dyugumbil baŋ-gul yaran-gu bura-ŋu-0 pina-ŋu
DEF-ABS woman-ABS DEF-INS man-INS see-AP-REL-ABS sit-down-TMP
The woman who saw the man is sitting down.

It can be seen, however, that AP is a phenomenon distinct from passivization, if the auxiliary translation of AP and the respective PSV are considered in a NOM/ACC language (German):

(37a) Die Frau, der Mann sah,
setzt sich. sit:down:3S REFL:3S
The woman whom the man saw is sitting down.

(37b) Die Frau, von Mann gesehen werd,
setzt sich. sit:down:3S REFL:3S
The woman who is seen by the man is sitting down.

Contrary to passive, which is a 'valence-reducing device' (making a transitive setting 'derived intransitive'), the antipassive was called a 'pivot-feeding operation' making the non-pivot (ABS of transitive) the pivot (ABS of intransitive; cf. Dixon 1994: 146). In short, it reduces the unmarked participant, as passive does for NOM languages.

A passive as observed in NOM languages usually does not occur in ERG languages (Song 2001: 182), but there are counterexamples. Basque is said to have developed a kind of passive construction under the influence of the sociolinguistically dominant majorities; Keenan (1985: 248f) and also Andersen (1990: 151) give examples in which the ERG is reanalyzed as INS with the detransitivization of the verb:

(38a) Gizon-a-k txakurr-a-0 maluskatu z-0-u-an
The man beat the dog.

(38b) Gizon-a-k txakurr-a-0 maluskatu-a z-0-u-an
The dog was beaten by the man.

This analysis is problematic, since Basque has an instrumental case marker -z/-az/-ez. In another analysis, a passive in Basque is assumed having the 'motivative case' for the (former) agent:

(39a) hori ikask-engatik eskatu-a izan d-a
this students-MOTIV require-A AUX:PP 3:ABS-STEM
This was required from the students.

(39b) eretze-a zuzendari-a-gatik debekatu-a izan d-a
smoking-DEF director-DEF-MOTIV forbid-A AUX:PP 3:ABS-STEM
Smoking has been forbidden by the director (headmaster).

Again, these sentences are not 'passives' in the sense of a syntactic 'transformation'. Morphotactically, the so-called passive marker -a is identical to the reference (REF) marker -a (ab-
breviated commonly as ‘DET’ for ‘determiner’); we are dealing here with a nominalized verb as the only difference between active and passive, but no valence-reducing operation. A better candidate for a ‘passive’ in Basque (if a passive there be) is the following minimal pair with varying word order of the NPs, nominalization of the verb stem, and a change of the AUX:

(40a)  gizon-a-k  mahai-a  egin  d-o-u-o
       man-DET-ERG  table-DET  make  3:ABS-PRS-STEM-3:ERG
       The man has made the table.

(40b)  mahai-a  gizon-a-k  egin-a  d-a
       table-DET  man-DET-ERG  make-PASS  3:ABS-STEM
       The table was made by the man.

The discussion on the emergence of a passive in an ERG language was discussed on Tibetan as well (Chang & Chang 1980), with similarly questionable presuppositions. A valid example for PSV in ERG languages is K’ekchi (Whaley 1997: 186, Song 2001: 182):

(41)  x-at-in-bok  (lian)  x-at-bok-e’  (laat)  (in-ban)
       TNS-2-1-call  (I)  TNS-2-call-PSV  (you)  (I-by)
       I called you  You were called by me.

Finally, a few languages are said to have both PSV and AP formation, namely Hindi, Mam (Maya), Inuktikut (West Greenlandic) – and Basque (cf. Dixon 1994: 17; Givón ed.) 1994). These languages are opposed to a much bigger number of ERG languages without PSV, however – in other words, PSV in ERG languages is rare.

To sum up, some languages do neither have PSV nor AP. These languages should have another device for changing perspectives. First, it may be mentioned that some verbs, e.g. in English or French, do not require passivization, but can be used in two different perspectives without any morphological change, cf.

(42)  La  tasse  tombe.  Tombez  les  chemises!
       DEF:F  cup  fall:3S  fall:2P  DEF:PL  shirt:PL
       The cup falls down.  Drop the shirts!

       The enemy sank the ship.  The ship sank.

German is more restrictive in this respect, but there are some examples:

(43a)  Er  zerbrach  die  Tasse.
       3S  break:3S:PST  DEF:F:SG:ACC  cup  He broke the cup.

(43b)  Die  Tasse  zerbrach.

There are, however, examples of now unproductive and lexicalized morphological alternations which distinguish such cases:

(44a)  Ich  sitze  am  Stuhl.
       1S  sit:1S  DEF:LOC(SURFACE):M:SG  chair  I am sitting on the chair.

(44b)  Ich  setze  die  Tasse  ab.
       1S  put:1S  DEF:SG:F:ACC  cup  down  I am putting the cup down.

(44c)  Ich  falle  vom  Stuhl.
       1S  fall:1S  DEF:SG:M:ABL  chair  I am falling (down) from the chair.
11. Theoretical considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(44d)</th>
<th>Ich</th>
<th>fallen</th>
<th>den</th>
<th>Baum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>cut-down-1S</td>
<td>DEF:M:SG:ACC</td>
<td>tree</td>
<td>I am cutting down the tree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There seems to be an old morphology for this distinction in transitivity, cf.

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sitzen</th>
<th>sit</th>
<th>setzen</th>
<th>put something</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liegen</td>
<td>lie</td>
<td>legen</td>
<td>lay something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trinken</td>
<td>drink</td>
<td>trinken</td>
<td>make [animals] drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fallen</td>
<td>fall</td>
<td>fallen</td>
<td>make:fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>versinken</td>
<td>sink</td>
<td>versenken</td>
<td>sink something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schwimmen</td>
<td>swim</td>
<td>schwemmen</td>
<td>wash/soak/rinse sth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verschwinden</td>
<td>disappear</td>
<td>verschwenden</td>
<td>spill [something]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It might be useful to talk here about the 'orientation' of the verbs: The event involves either one participant which is affected, or it involves an AG and a PAT in which case the AG is the natural topic. The possibility to change the orientation of a verb could provide a similar operation as (anti)passivization: In passives, the PAT seems to be the main participant, in antipassives, the AG becomes 'less agentive'.

In a number of Pacific languages, we find verb morphology changing the 'orientation' of a verb towards an AG or PAT; e.g., Tongan lexically distinguishes three basic kinds of verbs: those naturally oriented towards an agent, those naturally oriented towards a patient, and neutral ones (Drossard 1986a: 18):

Table 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AG oriented:</th>
<th>tamate, 'to kill' (AG in the ABS case)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAT oriented:</td>
<td>sio, 'be seen' (PAT in the ABS case)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral:</td>
<td>kai, 'eat/be eaten' (AG or PAT in the ABS case)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, with neutral verbs, the facultative ERG case can disambiguate the reading (Drossard 1986a: 18):

(45a) na’e | kai | ‘ae | iká |
PAST | eat | DEF:ABS | fish |
The fish ate. = The fish was eaten.

(45b) na’e | ‘e he | tangata | ‘ae | iká |
PAST | eat | ERG:DEF | man | DEF:ABS | fish |
The man ate the fish.

But an oriented verb needs to be derived in order to get another orientation (Drossard 1986a: 18f.):

(46a) na’e | tamate | ‘a Mele |
PAST | kill | ABS Mary | Mary killed.

(46b) na’e | tamate’i | ‘a Mele |
PAST | kill-TR | ABS Mary | Mary was killed.

(46c) na’e | tamate’i | ‘e Sione | ‘a Mele |
PAST | kill-TR | ERG:John | ABS Mary | John killed Mary.

The importance of verb classes is seen as well: Tongan shows both NOM/ACC and ERG/ABS schemes with perception verbs, depending on volitionality:

(47a) na’e | sio | ‘a Sione | ki he fefiné |
PAST | see | ABS John | ACC the woman | John saw the woman.
11. Theoretical considerations

(47b) na’e sio-i ‘e Sione ‘ae fefíné
PAST see-TR ERG John ABS woman John peered at the woman.

There are also operations to reverse AG orientation: -mia is an intensifier of the action which thereby is putting focus on the action; the agent is not allowed in this case (Churchward 1953):

(48a) na’e tanu’i ‘a e kapa (‘e Sione)
PST bury-TR ABS can ERG John The can was buried by John.

(48b) na’e tanu-mia ‘ae kapa
PST bury-MIA ABS can The can was buried.

Similarly, in Samoan (Pacific), we find NOM/ACC and ERG/ABS patterns in perception verbs (Milner 1973, Seely 1978: 130):

(49a) na va’ai le tama ‘i le i’a
PRS look ART boy ACC ART fish The boy looked at the fish.

(49b) na va’ai-a e le tama le i’a
PRS look-TR ERG ART boy ART fish The boy spotted the fish.

Again, we find regular morphological operations for changing verb orientation (Milner 1973, Tchekhoff 1973, Seely 1978: 130):

Table 16 mafai to be possible mafai-a to succeed
iloa to know, be aware of iloa-iná to be convinced

Similarly, the Samoan causativization device fa’a (described already earlier) serves the function of verb orientation (Drossard 1987: 18).

(50a) e fa’a-pa’u e le teine le peni.
PRS CAUS-fall ART boy pen The girl drops the pen.

(50b) sa pa’u le ufi.
PST fall yam The yam fell.

In Philippine languages such as Tagalog (cf. Wegmüller 1998) or Bikol (cf. Himmelmann 1987), a remarkable variant to this scheme is found. It seems as if these languages involve two entirely distinct operations in their case-marking scheme, topicalization of one (- any) participant, and semantic case marking for all other participants. These are ‘topic-prominent’ languages (cf. Li & Thompson 1976, especially on Chinese) which launched a discussion on the universality of the concept ‘subject’ (cf. Schachter 1976, 1977). Cf. an example from Bikol (Givón 1990: 671):

(51a) Agent topic:
nag-ta’ó ‘ang-laláke ning-libro sa-babáye
AGT-man TOP-man PAT-book DAT-woman
The man gave a book to the woman.

(51b) Patient topic:
na-ta’ó kang-laláke ‘ang-libro sa-babáye
PAT-man AGT-man TOP-book DAT-woman
The book was given to the woman by the man. OR The man gave the book to the woman. OR As for the book, the man gave it to the woman.

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157 These seemingly parallel sample sentences are pragmatically quite different, however: Their acceptability and applicability are not equal (for a discussion of contextual restrictions, cf., e.g. Himmelmann 1987: 66f.).
11. Theoretical considerations

(51c) Dative topic:
na-ta-o-han   kang-lalake   ning-libro   'ang-babaye
DAT-give-DAT  AGT-man      PAT-book    TOP-woman

The woman was given a book by the man.
As for the woman, the man gave her a book.

In Himmelmann 1987, the grammatical system of Tagalog is described as a system of ‘orientation’ towards specific participants (‘somebody who cuts’, ‘something which is cut’); this has been seen as a general characteristic of some of the Pacific languages which have sometimes been classified as ‘active languages’ (cf. Drossard 1984b).

Herforth (1989: 81) observes some similarity between such systems and Tibetan. These languages with a (more developed) morphological verb orientation device do not show passive or antipassive formation. The ‘orientation’ and morphological ‘reorientation’ of the verbs alone accounts for the desired effect of variable topicalization or subjectization of participants. This makes the system functionally similar to passivization, but not identical. Orientation creates a difference which could be seen as controlled vs. uncontrolled event, or between an emphasis on causative and resultative readings of the event construal, respectively. Contrary to Tibetan, however, the orientation of the verb is also reflected in the ‘ang-’ prefix on the NP. Finally, as seen above, verb orientation (both neutral verbs and formal regularities – unproductive morphology) is not alien to SAE languages.

In terms of ‘grammaticalization’ theory, this distinction is probably a more ‘semantic’ approach than the ‘syntactic’ operation of passivization, and it is therefore closer to a more ‘semantic’ case marking system than it would be to one which assigns ‘structural’ case markers. Therefore, verb orientation could be seen as a grammatical pattern related to semantic case marking – which is a (traditional) defining feature for active languages.

Unfortunately, the situation is not as simple as that. First, even semantic case marking systems turn out to often assign ERG case not only to agents, but also to experiencers in bivalent clauses. On the other hand, ‘oriented’ verbs occur in languages classified differently as well. In Pacific languages, however, morphological verb orientation seems to be highly productive. Tibetan controlled/uncontrolled verbs, on the contrary, do not form a productive class in most contemporary dialects. Historically, they show prefix derivational morphology for ‘transitivization’ (e.g., an -s) and ‘detransitivization’ (e.g., ’), but in the modern language there are simply verb pairs with some similarity (unaspirated vs. aspirated onsets, for example). Finally, a good number of such verb pairs is suppletive, i.e., there are two different lexical bases involved. The Tibetan lexical distinction termed controllable/uncontrollable and repeated in many grammars is generally defined by the following four characteristics: CTRL verbs

take ERG case

take -s suffix in the PFV

have an IMP stem (often with a > o ablaut)

can take the CONJ AUX pa yin

This list of characteristics does not explain what makes these verbs controllable, but only describes how controllable verbs behave morphologically (partly at a diachronic/orthographic stage). Worse, these features are not always realized in this way. Worst, not all CTRL verbs take ERG case, as can be seen in various publications (cf., e.g., Haller 1995, 2004). Thus,
11. Theoretical considerations

This definition is basically meaningless, since it only observes what verbs usually do on a grammatical level if they are viewed as controllable; it does not tell what makes them controllable. In short, there is no non-circular definition for controllability. The classification of a verb meaning as a 'controllable event' is probably based on a fuzzy (or not necessarily universally objective) semantic evaluation, the result of which largely coincides with the possibility of ERG marking of volitional agents – or pragmatic functions [construed as] conceptually similar to this prototypical function.

The use of CAUS/RES forms in Tibetan, e.g., in 'conative' expressions attracts the attention of the grammarian, however; since the language has no passive or antipassive, beside fluid ERG marking, the reorientation of verbs, and in modern central dialects, the use of CONJ/DISJ forms in specific settings (e.g., with 1st person), are the only means to construe events with differently profiled participants.

11.03. Case marking

11.03.01. Focus, topic, theme, subject, agent

Since case marking needs to express participant roles, syntactic relations, and topicalization simultaneously, categories which can collide with each other, case marking systems are said to be caught in a "functional dilemma", in that, e.g., nominatives have to "express simultaneously the semantic case role of an argument and its pragmatic case-role as subject" (Givón 1984: 145). We have to deal with the problem of local optimization, the impossibility to create ideal relations on all levels at the same time. SAE languages seem to predominantly mark a pragmatic role, the subject.

First, with respect to ergativity, it has been discussed whether 'subject' or the 'agent' is the more dominant sign. This can possibly be tested in coordinated sentences with identical subject, if one sentence requires and agentic subject, while the other sentence requires an absolute subject ('conjunction reduction'). In accusative languages, the subjects are coreferent in coordinated sentences:

(52a) Der Junge, schau-t-e sich den
Fil... an und e, schlief dabei ein.

The boy watched the movie and i, in the meantime fell asleep.

(52b) Der Junge, schau-t-e sich den
Fil... an und er, gefiel ihm.

The boy watched the movie and liked it (lit. 'it pleased him').

In Basque, the coordination of transitive and intransitive sentences with identical participants leads to a similar omission of ABS marked participants:

(53a) nesk-a hil d-a
girl die 3:ABS-STEM
The girl died.
11. Theoretical considerations

(53b) nesk-a-k gizon-a jo z-0-u-en
   girl-DET-ERG man-DET hit 3:ERG-3:ABS-STEM-PST
   The girl hit the man. (cf. Seely 1978: 15)

(53c) gizon-a-k nesk-a jo z-0-u-en
   man-DET-ERG girl-DET hit 3:ERG-3:ABS-STEM-PST
   eta hil d-a
   and died 3:ABS-STEM
   The man hit the girl and she died. (cf. Seely 1978: 98)

Thus, when the subject in the second clause is gapped, the object of the first clause is coreferent (cf. Dixon 1994: 11). In Tibetan 'conative' sentences, we find a similar omission for O=S cases. But in many Tibetan examples, it can be seen that 'coreference' seems to refer to the participant and not to the syntactic role of the constituent, cf. (Losang Thonden 1984: 137, 133):

(54a) khonʌ re bsʃʐbs nʐ'ʐnʌ sems ʃʐ nyʐr ʌyʈ 'duʌ/
   3-ALL what taught-whatever mind-ALL keep-VC-DISJ
   Whatever is taught to him, [he:AG] keeps in (his) mind.

(54b) khonʌ pʐ yʈn nʐ yʐnʌ chʐnʌ rʐʌ 'thunʌ ʌʈ 'duʌ/
   3 monk AUX-I'T-CONC alcohol drink-VC-DISJ
   Though he is a monk, [he:AG] takes alcohol.

(54c) nga lo chung chung yin dus byi ril zhe drag zas pa yin/
   1 yr small CONJ-time sweets many ate-NS-CONJ
   [I:AG] ate a lot of sweets when I:ABS was little. (Chonjore 2003: 243)

With two human 3rd person participants, however, this is not possible. In Dege (Kham) Tibetan, the following example shows that there is no topic continuity between the DAT and ERG roles of the same participant (Häsler 1999: 235):

(55) tenɛ: lâm-le ṭa ty-k'á-na lâm-ki sërû? ma-cê-sû?
   de nas bla ma la dri dus kha ni bla ma gis zer rogs ma byed tshug/
   then lama-ALL ask-time-when-TOP lama-ERG advice NEG-do-NARR
   Then, when he asked the lama, at that time, the lama did not give him advice.

It has been discussed whether ABS, typically unmarked, is the basic (default?) category of the system (Langacker 1991b: 241ff.), just like NOM is the basic and most often also the unmarked category of NOM/ACC languages. Therefore, the behavior of ERG and NOM in subordination may be tested. There is only one point which makes the ABS less central than the NOM: in transitive clauses, ABS does not encode the role which is the prototypical topic of the event construal (cf. Shibatani 1991: 120ff.).

In the following examples, the competition of two semantic roles in one participant is elicited in an ERG language (e.g., as AG and as MOVER/EXPER/ABS, respectively), so that the system must decide which frame is to be expressed by the available linguistic means (Seely 1978: 99):

(56a) etorrɩ d-a-n gizon-a-k ikusi d-0-it-u-o
   The man who came saw them.

---

158 Non-third persons may be distinguished by CONJ/DISJ verb forms in many dialects.

159 Wierzbicka 1980 proposed the ABS to be the topic in ERG languages, as indeed described for Dyirbal (Mallinson & Blake 1981: 109).
11. Theoretical considerations

(56b) ikusi d-Ø-it-u-Ø-n gizon-Ø-k etorri d-a
        see 3ABS-PST-PL/ABS-STM-3:ERG-REL man-DET-ERG come 3SABS-STM
        The man who saw them came.

Seely concludes that in both cases, the AG marker wins over the unmarked MOVER role, although in the second sentence, the (so-called) 'governed' role of the main phrase is thereby violated. This would hint to the fact that there is a competitive situation for grammatical and semantic concepts. But the example seems to be doubtful, cf. \textsuperscript{160}

(57a) etorri d-a-n-a-k ikusi d-Ø-it-u-Ø
        come 3SABS-STM-REL-REF-ERG see 3ABS-PST-PL/ABS-STM-3:ERG
        The one who came saw them.

(57b) ikusi d-Ø-it-u-Ø-n-a etorri d-a
        see 3ABS-PST-PL/ABS-STM-3:ERG-REL come 3SABS-STM
        The one who saw them came.

Additionally, this solution is not the only one found in the languages: Contrary to Basque, Kāte seems to prefer the other alternative: The syntactic main phrase determines the marking of the theme with ERG or ABS(/NOM?), cf. Kāte (cf. Pilhofer 1933; Anderson 1976: 14; quoted also in Seely 1978: 42f.):

(58a) vale-là nana na-là beʔ guy fo-veʔ
come-LA taro eat-LA pig sleep lie-3S:PST
        The pig came, ate taro, and lay down to sleep.

(58a) vale-là beʔ-ko nana na-veʔ
come-LA pig-ERG taro eat-3S:PST
        The pig came and ate taro.

These data seem to show that subjecthood triggers deletion under coreference, whereas NOM vs. ERG marking is determined by the verb in the immediate clause. This indicates that ERG systems are not a uniform phenomenon, and that there may be 'undecidable' cases of case systems standing between the by now defined kinds of systems. I.e., we will have to do with gradual, non-discrete concepts that are realised differently in various languages. In other words, in order to describe the variability of phenomena (with respect to an explanation), the linguistic model has to adopt the notion of 'prototypes' (cf. Hopper & Thompson 1985, Taylor 1989, Tsohatzidis (ed.) 1990, Mangasser-Wahl (ed.) 1998). Tibetan seems to predominantly refer to participant identity, but not role identity. In combination with fluid S-marking, Tibetan simply allows anaphoric ellipsis of participants regardless of case marking.

11.03.02. Unsemantic use of ERG

It is frequent in Tibetan to find unmarked agents, and it has been seen earlier that there is 'fluid' marking. It may also be discussed whether ERG marking occurs with non-agents. First of all, as in many languages, most cases of EXP subjects are indeed ERG-marked (e.g., 'X sees Y'). Some Ergative systems show an ERG/ABS variation in certain contexts which is called 'split ERG systems'. But split ergativity never allows subjects of intransitive verbs to be treated as AG (Dixon 1979: 82). Languages which show variation in ERG marking with

\textsuperscript{160} The characteristic of group inflection accounts for the difference in the first clause.

\textsuperscript{161} the suffix \textit{li} has coordinating function.
11. Theoretical considerations

respect to semantic agent/volition marking and often without restrictions of valence are called fluid S-marking languages. But there are some counter-examples to this distinction. In Basque, undisputedly an ERG language, we find few examples for AG marking with intransitive verbs, as in the following example, in which ‘water’ is construed as an actor (from Lafitte, quoted in Tchekhoff 1978: 87 & in Tournadre 1996: 34) – This (rare) example of intransitive ERG marking is unexplainable in semantic terms (agent? volition? control?); it is not a case of active marking:

(59a) ur-a-k iraki-tzen d-0-u-0
    water-DET-ERG boil-IPV 3:ABS-PRS-STEM-3:ERG
    The water is boiling.

(59b) ur-a iraki-ten ari d-a
    water-DET boil-IPV AUX 3:ABS-STEM
    The water is boiling.

cf. also:

(59c) kotxe-a-k ondo funzionatu d-0-u-0
    car-DEF-ERG good function 3:ABS-PRS-STEM-3:ERG
    The car has functioned well.

This is not attested in Written Tibetan (cf. Goldstein et al. 1991: 84) and in the Dege dialect (cf. Häsler 1999: 182, ex. 141):

(59d) chu 'khol/ (58e) te'ry xi te tsā: me k'i-si-jo-rē:
    water boil
    water boil DEF veryINS boil-PROG-be
    The water boiled. The boiled water has been boiling very strongly.

Nonetheless, it may be the case that not all case patterns share the same amount of semantic motivation.

11.03.03. Morphotactics, case syncretism

Case marking is technically performed by morphological means (affixes), by syntactic means (particles, word order), or other techniques (incorporation). In other words, we may find all the usual morphosyntactic problems with ERG markers, such as underspecifications, ambiguities, syncretisms. In cases of complete homophony or syncretism\(^{102}\) with other case markers, we may ask whether they represent one concept in the language.

With regard to ERG systems, we find mainly two syncretisms, ERG with genitive (GEN) or ERG with instrumental (INS) – and sometimes ERG with locative (LOC) (for an overview, cf. Seely 1978: 70). It is therefore interesting to define whether ERG and INS (or ERG and GEN, etc.) are two distinct concepts in the system under observation. This can be proved by finding distinguishable cases of use, e.g. when ERG and INS occur in the same sentence (ex. from Written Tibetan and Byangsi):

\(^{102}\) The term ‘syncretism’ refers to the collapse of both the marker and the concepts to be expressed; it is therefore different from mere ‘homophony’ which involves one form with entirely different functions. The distinction is not always easy to make, at least in case marking systems, and the term is used in the literature with varying degrees of exactitude.

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11. Theoretical considerations

(60a)  shing mkhan gyis  sta res  nags tshal du  shing  good par byed/
lumberjack-ERG  axe:INS  forest-ILL  wood  cut-NS:ILL-CAUS
The lumberjack is cutting wood in the forest with an axe. (cf. Kelzang Gyurme 1992: 262)

(60b)  je-se  fiŋ  dzag-se  cak-si
1-ERG  tree  axe-INS  cut-PFV
I cut the tree with an axe (Sharma 2001b: 289)

In Darma, a Tibetan language of Uttar Pradesh, it is argued that ERG does not occur when there is an INS present (Krishan 2001a: 359):

(61)  ji  p'or-so  ciŋ  t'um-ti
1  axe-INS  tree  cut-PRS
I cut the tree with an axe.

The same can be argued for GEN. Case syncretism between AG (ERG) and RELATION/POSSESSION (GEN) occurs in Inuktikut:

(62a)  piniautup  nanoq  takuva;
    hunter(ERG)  bear  sight
The hunter has seen the bear.

(62b)  piniautup  nulia  tikipoq
    hunter(GEN)  wife  arrival
The wife of the hunter arrived.

This syncretism was interpreted in specific ways by early theoretical approaches to this grammatical feature:

Hammerich 1970 has a nominal interpretation of the Eskimo verb and suggests case names (including both verb and nouns) according to the relationships they enter into. (Seely 1978: 68)

Therefore, the ERG has also been called 'DUPLEX', because this case has two relationships (Inuktikut):

(63a)  piniautup  nuliata  nanoq  takuva:
    hunter(GEN)  wife(DUPLEX)  bear  sight
The wife of the hunter has seen the bear.

(63b)  piniautup  nuliata  pania  tikipoq
    hunter(GEN)  wife(DUPLEX)  daughter  arrival
The daughter of the wife of the hunter arrived.

In this system, GEN expresses the 'possessed', whereas the syncretistic ERG marker expresses the 'agent'; thus it was assumed that there is indeed a comparable relationship between POSSESSOR and POSSESSED on the one hand, and between AGENT and VERB, on the other (cf. Seely 1978: 68). In other languages, ERG is syncretic with INS (such as in Tibetan); this is also ex-plainable in terms of 'system economy' (i.e., there is no need for discrimination), since agents usually are animate, whereas the instruments usually are inanimate, i.e., there is a 'natural' complementary distribution of these semantic roles eliminating the danger of ambiguity. Whether this syncretism is cognitively understood as one concept by native speakers of such a language can not be answered with certainty; one could propose a general concept of 'source' (SRC) (Langacker 1991b: 238) or 'effector' (van Valin & Wilkins 1996) for both animate and inanimate roles, however. On the other hand, ERG syncretism may hint towards possible metaphorical relationships between semantic (or cognitive) concepts which may explain grammaticalization channels. Usually, ERG systems do show only one of the possible syncretisms.
11. Theoretical considerations

[...] there is a frequent overlap of the ergative with either the genitive or instrumental; it should be noted, however, that with the exception of Chukchee no language ever has any overlap of the ergative case with both the instrumental and genitive. (Seely 1978: 69)

In modern Lhasa Tibetan, there is syncretism between ERG, INS and GEN. However, this is not a semantic correlation, but rather the result of historical phonological processes (loss of final -s, unstressed position shortened). 163

Table 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEN</th>
<th>CT</th>
<th>/kyi/</th>
<th>&gt;</th>
<th>[k'i]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
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<td>[k'is]</td>
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<tr>
<td>INS</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>/kyis/</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>[k'is]</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>MT</td>
<td>[ki]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Some authors claim that there be tonal differences (e.g., Tournadre 1996). While this cannot be falsified for all dialects of Tibetan, it may be suggested that grammatical particles are always in unstressed position which makes it more difficult to apply word tone (or vowel lengthening). In some Tibetan varieties, the situation can be different. E.g., in Ladakhi, there is ERG/GEN syncretism, but a distinct INS (Koshal 1979: 66, 70, 73). Since in this case, the presumably same origin led to different systems, syncretism or homophony can be said to be caused also by accidental diachronic developments.

In Basque, -ak for SG:ERG and -ak for ABS:PL are homophonous, which substantially weakens the ideal of distinctivity; due to verb inflection, however, this homophony is disambiguated. Lafon (1971: 329) reports of another homophony in some Basque dialects, where the distinction of -ek for PL:ERG and -ak for PL:ABS is neutralized to -ak in both instances, implying the loss of the differentiation (lack of discriminatory capacity). Historically, the ERG:PL suffix is said to have been derived from ABS:PL -ak + ERG -ek > PL:ERG ág.ek > *-áek > -ek.

11.03.04. Functional overlap in the case system

On the other hand, sometimes there may be competing case markers for the marking of one participant; in this case, if the competing markers encode different concepts, there may be a difference (i.e., liberty) in the 'profiling' of the participant role. This is in accordance with the concept of 'event construal' whereby the speaker gives an account of his view of the relations of the participants in the event. Often, it seems to depend on the degree of agentivity or intention which is attributed to the acting participant: the participant is thus construed as an actor, an instrument, or a source (ABL) or location (LOC) of the action. Similarly, the GOAL of an event construal can sometimes be viewed as a patient or as an experiencer of the action. This decision lies in the free will of the speaker – in accordance with the grammatical possibilities of the language. This kind of decision is similar to choosing passive voice instead of the default construction. In Avar (Dagestan, Caucasus, cf. Charachidzhé 1981), with ERG=INS syncretism, we find the following examples (ex. from Černý 1971: 49):

(64a) insu-cca gwe Oost-cca q-ot-ana.
father-ERG tree axe-INS ?-cut-PRET
Father cut the tree with an axe.

163 It is noteworthy that grammaticalizations are triggered by plausible cognitive relationships, but that language change may happen mainly due to systemic inconsistency (on competing rule levels), e.g. phonological changes making it affordable to adjust morphology and syntax.
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In the second phrase, the horse is profiled as the agent or instrument of the moving action, thus we may understand this case as one case with two semantic extensions which sometimes may remain undistinguished. In Central Tibetan dialects, ERG occurs with MOVER verbs in perfective aspect putting emphasis on the intentionality of the action; the same construction with ABS automatically implies that the moving was involuntary. In few cases, ERG can be replaced by ABL. This phenomenon has been described for Oceanic languages as well, with the effect of a reduction of agentivity. This chapter has developed the view that there is a dichotomy between syntactic and semantic functions of case marking, or maybe between topic/distinctivity and role marking. Grammatical definitions of NOM/ACC and ERG/ABS systems seem to emphasize the formal, syntactic side, while the semantic influences are construed as the explanations of the exceptions to the predefined syntactic regularities. It is therefore interesting to look for languages which rely heavily on semantic role marking.

11.04. Typology of case marking systems

Apart from nominative and ergative systems, it is recommended to distinguish a few further types of case marking.

11.04.01. Split ergativity

Some languages exhibit so-called split ergative systems (Silverstein 1976: 113), i.e., mixed systems having both ERG/ABS and NOM/ACC patterns in different circumstances. Splits may depend on semantic aspects of the verb or its participants, or on TAM categories, or on syntactic parameters (e.g. main clause vs. subordination) (cf. Dixon 1994: 70ff.). The Mayan languages show ERG/ABS in perfective and NOM/ACC in non-perfective contexts. This mixed system led early researchers to call the two pronominal systems simply ‘set A’ and ‘set B’. Similarly, Georgian has ERG only with verbs in the aorist. Indo-Iranian languages usually have only two syntactic case markers which are therefore called REC and OBL case. The REC corresponds to historical NOM, the OBL corresponds historically to the INS in Indian and to the GEN in Iranian languages. Interestingly, the contemporary system has two opposing case patterns for present (PRS) and past (PST) tense forms: While the case pattern REC/OBL occurs in PRS, in PST tense forms, the OBL is understood as the subject (agent) of the action. This gives an ERG system in sentences with PST tense. E.g., in Northern Kurdish, perfect tenses trigger the ERG case marking pattern, present and future tense the ACC scheme. (Scheuch 2001: 10):

(65a)  ew       di-bin-e
       PRON:3S:REC    see:PRES:3S
He sees me.

(65b)  wi       ez        dit-im
       PRON:3S:OBL   PRON:1S:REC see:PRET:1S
He saw me.
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An aspetacl split is described for Balòci (Karachi-Balòci): Only perfective aspect has an ERG pattern (Farrell 1995: 226, quoted in Scheucher 2001: 10):

(66a) kɔcık-ʐ jʈnʈk-0 dist-0
dog-SG:OBL girl-SG:REC see:PRET:3S
The dog saw the girl.

(66b) ponc sʐʃ-ʐ ce man-0 iʃi-a gindag-a it-ā
five year-SG:OBL PostP PRO:1S:REC PRO:3S:OBL:DEIX1 see-INF:OBL be:PRET:1S
Since five years, I have seen him (again and again, regularly).

Similarly, Gujarati (Song 2001: 174):

(67a) ramesh pen kharid-t-o ho-t-o
Ramesh pen buy-IPV-M AUX-IPV-M Ramesh was buying the pen.

(67b) ramesh-e pen kharid-y-i
Ramesh-ERG pen buy-PFV-F Ramesh bought the pen.

Finally, there seem to exist languages which are particularly sensitive to the ‘empathy hierarchy’ (cf. DeLancey 1981b) and expose this pattern in ERG application; in other words, such a language applies ERG marking only to the less prototypical participant roles, i.e., not to 1st and 2nd persons, but to 3rd persons; this is reported for Balòci (Farrell 1995: 39). Dyrbal is reported to have a split between 1st/2nd (NOM/ACC) and 3rd persons (ERG/ABS) (Di-xon 1994: 85).

11.04.02. Active/inactive systems

If we try to find the end points of the "functional dilemma of subjectivization" (Givón 1984: 145), it can be assumed that some languages predominantly code syntactic roles, whereas others predominantly code semantic role cases. ERG systems seem to have semantic case markers such as AG. On the other hand, they may encode the 'subject' of perception verbs with ERG, but never the subject of motion verbs, although the mover may well be a better AG than somebody seeing something by accident. Thus, ERG obviously interacts with syntactic structures, in that it helps to distinguish the two participants in a sentence regardless of their exact semantic nature. On the other hand, there are (ERG?) languages which show a remarkable degree of semantic orientation: the 'active language type'. Some languages in the Americas and on Pacific islands are sometimes named 'active languages' (Mithun 1996: 149), although there seems to exist a difference between the areal types of the Americas and of Oceania, which may account for various differences in the description of the main characteristics of this type.

11.04.02.1. Semantcicity of case markers

The term 'active languages' derives from Sapir 1917 on Lakota, stating that the active case (ACT) is the subject of both transitive or intransitive verbs allowing some volitional activity by somebody; in other words, this case marks the semantic role of a 'volitional actor'. In such a system, the relations between an active and an inactive participant are profiled (Klimov 1979: 328). Formally, the 'subject' of some intransitive verbs is an AG and the subject of some

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164 For Tibetan, the term 'active' for a class of verbs was coined in 1834 by Csoma de Körös, however. Grammars of Tibetan have used this term ever since.
other intransitive verbs is a PAT (‘split intransitivity’: cf. Dixon 1979, Bossong 1980, Mallinson & Blake 1981: 52, DeLancy 1985). The use of the AG (ERG?) case marker depends on the agentivity of the participant role and on the aktionsart of the verb (van Valin 1990, Mithun 1991). Since ‘transitivity’ seems to be useless for the definition and since case fluctuation in these languages allows more semantic choices in case marking, it could be said that contrary to ERG systems, it is not the (formal) parameter of transitivity, but the (semantic) distinction action vs. state which triggers case assignment (cf. Tournadre 1996: 33). Cf. Koasati (North America) (Mithun 1996: 149, quoting Kimball 1991: 251):

\[(68)\] ca-libáálti-t nihaci ikbak ca-libáálti-t
1S:PAT-burn-PST grease hot 1S:PAT-burn-PST
I got burned. The hot grease burned me.

The system of A,S,O marking as developed by Dixon (fundamental relations independent of morphological marking, cf. Dixon 1994: 45) proves to be dependent on a concept of transitivity, which makes the application of the model difficult for these languages:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>ERG/ABS</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>ABS</td>
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Usually, AG marking depends on the degree of control over the situation; this characteristic may be fixed with most verbs, so that a lexical feature of ‘controllability’ coincides with a marker for ‘intentional actor’. In other cases, however, some verbs may appear with either case, cf. Koasati (Mithun 1996: 149, quoting Kimball 1991: 252):

\[(69)\] nó-cí-li-t ca-nó-ci-t
sleep-1S:AG-PAST 1S:PAT-sleep-PAST
I slept. I fell asleep.


\[(70a)\] txo naizdrax qitra
ERG-we to-the-ground fell We fell to the ground (unintentionally).

\[(70b)\] atxo naizdrazx qitra
ERG-we to-the-ground fell We fell to the ground (intentionally).

The marking of semantic cases thus typically leaves the syntactic freedom to use or not to use the active case marker, depending on whether it is a volitional or controlled act. Therefore, these systems have also been termed fluid-S systems (Dixon 1994: 78ff.), Van Valin & LaPolla (1970: 370ff.) classify split-S and fluid-S languages as being of the ‘active/inactive’ type.

Fluid-S languages present a more complex problem, since the choice of case for the S NP can vary from sentence to sentence, depending upon the intended interpretation. Basically, the essential factor affecting case assignment with intransitive verbs in fluid-S languages is how agent-like the participant is or how much control they exert over their actions. (van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 371)

Languages termed ‘active/static’ are Tonkawa, Spoken Tibetan, Eastern Pomo, and Pomoan languages (Dixon 1994: 78ff., Mithun 1991: 542, Song 2001: 151), but also, e.g., Acehnese, Lakhota, and Tsova-Tush (cf. van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 370f.). A number of further languages
11. Theoretical considerations

has a similar system, but is consistent as to which intransitive verbs require ERG marking: Cocho, Dakota, Guarani, Ikan, Ioway-Oto, Ket, Laz, Onondaga (Harris 1986: 52ff., Song 2001: 152). Most of these languages have the characteristic of marking case on the verb and not on the NPs ('head-marking type', Nichols 1986, 1992: 45ff.; cf. Siewierska 1996, van Valin & La-Polla 1997: 370). This may have to do with the fact that case marking seems to depend on a semantic verbal meaning (cf. Mithun 1991: 540, Dixon 1994: 90). This special semantic characteristic of verbs has been termed 'verb orientation' within the UNITYP framework (cf. Serzisko 1984, Drossard 1986a, b, and others). While nowadays interest lies more on Amerindian languages, the UNITYP project seemed to work more on Pacific languages as representatives of this linguistic type.

11.04.02.02. Verbs

As Drossard (1986a: 10ff.) points out, the active type shows other kinds of verb classifications than the ERG type. First, it does not depend on transitivity or bivalence. E.g., Lakota verbs do not distinguish transitivity, but only AG and PAT roles, without regard to transitivity (Drossard 1986a: 14). On the other hand, some languages introduce the parameter of controllability of the action: In Tagalog, verbs can distinguish fully controlled or partly controlled actions (Drossard 1986a: 12). Semantic verb assignment implies that at least some 'intransitive' verbs (e.g., 'bark') can trigger agent marking. The formal characteristic of ERG + monovalent verbs can thus be explained semantically ~ AG corresponds with the 'controllability' of an event.

Thus the actual context for which each intransitive verb is used must be assessed in terms of whether the activity referred to by that verb qualifies as a controlled activity or as a state or non-controlled activity. Potentially, then, each intransitive verb has the ability of assigning A- or P-marking to S. Some verbs may always be interpreted as referring to controlled activities, and others as referring to non-controlled activities or states. But there will be a number of verbs which can denote either controlled activities or non-controlled activities or states. For these verbs S may be marked either as A or as P. This type of active-stative marking is called the fluid-S system by Dixon (1994: 78-83). (Song 2001: 150ff.)

In active languages, it may happen that perception verbs and other bivalent, but weakly transitive verb classes do not require an AG, whereas ERG systems construe them as 'transitive' (cf. the transitivity scale in Tsunoda 1985). Similarly, the behavior with experiencer verbs may be different (see below). Van Valin & LaPolla (1997: 371ff.), quoting Holisky 1987, give a more extensive example of case marking in an active language (Tsova-Tush); according to this description, some intransitive verbs always take ERG (motion verbs), some can take ERG (preferably or not: 'lie around', 'get drunk'), some take it rarely (e.g., 'die', 'suffocate'), and some never take ERG (e.g., 'be hungry', 'be afraid').

The main difference between ERG and active languages may be thus paraphrased as such: The (syntactic) ergative, although prototypically an agent, is construed as a subject marker for transitive clauses in ergative languages; since most bivalent settings involve a source and a goal of an event, the system (largely) distinguishes bivalent settings from mo-

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[165] An additional problem lies in the fact that transitivity may be defined differently among languages.
novalent settings, and not strictly agents from absolute participants. On the other extreme, in an active language, the ERG has retained a semantic interpretation, with no regard to valence. But the meaning of the ERG marker is not agentivity, but rather control.

If case is semantic, a syntactic case reassignment operation, i.e., passive or antipassive, cannot apply in principle. Equally, if AG and PAT marking applies on the basis of the semantics alone, the language need not rely at all on matters of valence, and probably, such a language would not need obligatory syntactic constituents.

But if this be so, how can the speakers then express event construals which describe non-prototypical situations, such as PAT = TOP? This seems to be the main task of a passive in SAE. In order to do this, the omission of a participant, or an orientation of the verb form towards an agent or a patient, respectively, can make this difference. Similarly, an event construal may receive different case markers, according to the (subtle) semantic difference: Somebody can be viewed either as the actor or the source or the experimenter of an action; furthermore it is possible to do something as an actor, but involuntarily. This is why volition or intentionality of the actor is usually relevant for case marking in active languages.

A language with semantic case markers thus behaves slightly differently from the theoretical ERG model. It has a) semantic case, which leads to the following characteristics: b) greater syntactic freedom, c) agentivity related to volition, d) perhaps a morphological device for changing the degree of transitivity of verbs. Therefore, it does not have passive, antipassive, or (too gross) aberrations from the semantic prototypes of the case markers.

Therefore, it is interesting to look for languages which have to be posited between ACT and ERG, in the sense of a gradual scale of phenomena. Drossard (1986a: 16ff.) explains that in an ACT system, two sentences of the type 'The man goes' and 'The man is dead', i.e., with a semantic role of AG or PAT, respectively, would be differentiated. In an ERG system however, both would be intransitive. Considering the semantic classification of events as (controlled) actions, (uncontrolled) events, and (uncontrollable) states, it appears that active languages may be more sensitive to these three classes – and that there are certainly events which can be either controlled or uncontrolled. With regard to passivization in other languages, it would be surprising not to find a similar technique of 'event reorganisation'. Thus, we might expect a morphological device for changing the controllability parameter and the semantic roles of the participants. If a language can perform such tasks by simply leaving out constituents (non-obligatorily) or by omitting an AG marker (ABS-ABS patterns), or by putting AG marking on 'intransitive' verbs ('AG went'), then it is difficult to identify this characteristic as the analogue of passivization. But in some languages, we do find regular morphology for changing the controllability, or the 'orientation' of the verb towards an AG or PAT, respectively.

11.04.02.03. Discussion

Active languages have to be distinguished from split ERG languages. Case is not triggered by verb aspect or syntactic categories; rather, case reacts to semantic transitivity of verb forms. Therefore, we find a 'split' between 'see' and 'watch', for example. Thus, in languages with syntactic case, the verb seems to have 'valence' for specific participants, whereas in languages with semantic case, the verb seems to have an 'orientation' towards specific roles. In languages with syntactic case, there exists a 'valence-reducing device' (passive or antipassive formation) which refers to the syntactic case pattern (NOM/ACC or ERG/ABS). In a lan-
guțg̠ ɨ̱ɛh puə̠l̊ s̠mʈnɛ̱c cʈs̠ mʈəţng, ʈ 'ʌʈl̠nc̠ -chʈng̠' ̱s n̠̠dl̠ss, s̱nc̠ ʈll pʈəɛ̱c̱-pʈnɛs ʈə̠ s̠mʈnɛ̱cʈll̊ mʈək̠d ʈnd noɛ obḻgʈɛoə̊ ʈn ɨht̊. 'S̠mʈnɛ̱c' mʈ̊ m̠ʈn 'conɛəol' əʈ-ɛh̠ə ɛhʈn 'ʈg̠nɛ̱ʌ̱ɛ̊'. On ɛh̠ oɛh̠ə hʈnd, ɛh̠ pəʈg mʈɛ̱c chʈəʈcɛ̠ə̱c oɕ cʈs̠ mʈəţng, ɛop̱-cʈţ̤ʈɛ̱on, plʈ̊s ʈ əol̠ ̱n ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠ lʈnguțg̠s, ɛoo. Thus, on̠ pʈəɛ̱c̱pʈnɛ, ̠.g. ɛh̠ AG, mʈ̊ b̠

As cons̠qu̠nc̠, ɛh̠ n̠̠d ɕoə ʈ  chʈng̠ ̱n p̠əsp̠cɛ̱ʌ̠ ɕoə ɛh̠ pəoɕ̱ţng oɕ s̱m̱lʈə ̠ʌ̠nɛ consɛəuʈls musɛ b̠ pəoʌ̱d̠d. Th̠ə̠ɕoə̠, ɛh̠ p̠ndʈnɛ ɛo pʈss̱ʌ̠ ʈnd ʈnɛ̱pʈss̱ʌ̠ ̱n ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠ lʈnguțg̠s could b̠ 'ə̠oə̱̠nɛʈɛ̱on': Th̠ ʌ ̠əbs ̱n ʈcɛ̱ʌ̠ lʈnguțg̠s ʈə̠ oə̱̠nɛ̠d ɛoɨṭəds ɛh̠ SRC oə ɛh̠ GOAL oɕ ɛh̠ ʌ̠nɛ (ʈcɛ̱on), bu ɛ ̱ɕ ɛh̠ s̱ɛuʈɛ̱on shʈll b̠ d̠scə̱b̠d ɕəom ɛh̠ oppos̱ng p̠əsp̠cɛ̱ʌ̠, ɛh̠ oə̱̠nɛʈɛ̱on hʈs ɛo b̠ ənʌ̠s̠d b̊ moəpholog̱cʈl m̠ʈns. Tẖs chʈəʈcɛ̠ə̱c could b̠ d̠scə̱b̠d ̱n ɛ̠əms oɕ cʈusʈ ɛ̱ʌ̱̤ʈɛ̱on: Th̠ cʈusʈɛ̱ʌ̠ (CAUS) ṣoəm ̱s oə̱̠nɛ̠d ɛoɨṭəds ɛh̠ SRC, ʈnd ɛh̠ ə̠sulɛʈɛ̱ʌ̠ (RES) ṣoəm ̱s oə̱̠nɛ̠d ɛoɨṭəds ɛh̠ GOAL.

Terminologically, we can now clarify: If we look at the event we can say that an event is controllable or not; if we classify the corresponding verb, we can state that a verb implies an AG or a PAT – this could be termed 'orientation'. If the verb form is oriented towards the causer, it is 'causative', if it is oriented towards the causee, it is 'resultative'. Of course, these categories are not alien to other language types. In German, there are also (morphotactically related) verb pairs which qualify for this categorial distinction: fallen – fallen ('fall' – 'chop'), sehen – ansehen ('see' – 'look at'), sitzen – setzen ('sit' – 'put'), liegen – legen ('lie' – 'put'), etc.. Orientation of action words towards specific participants is also encoded in the derivational morphology of Indo-European: Nomina actionis are 'neutral', n. agentis and n. acti (or patientis) are oriented towards AG and PAT, respectively (cf., e.g., Lehmann 1984: 151f.). The only possible distinction may thus be a) the number of such pairs and the theoretical possibility to formulate this difference as a morphological rule, and b) whether this plays a central and systematic role in syntax. In German, it does not play a systematic role, it is partly a lexical phenomenon and, in some cases, a side-effect of the meaning of verb prefixes.

As could be seen from the examples, case marking can vary in languages of this type; as all other languages, this system also has two different case marking interests, namely the marking of the roles, and the marking of the topic (vs. non-topic). Thus, some languages allow for distinctive case marking only, so that the 'normal' case relation need not be marked, whereas a 'less normal' relation is marked with semantic case. Therefore, we may find that AG or EXP marking occurs only in the 'more unusual' events. Eastern Pomo (cf. McLendon 1996) is described as being an ERG language with ERG case marking only in case of an 'unusual' direction of the energy flow. This is another kind of grammaticalization of case marking which is different from previously described NOM/ACC and ERG/ABS relations.

To sum up, there is a gradual difference between pure semantic marking, pseudotransitive behavior, and, finally, structural transitivity which may be realized in terms of ERG/ABS or NOM/ACC systems with obligatory syntactic roles. It may make sense to distinguish a third type, ACT/INACT marking.

11.04.03. Direct/inverse systems

A typological overview should also mention case systems with a direct/inverse opposition (DIR/INV). The term 'direct/inverse' seems to have been coined by Bloomfield 1946 ([1970]). DIR/INV case marking appears in Chukchee, Koryak, Kamchadal; Tzotzil; Mapudungun; Dumi; Cree; Kutunaxa (Kutenai); Fox; Nootka; Ojibwe; Pendau and others. It was also attested
for some Australian languages and for Tibeto-Burman (cf. DeLancey 1981a: 641). These languages do not necessarily mark case roles on nouns, but rather define morphologically on the verb which roles are played by the participants.

In some languages, pronominal affixes referring to core participants do not carry indications of case themselves. They specify only person and number. Case is carried by another suffix within the verb. (Mithun 1996: 150)

A simple example from Blackfoot (North America) is given in Frantz (1991: 15, quoted in Mithun 1996: 150):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(71)</th>
<th>nit-á’kahkayi</th>
<th>kit-á’kahkayi</th>
<th>á’kahkayi-wa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-go:home</td>
<td>2-go:home</td>
<td>go:home-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I am going home.</em></td>
<td><em>you are going home.</em></td>
<td><em>he/she is going home.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(72)</th>
<th>nit-sikákomimm-a-wa</th>
<th>nit-sikákomimm-ok-a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-love-DIR-3</td>
<td>1-love-INV-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I love him/her.</em></td>
<td><em>s/he loves me.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-love-DIR-3</td>
<td>2-love-INV-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You love him/her.</em></td>
<td><em>s/he loves you.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the DIRECT affix -a- and the INVERSE affix -ok- are obligatory and mark the direction of the energy flow. The personal affix nit- 'I' and kit- 'you' do neither specify a grammatical case nor a semantic role; rather, they are the 'first' participant; another verbal suffix, -a-, or -ok-, specifies whether the 'first' participant is the SRC or the GOAL of the action: Thus, nit-sikákomimm-a-wa is 'direct' in that the 'first' participant is the SRC, whereas nit-sikákomimm-ok-a is 'inverse', because the 'first' participant is the GOAL of the action/event.

As another example, we may review here in more detail the system of (Plains) Cree, an Algonquian language (cf. Wolfart 1973; cf. also, e.g., van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 374ff.). Cree nouns have plural suffixes, by which animate and inanimate nouns (henceforth NA, NI) are distinguished, e.g. sísíp PL: sísíp-ak, 'duck', and astotin PL: astotina, 'cap, hat'. Additionally, possessive suffixes which are quite similar to verbal personal suffixes can be added, e.g. ní-moshkoman-inan-a, 'our knives', with the 1P circumfix ní-...,inan and the PL suffix -a. Finally, there is a case marker for the more distant participant; in other words, the nominal case system distinguishes a proximate and a so-called obviative participant (henceforth PROX, OBV).

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>antimi</th>
<th>antimi-wa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dogPROX</td>
<td>dogOBV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obviation distinguishes between two or more third-person referents, one of whom is, roughly speaking, in the foreground (proximate), while all others are relegated to the background (obviative). [...] proximate nouns are morphologically unmarked, while obviative nouns are marked by the suffix -a. (Wolfart 1996: 393)

The person (or nominal) hierarchy (2 > 1 > PROX > OBV, cf. Mithun 1996: 150, van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 374) plays a decisive role in the system. If two participants are involved, one of the participants is proximate (PROX), while all others are marked as 'obviative' (OBV). Both PROX and OBV participants trigger agreement in the verb form, whereby the prefixed affix
is PROX (3:PROX being unmarked). The interaction of 2/1 and 3 (persons) is a question of situation, whereas the interaction of 3 and 3 depends on focus (Wolfart 1996: 409).

Animacy and transitivity trigger different morphological behavior of verbs: for 3rd person objects, we find the suffixes -maw for animate objects (NA) and -htén for inanimate objects (NI):

(72)  ni-wápm-áw  ni-mámá.  ni-wápa-h’tén  ani-ma  astotín.
     1-see-OBV:SG  1-mother  1-see-NI  DEM-SG  hat
     I see my mother.  I see that hat.

It is important to note here that the person categories of speaker and hearer are opposed to an unmarked third person (Wolfart 1996: 399f.). The verb form has a pair of additional suffixes which now can specify the direction of the action; they are therefore called direct and inverse (DIR and INV) (ex. left: Wolfart 1973: 25; also quoted in Siewierska 1998: 231; Bickel & Nichols 2005a: 87; right: Wolfart 1996: 409; similar examples in Foley & van Valin 1984: 298, 375):

(73)  seḱh-ew  napew  antim-wa  ni-se’ḱh-á-na’n  atim
      scare-DIR  man:PROX  dog-OBV  1-scare-DIR:PL  dog
      The man scares the dog.  We scare the dog.
    seḱh-ik  napew  antim-wa  ni-se’ḱh-ik\o’na’n  atim
      scare-INV  man:PROX  dog-OBV  1-scare-INV:PL  dog
      The dog scares the man.  The dog scares us.
    [The dog is scared by the man.]
    [We are scared by the dog.]

In other words, in this system, the case markers are fulfilling the function of topic or theme marking (Wolfart 1996: 400), whereas the DIR/INV distinction specifies the ‘energy flow’.

By identifying only one third-person referent as obliative, the dimension of obviation marks a semantic system of focus in addition to the syntactic construction of cross-reference. (Wolfart 1996: 400)

With animate PROX in transitive contexts, PROX codes the AG participant role (cf. Wolfart 1996: 409). In the following two examples, first ‘you’ is PROX, second ‘I’ is PROX; due to the empathy hierarchy, there are implicit OBV (1, 3) (ex., cf. Wolfart 1996: 409; Siewierska 1998: 240; Blake 1994: 130f., and others):

(74)  ki-tasam-in  ki-tasam-itin  ki-wa’pam-in  ki-wa’pam-itin
       2-feed-1:DIR  2-feed-INV-1  2-see-DIR  2-see-INV-1
       You feed me.  I feel you.
     ni-tasam-aw  ni-tasam-ik  ni-wa’pam-aw  ni-wa’pam-ik
       1-feed-DIR  1-feed-INV  1-see-DIR  1-see-INV
       I feel him.  He feeds me.

The system of PROX/OBV in connection with a person hierarchy allows to distinguish all interactions by using only one person affix in contexts where speaker or addressee are involved: ‘you’ implies T, and T implies ‘s/he’; on the other hand, relations between 1/2 and between 1,2/3 have different suffixes, cf.

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166 Inanimate participants cannot be AG (SRC) and therefore not be inverted.
11. Theoretical considerations

Finally, it should be noted that Cree has also other case markers (locatives) which do not participate in this syntactic interaction of PROX/OBV and DIR/INV.

To conclude, we find here another case system encoding near and remote participants in connection with another kind of verb orientation. This pattern cannot be seen as a subgroup of NOM/ACC, ERG/ABS, or ACT/INACT. More importantly, DIR/INV is not similar to the 'passive transformation' of NOM/ACC systems.

In spite of superficial similarities, direction in Cree is fundamentally different from voice in the Indo-European languages. While the Cree relation of direction functions between sentences that denote opposite events, [...] the English relation of voice exists between sentences that denote the same event, [...] (Wolfart 1996: 410)

In this system focus assignment seems to be the most important concept that has to be marked; thus we find here the grammaticalization of a discourse level function.

A final note: In Basque, there exists the phenomenon of inverted affix orders on the verb with past tense forms; this system, however, is not at all comparable to DIR/INV systems (Kerejeta, pers. comm.):

11.04.04. Topic

As long as a language does not have a clear-cut 'subject', the function of TOP may have to be expressed explicitly as well. In Samoan, there is a topic marker:

The strict separation of a TOP participant and semantic case marked participants as a peculiar variant of 'subjecthood' is found in Philippine languages. Verb orientation itself, however, was found to be characteristic for Pacific languages, already specifies a topic. Thus, we find a further deviation from a presupposed model of case marking in the Philippine type

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167 Usually, only AUX verbs are inflected in Basque, while lexical verbs are indeclinable. There is a small set of verbs which can carry inflection, however. Various grammars of Basque give diverging lists of full verbs which can carry inflection markers. With some verbs, it seems to be a kind of word game. This verb is documented in Lafon, cf. Gizona-ak da-akusa-0 haaur-a (man-REF-ERG 3S:ABS-see-[3S:ERG] child-REF) 'The man sees the child.' (Lafon 1973: 341)
11. Theoretical considerations

of languages. TOP is also found in Japanese and in Written Tibetan as well as in some Tibetan dialects. Formally, there is a conflict between the pragmatic marker for TOP and the semantic marker of the respective participant role; the TOP marker overrides the semantic markers. The semantic role of the TOP can be deduced from the marking of the other participants. The NOM usually also overrides any semantic role. It may be more often applied to agents in AG-PAT relationships which conforms with its relative salience in such an event construal. It is, however, conceptually similar to the TOP marking in TOP languages.

11.04.05. Experiencers

The whole chapter on case marking considered only the three central case roles AG, ABS, and PAT so far. This is due to the fact that the majority of clauses in all languages usually involves only one or two participants, so that a system of distinctive case markers needs to make a twofold distinction. We have seen that this can basically be performed by a system of NOM/ACC (AG + ABS/PAT) or ERG/ABS (AG/ABS + PAT). However, there is a fourth important semantic role distinct enough from both AG and PAT/ABS to be treated separately in many cases: the experiencer (EXP). Often, EXP is expressed by a DAT case which is an oblique case; then, DAT not being a possible subject role, the problem of topicalized EXP arises ('EXP subjects').

Case-marking, for example, often treats experiencers as non-prominent by assigning them cases that are canonically reserved for grammatical functions like objects or adjectives (datives, genitives and other oblique cases). Such coding reflects the semantic nature of an experience as something that befalls or affects the experiencer, or a certain aspect of it [...]. (Bickel 2001: 207)

On the other hand, experiencers are often human, animate and more central to an event construal than physical objects or patients – this brings them closer to agents. Although there are examples of EXP marking and even EXP subjects in many languages, it is still evident that EXP is more rarely marked separately from the AG and PAT/ABS roles, i.e., sometimes an ERG or PAT case marker can be used for the EXP role (see below). Semantically, the EXP is a further central ('core') participant such as AG and PAT/ABS; additionally, in trivalent verbs, the third typical participant usually is an EXP (experiencer, beneficiary, recipient), as in 'John gave a book to Mary' (cf. Rotaetx 1998). Therefore, EXP (and BEN) is often expressed by the third-most important case of the system, a dative (DAT) or directive (DIR) case. Diachronically, datives are often found to have been derived from locatives (allatives) (cf. Lehmann 1982), and usually they are never as grammaticalized as, e.g., NOM and ACC. To give an example, in German, DAT can be an obligatory object case, but also has EXP, BEN, and other (also pragmatic) functions (cf., e.g. Engel 1994: 156ff.):

(79a) Er hat mir das Fahrrad repariert.  (dativus commodi)
He has repaired the bicycle for me.

(79b) Mir ist die Vase kaputtgegangen. (dativus incommodi)
I broke the vase [lit. 'the vase is broken (to) me']
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(79c) Das war mir eine verrückte Nacht! (dativus ethicus)
DEIX was 1:DAT INDEF crazy night

(79d) Er sah ihr ins Gesicht.
3:M looked 3:F:DAT into:DEF face

He looked into her face [lit. 'her into the face'].

The semantic meaning of DAT also accounts for the so-called EXP-subjects (cf. Givón 1984: 4.2.5.2.4.): Thinking of Latin 'mihi est pecuniam' ('I have money'), Russian 'mne dumaet-sja' ('I think'; cf. Lambert 1998: 328), or German 'Mir ist kalt' ('I am cold'), and many other examples in a variety of languages (cf. Bossong 1998b), we find many instances even in (the high-ly grammaticalized systems of) SAE, where experiencer verbs require a DAT as the sole case role or the subject of the sentence. It seems, however, that in SAE such semantic case marking has been reduced historically, as can be seen in French 'j'ai froid' ('I am cold') or in English 'I am cold' (as opposed to German 'mir ist kalt'), or in German 'Ich habe Geld' ('I have money'). In these cases, the feature 'topic' overrules the semantic content of any participant in subject position.

Since the occurrence of EXP subjects cannot be attributed to a specific linguistic type, it seems to be an areal phenomenon; Bossong (1998b: 291) concludes about Europe as opposed to the Indian subcontinent including Tibeto-Burman languages: "Par là, l'Europe, considérée dans sa totalité, s'oppose clairement à l'aire linguistique indienne." For him, the European languages have more EXP subjects than the Indian ones. Similarly, Bickel (2001: 211) states for Tibeto-Burman languages that "dative-marked experiencers of the Indo-European type are not a general feature of Tibeto-Burman". On the other hand, Indo-Aryan languages and Tibeto-Burman languages show examples of EXP subjects with verbs such as 'like', 'remember', or 'become-tired', 'be afraid' (cf. ex. in Bickel 2001). In Lhasa Tibetan, a few verbs such as 'receive', 'dream', 'find', or 'have' have EXP subjects which partly show a kind of agreement with the verb (AUX byung) (cf. Tournadre 2001, Bickel 2001). Most (all?) EXP subjects in Lhasa Tibetan seem to involve the possessor role; verbs like 'be afraid' are coded with ABS, in some cases, light verb constructions with hyed or btang ('do') seem to follow rather the ERG pattern of these verbs. In other words, EXP subject marking in Lhasa Tibetan seems to be restricted to possessors and a few other cases. This finding stands in contrast to West Tibetan, e.g., Ladakhi (cf. Zeisler 2004) and Balti (cf. Read 1934: 64) where perception verbs ('see', 'hear', 'know') take EXP subjects.

In the Pacific languages, the DIR case seems to play a relatively important role in the case schemes (cf. Mosel 1985: 17ff). Since in languages with strongly semantic case roles the case markers are not grammaticalized to a more abstract grammatical concept or to a merely distinctive function, it might be expected that semantic case marking systems have a more systematic (or more widespread) use of EXP subjects, even in bivalent verbs. Indeed, some languages (of the Pacific area) seem to distinguish a relative strength of a third structural case beside AG and PAT/ABS, an EXP (DIR = directive, locative, dative). Cf. Tongan (Drossard 1987: 18):

| (80a) | să ita le tama’ i le teine. |
| IPV angry | boy | DIR girl |
| The boy is angry at the girl. |

In many examples, however, the EXP is encoded as an ABS (DeLancey 1999).
11. Theoretical considerations

This third case *i le*, variously termed DIR or INS, occurs in contexts with EXP roles:

I.e., the girl is either the instrument of the event or is experiencing the event. The terminology INS and DIR for the same case marker points to a general problem for such investigations: There is probably no finite and discrete set of possible semantic roles, and languages always use less distinctions that could be possible, probably often depending on 'accidental' diachronic events or possibilities for grammaticalization. Furthermore, participants in an event construal can have different roles depending on viewpoint: in the above example, one could either think of the girl as being an EXP of the wanting, or as being the INS of the boy’s situation. In other settings, the INS is conceptually similar to an AG, and an AG can be viewed as similar to an ABL (SRC), and so on. EXP roles in topic position ('subjects?’) are seemingly less frequently represented in their own place and are therefore often represented with the unmarked (ABS, NOM) case or even the marked case (ERG, ACC; for the latter, cf. German ‘mich friert’, lit. ‘me freezes’) instead of having a third type of case marking (beside NOM/ACC, ERG/ABS). The distinctive function of case marking does not require to uphold a tripartite case system (AG/PAT/EXP) in most languages of the world. This clearly is an extension of the ABS/PAT concept towards a very general SRC vs. GOAL concept, whereby EXP are considered an aspect of GOAL, except for cases such as perception verbs, where the EXP role is often identified as ERG or subject. Nonetheless, if there are more than two structural cases, the third one, DAT, is related to the semantic role of EXP.

11.04.06. Partitive case

The partitive case is attested in Basque, Persian (Comrie 1989: 132ff.), Hungarian (Moravcsik 1978: 261f., Reichert 1986), Russian (Blake 1994: 153), Polish (Moravcsik 1978: 266), and in Finnish (Hopper & Thompson 1980: 262, Song 2001: 163). Its functionality is sometimes represented by the GEN case. One may start from the French example of 'Je bois du vin' ('I drink some wine') vs. 'Je bois le vin' ('I drink the wine') in order to see that the partitive can be opposed to ACC or ABS which means that it can decrease transitivity. Cf. the Russian examples (Wierzbicka 1981: 56, Song 2001: 161), where the use of ACC implies referentiality, while GEN does not:

Sometimes, a DIR or DAT case seems to play a similar role, e.g., in Samoan (Cooreman 1994: 61, cf. also Mosel 1985: 23):

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11. Theoretical considerations

(82b)  sa 'ai le teine i le 'a
      PST eat DEF girl DIR DEF fish  The girl ate some of the fish.

The partitive seems not to form an independent typological group, but it is clear that it adds a further sub-specification of the phenomenon of transitivity. A partitive is not described in grammars of Tibetan, GEN being a purely attributive case (i.e., never governed by a verb). There are only two examples in the literature: In Ladakhi, Zeisler 2004b reports a partitive with the verb 'fill with' (ex. Zeisler 2004b, ms., p. 6):

(83)  dzing chu-i  gangsduk/
      pond water-GEN fill-PERF  The pond filled with water.

In Themchen Tibetan (Haller 2004), the only possible example of a partitive is the following one, which otherwise is an example of an 'unsemantic use of ERG' (Haller, however, describes these forms as ERG):

(84a)  štamdzon-a  rgormu-γo  luŋ-γoka.
      rta mgrin la  sgor mo kyis  long go gi/  money-ERG  suffice/IPV NVOL:EVID
      Tamdrin-DAT money-ERG  suffice/IPV NVOL:EVID
      The money suffices for Tamdrin. (= Tamdrin hat genug Geld.) (Haller 2004: 132, ex. 631)

(84b)  štamdzon-a  rgormu-ye  te'ox-i'a.
      rta mgrin la  sgor mo kyis  chog thal/  money-ERG  haveenough:PPV-NVOL:EVID
      Tamdrin had enough money. (= Tamdrin hatte genug Geld.) (Haller 2004: 134, ex. 646)

11.05. Diachronic change in case systems

11.05.01. Introduction

This section will shortly discuss one last question, whether case marking systems can evolve into one another. As mentioned above, earlier contributors to the field proposed that, e.g., NOM systems evolved from ERG systems, and so on. Some authors hypothesized that, e.g., ERG systems are simply passives of an (underlying) NOM system. Finally, the languages of the world share some commonalities (universals) which suggest that they are not fundamentally and unbridgeably different in one aspect. This implies that diachronic developments can indeed lead from one case marking system to another one.

11.05.02. ERG from passive sentences?

It is a long-standing idea in linguistics that ERG has similarity to passive voice in NOM/ACC systems; therefore, its genesis from passives has frequently been postulated, as Sieverska (1998: 230) concludes: "Of the sources of ergative case marking that have been proposed in the literature, the one most frequently cited is the passive." Thus, the ERG pattern is seen as a reanalysis of an older passive construction, such as:

1. I (NOM) have killed (ACTIVE) the enemy (ACC).
2. By me (INS) the enemy (NOM) was killed (PASSIVE).
3. I:ERG killed the enemy:ABS
11. Theoretical considerations

One could thus formulate a rule for a diachronic reinterpretation of case meanings (cf. also Butt & Deo 2001, Garrett 1990: 265):

\[ \text{NP}_{\text{INS}} \text{NP}_{\text{NOM}} V_{\text{PSV}} > \text{NP}_{\text{ERG}} \text{NP}_{\text{NOM}} V_{\text{ACT}} \]

In other words, the ERG is seen as a development from an INS in passive sentences. This is traditionally claimed to be the case with most Indo-Iranian languages (for an overview, cf. Scheuchter 2001):

Indic languages developed their ergative constructions from the past passive participles and a noun with an instrumental case, which was subsequently interpreted as subject (see chapter IV, section 13). (Seely 1978: 72)

A PSV sentence, however, is formed in Indo-European languages with the help of a past participle (PP), i.e. a verb form implying past tense or perfective aspect. Indeed, most Indo-Iranian languages do have a tense/aspect split in that ERG is applied solely in past tense. Therefore, Indo-Iranian languages are usually seen as the best example for the diachronic development of PSV to ERG in the context of split ERG.

We might thus expect a split ergative system conditioned by aspect or tense, where the ergative is found in perfective aspect or past tense, to be likely to have a passive origin. This is precisely what happened in the Indic and Iranian branches of Indo-European (for which we do have written records and can be fairly certain about what happened, although different scholars have suggested diverse interpretations). (Dixon 1994: 190)

As Dixon points out, there is also a tradition of opposing this viewpoint which is brought forth in Beames 1872ff., Kellogg 1893, Klaiman 1978, Zakharyin 1979, Andersen 1986, Hock 1986, and others, with varying arguments. For one counter-argument, Peterson (1998: 186-192) mentions that a possible shift from past perfect participle (PPP) constructions to an ERG pattern need not involve a PSV meaning of the PPP, but a resultative meaning:

In a language with an active/passive opposition, it seems that a resultative form will naturally be virtually identical with the passive of (almost all) transitive verbs (cf., e.g. Bybee & Dahl, 1989: 69 and section 6.4.1. below), whereas the analogy to the active is to be expected for intransitives. Thus, the PPP of transitive verbs is to a certain extent a passive-like form, although I would argue that the primary defining characteristic of the PPP is not its passive nature but rather its resultative nature, which thus includes the trait [+passive-like] for almost all transitive verbs and at the same time [+active-like] for all intransitive verbs. If the PPP is viewed in this fashion, then there is no need to require that the periphrastic perfect ever was a passive construction, even in its earliest stages. Thus, looking for a passive origin of ergativity in the PPP-construction – whether in OIA or MIA – is in my opinion decidedly incorrect. From the time that this construction began to be used productively for the perfect, it must have already been an ergative-like construction. (Peterson 1998: 190f.)

This is a refinement of the possible grammaticalization channel of ERG, which is said not to derive from the grammaticalized feature of PSV, but instead from the semantic category of resultativity which in a way is the underlying feature of passivity. Thus, PPPs are not PSV in the narrow sense, but resultative: in other words, the PRS verb form ‘beat’ is AG-oriented, but the PPP ‘beaten’ refers more to the beaten person, and not to the AG, but still in ‘transi-
11. Theoretical considerations

tive settings' (cf. 'un'ergative verbs' and similar observations). In this way, periphrastic per-
fected with a PPP may be naturally inclined to focus on the GOAL and not the SRC of the
action. In the same way, a 'perfect tense' is a derivation of a perfective aspect, the implication
of a clear end of an action, or a result in the present (cf. Bybee & Dahl 1989: 73). To sum up,
Indo-Iranian languages have developed an ERG from a pattern with perfective-resultative
verb forms.

As can be seen from the theoretical example above, it may be expected that such deve-
lopments may frequently involve analytic verb formation with PP plus AUX forms (cf. Seely
1978: 71). If the ERG construction comes from a derived sentence (such as PSV), then the
ERG is derived from an oblique case. This gives basically two hypotheses, since we frequently
find case syncretism of ERG with either INS or GEN/DAT.

11.05.02.01. ERG from INS

Most Indo-Aryan languages show split ERG patterns with ERG/INS syncretism, based on the
parameter of TENSE; i.e., past tense requires ERG marking. This pattern appeared in a histori-
cal process from passive/resultative or periphrastic perfect construction (to be + PP). In
other words, there appeared to be an equivalence between clauses such as 'I have written a
letter' and 'With me is a written letter (I have one here)' (cf. Peterson 1998: 211). Peterson
gives the following Latin example for this conceptual similarity:

(85)  Julius epistulam   scriptam   habet
    Julius letter-ACC:F   written-ACC:F   have/hold-3S

(a) Julius has/is holding a written letter. (b) Julius has written a letter.

However, the evaluation of this diachronic development proves to be difficult, since, as Pe-
terson (1998: 202) pointed out, "most likely ALL of the texts we have in this [= Sanskrit] lan-
guage were written by authors who spoke another language as their first language", i.e., we
cannot turn back on the real 'competence' of the writers and their 'real' languages, and we
may expect such a situation for all written styles of all languages. Additionally, the European
description bases itself on diachronic morphological correspondences and not real as-
pect/tense meanings (cf. Whitney 1924: 201 etc., see Peterson 1998: 203). Thus, it is not sur-
prising to find some further anomalies in the diachrony of the morphological markers. This
will be shortly summarized here. In Sanskrit, there was a deverbal adjective in -ta (from PIE
*-to-) (a 'PPP?') which had a passive interpretation with transitive, but an active interpreta-
tion with intransitive verbs and motion verbs (cf. Speijer 1886: 280, Garrett 1990: 263); mo-
contern ERG clauses derive from this verb form (Butt 2001). In Pāli, a periphrastic perfect (with
AUX and PP, and AG in the INS case) is frequent (Scheucher 2001: 20).

(86a)  bikkhû  vâlehi  ubbalhâ  honti
  Monks were bothered by snakes. or Snakes bothered monks. (Mahâvagga III: 9.1, from
Peterson 1998: 182, also quoted in Scheucher 2001: 20)

(86b)  sirimsapehi  ubbalhâ  honti
  Snakes bothered. (Mahâvagga III: 9.1, from Peterson 1998: 184, also quoted in Scheucher
2001: 20)
11. Theoretical considerations

When this verbal pattern is equally applied to intransitive sentences, we get the characteristic ERG pattern with past tense utterances:

(87) mahā bikkhusamgho sannipatito hoti

A huge monks' sangha has assembled. (Mahāvagga III: 9.1, from Peterson 1998: 184, also quoted in Scheucher 2001: 20)

In Hindi, we find similarly an ERG pattern in past tense utterances, whereby the verb shows congruence with the unmarked participant (the ABS) (ex. from Pandharipande & Kachru 1977: 20, quoted in Scheucher 2001: 21):

(88a) larke ne suboh citthiyā likhim.
The boy wrote letters in the morning.

(88b) larka kursi par betha
The boy sat on a chair.

The ERG case marker in Indo-Aryan languages is ne (Hindi/Urdu, Punjabi, Marathi (also nǐ)), -e (Assamese, Gujarati), or le (Nepali); in Sindhi, it is a REC/OBL inflection, and some languages do not have an ERG marker (Bengali, Oriya) (cf. Butt & Deo 2001). As Butt & Deo 2001 point out, one of the above-mentioned problems with the PSV to ERG theory is the fact that this ERG marker ne cannot have derived from the Sanskrit INs -ina (Beames 1872-1879, Kellogg 1893), since this marker seems to have merged with DAT e, forming today's OBL case marker in Hindi (cf. Sen 1973: 68). Additionally, the modern Hindi (Urdu) ne is morphotactically described as a clitic (Mohanan 1994) or similar to denominal postpositions (nominal adpositions) (cf. Kellogg 1893), i.e., a syntactic entity and not a bound morpheme; therefore, if ne derived from -ina, this would be a rare and unusual case of degrammaticalization (Butt & Deo 2001).

In other words, the ne marking seems to come into play secondarily. Beames (1872-1879: 267-271) states that ne does not occur in literary texts earlier than the 17th century; instead, earlier texts use -e. Beames (1872-1879: 270) therefore provides evidence for the sudden influence of one Hindi dialect on the written language of the 17th century which may have introduced a new denominal postposition for the older suffix.

Whatever the diachronic origin, it is clear that the ERG marker in Hindi and other Indo-Aryan languages does not necessarily derive from the old INS marker of the PSV sentence. Nonetheless, the ERG marking system seems to have been derived on the basis of the old `PSV' form. Butt 2001, Butt & Deo 2001 point out, that also the dissenting view of Hock 1986, speaking about a 'PAT orientation' of both Sanskrit and Hindi, in this way can be viewed as less dissenting: The old Indo-Aryan situation is more a kind of PSV, while the new system must be interpreted more as an ERG construal; the morphotactic marking has changed diachronically more than expected, due to the replacement of an old marker by a new one.

Thus, it can be assumed that in one language family, there is some evidence for a development of PSV (RES) to a split ERG system. The transposition of these findings on all ERG languages which show a great variety of divergent patterns may be doubtful. In other words, we can also assume the genesis or evolution of ERG in various languages from various original patterns.
11.05.02. ERG from GEN/DAT

The phenomenon described above for Indo-Aryan is actually more widespread in the IE language family, in that it also comprises Iranian languages. In Old Persian, there is a similar development leading to a slightly different construction: a periphrastic perfect ('neoperfect', 'manâ-ktam construction') was introduced which required the AG to be in the GEN/DAT case (Schmitt 1989: 80, quoted in Scheucher 2001: 22):168

(89) \begin{tabular}{llll}
ima & taya & manâ & krtam \\
\end{tabular}

That which I have done. (DB 1.27)

This construction, the reinterpretation of a passive sentence, would not be applied with synthetic past tense forms (imperfect). Intransitive phrases are interpreted only actively. Geiger 1893 therefore argues for the diachronic development of ERG from passive sentences in Persian. Benveniste opposes to that view and calls the construction 'un parfait "actif" d'expression "possessive"' (Benveniste 1952: 56f.; cf. Seely 1978: 71f., and others).

In early Middle Persian, only analytic past forms are found, and they are passive constructions, but become active again in newer Middle Persian (Sundermann 1989: 152f., quoted in Scheucher 2001: 27f.).

To conclude, in many Indo-Iranian languages, it is customary that a historical development of passive construction led to the formation of split ERG systems, whereby perfect tense requires oblique (OBL) marking for agents, whereas both the direct object and the intransitive subject are unmarked (casus rectus, REC); the verb, however, usually shows congruence with the REC marked participant only. Thus, in these systems we find a quite transparent diachronic state-of-affairs; a detailed account of ERG in West-Iranian languages can be found in Scheucher 2001. It is not sure whether this evidence can be easily applied to other language families.

This empirical fact from Indo-European language history, the development of ERG from INS in passive voice, was soon postulated (e.g. in Comrie 1973) to be the explanation of the origin of ERG systems in general (e.g., Allen 1964).

These two possible origins of ERG from either GEN/DAT or INS in NOM/ACC languages may account at least for the syntactic ergatives, since this ERG historically and diachronically does not refer to agentivity, but to the transitivity which made passivization possible. It would also account for split ERG systems, since ERG is more often found in past tense or perfective aspect. Passive, among all its other aspects, usually has similarities with perfective aspect both in meaning and in form.

Here, then, are two suggestions for the origin of at least the syntactic ergative – either with the passive and genitive/dative or the passive and instrumental. Both developments would tend to occur with the perfect tenses, where we have already noted that the ergative is more commonly found – rather than in the present tense. The next development is that the ergative would spread to use in other tenses. (Seely 1978: 73)

168 It is worthwhile mentioning that Old Persian had NOM/ACC and GEN/DAT syncretisms, the GEN/DAT thus being the only OBLLIQUE marker among the structural cases.
11. Theoretical considerations

If this assumption were true for the evolution of all (or most) syntactic ERG systems, it still would not mean that the intermediary passive form has remained today's interpretation of such phrases as passive sentences. But this was the earlier assumption in linguistic history, as discussed above. Additionally, the question how semantic ERG has developed and whether NOM systems can also develop from ERG systems remains to be answered.

11.05.03. ERG from a 'nominalised/neutral/impersonal' verb?

There is another line of argumentation in linguistics, which could be termed the 'nominalist hypothesis' (of ergativity). According to this view, the origin of ERG marking is found in the reanalysis of possessive phrases with GEN, the involved verb being a nominal form, such as 'the enemy's destruction of the city' for 'the enemy destroyed the city' (cf. Siewierska 1998: 244, fn. 2). In a way, this thought is quite similar to the above-mentioned passive origin, since passives are usually construed with nominal verb forms such as past participles (cf. Comrie 1978).

The nominalist view was maintained by several scholars of Inuktitut: It begins with Thalbitzer's statement "that to the Eskimo mind the nominal concept of life is predominant" (Thalbitzer 1911: 1059). But Thalbitzer, although he treats the verb as a noun, also states that "its fundamental idea is rather that of a passive than an active verb". Schmitt (1956: 45) thinks that N and V are subclasses of a more general category. Erichsen 1944 gave a mediating translation of the verb 'I listened' as 'the action of listening-I/my', and 'I heard it' as 'the action of being heard by me' (cf. Seely 1978: 75). Schultz-Lorenzen (1945: § 50) considered the V a N in juxtaposition with other nouns. For Basque, it is mainly Martinet (1958: 386) who has some sympathies for such a view by calling the Basque verb 'neutral':

L'action y est présentée en elle-même, 'sans orientation par rapport aux participants,' comme elle peut l'être dans un substantif. (Martinet 1958: 386)

Indeed, the Basque verb usually (except for a handful of basic and auxiliary verbs) is indeclinable with respect to person agreement (it has aspect markers for imperfective, perfective, and future, cf. Sagüés 1987: 44f.). Person agreement (with all participants) is added peripherically on an auxiliary verb, so that the verb itself remains 'indeclinable', while the auxiliary has agreement with all participants of the event construal (object inflection). Hence, in spite of the rich inflectional system, ordinary lexical verbs do not inflect (ex. pers. comm. Kerejeta):

(90a) Il-ten d-0-u-zu
     die-IPV 3:ABS-PRS-STEM-2:ERG
     IMPERFECTIVE/HABITUAL
     You kill him.

(90b) Il d-0-u-zu
     die 3:ABS-PRS-STEM-2:ERG
     PERFECTIVE
     You have killed him

(90c) Il-ten zen-0-u-en170
     die-IPV 2:ERG:PST-3:ABS-STEM-PST
     PRETERIDO INDEFINIDO
     You killed him

Only few (but basic, or frequent) lexical verbs such as 'do' are inflected like AUX, with different aspectual viewpoints:

170 PST, like this example, shows reversed affix order; 3:ABS is unmarked.
11. Theoretical considerations

This means that Basque is a controversial candidate for the assumed 'impersonality of the verb'. Contrary to Basque, there are indeed languages which lack agreement markers on the verb at all, and they have been subject to such nominalist theories. Tchekhoff 1973 on Tongan and 1978 on Avar talks about the 'neutrality and nominality' of the verb in these languages. And H. Maspero (1947/1948: 160) on Old Tibetan sees the verb as a "procès envisagé en lui-même impersonnellement", a judgement which is true also for modern Tibetan, after a proper analysis of the meaning of the attached auxiliaries. For Classical Tibetan, cf.:

(92a)  rgyal po des dgra bo bsad do/

King DEM:ERG enemy kill-FIN

This king kills/killed the enemy.

It may be mentioned here that in (Old, Classical, Modern) Tibetan, as in many other (agglutinating) languages, case particles may intervene as modifiers of verbs performing tasks which in SAE would be performed by conjunctions; this is another hint leading towards a 'nominalist hypothesis' of the verb. Cf.:

(92b)  rgyal po des dgra bo bsad pas ...

King DEM:ERG enemy kill-NS:INS ...

Because this king kills/killed the enemy ...

By this king[s] killing the enemy ...

Similarly, Maspero (1952: 551) on Old Burmese states that "L'agent est en réalité mis en vedette avec le verbe.". Finally, Dixon 1972 on Dyirbal mentions that DAT appears affixed to verbs in implicated clauses of purpose (Dixon 1972: 145f.):

(93a)  ba-lan dyugumbil miyanday-gu

That woman laugh-DAT

That woman wants to laugh (but restrains herself).

(93b)  ba-yi yara bagun dyugambil-gu balgal-ngay-gu

the:ABS man:ABS the-DAT woman-DAT hit:---DAT

The man hit the woman (against her wishes).

Thus, evidence for similarities between nominal and verbal morphosyntax can be observed in ERG languages supporting a 'nominal genesis' hypothesis for ERG marking.

Nonetheless, this may also be a too far reaching interpretation of the phenomenon; verbal nouns such as INF, PP are not uncommon and they are usually infinite in many languages. Furthermore, changing the lexical category status is probably the most important task of derivational morphology. Finally, case marking on verbs is not uncommon in many agglutinative languages such as, e.g., Turkish.

To sum up, calling a verb a noun does not make sense, since verbs and nouns are a fundamental grammatical dichotomy probably representing the difference between the concepts of event and participant/object. Languages with 'no' or 'weak' N/V distinction (e.g., Tongan,
11. Theoretical considerations

Bikol) still have a word representing the event and words representing the participants in a sentence – i.e., there are 'verbs' on a syntactic level. One could retreat to the position that in some languages the distinction remains on the level of a differentiation of events and participants, respectively.

11.05.04. ERG from 'inverse' case systems?

Siewierska 1998, while comparing DIR/INV data with ERG and PSV patterns, argues that in both ERG and PSV, the agent is overtly marked, which to her is similar to the INV construction, making the DIR/INV system, beside PSV, a further possible candidate for the development of ERG (Siewierska 1998: 230):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 20</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
<th>PATIENT₀</th>
<th>AGENT_OBL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERGATIVE</td>
<td>AGENT_ERG</td>
<td>PATIENT₀</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRECT</td>
<td>AGENT₀</td>
<td>PATIENT_OBS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVERSE</td>
<td>PATIENT₀</td>
<td>AGENT_OBS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no reason to exclude the possibility of a development of ERG/ABS from DIR/INV, but there is also no evidence. Additionally, the apparent similarity is restricted to construals with two 3rd persons, due to the person hierarchy system. Furthermore, there are languages showing both phenomena. In Eastern Pomo, there is an ERG marking pattern which relates to the DIR/INV distinction: Here, the case markers for AG and PAT are to be used only with non-prototypical agents and patients (cf. McLendon 1996: 533):

(94a) ka’Cil bu’ráqal Sá’k’a
Kachil bear kill-INDIC
Kachil killed the bear

(94b) bu’ráqal-là ka’Cil-iy Sá’k’a
bear-AG Kachil-PAT kill-INDIC
The bear killed Kachil.

Sahaptin is also both an ERG and a DIR/INV language (cf. Rigsby & Rude 1996); the same holds true for Oluta and Popoluca (Mixe-Zoque, cf. Zavala 1996, 2000). This fact clearly shows that DIR/INV and ERG/ABS code different distinctions, so that a diachronic development from one to the other is probably a matter of accidental changes, not strong implication.

11.05.05. NOM from ERG systems?

It was an earlier linguistic prejudice that ERG languages correlate with cultural inferiority, a prejudice based on the prejudice of evolutionary development of cultures and languages (towards a West European civilization). After what has been found about case systems and diachronic development, ERG is not found to be more basic, more fundamental than NOM. On the other hand, it is also not a secondary phenomenon itself. Dixon thus concludes: "The change ergative-to-accusative is just as plausible as accusative-to-ergative; [...]" (Dixon 1979: 100). Thus, we may find many intermediate steps between case systems and we may disco-
ver that the canonical case marking systems which we have developed are but rough distinctions for different tendencies.

It is probably the case that the ergative, stative/active, dative subject, split ergative and nominative-accusative "types" are best characterized not as discrete types but as easily describable points on a continuum, and that there are no typological / universal considerations which can be expected to outlaw languages falling between these easily identified points. (DeLancey 1982c: 29)

And indeed there is also evidence for ERG to NOM developments. Although most Indo-European languages have earlier been NOM systems, it is said that Indo-European seems to have had an ERG pattern (cf. Schmalstieg 1986, critique cf. Rumsey 1987, Kurzová 1993: 15ff.). This is, of course, a hypothesis from reconstruction (cf. Luraghi 1987b). IE ergativity reflexes are found in many languages, such as Latin: To mention one simple argument, we may have a look at the morphological NOM/ACC pattern to discover an interesting syncreres in inanimate nouns (Latin M and N o-stems):

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SG</th>
<th>animate</th>
<th>inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This resembles an ERG pattern, in that animate nouns have a distinct subject marker. Uhlenbeck 1901 was the first to make the observation that in IE, the masculine and feminine nouns show a distinct nominative case (*-s), whereas neuters show syncretism of NOM and ACC markers (in *-m or in *-8); and that the *-m of the o-stem neuters is identical to the ACC of masculines and feminines (*-m). This pattern, for Uhlenbeck, is the expression of an 'active' and a 'passive' case (p. 170; his terminology for ERG and ABS). Taking into consideration that feminine gender developed from the plural/collective of inanimate nouns (first described in Brugmann 1889: 22ff.; for other systems, cf. also Seiler 1986: 51, Unterbeck 1993: 64ff., etc.), the system indeed originally marks only (agentive) animate subjects. In Latin, we therefore find:

Table 22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NA o-class</th>
<th>NI o-class</th>
<th>(NI-derived) a-class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Latin paradigm (see above) exhibits a pattern where ANIM NOM, the conceptually prototypical AG, is marked, whereas all other instances of subject/direct object marking carry the suffix -m. The marking of this type of NOM resembles indeed an ERG pattern. As for the genesis of NOM from ERG, due to a lack of evidence, this is basically a speculation on the basis of only few facts. Some researchers are strictly opposed to such speculations (Rumsey 1987). In short, there is not enough evidence for a development of ERG to NOM.

11.05.06. Conclusion

Except for the case of Indo-Iranian, where a split ergative system has developed from past passive verb forms, and some hypotheses concerning reconstructed IE case morphology, there is no further evidence of historical changes of case systems of the above-mentioned
11. Theoretical considerations

types into another case marking type. It may therefore be concluded that case systems usually seem not to change too much typologically within a few thousand years.

On the other hand, there are also mixed types of case-marking, such as ‘ERG and ACT’, ‘ERG and DIR/INV’, or split systems (‘NOM/ACC and ERG/ABS’), and so on. Hence, it may be assumed that sometimes one strategy may historically disappear, while another one is generalized in a mixed system. That there is not much evidence for such changes leaves this conclusion speculative.

11.06. End

The Tibetan language is an early reference language of European ERG research. When traditional European linguistic presuppositions are applied, the Tibetan case marking system is, however, an especially ‘unclear’ and therefore ‘confusing’ area of research. Therefore, early grammarians tried hard to integrate European categories and Tibetan indigenous explanations. After some early contributions, general linguistics seemed to leave this field for Tibetan philology for a long time. Therefore, Tibetan was not a central reference language in ERG research, and descriptions did not change very much over several decades with respect to new linguistic conceptions.

In more recent publications, Tibetan was then typologically variously called split or fluid ERG, respectively, or even an active/inactive language, while the Kham dialect has even been classified as syntactic ergative. The data and these efforts show that typological classifications and real grammars deviate to some degree from each other, or that typological categorizations are used in different ways. Still more recent is the awareness of grammatical divergences among dialects. Diachronic changes, dialectal divergence, and normative influences complicate the situation further. Tibetan does not seem to be an undisputable candidate for one of the above-mentioned typological categories.

Grammatical categories and concepts themselves also evolve in a historical process and on the basis of specific language data. They are not ‘objective’ descriptions of reality, but rather explanatory hypotheses of what is perceived by an observer. They are developed on the basis of observations in order to explain the observations. Thereby, new data are at first ‘perturbations’ for the theory, but from then on become new evidence for the modified theory. In this way, it is perhaps the scientific explanations which create the phenomena which are to be described.

One might also hypothesize that linguistic relations are not defined in grammatical rules which are applied under all circumstances (‘across the board’). Rather, they are defined by the speaking community on the basis of prototypes and ideal or frequent situations of language use. Additionally, there is sometimes a concurrence situation between rules or levels of grammar (local optimization). Finally, it can be assumed that some patterns are probably not explainable at all, but have come into existence ‘accidentally’.

Therefore, historiography provides interesting empirical data for the development of linguistic thought and the development of linguistic categories. Linguistic models emphasize different aspects of linguistic relations at different times, and linguistic categories are redefined from time to time. Therefore, a theoretical conclusion, e.g., about the linguistic type of Tibetan, depends on the scientific presuppositions which are applied.
As can be seen from thorough investigations, all linguistic phenomena are widespread, but some are used more in one language (type). E.g., for the reorientation of an event in a non-prototypical way, e.g. an action with a topical patient, many languages rely on passivization; many ergative languages show an antipassive; a number of languages distinguishes a normal and inverse direction of actions. And in some languages, it is talked about a morphological '(re)orientation' of the verbs, thus emphasizing on one of the involved participant roles. Departing from this categorization, Tibetan, having no passive/antipassive, seems to rely more on the verb orientation type, at least historically. This characteristic, however, occurs in many if not all (most) languages, the only difference being the more or less salient usage, especially in combination with the absence or presence of passive or antipassive.
11. Theoretical considerations
## 12. Abbreviations

### 12.01. Grammatical glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<td>first person singular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>second person plural</td>
<td>2S</td>
<td>second person singular</td>
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<td>ABSTR</td>
<td>abstract noun formation</td>
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<td>accusative</td>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>action; active (verb orientation)</td>
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<td>addressee</td>
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<td>agreement</td>
<td>AGT</td>
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<td>AP</td>
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<td>ASP</td>
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<td>'T concept of tibetan grammar</td>
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<td>CONN</td>
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<td>GOT</td>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<td>nominal adposition 'in'</td>
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<td>detransitivizer</td>
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<td>MN</td>
<td>Milarepa's biography</td>
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<td>object; objective inflection</td>
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<td>connector, progressive aspect</td>
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<td>preposition</td>
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<td>SCP</td>
<td>sum cu pa, cf. Thonmi</td>
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<td>sth.</td>
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<td>smp</td>
<td>subject-marking particle</td>
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12. Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>SOC</td>
<td>sociative, comitative</td>
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<td>speaker</td>
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<td>SRO</td>
<td>solid roundish object classifier</td>
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<td>verb stem</td>
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<td>rtags kyi ‘jugs pa, cf. Thonmi</td>
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<td>TIB</td>
<td>Tibetan</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>transitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>transl.</td>
<td>translation</td>
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<tr>
<td>unintl.</td>
<td>unintentional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOL</td>
<td>volition(al)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VPREFIX</td>
<td>verb prefix</td>
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12.02 Abbreviations for dialects

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Central Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAT</td>
<td>Eastern Amdo Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EKT</td>
<td>Eastern Kham Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKT</td>
<td>Northern Kham Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Southern Tibetan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAT</td>
<td>Western Archaic Tibetan</td>
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12.03. Bibliographical abbreviations

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<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AJL</td>
<td>Australian Journal of Linguistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALH</td>
<td>Acta Linguistica Hafniensia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Asia Major, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOH</td>
<td>Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Budapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHPh</td>
<td>The Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academica sinica, Taipei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLS</td>
<td>Berkeley Linguistic Society Papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSL</td>
<td>Bulletin de la Société de linguistique de Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSOAS</td>
<td>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSOS</td>
<td>Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJAS</td>
<td>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IJAL</td>
<td>International Journal of American Linguistics, Baltimore, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Indian Linguistics, Journal of the Linguistic Society of India, Poona</td>
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<tr>
<td>JA</td>
<td>Journal Asiatique, Paris</td>
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<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven, Connecticut</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASB</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIES</td>
<td>The Journal of Indo-European Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JLR</td>
<td>Journal of Linguistic Research, IULC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRAS</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JWCBRS</td>
<td>Journal of Western China Border Research Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.</td>
<td>Language, Journal of the Linguistic Society of America, Baltimore</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTBA</td>
<td>Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area, Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of California, Berkeley</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTWA</td>
<td>Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala</td>
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12. Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Studies in Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUF</td>
<td>Sprachtypologie und Universalienforschung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Toung Pao, Archives concernant l'histoire, les langues, la géographie et les arts de l'Asie Orientale, Leiden</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSL</td>
<td>Typological studies in language, Benjamins, Amsterdam</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZDMG</td>
<td>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Wiesbaden</td>
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