

PERSONAL PRONOUNS IN OLD TIBETAN

BY

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The pronominal systems of various modern Tibetan languages have been described in detail¹, but the pronominal systems of earlier forms of Tibetan remain virtually unexplored. Previously, I made a short investigation (Hill 2007) of the use of personal pronouns in the *Mi la ras pa rnam thar* by Gtσαṅ smyon he ru ka rus paḥi rgyan can (1452-1507). This text is chronologically at the half way point between Old Tibetan (700-1000) and the modern languages. In order to understand the development of Tibetan pronouns over time, it is necessary to also describe the pronominal system of Old Tibetan.²

First and second person pronouns occur generally only in dialogue; thus in order to research personal pronouns it is necessary to explore texts with sufficient dialogue. This criterion rather limits the choice of Old Tibetan texts. I draw the majority of examples from the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (PT 1287, hereafter abbreviated ‘OTC’)³ and *The envoys from Phywa to Dmu* (PT 0216, hereafter abbreviated ‘Envoys’)⁴. The *Old Tibetan Chronicle* is a literary reworking of Tibetan imperial dynastic history⁵. *The envoys from Phywa to Dmu* is an etiological myth of the

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¹ For example Balti (Bielmeier 1985: 76-77), Southern Mustang (Kretschmar 1995: 63), Shigatse (Haller 2000: 50), Themchen (Haller 2004: 50), Dingri (Herrmann 1989: 44-45), Brag-g.yab (Schwieger 1989: 20).

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³ Imaeda et al. (2007: 200-229).

⁴ Imaeda et al. (2007: 17-24).

⁵ I would like to thank Brandon Dotson for sharing with me his draft translation of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*. Although my translations are everywhere informed by his, they sometimes differ in detail.

sku-bla ritual, an imperial cult⁶. Third person pronouns occur less frequently in dialogue, but are found readily in legal literature. The legal text PT 1071⁷ provides sufficient examples to draw some tentative conclusions.

The first person singular *na*

In the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* the default first person singular pronoun is *na*. It is the form used within families. A child addresses his mother referring to himself as *na* (OTC ll. 28-35); his mother also addresses him using *na* (OTC l. 30). A husband calls himself *na* while speaking to his wife (OTC ll. 165-169).

bu spus-la ḡgreñ nus tsam-nas / ma-la «myī gañ bya gañ-la rjo-bo yod-na na-ḡi rjo-bo gar-re? / myi gañ (29) bya gañ-la / pha yod-na na-ḡi pha ga-re?» źes zer-to / «na-la ston chig!» ces mchi-na / ma-ḡi mchid-nas / «myi-ḡu chuñ kha (30) ma che śig! / rte-ḡu cuñ kha ma drag na myi źes» źes byas-na / (OTC)

As soon as the noble son was able to stand upright, he asked his mother, «If every man and every bird has a lord, who is **my** lord? If every man and every bird has a father, who is **my** father?» He implored her: «Tell **me**!» His mother said, «Little man, don't be a big mouth! Little colts don't have fierce mouths. **I** do not know.»

Spuñ Gyim- (166) tañ Rmañ-bu blo-la btags-na / gñid log-pa-na brdol-gyis dogs-nas / / khyo-mo-dañ myī ñal-bar ri-la (167) ñal-źiñ / nub re mal re ḡphoḡ-ḡo / / khyo-mola yañ «na-la mtshar-gyi yī-dags śig bab-kyis / / gsañ (168) thub-par gyi-śig!» ches btamso / (OTC)

When they convinced Spuñ Gyim-tañ Rmañ-bu, he feared that he would leak [the plot] in his sleep, and so did not sleep with his wife, but slept in the hills, moving his bed nightly. He even told his wife, «A strange spirit has fallen upon **me**, but we must keep it secret!»

In addition to being used within families, *na* is used by lords addressing their vassals. The wicked lord Ziñ-po-rje in addressing his vassal Myañ Tseñ-sku also refers to himself with *na* (OTC ll. 140-141). The

⁶ My treatment of this text is based mainly on two recent studies by Ishikawa (2000, 2001).

⁷ Imaeda et al. (2007: 94-111).

would-be Tibetan emperor Stag-bu addressing the conspirators, his would-be vassals, also uses *ña* in reference to himself (OTC II. 158-159). While addressing his loyal vassal Dbaḥs Phañ-to-re Dbyi-tshab the Tibetan emperor Khri Sroñ-brtsan refers to himself as *ña* both in the opening lines of a speech (OTC I. 256) and a few lines later in a verse oath (OTC I. 269).

Ziñ-po-rje na-re // «*Mñan Ḥdzī-zuñ-las ña-la sñiñ ñe myed-pa-ḥī bran-du*
// *khyon-ḥdah ma (141) ran-la myed-do* // » (OTC)

Ziñ-po-rje said, «There is none more dear to **me** than Mñan Ḥdzi-zuñ. It is not the case that you, sir, are unsuitable as his servant.»

btsan-po-ḥi źal-nas / «*ña-ḥi sriñ-* (159) *mo źig kyañ* / *Ziñ-po-rje-ḥi ga-na*
ḥdug mod-kyi // *khyed zer-ba bźin bya-ḥo*» *źes bkaḥ stsal-nas* // (OTC)

The emperor decreed, «Even though one of **my** sisters is with Ziñ-po-rje, I will do as you say.»

(256) «*sña-na ña-ḥī yab-kyi riñ-la* // ... (OTC)

«Previously, during the reign of **my** father... »

(269) «*ña-ḥīs ni khyod myī gtañ* //
ña-ḥīs ni khyod btañ na //
dguñ mthaḥī ni sruñ-du ruñ // » (OTC)

«**I** will not abandon you.

As for me, if **I** abandon you,

Better [I] be a border guard of heaven.»

While speaking with enemies one also uses the pronoun *ña*. The Chinese general Woñ-ker-źañ-śes uses this pronoun during his exchange of boasts with the Tibetan general Mgar Khi-ḥbriñ (OTC II. 499-500), and Mgar Khi-ḥbriñ uses the same pronoun in reply (OTC II. 510-511).

(499) «*Bod-kyi dmag thub-pa tsam-du brlabs-nas* // *ña-ḥī dmag ḥdi sñed*
(500) *chig yod-do* // » (OTC)

[Woñ-ker-źañ-śes says:] «After overwhelming and vanquishing the Tibetan army, I will still have **my** army so numerous as [these grains].»

(510) «*ña-ḥī dmag ni* (511) *rtswa mañ-po-la zor-ba gchīg-gis gchod-pa-*
dañ mtshuñste chod krañ? // *g.yag ched-po-la mdaḥ phra-mos ḥphañs-na*
sod-krañ? // » (OTC)

[Mgar Khi-ḥbriñ replies:] «**My** army—it is like a single scythe that cuts the many grasses; will it not be able to cut them? If a small arrow is shot at a great yak, will it not be able to kill it?»

In all of these examples the speaker is clearly singular. The instances of a lord addressing a vassal and a general addressing an enemy general make clear that *ña* does not express any deference to the addressee. The examples of family members addressing each other with this pronoun, however, make clear that the pronoun also does not inherently carry a connotation of disrespect. This fact is also confirmed by the intimate and friendly tone of the emperor's oath to Dbaḥs Phañ-to-re Dbyi-tshab (OTC ll. 256-269). The pronoun *ña* expresses neither humility or haughtiness; it is the most neutral, default pronoun of the first person singular.

This understanding of *ña* can help to clarify the correct translation of, if not the understanding of, a difficult passage near the beginning of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (ll. 21-26).

(21) *ḥuñ-gi rjes-la Rhya-mo Rhul-bži khugs* (22)-*dañ* / *Sna-nam Btsan-bžoñ-rgyal gñis* / / *srīd-kyi khyi-bo che Ḥon-zugs-yar grags-dañ* / *Ḥjañ-gi Zu-le-ma Ḥjañ-dañ* (23) *Ḥon-rku-gñis-kyi spu-la dug bskuste* / *ḥphrañ-po-ḥi brag g.yaḥ-bo ḥdah-nas* / *pho-la ltasu bltas-na ltas bzañ-ste* (24) «*yul Myañ-ro Ṣam-po druñ-du lhags-nas* / *thabs-kyis bsgyud-de* / *khyi-ḥi spu-la dug yod-pa da ña-ḥī rta-rdzis khrid-nas* / (25) *khyi bzañ-po Lo-ñam-gyi lagis byugs-pa-dañ* / *ña-ḥī rta-rdzis khyi-ḥi spu-la dug bskus-pas lag-pa byug-ste bsad-de* / (26) *śa blan-no* / / (OTC)

Later, Rhya-mo Rhul-bži-khugs and Sna-nam Btsan-bžoñ-rgyal both smeared poison on the fur of the great dog of the realm, who is known as Ḥon-zugs-ya, and on both Zu-le-ma Ḥjañ of Nanzhao (Ḥjañ) and Ḥon-rku. Having passed the crooked slate cliffs, they examined the signs on the male [dog] and they were good. «When [we/the assassins] near the land of Myañ-ro Ṣam-po, we/they will conduct the ruse. **My** groom will lead these dogs, with poison on their fur, and the good dog will be rubbed by Lo-ñam's hand, and because **my** groom will rub with his hand a dog with poison smeared on its fur, he will be killed, and we/they will have revenge.»

Because of the presence of the pronoun *ña*, this passage must include a quotation. However, no verbs introduce or conclude this quotation; it is difficult to know where it begins and ends. Because the interpretation of the omens seems a logical choice for the content of the quotation, I have chosen to begin the quotation after the examination of the omens.

It remains unclear who the speaker is, and whether he is himself one of the would-be assassins. However, the grammar makes certain that the speaker is singular, and thus cannot be both assassins Rhya-mo Rhul-bzi-khugs and Sna-nam Btsan-bzoñ-rgyal as one might otherwise be tempted to suggest.

The first person singular *bdag*

The first person singular pronoun *bdag* is used in four passages in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*. All four examples of *bdag* occur in the speech of a vassal addressing the Tibetan emperor, three while making a request (OTC II. 10-12, 248-254, 324-327) and the fourth (OTC I. 292) in an oath of loyalty. The verb of speech used in the three requests *gsol* also makes clear that speaker is of lower status than the addressee. Thus it is clear that like in the *Mi la ras pa rnam thar* and in the dialect of GZis-ka-rtse today, in Old Tibetan *bdag* signals the humility and lower status of the speaker vis-à-vis his addressee (Hill 2007: 284).

(10) *huñ-nas Lo-ñam-gyis gsol-pa* / «*de ltar myi gnañ-na / lha-ñi dkor* (11) *mduñ rañ hdebs-dañ / ral-gyi rañ gcod-dañ / khrab rañ gyon-dañ / phub rañ bzur-la stsogs-pa / hphrul-gyi dkor* (12) *ched-po mñah-ba-ñi rñams bdag-la stsal-na phod*» *ces gsol-to* / (OTC)

Then Lo-ñam said, «If you will not allow [our refusal] in that way, then I will agree, if you grant **me** your divine inheritance, the great magical treasures you possess: the spear that throws itself, the sword that cuts by itself, the armor that dresses one by itself, the shield that deflects by itself, and so forth. »

Phaṅs-to-re Dbyi-tshab-gyis / / *prñ Sñā-to-re Gtsug-blon-las gsol-te* / / (249) [...] (250) «*Myañ-gīs srid ma thub-ste* / / *bkyon phab-nas / bdag-chag spad mtshan / blar glo-ba ma riñs / mñah ma grañ-ñiñ* (251) *mchis-na* / / [...] ***bdag*** *rgan-po tsam* (252) *ñig ma gum-bar* / / *dbu sñuñ khud-pa tsam gsol* / / ***bdagñ*** *bu tsha bro khud-bar stsal-d-par jñ gnañ?* / / *btsan-po yab* (253) *ñi bdagñ mchis brañ-du gdan bñiñ yañ gnañ-na* / / *da śul yogs-su / La-mo Chag-pa-prum-du pyag thab tsam* (254) *ñig gsol-du ji gnañ?* » *ñes gsol-nas* / / (OTC)

Phaṅs-to-re Dbyi-tshab made a request from the Gtsug-blon via the messenger Sñā-to-re: [...] «Myañ was insufficient in his governance, and was disgraced. My descendants and I were not disloyal to the authority. [...] I,

a mere old man requests to take an oath before dying. How would it be to grant **my** lineage to take an oath? As for the emperor's father, he granted the spreading of the carpet (i.e. marriage ceremony) for **my** wife. Now, how would it be to make an offering as your servant at La-mo Chag-pa-prum?»

«*bdagī pha rgas-kyi / (325)-la gar / / btsan-po-ḥi ʒa śnar glo-ba riñs-nas / / tshams bsdal-bar chad-paḥ / / Mgar Yul-zuñ-la ḥthol-bar bgyis-pa-las / (326) Yul-zuñ-gīs kyañ tshor-te / Yul-zuñ nī slar mchis / / bdagīs pha bkum-nas / / mgo bchad-de mchis-na // srid myi brlag (327) par ji gnañ*» *ʒes gsold-to / / (OTC)*

«In **my** father's old age he became disloyal to the presence of the emperor, and becoming frightened, he was going to make a confession of this to Mgar Yul-zuñ, but Yul-zuñ indeed perceived this, and Yul-zuñ returned. I killed my father, and cut off his head. This being so, can it be granted that [my] realm (*srid*) not be lost?»

(292) *bdagī phu-ma-nu-dañ / bu-tsha la-la ʒig-gīs / / sñiñ riñs-su byed-na / / «sñiñ riñs-so» ʒes kyañ myi ḥthol (293) reḥ / (OTC)*

«If one among **my** clansmen (*phu-ma-nu*) or lineage (*bu-tsha*) acts disloyally, Never will we fail to confess, «he is disloyal.»»

The first person singular *kho-bo*

The pronoun *kho-bo*, also a first person singular, occurs seven times in two passages in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*. Both of these passages involve social equals. In the first passage (OTC ll. 151-153) the conspirator Dbyi-tshab addresses his co-conspirator Myañ-tseñ-sku. In the second passage (OTC ll. 203-214) both Señ-go Myi-chen and Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad employ *kho-bo* when referring to themselves during their altercation about who will lead the campaign to Dags-po. Used by social equals, friends, and rivals, *kho-bo* does not have any implication of social status or attitude.

(151) *Dbyi-tshab-kyis tshīg de tog ces blañs-nas / / «Tseñ-sku khyod (152) zer-ba-las bden-ba myed-do / / kho-bo yañ ḥdī-las ma rañs-pa myed-kyis / / khyod sems-pa-dañ myi ḥdraḥ (153) re» ʒes mnaḥ bor-ro / / (OTC)*

Dbyi-tshab accepted the meaning of those words (*tshīg de tog ces blañs nas*), and swore, «Tseñ-sku, there is no truth apart from what you've said. As **my** own disaffection is nothing apart from this, [I] shall never differ from you in mind!»

uñ-gĩ rjes-la Dags-po hbañs-su mñah-ba-las log-go // *huñ-nas rje* (204)
blon yoñs-su hdus-te // *Dags-po Lha-de dgug-pa-ñĩ bkañ-gros mdzad-nas*
/ «dmag-pon sus bya?» žes blod-na // (205) *Señ-go Myi-chen-gyis* //
«kho-bos rño thog» ches khas blañs-so // *huñ-nas Khyuñ-po Spuñ sad*
na-re // *«khyo-ħdahs* / (206) *dmag-pon hoñ-ñam?* / *myĩ ħdzañs-pa go* //
sgye-ħu nañ-du smyuñ-bu bcug-pa-dañ mtshuñs šes bya-na // *khyo-ħdah*
/ (207) btsan-po-ħi snam pyĩ-par bkañ stsal-nas // *lo du-ma žig lon-na* //
/ «ħdzañs rño thog-go» žes // *myĩ chig-gĩs* / (208) *bstod-pa kho-bos ma*
thos-na // *khyo-ħdahs myĩ hoñ ba-la bsgre bsgre-ste* // *hbañs chab*
ħtshal-bar mchi-ħo // (209) *žes byas-so* // *Myĩ-chen na-re* // *«myi*
yoñs-kyis kho-bo-la sñan-du myi brjod-pa yañ bden-no // *kho-bo sñon*
(210) sgye-ħu nañ-du žugs kyañ ma žugs / rtse-mo pyir ma byuñ-ba yañ
bden-no // *kho-bo sñon sgye-ħu nañ-du žugs-(211) su zin-na* // *rtse-mo*
bas yu-ba phan chad pyuñ-ste soñ zin-no // *huñ-gĩs deñ kho-bos gsol-ba*
yañ // (212) *sñon ji-ħi nañ-du yañ ma žugs-pas* // *gdod ħjug-par gsol-ba*
yĩn-no» žes byas-so // *huñ-nas* // (213) *btsan-pos kyañ / Myi-chen gsol-*
ba bžin gnañ-nas // *Dags-po hbañsu dgug-pa-ñĩ dmag-pon-du bkañ /*
(214) stsal-to // (OTC)

After that, Dags-po, although it had been taken as subject, revolted, where-
 upon the lord and all ministers gathered and discussed the subjugation of
 Dags-po Lha-de. Saying «Who will act as general?», Señ-go Myi-chen
 said, «I am capable.» Then Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad said, «You Sir, are you fit
 to be a general? As for a clever man, he is said to be like an awl which has
 been put into a bag. You Sir, since you were appointed as a retainer of the
 emperor many years have passed, but I have never heard anyone praise you,
 saying. ‘(He) is clever and capable’; so You Sir will continue to be unsuit-
 able and will waste the people [i.e. soldiers].» Myi-chen said, «It is true
 that no one has ever praised me. But it is also true that because I have never
 stayed inside a bag before, the point has not come out. If I had stayed inside
 a bag, (more) than (just) the point, even the shaft would have come out,
 therefore today I am requesting (this): [I] am requesting to be put (into a
 bag) for the first time, since [I] have never stayed in anything previously.»
 Then the emperor granted just what Myi-chen had requested, and appointed
 him to be general to subjugate the Dags-po⁸.

As pointed out by Takeuchi (1985) this second passage is adopted
 from the *Shiji*.

平原君曰：「夫賢士之處世也，譬若錐之處囊中，其末立見。今先生處勝
 之門下三年於此矣，左右未有所稱誦，勝未有所聞，是先生無所有也。先

⁸ My translation closely follows that of Takeuchi (1985: 138) but differs in a few
 details.

生不能，先生留。」毛遂曰：「臣乃今日請處囊中耳。使遂蚤得處囊中，乃穎脫而出，非特其末見而已。」平原君竟與毛遂偕。(Takeuchi 1985: 146)

Pingyuanjun said, «As for a clever man in the world, he is like an awl which has been put into a bag: the point comes out immediately. Now Sir, you have been in my following for three years, (but) no one around has ever praised you, neither have I heard of you; (so) you have nothing about you. You are incapable, you should stay.» Mao Sui said, «That is why I am requesting today to be put into a bag. If I had been put into a bag previously, not only the point, but even the shaft would have come out.» (Then) Pingyuanjun finally accompanied Mao Sui⁹.

The only time the Chinese text has a word corresponding to Tibetan *kho-bo* is in the speech of Pingyuanjun. Following a normal Chinese practice, he uses his own name (勝 *shēng*) to refer to himself. The use of the rare pronoun *kho-bo* can therefore not be credited to any emulation of anything in the Chinese original. The occurrences of *kho-bo* are insufficient to distinguish its meaning from *na*.

The first person plural *ned*

The first person plural pronoun *ned* happens not to occur in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, but does however occur in other Old Tibetan texts. This pronoun occurs four times in the speech of the lord of Dmu in *The envoys from Phywa to Dmu* (l. 105, ll. 125-127, 132-133, 139-140). These attestations can be interpreted as a simple plural (with the lord seeing himself as part of the larger Dmu polity) or as a *pluralis majestatis*, the lord of Dmu using the plural because of his high status. Contexts like these, where the leader of a group speaks for the group in general, lead to the ambiguous use of the plural and the emergence of the *pluralis majestatis*.

(105) *Dmu-ḥis bkaḥ stsal-pa /*
 «*ned-kyi Dmu yul ḥdi dag-na /*
dgaḥ lha byed ni nam myi nañs-la /» (Envoys)

(105) Dmu decrees:
 «In these **our** lands of Dmu,
 celebrating the joyous god, dawn does not break (*nañs*).»

⁹ My translation closely follows that of Takeuchi (1985: 136) but differs in a few details.

Dmu rjes (126) *bkaḥ stsal-d-pa* /

«**ñed-kyi** yul ḥdi dag-na /

sa ḥtshams-kyi stag ḥphreṅ khri skugs dag-na /

gles-pa stag-daṅ (127) *gzig / dom-daṅ dred las-bstsogs-pa maṅ-por mchis-na* /» (Envoys)

Dmu decrees:

«In these lands of **ours**

in such [places as] ‘the *skugs* of ten thousand rows of tigers’

there are many including *gles-pa* tigers and leopards, bears and red bears.

Dmu rjes bkaḥ stsal-pa / /

«*khyed-cag-gi tshig-la yoṅ zol yod-pas* /

ñed (133) *Dmu-ḥi gcan-pa gles-pa lcags-kyi myi rta źub rluṅ ltar ni phyo-la / glog ltar ni myur-ba* /» (Envoys)

Dmu decrees:

«In your words there are deceptions

The *gles-pa* scouts of **our** Dmu, the armored horsemen of iron, bound like the wind as fast as lighting.»

Dmu rjes bkaḥ stsal-paḥ /

(140) «*ḥo-na Phywa-ḥi pho-ña ñed-kyi sku-bla-la mchod gsol-du ḥoṅs-na / mchod-paḥi rkyen ci yod?* /» (Envoys)

Dmu decrees:

«Well, if you messengers of Phywa have come to offer an oblation to **our** *sku-bla* what do you have as an oblation?»

Although these examples do not provide conclusive evidence, they do suggest that in Old Tibetan *ñed* is the plural equivalent of *ña*, and can be used both as a simple plural and as a *pluralis majestatis* of a single high ranking individual.

The first person plural *bdag-cag*

The pronoun *bdag-cag*, the plural of *bdag*, occurs frequently in *The envoys from Phywa to Dmu*. The envoys of Phywa emphasize their low status vis-à-vis the lord of Dmu by using this pronoun with regards to themselves. In many of the examples (e.g. Envoys I. 110, 114, 118, 120) the envoys further emphasize their low status with the adjective *ñan-pa* ‘vulgar’.

pho-ñas lan btāb-paḥ /
 «**bdag-cag** (111) ni Ḥphywa-ḥi ḥbañs /
 [...] **bdag-cag** ñan-pa yañ lha-la ni yon ḥbul /
Dmu rje-la ni bkod tsam (115) ḥbul-ñiñ spyañ-ñar mchis / | -paḥi *pho-ña*
lags.» / / / (Envoys)

The messengers answered:

«**We** are the subjects of Phywa.
 ... **We** vulgar fellows,
 come before [you] merely offering oblation to the god
 and offering an appointment to the lord of Dmu, are messengers.»

pho-ñas (118) *lan btāb-paḥ / /*
 «**bdag-cag** Rtsañ-smad-mdo-nas tshur mchis-na /
 śul yañ nor /-te / / [...] /
 myi-dañ [...] mjal-te /
 «*su-ḥi myi?*» žes *bdag-cag-la ḥdri-ḥo /*
bdag-cag-kyis kyañ / *drañ-por smras-te /*
 «*Dmu-ḥi yul-du* (121) *Phywa-ḥi pho-ñar mchi.*» žes *bgyis-na /* (Envoys)

The messengers reply,

«When **we** came thither from Rtsañ-smad-mdo (Tibet).

[We] lost the way....

[We] met with a man...

[He] asked us «Whose men are you?»

We answered him straight;

when [we] said «[we] go as messengers of Phywa to Dmu.»

An elegant contrast between the singular *bdag* and the plural *bdag-cag* occurs in the following passage from the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (ll. 248-254). Speaking to the emperor, the elderly minister Phañs-to-re Dbyi-tshab uses *bdag* of himself, but *bdag-cag* of himself and his kinsmen together.

Phañs-to-re Dbyi-tshab-gyis / / prīn Sñā-to-re Gtsug-blon-las gsol-te / /
 (249) [...] (250) «*Myañ-gīs srid ma thub-ste / / bkyon phab-nas /* **bdag-chag**
spad mshan / blar glo-ba ma riñs / mthañ ma grañ-ñiñ (251) *mchīs-na / /*
 [...] **bdag** *rgan-po tsam* (252) *žīg ma gum-bar / / dbu sñuñ khud-pa tsam*
gsol / / **bdagī** *bu tsha bro khud-bar stsald-par jī gnañ / / btsan-po yab* (253)
nī **bdagī** *mchis brañ-du gdan btiñ yañ gnañ-na / / da śul yog-su / La-mo*
Chag-pa-prum-du pyag thab tsam (254) *žīg gsol-du jī gnañ?* » žes *gsol-nas*
 / / (OTC)

Phañs-to-re Dbyi-tshab made a request from the Gtsug-blon via the messenger Sñā-to-re: [...] «Myañ was insufficient in his governance, and was

disgraced. My descendants and I, **we** were not disloyal to the authority. [...] **I**, a mere old man requests to take an oath before dying. How would it be to grant **my** lineage to take an oath? As for the emperor's father, he granted the spreading of the carpet (i.e. marriage ceremony) for **my** wife. Now, how would it be to make an offering as your servant at La-mo Chag-pa-prum? »

The first person plural *ho-skol*

The pronoun *ho-skol* is used twice in one passage in *The envoys from Phywa to Dmu* (ll. 165-168). The lord of Dmu has up until this point always used *ned* to refer to himself and his kinsmen while addressing the messengers of Phywa. This passage, however, marks the incorporation of these messengers into the community, and as a consequence the exclusive pronoun *ned* is replaced with the inclusive pronoun *ho-skol*¹⁰.

«*de-lags khyed ho-skol mchis-pa yañ /
phu ni stoñ sde / (166) mdaḥ ni rgya sde /
rje gcig-gi ḥbañs-la
yul cig-gi ni myi /
sa cig-gi ḥbras /
ri cig-gi (167) rdo /
khyed ho-skol-la dbyar myed-pas /
khyed-kyis nas kyañ ceḥu yag-dañ log men dag ltos! /
ruñ-ziñ (168) śis-par gyur-na /
bdag-cag [--] bkaḥ gros dag [b]gyis-la /
khyed-la bkaḥ-luñ dag sbyiñ-gis /*» (Envoys)

«You are **us**.

Above a myriarchy, below, a hecatontarchy
As subjects of a ruler,
men of the land,
rice of the earth,
stone of the mountain,
you are not distinguished from **us**.»

The second person singular *khyod*

The neutral second person singular pronoun is *khyod*. This pronoun is used by a mother to her child (OTC l. 31), a wife to her husband (OTC

¹⁰ Two further examples of *ho-skol* clearly being employed as a first person plural inclusive can be found in ITJ 0737/1 (ll. 136-137, cf. de Jong 1989: 112).

l. 169), the conspirator Dbyi-tshab to the conspirator Myañ-tseñ-sku (OTC ll. 151-152), the emperor to his vassal Žaň-snañ Peḥu-zur Ḥbriñ-po (OTC l. 232), the emperor in his oath to his minister Dbaḥs Phaň-to-re Dbyi-tshab (OTC ll. 268-269), and Mgar Khĩ-ḥbriñ's to the Chinese general Ḥwoñ-dker Žaň-še (OTC l. 509).

(31) *mas kyañ gdod bstan-te* / «**khyod-kyi** pha nĩ Rhyas bsad-do / **khyod-kyi** jo-bo (32) *btsan-po ni* / *Lo-ñam rta-rdzis bkronste* / (OTC)

His mother showed him what he wanted, «**Your** father was killed by the Rhya clan. **Your** lord, the emperor, was killed by Lo-ñam the groom.»

(168) *ḥuñ-nas* (169) *khyo-mo na-re* / / «**khyod** lto bo che-la / *yĩ-dags ma bab-kyi* / / *lto sbyor-du ñes-so*» *žes byas-so* / (OTC)

Then his wife said, «**You** are a liar! [You] haven't been possessed by a spirit, but are surely planning some deceit!»

(151) *Dbyi-tshab-kyis tshĩg-de tog ces blañs-nas* / / «*Tseñ-sku* **khyod** (152) *zer-ba-las bden-ba myed-do* / / *kho-bo yañ ḥdĩ-las ma rañs-pa myed-kyis* / / **khyod** *sems-pa-dañ mi ḥdraḥ* (153) *re*» *žes mnaḥ bor-ro* / / (OTC)

Dbyi-tshab accepted the meaning of those words, and swore, «Tseñ-sku, there is no truth apart from what **you** have said. As my own disaffection is nothing apart from this, I shall never differ from **you** in mind.»

ḥuñ-nas Žaň-snañ Pe-ḥu-zur Ḥbriñ-po bchas-pa tsañ žig / / *snañ-ma ltom-žĩñ mchis-pa-la* / / (232) «**khyod** *pha sñĩñ ñe-ba-ḥĩ bu-na* / / *klu šes-sam?*» *žes rmas-pa-dañ* / / *Žaň-snañ-gis* «*mchid ḥtshal*» *žes gsol-to* / (OTC)

Then [the emperor] noticed Žaň-snañ Peḥu-zur Ḥbriñ-po, who was wishing not to be noticed, and asked him, «If **you** are [your] father's loyal son, will [you] sing a song?» Žaň-snañ requested, «I will sing.»

(268) *da-nas ni phan chad-du* /
khyod (269) *-[kyi]s nĩ ña ma gtañ* /
ña-ḥĩs ni khyod *myĩ gtañ* / /
ña-ḥĩs ni khyod *btañ-na* / /
dguñ mthaḥĩ ni sruñ-du ruñ / /
khyod-kyis *nĩ* (270) *[ña] btañ-na* / /
Ñas-po nĩ rmad-du ruñ» *žes bkaḥ stsal-to* / / (OTC)

The emperor declared «From now on, henceforth,
You—do not abandon me.
I will not abandon **you**.

As for me, if I abandon **you**,
 Better I be a border guard of heaven.
 As for **you**, if you abandon me,
 Ņas-po will be well suited [for you].»

(509) «*khyod-kyi dmag niḥ* / (510) *mtsho ga-ḥī sbrañ bu-dañ ḥdraḥ-ste* / / *mañ-ḥīñ ḥkhol-la myī phan-no* / / *ri-ka-ḥī na-bun-dañ mtshuñste* / *myi-la myī lci-ḥo* / / *ña-ḥī dmag ni* (511) *rtswa mañ-po-la zor-ba gchīg-gis gchod-pa-dañ mtshuñste chod-krañ?* / / *g.yag ched-po-la mdaḥ phra-mos ḥphañs-na sod-krañ?* / / » (OTC)

«**Your** army—it is like flies on the lake, numerous and churning but useless. It is like the mist on the hills; it is not cumbersome to men. My army—it is like a single scythe that cuts the many grasses; will it cut them? If a small arrow is shot at a great yak, will it be able to kill it?»

The second person singular *khyon-ḥdaḥ*

A rather rare pronoun of the second person singular is *khyo(n)-ḥdaḥ*. This pronoun occurs once as *khyon-ḥdaḥ* in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (I. 140) and in the form *khyo-ḥdaḥ* three times in a second passage of the same text (II. 205 to 208). I am unaware of any other example of its occurrence. Takeuchi (1985) has suggested regarding the second passage, which is adapted from the Chinese *Shiji* and quoted above, that *khyo(n)-ḥdaḥ* is a calque of the Chinese 先生 *xiansheng*. The first passage, however, has no known Chinese inspiration. I am tempted to see this as a genuine Tibetan word, in some kind of relation with *khyod*. The variation of *-d*, *-n*, and open syllables is a widely attested if poorly understood phenomenon in Old Tibetan (cf. Lalou 1953). It would be hasty to draw any conclusions about the meaning of *khyo(n)-ḥdaḥ* based on these two passages. However, the two passages do make it clear that it is a second person singular pronoun, and both passages also share a sense of haughtiness or disdain toward the addressee.

(140) *Ziñ-po-rje na-re* / / «*Mñan Ḥdzi-zuñ-las ña-la sñiñ ñe myed-pa-ḥī bran-du* / / *khyon-ḥdaḥ ma* (141) *ran-la myed-do* / / (OTC)

Ziñ-po-rje said, «There is none more dear to me than Mñan Ḥdzi-zuñ. It is not the case that **You Sir**, are unsuitable as his servant.

huñ-nas Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad na-re // «*khyo-ḥdaḥs* / (206) *dmag-pon hoñ-ñam?* / *myī ḥdzañs-pa go* // *sgye-ḥu nañ-du smyuñ-bu bcug-pa-dañ mts-huñs śes bya-na* // *khyo-ḥdaḥ* / (207) *btsan-po-ḥi snam pyi par bkaḥ stsal-nas* // *lo du-ma žig lon-na* // «*ḥdzañs rño thog-go*» *žes* // *myī chig-gšs* / (208) *bstod-pa kho-bos ma thos-na* // *khyo-ḥdaḥs myī hoñ-ba-la bsgre bsgre-ste* // *ḥbañs chab ḥtshal-bar mchi-ḥo* //» (209) *žes byas-so* // (OTC)

Then Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad said, «**You Sir**, are you fit to be a general? As for a clever man, he is said to be like an awl which has been put into a bag. **You Sir**, since [you] were appointed as a retainer of the emperor many years have passed, but I have never heard anyone praise [you], sayng. ‘(He) is clever and capable’; so **You Sir** will continue to be unsuitable and will waste waste the subjects.»

The second person plural *khyed*

The second person plural pronoun is *khyed*. This pronoun is used by the father of the first Tibetan emperor, communicating to a group of conspirators, when he agrees to lead their conspiracy (OTC I. 159). Although Stag-bu Sñā-gzigs himself does not live to see the success of the plot, and is never made Tibetan emperor, the text regards him retroactively as an emperor.

(157) // *huñ-nas Myañ Dbaḥs Mnon-dañ gsuñ-gyis* / (158) *Tshes-poñ Nag-señ-las prin-kyis* // *Spu-rgyal Stag-bu-ḥi sñan-du bon-nas* // *btsan-po-ḥi žal-nas* / *ña-ḥi sriñ* (159) *mo žig kyañ* / *Ziñ-po-rje-ḥi ga-na ḥdug mod-kyi* // *khyed zer-ba bžin bya-ḥo*» *žes bkaḥ stsal-nas* // (OTC)

Then Myañ, Dbaḥs and Mnon—the three—[heard] the message from Tshes-poñ Nag-señ: «[I] proclaimed [our intentions] to the ears of Stag-bu, the Spu-rgyal, and the emperor said, ‘Even though one of my sisters is with Ziñ-po-rje, I will do as **you** say.» So he decreed.

The following passage, in which the emperor is agreeing to grant his minister Dbyi-tshab an oath, makes the contrast between singular *khyod* and plural *khyed* very clear. When the emperor addresses Dbyi-tshab individually he uses *khyod* but employs *khyed* whenever someone else is included in the reference.

sña-na ña-ḥi yab-kyi riñ-la // *Ḥbriñ-tho-re Sbuñ-brtsan* / (257)-*dañ* // *Phañs-to-re Dbyi-tshab-dañ khyed gñis* // *chab pha-rol tshu-rol-gyi* // *guñ blon ḥtshol chig-par dgod* / (258) *dgod-pa-las* / *Ḥbriñ-to-re Sbuñ-brtsan ñi śi* // *khyod ñi rgas-ste ñi ma ḥder gnañ-ste bžag* // *Myañ Žañ-*

(259) *snañ blon-cher bskos-te bźag-na / / yab noñs-nas / Myañ-gis kyañ glo-ba riñste / bkyon phab-paḥ / (260) yin-no / da khyed Dbahs pha chīg ni / / gdoḥ thag gñis-su / glo-ba ma riñs-pas / / La-mo Chag-pa prum-du (261) pyag thab kyañ gsol chig / / dbu sñuñ yañ gnañ-ño » žes bkaḥ stsal-to (OTC)*

Previously, during the reign of my father, **you** two, Ḥbriñ-to-re Sbuñ-brtsan and Phañs-ro-re Dbyi-tshab, were being made ministers (*guñ-blon*) of the near and far sides of the river. However, Ḥbriñ-to-re Sbuñ-brtsan died, and **you** being old were granted leave to rest in the sun. Myañ Žañ-snañ was appointed as prime minister. My father died. That very Myañ was disloyal and was duly disgraced. Now as for **you** all, Dbahs [clan] patriarchs, from beginning to end [you] have not been disloyal, and so [you] may make offerings (*pyag-thab gsol*) at La-mo Chag-pa prum. I also grant [you] an oath.» So he decreed.

The emperor also employs *khyed* in reference to Dbyi-tshab and his clansmen in the text of his oath (OTC II. 278-280, 286-289).

da pyin chad khyed spad-mtshan-gyis / / btsan-po Spu-rgyal-gyi ža / (279) sñar / glo-ba ma riñs mthaḥñ ma grañ-na / / nam nam nam nam / ža ža ža žar yañ / Dbyi-tshab-gyi bu-la (280) ma ñes-par bkyon dbab re / (OTC)

«From now onwards, if **you** [and your] descendants (*spad-mtshan*) Will not be disloyal to Spu-rgyal or consider power (*mthaḥñ ma grañ*), Then forever and forever, always and always, The sons of Dbyi-tshab will never be falsely disgraced.»

(286) *khyed glo-ba riñs-na dbu sñuñ-la ma gthogs / / khyed-kyis khol yul žig brjes-sam pul-na / dbu (287) sñuñ-la ma gthogs / (OTC)*

«If **you** are disloyal, [you] detach [yourself] from the oath. If **you** exchange [your] subject lands or offer them, [You] detach [yourself] from the oath.»

In general, descriptions of Tibetan grammar treat *khyed* as the honorific equivalent of *khyod*, and do not recognize a singular versus plural distinction (e.g. Beyer 1992: 208). In the *Mi la rnam thar* the pronoun *khyed* is used, just like *vous* in French, both as a neutral second person plural and as an honorific second person singular. The neutral use of *khyed* for the plural can be seen in the following example where a lama addresses two students.

(23) *khyed* *gñis-la mthuḥi gdams-ñag cis kyañ ster-ba yin-pas*

«I will give to **you** two whatever curse instructions [I have]» (de Jong 1959: 41, ll. 16-17).

The honorific use of *khyed* can be seen in this example, in which Myañ-tsha-dkar-rgyan addresses her dead husband.

yab Mi-la-śes-rab-rgyal-mtshan khyed-la bu ḥdi ḥdra skyes-so

«O father, Mi-la-śes-rab-rgyal-mtshan, to **you** such a son as this was born!» (de Jong 1959: 36, ll. 21-22)

In Old Tibetan it appears that *khyed* functioned only as a neutral plural and not yet as an honorific singular.

Third person pronouns *kho-na*, *mo-na*, and *khoñ-ta*

Because pronouns in Tibetan can be understood as carrying over from a previous sentence unless otherwise made clear there is very little need for third person pronouns, and they tend to have an emphatic or clarifying force. In the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* the third person pronoun *kho-na* occurs twice (l. 69, 193), and the feminine equivalent *mo-na* is used once (l. 70).

*de-ḥi ḥog-du Mthon-myi Ḥbriñ / (69)-po rgyal Btsan-nus byas-te / / dkuḥ ched-po byas-nas / / **kho-naḥi** sriñ-mo Mthon-myi za Yar-steñ / dug bskur / (70) te btañ-ba-las / / mo-na dug ḥthuñs-nas / / Btsan-nu bkum-ba lagso / / (OTC)*

After him, Mthon-myi Ḥbriñ-po-rgyal Btsan-nu served. Making a great plot (*dkuḥ ched-po*), he entrusted **his own** sister, Lady Mthon-myi Yar-steñ, with poison. He sent her off, but she drank poison [unknowingly], and Btsan-nu was put to death.

*de-nas Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan-gyis pyag lcag-gis / / (191) dras-te / / Myañ Tseñ sku ḥi bya dgaḥr / / Mñan Ḥdzī-zuñ-gi mkhar Sdur ba-dañ / bran khyim stoñ lña brgyaḥ stsalto / (192)[...] Mnon Ḥdron- (193) poḥi bya dgaḥr / **kho-na-ḥi** pu-nu-po Mnon-la stsogs-pa bran khyim stoñ lña brgyaḥ stsal-to / / (OTC)*

Then Gnam-ri Slon-mtshan pointed with his whip and granted Sdur-ba, the stronghold of [Myañ's enemy,] Mñan Ḥdzī-zuñ, along with one thousand five hundred bondservant households as Myañ Tseñ-sku's reward.... As Mnon Ḥdron-po's reward he granted one thousand five hundred bondservant households from **his own** Mnon clan, and others.

*de-ñi ñog-du Mthon-myi Hbriñ / (69)-po rgyal Btsan-nus byas-te / / dkuñ
ched-po byas-nas / / kho-nañi sriñ-mo Mthon-myi za Yar-steñ / dug
bskur / (70) te btañ-ba-las / / mo-na dug ñtuñs-nas / / Btsan-nu bkum-ba
lagso / / (OTC)*

After him, Mthon-myi Hbriñ-po-rgyal Btsan-nu served. Making a great plot (*dkuñ ched-po*), he entrusted his own sister, Lady Mthon-myi Yar-steñ, with poison. He sent her off, but **she** drank poison [unknowingly], and Btsan-nu was put to death.

Third person pronouns are more common in legal literature than in narrative literature. In the Old Tibetan contracts studied by Tsuguhito Takeuchi (1995) the following third singular pronouns occur, with no difference in meaning discovered by Takeuchi: *kho-ta*, *khoñ-ta*, *kho-na*, *khoñ-na*, and *khoñ-ta*¹¹. In order to further elucidate the meaning of these pronouns it is useful to restrict examination to a single legal text where two of these pronouns occur each multiple times. The hunting law PT 1071 contains many examples both of *kho-na* and *khoñ-ta*.

kho-na

In PT 1071 the singular pronoun *kho-na* only refers to the accused.

gtsañ-dkar bcu gñis-dañ kho-na bdag bcu gsum / bro stsaldo (PT 1071, r009)¹²

Twelve members of the jury, the accused himself the thirteenth, swear an oath.

mdaḥ hphoñ / hphoñ-ba / kho-na ḥbras śig bkumste / (PT 1071, r056)¹³

The accused alone, who shot the arrow, is himself executed.

mdaḥ hphoñ hphoñ-ba kho-na sgor rabs bcade / (PT 1071, r020)¹⁴.

The accused, who shot the arrow, suffers the extinction of his household lineage.

¹¹ Interestingly, it is only *kho-ta* and *khoñ-ta* which occur in the ergative case in these documents.

¹² Further examples occur nearly verbatim (r018, r030, r044, r054, r068, r089, r113, r122, r144, r160, r188, r200, r225, r235, r255, r268, r279, r292, r303, r314).

¹³ Further examples occur nearly verbatim (r071, r100, r103, r123, r162, r201, r236).

¹⁴ Two further examples occur nearly verbatim (r31 and r070).

khol yul-dañ bañ-za pyugs-nor-gyi pyed-pho ni kho-na stsalde / (PT 1071, r174)¹⁵

As for the [other] half of the service tenure lands, goods, and chattel, they are given to the accused

The corresponding term for plaintiff in PT 1071 is the noun *yus-bdag*.

dkar gyis chañs tañ / mdaḥ phogs paḥ / gum-dañ / myñ stoñ / (r11) srañ khri babste / yus bdag-dañ / ḥdam-po phyed mar dbaño / ḥdam-po ma mchis na / srañ khri yus bdag dbaño / (r12) mdaḥ phogs-pa / (PT 1071)

If the jury establishes guilt and the one hit by the arrow was killed, then blood money of 10,000 *srañ* is imposed and half is the share of the **plaintiff**, the other half that of his lawyer. If there is no lawyer, 10,000 *srañ* is the share of the **plaintiff**.

khoñ-ta

Each section of the law is prefaced by a description of those persons to whom that section of the law pertains. In these prefaces the pronoun *khoñ-ta* is used with plural antecedents.

(r2) \$ / / / *zań-lon chen-po-dañ / khoñ-taḥ myes-po-dañ pha-dañ ḥdi rnams / nañ gcig-gis / gcig ri-dags-la / maḥs drñul-bas phog-pa-dañ (r3) źañ-lon ḥdi rnams-laḥ / źañ-lon g.yuḥi yĩ-ge-pa man-cad / dmañs mthaḥ-ma yan-cad /-kyis rĩ-dags-la mdaḥs drñul-baḥi khrim / (r4) -la* (PT 1071)

The law [covering cases when] while hunting someone from among the great ministers, **their** grandfathers, or fathers hits one of their own with an arrow, or if such ministers are hit by an arrow shot by a minister of turquoise down to the lowest commoner.

(r4) / : / / *blon chen-po-dañ / nañ blon chen-po-dañ / btsan-poḥi źañ druñ chab-srid-la dbañ-ba gcĩg-dañ / blon chen-poḥi ḥog-pon / (r5)-dañ źañ blon chen-po ḥdi bźi / khoñ-ta ño-bo-dañ / khoñ-taḥ myes-po-dañ pha-dañ ḥdi rnams / mdaḥ drñul-pa-laḥ / stoñ mñamo / /* (PT 1071)

The prime minister, the great minister of the interior, the emperor's maternal uncle in charge of political affairs, and the deputy prime minister, these four great ministers **themselves**, **their** grandfathers and fathers are all of equal status regarding compensation for being shot by an arrow.

zań-lon g.yuḥi yĩ-ge khoñ-ta ño-bo-dañ / g.yuḥi yĩ-ge-paḥi myes-pho-dañ phaḥ /-dañ źañ-lon chen-po / (r39) bźiḥi phu-bo spad phan-cad / pha spun

¹⁵ Two further examples occur nearly verbatim (r210 and r243)

spad tshun-cad / yī-ge ma mchis-paḥī rñams /-dañ ma-yar-mo-dañ / bnaḥ-ma / (r40)-dañ / khyo-mo-dañ / bu-sriñ khyo ma mchis-pa-dañ / ḥdi rñams / (PT 1071)

The ministers with a turquoise insignia **themselves**, grandfathers and fathers of those with a turquoise insignia, from the *phu-bo-spad* of the four great ministers to their *pha-spun spad* without insignia, their step-mothers, daughters-in-law, wives, and unmarried sisters.

*blon che-la / (r331) stsogste / žañ-lon bži man-cad / phra-men-kyī yī-ge-pa yan-cad / žañ-lon **khoñ-ta** ño-bo-dañ / (r332) žañ-lon ḥdi rñams-kyī myes-pho-dañ / pha-dañ phyi mo-dañ maḥ-dañ / bu-po spad phan-cad / (r333) pha-spun-spad tshun-cad / yī-ge ma mchis-paḥī rñams-dañ / ma-yar-mo-dañ bnaḥ-ma-dañ khyo-mo / (r334)-dañ bu-sriñ khyo ma mchis-pa ḥdi rñams / (PT 1071)¹⁶*

The prime minister etc., from the four great ministers to those with a silver gilt insignia, the ministers **themselves** and the grandfathers and fathers of these ministers, their grandmothers and mothers, from their *bu-po-spad* to their *pha-spun-spad*, who do not hold insignia, their step-mothers, daughters-in-law, wives, and unmarried sisters.

This preliminary investigation of the use of *kho-na* and *khoñ-ta* in PT 1071 indicates that the primary grammatical difference between them is that *kho-na* is singular whereas *khoñ-ta* is plural. It remains for future research to demonstrate whether this distinction holds true for other texts and how the meanings of these two pronouns interact with those of the other third person pronouns *kho-ta*, *khoñ-ta*, and *khoñ-na* which occur in legal texts.

The reflexive pronoun *rañ*

Both objects and persons can be the referent of the reflexive pronoun *rañ*, as the following three examples from the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (ll. 10-12, 93-96, 322-323) indicate.

*(10) ḥuñ-nas Lo-ñam-gyīs gsol-pa / «de ltar myī gñañ-na / lha-ḥi dkor (11) mduñ **rañ** ḥdebs-dañ / ral-gyī **rañ** gcod-dañ / khrab **rañ** gyon-dañ / phub **rañ** bzur-la stsogs-pa / ḥphrul-gyi dkor (12) ched-po mñañ-ba-ḥī rñams bdag-la stsal-na phod» ces gsol-to / (OTC)*

¹⁶ For similar contexts compare r351, r353, r354, r362, r364, and r376.

Then Lo-ñam said, «If you will not allow [our refusal] in that way, then I will agree, if you grant me your divine inheritance, the great magical treasures you possess: the spear that throws **itself**, the sword that cuts by **itself**, the armor that dresses one by **itself**, the shield that deflects by **itself**, and so forth. »

*de-ñi ñog-du Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-tses / (94) byas-pa-las / / Ho-ma-lde Lod-btsan-dañ regs ma mjal-nas / / mkhar Khri-boms-su mchis-te / / Khri-boms (95) dkuñ gañ pub-nas / btsan-po Sroñ-brtsan ston-mo gsol-bar byas-te / / glo-ba riñs-pa / Mgar Yul-zuñ (96) gñs tshor-nas / **rañ-gñ** mgo bchad-de gum-mo / / (OTC)*

After him, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-tse served, but disagreeing (*regs ma mjal*) with Ho-ma-lde Lod-btsan, he went to Khri-boms stronghold. He filled Khri-boms to the roof with plots, and offered a banquet for the emperor, [Khri] Sroñ-brtsan. Mgar Yul-zuñ sensed the disloyalty, and [Zu-tse] cut off **his own** head and died.

*Yul-zuñ Khri-boms-su mchis-te / brtags-na / / dku gañ pub-par Yul-zuñ-gñs tshor-nas / / Yul-zuñ slar broste (323) btsan-po-ñi sñan-du gsol-to / / Yul-zuñ slar bro-pa-ñi rjes-la / / Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad **rañ** lcebeste gum-nas / mgo bchad-de / / (OTC)*

Yul-zuñ went to Khri-boms and examined it, and Yul-zuñ perceiving that it was filled up with plots, Yul-zuñ fled back and offered [this information] to the ears of the emperor. After Yul-zuñ had fled back, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad killed **himself** and died, cutting off his head.

Conclusion

Old Tibetan has three pronouns for the first person singular: *ña*, *bdag*, and *kho-bo*. The pronoun *ña* is the neutral default pronoun of the first person singular. The pronoun *bdag* shows humility or deference to a higher status addressee. The examples occurring in the corpus of texts studied here does not permit a clear description of the meaning of *kho-bo*, but it may express haughtiness or indignation. The plural pronouns corresponding to *ña* and *bdag* are *ñed* and *bdag-cag*, which are both exclusive first person plural pronouns. There is also an inclusive first plural pronoun, *ño-skol*. The second person pronouns include two singulars, *khyod* and *khyo(n)-ñdañ*, as well as a plural, *khyed*. Unlike classical and modern Tibetan *khyed* appears not to be used as an honorific

singular in Old Tibetan. Third person pronouns do not occur frequently in narrative texts, but rather are more typical of legal literature. This study has uncovered three third person pronouns: *kho-na*, *mo-na* and *khoñ-ta*. The first two, *kho-na* and *mo-na*, are third person singular pronouns, and *mo-na* is specifically feminine. The remaining pronoun, *khoñ-ta*, appears to be a plural third person pronoun. These findings are preliminary and must be confirmed by attestations in other Old Tibetan texts. Old Tibetan has a reflexive pronoun, *rañ*, which can be used of both people and things. The available examples are all third person, but this does not indicate that it cannot be used with a first or second person reference.

If we compare the system of personal pronouns in Old Tibetan with that of the *Mi la ras pa rnam thar*, the system of first person pronouns is seen to be very similar. The first person singular pronoun *kho-bo* drops out of use in *Mi la*, and the inclusive first plural is *rañ-re* rather than the *ho-skol* of Old Tibetan. The system of second person pronouns has undergone more change, with the disappearance of *khon-ḥdaḥ* and the extension of a honorific singular to the plural meaning of *khyed*. Third person pronouns were not included in my earlier study of the *Mi la ras pa rnam thar*, so I cannot offer any comparison on that point.

Much work remains to be done on both the synchronic use of personal pronouns in various periods of Tibetan literature and the diachronic relationship among these systems. The few facts established here can, however, perhaps aid in the philological treatment of Old Tibetan texts, and serve as a point of departure for further studies on Tibetan pronominal systems.

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ABSTRACT

The pronominal systems of early forms of Tibetan remain virtually unexplored. Old Tibetan has three first person singular pronouns *na*, *bdag*, and *kho-bo*, as well as three first person plural pronouns *ned*, *bdag-cag*, and *ho-skol*. The second person pronouns include two singulars *khyod* and *khyo(n)-hdaḥ* and a plural *khyed*. The current study uncovers three third person pronouns *kho-na*, *mo-na*,

and *khoñ-ta*. Old Tibetan also has a reflexive pronoun *rañ*. Through the examination of attested examples of each of these pronouns in Old Tibetan literature, this article attempts to distinguish the meanings among these diverse forms.

Keywords : Old Tibetan, personal pronouns

RÉSUMÉ

Les systèmes pronominaux du tibétain ancien restent pratiquement inexplorés. La langue tibétaine ancienne a trois pronoms pour la première personne du singulier *ña*, *bdag* et *kho-bo*, et trois pronoms pour la première personne du pluriel *ñed*, *bdag-cag* et *ho-skol*. Les pronoms de la deuxième personne comprennent deux pronoms singuliers *khyod* et *khyo(n)-hdaḥ* et le pluriel *khyed*. L'étude actuelle révèle trois pronoms de la troisième personne *kho-na*, *mo-na*, et *khoñ-ta*. Le tibétain ancien a également un pronom réfléchi *rañ*. Grâce à l'examen des exemples attestés de chacun de ces pronoms dans la littérature du tibétain ancien, cet article tente de faire la distinction entre la signification de ces diverses formes.

Mots-clés : tibétain ancien, pronoms personnels