Introduction to Sino-Tibetan Linguistics

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Outline of the lectures

Sino-Tibetan (Trans-Himalayan)

West Himalayish
Bodish
Qiangic
Raji-Raute
Puroik
Mishmi
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
Nepal
Magaric
Chepangic
Tani
Newar
Tamangic
Lepcha
Ole
Kamengic
Miji
Aka
Hruso
Nungish
Naic
Kiranti
Lhokpu
Bhutan
East Bodish
Gongduk
Konyak
Jingpho
Bai
Bodo
Karbi
Ao
NAGALAND
Garo
MEGHALAYA
Angami
Lolo-Burmese
Tangkhul
Zeme
MANIPUR
Meithei
YUNNAN
Bangladesh
JHARKHAND
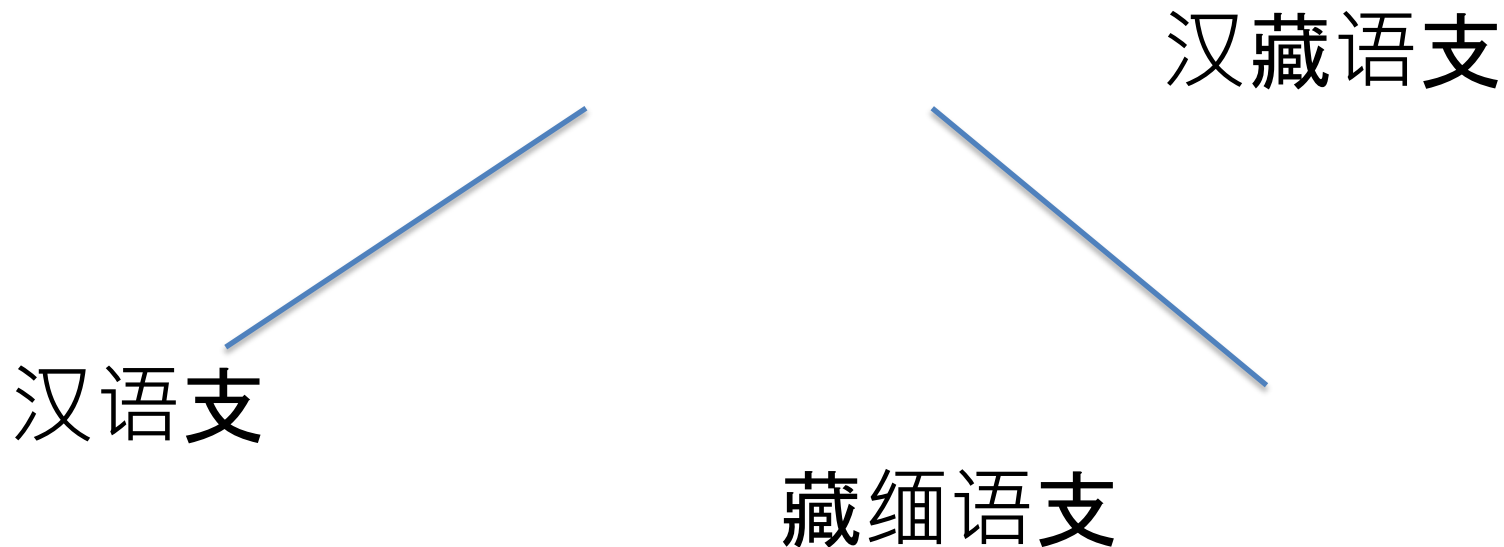WEST BENGAL
TRIPURA
Kukish
Pyu
Karenic
Mru

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

汉藏语支

藏缅语支

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

We used to think that Sino-Tibetan divides into two main branches, Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman:

汉藏语支

汉语支

藏缅语支

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

This is probably wrong.

A branch of a family must be a genetic unit: it must include all and only the languages which descend from a common ancestor.

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

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Sinitic is a genetic unit: All Chinese languages descend from a common ancestor, Old Chinese.

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

A branch of a family must be a genetic unit: it must include all and only the languages which descend from a common ancestor.

Sinitic is a genetic unit: All Chinese languages descend from a common ancestor, Old Chinese.

And no Tibeto-Burman language is descended from Old Chinese.

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

A branch of a family must be a genetic unit: it must include all and only the languages which descend from a common ancestor.

"Tibeto-Burman" is not a genetic unit. The common ancestor of all Tibeto-Burman languages is also the ancestor of Old Chinese.

Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Trans-Himalayan

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For this reason Professor van Driem has suggested replacing the term "Sino-Tibetan" with a new name: **Trans-Himalayan**
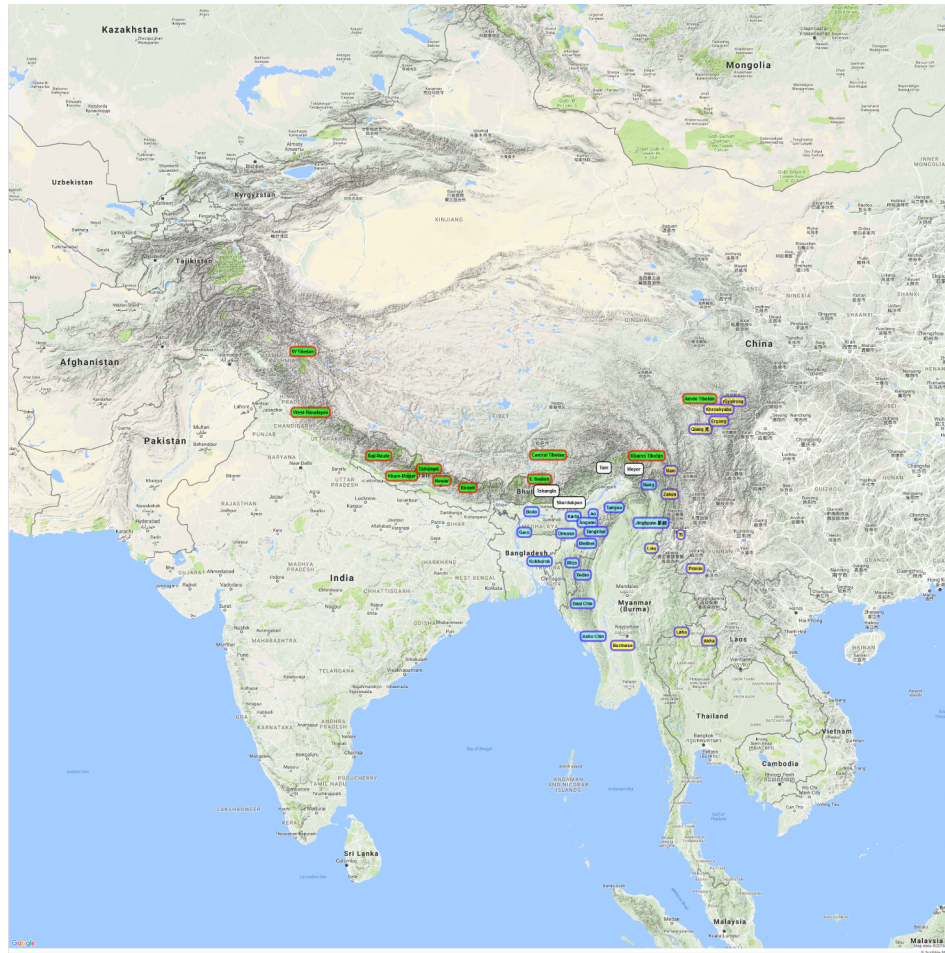
Classifying Trans-Himalayan

- We do not yet understand how all the languages of the family are related to each other

- Current classifications by Matisoff, 孙宏开, Bradley, Thurgood, and others do not agree

Classifying Trans-Himalayan

- I suggest 3 major branches: Eastern, Central, Western
- Some languages of the China-India border region are still unclassified
- Chinese may belong to the Eastern branch, but some scholars (for example van Driem) think it is closer to Tibetan, in the Western branch

Classifying Trans-Himalayan

Classifying Trans-Himalayan

Eastern Branch

Qiang-rGyalrong

rGyalrongic: rGyalrong, Horpa, Lavrung, etc.

Qiang

Na: Naxi, Mosuo

Lolo-Burmese

Languages of Sichuan & Yunnan

Western branch

Tibeto-Kinnauri
    Bodish: Tibetan, Tamangic, East Bodish
    Western Himalayan: Kinnauri, Darma, Bunan
Central Himalayan
    Magaric: Kham, Magari
    Chepang
Eastern Himalayan
    Kiranti: Limbu, Bantawa, Thulung, Khaling, etc.
    Newaric: Newar, Thangmi

Central Branch

Sal or Bodo-Konyak-Jinghpaw
    Kachinic: Jinghpaw, Andro, Luish, etc.
    Northern Naga: Tangsa, Nocte, Wancho, Phom
    Bodo-Garo: Bodo, Garo, Dimasa, Deuri
Kuki-Naga
    Kuki-Chin: Mizo, Mara, Tedim, etc.
    Tangkhul
    Ao
    Angami
Others? (Tani, Nung, Meyor)

Nomadic Rautes in Nepal

Achham
Kalikot
Dailekh
Jajarkot
Surkhet
Salyan
Dang
Nepal
Kathmandu

Khamci

NE India

Google Maps, 2014
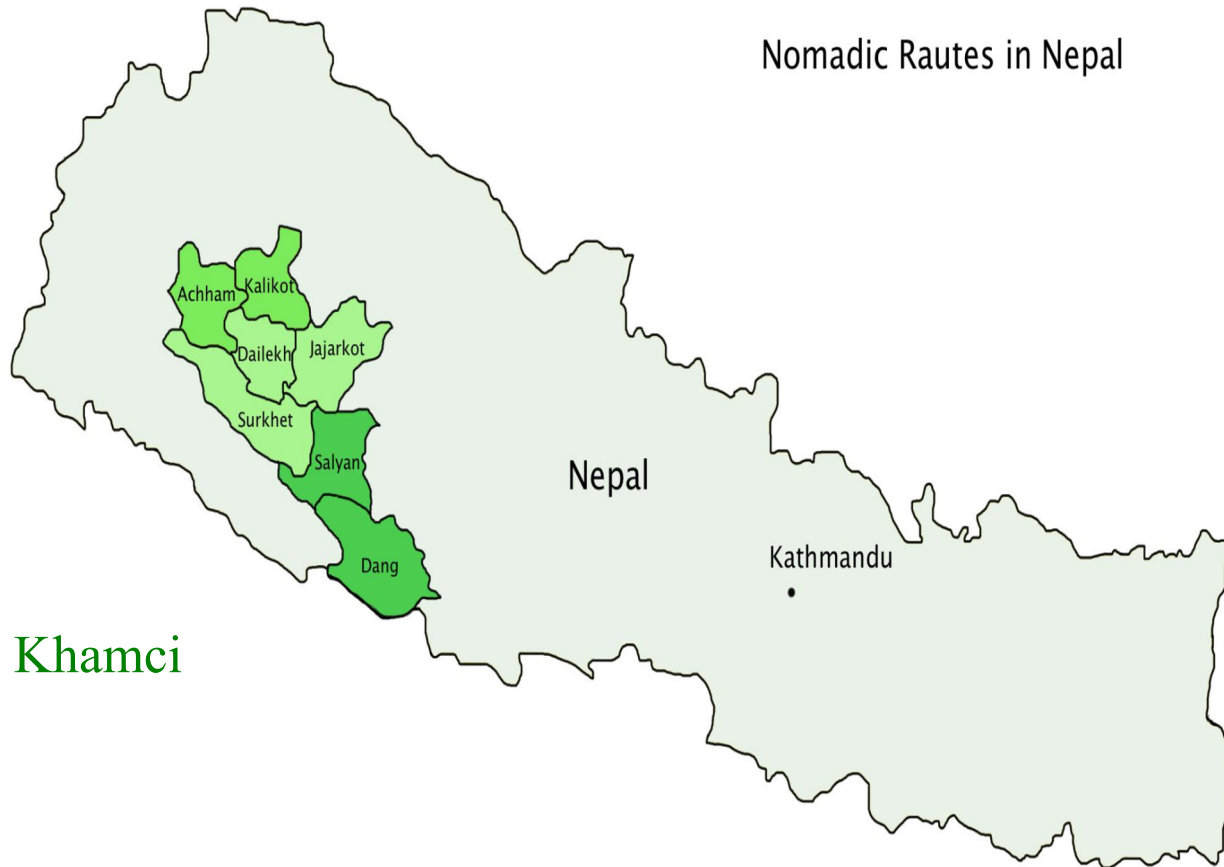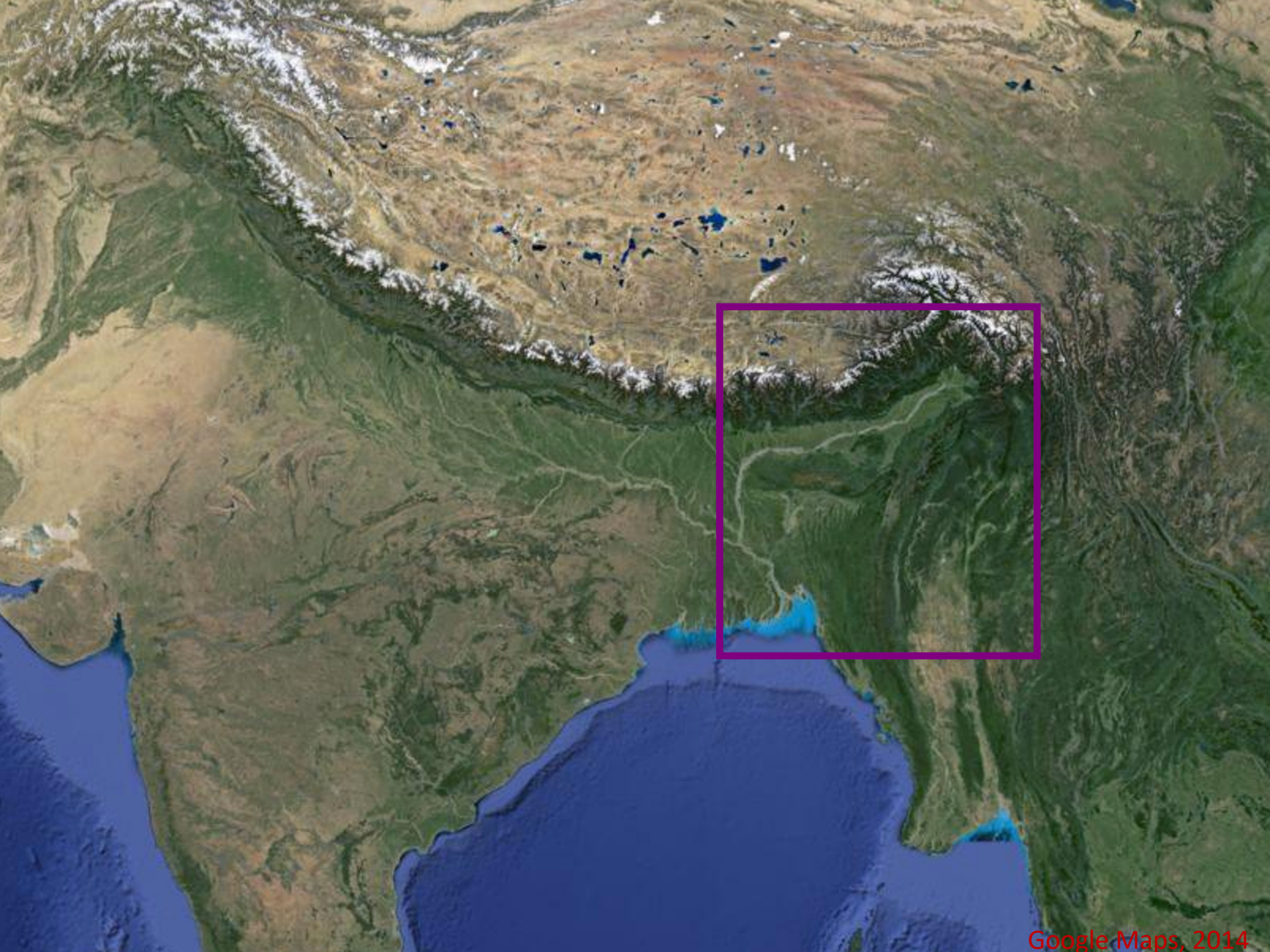
NE India

- Assam
- Meghalaya
- Tripura
- Mizoram
- Manipur
- Nagaland
- Arunachal Pradesh

Chandel District, Manipur, India

Anal Khullen Vuncho Alum 2016

Monsang with Egbert Khartu

Typology

Typology of Trans-Himalayan Languages

- Archaic paradigmatic complexity

- Transparent agglutinative synthesis

- Radical analyticity in Sinitic

Paradigmatic and syntagmatic

Syntagmatic: shuo +   qi + lai + le

Paradigmatic and syntagmatic

Syntagmatic: shuo **+**   qi **+** lai **+** le

Paradigmatic and syntagmatic

Syntagmatic: shuo +   qi +   lai +
    le

        chu   qu
Paradigmatic: shang

        xia

Paradigmatic complexity in Japhug

aʑɯɣ   *a-ɣɯ-thɯ-tɯ-khɤm*

                 ra

l.GEN   CISL-JUSS-DOWNSTREAM-2-give must

'You must give it to me.' (Jacques 2004: 502)

Paradigmatic complexity in Japhug

a-ɣɯ-thɯ-tɯ-khɤm

CISL-JUSS-DOWNSTREAM-2-give

'you give it to me'

a-	JUSSIVE	1 of 3 P1
modal prefixes		
ɣɯ-	CISLOCATIVE	1 of 2 P2 deictic
prefixes		
thɯ-	DOWNSTREAM	1 of 6 P3 direction
prefixes		
tɯ-	2nd PERSON	P4 in irregular person
paradigm, all other indexes		

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paradigm, all other indexes

Syntagmatic complexity in Bodo

assa khokhi aŋ   uwa-khw   dán-si-gwn-mwn

OK   friend   I   bamboo-OBJ   cut-IMM-FUT-PAST

'OK, friend, I was just going to cut the bamboo.' (*Treasure*)

Syntagmatic complexity in Bodo

dán-si-gwn-mwn

cut-IMM-FUT-PAST

was just going to cut

Syntagmatic complexity in Bodo

tháŋ-a	'didn't go'
tháŋ-a-khwi	'hasn't gone'
tháŋ-a-khwi-gwn	'maybe hasn't gone'
tháŋ-a-khwi-si-gwn	'unexpectedly maybe hasn't gone'
tháŋ-a-khwi-mwn	'hadn't gone'
tháŋ-gwn-mwn	'would have gone'

Syntagmatic complexity in Bodo

mwider-a   *bi-swr-khou* *sigi-nanwi*   *hor-ou*
elephant-SU 3-PL-ACC   frighten-NF   night-LOC

hẃ-khár-hór-phin-gar-dwng

drive-MOT-DIST-REPT-REGRET-RLS

'The elephant frightened them in the night and drove them away again unfortunately.' (Boro and Basumatary 2015)

Syntagmatic complexity in Bodo

hẃ-khár-hór-phin-gar-dwng
drive-MOT-DIST-REPT-REGRET-RLS

'drove them away again unfortunately'

	as lexical verb		as adverbial suffix
khár	'run'		MOTION
hór	'send to somebody'	DISTAL	
phin	'reply'		AGAIN
gar	'discard'		REGRETTABLY
dwng	'exist, reside'		REALIZED

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Radical analyticity in Sinitic

Mandarin

Aspect suffixes:

-le	change of state	< 'finish'
-zhe	persistent activity	
-guo	experiential	< 'cross'

Radical analyticity in Sinitic

Mandarin

Deictics:

-qu   'go'

-lai   'come'

Radical analyticity in Sinitic

Mandarin

Directionals:

-shang	'ascend'
-xia	'descend'
-jin	'enter'
-chu	'exit'

Radical analyticity in Sinitic

Mandarin

And that's it

Archaic and Creoloid

- Archaic type:
  - Robust paradigmatic verb morphology, including hierarchial argument indexation paradigms based on inherited PTH material
  - Complex morphophonology, rampant irregularity
- Creoloid
  - Some syntagmatic complexity -- unstructured sequences of transparent verbal operators, grammatical forms cognate only at very shallow levels
  - Little morphophonology, all simple and transparent; no irregularity

History of the typological patterns

- Japhug shows the original PTH typology, and retains most of the original morphology

- The creoloid typology seen in Boro originates in intense contact

- The Sinitic typology is shared with Mainland Southeast Asian languages through intense contact

Time Depths

- Sinitic   3,000+
- Lolo-Burmese 2,000+
  - Han Dynasty *Pailang Songs*
- Bodo-Garo   2,000+
  - Probable reference in *Mahabharata*

Time Depths

The radically analytic structure of Sinitic and the transparent agglutinative structure of Lolo-Burmese and Bodo-Garo have been stable over at least two thousand years.

Time Depths

The radically analytic structure of Sinitic and the transparent agglutinative structure of Lolo-Burmese and Bodo-Garo have been stable over at least 2 thousand years.

The archaic morphologically complex structure of rGyalrong and Kiranti has been stable since the beginning of the family, at least 4 or 5 thousand years.

Typology

- Archaic complex structure is preserved in the mountains, in languages which are not learned by other groups

- Simpler structure develops when one group of people conquer neighboring groups, and those groups learn the language imperfectly

Outline of the lectures

1   The Sino-Tibetan languages: Typology, subgrouping; Outline of the lectures

2   Sino-Tibetan noun phrases and nominalization

3   Syntactic features of Bodo: Verb serialization, Information management

4   Historical development of Tibetan: The Classical and Modern Tibetan verb

5   Verbal categories in Tibetan: Tense/Aspect/Modality/Evidentiality

6   Verb agreement in Tibeto-Burman languages

7   Comparative morphology and Sino-Tibetan

7   Wrap up