HIMALAYA, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies

Volume 11
Number 1 *Himalayan Research Bulletin no. 1-3*

Article 11

1991

Reviews and Rejoinders

REVIEWS AND REJOINDERS

Bista, Dor Bahadur
Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization. Calcutta: Orient Longman Limited, 1991. 187 pages. Price: IC Rs. 150.

Why Nepal remains underdeveloped in spite of over four decades of attempts at development and in spite of the massive infusion of foreign aid into the country is an issue that has yet to be satisfactorily answered. Writers who have in the past tried to provide an explanation for this situation have done so by looking at the economic structure in which Nepal is embedded. Authors like Chaitanya Mishra in *Development and Underdevelopment: A Preliminary Sociological Perspective* (1984), David Seddon in *Nepal: A State of Poverty* (1987) and Piers Blakie and David Seddon in *Nepal in Crisis* (1980) have attempted to explain the underdevelopment of Nepal by looking at the regional and world capitalist conditions and how the Nepalese state through history has been modified by these processes. A recent book by Dor Bahadur Bista entitled *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization*, however, marks a radical departure from these earlier attempts by identifying Nepal's lack of development not in economic structure but in the dominant cultural values that are embedded in Nepalese society. Bista argues in this book that it is the "culture of fatalism" (p.2) manifested as Bahunism which is the main impediment to development in Nepal.

An ethnographer by training, Bista is no stranger to problems vexing contemporary Nepalese society. As one of the founders of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Tribhuvan University and as the first Professor of Anthropology in Nepal, Bista has been rightly acknowledged as the "father of anthropology" in this country. The first book by Prof. Bista, *People of Nepal*, has been one of the most widely read books in this country. If this book had been primarily an ethnographic account of different ethnic communities inhabiting Nepal, *Fatalism and Development* advances into anthropology proper by discussing critically the evolution of Nepalese society and the different cultural values that have molded it.

Fatalism and Development is divided into eight chapters including the conclusion. The section before the first chapter, entitled simply Introduction, is probably the most important part of the book, although the author does not present it as a separate chapter. The major thesis of the book, i.e., the culture of fatalism, is introduced here. This section also contains the major arguments of the author, which are outlined in broad terms. In fact, the rest of the book could be regarded as an elaboration and a justification of the statement forwarded in this section. By identifying and then juxtaposing what he calls "alien caste culture" (read Bahunism) with the "indigenous egalitarian culture," this section often reads like a manifesto against Bahunism.

The first chapter of Fatalism and Development provides general information on Nepal, including a brief regional description of the ethnic heritage and an overview on Nepalese history. The second chapter focuses on Nepal's social organization. It looks at the role of caste and religion in greater depth, and also discusses the relationship between caste and class, ethnic groupings, kinship structure and gender relations in Nepalese society. The diagrams (p. 43) which show representations of different views of caste in Nepal are especially interesting, and could provide insights into the structure of Nepalese society. The third chapter looks at family and socialization practices. The fourth chapter discusses values and personality factors. In particular, it concentrates on psycho-social factors, fatalism, temporal orientation, dependency, collectivism and achievement motivation. This chapter also elaborates on the concepts of *afno manche* and *chakari*. The fifth chapter on politics and government reviews this topic in light of cultural peculiarities elucidated in the previous two chapters. The sixth chapter does the same with reference to education. The seventh chapter on foreign aid and development describes practices in the formulation and distribution of foreign aid in Nepal. The final

chapter discusses how various ethnic groups which are now underrepresented in the government could make potential contributions to Nepal's development, and in the process also ensure a viable national identity. This is the logical conclusion that follows from the premises laid down in the first part of the book.

The central thesis of this book, that it is a certain set of values (labeled here as the "culture of fatalism") that acts as the main obstacle to Nepal's development — and the arguments provided to substantiate this statement — are evaluated in terms of its empirical validity, theoretical adequacy and policy-wise effectiveness.

How valid empirically is the statement that Nepal remains underdeveloped due to the culture of fatalism? Before being able to evaluate this term empirically, it is necessary to have a definition of the term "culture of fatalism." However, this most important term which is a key to understanding his whole argument is nowhere defined in exact terms. The author does provide a definition of the single term, fatalism though. It is defined as a belief that one has no personal control over one's life circumstances, which are determined through a divine or powerful external agency (p.4). From his usage of the term culture of fatalism in frequent conjunction with karma, caste system, Bahunism, etc., we can only infer that this culture he is referring to, is something that is peculiar to Hindu societies. However, the belief that one has no personal control over life's circumstances need not be specific to Hindu religious thought. It could be as true in the case of a Muslim in Iran, a Buddhist in Thailand, a Christian in the Philippines as to a Hindu in Nepal. Moreover this orientation is not limited to Asian societies alone. As any acquaintance with Max Weber's works will make clear, Calvinists, the precursors of modern capitalists, strongly believed in the idea of predestination. What does the belief that one is predestined to everlasting heaven or the everlasting hell and that charitable works are inconsequential to this end, mean other than fatalism?

To prove his point the author also contrasts the domination of fatalism in Nepal to the dominance of cooperative values in Japan and Newly Industrialized Countries (NIC's), and attributes the success of these countries and the failure of Nepal to cultural values specific to those societies. It is ironical that these countries, which were once regarded as incapable of the development due to their dominance by Confucian values, have now been noted for their superb economic performance, which has been attributed to Confucian ethics, which emphasizes obedience to authority and the importance of the group over the individual (Alvin So, 1990). So is Confucian ethics ultimately favorable or unfavorable with respect to development? It is well to keep in mind that an argument such as "a society remains backward because of the dominance of certain cultural values" is an ex post facto argument. Unfortunately, it can cut both ways.

Are the arguments provided by the author theoretically adequate? It is implicit in his arguments that it is cultural values instead of economic structure that are of primary importance in accelerating or retarding development. Although the author does not explicitly link the ideas he propounds here to specific theories of development, it is evident from his focus on cultural values that it operates within the modernization paradigm, a school which was prominent during the fifties and early sixties. The ideas propounded by Bista here have strengths and weaknesses in common with the modernization school. If its major strength consists in visualizing social change as arising out of a change in cultural values, its major weakness is that it overlooks regional and global economic processes that have been altering the structure of Nepalese society over time. This is illustrated in his arguments about the Hindu caste system. Since the caste system and the specific world view associated with it have been a product of local self-sufficiency and the hereditary division of labor in the context of the Indian sub-continent and the enforcement of a particular civil code by an authoritarian state structure in the Nepalese context, the processes that reduce local self-sufficiency, hereditary division of labor and the relative autonomy of the state, consequently reduce the role of the caste system as well. To argue that Bahun values have become more entrenched in society in spite of regional and global economic processes that reduce state autonomy and in spite of the weakening of an authoritarian - patrimonial state is to miss the relationship between structures and values altogether.

Another theoretical weakness inherent in the culture of fatalism thesis is that the linkage between the major variable and its indicators, or in other words the relationship between Bahunism and Bahuns, appears to be weak and tenuous. Who is guilty of Bahunism? How is it that certain Bahuns are guilty of Bahunism while others are not? Are certain ethnic groups, castes or classes appropriate indicators of Bahunism? The main problem with this type of approach which defines a certain set of values as its major variable, is that such variables do not have appropriate indicators, while the indicators in turn, cannot be specifically measured.

What policy implications can be drawn from the author's argument and would these be effective? The policy implication that can probably be drawn is to reduce the current dominant values and to strengthen indigenous ones that are now suppressed. How is one to go about changing the values of a particular society? Where does one start from? The author unfortunately does not discuss the mechanisms through which this could be undertaken. Whether or not such policies would be effective is a different question altogether, and can be gauged only after certain policies are recommended by the author himself.

One indirect implication of the author's argument is that the foreign aid community in Nepal is absolved of the mistakes they may have committed. Since it is the cultural values of the Nepalese themselves which is the root problem, the blame for not doing sufficient to end the underdevelopment of Nepal rests squarely on the shoulders of Nepalese. No doubt this would make expatriate consultants, development experts and advisors feel comfortable in their respective roles and have their morale boosted in spite of their lackluster performance.

It is clear from the above discussion that this attempt by Dor Bahadur Bista at diagnosing Nepal's ills has, nevertheless, certain limitations on the empirical, theoretical and policy fronts. This is not to say that it is without its own strengths. Its major strength is that it presents a new perspective of looking at the process of development in Nepal. It shows how dominant cultural values influence social and economic structure and could subvert sincere efforts at development. However, its major strength also works to become its major weakness. In his excessive concern for cultural values, Bista overlooks how regional and world economic processes affect the prospect of Nepal's development, not to mention the role of class alliances to control the state apparatus and thus determine state policies. To my mind, the process of development in Nepal can be satisfactorily explained only by taking into account four factors: i) The role of cultural values on the political economy as a whole (as Bista does here), ii) regional and world capitalist conditions (or center periphery analysis as done by Mishra, Blakie, Seddon, etc., iii) internal class structure, conflict and alliances (as done by Mishra, Seddon, Blakie, etc., and iv) the role of the state as a relatively autonomous actor. To my mind, such a comprehensive theory to explain the dynamics of Nepalese society does not exist at present.

In spite of these limitations, this book, which represents one of the most comprehensive analyses of Nepalese society, is quite valuable for students, academicians and development practitioners alike. Let us hope that the ideas put forth in this book by Bista will initiate a long due debate on the implications of certain cultural values for development. If the argument provided by Bista will lead thinking Nepalese to critically appraise their own culture, the book will have provided an invaluable service.

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Sun, Jackson T.-S., Aspects of the phonology of Amdo Tibetan: Ndzorge śæme xʁra dialect. [Monumenta Serindica #16] Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo Gaikokugo Daigaku, 1986. viii + 267 pp.

Jäschke was the first to publish extensive information on Tibetan dialects, and he was followed by Francke, Sandberg and others. All these early descriptions dealt with either the Lhasa koine or with dialects to the south or west of Central Tibet. Following the mass-exodus of 1959, a large number of Tibetans from the eastern and north-eastern parts of Tibet, including many eminent religious teachers, first came in direct contact with the outside world. Thorough studies of their dialects have been few and far between: in 1958 Roerich published his large monograph on the Reb-kong Amdo dialect. Since the pronunciation of Amdo dialects is one of their most difficult aspects, it is regrettable that Roerich's account is rather sketchy and lacking in systemization, e.g. his vowel *ĭ*, a reflex of short *i* and *u* in Written Tibetan, is described as being different than and yet perhaps the same as his vowel *ŏ*. In 1980 there appeared Monumenta Serindica #7, a list of 1000 words in the "Amdo Sherpa Dialect" (also from the Ndzorge area) collected by Y. Nagano. Although a useful study, particularly for its comparisons with other Amdo dialects, it has an even shorter treatment of the phonology. For these reasons the appearance of Mr. Sun's study, extensive in scale and solely devoted to discussing the phonology of one dialect of Amdo Tibetan, is of special value.

Sun's sources were limited to a single émigré who had been living for 20 years in Taiwan when this material was gathered, but the informant was nonetheless using this dialect all along with a monolingual member of his household, so I feel some confidence in the material's authenticity and yet on some doubtful points I find it regrettable that comparisons could not be made with other speakers of the same dialect. This awaits future studies.

It is rare to see an actual attempt at a family-tree of the Tibetan dialects; unfortunately the "tentative" classification, adapted from Nishida 1970, which Sun presents in his introduction, is quite controversial: it suggests that the Western Tibetan dialects (Balti, Ladaki) are a branch of "Old Amdo Tibetan", with present-day Amdo dialects (Arig, Labrang, Golog, Ngaba, Amchog, Ndzorge) being another branch of the same "Old Amdo Tibetan". Of course the Amdo dialects and dialects such as Balti, Purik and Ladaki can all be grouped together in the sense that they are all phonetically more conservative than the innovating dialects of Dbus (Central Tibet): the dialects on Tibet's periphery lack tones and share a tendency to conserve some sort of phonetic evidence for the frequent "pre-radical" prefixes and post-vocalic consonants seen in Written Tibetan, but the details of phonological evolution have been quite different. The characteristic historical changes which Amdo dialects have undergone, and which are discussed in some detail in chapter four of the study under review, are not shared by Western Tibetan. To some degree the phonologies of Dbus and Amdo Tibetan seem to share common features which would set them apart, as a "genetic" group, from the conservative western dialects:

	Classical Tibetan	Balti(*Ladaki)	Dbus	Amdo
'cotton'	*ras*	*ras*	*rɑ̈ʔ*	*rɪ̄*
'bird'	*bja*	*bja*	*ǰa*	*šæ*
'wool'	*bal*	*bal*	*bɑ̈ː*	*wɑ̄*
'livestock'	*p'jugs*	*p'juk*	*čʻuʔ*	*šʻɤɣ*
'person'	*mi*	*mī / mjū* [1]	*mi*	*(m-)ñɤ*
'spring'	*dpjid·k'a*	*spit(·k'a)**	*čʻiːgə*	*šɤt·kʻæ*
'hawk'	*kʻra*	*kʻra*	*ʈʻa*	*čʻæ*
'silver'	*dŋul*	*xmul*	*ŋɵ̈ː*	*ɣŋū*

Although concerns with this broader issue raised at the book's beginning were the first thing which struck this reviewer, it is the detailed and wide-ranging phonological analysis found in the remainder of the book which is worthy of the most attention.

After his introduction, Sun gives us a synchronic phonological analysis, starting with the possible patterns of syllabic structure [(C)V(C)], and then a list and description of the onsets (initials), nuclei (vowels), and codae (finals), as well as the phonological constraints on segment structure and sequence. There is even a detailed analysis of intonation patterns. It may appear odd to a Tibetanist, especially for this sort of dialect, that Sun does not allow for the concept of prefixes; instead he describes a whole set of "pre-aspirated" initials, e.g. /ʰt/ as in /ʰtag/[2] 'mark', /ʰń/ as in /ʰńʁg/ 'eye', /ʰl/ as in /ʰlʁ/ 'song', /ʰj/ as in /ʰjʁ/ 'lynx', /ʰw/ as in /ʰwa/ 'goiter'. It is notable that this preaspiration does not occur before spirants[3] or voiced stops; also one finds /ʰl/ but no /ʰr/.[4]

There is another series of initials which Sun also chooses to view as unit phonemes, namely "pre-nasalised" stops. Compared to his preaspirated initials, this series is typologically more justified, especially in Sino-Tibetan languages; whether in a historical context the nasals in this series should be considered as separate segments or as part of the stop initial is another matter, too complex to discuss here. Most notable are the forms in this dialect that contain a nasal where it is lacking both in Lhasa and in Written Tibetan, e.g. /ᵐkhaŋwæ/ 'house', /ᵐtśhæm·bæ/ 'cold (a disease)'.

A number of the remaining initials deserve special comment:

This dialect has many spirant initials: /f; s, sh, z, ś, śh, ź, ʂ; x, ɣ, X, Xʷ, ʁ, h/[5], whereas Lhasa dialect only has *s, ś, ʂ, h*. NdzT /f/ (a bilabial spirant) has developed from earlier *sp*, e.g. /fuśi/ 'amber' (*spos·še/*) and would appear functionally equivalent to */ʰp/ which is otherwise missing from the pattern. The situation with the next group (apical sibilants) is exemplified by the NdzT names for the letters ཤ ཟ ཧ ཨ which Sun provides in one of his several useful appendices: */shæ, sæ, śhæ, śæ/* (i.e. *s'æ, sæ, š'æ, šæ* - I modify the transcription here and below to avoid Sun's easily misinterpreted combination /sh/). In these letter-names the initials have no prefix; with prefixes the pronunciation is modified:

s' → *s* : *gsum* 'three' = *sʁm* (← *so* 'tooth' = *s'o*)

s → *z* : *gzig* 'leopard' = *zʁɣ* (← *zam* 'bridge' = *sæm*)

š' → *ś* : *gšag* 'cleave ' = *šaɣ* (← *šig* 'louse' = *š'ʁɣ*)

š → *ź* : *gžu* 'bow' = *žʁ* (← *žo* 'yogart' = *šo*)

(The form before the gloss is Written Tibetan.)

/x/ as in /xo/ 'dice' (*šo*) appears to be a colloquial development in some words starting with *š-* in Written Tibetan. It is aspirated. /X/, on the other hand, is not aspirated, and is pronounced much further back in the throat, with a rasping sound. Sun lists only a few examples of words containing /X/, so it is hard to say where this sound has come from. /Xamæ/ 'tea-dreg', /Xɔlaŋ/ 'get angry', /Xa/ 'fibrous tissue in bones', and /Xijor/(but /Xojor/ in the appendix) 'oar' are some of the few words I found; /Xɔlaŋ/ makes me think of *k'ro laŋs-*, but in general I cannot relate this /X/ to Written Tibetan, and I see no explanation from Sun either. The initial /Xʷ/ is similar, but has rounding. It is clearly related to Wr.Tib. *Cp-*, where *C* is an apical prefix: /Xʷa/ 'tinder' (*dpal·ba*), /Xʷe/ 'model' (*dpe*), /Xʷon/ 'official' (*·dpon*). Since Sun's initial /w/ corresponds to Wr.Tib. *p-*, e.g./wʁrtha/ 'ashes (of bones)' (*pur·t'al*), /wagwæ/ 'skin' (*lpags·pa*) [and also corresponds to Wr.Tib. *b-* : /wa/ 'wool' (*ba/*), /wʁ/ 'son' (*bu*)], it would be tempting, if we admitted the idea of consonant-clusters in initial position, to consider the /X/ in /Xʷ/as a reflex of the prefix before the *p* in *dp-* . But Wr.Tib. *b-* can also have prefixes, and such words appear with a different initial in Sun's transcription of NdzT: /ʰw/, as in /ʰwa/ 'goiter' (*/ba·ba*), /ʰwu/ 'snake' (*sbrul*). This sound, in contrast to /Xʷ/, is voiced, higher, and less rasping. If the preaspiration /ʰ/ in /ʰw/ were, logically enough, also seen as a reflex of Wr.Tib. prefixes before the *b-*, then, since both *p-* and *b-* turned into *w-*, why should'nt /ʰw/ and /Xʷ/ be the same? If we remember that, among other differences, /ʰw/ is voiced but /Xʷ/ is voiceless, we could imagine that in the first stages of spirantisation to *w*, the combination *Cp-* changed to *xw-* , and either the voiceless *x* influenced the following *w* (< *p*) to remain voiceless, or else failed, at the critical time, to become voiced because the following *w* had itself not devoiced. On the other hand, in a word such as /ʰwæ/ 'felt-tent' (*sbra*), the *w* remained voiced and influenced the prefixed *s* to also become (or remain?) voiced before it de-specified to a velar prefix.

I am uneasy about the status of Sun's voiced back continuants /ʰw, ɣ, ʁ/. For the sake of argument as

well as ease of transcription I will rewrite them here as *ɣw, ɣ́, ɣ*. First, *ɣ* and *ɣ́* seem to be either allophonic variants or even interchangeable: *ɣ́* is higher and less rasping than *ɣ*. It is found as a reflex of Wr.Tib. *g* between vowels: */uɣ́u* 'lamb' (*/ug·u*); the genitive suffix *-kɤ* is *-ɣ́ɤ* after a vowel. On page 86 Sun has *jɤɣ́e* for 'book, letter' (*jig·e*), but on page 216 he has *jɤɣe,* hardly a misprint since his own transcription is so different for the two. In general this rasping *ɣ* is indeed also a reflex of Wr.Tib. velar stops: *raɣæ* 'branch' (*ral·ga*), *saɣaŋ* 'restaurant' (*za·k'aŋ*), *ɣwɤɣɤ* 'pipe' (*sbug·u*), *ʰta-ɣoŋ-ni wæp* 'dismount a horse' (*rta-goŋ-nas bab*), but also it seems to have an affinity to *ɣw-* and to imply an earlier *w* after it: *ɣu* 'center' (*dbus*), *raŋɣaŋ* 'freedom' (*raŋ·dbaŋ*), *ɣæ* 'fox' (*wa*).[6] As Sun points out (p.149), the modern reflex of Wr.Tib. "a-chung" (as in *ʕo·ma* 'milk') is a back voiced spirant (i.e. *ɣ* or *ʁ*) in other Amdo dialects. This NdzT *ɣ* we are dealing with here may also follow that pattern: *ɣɤrdo* 'sling' (*ʕur·rdo*), *ɣɤrʰčí-wæ* 'noisy', probably related to at least the first syllable in *ʕur·skra*. As for the difference between *ɣ-* and *ɣw-*, all the distinctive-feature differences that Sun lists could be attributed to the presence of the *w* in *ɣw-*. In summary, these sounds sometimes seem to be mere allophonic variants of velar stops, sometimes variants of each other. I doubt the need to set up all three as phonemes. Of course it may be difficult to appreciate these arguments if one insists on interpreting every pre-vocalic element in a syllable as part of a single phoneme.

Last on the above list of spirants is /h/, often a reflex of earlier *p'-*, e.g. /hæmæ/ 'parents' (*p'a·ma*), /hog/ 'salary' (*p'ogs*). A similar change is found in the history of many Mongolian dialects.

Among the liquids and glides we should note the difference between Sun's /ʰl/ and /lh/: the former is equivalent and rather similar in sound to *ɣl-* in other Amdo dialects, whereas the latter is somewhat like the Lhasa dialect pronunciation of "Lhasa" (*lha·sa = ɬa·sa*), but Sun stresses that this sound is an aspirated lateral, not the spirant *ɬ* which is found e.g. in the Lhasa dialect, Standard Burmese, and Welsh (< Catford 1977). It is strange that such a [ɭ^h] sound as Sun describes for NdzT is not even described in Zhāng Jìchuān's detailed article on the subject(1990).

A glide-sound unusual to Lhasa speakers is /ʰj/, found in words such as /ʰjærkhæ/ 'summer'(*dbjar·k'a*), /ʰjɤ/ 'turquoise' (*ɣju*).

Before discussing Sun's treatment of vowels and vowel-harmony, I'd like to finish up the consonants with some remarks about his finals /-ŋ -g -n -d -m -b -r /. By following certain arguments, he has arrived at what I feel is an awkward phonemicisation. Sun points out himself (p.35) that in no environment do the finals / -g -d -b /ever actually appear as voiced stops, as would be implied by his use of the symbols *-b -d -g*.[7] I think the problem starts out with the assumption that we must treat these three finals as a unit: that would only be the case if we were dealing with the earlier forms in Written Tibetan and similar ancient dialects; in this particular modern Amdo dialect the earlier *-k* has taken the fateful step of undergoing spirantisation. This change of a final stop into a final fricative is not that unusual, occurring for example in Balti Tibetan, southern German, and Tiberian Hebrew. Once the velar final of NdzT became the fricative *x*, it henceforth belonged also to the set of continuant finals, numbering five (*-ɣ -ŋ -n -m -r*), and no longer to the set of stop finals, which number two (*-t -p*). It was natural then for *-x* to become voiced to *-ɣ* since all the other continuant finals are voiced. It would be interesting to hear some other speakers of NdzT and related dialects and see how widespread the finals *-ɣ* and *-x* are; in Roerich's study we mostly see *-ɣ,* whereas Hermanns has *-x,* the Sūn/Wáng study has *-q* and *-k,* Hú has *-k* and *-x,* Rindzin Wangmo and Huà Kǎn have *-k*.

The vowel-system in Ndz. Tib. seems quite unlike that of Lhasa:

Ndzorge:			Lhasa:		
i/ī	ʉ	u/ū	ĭ	ў	ŭ
e		o	ĕ	ø	ŏ
ɛ/ē		ɔ/ō	ɛ̆	[ə̆]	
æ/a		a/ā		ă	

The NdzT vowels have Sun's transcription on the left/my suggestions on the right.

One of the most obvious features of most Amdo dialects is the change of short *i* and *u* into a mid to high central vowel; depending on the height I would transcribe it as *ə* or *ɨ*, but Sun uses *ɤ* to emphasize the back feature of the vowel in NdzT. This means that the syllables corresponding to Wr.Tib. *k'ji* 'dog' and *č'u* 'water' are both /tśhɤ/ in NdzT. [That is not to say, Sun reminds us, that there is any confusion: 'dog' is actually /tśhɤ-gɤ/.] In view of this obvious historical connection between a short vowel and a pair of historically long vowels, it would not be unreasonable to look for analogous linkages among the other vowels. Sun has not done this, but in looking at the behavior of vowels in NdzT I am reminded of similarities in the phonology of Central Tibetan dialects. Let us compare the vowel-harmony of this dialect(discussed extensively in Sun's third chapter) with Lhasa Tibetan:

When we speak of vowel-harmony in Lhasa Tibetan, or indeed in Mongolian, we are speaking of an *assimilative* process: In Lhasa, *šog·pu* 'paper' is pronounced *šug·u, bde·skjid* 'happiness' is pronounced *'di·kji²* : the relatively lower vowels *o* and *e* are "dragged up" to be the same height as the *u* and *i*. This assimilation also happens in the opposite direction, with a vowel being pulled down, e.g. *kup* 'buttocks' + *kjak* 'support' → *kop·kja²* 'chair', but not as often. Sun points out that in this Amdo dialect, by contrast, the interaction of two vowels mainly involves height *dissimilation*. (A similar phenomenon has been recorded in many modern Greek dialects.) The principal effect can be seen by grouping Sun's vowels thus:

i	ɤ	u
e	æ	o
ɛ	a	ɔ

Vowels in the top row he calls *dominant,* those in the middle row are *recessive,* and those in the bottom row are *neutral*. In a disyllabic word a recessive vowel is not allowed in the first syllable if there is a dominant vowel in the second syllable. Instead, the recessive vowel that we find in the "unharmonised" form(often equivalent to Wr.Tib.)gets pushed down as it were, converted into the corresponding neutral vowel.

Thus /tom/ 'black bear' and /tommo/ 'female black bear' share the same stem-vowel, but in /tomtsḥɤg/ 'cub of black bear' the dominant vowel *ɤ* in the second syllable causes the actual pronunciation to be [tɔmṭ'ɤɣ]. Besides the top row of vowels, dominance in the second syllable can also be caused by /-ag -og -aŋ -oŋ/. What do these segments and the top row of vowels have in common? They all share the feature of [+high].[8] This would indeed argue for a dissimilative effect on the middle row of vowels, but perhaps another mechanism is involved: Another "vowel-harmony" which recessively acts upon a vowel in the first syllable can be seen in words such as /ræmæ/ 'goat': when *-æ* is added for the dative, we get /rama/. By Sun's analysis, the change in the first syllable (*æ* → *a*) is analogous to the height dissimilation process shown above, but only affecting /æ/. He proposes no motivation for the change. Even for the changes due to high-row vowels in the second syllable, simply invoking height dissimilation is a bit cumbersome: the vowel-chart above is not very realistic in that *æ* is not really at all the same height as *e* and *o,* actually *æ* is even lower than *ɛ* and *ɔ,* so we really can't say that *æ* participates in a height-dissimilation process. Historically speaking, there is a fundamental difference among the vowels which Sun's symbols do not show: *length*. The fact that differences in vowel length are not found in present-day NdzT does not mean that an underlying representation based on length would not have important advantages for analysis. Sun's *ɛ* and *ɔ* are, in his underlying transcription, never found in the final syllable of a word except where it can be easily argued that they derive from a vowel-fusion process, e.g. /gɔ/ 'antelope' < *'goa* < *rgo·ba,* /dźɛ/ 'flea' < *'ǰia* < *lǰi·ba*. Since *ɛ* and *ɔ* are the result of vowel-fusion, they are also never found in closed syllables, except by result of the above vowel-harmony rules. */-ɔg/, for example, would be impossible since it would imply an earlier **-oak,* two vowels in one syllable. Only the "short" vowels (*ɤ e o æ*) can occur before a final consonant; Sun's vowel *a* cannot be in the short group: when it occurs before a final , i.e. /-ag -aŋ/, there is no contrast with any /-æg -æŋ/; the subphonemic change probably arose due to the influence of the [+high] final consonant, thus a part of the general pattern shown above. Classified by historic length, we have short vowels: *ɤ e o æ,* and long vowels: *i u ɛ ɔ a*. In the latter group we may distinguish *i u* from *ɛ ɔ a*. The first pair obtained their length as a result of segment loss in various kinds of closed syllables, e.g. *-es* → *-ī, -o/* → *-ū,* but the group *ɛ ɔ a* obtained their length as a result of vowel fusion, or else in surface forms as a result of vowel harmony. I propose retranscribing Sun's vowels *ɤ e o æ i u ɛ ɔ a* as *ɨ e o a ī ū ē ō ā* (*ɨ* is to symbolise the neutral, bipolar origin of the short, high vowel instead of Sun's more narrow transcription *ɤ* which is more associated with back vowels). In syllable-final vowels derivable from vowel-fusion, it might be desirable, in the context of comparative dialectology, to transcribe *-ē*

-ō -ā as *-ea -oa -aa* for such words as *'tea* = /ʰtɛ/ 'navel' < *lte·wa*, *'loa* = /ʰlɔ/ 'lungs' < *ylo·wa*, *k'aa* = /kha/ 'snow' < *k'a·wa*. Such digraphy for a single vowel would also be useful other vowel-harmony situations which Sun terms "vowel-inflection". Consider the chart below (Amdo material is adapted from Sun p. 127-128):

	Classical Tibetan	Amdo	*source	Dbus
'horse (abs.)'	*rta*	*'ta*	*hta*	*ta*
'horse (gen.)'	*rta-i*	*'tī*	*hte:* < *hta-i*	*tä:*
'horse (erg.)'	*rtas*	*'tī*	*hte:* < *hta-j*	*tä'*
'horse (dat.)'	*rta-la*	*'tā*	*hta-a*	*ta-a*
'look (pres.)'	*lta*	*'ta*	*hta*	*ta·*
'look (fut.)'	*blta*	*'tā*	*hta-a*	*ta·*
'look (pf.)'	*bltas*	*'tī*	*hte:* < *hta-j*	*tä'*
'look (imp.)'	*ltos*	*'tū*	*htø:* < *hto-j*	*tó'*

Each vowel which we could transcribe as long (*v̄*) has as its source a fusion of two segments. Similarly, the dative/future ending *-a*, when added to short *e* and *o*, also produces the same change to *ē* and *ō*, e.g. *'če -a* → *'cē* (*'cea*) 'to the tongue', *'go -a* → *'gō* (*'goa*) 'to the door'. This seems to involve a "dragging", lowering effect of the *-a* on the preceding vowel; compared to "height dissimilation" the motivating factors are completely different, yet the results on these vowels are the same. Perhaps the common factor is a lengthening effect. For words that end in consonants or in *ī ū ē ō ā*, there is a slightly different dative suffix: *-ē*. In future forms, this same group takes the same ending *-a* found in verbs ending in short vowels. Sun gives a number of examples (p. 92-98), without any explanation for the variance. I too am baffled.

For readers with a background in Tibetan, Sun's fourth chapter, on diachronic phonology, may be the most interesting. It details the relationship between Written Tibetan and this Amdo dialect. We can group the most notable features of NdzT phonology into innovations and conservations.

Innovations :

1. The palatalisation of stops + *r*: *kr* → *č*, *k'r* → *č'*, *gr* → *ǰ* [*ǰ* roughly as in English 'judge' *ǰəǰ*]. Thus *'gro* 'go' → *ⁿǰo* [= Sun's /ⁿdżo/], *skrag* 'fear' → *čaɣ* [= /tśag/]. The process was probably similar to Burmese: *kr* → *kj* → *čj* = *č*. This change takes place less consistently with labial stops, e.g. *'br* → *nǰ*, but also *'br* → *nḍ*, the latter change being common in Central Tibetan dialects. In this dialect we are dealing with possible mergers of 5 different series into this single palatal series: *ǰ/bj - - gj -- gr/br* from Written Tibetan may all, in certain words(especially words with a prefix before the stop in Wr.Tib.), end up as *ǰ*. Lhasa Tibetan preserves a 3-way distinction here, as shown by the dashes. In Tsang *ǰ* merges with *gj/bj*. These reflexes also occur in other labial and velar stops: *sprin* 'cloud' → *šɐn*.

2. The Wr.Tib. initials *dpj, p'j, bj* are in many words further assibilated to *š*, thus *bja* 'bird' → *šæ*, *p'jogs* 'direction' → *šoɣ*. This sound *š* then merges with *š* < Wr.Tib. *ž, žw, gš, bš*.

3. Wr.Tib. *sp*(*rl*)*j*) has become *f*, as in *dmig·spu* 'eyelash' → *hñɤɣ·fɤ*.

4. The "exposed", unprefixed voiced stops, affricatives and sibilants of Written Tibetan have become devoiced and, since there are no tonal distinctions in this dialect, this part of the voiced series merges completely with the series of unprefixed voiceless initials: Wr.Tib. *don* 'intent, concern' → *ton*, *zos* and *gsol* both → *sū*.

5. Fronting and raising of the low-central vowel *a* to *æ*: /xæ/ 'meat' < *ša*. The report by Sun/Wang on the Abà region shows perhaps an even more radical change:

ʁome 牛奶 'milk' ~ Wr.Tib *ɣo·ma* (ɣ = achung).

ʁɛ 狐狸 'fox' ~ Wr.Tib *wa* (*gwa* → *ɣwa* → *wa, ɣwa* → *ɣa* → *ɣɛ* ~ *ʁɛ* ?)

[The sound *ʁ* is quite similar to *ɣ* except articulated a bit further back in the mouth.]

6. *-iŋ/- eŋ* > *-āŋ*, e.g. *riŋ* 'long' > *rāŋ, t'eŋs* 'time' > *t'āŋ, žiŋ* 'field' > *šāŋ.* The reflexes of Wr.Tib. *-uŋ /-oŋ* also have merged into *oŋ* (the short vowel *o* was the only option); *-eɣ* is merged with *-aɣ,* but *-ɤɣ* is preserved.

Conservations:

Other features of this and other Amdo dialects are not innovations but rather reflect the conservative nature of these dialects:

The stops and nasals look typical for a conservative Tibetan dialect: there are voiced stops (not found in Lhasa dialect) as well as pre-nasalised stops such as *ⁿc'o* 'lake'.

Oral pre-radicals are preserved as a component of Sun's so-called *preaspirated* stops, e.g. /ʰtag/ *rtags* 'mark', /ʰtʂʊn/ *sprin* 'cloud', /ʰŋu/ *dŋul* 'silver'. It is an imbalance in Sun's analysis that the pre-radicals before voiceless stops, affricatives, and nasals are still reflected in this dialect, whereas before voiced stops and fricatives there is no trace of them. Since the remnant of preaspiration has no contrasts in terms of articulatory position, it can be represented by a vague space-holder, e.g. *'ta* horse < *rta, 'ŋū* 'silver' < *dŋul.* This same mark can then be used in words with voiced initials to show that they retain their voicing in NdzT (as opposed to unprotected voiced initials that devoice, e.g. *ža·mo* 'lama's hat' → *ša·mo*) : *'ža* 'four' < *bži, 'got* 'vulture' < *rgot.* In the same words, the same marker can be used in the Lhasa dialect forms, to indicate not voicing but lack of aspiration, i.e. in Lhasa dialect *go* is aspirated but *'go* is not. Similarly, in Lhasa Tibetan *la* 'mountain pass' ≠ *'la* 'wages' because the former has a low tone and the latter has a high tone; this difference also be signaled by the segment *'* . Amdo dialects maintain the distinction by still pronouncing the prefix: 'mountain pass' = *la* , 'wages' = *ɣla.*

Here and there in this chapter on historical phonology Sun gives the reader valuable comparisons between colloquial and literary differences in phoneme-distribution and morphemes, e.g. *žār·o* 'king' < *rgjal·po* but *žar·s'a* 'capital' < *rgjal·sa* .

Now I would like to enlarge on this desirability of analysing Amdo dialects not just as closed systems, but rather within the broader context of general Tibetan dialectology:

In what might be called a *hyperanalytical* analysis of Amdo phonology, Sun, for example, posits both /æ/ and /a/ as apparently independent, equal-status vowels: two out of the nine possible. Yet in his list of "Cores" (p.192-194) there is among the possible patterns of vowel + final consonant (8 possibilities including literary *-l*) not a single example of a contrast between two different lower vowels; the only contrast is when the vowels themselves are final, as in /ʰtæ/ 'horse' (*rta*) vs. /ʰna/ 'ear' (*rna·wa*). That is the only environment in which a contrast between these two vowels appears; some little vowel is making a rather poor showing, and it's not the only one: none of the 8 finals can be combined with more than 4 different vowels, and yet this phonology posits 9 different vowels. Perhaps they are not so different after all. So that is why I proposed the above retranscription of *ɤ e o æ i u ɛ ɔ a* into *ɤ e o a ī ū ē ō ā,* with short and long vowels contrasting not only in height, roundedness etc. but also clearly contrasting in where they may occur in a syllable. In a certain sense there are really only 5 vowels, or maybe we could even say $4\frac{1}{2}$ vowels, since short *i* and *u* have merged together in *ɤ*. The regular pattern in which the long vowels of NdzT arise can be seen thru the following examples:

k'ū 'boil' < [< *k'ɑ* <] < *k'ol, c'ā* 'hot' < *c'a·wa* , *'čī* 'middle' < *dkjil, 'jī* 'right' < *'jas* , *šī* '(small) bird' < *bjeu, ⁿč'ē* (or *ⁿč'ea*) 'fang' < *mč'e·wa, kū* 'vulture' < *go·wo, jō* (*joa*) 'handle' < *ju·wa, fū* 'incense' < *spos.* These vowel-fusions occurring in NdzT are often paralleled exactly in Lhasa Tibetan: if we use the short vs. long vowel approach, then we can conveniently apply Occam's Razor and consider, e.g. NdzT /kɔ/ 'hide' and Lhasa [kɔ̄ɔ̄] to both be *koa* (< Wr.Tib. *ko·ba*), then there is only one modern development to keep in mind, not two. In the case of words like Wr.Tib. *lǰi·wa* 'flea' or *ju·wa* 'handle', the vowels obtained after fusion are a bit different in Lhasa and NdzT, but the correspondence is regular in that the NdzT fusions have a vowel which is consistently lower than the Lhasa vowels.

The widespread occurrence of *ī ū ā,* compared to the other long vowels, suggests that a practical, everyday transcription for NdzT might do well to use simply *i* and *u,* since they dont contrast anyway; as for *ā,* its occurrence seems mostly predictable: the result of the disyllabic-type of vowel harmony, and fusions; *-ā* is also found in many common words such as *ñɯ·mā* 'day', *'goŋ·wā* 'egg', *hām* 'boot', *c'ʰɣ·ā* 'shape'. There seems to be the common element of a grave consonant directly before the *ā*; this can even be argued for *ser·ā* 'hail' (< *ser·wā*) or *č'ʰr·ā* 'cheese' (< *č'ur·wā*) . Yet some of these same combinations have *-a,* not *-ā,* (e.g. *rə·ma* 'goat') so for the time being it is better to write *á* , at least in these cases, until, *inšāllāh,* we can solve the puzzling origin of such endings in *-ā.*

The allophonic change of *-aɣ / -aŋ* to *-āɣ / -āŋ* reminds one of a similar sub-phonemic variation in Lhasa Tibetan: *lo* 'year' is [lo̰], but *lo²*(or *lok*) 'side' is [lɔ̰ɔ̀]. Altho I use here the transcription of Chang &Shefts in order to express a phonetic detail, I believe this kind of variation would be more economically signaled by a rule.[9] Likewise, we could convey the same information but be more historically, comparatively oriented if we retranscribed the contrast between /sho/ 'tooth' < *so* and /ser/ 'gold' < *gser* as *so* vs. *'ser*. A plain, exposed *s* gets assigned aspiration by rule, paralleling *x,* and the marker before the *s* in *'ser* signals no aspiration and also generally corresponds to a preaspiration in those Amdo dialects that have preserved preaspiration before sibilants.

Sun winds up his discussion of historical changes with a presentation of what he calls the "double reflex" phenomenon. For example on p.140 he gives us three words: /ʰtæ/ 'horse' < *rta,* /ʰtśag/ 'rod,whip' < *lčag,* /ʰtærʰtśag/ 'horsewhip' < *rta·lčag* . Noting that the compound word has both /r/ and /ʰ/,[10] he signals this as a unique innovation that he has discovered in NdzT. However, we can contrast the aspiration found after *r* in /ʰtærʰtśag/ with the absence of aspiration after *r* in a word such as /ʰnargaŋ/ 'bridge of nose' < *sna·sgaŋ* . The *r* prefix is automatically aspirated when it occurs before a voiceless stop, affricate, or nasal, and also devoiced before the first two groups. So we could write the three words as *'a, 'čaɣ,* and *'a·rčaɣ* (→ *'ā·rčāɣ*). Whether we could write *'a* as *rta, 'čaɣ* as *rčaɣ* is a more complex matter. Another example of Sun's "double reflex" occurs with nasals, e.g. /ᵐtsho/ 'lake' < *mc'o* but /dźæmⁿtsho/ 'sea' < *rgja·mc'o* . Here again Sun finds two segments /m / and /ⁿ/ representing the single *m* in *mc'o* . I would write it as *'ja·mc'o* and mention that, by rule, in this dialect a nasal-prefix, when in medial position such as in *'ja·mc'o,* has a homo-organic glide matching the following segment. It is puzzling from Sun's transcription whether or not this nasal glide has much syllabic weight: in /dźæmⁿtsho/ are we dealing with 2 syllables, or perhaps $2\frac{1}{2}$? In either case it is a sub-phonemic detail.

Sun's chapter 5 sums up his analysis and discusses some theoretical implications. He returns to the matter of "double reflexes", and attempts to show the necessity of double transcription: given /ʰmag/ 'army' < *dmag,* /ʰkaŋʰmag/ 'infantry' < *rkaŋ·dmag,* /dźærʰmag/ 'Chinese army' < *rgja·dmag,* and /rɤʰmag/ 'guerrillas' < *ri·dmag,* one can see that the *r* prefix in *dmag* is only pronounced when it immediately follows a vowel, as in /dźærʰmag/, but this "rule" does not apply to /rɤʰmag/. Therefore it would seem necessary for a lexical entry to list both *'maɣ* and *rmaɣ,* along with rules for their occurrence. Unfortunately this was the only example I could see where this was necessary, and there is apparently a clear distinction in lexical status between the two words *'ja·rmaɣ* and *rɯ·'maɣ*: the former is what Sun calls a "fossilized compound" which must be listed in the lexicon, the latter is a neologism whose structure and meaning would be transparent to a speaker of NdzT, thus one of a large group of words whose inclusion in the lexicon is optional in languages such as Tibetan and Chinese. Lexical status can be a factor in phonological analysis: just because a number of well-educated English speakers pronounce a final [-x] in *Bach*, does that make *x* an English phoneme? I am also reminded of the mess that can be made of Russian phonology by giving a few unadapted neologisms, especially those of foreign origin, equal weight to the mass of native words. The situation in NdzT may not be comparable since the problem is with neologisms; with such few data as Sun gives, I am interested but not convinced of his solution.

After concluding his main text with some interesting remarks on tonology, Sun greatly increased the value of his monograph by adding several appendices. The third one is a detailed list of correspondences between Wr.Tib. and NdzT; the section on vowel codas is missing his /ɛ/, which would have *-e·ba* and *-i·ba* as the Wr.Tib. matches. The last appendix is especially appreciated: an English-NdzT word list (1,189 entries) ar-

ranged by topic. I wish it had been alphabetical: one wastes time looking for words---would a word be under "Culture" or under "Human Affairs", or maybe "Miscellaneous"? A more readily noticed but easily corrected situation is the table of contents, which appears to be missing a page or so in the middle.

In conclusion I would like to reiterate the regrets of a more traditional Tibetanist that a study such as this was not based on a broader comparison with other Tibetan dialects, especially other Amdo dialects. Sun's phonological analysis seems to emphasize, or even create, differences, not seek out common points and general principles. It is simpler to say:

"Lhasa, NdzT, Y, Z dialects = *'mak* (or *'may*) but dialect X = *rmak*

(therefore, providing that in dialect X *rmak* ≠ *ɣmak,* it is reasonable to posit ancestral **rmak*)"

than to say:

"Lhasa dialect = *ma'* ˥, dialect X = *rmak*, dialect Y = *hma'*, dialect Z = *ɣmā*, NdzT = *hmag*

(therefore...)".

If one can unite many data under a powerful generalisation (e.g. that many dialects have *'mak,* altho one may reflect the "prefix" by a pitch difference, another may instead have a glottal stop, another may have a velar fricative), it is then easier to focus on what is really different, e.g. having two contrasting oral prefixes. Much of the book bristles with distinctive-feature equations, the information in which could often be presented in another way that would be clearer to many readers. Maybe it was really intended more for the general linguist than for the Tibetanist, and that is why I have objected to some of his methods. It is also easy, after the fact, to rely on someone else's data and find fault with it. Despite all the criticisms I have brought up, I feel priviledged and fortunate to have spent time examining Sun's book; it is loaded with both data and ideas: I have only touched upon some highlights. I heartily recommend this volume as one of the most important contributions to Tibetan linguistics in recent decades.

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- - notes and references - -

1] cf. the Dun-huang (F.W.Thomas p. 18) form *mu* for WrTib *mi*.

2] Forms within slanted lines are Sun's transcriptions. Written Tibetan and this reviewer's transcriptions are both in italics.

3] Thus Wr. Tib. *gser* 'gold' is /ser/ in this dialect, but, according to Roerich, in Rebkong Amdo and in Golok it is *ɣser.* In reference to the discussion of sibilants later in this review, I would, in a more historico-comparative transcription, write Sun's /ser/ as *'ser,* with the mark before the *s* being a remnant of the previous *ɣ/g* prefix. This remnant would leave the *s* in *'ser* "protected" and explain why its *s* did not acquire the aspiration found in words such as *ser·ā* 'hail' (= Sun's /shera/).

4] Sun emphasizes that these sounds must be viewed as unit phonemes, and in defense he cites reports of similar phenomena in other languages. I must disagree: languages cited by Ladefoged and in turn by Sun such as Icelandic and Outer Hebrides Gaelic exhibit preaspirated stops only post-vocalically, never in initial position. Their preaspiration is only the inadvertent result of a vowel preceding an aspirated, voiceless stop and losing its voicing as it approaches the stop. This effect is perhaps even clearer in Mongolian dialects such as Khalkha. Sun points out that in NdzT (Ndzorge Amdo Tibetan) preaspiration assimilates its voiced/voiceless feature to the following consonant, so that a word such as /^{h}ŋu/ *dŋul* 'silver' is actually pronounced with a voiced preaspiration; in these other languages (Icelandic etc.) preaspiration is never found before voiced consonants. Finally, whether a sequence of sounds constitutes one, two, or ten phonemes depends entirely upon one's analytical objectives: for a given language there is no "true" analysis waiting for us to discover it. We will further consider Sun's views on this matter later.

5] Sun apparently forgot to include /h/ in the discussion (pp. 26-29).

6] The word for 'fox' was something like *ɣwa* in proto-Tibetan, cf. Chinese *hú* < *ɣa,* and the initial simply dropped off in Written Tibetan. Roerich has *ɣa* for 'fox' in Rebkong Amdo.

7] Sun appears to contradict himself on page 71, saying that *g* in the word /figen/ 'monkey' does not undergo spirantisation to *ɣ*. Does that mean it remains as [g]?

8] It would simplify matters to just define the second dominant group as /-g -ŋ/, i.e. velar finals, since other possible combinations either do not occur, e.g. */-eg -æŋ/, are impossible, e.g. */-ɔg/, or are already dominant, e.g. /-iŋ/ .

9] The other reasons for positing a separate ɔ vowel in Lhasa Tibetan are equally insubstantial. E.g. there is no contrast between *-or* and *-ɔr,* nor between *-op* and *-ɔp, -o'* and *-ɔ',* etc.

10] Despite Sun's insistence on the unit-phoneme status of segments such as /^{h}tś/, he seems at this point to give equal status in /^{h}tær^{h}tśag/ to /r/ and to /^{h}/, as if /^{h}/ were indeed a distinct phoneme.

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Pre-Chinese Invasion Political Relations Between Tibet's Monastic State and Changtang (*Byang thang*) Nomads: A Response to Goldstein. Rejoinder by Thomas Cox

It was with great interest that I read Melvyn Goldstein's rejoinder to my (1987) *Himalayan Research Bulletin* article "Tibetan Nomads Before The Chinese Invasion." Through the avalanche of insults, Goldstein (1988: 15-16) refers to me as "naive," claims that I lack an "understanding of Tibetan history, geography and ethnology," and furthermore am "ignorant" of the literature on Tibet" Goldstein clearly demonstrates that my original article (which questioned Goldstein's use of the term serf) needed to be written. Indeed, Goldstein (1988:16) himself admits that "there is considerable controversy over the appropriateness of the term serf." If there is so much controversy over the appropriateness of the word serf, as a term to describe pre-Chinese invasion nomads in Tibet, then one wonders what Goldstein was doing using it in the first place. The fact that Tibetans (in the face of considerable Chinese propaganda to the contrary) are trying to communicate to the world the fact that the nomadic inhabitants of their country did have considerable freedom and autonomy, before the Chinese invaded, makes Goldstein's irresponsible use of the term serf particularly reprehensible.

Goldstein (1988: 16) goes on to say that just because he refers to some nomadic populations as serfs, he does not mean "that Tibetan nomads had no personal freedom." If the nomadic populations to which Goldstein refers had so much freedom, then they quite clearly could not have been serfs. For Goldstein's benefit I will repeat the definition of serf that was used in my original article.

> A serf is an agricultural laborer who is bound to the land to such an extent that he may be transferred with the land to another owner (Seymour Smith 1986: 255)

In his rejoinder to my article, Goldstein (1988: 15) also criticizes my use of data from an "untrained" investigator like Ekvall. This is intellectual hypocrisy of the worst kind, for only three paragraphs later Goldstein cites a passage written by Sven Hedin (a Norwegian explorer) to support his argument that Phala Shang nomads were serfs before the Chinese invasion. What makes Goldstein's hypocrisy particularly outrageous is that Sven Hedin, besides being "untrained" himself, did not spend nearly the amount of time in Tibet, achieve nearly the same level of integration into Tibetan society, or acquire the same expertise in the Tibetan language, as Robert Ekvall.

The most serious problem with Goldstein's assertion (that some nomads on the Changtang were serfs) however, becomes apparent upon examination of Dawa Norbu's 1987 book, *Red Star Over Tibet*. Dawa Norbu is a native Tibetan who, before the Chinese invaded, had extensive first-hand experience with Changtang nomads, both because he grew up in an area through which these nomads regularly roamed, and also because his own father, and maternal grandfather, were hired to collect donations, from Changtang nomads, by the Sakya monastery and governor of western Tibet (who was the central Tibetan government's highest authority in the area) (Norbu 1987: 27-28).[1]

Dawa Norbu's description of the political system of pre-Chinese invasion Changtang Tibetan nomads is strikingly different from Goldstein's. As Norbu (1987) describes it, Changtang nomads maintained a high degree of independence and autonomy in their relations with Tibet's monastic officials. Indeed, the central Tibetan government appointed a local administrator from among the nomads themselves (Norbu 1987: 27). The fact that this administrator worked independently, did not have to answer to any other locally present state officials, and was a member of the nomad community, enabled him to be flexible in the implementation of his administrative duties, in such a way as to protect the autonomy of the nomadic community. Indeed, the government-appointed nomad administrator was little more than a figurehead. The real authority among Changtang nomads was the *dpon*, a leader elected by members of several small groups of nomads inhabiting a specific territory known as a *gar pa* (Norbu 1987: 27).

Once every year or two the Sakya Monastery would send a mission, consisting of the chief contractor, a tantric practitioner and three servants, to collect donations for both the monastery and governor of western Tibet, from the Changtang's different nomadic groups (Norbu 1987: 24). These donations consisted of yak,

sheep and butter. The resources to be given however, were never just arbitrarily imposed on nomads by monastic officials. Rather, the amount to be donated was left up to the nomads themselves (Norbu 1987: 34).

Norbu's (1987: 34) data also shows that the donations given by Changtang nomads rarely exceeded 1% of their total livestock resources. The fact that donation collecting missions, sent by the Sakya Monastery, would also give substantial amounts of barley and woollen clothes to Changtang nomads (Norbu 1987: 34) is further evidence of the autonomy, independence and reciprocity which characterized relations between Changtang nomads and the Tibetan monastic state before the Chinese invasion.

Thomas Cox

[1] Since Goldstein has made "scholarly" qualifications such an issue, it should also be pointed out that Dawa Norbu is a highly trained scholar, having received a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley.