Coming to Terms with Tibet: Scholarly Networks and the Production of the First "Modern" Tibetan Dictionaries

Markus Viehbeck

(University of Heidelberg)

The production of dictionaries has been a standard feature in Europeans' initial engagement with foreign cultures, an activity that aimed to enable intellectual understanding as well as political domination of "the other." In the case of Tibet, many early dictionaries were produced in a specific historical and political setting, in the contact zones between non-Tibetan and Tibetan agents, which the Himalayan region provided in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries.

The article uses "modern" dictionaries—that is, dictionaries that organize their entries alphabetically and present these in adjoining columns—as a means of investigating the entanglements between Christian missionaries, British-Indian colonial officials, European academics, and Tibetan scholars as well as the knowledge that these people produced in this context.[1]

1. Introduction

On February 19th, 2013, a new app containing the well-known dictionary of dGe bshes Chos grags, a Buryat Mongolian who had entered Se ra Monastery in the 1920s, was released via iTunes. This dictionary was completed in Lhasa in the 1940s and is commonly considered the first modern Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary. The announcement of the app's release stressed that this dictionary is unique insofar as it "was written in a purely Tibetan situation without another culture overseeing the work."[2] While this

[1] I would like to thank John Bray for numerous valuable comments as well as Jonathan Samuels and Kim Friedlander for suggestions regarding the English in this article.

[2] See the description on iTunes, https://itunes.apple.com/de/app/geshe-chodrak-tibetan-tibetan/id602452248?mt=8; accessed March 31, 2016.

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description was intended to emphasize the dictionary's independence from Chinese influence, it did not really do justice to the complex historical setting out of which this work emerged. In this article, I will start from a diametrically opposed vantage point, using the production of modern Tibetan dictionaries as a way to explore knowledge production in this context as a highly entangled enterprise, which brought together Tibetan scholars, who are associated with forms of knowledge commonly characterized as "traditional," and Western agents, often missionaries, colonial officials, or global academics, who are seen as representatives of "modern" types of knowledge. In doing so, I do not intend to give a comprehensive account of Tibetan lexicography;[3] rather, I would like to investigate how crucial knowledge about Tibet emerged in this interplay between Tibetan and Western worlds, and how it shaped modern Tibetan studies.

First, I will briefly trace the historical connections between important dictionaries, starting with dGe bshes Chos grags and going back in time to the work of Csoma de Kőrös in the early nineteenth century and the early missionary projects of the eighteenth century. Then I will proceed in the opposite direction to show, although rather tentatively, that the connections between these endeavours also had a direct impact on the publications arising from them.

2. Historical Entanglements in the Production of Modern Tibetan Dictionaries

The most obvious feature that connects these different dictionaries is the layout and alphabetical organization of terms in adjoining columns, a system which should enable the user to look up individual entries quickly. While this was the accepted system for modern dictionaries in Europe,[4] in comparison to traditional Tibetan lexicographical works in *dpe cha* format, which presented their contents as continuing text that was often learned by heart as a whole, this was a *novum*.[5]

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[3] Due to limitations in the length of this article, I will only consider the most crucial steps in bringing modern lexicography into a Tibetan language context. For comprehensive (but still incomplete) overviews, see the summaries by Simon 1964 or Goldstein 1991, or, most extensively, Walter 2006.

[4] In the European context too, mechanical alphabetization only emerged gradually as the standard, and in the Middle-Ages different systems were used to organize glossaries and dictionaries; see Miethaner-Vent 1986 and Daly 1967 for an overview.

[5] However, in the Tibetan context as well alphabetization played an increasing role over time; see Goldstein 1991: 251.

dGe bshes Chos grags (1898–1972)

As Pema Bhum noted, it is the feature of textual organization and presentation that marks Chos grags's work as bringing something radically new to Tibetan lexicography:

> This dictionary is likely the first instance of the transformation of what Tibetans call "*dag yig*" or glossaries into the structure of the modern dictionary. [6]

In the introduction to this dictionary, which was completed in 1946 and carved on wood blocks in 1949, Chos grags felt compelled to explain some of the modern features that he introduced along with this form of presentation.[7] Yet he does not discuss in any detail the rationale for adopting this system in the first place, apart from mentioning in passing that this should facilitate an "easy search" for individual terms.[8]

Chos grags's intellectual network might, however, provide some clues as to why he chose this form of presentation. Among the scholars with whom he discussed his work are the Lhasa grammarian Tsha sprul Rin po che and the A mdo intellectual dGe 'dun chos 'phel. The latter is also said to have contributed vernacular vocabulary to the dictionary.[9] Both of these scholars were well acquainted with modern techniques of dictionary compilation. Tsha sprul Rin po che, for example, must certainly have learned such principles while he was helping to correct Basil Gould's *Tibetan Word Book* in 1940, which was one of several smaller manuals and word books developed by British colonial officials for practical rather than scholarly purposes.[10]

Another scholar who contributed to Gould's enterprise was Dorje Tharchin (rDo rje mthar phyin), who by that time had made a name for himself as the editor of the Tibetan-language newspaper *Me long* (or Tibet Mirror) and who emerged as a crucial bridge between Tibetan and European scholars. dGe 'dun chos 'phel and dGe bshes

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6 Pema Bhum 2005: 27. This article summarizes the general features of the dictionary. A narrative account of the conditions of its production by Hor khang Byams pa bstan dar is included in the same volume; see Jampa Tendar 2005.

7 Chos grags 1980: 2.

8 Tib. *btsal bde ba*, Chos grags 1980: 9.

9 See Stoddard 1986: 219.

10 See Fader 2002–2009, vol. III: 10ff., for details on these meetings between Gould, Tsha sprul, Tharchin and others. A forthcoming article by Emma Martin, "Knowing Tibet in the Borderlands: The Knowledge Making Networks of Himalayan Hill Stations," to be published in *Transcultural Studies* in 2016, gives a detailed general account of British colonial officials' involvement in producing dictionaries and language manuals in this context.

Chos grags had known Tharchin in his role as a connecting figure since they left Tibet to accompany Rahul Sankrityayan to India. In fact, dGe 'dun chos 'phel had very close contact with Tharchin during the 1930s and 1940s and not only contributed several articles to his newspaper, but also collaborated with him on other linguistic ventures.[11]

Dorje Tharchin (1890–1976)

Among these projects was a more practical English-Tibetan-Hindi pocket dictionary (1965), but also a large Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary, which Tharchin envisioned as his *magnum opus*. He worked on this dictionary from 1930 until his death in 1976, involving several scholars and workers at his Tibet Mirror Press in it. Interestingly, as can be learned in a rather crude letter Tharchin wrote to Hugh Richardson in 1962, dGe bshes Chos grags became familiar with the details of dictionary production in the 1930s as an employee for this enterprise:

> I am grateful that you are still in favour of my Tibetan Dictionary. [...] I think You know the mongolian Geshe Chhodrag, who also brought out a Tibetan to Tibetan Dictionary. Actually I was the man [...] who tought and imployed him for nearly two yars in 1930 and 1932, then he went back to Tibetan and again came in 1935 and worked about a year. So he got the idia and later on he printed on a block print as Tibetan ways. But his explanation of the words are not so good and clear, besid mine one is four time more words then his. [12]

This letter also indicates that there was some rivalry between the two intellectuals over their respective dictionary projects.[13] This seems to have evolved especially against the backdrop of the immense difficulties that Tharchin faced in producing his own work. While his smaller dictionary and various linguistic manuals had been

[11] According to Fader 2002–2009, vol. III: 92ff., dGe 'dun chos 'phel and Tharchin met for the first time in Kalimpong in 1935, introduced by Sankrityayan. dGe 'dun chos 'phel lived with the Tharchin family for eighteen months and he probably also contributed to Tharchin's large dictionary project.

[12] Letter from Tharchin to Richardson, Feb. 10, 1996, Richardson Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, MS. Or. Richardson 41; the spelling mistakes in the original letter have been retained. A copy of this document was kindly provided by Isrun Engelhardt.

[13] Based on passages like this, Tharchin's main biographer, H. Louis Fader, constructs a narrative about Chos grags having extensively appropriated Tharchin's work for his own purposes; see Fader 2002–2009, vol. III: 1–35. As will be shown below, the actual content of the dictionaries does not support such a claim.

published and were reasonably successful, his *magnum opus*, consisting of almost 60,000 entries in five volumes,[14] was never completed. Tharchin received some funding from the University of Washington, which Hugh Richardson and Turrell Wylie facilitated. Later, Mrs. D.S. Still, the daughter of Dr. Shelton, the famous missionary in Eastern Tibet, put Tharchin in touch with Beta Sigma Phi, an American social and cultural service organization. Drawing on the educational mission of the sorority, Tharchin was able to gain support for various publications for Tibetan refugee schools, but also his large dictionary. Nevertheless, the first two volumes of this work were the only ones that were actually printed, while the other three remained in draft manuscript form.[15] Tharchin seems nowhere to have set out the precise sources of his dictionary, which he refers to as a "compilation" (*phyogs bsgrigs*) in some verses at the beginning of the first volume.[16] Given his scholarly connections, one can point to numerous related publications that both preceded and followed Tharchin's work, e.g., the various text books, word lists, and even gramophone records that Charles Bell, Basil Gould, and Hugh Richardson created, mostly for Colloquial Tibetan, or George Roerich's Tibetan-Russian-English dictionary and the dictionary project of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences initiated by Helmut Hoffmann.[17]

Among dictionaries produced by his predecessors, the one of Sarat Chandra Das stands out as the work that was most closely related to his own. Indeed, Tharchin received his personal copy of this dictionary in September 1934,[18] and in 1945 he even managed to purchase the Tibetan matrices that were used to print Das' dictionary

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[14] In a letter to the American Consulate General, Calcutta, from June 16, 1965, Tharchin speaks of "over 58,000 words." This letter is found among the correspondence preserved in the Tharchin Collection, C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University. I would like to thank Isrun Engelhardt for providing me with a copy of this document. In later letters, Tharchin mentions 60,000 words; the missionary Margaret Urban lists a more precise number of 58,551 words. See Fader 2002–2009, Vol. III: 227; 231.

[15] Following Isrun Engelhardt's lead, I discovered these remaining volumes, thought to be lost, among various dictionaries at the Tharchin Estate in September 2014. I would like to thank Nini and Daniel Tharchin for giving me access to these documents. In January 2016, Lauran Hartley acquired these volumes for the Tharchin Collection at the C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

[16] Tharchin Dictionary: Vol. I: 1.

[17] All of these individuals were in close contact with Dorje Tharchin. See Fader 2002–2009, Vol. III: especially, 1–35, and also the forthcoming article by Emma Martin (note 10). For details on the dictionary of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences, see Uebach 1998 or 2010.

[18] This copy is still in Tharchin's office. I would like to thank Daniel Tharchin for providing access to it.

for his own Tibet Mirror printing press.[19]

Sarat Chandra Das (1849–1917)

As an official of the British-Indian government, Das made three journeys into Tibet and from 1889 to 1899 worked on his dictionary.[20] His work was published in 1902, only after it was revised and edited by August Wilhelm Heyde, a member of the Moravian Mission, and Graham Sandberg, a chaplain who had developed an interest in Tibetan during his tenure in Darjeeling.

In his introduction, Sarat Chandra Das makes reference to Csoma de Kőrös and Jäschke, and, in contrast to these earlier works, proposes to include Sanskrit equivalents as well as more modern vocabulary. He does not, however, provide a more detailed account of how his dictionary was compiled. Interestingly, the Tibetan title page of the dictionary gives very concrete clues in this regard, and explicates the distribution of labour in its compilation:[21] while Das acted as the main editor and translator, several others played important roles. For example, mKhan chen Shes rab rgya mtsho, the abbot of Ghoom (also Ghum) Monastery in Darjeeling, was responsible for the Tibetan terms, which he gathered and explained in accordance with a number of traditional Tibetan sources that are listed in detail.[22] The Indian professor Satis Chandra Acharya worked on the Sanskrit terminology, and U rgyan rgya mtsho, who had accompanied Das in Tibet, took care of Bon-related terminology.

In addition, Sandberg and Heyde, the dictionary's editors, are rather outspoken about the European sources and models for Das' work. In their preface to the dictionary, they make it clear that Das' entries depend, often considerably, on the earlier work of Csoma de Kőrös, and, most importantly, that of Heinrich August Jäschke:

> In place of the innumerable excerpts from Jäschke, already referred to, we have had to examine and to treat *de novo* the grammar and general usage of a large number of the commoner nouns, adjectives, and verbs, notably the verbs. To illustrate these new articles, we have had

[19] See Fader 2002–2009, Vol. III: 186–7, for details.

[20] Details of his beginnings in the Himalayas are provided in his autobiography, see Das 1969.

[21] See Das 1902.

[22] Donald Lopez even went so far as to consider Shes rab rgya mtsho as "the true author" of Das' dictionary (Lopez 2011: 159). This is an extreme position, but it addresses the crucial question of intellectual property, which is equally relevant to the other dictionaries produced in this context. See Emma Martin's forthcoming article for details on the encounter between Das and Shes rab rgya mtsho (note 10).

> to substitute for Jäschke's examples a large number of original quotations from Tibetan authors as well as a certain number of made-up sentences put together to exhibit various phrases of ordinary employment. In other articles, also, where Sarat Chandra Das had not thought it necessary to do more than repeat Csoma's or Jäschke's illustrative sentences, we have looked out fresh examples to replace them. [23]

Heinrich August Jäschke (1817–1883)

Along with Heyde and several other Christian missionaries, Jäschke was attached to the outposts of the Moravian Church that were established in the Western Himalayas in the second half of the nineteenth century. In their missionary zeal, these scholars exhibited an unprecedented interest in Tibetan linguistics. Jäschke, who lived in the region from 1857 to 1868, emerged as a particularly gifted intellectual, who could draw not only on his own studies of other languages, but also on the knowledge of his local interlocutors. This was especially important to achieve his declared aim, namely to consider temporal and geographical differences and to account for the meaning of a term not only by a translation, but also with a concrete example, taken from scriptures or ordinary conversation.[24] To this end, Jäschke collaborated with local scholars from different regions, but there is only very limited information about the details of these encounters.[25] At first, he worked with a certain Sonam Stobgyes (bSod rnam stob rgyas) from Stok, further with the monk Tsultrim (Tshul khrims) from Zangskar, and two lamas from Central Tibet. From 1864–65, he stayed in Darjeeling to improve his Lhasa dialect and had contact with various learned lamas. Back in Keylang, he studied for three years with Blo bzang chos 'phel, a monk from Tashilhunpo who was well versed in religious literature.[26]

Despite this intense and long lasting exchange with Tibetan scholars and the knowledge he gained from them, Jäschke's enterprise primarily had a missionary character:

> The chief motive of all our exertions lay always in the desire to facilitate and to hasten the spread of the Christian religion and of the Christian civilization, among the millions of Buddhists, who inhabit

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23 Das 1902: XII.

24 See Jäschke 1881: IIIf.

25 See Bray 1983; in a forthcoming article ("Heinrich August Jäschke (1817–1883): translating the Christian scriptures into Tibetan"), John Bray gathers information on Jäschke's indigenous instructors and informants, which I refer to here.

26 Some details of this scholar's life and his work with Jäschke were only recently unearthed; see Bray 2015.

> Central Asia, and who speak and read in Tibetan idioms. [27]

The dictionary that emerged as a by-product of these endeavours brought modern Tibetan lexicography to a new level, but must also be seen as a continuation of earlier works. In contrast to the limited information on his Tibetan interlocutors that he provides, Jäschke is rather outspoken about the European dictionaries of Tibetan he used, and he discusses the efforts of earlier pioneers, such as Schmidt, Csoma de Kőrös, and Schroeter critically.

Isaak Jacob Schmidt (1779–1847)

Schmidt's Tibetan-German dictionary must naturally be considered important for Jäschke, as Jäschke too published his large Tibetan dictionary first in German, between 1871 and 1876, before producing a translated and expanded version in English, in 1881.[28]

In contrast to Jäschke's extensive references, Schmidt's dictionary merely provides a translation of a Tibetan term, and, in this regard, clearly follows the earlier model of Csoma de Kőrös. In fact, Schmidt readily admits that he is largely building on Csoma's work, with the important difference that he organizes the words alphabetically, according to the base letter (*ming gzhi*), rather than the first letter, as Csoma did—something for which Schmidt had also criticized his predecessor. Further, Schmidt consulted three indigenous glossaries, which enabled him to add new vocabulary. When he published his dictionary in 1841, he therefore estimated that it would contain over 5,000 entries not included in Csoma's work.[29]

While Schmidt had come to know about Mongolian and Tibetan culture during a stay in Kalmykia in 1804–1806, his work on the Tibetan dictionary seems to have been done without the direct involvement of native scholars, based solely on written accounts, and in concrete dependence on the work of Csoma de Kőrös, which was published after Schmidt had started to work on his dictionary.[30]

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[27] Jäschke 1881: III.

[28] Though he started off with a *Romanized Tibetan and English Dictionary* of much smaller scope in 1866.

[29] See Schmidt 1969: V; these three works are the Tibetan-Mongolian *Ming gi rgya mtsho* and *Bod kyi brda yig rtogs par sla ba*, and the Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan-Chinese *Skad bzhi shan sbyar ba'i me long gi yi ge*. For a brief account of his scholarly activities, see Walravens 2005.

[30] For a detailed account of his life and scholarly works, see Walravens 2005. In the introduction to his dictionary, Schmidt openly admits the close relationship between his and Csoma de Kőrös' work; see Schmidt 1969: Vf.

Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784–1842)

Csoma de Kőrös finalized and published his work eight years before Schmidt, as a result of an extended stay in the Western Himalayas. Initially, Csoma had come to the region to explore the origins of Hungarian, which was his native language. There, he met with William Moorcroft, a British-Indian officer, who in this function must have been well aware of the importance of linguistic expertise for interacting with Tibet. Moorcroft quickly realized Csoma's linguistic potential and hired him on his own initiative, clearly with wider political and commercial agendas in mind.[31]

He was also the one who put Csoma in contact with his main local interlocutor, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, an influential lama in Zanskar, who too was paid by the British-Indian government for linguistic services. Csoma studied and worked with Sangs rgyas phun tshogs for seven years, and even acknowledges his contribution on the title page of the dictionary—a major gesture, expressing how much he valued indigenous scholarship.[32]

While on the English title page Sangs rgyas phun tshogs is referred to as an "assistant," in the Tibetan version he is called *slob dpon* or "teacher," which corresponds to Csoma de Kőrös' appellation as *slob gnyer pa* or "student." Again, it is the Tibetan version that tells us more about the actual distribution of labour in producing the dictionary: according to that text, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was responsible for compiling the words for the dictionary, which Csoma then translated and established their meaning in English.[33] In so doing, Csoma de Kőrös depended heavily on the scholarship of his local interlocutors, a fact that he declares openly in the introduction to his work:

> With respect to the Dictionary [...] the author begs to inform the public that it has been compiled from authentic sources, after he

[31] Moorcroft states this quite clearly in a letter that is quoted in Terjék 1984: XIV: "... A knowledge of the language alone is an acquisition not without a certain commercial, or possibly, political Value."

[32] Such an attitude seems to have prevailed also among Csoma's British-Indian superiors: when he received further funding to complete his work in 1827, he was asked to share the money equally with Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, see Terjék 1984: XXV.

[33] Csoma de Kőrös 1834: title pages. This accords with the method described by Terjék (1984: XX): "At his request, the Lama collected in the course of three months several thousand words according to definite thematical groups; names of the gods of the Buddhist pantheon, of the parts of the human body, of animals, of different furniture and objects, of grammatical terms, of numbers, of colours, of monasteries, of sects, and of plants and minerals, and wrote them down according to Csoma's directions."

> himself became sufficiently acquainted with the language, with the assistance of an intelligent Lama [...] in whose intellectual powers the author had full confidence, and whom he found to be thoroughly versed in Buddhistic literature in general, well acquainted with the customs and manners of his nation, and possessed of a general knowledge of those branches of science that are more essential for the preparation of a Dictionary. [34]

The dictionary was published with British funding in 1834 and quickly gained fame as the first modern European dictionary of Tibetan. This appellation is historically not entirely correct. During the same period that the British hired Csoma for his efforts in the Western Himalayas, they also arranged for the printing of another Tibetan dictionary in the Eastern Himalayas.

Friedrich Schroeter (d. 1820) and Eighteenth-Century Christian Missionaries

In the East, British colonial officials also understood the benefit of linguistic knowledge for their diplomatic relations with Bhutan, Sikkim, Tibet, and Nepal. Therefore, they supported Friedrich Schroeter, a Lutheran minister from Saxony who worked for the Anglican Church Missionary Society. To further his linguistic studies, he was given access to material that had been gathered by earlier missionaries, notably, the work produced by the Capuchin Francesco Orazio della Penna, during his stay in Lhasa in the middle of the eighteenth century. The Tibetan-Italian and Italian-Tibetan dictionaries that he produced served as the basis for Schroeter's work, and, together with the even earlier Latin-Tibetan dictionary by Giuseppe da Ascoli, Francesco Maria de Tours, and Domenico da Fano, these must be seen as the first modern Tibetan dictionaries, in the sense outlined above.[35]

However, as Schroeter died before completing his task, his unfinished manuscript was edited and finalized by John Marshman and William Carey, who had no knowledge of the Tibetan language and therefore must have introduced numerous errors into the publication that appeared in 1826.[36] These circumstances explain also why the influence of this work on the later dictionaries remained

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[34] Csoma de Kőrös 1834: IX.

[35] On the history of these earlier dictionary projects, see Bray 2008: 34–36 and Simon 1964: 85–87. At least a part of della Penna's original manuscript survives in private hands in Italy, see Lo Bue 2001. I would like to thank John Bray for bringing this to my attention.

[36] See Schroeter 1826. A detailed account of the production of this dictionary is provided in Bray 2008.

marginal. Csoma saw only some sample entries of it and dismissed the work as a whole.[37] Jäschke and Das make reference to it, but seem to have used it only minimally.

3. From Context to Content: Transformations and Appropriations in Producing Modern Tibetan Dictionaries

As this brief historical sketch demonstrates, the various enterprises of early modern Tibetan dictionary production were indeed closely connected: some of them involved similar networks of individuals, some of them were driven by similar motives and paid for by the same institutions, some used the same technologies, and all of them borrowed and incorporated material from their predecessors into the works they created. It is therefore not surprising that the various historical connections pointed out above also left their mark in the contents of the dictionaries. While a comprehensive analysis of the contents of all these works is clearly beyond the scope of this essay, some observations of their principal connections will be laid out, based on a more detailed analysis of a couple of significant samples.[38]

As mentioned earlier, the published outcome of Schroeter's work was rather flawed and therefore had no major influence on the dictionaries that were produced later. Hence only with Csoma de Kőrös' dictionary does one see closer relationships in the form of different processes of appropriation and transformation.

From Csoma de Kőrös to Schmidt

In going from one dictionary to another, it is clear that the works of Csoma de Kőrös and Schmidt are the ones most intimately connected. Schmidt acknowledges this close relationship in the introduction to his dictionary, but he also mentions "considerable gaps" as well as "incomplete, at times even entirely mistaken explanations" in Csoma de Kőrös' work, problems that he tried to overcome in his own dictionary.[39] Given these rather harsh comments, it is surprising how closely Schmidt actually follows

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[37] In the introduction to his dictionary, Csoma emphasizes that he did not have access to Schroeter's dictionary, edited by Marshman (Csoma de Kőrös 1834: X); but as detailed in his biography, he must have seen some excerpts of it (Terjék 1984: XXIV).

[38] This analysis is limited to a detailed comparison of all entries and derivatives under *kun*, *tha*, and *cho*, which were chosen due to their semantic range as well as their overall length and the ratio between main entries and subentries. The picture that emerges is consequently rather tentative.

[39] See Schmidt 1969: Vf.; quotations translated from German by author.

Csoma's rendering of Tibetan terms. In both cases, the individual entries are limited to listing equivalents of the Tibetan term, without providing any clarifying examples of its syntactic or semantic usage, more detailed explanation, or reference to any sources. The contents of Schmidt's dictionary therefore appear mostly as a close German rendition of Csoma de Kőrös' English explanation. The only major difference lies in the organization of entries, which, as mentioned above, in Csoma's case are listed according to the first letter, and in Schmidt's dictionary are listed according to the base letter (*ming gzhi*).

From Schmidt to Jäschke

This close relationship was also noted by Jäschke, who spoke of Schmidt's dictionary as a German "adaption" of Csoma's work, and criticized Schmidt not only for his belittling comments about his predecessors, but also for failing to implement a strict alphabetic organization in the case of subentries to a specific term.[40]

Jäschke fully acknowledges that he incorporates terms from Csoma and Schmidt, for which he provides references to sources for individual usages and nuances in meaning. In terms of the scope of terminology, Jäschke's work is similar to his predecessors, while its innovative character unfolds in the ways in which these contents are organized and explained. Rather than offering mere English (or German) equivalents, Jäschke ventures to explore the relationship between individual terms, occasionally provides Sanskrit equivalents, and, most importantly, accounts for their meaning by offering examples taken from Buddhist scriptures or conversational Tibetan.

The investigation of a single entry can serve as an example illustrating this change in presentation: the Tibetan term *cho nge* and its variant *cho nges* were rendered by Csoma as "a sob, sigh."[41] In the German version of Schmidt this was translated as "ein Seufzer, Geweine, Geschluchze." In addition, Schmidt listed the verb *cho nges byed pa* ("seufzen, weinen, schluchzen") as a subentry—indeed one of the very few additions not found already in Csoma.[42] In the work of Jäschke, *cho nge* / *cho nges* is given as "lamentation, wailing," along with the additional explanation that this refers especially to "lamentations for the dead." Jäschke then lists several derivative verbal constructions and provides a concrete reference to every single

[40] Jäschke 1881: VI.
[41] Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 47.
[42] Schmidt 1969: 162.

one of these: *cho nge* - *'debs pa* (Dzl. = Dzanglun);[43] - *'bod pa*, - *'don pa* (more recent literature); - *byed pa* (Sch. = Schmidt). These verbs are translated as "to lament, wail, cry, clamour," to which is added the grammatical explanation that the object of lamentation ("to cry to a person") is constructed with the particle *la*; moreover, another example with a reference is given, i.e., "the crying of a new-born child" (Thgy. = Thargyan).[44]

In providing such clear references Jäschke stands out even amongst many later dictionaries, and exhibits a scholarly rigor that must also be seen as an effect of the classical education he received at the Moravians' theological college. The list of (abbreviated) references at the beginning of his dictionary further reveals that Jäschke had access to a broad range of sources, not only indigenous texts and glossaries, but also the academic works about Tibetan culture that started to emerge in Europe at the time.[45]

From Jäschke to Das

A similar, but even more extensive list is found in the dictionary of Sarat Chandra Das.[46] While it does not attempt to provide references for all entries, the sources for more specialized terms are given, which is just one of several features adopted from Jäschke. The strong connection between the two dictionaries was noted also by the editors Sandberg and Heyde, who complained that Das had his own work "interlarded with lengthy excerpts from Jäschke's Dictionary."[47]

Indeed, a closer look at the examples that are given to illustrate the usage of a term reveals these borrowings. Again, a single case should suffice to illustrate the point: to explain the usage of the syllable *kun* in context, Jäschke provided the following examples: *spu'i khung bu kun nas* (taken from Dzl. = Dzanglun), *de dag kun*, *gzhan kun*, *kun thams cad*, *kun gyis mthong ba / thos pa*.[48] All these exact usages are listed again in Das, to which the further examples *me tog 'di kun bkram par bya*, *dus rnam pa kun*, *rnam pa kun*, and *kun la* are added. Das, however, does not point to Jäschke as a source, which he clearly was, nor does he include the reference (Dzl.) that Jäschke provided.[49] While Sandberg and Heyde obviously had made an effort to distance

[43] This text was edited and hence made accessible by Schmidt and is frequently referred to in Jäschke's work.
[44] Jäschke 1881: 161.
[45] See Jäschke 1881: XXI–XXII.
[46] Das 1902: XXVII–XXXIV.
[47] Das 1902: XI.
[48] Jäschke 1881: 4.
[49] Das 1902: 20.

Das' work from Jäschke through their revisions, the contents remained closely connected.

Nonetheless, the newer dictionary also featured various innovations such as a much stronger focus on providing Sanskrit equivalents, the provision of synonyms, and, most importantly, a drastic increase in the number of entries. In this regard, however, it should be noted that many of the words that appear as independent entries in Das were already contained in Jäschke, except there, they were mentioned in the explanations and examples for individual terms and their derivatives. In the sample of *kun* just mentioned, various names like Kun tu bzang po, Kun tu rgyu, Kun dga' bo and composites like *kun dkris*, *kun khyab*, *kun mkhyen*, *kun brtags*, etc. are listed and explained within the main entry in Jäschke. In Das' dictionary, all of these are included, but listed as separate subentries in their respective order, and hence add to the significant overall increase in vocabulary.

From Das to Tharchin

Similar mechanisms are also at work in the transition from Das' Tibetan-English to Tharchin's Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary. While Das distinguishes clearly between main entries, derivative sub-entries, and related terms in his explanations, Tharchin seems to draw his entries from all of these sources and lists them as separate main entries. This procedure can be observed clearly by taking a look at the entry *tha dad pa*. In Das' dictionary this figures as the main entry, which is then explained and detailed by providing the distinctions of the *tha dad lnga*. The derivative sub-entry *tha dad du* is discussed next, explained by, among others, the phrase *tha dad du mi gnas pa*. Then follows the next and last sub-entry, *tha dad phreng ldan*.[50]

In Tharchin's dictionary, the entries related to *tha dad* mirror precisely the same semantic range, only they are placed according to their strict alphabetical order and not according to their internal relations. The respective sequence hence starts with *tha dad lnga*, then *tha dad du*, *tha dad du gnas pa*, *tha dad pa*, and ends with *tha dad phreng ldan*. The only significant variation is that Das' phrase *tha dad du mi gnas pa* is turned into its opposite *tha dad du gnas pa*, to which a longer explanation is given.[51] This rearrangement of explanations, examples, and sub-entries as separate main entries also accounts for a further increase in the number of terms, which was estimated to amount to a

[50] Das 1902: 564.
[51] Tharchin Dictionary, Vol. II: 1046–47.

total of 60,000.[52]

These similarities in the structure and semantic field of individual entries seem not to be just a coincidence or caused by the nature of the Tibetan language. Rather, they must be seen as a result of active borrowing, as the consideration of two striking examples under the syllable *cho* suggests. In Das, the term *cho babs skor* is paraphrased as *tshur yong babs* (revenue, income), and its usage is illustrated by the example *'bras khul cho babs skor*, that is, "the earnings or income from the state of Sikkim."[53] While this phrase seems to have been chosen rather randomly, we find the exact same explanation in Tharchin's dictionary: here too, the term is paraphrased as *tshur yong babs*, and exemplified by pointing to the example of Sikkim: "*'bras khul cho babs skor zhes pa lta bu*."[54] Two phrases later, another, even more remarkable example of direct and, in this case, infelicitous borrowing is found. Das explains the phrase *cho ma* as referring to the name of a number. While he does not specify which number, he provides a reference for his explanation, that is, Ya-sel (Vaidūrya g-ya' sel), and even provides a concrete number (56) to locate the passage, presumably referring to a page or folio number, a system that he commonly uses for other references. In Tharchin's dictionary then, *cho ma* is explained as *grangs gnas lnga bcu nga drug pa.* The term *grangs gnas* usually refers to larger numerical units, especially the decimal multiples, such as tens, hundreds, thousands, etc. Thus, the phrase in Tharchin's dictionary points to the fifty-sixth position of such units. But while there is in fact a system of counting up to sixty units in ancient India, *cho ma* is not part of these.[55] Rather, the entire entry can only be understood as an act of unfortunate borrowing from Das. Quite obviously his dictionary was taken as a model, but the creator of the later entry had not fully understood Das' system of providing references.

While these are minor examples and a more thorough analysis would be required to determine the precise relations between the dictionaries of Das and Tharchin, they are nevertheless significant. As far as the earlier modern dictionaries attributed to non-Tibetan authors go, not only does an investigation of their contents reveal close connections between them, their authors even openly admitted such relations in the introductions to these works. With the dictionary of Tharchin and the examples just discussed, there is clear proof that these primarily missionary and colonial knowledge-

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[52] A thorough calculation is required to confirm this figure that is provided by Tharchin himself, see earlier.

[53] Das 1902: 462f.

[54] Tharchin Dictionary, Vol. II: 792.

[55] See Krang dbyi sun 2008, Vol. 1: 394–95.

making projects fed back directly into an entirely Tibetan language context. The impact of that, however, remained limited, due to the special history of Tharchin's work.

From Tharchin to Chos grags?

As financial and other problems prevented the completion and full publication of Tharchin's dictionary, it is not surprising that its influence on later modern Tibetan lexicography was much smaller than the potential of his work promised.

The first modern Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary that was actually published and more widely distributed was that of dGe bshes Chos grags in 1949. When a complete Chinese translation of every single entry of the dictionary was added in a new edition published by the Nationalities Publishing House in Beijing in 1957, this further increased its importance and also its influence on the later production of Tibetan and Chinese dictionaries.[56]

With the modern appearance that Chos grags had chosen in printing his dictionary in a tabular form, it is obvious that he was adopting a system that had been accepted as standard by Tharchin, as well as the European-trained scholars with whom both he and Tharchin were conversing. However, the conclusion that these similarities indicate more substantial processes of borrowing would seem to be premature, as a look into the contents of Chos grags's dictionary reveals: A tentative comparison of explanations of individual terms does not show any significant similarities to Tharchin's dictionary. Rather, there are fundamental differences even on a larger structural level. While Tharchin had used the system of alphabetical organization rigorously, not only implementing it to order the first syllable of a Tibetan term but also using it to place multisyllabic terms, this practice is not found in Chos grags. There, only the first syllable is strictly ordered and multisyllabic terms seem to be placed rather randomly. With regard to alphabetical organization then, Chos grags's dictionary should in fact not be closely linked to the modern tradition of producing Tibetan dictionaries associated with Csoma de Kőrös, Schmidt, Jäschke, *et al.*, where such an order was enforced with increasing strictness, and which was employed in an exclusively Tibetan context by Tharchin. At least on a structural level, it seems likely that Chos grags draws on the Tibetan indigenous lexicographical tradition, where alphabetization came into common use by the eighteenth century,

[56] See Pema Bhum 2005: 26. Detailed effects on later dictionaries remain to be investigated.

but was not used to order subsections or derivatives beyond the first syllable.[57]

4. By Way of Conclusion: The Entangled Nature of Early Tibetan Studies

Given the complexities of these relationships, is it accurate to describe Chos grags's dictionary as "purely Tibetan," as its app on Itunes advertises it—or not? The discussion above is not trying to give a straightforward answer to this question. Instead, in tracing the production of early modern Tibetan dictionaries, I have presented a case that illustrates the potential of an approach that goes beyond looking at knowledge production from a limited cultural perspective. As my emphasis on considering the different agents, their respective motives, sources, and resources for knowledge production has revealed, the creation of modern Tibetan dictionaries was in fact a highly transcultural affair that brought Christian missionaries, European linguists, British colonial officials, and Tibetan scholars together. The knowledge they created through their interactions is very much hybrid in nature and combines a modern European with a Tibetan scholarly tradition.

Not all of these agents and threads of knowledge are visible to the same extent. Early European dictionaries were heavily dependent on indigenous scholarship. They often acknowledge this dependence in passing, but do not explain it in detail. In contrast, they usually discuss their relationship to earlier European works at length, often speaking critically of their predecessors. This difference certainly reflects larger asymmetries of power in which indigenous agents are not given equal weight in recognition and are depicted as informants rather than as scholars in their own right. But beyond these mechanisms, which are typical for a colonial setting, in which many of these works were in fact produced, this asymmetry might also be related to cultural differences in notions of authorship and intellectual property.[58] Whereas the European academic tradition is very focused on the individual in its understanding of how knowledge is produced and how it should be attributed, in Tibet, knowledge production is seen more as a communal enterprise, related to a larger scholarly tradition to which individuals belong. Thus, this Tibetan perspective might also explain the fact that in the

[57] See Goldstein 1991: 2549.

[58] For a fundamental article on the different conceptions of authorship in the European and the Tibetan traditions, see Cabezón 2001. This topic has only recently received much more attention.

cases of Tharchin and Chos grags, who produced dictionaries mainly for a Tibetan audience, no detailed attempts to clarify contributors or sources, either European or Tibetan, are found in their introductions.[59] With their works, a tradition of producing dictionaries understood as modern emerges in Tibet, which is, effectively, a result of complex entanglements between European and Tibetan indigenous agents and their respective forms of knowledge.

However, dictionary production is not the only potentially fruitful domain for the investigation of such entanglements. As a central practice in the initial engagement with another cultural sphere, lexicography also had direct repercussions on other fields of study, such as religion, philosophy, anthropology, history, etc. But beyond purely linguistic issues, these areas of interest developed and were shaped through interactions between foreign and indigenous agents in crucial ways. The focus on viewing knowledge production as a transcultural affair, as it has been put forth in this essay, might therefore not only provide us with a more nuanced and historically accurate picture of how modern Tibetan dictionaries came into being, but could also serve as a model for investigating a wide range of disciplinary approaches and areas of interest that were pursued with the emergence of modern Tibetan studies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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[59] In the introduction to his dictionary, Chos grags does refer to various Indian and Tibetan treatises; he does so, however, not to explain his sources, but to establish the benefit (*dgos pa*) of his work (Chos grags 1980: 3ff.).

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