SORTING OUT MONPA: THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE BODIC LANGUAGES OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Roger Blench
Kay Williamson Educational Foundation
8, Guest Road
Cambridge CB1 2AL
United Kingdom
Voice/ Fax. 0044-(0)1223-560687
Mobile worldwide (00-44)-(0)7967-696804
E-mail rogerblench@yahoo.co.uk
http://www.rogerblench.info/RBOP.htm

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#	quasi-reconstruction
*	regular reconstruction
C	consonant
C_1	first consonant
IPA	International Phonetic Association
N	nasal
V	vowel

1. Introduction

One of the most characteristic ethnonyms used in Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India is 'Monpa' (e.g. Duarah 1992). It has been used to cover a wide range of languages, which have nothing much in common other than a putative Sino-Tibetan affiliation and there is a spectrum of local publications in Arunachal Pradesh referring to the Monpa, conflating both anthropological and linguistic data. Monpa is a generic term for non-Tibetan-speaking peoples south of Tibet proper, and applies to a number of highly diverse peoples, and so should not be used for classification purposes (Van Driem 2001: 472). From the point of view of the Tibetan Plateau it strikes a somewhat pejorative note, equivalent to 'Southern Barbarians' but to peoples further south it has generally positive connotations. All the Monpa languages are gathered in under the general term 'Bodish', which includes Tibetan and allied languages and goes back to Shafer (1955/56). However, there is an absence of good evidence, from the point of view of historical linguistics, that Bodish is a valid subgroup of Tibeto-Burman. The confusion over the affiliation of languages such as Mey (Sherdukpen) and Lish illustrates this. Indeed, many languages are only now being documented, and reliable comparative lexical data remains in short supply.

This paper tries to sort out the affiliations of the various Monpa groups in Arunachal Pradesh, their external links and place within the larger framework of Tibeto-Burman. It is based on intensive survey work in Arunachal Pradesh November and December 2011[1]. Standard sources on Tibeto-Burman (Shafer 1966/7; Benedict 1972; Bradley 1997; Van Driem 2001; Thurgood & LaPolla 2003; Matisoff 2003, 2008; Handel 2008) are used for comparisons and discussion of genetic affiliation. The Appendix Table brings together a sample of basic lexicon in various Monpa lects[2]. The table also includes standard Tibetan and reconstructed Tibeto-Burman forms, drawn from Matisoff (2003). These are cited as CTB (Common Tibeto-Burman) as their proto-form status is uncertain. The Meyor or Zakhring language, whose affiliation is problematic, is also included.

2. Tawang Monpa

One variety of Monpa is spoken in Tawang, the capital of Tawang District in northwestern Arunachal Pradesh, Northeast India. Tawang is a major monastery in northern Arunachal Pradesh (Lama 1999) and Norbu (2008) is an anthropological description of the Tawang people. The first data on this language was published by Hodgson (1853) and is analysed in Shafer (1954) under the name 'Dwags'. The only extended material on this language is Wangchu (2002) which follows the standard formula for this type of guide and consists mainly of 'useful' vocabulary and phrases. Hyslop and Tshering (2010) present a much more linguistically sophisticated field report of 'Dakpa'[3], based on material collected in the village of Lhou-Dung, some 20 km. southeast of Tawang. A wordlist of Tawang Monpa was recorded in Tawang in December 2011 through the kind offices of Dr. Micha Taiju, from Mr. Jenzia Phuatsok. Mr. Phuatsok is from the village of Rho, Thingbu Circle, on the very eastern edge of where the language is spoken. Additional cultural vocabulary was recorded from the information slips attached to objects in the Museum at Tawang Monastery, through the kind offices of the curator[4].

It appears that Monpa of Tawang resembles the Cuona (mTsho-sna) Monpa spoken in southeastern Tibet (Mama commune, Motuo), first reported in Sun et al. (1980), Lu (1986) and then described by Nishida (1988). According to Van Driem (2007) the nearest relative of Dakpa is Dzala. Hyslop and Tshering (2010) discuss the further links to languages west of Tawang, including Chali, Bumthang and Mangde, which are said to constitute East Bodish.

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[1] Thanks to Mr. Jummar Koyu and Mr. Jiken Bomjen for facilitating my work in Arunachal Pradesh. Individual informants for each language are listed in an Appendix.

[2] The relevant volume of the Linguistic Survey of India, III-1 (Grierson 1909) has no information on any Monpa lects.

[3] This name appears to be the Bhutanese term (Van Driem 2007), but I was unable to persuade my informants to recognise it.

[4] My particular thanks to the Abbot of Tawang, Guru Tulku Rinpoche, for assistance with work on the monastery collections.

The situation is different for Zemithang; all Tawang speakers report not being able to understand this language at all. It is assumed to still be part of East Bodish, but since no data is available, its present status is unclear. Map 1 shows the approximate extension of Tawang Monpa and Zemithang. The language of Mago-Thingbu is also not understood by Monpa speakers in Tawang, but is not considered to be Brokeh, so this may well be a type of Tibetan. However, this awaits further investigation.

Because of the prestige of Tawang monastery, the exonym 'Monpa' is taken as a high-status marker, hence many groups apply the term to themselves, despite speaking quite distinct languages. However, in Tawang itself, Monpa is severely threatened by the spread of Hindi as a daily language of intercommunication. Speakers in nearby villages such as Lhou are more likely to be able to produce an unmixed version of the language. However, Tibetan is the prestige language for Tawang speakers and public notices in Tawang are written in Tibetan. There has been no attempt to write Tawang in Tibetan script, to my knowledge.

Map 1. Tawang Monpa and Jang
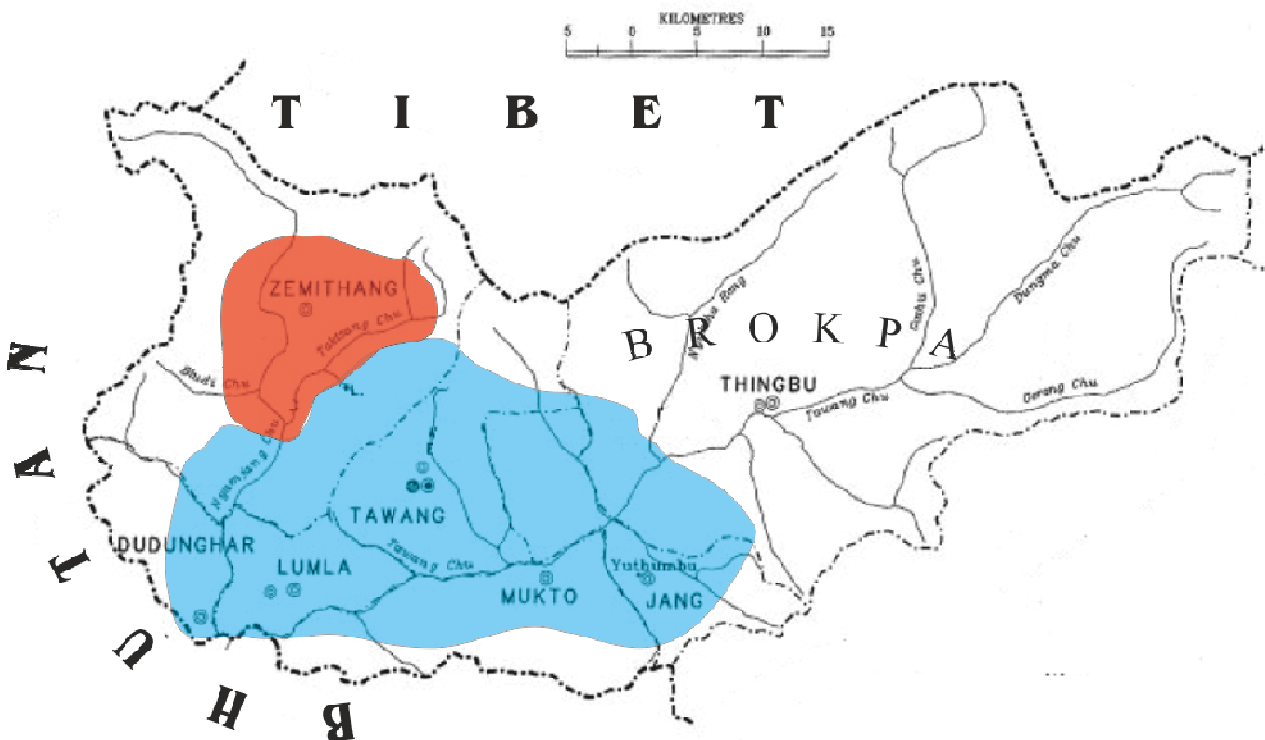
Despite the small number of speakers, a fiction film ('Redemption') in Tawang Monpa has been produced on DVD and apparently circulates well beyond the immediate area. Tawang Monpa is also clearly subject to considerable dialect variation, with Lumla and Jang specifically mentioned. Many words have doublets, i.e. two forms with the same meaning, which may be due to interference from Tibetan or from other dialects. This is almost certainly the case for culturally important terms such as 'skull'.

Dasgupta (2007) appends a short vocabulary of Jang, some 40 km southeast of Tawang, and his brief wordlist is given in Table 1 in comparison with Tawang and Dirang.

Table 1. Comparative table of Jang with Tawang and Dirang

Gloss	Jang	Tawang	Dirang	Comment
Man	mi	miʰ	soŋa	CTB *r-min
Woman	mui puʧa	mui butsa	ɲiza	cf. Memba neʤa. –za is a common element for 'child' in Tibeto-Burman
Child	puʧa	za, onu	ono	cf. Mey *nunu* 'child'
Mouth	kʰa	kʰa	nowaŋ	cf. Memba kʰa, CTB *mka
Eye	mey loŋ	meloŋ	rniŋ	cf. CTB *mik
Hand	la	la	garaŋ	cf. Memba lak
Horse	teʰ	teʰ	kurta	
Dog	kʰi	kʰi	kʰu	
Cow	ba	bʰa	wa	
House	kʰim	kʰyem	pʰey	
Bamboo	riu	rui	ʃi	
Water	ʧʰi	ʧʰe	ri	cf. Siangic *si*, Memba *ʧʰu*,
Sky	plaŋ	nom nuŋ	ŋam	
Flower	mentoʰ	mentʰo	mom naŋ	
Leaf	ʃʸiŋ blap	palap	ʃiŋ ʃawa	
Grass	kiʰ	ŋon	ʦi	
Maize	aʃum	oʃum	pʰin tʰaŋ	
Rice	topʃe	dep	toʧʰaŋ	cf. Memba *dey*
Dao	ʧʰobu	kʰyop	ʧʰowaŋ	
Stone	gorr	gor	luŋ	cf. Lish *luŋ*,
Good	ʃinpu	namda	pʰelu	
Tomorrow	nogor	nogor	ŋam ʧʰa	

This indicates that Jang is simply a dialect of Tawang with some slight lexical and phonological variation. The same appears to hold true for Lumla, but it may be the case that the language varies from village to village rather than having sharp dialect boundaries.

Strikingly, Tawang often agrees with reconstructed CTB where other types of Monpa have divergent lexemes, as shown in Table 2. For example;

Table 2. Tawang Monpa and reconstructed CTB

Gloss	CTB	Tibetan	Dirang	Brokeh	Tawang
Four	*b-ləy	འབཞི (bzhi)	bʧi	ʒi	bli
Seven	*s-nis	བདུན (bdun)	zum	dun	ŋis
Eight	*b-r-gyat	བརྒྱད (brgyad)	yen	geʰ	get
Nine	*d-gəw	དགུ (dgu)	gu	gu	ɖŭgu
Bone	*rus	རུས་ཁོག (rus khog)	kʰaŋ	ruko	roʃba
Moon	*s-la	ཟླ་བ (zla ba)	laɲi	da	lei
Man	*r-min	མི (mi)	soŋa	mi	miʰ
Name	*miŋ	མིང (ming)			meŋ

Some similarities may be explained by borrowing *from* Tibetan, for example, in the case of 'nine' or 'star'.

3. Misleading ethnic classification of the Kamengic languages

Bugun and the Mey cluster [=Sherdukpen] are languages spoken in West Kameng District of Arunachal Pradesh. Blench (2011) suggests that they should be classified together and form a small independent phylum christened 'Kamengic'. Whether this is ultimately accepted depends on more extensive documentation and analysis, but it can be asserted that their relationship with any Bodish language is remote. The Mey live in the valley of the Tengapani river south of Bomdila. The name Sherdukpen is a construct, from the settlements of Shergaon and 'Tukpen', the Monpa name for Rupa. The correct name for

Sherdukpen is *Mey* and their language is *Mey nyuk*. The main published source is Dondrup (1988) which is based on the Shergaon dialect and is of variable reliability. So far unrecorded is the dialect of Rupa, which is surprisingly different from Shergaon[5].

However, there are three languages, Chug, Lish and Sartang (aka But Monpa) which have regularly appeared in lists on Monpa languages, which are in fact part of the Mey cluster. Sartang is a language spoken in Nafra and Dirang circles in West Kameng. The Sartang were previously called 'But Monpa', but there was a consensus to change the name in 1981, and the name Sar Tang is a construct meaning 'plains dwellers'[6]. There was a recorded population of 348 in 1981, but this was probably an underestimate. The Sartang live in four central villages and numerous associated hamlets, so there must be at least 2000 speakers. Dondrup (2010) describes the 'Boot Monpa' language, his version of Sartang. According to the prefatory remarks, the fieldwork was completed in 1996, the manuscript completed in 2004, hence publication was rather tardy. The same lamentably low standards that characterise almost all volumes in this series are equalled or even surpassed in this work, and it is untrustworthy in all areas of usual interest to linguists. Two more languages falling under the general rubric of 'Monpa' are Chug and Lish. The Chug are found only in Chug village, a few miles from Dirang, and had a population of 483 in 1971. Lish speakers live in Lish itself and Gompatse, and there were 1567 residents recorded in 1981. Map 2 shows the locations of Lish, Chug and Sartang.

Map 2. Lish, Chug and Sartang

The first author to note the distinctiveness of Lish appears to be Kennedy (1914) although he says nothing about its affiliation. Grewal (1997:9) also reviews the various arguments. Das Gupta (2007) includes a very short comparative wordlist of Lish and Tawang Monpa in his monograph on Central Monpa, notes its differences from both, but reaches no conclusion. The text of Abraham et al. (2005) makes a case for treating Sartang, Chug and Lish as separate languages, and as a consequence they are assigned three-letter codes in the 2009 Ethnologue, and thus have probably gained ISO status. This is misleading; allowing for variations in transcription, Chug and Lish are hardly even dialects of one another. Concerning classification, Ethnologue (2009) says the following; 'The Lish, But and Chug dialects [of Monpa] differ from the others,

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[5] I would like to thank Dr. Dorje Karma of the State Veterinary Service for both hospitality and extensive help with fieldwork on Mey of Rupa and Shergaon, and in Rahung in January and December 2011.

[6] An odd name for people who live in extremely steep river valleys.

resembling Aka, Miji, and Sherdukpen languages'. This is a wild fantasia on the situation, given that these three languages hardly share any common lexemes. Accordingly the Ethnologue classifies these languages with Eastern Kiranti [!]. Even accepting this dubious classification of Monpa, which looks distinctly Bodish, the concept of specific languages 'resembling' such a mixed grab-bag is improbable at best.

Table 3 is a brief comparative wordlist of the Mey languages, showing that they are closely related to one another but have hardly anything in common with either Tawang or the hypothetical CTB. The transcription of Sartang and Lish are based on newly transcribed field data[7]. Surprisingly, Rupa is quite distinct from the language of Shergaon.

Table 3. Comparison of Mey cluster languages with Tawang Monpa and CTB

Gloss	CTB	Tawang	Chug	Lish	Sartang	Rupa	Shergaon
One	*g-t(y)ik	tʰi	hin	hin	han	han	han
Two	*g-ni-s	neⁱ	niʃ	ɲes	niʃ	ɲik	ɲit
Three	*g-sum	sum	om	ʔum	um	uŋ	uŋ
Four	*b-ləy	bli	psi	pʰəhi	pʃi	bsi	pʰsi
Five	*b-ŋa	leŋa	kʰa	kʰa	kʰu	kʰu	kʰu
Six	*d-ruk	gro	ʧyk	ʧʰuʔ	ʧy	kit	ʧuk
Seven	*s-nis	ŋis	his	ʃis	siʔ	sit	sit
Eight	*b-r-gyat	get	saɾgeʔ	saɾgeʔ	sardʑe	sardʑat	sargyat
Nine	*d-gəw	d̪ŭgu	tʰikʰu	tʰikʰu	tʰekʰe	dʰikʰi	tʰikʰi
Ten	*gip	ʧĩ̥	ʃan	ʃan	sou	sõ	sõ
Head	*d-bu-s	got	kʰloʔ	kʰoloʔ	kʰruʔ	kʰruk	kʰruk
Nose	*na, *naar	nah̥	heŋpʰoŋ	hempoŋ	apʰuŋ	nəfuŋ	nupʰuŋ
Eye	*mik	meloŋ	kʰum	kʰumu	kʰaʔbu	kivi	khibi
Mouth	*mka	kʰa	kʰoʧu	hoʧok	ʧʰo	nəʧaw	niʧaw
Ear	*r-na	nelăp	kʰutʰuŋ	kʰutʰuŋ	kʰətʰuŋ	gtʰiŋ	kʰutʰuŋ
Tongue	*s-l(y)a	leh̥	loⁱ	loⁱ	le	lapon	laphõ
Tooth	*swa	wah̥	hintuŋ	ʃiŋtuŋ	nitʰiŋ	tokʧe	nuthuŋ
Arm	*g-lak	lah̥	hut	hu	ik	ik	ik
Leg	*kaŋ	lemi	laⁱ	leⁱ	le	la	la
Stomach	*grwat	kepa	hiliŋ	hiɲiŋ	fəriŋ	sliŋ	siriŋ
Bone	*rus	roʃba	ʃukuʃ	ʃukuʃ	skiʔ	skik	skit
Blood	*s-hywey	kʰra	hoⁱ	hoⁱ	he	ha	ha
Sun	*nəy	plaŋ	nami	nami	nimiʔ	nini	nini
Moon	*s-la	lei	atnamba	namba	namluʔ	namblu	namblu
Star	*s-kar	karma	karma	karma	ʧydʑu	zik	ʧuzuk
Man	*r-min	mih̥	pədəŋ	bŭd̪ŭn	dʑiriŋ	ʃirin	dʑuhu
Woman	*mow	ămah	dʰudma	esma	dʑymy kʰre	dʑimi	dʑimi
Dog	*kʷəy	kʰi	watʰi	watʰi	petʰe	btʰa	pʰitʰa
Pig	*pwak	pʰa	ʃʼabaʔ	ʃaba	swaʔ	swok	swag
Tiger	*k-la	ʧĕn	lapʧa	pʰuyam	pʰuŋ	pʰuŋ	phõ
Water	*ti(y)	ʧi	kʰu	kʰaᵘ	kʰow	kʰo	kʰo
Fire	*mey	meh̥	beⁱ	beⁱ	be	ba	ba
Tree	*siŋ, *sik	ʧyaŋ	ʃiŋ	hiŋ	hiŋ	siŋtiŋ	hiŋ tʰuŋ
Leaf	*r-pak	palăp	ulaʔ	ulap	arap	alap	alap
Name	*miŋ	meŋ	biŋ	biŋ	adʑen		
Eat	*dzya	sasuʰ	ʧʰa	ʧa	he	ʧuva, kuva	ʧuwa, kuwa

It can be clearly stated that faulty methodology and the confusion of ethnic and clan classifications have allowed the manufacture of non-existent languages. Shergaon, Rupa, Sartang and the Lish cluster form a close dialect complex which has no discernible relation to either Kiranti or Monpa.

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[7] I would like to thank the Gaon Bura of Rahung, for recording a wordlist of Sartang on January 18th, 2011.

4. Dirang, Central and Southern Monpa

Apart from Chug and Lish, other languages usually assumed to be Bodish are also quite diverse. There is a chain of languages, stretching from Dirang to Kalaktang, which resemble one another, but which are too differentiated to be simply classed as dialects. These are Dirang, Murshing and Kalaktang (also referred to a 'Southern' Monpa). Map 3 shows the approximate location of Dirang or Central Monpa;

Map 3. Dirang or Central Monpa
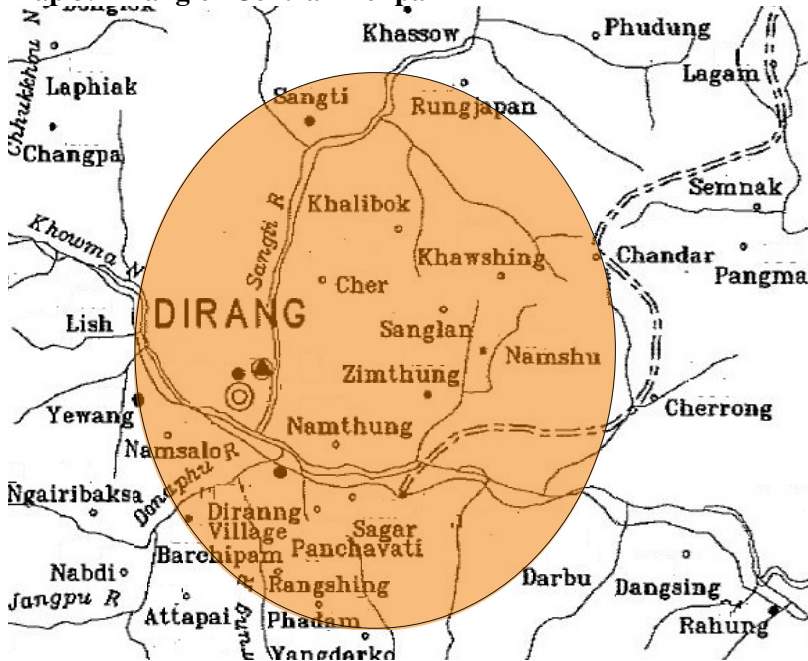
The existence of the Monpa communities of Murshing has not so far been reported in any literature[8]. The Murshing Monpa live in three villages, Murshing, Domkho and Sang Lin (wrongly spelt on official maps) and constitute some 130 households. A primary record of the language was made on 26th November, 2011[9]. The Monpa of Kalaktang are isolated from other Monpa in Arunachal Pradesh but probably have a close relationship with the neighbouring Tshangla in Bhutan. These people are described in Dutta (1999) which is an anthropological monograph containing only a small fragment of linguistic data. As far as can be seen, Kalaktang Monpa most closely resembles Dirang and not Tawang. Map 4 shows the villages of the Kalaktang and Murshing Monpa;

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[8] Murshing is not unknown in the wider world, as its traditions of origin refer to Tawang and the ruling family is of the same lineage as the current queen of Bhutan, who has visited the community.

[9] I would like to thank Mr. Jiken Bomjen for facilitating my visit to Murshing and Gombu Thinley and Anchal Samity in Domkho for kindly recording a wordlist of their language.

Map 4. The Kalaktang and Murshing Monpa
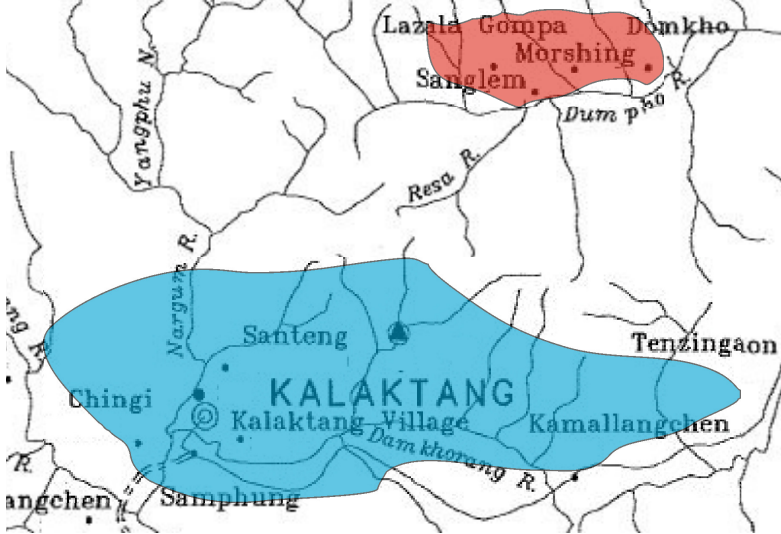
The literature on these languages is extremely limited. Das Gupta (2007) is a description of 'Central Monpa' which is effectively the language of Dirang. Grewal (1997: 34 ff.) also includes a grammar sketch of Central Monpa and he includes some comparisons with Lish and Tawang, as well as shorter lists of the lects spoken in the hamlets of Senge and Jang as an appendix. A list of Dirang Monpa is given in the Appendix Table, showing that it bears no significant resemblance to Tawang, except where the two share a CTB root. Its closest external relative appears to be Tshangla (known as Sharchhopkha in Bhutan) described in Egli-Roduner (1987) and Andvik (1993, 1999, 2003), which also corresponds to Cangluo spoken SE Tibet (Zhang 1986). Hoshi (1987) presents comparative lexical data on two dialects of 'Sharchok' which can be compared to the vocabulary in Das Gupta.

5. The Senge cluster

A previously unrecognised cluster of languages affiliated culturally with Tawang Monpa is called here the Senge cluster. Kennedy (1914) mentions the distinctiveness of Senge, together with another village, Nyukmadung. These two villages are some ten and fifteen kilometres northwest of Dirang in West Kameng district (Map 5). Fieldwork in November 2011 established that Senge, Nyakmadung and a third village, Lubrang, previously listed as Brokeh, speak a distinctive Bodish language. The Appendix Table gives newly transcribed field data collected in November 2011[10]. This shows clearly that the Senge cluster is most closely related to Brokeh and Memba and is quite remote from Tawang Monpa. Most likely the Senge-Nyakmadung peoples represent settled Brokpa herders.

Map 5. Villages of the Senge cluster
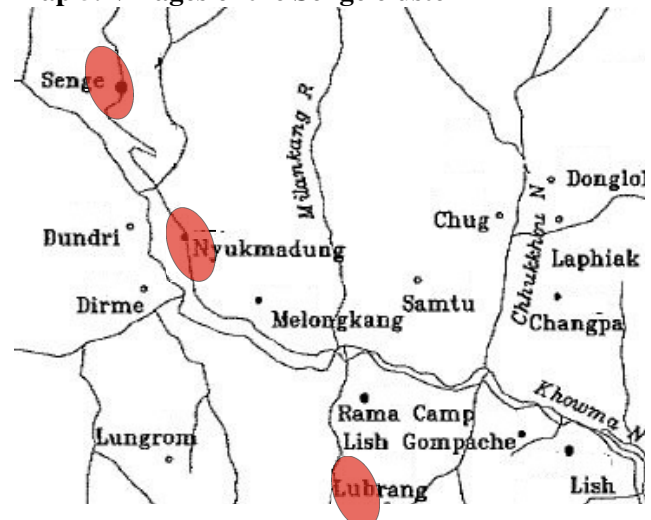
6. Memba

The Memba people live in a very remote region of northeastern Arunachal Pradesh, the Mechuka Valley in West Siang and in the Tuting and Gelling Valleys of Upper Siang. Badu (2002) estimates the population at just over 2000 in some nine villages. Badu (2002) is the only source for their language, although Dutta (2006), an anthropological account, quotes some enigmatic language data. Their oral traditions relate that they originated at Dakpa Kongba in SE Tibet, migrated to Bhutan, to Tawang and thence to their present location. The passage through Tawang may be a prestige gloss on their migration tradition; the data in the Appendix Table show that the language of the Brokpa nomads of the Tawang region is most closely related to Memba, and this in turn to Tibetan. For example, Brokeh and Memba share the Tibetan word for 'seven', #*dun*, which has been replaced in Tawang by *ŋis*, cognate with purported CTB *s-nis*.

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[10] Thanks to Pasung for both recording samples of his language and showing me around Senge village

Grewal (1997, II:14) quotes a vocabulary of 'Memba' but provides no source for it. As Dutta (2006) points out this is strongly at variance with the Memba recorded in other sources. Grewal aligns it with Tshangla and this is evidently correct as it closely resembles the Sharchok in Hoshi (1987), but in which case it is unlikely to be the Memba of north-eastern Arunachal Pradesh. It seems most likely this data was mislabelled in whatever source was available to Grewal.

7. Where does Meyor [Zakhring] fit in?

Map 6. Meyor speaking villages

The Meyor language, also known as Zakhring, is spoken in Lohit District, Walong and Kibithoo circles, Arunachal Pradesh (Landi 2005). In 2001 there were some 376 speakers scattered in fifteen villages. The approximate locations of these villages are shown in Map 6. The only p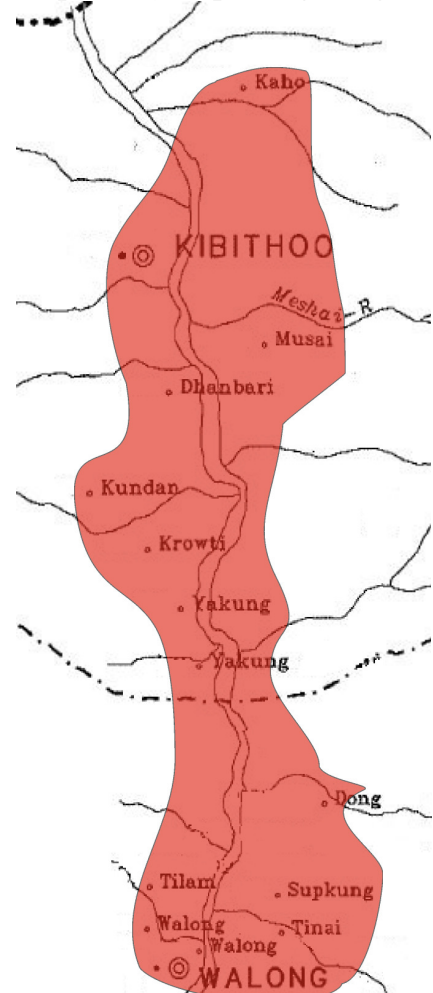ublished source on the language is Landi (2005) although Jacquesson (2001) includes some data on pronouns. Meyor is most closely related to the Brokeh languages, such as Memba and the Senge cluster. These languages have a relatively high proportion of Tibeto-Burman roots, preserved in a constellation very close to the hypothetical proto-form. However, as Landi (2005: 164 ff.) notes, there are some surprising similarities to Miju. Landi conflates similarities due to common CTB inheritance

Table 4. Miju-Meyor common roots

Gloss	Meyor	Miju
arrow	lowat	roowat
ask	want	wat
bear	ʧam	ʧim
beer	si	si
bird	awa	oowa
blood	awi	iwi
claw	ʧan	ʧan
comb	sipiŋ	sipin
granary	keetam	katam
hair	sam	syam
honey	ʃam	ʃamti
lock	dimik	dʒimik
melt	yulo	yu
mouse	aʃi	si
meat	ʧin	ʃin

with genuine shared cognates, but nonetheless some useful observations can be extracted from his tables. Table 4 shows a sample of lexical items where Miju and Meyor appear to share a common root.

Landi also compares Meyor to Turung (Singpho), a Jingpho language spoken in this region, but his comparisons are all either only doubtfully cognate or are CTB and thus not convincing as evidence. Meyor looks as if it is underlyingly a Bodish-type language, and related to Memba and Tawang Monpa, but that at some point in its history has interacted with Miju and has borrowed some of its lexicon. There may well also be grammatical and morphological evidence for this process.

8. The Brokeh cluster

The Brokpa are the high-altitude yak herders, dispersed across Bhutan, Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh who migrate along the snow line of the southern edges of the Himalayas. In Tibet proper they are usually known as 'Drokpa'. They generally follow a north-south transhumance pattern, exploiting mid-level pastures during the extreme parts of the winter. Because of their extreme mobility, their language has never been systematically surveyed and it is thus not certain they all speak the same language. Brokeh, the language of the Brokpa herders, is spoken in at least the following villages and probably others;

Table 5. Brokpa villages in Arunachal Pradesh

District	Villages
West Kameng	Dirme, Sumre
Tawang	Lagam, Mago, Thingbu, Lakuthang
Bhutanese border	Saklang, Marale

A brief introduction to the Brokeh spoken in Arunachal Pradesh exists (Dondrup 1993) and it is possible to establish the existence of a Brokeh group of Bodish. The Appendix table shows clearly that Senge, Brokeh and Memba are aligned and show near identical forms for many numerals. Their nearest relation is clearly Tibetic, but they have diverged too far from Tibetan to treat them as dialects. In particular, there has been a significant erosion of both initials and finals.

9. Relationship with Tibetan and Tibeto-Burman

The internal structure of Tibeto-Burman is not well understood, with recent publications in the field (e.g. Matisoff 2008) still promoting 'geographical' classifications such as Kamarupan. In particular, it has yet to be explained why the so-called 'North Assam' languages (Mey, Bugun, Hruso, Koro, Miji and others) share such a small proportion of their lexicon with reconstructed CTB and indeed with each other. It may well prove that this classification is essentially typological and that the relationship is one of contact rather than genetic affiliation.

In the case of Tawang Monpa, the similarities to Tibetan, as evidenced in the Appendix Table, are fairly clear. Bodish languages show strong similarities to reconstructed CTB, although this evidence may be partly circular, since Tibetan is a key plank in the reconstruction. Nonetheless, the 'East Bodish' label still prevalent in the literature is clearly misleading and a more neutral term needs to be devised. Dirang Monpa has innovated more vocabulary, and lost a number of initial minor syllables, hence its relation with other Bodish languages is more remote. A further study of its relationships to languages within Bhutan is required to assess its position within Tibeto-Burman as a whole.

10. Conclusions

'Monpa' is a broad ethnic label deriving from Tibetan, referring to southern populations. Arunachal Pradesh has at least three distinct linguistic groups locally named 'Monpa' which are confused in the literature, where ethnicity and language are frequently confounded. The main conclusions reached by this study are;

a) The Lish, Chug and Sartang languages are part of the isolated Mey (Sherdukpen) cluster and not certainly Tibeto-Burman.
b) Tawang Monpa is a Bodish language related to the Cuona spoken in Tibet and the same as Dakpa spoken in Bhutan
c) Tawang Monpa has considerable internal dialect variation, with the lects of Jang and Lumla mentioned by speakers.
c) Brokeh, the language of the transhumant herders found throughout the region, is distinct from Tawang Monpa and is related the Memba of Lohit.
d) The languages of Senge, Nyakmadung and Lubrang constitute a distinct language related to Brokeh and not to Tawang Monpa as previously claimed
e) Zemithang has a language not understood by speakers of Tawang Monpa, but which is presumably related
f) The language of Thingbu and Mago is also not understood by Tawang Monpa and could be a Tibetan or Brokeh dialect
f) The languages of Dirang, Murshing and Kalaktang form a dialect chain with Bhutanese Tshangla and are ultimately related to Central Bhutanese languages such as Bumthang; however their phonology appears to have been simplified
g) Hence the 'North', 'Central' and 'South' division of Monpa used in the literature is inappropriate and more illuminating labels should be adopted

Poor standards of transcription in published materials and preliminary materials on otherwise unrecorded languages mean that none of the languages in Arunachal Pradesh can be considered well-documented, and further scholarship in this direction would be welcome.

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Appendix: Sample comparative wordlist for Monpa type languages of Arunachal Pradesh

Gloss	CTB	Tibetan	Tawang	Dirang	Murshing	Senge	Brokeh	Memba	Meyor
One	*g-t(y)ik	གཅིག (g.cig)	tʰi	tʰur	tʰur	tʃik	tʃik	tʃik	tʃak
Two	*g-ni-s	གཉིས (g.nyis)	ney	nitsiŋ	ɲitsiŋ	ɲi	ɲiʰ	ɲi	ni
Three	*g-sum	གསུམ (g.sum)	sum	sam	sam	sum	sum	sum	som
Four	*b-ləy	བཞི (bzhi)	bli	btʃi	bʃi	pʃi	ʒi	tʃiʰ	dʒee
Five	*b-ŋa	ལྔ (lnga)	leŋeʰ	ŋa	ŋa	ŋa	ŋaʰ	ŋe	ŋa
Six	*d-ruk	དྲུག (drug)	gro	kʰuŋ	kʰuŋ	tukʰ	druk	du	trok
Seven	*s-nis	བདུན (bdun)	ɲis	zum	zum	dŭn	dun	din	dun
Eight	*b-r-gyat	བརྒྱད (brgyad)	get	yen	yen	ge	geʰ	gey	zat
Nine	*d-gəw	དགུ (dgu)	du	gu	gu	gŏ	gu	gu	gu
Ten	*gip	བཅུ (bcu)	tʃi	se	se	tʃi tamba	tʃu tʰamba	tʃu thum ba	tʃu
Head	*d-bu-s	མགོ (mgo)	got	ʃaraŋ	ʃaraŋ	gŏ	go	go	aku
Nose	*na, *naar	སྣ་ཁུག (sna khug)	naʰ	na uŋ	nakʰun	na	haʰ	noguŋ	naʰ
Eye	*mik	མིག (mig)	meloŋ	rniŋ	miŋ	mik	mik	mi	mik
Mouth	*mka	ཁ (kha)	kʰa	nowaŋ	nuwaŋ	katʃiko	kʰa tʃeme	kʰaʰ	tʃipay
Ear	*r-na	ཨ་མཆོག (a mchog)	nelăp	ney gaŋ	na	namtʃo	namʒo	namdʒo	tʃiŋ
Tongue	*s-l(y)a	ལྕེ (lce)	leʰ	le	dʒe	tʃe	tʃeʰ	tʃoli	bro
Tooth	*swa	སོ (so)	waʰ	ʃa	ʃa	so	so	sow	ʃu
Arm	*g-lak	ལག་པ (lag pa)	laʰ	garaŋ	garaŋ	lakpa	lakpa	lak	arak
Leg	*kaŋ	རྐང་པ (rkang pa)	lemi	bi	bi	kaŋba	kaŋba	kʰaŋ	tepro
Stomach	*grwat	གྲོད་ཁོག (grod khog)	kepa	pʰoloŋ	pʰutʃi	sukʰo	sukʰo	dogo	pʰuko
Bone	*rus	རུས་ཁོག (rus khog)	roʃba	kʰaŋ	kʰaŋ	drukɔ	ruko	rugo	tʃereek
Blood	*s-hywey	ཁྲག (khrag)	kʰra	ʒi	ʒi	tă?	tʰraʰ	tha	awi
Sun	*nəy	ཉི་མ (nyi ma)	plaŋ	ŋam			ɲima	ɲim	mik
Moon	*s-la	ཟླ་བ (zla ba)	lei	laɲi			da	dager	lo dowa
Star	*s-kar	སྐར་མ (skar ma)	karma	karma			karma	karem	karma
Man	*r-min	མི (mi)	miʰ	soŋa	ză		mi	kʰyog	gijoŋ
Woman	*mow	སྐྱེས་དམན (skyes dman)	amaʰ, muibu	ɲiza	zamiŋ		ama	nedʒa	mainaŋ
Child	*za/*tsa	ཕུ་གུ (phu gu),	ono	za, nunu	nunu		trugu	tukto	neŋe

Gloss	CTB	Tibetan	Tawang	Dirang	Murshing	Senge	Brokeh	Memba	Meyor
Old man	*bəw	སྤུ་གུ (spu gu) རྙིང་པ (rnying pa)	gatpu	ata, gatpu			gatpu	im, seŋ go	giʥoŋ mainaŋ
Dog	*kʷəy	ཁྱི (khyi)	kʰi̤	kʰu				kʰi̤	kwi
Pig	*pwak	ཕག་པ (phag pa)	pʰa	pʰa			pʰa	pʰa	lik
Tiger	*k-la	སྟག (stag)	ʧ̃en	goŋtak			sem can	taʰ	ziktetha
Water	*ti(y)	ཆུ (chu)	ʧi	ri			ʧu	ʧʰu	ati
Fire	*mey	མེ (me)	me̤ḫ	mi			me	meʰ	mi
Stone	*r-luŋ	རྡོ (rdo)	gor	luŋ			doʰ		
Tree	*siŋ, *sik	ཤིང་སྡོང (shing sdong)	ʧyaŋ	ʃiŋ			ʃiŋ	ʃiŋ	duŋpu
Leaf	*r-pak	lo-ma	palăp	ʃawa			loma	lemah	alap
Name	*miŋ	མིང (ming)	meŋ						meŋ
Iron	*syal	ལྕགས (lcags)	leʰ	perr			ʧa	ʧaʰ	ʧak
Rice	*ma(y)	འབྲས ('bras)	dep	kʰu		breʰ	bre	dey	andek
Eat	*dzya	ཟ (za)	sasṳḫ	za			zoʰ	sale	ʧəm

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