

Fading Songs of the Changpa Nomads

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Family at Angkung Village, Changthang Plateau, February, 2015

Special Copy for Dr. Maria Struble:

Thank you for your support!

Abstract

The Changpa nomads of the Rupshu-Kharnak region of Ladakh in northern India have survived for centuries living within the limits of one of the harshest ecological zones on earth. Through personal interviews this study investigated whether continued sedentarization among the Changpa nomads is having an influence on retention of traditional song knowledge, and specifically on the transmission of this knowledge to younger generations. The praise or offering songs included in this study are a primary way that these Buddhist-animist peoples have traditionally conceived of themselves within their natural and human environment. Using an ecopsychological approach (focusing on the nexus between ecology, psychology, and spirituality), this study seeks to document the existence and nature of song loss, and to better understand how loss or hybridization of these songs may influence the evolving self-concept of the Changpa people, and how they interact with their natural environment. In many ways the traditional Changpa culture, with its emphasis on intimate relation to the land, to each other, and to the spirit world, embodies the ideals of ecopsychology.

Key findings indicated that song knowledge appears based on age of individual rather than their location, and that there appears to be a trend of almost complete song loss among respondents under 30-years of age.

Keywords: nomads, ecopsychology, Changpa, song, Ladakh, Changthang

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songs, with a wider world. I hope that I have captured some of your openness and good humor, as well as your spiritual devotion, in these pages.

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We are very close to the sun and moon, so we are lucky, so why not be singing this song—our entire region is so good, so clean, this is a moment of enjoyment, so let us sing.

--Transcribed lyrics from *Gun tuk*, a traditional Changpa song of prosperity, sung by K-1

The Fading Songs of the Changpa Nomads

The Changpa nomads of the Rupshu-Kharnak region of Ladakh in northern India have survived for centuries living within the limits of one of the harshest ecological zones on earth (Goldstein & Beall, 1990). In successfully shaping their lives to the contours of the landscape, these nomadic pastoralists have developed an oral culture, rich in traditional song and dance, as well as one steeped in a mix of Buddhist and localized animistic worship practices that guide them in their daily life (Dollfus, 1999). A variety of forces are now converging upon the Ladakhi Changpa, encouraging significant levels of sedentarization and cultural change (Goodall, 2004a; Rosing, 2006).

Using the lens of ecopsychology, which focuses on the nexus between ecology, psychology, and spirituality, important elements in the Changpa's journey that risk being lost in this transition can be identified, and documented. One such loss may be the Changpa's rich trove of traditional songs, which speak of an ancient set of interdependencies—relationships with nature, with monasteries, lamas, and with animistic local gods. The songs also speak of a sense of place and rootedness over centuries, a sense of fully belonging to one of earth's harshest landscapes, and knowing that place intimately, as if it were a part of one's own body.

Ecopsychology is an evolving theory and practice that encourages sustainable and life-affirming relationships among humans, and between humans and with the more-than-human world. In many ways the traditional Changpa culture, with its emphasis on intimate relation to the land, to each other, and to the spirit world, embodies these ideals.

This study investigates whether sedentarization among the Changpa nomads is having an influence on retention of traditional song knowledge, and specifically on the transmission of this knowledge to younger generations. Praise or offering songs included in this study are a primary way that these Buddhist-animist peoples have traditionally conceived of themselves within their natural and human environment (Dinnerstein, 2013; Mills, 2000). Additionally, loss or hybridization of these songs may influence the evolving self-concept of the Changpa people and how they interact with their natural environment in the future (Dzhanseitova & Sakharbayeva, 2013).

My Personal Relationship to the Changpa and to Ecopsychology

I was first drawn to Ladakh, and to Changpa culture specifically, in 2004 while travelling to northern India as a tourist. Helena Norberg-Hodge had described Ladakhi culture in her book, *Ancient Futures* (1991), as a model for respectful and sustainable human society. Fascinated by this harsh and enchanting place in the Himalayas, populated by kind and welcoming Buddhist peoples still living a mostly traditional lifestyle, I have returned seven times to the Ladakh region, the latest visit being in February 2015 to conduct research for this study.

My pursuit of a degree in Ecopsychology grew out of my interest in Ladakhi Buddhist practices, and also from my frustration with decades of doing environmental activism fueled only by anger and a sense of foreboding and desperation. What I lacked was a larger psychological and spiritual context within which to view my life and its 'doings.' With its incorporation of

ancient indigenous wisdom, new science, and transpersonal psychology, ecopsychology provides that context, and gives new meaning to those of us who work in the fields of environmental awareness and conservation. Ecopsychology is an inter-discipline that looks at root causes of unsustainable human activities, as well as examples of sustainable human societies, as lessons from which to draw in the future, thus the connection to the Changpa and Ecopsychology.

Literature Review

Nomads

The definition of ‘nomad’ has long been dependent upon the observer (Barfield, 1993), and many typological schemes have been proposed to describe nomadism and all its variants (Abdi, 2013; Chang & Koster, 1994; Khazanov, 1994; Naess, 2013; Rosing, 2006). For Chang and Koster (1994), nomads are “pastoralists who depend on the products of their herd animals in areas where agricultural life is deemed too risky” (p.8). They describe pastoralists as “those who keep herd animals and who define themselves, and are defined by others, as pastoralists” (Chang & Koster, 1994, p.8). Barfield adds that nomadic pastoralism requires periodic movement, and social organization around households involving the entire family (Barfield, 1993, p.4).

Chang and Koster (1994) dispute the “nomadic model,” which equates pure pastoralism with egalitarianism. They hold that social inequalities have long been integral to nomad groups, a view also supported by Khazanov (1994), who also noted that nomads are non-autarkic. Abdi (2003) and Naess (2013) propose that earlier research has been overly focused on establishing fictitious typologies of pure pastoralists or nomads. Rosing asserted a kind of pure nomadism, while exceptionally rare, continues to exist in some of the Earth’s most barren environments, including among some groups of Changpa nomads still living on the Changthang Plateau (Rosing, 2006, p. 27).

Nomadic life in the 21st century is under threat worldwide due to factors that contribute to significant changes in nomadic life and a global trend toward settlement (Chang & Koster, 1994; Naess, 2013; Goodall, 2004b; Khazanov, 1994). Not only are these changes global, but in many cases they are rapid: In 1993, researcher James Barfield noted that pastoralism for Tibetans on the Changthang is “likely to thrive in Tibet to a degree unmatched elsewhere in Eurasia,” because the market for wool, meat and cashmere remains strong, and there are no inducements such as wage-labor (Barfield, 1993, p.199). At that time, the same could have been said for the neighboring Ladakhi Changpa: there were no inducements such as wage-labor, and thus very few alternatives to nomadic life. Yet recent research by Goodall (2004a & 2004b) and Morup (2007) documented the development of a wage labor market in Ladakh and its heightened effect upon rates of Changpa out-migration. Thus, with the growth of wage-labor, the Changpa’s ability to thrive to an ‘unmatched degree’ as noted by Barfield 22 years ago may be disappearing.

Changpa Nomads

Physical setting. The Changpa nomads live in the Indian region of Ladakh at the far western edge of the Changthang Plateau, a cold, dry steppe that lies at an average elevation of 4500 meters. This vast treeless area extends more than 1400 kilometers, from India’s Himalayan region in the west, through the Tibetan Autonomous Region, to the Chinese province of Qinghai in the east (Goldstein & Beall, 1990; Rosing, 2006). Changthang is a Tibetan word meaning northern plain or plateau: *Chang* means north, and *thang* or *tang* means plain. The Changpa are thus *northerners* (Rosing, 2006). The land here is higher in elevation than in central Tibet, creating a more unpredictable climate, which has largely prevented agriculture (Goeury, 2010; Goldstein & Beall, 1990). The anthropologist Melvyn Goldstein has called the Changthang “one of the most inhospitable regions in the world” (Goldstein & Beall, 1990, p. 45).

Changpa culture. The Changpa form a distinct society, separate from neighboring sedentary communities with whom they share a common language and Buddhist religion (Barfield, 1993; Goodall, 2004a; Rosing, 2006). Although one researcher believes there may have been as many as 4,000 Changpa on the Rupshu-Kharnak in 1995 (Jina in Rosing, 2006, p.60), Goodall's 2004 work states there are now fewer than 1200 Changpas of Rupshu-Kharnak, dispersed among three independent communities, located at Rupshu, Kharnak and Korzok. Some limited cultivation is undertaken, although mobile pastoralism (herding of sheep, goats and yak) for subsistence and trade is their main occupation. Each community maintains its own annual migration cycle and all households move with their animals throughout the year. The Changpa sell meat and wool produced in Rupshu-Kharnak to traders, who supply the urban population in Leh and the weaving industry in Srinagar (Goodall, 2004a; Goodall, 2004b). Pastoralism here is risky—one storm can kill up to 50% of all animals within a region, as it did on the Changthang in 1995-6 (Rosing, 2006; Schaller, 2003). Yet, the economic incentive is strong: The average income of pastoralists in Ladakh exceeds that of subsistence agricultural households due to the market for pashmina wool, which is Ladakh's highest export earner (Bhasin, 1999; Goodall, 2004a; Rosing, 2006).

Regional influences – Ladakh. The homeland of the Rupshu-Kharnak is the far western portion of the Changthang Plateau, in an area called Ladakh, a semi-autonomous region located in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir on the flanks of the Himalayas, bounded by Pakistan to the west, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China to the north and east (Goodall, 2004b) (See Appendix A-Map of Study Area).

Ladakh was first settled by Aryan Dards, and was greatly influenced by Muslims from nearby Kashmir. Only later did the influence of Tibet take hold (Larson, 1988). Politically, the

area is still subject to rule from the Muslim-dominated cities of Jammu or Srinagar. Culturally, however, Ladakh is still predominantly Tibetan Buddhist, and like Tibet, the region was largely undisturbed for centuries (Norberg-Hodge, 2009). Despite its isolation, Ladakh was at the ‘crossroads of high Asia,’ serving as a central re-supply point and feeder route for the Silk Route until late in the 19th century (Goldstein & Beall, 1990; Rizvi, 1999). It is one of the few remaining Buddhist regions that has retained a degree of social and religious continuity, and this is especially important regionally, given recent political crackdowns and repression against Buddhists in neighboring Tibet (Ahmed & Harris, 2005; Bray, 1998).

Sedentarization. Much of the recent research done on the Changpa is related to the themes of culture change, hybridization, and sedentarization (Dollfus, 1999; Goodall, 2004a; Morup, 2007; Naess, 2013). Dollfus (1999) found that between 1993-1999, Kharnak lost 25 of its 67 families to sedentarization. Rosing (2006) cites Jina’s 1999 study, which noted 7-14 family members per tent, or family. When applied to Dollfus’ migration figures of 25 families, this range of 7-14 members per family means that according to Dollfus, the number of people who had migrated away from the Changthang by 1999 was between 175-350 people (Rosing, 2006, p. 61). Goodall’s results indicate that between 1962-2001, 306 people had left the Rupshu-Kharnak to settle in Leh town, or “one-quarter the original population of the Rupshu-Kharnak” (Goodall, 2004a, p.194). Naess asserts that the Changpa’s very nomadic existence is now at risk of extinction, due to a convergence of social, political and environmental factors beyond their control (Naess, 2013).

Forces of change. Military build-up throughout Ladakh began in the 1960s, and tourism started in 1974: both have fostered rapid social and economic change causing a shift away from subsistence agriculture and an increased reliance on imports (Ahmed & Harris, 2005; Bhasin,

1999; Dinnerstein, 2013; Goodall 2004; Rizvi, 1999). This has had spin-off effects on market economy development, and the creation of wage-labor opportunities, which according to Goodall, are the main reason for increased levels of out-migration from nomadic communities (Goodall, 2004a).

The Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 restricted the Changpas from journeying to Tibet to collect salt for trade, and prevented access to traditional winter pastures. Increased forage competition on the lands that still remain accessible to the Changpa has come from Tibetan migrant nomads with their livestock, (forced over the border into Ladakh by Chinese policies), and as a result of the burgeoning growth in tourism treks (Goodall, 2004a; Naess, 2013).

Several sources point to climate change as a potential threat to the greater Himalayan region (FAO, 2009; Naess, 2013; Xu et al., 2009). Related to the Changpa, Naess posited that climate change, coupled with policies to privatize land and restrict the mobility of Tibetan pastoralists, may create accelerated pasture degradation and lead to the end of viable nomadic pastoralism on the Changthang Plateau (Naess, 2013). In the winter of 1995-6, many Changpa lost up to half their flocks, or more, due to an unusually heavy snowfall. This began a chain reaction of migration, which led to the formation of what Tashi Morup (2007) refers to as the 'ghetto' settlement of Karnakhling (Lonpo, Angchuk, personal communication, 2015).

Additional factors related to a reduced labor force can be seen to hamper the Changpa's ability to thrive, and are thus contributing to sedentarization. The national education campaign has severely impacted many families' ability to handle the livestock upon which they depend for survival, due to lack of manpower (Goodall, 2004a; Morup, 2007). Within the family, the Changpa traditionally have practiced fraternal polyandry (wherein a woman marries two, or more brothers). A move away from this practice has brought problems of inadequate labor

resource. Economics of scale dictates a need to maintain a certain herd size, which in turn requires enough extended family to manage it (Goodall, 2004a; Morup, 2007).

Lastly, Goodall raised the point that awareness of healthcare and educational facilities available in the urban area “has also helped to foster a sense of relative deprivation among the nomadic pastoral communities” (Goodall, 2004a, p.194).

Ladakhi and Changpa psycho-spirituality: Buddhist animists

Trewin (1995) found that Ladakhi Buddhists, like Tibetans, draw a distinction between the tradition of monastic Buddhism (*lha-chos*, "the religion of gods") and the religious beliefs and practices of the lay people (*mi-chos*, "the religion of men"). The latter is represented in Ladakh by a belief system rooted in Dardic culture, whereas in Tibet it is represented most strongly by what became the institutional Bon religion (Trewin, 1995).

Mills (2000) observed that the traditional Tibetan Buddhist sees themselves as rooted in a place, not just physically, but chthonically; that is, they are located in a complex matrix of relations between people and various spirits, such as household gods and protectors, and itinerant demons (Mills, 2000). These deities are associated with features of the local geography, and they regulate and influence local agricultural and social events. The land itself has personhood and agency (Dinnerstein, 2013; Dollfus, 1999). According to Dollfus and Rosing, the Changpa have twin religious allegiances to Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism of the *Karyad*, and to a large pantheon of local or village gods and spirits of the environment: mountains, lakes, passes, streams, etc. This animism extends to every facet of daily life, and the Changpa still rely on numerous locally-invoked deities that have a corresponding geographic reference in the physical world (Dollfus, 1999; Rosing, 2006).

Ecopsychology and Changpa Worldview. The three chief elements of Changpa psycho-

spirituality (close relationship to the natural world, shamanistic beliefs in local animistic deities, and ritualistic observance of traditional Buddhist practices) are themes that are well represented in the field of ecopsychology (Fisher, 2012; Gray, 1995), making it a good match for this study from a disciplinary perspective.

Ecopsychologists frequently look to indigenous cultures and their ties to the land for clues about sustainable human relationship to the Earth. As Theodore Roszak stated (1995), “ecopsychology proceeds from the assumption that at its deepest level the psyche remains sympathetically bonded to the earth that mothered us into existence.” (p. 5) Ecopsychology embraces indigenous wisdom, including ancient spiritual traditions, shamanism and other animistic viewpoints that encourage and nurture our sympathetic bond with the earth, as valid constructs of the world (Abram, 1995; Davis, n.d.; Fields, 2005; Gray, 1995; Metzner, 1995a).

Thus, the Changpa’s animated pantheon of local or village gods and spirits including mountains, lakes, passes, and streams (many of which are also included in their songs), expresses their own sympathetic ecopsychological bond with the land. This reciprocal, psycho-spiritual relationship with nature springs from what Roszak has called the ecological unconscious, which lies at the core of the psyche (Roszak, 1995). Repression of this collective unconscious leads to madness. Says Roszak, “[w]e have evolved into this planet killing species precisely because there is no awareness of an ecological unconscious” (Roszak, 1998).

Ecopsychology also highlights concepts of transpersonal psychology that are expressed through elements of Buddhist philosophy contained in Changpa songs: the notions of non-duality, interdependence, gratitude, and impermanence are foundational concepts within ecopsychological literature (Coleman, 2003; Davis, n.d.; Macy, 1995), and form a central theme woven through Changpa song and life.

Metzner (1995b) pointed out that ecology has been called the "subversive science" because it deals with systemic interconnections and interrelationships, and "is therefore in essence transdisciplinary and subversive of academic specialization" (Metzner, 1995b, para 4). Metzner proposed that ecological concepts are "ideally suited for helping the knowledge disciplines transcend their specialized blinders, and consider the wider contexts of ecosystem and Gaia" (Metzner, 1995b, para 4).

Changpa Songs

Until recently, Ladakhi was not a written language, and one of the main sources of traditional wisdom and entertainment has come from a rich oral tradition, including song (Dinnerstein, 2013). Ahmed and Harris state that the Moravian missionary A.H. Franke's work in the Ladakh region from 1896-1908 ranks among the best early academic efforts of the region and its people (Ahmed & Harris, 2005). Of interest to this study is Franke's 1899 work *Ladakhi Songs*, the first transcribed text of Ladakhi songs (Franke et al., 1899). The Ladakh scholar and poet Tashi Rabgias has been collecting Ladakhi folk song texts throughout the region. Like Franke's work, Rabgias' serial publication, entitled *Ladvag gyi yul glu* (Ladakhi Folksongs) unfortunately does not include recordings or transcriptions of the music itself (Dinnerstein, 2013, p.78-79).

Larson (1988) pointed to the distinction between Ladakhi instrumental music, called *dByangs*, which originally came from the west, and song, called *gLu*, which came from the east (and which are this study's focus). The majority of the village *gLu* that Larson encountered were very simple song melodies, with a wide variety of text themes applied to them. He cautioned against analyzing songs by text content as it varies widely. *dByangs* music is the province of men and their instruments; *gLu* belong to all the people, and are often sung by women.

Especially important to this study, Larson stated that in many cultures, music has proven to be the sole durable element during radical cultural change (Larson, 1998).

Dinnerstein (2013) noted that song for the Ladakhi helps fix the participant in a pre-defined universe populated with local mythical and geographic features, and that “traditional songs are not as well-known any more, but are being kept alive by a few singers who cultivate them in the way old folk songs have been cultivated in the West—not quite museum pieces, but no longer practiced in their original contexts, except in more remote villages where older folk still sing them for traditional holiday functions and recreation during the long, isolating winters.” (Dinnerstein, 2013, p.79).

While there has long been interest by researchers in the culture (including the songs) of the Ladakh region, there has been almost no research published on the songs of the Changpa nomads as a subset distinct from Ladakhi culture. A recent exception to this is A.G. Sheikh’s new book *Reflections on Ladakh, Tibet and Central Asia* (2014), which details 35 Ladakhi songs, and contains two songs it variably ascribes as having originated from ‘Changpa nomads’ or ‘nomads,’ and both are related to pashmina wool. One example, a nomad women’s song, combines the act of weaving with Buddhist teaching: “See the loom as Buddha’s shrine room. That is good” (Sheikh, 2014, p.159). As the study will demonstrate, Changpa songs that are sung today refer frequently to Buddhist teachings and themes.

Literature Review Conclusion

Thus far, the study has reviewed the literature concerning who and where the Changpa nomads are, how they traditionally live, and the various forces that are leading to their increased sedentarization. There is agreement among researchers that the Changpa are undergoing elevated rates of sedentarization from a nomadic to a settled environment. Many forces are now acting

upon the Changpa, and there is even speculation among some researchers concerning the future viability of the Changpa culture itself (Morup, 2007; Naess, 2013).

The review also revealed the Buddhist-animist worldview of the Changpa, and how singing songs has been a part of the traditional Changpa culture, one that locates them in relation to their physical and spiritual world. Dinnerstein stated that traditional Ladakhi songs are not well known anymore and that song knowledge is being preserved solely by Ladakhi elders in remote villages (Dinnerstein, 2013). Although the Changpa and the Ladakhis are culturally distinct, the two share many overlapping cultural elements including language similarities (Rosing, 2006). If these extend to song lyric similarities as well, the song loss noted by Dinnerstein among the Ladakhis may also be occurring among the Changpa. Yet, the literature has not revealed any similar studies of the preservation or loss of Changpa songs, thus the rationale for this initial study.

Last, the study revealed the degree to which the Changpa culture embodies many principles ecopsychologists consider important to study and to document for clues about sustainable human habitation on the planet. Ecopsychology, which is a further confluence of ecology (and all its transdisciplinary subversiveness) combined with transpersonal psychology (itself a melding of psychology and aspects of spirituality), carries the potential for an added richness of documentation and analysis of Changpa songs due to synergetic influences in its cross-boundary communications between constituent disciplines.

Method

The original research design called for a total of eight interviews conducted between two participant groups, one sedentary, one nomadic. I hypothesized that song knowledge and use

would differ between populations based on locality, and sought to include an age-sampled mixed gender pool of respondents (See research design, Appendix A). A total of nine Changpa were interviewed for this study; five individuals participated in full interviews. The full interviews consisted of 12 formal questions (see Appendix B). Most study participants also sang several songs, and a total of 21 songs were recorded and transcribed (See Table 1. Respondent Matrix, Songs and Themes).

The first four participants (K-1 through K-4) were originally from the Karnak region and now live in the village of Karnakhling, one of two Changpa housing settlements near Leh. The fifth participant was (C-1), a young woman from the small Changthang nomad group of 15 families known as Angkung, who migrate between two main encampments above 15,000' on the Changthang Plateau. Mechanical problems with diesel vehicles and the extreme cold prevented our research party from conducting further interviews on the Changthang Plateau, but the study author did secure partial interviews with three additional Changpa individuals in town which proved useful (C-3, TY, and TA). In all, the eight respondents ranged in age from 28 to 75, and comprised of six men and two women (see Table 1).

Participant responses were translated verbally in the field by Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, and Mr. Tashi Dawa, and recorded using handwritten notes and two digital recording devices. Mr. Tsering Angchuk (TA), a Changpa originally from Hanle village, also reviewed all interview recordings, and his translation of song lyrics was particularly helpful to confirm and clarify song themes. [Transcribed sections reproduced here have had minor editing for clarity only, in order to preserve the transliterated flavor of the interview situation.

The Respondents

[Note: all italics are words spoken by a translator]

K-1, a 62-year old male, was an accomplished and well-known traditional Changpa musician. My translator described him as an elder Changpa patriarch of the settlement of Karnakhling, where he had been settled for 21 years. When asked what song best defined the Changpa, K-1 sang a song about the good life on Changthang. *“He says that we people are situated very near to the sun and moon on Changthang, so we are lucky, so why not be singing this song. Our entire region is so good, so clean, this is a moment of enjoyment, so let us sing. He says rarely if ever are young Changpas interested to learning these songs. He always wants them to learn these as they reflect their identity. Yes. He’s very much love to sing the Changpa song even today after migration of 20 years.”*

K-2, a 40-year old woman, wore the traditional long dress, sheepskin shawl and turquoise jewelry of her ancestry. She felt passionately about preserving song knowledge: *“she feels immensely pleasure when singing these kind of Changthang songs, and she is determined to pass along to younger generation. And she said that it is very important to keep identity of Changpa. But she felt that the younger generation isn’t interested in traditional Ladakhi songs. She says that the Changpa who do not know the Changpa songs, cannot be a pure Changpa—cannot be a real Changpa.”*

K-3, a 49-year old man, cut an imposing figure in his traditional red *chuba*. Yet, he spoke so softly, we missed some of his dialogue. *“In the olden days, every Changpa used to know all these songs—they had two days-long song competitions. That was important way to pass on to the young generation. But with exposure to the modern world, the younger Changpas are no longer interested in learning this kind of song. That is why tradition of singing song is rapidly losing, particularly in the younger generation.”*

K-4, a 31-year old man, had been settled for half his life. He was the only Changpa we encountered in town who desired to go back to the Changthang and live a nomad's life. "*There are no government jobs here he says*". He expressed great pleasure in singing, saying it reminded him of childhood.

As with all respondents, for K-4 the songs were able to re-create emotions evoking deeply embedded memories of people and place. K-4 also felt that "*the younger generation [is] losing the values of song. And even his age—people of his age—rarely know the song of the Changthang. He said that the main cause of losing the songs, [was] by getting accessibility to modern world, accessibility to the education. That most of the younger people are not interested in the olden songs.*

C-1, a 28-year old woman, was from the small Changthang nomad group of 15 families known as Angkung. She had married into this village, her prior village being Hanle, where she described a rich tradition of daily song gatherings around a bonfire after work with flocks in the surrounding hills. She was one of several who mentioned a feeling of nostalgia when hearing the old songs sung in a village or on the radio. When speaking of the songs she remembered from her youth, she lowered her head, and her voice became softer and much lower in pitch. Her whole body seemed to be filled with the emotion of the music she remembered, and the times it evoked.

C-3, a 76-year old migrant in Choglamsar still spends seven months a year living the traditional nomad life at Hanle Village. When asked about song knowledge being part of the definition of a Changpa, he stated Changpa was 'more genetic' [in the blood], and that songs can be learned by the youth. Yet, he did say he felt sad about youth not wanting to learn songs, and admitted something was being lost from Changpa culture when songs were not being sung.

TY, a 28-year old Changpa woman, has lived with her family in Choglamsar for the past 12 years. Prior to this the family lived in Hanle village. She is studying to work in a bank, has her own laptop computer and says that although she knows very few traditional songs, *“it is not problem. Can learn songs, not difficult.”*

TA, a 31-year old secondary translator for this study, is a Changpa originally from Hanle village, and has been settled in Leh for the past five years. TA reviewed all recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and their meanings. He stated: *“Everything is influenced by the modern world. Traditionality is almost now gone. My sons and daughter’s generation is totally gone. [Before], none of them wear these skin-tight pants. Things are changing really fast. Thirty years ago everybody [was] living on the farm. From the farm everything’s available—sheep, goats, tsampa, yak cheese. So, how much it’s changing, really!”*

Results

Intergenerational loss. Of the four younger Changpa contacted for this study (C-1 (age=28), TA (31), TY (28), and AM (18), with the exception on C-1 who lived on the Changthang, none of the settled Changpa respondents sang any songs, said they knew songs, or expressed an interest in learning them. All respondents regardless of age or location said they felt that song knowledge was being lost among the younger generation (those 30 years-old and younger), particularly those who have moved away from the Changthang.

This intergenerational loss is evident among the six-member Changpa family who were my part-time hosts. They live in the refugee settlement of Choglamsar near Leh, and during the winter months, three generations are present in the household. In summer, the elders return each year to live on the Changthang, in the village of Hanle. Although the whole family visits there sporadically during this summer period, younger family members, TY and AM (ages 28 and 18

respectively) have little knowledge of Changpa songs, and little inclination to learn them. They speak about the songs lacking relevance to their modern lives, and also about their lack of understanding some words and themes used in the songs. This is also corroborated by 31-year old K-4 who says the interest among young Changpa is in hybrid Ladakhi songs (traditional songs whose rhythm is stepped up, and more of a rock beat is used), and in Hindi popular songs. This major shift by young Changpas to abandon their traditional song knowledge in favor of modern music is further supported by 31-year old TA's comments, "now they go from Hindi to Hip Hop by 8th or 9th standard" [this refers to Ladakh school levels, which roughly equate to students who are 13 to 15 years old].

The elders interviewed for this study often spoke of their desire for youth to learn the traditional songs, and several respondents agreed something was lost if the songs were not sung. Two respondents (K-2, C-1) explicitly said that it is impossible to be a pure or a real Changpa without knowing and singing the traditional songs, many of which speak about interdependence of the natural world and Changpa well-being.

Analysis of songs

Types of songs. The majority (66%, n=14) of the 21 songs sung and recorded for this study were devotional songs, concerned with making offerings, asking for blessings, or expressing gratitude to the gods. Interdependence with nature and the environment comprised the second thematic grouping (n=6), with the Barley Cake Marriage song forming a category of its own (See Song Themes, Appendix C).

Relationships in Songs. Overall, translations from the field results indicate that Changpa songs speak of three different relationships that are of great importance (see Table 1.). The first is the concept of interdependence, and specifically the direct relation between Changpa well-

being, and the natural world. Examples of this would be *Gun tuk* or Prosperity on the Changthang, sung by K-1, where the theme of individual and societal prosperity is tied to the health and harmony of the environment: “*We are very close to the sun and moon, so we are lucky.*), or *Shar gi Tidung Nima*, sung by K-3, which speaks of a time when “*the eastern sun and northern moon meet in the sky, this will remove global darkness.*” Or *Tendel Dhunpa*, the seven interdependencies song sung by the 75-year elder, C-3:

At the mountain and mountain wild life, those wild animals enjoy the good pasture and good water, there are happiness and joyous for those deer’s who live in that region, it is the third interdependent or interrelations.

In the midst of meadow, there would be wild yak, those animals enjoy the good pasture and good water, there would be wild yak also enjoy and happiness, it is the fourth interdependent or relations.

Hence we have many references to connection between animals and humans and the sun and moon, and between the health of the pasture and the success of the Changpa who depend upon it.

The second is the relationship between the Changpa and the local lama or Rinpoche connected with the local monastery. Hence, in these songs we have references to butter lamps (*Rakyong Thay Lay Da*), to praising and seeking blessing from individual lamas themselves (*Lama Lobsang Yeshe*), and to ceremonial prayer scarves in the song *Tselden lama jal lay jaldar*, which asks, *What types of offering scarf should we take to meet Tselden lama? We should take the best quality of the offering scarf.*

The third relationship is with local deities. The song *Sa la kidpo chik* (sung by K-4) is an older song that speaks of life on the Changthang depending totally upon the deity who exists at

that region. *The land of good pasture and good source of water which is grown very well for all the livestock depends on getting blessing from the deity at the regions.* The Changpa (and many in the larger Ladakhi culture) place great emphasis upon the appeasement of local deities, who are wholly separate from Buddhist deities. This is animism that pre-dates Buddhism, and may be of Bon origin (Dollfus, 1999; Rosing, 2006; Trewin, 1997).

Plate 1. *Latho*, or monument for appeasement of local mountain deities, near Nang Village, February 4, 2015. Author photo.

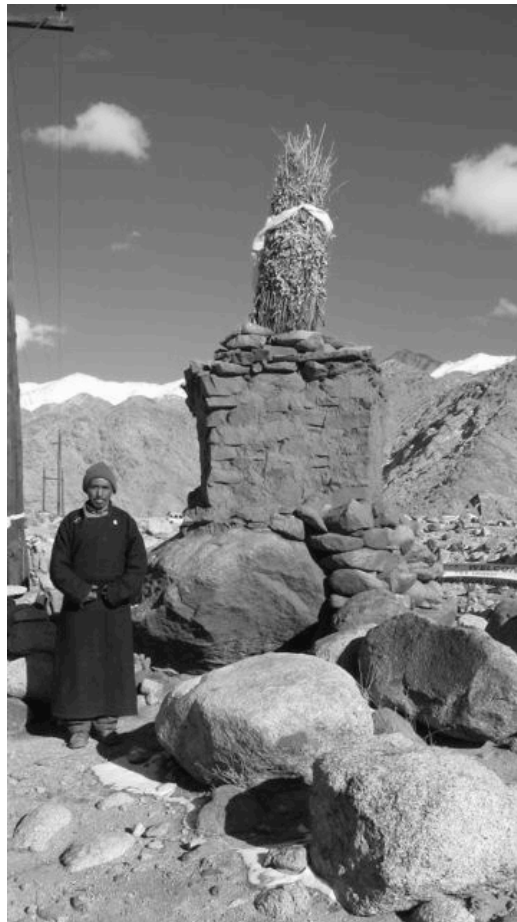


Table 1. Respondent Matrix, Songs and Themes

Cod e Name	Sex	Age	Years Sedentary	Full Interview	Song Knowledge	Songs Each Participant Sang	Themes Expressed Through Analysis of Lyrics
K-1	M	62	21	X	X	1. <i>Thende Lundup</i> - Interdependence Song; 2. <i>Rakyong Thay Lay Da</i> - Butter Lamp Song; 3. <i>Stod lu</i> - Praising song; 4. <i>Gun Tuk</i> - Prosperity on Changthang	1. Interdependence - living a good life, without hatred; 2. Devotional lighting of butter lamp; 3. Prayer for blessing and prosperity; 4. Gratitude for good life on Changthang
K-2	F	40	20	X	X	1. <i>Gunthot thonpo</i> - Joyous Family and Nature; 2. <i>Lada Balay lala</i> - Snowy High Passes; 3. <i>Mentok ki dhang</i> - Radiant yellow flower; 4. <i>Gongthot thonpo llasa yung gi nurbu</i> - To find precious gems is auspicious. 5. <i>Ruthuk khar</i> - Ruthok Palace	1. Interrelation between parents and nature; 2. Snow at highest pass melts with golden sun; 3. Offering - the bright yellow flower should be offered to the gods; 4. Precious ornamental stones worn on the body are auspicious like sun and moon; 5. Offering - May our prayers to Ruthok Palace elicit kindness from the gods and goddesses.
K-3	M	49	20	X	X	1. <i>Tashi phuntsum tsokspa</i> - prosperity and happiness song; 2. <i>Gaway Stendel dangpo</i> - joyous interdependent relations; 3. <i>Zuksong dhanggay zuksong</i> - Making the barley cake; 4. <i>Shargi Tidung Nima</i> - Eastern sun, northern moon; 5. <i>Lama Lobsang Yeshe</i> - Prayer offering to Yeshe; 6. <i>Sa yagi jangthang</i> - The poor northern plains	1. Marvellous three-fold perfection, happiness--sung at marriage, other venues; 2. The first joyous interrelations become visible at Phobrang palace; 3. Marriage- Sung while making the barley cake before the wedding ceremony. 4. Praise Nature song- When sun and moon meet in sky, darkness is removed; 5. Prayer offering to Lama Lobsang Yeshe; 6: Nature song- about the Changthang land.
K-4	M	31	15	X	X	1. <i>Kalzang ri</i> --Golden hills vision; 2. <i>Tselden lama jal lay jaldar</i> - Offering scarf for meeting lama; 3. <i>Sa la Kidpo</i> - Good pasture, Good life; 4. <i>Shar chuk la- Gankar Tinksay</i> monastery 5. <i>Kora wow</i> - Purification song.	1. From the golden hills our lama comes; 2. Offering to lama; 3. Good fortune (i.e., pasture) depends on the local deities; 4. Originally sung while circumambulating <i>Shar Chuk</i> monastery in <i>Gangkar Tinksay</i> region of what is now Tibet; 5. Circumambulation to remove bad karma.
C-1	F	28	0	X			
C-2	M	69	0		X		
C-3	M	75	*10		X	<i>Thendel Thunpa</i> - Seven Interdependencies	Interdependence of earth & sky; wild animals, including deer, yak; wood and stone for home; wealthiest with poorest person; farm, water and grain
TY	F	28	12				

TA	M	31	5				
			* seasonal				

Discussion

Since Changpa songs remain largely unrecorded (except the three references above in Sheikh (2014) and Rosing (2006)), the degree to which they coincide with songs sung by village Ladakhis, or by Tibetan nomads, remains unknown in the literature. Several informants used in this study stated that there is great similarity between the two, but there are differences in words used, and especially in the rhythms employed (Tsering Angdus Lonpo (TAL); Tsering Anchuk (TA), personal communication). Additionally, both our native Changpa translator, and a well-known Ladakhi singer, could tell immediately if a song was Changpa or Ladakhi by hearing a few lines sung.

Dinnerstein's 2013 work suggests song knowledge is being lost among the general population of Ladakhis inter-generationally: Traditional songs are no longer well-known, nor practiced in their original contexts, she has stated, except possibly by elders in remote villages. Although Dinnerstein did not mention the Changpa nomads *per se*, it seems reasonable to conclude that there may be a concomitant loss of song knowledge and frequency of use among the Changpa with increased sedentarization and modernization.

“Youth aren't learning the songs”

Research conducted among the Changpa in January and February, 2015, as a part of this study suggests that this is indeed the case: All of the Changpa interviewed, whether in town or on the Changthang, lamented the fact that younger Changpa no longer seem interested in learning the old songs, and none of the Changpa youth questioned (under 30-years old) knew any

Changpa songs, nor had an interest in them. “Youth aren’t learning the songs” was by far the most often heard comment from elders, said both out of frustration at the youth, and also possibly out of a frustration at their own inability to find a solution. “Youth are not learning because of lack of interest”, “lack of understanding the Changpa lyrics” and “the lure of modernization.” Every respondent mentioned this failure to transmit songs to the current generation as the main reason why song knowledge is being lost. An informant named AM (TY’s younger 18-year old sister) said the song lyrics were “boring.” It was found subsequently that she did not understand the lyrics as this form of Changpa dialect is not commonly learned today among youth.

Several respondents (K-2, C-1, K-3) expressed a strong desire to transmit songs to youth, yet only C-1, the young woman deprived of her Hanle song life by living in Angkung, mentioned a travelling troupe that would perform and share song knowledge with villages. Apparently the troupe had been on hiatus, but C-1 was eager to have them visit Angkung.

Changpa Ideology and Self-Identity

More than two decades ago, Barfield reported that the *drokba*, with whom the Changpa are closely related, felt a great sense of pride in their ability to survive “in an environment that would destroy lesser mortals” (Barfield, 1993, p. 182). This is also echoed by Goldstein and Beall (1990, p. 48), who quoted one nomad as saying “Look, it is obvious that we have a very easy lifestyle...as I have told you several times, the farmers’ lifestyle is difficult, not ours.” Yet Goodall (2004a) noted some Changpa she interviewed now feel a sense of deprivation in comparing their traditional existence with the larger world, and this is leading to out-migration. There also appears to be a growing sense among the Changpa that they are not in control of their destiny as they were in former times (Morup, 2007; Naess, 2013).

How do the Changpa consider themselves in these times of change? What does it mean to ‘be a Changpa’ these days, and how has changing song practice possibly reflected or even influenced this self-identity?

In terms of self-identity, the research conducted for this study indicates the Changpa identify themselves as intimately connected and bound up with the land, natural forces and associated deities and spirits, through their songs. Many of the village praise or offering songs speak of an intimate gratitude, and an interdependent awareness of the environment and its direct relationship to continued Changpa well-being. The lyrics also make clear that the Changpa identify themselves as Buddhists, and as members of their local *pha spun*, or extended family, which involves worship of local deities:

Joyous good omen will arise in the palace when we get together and praise the enlightened one.

In the great eon or glorious period, who will appear at the golden hill, during that period? Stelden lama will be there.

Both the happy and unhappy of the life at jangthang will be depend upon the deity who exist at that region.

Taken together, these themes indicate that important elements concerning the Changpa connection with place, with nature and the ecological unconscious, risk being lost as cultural expressions if the traditional songs which describe these relationships are no longer, or rarely sung.

Loss of Changpa Traditional Culture

The rapidity of cultural decline led several individuals encountered to speculate that the Changpa had “about 20 years” before they were all but functionally extinct. The vast majority of

respondents and informants felt that the remaining traditional culture, as still exemplified at places like Rupshu, and Angkung, was in a slow but steady decline. Even though the population has increased at Angkung from three families to 15 over the past two decades, this represents a small upsurge in an otherwise region-wide reduction of numbers of Changpa still living as nomads. Additionally, C-2 was clear in pointing out that the only reason Angkung hadn't gotten smaller was because they were by far the poorest village on that portion of the Changthang, and that this meant they were simply too poor for any members to move to town. Thus, their growth over the years has likely been fueled by increased arrival of those few Changpa too poor to move to town (also confirmed by TD and TAL).

All respondents agreed something essential about being a Changpa in the future would be lost by not singing the songs, but they were unable to clarify what qualities, or feelings, or relationships were being shifted, transformed, or potentially eliminated by the song loss.

For an ecopsychologist, relationships with nature become more of a reciprocal, non-dual and non-verbal conversation with Nature, not just an objective and easily quantified relationship with nature. Thus, the Changpa worldview may not be easily expressed in words that would make sense in the Western world.

Ecopsychology encourages the researcher to adopt different lenses of human perception—to widen the field of vision and employ different ways of knowing the world—as a window onto another dimension of intelligence. For non-verbal clues, researchers can look to somatic cues in respondents, such as those noted in C-1 (see below), or they can begin to think and possibly to feel, as would a Changpa.

Many changes have already come to Changpa culture over the past 50 years: Yak wool tents are today almost fully supplanted by cloth parachute tents; Diesel trucks are replacing

Yaks. Traditional foods are being replaced by tinned and packaged foods and roads now connect even the most remote zone of the Changthang. Loss of traditional song knowledge may be a 'last straw' for Changpa culture, one that is too fundamental, too psychologically disturbing to contemplate for the finality it represents. If Changpa songs are only being preserved to be sung as museum pieces, this may signal a fundamental shift in Changpa culture and life, too disappointing to verbalize to a Western researcher.

It may indeed be that song's unique place as one of the more robust and durable practices during cultural upheaval and change (Larson, 1998) is being eroded by the confluence of sedentarizing forces outlined above, causing the song knowledge to now be largely abandoned with this current generation.

Songs as Emotional Connection with Place

Several respondents (K-1, K-3, K-4, C-1) felt that while singing the songs today they could either recall a time or a place from childhood. For 28-year old C-1, who now lives in Angkung where few songs are sung, hearing the songs brought a visible longing for the social gatherings she used to enjoy in Hanley. She was one of several who mentioned a feeling of nostalgia when hearing the old songs sung in a village or on the radio. K-3 was reminded of a time when he was young and handsome on the Changthang. Respondent K-4 was reminded of time with his parents on the Changthang, and how he had to struggle to learn the songs around the fire. Changpa songs are usually sung outdoors, where the Changpa spend a majority of their time, thus heightening the psychological connection between songs, and a strong sense of place.

The Future for Changpa

Currently the market for Pashmina wool is the central economic factor encouraging continued pastoralism for the Changpa (Ahmed, 2004; Goodall, 2004a). While there is concern

among some researchers that the Changpa are in danger of mass sedentarization (Morup, 2007; Naess, 2013), so long as the market for pashmina remains strong, and so long as the Changpa migration experience continues to be highly variable in terms of economic success (Goodall, 2004b), mass sedentarization, and a total elimination of the Changpa way of life may not be inevitable. Thus, songs may be preserved in some areas for some time into the future. Some solace may also be taken in both Khazanov's (1995) observations about adaptability, hybridity, and resiliency of cultures, and Goodall's (2004a) comments about sedentarization not necessarily being a one-way street. So long as there are elders, or recordings from research studies, traditional song knowledge can theoretically be preserved and revived. Whether the same is true for the larger Changpa culture remains to be seen.

Ecopsychological Applications

Ecopsychology embraces ecology as a blueprint for our own conscious living within the human, and the more-than-human world. In generally describing the people of the Ladakh region, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has written that “[d]espite the rigorous climate and the harsh environment, the people are by and large happy and contented. This is no doubt due partly to the frugality that comes from self-reliance and partly due to the predominantly Buddhist culture.” He goes on to note Ladakhi values that are based in a “deep-rooted respect for each other’s fundamental human needs and an acceptance of the natural limitations of the environment” (HHDL In Norberg-Hodge, 2009, p. vi). Thomashow (1995) highlights the elements of simplicity, locality, having respect for each other, and honoring the land, as qualities of an evolved ecological identity. In leaving their nomadic lifestyle and abandoning its songs, the Changpa are certainly not the first to make such radical shifts. Khazanov (1994) notes many examples, including the Turkmen, the Kalmucks, the Uighurs all nomads who adapted to the

outside world through sedentarization. Yet, the ecopsychological implication of this shift is to lose one more strand of a human culture that accepted the natural limitations of the environment. In terms of ecological adaptation, the Changpa are some of the original Deep Ecologists, embodying ecopsychology's ethic for frugality, bioregionalism, and thus sustainability, long before the terms existed (Rosing, 2006). Even in 2015, what remains of the traditional Changpa culture represents a highly refined ecological adaptation to one of the most challenging ecosystems on earth. The songs depict the individual in relation to the vast sky of the Changthang Plateau and help describe, and to celebrate, this vanishing ecopsychological relationship:

The high land, which is near to the sky, is our land—the land [where] we live, and the sun and moon are like our parents, and that is the reason we are living a very good life.

Limitations

Deriving Meaning from Changpa Songs. Translating Ladakhi text to English is a challenge. Deriving meaning from Changpa song lyrics is often complicated by their heavy reliance on symbolism, and by the use of regional dialects unique to a single village.

Transcription of these songs, even using several native-speaking individuals as in this study, has proven difficult, and at times uncertain. The Ladakhi (non-Changpa) native speakers did not always know the words that were used, and frequently said things such as “it is difficult to say what this means exactly.” Or, they would simply say, “the song is about interdependence” adding no more details or specifics. Even Tsering Angchuk, a 31-year old native Changpa speaker from had some difficulty converting the Changpa songs into English. The concepts expressed are more like poetry than text, and while the imagery is rich with references to the

natural world, and to concepts such as impermanence, interdependence, and prosperity, converting these elements into an English language transcription has been a challenge.

Additionally the small sample size and the few responses from individuals living on the Changthang indicate a potential trend of intergenerational song loss only, and provide an avenue for future study.

Recommendations for Future Study

More research is needed looking at the phenomenon of hybridization (rather than abandonment) of Changpa songs and whether it indicates a potential for cultural resiliency, or is an indication of cultural disintegration. Further work could also be done to investigate the changing ecological identity of the Changpa nomads, and to learn more about their vast trove of more than 2,000 reported traditional songs, some 200 of which have been captured as a private documentary video project by local Ladakhi filmmakers, Mr. Tashi Dawa and Mr. Tsering Wangdus Lonpo (Dawa & Lonpo, 2015).

Self Reflection

During visits to Ladakh, many of the social transformations noted in the literature have become apparent: there are more tourists, more traffic, more hotels, bigger army posts, as well as more wage opportunities, and less young people living full-time on the Changthang. An informal survey I conducted of a Ladakhi private school class among young people (ages 6-16) in February 2105 indicates that the overwhelming majority of students (n~40) had little interest in local planting regimes and basic agrarian strategies that only a generation ago formed the bedrock of their culture. Instead, the students said they are actively looking to move off the land, seeking jobs in the growing government sector, in the Indian army, or in tourism. Only one student out of 40 respondents said she wanted to remain in the village, and not come to an urban

area to live.

As one who values traditional and sustainable human culture as an honest expression of humanity interwoven into the land, I lament these results. And yet ecopsychology, particularly with its emphasis on transpersonal psychology and mindfulness, has given me a different context within which to view these rapid cultural shifts, and my place as a compassionate witness to them. Researchers have an obligation to record, to experience, and to witness. It is also an obligation to tell, as honestly as possible, the story of another through their eyes. It is my hope that this study has accomplished this, even to some small degree.

Conclusion

By tracing traditional song retention, ecopsychologists can develop a potential indicator of cultural integrity and monitor the speed of change among sedentarizing peoples, and among the Changpa specifically. If Larson (1988) is correct that songs are among the most durable and least subject to change of cultural elements, then by this rubric the Changpa culture is in the midst, or possibly at the end, of a major cultural shift. Many researchers have noted that influences from modern western culture, and domestic Indian culture, are having major social and ecological impacts on the entire Ladakh region, which includes the remote Changthang Plateau. Respondent and translator TA, who is now 31 and a father of an infant, was not alone among respondents when he said he sees the traditional Changpa lifestyle disappearing entirely with his children's generation. It remains to be seen whether ecopsychology may allow discovery of ways that the Changpa can move forward into the 21st century with a spirit of creative adaptation that honors relationships among and between humans, and with the more-than-human world.

Results from this limited study indicate that song knowledge and use appears dependent upon living in an active and vibrant Changpa culture. Without immersion in the culture, individuals do not have the chance to learn the songs, many of which are sung in a group around a fire after the day's work. With advanced rates of sedentarization, and with exposure to the modern educational environment (with its access to Hindi and Hip Hop) for almost all children of Changpa nomads, further erosion of the collective body of knowledge concerning Changpa traditional song is likely to occur.

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Appendices follow.

Appendix A—MAP OF STUDY AREA



Map courtesy University of Texas. Retrieved from: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/kashmir.html>

Appendix B—STUDY DESIGN

Song loss/retention among nomadic groups: Fading songs of the Changpa?

December 2, 2014

Introduction

The Changpa nomads of northern India are sedentarizing at increasing rates, and traditional folk songs that the Changpa nomads sing as pastoralists that intimately connect them with the land on the Changthang Plateau may be at risk of loss. The primary aim of the attached survey is to establish if song knowledge is being lost or retained as the Changpa leave their nomadic lives and become part of the sedentary population in and around Leh Town, northern India.

Project Design

Two populations of Changpa peoples are to be anonymously surveyed using the same survey: 1). Changpa pastoral nomads living traditionally on the Changthang Plateau, and 2). Sedentary Changpa living in town. All subjects will be given a unique fictitious name, and identified in field notes only by age, gender, and their locational history. Four families from each of the two larger populations will be identified, and interviewed in February 2015. All eight interviews will be conducted in the local Ladakhi language, and translated to English. My

English translators for this, and assistants in the field will be Mr. Tashi Dawa and Mr. Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, both film makers and residents of Leh town, Jammu & Kashmir State, India.

Methodology & Results Analysis

This study will use a qualitative Narrative Inquiry method to collect and analyze information obtained through administering interview questions related to each subject's recollection and use of song, and information gained about a subject's life through their stories and song. A collaborative analysis process with Ladakhi colleagues will be used throughout. translations in the field, a more refined and accurate translation, and re-construction of story and the underlying narrative's meaning. Essentially, each of the 12 interview questions can be looked at as the subject's opportunity to tell a story. Thus, the study's use of a narrative analysis approach which identifies and analyzes themes, enthymemes, opposites, and syllogisms as part of the analysis process seems appropriate. This study proposes to use an approach similar to Feldman, et al., *Making Sense of Stories: A Rhetorical Approach to Narrative Analysis*. (2004). See:https://socialecology.uci.edu/sites/socialecology.uci.edu/files/users/feldmanm/Feldman_Skolberg_Brown_Horner_2004.pdf

Objectives of the Interview

1) To investigate song loss among Changpa nomad peoples based on their location. I hypothesize that on average, nomadic individuals still living on the Changthang will have retained better recollection, and more frequent use of, traditional village offering songs than Changpa individuals who have moved to town.

2) To explore the extent that song, traditional or hybridized, expresses and defines the modern Changpa today. How does song help the Changpa navigate through their rapidly changing world?

3) I hope that by giving Changpa people the chance to talk about favorite or important songs, and to dedicate songs for recording and dissemination through the thesis, they are given the chance to sing their stories of tradition and change, directly to a wider world.

Appendix C—SURVEY QUESTIONS

Survey Questions—Songs of the Changpa

1. *What traditional songs do you sing today?*
2. *How often do you sing them?*
3. *How did you learn them?*
4. *Who sings them (men/women/children)?*
5. *Did you, or your relatives sing more/different songs before? Which ones?*
6. *What do you see and feel when you sing these songs? Do some have special importance or meaning?*
7. *Do the songs have the same meaning when you are not on the Changthang?*

8. *Are these traditional songs still important to you? Will they be in the future?*
9. *What songs do you no longer, or very rarely sing?*
10. *Why do you no longer sing these?*
11. *What songs do you feel best define the Changpa people? Why?*
12. *Would you like to sing a song for me?*

Appendix D—SONG THEMES

Sung by K-1

1. *Thende Lundup*—Interdependence—Good life without hatred
2. *Rakyong Thay Lay Da*—Devotional lighting butter lamp
3. *Stod lu*—Prayer for prosperity
4. *Gun tuk*—Gratitude for good life

Sung by K-2

5. *Gunthot thonpo*—Interdependence— parents & nature
6. *Lada Balay llala*—Nature – of sun melting snow on high passes
7. *Mentok ki dhang*—Prayer offering
8. *Gongthot thonpo llasa yung gi nurbu*—Offering/connection
9. *Ruthuk khar*—Offering

Sung by K-3

10. *Tashi phuntsun tsokspa*—Celebration—behold three-fold perfection
11. *Gaway Stendel dangpo*—Praise for Pobhrang Palace
12. *Zuksong dhanggay zuksong*—Barley cake song—joyous marriage preparation
13. *Shargi Tidung Nima*—Praise Nature—remove darkness
14. *Lama Lobsang Yeshe*—Prayer to lama
15. *Sa yagi jangthang*—Nature song about Changthang

Sung by K-4

16. *Kalzang ri*—Praise lama from golden hills
17. *Tselden lama jal lay jaldar*—Offering to lama
18. *Sa la Kidpo*—Good fortune depends on local deities
19. *Shar chuk la- Gankar Tinksay*—Prayer-circumambulation song
20. *Kora wow*—Purification song

Sung by C-3

21. *Thendel Thunpa*—Seven Interdependencies

Major Themes Found Within Changpa Songs

1). Devotional (prayer or offering) songs:

2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 (n= 14)

2). Interdependence with environment/praising nature songs:

1, 5, 6, 13, 15, 21 (n=6)

Also:

3) Marriage cake song

12 (n=1)

Appendix E—CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT: Song of the Changpa

Purpose of this study: To survey knowledge of traditional Changpa songs, and attitudes about them.

Principal Investigator: Sandy Shea; Ecopsychology Graduate Program; Naropa University

Address: P O Box 2671, Crested Butte, CO 81224, USA

Phone: 01 (970) 349-6424

E-mail: ashea@students.naropa.edu Or: sheasworth@gmail.com

Dear Esteemed Participant,

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may STOP your involvement at any time if you choose. There are 12 questions. It might take an hour to go through all of them.

Compensation: As per prior agreement, you will be compensated INR 500 for your participation.

Confidentiality: Your comments will not be anonymous unless you request that they be. Please let us know now if you wish to remain anonymous.

Each participant has the opportunity to obtain an audio CD of their interview. Participants should tell the researcher if a copy of the interview, or a portion thereof, is desired.

Information Contact:

Should you have any questions about the research or any related matters, FOR LOCAL

LADAKH INQUIRIES, please contact MR. TSERING WANGDUS LONPO 9469270323.

EMAIL: STLONPO@REDIFFMAIL.COM. Or contact this study's author, Mr. Sandy Shea,

Colorado, USA. ashea@students.naropa.edu

Consent:

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. *Therefore, I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.*

Signature _____ Date _____

Anon SOC#	YES	NO
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Interview CD YES	NO
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Appendix F—TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

K-1

Interviewed at Karnakhling

January 30, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, a 56-year old film maker, writer, lyricist, Ladakhi colleague and main translator.

TA is Tsering Angchuk, a 31-year old Changpa originally from Hanle village, who has been settled in Leh for the past 5 years, and now works with many tourist groups. TA reviewed all recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and their meanings.



SS: I'm here with Mr. Tsering Wangdus Longpo, and Mr. [K-1], and we're ready to begin the interview.

[Ladakhi talking]

SS: What traditional songs do you sing today?

[Brief talking, then a song is sung (children's laughing in background) Slow, measured rhythm.

Song ends]

SS: I need to know what song name is and what song is about

TAL: *Thende lundup*—He say Interdependence song

SS: uh huh, relationship of all things?

TAL: It is involved good luck, how the people lead a simple life, a good life without hatred, without dislike, that kind.

How did he learn this song?

TAL: He says he learned this song from his father. They used to sing these songs at marriage and other ceremonies.

SS: Does he know--Do they still sing on the Changthang today?

TAL: Yes, this song still sung by both men & women during marriage and childbirth ceremonies.

SS: Childbirth?

[confirm with respondent]

TAL: Yes, also used to sing during the birth ceremonies.

[choosing next question]

SS: Does he remember his family singing other songs?

Brief words, then 2nd song

Song tashi phunsum tsokpa, stanpa ga la way sang, (repeat) song ga la kyith stendel lay dangpo wow, la photang ou su khil, , (repeat). by K-1

[Song tashi phunsum tsokpa means tashi=some sort of prosperity and happiness and Phunsum means marvellous or threefold perfection Tsokpa means to get together like marriage ceremony, losar , and any other gathering stanpa ga la way sang means Stanpa means view or to exhibit Gaway means satisfaction or joyous Sangay means awakened or enlightened one , song ga la kyith stendel lay dangpo wow means joyous and Stendel mean interdependent or coincidence or interrelation Dangpo means first, la photang ou su khil means all this good omen will be arise at the middle of photang, (photang means palace) by TA]

“Joyous good omen will arise in the palace when we get together and praise the enlightened one.” [SS]

Song gung nong thonpo yig, la ragkyong thay lay da,[bowl for butter lamp] nilza niskot chik di math sarchik zuk, gukar zompo yig, markhu gyamtso khil. By K-1

What is this song about [longish Ladakhi answer]

TAL: The name of this song is to have good fortune [destiny]for the villages, good prosperity and peace. This is a kind of a devotional song in which the prayer for the good health of the Changpas, the prosperity of the region, and the good health of everyone [is made]. This is a very old song, ancient song, used to sing even today, by the Changpas.

SS: Does he know of a song that's not sung anymore? [very long interchange] Answer- no.

TAL: *Rakyung the le da* is what you call it it is a bowl you often see which offer the butter lamp. It mean that. The song is sung just after offering of the butter lamp and the prayer is started for good fortune.

[Song gung nong thonpo yig, la ragkyong thay lay da means as high as sky or space is like a offering bowl of copper, nilza niskot chik di math sarchik zuk means both the moon and sun are like pure string which is set to that copper bowl, gugar zompo yig, markhu gyamtso khil means all the constellations are the offering bowl filled up oil of ocean. (the song is related to the offering butter lamp) By anchuk]

SS: Does the song mean the same thing to him even though he's not on the Changthang?

TAL: Yes. He is very much love to sing the Changpa song even today after migration of 20 years. When he gets older, the singing promotes ...

SS: What does he feel?

TAL: He feels these songs should not be vanished away—he love to pass on to younger generation.

SS: Does he pass along to others?

TAL: Rarely people...uh the young Changpas, are not interested in learning these songs. He's always wanting them to learn these as they reflect their identity.

SS: What songs do you no longer sing? Does he know songs that he does sing anymore?

Grandfather or something [song is sung. Very slow and clear.]

[song ends]

TAL: Oh jujujuju [a form of 'thank you very much' in local Ladakhi]

SS: Can you tell us about that song?

TAL: This song is based on the praising the monastery and the head lamas. And for the head lamas to bless us for a good life, good luck, good fortune.

SS: Do they still sing this song in town?

TAL: This is only sung on Changthang, not in Leh.

SS: Tell him why we're here—'we look for the difference in Changpa culture through the songs.

TAL: This song is very special one.

What is name for this song?

Stod lu-- praising song

TAL: Please bless us for good health, good fortune.

SS: Is there one song he feels defines what it is to be Changpa?

[Long interchange in Ladakhi]

[Song is started, then started again—a hearty rhythm—**Nam san la**]

SS: What is this song?

TAL: Purely a jabro—song.

SS: What is title?

TAL: *Gun tuk*

[Long Ladakhi interchange]

TAL: This is a song of good life on Changthang. Prosperity on Changthang. He says that we people are situated very near to the sun and moon on Changthang. We are very close to the sun and moon, so we are lucky, so why not be singing this song—our entire region is so good, so clean, this is a moment of enjoyment, so let us sing. Also sung in Leh as well, but it is purely a Changpa song.

SS: It's a crossover song? Modern?

TAL: It is played with the Changpa guitar....damyan.

SS: I think we're pretty well covered.

SS: Is there anything he'd like to tell me about Changpa culture in terms of what is happening now? His feelings...

[Ladakhi answer, TAL question, more answer]

TAL: The spirit of maintaining songs and dances—the people in Changthang are also fond of maintaining their old traditional songs & dances. Those who already migrated, he says that he also feel this tradition should be maintained forever. Many groups are performing their songs and dances—there's a sense of competition so this is why the effort will keep going.

SS: Are the songs being changed?

TAL: He very much concerned to maintain traditional song

SS: What about when he sees hybrid songs—how does he feel?

TAL: Yes, the Changpas do not like to have any changes in the ancient style. But sometimes they see different performing groups singing with modern rhythms, and they don't like this.

SS: One more question—tell him last one —[I mention a few songs as examples] When he sings these sings what are the feelings?

[long interchange—then short singing as example]

TAL: Yes, they feel a very special feeling—they pray from the bottom of their heart with complete devotion they use to sing these kind of songs. To get the blessings—what is demanded in the songs.

SS: Can the Changpa exist without the song?

TAL: This is very difficult one. He says that whoever does not know the Changpa songs is less Changpa, not complete one. Whenever the younger Changpas learn the songs, in that case the young Changpas—

[SS: initiation?]

TAL: they will be full Changpas. [Long Ladakhi answer]

TAL: The only things they don't have sheep, goats, and yaks here, otherwise the tradition and as on Changthang lifestyle is the same. He says the young people must learn the culture.

SS: And they learn it in part through the songs?

TAL: Yes, they must learn the songs to keep their identity intact.

###

K-2

Interviewed at Karnakling

January 31, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, a 56-year old film maker, writer, lyricist, Ladakhi colleague and main translator.

TD is Tashi Dawa is a ladakhi film maker and colleague.

TA is Tsering Angchuk, a 31-year old Changpa originally from Hanle village, who has been settled in Leh for the past 5 years, and now works with many tourist groups. TA reviewed all recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and their meanings.

~~~~~



SS: Let's start. How old is she?

TAL: 40 years...

SS: We'll do the signature later. If you can just read the question in English and so I can hear it, please sir?

TAL: What traditional songs do you sing today?

[a song is sung]

SS: What is this song—what is the name?

TAL: The title of the song is *gungthot thonpo*. The high land which is near to the sky is our land—are the land we live, and the sun and moon are like our parents, and that is the reason we are living a very good life. (Especially song is interrelation between nature and parents.)

*Gungthot thonpo nga yi phama yinda kith jung, nilda niskot nga yi phyul yinda ga jung, chisu dho thou dochen gi tavo yinda ga jung, nangsu do thou ja chang suma yinda kith jung.* By sonam  
[*Gungthot thonpo nga yi phama yinda kith jung* means it is very happy to my parents as high as sky or space, *nilda niskot nga yi phyul yinda ga jung* means it is very joyous to my father land as moon and sun, *chisu dho thou dochen gi tavo yinda ga jung* means it is very joyous to my skilful horse while going out, *nangsu do thou ja chang suma yinda kith jung* means it is very happy to have tea and chang while staying inside. TA]

SS: I want to know the names of the older songs? The name of the song and what it is about.

*Lada balay la la, khava chay chay bapjung, khava chay chay bapna sarchung nimay you song.*

By K-2.

SS: Do we have a name for this song?

Lada balay lala means the high passes name Balay la, khava chay chay bapjung means heavily snowing there, khava chay chay bapna sarchung nimay you song means it is melted by the golden sun. by K-2

[Tashi Dawa: Especially when there is heavy snowfall, then they sing this song]

*Mentok ki dhang dhi chi yi dhang, mentok ki dhang dhi sarpo dhang, mentok sarpo tang gi lha la phul.* By K-2

TAP: This song used to be sung by the men and the women group.

SS: Are there older songs she knows of?

TAP: This is one of the older songs, she says that.

TAP: When the Changpas go with the flocks they used to sing this song.

[some discussion among four or five voices. Mentok ki dhang dhi chi yid hang means what is the radiance or bright of the flower, mentok kid hang dhi sarpo dhang means the bright colour or radiance of flower is yellow radiance, mentk sarpo tang gi lha la phul means that yellow radiance flower should offer to upper god. TA]

SS: Other older songs before? Songs she might remember but that they don't sing anymore?

[long interchange between up to five participants—then K-2 begins:]

*Gongthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu, nilda niskot thachung lu la pamjung.* [By sonam]

This song *Gongthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu* means to found precious gems [all precious things, even dzi stone] stone from lhasa as sky or space, *nilda niskot thachung lu la pamjung* means it is very suitable to variegating an ornament with precious stones to bodily as sun and moon. By angchuk

SS: Do the songs have the same meaning if not on the Changthang?

TAL: She feels immensely pleasure when singing these kind of Changthang songs, and she is determined to pass along to younger generation. And she said that it is very important to keep identity of Changpa.

SS: Are the songs being forgotten, or remembered?

TAL: She felt that the younger generation isn't interested in traditional Ladakhi songs.

Ss: Is it possible to be a Changpa and not know these songs.

[this will be the last question for her, then she can sing]

TAL: She says that the Changpa who do not know the Changpa songs, cannot be a real Changpa—cannot be a Real Changpa.

SS: Is the younger generation losing the tie to the natural world when it no longer sings? [This is difficult to ask –Tashi Dawa consults with TAL.]

TAL: [long explanatory question in Ladakhi];

She said that the younger generation who aren't interested in traditional song, they won't attach with nature—the importance of nature in being Changpa.

Ruthuk khar gyi tsemo na, tsemo thuk tang darchok, tsemo thuk tang darchok, young young badgu sang min dhug, bardo cha gu sang min dhug, ngang song nang gu la jungna, lha tang lhamo bad song ma tang khadu la bad song.

Ruthuk khar gyi la kadpa, kadpa rabsal lay chorten, kadpa rabsal lay chorten, ngang song nang gu sang min dhug, bardo nang gu sang min dhug, ngang song nang gu jungna lha tang lhamo bad song ma tang khandu la bad song.

Ruthuk zampa la tang na, lamay la chib ga la roll jung, kyabgon chib ga la roll jung, zampa vok ki la namo, ngang song nang gu min dhug, bardo cha gu sang min dhug, ngang song nang gu jungna lha tang lhamo bad song ma tang khandu la bad song. By sonam

Ruthuk khar gyi tsemo na means on a top of the ruthok palace, tsemo thuk tang darchok means there are full of soul and flag, ngang song nang gu min dhug means no need to go for lower destinies, bardo cha gu sang min dhug means no need to go for bardo. (bardo means in between death to birth.) ngang song nang gu la jungna lha tang lhamo bad song ma tang khando la bad song means by the kindness of god and goddess, dakini will help to prevent exist from lower destinies.

Ruthuk khar gyi kadpa means at the middle of ruthuk palace, kadpa rabsal lay chorten means the terrace of the palace full of chorten (chorten means stupa). Ngang song nang gu min dhug, bardo cha gu min dhug, ngang song nang gu jungna lha tang lhamo bad song ma tang khando la bad song means same meaning as above.

Ruthuk zampa la tang na means over the bridge of ruthuk, lamay la chib ga la roll jung means to put the saddle over the horse, kyabgon chib ga la roll jung means to put the saddle over horse by kyabgon, zampa vok ki namo la means underneath the bridge of fishes. (same meaning as above)

Any other song would you like to sing? (conversation by SS and TAL)

Then she had sing another song title *gungthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu*.

Gungthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu, nilda niskot tachung lu la pamjung, **chituk kasang chi yi yabro thop shock, nang duk kasar nang ki yabro thop shock, chinang po ngi thiksey yabro thop shock (repeat one more).**

Gangthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu, darsam karmo tachung lu la pamjung, (same stanza as colour text) By sonam

Gongthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu means to found precious gems stone from lhasa as sky or space, nilda niskot thachung lu la pamjung means it is very suitable to variegating an ornament with precious stones to bodily as sun and moon, **chituk kasang chi yi yabro thop shock means to**

dance to the outside yabro, nang duk kasar nang ki yabro thop shock to dance to the inside yabro chinang po ngi thiksey yabro thop shock means to dance to the both outside and inside yabro.

Gangthot thonpo lhasa yung gi nurbu means to found precious gems stone from lhasa is similar to as high as snowy region, darsam karmo tachung lu la pamjung means , chituk kasang chi yi yabro thop shock means to dance to the outside yabro, nang duk kasar nang ki yabro thop shock to dance to the inside yabro, chinang po ngi thiksey yabro thop shock means to dance to the both outside and inside yabro. By TA]

###

K-3

Interviewed at Karnakling

January 31, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, a 56-year old film maker, writer, lyricist, Ladakhi colleague and main translator.

TA is Tsering Angchuk, a 31-year old Changpa originally from Hanle village, who has been settled in Leh for the past 5 years, and now works with many tourist groups. TA reviewed all recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and their meanings.

TD is Tashi Dawa is a ladakhi film maker and colleague.

~~~~~

[Karma Dorje is age 49, and has been settled 20 years. The interview recording begins just after a song has been sung, discussing its meaning]

TAL: It is very difficult to translate.

SS: Interdependence.

TAL: Yes, interdependence.

Tashi Dawa: But the words are not commonly used on our language, so it's very difficult to translate this kind of words—exactly.

SS: Yes, I know this problem.

TD: Is a very big problem—because some words are very difficult.

TAL: Tashi means the prosperity.

SS: We can translate later.

[The title of song is *Tashi phuntsum Tsokpa and Stanpa Gaway Sangay* . by K-3

The meaning of song which Tashi means some sort of prosperity and happiness and Phuntsum means marvellous or threefold perfection Tsokpa means to get together like marriage ceremony, losar , and any other gathering . by TA

Stanpa means view or to exhibit Gaway means satisfaction or joyous Sangay means awakened or enlightened one. By TA]

SS: Are there other old songs, different?

[Then another song is sung]

Gaway Stendel dangpo Phobrang ngosu Khil.by K-3

Gaway means joyous and Stendel mean interdependent or coincidence or interrelation Dangpo means first. Phobrang means the name of place and Ngosu khil means appearing visibly. By TA

Another song title is Zuk song Zuksong Dhanggay Zuksong. Dhanggay Gungngong kilna Zuk.by K-3.

Zuksong Zuksong means to start or build and Dhanggay means barley cake. Dhanggay Gungngong kilna means middle of the sky and Zuk means to build. By TA

(This song is during marriage ceremony)

TAL: while making this ceremonial marriage cake, this song is sung.

SS: Is this an old song?

TAL: This is a very ancient song, and the Changpas are used to sing this song.

SS: Who sings, men and women?

TAL: This song only sung by group of men. The group should be of three person, five person, or seven person.

SS: Other old songs he can name?

[song is sung]

The title of the song is *Shargi Tidung Nima*. (The song is known as *Tal Lu* which means people sitting in line during the gathering.)

[song ends]

SS: Beautiful. So this was the marriage song?

TAL: No. When the changpa community gathers for a special occasion, then it [this song] can be sung, by both men and women, but often it is sung by the male groups.

SS: This song name?

TAL: *Shar gi Tidung Nima*.

[*Jang gi karsal Zawa*. (Then voice is not clear). *Gungngong Kilna Zom*.by K-3]

TAL: This is also the nature song.

TAL: It means that the shar--this is the east sun [consulting with /Tashi Dawa then Dorje sings again as the men listen and search for meaning in the words of a language no one present knows very well.]

[Shar gi Tidung Nima means great eastern sun and Jang gi karsal Zawa means great northern moon. And Gungngong Kilna Zom means middle of sky and Zom means gathered. TA]

TAL: This is something like the eastern sun and the northern moon are meeting at the sky, that will remove the darkness of the entire world, global darkness

TAL: This is sung but most of the people do not know this song [a consult ensues with Dorje, others]

SS: This is like an offering song or praise song. This is what I'm so interested in.

Tashi Dawa: This is not *zab bro* style. The lady before [K-2] she doesn't know this style

SS: how do you call these kinds of songs?

TAL: *Tal lu*-- people are sitting

Tashi Dawa: When the people sit there, it is *Tal Lu*.

TAL: [long Ladakhi speaking]

[*Riwo Phunsum dhang Daway. Gonpa Dhungchung nay bar, Nangdi Lama Youg yoth, Kunla Thupay Zangrhok Loma. Lama lobsang yeshi.* (Then I couldn't recognised the proper line in between) [laughing]

Jinlab po yan the ru Masal, Yulchung the ga rang Salchik, Ngodup yan the ru Masal, Yulchung di ga rang Salchik. By K-3]

TAL: This is actually a praising song for an important monastery—the lama to please—all blessings you have give to us. *Labsang Yeshe* there is a particular lama in the Changthang region.

SS: So the name doesn't change when the lama dies? Sometimes it changes...

TAL: It was composed in very ancient times and they're not going to change.

SS: Singing this one in town? -has he ever heard it in Leh?

TAL: He never seen singing this song with people from Leh.

SS: This is important. [consult on which question to ask next]

SS: Is there one song that would define what is Changpa for him?

TAL: Ya ya ya

[Song sung]

[Dhungchung nay bar means there is monastery name Dhungchung. Nangdi Lama Youg yoth means there is a lama staying, Kunla Thupay Zangrhok Loma means who is the disciple of Lord Buddha, lama lobsang yeshi.

Jinlab po yan the ru Masal means don't give empower blessing to other, Yulchung the rang Salchik means to give empower blessing only for this small village, Ngodup yan the ru Masal means don't give siddhi or attainments to other, Yulchung diga rang Salchik means to give siddhi only for this small village. (this song is something dedicated to Lama lobsang yeshi at jangthang area) TA]

Sa yagi jangthang kyomo na, gyaser miyi bula rhinpho bu, dhiring rhinpo dongmar dang durgu yoth

Sa yagi jangthang kyomo na, rilon di yi bula dong gi bu, dhiring dongchung rokbo dang durgu yoth.

Sa yagi jangthang kyomo na, tiling ta yu bula kyang gi bu, dhiring kyangchung khakar dang durgu yoth. By karma

Sa yagi jangthang kyomo na means the poor wilderness northern plains [TA]

[song ends]

SS: Tuk je che

SS: What does he feel when he sings this song?

TAL: While singing the song he used to think that when he was very young and handsome in the Changthang region and remembering those golden days.

SS: What about the youth not learning the songs— How does he feel about this?

TAL: In the olden days, every changpas used to know all these songs—they had two days long song competition. That was important way to pass on to the young generation. But with exposure to the modern world, the younger Changpas are no longer interested in learning this kind of song. That is why tradition of singing song is rapidly losing particularly in the younger generation.

SS: Would he like to sing another song, and be filmed, or whatever?

[talking in Ladakhi...laughter]

SS: Where is the chang? I know a little Ladakhi...

TAL: There is a close relationship between...

[song: *Sangmo samo*, is not translated]

TAL: Very nice.

###

K-4

Interviewed at Karnakling

January 31, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, a 56-year old filmmaker, writer, lyricist, Ladakhi colleague and main translator.

TA is Tsering Angchuk, a 31-year old Changpa originally from Hanle village, he has been settled in Leh for the past 5 years, and now works with many tourist groups. TA reviewed all

recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and meanings.



[K-4, a 31-year old Changpa male, has been settled for 15 years. He desires to go back to the Changthang as his job opportunities over the years have not materialised.]

The interview begins with a song:

[Kalzang sar gi ri la, chi rang gang chik phab gin zok, gang tang su yig phab gin zuk, kalzang sar gi ri la, tseldan lama phab gin zuk, tselden lama phab gin zuk. By Tsepal

In the great eon or glorious period who will appear at the golden hill, during that period, stelden lama will be there. By TA]

SS: What is this song?

TAL: This song is actually a devotional song. It says that from the golden hills someone is coming—our beloved lama is coming. It is rarely sung in Leh, but Changthang people used to sing this song

SS: What does he feel when he sings the song?

TAL: He feels immensely pleasure because when he was a young boy he has struggled a lot how to learn this song.

SS: Does it remind him of his parents and elders?

TAL: Yes.

SS: Do the songs have the same meaning—do you feel the same when you sing the song anywhere?

TAL: The Changpas who already migrated—when he found the song sung by these people, he felt of feeling generous inside.

SS: So the song has the same meaning for him here or there?

TAL: Yes.

SS: Does he know any songs that are no longer sung?

Tselden lama jal lay jaldar, jaldar chi rang gang chik gouu, jal dar chi rang gang chik gouu,

Tselden lama jal lay jal dar, jaldar a she khatak chik , , jaldar a she khatak chik. By Tsepal

What types of offering scarf that we should take to meet tselden lama, we should take best quality of the offering scarf. By angchuk

There is a short stanza of song from Tsepal which is oldest song from Changthang

Sa la kidpo chik lo kidpo nyi, sa la kidpo sarduk they you la sa la kid, young la kidpo sarduk they youl la sa la kid. By Tsepal

Neither the happy nor unhappy of the life at jangthang will be depend upon the deity whose exist at that regions. By angchuk (means the land of good pasture and good source of water which is grown very well for all the livestock is depend or to get bless from the deity exist at the regions.)

TAL: The song he has sung now, he is saying that this is the oldest song. One of the oldest songs. Now he never witnessed such an occasion by any people singing this song.

SS: What is the song name?

TAL: *Sa La Ki po*

SS: Is there an English meaning?

TAL: I will try. It is very difficult. This is the song—if we have a very good pasture, the entire of the Changthang have a good life

[Tashi Dawa in background}: The moral of the story.

SS: What song do you feel best defines you as a Changpa—what one song would best define Changpa for you?

2nd Song sung:

Shar chok la ni nosu thunk pa, nashan gank kar tintsey, chi tanpo wow ni gang kar tingstey, nang tanpo ni nang wa tha yaa. By Tsepal

From the eastern side of direction, there will be pilgrimage site known as mount kailash, external site of pilgrimage is mount kailash and internal side of pilgrimage is nang wa thayay. By angchuk

[song ends]

TAL: This is the song sung by only Changpa

SS: uh huh. Not sung in town?

TAL: Only sung on Changtang

SS: What is name?

TAL: *Char chuk, Shar chok la ni nosu thunk pa nashan, gank kar tintsey. Gank Kar Tintsey—* this is an area that is part of Tibet, now occupied by China.

SS: So its more to the east on the Changthang?

TAL: *Nar chen—*very important monastery of *Gank Kar tintsey*.

3rd song sung:

Kora wow yes tana kor they, lay say dipa jung, yakor lan sum gyab pay, kay ngang bar chat saal song.

To circumambulation through right side, it would be beneficial to good karma, when we did three times of circumambulation, it would be beneficial to remove any kinds of obstacle or hindrance.

TAL: This song is mention a very olden a very important monastery. When we take the circumambulation from the right side, what we did wrong will be removed.

SS: uh huh, so this is purification song?

TAL: Yes, purification.

SS: This different from previous song?

SS: This song not sung in Leh?

TAL: He never see this song in Leh.

SS: Very important. What about the youth? How do you feel about the youth losing the song?

TAL: He say that this is absolutely right that younger generation losing the values of song. And even his age—people of his age—rarely know the song of the Changthang. He said that the main cause of losing the songs, by getting accessibility to modern world, accessibility to the education. That most of the younger people are not interested in the olden songs. Also, they are unable to understand the real meaning of the songs.

SS: Does he want to sing a song? Or is there anything else he wants to tell me about songs, about Changpa culture? What does he think is important for me to know about Changpa culture?

TAL: He feel very bad that most of the people are migrating to urban [areas]. In that way he feel they will lose its importance, identity, culture, and that will be not good for history of the Changpa with their history of producing world's finest pashmina, butter ...butter tea...and yak cheese, all that tradition will lose in case the Changpa is entirely extinct from the Changthang.. So he said that it is very important-- the sustenance of the Changpa is very important, in order keep their tradition continue and alive.

[TAL and K-1 long discussion, then laughter. Then TAL speaks more with K-4. There is no Ladakhi translation.]

###

C-1

Interviewed at Angkung

February 13, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, Ladakhi colleague and translator

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SS: OK, this is a test. We have here [C-1]?

OK, we're going to have to shift here...she's going to have to speak up [outside noises—family conversation overrides the process momentarily]

SS: We're ready to conduct the interview now.

SS: What traditional songs do you sing today?

TAL: She used to have many jabros songs in Hanle. But here in Angkung she said most younger generation dance with recorded songs—ladakhi hybrid songs.

SS: in Haley how often did she sing those songs in Hanle?

TAL: She said that in Hanle, there is the prosperity song—tashi song, tashi song--prosperity will come to our village—that kind of song. And one other song, a bird song—Hanle used to have so many birds.

SS: How often did she sing these songs?

TAL: Daily she used to sing, after coming back from the hills with the flock, the young people used to gather every evening and they almost most of the evening they used to sing and dance.

SS: How did she learn these songs?

TAL: She learn from her father, mother, elder sisters and elderly neighbor. She said that they have a very good tradition to stage a lot of dramas in Hanle. They have to sing a lot of songs, so this is a way to preserve them. They have a dramatic club in Hanle, but recently they haven't

come here to Angkung. She has requested them to come to give lessons so that they could learn Changpa songs.

SS: What does she feel when she sings these songs?

TAL: She feel excited to learn. Then again sometime she listen to the radio, and she is very interested to dance, but she find no other clique to join her. That is a problem here.

SS: Does the song have the same meaning whether she sings in town or on the Changthang?

TAL: She said whenever she hears such songs in Leh, she remember her young childhood, her surroundings.

SS: The traditional songs are still important to her?

TAL: She is very interested in preserve songs in her mind for her whole life, but the problem is here she's the only one coming from Hanle, so she doesn't find any clique here, and the songs are different here than in Hanle.

SS: they do sing some songs here?

TAL: After her marriage, she tried to get her friend to give a lesson of Changpa songs, but she made it to Tibetan Refugee camp and moved on.

SS: So, can you be Changpa without song?

TAL: She said that the Changpa who do not know the songs cannot be a real Changpa.

SS: Is it because... or is it...? (unintelligible)

The song carries the olden knowledge, the forefathers living, also carries the olden days of Changthang. Today's people do not know the Changpa songs, and she said that without knowing the Changpa songs, one could not be a pure Changpa.



SS: Is the younger generation losing the tie to the natural world? How does the song, or...is this correct—the song connects the people with the land, and without the song something is lost? Ask her if this is correct?

[Long interchange between TAL and C-2, and C-1]

TAL: she said that they cannot reply to this very difficult question, but she will try to keep the olden songs to preserve whatever she can. Otherwise I'm not ready to answer this question.

Ss: Will she sing a song?

[She sings briefly, obviously shy.]

SS: Thank you very much

###

C-2

Interviewed at Angkung Village

February 13, 2015

[C-2 is father-in-law of C-1]

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TAL is Tsering Wangdus Lonpo, Ladakhi colleague and translator

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SS: [Has] he heard any other *lu*, or is this the only one? There must be other songs.

TAL: He said that he often used to hear this kind of song—when there is marriage ceremony, etc. But he is not interested in any songs.

SS: Can we have his name?

TAL: [C-2]- He is 69 years old

SS: So why does he never sing song?

He: He does not have a very melodious voice so he isn't interested in songs

SS: He is the most elderly person in this group?

TAL: He said there is not any elderly because some who know Changpa songs went on pilgrimage to India. So there is only a few young people here.

SS: Maybe we could ask this young woman—does she know any songs?

TAL: She said that she is fond of singing songs but don't have much time to sing. She often go with sheep and goats in the hills—she is very interested to sing. She didn't get any opportunity to memorize.

[Son's wife—daughter-in-law. 28 years old, C-1.]

TAL: He said that the main reason is that the people who have moved to Korzok are richer than this village—

SS: Where are the new families coming from?

TAL: Angkung is the poorest village in this Changthang region. That is why they're not capable to go to Leh to buy land and to construct houses there—that is one reason why they have remained here—the people of Karnak, Korzok, they are economically good, better than the people of Angkung.

###

C-3

Interviewed at Choglamsar

February 18, 2015

SS is Sandy Shea, study leader

TY is the 28-year old granddaughter of the respondent

[C-3 Male, Age 82 A migrant who with his wife spends seven months each year in Hanle village, living a traditional semi-nomadic pastoral lifestyle. The other five (winter) months are spent in Choglamsar village living with extended family. The translator for this session is TY, the 28-year old granddaughter of the respondent.]

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SS: I would like to record this, so please just tell him.

TY: OK

SS: I've heard he is one of the elders in Hanle. Is this true?

TY: [muffled response]

TY: Meme asks, What types of songs you want to hear about the most?

SS: I want to know what are the oldest songs. I'm interested in what the names are and what the songs were about.

TY: This song is called *tendel dhunpa*. It's a song...they have seven types of songs they can sing.

SS: uh huh.

TY: Oldest song which he learned from his grandparents.

SS: *Maybe he can sing at the end? –I have a few more questions first. When he sings these old songs, what does he feel?*

TY: Just only for enjoying. During that time, they will be sung in the group, and they will drink wine.

SS: Chang?

TY: Yes, chang.

TY: They will be in the line and one after one they can sing.

SS: [remembering questions] Please ask, What song would best identify him as a Changpa?

TY: Nothing any special but it's a Changpa song. But what he can say it's an oldest, and every Changpa can sing those songs, he can say

SS: If he does not sing these songs—can the young people still call themselves Changpa without knowing these songs.

TY Not only depend on the songs. If they come from Changthang, they are Changpa.

SS: Even if not singing the songs, is the pure Changpa culture being preserved or not?

TY: Yes, they are pure because of the genetics. But if they want to learn the songs, it is easy.

SS: So, many songs relate to humans and the environment. If those songs aren't being sung, what happens to that relationship? Like, your generation (TY's) aren't singing the songs--you know what I'm saying? To me it seems the song connects us—if we're not singing are we losing something in the Changpa culture?

TY: Yes it's also right, he feel it's lost something from the Changpa culture.

SS: What exactly is being lost?

TY: They mostly feel that—most of the younger generations only study the modern generations—therefore most of the Changpa song, they can't know anything, even the simple types of songs. Most elders are discussing in their villages about how to preserve the songs.

Therefore, most generations ignoring about traditional song and traditional culture.

SS: Does that make him sad?

TY: Yes. Most of the elder age group coming together and discussing how to change but no success. Therefore he can feel sad about this.

SS: Would he like to sing a song?

Yes this one, sTendel Dhunpa, is the oldest one. [The title of the song is STENDEL DHUNPA which means seven auspicious interrelations or interdependent. ]

SS: would he like to sing it?

TY: Yes.

*Song gung dang nilda, katak dang zompo, sung gung dang nilda, katak dang zompo, yayi munpa ru salway, stendel di rang, munpa ling yi ru salway, stendel lay dangpo. Song gang dang darsam, saral chak rang, song gang dang darsam , saral dang chak rang, you ral pang they ru lanpay, stendel di rang, you ral pang they ru landpay, stendel lay nipa.*

*Song ri rang ri ridak, sa lay chu zomdang, songng ri rang ri ridak, sa lay chu zomdang, sha wa kidnam du chakphay, stendel di rang, shawa kidnam du chakphay, stendel lay sumpa. Song pang dang rang dong chunk, sa la chu zomdang, Song pang dang rang dong chunk, sa la chu zomdang, dong chung kid nyam du chak pay, stendel di rang , dong chung kid nyam du chak pay, stendel lay yipa.*

*Song makhang dang makdho, dala chan thop dang, Song makhang dang makdho, dala chan thop dang, ka la thot the ru rolay, stendel lay di rang, ka la thot the ru rolay, stendel lay nyapa.*

*Song yab dang yumchung, gyu nor zomdang, phorang the ray ru kay pay, stendel lay di rang, phorang the ray ru kay pay, stendel lay dukpa. Song ma ying dang chumo, du nor dang zom dang, song ma ying dang chumo, du nor dang zom dang, sar ming somchang du dol they, stendel di rang, sar ming som chang du dol they, stendel lay dunpa.*

[English Translation by TA: It is very popular to meeting the sun and moon at the sky or space, that moon and sun will be to clear the place of darkness, it is the first interdependent or interrelations.

At the snowy mountains region, there would be folk of snow cock, and snow lion together, it is the second interdependent or interrelations. (Yu ral means the curly hair and colour is like turquoise colour only found in tibet which is known as snow lion)

At the mountain and mountain wild life, those wild animals enjoy the good pasture and good water, there are happiness and joyous for those deer's who live in that region, it is the third interdependent or interrelations.

In the midst of meadow, there would be wild yak, those animals enjoy the good pasture and good water, there would be wild yak also enjoy and happiness, it is the fourth interdependent or relations.

There would be living home and laid foundation stone, to build with the wooden pillar, it is the fifth interdependent or interrelations.

By the wealthiest together of father and mother, it will be very fortunate to have children and property, it is the sixth interdependent or interrelations.

Over the big farm land of property, there will be good sources of water, it would be well grown of several types of grains, it is very happily to reap the crops for having purely chang, it is the seventh interdependent or interrelations. ]

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TA

Interviewed at Choglamsar

February 18, 2015

[TA is a 31-year old Changpa man originally from Hanle village, who has been settled in Leh for the past 5 years, and now works with many tourist groups. TA reviewed all recorded segments for additional interpretation and translation particularly of song lyrics and their meanings. TY is

a 28-year old Changpa female and granddaughter of respondent C-3. She has been settled 24 years and is also originally from Hanle village.]



SS: What is the difference between Changpa and Ladakhi tunes?

TA: The lyrics are similar—the difference is in the rhythm. Mostly Changpa is very closely related to the Tibetan accent. Ladakhis are mostly like Tibetan – the language comes literally. There is no proper word for the plate in Ladakhi. You ask and they say I don't know. But in Changpa and Tibetan society, the words will be there for the proper object. We cannot take it literally—has a meaning that is beyond the words [tea comes]

TA: Meme [referring to respondent C-3]—almost he is oldest in my village, about 75 years old. He will lead the program we will do, when before your serving (what kind of foods, and songs)—[he is a] great person.

SS: So you know a few songs?

TA: I do only 1 or 2 stanza. I don't know properly. I will try to sing, after two or three days later.

SS: Is it possible to be Changpa without singing these kinds of songs?

[TA confers with the elder]

TA: I think almost those guys [in the village]

SS: Difficult to learn?

TA: Very easy—most of lyrics are similar.

SS: What about you TY?--what do you think about the singing of the songs?

TY: I didn't get any chance to learn. I can do—it's easy to catch up—but we can't get many chances to learn them now.

SS: How much is tied up in your identity—is there something about the song that's important to preserve? Do you lose a connection when you're not singing these songs

TA: Yes obviously—youngsters like us could not survive on Chanthang! Obviously it's totally separate.

SS: What does it mean for the future?

TA: Ya, it is difficult for us—we have to live in this modernized world—the world is so competitive—it seems to be very tough for us—almost 80% [there's] no going back. It is very difficult for us.

SS: Sad?

TA: Ya, is sad. We have to struggle, your last option to go back there [the Changthang]. It's happened sometime—there are so many youngster here 60-70% their parents have [unintelligible] backgrounds. The Discotheque, modern city.

SS: What is being lost?

TA: Everything influenced by the modernized. Traditionally is almost now gone. My son's and daughter's generation, is totally gone. [Before] none of them wear this skin tight pants.

SS: Who will raise pashmina?

TA: Kashmiri make fake pashmina and sell here [laughs]... Things is changing really fast. 30 years ago, everybody living on the farm. From the farm everything's available—sheeps/goats, tsampa, yak cheese. So, how much it's changing, really.

SS: Today's Ladakhi— Do the Changpa mix with Ladakhi kids?

TA: No problem [20-minute break for food]

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TA: 1995 to 1996—[We had a] natural disaster- a huge snowfall killed so much stock—so this is why migration began—then Karnakhling is here—now there’s no more nomads at Karnakh, movement is only one way.

[On songs and traditional song loss]

TA: For Changpa kids, it’s first Hindi songs, then by 8th or 9th standard—they go Hip Hop style.

The song loss that is happening [is not] place-based, but age-based. Old song doesn’t fit in the new place.

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Appendix G—Images

[All photos by the author]

Plate 2. Semi-sedentary elders from Hanle village at Choglamsar, Feb 18, 2015



Plate 3. Nomad family at Angkung, Feb 13, 2015



Plate 4. Changthang Plateau and sheep, 4500 m., near Rupshu Village, February 17, 2015



Plate 5. Man in traditional sheepskin *chuba*, rarely seen today. February 17, 2015



Plate 6. Nomad woman and son at Angkung (winter encampment), February 13, 2015



Plate 7. Mahabodhi Medical Camp, Rupshu Village, February 17, 2015



Plate 8. Venerable Sanghasena and Changpa man, inside a Changpa cloth parachute tent, or *rebo*, February 18, 2015



Plate 9. Herding horses at Rupshu, February 17, 2015



Plate 10. Pashmina goats, or *Chang ra*, and their tenders, near Rupshu, February 17, 2015



Plate 11. Rupshu villagers and Ven. Bikkhu Sanghasena (center) February 17, 2015

