

東京音楽大学附属民族音楽研究所刊行物リポジトリ

Title	Folk music of Buli village, Nangkor Gewog, Zhemgang Dzongkhag, Bhutan: <i>Tsangmo, Buli Pemi Thang, Amai Auja Peyzom</i>
Title in another language	ブータン シェムガン県ナンコル郡ブリ村の民俗音楽—ツァンモ, ブリ・ペミ・タン, アマ・ウジャ・ペイゾン—
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Citation	伝統と創造=Dento to Sozo, Vol. 14, p. 25-39
Date of issue	2025-03-26
ISSN & ISSN-L	Print edition: ISSN 2189-2350, Online edition: ISSN 2189-2482, ISSN-L 2189-2350
URL	https://tcm-minken.jp/publication/IE_B14202403.pdf

Folk music of Buli village, Nangkor Gewog, Zhemgang Dzongkhag, Bhutan: *Tsangmo*, *Buli Pemi Thang*, *Amai Auja Peyzom*

ブータン シェムガン県ナンコル郡ブリ村の民俗音楽
—ツァンモ, ブリ・ペミ・タン, アマ・ウジャ・ペイゾン—

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This paper reports on a survey of folk music in Buli village, Nangkor Gewog, Zhemgang Dzongkhag, Bhutan. In *Tsangmo*, a traditional playful song, originalities exist in the lyrics and the way they are played. In *Buli Pemi Thang*, various parts of the village are praised and its dance comprises a form of traditional circle dance in which dancers dance while singing. Handed down to a Bon priest, *Amai Auja Peyzom* features a short melody and prayers offered to the stupa, holy water, plain, sacred lake, goddess of the lake, and local guardian deity. Buli's songs are unique because they are characterized by topography and mythology and reflect a strong mixture of Buddhism and Bonism.

Keywords: Folk music of Bhutan, Buli village,
Tsangmo, *Buli Pemi Thang*, *Amai Auja Peyzom*

1. Introduction

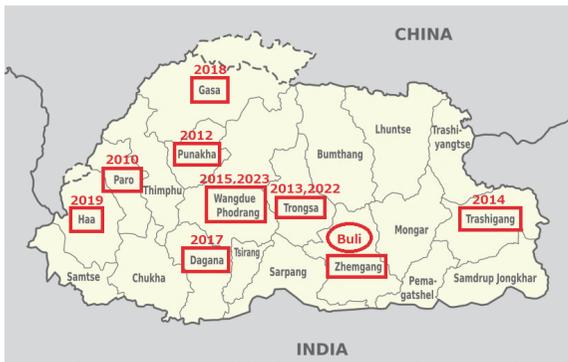


Figure 1 Previous study sites and location of Buli village created from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Districts_of_Bhutan

In September 2024, we conducted a folk music survey in Buli village, Nangkor Gewog, Zhemgang Dzongkhag, Bhutan. This study is a follow-up to the previous year's survey in Wangdue Phodrang Dzongkhag (Kato et al., 2024), which is a part of the joint research project by the Bhutan Japan Music Education and Research Network (BJMRN), established in 2021 between Japan and Paro College of Education (PCE).

It is also a continuation of the research we've been conducting on Bhutanese folk music since 2010 (Ino, Kuroda, & Gondo, 2022), focusing on *Tsangmo*, a Bhutanese song (see Figure 1).

Three types of folk music are reported: *Tsangmo*, a traditional playful song; *Buli Pemi*

Tang, a song-dance in praise of Buli; and *Amai Auja Peyzom*, which tells the story of a Buli woman who went to Lhasa for ascetic training.



Figure 2 Informants and coordinator

Bhutanese songs, *Tsangmo* and *Buli Pemi Thang*. Another informant, Tsundu Gyeltshen (57) was a Bon priest in Buli village who sang *Amai Auja Peyzom*. The coordinator, Phuntsho Dendrop (63), also provided information about the village's traditional culture. In the following, we provide an overview of Buli village, followed by a detailed description of the survey. Lastly, we consider the characteristics of these songs and their relationship with Bhutanese folk culture.

On September 2 and 3, 2024, six women and one man living in Buli village who agreed to serve as informants for our study gathered at Tashi Yangzom's house per the request of the coordinator, Phuntsho Dendrop.

The six women included Yangchen Lhamo (52 years old), Ugyen Lhazom (56), Garab Ma (56), Mindu Wangmo (63), Tshering Uden (45), and Rinchen Wangmo (56). They performed the traditional

2. Buli Village Overview



Figure 3 Buli village

Buli village is home to more than 100 households and approximately 800 people (Satoyama Development Mechanism [SDM], 2024). Buli Higher Secondary School is located at the entrance to the village and Buli Lhaxhang (temple) stands on a hill overlooking the entire village. The people identify ethnically as Khengpa, and their native language is Khengkha; however, they also understand the national language, Dzongkha. Roads to the village have become muddy and rutted in recent years because of truck traffic for power plant projects. Most vehicles in the village were Mahindra Boleros. The village is self-sufficient and mainly grows corn, rice, buckwheat, millet, barley, wheat, potatoes, and a variety of vegetables. The owner of the guesthouse, who is a son-in-law from Tashiyantse in the northeastern part of the country, said, "We have everything we need for our daily life here." A sacred lake known as Buli Tsho, located approximately 5 km from the village, was designated as a heritage forest by the Department of Forest and Park Services and

is protected by fences and caretakers. The lake is believed to be home to Tshomen Kuntu Zangmo, also known as *Buli Muenmo* (The lower half of the goddess is a snake), the guardian deity of the village. A ceremony is held twice a year to appease the goddesses. While the predominant religion of the village is Bhutanese Buddhism, as in other areas of Zhemgang, some intermixture with Bonism exists. For example, Phuntsho Dendrop describes that the relationship between Guru Rinpoche, the founder of Tibetan esoteric Buddhism, and Benpo of Bonism is conveyed in Guru Rinpoche's following statement: "There are many local deities around us, even though we cannot see them. There are many gods of the land around us, although we cannot see them here. All these gods are supportive of Benpo. Trees have gods of trees, and stones have gods of stones. When a person becomes ill, the Benpo must pray and perform rituals because of the influence of these deities."

Although this paper does not examine the details of the Bonism in Buli village, the Buddhist content of the song *Amai Auja Peyzom* by Benpo, a Bon priest, symbolizes the relationship between Buddhism and the Bon religion in this area.

3. *Tsangmo*

3-1. Overview

Tsangmo is a traditional type of Bhutanese song that consists of 24 syllables in four lines of six syllables sung to a short melody. Such songs include divination based on lyrics and group dialogues, and have been enjoyed in a variety of contexts, from jobs such as herding to memorial services where relatives gather. Widely popular throughout Bhutan, *Tsangmo* and its various way of being have been studied by Ino, Kuroda, and Gondo (2022).

The University of Virginia's Mandala Collections (2024) feature a video of four *Tsangmo* verses played by a single singer. In his overview of *Tsangmo*, Dorji Penjore (2018) presents 20 *Tsangmo* verses performed by the women of Shingkar and Wamling in Zhemgang.

While these are the introduction of poetry and songs, this paper describes the actual practice of *Tsangmo* in the village of Buli in Zhemgang, specifically describing how it was performed as an act and what type of play it was.

For the present study, we asked informants to recreate *Tsangmo* as they used to play it. In the past, they were played in forests during cattle herding and enjoyed by both adults and children. These days, owing to the spread of school education and changes in the industrial structure, such opportunities are disappearing. The women were surprised that they were able to perform as they had in the past, even though it had been approximately 30 years since they had last performed.

As a result, we heard 70 songs (including duplicates). (See the QR code for the lyrics.)

The play styles of *Tsangmo* can be divided into three types, which were common in previous surveys in other areas. However, a closer look reveals that some are unique to Buli village. (See Figure 4-1, 4-2, 4-3)

(i) *Tsangmo Cheyni*: A singing competition between two groups.

(ii) *Tsangmo Motapni*: A diviner sings lyrics while pointing to items to divine the owner of the items.

(iii) *Namkey Cheni*: Divination to determine the compatibility between two people.



Lyrics
<https://x.gd/aFKKg>



Figure 4-1 *Tsangmo Cheyni*



<https://youtu.be/AS7UGwbobvQ>



Figure 4-2 *Tsangmo Motapni*



<https://youtu.be/LpeYSSCsb2I>



Figure 4-3 *Namkey Cheni*



<https://youtu.be/KHnPZoJSbvA>

3-2. *Tsangmo* types

(1) *Tsangmo Cheyni*

The six women sat in groups of three, alternating from the group on the left to the one on the right, and sang a total of 58 *Tsangmo Cheyni* (Figure 4-1). Some lyrics were similar to those observed in other areas, while others were unique to Buli and new to us.

While their native language is Khengkha, most of *Tsangmo* heard in this study were sung in Dzongkha. *Cheyni* means competing against each other. During *Tsangmo Cheyni*, two groups of singers exchange songs according to the character of the lyrics that make up the *cheyni*, such as “*dra lue*,” a fight song, or “*nyen lue*,” a song pleasant to the ear. However, because it had been 30 years since the last time they had sung together, they sang in the order they remembered.

(2) *Tsangmo Motapni*

Based on previous research, *Tsangmo Motapni* are considered to be a “prediction or divination based on the combination of individual items” (Ino, Kuroda & Gondo, 2022). All participants sat in a circle, items were placed in the center of the circle according to the number of participants, and the owner of each item was determined. The “diviner” used a stick to point to the items while singing, and at the end of the song the owner of the items would be divined according to the lyrics of the song. In Buli village, the owner

of the item was also classified based on whether the lyrics of the song matched them (Figure 4-2). The “diviner” could be anyone who knew the *Tsangmo* lyrics well. The following is the list of items (their owners): general contents of the lyrics, in the order in which they were sung.

- 1 Clock (Garab Ma): The conch shell is beautiful from the outside, but there was nothing inside.
- 2 Ring (Tshering Uden): Shoulder shawl extends to a large size when extended, fits in the hand when reduced.
- 3 Clock (Mindu Wangmo): Dolma for the Goddess, even if there is a calamity, the connection will not be lost.
- 4 Ring (Yangchen Lhamo): You like me but I don’t like you.
- 5 Bracelets (Rinchen Wangmo): Even if you are lonely for a long time, you will be happy someday.
- 6 Bracelets (Ugyen Lhazom): Neither you nor I have a partner. Let’s become a nun.

Each verse was interpreted and shared by the singing group. However, as “outsiders” who did not know the details of the individual performers, we could not judge the accuracy of the divination results.

(3) *Namkey Cheni*

Namkey Cheni was played by six female informants and five male participants, comprising a total of 11 participants. Men were included because the game divides the relationship between men and women.

The men who participated and their respective items were as follows: cell phone (Tshewang Tashi), key (Phuntsho Dendrop), badge (Tsundu Gyeltshen), mechanical pencil (Ino Yoshihiro), and ballpoint pen (Pema Wangchuk). After the men’s items were placed on the floor along with the women’s, the *Namkey Cheni* began (Figure 4-3). Initially, Ugyen Lhazom, the diviner, did not add her own belongings, thus, 10 items were placed in the center of the circle.

The diviner took one of the possessions placed in the center of the circle and matched it with the possessions of the participants in front of her in a clockwise direction while singing. The compatibility between the owners of the paired possessions was foretold at the last beat of the song. After singing five times, five pairs were formed.

①

Namkoe namkoe la namkoe	Past connection, past connection, past connection
Sharcho Gyalpai la namkoe	Connection with the Four Heavenly Kings of the East
Ley dang namkey yoena	If we have a past connection
Shar darmi phu lu zom sho	See you in the depths of the east

In the first session, Mindu Wangmo (watch) and Garab Ma (watch) were paired.

②

Namkoe namkoe la namkoe	Past connection, past connection, past connection
Lhocho Gyalpai la namkoe	Connection with the Four Heavenly Kings of the South
Ley dang namkey yoena	If we have a past connection
Lho darmi phu lu zom sho	See you in the depths of the south

In the second session, Ino Yoshihiro (mechanical pencil) and Pema Wangchuk (ballpoint pen) were paired.

③

Namkoe namkoe la namkoe	Past connection, past connection, past connection
Nubcho Gyalpai la namkoe	The relationship of the Four Heavenly Kings of the West
Ley dang namkey yoena	If we have a past connection
Nub darmi phu lu zom sho	See you in the depths of the west

Third, Yangchen Lhamo (ring) and Tsundu Gyeltshen (badge) were paired.

④

Namkoe namkoe la namkoe	Past connection, past connection, past connection
Jangcho Gyalpai la namkoe	Connection with the Four Heavenly Kings of the North
Ley dang namkey yoena	If we have a past connection
Jang darmi phu lu zom sho	See you in the depths of the north

In the fourth session, the Tshewang Tashi (cell phone) was paired with the Phuntsho Dendrop (keys).

⑤

(Here, the diviner's bracelets were added, leaving only three. The lyrics return to the first "Four Heavenly Kings of the East.")

Namkoe namkoe la namkoe	Past connection, past connection, past connection
Sharcho gyalpai la namkoe	Connection with the Four Heavenly Kings of the East
Ley dang namkey yoena	If we have a past connection
Shar darmi phu lu zom sho	See you in the depths of the east

In the fifth session, the Tshering Uden (ring) and Ugyen Lhazom (bracelet) were paired. Only Rinchen Wangmo's bracelet remains. Ugyen Lhazom, the diviner, took the last remaining bracelet and sung the next song.

⑥

Choe lu cha chi la mindu	You don't even have a pair
Nga lu ya chi la mindu	I don't have a pair either
Cha mey ya mey niku	Two people without a pair
Dam be choe lu la dro gey	Let's become a nun

When a pair is selected and a deep connection is recognized between the two, they pat each other on the back and say “Dhanbey (You are right)”. For example, Tshewang Tashi and Phuntsho Dendrop had a deep connection through many exchanges in advance of this survey, and Pema Wangchuk and Ino Yoshihiro had been close friends for a long time as collaborators in folk music surveys, so they thus became Dhanbey.

One participant commented, “At *Namkey Cheni*, we used to divine the fate of a man we were interested in by placing his item on the floor.” Some participants said, “It was very sad and disappointing when I was not paired with the person I wanted to be with and was paired with someone else,” or “It’s a pity, because I would have loved to go to Japan with a man from Japan.” Thus, the atmosphere became friendly.

3-3. Lyrics

In Buli, there is no particular order in which *Tsangmo* begin. In *Tsangmo Cheyni*, this time they sang in the order they remembered because they had not done so for 30 years. Thus, there was no “competitive” aspect of responding to the lyrics of the other person as in other regions; however, we were surprised to observe that dozens of lyrics were sung, many with Buli’s unique expressions.

While the play of *Tsangmo Motapni* was common to other regions, all of the lyrics sung overlapped with those sung in *Cheyni*. This was the first time we heard of the Four Gods of the East, West, South, and North being sung in *Namkey Cheni*.

3-4. Melody

In *Tsangmo*, only melodies with the following score were sung. It is the most popular melody to date and consists of the A-C-D-E-G-A pentatonic scale. It can be divided into four major phrases that correspond to each line of a six-syllable, four-line poem. The diviner, Ugyen Lhazom, sang and, in relation to the syllables of the verses and beat of the song, in *Tsangmo Motapni* with a wooden stick, and in *Namkey Cheni* with one arbitrary object laid out before her, pointing in a clockwise direction to the belongings of the participants. All the verses were sung in this melody; however, subsequent interviews revealed that other melodies were also used.

♩=ca.97 Actual first pitch is F

kar yul kar sang la chi la ri mo ta shi la dar gey

kar yul drum na ma to ri mo yel sa min du

3-5. Common Features and Characteristics of *Tsangmo* in Buli

Tsangmo in Buli showed the same commonality in play style, such as *Tsangmo Cheyni*, *Tsangmo Motapni*, and *Namkey Cheni*, which have been found in previous surveys in other regions. Melodies are also popular in Bhutan. In terms of poetry and prose, a common style was observed throughout the country as well as a local style unique to the region that mixed Khengkha with Dzongkha.

Namkey Cheni did not use sticks, and the diviner sang with objects in their hands. In addition, the play was conducted in the context of the invocation of divine spirits in relation to folk beliefs. This has been observed in *Tsangmo* of Haa (Ino & Kuroda, 2021); however, the play was directed at the spirits of heaven and earth, such as *Tencho Lha*, *Barcho Tsheng*, and *Wochu Lu*. In Buli, it was unique that they consulted the guardian deities in four directions: *Sharcho Gyalpai* (the four heavenly kings of the east), *Lhocho Gyalpai* (the four heavenly kings of the south), *Nubcho Gyalpai* (the four heavenly kings of the west), and *Jangcho Gyalpai* (the four heavenly kings of the north).

4. Songs and Dance of Buli

4-1. *Buli Pemi Thang*

4-1-1. Outline

Phuntsho Dendrop, an expert on the history of the village of Buli, stated, "There are many small lakes in this mountain. There were approximately 108 lakes in total. Walking alone in such a forest is dangerous. The god of the mountains protects the village from enemies from the outside, while the god of the lakes protects the village from the inside. The king has been here, the top religious monk has been here, and all Bhutanese prayers are held."

Buli Pemi Thang refers to a flat place in the center of the village surrounded by mountains, where songs and dances are performed to praise Buli village. It also serves as a village meeting place for elections, archery, and other activities. The place is also mentioned in the legend of *Buli Muenmo* at Holy Lake Buli Tsho and is important to the village.



Figure5 Buli Pemi Thang



<https://youtu.be/UGl2Qv9hEyY>

4-1-2. Lyrics

First, *Buli Pemi Thang*, a heavenly and happy place, is introduced. Then, the splendor of the village's surroundings is praised, songs are sung about the palace in the village where the high priest lives, and his prayers and holy water bring long life and peace.

Buli Pemi Thang la	Buli Pemi Thang is
Zhasum zhu pi ga tro	It is a happy place if you sleep for just three nights
Ga tro lharey lha song	Its happiness is more than heaven

Yoe gi ri ta tse	Looking at the mountains around the village
Ser gi cha ri dra song	Looks like a fence made of gold
Yuen gi ri la ta tse.	If you look at the mountain on the left
Nuel gi cha ri dra song	Looks like a fence made of silver

Yae yuen zom pi bu la	Between right and left
Lha ye phodrang zhon song	There is a palace in heaven
Lha ye phodrang nang du	In that palace
Tshenden lama zhu yoe	The high priest lives there

Tshenden lamai cha lu	High priest is in his hands
Tsewang bumpa nam yoe	A bumpa that will make you live a long life

Tsewang bumpa nam ney	From the bumpa
Tse gi nuel drup zhu yoe,	I was given nuel drup (prayer) to live longer

Chu mo kar hoey chu mo	White water (where there is holy water)
Yuen cha cham pa dra song	Seems to be a water offering (seven offerings to the altar)
Yuen cha lha lu phul na	If you offer that water to heaven
Dey ki phuesum tsho ye	Much peace will be brought

4 - 1 - 3 . Melody

The melody is largely divided into first and second halves. As can be seen from the score, it has four beats, with the first half consisting of five measures of 20 beats and the second half consisting of six measures of 30 beats, for a total of 50 beats. In the last two measures of the second half, the lyrics of the previous two measures were repeated to emphasize the content of the melody. Because dance consists of repeated actions with 14 beats per unit, it does not correspond to the unit of melody, and singing and dancing proceed with a gap between them.

♩ = ca.88 ♪ Actual first pitch is E

soo bu li pemi thang la zha sumzhu pi ga tro

zhasumzhu pi ga tro ga trolha rey lha song gatro lha rey lha song

4-1-4. Dancing

In *Buli Pemi Thang*, the dancers dance while singing in a circle in a clockwise direction with 14 beats and 14 steps as a unit. First, they step forward with their right foot and then with their left foot (steps 1-2, Figure 6-1). Then, they make a half-turn to the right, raise and lower the right hand (steps 3-5, Figure 6-2), raise both hands, turn backward, and lower both hands (steps 6-7, Figure 6-3). Next, they make a half-turn (step 8), raise (steps 9,10, Figure 6-4) and lower (steps 11,12) the hands, lower the right foot (step 13), move forward (step 14), and so forth in a series of movements. The complex steps of the feet and movements of the hands are integrated into a beautiful dance. (See the dance in Figure 5)



Figure 6-1



Figure 6-2



Figure 6-3



Figure 6-4

4-2. *Amai Auja Peyzom*

4-2-1. Outline

The *Amai Auja Peyzom* song was sung by Benpo, a Bon priest. The song goes as follows: In the past, there were many hardships in Buli Village, including a labor tax called Ura. Due to these hardships, *Amai Auja Peyzom* left via Bumthang to travel to Tibet to practice Buddhism. She prayed to the guardian deity of the Buli. The song was sung by repeating a short melody.



Figure7 *Amai Auja Peyzom*



<https://youtu.be/UGl2Qv9hEyY>

4-2-2. Lyrics

Following songs praising the holy places of Buli village, such as the pagoda, holy water, pemi pethang (plain), and holy lake Buli Tsho, prayers are offered to the goddess of the lake, *Buli Muenmo*, the guardian god of the land, and the four directions of the gods. As mentioned above, the village of Buli is protected from enemies by the gods of the mountains surrounding the village, and the goddess of the lake protects people inside the village from the outside. Benpo also knows all the gods in Buli and summons them to fulfill the wishes of the people.

*Amai Auja Peyzom aow**
Amai kono yoeta aow

Amai Auja Peyzom is
Fading away

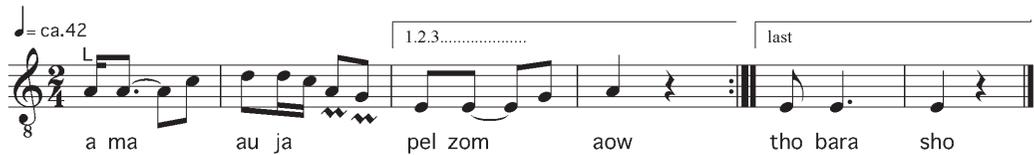
Amai Auja Peyzom aow	Amai Auja Peyzom is
Dangpai chuno ga dey aow	Going to practice Buddhism
(*aow: feelings of sadness or disheartened)	
Duthro pongney chorten aow	Crematorium chedi is
Tashi gongma drado aow	Similar to Tashi gongma (Portal shrine)
Tashi gongma draro aow	Because it looks like Tashi gongma
Tendrel zangpo du go aow	Very auspicious
Phu ye tshenden dongpo aow	The cypress tree behind it is
Mendrel phulba dra do aow	Mendrel (a mandala made by hand) seems to be offered
Chorten pong gi mani aow	Chorten pong gi mani (the old chedi in Buli village) is
Zhey ma tsamba drado aow	Seems to be dancing Zhey side by side
Chumo garphey chumo aow	Holy water is very clean
Yoenchap shangpa drado aow	Like the water of an offering
Yoenchap shangpa draro aow	Like the water of an offering
Lue ni driba da sho aow my	Vices disappear*
(*Buli people drink holy water to cure diseases)	
Pang bra Pemi Pethang aow	Arrives at Pemi Pethang on the plain
Dolay Yabsey densa aow	The place where Dolji Rimpa* was
(*Tertön of Nyingma school, 1346-1405)	
Amai Auja Peyzom aow	Amai Auja Peyzom is
Amai kono yoeta aow	Fading away
Amai Auja Peyzom aow	Amai Auja Peyzom is
Dangpai chuno ga dey aow	Going to practice Buddhism
Berpa Pemi Pethang aow*	Around the lower part of Pemi Pethang
Tshomoi Gelmoi densa aow,	Where Tshomoi Gelmoi, the god of lakes, is located.
Tshomoi densa dra rong aow	Because that's where that lake god lives
Tendrel zangpo du go aow	Very auspicious
(*Description of a terraced rice field near Alin Lake, below Pemi Pethang)	
Ma la la ye lomo aow	Don't go over the Ma La pass
Mi ken amai auja aow	Auja come back and pray to the temple
Karsung Yezhey Norbu aow	Guardian Karsung Yezhey Norbu
Marju tendu ze sho aow	Never change

Phu Tenchey Norbu aow Marjur tendu zhu gey aow	Deep in that mountain Tenchey Norbu Never change
Du ye Tshomo Gelmo aow Marjur tendu zhu gey aow	The god of the lake below, Tshomo Gelmo Never change
Shar gi gorkha sung mi aow Paw Do Tsanga Riagchen aow Shar gi gorkha sung sho aow	Guarding the eastern direction Paw Do Tsanga Riagchen Please protect the east
Lho ye gorkha sung mey aow Yumchen Tshomei Gelmo aow	Guarding the south direction Yumchen Tshomei Gelmo
Nubgi gorkha sung mey aow Wo Bi Dipa Richen aow Nub gi gorkha sung sho aow	Guarding the west direction Wo Bi Dipa Richen Please protect the west
Jang gi gorkha sung wey aow Lang bey Chana Dorji aow Majur tendu drip sho aow Jang gi gorkha sung sho aow	Guarding the north direction Chana Dorji (Bodhisattva Vajra) Stay the same Please protect the north
Buli Pema Pethang aow Mi doe Amai Auja aow Majur tendu ney sho aow	Went through Buli Pema Pethang Amai Auja because you can no longer stay here Hope that this village will never change
Dap ley Paidung Lhamo aow Majur tendu zhur chi aow (*Perden Ramo: Mahakala)	Pray to Paidung Lhamo* Never change
Pang ba Pema Pethang aow Nam gi kawa drado aow (*If you go beyond this plain, you will reach Bumthang)	There are also plains* like Pema Pethang on the mountains Too high like a pillar stuck in the sky
Pho Bi tsegi jong po aow Long chen lo ni denpa aow	The place called Pho Bi is A very rich land
Bep te Lhasa bumpa aow Kindey Amai Auja aow Amai Auja Peyzom aow	Lhasa like Tibetan bumpa Kindey Amai Auja aow Amai Auja Peyzom is

Dangpai chuno ga dey aow	Going to practice Buddhism
Amai Auja Peyzom aow	Amai Auja Peyzom is
Amai kono yoeta aow	Fading away
Bey gi Lhasei zhung na aow	In the Tibetan city of Lhasa
Dom choe choe gi puti aow	There are many scriptures and
Jeynang Amai Auja aow	Amai Auja could see it all
Dampai zokpi sangay aow	Like the Buddha
Amai Auja thobara sho	May Amai Auja also be enlightened
(Ends with his hands palms together)	

4-2-3. Melody

The short melody is repeated at a very slow tempo and is richly ornamented, with the exclamation aow (feelings of sadness or disheartening) added to each final A-note. The pitch of the melody undulates up and down like a wave, and Benpo sometimes sings with the walking gesture of the traveling *Amai Auja Peyzom*, or clasping of hands, as a supplementary explanation of the lyrical content. The last part of the song, *thobara sho*, ends with prayer. Instead of going to E-G-A, it stops on note E, and the song ends.



5. The Characteristics of Buli Songs and Their Relationship to Folk Culture

Although it is difficult to convey everything about Buli music from the three songs presented in this paper, the following points can be made in light of these songs: the geographical location of Buli and the beliefs of the people.

First, the songs are characterized by the topography and mythology of Buli.



Figure 8 Bon rituals according to the Benpo

The village of Buli is surrounded by steep mountains and lakes, and its central part is flat. A flat plain surrounded by houses lies at the center of the village. Mountain gods protect the village from invading enemies, and the spirits of sacred lakes protect it. The people believe in the many deities living in sacred places in the village, along with Buddhism. *Buli Pemi Thang* is a place of worship for the deities. Thus, *Amai Auja Peyzom*, who is

on her way to asceticism, praises this plane and moves to Lhasa. In the village, the road to Lhasa, location of the lake, and place where spirits live are important knowledge and physical sensations for survival. Thus, the sense of direction is strong, and in both *Amai Auja Peyzom* and *Tsangmo Namkey Cheni* they call upon, divine, and pray to the gods in the four directions that protect the east, west, south, and north. *Amai Auja Peyzom* also invokes each of these sacred places to point towards Lhasa.

Second, a strong mixture of Buddhism and Bonism exists, as reflected in the songs.

According to Phuntsho Dendrop, who recounted a village legend, Benpo, a Bon priest, came from Tibet and was in Buli before the arrival of Guru Rinpoche. Benpo has great power, and if a villager is ill, he calls on the god of the land for prayers and helps them recover. Alternatively, if he prays for rain, it is said that rain will fall only in Buli. The gods of this land are said to be on the same team as Benpo. However, when Guru Rinpoche came to Buli, Benpo competed with him and lost. As a result, Benpo received permission from Guru Rinpoche to perform the ritual of praying to local deities (Figure 8).

This kind of content was characteristic of the *Amai Auja Peyzom* handed down by Benpo, a story he sings about a woman who travels to Lhasa in Tibet in search of Buddhist scriptures while praying to various deities and buddhas, including the stupa, cypress tree, gods of the lake, guardian deity of the pass, gods of the four directions, and Chana Dorji (Vajrapani). In this way, the songs of the Buli symbolize the religious views of the people who are steeped in both Buddhism and Bonism.

In addition, we would like to mention the commonalities and uniqueness of Buli's songs. Commonalities include Tsangmo types, such as *Tsangmo Cheyni*, *Tsangmo Motapni*, and *Namkey Cheni*. *Buli Pemi Thang* is a traditional style of gorgom (meaning "circle") found throughout Bhutan, where it is danced in a circle, the dancers sing while stepping, and the flowing movements of the hands up, down, left, and right are characteristic. However, the invocation of the gods in the four directions in *Namkey Cheni*, praise of Buli in *Buli Pemi Thang*, and mixture of Buddhism and Bonism in *Amai Auja Peyzom* all represented the uniqueness of the local songs.

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本稿は、ブータン、シェムガン県、ナンコル郡、ブリ村における民俗音楽の調査報告である。報告するのは、伝統的な遊び歌ツァンモ、ブリを賛美する歌と踊りブリ・ペミ・タン、修行に出たブリの女性を語るアマ・ウジャ・ペイゾンの3曲である。ツァンモについては、これまでの調査と共通の類型や旋律が確認される一方で、歌詞や遊び方における独自性が見られた。ブリ・ペミ・タンは村の平地の名前で、天国のように幸せな場所として紹介され、村の各地が賛美される。歌いながら踊る伝統的なゴルゴム（輪踊り）の形式である。アマ・ウジャ・ペイゾンは、ボン教の祭司によって伝承されていた。村の聖地である仏塔、聖水、平地、聖なる湖を讃え、湖の女神、土地の守り神などへ祈りが捧げられる。短い旋律が繰り返される。ブリの歌の独自性として、地形や神話により特徴付けられている点、仏教とボン教との混淆が色濃く残っており、それらが歌に反映している点などがあげられた。

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*This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Numbers JP21KK0035, JP22K02602.

