Relative Clauses and Noun-Modifying Clauses in Chantyal
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1. INTRODUCTION
Translation equivalents of English relative clauses are accomplished in Chantyal, a Tibeto-Burman language in the Tamangic group spoken in Nepal, with a construction referred to in this handout and in other publications as a nominalization.
This term was chosen because of the syncretism in Chantyal between the form used for clausal nominalization in the strict sense [clauses used as arguments of other clauses] and the form used by clauses with adnominal functions.
The usual tests that might be used to distinguish the internal structure of otherwise syncretistic nominals from adnominal clauses are not particularly appropriate for Chantyal because it is a language with a very low referential density [Noonan (ms)].
Argument arrays in nominalized clauses and adnominal clauses are identical to argument arrays in syntactic main clauses.

2. USES OF NOMINALIZATIONS IN CHANTYAL
Nominalizations in Chantyal are formed with the morpheme -wa, a form having cognates in many TB languages [eg Classical Tibetan -pa, Gurung -ba, etc.]. Words containing this form can be used to express a wide variety of functions:

(1) 1. nominalization in the strict sense
2. verb complementation
3. noun complementation
4. purpose clause
5. relative clause
6. non-relative attributive
7. agent and patient nominal
8. attributive nominal
9. expression of the semantic predicate in verbal periphrasis
10. main verb

2.1 Nominalization:
Forms in -wa are used as citation forms for verbs. They are also used in discourse as names of activities or states. These forms are nouns and may be case-marked.

(2) ḡya-wa angréjī bḥasa-ri kḥawa bḥi-m-ē
    go-nom English language-loc how say-npast-q
    ‘How do you say “to go” in English?’

(3) pṛi-wa gāra-wa mu
    study-nom good-nom be npast
    ‘Studying is good’

(4) ca-pa ca-wa-ye ligam
    meal eat-nom-gen back
    ‘after eating’

(5) mṛa-wā-sə bḥi-wa thasa-wa ḫin nu
    other-pl-erg say-nom hear-nom be npst reminder
    ‘What we hear is what other people say.’ [Z146]

1 Notice that the word capa ‘meal’ is a fossilized nominalization of the root ca- ‘eat’.
2.2 Verb complements:
Forms in -wa are used as verb complements. The anterior suffix -si is available for indicating a secondary [relative] past tense in any sort of nominalized clause.

(6) nñi-sö reysi thû-wa a-kham mu
we-ERG liquor drink-NOM NEG-be.able be.NPAST
‘We aren’t able to drink liquor’

(7) nñi-i thêm-æn pali-ri mi phur-si-wa puttæ
we-GEN house-LOC veranda-LOC fire blow-ANT-NOM smoke.rising
dhwâl wurâ-wa mârâ-i
smoke fly-NOM see-PERF
‘We saw a fire set and smoke rising on the veranda of our house’ [O12]

2.3 Noun complements:
Forms in -wa may also act as noun complements.

(8) na-ra reysi thû-wa man kha-i
I-dat liquor drink-NOM desire come-PERF
‘I want to drink liquor’ [lit a desire to drink liquor came to me]

(9) na-sö reysi thû-wa thaa yâ-i
I-ERG liquor drink-NOM knowledge find-PERF
‘I recall drinking liquor’ [lit I found knowledge that I drank liquor]

2.4 Purpose clauses:
A nominalization with -wa, with the addition of the locative case suffix, is used to code purpose clauses:

(10) kñi ca-wa-ri kha-i
he eat-NOM-LOC come-PERF
‘He came to eat’

(11) sñålal-ma mñâo tara-wa-ri fiya-i
Sanglal-pl honey gather-NOM-LOC go-PERF
‘Sanglal and some others went to gather honey’

2.5 Adnominal clauses:
Adnominal clauses are formed with -wa. The anterior suffix -si is a secondary [relative] past tense marker available in adnominal clauses:

(12) [gay-ye sya ca-wa] mñâchi
cow-GEN meat eat-NOM person
‘the person who is eating beef’

(13) [gay-ye sya ca-si-wa] mñâchi
cow-GEN meat eat-ANT-NOM person
‘the person who ate beef’

These -wa adnominal clauses can be used to relativize on any core argument, whether animate or inanimate, and on obliques. [See also §3 below.]

(14) [ba-thyawa phâle mu-wa] mñâchi-ra cyäjì jutta kam a-lagi-m
very-big foot be-NOM person-DAT small shoe work NEG-follow-NPAST
‘A small shoe won’t work for someone with big feet’

(15) [cö bura-sö payle bñulun-rā khor chû-si-wa] kñiyala-ri kñâ-si-ra
that old.man-ERG first leopard-DAT trap set-ANT-NOM place-LOC bring-ANT-SEQ
‘he brought them back to the place where the old man first set the trap for the leopard’ [P338]
Then, around the time you first went to India, how was the forest?

He loved that dead cow that the leopard ate.

The last example shows that multiple nominalizations can modify the same noun. All but one attested native word translating an English adjective contains the suffix -wa or a [presumably] fossilized earlier form of the suffix:

Such forms were thus once analyzable as stative verbs in a relative construction. However, the recent massive influx of Nepali vocabulary — including most of the Chantyal stock of adjectives — has weakened [or perhaps even destroyed] this analysis:

There is an additional, related set of uses for the suffix -wa, which I will refer to loosely as the ‘non-relative attributive’. In this use, -wa may be suffixed onto adverbs, relative words, locative nouns, and case-marked nouns when they are used as modifiers of nouns:

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(28) **khiwara-ru-wa kəru**
    wheat-COM-NOM hooded.barley
    ‘the hooded barley among the wheat’

(29) **ram-siŋ-wa photo**
    Ram-COM-NOM photo
    ‘Ram’s photo’ [ie a photo Ram owns]

This last example can be contrasted with a similar construction involving the genitive:

(30) **ram-ye photo**
    Ram-GEN photo
    ‘Ram’s photo’ [ie a photo Ram owns or a photo taken of Ram]

Where the two contrast, the genitive indicates a more intimate relationship than is signaled by an attributive with -wa. It should be noted that an NP juxtaposed before another NP can function as an attributive as well:

(31) **pyā mfninho**
    flute flower
    ‘flute flower’

(32) **phuli kūro**
    nose.stud burr
    ‘Bidens bitemnata’

(33) **chimkhola iskul**
    Chimkhola school
    ‘the Chimkhola school’

2.7 **Agent and patient nominals:**
Forms in -wa can also be used as agent nominals. So, a form like

(34) **ca-wa**
    eat-NOM
    ‘eating’ or ‘eater’

can be interpreted as either a simple nominalization [‘eating’] or as an agent nominal [‘eater’]. Such forms can fill any sort of nominal slot:

(35) **na-sə capa ca-wa-ra kwi pin-jí**
    I-ERG meal eat-NOM-DAT water give-PERF
    ‘I gave water to the one who was eating’

(36) **na-sə reysi thū-wa-ye naku khway-kə y mu**
    I-ERG liquor drink-NOM-GEN dog feed-PROG be.NPAST
    ‘I’m feeding the liquor-drinker’s dog’

(37) **reysi thū-si-wa-ma-sə goth khāra-i**
    liquor drink-ANT-NOM-PL-ERG cowshed burn-PERF
    ‘Those who had been drinking liquor burned down the cowshed’

Notice that the anterior suffix -si can occur with these nominals.

Interestingly, these nominals may be interpreted either as agent nominals or as patient nominals, ie either as referring to the agent or to the patient. The three examples above receive an agent nominal interpretation. The example below receives a patient nominal interpretation:

(38) **cə lara pari-wa-ma goṭilo lara a-ta-si-n ṭə**
    that strip make.happen-NOM-PL good strip NEG-become-ANT-SUP FACT
    ‘those strips, the ones that I made, might not have become good strips’ [I110]
### 2.8 Attributive nominals:

Nominals can be formed from structures analogous to relative clauses, as we have seen, and also from non-relative attributives.

(39) **na-so mangale-ri-wa-ma-ra w** & p**in-ji**

I-ERG Mangale-LOC-NOM-PL-DAT water give-PERF

‘I gave water to the people from Mangale’

Suffixation of `-wa` is recursive, the limitations being those of sense and processability. The first example below shows a non-relative attributive formed from a case-marked attributive nominal:

(40) **mangale-ri-wa-ma-siŋ-wa photo**

Mangale-LOC-NOM-PL-COM-NOM photo

‘the photo belonging to the people from Mangale’

The next example shows that this form, too, may fill a nominal slot. In other words, an attributive nominal can be built off of another attributive nominal:

(41) **na-so mangale-ri-wa-ma-siŋ-wa-ra dekha-i**

I-ERG Mangale-LOC-NOM-PL-CIRC-NOM-DAT show-PERF

‘I showed it to the owners from Mangale’

### 2.9 Expression of the semantic predicate in periphrastic verb complexes:

Chantyal has been under strong Nepali influence for a considerable period and has developed considerable inventories of periphrastic constructions, a far greater number than its Tamangic kin, which typically have developed very few. The attested combinations involving the nominalizer `-wa` are found in (42):

(42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMANTIC</th>
<th>AUX</th>
<th>SENSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAIN VERB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>fin</td>
<td>Pres intentional, habitual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>fin</td>
<td>Pres perf, past: ‘it turns out that’; resultant states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>fin-si-m</td>
<td>Past [discovery of fact; modal sense (?)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>fin-si-m</td>
<td>Past perf [simply records event: ‘it turned out that’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>fin-si-n</td>
<td>Pres perf suppositional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>fin-si-n</td>
<td>Past perf suppositional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>fin-la-nə</td>
<td>Pres intentional conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>fin-la-nə</td>
<td>Past intentional conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>mu</td>
<td>Pres prospective [prediction]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>mu</td>
<td>Pres perf resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>mu-ma</td>
<td>Past prospective [prediction]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>mu-ma</td>
<td>Past perf resultative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>mu-wa fin-si-m</td>
<td>Pres perf resultative [hidden beforehand]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si-wa</td>
<td>mu-wa fin-si-m</td>
<td>Past perf resultative [hidden beforehand]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-gay</td>
<td>mu-wa fin-si-m</td>
<td>Pres perf resultative progressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>ta-wa fin</td>
<td>Pres hypothetical prospective [‘would come to’]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>ta-wa fin-si-m</td>
<td>Pres perf hypothetical prospective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si</td>
<td>ni-si-wa fin</td>
<td>Catalytic passive [accidental]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-si</td>
<td>yā-si-wa fin</td>
<td>Catalytic passive [deliberate, deserved]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>ta-T/A/M</td>
<td>Pres predictive [‘come to’: definite result]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa-khum</td>
<td>ta-T/A/M</td>
<td>Reciprocal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V-wa</td>
<td>la-i</td>
<td>Inceptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**

- `-wa` nominalizer
- `-m` non-past
- `fin` identity copula
-si anterior/sequential converb  -n suppositional  mu locational/attributive copula
-gay simultaneous converb  -nə result  ta ‘become’
-khum reciprocal  -la conditional  la ‘do’
-ma past impfertive  -læ perfective

2.10 **Main verb:**
The suffix **-wa** may also mark the syntactically main verb within the verb complex, as in:

(43)  
\[ ci-wa \]  
sit-NOM fact  
‘I’ll stay!’ [U202]

(44)  
\[ aay, kattay talay tha-i nə a-tha-wa tane \]  
gosh definitely cut-ANT focus neg-cut-NOM affirmation  
‘Gosh, it didn’t even cut, right?’ [I56]

(45)  
\[ bñalu nə puli-puli la-wa ro \]  
bear focus wiggle-wiggle do-NOM hearsay  
‘Bear wiggled!’ [L21]

(46)  
\[ bñnu-ye nal tato ta-si-wa \]  
gun-GEN barrel hot become-ANT-NOM  
‘The barrel of the gun had become hot!’ [R29]

In Chantyal, when nominalizations appear as main clauses, the effect is one of mirativity, *i.e.* the sense that the predication so expressed is in some sense surprising, contrary to expectation, or in some way exasperating. Noonan (2008b) provides some discussion and references to the situation in other Bodic languages.

3. **FURTHER COMMENTS ON NOMINALIZATIONS IN CHANTYAL**
The Sentences below are translations of the sentences sent to us by Yoshiko and Bernard on Feb. 5.

A.  
1.  
\[ [[kitab kin-si-wa] bidyarthi] su nñe \]  
book buy-ANT-NOM student who be.Q.NPAST  
‘Who is [the student [(who) bought a book]]?’

2a.  
\[ [bidyarthi-sə kitab kin-ji] bñi-wa (kuro) thaa ta-i \]  
student-ERG book buy-PERF say-NOM thing knowledge become-PERF  
‘[The fact [(that) (student) bought a book]] was revealed.

2b.  
\[ [bidyarthi-sə kitab kin-si-wa] (kuro) thaa ta-i \]  
student-ERG book buy-ANT-NOM thing knowledge become-PERF  
‘[The fact [(that) (student) bought a book]] was revealed.

3.  
\[ [bidyarthi-sə kitab kin-si-wa] khusəra khəni nñe \]  
student-ERG book buy-ANT-NOM change where be.Q.NPAST  
‘Where is [[the change ]([from) (student’s) buying a book]?

The A sentences the discussion above, namely that Chantyal uses the same construction for nominalizations and adnominal clauses.

B.  
1.  
\[ [(na-sə) çə thəpi thəpi-si-rə sup ca-wa] kñyala səmjñi-i \]  
I-ERG that repeat repeat-ANT-SEQ soup eat-NOM place remember-PERF  
‘(I) was remembering [the store [(at which) (we) could have seconds of soup]]…’
1. [ḥa-jā tam-sā bhāsakkāy bārsa sāmma khi-ye lokne-ru ci-si-wa] that-that speech-instr a.lot year until s/he-gen husband-com live-ant-com dukho sāmjā-i hardship remind-perf

2a. [ḥa-jā tam-sā bhāsakkāy bārsa sāmma khi-ye lokne-ru yā-si-wa] that-that speech-instr a.lot year until s/he-gen husband-com find-ant-com dukho sāmjā-i hardship remind-perf

‘(it) reminds (one) of the hardships of [the long years [(during which) (she) walked (=lived together) with (her husband)]’

3. [(khi-sā) cā capa ca-si-wa] dhēr tīokhor nep-la you-erg that food eat-ant-nom plate by.now wash-perf.q ‘Have (you) already washed [the bowl [(from/with which) (you) ate]]?’

4. [(mānchi-ra) batha ta-wa] kītāb person-dat intelligence become-nom book

4a. [(mānchi-ra) batha bānā-wa] kītāb person-dat intelligence make-nom book ‘[the book [(by reading which) (X’s) head gets better]]’

5. [wojān a-bārā-wa] mīthāy ta-wa-si-n kī a-ta-wa-si-n weight neg-increase-nom candy become-nom-perf-sup or neg-become-nom-perf-sup ‘I wonder if there aren’t any [sweets [(even though (X) eats which) (X) doesn’t gain weight]]’

6. [khi-sā cā kama-yisa-ra] [domase ta-si-wa] pāyā jāmmāy ca-i chīn-ji you-erg that earn-ant-seq interpreter become-ant-nom money all eat-ant finish-perf

6a. [khi-sā cā domase ta-si-ra] [kama-yisa-wa] pāyā jāmmāy ca-i chīn-ji you-erg that interpreter become-ant-seq earn-ant-nom money all eat-ant finish-perf ‘Have you eaten all [the money (which you earned by) (your) having translated (X)]?’

7. [cā mānchi-sā siyo tfu̱pā-wa] ya pānī yekchin thāpakā ḥā-thāna-m that person-erg needle sew-nom hand even one.moment stand.still neg-keep-pres ‘(She) does not rest even [(her) hand [(with which she) is sewing]].’

The B sentences [not always identical in meaning to the Japanese originals!] reveal that the range of semantic relations between the nominalized clause and its head is similar to that illustrated for Japanese. Where there is an (a) sentence, it is an idiomatic first translation.

C.

1. [jātti pālī śiyala-i kara-wa kha-wa] syanimāya as.much.as time look-at-seq cry-nom come-nom movie ‘the movie (which) whenever (I) watch (the movie) I cry.’

2. [phānī-si-wa kosili pāthā-si-wa] yāwta pakuna mu-wā break-ant-nom gift send-ant-nom one guest be-impf ‘There was a guest who was sent a broken gift’ ‘(lit.) There is a [client [(to whom) the summer gift [(which) I sent [was broken]]], but…’

Sentence (1) was translatable into Chantyal with a structure different from the Japanese original. Look at, is rendered by a sequential converb. My Chantyal friend, Ram Prasad Bhulanja, and I had numerous attempts at rendering (2), but could not find an acceptable rendering with a structure similar to the Japanese original, i.e. where break was the verbal of a clause taken to modify client/guest. [Note that there is no word for client, so we substituted guest.] An attempt at a literal rendering of the Japanese original in Chantyal would be:
2a. paque-si-wa kosili phayni-si-wa yawta pakuna mu-wa
    send-ANT-NOM gift break-ANT-NOM one guest be-IMPF
    ‘There was a guest who was sent a broken gift’

We tried this out on some other Chantyls, but they couldn’t contextualize it to produce the intended reading. One rendering in idiomatic Chantyal is seen in (2b), which employs a sequential converb and a main verb expressed as a nominalization, having a mirative sense.

2b. pakuna-ra no paqueysi-ri kosili phayni-si-wa la
    guest-DAT focus send-ANT-SEQ gift break-ANT-NOM INCREduLITY
    ‘Having sent the gift to the guest, it was (found to be) broken!’

It seems that (1) is possible in Chantyal because one can make a pragmatic inference that a movie would be the cause of tears, whereas (2a) fails because guest [or any human referent] is linked too easily with break in any of a number of idiomatic senses. Extractions that would violate Ross’s Complex NP Constraint seem possible in Chantyal with sufficient context [i.e. people will accept them], for example the following:

3.  [mastar-ra khyala-si-wa] kyata-ra lagari-si-wa ni-cu yipa mu
    teacher-DAT throw-ANT-NOM boy-DAT chase-ANT-NOM that-this stone be.NPAST
    ‘This [aforementioned one] is the stone that (I) chased the boy who threw __ at the teacher’

Spontaneous productions of this sort are very rare and unattested in my transcribed corpus.

4. SOME COMMENTS ON THE HISTORY OF CHANTYAL NOMINALIZATIONS

DeLancey (2005) proposes that Bodic nominalizations used adnominally were originally constructed with the genitive. This matter is discussed in Noonan (2008d), where it is concluded that the evidence is mixed, but on the whole probably supports DeLancey’s hypothesis. Chantyal no longer uses the genitive in this way. Below are examples from the Tamangic language Gurung:

(1) [ca pxra-ba-e] mxj jaga
    that walk-NOM-GEN person PL
    ‘those walking people’ (=sentries)

(2) [bana·r-ba-e] sī
    forest-LOC-NOM-GEN wood
    ‘trees from the forest’

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABL</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>GEN</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>PRES</th>
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</table>

Some References on Nominalizations in Chantyal and Other Works Referred to in the Discussion


Appendix 1: Possible Genetic Relationships Within the Bodic Section of Tibeto-Burman

BODIC

CENTRAL HIMALAYISH

NEWARI
KHAM-MAGAR
HAYU-CHEPANG
THANGMI-BARAAM
KIRANTI

BODISH

WEST HIMALAYISH

GHALE
TAMANGIC

CENTRAL BODISH

TIBETIC

TIBETAN COMPLEX

TSHANGLA

RGYALRONG

Classical N.
Dolakha N.
Jyapu Newari
Kathmandu N.

Gam Kham
Maikot Kham
Nishi Kham
Sheshi Kham
Takale Kham
Kaike
Magar
Raji

Chepang
Hayu
Sunwar

Thangmi
Baraam
Athpare
Bantuwa
Belhare
Camling
Dumi
Khaling
Limbu
Thulung

Byangsi
Chaudangsi-Byangsi
Chhitkuli
Darmiya
Gahri
Kanashi
Kinnauri
Marchha
Pattani
Tinnani
Old Zhangzhung
New Zhangzhung

Ghale
Chantyal
Gurung
Manage
Nar-Phu
Tamang
Thakali
Seke

Balti
Central Monpa
Classical Tibetan
Dura
Dzongkha
Jad
Jirel
Ladakhi
Leh
Lhasa Tibetan
Nubra
Nyang-Kad
Purki
Sham/Purik
Sherpa
Spiti
Spiti

Cogtse Gyarong
Caodeng rGyarong