MON-KHMER INITIAL PALATALS
AND "SUBSTRATUMIZED" AUSTRO-THAI

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In his recent book *Austro-Thai: Language and Culture* Benedict argues that there is no direct historical relationship between the Austroasiatic family of languages and his proposed Austro-Thai family, which includes the Tai-Kadai family, the Austronesian family, and the Miao-Yao family (cf. Benedict, 1975, Appendix III).

In the course of his argument Benedict reconstructs the phonological system of the Palaungic branch (minority languages spoken mostly in Burma) of Mon-Khmer and proposes a reconstruction of the proto-Mon-Khmer and even of the proto-Austroasiatic (Munda plus Mon-Khmer) phonological system. These are very similar to his reconstructed Austro-Thai phonology but, since very few words are found to be common to Austroasiatic and Austro-Thai, he concludes that the similarity is the result of influence, not of inheritance from a common past. To explain this he postulates the existence of a separate branch of Austro-Thai, which he calls "substratumized AT" and which he assumes to have been completely eliminated and superseded in the course of time by the Austroasiatic family. The similarity of the phonological systems would be due to this historical process.

These are daring and novel hypotheses which have numerous important implications not only for Southeast Asian history but for the history of Asia as a whole.

In this short paper I should like to adduce new linguistic evidence provided by Y. Mitani's work on Palaungic and by my own on the Aslian languages (Mon-Khmer of Malaysia). I propose a reconstruction of proto-Palaungic which is quite different

from that of Benedict and suggest some reconstructions for proto-Mon-Khmer based on Aslian data, which also disagree with his.

If my proposals are correct, the argument based on similarities between Austro-Thai and Austroasiatic is seriously weakened and the existence of a "substratumized AT" branch becomes very much in doubt. The question of Austroasiatic and Austro-Thai historical relations would remain completely open. The possibility of a direct but very ancient historical grouping cannot be dismissed, however, until our knowledge of Austroasiatic, and especially of Mon-Khmer, is greatly expanded.

The history of Mon-Khmer is still full of enigmas. Several of the major branches recently outlined by Thomas and Headley (1970) and Ferlus (1974a, b and c) remain practically unknown for comparative purposes (Katuic, Pearic, Khmuic) or poorly represented by only one language (Palaungic). Within any given branch no historical framework has been proposed except for parts of the Bahnaric branch (Smith, 1972). The historical position of the nine branches relative to each other is, *a fortiori*, anybody's guess, and this is not to mention problems yet to be raised such as the history of Aslian and Nicobarese languages in relation to mainland Mon-Khmer languages.

In the absence of a historical framework it is still possible to establish certain equations and collate them into abstract formulae for a few lexical items; but this does not constitute a reconstruction of linguistic history. In addition, such formulae are worth exactly as much as the notations they are based on. In the case of Palaungic this may be a serious handicap, because of the scarcity of good data. Thus Benedict had to rely on E.C.B. Stirling's notation of Vü, Amok and Angku (Scott, 1900), which has sometimes been reinterpreted *in vitro* by later scholars.[1]
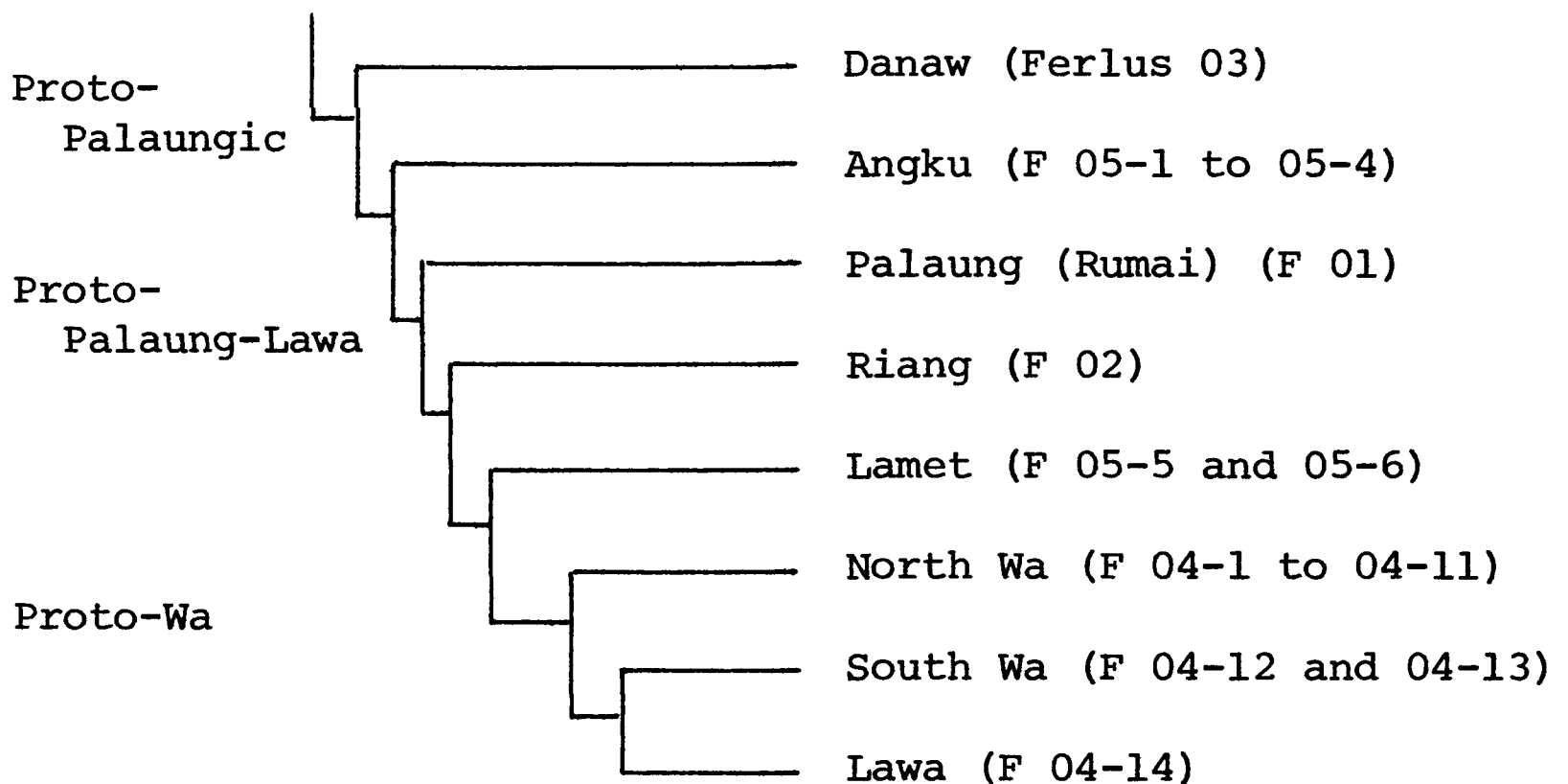
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[1]Shafer (1952) rewrote Stirling's -aw- as -å-; Benedict

However, thanks to recent field and linguistic work by Y. Mitani on three varieties of Lawa (1966, 1972) and on Khamet (1965), i.e. Lamet, there is now available in print a sizable body of material on Palaungic.

Shafer (1952), after Schmidt (1904), proposed five branches for Palaungic: Riang, Palaung, Angkou, Wa, and Danaw. He did not indicate their mutual relationships, however. Ferlus (1974b) proposed three additional branches: P'u Man, Pou Ma, and Khao. Moreover, he developed Shafer's scheme by adding Lawa to the Wa branch and Lamet to the Angkou branch; but he did not suggest any wider groupings among his eight branches of Palaungic.

The historical diagram which I propose here is, necessarily, very tentative but is based on the early phonological innovations which have been discovered so far, and not solely on lexicon or later developments such as register, tone and aspiration.

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Proto-                                    ────── Danaw (Ferlus 03)
   Palaungic
                                      ─────── Angku (F 05-1 to 05-4)

                                   ──────── Palaung (Rumai) (F 01)
Proto-
   Palaung-Lawa
                                  ───────── Riang (F 02)

                                ──────── Lamet (F 05-5 and 05-6)

                              ───── North Wa (F 04-1 to 04-11)
Proto-Wa
                             ────── South Wa (F 04-12 and 04-13)

                              ──────── Lawa (F 04-14)
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Within each branch I have retained Ferlus' classification

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modified Shafer's -å- to -ɔ-, as in 'foot' (Stirling: chɑwng). In view of Luce's TungVa tjauŋ² 'foot', the original notation may be more accurate than Shafer's tśåŋ and Benedict's ćɔŋ. Benedict also disregards all of Luce's tones.

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except for his Lamet (O5), which I have found it necessary to split in two; for as we shall see the Angku group, like Danaw, has preserved the old contrast *s- / *h- while all the other groups, from Palaung to Lawa including Lamet proper (O5-5 and O5-6), have merged the two into /h-/.

Characteristic of the entire Palaungic branch is a gradual but eventually drastic reduction in the initial part of roots. Proto-Mon-Khmer probably had a rich morphology and dissyllabic as well as monosyllabic roots. Dissyllabic roots included "complex" roots, having two initial consonants separated by a predictable vowel (usually [ə]), and true dissyllables with an unpredictable Minor Vowel, e.g. /-a-/ in some Katuic languages, or /-a-/, /-i-/ and /-u-/ in Senoic (Diffloth, 1973).

Of all this not much remains in the modern Palaungic languages. The majority of roots in Lawa, for instance, are simple monosyllables, and there is virtually no morphology. In reconstructing initial consonants it is consequently more productive to consider first those roots which are likely to represent original CVC syllables, setting to one side those which contain either old morphology or complex initials, where historical possibilities are as numerous as the data are scarce. As an illustration consider the case of Ban Phae Lawa /gïm/ [ŋgïm] 'under'. This form comes from a proto-Wa word with the initial cluster *knr- (via kŋr-, kŋ^{g}r-, ŋgr-, ŋg-); cf. Khmu kn^{d}ruum 'below', where the -n- is an infix and the original proto-Mon-Khmer base was either *krVːm (cf. Semai /krɔɔp/) or a dissyllabic *karVːm (cf. Semelai /karum/), in which *ka- may or may not have been a preposition.

In Palaungic the original voice distinction of initial stops in CVC words has undergone changes except in Milne's Palaung (1931). This contrast has often been transferred to a tone (Wa) or a register (Lamet) contrast, but some languages

(e.g., the "Palaung" of Yeseji[2]) show an apparent "flip-flop" correspondence in which original voiceless stops are now voiced (Yeseji Palaung /gɔn/ 'child') and original voiced stops are now voiceless (Yeseji Palaung /kaʔ/ 'house'; cf. Khmu /gaaŋ/ 'house').[3]

All of these changes occurred separately in each branch of Palaungic and are apparently quite recent. Even by comparing three Lawa dialects (Bo Luang, Umphai and Ban Phae) the original distinction can be recovered: the initial correspondences indicate the presence of two series of stops and the vowel correspondences also fall into two series matching the initial correspondence series.[4] If we set aside initial clusters the following can be said: if the initial stop was originally voiceless all three dialects have voiceless unaspirated stops, but if the original stop was voiced the Bo Luang and Ban Phae dialects have voiceless unaspirated stops while the Umphai dialect has aspirated stops. For example,

	Bo Luang	Umphai	Ban Phae	
	original voiceless initials			
(1)	pəĩŋ	poiñ	poiñ	'to shoot'
(2)	taum	tom	tom	'liver'
(3)	taʔ	taʔ	taʔ	'grandfather'
(4)	kuan	kuan	kuan	'child'
	original voiced initials			
(5)	poʔ	phoʔ	puʔ	'each other'

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[2]A language closely related to Scott's Darang.

[3]Since the intermediate historical stages and the vocalic features (tone, register, etc.) of this language are not known, this does not constitute an argument for the existence of actual "flip-flop" changes in historical phonology.

[4]All the information I have on proto-Lawa phonology has been offered by Mitani in personal communications. The interpretations for Mon-Khmer reconstruction and possible errors are my own.

(6)	tɯm	thɯm	--	'ripe'
(7)	kuɑt	khuɑt	kuɑt (tɑʔ-)	'old man'

The vowel sets ɑ/a/a, ɑu/o/o are found only after proto voiceless initial stops and the vowel set o/o/u after voiced stops, while some sets such as uɑ/uɑ/uɑ occur after either.

With initial palatals the situation is somewhat more complicated, though not much. There is the proto voiced initial stop, *j-, which has the expected consonantal and vocalic reflexes:

		Bo Luang	Umphai	Ban Phae	
*j-	(8)	coŋ	choŋ	cuŋ	'to stand'
	(9)	cuaŋ	chuaŋ	cuaŋ	'foot'
	(10)	cïŋ	chiŋ	c(h)iŋ	'to sew'[5]

There are also initial y-'s with the vowel correspondences typical of voiced initials:

*y-	(11)	yïaʔ	yïaʔ	yïaʔ	'grandmother'
	(12)	yïam	yïam	yïam	'to weep'

As for voiceless initial palatals, both *c- and *s- can be reconstructed for proto-Lawa:

*c-	(12a)	cɑk	cɑk	cɑk	'deer'
*s-	(13)	sɑiñ	sɑim	sɑim	'bird'
	(14)	sɑʔ	sɑʔ	sɑʔ	'breakfast, time to eat'
	(15)	sɑuʔ	soʔ	soʔ	'grandchild'
	(16)	sɑʔ	sɔʔ	sɔʔ	'dog'

Of the two, *c- is much less frequent than *s-; what is more, borrowings from Thai account for two thirds of the words recorded with *c-. It is hence difficult to find cognates of proto-

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[5] Mitani's Ban Phae dialect often has aspirated stops as a reflex of original voiced stops, as in Umphai, especially before high vowels.

Lawa words in *c- elsewhere in Palaungic and all the more so in the rest of Mon-Khmer. I shall return to this later.

There is also in Lawa an initial *h- which is followed by vowel sets of the voiceless stop type:

		Bo Luang	Umphai	Ban Phae	
*h-	(17)	haïk	hauk	haïk	'hair'
	(18)	ha?	ha?	ha?	'to burn int'
	(19)	haïŋ	haun	haun	'a tuber'
	(20)	hoak	hauk	hauk	'to climb'
	(21)	hoic	hɔic	--	'to end int'
	(22)	--	hao	--	'to vomit'
	(23)	haum	haum	haum	'to bathe'

Turning now to consider Mitani's Khamet (Lamet) (1965), we find that the same initials can be reconstructed for proto-Lamet as for proto-Lawa. In modern Khamet the original voiced/voiceless contrast of initials has been replaced by a breathy-low versus clear-high contrast in the following vowel, after which voiced initials became voiceless.

Proto-Lamet *j- (v̀ indicates breathiness and low tone):

    Khamet: (24) clìŋ 'to stand'; cf. (8).

            (25) cèeŋ 'foot'; cf. (9).

            (26) cìŋ 'to sew'; cf. (10).

Proto-Lamet *s-:

    Khamet: (27) siim 'bird'; cf. (13).

            (28) kə̀l-sa? 'time to eat, morning'; cf. (14).

            (29) sɔ? 'dog'; cf. (16).

Proto-Lamet *h-:

    Khamet (30) hɛc ~ hɛk 'to end'; cf. (21).

            (31) huum 'to bathe'; cf. (23).

Khamet words with initial c- followed by clear-high vowels are mostly borrowed from Thai, and the Khamet cognate of Lawa /cak/

(12a) is:

        (32) tyaak (or perhaps tyiak) 'deer'.

This Khamet word and cognates outside Palaungic (e.g., Khmu /kyaak/ 'deer'), together with the fact that Lawa does not allow the initial /ty-/ cluster, all suggest that proto-Lawa *c- is a recent development due to reduction of initial clusters.

Moving back towards proto-Palaungic, we find that in Milne's Palaung (1931) nothing happened to the voiced initials:

        (33) jūng 'foot'; cf. (9) and (25).

        (34) jūr 'valley'; cf. Khamet cùul 'to go down'.

        (35) jı̄ng 'to sew'; cf. (10) and (26).

*s- has an aspirated reflex noted ṣ- and sometimes sh- by Milne, showing some dialect variation and also some free variation (see Shorto, 1960), and *h- is unchanged:

        (36) hŭ (Luce: hu?[1]) 'hair'; cf. (12).

        (37) hōn 'yam'; cf. (19).

        (38) hwǭ-i 'to be finished'; cf. (21) and (30).

        (39) hūr 'to vomit'; cf. (22).

        (40) hūm, hōm 'to bathe'; cf. (23) and (31).

It is only when we reach the Angku group and Danaw that the situation begins to change. As Shafer (1952) noted but did not explain, the initial h's of Palaung, Riang and Wa---and, we can now add, of Lawa and Lamet as well---correspond to two distinct phonemes: to (h)s- and h- in the Angku branch, to θ- and h- in Danaw:

Shafer's "B" set: Angku (h)s-, Danaw θ-, other h-.

        (41) Angku suk, hsuk 'hair';[6] cf. (17) and (36).

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[6]The Danaw word for 'hair', ñok[1], obviously contains a nasal affix, probably an infix as its Khasi cognate šñu? suggests. Note also the Khamet cognate muk, in which the clear-high vowel indicates a proto-Lamet *hmuk, an infixed form of the *huk we should expect. The Mal (Khmuic) cognate nsook has a similar affix (Thomas and Headley, 1970).

(42) Angku hsut, ɑsút, ka hsut 'thick'; cf. Pa-
laung hǎt, Khamet khɯt 'id.'

(43) Angku hsen 'five', Danaw θ∂n[4] 'five'; cf.
Palaung p'ɑn, Khamet phɑn, Lawa B.L.
phoən, U., B.P. phɔn 'id.'

(44) Danaw θɔn[4] 'to bathe', Ya Ang (Angku) sǔm;
cf. (23), (31), (40).

Shafer's "A" set: h- in all languages.

(45) Danaw hɑ[4] 'to open the mouth'; cf. Lawa
B.L. hɑ 'to breathe'.

(46) Ya Ang (Angku) (Wenk, 1965) häṅ 'clever';
cf. Lawa B.L., U. hiɑŋ 'id.'

(47) Danaw tsɔŋ[4] h∂n[2] 'honey bee'; cf. Lawa B.
L. hɛ, Wa (Luce, 1965) hiɑ[2] 'id.'

The *h- of proto-Palaung-Lawa is thus the result of a merger of
two proto-Palaungic consonants. As for the *s- of proto-Palaung-
Lawa, it corresponds to s- in Angku but to ts- in Luce's nota-
tion of Danaw, in which it is not clear whether it represents a
consonant cluster or a single initial. Proto-Palaung-Lawa *j-
corresponds to Angku c- and to ts- in Luce's Danaw.

Proto-Palaung-Lawa *s-:

(48) Danaw ts∂n[4] 'bird'; cf. (13), (23), and
Palaung s̬īm, shīm 'id.'

(49) Danaw tso[1] 'dog', Angku so, hsɑu, Ya Ang
sǒ, Palaung s̬q̄ 'id.'; cf. (16), (29).

(50) Danaw tsi[1] 'louse', Angku si, Palaung s̬ī,
Khamet si?, Lawa B.L. s∂i?, U. se?, B.P.
sɛi?.

(51) Danaw tsʋ∂t[3] 'charcoal',[7] Lawa B.L. sɔih,
U. sɔs.

(52) Danaw kǎtsu[1] 'to be in pain', Angku su,
hsu 'painful', Ya Ang su 'sick', Palaung
s̬ū, Khamet su?, Lawa B.L. sɑu?, U., B.P.
so? 'painful'.

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[7]Danaw merges proto-Mon-Khmer final *-s and *-t. Cf. Danaw
nuɔt[2] 'heart', Riang (Luce, 1965) kɑnuɑs 'id.', proto-South-
Bahnaric (Blood, 1968) *nuːs, Semai NW nuus, NE n∂ɯs, C nɔɔs,
Semaq Bri (South Aslian) gnɔs 'id.' Khamet and the Umphai dia-
lect of Lawa preserve proto-Mon-Khmer final *-s.

(53) Danaw ɑtsɛ̀n⁴ 'cooked', Palaung sĭn, shĭn, Khamet sin, Lawa B.L., U., B.P. saiñ 'id.'

Proto-Palaung-Lawa *j-:

(54) Ya Ang čeṅ 'foot'; cf. (9), (25), (33).

(55) Danaw kătsɑn² 'heavy', Ya Ang k(ɑ)čan, Khamet kə̀cɛ̀n, Lawa B.L. ciɑn, U. chĭan ~ chian, B.P. chiɑn 'id.'[8]

Assuming that Danaw ts- represents the unitary segment ¢-, I propose for proto-Palaungic the set of single initials *j-, *¢-, *s-, *h-, with the history outlined in the table given hereafter.
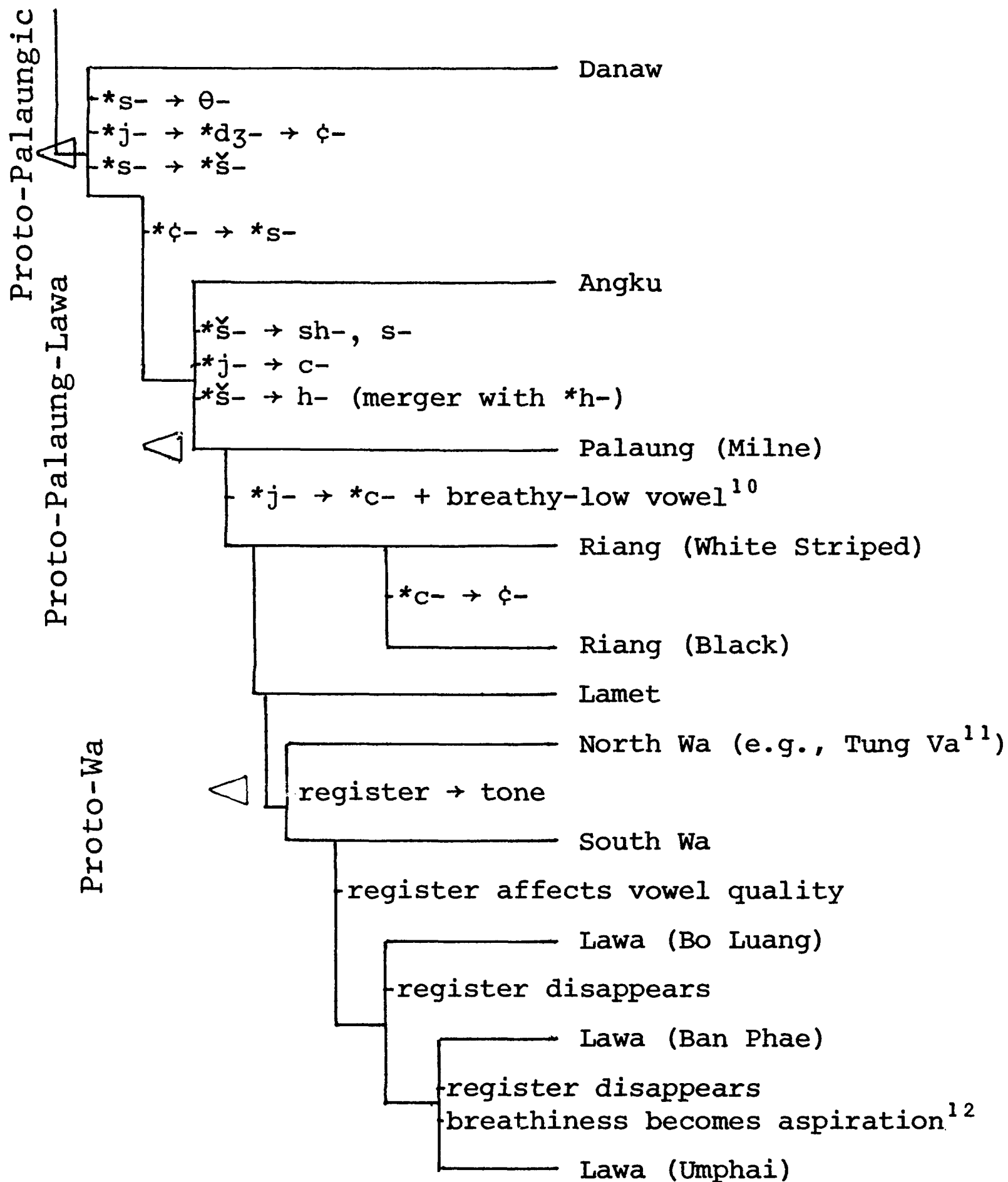
Benedict reconstructs the following initials for proto-Palaungic, which he calls Palaung-Wa (PW): *s-, *s̓-, *z-, *ts-, *tsh-, *c̓-, *dz-, *j-. On the assumption that these notations represent unit segments, we can easily match my *s- to his *s-, my *¢- to his *ts-, and my *j- to his *j-. But the remaining five are problematic in various ways.

§1. *s̓-.

Two of the examples given are first members of consonant clusters. The history of cluster reduction in Palaungic is very complicated, as mentioned above. Surely the history of proto-Mon-Khmer *s- in a CVC root will be different from that of a proto-Mon-Khmer *s- as the initial of a CCVC root. The word for 'leaf' used by Benedict is a case in point. There is no problem in reconstructing *slɑːʔ for proto-Mon-Khmer;[9] but

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[8] I have not been able to find a good example of initial *j- in Luce's list. However, an old Thai borrowing may do: Danaw tsɑo² 'early', Khamet cáɯ 'early'.

[9] The Cham borrowing mentioned as evidence for an -u- in the minor syllable of his *s[u]lɑq unfortunately appears to be a case of "revocalization" common in Chamic languages (cf. Cham lipaːŋ 'hole', < PAN *lubaŋ), and the Khasi "variant" slak appears to be an error for /slɑ/, as I heard it myself in 1966. Khmer slək is probably an Indo-Aryan borrowing. The proto-Aslian form is *slɑːʔ (cf. Semai /slɑɑʔ/, Temiar /slɑɑʔ/, Che' Wong /hɑleʔ/.

Proto-Palaungic

Proto-Palaung-Lawa

Proto-Wa

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                                                    ───────── Danaw
  *s- → θ-
  *j- → *dʒ- → ¢-
  *s- → *š-

  *¢- → *s-
                                          ───────── Angku
   *š- → sh-, s-
   *j- → c-
   *š- → h-  (merger with *h-)
                                          ───────── Palaung (Milne)
      *j- → *c- + breathy-low vowel[10]
                                          ───────── Riang (White Striped)
          *c- → ¢-
                                          ───────── Riang (Black)
                                          ───────── Lamet
                                          ───────── North Wa (e.g., Tung Va[11])
       register → tone
                                          ───────── South Wa
     register affects vowel quality
                                          ───────── Lawa (Bo Luang)
     register disappears
                                          ───────── Lawa (Ban Phae)
     register disappears
     breathiness becomes aspiration[12]
                                          ───────── Lawa (Umphai)
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[10]Mitani has evidence that this sound change occurred even more recently than I claim here and that it took place independently in several branches.

[11]Most of the tones in Luce's Tung Va are conditioned by the final consonant: tone 2 occurs with final nasals and liquids, tone 5 with final h, and tone 4 in nonfinal syllables. Tones 1 and 3, however, both occur with final stops and are conditioned by the initial consonant, voiceless initials going with tone 1, voiced initials with tone 3.

[12]Breathiness and aspiration being both phonation types, this kind of change is very natural. It apparently also took place in Thai, which may have transmitted it to Umphai Lawa. Mitani groups together Umphai Lawa and Ban Phae Lawa for reasons not mentioned here; this required two independent "losses of register," one in Ban Phae, the other in Bo Luang.

for proto-Palaungic the Danaw cognate la[1] 'leaf' shows that we need not reconstruct an initial *s-, but probably an *h- (cf. Khamet laɑʔ, with a clear-high vowel, and Lawa B.L., U., B.P. hlɑʔ 'leaf'). In this light proto-Mon-Khmer *sl- corresponds to proto-Palaungic *hl-.

In the word for 'blood' not only initial clusters but also ancient morphology seems to be involved. The proto-Mon-Khmer root was probably *jhaːm, with derivatives *j-n-haːm and *j-m-haːm. The proto-Palaungic form comes from *j-n-haːm with loss of medial *-h-, an innovation which is earlier than proto-Palaungic---since Khmuic and perhaps even Khasi share it (cf. Khmu /maam/ 'blood', from the *j-m-haːm derivative; cf. also Khmu biʔ : Semai bheeʔ 'satiated').

The last example for Benedict's *ś- is the etymon 'bathe'. As I have already shown in examples (23), (31), (40) and (44), this word has a perfectly regular proto-Palaungic *s-. Hence it is in the rest of Mon-Khmer (e.g., in Mon, Bahnar, etc.) that a problem arises. South Aslian evidence (Semelai /hũm/, Mah Meri /hum/) argues for a proto-Mon-Khmer *h-, so I should propose a proto-Mon-Khmer *shVːm for this word and cite it as another case of Palaungic loss of medial *-h- (note also Khmu /muum/, which may go back to a *s-m-huum, again with loss of medial *-h-).

There seems to be no evidence for Benedict's PW *ś- as distinct from *s-.

§2. *z-.

The sole evidence, the etymon 'eat', has Lawa reflexes B.L. saum and U., B.P. som 'eat', where the vowels cannot go back to a breathy register or to a voiced initial. Discounting Danaw sué[4], where a cognate would have final -n, the Riang, Wa, and Lamet evidence (Khamet sɔːm 'to eat', Kraisri, 1963) all argues for proto-Palaungic initial *ç-. Only Milne's Palaung poses a possible problem; but her dictionary provides, besides hɔ̃m, forms like sũm 'to eat (of monks)' and sɔ̃m 'steamed rice'

which are consistent with initial *ç- but for which I should be hard put to make a choice.

§3. *tsh-.

For 'sun/day' we are again dealing with a consonant cluster, except that here a *t- seems to be involved, the South Aslian,[13] Mon and Khmer evidence suggesting a proto-Mon-Khmer *tŋ- initial.

The word for 'salt' given by Benedict is unknown in the rest of Mon-Khmer. If Danaw ts'a⁴ were a cognate it would have a final -k (Mitani suggests Burmese chā² [s'áː] 'salt' as a possible source of the Danaw word). No cognate is found in Lawa, but Khamet has /sɑk plùuʔ/ 'salt', of which /sɑk/ desig-nates any grainy substance. If the word goes back to proto-Palaungic it only requires initial *ç-.

Thus there is no evidence left for *tsh-.

§4. *ç-.

For 'bitter' Benedict himself suggests a proto-Mon-Khmer *kt- cluster. In addition to the regular Khasi ktʰaŋ, we find Bahnar and Stieng /tăŋ/ indicating a proto-Mon-Khmer short vowel. In Palaungic, *t- (or *-t-) before certain proto short vowels was palatalized or spirantized (cf. the etyma for 'night' and 'to plant'). The Lawa reflexes---B.L. saŋ, U., B.P. sɔŋ 'bitter'---when compared with Danaw tsaŋ⁴ would suggest a *ç- initial, but Khamet /caŋ/ 'bitter' and /pə̀lcaŋ/ 'liver' ex-clude this possibility. The history of Palaungic *-tV̆- remains to be explained; and, here again, Khmuic seems to share an an-cient innovation with Palaungic: Khmu /caŋ/ 'bitter', Thin /saŋ/ 'bitter'.

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[13]The term "Sakai," as inaccurate as it is opprobrious, is no longer used. Dentan (1964) has given the current terminology and Diffloth (1968) and Benjamin (1973) have shown how this re-lates to the older one. Semai does not have a word /təŋiʔ/ 'day' (Benedict, p.470) or a word /rəkuaʔ/ 'rice' (p.472). The first is found in Semaq Bri, the second in Jah Hut.

§5. $*$dz-.

Finally, for 'heavy' there is no real obstacle to re-constructing a $*$j- in this word; cf. example (55). Luce's initial tj- is contradicted by Milne's jān 'heavy', and the high front vowel may explain the apparently irregular Tung Va jiːn² . The Riang, Khamet and Danaw forms also suggest a possible prefix in this word.

The next question is: What are the proto-Mon-Khmer reflexes of proto-Palaungic $*$j-, $*$¢-, $*$s-, and $*$h-?

The closest relatives of Palaungic, Khmuic and Khasi, have been subject to much the same areal influence as had Palaungic itself, and are hence not useful in this connection. The question can be answered by looking at the three Mon-Khmer groups of Malaysia---Senoic, North Aslian (Semang), and South Aslian ---where areal influences are very different and the time depth is very great.[14]

What we find is that nothing much has happened to differentiate proto-Palaungic from proto-Senoic. Proto-Palaungic $*$j-, $*$s- and $*$h- all correspond to proto-Senoic $*$j-, $*$s- and $*$h-.

Proto-Senoic $*$j-:

(56) 'to stand': Semai SE jəkŋ, other dialects jək; Jah Hut jwɔŋ; cf. (8), (24).

(57) 'foot': Semai SE jukŋ, other dialects juk; Temiar, Lanoh juk; Jah Hut jɔŋ; cf. (9), (25), (33), (54).

(58) 'to fall down': Semai NE joor, other dialects juɯɯr; Temiar, Lanoh jur; cf. (34).

Proto-Senoic $*$s-:

(59) 'hair': Semai, all dialects, sɔɔk; Temiar soog; Jah Hut sɔk; cf. (17), (36), (41).

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[14]It is still not clear to me whether the three Aslian branches form a single super-branch or are independently related to other Mon-Khmer branches or to proto-Mon-Khmer itself. In the two latter cases there would be no "proto-Aslian" distinguishable from proto-Mon-Khmer. See Diffloth (1975).

(60) 'to sting': Semai NE sooc, other dialects sʉʉc; Temiar suj; Lanoh seec; Jah Hut suc; cf. Amok (Angku) i-soit 'insect'.

Proto-Senoic *h-:

(61) 'finished, gone': Semai hõc; Temiar, Lanoh hɔj; cf. (21), (30), (38).

(62) 'to go out, come out':[15] Semai NE həʉl, SW hwaal, other dialects hool; Temiar hwal; cf. Khamet hʉl 'to walk', Lawa B.L. həu, U., B.P. heu 'to go, to walk'.

The only difference between proto-Palaungic and proto-Senoic, as far as our initials are concerned, is a phonetic one: proto-Palaungic *ȼ- corresponds to proto-Senoic *c-.

Proto-Senoic *c-:

(63) 'bird': Semai SE cɛɛpm, SW cyaap, other dialects cɛɛp; Temiar cɛp; Lanoh ceem; Jah Hut cɛm; cf. (13), (27), (48).

(64) 'to eat': Semai N caaʔ, S caʔ; Temiar caaʔ; Jah Hut caʔ; cf. (14), (28).

(65) 'grandchild':[16] Semai N cnɔɔʔ, S cnɔʔ; Temiar cnɔɔʔ; cf. (15).

(66) 'dog':[17] Semai NE cəuʔ, S coʔ, other dialects

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[15]Appearances to the contrary, this is a different etymon from Palaungic 'vomit' (22), (39). Khmu has cognates for both etyma, with different vowels: hʉəl 'to vomit', hool 'to stick out (e.g., navel)'.

[16]Nasal infixes are very common in kinship terms (cf. Semai knuun 'child').

[17]There is no reason to consider Bahnar kŏ [kɔʔ] (Guilleminet, 1959-63) as a cognate when the same author gives sō [sɔː], Rengao Bahnar čō [cɔː] 'dog'. Rengao Bahnar regularly retains č- from proto-Mon-Khmer *c- while the other Bahnar dialects have s-, as does the whole South-Bahnaric group: Bahnar sâu, Rengao Bahnar čâu 'grandchild'; Bahnar si, Rengao Bahnar či 'louse'. The vowels of sō, čō are also regular, whereas that of kŏ would be a problem. All other Bahnaric languages conduce to the reconstruction of proto-Bahnaric *cɔː 'dog'. This makes the cognation of Mon kluiw much less than compelling (see Benedict, p.479), inasmuch as every segment of the Mon form would be an exception. Standard Khasi (that is to say, the Welsh Missionary notation of the Cherrapundji dialect) ksew does not indicate

coo?; Temiar cwa?; Lanoh cwo?; Jah Hut cwə?; cf.
(16), (29), (49).

(67) 'smoke (*n.*)': Semai cɑs; cf. (51).

(68) 'louse': Semai N cɛɛ?, S cɛ?; Temiar cɛ?; Lanoh
ce?; Jah Hut cɛ?; cf. (50).

The Pearic, Monic, Khmeric, Katuic, Bahnaric and Viet-Muong
branches of Mon-Khmer all confirm the proto-Senoic palatal stop
*c-. North and South Aslian also agree.

There remains the question of *y-, considered briefly in
examples (11) and (12). Proto-Senoic *does* have initial *y-:

(69) 'to be born': Semai yɔɔs; Temiar yɔɔs.

(70) '(*of sun*) to be up; (*of day*) to be bright': Semai
yɑh; Temiar yɑh.

(71) '(*of bird*) to spread tail': Semai yɛɛr; Temiar
yɛɛr.

But there is another correspondence: Semai j- : Temiar y- (or
?- before -i(i)-) : Jah Hut y-:

(72) 'grandmother': Semai N jɑɑ?, jɑjɑɑ?, S jɑ?; Temiar
yɑɑ? (jɑɑ? in some dialects); Jah Hut yɑ?; cf.
(11).

(73) 'to weep': Semai N jɑɑp, S jɑɑpm; Temiar yɑɑp, Jah
Hut yɑm; cf. (12).

(74) 'we two (*excl.*)': Semai jɑɑr; Temiar yɑɑr.

(75) 'day': Semai jiis; Temiar ?is; see Shorto, 1972.

This correspondence probably goes back to a *?y- cluster in
proto-Senoic and to a proto-Mon-Khmer preglottalized (or implo-
sive) palatal stop, which would nearly complete the preglottal-
ized series proposed by Haudricourt (1950). A dissyllabic solu-
tion, *i?ɑɑm (73), etc., is also possible (see Shorto, 1972).

Without going any further, it is easy to see that typologi-
cal differences between proto-Mon-Khmer and proto-Austro-Thai

final -w: the word is pronounced [ksoːu̯] /ksoː/; cf. Lyngham
dialect (k)su.

are much greater than Benedict has claimed. Although the picture may be somewhat modified when we reach the proto-Austroasiatic level, the proto-Mon-Khmer results are damaging for Benedict's hypothesis---and this for geographic reasons. If there ever existed a "substratumized AT" group of languages, it is more likely that they would have been located in Southeast Asia than in East-Central India, in which case proto-Mon-Khmer would have been more thoroughly influenced by "substratumized AT" than the Munda languages. But both of these possibilities are contradicted by the evidence. We often forget that languages have constantly appeared and died out in the past, as many are doing today under our very eyes. Still, the proposed defunct "substratumized AT" is not likely to have ever existed.

But then again, who really knows the deep mountain?

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