

The Angkuic languages: a preliminary survey

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Angkuic within Palaungic

From Sidwell (2010), Diffloth & Zide (1992)

Palaungic

Danau

(core Palaungic)

Western (= Palaung)

Lametic

Waic

Angkuic

Angkuic is arguably the least documented Palaungic subgroup (no dictionaries yet).

ISO 639-3 names and codes

- **U**: ISO 639-3 **U** [uuu]. Lects include: **P'uman, Avala, Ghu, Alva, Auva**, etc.
- **Hu**: duplicate ISO 639-3's **Hu** [huo]; **Kon Keu** [kkn], from one of their names, **xɔn⁵⁵ kɤt³⁵** (Yan & Zhou 2012:152)
- **Man Met**: ISO 639-3 **Man Met** [mml]; also called **Kemie**
- **Muak Sa-aak**: ISO 639-3 **Mok** [mqt]
- Ethnologue also mistakenly lists **Tai Loi** [tlq], **Kiorr** [xko], and **Samtao** [stu] as Angkuic languages. No ISO codes exist for **Va** or **Angku**.

Coverage

- Only Muak Sa-aak (Hall 2010), Hu (Li 2006), and Manmet (Chen 2005) have more than 1,000 lexical items documented.
- U dialects: word lists of several hundred items. All others are very scantily documented.
- Various new Chinese data has come out within the last 15 years.
- The only grammar of an Angkuic language is Chen's (2005) sketch grammar of Manmet.

My tentative Angkuic classification

Angkuic

Eastern (Va)

Va, Northern

Va, Southern

Northern (U)

Xiaoheijiang U (Alva, Auva, U)

Northeastern U (P'uman, Avala)

Northwestern U

Southern (?)

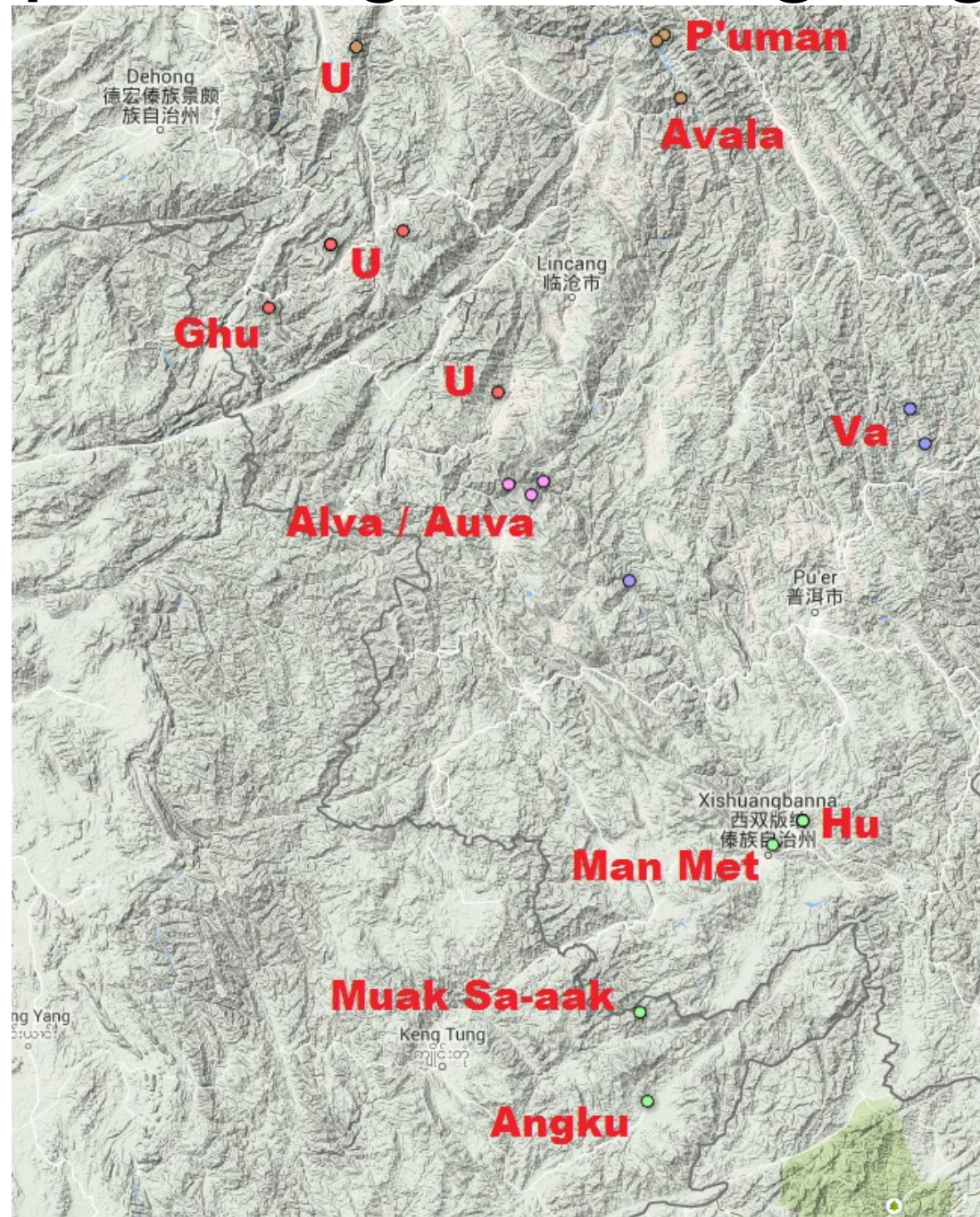
Man Met

Hu

Muak Sa-aak

Angku (?)

Map of Angkuic languages



Sound changes and phonology

- All Angkuic languages are **tonal** (cf. Svantesson 1988, 1991).
- Angkuic languages display a “**Germanic-type**” **consonant shift**, i.e. *ph- > f-, *p- > ph-, *b- > p-.
- Angkuic: Proto-Palaungic *s- > s-
- Waic: Proto-Palaungic *s- > h-
- En, Son, and Tai Loi do not display these sound changes (e.g., 'hair': En hak, Son hāk, TL huk).
- In Northern Angkuic (U), Proto-Palaungic final nasals are reflected as final stops, such as *-ŋ > -k, *-m > -p, *-n > -t.

“Bulang” 布朗

- One of the 56 ethnic groups officially recognized by the Chinese government
- Cover term used for pretty much any AA-speaking group that is not Waic (Wa), Palaung (De'ang) or Vietnamese (Jing).
- Includes *Khmu*, *Mang*, *Plang*, and most *Angkuic* speakers
- But ethnic “Wa” 佤 (government terminology) are pretty much all Waic speakers, and “De'ang 德昂” are all Western Palaungic speakers.
- Some other AA speakers' classifications: Bumang as Dai; Bolyu as Gelao; Bagan as Yi

The ethnonym Wa /va/

- 1. **Eastern Angkuic** speakers in Mojiang County (vaʔ⁵¹)
- 2. **Northern Angkuic (U)** speakers in Lincang (“Va”), Shuangjiang (“Alva” /al³¹vaʔ¹³/), Lancang (“Auva” /ɔ⁵⁵vɑ²¹/), and Nanjian (“Avala” /a²¹ va²¹ la²¹/)
- 3. **Waic** speakers (“Wa”, “Va” /vaʔ/, “Ava” /ʔa vɣʔ/, “Avala” /xa³¹ va⁵³ lɔi⁵³/)

/va/ vs. /va/

(From my fieldwork)

In Wendong Township 文东乡, Lancang County, Yunnan, *Northern Angkuic* speakers refer to:

- **Themselves** as va²¹ (creaky voice),
or ɔ⁵⁵va²¹ (“Auva”)
- **Waic** speakers in neighboring villages: va²¹
(lax voice)
- **Waic** speakers refer to themselves as va?

Mok

There appears to be (at least) 3 types of Mok.

- 1. **Mok of Lampang**, Thailand, which is extinct or nearly extinct. Mentioned in the Ethnologue as ISO 639-3 [mqt].
- 2. **Mok of Shan State**, Myanmar, a newly discovered variety that still needs documentation (Ellie Hall, p.c.)
- 3. **Muak Sa-aak of Shan State**, Myanmar (Hall 2010)

New languages

- **Northern Va:** in Mojiang County, China
- **Southern Va:** in Mojiang County, China
- **Avala:** in Yun County, China
- **Mok:** in Shan State, Myanmar

View of Northern Va villages



Mural: Traditional Va women's clothing (rarely worn nowadays)



Mural: Traditional Va men's clothing (rarely worn nowadays)



New language: Northern Va

- Location: about 8 villages in Taihe Administrative Village 太和村, Jingxing Township 景星乡, Mojiang County, Yunnan, China
- About 600 households
- Just over 2,000 people
- Spoken by all generations
- I recorded about 270 words in April 2014.
- Also recorded in Simao (1990), but the data is very patchy, not up to linguistic standards, and often differs significantly from my data despite being from the same village.

New language: Southern Va

- Location: about 6 villages in Zhenglong Administrative Village 正龙村, Jingxing Township 景星乡, Mojiang County, Yunnan, China
- Perhaps just under 1,000 speakers
- Not spoken by most children and youth; most speakers are age 40+.
- More phonologically conservative than Northern Va.
- I recorded about 100 words in April 2014.
- To my knowledge, this location or lect has never been mentioned in Chinese gazetteers or publications.

Northern Va & Southern Va

- Autonym for both: *vaʔ*⁵¹
- Both in the same township
- Both are geographically isolated from other AA languages; no other AA languages within at least a 100 km radius
- In contact with: Kaduo (S. Loloish), Tai Ya (SW Tai), SW Mandarin
- Separate languages?
- My Northern Va informant could not understand Southern Va.
- But my Southern Va informant could understand Northern Va.

Southern Va ʔ- : Northern Va Ø-

Gloss	Southern Va	Northern Va
two	kʔa ⁵¹	ka ⁵¹
sour	sʔa ⁵¹	sa ⁵¹
sweet	ʔnein ⁵¹	nein ⁵¹
dry	sʔon ⁵¹	so ⁵¹

Southern Va -k : Northern Va -ʔ

Gloss	Southern Va	Northern Va
water buffalo	k ^h ak ²¹	k ^h uaʔ ⁵¹
ear	ɛi ³³ ɛok ²¹	ɛu ²¹ ɛuʔ ⁵¹

Southern Va sC : Northern Va ɕ , C

Gloss	Southern Va	Northern Va
eye	sŋai ²¹	ŋai ⁵¹
stone	smu ³³	lu ²¹ mo ³³
near	steʔ ³³	teiʔ ³³
old (of people)	st ^h eŋ ²¹	teŋ ⁵¹
earth, soil	st ^h e ³³	teiʔ ³³
day	sni ³³	ŋi ³³
green	sŋə ³⁵	vei ²¹ ŋia ³³

Southern Va non-palatalized : Northern Va palatalized

Gloss	Southern Va	Northern Va
to buy	khueiʔ ²¹	tɕua ²¹
rain	tsom ⁵¹	tɕũi ⁵¹
head	k ^h iŋ ⁵¹	tɕ ^h iŋ ⁵¹
heart	mu ²¹ sak ³³	mu ²¹ ɕak ³³

New language: Avala

- Autonym: *a21 va21 la21*
- Location: Bangliu 邦六, Manghuai Township 芒怀乡, Yun County 云县, Yunnan, China
- Only one (1) elderly rememberer: 83-year-old Chen Zhifang 陈织芳
- I managed to elicit about 30 words in April 2014.
- Apparently most similar to Luce's P'uman and to Bulang of Nanjian County, from the limited data
- Some Waic speakers also refer to themselves as Avala (Zhou & Yan 2004).

Last rememberer of Avala



New language: Mok (of Shan State)

- Thanks to Ellie Hall (p.c.)
- Speakers found in Mae Sai, Thailand
- Not much mutual intelligibility between Mok and Muak Sa-aak.

Some research questions:

- How similar is it to Mok of Lampang, Thailand?
- Is there a Mok cluster of languages within Angkuic (Is it a valid genetic clade)? Or is it simply a cover term for languages of various subgroups?

Diagnostic isogloss: 'To eat'

Proto-Southern Angkuic: **k^ha:i

- Man Met k^hai³¹
- Hu k^ha:i³³
- Muak Sa-aak k^ha:i³

Proto-Eastern Angkuic: **pra

- S. Va pɣa³³
- N. Va pwa³³

Proto-Northern Angkuic: **na?

- Avala na²¹
- U [Svantesson] nâ
- Alva (Bangbing 邦丙) na?¹³
- U (Pangpin 胖品) na?⁵⁵
- U (Gantang 甘塘) na⁵⁵

'Three'

Proto-Northern Angkuic **ʔuaj

- Alva ʔuai⁵¹
- U (Pangpin) ʔuai⁵¹
- Ghu (Zhenkang) ɣuei⁴⁴
- U [Svantesson] wáj

Proto-Eastern Angkuic **kuej

- S. Va kuei⁵¹
- N. Va kui⁵¹

Proto-Southern Angkuic **-ɔj

- Man Met ɔi³¹
- Hu ka ɔi³³
- (Muak Sa-aak sa:m³ < Tai)

'Tooth'

Proto-Xiaoheijang U ****hɾaŋ**

- Alva ɾaŋ⁵¹
- U (Pangpin) ɾaŋ⁵¹
- U (*Gantang*) *k^hɾt*⁵⁵
- U [*Svantesson*] *ŋk^hèt*

Proto-Eastern Angkuic ****xaŋ**

- S. Va xã⁵¹
- N. Va xwã⁵¹

Proto-Southern Angkuic ****k^hɛŋ**

- Man Met k^hɛŋ⁵⁵
- Hu k^hiŋ⁵⁵
- Muak Sa-aak k^hɛŋ³

'Knife'

Proto-Northern Angkuic ****sak**

- Alva sak⁵⁵
- U (Pangpin) sak⁵⁵
- Ghu (Zhenkang) saŋʔ⁵⁵
- U [Svantesson] sàʕ

Proto-Eastern Angkuic ****jət**

- S. Va jət³³
- N. Va jot⁵¹

Proto-Southern Angkuic ****wac**

- Hu wait³³
- Muak Sa-aak wac² m.nɛp²
- (Man Met sɔ³⁵)

Numerals

- Only the more northerly U lects and Hu preserve the entire set of original (i.e., non-Tai, non-Chinese) numerals from 1-10; the others have Tai borrowings, usually from 4-10, and onwards.

Hu

a mo³³, ma⁵⁵
ka a³³
ka ɔi³³
a p^hon³³
pa θa:n³⁵
ŋ t^hɔl³³
ŋ t^hil⁵⁵
ma pa³³ t^haʔ⁵⁵
ŋom³³
ŋ **kit**⁵⁵

U (Lincang)

ʔmu³⁵
a³⁵
yuei³¹
p^hon³⁵
san⁵⁵
t^ho³¹
p^hon⁵⁵
t^haʔ⁵⁵
t^heʔ⁵⁵
sau⁵⁵

Proto-Palaungic

*mooh; *muuj; *diʔ
*lʔaar
*ʔɔɔj
*poon
*psan
*tɔɔl
*tpuul
*taaʔ; *saam; *tiiʔ
*tiim
*kəəl

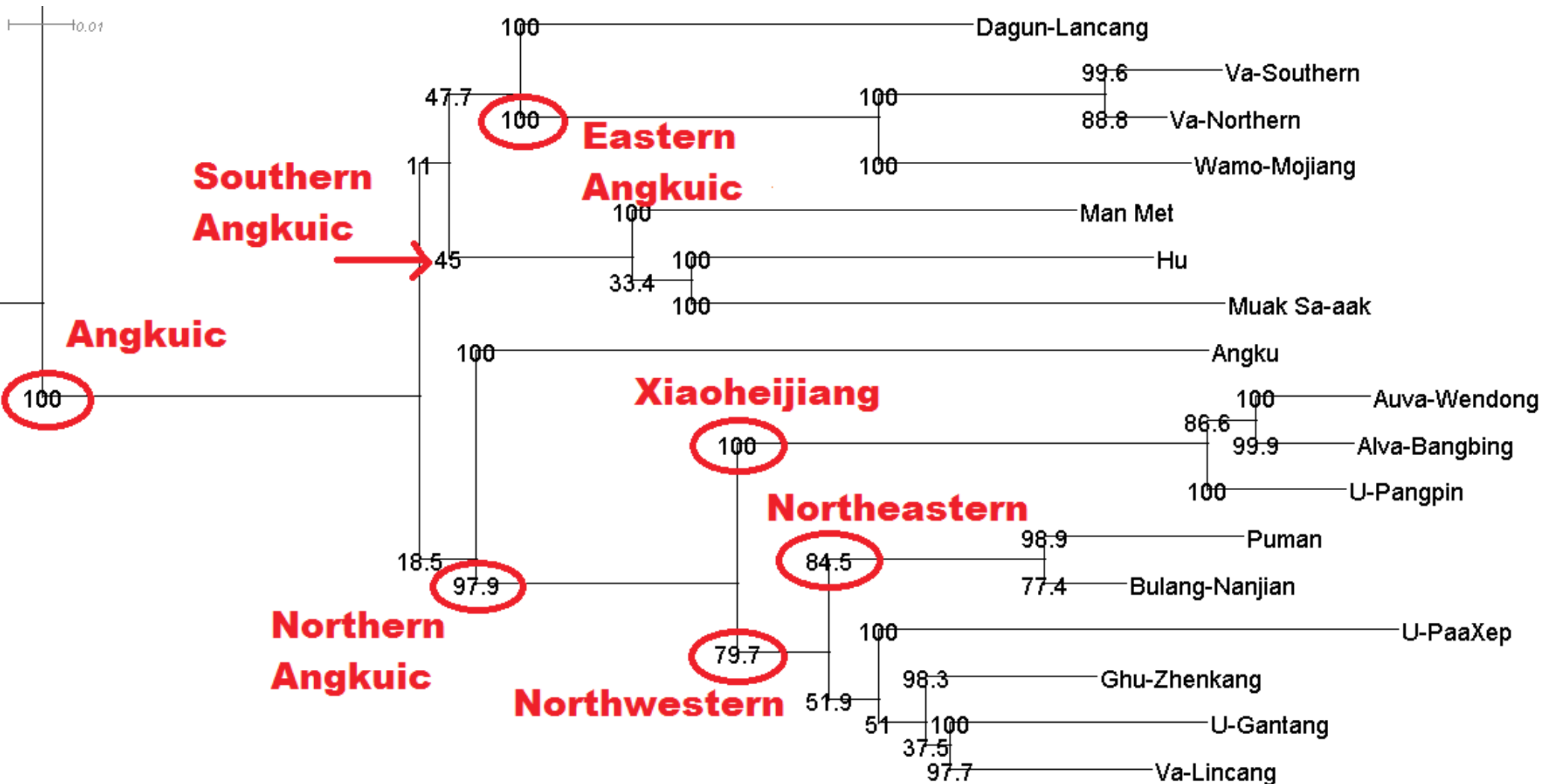
Computational phylogenetics

- 22 languages (17 Angkuic varieties, 3 from the author's own field notes; Danau and 4 others to root the tree)
- 178 lexical items
- Neighbor-joining (NJ) algorithm using SplitsTree

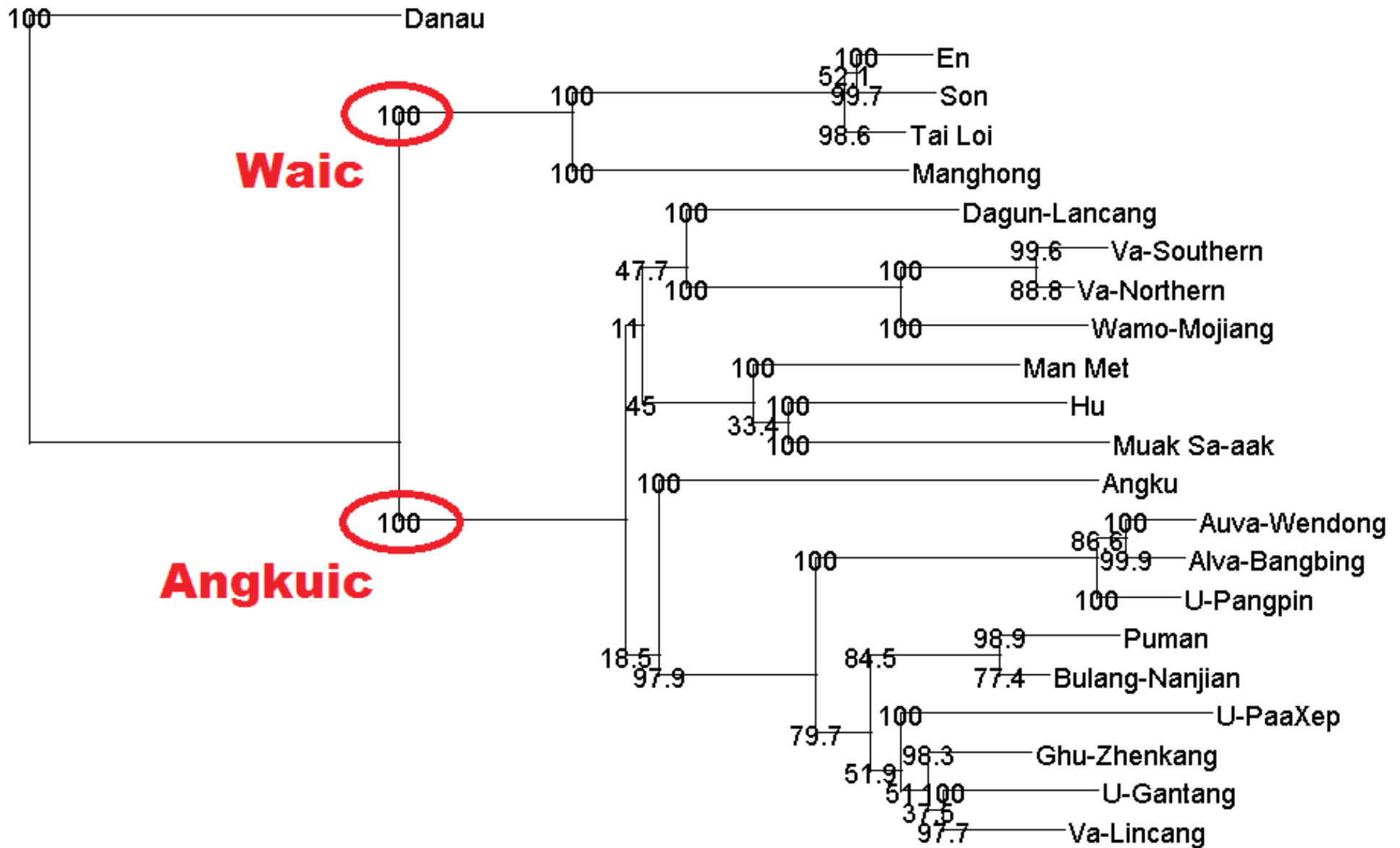
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	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA
Ghu (Zhenkan)		Va (Lincang)	U [Svantesson]	U (Hazhai)	P'uman (Lu)	Bulang (Na)	Avala	Dagun (Lan)	Va, Southern	Va, Northern	Wamo (Moj)	Man Met	Hu [Svantes]	Hu [Li Jinfa]	Muak Sa-aa
		mún muí							k ^h u ²¹				ply ⁵⁵		t ^h u ²¹ p ^h uk ²¹
		li ⁵⁵ so ³⁵	súí		la-fu		na ²¹ so ²¹	zon ³³	ci ³³ co ²¹	cu ²¹ cu ²¹	se ³³ giu ²¹	la ⁷⁵⁵ sok ³³	nasòk, le ³³ ce ³³ le ³³ co ²¹		k.c ^h o ²¹
		kat ^h e?		t ^h ui	t ^h u wei, mor		t ^h e ²¹	st ^h e ³³	teí ³³	te ¹³	p ^h yn ²¹ t ^h eí ³³	kat ^h e?	t ^h i ²¹		k ^h oj ¹ k ^h et ^h
			pli ²¹ (maggot)					k ^h o ²¹ ua ²¹	tsòm ²¹		tol ²¹ lon ¹¹				
aa ¹³		na		na	na	na ²¹	pa ²¹	pya ²¹	pma ²¹	va ²¹	k ^h ai ²¹ (rice), k ^h av	k ^h aj ²¹			k ^h aj ²¹
			nt ^h ap	d ^h ai ²¹	na (k ^h ai)	na k ^h ai		k ^h ai ²¹ k ^h ai ²¹	k ^h o ²¹ k ^h ai ²¹						
		ly ²¹ nai ³³	nai	t ^h ai			dem ²¹	t ^h am ²¹	t ^h am ²¹	t ^h am ²¹	t ^h am ²¹	nt ^h am	nt ^h am	nt ^h am	t ^h am
		nai ²¹	lò	nai			bo ²¹ ne ³³	snai ²¹	nai ²¹	ne ²¹	sak ³³ nai ²¹	sanaj	cak ³³ nai ²¹	ca ²¹ ak ³³ nai ²¹	na ²¹ nai ²¹
			χuí, ntú						t ^h oi ²¹ nai ²¹		a po ¹³				
			saqéj		nai				k ^h u ²¹						
			pats ^h õá						ne ⁵⁵	snai ²¹	nai ²¹	xú ⁵⁵ lɛ ²¹	nai ²¹	n ^h nai ³³	s.nai ²¹
										k ^h lən ⁵¹			nt ^h p ^h en ⁵⁵		k ^h u ²¹ k ^h e ²¹ k ^h aj ²¹
aa ⁴⁴			ʔün			a ta				u ²¹		ai ¹³	ʔaʔün	a uin ⁵⁵	pua ¹
			lät					la ³³	yet ³³ , get ³³	yet ³³	u ²¹				rat ¹
			p ^h ət, náj			ts ^h i p ^h e				k ^h on ²¹ p ^h yn ²¹			k ^h on ²¹ p ^h yn ²¹ , p ^h in	nom ²¹ k ^h en ³³	p ^h yn ²¹
pin ⁵⁵			má			pean		xò ²¹	ma ²¹	ma ²¹	ma ²¹	k ^h u ²¹	k ^h u ²¹	k ^h u ²¹ (wet)	ma ²¹ (dry)
					piəŋ										
			naw		nəo	nau			nə ²¹	nə ²¹		nəu ²¹	nəl	nəl ²¹	nəl ²¹
ch ^h a ⁵⁵	p ^h an ³⁵	k ^h á	k ^h q		k ^h a			xə ³³		k ^h ai ²¹	ʔa ¹³	a k ^h ai ²¹	ʔapalaw	a plau ⁵⁵	k ^h a ²¹

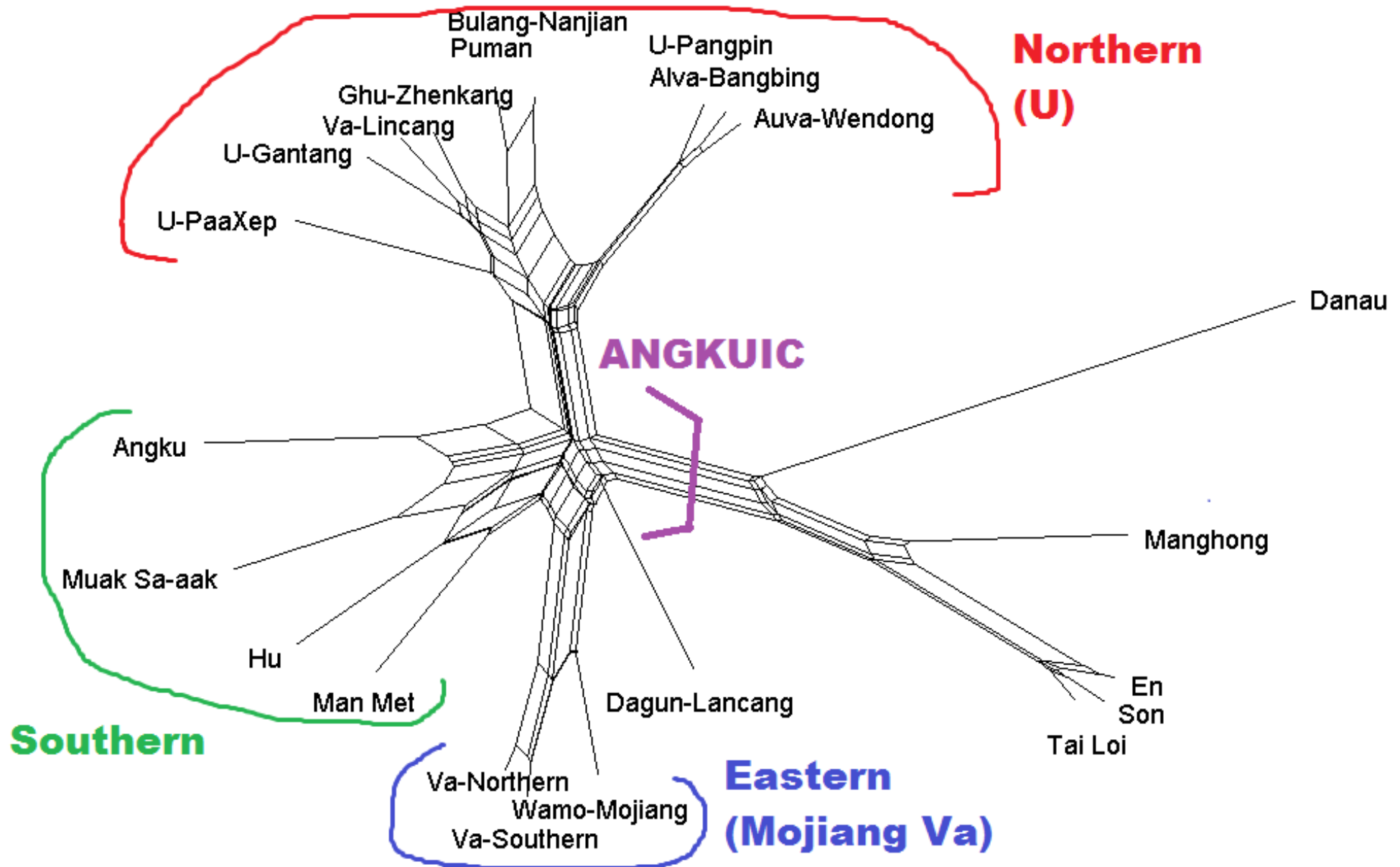
Phylogram of Angkuic languages



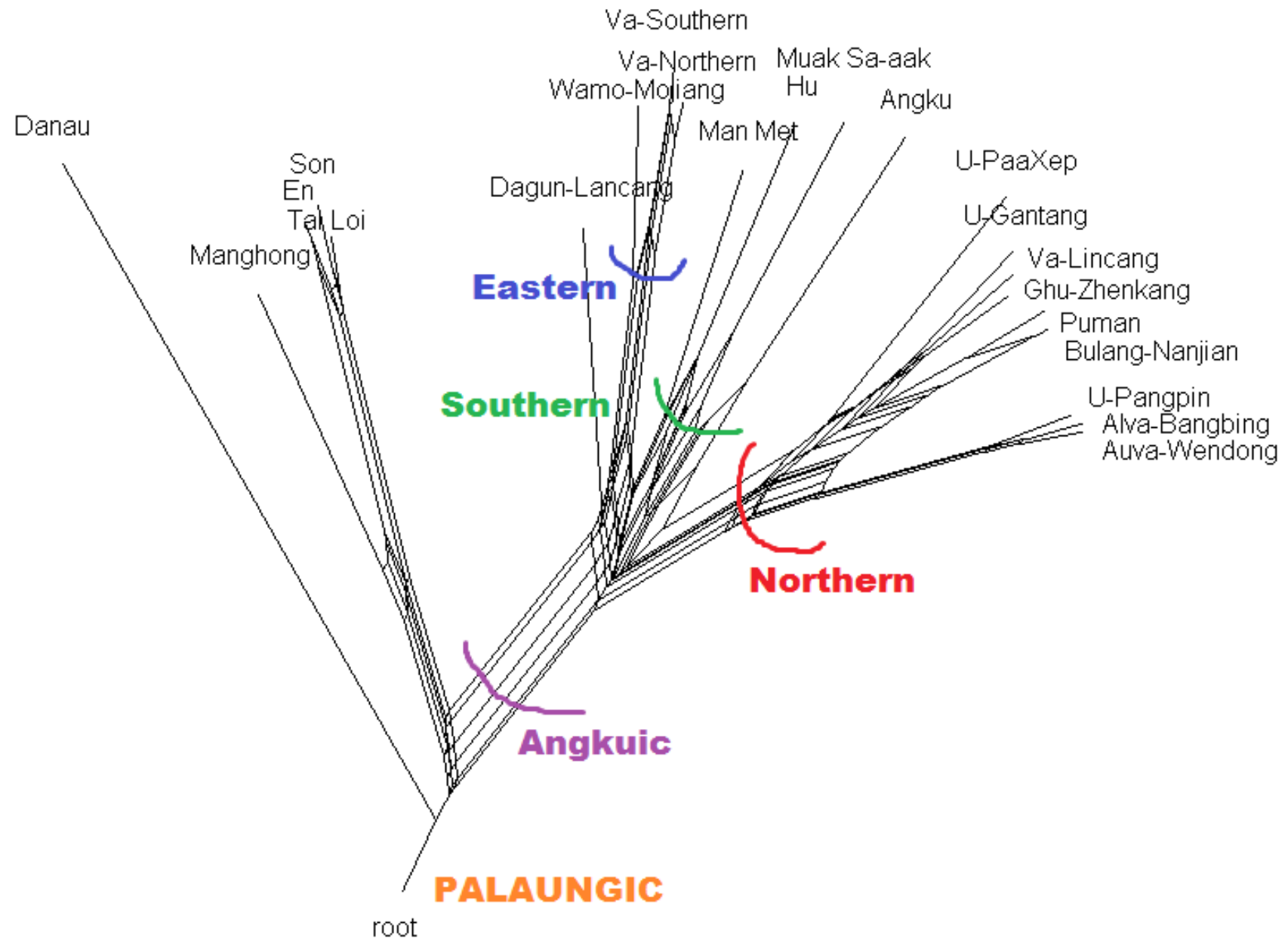
Phylogram of Palaungic languages



NeighborNet graph



Rooted tree network diagram



Tentative Angkuic classification

Angkuic

Eastern (Va)

Va, Northern

Va, Southern

Northern (U)

Xiaoheijiang U (Alva, Auva, U)

Northeastern U (P'uman, Avala)

Northwestern U

Southern (?)

Man Met

Hu

Muak Sa-aak

Angku (?)

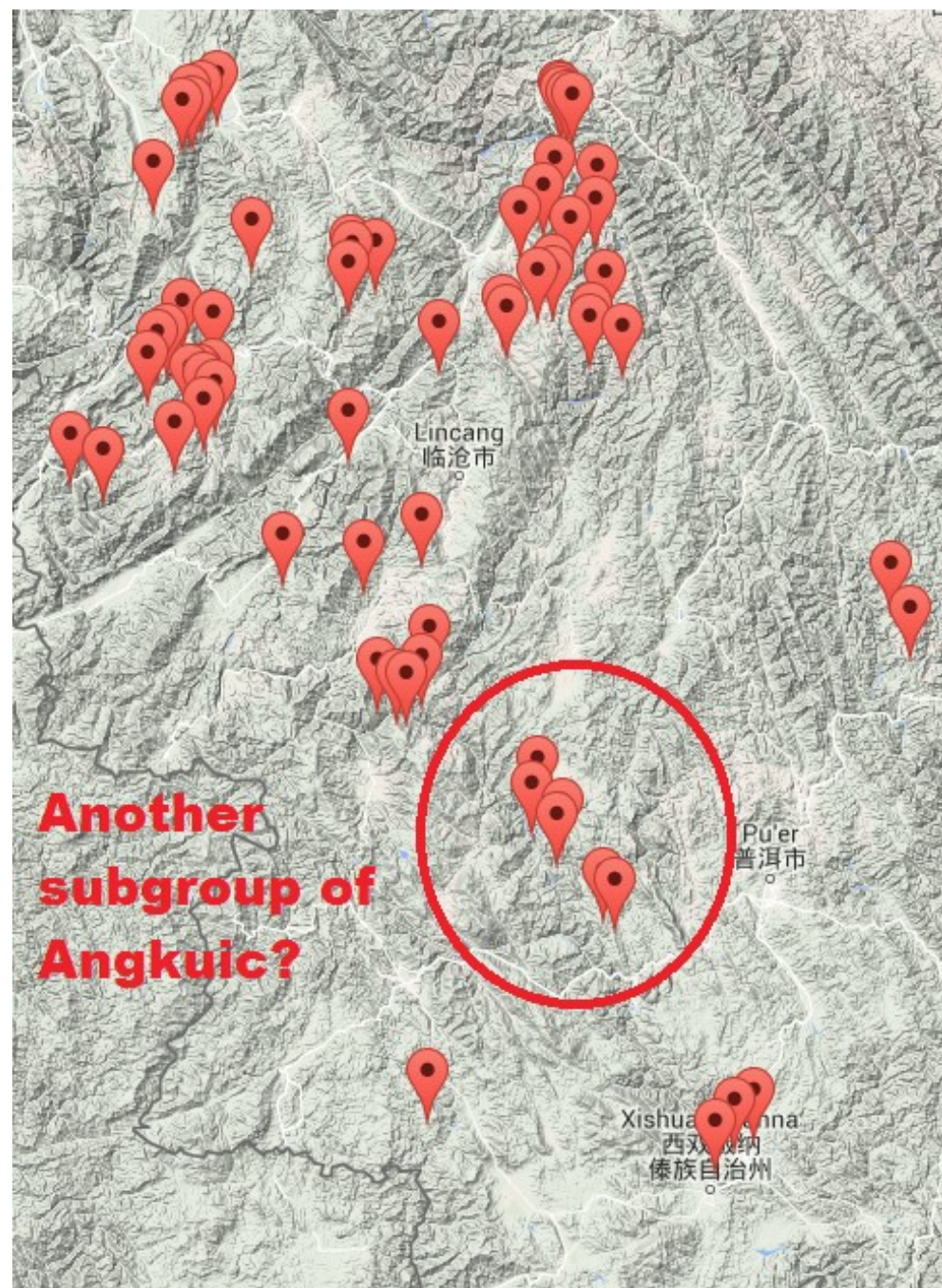
Summary of the 3 Angkuic subgroups

- **Southern Angkuic:** Most internally diverse. Subgroup or linguistic area? In Sipsongpanna and Shan State.
- **Eastern Angkuic = Va:** 2 lects. Least internally diverse. In Mojiang County.
- **Northern Angkuic = U:** Very geographically widespread throughout western Yunnan. Northern lects are highly endangered.

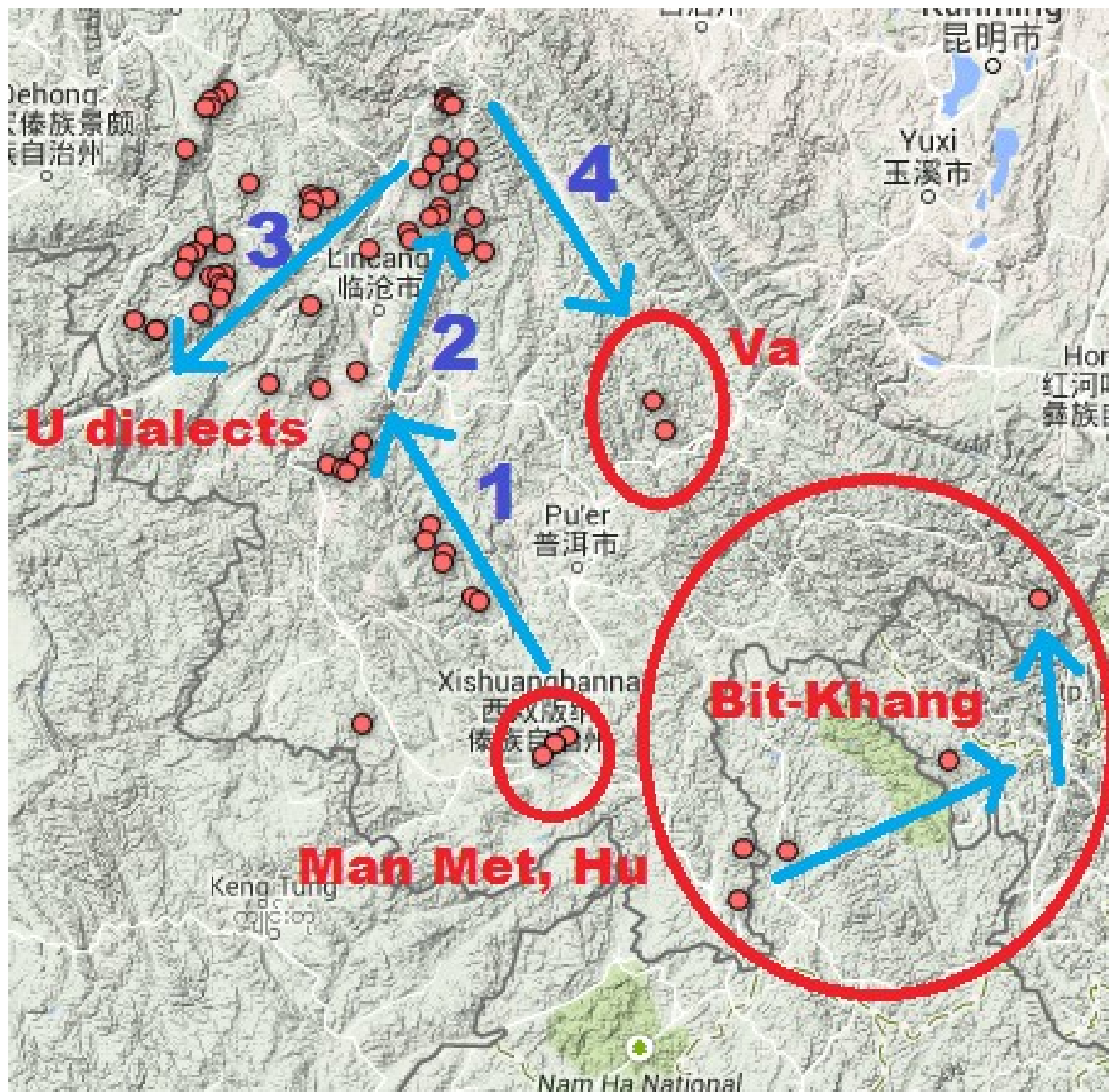
Another Angkuic branch?

The data from Simao (1990), of questionable quality, for Bulang of Dagun suggests that the varieties in Simao and Jinggu counties may form yet another branch of Angkuic.

But we can't be sure unless we get more and better data.



Map: Riverine dispersal of Angkuic



Dispersal of Angkuic

- 1. In its homeland in the Sipsongpanna area, Proto-Angkuic splits up. Southern Angkuic languages stay behind in Sipsongpanna, while Northern Angkuic disperses upstream along the Mekong River (Lancang River 澜沧江 in Chinese).
- 2. From the Xiaoheijiang 小黑江 ('Little Black River') and Mekong River confluence, Northern Angkuic disperses further upstream to Yun County and Nanjian County, near Dali.
- 3. Northern Angkuic disperses downstream along the Nanding River (南定江) towards Shan State, Burma.
- 4. Eastern Angkuic (Va), which had dispersed alongside Northern Angkuic, then migrates from the Dali area (in accordance with the Va's own migration stories) down the Chuan River 川河 (also known as the Babian River 把边江) to Mojiang County. Eastern Angkuic would have presumably been spoken over a much wider area before speakers became assimilated by Loloish and Tai speakers.

Mekong River tributary, near the Avala village of Bangliu in Yun County, China



Xiaoheijiang: View from an Auva village in Lancang County, Yunnan



Further research

- Data needed on Angkuic lects spoken on the part of the Mekong south of the Xiaoheijiang and north of Jinghong city; the data from Simao (1990) is too patchy and not high-quality enough. Are those lects Southern or Eastern Angkuic, or do they constitute yet another branch of Angkuic, as the computational phylogenetic results seem to imply?
- Dialectology work on U and Va needed
- Sort out the “Mok” lects
- Angkuic languages of Shan State: Angku, etc.

Thank You!

