

Reconstructing Proto-Pakanic

Andy Hsiu

Payap University

November 2016

Background

- 2 little-known tonal Austroasiatic languages:
- **Bolyu**: spoken in Longlin County, western Guangxi Province, China
 - ~ 1,000 speakers
- **Bugan**: spoken in southern Guangnan County, Yunnan Province, China
 - ~ 2,000 speakers

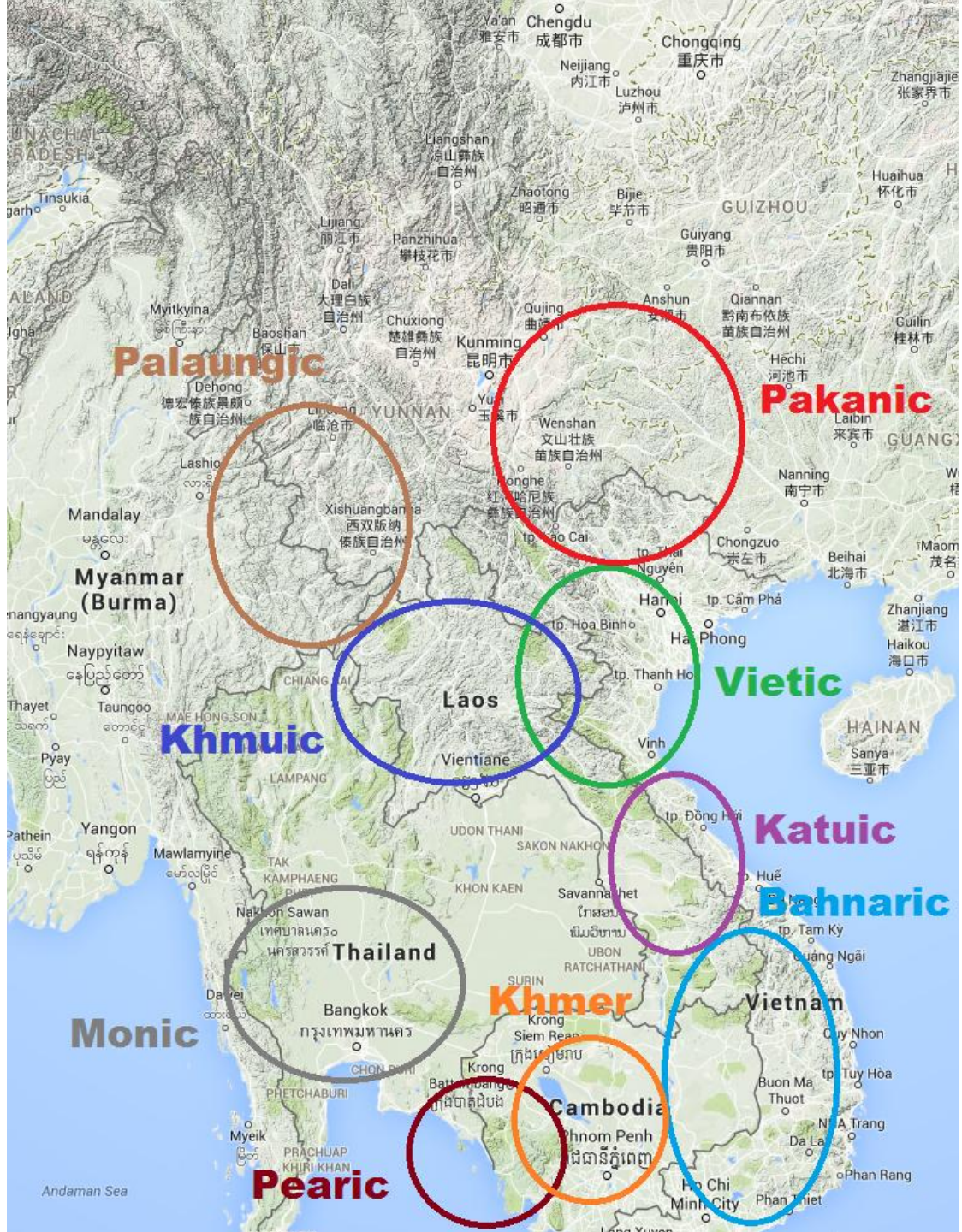
Significance

- No reconstruction yet
- Northeastern-most Austroasiatic languages
- Many forms seem to have diffused from Vietic and Khmuic.
- “Relic” languages: AA languages were once very widespread in southern China, but have been assimilated by Tai-Kadai languages (cf. papers by Jerry Norman; Jerold Edmondson; George van Driem)

Classification

Classification (Sidwell 2009)

- Austroasiatic
 - (Various primary branches)
 - **Mangic branch [3 languages]**
 - *Mang language*
 - Pakanic sub-branch
 - **Bolyu**
 - **Bugan**



Palaungic

Pakanic

Myanmar (Burma)

Laos

Vietic

Khmuic

Katuic

Monic

Thailand

Bahnaric

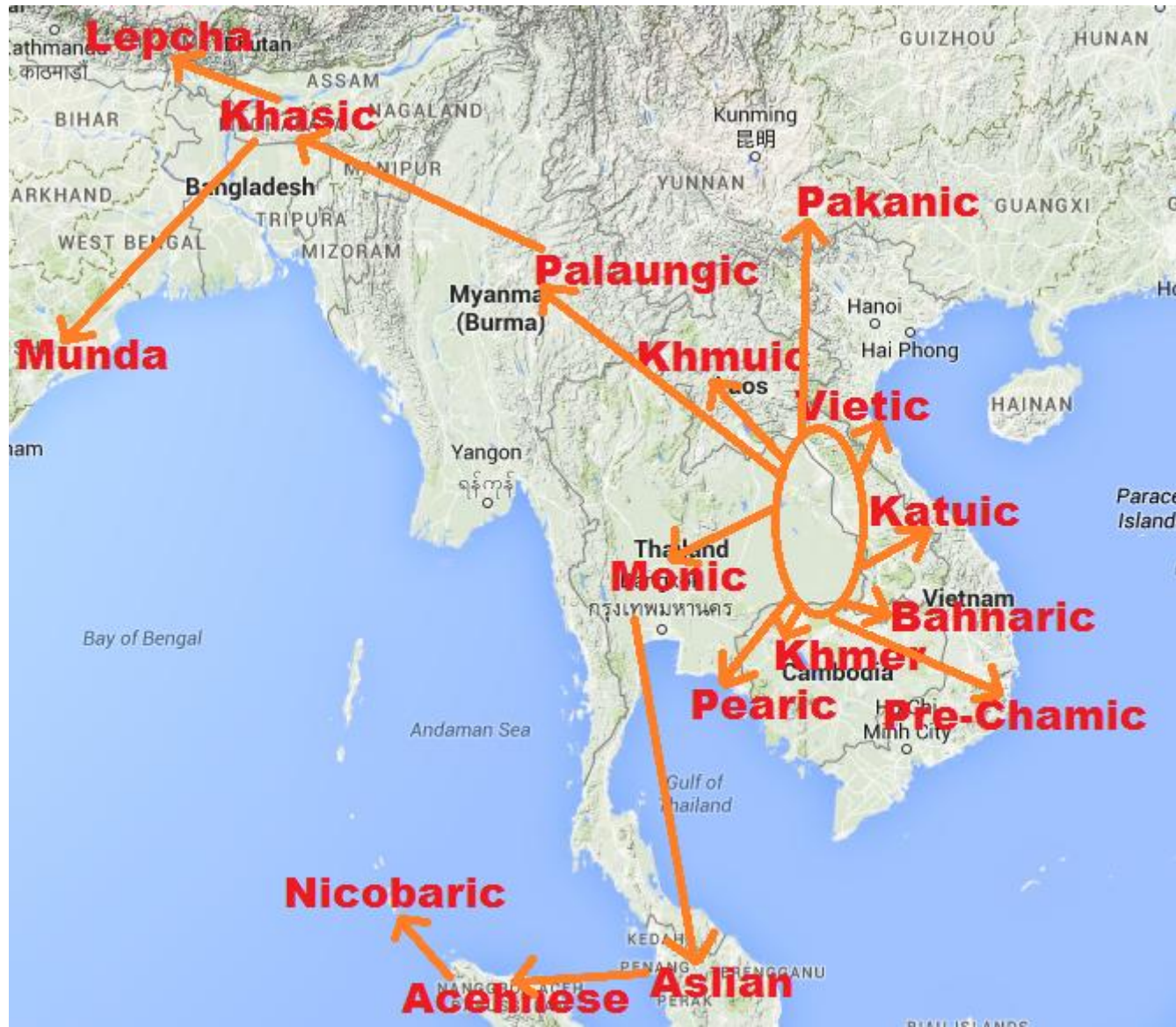
Khmer

Pearic

Cambodia

Vietnam

Austroasiatic dispersal (Blench & Sidwell 2011)



Locations



Bugan people



Official government classifications

- Bolyu classified as Gelao (= Kra)
- Bagan classified as Yi (= Lolo-Burmese)
- This is because Bolyu has had contact with White Gelao. They migrated from Guizhou province in the 1800's along with the Gelao (Li 1999).
- Bagan has had contact with Yi (Lolo) languages.

Personal visits

- In 2013, I visited Bolyu and Bagan villages to get a sense of the sociolinguistic situation, but have not collected any linguistic data.
- Both are still spoken by children, and entire villages.
- Bolyu: 5-10 villages
- Bagan: 7 villages

Languages compared

3 dialects compared

- 1. Bolyu (Li Xulian 1999)
- 2. Bagan of Manlong village (Li Yunbing 2005)
- 3. Bagan of Nala village (Li Jinfang 2006)

- Word lists have only Chinese glosses.
- Note: All 3 authors have the same last names but are different people!

Bolyu phonology

- Very similar to Northern Tai languages, which Bolyu speakers are surrounded by
- Final stops and short monosyllabic words
- Vowel length contrast
- 9 tone categories; 6 tone values
- 54 onsets
- 10 vowels
- Has preglottalized /ʔj/ and /ʔw/; fricative /v/

Bugan (Manlong) phonology

- Tense-lax register contrast; likely influence from Loloish languages, which surround Bugan
- Nasalized vowels
- Prenasalized consonants
- Has the complex clusters /pts, pts^h, mbdz/
- Sesquisyllables such as pə⁰
- Final stops occur only very rarely.
- 49 onsets, 8 vowels
- 4 tones: 55, 44, 24, 31

Bugan (Nala) phonology

- 36 onsets
- 11 vowels
- Nasalized vowels
- Prenasalized consonants
- 5 tones: 55, 33, 35, 13, 31

Abbreviations

- BL: Bolyu
- NB: Nala Bugan
- MB: Manlong Bugan

Proto-final stops

- Final stops preserved in Bolyu, lost in Bugan (sometimes appearing as tense vowels)
- hand
 - Bolyu $\zeta it7$
 - Nala $pə^0 \zeta i^{55}$
 - Manlong $p\omega^{55} \zeta i^{55}$
 - Proto-Pakanic $*\zeta it7$

Proto-final nasals

- Preserved in Bolyu, often lost in Bugan, but not always
- BL mja:n1; NB mia³¹; MB mja³¹ ‘salt’
 - *mja:n1
- BL sa:m5; NB sa³³; MB sa⁴⁴ ‘blood’
 - *sa:m5
 - cf. Proto-Vietic *ʔa-sa:mʔ (Ferlus m.s.)

Bugan excrescent medial consonant

‘to spit’

- Bolyu mbjɔ3
- Nala Bugan mde¹³
- Manlong Bugan bdei²⁴
- A rough guess: Proto-Pakanic **bjo1

Bugan excrescent medial consonant

Nala has /-ts-/ added to 'three'.

- Bolyu pa:i3
- Nala Bugan **ptse**³¹
- Manlong Bugan pi³¹

Bolyu: Nala Bagan : Manlong Bagan

- ai : ε : ε - who, we (excl.)
- k : ŋ : ŋ - bean

Devoicing in Nala Bagan

- mb : b : mb - skin, bamboo shoot, pangolin, ash
- ɸ : ɸ : ɸ - bone

Loanwords excluded

‘year’

- Bolyu nam1
- Nala Bugan nam⁵⁵
- Manlong Bugan hẹi³¹ < Loloish

In progress....

- Much more needs to be done!

Acknowledgements

- All maps are my own creations.

Special thanks to:

- Paul Sidwell for the in-depth discussions.
- The Bolyu and Bagan peoples for welcoming me.
- Eric Johnson of SIL International
- Teachers and students at Payap

Bibliography

- Benedict, Paul K. 1990. "How to Tell Lai: an exercise in classification." *Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area*. 13/2:1-26.
- Edmondson, Jerold A. 1995. "English-Bolyu Glossary." In *The Mon-Khmer Studies Journal*, 24: 133-159.
- Edmondson, Jerold A and Kenneth Gregerson. 1996. "Bolyu Tone in Vietic Perspective." In *The Mon-Khmer Studies Journal*, 26: 117-133.
- Gao Yongqi [高永奇]. 2003. *A study of Mang [莽语研究]*. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House [民族出版社].
- Guangxi Minority Languages Orthography Committee. 2008. *Vocabularies of Guangxi ethnic languages [广西民族语言方音词汇]*. Beijing: Nationalities Publishing House [民族出版社].
- Li Jinfang & Luo Yongxian. 2015. "Bugan." In Mathias Jenny & Paul Sidwell (eds). *The Handbook of Austroasiatic Languages*. Leiden: Brill.
- Li Jingfang. 1996. "Bugan: a New Mon-Khmer Language of Yunnan Province, China." In *The Mon-Khmer Studies Journal*, 26: 135-159.
- Li Xulian [李旭练]. 1999. *A Study of Lai (Bolyu) [傣语研究]*. Beijing: Minzu University Press [中央民族大学出版社].
- Li Yunbing [李云兵]. 2005. *A study of Bugeng [Bugan] [布赓语研究]*. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House [民族出版社].
- Li Jinfang [李锦芳]. 2006. *Studies on endangered languages in the Southwest China [西南地区濒危语言调查研究]*. Beijing: Minzu University.
- Nguyễn Văn Lợi; Nguyễn Hữu Hoàn; Tạ Văn Thông. 2009. *Tiếng Mảng*. Hanoi: Nhà xuất bản khoa học xã hội.
- Sidwell, Paul. 1995. "Bolyu is a Mon–Khmer language: even if Benedict says so!" *La Trobe working papers in linguistics*. Volume 8 (1995). Bundoora, Victoria: Linguistics Program, La Trobe University.
- Sidwell, Paul. 2009. *Classifying the Austroasiatic languages: history and state of the art*. LINCOS studies in Asian linguistics, 76. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- Sidwell, Paul. 2015. *The Palaungic Languages: Classification, Reconstruction and Comparative Lexicon*. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- Yan Qixiang [颜其香] & Zhou Zhizhi [周植志]. 2012. *Mon-Khmer languages of China and the Austroasiatic family [中国孟高棉语族语言与南亚语系]*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academy Press [社会科学文献出版社].