

Sangkong 桑孔 of Yunnan:

Secondary "verb pronominalization" in Southern Loloish*

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The Chinese linguist Li Yongsui has described (1991) a newly discovered language called Sangkong (saŋ⁵⁵qhoŋ⁵⁵), that evidently belongs to the "Bisoid" subgroup of Southern Loloish, close to Bisu, Phunoy, and Mpi.¹ Aside from the intrinsic value of the new lexical material Li provides, Sangkong has an extremely interesting syntactic property: a rudimentary system of "verb pronominalization", where the verb-phrase may contain either of two morphemes that refer to the person of the subject. In the case of the first person, this agreement morpheme is phonologically identical to the independent personal pronoun, ŋa⁵⁵ 'I'. The etymology of the non-first person marker, zə⁵⁵, is not so transparent, though we offer a theory about its origin below.

1.0 SANGKONG PHONOLOGY

1.1 Initials

p	pj	t	ts	tɕ	k	q	ʔ
ph	phj	th	tsh	tɕh	kh	qh	
mb	mbj	nd			ŋg		
m	mj	n		ɲ	ŋ		
			s	ɕ	x		h
w		l		z			

--Note the absence of a simple voiced series.

--Note the single voiced fricative ʔ, which represents the merger of several sonorant and fricative proto-phonemes. (See below 5.1.)

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¹ The Sangkong people number fewer than 2000. They live in Jinghong County of Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, and were formerly grouped with the Hani nationality.

1.2 Rhymes

Open:	-V
Nasal:	-VN
Constricted:	- \bar{v}
Stopped:	-VS

1.3 Tones

55	high level
33	mid level
31	low falling
[35	high rising (sandhi tone)]

2.0 SANGKONG (SK) AND PROTO-LOLO-BURMESE**2.1 Initials**

(a) PLB *voiceless obstruents > SK voiceless aspirates

(b) PLB *preglottalized obstruents > SK voiceless aspirates

(c) PLB *voiced obstruents > SK plain obstruents

*b > SK p *d > SK t *g > SK k
/same as Bisu, Lahu, Burmese/

(d) PLB *prenasalized obstruents > SK plain obstruents

*ŋg > SK k (ka³¹ 'desiderative')
*mb > SK p (p_o³³ 'satiated')

(e) PLB *simple nasals > SK prenasalized voiced stops

*m > SK mb *n > SK nd *ŋ > SK ŋg
/cf. Bisu: PLB *nasals > Bisu voiced stops/

(f) PLB *complex nasals > SK simple nasals

*?m/hm > SK m *?n/hn > SK n *?ŋ/hŋ > SK ŋ
/same as Bisu/

2.2 Some Loloish Manners of Articulation²

<i>PLB</i>	<i>WB</i>	<i>Luquan</i>	<i>Lisu</i>	<i>Lahu</i>	<i>Akha</i>	<i>Bisu</i>	<i>Sangkong</i>
*p	ph	ph	ph	ph	p/ph	ph	ph
*?b/?p	ph	p	p	p	p	ph(?)	ph
*b	p	b	b	p	b	p	p
*mb/*mp	p ~ b	mph	b	b	b	p	p
*m	m	m	m	m	m	b	mb
*?m/*hm	hm	m	m	m	m	m	m

From top to bottom, these reflexes range from more stop-like down to more nasal-like. This arrangement is satisfying because identical reflexes of different *manners are contiguous in any vertical column (i.e. for any given language).³

As these manner-developments show, Sangkong definitely belongs in the "Bisoid" subgroup of Southern Loloish.

2.2 Rhymes

<i>PLB</i>		<i>Sangkong</i>
*-ak	>	- <u>a</u>
*-vak	>	- <u>o</u>
*-ok/-uk	>	- <u>o</u>
*-ik	>	- <u>i</u>
*-at	>	- <u>e</u>
*-vat	>	- <u>e</u> / - <u>ø</u> [FLOWER]
*-ap	>	-ap

² See Matisoff 1979:28.

³ For a similar arrangement of the Tai consonantal series with respect to tonal developments, see Gedney, 1970/1989. It should also be noticed that the order in which the consonantal mutations (a) through (f) are listed reflects the presumed actual sequence of changes: first I (a/b), then II (c/d), then III (e), then (IV) f.

*-am	>	-am
*-an	>	-an or -e [see below]
*-aŋ	>	-aŋ
*-oŋ	>	-oŋ (?)
*-uŋ	>	-uŋ (?) ⁴
*-um	>	-em
*-əy	>	-ɯ
*-əw	>	-ø
*-a	>	-a
*-ya	>	-ja
*-wa	>	-o
*-u	>	-u
*-ul	>	-ɯ
*-i	>	-e
*-ay	>	-e
*-ey	>	-i

2.3 Tones

PLB *1	>	SK 55
PLB *2	>	SK 31
PLB *3	>	SK 33 ⁵
PLB *HS	>	SK 33c
PLB *LS	>	SK 31c

Sangkong has the Loloish tonal split in stopped syllables (see Matisoff 1972), despite the relative well-preservedness of syllable-final consonants: more proof, if any were needed, that this split was conditioned by the syllable-initial consonant group.

⁴ SK contrasts -oŋ and -uŋ, though this has not been firmly established for PLB; maybe SK data will prove crucial here, e.g.: 'finger' la³¹ nuŋ⁵⁵ vs. 'belly' u³¹ poŋ³³.

⁵ Words in this tone are sometimes pronounced with constriction, e.g. 'egg' u³³.

3.0 BISOID PRONOUNS AND SINO-TIBETAN PRONOMINAL ALLOFAMY

3.1 Sangkong personal pronouns⁶

	Singular		Dual	Plural
	Subject	Object		
1st pers.	ŋa ⁵⁵	ŋa ³³ la ³³ ⁷	a ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹	Excl: a ⁵⁵ ŋaŋ ³¹ Incl: ho ³³ ŋaŋ ³¹
2nd pers.	naŋ ⁵⁵	naŋ ³³ la ³³	na ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹	naŋ ³³ kun ³³
3rd pers.	thaŋ ⁵⁵	thaŋ ⁵⁵ la ³³	thi ⁵⁵ ŋ _i ³¹	thi ⁵⁵ kun ³³

3.2 Bisu personal pronouns⁸

	Singular	Dual	Plural	Collective
1st pers.	ga	gaj	gu	guh ^{mù} ~ gu ^{?ɛ̃}
2nd pers.	na ~ naŋ	naj	no ~ noŋ	noŋh ^{mù} ~ noŋ ^{?ɛ̃}
3rd pers.	ja ~ jaŋ	jet	jo ~ joŋ	joŋh ^{mù} ~ joŋ ^{?ɛ̃}

3.3 Open, palatally-suffixed, and nasal-suffixed variants of pronouns in Sino-Tibetan

Evidence from these Bisoid languages, when added to data from other branches of ST, suggests that the pronouns for all three persons have been *suffixable by palatal and/or nasal elements at various times and places in the family*. Even if the basic allomorph of the 2nd person pronoun was *naŋ, this final nasal seems to have been treated as a separable element by many languages. It is tempting to set up a quasi-paradigm as follows, though it must be admitted that the semantic increment provided by the "suffixal" elements is unclear and inconsistent across languages:

⁶ See Li 1991:20.

⁷ The accusative particle la³³ is optional with object pronouns.

⁸ Adapted from Beaudouin 1991:1.82.

	<i>Open</i>	<i>With -y</i>	<i>With -N</i>
1st Pers.	*ŋa	*ŋay	*ŋaŋ
2nd Pers.	*na	*nay	*naŋ
3rd Pers.	*ta		*taŋ
(PLB) ⁹	*za		*zaŋ × *yaŋ

Exemplifications in selected languages

Chinese

1st person:

Open:	我	ngâ/ngâ	[GSR 2a]
	吾	ngo/nguo	[GSR 58f]
With -N:	印	ngâŋ/ngâŋ	[GSR 699a] ¹⁰

3rd person:

Open:	他	t'â/t'â	[GSR 4c] 'another' ¹¹
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Mirish

1st person:

With -N:	Mishmi ŋaŋ; Miji naŋ ¹²
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Jingpho

1st person:

With -y:	ŋā ¹³
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2nd person:

With -N:	nāŋ
With velar stop:	nāk (Northern usage); náʔ 'your' (< nāŋ àʔ)

⁹ No single root for '3rd person' may be reconstructed for PTB or PST. As in other language families, ST/TB 3rd person pronouns are related to demonstratives and deictic words like 'other'.

¹⁰ My colleague Ting Pang-Hsin has kindly supplied me with a quote from the *Shi Jing*: 印須我友 (Mand. *ân xū wǒ yǒu*) 'I'm waiting for my friend.'

¹¹ This word is now the ordinary 3rd person pronoun in Mandarin.

¹² Personal communication, Jackson Tianshin Sun.

¹³ I now believe that this same morpheme underlies the unique Jingpho form for the numeral 'one', with secondary falling tone: ləŋá. See Matisoff, to appear.

Written Burmese

3rd person:

With -N: sãŋ ~ yãŋ 'that'

Lahu

3rd person:

From -N: yŋ 'he/she' < PLB *zaŋ² ~ *yaŋ² ¹⁴**Sangkong**

2nd person:

Open: na⁵⁵ n₁³¹ 'you two'With -N: naŋ⁵⁵

3rd person:

With -N: thaŋ⁵⁵ 'he/she' (pronoun);
'that' (demonstrative)**Bisu**

1st person:

Open: ga

With -y: gaŋ (dual)

2nd person:

Open: na

With -y: naŋ (dual)¹⁵

With -N: naŋ

3rd person:

Open: ja

With -N: jaŋ

4.0 SANGKONG "VERB PRONOMINALIZATION" AND THE MARKERS ŋa⁵⁵ AND ze⁵⁵

Li Yongsui's article contains some 23 sentences containing a person-marker in the VP.¹⁶ If the subject of the sentence is first person, the marker ŋa⁵⁵ appears in the predicate (1); otherwise, the marker ze⁵⁵ is used (2):

(1) ŋa⁵⁵ naŋ³³ la³³ poŋ³¹ tɕhø⁵⁵ ti³¹ thaŋ³³ pi³¹ la(ŋ)³⁵
I you OBJ sugar one packet give come

ŋa⁵⁵

1P

'I'll give you a packet of sugar.'

¹⁴ This latter reconstruction is preferred in Bradley 1993. LaPolla (p.c. Sept. 1993) suggests an allofamic relationship with PLB *tɕaŋ¹ 'person'.

¹⁵ It seems possible that the palatal suffix in the Bisu 1st/2nd dual pronouns is a cliticized reduction of the syllable *ŋi (as in the Sangkong duals), which must ultimately derive from the numeral 'two' (*g-ni-s).

¹⁶ They are presented here in a different order than in the article.

- (2) a³¹saŋ³⁵ naŋ³³ la³³ soŋ³¹ zə⁵⁵
 NAME you OBJ seek non-1P
 'Asang will look for you.'

If the verb is negated, the agreement markers are ŋe⁵⁵ for first person (3) and ŋi⁵⁵ otherwise (4):¹⁷

- (3) ŋa⁵⁵ haŋ³¹ a³¹ tsa³¹ suŋ³¹ ŋe⁵⁵
 I rice NEG eat YET 1P/NEG
 'I haven't eaten yet.'
- (4) thi⁵⁵kun³³ a³¹ tsa³¹ suŋ³¹ ŋi⁵⁵
 they NEG eat YET non-1P/NEG
 'They haven't eaten yet.'

As (1) and (2) illustrate, in the absence of an overt aspect/mood morpheme in the VP, the sentence tends to be interpreted as expressing a *future intention* ¹⁸, as also in (5) and (6):

- (5) ŋa⁵⁵ naŋ³³ la³³ soŋ³¹ la⁵⁵le(ŋ)³³ ŋa⁵⁵
 I you OBJ seek come 1P
 'I'll come to look for you.'
- (6) a⁵⁵naŋ³¹ haŋ³¹ tsa³¹ ŋa⁵⁵
 we rice eat 1P
 'We're going to eat.' / *Wǒmen yào chī fàn.*

These person markers themselves have nothing to do with aspect, since they are equally compatible with various aspectual morphemes, including pi⁵⁵ 'perfective' (as in Exs. 7-10), ŋan³¹ 'progressive' (11), and la⁵⁵ or le⁵⁵ 'come; inchoative; change-of-state' (12-14):

- (7) ŋa⁵⁵ naŋ³³ la³³ mjaŋ⁵⁵ pi⁵⁵ ŋa⁵⁵
 I you OBJ see PERF 1P
 'I have seen you.'
- (8) wa³¹ thaŋ⁵⁵ tsha³¹ la³¹ la³³ mjaŋ⁵⁵ pi⁵⁵ zə⁵⁵
 pig that tiger OBJ see PERF non-1P
 'That pig saw a tiger.'

¹⁷ Somehow the ŋ- of the 1st person form seems to have infected its paradigm-partner.

¹⁸ Li Yongsui (p.17) refers to this as *jiāngxíngtí*.

- (9) $\eta a^{55}/ho^{33}na\eta^{31}$ py^{33} $ts\underset{o}{33}$ pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I/ we hit middle PERF IP
 'I/we hit the mark.' / *Wǒ(men) dǎ zhòng le.*
- (10) $tha\eta^{55}/thi^{55}kun^{33}$ py^{33} $ts\underset{o}{33}$ pi^{55} ze^{55}
 s/he/ they hit middle PERF non-1P
 'S/he/they hit the mark.' / *Tā(men) dǎ zhòng le.*
- (11) $tha\eta^{55}$ $po^{31}lo^{31}$ ky^{33} ηan^{31} ηgy^{55} ze^{55} 19
 he book read PROG COP non-1P
 'He's reading a book.'
- (12) $ho^{33}na\eta^{31}$ mbu^{31} la^{55} ηa^{55}
 we good COME IP
 'We're going to get better.'
- (13) qo^{33} $s\eta^{55}$ le^{55} ze^{55}
 millet yellow COME non-1P
 'The millet is getting yellow.'
- (14) $na\eta^{55}/tha\eta^{55}$ $ma\eta^{31}$ la^{55} ze^{55}
 you/ he old COME non-1P
 'You/he are/is getting old.'

Combinations of more than one aspectual morpheme seem freely to co-occur in the VP before a person-marker, e.g. EXPERIENTIAL + PERFECTIVE (15, 16), or INCHOATIVE + PERFECTIVE (17, 18):

- (15) ηa^{55} $ha\eta^{31}$ $t\underset{sa}{31}$ sa^{33} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I rice eat EXPER PERF IP
 'I've already eaten.'
- (16) $thi^{55}kun^{33}$ $ha\eta^{31}$ $t\underset{sa}{31}$ sa^{33} pi^{55} ze^{55}
 they rice eat EXPER PERF non-1P
 'They've already eaten.'
- (17) ηa^{55} mbu^{31} $t\underset{se}{55}$ le^{55} pi^{55} ηa^{55}
 I good pass COME PERF IP
 'I'm better already.'

¹⁹ Notice that a newer copula, ηgy^{55} , may now co-occur with the older one (ze^{55}), now bleached of copular meaning.

- (18) aŋ³³ si³¹ miŋ³³ tse⁵⁵ le⁵⁵ pi⁵⁵ ze⁵⁵
 fruit ripe pass COME PERF non-1P
 'The fruit is ripe already.'

So far all these examples have contained an explicit personal pronoun in a NP which shares with the person-marker in the VP the function of pointing to the subject of the sentence. However, the presence of a person-marker in the VP often makes subject pronouns redundant, so they are omissible without loss of clarity, as in (9a) and (10a), which are pronounless (indeed NP-less) variants of (9) and (10) above:

- (9a) pɿ³³ tso³³ pi⁵⁵ ŋa⁵⁵
 hit middle PERF 1P
 'I/we hit the mark.' / *Wǒ(men) dǎ zhòng le.*

- (10a) pɿ³³ tso³³ pi⁵⁵ ze⁵⁵
 hit middle PERF non-1P
 'S/he/they hit the mark.' / *Tā(men) dǎ zhòng le.*

Even when an object-noun is present in sentence initial position, it often cannot be misinterpreted as the subject if a person-marker occurs in the VP, as in (19):

- (19) va³¹ lə³³ la⁵⁵ pi³¹ ŋa⁵⁵
 pig fat COME CAUS 1P
 'I let/made the pig get fat.'

The most interesting cases demonstrate that these person-markers are not simple "agreement" morphemes, but rather have *evidential* significance. The two markers can each occur in a sentence having a third person subject, but with a concomitant difference in evidential value. If the "normal" non-1P morpheme ze⁵⁵ is used, the sentence has an impersonal, general declarative sense:²⁰

- (20) lan⁵⁵ ɕa⁵⁵ me³³ lan⁵⁵ tɕho³¹ qə³³ ze⁵⁵
 paddyfield LOC water have non-1P
 'There's water in the paddyfield.'

²⁰ Called *yí-bàn chéngshù* by Li Yongsui (p. 32).

If, however, the 1P morpheme ηa^{55} is used, the sentence is still grammatical, but there is an evidential increment of meaning: there is a claim that the statement is based on firsthand, personal knowledge:²¹

- (21) $la\eta^{55}ca^{55} me^{33} la\eta^{55}t\phi ho^{31} q\phi^{33} \eta a^{55}$
 paddyfield LOC water have 1P
 'There's water in the paddyfield [and I see it with my own eyes].'

Similarly:

- (22) $\eta a^{31}lo\eta^{33} \eta e^{33} ten^{55}ne^{55} t\phi a\eta^{55} \eta a^{55}$
 fishpond inside fish exist 1P
 'There are fish in the fishpond.'
 /personal knowledge: $q\bar{i}n\ zh\bar{i}/$

- (23) $tha\eta^{55} ti^{31} tha^{55} z\bar{i}^{33} tse^{55} pi^{55} \eta a^{55}$
 s/he one time come EXPER PERF 1P
 'S/he has already come once.'
 /personal knowledge: $q\bar{i}n\ zh\bar{i}/$

5.0 ETYMOLOGY OF SANGKONG $z e^{55}$

5.1 Sources of SK initial $z-$

Sangkong $z-$ reflects several different PLB resonant and sonorant initials:²²

(a) SK z < PLB $*y-$

HOUSE	zim^{55}	<	$*yim^1$
TAKE	zu^{55}	<	$*yu^1$
SLEEP	$z\bar{u}^{31}$	<	$*yup^L$
SEED	$a\eta^{33}z\phi^{31}$	<	$*y\phi w^2$

/cf. Lahu $y\delta/$

POTATO $z a\eta^{31}z\bar{i}^{35}$

/cf. Lahu $y\grave{a}^?-y\acute{i}-\check{s}\bar{i}$ (DL 1269) and Bantawa yak 'taro'/

²¹ Called $q\bar{i}n\ zh\bar{i}$, $q\bar{i}n\ ji\grave{a}n$, or $qu\grave{e}\ zh\bar{i}$ by Li Yongsui (*ibid.*).

²² Cf. the discussion of Loloish resonantal reflexes in Matisoff 1969:171-9. The Lahu reflexes of PLB $*y$, $*r$, $*w$, $*C-\check{s}$, and $*z/\check{z}$ are $/y, \check{y}, v, \check{s},$ and $y/$, respectively.

(b) SK ʒ < PLB *r-

BONE	$\text{aŋ}^{33}\text{ʒ}\text{ø}^{31}$	<	*rəv ²
	/cf. Lahu $\text{y}\hat{5}$ /		
STAND	ʒap^{31}	<	*ʔrap ^L [TSR #175]

(c) SK ʒ < PLB *w-

BLOOM/FLOWER	$\text{ʒ}\text{ø}^{33}$	<	*s-wat ^H
ELDER SIBLING	$\text{a}^{31}\text{ʒ}\text{u}^{31}\text{a}^{31}\text{n}\text{i}^{55}$		'relatives'
	/lit. "older and younger siblings"; cf. Lahu a-ví-a-ni, ò-ví-ò-ni/		

(d) SK ʒ < PLB *C-š

EASY/CHEAP	ʒa^{55}	<	*C-ša ¹
	/cf. Lahu ša/		

(e) SK ʒ < PLB *z or *ž

EXCREMENT/RUST/BLIGHT	ʒaŋ^{31}		'excrement' < *z/žaŋ ²
	/cf. Lahu $\text{y}\hat{5}$ 'rust; rot; blight'; cognate to WT gśaŋ, bśaŋ 'shit' < PTB *g-/b-šaŋ/		

5.2 Sources of the Sangkong rhyme -e

Sangkong -e (similarly to Lahu -e)²³ has several sources, including *-at (with constriction of the vowel), *-i, *-ay, and perhaps *-an²⁴:

PLB *-at > SK -e (> -ø after a SK palatal)

HUNGRY	*mvat	>	SK mbe ³¹
BITE	*tsat	>	SK tše ³¹
SPIRIT	*nat	>	SK nde ³¹
KILL	*sat	>	SK se ³¹
ALIVE	*dat	>	SK te ³¹
FLOWER	*s-wat	>	SK ʒø ³³

²³ See Matisoff 1985, *passim*.

²⁴ SK does have the rhyme -an, but the two best examples, LOUSE and DHOLE (see Appendix) descend from etyma in *-ar and *-al, respectively. If ordinary *-an really became SK -e, perhaps we will have to claim that the rhymes *-ar and *-al survived into Proto-Loloish after all. The interesting etymon *san ʃ *sat 'pour, spill, scatter (as seed)' also appears with SK -an [see Appendix].

PLB *-an > SK -e

STIR/MIX *pan > SK phe³¹

PLB *-i > SK -e

RED *ni > SK ne⁵⁵

PLB *-ay > SK -e

TEN²⁵ *tsyay > SK tshe⁵⁵

GO *ay > SK e⁵⁵

RELATIVIZER *way > SK e⁵⁵

5.3 The copular etymon *way & *ray as the source of Sangkong e⁵⁵ and ʒe⁵⁵

Among its other functions, the Lahu particle *ve* is a nominalizer and a relativizer. I have shown (1985) how *ve* descends from a copular morpheme, PTB *way, that has an equally well-attested allofamic variant *ray.

The Sangkong relativizer e⁵⁵ appears directly cognate to Lahu *ve*, and the two particles show identical syntactic behavior:

lan⁵⁵ɕa⁵⁵ thai³³ e⁵⁵ mban³³
 field plow REL person
 'the person who plows the field'
 /cf. Lahu: ti-mi tháy ve cho/

qha⁵⁵ tsa³¹ mbu³¹ e⁵⁵ an³³si³¹
 most eat tasty REL fruit
 'the fruit that tastes the best'
 /cf. Lahu: a-cí câ mè ve í-šī/

This finally gives us the clue to the etymology of the SK non-3rd person marker ʒe⁵⁵. We have seen that SK ʒ- can come from *r-, and that one of the sources of SK -e is *-ay. I wish to claim that ʒe⁵⁵ is from the abstract copular morpheme *ray, which seems semantically quite appropriate for sentences where the 1st person is out of the picture. This use of an abstract

²⁵ For a discussion of this "still puzzling etymon", which shows vowel gradation, see Matisoff 1985 #73.

copula-like element ensures that the verbal event is stated in its most evidentially neutral, declarative aspect²⁶—in sharp contrast to those utterances where the 1st person is elevated to the center of attention by the copying of a personal pronoun onto the verb-phrase.

It is interesting to note that both alloforms of the copula have distinct reflexes in both Sangkong and Lahu:

	*vay	ɤ	*ray
Sangkong	e ⁵⁵		ze ⁵⁵
Lahu	ve		ɣɛ ²⁷ 'bunch; group (Clf)'

6.0 THE AKHA EVIDENTIAL SYSTEM

In an illuminating series of articles in the early 1970's, Søren Egerod analyzed a system of Akha sentence particles that encode such dimensions of meaning as "1st person prime mover" vs. "non-1st person prime mover" and "visual knowledge" vs. "non-visual knowledge". The 1st person particle indicating visual knowledge is ɲà (with some tonal variants), obviously related to the independent pronoun ɲá ~ ɲà 'I', which contrasts with the non-visual particle njà, as in:

gà ɲà	'he loves her (I have seen signs)'
gà njà	'he loves her (I have heard/felt signs)' ²⁸

A more detailed treatment of Sangkong sentence particles than is to be found in Li Yongsui's article would undoubtedly reveal many more points of similarity with the Akha evidential apparatus.

7.0 THE LAHU BENEFACTIVE SYSTEM²⁹

Lahu has a systematic dichotomy between 3rd and non-3rd person beneficiaries of verbal actions (as opposed to the Akha/Sangkong 1st vs. non-1st person marking). The basic distinction here is outer-directed vs. inner-

²⁶ Cf. the use of Lahu ve in non-embedded sentential nominalizations.

²⁷ As explained in Matisoff 1985:59, synchronic Lahu does not tolerate the syllable *ɣe, so the regular reflex of *-ay after *r- is ɛ. See also *s-ray > Lh. hɛ 'pluralizer'.

²⁸ The Akha verb gâ 'love' is cognate to SK ka³¹ and the Lahu desiderative particle gâ (see Appendix).

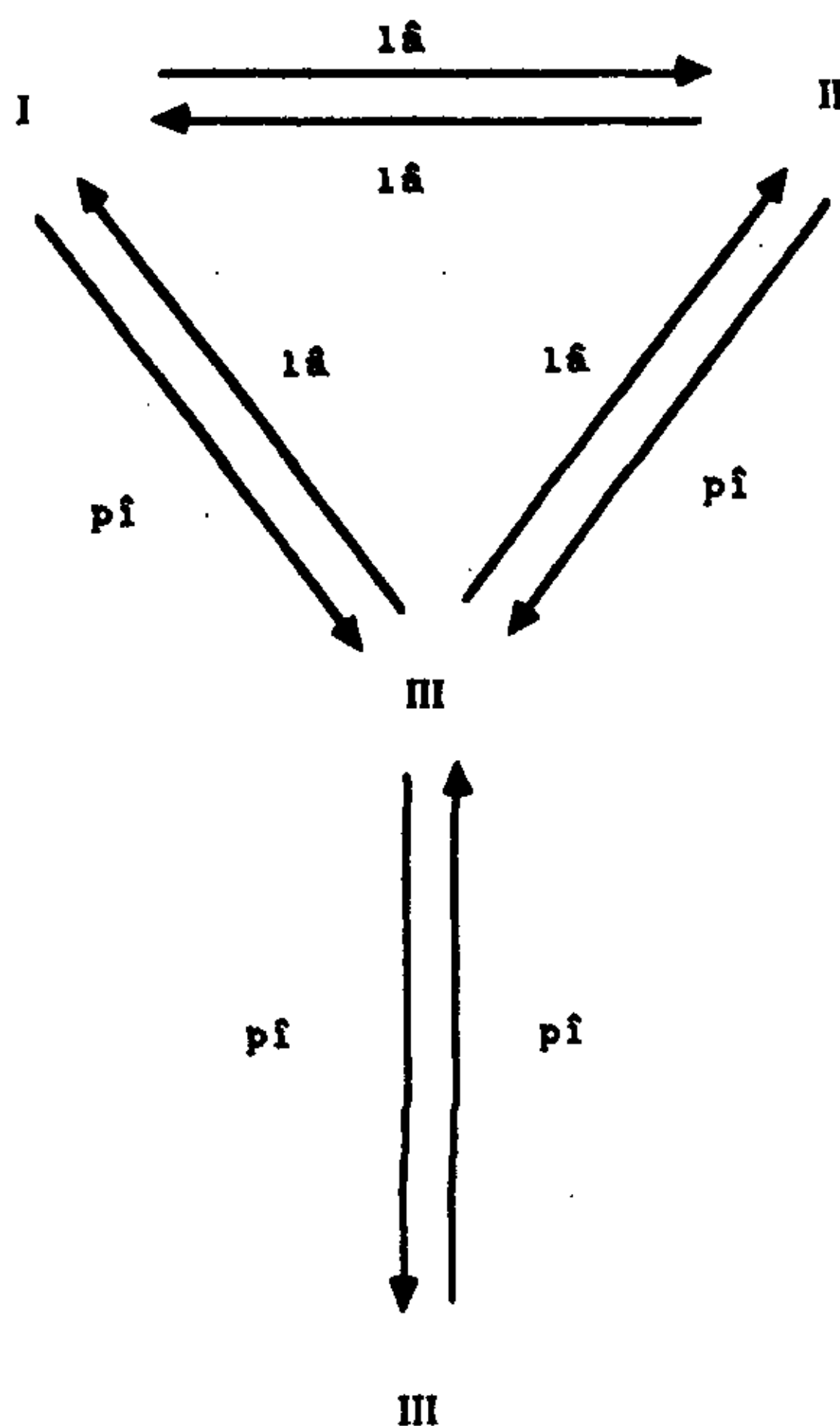
²⁹ See Matisoff 1973:325.

directed action, as is obvious from the full verbal meanings of the grammaticalized markers of the distinction:

3rd person marker: pî (Vv) /'give' as full verb/
 non-3rd person marker: lã (Pv) /~~ã~~ lã (V) 'come'/'

See Figure I below.

Figure I. The Lahu Benefactive System



8.0 CONCLUSIONS

A controversy has been simmering in Tibeto-Burman circles as to whether the pronominal agreement systems that have achieved great complexity in, e.g. the languages of E. Nepal reflect an original TB/ST feature, or whether (as I believe) they have developed secondarily and independently in various branches of the family. The fact that the germs of pronominalization

have been found in a Loloish language (a branch of TB that had hitherto been thought to be free of the phenomenon) does not, in my view, constitute evidence for the existence of a reconstructible system of pronominal concord at the PTB level—in fact quite the contrary! It shows that the marking of agreement in the verb is something which can evolve naturally and independently through the operation of certain information-packaging strategies in verb-final languages.

In fact the Sangkong "agreement markers" do not necessarily refer narrowly to the agent of the sentence, but may have a more general *evidential* value. If, e.g., the speaker is making a statement that reflects his own personal knowledge, he may use the 1st-person marker even though the sentence may contain a 3rd-person subject. This makes Sangkong "verb pronominalization" look much more like the person-based evidential system of particles described for Akha (Egerod 1973, 1974; Hansson 1976), or the person-based benefactive morphemes found in Lahu (see above, 6.0, 7.0).

The origins of this rudimentary system of verb pronominalization are perhaps to be sought in "evidential afterthoughts", sentence-tags like "..., I know" or "..., I guess" for first person involvement, vs. "..., [and that's the way he/it/you] is/are" for neutral, objective statements.

9.0 APPENDIX: SOME INTERESTING SANGKONG COGNATES

PTB	PLB	Written Burmese	Lahu	Sangkong
'be in a place/be there/existential copula'	*dʒaŋ ¹		cò	tʃaŋ ⁵⁵
'wolf/dhole/wild dog'	*kywaɪ		vè	han ⁵⁵
			/see Matisoff 1985, #17; the -n in the SK form might be due to rhinoglottophilia after the initial h-; cf. 'four' un ⁵⁵ ~ xun ⁵⁵ (Lahu ſ ~ ſn)/	
'louse'	*sar	sân (Tone*2)	še (*1)	san ⁵⁵ (*1)
'snow/ice/frost'	*hŋ--		ŋe	ŋe ⁵⁵
			/firm cognate, but proto-vocalism uncertain/	

PTB	PLB	WBs	Lahu	Sangkong
'weave'	*g-rak ^L	rak	ɣàʔ (< *rak)	ŋga ³¹ (< *ŋak)
	/this complicated root had an unstable initial; even the four allofams set up in TSR #192 do not tell the whole story; Bisu has gā, also < *ŋak/			
'teach'	*ʔma ^{1/2}	hma (< *1)	mā (< *2)	ma ²¹ (< *2)
'field'	*hya ¹	ya	he	laŋ ⁵⁵ ɕa ⁵⁵
	/the 1st syll. of the SK form means 'water'; the Bs. and Lh. forms refer to non-irrigated swiddens/			
'temporal'	*ta ^{1/2}		thā (< *2)	tha ⁵⁵ (< *1)
	/the Lahu form is an unrestricted particle and nominalizer, meaning 'when; the time that'; the SK cognate is a time-classifier/			
'love/desiderative'	*Nga ²		gā (Pv)	ka ³¹ 'love; want'
'send (things)'	*sa ^{2/3}		šā (< *2)	sa ³³ (< *3)
	/Akha [ILH] sɰha (< *3); contra Matisoff 1988:1173, this is NOT a Tai loanword, and has nothing to do with Tai sòŋ 'send' (miscited as sàŋ [ibid.])/			
'dry in the sun'	*ʔ-rap ^L		hú	hap ³¹
	/both Lahu and SK reflect a preglottalized prototype; contrast STAND/			
'stand'	*ʔ-rap ^L	rap	hú	zap ³¹
	/see TSR #175; WB and SK both reflect an allofam with plain liquid, *rap/			
'easy'			ša	za ⁵⁵
	/Akha sa [˥] ; why voicing in SK?/			

PTB	PLB	WBs	Lahu	Sangkong
'shit'				
*g/b-šaŋ	*zaŋ ² /*žəŋ ²		yŋ	zaŋ ³¹
bšəŋ	'shit'			
/the Lahu form means 'rust; rot; blight'; cognate to WT gšəŋ,				
'scatter seed'				
*swan ^{1/2}	swan/swân		šē	san ³¹
/Lahu šêʔ 'spill, pour' reflects the allofam *sat. Chinese has cognates of both the nasal- and stop-finalled allofams: OC 散 *sân and 撒 *sât (see Matisoff 1985:#40); the proto-variation in the final may account for SK -an rather than -e/				
'go'				
	*ay ¹		e (Pv)	e ⁵⁵
/see Matisoff 1990/				

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