

Sino-Tibetan *Tongue and *Lick¹

Robert S. Bauer
University of Hong Kong

1.0 Introduction

Gordon H. Luce's *Phases of Pre-Pagan Burma*, Volume II first alerted me to the potential fruitfulness of comparative work with southern Chinese dialects and Tibeto-Burman languages. In *Chart N, Tibeto-Burman Languages - Chin (Zo) Group, Tone Pattern I* (Luce 1985:70-71), the following forms for 'tongue' (item #19) appear:

	'tongue'		
Xönsai	lei ⁵	Haka (Lai)	lei ⁵
Tedim	lei ¹	Mätu ² pi ⁴	lai ¹
Lushei	lei ¹	T'an ¹ p ⁴ um ¹	lai ¹
K'ualsim	lei ⁵	T'ä ² ?od ⁴	lai ¹

Now, to someone familiar with Cantonese the striking phonetic similarity of the Chin forms with Cantonese lei⁵ 'tongue' (Zeng 1986:64) and lai¹ 'lick' (ibid.:120) immediately leaps from the page and raises a couple of questions: What is the connection between the Cantonese and Tibeto-Burman forms? Why have they developed in such a similar way? With my curiosity kindled by these questions, I took another close look at Benedict's *Sino-Tibetans: A Conspectus* and realized that in Cantonese alone--to say nothing of other southern Chinese dialects, there were forms which could be compared with two of Benedict's Tibeto-Burman roots for *tongue*; *lick*. Might other Chinese dialects also offer additional forms for comparison with his other Tibeto-Burman roots?

This paper is the fruit of my investigation of the relationship between forms for *tongue* and *lick* in southern Chinese dialects and several Tibeto-Burman roots as reconstructed by Benedict and Matisoff.² In the following discussion I have combined recent material on southern Chinese dialects and Tibeto-Burman languages with that from my own fieldwork on bodypart nomenclature in southeastern Chinese dialects. The first part of the paper is devoted to Tibeto-Burman and is organized as follows: first, I have reproduced the Tibeto-Burman forms which form the basis for the reconstruction of the six roots by Benedict and Matisoff. Second, taking advantage of more recently-published material, I have appended additional Tibeto-Burman forms which appear to me on the basis of their phonetic shape to belong to these roots. The second part of the paper comprises the Sinitic material and compares forms from the southern Chinese dialect families of Yue, Kejia, Min, Xiang, and Southwestern Mandarin with these Tibeto-Burman roots. Finally, noting "the hot-house homogenizing atmosphere of South-East Asia" (Matisoff 1983a:63), I have included under the relevant roots Kadai (Austro-Tai) and Austro-Asiatic *lookalikes* or *comparabilia* (Matisoff 1976:264).

A final introductory word: I recognize that in a broad-based comparative study one needs to be aware that phonetic-semantic

similarity can stem from at least four sources: cognation, contact borrowing, coincidence, or universal tendency. My assumption is that genetic relationship generally accounts for the connection between the Chinese forms and Tibeto-Burman roots. But some items are so similar they arouse suspicion, and I suspect that the other three "explanations" must also apply to some (unknown) extent. With South China's long history of intimate contact among various languages, opportunities for contact borrowing within or across genetic lines cannot be overestimated. However, I have not tackled the intriguing problem of identifying language donors and borrowers. Finally, universal tendency may play a special role in the development of forms meaning *tongue* and *lick*: viz., many languages, regardless of genetic affiliations, display a tendency to select the apically-articulated lateral *l* as an initial or medial consonant in words with these meanings (cf. Bauer 1988).

2.0 Tibeto-Burman Variant Roots for Tongue/Lick

Recognizing the phonetic-semantic interplay between *tongue* and *lick*, Benedict (1972) in his *Sino-Tibetan: A Conspectus* has reconstructed the following phonetically-related proto-variant Tibeto-Burman roots:

* <i>(s-)</i> lya'w	<i>lick; tongue</i> (p. 48, #211)
* <i>(m-)</i> lyak ~ * <i>(s-)</i> lyak	<i>lick; tongue</i> (ibid.)
* <i>(s-)</i> lyam	<i>tongue; flame</i> (ibid.)
* <i>m-lay</i> ~ * <i>s-lay</i>	<i>tongue</i> (p. 64, #281)

To this list Matisoff (1985:26) has recently added two more roots for *tongue*: **-ley* and **-lya*. As can be seen, all of these roots follow the typical canonical form of the Proto-Tibeto-Burman syllable (Matisoff 1972:275), namely,

(P)C_i (G)V(C_f)

It is interesting to observe that all of the roots above have *l*- as their initial consonant, an optional or obligatory consonantal prefix which alternates between *m-* and *s-*, and all have consonant finals or glide-endings. Although these roots are reconstructed for Proto-Tibeto-Burman, I would suggest that they can be pushed back further to Proto-Sino-Tibetan on the basis₃ of cognate relationships drawn in the second part of this paper.

2.1 Tibeto-Burman Root **(m-)*liak ~ **(s-)*liak *Lick, Tongue*

The two variant roots **(m-)*liak and **(s-)*liak 'lick, tongue' are reconstructed from the following forms (Benedict 1972:48):

Lepcha	liak 'to taste, try'
Written Burmese	liak 'lick'
Nung	la ~ le 'lick'
Miri	jak 'lick'
Garó	srak 'lick'
Lushei	liak 'lick'
Mikir	inglek 'lick'
Tangkhu	khemelek 'lick'
	khemerek (Bhat 1969:48)
Magari	let 'tongue'

Kachin	ŋɪŋlet ~ ŋɪŋlep 'tongue'
Written Tibetan	ldzags 'tongue' (respectful)

To the above list I would add the following items:

Written Tibetan	ldág-pa 'lick' (Jäschke 1985:289)
Tibetan-Zangskar	ldak 'lick' (impf.) Hoshi and Tsering 1978:52)
Tibetan-gLo	dzak 'tongue' (hon.) (Nagano 1982:485)
Tibetan-gLo	dak/ ye 'lick' ibid.
Tibetan-Lhasa	taʔ 'lick' (Jin 1983:182)
Limbu	lakmaʔ (van Driem 1987)
Magari	lhāk-ke 'lick' (Hale 1973:106)
Jirel	cyelāq 'tongue' (Hale 1973:51)
Sherpa	celakq ~ celāq 'tongue' (ibid.)
Trung-He	laʔ 'lick' (Sun 1982:229)
Achang-Luxi	liaʔ 'lick' (Dai and Cui 1985:118)
Achang-Longchuan	liap ~ leʔ 'lick' (ibid.)
Akha	mjè ŋw 'lick' (Nishida 1966:24)
Lisu	lw-ʔah 'lick' (Nishida 1968:33)
	lw 'lick' (Xu et al 1986:144)
Bisu	bè-ŋe 'lick' (Nishida 1967:865)
	(Akha, Lisu, Bisu < *m-liak Thurgood 1977:197)
Lahuna, Lahuxi	leʔ 'lick' (Chang 1986:116)

The Lahu forms have lost trace of the original stop ending, but I follow Nishida (1968:32) who associates his *Lahushi* lē-ve and *Lahuna* lə lw with Burmese ml^{at}-se 'to lick'. Matisoff (Benedict 1972:48, footnote #157) derives *Lahu* lēʔ/leʔ 'lick'/'feed an animal', a "simplex/causative pair", from *Proto-Lolo-Burmese* *liak/*ʔliak 'lick'.

Apparently as the result of borrowing, this root has a reflex in the Taunggyi (also called Taungthu) variety of Karen of south central Burma: *Karen-Pa-O* liak 'to taste, to lick' (Burling 1969:79); but *Written Burmese* liak is not the source of the loan according to Benedict (1972:141). As for Karen, the following varieties imply at least two different etyma for 'lick':

Karen-Moulmein Pho	lénʔ 'lick' (Burling 1969:79-80)
Karen-Bassein Pho	ʔàn lèn ibid.
Karen-Palaychi	ʔòq líʔ ibid.
Karen-Moulmein Sgaw	lèʔ ibid.
Karen-Bassein Sgaw	lè ibid.

2.2 Tibeto-Burman Root *-lei Tongue

With reference to Walter French's *Proto-Naga* root *C-lei 'tongue' (as reconstructed in his 1983 Ph.D. dissertation, *Northern Naga: a Tibeto-Burman Mesolanguage*, on the basis of Yogli li, *Wancho* le, *Konyak* ji, *Phom* jei), Matisoff (1985:26) has proposed a proto-variant root *-lei based on *Tiddim Chin* lei and *Jingpo* ŋɪŋli 'tongue'. Additional cognate forms from languages of the Chin, Naga, and Baric groups include:

Xongsai	lei 'tongue' (Luce 1985, Volume II:70-71)
Khualsim	lei ibid.
Haka (Lai)	lei ibid.
Ngawn	lei 'tongue' (Ono 1965:13)

Falam	lei	ibid.
Khiamngan	²¹ lei	'tongue' (Weidert 1979:119)
Tangsa	⁸ li	ibid.

Forms from various languages of the Kuki-Chin group support the reconstruction of *m-lei:

Mera (Darling)	pě li ⁶	'tongue' (Luce 1985, II:70-71)
Lotu (Hriangpi)	pě li ¹	ibid.
Lailenpi	mē/pěle ^{1,4}	ibid.
Womatu	m ⁻ le ¹⁴	ibid.
Awa Khumi	ǎmle ²	ibid.
Asho (Sandoway)	mle ¹¹	ibid.
Anal	pa-li	'tongue' (Ono 1965:13)
Chinbok	am-lei	ibid.
Kom	¹ ma ⁻ lei	'tongue' (Weidert 1979:119)
Lakher	² pe ¹ lei	ibid.

Forms from the following Tibeto-Burman languages in Nepal appear to be related to the *-lei root:

Tamang	'le	'tongue' (Hale 1973:51)
Sunwar	le	ibid.
Thakali	le	ibid.
Chepang	le	ibid.
Ghale-Keura	li	'tongue' (Nishi 1982:177)
Ghale-Barpak	li	ibid.
Ghale-Gumda	li	ibid.
Ghale-Uiya (Tularam)	li	ibid.
Ghale-Uiya (Lanman)	li	ibid.
Tamang-Risiangku	le: ²	ibid.
Gurung	'le	ibid.
Manang Gyaru	le ¹	ibid. (Nagano 1984:207)
Manang Prakaa	li ¹	'e ibid. (Hoshi 1984:138)

Two varieties of Menba, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Tibet, also have forms which appear to belong to this root: *Menba-Motuo* le and *Menba-Suona* le² 'tongue' (Sun 1980:336). A variety of Yi, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in Guizhou, appears to have a form cognate with this root: *Yi-Dafang* le¹ 'lick' (Chen et al 1985:256). The following four Tibeto-Himalayan "dialects" have similar forms for 'tongue' (Sharma 1986):

Manchad (PaTani)	l ¹ he
Bunan	le
Tinan	le
Kinauri	le

Karen may also fit into the picture in some way. Cf. the following items meaning 'tongue' (Burling 1969:67-68):

Karen-Taungthu	phre
Karen-Moulmein Pho	phle
Karen-Bassein Pho	phlé
Karen-Palaychi	plé
Karen-Moulmein Sgaw	ple
Karen-Bassein Sgaw	ple

2.3 *Tibeto-Burman Root *m-lai ~ *s-lai Tongue*

Benedict (1972:64) has reconstructed *m-lai ~ *s-lai 'tongue' on the basis of the following forms for 'tongue':

Written Tibetan	ltse <	*s-lai
Dimasa	salai	
Kanauri	le	
Nung	phels <	*m-lai
Lepcha	ali	
Vayu	li	
Limbu	le-sot	
Kachin	lai	
Garó	sre	
Lushei	lei	
Mikir	de	

Forms for 'tongue' from other Tibeto-Burman languages which I believe also belong to this set include the following:

	Kaika	lai (Hale 1973:51)
*s-lai >	Tibetan-Lhasa	tse ¹ (Jin 1983:174)
	Tibetan-Zangskar	ltse (Hoshi and Tsering 1978:1)
	Boro	sa lai (Bhat 1969:149)
*m-lai >	Trung-Nujiang	pw ² lai ² (Sun 1982:216)
	Trung-He	pw ² lai ² ibid.
	Deng-Geman	blai (Sun et al 1980:336)
	Awa	malai (Löffler 1960:531)
	Areng	palai ibid.
*?-lai >	Rengmitca	talai ibid.

2.4 *Tibeto-Burman Root *(s-)liam Tongue; Flame*

The proto-root *(s-)liam 'tongue; flame' has been derived from the following language forms (Benedict 1972:48):

Bahing	liam 'tongue'
Khambu	lem ibid.
Yakha	lem ibid.
Written Burmese	ahliam 'coruscation of flame'

Benedict (footnote #158, p. 48) suggests that "Kanauri and Thebor lem 'lick' probably belong in this set . . ." Additional forms from several *Tibeto-Burman* languages in Nepal also belong with this root:

Tamang	lehm-pā(m) 'lick' (Hale 1973:106)
Thakali	lehm-la ibid.
Chepeng	lemh.sa ibid.
Khaling	lem 'tongue' (Hale 1973:51)

2.5 *Tibeto-Burman Root *(s-)liq'w Lick, Tongue*

Benedict (1972:48) has reconstructed *(s-)liq'w on the basis of *Lushei* hliq'w 'lick (as flames)' and *Kachin* fiqlau 'tongue'. Possibly related to this root are the forms below:

Deng-Darang	lio ² 'lick' (Sun 1980:362)
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Deng-Geman	lo ¹ ibid.
Nusu-South	lio ² 'tongue' (Sun and Liu 1986:146)
Nusu-South	li ¹ 'lick' (ibid.:159)

2.6 Tibeto-Burman Root *-lia Tongue

Matisoff (1985:26) has identified yet another root for 'tongue', namely, *-lia, as the source of *Written Burmese* hli² and *Lahu* ha (-te); (also cf. *Lahuna* xa¹ te² and *Lahuxi* xa¹ le² [Chang 1986:103]). The following forms may be reflexes of the root:

Achang-Luxi	lia ² 'tongue' (Dai and Cui 1985:106)
Achang-Lianghe	lia ² ~ lia ² 'lick' (Dai and Cui 1985:118)
Nusu-Central	?lia ¹ 'lick' (Sun and Liu 1986:159)
Nusu-South	lia ¹ ibid.
Tako	manhlà 'tongue' (Bradley 1988:3)
Bisu	men ¹ hla ² 'tongue' (Nishida 1966b:70)
Akha	mè lá 'tongue' (Nishida 1966a:36)
Lisu	lah-tjho ² 'tongue' (Nishida 1968:19)
Lisu	la ¹ tjhw ² 'tongue' (Xu et al 1986:136)
Phunoi	à là 'tongue' (Nishida 1966c:46)
Tibetan-Lhasa	tcālad 'lick without eating/drinking' (Goldstein 1984:250)
Yi-Nanjan	la ¹ 'tongue' (Chen et al 1985:242)
Yi-Dafang	lo ² ibid.
Yi-Nanjan	la ¹ 'lick' (ibid.:256)
Tujia-North	ji ² la ¹ 'tongue' (Tian et al 1986:174)
Tujia-South	dzi ¹ la ² ibid.
Tujia-North	la ² 'lick' (ibid.:189)
Tujia-South	lo ² ibid.

Pumi-Qinghua jie¹ qho¹ and *Pumi-Taoba* jie² 'tongue' (Lu 1983:113) are tentatively linked to this root.

Bradley (1985:43) assigns *Haoni* p¹ lo¹ 'tongue' to his Proto-Loloish root *ʔ-l(i)ā¹. Forms from the following Hani languages appear to belong with it as well:

Hani-Dazhai	la ¹ ma ² 'tongue' (Li and Wang 1986:170)
Yani-Gelangho	me ² la ¹ ibid.
Hanoi-Shuigui	o ¹ lo ¹ ibid.
Biyue-Laiyuan	a ¹ la ¹ ibid.

3.0 Archaic Chinese *dʒiat ~ *liam 舌 Tongue

Benedict has linked two of his Tibeto-Burman roots with reconstructed Archaic Chinese forms, and both reconstructions are tied to the same Chinese character [舌]:⁴

(1) *Tibeto-Burman* *(m-)liak ~ *(s-)liak (1972:165, note #442) is compared with Karlgren's *Archaic/Ancient Chinese* dʒiat/dzʒiat (GS#288a, Karlgren 1966:201) [舌] 'tongue'. Benedict says the source of the Chinese word is the root *gʷliat [舌] 'tongue', a doublet of gʷliak which is derived from *gʷliak [腹] 'tongue' (however, it may be worth noting that this graph now means 'upper jaw': cf. Li Zhoumin 1980:335). With *gʷliat contrast Bodman and Baxter's *Old Chinese* *ʔliet 'tongue' (Bodman 1987:4).

(2) *Tibeto-Burman* *(s-)liam 'tongue; flame' (page 172, note #458) is compared with *Archaic/Ancient Chinese* *tʰiam/tʰiem [舌] 'lick, taste' (not in GSR) which is derived from (Sino-Tibetan?

Proto-Chinese?) *liam/*liem. Benedict notes "the Cantonese reading li'm which has the same meaning and claims that "this root [*(s-)liam] is also represented in Chinese by the 'hidden' word for 'tongue' (*d'iem ~ *d'iam < *liam ~ *liam [舌]), explaining the use of [舌] as phonetic in *d'iam/d'iem [舌] 'calm' and *sriam/siäm [舌] 'sharp'..., also in *d'iam/d'iem [舌] 'sweet' (not in GSR)..."

Luce (1985, Volume II:117) compared *Written Burmese* lhia, *Written Tibetan* lce, ljags, and Karlgren's *Archaic Chinese* d'iat 'tongue' but proposed no proto-form; for 'lick' (p. 111) he was not able to find any Archaic Chinese reconstruction which could be related to *Written Burmese* liak and *Written Tibetan* ldag-pa.

With regard to the comparison of Tibeto-Burman roots and Chinese dialect forms, my own purpose is fairly modest: I have collected forms for 'tongue' and 'lick' found in various southern Chinese dialect families of Yue, Kejia, Min, Southwestern Mandarin, and Xiang and have sorted them on the basis of their phonetic shape into the Tibeto-Burman root categories listed above. Patterns of striking phonetic similarity between the two groups suggest that the Chinese forms share cognate (and loan) relationships with the Tibeto-Burman roots.

3.1 Chinese-Min and Tibeto-Burman *(m-)liak ~ *(s-)liak

It is primarily within the Min dialect family that we find a number of forms which appear to be related to the proto-variant forms of T-B *liak. This is not surprising in view of the general understanding among Sinologists that the Min group split off very early from Proto-Chinese.

Min-Fuzhou	liek ⁸ (~ ɕiek ⁸)	'tongue' (Nakajima 1979:134)
Min-Fuzhou	lia? ⁷	'lick' (Li and Chen 1985:158)
Min-Gutian	lei? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Zhouming	le? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Fuding	le? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Putian	le? ⁷	'tongue' (ibid. 99)
Min-Youxi	li ⁷	'lick' (ibid. 158)
Min-Yongan	la? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Jianou	la? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Jianyang	lye? ⁷	'tongue' (ibid. 99)
Min-Songxi	lye? ⁷	'tongue' (ibid.)
Min-Jianyang	la? ⁷	'lick' (ibid. 158)
Min-Songxi	lp? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Min-Ningde	lep? ⁷	'lick' (ibid.)
Kejia	liap ⁸	'liap' (Maciver 1982:398)
Min-Jianou	ye ⁸	'tongue' (Li and Chen 1985:99)
Linghua	ie ⁷ lie ⁸	'tongue' (Wang 1979b:234) ⁶

The raised numbers 7 and 8 attached to the end of each form indicate that they belong to the Rusheng tone category whose morphosyllables historically had -p, -t, -k endings. In all cases except three the stop ending has either reduced to -? or has been rephonologized as a distinctive tone contour. *Min-Fuzhou* tshui⁸ liek⁸ (~ ɕiek⁸) 'tongue' (but tshui⁷ lie?⁷ in *Hanyu Fangyan Cihui*:194) appears to retain -k. On the basis of *Min-Ningde* lep⁷ we might infer that the original identity of the stop ending in Min may have been -p and not -k. Such a conclusion is further supported by *Kejia* liap⁸ 'to lick'. However, for the moment I

reserve judgment on the matter because I suspect there was variation between *liak* and *liap*. Evidence for such variation in Tibeto-Burman is found in *Achang-Longchuan liap*¹ (Dai and Cui 1985:118) and *Kham lep-nya* (Hale 1973:106) 'lick'. Contrast Kadai: *Li-Jiamao lep*² (Ouyang and Zheng 1983:485) and *Shui lia:k*³ (Zhang 1980:99) 'lick'. With respect to the apparent loss of the *l*-initial in *Min-Jianou ye*⁴ and *Linghua ie*⁵ 'lie' 'tongue', we can compare the parallel development in *Modern Burmese ie?* and *Atsi jo?* 'lick, lap' (Yabu 1982:28) < *Tibeto-Burman *-liak*.

Finally, this root also appears to have some connection with Austro-Asiatic where we find the following forms meaning 'lick' but showing some phonetic similarity to *Magari let* and *Kachin finlet* 'tongue' (again cf. Bodman and Baxter's *Old Chinese *?liet* 'tongue'):

Wa	let 'lick' (Zhou and Yan 1984:177)
Bulang-Xinmane	liat ² <i>ibid.</i> (Li, Nie, Qiu 1986:106)
Deang	liat <i>ibid.</i> (Chen, Wang, Lai 1986:135)
Kammu	klè:t <i>ibid.</i> (Svantesson 1983:24)
Danaw	kāliet ³ <i>ibid.</i> (Luce 1965:116)
Black Riag	liet ⁴ <i>ibid.</i>
Palaung-Panku	lēt ¹ <i>ibid.</i>
Mundari	le? 'tongue' (<i>ibid.</i> :122)

3.2.1 Chinese and Tibeto-Burman *-lei Tongue

Matisoff (1985:26) reconstructed **-lei* on the basis of *Tiddim Chin lei* and *Jingpo fin li* 'tongue'. Tibeto-Burman forms listed above in section 2.2 show a strong similarity to forms for 'tongue' from a number of Yue dialects as well as some Kejia, Min, and Southwestern Mandarin varieties:

Yue-Guangzhou	lei ⁶ 'tongue' (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Yue-Hongkong	lei ⁶ (Lau 1977:500)
Yue-Yangjiang	lei ⁶ (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Yue-Conghua	lei ⁶ (Bauer 1985a)
Yue-Zhongshan	li ⁶ (Chan 1980:126)
Yue-Taishan	li ⁶ (Cheng 1973:281)
Yue-Yulin	li ⁶ tim ¹ (Bauer 1985a)
Yue-Huaiji	li ² (Bai 1987:4)
Yue-Gaozhou	lei ⁶ thau <i>ibid.</i>
Yue-Lianjiang	lei ⁶ <i>ibid.</i>
Yue-Yangchun	lei ⁶ <i>ibid.</i>
Kejia-Meixian	li ⁶ (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Kejia-Danshui	li ⁶ ma ² (Bauer 1986a)
Kejia-Lianping	siet ⁶ lei ² (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Huizhou	li ⁶ (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Wengyuan	li ⁶ tchien ² (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Yongding	li ⁶ 'tongue (of large domestic animal)' (Huang 1983:226)
Min-Hongkong	li ⁶ (Bauer 1986a)
Min-Shaqi	li ⁶ (Zhang 1987:36)
Min-Nanlang	tau ² li ⁶ (Zhang 1987:36)
Mandarin-Liuzhou	li ⁶ tshə ² (Bauer 1985a)
Mandarin-Chengdu	ni ⁶ tsj ⁶ 'pig tongue' (Liang 1982:242)
	li ⁶ tsj ⁶ <i>ibid.</i> (Luo et al 1987:132)

majority *li*-forms as representative of the etymon and reconstruct Ancient Chinese **li*.

Austro-Tai "lookalikes" include the following:

Li-Yuanmen	lei ⁴ 'lick' (Ouyang and Zheng 1983:485)
Dai-Xishuangbanna	lei ² ibid. (Yu and Luo 1983:123)
Dai-Dehong	lei ² ibid.
Tai Lo, Maw, No	lei ⁴ ibid. (Harris 1975:219)
Tai Khamti	lei ⁴ ibid. (Harris 1976:132)
Zhuang-Longzhou	li ² ibid. (Wei and Tan 1980:117)
Miao-Shui-wei	mple 31 'tongue' (Chang Kun 1976:149).

3.2.2 Yue Folk Etymology for 利 lei⁶ Tongue

Although the modern reflexes of this Chinese root reconstructed as **li* show a widespread distribution among southern Chinese dialect families and a broad geographical dispersal from Fujian through Guangdong and Guangxi and up to Sichuan, the ancient rhyme books and dictionaries which sometimes contained graphs with commentaries attributing them to particular dialects (as described by Downer 1981) seem not to have recorded such a graph that can be related to the Chinese root **li* (Bai 1980 lists a morpheme plus graph for 'lick' to be discussed below but gives nothing for 'tongue'). This omission may have helped to perpetuate a Yue-centric folk etymology purporting to explain the origin of Yue-Guangzhou lei⁶. This etymology which is widely accepted among Chinese linguists runs as follows: Because the standard Yue pronunciation of [舌] is homophonous with Yue-Guangzhou sit⁶ 'to lose' (sometimes written with the Cantonese graph [貼] and sometimes with the standard Chinese graph [餽] which is actually pronounced sik⁶) as in the phrase [貼本] sit⁶ pun⁶ 'to go bankrupt', a taboo has replaced sit⁶ with lei⁶ which is taken from the lucky expressions [吉利] kat⁶ lei⁶ 'lucky' and [盈利] jin² lei⁶ 'profit'; the flesh radical was then added to [利] to make the character for 'tongue' (Yuan 1960:210; Qiao 1975:97; Rao et al 1981a:125; Rao et al 1981b:93). It is true that Cantonese-speakers are superstitious and do have their lucky and taboo expressions. However, the question of why "lei" was chosen and not some other propitious-sounding morphosyllable is never addressed in this story. In spite of the taboo or perhaps because of it, pejorative-type quadro-syllabic expressions containing sit⁶ 'tongue' are found in Cantonese, e.g., [頂嘴頂舌] ten³ tsøy³ ten³ sit⁶ 'rebuke with sarcastic remarks'; [口甜舌滑] hau³ thim³ sit⁶ wat⁶ 'glib-tongued'; [油嘴滑舌] jau³ tsøy³ wat⁶ sit⁶ 'glib-tongued' (Chen 1980:142). Yuan (1960:171) invokes the same folk etymology to explain Hakka-Meixian li⁶. In view of the number of Chinese dialects and Tibeto-Burman languages with reflexes of **li* and *-lei, however, it must be seen as a myth.

3.3 Chinese-Yue and Tibeto-Burman *(m-)lai ~ *(s-)lai Tongue

We find the following Yue and Min forms which mean 'lick' for comparison with Tibeto-Burman *(m-)lai ~ *(s-)lai:

Yue-Guangzhou	lai ⁶ 'lick' (Zhan and Cheung 1987:92)
Yue-Hongkong	lai ⁶ ibid.
Yue-Aomen (Macau)	lai ⁶ ibid.
Yue-Shunde	lai ⁶ ibid.

Yue-Zhongshan	lai ³ ibid.
Yue-Zhuhai	lai ³ ibid.
Min-Nanlang	lai ³ ibid.
Min-Longdu	lai ³ ibid.

Standard Cantonese reading and colloquial pronunciations are associated with the graph [𦘒], namely, *Yue-Guangzhou* sai³ and lai³ 'lick'. This variation between sai³ and lai³ seems eminently relatable to the Tibeto-Burman variant root *(s-)lai 'tongue': sai³ could have developed through the prefix preempting the initial l-, while lai³ developed from the loss of the prefix.

That the phonetic history of the Chinese morpheme has been fairly complicated is suggested by the fact that no less than five different graphs are associated with it: [𦘒], [𦘓], [𦘔], [𦘕], [𦘖] (Li Zhomin 1980). The rhyme books *Guangyun* (1008 A.D.) and *Jiyun* (1039 A.D.) both glossed the graph [𦘒] and indicated it belonged to the [𦘒] rhyme. However, its pronunciation has changed through time and it now has moved over to the [𦘒] *she* of the second division (Bai 1980:211). Two varieties of Kejia may have reflexes of this graph, but both have changed their tone category (*Yinping* instead of *Shang*) and rhyme ([𦘒] instead of [𦘒]): *Kejia-Song Him Tong* (New Territories, Hong Kong) se¹ (Sagart 1982:17) and *Kejia-Meixian* (eastern Guangdong) se¹ (Beijing Daxue 1964:256). Reflecting the uncertainty of its origin, the *Hanyu Fangyan Cihui* does not assign a graph to the Kejia morphosyllable.

Benedict classifies Miao as an Austro-Tai language, but *Miao-Dananshan* mpla³ (Wang 1985:168) and *Miao-Hsien-chin* mpla³ 24 (Chang Kun 1976:149) 'tongue' may have some connection to the T-B root (cf. Benedict 1975:328 *Proto-Miao-Yao* *mbli³ from *mbli(d)a). Cf. *Austro-Asiatic Vietnamese* lwei³ 'tongue' (Nguyen 1966:266).

3.4.1 Chinese-Kejia, Yue and Tibeto-Burman *(s-)liam Tongue; Flame

The following Kejia and Yue dialect forms all meaning 'lick' are compared with *Tibeto-Burman* *(s-)liam:

Kejia-Danshui	liam ³ 'lick' (Bauer 1985a)
Kejia-Yongding	lian ³ (Huang 1983:238)
Yue-Taishan	liam ³ (Zhan and Cheung 1987:189)
Yue-Enping	li ³ m ³ ibid.
Yue-Doumenzhen	lim ³ ibid.
Yue-Foshan	lim ³ ibid.
Yue-Guangzhou	lim ³ (Rao et al 1981:129)
Yue-Hongkong	lim ³ (Yue-Hashimoto 1972:259)

In the above list we note that *Kejia-Danshui* liam³, *Yue-Taishan* liam³, and *Yue-Enping* li³ m³ closely parallel the Tibeto-Burman root. Bai (1981:85) claims *Yue-Guangzhou* lim³ has a variant form lem³, and either can occur in the reduplicated phrase lei³ lim³ 'stick out the tongue and lick the corners of the mouth'. However, neither Yue-Hashimoto (1972) nor Rao et al (1981) recognize the morphosyllable lem as one in the standard Cantonese syllabary (-em is found only in loanwords, cf. kem¹ < "game" Bauer 1985c:107, tsem¹ < "jam" Cheung 1972:217), so it may be a loan from some other (currently unknown but possibly Yue) dialect. It is certainly an interesting form with respect to its -em-rhyme

Yue-Taishan and may represent some intermediate stage between -iam and -im.

Kadai comparabilia include the following:

Mulao-Siba	lia:m ⁶	'lick' (Wang and Zheng 1980:13)
Li-Giandui	le:m ¹	'lick' (Ouyang and Zheng 1983:485)
Li-Tongshi	li:m ²	'lick' (ibid.)
Be-Limkow	lim ⁴	'tongue, lick' (Hashimoto 1980:154)
Be-Qiongsan	lim ⁴	'lick' (Zhang et al 1985:430)
Be-Chengmai	lim ⁴	ibid.
Siamese	lim ⁴	'taste (elegant)' (Haas 1985:485)

Cf. *Austro-Asiatic: North Vietnamese* liem², *South Vietnamese* lim² (Nguyen 1966:244), *Jing (=Vietnamese)* liem⁶ 'lick' (Ouyang, Cheng, and Yu 1984:140).

3.4.2 Chinese-Kejia, Min lim 'drink'

On the basis of their phonetic/semantic similarity, we can compare the following forms meaning 'drink' and 'suck' ('slurp?') from Kejia and Min and *Tibeto-Burman* *(s-)liam:

Kejia-Sixian	lim ¹	'drink' (Hashimoto 1972:16)
Kejia-Sixian	lim ³	'suck' (lim ³ tho ¹ 'suck soup') (ibid.)
Min-Xiamen	lim ¹	'drink' (Beijing Daxue 1964:253)
Min-Chaozhou	lim ¹	ibid.
Min-Taipei	lim ²	ibid. (Zhang Zhenxing 1983:111)

Hanyu Fangyan Cihui (p. 253) claims that the Xiamen and Chaozhou forms are related through borrowing to Malay lemak, but this seems highly doubtful because this Malay word means 'fat (of meat); grease' (Yusop 1984:157), and secondarily 'a type of freshwater fish' or 'a type of tree' (Abas 1983:412). I suggest that the above forms are related to *Yue-Guangzhou* lim⁶ which is both phonetically and semantically closer than the Malay item. The Min forms, however, have undergone a semantic shift.

3.5 Chinese-Min and Tibeto-Burman *(s-)lia'w Lick; Tongue

In four Min dialects we find forms for comparison with *Tibeto-Burman* *(s-)lia'w 'lick; tongue':

Min-Putian	lieu ⁶	'lick' (Li and Chen 1985:158)
Min-Fuzhou	neu ¹	ibid. (Beijing Daxue 1964:256)
Min-Shuibei	lu ⁶	'tongue' (Zheng 1985:40)
Min-Shipo	lye ²	ibid.

There is a Kadai "lookalike": *Gelao* liu⁶ 'lick' (He 1983:82).

3.6 Chinese-Xiang and Tibeto-Burman *-lia Tongue

With *-lia we relate the following Chinese forms:

Xiang-Hengyang	lia ¹	'lick' (Li Yongming 1986:298)
Linghua	lia ³	ibid. (Wang 1979b:237)
Mandarin-Chengdu	nia ³	ibid. (Liang 1982:242)

Previous comparisons have turned up items shared mainly by Yue, Kejia and Min and these are fairly concentrated in the southeastern provinces of Guangdong and Fujian. But the above three diapiants form a broad triangle that joins three different dialect families and spans several provinces further south and west. Xiang is spoken in the south central province of Hunan and Linghua further southwest in nearby Guangxi. Northwest in Sichuan Chengdu dialect is representative of southwestern Mandarin in which *n-* and *l-* are not phonemically distinctive, a feature found in many Chinese dialects, usually those south of the Yangzi River. With more forms for 'tongue' and 'lick' from more diapiants within this triangle we might be able to determine the significance of **-lia* among the Chinese dialect families.

We find the following **-lia* "lookalikes" in Kadai:

Siamese	<i>lia</i> ¹	(Haas 1985:493)
Lao	<i>lia</i> ²	(Marcus 1970:123),
Dong	<i>lia</i> ²	'lick' (Liang 1980:106; Wang Jun 1984:841)
T'ien-chow	<i>lie</i>	'lick' (Li 1977:127) ⁹

and in Austro-Asiatic:

Kammu	<i>lla</i>	'lick' (Svantesson 1983:26)
White Striped Riag	<i>lia</i>	ibid. (Luce 1965:128)
Khasi	<i>dziliah</i>	ibid.

4.1 Conclusion

This study has investigated the distribution of forms for 'tongue' and 'lick' in a number of southern Chinese dialects and has compared them with six Tibeto-Burman roots. This lexical evidence has been presented to support the conclusion that many of the Chinese forms are cognate to the Tibeto-Burman roots. A pattern of cross-dialectal ties among the Chinese dialect families can be represented as below:

Figure 1. Cross-Chinese dialectal ties for 'tongue' and 'lick'

Min	<i>li</i>	<i>lai</i>		<i>liek</i>	<i>lieu</i>
Kejia	<i>li</i>		<i>liam</i>	<i>liap</i>	
Yue	<i>li</i>	<i>lai</i>	<i>liam</i>		
Sw Mand	<i>li</i>			<i>nia</i>	
Xiang				<i>lia</i>	

In Min we find four roots represented and in Kejia and Yue three, but only reflexes of **li* connect four of the five dialect families. Still, this lexical affinity for 'tongue' across Yue, Kejia, and Min may give some support to Norman's claim that these three dialect groups descend from a common source he terms "Old Southern Chinese" (1988:210). One should also keep in mind that some of the Chinese items may be loans from Tibeto-Burman languages. We can note that similar forms are not found in the northern Chinese dialects but only in the southeastern and

southwestern ones whose contact with Tibeto-Burman languages has been historically more recent. Linguistic exchange may account for the close phonetic similarity observed between some Chinese and Tibeto-Burman items. In this regard, Ramsey has made tantalizing hints that "the varieties of Chinese spoken in South China still have some features of earlier, non-Sinitic languages. . . [i]n vocabulary, too, there is evidence for non-Han substrata" (1987:36, 37). However, he provides no lexical examples of these non-Han substrata, so this is a task still waiting to be done.

4.1 Summary Table of Tibeto-Burman Roots and Chinese Forms

All the Chinese forms discussed above are listed below under their relevant Tibeto-Burman roots for ease of reference:

1. *(m-)liak ~ *(s-)liak 'lick; tongue'

Min-Fuzhou	liek ⁶ (~ ɕiek ⁶) 'tongue' (Nakajima 1979:134)
Min-Fuzhou	lia? ⁷ 'lick' (Li and Chen 1985:158)
Min-Gutian	lei? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Zhouming	le? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Fuding	le? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Putian	le? ⁷ 'tongue' (Li and Chen 1985:99)
Min-Youxi	li ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Yongan	la? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Jianou	la? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Jianyang	la? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Songxi	lo? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Ningde	lep? ⁷ 'lick' <i>ibid.</i>
Kejia	liap ⁶ 'lick' ((Maciver 1982:398)
Min-Jianyang	lye? ⁶ 'tongue' (Li and Chen 1985:99)
Min-Songxi	lye ⁶ 'tongue' <i>ibid.</i>
Min-Jianou	ye ⁶ 'tongue' <i>ibid.</i>
Linghua	ie ⁷ lie ⁶ 'tongue' (Wang 1979b:234)

2. *-lei 'tongue'

Yue-Guangzhou	lei ⁶ 'tongue' (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Yue-Hongkong	lei ⁶ (Lau 1977:500)
Yue-Yangjiang	lei ⁶ (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Yue-Conghua	lei ⁶ (Bauer 1985a)
Yue-Zhongshan	li ⁶ (Chan 1980:126)
Yue-Taishan	li ⁵ (Cheng 1973:281)
Yue-Yulin	li ⁶ tim ¹ (Bauer 1985a)
Yue-Huaiji	li ² (Bai 1987:4)
Yue-Gaozhou	lei ⁶ thau <i>ibid.</i>
Yue-Lianjiang	lei ⁶ <i>ibid.</i>
Yue-Yangchun	lei ⁶ <i>ibid.</i>
Kejia-Meixian	li ⁶ (Beijing Daxue 1964:194)
Kejia-Danshui	li ⁵ ma ² (Bauer 1986a)
Kejia-Lianping	siet ⁶ lei ² (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Huizhou	li ⁶ (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Wengyuan	li ⁵ tchien ² (Huang 1987:94)
Kejia-Yongding	li ⁵ 'tongue (animal)' (Huang 1983:226)
Min-Hongkong	li ⁶ (Bauer 1986a)
Min-Shaqi	li ⁵ (Zhang 1987:36)
Min-Nanlang	tau ² li ⁵ <i>ibid.</i>
Mandarin-Liuzhou	li ⁵ tshə ² (Bauer 1985a)
Mandarin-Chengdu	ni ⁴ tsj ⁶ 'pig tongue' (Liang 1982:242)
	fi ⁵ tsj ⁶ <i>ibid.</i> (Luo et al 1987:132)

3. *(m-)lai ~ *(s-)lai 'tongue'

Yue-Guangzhou	lai ³	'lick' (Zhan and Cheung 1987:92)
Yue-Hongkong	lai ³	ibid.
Yue-Aomen (Macau)	lai ³	ibid.
Yue-Shunde	lai ⁴	ibid.
Yue-Zhongshan	lai ³	ibid.
Yue-Zhuhai	lai ³	ibid.
Min-Nanlang	lai ³	ibid.
Min-Longdu	lai ³	ibid.

4. *(s-)liam 'tongue; flame'

Kejia-Danshui	liam ³	'lick' (Bauer 1985a)
Kejia-Yongding	lian ¹	'lick' (Huang 1983:238)
Yue-Taishan	liam ³	(Zhan and Cheung 1987:189)
Yue-Enping	li ³ m ³	ibid.
Yue-Doumenzhen	lim ³	ibid.
Yue-Foshan	lim ³	ibid.
Yue-Guangzhou	lim ³	(Rao et al 1981:129)
Yue-Hongkong	lim ³	(Yue-Hashimoto 1972:259)

5. *(s-)lia'w 'lick; tongue'

Min-Futian	lieu ⁵	'lick' (Li and Chen 1985:158)
Min-Fuzhou	neu ¹	'lick' (Beijing Daxue 1964:256)
Min-Shuibe	lue ⁵	'tongue' (Zheng 1985:40)
Min-Shipo	lye ²	ibid.

6. *-lia 'tongue'

Xiang-Hengyang	lia ¹	'lick' (Li Yongming 1986:298)
Mandarin-Chengdu	nia ³	'lick' (Liang 1982:242)
Linghua	lia ³	'lick' (Wang 1979b:237)

Endnotes

¹This is a revised version of a paper entitled "'Tongue' and 'Lick' in Southern Chinese Dialects and Tibeto-Burman Roots for 'Tongue/Lick'" which in turn was a revised section from "Cognition of Bodypart Terms across Chinese Dialects, Part II" (Bauer 1986b).

²In addition to comparing Yue-Guangzhou lei⁶ 'tongue' with Tibeto-Burman *-lei, I have also compared pei³ 'leg' with Tibeto-Burman *pei ibid. (Bauer 1987). Here I would like to list a few more sets for Cantonese/Tibeto-Burman root comparisons:

- Yue-Guangzhou jɔp⁶ 'to wave hands' (Yue-Hashimoto 1972:285)
jɛp⁶ 'wave the hand' (Zeng 1986:132)
Written Burmese jɔp 'fan; to fan' (Luce 1985:124)
Written Tibetan (g)ɔɪɔb-mo 'the act of fanning, waving' (Jäschke 1985:507)
Tibeto-Burman *jɔp 'fan, wave' (Matisoff 1983b:468)
- Yue-Guangzhou khe¹ 'shit' (Rao et al 1981:109)
Lahu na khɔ 'excrement' (Nishida 1967:62)
Lahu shi ɔ khɔ ibid.
Written Burmese khiei 'excrement' (Yabu 1982:21)
Written Burmese khli⁴ 'dung' (Luce 1985:121)
Tibeto-Burman *kli¹ 'excrement' (Benedict 1972:39)

3. Yue-Guangzhou na⁶ 'female suffix' (Rao et al 1981:157)
 Tibeto-Burman *(m-)na 'mother, older sister, daughter-in-law' (Benedict 1972:187)
4. Yue-Guangzhou let⁷ 'slip, fall off' (Rao et al: 1981:123)
 Written Burmese lwat 'be free' (Matisoff 1985:12)
 hlwat 'free, release'
 Written Tibetan glod-pa 'loosen, relax, slacken'
 Tibeto-Burman *g-lwat
5. Yue-Guangzhou hei¹ 'vulva'
 Tangkhul hai ibid. (Matisoff 1985:54)
 Limbu hi-rā ibid.
 Tibeto-Burman *hei/kei ibid. (Benedict 1979:30, but T-B root taken from comment by Matisoff under note 40)
6. Yue-Guangzhou lou⁸ 'guy' (Yue-Hashimoto 1972:273)
 Written Burmese lu: 'person, man' (Yabu 1982:39)
 Tibeto-Burman *lu:

³Transcription convention: medial and final T-B "y" (palatal glide) is rewritten here as "i" and initial T-B "y" as "j".

⁴Why should one graph have two such different readings? One possible answer is that two different languages in contact with one another were both using the Chinese characters. Bilingual speakers would read the graph with both of the semantically-equivalent forms.

⁵On the development of d-, l-, and t- for the same lexeme outside Sino-Tibetan, cf. *Indo-European* *dǵhwa- > *Irish* *tenge*, *Old Latin* *lingua* > *Latin* *lingua* 'tongue' (Carl Darling Buck. 1949. *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages*, p. 230. Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

⁶Linghua has been identified by Wang (1979a:137) as a "mixed" Chinese dialect spoken by the Ling people in Guangxi, but he did not classify it under any of the major dialect families.

⁷This is a rather simplified reconstruction. If we take the phonetic [利] as indicative of the historical development of the root's rhyme, then it would be reconstructed as *Ancient Chinese* *li (Wang Li) or *lixi (至 A) / *liei (至 B) in Chou Fa-kao's system (Chou Fa-kao. 1984. *Zhongguo Yinyunxue Lunwenji*, Table 1. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press). Karlgren (1966:258) reconstructs *Archaic Chinese* *lied (GS#519a-f) which shows a close parallel to Bodman and Baxter's *Old Chinese* *ʔliet 'tongue'.

⁸Lew Ballard's recent fieldwork in southern Zhejiang turned up the following items: *Longquan* tɕhyɛz lieʔɛs 'tongue'; *Longquan* lieɛɛ, *Hencheng* liɛɛɛ 'lick'. Classification of these dialects is uncertain.

⁹Li (1977:125) reconstructs *Proto-Tai* *dl- for 'lick'.

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