EARLY MY/TB LOAN RELATIONSHIPS

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The Miao-Yao (MY) languages appear to have split off from the mainland bloc of Austro-Tai (AT) languages at an early period, moving to the north and west and there coming into contact with the Sino-Tibetan (ST) languages. To make use of an analogy from geomorphology, they came to be positioned at the 'grinding edges' of the vast AT and ST tectonic plates, along a line of maximum anticipated activity. In this case the activity involved the transformation of MY into a monosyllabic, fully tonal language family, as earlier described by the writer (1975 - hereafter *ATLC*), with many of the details yet to be explored. As regards the monosyllabism, this is a feature of both Tibeto-Burman (TB) and Sinitic (Chinese, Bai) and must be set up for the parental proto-language (PST), hence no clues as to the precise source of the influences are provided. The tones are another matter, however; at an early period (2nd/1st mill. B. C.) Chinese converted the two-tone (or two-accent) *A ~ *B system of PST into a three-tone (or three-accent) system with the addition of a third, sandhi tone (or accent) *C and a system of precisely this kind must be reconstructed for the parent MY language (PMY), with one-to-one tonal correspondences in the early loanwords for such cultural items as 'horse' and 'charcoal'. This is an example of 'direct' diffusion, in contrast to the 'stimulus' diffusion found in Mon-Khmer (e.g. Riang, Khamu) and even in Austronesian (Huihui, the Chamic language spoken on Hainan); the tonal system itself was borrowed, not simply the 'idea of tones', with the loanwords serving as the bearers of tone. The process undoubtedly began in a highly selective manner, with later spread throughout the language; cf. the situation in T'in, a Mon-Khmer language now on its way to becoming fully tonal, which has borrowed Thai (Siamese) numerals *along with the tones* (see Benedict 1984: 67).

This sort of linguistic happening cannot occur at a distance, inasmuch as it requires a virtual cultural 'flooding', with extensive diglossia on the part of the 'submerged' population (as in the case of T'in). The early (Archaic level) Chinese/MY loans, as currently analyzed (Benedict 1986), point to exactly this kind of prolonged, intimate relationship, thus dovetailing with the tonal evidence. The picture is complicated, however, by the fact that the bulk of Chinese loans into MY reflect early dialect(s) that are distinct from the 'standard' Archaic, notably in the retention of PST final *-a, where the latter shows a regular shift to -o. These loans also commonly show evidence of Chinese 'processing', reflecting manifold prefix + initial shifts of the type described in an earlier paper (1976) by the writer. Thus, the picture is exceedingly complex, even under the best of circumstances, yet all would make good sense historically were it not for the following: a TB rather than Chinese source must be recognized for the basic cardinal numerals of MY as well as for the 'core' (basic) lexical items: 'sun/day' ~ 'moon/month', along with a number of other items rather less basic in nature. This paper presents the relevant linguistic data, attempts to delineate (if not identify) the donor source or sources (DMY or DMY's) and,

finally, offers some preliminary speculation as to how this strange linguistic state of affairs is likely to have come about.

The numerals of MY, like those of the Kadai languages and even Austronesian (Huihui), nicely exemplify selective lexical retention (SLR - see Benedict 1983b), with a primary 'rule' that cardinals are better retained than ordinals and a secondary 'rule' that the lowest numerals are better retained than the higher (it should be noted here that the Swadesh basic 100-word list includes only 'one' and 'two'). In the case of the MY numeral system, only one loanword managed to break into the native 'one' through 'three' alignment and the intrusion was relatively late: Middle Chinese (MC) — ʔịĕt 'one' > Yao (Mien only) *yet[1]. The MY numerals above 'ten' are also of Chinese origin but those from 'four' through 'ten' appear to have been borrowed as a set from a TB source (or sources). Both Shafer (1964) and Downer (1971) took special note of the resemblances shown by these numerals while the writer (1976) has analyzed them at some length, along with the early Chinese loans to Tai. Contra the view expressed there, it now seems evident (see fn. 1) that 'four' also belongs in this set of early loans from TB, with the further strong likelihood that 'five' must be included as well, i.e. these numerals were borrowed as a set. As shown in the following listing, the corresponding Chinese numerals developed in different ways (see the above-cited paper), precluding the possibility of their having served as sources for the MY numerals (see Benedict 1972 - hereafter *STC* - for the TB numerals):

'four': PTB *b-ləy; PMY *plei^A; MC 四 si-. PMY regularly has -ei for earlier (PAT-level) final *-i, with *-i as an alternative reconstruction, hence the indicated DMY form is *pli^A, with *-i for final *-əy (as in most TB languages) along with unvoicing of the prefix.

'five': PTB *r-ŋa ~ (secondary) *b-ŋa; PMY *pra^A; MC 五 ŋuo: PTB prefixed *r- is maintained in Old Kuki but replaced in Written Tibetan (WT) by l-, apparently through influence from PTB *lak 'arm/hand'[2]; general replacement by prefixed *b- through influence from the preceding numeral (see above), with occasional preemption of initial *ŋ-. The indicated DMY form is *pra^A, with the secondary *b- (> p-) preceding the *r- rather than replacing it, followed by premption of the initial and unvoicing of the prefix, as in 'four'.

'six': PTB *d-ruk ~ *k-ruk; PMY *truʔ; MC 六 liuk. The PMY initial *tr- has been reconstructed on the basis of the Na-e evidence (see Benedict: forthcoming); the final *-ʔ for earlier *-k is a MY feature, hence the indicated DMY form is *truk, with unvoicing of the prefix as in 'four' and 'five'.

'seven': PTB *snis; PMY *zń[ia]^C; MC 七 ts'ịĕt. Contra *STC*, the PTB *s- stands for the first part of the *sn- cluster rather than for prefixed *s-, with Stau exhibiting a distinction between /zńi/ 'seven' (secondary voicing and palatalization with loss of final *-s) and /sńi/ 'day', from *s-nəy^A (see below). The nasal element of the MY root is maintained only in Yao: Mun (ń) but it yielded typical secondary nasalization of the final in Miao, with some Western dialects reflecting secondary unvoicing (*zńia^C > *sńia^C). The initial of the DMY form can be reconstructed as *z[n,ń]-, with secondary voicing as in Stau; the ambiguity results from the fact that

secondary palatalization is characteristic of MY, tying in with the same feature in Chinese, probably reflecting an ancient Sprachbund. The final of the DMY form could hardly have been *-i, with loss of *-s (as in Stau), since this would have yielded PMY *-ei (cf. 'four'); PMY does have medial *-ia- for medial *-i-, however (see 'ten' and 'year', below), hence the indicated reconstruction of the DMY final is *-is, with the vocalic shift preceding the eventual loss of *-s (lacking in PMY).

'eight': PTB *(-)ryăt; PMY *hyat; MC /⌣ pwăt. The earliest ST prefixation pattern, reflected in WT (brgyad < *b-g-ryat) and Jingpho (mǝtsát) as well as in Chinese (apparently unvoiced by an original prefixed *s-) can be set up as *b-g- but within TB the Kuki-Naga forms reflect prefixed *d- (< *d-răt) while those of Burmese-Lolo reflect prefixed *s- > Written Burmese (WB) hrac (< *hryat), with /hyat/ appearing in the inscriptions, exactly matching the PMY root. The indicated DMY form is *h[ry,y]at, with *-ry- a possibility in view of the fact that PMY lacked this cluster and may well have substituted *-y-, paralleling the Burmese development.

'nine': PTB *d-kǝw ~ *d-gǝw; PMY *gy[ou]A; MC 九 kị̯ǝu:. The initial *g- form, represented notably in WT (dgu), shows secondary voicing after the prefix, which was replaced by *s- in some languages (Jingpho, Bodo-Garo). The PMY palatalized initial is generally reflected by palatals or dentals (but Na-e kó); the reconstruction of the final is provisional, with the Yao forms apparently influenced by the similar ordinal forms (< Chinese). PMY regularly has final *-ou for earlier (PAT-level) *-u, paralleling *-ei for earlier *-i (see 'four', above), hence the indicated DMY form here is *[prefix+] [g,gy]u, with ambiguity arising from the palatalization (see the discussion under 'seven', above). The initial voicing points to earlier prefixed *d-, as in WT, with later shift to *t- (cf. 'six', above).

'ten': PTB *gip; PMY *g(y)iap; MC 十 ź̯ǝp. The PMY initial palatalization appears to have been variable, with Yao forms perhaps influenced by competing forms of Chinese origin. As in 'seven', the PMY medial *-ia- is to be considered secondary, with *gip indicated for the DMY form.

Reconstructed tones (*A or *B) have not been cited for the three relevant PTB numeral roots ('four', 'five' and 'nine') in view of the widespread variation shown by the modern forms, including tonal 'form classes', e.g. WB all < tone *B; Trung (Nungish) all < tone *A, for these three numerals as well as for 'three' (PTB *g-sum). PMY tone *A for the trio indicates that DMY had a 'form class' like that of Trung. The fact that PMY has tone *C for 'seven' supports the final *-s reconstruction since this tone has a sandhi origin, reflecting syllable-final features.

To sum up, the DMY numerals were probably as follows:

	DMY			**DMY**
four	*pliA		eight	*hryat
five	*praA		nine	*t-guA
six	*truk		ten	*gip
seven	*znis			

The DMY phonology is featured by the unvoicing of stop prefixes (the *t- of 'nine' only by inference), along with the *s-r- > *hr- shift, contrasting

with secondary voicing of the *sn- cluster; also the parallel final *-əy > *-i
and *-əw > *-u shifts. Although only one numeral root (*gip 'ten') remained
without change, none of the DMY forms appears very unusual for TB, with
the exception of that for 'five', and even here there are parallels in the
modern languages to the initial-preemption involved.

Three other lexical items, all at least partially of calendrical type, have
long attracted the attention of comparativists because of the obvious MY/TB
resemblances. As reported in the above-cited article (Benedict 1976), there
is a competing AT etymology in the case of one of these items ('moon/
month') but this must now be discarded, especially in view of the additional
evidence available here (see below). As in the case of the numerals, the
Chinese cognates exhibit different lines of development, effectively
precluding them as possible loan sources:

'sun/day': PTB *nəyA 'sun' ~ *s-nəyA 'day'; PMY *hnɔiA (often
prefixed) 'sun/day'; MC 日 ńźi̯ĕt 'id.'. The 'sun' vs. 'day' distinction can
be established at the PTB level; cf. Stau śńi 'day' (above); Jingpho śənĭ 'id.';
WB ne (< *nəyA) 'sun' ~ ne' (< *s-nəyA) 'day', but has been lost in some TB
languages, e.g. Lushai has /ńi/ for both 'sun' and 'day'. Chinese also has lost
the distinction: ńźi̯ĕt< *s-ńi̯ĕt (Min evidence for the prefixation), with
secondary final -t after the prefix (paralleling the WB glottalization; see
Benedict 1983a). In MY the 'sun' vs. 'day' distinction is often made through
prefixation but basically the PMY root shows a loss here, of the Chinese
rather than Lushai type, i.e. it is the *s- prefixed rather than the unprefixed
form that has prevailed. On the basis of this MY loan evidence one can posit
a similar loss of distinction in the donor language, although it is possible that
MY innovated here. The indicated *hn- for DMY, from an earlier (PTB)
*s-n-, contrasts with *zn- from a *sn- cluster in 'seven', precisely as in Stau
(see above). The final presents a problem, however, inasmuch as in 'four'
PTB final *-əy is represented by PMY *-ei, regularly from an earlier *-i,
whereas in this root it is represented by PMY *-ɔi, very likely standing for
*-əy itself. At least three possible solutions present themselves: (a) the final
reflex was conditioned by the initial (*pl- vs. *hn-) (b) PMY lacked the
specific *hnei combination (Mien, at least, appears to lack it) and
substituted *hnɔi (3) a somewhat different DMY, perhaps a dialect of the
'standard' DMY, which retained final *-əy, was the source in the case of this
item. Of these three possible solutions (a) seems the least likely and (c) the
most likely.

'moon/month': PTB *(s-)(g-)laA: PMY *hlaC; MC 朔 ṣɔk [GSR 769a]
'new moon', from *s-glâk (see Benedict 1976:189 for the phonetic element
here), with prefixed *s- yielding secondary -k after the low vowel, in
contrast to the final -t after high front vowel that appears in the preceding
root (see Benedict 1983a). The Garo cognate: ja (< *sglaA) is also glossed as
'spirit/apparition/phantom'; WT has the doublet zla (< *sglaA) 'moon' ~ hla
(< *sla) 'the gods'; Jingpho has only śətà (< *s-glaA). Chang-Tangsa (STC:
Konyak group) only *glaA and WB only la' (< *s-laA), all in the meaning
'moon' (~ 'month'), but Lushai parallels WT in showing a doublet, in this case
the product of regular tonal changes (see Benedict 1983a): thlà (< *s-glaA)
'moon' ~ thlá (< *sglaA) 'spirit/soul/one's double'. This all points to an

underlying cult of the moon, with WT hla 'the gods' playing a key semantic role. An identical form but with tone added (*hlaᴬ) must be set up for the donor language (DMY), in this case with the basic meaning of 'moon/month' retained, as in WB la' (< *s-laᴬ). The indicated *s-1 > *hl- shift here parallels the similar shift before *r- in 'eight' (above). The tone *A reconstruction is conjectural; the PMY (sandhi) tone *C points to an earlier suffix (cf. WT zla-ba 'moon').

This is all straightforward enough, with 'moon/month' joining 'sun/day' to form an interesting pair of 'heavenly body' terms that were borrowed by MY from an early TB source, either the same DMY that donated the numerals or a language very similar to it. There is no evidence in the 'moon' loan of the cult associations of the TB root but, curiously enough, this may simply reflect the fact that the replaced native term had already undergone a parallel shift, thus making 'semantic space' available for the loan; cf. PMY (Miao only) *bḷaᴬ/ᶜ 'spirit/soul', apparently the direct cognate (PMY lacks final *-1) of PAT *(m)buḷal 'moon/month', represented in Kadai as well as in Austronesian. And the case gets 'curiouser and curiouser': a similar root can be reconstructed for PTB and it shows the same range of meanings as *(s-)(g-)laᴬ, cited above: PTB *b-la (tone variable): Proto-Tamang (Nepal) *blaᴮ 'spirit, soul'; Rawang (Nungish) phəla (< *bəla) 'soul; demon'; Southern Loloish *bəlaᶜ 'moon' (cited under No. 318 in Bradley 1979). The loan here must have been in the reverse (MY > TB) direction, as confirmed by the phonology; if the donor language had been Tibeto-Burman the yield in PMY would have been medial *-1-, as in 'four' (above), while a prototypical *-ḷ- could have yielded only *-1- in TB, which lacks the contrast; further, prefixed *b- is known to have been unvoiced to *p- in DMY (see 'four' and 'five' above), excluding this language as a possible loan source for PMY *bḷaᴬ/ᶜ.

'year': PTB *(s-)ni·ŋᴮ; PMY *śñiaŋᶜ MC 年 nien, from *s-nienᴬ

< *s-ni·ŋᴬ [GSR 364a] (Min evidence for the prefix), with regular *B > *A tonal shift after *s- and assimilative -n for PST-level final *-ŋ. The PMY medial *-ia- for *-i- is anticipated (cf. 'seven' and 'ten' above) but the initial *śñ- (the sibilant is retained only in Western Miao) can hardly be reconciled with the DMY *hn- for *s-n- indicated by the loan for 'sun/day' (above). It is certain, from the Min evidence, that Chinese retained prefixed *s- (variable within TB) and the palatalization of the initial is typically Chinese (although not present in /nien/). It is probable, therefore, that the source of this early MY loan is not Tibeto-Burman but Chinese, specifically an early dialect (other than 'standard' Archaic) that maintained final *-ŋ, with the (sandhi) tone *C pointing to an earlier suffix. Valuable support for this view is supplied by a parallel loan; cf. MC 新 siĕn 'new' [GSR 382k], representing a PST-level *siŋᴬ as shown by PMY (Yao only) *siaŋᴬ. The MY loan clarifies another matter here: in STC the /siĕn/ is compared with the well-represented PTB *(s-)sarᴬ 'new', setting up PST *sarᴬ with *-ar > -iĕn a regular development; the early MY loan now shows that the PST root here is *siŋᴬ, represented in TB by WB sac (< *sik < *siŋᴬ), precisely paralleling the nearly homophonous root for 'tree/wood': *siŋᴮ; PTB *siŋᴮ > WB sac; MC

新 ʒi̯ĕn 'firewood' [GSR 382 n], with *B > *A tonal shift after *s- (as in 'year' above).

The numerals, along with the 'sun' ~ 'moon' pair, stand out in any over-view of early MY loan relationships simply because they must be assigned a Tibeto-Burman, rather than a Chinese, origin, thus differing from the bulk of MY lexical items. The occasional MY/TB lexical resemblances that have been noted to date rarely involve 'core' (basic) vocabulary or even widespread roots, for that matter, hence one can scarcely rule out the chance factor. One of the 'better' comparisons in this group involving both basic vocabulary and well-represented roots, is the following:

'horn': PTB *ruŋ^A ~ *rwaŋ^A, yielding Garo groŋ (g- is a pronominal prefix); PMY krɔŋ^A. If these forms indeed reflect an early loan, the DMY form would be *krɔŋ^A, from *k-rwaŋ^A, with unvoicing of an earlier *g-prefix, as in the *b- and *d- prefixes encountered in the numerals (above).

As indicated above, the cultural items such as 'horse' and 'charcoal' in MY routinely exhibit early loan connections with Chinese, with the direction of the borrowing in doubt at times. In one item of this kind MY has a curious doublet involving inter alia medial -i- ~ -ia- (see above), with TB (limited) as well as Chinese connections:

'field': PTB *liŋ (limited distribution, with indeterminate tone): WT źiŋ < l(y)iŋ (regular shift) 'field, ground, soil, arable land'; Lepcha lyăŋ < *s-liŋ (regular shifts) 'land, field'; MC (probably an early loan from a Tibetan group' source); MC 田 d'ien 'field', from *s-lien^A < *s-li·ŋ^A (with final -n < *-ŋ shift as in 'year', 'new' and 'firewood' above); PMY *l̥iŋ^A 'paddy field (lowland irrigated rice field)' ~ *ʔl̥iaŋ^C 'mountain field' (in Chiangrai Yao [Mien] specified as 'not yet under cultivation'). The WT/Lepcha form is isolated in TB (cf. STC : fn. 246) and appears to be intrusive (borrowed). This is hardly surprising in view of the mountainous region inhabited by the speakers of these two neighboring languages and, in fact, the 'core' agricultural AT root for '(inundated) lowlands/(wet)field/mud': *buna (> *bəna), represented even in Japanese (hena 'earth/mud/clay'), somehow found its way into Tibetan for the alpine equivalent: WT na 'meadow' (cf. the Kadai root: *naa^A 'paddy field'). The Chinese form is *s- prefixed[3] and this also is hardly surprising, given the ubiquity of that element in Chinese. Perhaps PMY *l̥iŋ^A stands for the root itself, whatever its ultimate origin (no AT etymology has yet been uncovered), with the original meaning ('lowland field') maintained, serving as a basis for the early loans into TB as well as into Chinese (note the tonal agreement); PMY *ʔl̥iaŋ^C,on the other hand, might then represent a back-loan from an *ʔa- prefixed TB form: *ʔa-liŋ, with the meaning accommodated to the terrain (cf. WT na 'meadow', cited above) and the tone modified by the glottal prefix, also with *-l̥ for *l-through influence from the 'native' doublet. This would point to an underlying AT > ST direction for the loan, which is in keeping with the overall evidence re south > north cultural movements at an early (PAT-level) period in SEA (see ATLC). This all sounds, and is, complicated but it is the kind of historical scenario that has come to be expected in this 'language-crowded' corner of the Asian mainland.

To complete this review of lexical categories, kinship terminologies tend to include more than their fair share of loan words, especially for older-than-Ego and affinal kin. The MY languages present a bewildering variety of kinship terms, far more than one would have anticipated for this fairly compact language family, and it seems evident that extensive borrowing of various kinds has taken place. Chinese loans are much in evidence of course, and even apparent loans from Tai, complicated in this case by the fact that both MY and Tai are of AT descent. As for possible loans from TB, the consanguineal terminology reveals little that can definitely be 'tagged' as borrowed from this source. The Mien branch of Yao on occasion exhibits what appear to be isolated loans from TB, in various lexical categories, and one of these appears in the consanguineal terminology: Mien *naw^B 'younger brother (female sp.)' > 'uncle (mother's y. br.)'; cf. PTB *naw^A 'younger sibling' > (Byangsi, Mru) 'y. br.' ~ (Chinbok) 'y. br. (male sp.)'. The comparison is weakened by the fact that younger, rather than older-than-Ego kin, are involved as well as by the tonal discrepancy.

The MY affinal terminology is quite another matter, however, inasmuch as it seems very likely that both of the key younger-than-Ego terms in this terminology are of TB origin:

'daughter-in-law': PTB *(s-)nam^A 'daughter-in-law'; also (WB: archaic) '(comp.) wife'; (Gyarung) 'sister'; also (Nungish: Rawang) *?a-nam^A 'cousin [female]; (comp.) sister'; also (Magari)*?a-r-nam^A 'maiden'; PMY *?ńaam^A 'daughter-in-law'; also (Yao:Mien) 'wife of older brother'; in Mien (Chiangrai Yao) used only in address or in 'personalized reference' ('She is my /ńaam/'), in contrast to the general referential term (< *bwaŋ^B). The indicated DMY form is *?-nam^A, with the widespread (< 3rd person) pronominal *?a-prefix, as in Nungish; the secondary palatalization is probably of MY origin, as in the numerals (see above), and the length also appears to be secondary, apparently through influence exerted by the prefixed *?a-, although for this PTB root medial length (*-naam^A) cannot be ruled out; note the tonal agreement.

'son-in-law': PTB *krwəy^B: Jingpho khri (< *khrwi) 'son-in-law; paternal aunt's children; sister's children'; WB khrwê:-ma' 'daughter-in-law', from *khrwê: 'son-in-law' + -ma' 'fem. suffix'; PMY *?wei^B 'son-in-law'; also (Yao: Mien) 'husband of older sister'; in Mien (Chiangrai Yao) used only in address or 'personalized reference' ('He is my /wei/'), in contrast to the general referential term (< *laaŋ^A). Here the indicated DMY form is *?a-wi^B, with the final reflexes as in 'four' (above) and prefixed by *?a-, as in the preceding affinal term. As for the initial, it appears that the *k- of the root was metanalyzed as common *g- (> k- in DMY) pronominal element (see 'horn', above), often employed with kinship terms in Jingpho, with simplification of the medial *-rw- to -w- rather than to the -r- found in Jingpho; note the tonal agreement.

It is possible, of course, that still other key TB > MY loans (and/or the reverse) will in time be uncovered but for the moment we are left with three groups of such loans, all crying out for an explanation:

1. the numerals from 'four' through 'ten'. Loans of this kind, sparing only the very lowest numerals, are generally explained through a need to communicate in trading. Apparently this must suffice for an explanation here as well,

but one might wonder why the terms for the things exchanged, i.e. the cultural items, did not at times get borrowed along with the numerals. Why would a language borrow, say, the word for 'silver' from Chinese but its higher numerals (through '10') from TB, as the early PM-speakers clearly did? By contrast, the early Tai- (and other Kadai-) speakers borrowed both from a single source (Chinese), as one would have expected. Clearly there was 'something special' about the early MY relationships vis-à-vis TB and Chinese, but what? And can the answer here in any way be connected with the answers for the following two points?

2. the 'sun/day' ~ 'moon/month' pair. The writer originally emphasized the calendrical ('day' ~ 'month') aspects of these two roots and attempted to explain them along the lines of trading, e.g. agreements to return for a given exchange of goods in so many days or months. This was all radically altered, however, by the uncovering of the second 'moon' loan, this in the reverse (MY > TB) direction, with its powerful confirmation of an underlying cult of the moon. It is now apparent that it was this cult trait, with overlapping distribution at the TB/MY border, that shaped the two loans, with PMY supplementing with a loan from TB for 'moon' after having undergone specialization of its own (< AT) root in the cult sense of 'spirit/soul'. The other ('sun') member of this pair of 'heavenly body' roots can be explained along similar lines (cult of the sun) although in this case the linguistic evidence (and by inference the culture trait itself) lies at a rather deeper level. Matisoff (1983) has pointed out that the Mikir cognate for PTB *nəyA 'sun' (see above) is ar-ni, glossed not only as 'sun/day' but also as 'god, deity' and suggests a relationship to WB ne 'be, dwell'. Although not cited in *STC*, a homophonous *nəyA 'be/dwell' (> 'sit') can be reconstructed at the PTB level, to include the above-cited WB ne (~ 'sit' in Loloish) as well as the following: Lepcha nyi(-m) 'to be; exist'; West Himalayish *ni 'dwell'; Bahing ni(-so), Sunwari ni 'sit'; Lushai ni (< *s-niA) 'to be; become'. Thus, with the help of the Mikir form, one can set up a single basic etymon, widespread in both senses, for PTB: *nəyA ~ *s-nəyA (~ *r-nəyA) 'to be/dwell' > '(heavenly being =)' '(sun) god' > 'sun' ~ 'day'.

3. the 'daughter-in-law' ~ 'son-in-law' pair. As pointed out above, affinal terms are rather more susceptible to replacement through borrowing than are consanguineal terms but the writer, who has made extensive/intensive analyses of Tibeto-Burman as well as Chinese, Tai and Vietnamese kinship nomenclatures, knows of nothing even remotely like the apparent early MY borrowing (from TB) of *just this key pair of younger-than-Ego in-law terms* . Where one or (more rarely) both of these terms have been borrowed elsewhere, as commonly in northern TB languages from Indic and also in northern Tai languages from Chinese, they invariably represent only a single aspect of a larger pattern of loans, at times on a very grand scale indeed. This clearly did not occur in the case of these early MY loans from TB and, again, the fact in itself cries out for an answer. The existence of the two sets of in-law terms in Yao (see above) suggests that one of the sets may well have been intrusive (borrowed), in this case the set employed in address and for 'personalized reference', a most unusual distinction. One is tempted to speculate about the existence of an early TB/MY 'bride exchange' marital program or the like, with some transference of the terms involved as well, but in this event influences upon other sectors of the nomenclatures would be likely.

As for the precise source of the early loans from TB it is possible or even likely that a single donor language (DMY) was involved, perhaps with some dialectical variation (see the discussion of 'sun/day', above). Despite its early date (see below), DMY displays prefixial unvoicing and other secondary changes, presenting little of significance to the TB comparativist. In addition, it shows 'a little of this and a little of that', making it impossible to place within any existing TB group or division, hence one must regard it as another 'extinct' language, on the order of Pyu (the precursor of Burmese). As for location, the very fact of the loans into MY places DMY well to the east, certainly within the borders of China, but this is of no great help. Finally, it does present one significance bit of data, viz. *praA 'five', providing much needed evidence for PTB prefixed *r- in this numeral root.

What is one to make of these findings, some of a most unusual nature, re early MY/TB borrowings? The cultural flow, as evidenced by these loanwords, was almost entirely *towards* MY, even more clearly so than in the case of the early MY/Chinese borrowings. These loans also reflect an entirely different 'borrowing milieu', so to speak, than the MY/Chinese loans: much less 'diffuse', with the loans sparse and rigidly confined to specific categories. The early MY-speakers made good use of the higher numerals of the TB-speakers on their west and even shared in their heavenly body (sun, moon) cults, perhaps also entered into certain marital alliances with them, but they kept their distance; with their Chinese neighbors, on the other hand, they shared a community existence of sorts as a 'substratumized' population, the two groups exchanging cultural items of various kinds. To put it somewhat differently, they had the DMY-speakers as neighbors; they lived with the Chinese.

Finally, how is one to date these early happenings, at least on a relative basis? The one solid bit of dating here is that for the MY community's co-existence with the ancestral Chinese, dated as early as the Archaic (Dobson's 'Early Archaic') period, from before 1,000 B.C. to ca. 750 B.C., as attested by the extensive loans in MY that 'tie in' phonologically (see Benedict 1986) with AC (and AC dialect) forms. It would seem, surely, that the TB loanwords had already become part of the parent MY language by that time in view of the continuous nature of the subsequent MY/Chinese relationship. One must suppose, therefore, that the early MY-speakers first made contact with TB-speaking populations as they moved west, probably during the 2nd millennium B.C., borrowing the higher numerals and a few other, very 'special' items from one of their languages (DMY); further, that their next move was towards the north, bringing them face to face with the ancestral Chinese, with whom they settled down into an arrangement of community living. This historical scenario is conjectural, to be sure, but it does serve to explain the linguistic findings. It also agrees well with the view held by a number of scholars (e. g. Pulleyblank 1983), that the ancient state of Chu 楚 , that arose during the lst millennium B.C. in the middle Yangtze region, was of MY origin. Actually, by placing the ancestral MY in northwest China as early as the Archaic period, the scenario readily lends itself to the conclusion that the early population of much of China, particularly in the west, was MY-speaking, with the continuing post-Archaic Chinese expansion to the south and east overlaying this autochthonous stratum.

Footnotes

1. See Benedict 1975 (cited as *ATLC*) for references to MY and other AT sources, vastly strengthened now for Miao dialects by Wang 1979. *ATLC* (pp. 211 ff.) derives the MY numerals for 'one', 'three' and 'four' from the corresponding AT roots and suggests AT etymologies for both 'two' and 'five'. It now appears (Benedict: 1986b) that the various MY forms for 'two' reflect, rather, the corresponding AT numeral root. As for 'one' and 'three', both present problems in reconstruction of the PMY rhymes but a good case can be made out for 'one', at least, as connected to the PAT root, giving the proto-language the 'one' ~ 'two' pair. Finally, the *ATLC* analysis for 'four' involved handling PMY medial *-l- as an infix, with an apparent parallel in Atayal (Formosan), but Li (1983) has recently shown that in the latter case simply a feature of men's speech is involved, virtually invalidating the *ATLC* analysis as a whole. With 'four' thus restored to the 'TB loanword' roster, so to speak, and with 'six' and higher numerals already there, the likelihood of a straight numeral run: 'four', 'five', 'six' . . . becomes very great, indeed, with a TB source for 'five' to be preferred over the *ATLC* etymology (< 'palm' via 'hand').
2. Shafer (1964) cites Abor pilŋa, which can be used in support of a PTB reconstruction of *b-l-ŋa rather than *b-r-ŋa type, with the doublet as an alternative. In any event, the Abor form does provide a likely parallel for the DMY double-prefixed form.
3. Contra Benedict 1976, prefixed Archaic *s-1- yielded MC d'- (~*s-lị- > dị-), as in this form for 'field', whereas cluster slị- yielded sị-, with initial *l- maintained as a lateral.

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