THE POSITION OF THE MUNDA LANGUAGES WITHIN THE AUSTROASIATIC LANGUAGE FAMILY

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1. The Austroasiatic controversy, which arose in 1930 when Wilhelm v Hevesy [1] violently attacked Wilhelm Schmidt,[2] the real discoverer of the Aust asiatic family, still remains unsettled. Schmidt, it will be recalled, had group the Munda languages, Khasi, and the Nicobar, Palaung-Wa, Mon-Khm Malacca, and Cham languages together under the designation ' austroasiatisc Sprachstamm '. Some scholars, among them Sten Konow,[3] C. O. Blagde F. B. J. Kuiper,[5] R. Shafer,[6] J. H. Greenberg,[7] and A. J. Shevelenko,[8] in the m agreed with Schmidt and favoured the recognition of the existence of an Aust asiatic family including the Munda languages but excluding the Cham languag Others, in particular Georges Maspero,[9] and more recently also A. I. Blinov rejected this contention. The majority of the critics, especially T. A. Sebeol and M. B. Emeneau,[12] have deferred judgment in the belief that the problem be solved only through further investigation.

How unsettled the classification of the languages of South East Asia stil can be seen in Richard Salzner's *Sprachenatlas des Indopazifischen Raume* in which the Munda and Malacca languages are excluded from the Austroasi family but which follows Schmidt in once again designating as Austroasiatic Cham languages, which have long been recognized as Indonesian. The wh question becomes even more complicated by the fact that the linguistic relatic ships of Vietnamese and of Müöng are disputed.[14] Vietnamese, Müöng, and Malacca and Cham languages are, however, all clearly mixed languages : th all reveal at least an Austroasiatic substratum, which, however, is so small

[1] *BSOS*, 6, 1930, pp. 187 ff.
[2] *Die Mon-Khmer-Völker*, Braunschweig, 1906.
[3] *Gött. gel. Anz.*, 1906, pp. 228 ff.
[4] W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan races of the Malay Peninsula*, London, 19 Vol. II, Part IV, pp. 377 ff.
[5] ' Munda and Indonesian ', *Orientalica Neerlandica*, Leiden, 1948, pp. 372 ff.
[6] ' Études sur l'austroasien ', *BSL*, 48, 1952, pp. 111 ff.
[7] ' Historical linguistics and unwritten languages ', in *Anthropology today*, ed. A. L. Kroel Chicago, 1953, pp. 265 ff.
[8] *Sov. V.*, 1958, pp. 101 ff.
[9] *Grammaire de la langue khmère*, Paris, 1915.
[10] *Sov. V.*, 1956, 153 ff.
[11] *Language*, 18, 1942, pp. 206 ff.
[12] *JAOS*, 75, 1955, pp. 145 ff. ; *Language*, 32, 1956, pp. 3 ff.
[13] Wiesbaden, 1960.
[14] cf. H. Maspero, *BEFEO*, 12, p. 1 ; A.-G. Haudricourt, *BSL*, 49, 1953, pp. 122 R. Shafer, *BEFEO*, 40, 1940, pp. 439 ff., *HJAS*, 6, 1942, p. 399, *Dân Việt Nam*, No. 1, 19 pp. 1 ff.

Vietnamese, Müöng, and the Cham languages that we may unhesitatingly regard Vietnamese and Müöng as Thai languages and the Cham languages as Indonesian. In the Malacca languages, on the other hand, the Austroasiatic elements are so numerous that the languages are still to be regarded as Austroasiatic, although all of them (particularly Jakud) are gradually being assimilated into the Indonesian group.

The Munda languages, which are undoubtedly not mixed languages, do indeed differ greatly from the pattern of the other Austroasiatic languages (for which the designation ' Khmer-Nicobar group ' seems suitable), but the points of correspondence of the Munda languages with this group are so numerous that these similarities can by no means be coincidental. Borrowing may also be ruled out, for the common features lie especially in the basic vocabulary, in word-formation (where the infix-formation is particularly characteristic), and in certain morphological and syntactical peculiarities. The typological differences between the two groups can in large part be explained as the results of influence by the various neighbouring languages, with which individual Austroasiatic sub-families have formed so-called ' language leagues ' (*Sprachbünde*). A further discussion of this subject is to be found in my *Versuch einer historischen Lautlehre der Kharia-Sprache* [1] and in an article in the *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 1960.[2]

2. Schmidt's view that the Munda languages form a sub-family of the Austro-asiatic group proves to be well founded and correct, but it still remains to be ascertained exactly what the relationships of the various members of the family (Munda, Nicobar, Khasi, Palaung-Wa, Mon-Khmer, and the Malacca group) to one another are, and a suitable classification of the Austroasiatic family must be worked out. Furthermore, the classification of the Munda languages themselves must be established. The unity of all the Munda languages (not including Nahali, which is not Munda) is apparent not only from a comparison of the phonological systems in these languages but even more from their highly developed inflectional systems, in which they differ from all other Austroasiatic languages. Recent investigation [3] has shown that the verbal inflection of all Munda languages is traceable to a Proto-Munda inflectional system, which was later expanded in the north and considerably reduced in the south. From this evidence and on the basis of lexical differences the Munda languages may be divided into a Northern group with the sub-groups Kurku and Kherwari (Santali, Mundari, Korwa, etc., belong to the latter branch), and a Southern group, which is further subdivided into a Central group (including Kharia and Juang), and a South-Eastern group (including Sora, Pareng, Gutob, and Remo). R. Shafer (in *Word*, 1960, p. 425)

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[1] Wiesbaden, 1959.

[2] ' Über den Ursprung der voneinander abweichenden Strukturen der Munda- und Khmer-Nikobar-Sprachen ', *IIJ*, 4, 1960, pp. 81 ff.

[3] H. J. Pinnow, *Sprachvergleichende Studien zum Verbum in den Mundasprachen*, Berlin, 1960 (MS).

has also divided Munda into Northern and Southern groups. The relat
of Kherwari and Kurku is much closer than that of Central and Sou
Eastern Munda, which must have been separateú much earlier than Kherwari
Kurku.

This classification, the reasons for which are given in more detail in
investigation of the Munda verb mentioned above, differs greatly from the o
classification of Schmidt, who grouped the languages solely on the distribut
of *k* and *h* (from Proto-Munda *q). He concluded that there is an Eastern gr
(= Kherwari; with *h*), a Western group (Kurku, Kharia, Juang; with *k*),
a supposedly ' mixed group ' (= South-Eastern Munda; with a loss of Pr
Munda *q). As this classification was based on a single argument, it could
do justice to the facts.[1]

3. W. Schmidt likewise attempted a general classification of the Austroasi
languages,[2] and again on the basis of a single, if important, factor. On the b
of the comparison of numerals and some other important words he came to
conclusion not only that the Munda languages are Austroasiatic but that t
together with the Mon-Khmer languages (in the narrower sense of the te
form one of four Austroasiatic sub-families,[3] the others being the older Mala
group (including Semang and Sakai), the central group (including Khasi, Nico
and Palaung-Wa), and a so-called south-east mixed group (i.e. the Cham
guages). Schmidt classifies Besisi and Jakud as a younger Malacca group v
the Mon-Khmer languages. His classification of the ' South-East mixed gro
is not appropriate, as these languages are clearly Indonesian. Because of its c
sidedness, Schmidt's classification is as a whole questionable and must be
examined. However, in the following we will limit ourselves primarily t
reconsideration of the position of the Munda languages.

4. There are two ways of solving the problem of the classification of
Munda languages within the Austroasiatic family : first, according to structu
synchronic considerations ; secondly, according to the historical developm
of the languages. The latter classification is undoubtedly the more important (
Reliable information can be obtained only through such intensive histor
linguistic investigation of the various sub-groups as R. Shafer, for exam
has done in the field of the Palaungic languages.[4] The work of W. Schn
pioneering as it may be, does not suffice to clarify the complicated situation.
long as the eastern Austroasiatic languages have not been subjected to a c
prehensive historical examination in which the history of the individual gro
is established, the classification of these languages on the basis of their comn
and differing features will remain provisional. In the comparison of cer

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[1] *Die Sprachfamilien und Sprachenkreise der Erde*, Heidelberg, 1926, p. 140.
[2] *Grundzüge einer Lautlehre der Khasi-Sprache* (*Abh. d. K. Bayer. Ak. d. Wiss.*, 1 Kl., Bd
3 Abt.), München, 1904, pp. 759, 804. Cf. p. 140, n. 2, and n. 1 above.
[3] See n. 2 above.   [4] See p. 140, n. 6.

individual correspondences in vocabulary, morphology, and phonology the greatest caution is necessary, for all too often one finds completely independent parallel developments that do not at all justify grouping the languages with such common features together. Reasonable assurance for the correctness of the provisional classification is offered only by a correspondence of several major factors, in which connection morphological features deserve particular attention.

5. Features particularly to be regarded in classification are the following :

5.1. The position of parts of the sentence, especially in the relationship of the determiner to the thing determined. From the structural viewpoint three groups can here be clearly distinguished : (*a*) the eastern languages (with the exception of Nicobar), in which the *determinans* consistently follows the *determinandum*; (*b*) the Nicobar group, in which this rule is only partially observed, in so far as the ' adjective ', without an affix, precedes the ' substantive ', e.g. Nancowry *ãã yuəŋ ləpaa kəliŋ* ' the two good foreigners ' (literally ' two persons good foreigners ') or *ãã yuəŋ kəliŋ tə-ləpaa* ; in the latter case the adjective following the noun has the prefix *tə-*. In Car Nicobarese an adjective with the prefix *tö-* can also precede, and the practical result of this is that the whole *determinans* precedes the *determinandum*, e.g. *tö-tamüi cooŋ* ' steamer ' (literally ' with fire provided boat '; *tamüüi-yö* ' fire '). Lastly (*c*) the Munda languages, in which the *determinans* usually precedes, but in which the reverse holds true in a number of cases. Thus in compounds, especially in Sora, the ' genitive ' often follows, e.g. *ə-jeelu-booŋ-ən* ' buffalo meat ' (literally ' meat-buffalo-the '). The postposition of the personal pronoun as a possessive suffix is also frequently employed, e.g. Juang *bui-nɔm* ' thy mother ' (literally ' mother-of-thou ').[1] Historical linguistic investigation shows the following : at the earliest period for which we can make any statements the order *determinans—determinandum* was predominant. Later began a period in which the *determinans* was in all Austroasiatic languages largely but not exclusively placed after the *determinandum*. The eastern languages with the exception of Nicobarese continued this tendency, so that there now exist only a few remnants of old ' preposition ', such as the ' preposition ' of the numerals and numeral classifiers in Khasi and Bahnar. The Munda languages returned to the customary ' preposition ' of the *determinans*—presumably under the influence of Dravidian and Aryan languages. Nicobarese took a similar course—perhaps influenced by Andamanese languages. The only difference from Munda is that in Nicobarese the number of formations with ' preposition ' of the *determinans* is comparatively small. There is no reason to assume that Munda and Nicobar in this case passed through a common stage of development; however, a common tendency may have been present.

5.2. The use of prefixes and suffixes is very closely connected with the position of the *determinans*. The classification given above is also applicable here, but

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[1] *IIJ*, 4, 1960, pp. 97 ff.

Nicobarese and Munda are in this regard even more closely connected. [
three groups are : (a) the eastern languages (with the exception of Nicobare
which use prefixes almost exclusively. Remnants of old suffixes appear in La
-do in kon-do ' child ' = Kharia kon-ɖuʔ (cf. Mon kon) ; Khmer lö-k ' rais
lö-ŋ ' rise ', lö-s ' more ', from lö ' up ' ; cf. Kharia tob-luŋ ' up '.

(b) The Nicobar group, which uses a large number of prefixes and suffi
It is a striking fact that some affixes can sometimes be used both as prefix a
suffix : e.g. Car ma, maa, affix indicating a nomen agentis, in ma-harɔh '
sleeping ' (ha-rɔh ' to go to sleep '), but ɲa-maa ' an eater of food ' (ɲa ' to ea
Further, Car ha, Nancowry hə (ha), affix indicating transitive or causitive ve
(= Khmer pɔ-, Bahnar pö-, Sora ab-) ; e.g. Car ha-kün ' to cause to carry ' (
' to carry '), Nancowry fət (fat) ' to break by striking ', fət-hə (fat-ha) ' to ca
to break '.

(c) The Munda languages, which are in this respect like the Nicobar langua
Both prefixes and suffixes occur both as productive and unproductive affi
Among the productive suffixes are almost all the inflectional suffixes, e.g. San
Mundari, Kharia -aʔ indicating the genitive. Unproductive suffixes occur
example in Kurku ka-ku ' fish ' (Sre ka), Kharia siŋ-ko-e < *sim-ko-e ' fo
(Mundari sim id., Sre sim ' bird '). The suffix -ku, -ko occurs as a prefix in \
k-sem, Mon ga-cem ' bird '. Many of the suffixes in the Nicobar langua
particularly the directional affixes, are not connected with Munda affixes ;
others, however, a close connection can easily be supposed, e.g. Santali, Mun
-oʔ, verbal suffix of the middle or passive voice, Car -ö, Nancowry -ə (-a)
Car mük ' to see ', passive müük-ö, Nancowry hərɔk-hətə ' to burn ', pas
hərɔɔk-ə ; further Mundari -ian, Santali -en, Proto-Munda *-ian, suffix of
durative (with intransitive verbs), Nancowry -yən-de (-yan-de), suffix of
continuative, in top ' to drink ', t-enn-op-yən-de ' to continue drinking '. In so
cases Munda suffixes occur as prefixes or as particles in Nicobarese, e.g. Juang -
Kharia -tai, -atai, ablative suffix, Nancowry tai, in Kharia am-a-tai = Nanco
tai me ' from thee ' (Kharia am ' thou ' < *a-me ; cf. Santali me ' thou
Further Mundari, Santali -le-d, -le-n, suffix for the non-resultative perfect, Sora
perfect suffix, Nancowry leɛt ; e.g. Mundari abuɲ-led-a-iŋ ' I have washe
Nancowry cüə leɛt orii ' I have beaten ' (from orii ' to beat ' ; cf. Juang rim
Corresponding prefixes in Munda and Nicobarese are to be found, for exam
in Mundari ta-, Nancowry tə- (ta-), prefix indicating possessive pronoun
Mundari ta-iŋ, Nancowry tə-cüə ' my ', e.g. Mundari apu-ta-iŋ ' my fath
Nancowry düe tə-cüə ' my canoe '.

It may be regarded as certain that a large number of both prefixes and suf
were employed in the Austroasiatic languages at an earlier period.[1] The fact

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[1] cf. W. Schmidt, ' Die Mon-Khmer-Völker ', Archiv für Anthropologie, 33, Braunschw
1906, p. 78.

once again neither Munda nor Nicobarese lost their suffix-formations but rather extended the use of such formations through the erection of various new suffixes is evidence not for an actual common development but rather for a common conservative tendency.

5.3. A treatment of the numerous infixes, most of which are undoubtedly old, would be superfluous here, for they are encountered in all the groups and are hence meaningless for the classification.[1]

5.4. The repetition of words that logically need to occur only once in a sentence is to be found both in Munda and in Khasi, e.g. Mundari *am gapa-m sen-re-do, ka-m tebai-a* ' if thou goest tomorrow, thou wilt not arrive ' (literally ' thou tomorrow-thou go-if, not-thou arrive-will '), Khasi *ka-wei ka kənthei ka la iap* ' the one woman died ' (literally ' she-one she woman she died '). We have here to do with a kind of agreement which of course has not reached the extent to be observed, for example, in some African classificatory languages. Whether this agreement is old or whether it may earlier have been present in other Austro-asiatic languages cannot yet be determined. A direct relationship of the two languages in respect of these forms cannot be shown, but as a common feature this point is not uninteresting. A classification from a structural point of view is then : (*a*) the eastern languages excepting Khasi ; (*b*) Khasi and Munda.

5.5. On the basis of their syntactical framework the Austroasiatic languages may be classified into two groups : (*a*) the largely co-ordinating and analytic Khmer-Nicobar languages, and (*b*) the largely subordinating and synthetic Munda languages. The Nicobar languages here share the typical characteristics of the eastern group ; subordinating participial constructions, which frequently occur in Munda, are here completely absent. According to recent investigation [2] the extensive subordination and the extremely synthetic structure of the Munda languages are of a secondary nature, just as the analytic structure and general co-ordination in the east are not original but are probably the result of secondary development and, in part, of the influence of the Thai and other languages. The complicated Munda conjugation, if pursued back to its origins in older Proto-Munda, shrinks to a fraction of its present size ; thus in Proto-Munda no pronouns as indicators of either subject or object were incorporated into the verb. The decisive question here is whether the analytic simplification developed independently in the individual eastern groups or whether it began in a period before the formation of these groups, as was the case with the increased structuralization in the later period of Proto-Munda. If the latter supposition is correct, the Khmer-Nicobar languages form just such an historical unified group as the Munda languages do. It is unfortunately not yet possible to give a reliable answer to this question.

5.6. Morphological systems with declension and conjugation are present only

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[1] cf. W. Schmidt, op. cit., p. 74.   [2] See p. 141, n. 3.

in Munda. In the eastern languages with the exception of Nicobarese morph
logical systems are practically wholly absent. Special syntactical relationshi
and loosely attached particles there assume the function of the Munda declensi
and conjugation. Nicobarese again has an intermediate position : it posses:
obvious remnants of an older morphological system. In Car Nicobarese thr
' cases ' of the pronouns are distinguishable, ' absolutive ' or ' nominative
' interrogative ', and ' oblique '. The first person singular is thus *cin* or *cuu-ö*
the nominative, *öic*, *cu-ö öic* in the interrogative, and *cu* in the oblique. As
Munda, the singular, dual, and plural of the pronoun are differentiated, as w
as inclusive and exclusive forms of the first-person pronouns in dual and plur
Some of the comparative forms in Nancowry differ greatly from the correspondi
morphemes in the positive, e.g. *wiihlə* ' young ', *olyaalə* ' younger ', *keooy*
' hot ', *kenooŋ-ə-yən* ' hotter '. Continuative forms of the verbs are created
various alternations of the root with the infix *-en-*, the suffix *-ə,* and the su
-yən-de ; e.g. *ikaaʃə* ' to sing ', *kennɔiʃə-yən-de* ' to continue singing '.[1] Pass
formations in *-ö* or in *-ə* have already been mentioned, as the continuative for
have been ; they agree exactly with the Munda forms. Very different from
Munda, on the other hand, is the use of directional affixes ; e.g. Nancowry -
which indicates motion downward, in *ten-fət-hə-ʃe* ' to break something
throwing it to the ground '. It is evident from Munda and Nicobar that Pro
Austroasiatic possessed a fairly well developed morphological system that w
further expanded in Munda, reduced in Nicobar, and lost in the other languag
This loss of the morphological system suggests not only a common developme
but even that this development began in a period in which the individual grou
had not become independent. In general the following rule holds true for
development of languages : if only one of a group of languages introduces so
important innovation, the fact that the other groups do not possess this innovati
may not be regarded as a sign that they still have any common ties ; however
all but one of several groups of languages introduce an innovation, this fact m
be regarded as an indication that the innovating languages possess common bon
An early separation of Nicobarese from the rest of the groups seems very likely

5.7. Another morphological feature is the frequent use of certain compo
tional forms : i.e., the words, when they are used in a compound, possess
different form, which is usually one affix shorter than the normal form. This occ
mostly in Sora but to a lesser degree also in the other languages, especially
Kharia ; e.g. Sora *taŋ-liy-ən* ' cow ', compositional form *taaŋ-ən*, in *gupə
taaŋ-mar-ən* ' cowherd ' (literally ' graze-cow-man-the '), Kharia *soreŋ* ' ston
compositional form *-sor* in *thom-sor* ' to stone '. Here there is an agreement w
Khasi, which likewise has compositional forms ; e.g. *ksah* ' ring ', *kti* ' han
sah-ti ' ring for the finger '. In the other languages there do not seem to be a

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[1] See 5.2 above.

special compositional forms, though an old remnant may perhaps be present in Khmer *mɔ-* (*m-*) to *muoy* ' one ', e.g. in *m-'daŋ* ' once '. In Nancowry Nicobarese *ʃiŋkaa* and *daam* (*raam*) are respectively used in combination with numeral classifiers for *heŋ* ' day ' and *hɔtɔm* ' night '. Whether old compositional forms are present here is not entirely certain. However, such pairs as *hɔ-kook* ' to fire a gun ', *hen-kook* ' cannon ', *hɔ-teehɔ* ' to sail ', *hen-teehɔ* ' sail ' reveal good comparable parallels, as do the frequent phonetic changes in Nicobarese when affixes are employed.

Thus from a structural standpoint the classification is : (*a*) the eastern languages except Nicobar and Khasi ; (*b*) Khasi, Nicobar ; (*c*) Munda. Special compositional forms probably existed at an earlier period ; the fact that they have been in varying degree preserved in Munda, Khasi, and Nicobar constitutes a bond between these languages but is no evidence for a common development.

5.8. In the use of numerous numerical coefficients the Nicobar languages agree completely with the other eastern languages and thus differ from Munda, in which such words are little used. The word-order in Munda, Nicobar, and Khasi is numeral, numeral classifier, noun ; in Mon and Khmer noun, numeral, numeral classifier ; in Bahnar usage varies : e.g. Kharia *moloi boko'b ore'j-ki* ' five bullocks ' (literally ' five head[s of] cattle '), Car *sөm ta-ka ɲiö* ' ten children ' (literally ' ten persons child '), Khmer *kun prŭs pi 'nɔ̆k* ' three boys ' (literally ' child masculine three persons '), Bahnar *pluŋ 'baar tooŋ* ' two barks ' (literally ' bark two piece ') or *'baar tooŋ pluŋ*. It is remarkable that with regard to the position of the numeral coefficients Munda, Nicobar, and Khasi again stand in opposition to Mon and Khmer. That the use of numeral classifiers was extended in the east and restricted in the west is probably the result of the influence of neighbouring non-Austroasiatic languages.

5.9. With regard to phonology the following points are important :

(*a*) Central, unrounded back, or rounded front vowels (*i*, *ə*, *ɯ*, *ɤ*, *y*, *ø*) : prevalent in Khmer-Nicobar, rare in Munda. For Proto-Munda *i and *ə must, however, be reconstructed.

(*b*) Quantitative opposition of vowels : prominent in Khmer-Nicobar excepting Khasi ; less prominent in Munda. Quantitative opposition is to be assumed for Proto-Munda.

(*c*) Contrast voiceless *versus* voiced stops : lacking only in Nicobarese. In Nancowry *d* appears as a kind of liquid. The loss of voiced stops in Mon, Khmer, Riang, etc. is demonstrably secondary.

(*d*) Aspiration : lacking only in Nicobarese in the east and in Sora and Gutob in the west. For the older period aspiration is to be assumed. It was, however, clearly diphonemic, just as it is to-day in Khmer, etc. In Munda secondarily monophonemic as a result of the loss of the other initial consonant clusters.

(*e*) Retroflex consonants : only in Munda excepting Sora. Retroflex consonants are completely lacking in the east ; *ṭ* in Khmer and *ḍ* in Mon are graphemic

equivalents of phonetically preglottalized [*d*], which may be alveolar or dent
In Car Nicobar *ṛ* (*ř*) is no genuine retroflex. Proto-Austroasiatic did not ha
retroflex consonants; *t* was probably dental, *d*-alveolar. This is still the sta
of affairs in Sora and Palaung.[1] Retroflexes were probably developed in Prot
Munda under the influence of Dravidian and/or Aryan languages.

(*f*) Non-plosive, glottalized consonants: in Munda and Nicobarese r
initially but only finally. Initial implosive consonants are present in Mon, Khm
Bahnar, etc., but not in Palaung and some other languages. All these soun
which have in part become phonemes, are of a secondary nature and ha
developed independently. Only the tendency to introduce such sounds is a comm
feature. The close correspondence of Munda and Nicobarese is again noticeable.

(*g*) Tonemes were originally completely absent. In the languages in whi
they now occur, e.g. Mon, Sre, Riang, they are clearly secondary developments.

(*h*) Consonant clusters are numerous in the eastern languages except Nicob
rare in Munda, absent in Nicobarese. Clusters of two, and not more than tw
consonants undoubtedly occurred in Proto-Austroasiatic.

(*i*) Number of syllables in words: Munda inclines towards polysyllables, t
eastern languages to monosyllables. The polysyllabic structure of Nicobar
is the result of the fact that many affixes have there been indissolubly combin
with roots. It is certain that the older languages had both one- and two-sylla
words and that the latter have mostly been secondarily shortened in the east.

This phonological evidence again leads to a threefold classification: Mun
Nicobar, and the other Austroasiatic languages. Nicobar and Munda ha
three points of correspondence; Nicobar and Mon-Khmer, four points. T
development of the phonemic system of Proto-Austroasiatic to Munda, Nicob
and the remaining languages indicates that the former two groups were ea
separated from the family.

5.10. The numerals present a different situation. In this respect the Mur
languages together with Mon-Khmer and one part of the Malacca languages fo
one group in contrast to Khasi, Nicobar in another group and to the remain
Malacca languages in yet a third group: e.g. Mundari *bar* 'two', Bahnar '*ba*
South Sakai '*mbaar*; but Khasi *ar*, Palaung *aa*, Riang *kaar*, Nancowry *a*
North Sakai *nar*. Similarly Mundari *pe*, Mon *pi*, South Sakai '*mpe?* 'three
in contrast to Khasi *lai*, Palaung *uwe*, Riang *kwai*, Nancowry *luue*; No
Sakai *ne?*. An exception is the number for 'ten'; here Munda agrees w
Palaung-Wa and not with Mon-Khmer: Mundari *gel*, Kharia *ghol*, Palau
gö, *köör*, Riang *kɔl*, but Nancowry *fɔm*, Car *sam*, Khasi *fipeu*, and Mon *c*
Bahnar *jit*. An historical consideration of the numerals shows that the pho
logical similarity of the numerals for 'two', etc. in Munda and Mon-Khm
is not at all the necessary result of a close connection between the two grou

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[1] cf. H. L. Shorto, *BSOAS*, 23, 1960, p. 547.

it consists rather in a common preservation of old forms, which have been changed in Khasi and Nicobar. The initial *b*- of the Munda and Mon-Khmer numeral for 'two' is absent, for example, in Khasi, Palaung, and Nicobar. Riang (belonging to the Palaung-Wa group) has initial *k*-, Wa initial *la*- or *r*-, North and Central Sakai initial *n*-. But it is false to try to explain this state of affairs, as Sten Konow [1] has, by positing an old prefix *b*-. The original initial sound, which was part of the root, was itself *b*-. Ple-Temer, a Malacca language, gives us a clue : it has three variants for the numeral 'two' : *nar*, *panar*, and *bərnar*. Now, *n*- is an infix, which also occurs in Santali : *ba-na-r* 'both' from *bar* 'two'. *banar* easily changes to *panar* and thence to **pnar* and finally to *nar*. *k*-, *r*-, and *l(a)*- are undoubtedly prefixes that have replaced the old initial consonant : **k-bar* became *kaar*, etc., **l-pe* and **l-pai* became **l-we*, *lue*, and *lai*. The absence of initial *b*- in *aar* is probably to be explained by positing a prefix **a*-, so that **a-bar* became **a-war* and thence *aar*. In the Munda languages we have a similar development in the numeral for 'four' : Santali *pon*, Mundari *u-pun*, Gutob *vuun*, but Sora *un-ji*. *Un*- (*ji* is a plural suffix) surely developed out of **u-phun* (cf. Kharia *iʔphon*) from **u-pun*; this is a purely Munda affair, cf. Mon *pɔn*, Palaung, Khmer *puon*, Riang *khpwon*, Nancowry *fooən*, Car *fɛn*. Thus if both Mon-Khmer and Munda have an old initial *b*- in this case, this constitutes no evidence for any particularly close degree of relationship ; the two groups have not added a *b*-prefix at any common stage of development ; they have simply retained an old feature of the language, and such a retention of course presupposes no interdependency. The loss of *b*- in Palaung-Wa, Khasi, and Nicobarese may indeed point to an earlier common stage in these languages, but this is not a necessary conclusion, especially inasmuch as Riang in the Palaung-Wa group has initial *k*-.

5.11. In regard to vocabulary the Munda languages have, according to W. Schmidt [2] and Sten Konow,[3] far greater similarities with the Mon-Khmer languages than for instance with Khasi. The important words for 'eye', 'leg', 'blood', 'fly', 'hair', 'water', 'nose', etc. agree with Mon-Khmer, but not with Khasi; and Schmidt's classification, which was based upon the numerals, thus receives support. There are, however, some instances in which the Munda languages lie closer to Palaung-Wa than to Mon-Khmer, e.g. in the words for 'sun', Mundari *siŋgi*, Palaung *shəŋii*, but Khmer *thŋai*. Khasi agrees here with Palaung and with Mundari with *sŋi*, as does Nancowry with *heŋ* < **siŋ*. If one or two groups employ variant words, this need not reflect an old state of affairs. For instance, the Car Nicobarese word for 'sun' is *ta-vuuöi*. In the words for 'water'—Santali, Mundari *daʔ*, Kharia *ḍaʔ*, Mon *'daʔ*, Bahnar *'daak*, Nancowry *daak*, Car *mak* (< **um-dak*), but Palaung *oom*, Khasi *um*—it is certain

[1] *Gött. gel. Anz.*, 1906, p. 234.
[2] W. Schmidt, *Grundzüge einer Lautlehre der Khasi-Sprache*, pp. 757–60.
[3] *Gött. gel. Anz.*, 1906, p. 236.

that the old usual word was *daak*. The Khasi and Palaung words belong wi[t]
Kherwari *um*, Bahnar, Besisi *hum* ' to bathe '. Since Lawa in the Palaung-W[a]
group also has *haum* in the meaning ' to bathe ', it is clear that a change of meanin[g]
with a secondary suppression of the old word for water (perhaps for reasons [of]
tabu) has taken place in Khasi and Palaung. The close relationship of Mun[da]
and Mon-Khmer is thus by no means so apparent as Schmidt and Konow assume[d].
It is nevertheless evident that in regard to vocabulary there are fewer corr[e]-
spondences between Munda and Nicobar than between Munda and Mon-Khm[er]
and Munda and Palaung-Wa. Their relationships can be cleared up only throu[gh]
more investigation, which unfortunately still remains to be done.

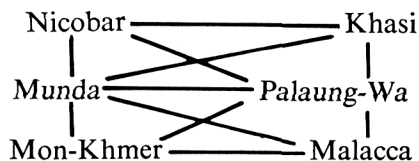6. The foregoing investigation has led to the following tentative conclusions :

6.1. Schmidt's thesis that the Munda and Mon-Khmer languages are to [be]
grouped together and apart from Nicobar, Khasi, and Palaung-Wa cannot [be]
maintained, since it did not take into consideration the most striking a[nd]
important common features of the Khmer-Nicobar languages, and since it d[id]
not make allowances for the similarity of Munda to Nicobarese and, to a less[er]
degree, to Khasi.

6.2. The differences of Nicobarese from the other eastern Austroasia[tic]
languages are so great that it should be ranked as a separate group within t[he]
Khmer-Nicobar languages, a group that on the one hand has close relationshi[p]
with Munda and on the other with Khasi. Though most of the similarities shar[ed]
by Munda and Nicobarese result less from close relationship than from a co[n]-
servative tendency, an old contact relationship seems likely.

6.3. Within the Austroasiatic family the Munda languages form a clear[ly]
defined group that stands in opposition to all the eastern languages, i.e. t[he]
Khmer-Nicobar group ; and the Munda languages undoubtedly are more simil[ar]
to Proto-Austroasiatic than the other members of the family. From a morph[o]-
logical viewpoint they are far more conservative than Nicobarese and Khas[i;]
from the standpoint of vocabulary they surpass the Mon-Khmer languages [in]
their preservation of ancient word stems and word forms.

6.4. Whether the Khmer-Nicobar languages form a unified group, as t[he]
Munda languages do, remains uncertain. Such a unity is in any case not as evide[nt]
as it is in the Munda languages, and it may depend only upon secondary, structu[ral]
resemblances. There is as yet a complete dearth of any investigations whi[ch]
might guide us in tracing the individual members of the Khmer-Nicobar fami[ly]
back to a Proto-Khmer-Nicobar which might then be compared with Prot[o-]
Munda. It may be that there never was a Proto-Khmer-Nicobar and that t[he]
individual members of the Austroasiatic family—Munda, Nicobar, Kha[si,]
Palaung-Wa, Mon-Khmer, Sakai, Jakud, Semang—constitute, historica[lly]
speaking, sub-families independent of one another and traceable solely to Prot[o-]
Austroasiatic. In this case the Khmer-Nicobar grouping would have only [a]
structural and geographical justification.

6.5. The former geographical distribution of the various sub-groups with regard to one another may be inferred from the above-mentioned linguistic similarities. The lines of relationship Mon-Khmer/Palaung-Wa/Khasi, Munda/Nicobarese, Munda/Mon-Khmer, Nicobarese/Khasi are particularly important here. These areas of contact suggest the following older spatial distribution :

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Nicobar} \longrightarrow \text{Khasi} \\
| \quad \diagdown\!\!\diagup \quad | \\
\text{Munda} \longrightarrow \text{Palaung-Wa} \\
| \quad \diagup\!\!\diagdown \quad | \\
\text{Mon-Khmer} \longrightarrow \text{Malacca}
\end{array}
$$

(three groups)

It is interesting to note that one must assign a northern position to Nicobarese if one wants to avoid excessive spatial dislocations. The spread of the various groups out of this compact original homeland, the location of which cannot be discussed here,[1] can be imagined to have taken place as follows. The Munda peoples were the first to leave; they migrated westwards. The Proto-Nicobar tribes went to the south, then possibly settled west of the Mon-Khmer on the coast, and later migrated to the islands; they were the second group to leave. The Khasis, who perhaps went west like the Mundas, constituted the third group. At a later period Austroasiatic-speaking peoples occupied increasingly widespread territories and imparted their languages to other peoples, e.g. to the originally non-Austroasiatic Semang on Malacca.[2] Concerning the Malacca languages, which cannot be dealt with here in more detail, cf. C. O. Blagden in Skeat and Blagden, *Pagan races of the Malay Peninsula*, London, 1906, Vol. II, 432 ff.

7. Nahali, a language spoken in Central India and bordering on the Kurku area, has not yet been considered. Its classification is particularly difficult, for the language is not yet sufficiently well known or investigated. It is possible that Nahali is completely separate, as R. Shafer[3] assumes, but it may also constitute a separate branch of Austroasiatic. It is at any rate not Munda. Nahali exhibits a number of words that cannot be explained as Austroasiatic, as Dravidian, or as Indo-Aryan. Its morphological system, on the other hand, is obviously connected with that of the Munda languages : thus, for example, all the Nahali tense suffixes may be compared with corresponding suffixes in Munda. The reliability of these comparisons is, however, reduced through frequent divergences in meaning. The present state of investigation does not permit any definite judgment. We may

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[1] cf. R. Heine-Geldern, *Festschrift Schmidt*, Wien, 1928, pp. 809 ff. ; Shevelenko, *Sov. V.*, 1958, pp. 105 ff. ; H. J. Pinnow, *IIJ*, 4, 1960, pp. 84 ff.

[2] cf. Isidore Dyen, ' Language distribution and migration theory ', *Language*, 32, 1956, pp. 611 ff.

[3] *HJAS*, 5, 1940, pp. 346 ff. ; *Ethnography of ancient India*, Wiesbaden, 1954, pp. 10 ff.

perhaps come closest to the truth if we assume that Nahali possesses an isolate non-Austroasiatic substratum that has been partially replaced by an Austr asiatic stratum which has also provided Nahali with its inflection. But the resol tion of this problem awaits further research.[1]

8. A provisional classification corresponding to the present state of knowled takes the following shape :

Western group (Nahali-Munda)

(A) West : Nahali (?)
(B) East : Munda

    (a) North
        Kherwari (Santali, Mundari, Korwa, etc.)
        Kurku

    (b) South
        1. Central : Kharia, Juang
        2. South-East : Sora, Pareng, Gutob, Remo

Eastern group (Khmer-Nicobar)

(A) West : Nicobarese (Nancowry, Car, etc.)
(B) East : Palaung-Khmer

    (a) West : Khasi
    (b) North : Palaung-Wa (Palaung, Wa, Riang, Lawa, etc.)
    (c) East : Mon-Khmer (Mon, Khmer, Bahnar, Sre, etc.)
    (d) South : Malacca

        1. Sakai
        2. Jakud
        3. Semang

The position of Yumbri has not been considered here. According to Salzne it constitutes a special Austroasiatic group; it may, however, belong to t Palaung-Wa languages. And, finally, the picture is not complete without the no Austroasiatic languages with an Austroasiatic substratum, namely (1) the Cha languages and (2) Vietnamese and Müöng.

[1] cf. H. J. Pinnow, *Sprachvergleichende Studien zum Verbum in den Mundasprachen.*
[2] *Sprachenatlas des Indopazifischen Raumes*, Wiesbaden, 1960, pp. 4, 6.