God and the Sino-Tibetan Copula  
with some good news concerning  
Selected Tibeto-Burman Rhymes  

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FOREWORD  

This monograph was summarized orally and circulated in preliminary form at the Sixteenth International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, University of Washington, Seattle, September 15–18, 1983. I would like to thank Professors N. Bodman, Chou Fa-kao, P. Serruys, and K. Takashima for the interesting comments they made at the Conference, and I am grateful to P. K. Benedict, S. DeLancey, and D. Solnit for taking the trouble to send me written comments later.  

At the same Sino-Tibetan Conference, Professor Richard Kunst of Duke University presented a concise and cogent paper entitled “A note on several possible cases of the copula ɕei/*hui 頂 in the line texts of the Yijing.” Since this subject is so directly relevant to the concerns of the present monograph, I asked Professor Kunst if I might include it as an Appendix to this published version, to which he graciously agreed (see below, pp. 66–70).  

To help the reader pick his way through the labyrinth of forms, an Index of Reconstructed Roots has been added (below pp. 70–78).  

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Professor Hajime Kitamura of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies for arranging for the publication of this monograph. A special word of thanks is also due to my former student, Dr. Yasuhiko Nagano, of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka.  

March, 1984  

JAM  
Berkeley  

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ABBREVIATIONS

A Æ B A is an allofam of B; A and B are members of the same word family
Ak. Akha
GL The Grammar of Lahu [Matisoff 1978a]
GSR Grammata Serica Recensa [Karlgren 1957]
ILH I-L. Hansson [in prep.]
Jg. Jingpho (= Jinghpaw = Kachin)
KHG K-H. Grüssner [1978, ca. 1979]
Kmrp. Kamarupa; Kamarupan languages [see n. 8]
LB Lolo-Burmese (= Burmese-Lolo)
Lh. Lahu
LQ Luquan Lolo [Ma 1949]
Mk. Mikir
PL Proto-Loloish
PL Paul Lewis [1968]
PLB Proto-Lolo-Burmese
PST Proto-Sino-Tibetan
PTB Proto-Tibeto-Burman
NOTE ON THE TRANSCRIPTION OF TONES

Tones are indicated according to the following sources and conventions: (Akha) Lewis 1968 or Hansson and Matisoff 1979; (Bawm) Schwerli ca. 1979; (Boro) Bhat 1968; (Burmese) □ ‘low, clear’, □ □ ‘heavy, breathy’, □ ‘creaky’; (Hani) Hu and Dai 1964, Gao Huanian 1955; (Jingpho) Maran [in prep.]; (Jino) Gai Xingzhi 1981; (Karen) Jones 1961; (Lahu) Matisoff 1978a; (Laizō) Osborne 1975; (Lisu) Fraser 1922; (Luquain) Ma Xueliang 1949; (Lushai) either as entered by Siamkhiba Hkawthring into a copy of Lorrain 1940, or Weidert 1975; (Meithei) Thoudam 1980; (Mikir) Grüssner 1978, 1979; (Mpi) Srinuan 1976; (Nasu) Gao Huanian 1958; (Tangkhul) Bhat 1969; (Tiddim) Henderson 1965; (Woni) Yuan Jiahua 1947.

1.0 Introduction

There can be no more solemn duty for the comparative linguist than to reconstruct his language family’s word for the Supreme Being. Although I did not realize it at the time, the first steps along this pious path were taken at the Sixth Sino-Tibetan [ST] Conference (San Diego 1975), when I informally proposed a relationship between the ‘ubiquitous’ Lahu [Lh.] particle *ve (which has both subordinating and nominalizing functions and is used in the citation-form or ‘infinitive’ of verbs), and the Jingpho [Jg.] forms *rāi ‘relativizer; nominalizer; marker of citation-forms of verbs’ and *rāi ‘copula’, setting up a Proto-Tibeto-Burman [PTB] etymology of the shape *way Þ *ray.

There matters stood for awhile, until for some reason I was ruminating about the strange vowel correspondence in the word LAUGH between Written Burmese [WB] rai and Lh. ṣl. Now before I had ever started thinking about the etymology of *ve, I had twice claimed in print that “final -i is the regular Lahu reflex for *-ay”\(^1\)” on the basis of the sets for CRAB, TEN, and TOOTH/TUSK. See Table I.

\(^1\) See my portion of n. 81 in [S]ino-{T}ibetan: a [C]onspectus (Benedict 1972), p. 25. Also Matisoff 1975a, p. 15: “/i/ . . . is the reflex of *-ay . . . .”
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Lh.</th>
<th>PLB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[1] LAUGH</td>
<td>rai</td>
<td>ši</td>
<td>*ray¹ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[2] TEN</td>
<td>(tæ)chai</td>
<td>(tẽ)chi</td>
<td>*tsay¹ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[3] TOOTH/TUSK</td>
<td>cwhai</td>
<td>ci</td>
<td>*/way¹ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[4] CRAB</td>
<td>....</td>
<td>&quot;š-ci-ku&quot;¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/cf. Lushai /ai ‘crab’, Tangkhul Naga khai ‘fish’, khai-reu ‘crab’ < PTB *d-k(ŋ)a-y [STC #51]; see [59] below /

Taking the WB final as faithfully reflecting PLB *-ay, how to explain the apparently aberrant -i vocalism of Lh. ši ‘laugh’? It then occurred to me that Black Lahu does not tolerate the sequence */ši/ (nor for that matter the sequence */še/),³ so that there would be no theoretical objection to considering /i/ to be the ‘regular’ conditioned reflex of *-ay after initial *r. (> Lh. ši).⁴

In order to confirm this hypothesis, I began to consider other Lahu syllables pronounced /ši/. The most interesting of these was the first element in ši-ša ‘God; Creator; Great Spirit’, a word I had once regretfully included in the category of ‘obscure compounds of religious or mythic import’ [GL, p. 60]. Did cognates to this ši- exist elsewhere in TB that could be derived from a prototype *-ray? The form which immediately leapt to mind was Jingpho kər̥̊əi kəsəŋ ‘the Supreme Being, the Creator; the self-existing first cause… invoked only in time of extreme danger or dire calamity’ [Hanson 1906/1954, p. 266], which Hanson derived from the verb rai ‘create’.⁵

2) This Lahu form was elicited on my 1965–6 fieldtrip to Black Lahu [Lāhû Nã] villages in N. Thailand, but was amended to še-ci-gu by my chief informant in one of these same villages in 1970. This latter form was accepted by my best informant in 1977, who also offered the variant še-ci-gu. (I have wondered whether there has occurred some contamination from the etymologically distinct word še-ci ‘hawk, kite’ < PLB *dzwan¹, below [6].) At any rate, words for ‘creepy-crawly’ creatures like crabs, spiders, dragonflies, etc. show great dialectal variation in languages like Lahu, which makes them tricky to use for comparative purposes.

For CRAB, Bradley [Lahu Dialects (1979) #68] has recorded Black Lahu šr̥̊əi-ku (North Country subdialect); ci-ku (Mān-pû-lûn subdialect); Red Lahu (Lāhû Nû) šd-ci-gu; Lahu Shelehe šd-ci-ku; and Yellow Lahu (Lāhû ši) o-ka-ʊqû [Bakeo subdialect], ci-kô [Banlan subdialect]. The Mān-pû-lûn subdialect of Black Lahu is the one on which my Lahu grammar and dictionary are based.


4) The symbol /š/ stands for the voiced velar spirant [γ] in my transcription. It is the regular reflex of PTB and PLB *r. [GL, pp. 8–9].

5) Tone-marks are absent from Hanson’s classic dictionary. The Jingpho tones in this paper have been supplied by La Raw Maran, either via personal communication or from the MS of his unpublished dictionary [see Bibliography].

The probable relationship between Lh. ši and Jg. kər̥̊əi had been independently noticed by Bradley, who called the phonological correspondence ‘nearly regular’ [op. cit., p. 47].
“Self-existing first cause?” Of course! A semantic association between a copula (e.g. Jg. rái)—a verb of existence—and the Creator—He who is the Ground of Being for the universe (e.g. Jg. rái 'create')—is an extremely natural one, with parallels all over the world.6)

If this comparison is valid, we now have two examples of *ray > Lh. ĝi:

[ 1 ] LAUGH: WB rái, Lh. ĝi < PLB *ray1
[ 5 ] COPULA/CREATOR: Jg. rái 'copula', kərəi(-kəsəg) 'Creator', Lh. ĝi(-ja) 'id.' < PTB *g-ray.

A key problem remains, however. As indicated above, we had long ago followed a hunch and posited an allofamic relationship between the Jg. copula rái and the particles Jg. rəi/Lh. ve (<PTB *way) 'nominalizer; subordinator; verb citation-form marker'. If this hunch were correct, Lahu ve and ĝi(-ja) would now both have to be derived from a prototype in *-ay. But what independent evidence is there that *-ay could become -e in Lahu (as it presumably did in ve)? So far the only Lahu reflexes of *-ay we had observed were -i and -e. Yet the 3 examples of *ay > Lh. i were all after palatal initials (TEN, TOOTH, CRAB [2-4] above). This at least left open the possibility that *-ay could have developed into Lh. -e after non-palatal non-*r initials, thus:

PTB *-ay > PLB *-ay > Lh. i/?
> Lh. i/c, ch __
> Lh. e/________ .

Desiring to test this hypothesis, I started looking for new TB roots in *-ay that might have a Lahu reflex in -e. This search has turned out to be more successful than I had dared to hope. Below I present evidence for well over a dozen new etyma of this type.

Two excellent and provocative articles have just appeared which are directly relevant to the issues raised in this paper. In “The Sino-Tibetan copula *way” (1982), Thurgood explicitly rejects my suggestion of putting *way7) and *ray into the same word-family (p. 72). And in “This and that in Sino-Tibetan” (1983), Benedict tries to derive Lh. ve from *wan rather than from *way

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6) As is well-known, the euphemism substituted by the ancient Hebrews for the ineffable name of God was the “Tetragrammaton” YHWH (the original ‘four-letter word’) conventionally vocalized as Yahweh or Jehovah, which is derived from the Hebrew copula, whose root-consontants are H-W-H or H-Y-H. When asked His name, God replies ‘I am that I am’ [Exodus 3:14].

7) We shall discuss below [5.11] whether the proto-rhyme should be *-ay or *-ay.
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(pp. 85–6). In what follows, I hope to demonstrate, in all humility, that on these points God knows they are wrong and I am right.

* * *

Our argument will proceed on two fronts: comparative-phonological and semantic. We will explore the PTB rhyme *-a(·)y and its close relatives (*-ey, -oy, etc.), using the STC as our point of departure, but also presenting a large number of new etymologies for the first time. Since the rhymes *-an, *-at, and *-i·t are also relevant, they will first come in for their share of attention as well. The discussion will depend to a large extent on data from the ‘Kamarupan’8) languages, since it is in the Western branches of TB that the PTB diphthongs seem to be best preserved.

Finally, we shall zero in on the morphophonemics and semantic interconnections of the TB copula, in both its secular and divine aspects.

2.0 Previously recognized sources of Lahu -e: PTB/PLB *-an and *-at

In his valiant but quixotic attempt to derive Lahu ve from *s-wan, Benedict (1985, loc. cit.) quotes The Grammar of Lahu (p. 15):

"/e/ [comes] from PLB */an wan at wat/".

As far as it goes, this is a perfectly true statement—and in fact it is ‘truer’ today than ever before. Where once I only had a handful of examples of *-wyan > Lh. -e,9) the present study has unearthed a dozen more. (It is just that this is not the whole story—Lahu -e is also the chief reflex of *-ay10)

2.1 The fate of *-an in Lahu

Of the 10 sets reconstructed with the rhyme *-an in STC, only one has a Lahu cognate:

[6] HAWK/KITE: PLB *dzwan > WB cwan, Lh. á-ce./STC also cites Atsi istsàn, Lisu dzyè, and Chinese 談 [GSR 230a] *diwan/iwán [pp. 49, 169, 190]: to these we may add 3 Southern Loloish forms: Akha [ILH] xhù-dzé, Mpi te³-mo³, and Jino tsb³-mɔ³/

8) The term ‘Kamarupan’ (from the Sanskrit Kāmarūpa, an old name for Assam), is adopted in Matisoff [in prep] as a neutral overall designation for the TB languages of NE India and adjacent areas that belong to the Kuki-Chin-Naga, Barish (=Bodo-Garo), and Abor-Miri-Dafa groups (or that remain imprecisely classified, like Miki).

9) Especially HAWK and SLAVE (below [6] and [8]).

10) Benedict is of course hardly to be blamed for jumping to the conclusion that */an wan at wat/ were the only sources of Lahu -e, since on the same page I had claimed flatly that Lahu i is ‘the reflex of *-ay’. [See note 1, above.]
In another important set, PLB *-an derives from an older PTB *-ar:

[ 7 ] LOUSE: PTB *sar [STC pp. 15, 53, 84, 147, 172, 189] > PLB *san\(^1\)/2. Lh. se, Akha shë-më, and Mpi se⁶ reflect PLB Tone *1, while WB sdn [mis-cited in STC pp. 15, 84 as san] is from a Tone *2 variant. Note the difference in the Akha reflex from that in HAWK.

The following ten etyma (sets [8–17]) do not appear in STC. In all of them it is clear that the proto-rhyme is *-an or *-wan, and Lahu has the reflex -e. In some cases the etymon has not yet been traced outside of Lolo-Burmese [LB], but 4 or 5 can already be reconstructed at the PST level.

[ 8 ] SLAVE: PLB *gywan¹ > WB kyun, Lh. cè, s-cè. Luce (1981) compares the WB form to WT khol-po 'servant' (fem. khol-mo) and Chinese 官 *g'wan [GSR #188 a] 'servant, officer, official' < PST *k(y)wal ≈ *g(y)wal. [See Matisoff (1983) "Review of Luce", set #73.]

[ 9 ] SHARPEN/MAKE A POINT: PLB *kywan\(^1\)/2 > WB khywan 'make pointed, sharpen; sharp, keen', ṭskhywan 'end of sthg. sharp' [< Tone *1], khywăn 'naturally pointed', khywăn ~ khrewăn 'goad for elephants' [<*2]; Akha [ILH] tşe (mid-tone) and Mpi tçe⁵ both reflect Tone *3; Lahu che (mid-tone) may reflect either *1 or *3.

[10] FILTER/CAUSE TO REMAIN: PLB *(?)gyan¹ ≈ *kyan¹.
(a) *gyan¹ > WB kyan 'remain, be left'
(b) *(?)gyan¹ > WB khyan 'leave, let remain'
(c) *kyan¹ > Lh. che 'strain, filter'.
/The WB forms are a simplex/causative pair. /

(a) *dzan² > WB can’ 'stretched out, lengthened'
(b) *(?)dzan¹ > WB chan’ 'stretch out straight, lengthen sthg'
(c) *tsan² > Lh. che ‘stretch out, extend, stick sthg out (e.g. leg, arm, tongue)’.
/The WB forms are a simplex/causative pair. Lahu also has a synonym qhe 'stretch out (as stiff arms or legs or an animal skin) [implies more tension than does che]; see [12], below.

[12] OBJECT TO/OPOSE: PLB *k(y)an°⁰⁰ ≈ *tan³⁰ (< Tone *1) 'contravene authority; go upriver, go against the wind' and chan’ (< Tone *5) 'contrary, opposite, adverse'; Lahu has que 'object to sthg, oppose smn., apparently reflecting *kan (< Tone *1 or *3). The initial correspondence is irregular (we would expect Lh. che)
and inexplicable (but cf. the Lh. che ~ qhe alternation in [11]). The reconstruction here remains uncertain.


[14] ARROW: PTB *?-dzan > Lh. kha-ce [1st. syll. < kha? 'crossbow'; the mid-tone of -ce points to a PLB *preglottalized initial], Proto-Northern Naga *(la)-dzan-n (Moshang la-san, Noote lath-chan, Wancho san, Konyak la-han; the 1st. element means 'bow' [French 1983, p. 448]).

"French etymologizes this compound as ‘bow-children’, with the 3nd. element < PTB *(d)za 'son, child' [STC #59] + collective *-n suffix [STC n. 284, p. 99]. If this is correct it would add still another allomorph ce (< PLB *dza-n) to a Lahu word-family already comprising yā 'child, son' (< PLB *za), sā 'sibling's child' (< PLB *sa), and cā- 'prefix to male names' (< PLB *dza)."


(a) WB has a simplex/causative pair: pran' [< PLB *bran²] 'be expanded, spread out, level', phran' [< PLB *bran¹ or *pran²] 'spread out, expand; spread wings'.

(b) Lahu phe [< PLB *pran³ or *pran¹] 'spread sthg out (blanket, cloth, one's palm)', mú-phe 'sky' ('sky-spread?'); also fe [< PLB *wan²] 'wide'. Mpi has phe² [< PLB *1] 'wide'.

(c) Jingpho phyân [Hanson] 'spread wings, as a bird', [Maran] 'spread wide; open, unroll, and flatten out' (Maran adds "SYNONYM: phran' [tone not indicated]), phyân 'grow, unfold and flatten (as a leaf)', phràn [Maran] untie a knot; (fig.) untangle a knotty problem', yin [Hanson] 'unrolled, unwound, spread out (as a bundle)'.

[16] STRONG/FIRM/STEADFAST: PTB *b-tsan > PLB *zan¹. WB san 'strong, vigorous', Lh. yè 'durable, strong, firm; steadfast' [< PLB *zan¹; WB s- / Lh. y- are the regular reflexes of PLB *z-].

An older affricated initial is implied by WT btsan-po 'strong, mighty, powerful; firm, staunch, immovable; safe, sure; definite, decided' and P Northern Naga *jan (cf. Yogli a-tsan 'hard', Noote can 'difficult', a-can 'hard', lo-can 'strong' [French, op. cit. p. 497]).

[17] DHOLE/WOLF/WILD DOG: PTB *kywal > PLB *wan². Lh. vè
'dhole' (Cuon javanicus), Jino Ø⁴ (glossed 射狗 in Gai Xingzhi 1981, p. 67), and Akha [ILH] xhà-jë, [PL] k’a_yeh” ‘wolf’ point to PLB *wan¹.

This set is particularly interesting, since the Lahu cognate looks superficially so similar to our particle ve (< *way, below 5.11).”


The Loloish forms indicate that the velar element in the initial was prefixal.¹¹,¹²

### 2.11 An apparent exception explained: Lh. şi ‘onion, garlic’

The STC sets up a PST etymon *swan ‘garlic’ on the basis of WB krakswan and Chinese 蔬 *swän/swán [GSR #175 b]. Lahu şi ‘onion, garlic’ (appearing in such compounds as şi-qo ‘leek’ [‘hollow onion’], şi-phu ‘onion’ [cf. phu ‘tuber’] and şi-phu-nų ‘garlic’ [cf. nų ‘to stink’]), has always been a puzzling form, since there are no other examples of *wan > Lh. -u.

This anomaly may now be satisfactorily explained by assuming that the *-n is suffixal. This is justified by the fact that Lh. -u is the regular reflex of PTB/PLB *wa¹, a Lautgesetz for which I have so far found three solid examples:

- ‘cattle’, PTB *gwa [STC #215] > PLB *nwa² > WB nwa, Lh. nų
- ‘span’ PTB *m-twa [STC #165] > PLB *twa¹ > WB thwa, Lh. thu
- ‘tooth’ PTB *s-wa [STC #437] > PLB *swa² > WB swa, Lh. şi

‘tooth-like part of tools’ (e.g. pĩ-kāt-sũ ‘tooth of a comb’, li-lo-şi ‘saw-tooth’, etc.).¹³

The Lahu morpheme şi ‘onion, garlic’ is thus a perfect homophone of şi ‘toothlike part’, both < *swa².

Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to suppose that the -n in the WB and Chinese words for GARLIC is still another instance of the ‘collective -n suffix’ [STC n. 284, pp. 99–100]—after all, garlic (as opposed to onions) is composed of multiple discrete cloves.

¹¹ For discussions of the ‘velar animal prefix’, see Matisoff 1969 (pp. 190–99) and STC n. 301 (p. 107).

¹² It is tempting to try to bring in Chinese 射 *k’jawan/k’iwên ‘dog’ [GSR #479a-d] here. STC treats this as cognate to PTB *kwiy [±159], with a ‘collective’ dental suffix (pp. 157, 158). (It should be pointed out that such a suffix is more appropriate for wild dogs or wolves, which run in packs.) My own feeling (which there is no time or space to justify here), is that PTB *kwiy and *kywal are themselves ultimately related.

¹³ It will be remembered that the ordinary Lahu word for ‘tooth’ is ci < PLB *jwaⁱ (3) above.)
We should thus set up PTB *swa-n, with the Lahu form deriving from the unsuffixed root.

2.2 The fate of *-at in Lahu

As demonstrated in TSR (Matisoff 1972a), the regular Lahu reflex of the stopped rhyme *-at is also the mid front vowel e, with the former final stop *-t transphonologized as one or the other of the two checked tones, high-checked `e or low-checked `e, thus -ē or -ē.14

2.21 Etyma in *-at which appear in STC

[18] BREAK IN TWO/CUT THROUGH/CONCLUDE.
A PTB root *tsyat is set up in STC #185 on the basis of forms from only two languages, WT gtsod-pa (perfective btsad) and Lushai tsat ‘break, cut’.

To these may be added WB chat ‘brittle’ and the forms assembled in TSR #40, reflecting PLB *G-tsat, especially Lh. chēʔ.

As suggested already in Matisoff [1980a pp. 27–8], I would also like to bring at least two Chinese forms into this word family: 绝 *dz’iwa/dz’iwaʔ [GSR 296 a] ‘cut off, break off’ and 绝 *ts’iwa/ ts’iwaʔ-[GSR 296 c] ‘brittle’.

[19] LEECH: PTB *r-pat [STC #45] > PLB *k-r-wat [TSR #167] > P Loloish *wat. A better PTB reconstruction might be *p-wat ≈ *k-r-wat. To the forms assembled in STC (#45 and n. 78) (WT srim-bu pad-ma, Lushai vaw-vat, Ranghol ervot, Jg. wot, etc.) add Mikir ingphat, and a Northern Naga group (Moshang tawat,15) Nocte wa-vot ~ sa-vot, Wancho vat, Chang wat [French, op. cit., p. 507]).

WB has a doubly prefixed form krawat, but Loloish (and most N Naga languages) reflect the unprefixed prototype *wat (e.g. Lahu vēʔ).

[20] FLOWER: PTB *bwaʔ [STC p. 24] > PLB *s-p-wat [TSR #185]. The *s- prefix (which I posit to account for the Loloish forms in the HIGH tonal class, e.g. Lh. vēʔ) is a reduction of the morpheme ‘tree’ (PTB *sik ≈ *siʔ, [TSR #118, STC #233]), as in Trung siʔ-uat, Lisu siʔ-uēʔ, Lh. hi-uēʔ.

14 Which is the two checked tones a syllable acquires is determined by the voicing or voicelessness of its initial consonant(ť), as explained in TSR [passim].
15 The dental prefix in Moshang is paralleled in other TB languages, including Nung dophat~phophat [STC p. 24] and Karenic (Taungdu tawu, Fwo ḫuľa, Gyaw būʔ) [STC n. 357, p. 132].
[21] KILL: PTB *g-sat [STC #58] > PLB *C-sat [TSR #124]. Lahu has no reflex of this etymon, otherwise very widespread in TB (e.g. WT gsoed [pf. bsad], WB sat, PN Naga *səsat [French p. 504]), with a solid Chinese cognate *sàt/sât [GSR #319 d].

[22] FREE/RELEASE/LOOSE/SLIPPERY: PTB *g-lwat (≈ *s-lwat ≈ *ʔ-lwat) [STC #209] (cf. WT hlod-pa 'loose, relaxed', glod-pa 'loosen, relax, slacken'; Jg. lōt 'escape, be free, unrestrained,' šalot 'set free') > PLB *k-lwat ≈ *g-lwat ≈ *ʔ-lwat (cf. WB lwat 'be free', hlwat (<*[ʔ]lwat) 'free, release' and khywat (<*[g]lwat) 'loosed, freed', khywat (<*[ʔ]g]lwat) 'release, free').

This set does not appear in TSR, though I have subsequently uncovered several Loloish cognates, including Lh. ləʔ 'to slip; be slippery, smooth (of objects); free-flowing (of a liquid); glib, smooth-tongued (of a person) [<*[k]l-wat], ləʔ 'remove sthg from its place; withdraw oneself; release from (an influence or power) [<*[l]wat]; and Akha [PL] ləhʔ 'take off an article of clothing' [<*[k]l-wat].


STC #344 relates the WB form to WT btsod ~ gisdod 'Tibetan antelope' < PST *tsot, though as Benedict implies (p. 73), *-ot had already merged with *-at by PLB times.

2.22 Etyma in *-at which appear in TSR (but not in STC)

[24] ALIVE: PLB *dat > Lh. tèʔ Akha [PL] deh₃ [TSR #1]. As illustrated by this example, the regular Akha reflex of *-at is -eh₃ [PL]/-eq [ILH] for LOW-toned syllables, and -ehʔ [PL]/-eq [ILH] for HIGH-toned ones.

[25] BITE DOWN ON: PLB *C-tsət > Lh. chèʔ, Ak. tseh₃ [TSR #24].

This root may now be reconstructed for PTB, thanks to some newly discovered N Naga forms: Wancho tsat, Konyak jet < PNN *tsat [French, p. 455].

[26] VOMIT: PLB *C-pət > WB phat, Lh. phèʔ, Ak. pəh₃ [TSR #38].

This root must now definitely be reconstructed for TB as a whole, as PTB *m-pət: Abor-Miri bat, Jg. n-phat, Gyarong [Nagano 1983] mphat.16) It also turns up in N Naga: Yogli and Konyak phai, Nocte phat [French, p. 570].

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16) The nasal prefix attested by Jg. and Gyarong was evidently not applied to this root in Loloish, since *mp- yields the voiced stop b- in Lahu [TSR pp. 13-16].
2.23 New etyma in *-at (appearing neither in STC nor TSR)

[27] CUT OPEN: PLB *(?)brat ≈ *C-prat.
(a) *brat > WB prat ‘be cut in two’
(b) *(?)brat > WB phrat ‘cut sthg in two’
(c) *C-prat > Lh. phèt ‘cut open; perform a surgical operation’.
   /The WB forms are a simplex/causative pair./

[28] FLAIL/FLAP: PLB *(pat- > WB phat-lat ‘loosely and flappingly’
(usually reduplicated as phat-lat-lat or phat-lat-phat-lat), Lh. phèt-dò
‘thrust around, flail about, struggle (as when resisting capture)’, phèt-
phèt-tò-tò ‘moving the hands and feet restlessly; fidgety, squirming’.

[29] STICK INTO OPENING: PLB *swat > WB swat ‘put into a small
opening (as a letter into an envelope)’, Lh. sò ‘put on/wear socks or
leggings’, khi-sò ‘leggings, gaiters, puttees’.

[30] SMELL/ODOR: PTB and PLB *(bat > Jg. bòt ‘odor; any kind of
smell, fragrant or offensive’, Lh. 3-pèt ‘a smell’, Ak. [PL] beh-3a ‘to
smell’.
   /cf. also perhaps WB phwat-sui-na ‘disease affecting the nose’ (given
as a synonym of phwat-caui-na in Judson, p. 705)/

[31] WIND AROUND/CONNECT BY ARCHING: PTB *(bat > Jg. bòt
‘wind around’, WB pat ‘wind around, encircle’ (the Jg/WB comparison
was already made in Hanson p. 61).
   Hanson explicitly (pp. 61, 114) derives from this root Jg. dìp-bòt
‘crossbar, stringer, beam; arch, space, as between two posts and a top-
bar; the bow (as of a crossbow)’, which surely goes with Ak. [PL]
beh= ‘rafter that goes lengthwise on the posts at side of house’.
   As suggested in Matisoff 1974 (#346) the probable Lahu cognate
is pèt ‘classifier for strips/pieces of land; slice, piece’.

2.24 Etyma in *-at where Lahu has developed a central vowel

In four important cases, all of them involving initial *w- or medial *w-,
the Lahu reflex of *-at is not -e,t, but rather a central vowel: ì, or ò.

[32] WEAR (CLOTHES)/DRESS (SMN): PLB *wat [STC p. 24, n. 78] >
WB wat, Atsi wut.
   In TSR #181, Lh. vò ‘wear’ (simplex) and fì ‘dress smn, put
smn’s clothes on him’ (causative), along with Lisu ñhò [x], Sani vi
22s, Luquan i 55, Nasu vi 55, and Ahi vi 44s (simplex), fi 55 (causative),
are derived from “PLB *wik/*twik or *wit/*twit”, and declared
to correspond irregularly to WB *wat.

To these puzzling forms we may now add Akha [ILH] ʸ Cynthia ‘wear (archaic),’ also with a central vowel.17) (It will be remembered that
the normal Akha reflex of *-at is -eq/eq [ILH], -eh/-eh [PL].)

Cf. also Gyarong *wat (Nagano 1983 #321).

[33] PLUCK: PLB *cwat [TSR #57] > WB chwat ‘pluck, gather, as
flowers or fruit;’ Lh. cʰu ‘pinch (between the fingers), pluck,’ ḡά-mu
cʰu ve ‘pluck a chicken’s feathers,’ ʰ-νδά ʰ-δά ve ‘pluck a flower;’ Ak.
[PL] ci♂ ‘dress a fowl or animal before roasting, by pulling out feathers
or scraping off fur.’

Again note the peculiar Akha reflex, this time i♂. Mpi has two
forms for ‘pluck’, teh-i and tte+i [Matisoff 1978b, p. 12]; the latter
has the ‘correct’ Mpi vowel reflex for *-at (i.e. e) but is irregular in
that it has no glottal stop.

[34] HUNGRY: PLB *muwat [TSR #132] > WB mwat, Ak. [PL] meh_i
(this time the ‘regular’ reflex!), but Lh. mə[i.

Several forms seem to point to an alternant with ɣ- semivowel:
*myat (Ahi ni 44s, Sani n 22s, Hani (Gao Huanian) mie 33, Nasu ḡi
55) though we still know too little about the historical phonology of
these languages to be sure.

Another related WB form (lacking in TSR)18) is gat, as in re gat
‘thirst for water’, cha-ват ‘be hungry or thirsty, be in want of food’
(same as cha-mwat), gat-mwat ‘id.’

We now wish to reconstruct this word-family as PLB *muwat ≈
*ɣ(ŋ)at.

[35] STAR/MOON. PST and PTB *s-bwat > PLB *muwat > Lh. mə[ŋ]-kə
‘star’.

This etymon is the chief focus of discussion in ‘Stars, moon, and
spirits: bright beings of the night in Sino-Tibetan’ (Matisoff 1980a),
where the first syllable of the Lahu form is brought into direct com-
parison with Chinese 月 *ngiwat/ngiwot [GSR 306 a-f] ‘moon’ and such
TB forms as Angami Naga themvi♂ ‘star’.

Although all four of these sets are reconstructed with prevocalic *-w- (in
the case of WEAR, *w- is the root-initial consonant; in the other three
* w- is

17) I-L. Hansen’s ɣeq/eq corresponds to P. Lewis’ ur/ur, i.e. [ŋ]. Note that this Akha
form is in the LOW-stopped tone, while all those assembled in TSR #181 reflect
HIGH-stopped tone.

18) It is discussed in Matisoff 1980a (pp. 22–3) for the light it sheds on the etymon STAR
(see below [35]).
a medial glide), this cannot be the conditioning factor for the peculiar vocalic reflexes, since in other such etyma Lahu has the normal -e? reflex: in [19] LEECH (vè)? and [20] FLOWER (vè)?, *w- functions as the Loloish root-initial; while in [22] FREE/SLIPPERY (lè°) and [29] STICK INTO OPENING (lè°), *w- is a medial glide.

Rather than offer some ad hoc explanation (e.g. positing a length distinction between *(w)at (> Lh. e?) and *-(w)a·t (> Lh. ʔ/ʔ), for which there is no independent evidence, it seems better merely to identify this problem without trying to solve it now.\(^{19}\)

2. 25 An obvious recent loanword: nàʔ ‘gun, rifle’

The Lahu word nàʔ ‘gun, rifle’ is clearly a recent loan from some other language, both on extralinguistic and comparative phonological grounds. This word appears in Mon-Khmer (Mon sanat [Shorto 1962, p. 196], Khmu ınıat [Smalley 1961] and in many other TB languages (WB sanat ‘musket, bowling-piece’, Jg. sanät, Pa-O Karen tonät [Solnit], Bisu sun-iñat, Phunoi ıp-åat [Bradley 1979a, #267]), with all forms pointing to an *-at final. The Lahu high-stopped tone reflects the s- prefix (cf. *s-nak ‘black’ > Lh. nàʔ [TSR #142]), but the word was obviously borrowed into Lahu after the *-at > e? shift had occurred.\(^{20}\)

2. 3 Word families showing *-an ≈ *-at variation

A number of interesting sets display variation between the homorganic rhymes *-an and *-at. Among the five we shall discuss in this section, the Lahu cognate reflects *-an in two cases (SPIRIT, BRAID/INTERWEAVE); in two others a Lahu form is lacking (RUN/DANCE/KICK) or seems to reflect neither *-an nor *-at (LOAD/BURDEN); and in one case (POUR/SPILL/BROADCAST) Lahu preserves a distinct reflex for each of the two proto-allophones.

\(^{19}\) Note that there is nothing about the initial consonants to account for the non-occurrence of -e? in our four sets, since syllables like mêʔ, chêʔ, and veʔ do occur in the language [see LEECH, FLOWER, and the discussion of *i-t, below 3.0]. (This is different from the case of LAUGH (above [1]), where the Lahu form ʔ was justified on the grounds that no Lahu syllable *ge or * siècle occurs.)

The double reflex -eʔ/-e? in these sets is not a problem. There is a very low functional load to the s/i contrast in Lahu checked syllables. (Note that both vowels occur in the allophones of [32] WEAR/DRESS, ěʔ and ʔ/ʔ. Certain initial consonants (e.g. v, ʔ, m-) only occur with -eʔ but not -eʔ in native words, while certain others (e.g. f and the palatals c? ch? j? y?) only occur with -eʔ but not -eʔ.

\(^{20}\) The ultimate source of this loan has been a problem. Bradley (1979a, p. 318), claims it is from Malay, but later (1982) relates it to the mysterious Wanderwort meaning “crossbow” that is found in so many language families (e.g. Chinese x, PTai *hna, Vietnamese nd, Nung (TB) thôna, Moso tona). [see Benedict 1975, pp. 309–10]. Actually, however, as Gérard Diffloth suggests [p.c. 1985], our word is probably from Portuguese espinharda (“the spiny one”), presumably a 16th century soldiers' slang term for “musket.”
SPIRIT/DEMON1/ANIMIST DEITY: PLB *nan \(\approx\) *nat [TSR #136]. Lh. né reflects PLB *nan\(^2\), as do Sani ni\(^{25}\) and Lisu ni\(^3\); while Jg. nàt, WB nat, Ak. [PL] neh\(_\sim\), Woni ni\(^8\), and Nasu ne\(^8\) point to the allofam *nat.

Both the -t and the -n in this etymon may be suffixal, ultimately deriving from *na 'ill; pain' [STC #80] (\(\succ\) PLB *nä1 > WB na, Lh. nd).

Chinese 難 *nàn/nán [GSR 152 d-f] 'difficulty, suffering' descends from the same nasal-finalled allofam as the Lahu form.\(^{21}\)

BRAID/PLAIT/INTERWEAVE: PLB *pan\(^{1/2}\) \(\approx\) *C-pat. Lh. phé 'braid, plait' reflects PLB *pan\(^2\), while Mpi phe\(^{$\text{o}$}\) could derive from PLB *C-pat.\(^{22}\)

Possibly related to these forms are WB phan 'shuffle cards' (i.e. "interweave cards") [\(\prec\) PLB *pan\(^1\)] and bhån 'shallow basket' (\(\prec\) PLB Tone *2, with orthographic initial unexplained).

LOAD/BURDEN/TRANSPORT: PTB *wan \(\approx\) *wat.

French [op. cit., p. 459] sets up a PNNaga root *wan 'bring, take', which shades into the meaning 'load, cargo, stuff, what one brings or takes along' (e.g. Chung o-on \(\sim\) u-wan 'load, burden'). Benedict has suggested [p.c. to French] relating these forms to WB wan 'load' and WT hon 'bring', setting up PTB *wan.

I would now like to develop this word-family further by positing an allofam *wat underlying Tangkhul Naga wot [Bhat] 'thing' = ot [Pettigrew] 'work, subject, substance, service' [Pettigrew gives ot as the Tangkhul gloss for 'load' in the English-Tangkhul part of his dictionary, p. 163], ot kaphei 'unload' (kaphei 'dismantle').

The Lahu word for load, \(\text{vì}\), has the 'correct' initial correspondence to WB \(\text{w}^{-}\), but the rhyme -t cannot be derived from *-an. (See [17] DHOLE: PLB *wan\(^1\) > Lh. vè.) Lahu \(\text{vì}\) could derive from PLB
*wiy¹ (cf. [5.11] FAR: PLB *wiy² > Lh. vi), but at the moment it seems doubtful that this is relatable to WB wan. On the other hand, Sgaw Karen wi 'classifier for loads carried on the back' [Jones 1961, p. 20] looks directly cognate to the Lahu form.

[39] RUN,/DANCE/KICK. PTB *k(y)at $\approx$ *gan.

In TSR #18, I set up a PLB etymon *kyat 'run' on the basis of Ak. [PL] ceh³, [ILH] tjêq, Lisu hchye⁵, and Sani ce⁴⁵, remarking that "extra-Loloish" forms like Bodo khat, Garo kat, Mikir kát, Jingpho [Hanson] gât 'run', kogât 'flee', [Hertz pagat], reflect an alternate prototype without -g- *kat.

I now see that I had conceived of the semantic scope of this etymon too narrowly as 'run, flee', and that its range extends over several types of vigorous foot-action, including dancing and kicking. We may now set up the allofam *kat at the Loloish level as well, as reflected by the 2nd. syllable of Lahu qâq³ê³ 'dance' (1st. syll. prob. $\approx$ Lh. qa 'sing; play'). We can also bring in some new Jingpho allofams with kʰ- (along with the perhaps 'secondarily' voiced gât, etc.): Jg. khât, lôkhat 'kick, as a horse', khât-khât 'to "show the heels"; to hurry (also used adverbially).

Finally WB kan 'to kick; kick back, rebound (as a gun when fired); push off (as a boat from land); prop laterally' suggests that we should also set up a nasal-finned allofam *gan. The semantic development here seems to be into 'sudden (later) lateral action,' and we may perhaps also include in this family WB kan' (< Tone *3) 'mark across, intersect, thwart of a boat', økan' 'transverse line', khat 'strike by side or back blow' (< *kat).

[40] POUR/SPILL/DISPERSE/SOW BROADCAST: PST *š( w)an $\approx$ š(w)at.

In TSR #114, I reconstructed PLB *šat POUR/SPILL, on the basis of Lh. šê³, Ak. [PL] sheh³, Sani xyy⁴, and Bisu šêt.

I now see that a nasal-finned allofam must also be posited, underlying Lh. šê, Ak. [ILH] sjê³, and Mpi se¹ [PLoloish *šan²], all meaning 'to sow broadcast', i.e. to sow seeds too small to plant individually (e.g. mustard-seeds) by scattering them over the prepared earth. The direct WB cognate is swân 'pour upon; cast out by pouring', with medial -w-, so the PLB reconstruction should be *šwan². (WB also has a variant that reflects PLB Tone *1, swan 'pour out, spill, shed'.)

This is a gratifying TB word-family, since both allofams have direct Chinese parallels: 散 *šân/sân: ~ sân- [GSR #156 a] 'disperse' and 散 *sât [Karlgen, Analytic Dictionary #767] 'scatter, disperse;
spread, distribute; let loose'.

3.0 Lahu -e? < PLB *-i·t: a first taste of copular allofamy

PLB *-it is one of the few rhymes for which there is enough evidence to reconstruct a length contrast in the vowel (*-it vs. *-i·t). As explained in TSR (n. 55, p. 65), it appears that the short rhyme *-it merged with *-ik to become WB -ac (e.g., EIGHT [41]), while long *-i·t remained WB -it (GOAT [42], FLICKER/BLINK/EXTINGUISH [43], REAP [44]). The regular Lahu reflex of *-i·t is definitely -e?, with -e? a conditioned variant after *r-. Although the evidence is slim here, it looks like the short rhyme *-it becomes Lh. i(e?) [EIGHT].


/The glottal final has disappeared in Lahu by dissimilation from the preglottalized initial (see Matisoff 1970)/.

[42] GOAT: PTB *tsi·t > PLB *v-ci·t [TSR #27] > WB chit, Lh. d-che?.

/This root is also found in Trung a-tšìtºº, so it is not confined to Lolo-Burmese, contra the indices in STC pp. 208, 214. Both STC (p. 88) and TSR err in not reconstructing a long vowel/.

[43] FLICKER/BLINK/EXTINGUISH:24) PTB/PLB *s-mi·t > WB hmit 'wink, shut the eyes', Lh. mè? 'shut abruptly (eyes, mouth); go on and off rapidly; twinkle, flash, flicker (as fireflies, stars, sparks)', Akha [PL] mi· 'be extinguished, mya·n-nui· mi· eu 'close one’s eyes tightly', Mpi mi? 'go out (of fire), be extinguished'. (The WB form reflects an *s-prefix, which is also attested by the Akha and Mpi tones (< PLB *HIGH-checked). The tone of the Lahu form (< PLB *LOW-checked) reflects the unprefix ed allofamy *mi·t.

The phonological shape and semantic range of this etymon is only partially presented in STC #374, which sets up a root *mit (better: *s-mi·t) on the basis of forms (none of them from LB) which all mean 'extinguish; destroy' (e.g., Nung šmit, Lushai timit, Mikir met). The Chinese cognate is 滅 *miat/miät [GSR #294 b] ‘drown; extinguish,

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23) The Chinese forms provide no support for the medial *-e- reflected in WB.
24) See the discussion of this word in Matisoff 1983, #59.
destroy' [STC p. 183].^{25}

[44] REAP: PTB *ri·t [STC #371] > PLB *ri·t [TSR #169] > WB rit 'reap, mow, shave', Lh. ɟeʔ, Lisu ḡhə.

In this case there is extra-LB confirmation for the long vowel, in Lushai rit 'scrape with a hoe'.

Since Lahu lacks the syllable ɟe, we may take -eʔ to be the regular conditioned reflex of *i·t after ɟe (<*r·t).^{26}

[5-A] COPULA_2/BE THE CASE: PTB *s-ri·t ≈ *s-rut.

In STC #264, an etymon *s-ri 'to be' is reconstructed, on the basis of only two forms, WT srid-pa ‘existence’ ("with suffixed -d") and WB hri 'be, be there'. This is certainly valid as far as it goes, but it is only the tip of the copular iceberg, as we shall see [5.2, 5.3].

In the present context, I would like to bring in two more forms whose apparently strange correspondence has long been a source of puzzlement: Lh. ḡeʔ 'be the case, be so' (usually occurring negated, as in ɹs ḡeh-yā mā ḡeʔ 'He is not a Lahu'),^{27} ḡ-heʔ 'true omen, portent; symbol, sign', and WB hut 'be so, be true', ḡhut 'truth, right'.^{28} See below 5.54.

We now see that this Lh. -eʔ/WB -ut correspondence reflects an older alternation between *i·t (> Lh. -eʔ) and *-ut (> WB -ut), which is simply one more example of the *i· → *u- alternation that is so well-attested in TB word-families^{29}

The long vowel in the alloform *s-ri·t is independently justified by the fact that the copula root has an underlying diphthongal vowel (< *s-ray·t [below 5.54].

The initial consonants of Lh. ḡeʔ/WB hut call for some comment. ḡ- is the regular Lahu reflex of *r- or *r (cf. EIGHT [41], SPEND THE NIGHT [PLB ɹrak > Lh. ḡá (TSR #174)], STAND [PLB ɹrap > Lh. ḡu (TSR #175)], etc.).

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^{25} In STC (loc. cit., n. 481) an attempt is made to relate this Chinese form to the WT 'negative copula' med-pa 'be not, exist not', a suggestion which must, I believe, be rejected. See below 5.34.

^{26} This is closely analogous to what we posited above (1.0) in connection with [1] LAUGH *ray > Lh. ɹi and [5] COPULA/CREATOR *g-ray > Lh. ɹi(·la), where the Lahu central vowel i is the regular conditioned reflex of *ay after *r-

^{27} Using mā ḡeʔ is the regular way of negating nouns or nominalized clauses in Lahu [see GL 5.632, 4.411(2), 4.422(1), 4.711], e.g. ɹs ɹla t'u ve mā ḡeʔ 'He won't be coming'.

^{28} The negated verb ma-hut (Mod. Bs. ma-hoʔ) is the regular way of negating nouns or nominalized clauses in Burmese, e.g. ɹu la me ma-hoʔ ɹhut 'He won't be coming' (Okell 1969, p. 149).

^{29} See Wolfenden 1929 (pp. 114–5), STC pp. 80–84, VSTB pp. 41–2. Cf. such key etyma as SLEEP *yip ≈ *yip, HOUSE *hyim ≈ *hyum, SWEEP/WIPE *sit ≈ *sit, etc.
WB vacillates in its reflexes of *sr/-sr, sometimes responding with hr-(EIGHT: WB htr; BE/EXIST: WB hri), sometimes with a plain r- (STAND: WB rap; SPEND THE NIGHT: WB rak 'complete day of 24 hours'), and in the present instance with a plain h- (hut).\(^{30}\)

4.0 *-ay, *-ey and related rhymes in PTB

The vocalic system of PTB, as brilliantly reconstructed in STC, comprises the set of open and diphthongal rhymes indicated in Table II.\(^{31}\)

The part of this system with which we are especially concerned in this paper is the palatal falling diphthongs with non-high nuclear vowels:

-ey
-oy
-ay/-way
-a·y/-wa·y

4.1 Reflexes of *-ay, *-a·y, *-ey in key TB languages

These three proto-rhymes are reflected in six major TB languages as in Table III [from chart in STC, p. 62].

Already we may gather that the 2 'pre-y' distinctions implied by these three proto-rhymes — i.e. between long and short -a- and between -a- and -e- — are rather tenuously maintained in TB as a whole. Three of these languages, including WT, have merged all 3 *rhymes, and 5 of them have merged long and short *a(·)y. Only Jg. and WB distinguish *-ey from *-a(·)y, and only Lushai

\(^{30}\) WB hut may thus be viewed as a form where the proto-prefix has 'pre-empted' the root-initial. For the introduction of this term see Matisoff 1972c and 1973/1979 "Quo Vadimus?".

\(^{31}\) Adapted from STC, p. 58. For the purposes of this exposition, we are treating medial -w- as a feature of the rhyme.

\(^{32}\) E.g. only 10 sets in all of STC are reconstructed with *-i, and most of these have allophonic variants in the diphthongal rhymes, or are restricted in distribution, or are area words.

\(^{33}\) For this relatively quite minor change he was severely attacked by Roy Andrew Miller (1974), who claimed that it vitiated Benedict's entire previous system of reconstruction. In my reply to Miller (1975), I perhaps went to the other extreme in minimizing the significance of the change, calling it 'merely notational'. Actually I now agree that the reconstructions with shwa are preferable, since the previous system amounted to setting up a length contrast in open syllables, i.e. *-i/-i: (=ly), *-u/-w: (=uw), which seems typologically unnatural. As the phonologies of Kamarupan languages are coming to be better described, we are finding a number of modern languages with diphthongs like [-aw], e.g. Tangkhul Naga (Bhat 1969), Meithei (Thoudam 1980), etc. And of course shwa vocalism in diphthongs is also highly characteristic of Chinese.

\(^{34}\) We should note, however, that the prelabialized counterpart of this rhyme, *-aw (-aw), sometimes has reflexes with lower nuclear vowel (-ey, -oy), which may merge with the reflexes of the PTB diphthongs in which we are particularly interested (i.e.
### Table II  PTB Open and Diphthongal Rhymes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN</th>
<th>PALATAL FALLING DIPHTHONGS</th>
<th>LABIAL FALLING DIPHTHONGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(-i/-wi)</td>
<td>(-u)</td>
<td>(-uy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-e/-we)</td>
<td>(-o)</td>
<td>(-aw)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-a/-wa</td>
<td>-iy/-wi+y</td>
<td>-aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-i-y/-wi+y</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ay/-way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-o-y/-way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-a-y/-wa+y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-a-w</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes to Table II

1. Poorly attested rhymes are in parentheses. Except for *-a* (by far the most common vowel in the system), pure vowels in syllable final position are quite rare.\(^{32}\)

2. There is no contrast in the system between *-wi* and *-uy*. The only set reconstructed with *-wi* in STC is based on forms with falling diphthongs in two Chin languages:


/Incidentally, I would now like to offer a Chinese cognate for this etymology: 隋 *dswiaziwg [CSR §11g] ‘follow’./

3. In the MS version of STC (ca. 1942–5), Benedict reconstructed the homorganic diphthongs *-iy* and *-uw* for two of the best attested TB vowel correspondences, where WB has *-e* and *-ui* respectively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTB</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-iy</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>DOG: *kwi-yi [STC §159]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-uw</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-ui</td>
<td>STEAL *-ku-wa [STC §53]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-u</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benedict changed his reconstructions of these rhymes to *-ay* and *-aw* in the new footnotes to the printed version of STC [1972]. (See, e.g. n. 188, p. 57).\(^{33}\)

A detailed discussion of this rhyme is beyond the scope of this paper.\(^{34}\)

4. A vowel length contrast is posited only for the rhymes *-a(-y)* and *-a(-w)*. Even here, there is not much evidence for a length contrast if medial *-w* is present (i.e. the *-way*/-*wa-y* contrast is very tenuous).

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\(^{32}\) *-ay, *-way, *-ey). Thus, *s-hui-y* 'blood' [STC #222] > Jg. sii; *s(y)wi-y* 'shave' [STC #180] > Tiddim Chin ta:i 'plane', Mikir so:i 'chisel, plane, shave'; *khui-y* 'sweat' > Lakher matlar [contra STC p. 90, this latter root is not confined to Lolo-Burmese].
### Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTB</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Jg.</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Garo</th>
<th>Dimasa</th>
<th>Lushai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-ay</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*a·-y</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*e·y</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

has distinct reflexes for *-ay vs. *a·-y.\(^{35}\)

In an attempt to buttress the evidence for this tripartite distinction, it is natural to seek the testimony of other “Kamarupan” languages besides Lushai.\(^{36}\) Though we cannot yet demonstrate this in detail, there are indeed some suggestive correlations between the Lushai reflexes and those in such languages as Tiddim Chin, Lakher, Tangkhul Naga, Abor-Miri, Mikir, and Meithhei. However, even when we increase our data base to include many etyma not to be found in STC [below 4.5], no simple or clearcut pattern emerges. It appears certain, in fact, that vowel length is a highly unstable feature even in Kamarupan languages, with much inter- and intra-lingual variation. Many of these languages—including Lushai itself\(^{37}\)—now have thoroughgoing length contrasts for virtually all vowels before *-y and *-w, which are clearly secondary from the standpoint of PTB. Often one and the same morpheme will have allomorphs with both long and short vowels. This is especially frequent in verb roots, which in many Kuki-Chin-Naga languages have two forms, one typically used in main clauses (“Form I”) and the other in subordinate clauses (“Form II”).\(^{38}\) It is usually easy to determine the synchronically ‘basic allomorph’ for a given verb—e.g. we would certainly consider the Form I to be basic in the following Tiddim pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form I</th>
<th>Form II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘plaster with mud’</td>
<td>-mai?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^{35}\) When a Lushai cognate is lacking, STC adopts the convention of reconstructing a short vowel *-ay. Ideally one might prefer a special non-committal symbol for these cases, e.g. *-dy.

\(^{36}\) In Matisoff [to appear], I have adopted the name Kamarupan (from Sanskrit Kāmarūpa, an old designation for Assam or extreme NE India) as an overall non-committal geographic designation for the TB languages of the Kuki-Chin-Naga, Bodo-Garo, and Abor-Miri-Dafna groups, along with those languages which the STC hesitates to assign to a particular branch of TB (e.g. Mikir, Meithhei, Mru). See n. 8.


\(^{38}\) See, e.g. Henderson 1965 (Tiddim), Osborne 1973 (Zahao=Laizo), Schwerli 1979 (Bawm), and Weldert, op. cit. Weldert 1981 attempts a single ‘explanation’ of all the complex morphophonemic alternations between Form I/Form II pairs by positing some highly dubious proto-suffixes which he then scrambles around by complex rules. See the discussion in Matisoff 1982.
‘plane wood’  

'ta:i  

-tai?  

Nevertheless, when language-internal length-variation is rampant, the door is wide open for ‘paradigm leveling’, ‘analogue readjustments’, etc., which cannot help but cloud the historical picture.

It seems to me likely, in fact, that vowel-length contrasts have come and gone cyclically in the history of TB, with the effects of later changes largely obscuring the results of earlier developments.  

With the *ay/*ey contrast, we are on somewhat firmer ground—they can be distinguished quite well even in Lolo-Burmese—though there are a number of cases of intra- and inter-lingual variation between the two rhymes and many languages have merged *ay and *ey entirely.  

TB *ey regularly becomes -e in Pwo and Sgaw Karen (e.g. [47] me ‘fire’, [50] ne ‘get’, khe [52] ‘tiger’, but *ay often does too ([56] phle/pa(le ‘tongue’, [71] de ‘navel’, [77] phe ‘chaff, husks’). The Karen evidence for the *ay/*a·y distinction is also spotty [STC pp. 149-50].

Little comfort is to be found from Chinese:

“Our comparative [ST] material on these [diphthongal] finals is still scanty, more so than might be anticipated, and we have good evidence for only a few of the possible combinations . . .

“The material on final -y forms is still skimpier, if anything, and in general is quite unsatisfactory . . .”

As far as Lahu is concerned, only 5 of the sets with *a(·)y presented in STC have known Lahu cognates:  

- TEN *tsay > Lh. chi [STC #408 and n. 81, p. 25], CRAB *d·ka·y [STC #51] > Lh. “d-ci-ku” [see n. 2, above], LEFT *b(w)ay

---

89 The ‘direction of predictability’ here is from Form I to Form II, and not vice versa—i.e. if Form I is basic, a simple ‘rule’ could state that ‘a long vowel is shortened in Form II, with the addition of -P;’ but if Form II is taken as basic, there is no way to predict whether Form I will have a long vowel.

40 I have long adopted a similar view with respect to tone in TB—what one might call a ‘polygenetic’ tonogenesis theory rather than a ‘monogenetic’ one. See Matisoff (1973b) “Tonogenesis in SE Asia”.

41 See below 4.211, and STC pp. 65-6.

42 STC p. 192 (n. 491). STC makes 9 specific comparisons of Chinese forms with PTB roots in *ey, *ey, or *oy: BEAUTIFUL [below, 81], BIG [68], CRAB [4; 59], LOVE [120], NEAR [55], RICE [57], TAIL [72], YOUNGER BROTHER [146], and RHINOCEROS [PST *b·sey > WB bse, Ch. 象 *si‘ei (GSR #596a-b)]. We will venture to make a few more [below 4.3], e.g. BELT/ZONE [95], SPLIEN [94], REPEAT/PRACTICE [107], VEGETABLE [161], TALENT/APTITUDE [106], and perhaps COME, [185].

43 In three of these sets the Lahu form is actually given in STC: TEN, CRAB, LEFT. For a more speculative comparison of a Lh. form with a set in STC see CENTER/NAVEL (below [61]).
> Lh. (låʔ-) mē [STC #47 and n. 80], TAIL *r-may [STC #282] > Lh. mē(tu), and CHAFF *pwa · y [STC #170] > Lh. (vāʔ-) phē. By a strange quirk of fate, none of the Lahu reflexes displayed by these etyma /i, e, i/ is the ‘regular’ (i.e. most frequent and least conditioned) reflex of *a(·)y! To demonstrate this requires finding many more examples, which is the motivation for Section 4.3 below. (See especially 4.38.)

4.2 Sets reconstructed in STC with the rhymes *-ey, *-(w)a(·)y, *-oy

4.21 STC sets in *-ey

Four of the sets reconstructed with *-ey in STC have Lahu cognates, and all of these have -i ([46–49] below), so that we may declare the regular Lahu reflex of *-ey to be the same as in Jg. and WB:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTB</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Jg.</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Lahu</th>
<th>Garo</th>
<th>Dimasa</th>
<th>Lushai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-ey</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For 2 new examples of *-ey > Lh. i, see [144] and [145], below.)

[46] FRUIT: PTB *sey [STC #57]
WT se- ‘morpHEME in plant names’, Vayu se ‘to fruit’, se ~ si ‘fruit’…
Jg. si ~ asì ‘fruit’, asì ‘bear fruit’, WB si ‘bear fruit’, asì ‘fruit’, Garo the ~ bithe ‘id.’, Dimasa thai ‘bear fruit’, bathai ‘fruit’, Lushai thei, Mikir (a)the ‘fruit’.
/add Lahu ëi, Akha ëshi (< PLB *sey³); Lakher thei, Tangkhul theei, Abor-Miri a·ye, Meithei mahay ‘fruit; result’, Boro tày; also PNNaga *sey [e.g. Yogli (pul·di) [French p. 488]]/

[47] FIRE: PTB *mey [STC #290]
WT me … WB mì, Lushai mey, Mikir me, Jg. myì·phrāp ‘lightning’ (“fire-flash”)…
/add Lahu à-mì [see STC, n. 203], Ak. mi·dzà (< PLB *r-mey³); Tangkhul [Bhat] mey, Lakher mei/

[48] KNOW: PTB *sey [STC #182]
WT sēs·pa … WB si’ ‘know, understand’, Jg. ṭi ‘news’, Garo masì …
/add Lahu ëi (< PLB *sey²); the creaky tone in WB is unexplained, though the WT form suggests that suffixal *-s was somehow responsible/

[49] PENIS: PTB *m·ley ≈ *li [STC #262]
WT mdìe… WB ël
/This set was originally reconstructed as *li, on the basis of Garo ri·gag, Dimasa li, Kanauri kut·li (vs. e.g. Kan. me ‘fire’), but the WT
form establishes the allofam in *-ey [n. 197]. To the forms given in STC, add Lh. ni (with preemption and assimilation of the prefix). Jg. manè ~ manèʔ, Atsi nọyi, Maru nọyi, Listu [Fraser] hˈaw⁵.

The other sets reconstructed in STC with *-ey include:

[50] GET/OBTAIN: PTB *(r)-ney-t [STC #294]
Bahing (and general Kiranti) ne ‘take’, WT rnyed-pa (with suffixed -d) ‘get, obtain’, Lushai nei ‘get, have, obtain’.
  /add Tiddim ‘nei ‘have (of weather, etc.)’, Lakher hnei ‘shift, obtain, acquire; have, possess’; also perhaps Meithelai manai ‘servant’/
  For speculations on the copular affinities of this etymon, see Section 6.0 and note 115, below.

[51] HAIR (of head): PTB *ney [STC #292]
Gyarung rni, Nung oni ~ tsoni, Garo khoni⁴⁴⁵, Dimasa khanai.
  /add Boro kandá and also a very interesting Xide Loloish form recorded by Professor Fu Maoji in his unpublished doctoral dissertation for Cambridge University, ^o ^pí [1st. syll. is ‘head’]⁴⁴⁶

[52] TIGER: PTB *(d)-key [STC #462]
Kiranti *key-ba (e.g. Limbu keh-va), Miri si-ke ‘species of civet cat’, Lushai sa-kei ‘tiger’ [STC p. 107], Pwo/Sgaw Karen khe [STC p. 134].
  /add Tangkhul [Bhat] ṣapkhu ‘tiger’, Meithelai ḏokok ‘leopard’⁴⁴⁷

[53] CANE/RATTAN/ROPE: PTB *rey [STC #478]
Jg. ri ‘rattan, cane, cord, string, thread’... Garo re, Dimasa rai ‘rattan, cane’.
  /add Abor-Miri ri-bi, ri-bui ‘treep of any sort; cane, wire, rope, string’ and PN Naga *rey (e.g. Moshang and Nocte ri, Wancho re, Konyak wei, Chang li) [French, p. 462]/

[54] BUY_/BARTER: PTB *b-rey ≈ *(r)-ley
  *b-rey [STC #293] > Jg. mɔri, Miri re, Garo bre, Dimasa barai ‘buy’,⁴⁴⁷
  /Benedict considers this etymon to be a loan from Austro-Thai *(m)bali [see Benedict 1975, p. 282]. In a monumentally confusing note [n. 205, p. 64], he suggests that a separate but related loan yielded

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⁴⁴ With Garo -i instead of the expected -e. See STC n. 206, and below 4.211.
⁴⁶ Benedict posits an unorthodox *-ey ≈ -ey variation in this root by attempting to relate WB khye-sae ‘leopard cat’ [n. 924]. A similar hypothesis might be invoked for EARTH [151] below.
PTB *(r)-ley 'barter, buy', which, though distinct from a native root *lay 'change, exchange' [STC #283; below 69], overlaps with it both semantically and phonologically in certain languages [cf. WT rdše-ba, which means both 'barter' and 'change (name, clothes)'].

Perhaps this is another root where we should recognize *-ey ≈ *-ay variation [see following subsection].

4. 211 Sets displaying *-ey ≈ *-ay variation

For at least 3 sets discussed in STC, Benedict admits *-ey ≈ *-ay variation or uncertainty, and to these we may add several others:

[55] NEAR: PTB *s-ney ≈ *s-na-y [STC #291]

*ney > Jg. ni, WB nl
*s-na-y > Lushai hnaï, Lahu nê

/WT nye-ba could reflect either allofam; Lh. nê [not in STC] cannot be from *ney, since *-ey > Lh.-i (cf. PENIS [49]). Other Kamarupan forms include Tangkhul khapanai, and 3 Tiddim verb-pairs showing allofamic tone-and-length variation: 'na:i/na:i 'be near'; 'na:i/_.nai? 'draw near' (v.i.), _.nai?/_.nai? 'draw smn near (v.t.).

For the same irregular WB/Lahu vowel correspondence, cf. WB hnaï 'strip of bamboo' [<PLB *-ney][Lh. (và)ne 'id.' [<PLB *-ny] (below [128]). [Note the tonal discrepancy also.]

[56] TONGUE: PTB *-lay ≈ *-ley ≈ *-lya.

This slippery root is reconstructed in STC #281 as *m-lay ≈ *s-lay, on the basis of forms like WT lîše (< *s-lay), Nung phale (< *m-lay), Jg. lâí (couplet form), Garo sre, Dimasa salai, Lushai lei, Mikir de.

WB lîya, Lh. ha (-tê) are assigned to a separate root (let us say *s-lya), apparently influenced (n. 202) by *m-lyak ≈ *s-lyak 'lick'.

French (p. 565) sets up a PNNaga root *C-ley (> e.g. Yogyi li, Wancho le, Konyak yi, Phom yet), and indicates that Benedict [p.c. to French] has changed his PTB reconstruction to *-ley [on the basis of these Naga forms?]. (Add TC lei, Jg. sigli [another couplet form].)

[57] RICE/PADDY: PTB *may or *mey [STC pp. 65, 128, 149, 192–3]

48) For PNNaga, French reconstructs both *lîey 'barter' (> e.g. Nocte a-li-i-min) and *rey 'buy' (> e.g. Nocte ri) [pp. 450, 461].

49) The reconstruction is given simply as *ney in STC, though the Lushai form is marked as showing "vowel gradation".

50) Still other allofams (or "related roots", as Benedict calls them in his classically simple terminology) are posited for this word family, including *s-lya-w and *s-lya [see STC #211].
For this root STC cites forms only from Bodo-Garo (Garo mi and me-[the latter is a combining form], Dimasa mai ‘rice, paddy’ [p. 65]), from Karen (Pwo and Sgaw me ‘boiled rice’ [p. 149]), and Chinese 米 *mi: [GSR #598 a-c]. The Bodo-Garo forms could reflect either *may or *mey (the reconstruction is given as “BG *m[a/e]y” on p. 192), though Benedict somehow feels that the Karen forms unambiguously reflect PKaren (“and by inference also PTB”) *may [p. 149, n. 408].

Also related, I believe, is a form from outside of Bodo-Garo, Tangkhuli ma ‘paddy’, reflecting an allofam *ma. (We have found a surprising number of apparent instances of *-ay ≈ *-a variation, hitherto unrecognized for TB.)

Benedict considers this root to be a loan from Austro-Thai, which perhaps accounts for its phonological instability.

PASS/EXCEED: PTB *s-lay ≈ *s-ley
STC sets up a root *lay [#301] on the basis of Jg. lái ~ žalai ‘pass; exceed’, Nung le ~ sole ‘pass’, Garo re, Dimasa lai ‘pass’, Mikir le ‘over, excess, profit’, and Lushai lei ‘fine, debt, tax’.

/add Tiddim lai: (with long vowel) ‘still, yet’, Boro lay (auxiliary verb) ‘V again’ [e.g. za lay ‘eat again’, ray lay ‘speak again’], Nocto a liæt choæn (with suffixed -i) ‘surpass’ [French, p. 558], and Lushai hlæi [<*s-lay] ‘more than ten; over ten’, hlæi-hlæi ‘more still, even more, in particular’.

Intra-lingual allofams in Lakher (=Mara) point to *-ay ≈ *-ey interchange in this root: lai-pa ‘the remains, that which is left over’, hlæi ‘more than others; beyond; more than; special’.

Other examples of *-ay ≈ *-ey variation include BRIDGE (below [151], BAMBOO STRIP [128], BUY/BARTER [54].

4.22 STC sets in *-a•y

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTB</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Jg.</th>
<th>WB</th>
<th>Garo</th>
<th>Dimasa</th>
<th>Lushai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-a•y</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

51) To further complicate matters, there is a typo in the English-TB Index (p. 218), where the root is cited as “*mey [BG]”. This error was unfortunately repeated in the Index of Chou Fa-kao 1972 (p. 235).

52) See below, BIG [67], I/SELF [70], THROW [147], FALL [125], SEE [76], COME [185], QUESTION PARTICLE [131].

53) Lakher is a Central Chin language closely related to Lushai, for which quite a good dictionary exists [Lorrain 1951].

54) Lahu là ‘be extra, be left over’, ล-ะ ‘sthg special’ is unrelated, being a loan from Tai (cf. Siamese ี้/ya).
STC reconstructs 5 sets with *a·y on the basis of Lushai cognates, and sneaks in another one (KNEAD/TWIST [60]) on the testimony of Tangkhul. To these we may add one more (GOOD [65]), misreconstructed in STC with a short vowel since the Lushai cognate had not been discovered.

[59] CRAB: *d-k(y)a·y [STC #51]

/see [1] and note 2, above; French (p. 469) reconstructs PNNaga *gra·n (> Wancho san, Chang hin) with the 'collective' *-n suffix as in Jg. tsɔkhɔ̀n [STC p. 99, n. 285], and indicates that Benedict [p.c. to French] has changed his PTB reconstruction to *d-gra·y/

[60] WHIRL/BRANDISH/WAVE: *wa·y [STC #90]

Jg. wāi 'whirl, as a whirlpool; stir, as with a ladle; strike out with a sweeping movement' ... WB wai 'whirlpool; soar around, as a bird; brandish (a sword, weapon, stick)', Lushai wāi 'row, paddle; wave (the hand, arm)', Mikir ingwe [Grüssner has ingwey] 'fly around (as an insect).

/add Tiddim 'wa:i 'be giddy'; I would also like to include in this family WB swai (Tone *3) 'swing around (as a sword); wave (as a flag) < *s-way [with fused causative prefix?], and perhaps the 1st. syll. of Lushai hui. ēk zial, 'whorl, coil; twist in whorls or coils'/

[61] KNEAD/TWIST: PTB *na·y [STC #286]

Jg. mənài 'twist', WB nai, Tangkhul kʰənai 'knead'/French (p. 550) compares this root to his PNNaga *nə·y 'soft'/

[62] CENTER/NAVEL: PTB *la·y [STC #287]

WB təlai 'middle, center', Lushai lai 'id.; navel'.

/I have long wondered whether Lahu le 'trigger' (nə̂-le 't. of gun', khʌ̀-le 't. of crossbow') might be cognate here; a trigger does not, it is true, look much like a navel, but it is a central, important part of a weapon/

[63] DIG: PTB *la·y [STC #288]

Jg. lāi 'dig up', Lushai lai. 'dig, hoe'.

[64] PLAY: PTB *r-tsyə·y [STC #289]

WT rtse-ba 'play, frolic, joke', Jg. tʃyāi 'play; do for pleasure', Lu. tʃai.

/add Lakher sai-so 'joke, jest, be funny', Tangkhul [Bhat] khəpəcay 'play (football)', Mikir jùy 'play', PNNaga *C-tsa·y (e.g. Chang cai) [French p. 528]; another Jg. form that must be related somehow is
zói 'joke' [\(< *dzwa \cdot y?\)]

[65] GOOD: PTB *ma \cdot y [contra STC \#300]

In STC \#300, a root *may is reconstructed on the basis of 3 forms: Jg. māi 'good, pleasing', Nung me, Mikir me 'good, well'.

To these, however, we must add Lushai maih, 'be in good condition; plump, well-favored', which leads us to revise the reconstruction to \(*ma \cdot y\). (This is supported by French's PNNaga reconstruction \(*ma \cdot y\) [p. 492] > Wancho mai, Konyak mei-pu, Phom mei-pa, Chang mai-bu.)

Also add the Jg. causative form ścimai 'cure, heal' and the Boro auxiliary verb -may 'V properly' (e.g. ray-may 'speak properly', za-may 'eat properly', so-may 'be beautiful').

Most interesting to Lolo-Burmanists are Akha [ILH] my 'good, beautiful' and Mpi muw 'good' which now establish this root for LB (PLB Tone \*2) as well.\(^{56}\)

I suspect that this root is allofamically related to \(*moy\) [STC \#304] 'beautiful' [below 4.25].

4. 23 STC sets in \*-ay

We may divide the sets reconstructed with \*-ay in STC into three groups:

(a) those where a Lushai cognate in -ei is lacking, so that the short vowel in the reconstruction is 'short by default' (i.e. there is no positive evidence for its shortness) [4. 281];

(b) those where a Lushai cognate in -ei is available (i.e. the shortness of the reconstructed vowel has contrastive status) [4. 282];

(c) those where Lahu, Burmese, and/or Lushai have 'irregular' reflexes, and some kind of 'vowel gradation' or allofamic variation is posited [4. 283].

4. 231 Where no Lushai cognate is available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTB</th>
<th>WT</th>
<th>Jg.</th>
<th>Bs.</th>
<th>Garo</th>
<th>Dimasa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-ay</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[66] FEAR: PTB \*b-ray-t [STC \#450 and n. 317]

WT bred-pa (\< *b-ray-t\) and żed-pa (\< *ryed, with 'secondary palatalization') [the final dental in both forms is suffixal]. Digaro re... Nung phare 'fear, be afraid', Mikir phere 'fear, doubt, dread'.

\(^{55}\) In Matiisoff 1974 [\#188], I tentatively compared Jg. tłyai to Lahu gi'play; do for pleasure', being influenced by the fact that in both languages the words may be used as auxiliary verbs ("V for pleasure"). I would now be pleased to withdraw this suggestion on phonological grounds.

\(^{56}\) \*-u seems to be the most frequent Mpi reflex of \*a(\*y), e.g. Mpi \*thu 'laugh' <\*ray [1], tɯ\* 'tusk' <\*fway [160], ko\* -pɯ\* 'chaff' <\*pwa \cdot y [77].
4.232 Where there is a Lushai cognate in -ei: *-áy

When there is a Lushai cognate in -ei corresponding to a Jg. or WB word in -ai, there is positive evidence for the shortness of the proto-vowel, and we adopt the convention of adding a breve /'/ to the reconstruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PTB</th>
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<th>Jg.</th>
<th>Bs.</th>
<th>Garo</th>
<th>Dimasa</th>
<th>Lushai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-ay</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-ai</td>
<td>-ei</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[69] CHANGE/EXCHANGE: PTB *s-láy [STC #283 and n. 205]
Jg. lái 'be changed'; gólái 'change, exchange, barter'; mó lái 'change, repeat, substitute', Nung thalé 'alter, (ex)change', WB lái 'exchange', Garo sre 'id.', Dimasa salai (lái) 'interchange, exchange', Lushai léi 'buy, barter', Tiddim -lay? 'change' (vs. lei 'buy' < *r-ley).

As noted above, this set overlaps with *r-ley < *b-rey 'buy, barter' (above [54]); the distinction reflected in Tiddim is neutralized in WT dóže-ba (≠ bróže-bó), which could descend either from *-ey or *-ey and means both 'barter' and 'change'. The Lushai form could also descend either from *-dy or *-ey. This set could well have been included under 4.211, above.

To the forms given in STC #283, add the following: WB h lái- phēi 'exchange; Mpi lv?, 'exchange, sell' [57] Boro salay 'transfer, change', bila y 'distribute', laykón 'borrow, loan, debt', bós-lay 'replace', ganslay 'take off (dress)', guslay 'slough (snake), change color of skin'. (So many of the daughter forms point to prefixal *s- that I have added it to the PTB reconstruction.)

[57] In Matisoff 1978 (#96), I ill-advisedly tried to compare Lh. hš 'sell' to this Mpi form.
1/SELF₁: PTB *đay [STC #285]
WT ned (‘with suffixed -d’) ‘I, we’ (elegant), Jg. ṇāi ‘I’, Lushai ngei ‘self’.

/also perhaps Meithei ei ‘I’/

This root is obviously related to the primary TB pronominal etymon *ŋa ‘I’ [STC #285], and is thus an excellent example of the ‘new’ TB variational pattern we are documenting: *-ay ≈ *-a (see note 52).


SELF₂/NAVEL₂: PTB *s-tay [STC #284 and #299]

STC (p. 65) umbilicarily implies that 2 sets it presents separately should really be grouped into a single etymon:
SELF [#284] Jg. dāi ‘self’, Lushai tei, ‘myself’

NAVEL [#299] WT lte-ba, Jg. dāi ~ šadāi ‘navel’, Garo ste ‘abdomen’.

/after Lakher tlaí ‘oneself, self’, Abor-Miri ai ‘self’; also the following forms meaning ‘navel’: Mru dāi; Chepang toy?; Jirel teq; Karen [Jones] de (Moulmein Pho), de (Bassein Pho, Sgaw); Tangkhul [Bhat] haytoŋ, hayzo; PNNaga *ta-y [French p. 521] (> e.g. Nocte po-te)/

4.233 Where irregular reflexes point to proto-variation

TAIL: PTB *r-məy [STC #282]

... Bahing me-ri... Jg. (h-)mái... WB ?əmrí, Garo kime, Dimasa khermai ~ bermai, Lushai mei... Mikir arme.

/after Tangkhul akhoməy, Meithei məməy, and PNNaga *C-me-y (> e.g. Moshang a-mi, Nocte a-me, Konyak a-ñe, Chang mei)/

The WB reflex is irregular (we would expect *əmrəi), and Benedict is ‘tempted to interpret the Bahing and Burmese forms in terms of metathesis’, but decides rather that ‘the Burmese form must...be regarded as a contraction of *a-ma-ri, with the regular -ai correspondence’ [n. 204].

Before leaping to espouse this rather ad hoc explanation, however, we should note that several other languages also have discrepant forms: Lahu më-tu²⁸ Akha dɔ-mi, Mikir [KHG] -mi ‘tail, anus’. Both the WB and Akha forms could derive from *-ey, and the Mikir doublet confirms that we are dealing with a complex word family.

The obvious Chinese cognate to this puzzling set is 尾 *miuər/miwe [GSR #583 a-b].

58) For other unexpected examples of Lb. e < *-ay, cf. 4.38 below.
[73] TEN: PTB *ts(y)i(y) ≈ *tsway [STC #408 and n. 272]
Jg. tší ~ sī ... Garo tši, Dimasa džī ... < *ts(y)i; ‘WB ?achai appears to be related to this root through vowel gradation’; also Karenic shì (Pwo, Sgaw), tši (Taunthu) [p. 131].

In a footnote (n. 272) Benedict withdraws his eminently reasonable allofamc explanation of the WB form in favor of a single ‘stuffed’ proto-form *tsway, ‘yielding both WB ?achai and the various palatalized forms with final -i’; against this, however, is the different Jg. reflex for *r-tsa-y 'play' (> Jg. tšā) [STC #289; set 64, above]!

As indicated above [2], Lahu chi ‘ten’ shows the same -i reflex after palatal initial as in TOOTH and CRAB. Mpi (to2)th i, also has an aberrant reflex, -i. Other Loloish cognates of this still puzzling etymon are Akha [PL] tse~ Lisu htsi4, Phunoi tsaé.

[74] BREAK: PTB *pay ≈ *bay

This set was originally reconstructed *pe ~ *be [STC #254], because of Lushai pe2 ‘break; be broken’, alongside WB pai ‘be broken off, chipped’, phai ‘break off a piece’; Garo be ‘break; broken’, pe ‘break down’; Dimasa bai ‘get broken’, sabai ‘break’, gabai ‘broken’, phai ‘hatch’, do-phai ‘break with an instrument’.

French (p. 458) reconstructs PNNaga *pay (> e.g. Konyak pai ‘break’, Chang pei-nin ‘split’), and indicates that Benedict [p.c. to French] has changed his PTB reconstruction to *pay ≈ *bay.

4.24 STC sets in *-way

The STC nowhere specifically tabulates the reflexes of *-wa(-*)y in the six diagnostic languages, though we can partially do so from the examples given. See Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-wa-y</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>-oi/we</td>
<td>-wai</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>-oi/uai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six sets in *-wa(-*)y are reconstructed in STC [75–80, below]. Of these, three have a Lushai cognate in -oi or -uai, and are reconstructed with a long nuclear vowel, *-wa-y (BUFFALO, BEE, HUSKS/CHAFF). Two others have no Lushai cognate and are reconstructed *-way ‘by default’ (CONCEAL, EASY).

59) The poorly attested rhyme *-e is reconstructed when Lushai has -e corresponding to WB -ai (cf. PEA [STC #258]), or when Jg. and Himalayish both have -e (PUNISH [#252], NECK [#231], SLIP/SLIPPERY [#141]).
The sixth, LEFT, actually belongs to a complex word-family that has ramifications into the semantic area of ‘awkward, misaligned; lame, limp’. Lushai has several alloforms, of which one (vēi ‘left’) seems to reflect a short vowel, and others a long one (bāi ‘limp’, pāi ‘stagger’).

As we see, the evidence for a length distinction in the PTB *-way rhyme is skimpy in the extreme.\footnote{61}

\section{BUFFALO: PTB *lwā-y [STC #208]}
Jg. ʔā-lōi, nā-lōi, nō-lōi, WB kywai (< klwai), Lushai loī, Siyin loai.
/add Tangkhul [Pettigrew] silui, [Bhat] siruy; PNNaga *C-luā-y (French p. 460); this is a SE Asian areal word (cf. Proto-Tai *grwaay > Siamese khuaay)/

\section{BEE: PTB *kwa-y [STC #157]}
/add Angami Naga mèpfi (Kohima dial.), makwi (Khonoma dial.);\footnote{62} Meithei khoy; and PNNaga *C-guay (> e.g. Wancho ve-koi ‘bug’ [French p. 460]; PTamang *gway [Mazaudon] and the WB form also point to a PTB alloform with *voiced initial/}

The Lakher and Nung forms given in STC are quite interesting in that they imply a variant in *-a — still another instance of *-ay ≡ *-a\footnote{63} Actually I have not been able to verify STC’s Lakher form (it is not in Lorrain 1981, p. 76), but have come up with another one, khei ‘bee’ [Lorrain p. 176]. If both Lakher forms are valid, it nails down the *-ay ≡ *-a alternation.

\section{HUSKS/CHAFF: PTB *pwa-y [STC #170]}
/add Tiddim wai, Meithei wai, Jg. pói ‘be blown, airborne, as fine chaff; be carried away by the wind’, špōi ~ špōi [Maran] ‘let scatter, cause to float in air’, Lakher pai ‘be scattered, disperse; emigrate, migrate’, Tangkhul khpāpuv ‘fly in a group (bees), swarm; be scattered everywhere’; many more cognates are to be found in Marrison

\footnote{60} See below [124].
\footnote{61} All the more so since the labial element in the root for LEFT functions in most languages as the root-initial, not a medial glide (below [80]).
\footnote{62} For a detailed discussion of this and other Angami words that descend from etyma with initial ‘labiovelars’, see Matisoff 1989, passim.
\footnote{63} See note 82.
(p. 130): Mikir phe-ke, Zemei kepai, Liangmai chapha, Lotha ofu, etc.; in Loloish we have Mpi kəʔphə and Lahu wəʔ-phə (1st. syll. prob. 'pig'—chaff is fed to pigs)/
The central Lahu vowel -i perhaps represents the 'regular' Lahu type of reflex of *-wa(·) after a labial root-initial.65)

[78 ] EASY: PTB *lway [STC #302]
Bunan lo-i, Jg. ləi ~ lubə, WB lwai.
/some additional Jg. forms are cited in Matisoff 1974 (#121):
ləi 'easy, of early growth', ʔələi 'easily', ʔələi 'of early growth', soləi 'an early bean'; the 2nd. syll. of Lahu cə-lubə 'early growing rice' looks like a loan < Bs./

[79 ] CONCEAL/HIDE/SHUN: PTB *kway [STC #303]
Jg. kəi 'shun', məkəi 'hide, conceal'; WB kwai 'conceal, keep out of sight'.

[80 ] LEFT: PTB *b(w)əy [STC #47]
Thebhor ba-e; Jg. pəi 'left', lepəi 'left-handed, awkward', əpəi 'be awkward, speak with a brogue'; WB bəi 'left', lak-wəi 'left hand', wəi 'speak with a brogue'; Tangkhal wui-soŋ 'left', phuï kəsiŋə 'left-handed', Lepcha vi-m, Lushai vi, Mikir arvi 'left'.
/\add Tangkhal [Bhat] yuypan 'left hand' (note the triple Tangkhal alloforms in y- ≈ w- ≈ ph-), Abor-Miri lak-kə 'id.' (< lak-ə?), Meithei oy, Lisu Lət-rəi, Mpi le-təoə/

Black Lahu ləʔ-mə (cited in STC n. 80) looks quite irregular,66) but forms in other Lahu dialects look closer to those in other TB languages: Yellow Lahu (Bakeo) ləʔ-fə, (Banlun) ləʔ-ə-e [Bradley 1979b set #446-A].

As we shall see ([124] below), these forms are allofamically related to a group meaning 'misaligned; lame; to limp'.

4.25 STC sets in *-oy

The STC reconstructs *-oy in an interesting series of 12 consecutively num-

64) French (p. 502) sets up PNNaga *C-we-k (> Konyak weh, Chang ek), postulating metanalysis of a compound like the Mikir form.
65) Cf. FINISHED/PAST [164] and YAM [165], where Lahu also has a central vowel /ə/. Among other *-way words with Lahu cognates are LEFT [80], (> Lh. mə) a highly aberrant root, and WITHER/FADE (> Lh. we) (below [98]), which has an unusual initial. Note that we must carefully distinguish between *-way (i.e. medial *-w- plus -oy) and syllables of the type *-way, where *-w- is the root-initial, and which we claim > Lh. we [below 5.11].
66) It is ingeniously explained by Benedict (ibid,) as due to a development *lak-bəi > *laŋwij > *maij > mə.
bered roots [#’s 304–315], on the basis of forms from Jingpho, Lushai, and Burmese. The reflexes tend to be variable, and there is some overlapping with the rhymes *-way and *-wiy (= *-way). See Table V.

<table>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>-way/</em>-wiy</td>
<td>(y)i</td>
<td>-ai/(o)wi</td>
<td>-we</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-ui/-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-oy</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>-oi/-we/-wi</td>
<td>-we</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-oi/-ui/-uai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benedict reconstructs *-oy when Jg. and Lushai have -oi but WB has -we; when a WB cognate is lacking, *-oy is conventionally reconstructed instead of *-way (STC p. 67).

The discussion of this material in STC can hardly be improved upon, and we shall merely list the examples for ease of reference:

[81] BEAUTIFUL: *moy [STC #304] /add Laizo [Osburne] móoy/móoy; this is undoubtedly an alloform of *ma(-’y) ‘good’ [STC #300] (above [65]), perhaps from **m(w)a’-y (the putative Chinese cognate is 美 *mipr/myi: [GSR #560 a-c]); [82] BUD/BLOSSOM: *(r)-moy [STC #305]; [83] GRAZE (almost hit) *søy [#306]; [84] BEND/CURVED *koy [#307] /add Meithiei kho’-y ‘fishhook’ [Thoudam p. 6], and perhaps Abor-Miri ge ‘crooked’; also probably related somehow is Jg. khái ‘be hooked’; [85] COWLICK *koy [#308]; [86] YOUNGER SIBLING1 *doy ≈ *toy [#309]; [87] CROW/HOWL/SCREAM *groy [#310]; [88] SHELL (-FISH) *kroy [#311]; [89] BORROW/LEND/DEBT *kroy [#312] /WB křué ‘debt’ reflects PLB Tone *2, but several interesting Loloish forms bespeak a Tone *1 variant with *prenasalized initial: Lh. jè, Luqwan nts’e11, Akha [PL] dzir’/; [90] SURROUND *kroy [#313]; [91] MONKEY *b-woy [#314] /add PNNaga *wo’y (French p. 518); see the discussion in Matisoff 1980 (pp. 12–13); [92] GENTLE/QUIET/MODERATE *goy [#315]/this root ‘shows much fluctuation in final’ /add Abor-Miri ngi ‘to comfort, soothe, cheer, console, pacify (as a child)’ and PNNaga *C-qua ‘easy’ [French p. 477]; this etymon is undoubtedly related to *-y-(w)ay ‘LOVE’ (below [124])

4.3 New etymologies with the rhymes *-ay and *-ey

In this section we shall present a number of new etymologies in this phonological area, as well as new wrinkles to several old ones. The 90-odd sets to be discussed are categorized as follows:

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67) This table does not appear in STC, but is pieced together from the available examples.
4.31 New etyma in *-ay attested in more than one branch of TB, where Lahu has a cognate in *e.

4.32 New etyma in *-ay or *-ey attested in more than one branch of TB, but for which no Lahu cognate has been found.

4.33 Further ramifications to already established etymologies.

4.34 New *-ay etymologies restricted to Lolo-Burmese, where Lahu has a cognate in *e.

4.35 New *-ay/*-ey etymologies attested only in Kamarupan languages.

4.36 New *-ey etymologies, where Lahu has a cognate in *i.

4.37 Etyma (some new, some old) displaying interesting phonological variation.

4.38 Etyma in *-ay where Lahu has a cognate with vowel other than *-e (*-i, *-e, *i, *o).

4.39 Promising new etymologies for which the evidence is still skimpy.

4.31 New etyma in *-ay attested in more than one branch of TB, where Lahu has a cognate in *e

[93] STING/SCOLD. PTB *ta•y
Lh. dê 'sting (as a bee); scold; curse'; Akha [PL] deh, [ILH] dê 'sting, scold'; Mpi te 'sting' < PLB *n-day [the voiced Lh. initial implies a PLB *nasal prefix]; Jg. dâi 'be sharp (as a tooth or edge tool); be sharp, tart, or caustic of tongue'; Tiddim ta:i/ta:i 'scold, blame, nag; Lushai tai-têm ~ tai-têng 'name of a stinging nettle', tai-vâng 'name of a large ant [that presumably inflicts a sting]'; Mikir [KHG] ingdêy 'sting (as a nettle)'; Abor-Miri te 'sting, as a bee'; Boro ray 'scold; rebuke', ray-sin 'scold severely'.

/Boro (also called Bodo) shows interchange between dental stops and r/

[94] Spleen. PTB *r-pay
Lh.  zrobi; Akha [PL] shi•pyeh, [ILH] sjih-piêh (cf. also Ak. bê-si 'kidney'); Mpi tóz-phê < PLB *pawai; Jg. pâi, kâm-pâi, kûm-pâi, sin-pai (all 'spleen'); Tangkhul [Petigrew] ñpäi 'bulb; dross; spleen; pith', pei 'spleen', pei katâ 'liver complaint'; [Bhat] pôy 'liver' [sic]; Abor-Miri tûr-pe ~ tûr-pui 'spleen', Mru pâi 'id.'; Newari am-pi, Kham (Nepal) phis 'id'.

/Angami ù-pri and Mikir plî-ha may be influenced by Indo-Aryan (cf. Sanskrit pîthana, Bengali bili) [VSTB, n. 271]/
The undoubted Chinese cognate is 脾 *b'ĩég/b'jets [GSR #874h] 'spleen, tripe'.

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68) This root was first presented in Matisoff 1978 (VSTB), pp. 217–9.
[95] BELT/ZONE/WAIST. PTB *ta'y
Lh. de, ñ-de 'belt of land lying between the high rain-forest and the plains; large expanse of terrains' (e.g. ā-pā-de 'banana plantation', še-de 'desert' ['sand-expanse']); Akha [PL] deh-ga 'levelish place (esp. near streams) where paddy terraces are made', deh-k'aw 'a fairly level place with high mountains near or around it'; Luquan n'e'11 'plain, flat expanse' < PLB *n-day³

/the Lh. and LQ forms unambiguously point to a PLB *prenasalized initial/;

WT sde 'part, portion (e.g. of a country); province, district, territory'; Lushai tai 'waist', tai-von 'wear in the belt'; also perhaps Jg. tāi 'pull a rope around a tree, etc., as a pulley' and Mikir daykha 'middle, intermediate'.

Definitely cognate is Chinese 帶 *tāi/tāi- [GSR #315 a] 'girdle, sash; carry at the girdle' (the modern word also means 'zone, area', e.g. 熱帶 'torrid zone').

For the semantics, cf. Eng. zone < Gk. zōnē 'girdle' < PIE *yōs-nā (*yōs 'to gird').

[96] ENCIRCLED/RINGED/STRIPED AROUND. PTB *pəy ≈ *bay.
Lh. lāʔ-pē 'finger-ring' (lāʔ 'hand'), Ak. [PL] la₇ beh₇ [ILH] lāq-bē 'id.' < PLB *bay² (Ak.) ≈ *bəy² (Lh.); Jg. bāi 'be encircled, girded; striped', bāi-bāi 'be marked, as with streaks or rings of variegated colors', pāi 'appear striped or spotted'; Mikir paəy 'fence, hedge, line; stripe, ring (of leopard’s skin); turn'; Tangkhul [Bhat] naəway 'fence', khɔŋnaəway 'to fence', wəykhəu̯ 'fence around village'.

/in view of the Tangkhul forms, perhaps we should reconstruct *p(w)əy ≈ *b(w)əy/

[97] COHESIVE/STICKY/ELASTIC. PTB *nə-nay ≈ *nə-nəway.
Lh. nē 'have consistency; be cohesive, viscous, chewy'; Akha [ILH] nē 'tough, chewy' < P Loloish *nay²;

Jg. [Maran, p. 830] ʔnāi 'sticky; adhesive, pliable; elastic', ʔnāiʔnāi 'sticky and thus soft; fabby'; the latter form provides the semantic link with WB nai 'loose, not firm', hnaï 'loosen', hndi 'rub hair with limejuice to make soft' (< PLB *ʔ-nəway³);

Jg. also has an allofam ʔnói 'limp, soft, tender, pliable, elastic', which reflects *nəway, as does Tangkhul kʰamənɛw 'sticky'.

Laker hnei 'have cohesion' could reflect either variant.

[98] WITHER/FADE. PTB *hwa-y
Lh. hwe; Jg. wāi ñ wāi (Hkauri dial.); Lushai ǔai, ūai; Tangkhul

-the Lahu/Jingpho comparison was made already in Matisoff 1974 (§321); Tai has a phonologically similar, but unrelated root (cf. Siamese *hiaw*).

We are tempted to reconstruct a unitary initial phoneme *h*- for this root, to account for the very unusual Lahu *hw-* cluster (this is the only native word in which it occurs, except for *hw:i* ‘grandchild’ [ult. < PTB *b-liy* (STC #448)]).

[99] 1.1E/DECEIVE/DISSEMBLE. PTB *ha:y*

Lh. *hè* ‘cheat; deceive; tell a lie; be dishonest’, *hè-pà* ‘liar; a cheat’;[69] Lushai *hâ* ‘to mistake; not know; not recognize; be ignorant of; forget; mistake one for another’, *hâi-dër* ‘connive at; overlook intentionally; pretend not to know/recognize/hear’; Lakher *hai* ‘misrepresent, lie; false, untrue; a lie’, *hai-pà ~ hai-thai-pà* ‘liar’, *hai-bi* ‘falsehood’, *hai-na* ‘id.’, *hai-di-hai-dua* ‘guile, deceit’, *hai-phia* ‘dishonest, unreliable’.

[100] MOTHER/GRANDMOTHER/MATERNAL AUNT. PTB *(y)ay.*


Abor-Miri *yai* ‘grandmother’, *yai-o* ‘id.’, *yai-a* (voc.); Boro *ây* ‘mother’; Tangkhul [Pettigrew] *âyi* ‘grandmother; mother’s brother’s wife’.

[101] DIVERT/CAST/OFF/PUSH ASIDE. PTB *(i)way ~ *(v)way.*

WB *hrâ* ‘make an opening in a crowd by scattering on both sides’; *lô:wâ* ‘be out of the way; vary’, *lô:wâ* ‘go out of one’s way, turn aside; (n.) outlet by side of reservoir’; *lê:jwâ* ‘contrariwise’, *lô:jwâ* ‘id.’, *jwâ* ‘be drawn aside, distorted, awry’; Lahu *hé ~ hí* ‘cast off (as a snake’s skin); push aside (as over-hanging plants from one’s path)’ [the Lh. tone points to a PLB *preglottalized initial]; Mikir *sê* ‘make a way by parting (e.g. grass); dispel; clear (as the sky)’.

[102] POUND/Crush. PTB *(t)a·y ~ *(d)a·y.*

Lh. *tê* ‘pound, crush, press, squeeze; wear away by friction; nudge (with the elbow)’; Akha [IHL] *dê* ‘push down’ (both from PLoloish *(d)ay*) [cf. also Akha *dê* ‘hit, beat, strike’]; Mpi *tê,* ‘pound in a mortar’ re-

69 PTB *h-* is actually better preserved in Lahu than I had thought! Besides [98] and [99], cf. also [99a] RAISE/BRING UP (as children): PTB *hu > Lh. hu, Luquan *hu:l,* Abor-Miri *u.*

70 Contra Bradley Proto-Loloish (#200B), who sets up PLB *(y)an*.
flects PLoloish *tayː; WB te 'beat, pound, pulverize' points to another variant, perhaps PLB *diyː; Lakher dai 'pound, as grain', Tangkhul khaṇdtai 'grind, pulverize'.

[103] DO/MAKE. PTB *dɔy.
Lh. te 'do; make'; Lakher tei 'to work; to do'; Boro soday 'make'.
/also perhaps Jg. tāi 'become, metamorphose, transform, play the part of another person or character; be skilled or knowledgeable, well-versed'; WB te 'do repeatedly and constantly' is possibly related somehow [see preceding set]/

[104] QUOTATIVE PARTICLE. PTB *dɔy or *tiay.
Lh. cə 'quotative prt.' [see Matisoff 1976a, pp. 377–80], Akha [PL] jeاته, [ILH] djé 'id.' < PLB *dɔayl2 (the Lahu form points to PLB Tone *2, but the Akha form is < Tone *1; but tonal discrepancies are common in functors);71] WT ēs (with -s suffix) 'so, thus; in ancient literature regularly placed after words or thoughts that are literally quoted' [Jāschke, p. 142].

4.32. New etyma in -*ay or -*ey attested in more than one branch of TB, but for which no Lahu cognate has been found

[105] PUS. PTB *s-na·y.
Lushai hnia 'juice, sap, pus, exudation; exude, discharge'; Lakher hnia 'pus from a wound, etc.' [for the correspondence Lu-at/Lk. -ia, see FACE (below [109]); Tidimm naːi 'pus'; Meithei nay 'id.'; Mikir [KHG] tenə ~ tengne [Walker] 'pus, matter'; Tangkhul shinai 'pus'; Newari nahi, Sunwar nene, Kaman Mishmi ni 'id.'

/perhaps belonging to a separate but related root are Mikir tingnir 'pus, slime, matter, excrement of snail' and Kham (Nepal) sanis 'pus'/

[106] TEMPERAMENT/APTITUDE/TALENT. PTB *(t)sa·y ≅ *(d)za·y.
WT ƚe 'inclination, affection, heart, mind; volition', ŝen-pa (with suffixed -n) 'desire, long for, be attached to'; Lushai zāi 'temperament, disposition, nature'; Lakher thai-na 'ability', thai-pa-kı 'talent, aptitude, skill'; Jingpho sāi 'disposition, tendency', tsāi 'intellect, wisdom', zāi ~ xɔəi 'id.'; Achang aʰtšaʔ [Dai 1983] 'heart'.

Certainly cognate is Chinese ظ *dzʰōg/dzʰi [GSR #943 a] 'endowment, ability, talent'.

71) See INTERROGATIVE PARTICLE, below [151].
[107] REPEAT/PRACTICE. PTB *bay.

Jg. bāi ‘repeat, do over’; Mikir [KHG] bē ‘practice; to accustom, practice’, [Walker] ‘id.; obey, exercise’; Lakher bai, bai-chhah ‘add to’; Boro bāy ‘do again and again’ (usable as an auxiliary verb, as in bi-bāy ‘beg again and again’, pay-bāy ‘come again and again’).

Probably cognate is Chinese 餐 *b’uāg/b’uāi [GSR #999c] ‘accompany, support; augment, double’.

[108] RUST/DROSS/STAIN/SHIT. PTB *(t)sə ·y

Jg. sāi ‘be stained (as lips from tobacco)’; Lushai tāi ‘dread, lees, rice from which beer has been brewed’, tūi-ēk ‘rust’ [the second element means ‘shit’, < PTB *e ·k (STC pp. 26, 146), as in the Abor-Miri72] and Lakher forms, below]; Lakher sai-i ‘rust, rusty’ (i ‘defecate’); Abor-Miri tai-ē ‘excrement; dross; rust’, tai-ē dut-shu ‘to rust, get rusty; to mess oneself (as a child)’.

/Tangkhul pāy ‘feces’, apāy ‘rust’ is to be assigned rather to PTB *ba ·l (cf. Lushai bāal) [Matisoff 1972 c. p. 280]/

[109] FACE PTB *(s)ə · y.

Lushai hmaí; Tiddim ma:i; Lakher hmia [for Lu. -ai/Lk. -ia, cf. PUS (above [105]) and also CRAB (above [4]. Lk. tšia < *d-ka ·y]); Tangkhul mai ‘face, visage’; Meithei məmay.

/STC (p. 173) compares Lushai hmel ‘face’ to Chinese 面 *miān/ mian [GSR #223 a], presumably from a related root, PST *s-myal. It is hard to avoid speculating that there is also ultimately some connection with *s-myak ‘eye’ [STC #402; TSR #145], since the eyes are such a salient feature of the face (cf. Lh. mḕ ‘eye’, mḕ-phu ‘face’).73

[110] BOLD/HEROIC. PTB *(s)ray ≈ *s-ray ≈ *s-way.


Jg. ḥəā, ḥəāi ‘bear children’; WB qaî ‘small, little, inferior’, qaî cañ tɔŋ kyə ‘since childhood’, qaî qaî kəθaŋ ka ‘id.’; Boro maŋəy ‘small’.

72) Contra STC this root for ‘feces’ is not confined to Kuki-Naga.

73) Two other body parts that are intimately related to each other in TB are NOSE *(s-na [STC #101] and EAR *(s-na ≈ *(s-na [STC #453].

74) See Matisoff 1974, #240. In n. 105 of that paper, I speculated that Lh. yē ‘steadfast, brave’ might be a loan from Burmese rāi, but it is now clear that this Lahu form goes rather with WB san ‘strong, vigorous’ < PLB *tan (above [16]).
[12] SCOOP/DIP OUT (of water, a hole, etc.) PTB *(t)say.

Jg. sāi ‘scoop out of water; skim’; WB chai ‘take out of water; extricate, deliver, save from drowning’, chai-nut ‘draw up out of (as from a pit)’; Lakher sai-kyu ‘a dipper; ladle... used for dipping up water’, thak ‘draw out, dip out, ladle out (as water); Mikir [KHG] chay ‘[perform action] in sthg liquid’.


Jg. nāi ‘languid, lethargic’; Lakher nai-so-so ‘loiter; be slow; take things easily’, nai-ny ‘not exert self in word and speech’, nai-pi ‘slowly, leisurely’.


Jg. khai ‘plant seed’, Boro gay ‘plant’, gases ‘transplant; erect the first housepost’.

Also PNNaga *C-ga(·) ‘to sow’ [French pp. 551-2] > Nocte khet, a khet (with -t suffix); Konyak tei; Phom sei ‘sow’, sei-li ‘seed’; Liangmai maruk-khai ‘to sow’. Also Dimasa gai ‘id.’

French also cites Jg. gāt ‘sow, scatter as seed’, hypothesizing that the -t is suffixal.


[16] PUT TOGETHER. PTB *dway.

WB twe ‘put together; connect (as with rope), ?̣ twe ‘two or more things tied together’; Jg. tōi ‘put together; lead or tow (as with rope)’.


Jg. prā ‘be effaced; settled and forgotten (feud); healed (old sore); šāprāi (v.t.); WB prai ‘be wasted; become weak, less vivid’ [cf. Matisoff 1974, #4]; Mikir [KHG] prō ‘to spoil, botch, erase’.

[18] RETALIATE/BEAR A GRUDGE. PTB *m-tay.

Jg. tāi ‘avenge, retaliate’, mátāi ‘vengeance’; Lushai tāi, in, -tāi ‘be at enmity with one another (intense); have a grudge against’.

I would like to suggest a relationship between this new PTB root and Chinese 剃 *twoud/tuǎi [GSR #511 a-g] ‘respond, in response; reply’, 殴 *ďiu̍/ďwi̍-[GSR #511i] ‘cause resentment’.


Jg. tōi ‘be even with’, tōi-tōi ‘id.’ (as in looput tōi-tōi ‘knee-deep’);
Lakher *tai ‘as far as; up to; all the way to; even to; even to the extent of’ (e.g. *kei o *tai a *khy te ‘Come up as far as my house’).

[120] SHALLOW. PTB *day.
Tiddim *dai/*dai; Mikir [KHG] ingdêy.
/ Tangkhul kópîy ‘shallow’ seems unrelated /

[121] LEAD,TEND,WATCH,GUARD. PTB *s-r-way.
Jg. *wôi ‘tend, care for (as a child); lead, guide, conduct’; Lakher *vai ‘guard, look after’; Mikir wi ‘watch, guard (cattle)’; PNNaga *rua*y ‘lead’ (French p. 506) > Konyak woi, Chang lei-an, lei-laì; Benedict [p.c. to French] suggests a comparison with Lushai hruài ‘lead, guide, escort, conduct’.

[122] PROPITIATE,APPEASE. PTB *tøy or *tway.
Jg. tōi ‘propitiate (as certain kinds of nai)’; Lushai [Weidert] ‘thoi ‘offer a sacrifice or utter an incantation for one who is ill’.
The verb in Lh. nē te ve ‘appease the spirits’ [nē ‘spirit’ (above [36])] is perhaps simply ‘do, make’ (above [103]).

[123] LEAF,PAPER. PTB *lay.

4.33 Further ramifications to already established etymologies

[124] LAME,LIMP,ASKEW. PTB *pay ≈ *bay
Tiddim -ba:i/*ba:i ‘be lame’; Lushai bāï ‘limp, be lame; hop’, páï ‘stagger, reel; have a foreign accent; be out of line askew’; Nyarong [Nagano] Nbi ‘person who limps’; Kaman Mishmi a-be; PNNaga *ba:y ‘jump’ [French p. 505] > Phom tāi-etì, Chang ai.
This group of forms is certainly related to PTB *b(w)ày ‘LEFT’ (see above [80], esp. such forms as Jg. ṭāï ‘be awkward, speak with a brogue’). French [p. 445] sets up a PNNaga root *pha:y ‘after’ (> e.g. Chang pāi ‘backwards, behind’), which he also suggests relating to the LEFT etymon.

[125] FALL. PTB *glay ≈ *klay.
Lh. ce ‘fall from a height’, Luquan tse₈‘ fall down’ ~ ts’e¹¹ ‘fall over, topple’ < PLB *glay₃ or **glay; Boro kākōy ‘to fell’, gōglōy ‘fall, lie down’, klay ‘V downward’ (e.g. za-klay ‘eat from top to bottom’,
kam-klay ‘burn down’, bar-klay ‘jump down’ [Lh. ce may also be used as an auxiliary in this way, e.g. b39 ce ve ‘fell by shooting’, bə ce ve ‘throw down’]; also perhaps Mikir ingjuy ‘fall off, drop off (hair, leaves, etc.’, V+juy ‘V away’ (e.g. kät-juy ‘wegrennen’, arphlün-gjuy ‘wegjagen’) [Grüsser 1978, p. 114].

This group of forms certainly seems related to *kła ‘fall’ [STC #123], which is known to have been what one might call an ‘eminently suffixable’ root [cf. Jg. khrät (with -t), Lushai tla:k ‘fall’, thla:k ‘let fall’ (with -k)].

This etymon is thus another example of the ‘new’ TB variational pattern we are bringing into focus: *a ≈ *-ay. (See note 52.)

[126] LOVE/MAKE LOVE. PTB *ŋ-(w)ay.

STC compares PKaren *ŋai (> Pwo ai, Sgaw e) to Chinese 艾 *ŋә/-qi [GSR #508a] ‘love’, but does not cite any forms from ‘TB proper’, though all of the following are certainly related:

Jg. ṇoai ‘respect, love’; Tiddim -ŋa:i/-ŋai ‘love; fall in love’, ‘ŋә:i ‘tenderly’; Lushai uai ‘hang on to’; in. uai ‘clasp one another and be reluctant to leave’; in. uai: lün-g-leng ‘make love to one another’; ngāi ‘long for, miss, feel earnest desire for; copulate’; Tangkhul Pettigrew] sa-ngai kachi ‘that which one likes to do’; ngailon ‘gentle’;

[Bhāt] khəŋay ‘desire’.75

This root is undoubtedly related to the phonologically unstable etymon *ŋoy ‘GENTLE/QUIET/MODERATE’ (above [92]).

4.34 New *-ay etymologies restricted to Lolo-Burmese, where Lahu has a cognate in -e

[127] FLARING: PLB *bray.

WB ḍrāi ‘gape, expand, flare’; Lahu ḍ<i (<*pɛ i) ‘flaring; wider at the tip’.

/The Lh. adverbializing particle ḍ frequently affects the tone of the previous syllable (e.g. ni ‘red’, ni ḍ ‘reddly’).

[128] GO: PLB *ŋay. [Bradley (1979a) #’s 647A/822]

Lh. e ‘verb particle indicating motion away from the center of interest’ [GL, pp. 318–9]. Akha i ‘go down’, Lisu yei ~ jyei ‘go’, Phunoi ṭe/le, Bisu ṭe/le, Mpi jei ‘go (south or west)’.76

75 Solnit (p.c) adds several Karenic forms meaning ‘copulate’ that point to a PKaren alloform with initial *ŋu- (Pa-O ʔu̯, Pho and Palaychí ʔu̯, Sgaw ʔu̯, Keye h, Kayoh ʔu̯ [all < PKaren Tone *B-1]).

76 De Lancy (p.c) points out that this is a general TB root, occurring also in Himalayish (Bunan e ‘go’, Chitkuli and Manchati i- ‘go and V; V away’) and in Baris (Garo -e ‘go and V').
[129] CATTLE/DOMESTIC ANIMAL. PLB *dzay².
Lh. cé-cá ‘domestic animals; cattle’; Akha [PL] jë za; ‘animals, whether domesticated or not’, [ILH] dzè-dz; Luquan dzê.ta ‘livestock’.

[130] BAMBOO STRIP. PLB *?nay½ ≈ *?ney²
WB hñi (<*?ney²); Lahu vâ-ne [vâ ‘bamboo’] (<*?nay¹); Akha [ILH] a-nê (<*?nay²); also Bisu nê-phê [Bradley 1982].

[131] QUESTION PARTICLE. PLB *lay½/².
WB lâ ‘final particle marking substance questions’ (<*lay²); Lh. le ‘id.’ [cf. GL, pp. 374-5] ‘id.’ (<*lay³).
In both languages these particles stand in opposition to a ‘yes-no question’ particle: WB lâ, Lh. lâ < PLB *la².
It is tempting to see here another instance of our *-a ≈ *-ay alternational pattern. (See note 52.)
The tonal discrepancy between WB and Lahu is par for the course with particles. (See QUOTATIVE PARTICLE, above [104].)

4.35 New *-ay or *-ey etymologies attested only in Kamarupan languages

[132] LANGUAGE. PTB *rey. [Kmrp]
Lakhir rei ‘language, tongue, dialect, speech’; Boro ray ‘language, speech’.

[135] BRIDGE/LADDER. *s-lay ≈ *s-ley [Kmrp]
Tiddim ‘lei’; Lushai lei, lei-háwn [for the 2nd. syll. of the latter, cf. perhaps Mikir [KHG] arlàn ‘be across, stretch over (as bridge over river)’]; Lakhir hlei-dy, hlei-ri ‘stair, bridge, ladder; flight of steps’ (all < *s-ley); Tangkhul [Bhat] sà ‘small bridge’, sàyron ‘ladder’ (<*s-la·y),

[134] HANG. *k(w)ay [Kmrp]
Lushai khái ‘carry in the hand (sthg that hangs); hang up, suspend; lift up’; kuai, ‘droop, hang down’; Tiddim -ka:i/-ka:i ‘be suspended’, -xa:i/-xa:i ‘hang’.
/cf. perhaps Jg. kdi ‘wear flowers or ornaments’/

[135] FLURRIED/DAZED/FOOLISH. *h(w)a · y [Kmrp]
Tiddim ‘hai’/hài ‘foolish’; Lushai hài ‘be giddy, dizzy, dazed; have

77) It is now clear that this etymon is not restricted to LB at all, but is a general TB root. Cf. Proto-Karen *hài ‘fiber’ and Proto-Tamang *hñaf ‘id.’, both cited in Mazaudon 1984.
78) This etymon also has much wider affinities than I had thought. Baxter 1984 (48), following Bodman 1980, cites Chepang (Nepal) hlay ‘ladder’, and Chinese 梯 *t[i]er/t[ei] [GR #391-1] ‘wooden steps, staircase’.
one’s head swim; hāi-huīh, ‘be flurried, confused; lose one’s presence of mind, be bewildered’; vai, ‘bewildered’.

[136] MANGO. *ha-y [Kmrp]
Tiddim -ha:i; Lushai hāi; Tangkhul [Bhat] hɔynutɔhɔy ‘mango’ (hɔy ‘fruit’), hɔykhɔthɔy ‘kind of fruit’, hɔymantɔhɔy ‘cardamom’.

[137] DEW. *da-y [Kmrp]
Tiddim ‘dai; Lushai dai, ‘dew; rainwater settled on leaves’. These forms are perhaps ultimately to be related to PTB *ti(y) ‘water’ [STC #55].

Tiddim ‘ka:i/-ka:i; Lushai kai.

[139] COME1/GO2. *pay [Wmrp]
/This is accidentally homophonous with a Tai root, PTai *pay ‘go’./

[140] CONCEIVE/BE PREGNANT. *pa-y [Kmrp]
Tiddim ‘pa:i/-pa:i; Lushai pā.

[141] PUMPKIN. *ma-y [Kmrp]
Tiddim mɔ:i ‘golden pumpkin’; Lushai māi ‘red pumpkin’ [Lorrain 1940 lists many species (p. 506), this being apparently an important food].

[142] LEG. *pey [Kmrp]

Also perhaps the 2nd. syll. of Abor s-i-ta, Miri s-i-te ‘elephant’ (s-i is an ‘animal prefix’).

79) De Lancy (p.c) cites a large number of apparent cognates, meaning either ‘come’ or ‘go’, both from Kamarupan (Sizang pai ‘go’ Hrangkhol phe ‘id.’) and from other branches of TB (Nakhi bi ‘go’, Rawang -bā ‘V away’, Thakali phe ‘go out’, Kanauri bi ‘go’, Chaudangsi pi ‘go; come’, Baling pi and Vayu phi ‘come’, Miju [LSI] phai ‘go’). We should now reconstruct a general PTB root, perhaps *pay ≥ *bay.
[144] EAT PNNAga *they.

This root is reconstructed by French (p. 477) on the basis of Yogli sei ‘eat’, Konyak heì ‘food’, Mzieme tei ‘eat’. He further compares these to Lushai ei ‘taste; eat’. However, it seems likely that these forms are ultimately derivable from the basic TB root *dz(y)a [STC #66], with the strange vocalic reflexes already noticed in STC (p. 58).

4.36 New *-ey etymologies, where Lahu has a cognate in -i

It will be remembered that -i is the regular Lh. reflex of *-ey (above 4.21). To the examples already given ([46] FRUIT, [47] FIRE, [48] KNOW, [49] PENIS), we may add the following two roots:

[145] LOOK/TRY TO. PTB *ney.
Lh. ni ‘look at; look after, care for’ (< PLB *ney3 or *?ney’); (as auxiliary verb) ‘try V’ing’ [GL, p. 237], e.g. ca ni ve ‘try eating; have a taste’, te ni ve ‘try doing’; Boro nay ‘look’, nayso ‘look after’; (as auxiliary verb) ‘try V’ing’, e.g. za-nay ‘to taste’, labo-nay ‘bring and try’, dag-nay ‘feel by touching’.
Also Garo ni [with unexplained vowel], Dimasa nai ‘look, see’ (both cited in STC, p. 65 n. 206).

[146] YOUNGER SIBLING/Y. SIB’S HUSBAND. PTB *nyey.
Lh. 3-ni-pa ‘younger brother’, 3-ni-ma ‘y. sister’; Akha [ILH] a-nji ‘y. sibling’; WB nii ‘man’s younger brother’ < PLB *?-ney’;
Boro baynay ‘wife’s younger brother, y. sister’s husband’, bib’nay ‘his wife’s y. brother’, nomb’nay ‘your wife’s y. brother’.

4.37 Etyma (some new, some old) displaying interesting phonological variation

[147] THROW/DISCARD. PTB *ba ≈ *ba’i.
Lh. pa ‘throw; throw away’; (as auxiliary verb) ‘discard by V’ing’ < PLB *mba3.
Jg. kaba ~ gaba ‘throw’; Lushai paih ‘throw away, fling away; strike out, cancel, annul, discard, subtract’; Tiddim ‘pa:i/-pa’i ‘throw away’ < PTB *g-ba’i.
This is a classic example of our ‘new’ TB variational pattern *-a ≈ *-ay. (See note 52.)

[148] SINGLE/ONE/WHOLE. PST *day ≈ *dan or *tay ≈ *tan.
Jg. t’ai ‘single’; st’ai ‘one, as of a pair’; gunt’ai ‘single’, lipt’ai ‘only’; Boro ota ‘whole’; Lakher dei ‘only; alone’; Lh. te ‘one; a; the whole’
(< PLB *day²). 80)

An excellent candidate for this word-family is Chinese 矢 *tān/tān [GSR #147 a-d] ‘single, simple’. If this comparison is valid, it is a striking example of our newly noticed (and yet to be evaluated) alternational pattern, *-ay ≈ *-an. (See below [147], [148].)

Lh. tē could of course descend either from PLB *day² or *dan², but given the lack of any independent attestation for a final nasal in LB, I believe *day² to be correct in this case.

Another allofam that must be recognized for LB should perhaps be reconstructed *tey², to account for WB thi ‘single; alone’, ṭsiḍi ‘alone’, as well as Akha ti, Lisu ṭti, Hani [Gao 1955] t’20, and Woni ṭsi2 81.

Still another (probably distinct) root which must be recognized in this semantic area is PLB *e-dik > WB tac ‘one’, Lahu ti ‘only’ [TSR #31 a, c, #48], perhaps to be related to WT gtsiŋ ‘one’, tsiŋ ‘a little, few, some’ [TSR #70].

[149] WAR/STRIFE. PTB *gra’l ≈ *ran ≈ *ray.

STC sets up a PTB root *gra’l ≈ *ran [pp. 15, 71, 113, 155, 173, 178, 191], on the basis of WT hgran ‘vie with, contend for, strive’, ra-glri ‘sword’; Lushai ra’l ‘war against, warrior’; and WB ran ‘quarrel’, which Benedict relates to Chinese 戰 *tǐan/tījän [GSR #147 r] ‘battle; to fight’.

We now see that this set furnishes another example of the ‘replacement of *-l by *-y’ which Benedict had already noted as an occasional Burmese development [STC p. 15, n. 54]. This time the yodizing language is Tangkhul Naga: rai ‘war; battle; feud’, rai kāpīga ‘warrior’, rai khaŋar ‘warfare; make war’, rai-mi ‘soldier; military’. 82)

[150] RED. PTB *t(y)a-n ≈ *t(y)a’y

The STC, which sneaks in more allofamic reconstructions than Benedict used to be willing to admit, presents a root *tyan ‘red’ (> Lushai ḥen, Thado dāsēn, Tiddim san, tshān [add Laizo sēn/sēn]), which is compared to Chinese 矢 *tān/tān [GSR #150 a-b] ‘red, vermilion; cinnabar’; 83) *tsiēn/tsiĕn [GSR #378 g] ‘pale red’ and 紅 *ts’iön/ts’ien [GSR #812 t] ‘dark red’. A second allofam *t(y)a is set up to account for WB ta ∼ tya ‘flaming red, very red (in-

80) This Jg./Lh. comparison was made already in Matisoff 1974 (#154). The Laker form in -ei perhaps points to a short vowel (*dēi). Also possibly related are Lakher sai ‘only, nothing but’ and WT lē ‘mere, only, nothing but’.
81) These Loloish forms were too hastily grouped with Lahu lē in TSR #31b, though of course I remarked on the discrepancy between the unaspirated Lh. initial (< *d’) and the other (Ak, Ls, Ha, Wo) forms that reflect *t-.
82) Kaman Mishmi has developed a -u from the *-l in this root (*tu-kra‘ kuā ‘quarrel, tu-ruwu kuā ‘fight’) [p.c., Scott De Lancey], reminding us of the history of French (eg. cheval ‘horse’, chevaux ‘horses’).
83) This character is mistakenly given as 紅 in STC p. 159h.
tensive) and Chinese ŋiū/tiū [GSR #128 a-c] ‘red’. [See STC pp. 17-18, 159, 169, 188, 189, 190.]

To all these we may now add a pair of Chin forms: Lushai tāi ‘rosy; ruddy; red’ and Lakher sai ‘rosy; ruddy; red; crimson’, sai-law ‘scarlet’ [<*t(ə)a.y].

This complex of forms thus illustrates both the *-ay ≈ *-an and the *-ay ≈ *-a variational patterns that we have been positing.

[151] SQUIRREL/WEASEL. PTB *s-le-y ≈ *s-le-y ≈ s-re-y ≈ s-re-y

STC (pp. 79, 171, 183) sets up a PTB root *sre[d] ‘squirrel; weasel’, on the basis of WT sre-mo(d) ‘weasel’, Mikir īqren (<*m-ren) ‘mongoose’, and WB hrai ‘squirrel’ (<*sre), and identifies the Chinese cognate as 狐 (¼狐) *sřē[d]/sjāŋ [GSR #812 t, u] ‘weasel’.

Certainly to be added to this word family are Lushai hēi—thehēi ‘squirrel’ (<*s-le-y); the first syllable of Abor-Miri lī-po ~ li-bo ‘id.’; and a group of forms from Tangkhul referring to various species of squirrel (sāgr, khāry, cīrēg [Bhat]) that illustrate both the nasal- and palatal-finalled allofams.

Possibly related is the 2nd. syllable of Lh. jāː-swe ‘red-cheeked ground squirrel; long-nosed tree squirrel’ (<*sre-y). though the -w- is a problem.

[152] EARTH. PTB *m-le-y ≈ *m-le-y

STC #152 sets up a root *mliy (=*mluy) on the basis of forms like Mikir mili ~ meli (note the vowel gradation!) ‘sand-bank, bare-ground’; Nung māl ‘country, mountain’; WB mre ‘earth’; and Phön (Samong dial.) tomli ~ tomyi ‘id.’

To these we must now add Lushai lēi ‘earth, ground’ and Tangkhul [Bhat] nāry ‘id.’, which point to an allofam *ley. This is also a perfect prototype for the hitherto inexplicable Lahu form mi ‘earth’ [<*m(ley)]. It now seems clear that the *m- is prefixal (or that this root descends from a fully syllabic prototype, the 1st. syllable of which came to be treated as a prefix).

At least one other case of *-ey ≈ *-ay variation is ‘snuck into’ STC, i.e. TIGER *d-key ≈ *d-kay (n. 324, p. 116). (See above [52].)

[153] HANG FROM/CLING TO/CREEPER. PTB *dway ≈ *nway.

A creeper is defined as ‘a plant having stems that grow along a surface, either rooting at intervals or clinging for support.’ A very interesting set of forms in this semantic area point to a type of initial consonant variation hitherto unrecognized for TB: *dw- ≈ *nw-:

WB twai ‘cling to, attach’, twāi ‘be pendent; hang’, twai ‘hang suspensive-ly’, owai ‘stretch along, as a creeper; creeper’, ?ɔtwai ‘creeper’ (< PLB *dway ≈
*nway [Tones *1 ~ *2 ~ *3] 30 Lahu te, 3-te 'creep' (< *dway⁸ or *dway¹); Jg. noï 'cling to, depend on (as child on mother)', nöï 'suspend, hang', nöï 'hang on to, adhere to', mënöï 'hang on to, cling to; be united (of mind or purpose)', mënöï rù (shang) 'a variety of creeper or climber' (< *nway).

Cf. also Tangkhul [Pettigrew p. 577] nei kahai 'climb up, as a creeper'.

[154] INCHOATIVE PARTICLE. PLB *sVy²

Three LB languages have a particle indicating that an action has not yet occurred or been carried through to its conclusion, or that an action must be performed as a prerequisite for some further action:


However, the vowel correspondences are irregular (WB -e < *iy, Lh. -e < *ay, Ak. i < *-e). Rather than invoke an elaborate alternation here, we should point out the phonological instability of functors, and the possibility of contamination from Tai (cf. Siamese siâ, with similar grammatical functions).

[155] SULFUR. *gan ≈ *gat ≈ *gay.

This interesting word displays wide variation in final in several TB languages: WB kan', Tiddim -kai, Lakher kai. We are undoubtedly dealing with a polysyllabic loanword, probably ult. < Skt. gandha 'odor; odoriferous substance; sulfur' (cf. Mikir [KHG] kodhok ~ kodohok 'sulfur' < Assamese gandhaka).

4.38 Etyma in *-ay where Lahu has a cognate with vowel other than -e

As we have seen, by far the most frequent Lahu reflex of *-ay is -e (above 4.31 [93–104], 4.34 [125–129]).

There are, however, a number of cases where Lahu has a different vowel (i, e, i, or a). At first glance, this looks rather chaotic—fully 5 out of the 9 Lahu vowels may sometimes reflect *-ay:

\[\begin{array}{c}
  \text{Lahu Reflex} \\
  -e & \text{Examples} \\
  \text{i} & \text{TAIL [72], LEFT [80], CEASE [156], LATE [157], DUCK [158], SAND [159];} \\
  \text{e} & \\
  \text{a} & \\
  \text{u} & \\
  \text{O} & \\
  \text{i} & \\
  \end{array}\]

84) WB has another form which might be related, chwai 'attach to, connect with' (< *fsway).
TEN [73], TOOTH [3; 160], VEGETABLE/CURRY [161], HABIT [162];
LAUGH [1]; CHAFF [77]
STAR/SCATTERED WIDE [163], FINISHED [164], YAM [165].

Five of these etyma (TAIL, LEFT, TEN, LAUGH, CHAFF/HUSKS) have already been discussed. Here are the others:

[156] CEASE. PTB *m-dzay ≈ *s-dzay.
WB cāi 'cease, stop, subside'; Lh. jè 'stop, come to a stop, wait, pause, rest; be patient, long-suffering' [this WB/Lh. comparison is made in Bradley 1979 a (#739 B), who reconstructs PLB *m-jay²]; Ak. [PL] tšú~ 'for rain to stop; to no longer have offspring';
Jg., ḥatsai [Hanson] 'cleanse, purify'; [Maran] 'neutralise, erase; bring to a balance; forgive and forget, disregard (as minor irritations); trickle off, cease, terminate (as rain)';
Lakher tle 'cease, stop, come to an end'.

[157] LATE/TOO SLOW. PTB *s-lā-y
WT le-lo (nyid) 'indolence, laziness, tardiness'; Lushai tlahi 'be late; slow (as a clock)'; Lakher tla 'late'; Lh. le 'be late; be the last one'; Mpi lā 'late'.
The Lahu and Mpi forms reflect PLB *lāy¹. (In Proto-Loloish #565, Bradley reconstructs *(k)-l(y)ay³, but Mpi □ reflects PLB Tone *1. Lahu mid-tone (unmarked) reflects either Tone *3 or (as we take it here) Tone *1 with *preglottalized initial.)

[158] DUCK. PLB *bay¹
WB bhāi (< Tone *2); Lh. ā-[p]ē (< Tone *1); Mpi tshè[p]ē⁴ seems to reflect a prototype with final stop. The unusual WB initial (Bradley #58 a reconstructs *b-) adds to the impression that this is a loanword. This certainly seems to be a SEA'n areal etymon. Cf. PTai *pet. Benedict reconstructs PAus-Tai *bets [1975, p. 276].

[159] SAND. PTB *say ≈ *zay.
This is another areal word. Benedict reconstructs PAT *baw(n)draj [1975, pp. 369-70] > Proto-Tai *draj > *zay.
Bradley #334 reconstructs PLB *say², citing WB sāi, Lh. ē, Akha [PL] k'āshui, Phunoi khsāi, Bisu sāj, Mpi nē sī. The Lahu form must be a loan (prob. from Modern Burmese), since native Tone *2 syllables in *s- acquire Lh. very-low tone □ (i.e. we would expect ē); The Akha form reflects a *stopped antecedent.
To the above add Jg. zāi-brū (with voiced initial) and Abor-Miri shi-yé 'sand', yē-pu 'soft sand', yē-rol 'coarse sand'.
[160] TOOTH\textsubscript{1}/TUSK\textsuperscript{85} PTB\textsuperscript{*}m-j\textsubscript{way}.
WB ewai 'eyetooth; tusk', Lh. ci 'tooth', Akha [ILH] dy\textsubscript{j} 'tusk', Lisu si\textsuperscript{5} hch\textsubscript{i} 'tooth', Mpi te\textsubscript{u} 'classifier for tusks' < PLB *j\textsubscript{way} \textsuperscript{1} (Bradley #96B reconstructs *\textsuperscript{2}e\textsubscript{way} \textsuperscript{1}, prob. because of the Lisu tone);
WT mc\textsubscript{h}e\textsubscript{-ba} 'canine tooth, eyetooth, fang, tusk'.

[161] CURRY/VEGETABLE/DISH TO EAT WITH RICE. PTB \textsuperscript{*}r\textsubscript{tsa}'\textsubscript{y} Lushai _tla\textsubscript{i} 'vegetable'; Lahu 3-ch\textsubscript{i} 'dish to eat with rice' (3 'cooked-rice'), Akha [ILH] ts\textsubscript{h}e 'food (except rice)' [not in Lewis, p. 306].
I used to think the 2nd.yll. of Lh. 3-ch\textsubscript{i} meant 'to lift up, exalt' (i.e. curries or vegetable dishes 'lift up' the taste of plain rice; most Lahu informants endorse this analysis), but Akha has another word t\textsubscript{ji} [ILH] 'lift up', which indicates that Lh. ch\textsubscript{i} 'lift up' might really be etymologically distinct from the 2nd. yll. of 3-ch\textsubscript{i}.
It seems likely that Chinese 菜 Anc. ts\textsubscript{ā}ʔ [Karlgren, Analytic Dictionary #1025] 'vegetables; things plucked' is cognate.

[162] HABIT/MANNER/CUSTOM. *IV\textsubscript{y} Jg. l\textsubscript{ā}ʔ 'habit, custom', ?a\textsubscript{l\textsubscript{ā}ʔ} 'conduct', l\textsubscript{ā}ʔ-l\textsubscript{ēn} 'pattern, model, precedent'; WB le' 'practice, acquire a habit'; Lh. 3-li 'custom, rule'.
The vowel correspondences are quite irregular, for this etymon is undoubtedly a loan from Chinese 理 *li\textsubscript{og}/l\textsubscript{ji}: [GSR #978 d] 'regulate, reason, principle' or 體 *li\textsubscript{or}/l\textsubscript{ie}: [GSR #597 d] 'propriety; ceremony; rite, ritual'.

[163] STAR\textsubscript{2}/SCATTERED WIDE. PTB *gray \textsuperscript{f} \textsubscript{glay}.
WB krai 'star', k\textsubscript{r}ā\textsubscript{i} 'scatter, throw about; sow, as seed', kyai 'wide, broad', ky\textsubscript{ā}i 'be wide apart', kh\textsubscript{y}āi 'make wide apart', kh\textsubscript{y}ai 'wide, spread out', khr\textsubscript{ai} 'diffuse';
Lh. m\textsubscript{ā}ʔ-k\textsubscript{a} 'star' (for the 1st yll. see [35] above), Akha a-g\textsubscript{y} 'star' [the Lh. tone points to a variant with *glottalized initial];
for the semantic connection between 'star' and 'scattered wide (in the firmament)', see Matisoff 1980a, pp. 30–1/;
Also Bisu kl\textsubscript{u} 'wide', Mpi kw\textsubscript{s} 'id.' < PLB *gl\textsubscript{ay}\textsuperscript{1/2} [Bradley 1979 a #527];
Lushai t\textsubscript{ā} 'scatter, disperse'; Boro og\textsubscript{r}ay 'be wide (face)'; Pa-O Karen [Soln] l\textsubscript{a}i (< PKaren Tone *B-2) 'wide'.

[164] FINISHED/PAST. PTB *b\textsubscript{w}\textsubscript{d\textsubscript{y}}.
Jg. b\textsubscript{ō}i 'be finished, ended'; WB p\textsubscript{\textsubscript{w}\textsubscript{d\textsubscript{y}}} 'be past the season (as of blossoming or bearing fruit)'; Lushai pe\textsubscript{h}, 'finish, complete; ready, willing', '\textsubscript{\textsubscript{w}\textsubscript{e}i [Weidert] 'come to an end'; Tangkhul [Bhat] k\textsubscript{\textsubscript{p\textsubscript{a}y} 'be complete'.
Lh. p\textsubscript{\textsubscript{d\textsubscript{b}}} 'finish, come to an end' certainly seems related somehow, though it

\textsuperscript{85} See [2] above.
reflects PLB Tone *1 (vs. WB ְרְדִּי < *2).

This word family is still far from understood. Also waiting to be accommodated is WB ְרִי 'be done, completed' (also < PLB Tone *2).

[165] YAM. PTB *m-n[w]ay.

STC (p. 150) compares Jg. nai (actually ְנֶאָה ~ ְנֶאָה) and Sgaw Karen nwe, without offering any reconstruction. To these we may add Lahu m3, Akha [PL] mah, [m3], and, most revealingly, Lotha Naga mānī. This splendid Lotha form reveals that the labial nasal is prefixal, so that the Lahu and Akha cognates display prefix preemption.

This etymology is also significant because of the light it sheds on the relationship between God and the copula. For, as the Lord of the Tubers said, “I Yam that I Yam.”

4. 381 Discussion of these ‘special’ Lahu reflexes

Of the 15 sets where Lahu has a reflex other than -e, three are loanwords or area words (DUCK, SAND, HABIT), and may be disregarded. Three have palatal initials (TEN, TOOTH, CURRY/VEGETABLE) and thus perhaps the ‘higher than normal’ reflex -i. Four more have *initials consisting of a labial element plus -w-, and in 3 of these cases the Lahu reflex is a central vowel: HUSKS/CHAFF *pwa > Lh. ְפִּי, FINISHED *bwa > Lh. ְבָּשׁ, YAM *m-n[w]ay > Lh. m3, LEFT *b[w]ay > Lh. m3. This last, “exceptional” set presents many problems, and cannot be taken as criterial (see [80], [124], and n. 66).

The set for TAIL also has an irregular Burmese reflex and is a tricky, aberrant etymon.

In two cases, a Lahu central vowel appears after an initial which does not tolerate a following -e. Thus ġi ‘laugh’ < *ray, since there are no syllables ְגֶי; and -kə ‘star’ < *gray, since there are no syllables ְקֶי. [See 5.11, below.]

That leaves CEASE and LATE, which cannot plausibly be explained away at present.

At any rate, for any one of these four ‘special’ reflexes there is only a tiny number of solid examples. By far the best attested and least restricted Lahu reflex of *ay is -e.

4. 39 Promising new etymologies for which the evidence is still skimpy

For a large number of fragmentary sets, we cannot yet be sure whether we have the beginnings of valid etymologies or not. Rather than throw them away entirely, or try to make premature reconstructions, we shall merely list the data in this section.
[166] PRECOCIOUS/ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTED: Jg. kāi ‘be forward, premature, precocious (as a child); be ardent and thus exacting, as in work’/Lushai kāi ‘cross (over), proceed; attain, achieve’.

[167] NARRATE: Jg. khāi ‘tell, narrate’/Abor-Miri ki ‘narrate, tell, relate’.

[168] SPRAWL/LEAN: Jg. gāi ‘sprawl (esp. in a vulgar way)’/Abor-Miri ke ‘lean’, ked-ge ‘lean back’/Laizo haay/kāay ‘lean, curve, slant’.

[169] GOAT₂: Jg. bāinām ‘goat’/Mikir [KHG] bī ‘sheep; goat’.


[171] GOOD₂: Jg. (Hkahku dial.) ài ‘good, proper, becoming’/Abor-Miri ai ‘be good, well’.

[172] COPULATE: Lakher hnei/Jg. nēṭ.

[173] SAW (n.): Tangkhul [Bhat] horay, [Pettigrew] khurai, horai (n.), khurai kahāt ‘to saw’/Meithei holay. [This disyllabic word is probably a loan into both languages (<Indo-Aryan?).]

[174] SPREAD (of intangibles): Jg. sōi ‘spread (as a rumor)’/Mikir sōy ‘spreading here and there (with a slight noise)’.

[175] ABSTAIN/REFRAIN: Lh. ce-kan ‘abstain, fast, refrain’/Mikir [KHG] sé ‘abstain from (smoking, alcohol, etc.)’.

[176] STRING THROUGH: Jg. sōi ‘pass ring through nose (of bovine); put fish on a stringer’/WB si ‘string, as beads’/Mikir [KHG] phrōy ‘to insert a new rope into the nose of a buffalo’/Tangkhul khārūy ‘string flowers’, khārūrūy ‘go in between, go through’.

[177] SMALL₂/SLENDER: Jg. sōi ‘small, weak, paltry’/WB swai ‘slender and tapering’ [see Matisoff 1974, #275].

[178] INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN: Jg. kādāi–gādāi ‘who’/Meithei kādāi ‘where’.


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80 Solnit (p.c) cites a PKaren form *re (A-2) ‘good; beautiful’, which looks like it belongs with these Jingpho and Abor-Miri forms, implying an etymon *ray ≡ *(w)ay. But this takes us right into the phonological and semantic territory of our basic GOD/COPULA etymon [below, Section 5]: For a similar semantic link between GOD and GOODNESS/BEAUTY (“that which is, is right!”), cf. WT hla ‘the gods’, WB hla ‘beautiful’ [STC #475].
ingwe 'time, turn, round'.

[180] SQUINT/GAZE: Jg. sói 'gaze at'/Lh. mëf ñe e ve 'look at sthg side-long; squint at out of the corner of one's eye' (mëf 'eye').

[181] STRAIGHT: WT ñere 'straight, upright, firm; smooth (without folds or wrinkles)'/Lh. thë 'straight, upright'.

[182] ONE: Jg. ñi-ñapə/ñapə/Mikir [KHG] e- (allomorph of ñi 'one'.

[183] SCRATCH UP FROM GROUND: Jg. ʒakhráí 'scratch with fingers when searching for sthg on ground'/Lushai ñài 'scrape or draw along; scratch up, scrape; unearth by scratching; clear out loose soil with hands'.

[184] VULVA/RECTUM: Tangkhul [Bhat] hay(-khur) 'vulva'/Meithei hoyloŋ 'rectum' [for the semantics, cf. e.g. WT rkhub 'anus; vulva', gíŋ 'anus; privy parts'; also perhaps Limbu hi-rá 'vulva', hi-rá-hong 'vagina', Mru kai 'vulva'.

[185] COME/ARRIVE: Mikir [KHG] lê 'arrive, reach'/Chinese 来 *lag/ lài [GSR #944 a] 'come'. This is a good example of *-a ≈ *-ay, since there is a well-established PLB root *la¹ 'come' [WB là, Lh. là, Akha [PL] là’, Phunoi là, Bisu là, Mpi là] (Bradley #649 A).

5.0 The Sino-Tibetan copula: morphophonemic shape and semantic ramifications

From the purely phonological point of view, the ST copula may be regarded as basically just another etymon in *-ay—that rhyme on which we have already lavished so much attention. As is usually the case, however, no single invariant proto-form can begin to do justice to the multiplicity of reflexes in the various ST languages. We are dealing with a complex (though relatively well-behaved) word family, wherein the root could be preceded by a number of prefixes and/or followed by suffixes, and where the root itself took several variant shapes, showing alternations of the root-initial consonant and even the nuclear vowel.

Our claim is that there were two irreducible variants of the ST copula from earliest times, one with root-initial *r- and the other with root-initial *w-. At least 5 prefixes attached themselves to the root in one or another

87) Alternatively, the Lahu form may well descend from a prototype *tan, in the light of the Achanh forms tan²⁴ 'straight'/shan²⁴ 'make straight' [Dai 1985].

88) There is no need to dwell on the articulatory and perceptual similarities between [r] and [w]. I have referred to the interchange between the two as the 'wittle wabbit syndrome'. See, e.g. Matrisoff 1978a, p. 56. The lateral l- also turns up in several daughter languages (esp. in Kamarupa), though this appears to be a secondary development from *r-.
daughter language (*p, *s, *g, *d, *m), occasionally two of them at the same time. The dental suffixes *t and *n could follow the root, bringing certain increments of meaning. As for the rhyme, our contention is that it was basically *ay, with a well-attested variant in */i/. There is also sporadic evidence for a variant *ay (=*iy), but I feel this can by no means be considered to be the basic vocalism of the root, especially in view of the key Jingpho cognates in -ai (pai, rai, rai, rai) and the WT cognates in -*e.

We are thus positing the fundamental shape of the copula as

\[ *\text{way} \approx *\text{ray}. \]

When we include all the affixes and root-variants for which there is evidence, and include them in a single 'pan-allofamic' formula, we get something like the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\; *s- \quad (Q) \\
&\; \_ \quad r \\
&\; g- \quad a \quad y \\
&\; (d-) \quad (1) \quad (\varnothing) \\
&\; (m-) \\
\end{align*}
\]

\[ \approx \approx *s- \; r \; i \; \approx \approx *s-\text{rut} \\
\]

**Constraints:**
(a) *ay-t is a possible rhyme, but *ay-n, *ay-t, and *ay-n are not attested;
(b) the vowel *-u- appears only before *-t.

---

89) A subvariant of the combination */-i/ was */-u-\, another instance of the widespread */i\- */u- alternation in TB closed syllables. See above 3.0 and below 5.34.

90) PTB */iy(=\text{iy})* > WT, Jg. */i* [STC p. 6]. We are thus taking issue both with Benedict, who (on the basis of a much narrower range of forms than are considered in this study) reconstructed FST */s-\text{ta}-\text{y} \approx *\text{si}(n \; -t)* [1976, p. 190], and with Thurgood (1982) who reconstructs the copula as */way/.

91) Less frequent increments and variants to the root are in parentheses. 'Pan-allofamic' formulas like this are necessarily something of an oversimplification, since they seem to imply that all variants are of equal antiquity, whereas in reality some are undoubtedly 'younger' than others. For example, the zero-initial (*e.g. Jg. *\text{tai}*) is clearly secondary with respect to */u-\, one of our \textit{ab initio} root-initials. The virtue of such formulas is that all variants of some antiquity are displayed simultaneously, so that the full phonological range of the word family can be appreciated.
Figure 1. Semantic Ramifications of the Copula
Semantically, our etymology covers a wide range. We take the basic meaning to be BEING/IDENTITY/EXISTENCE, and it is in the abstract grammatical realm that the root is most widely attested: as copula, subordinating particle (relative or genitive marker), evidential morpheme, aspectual or modal particle, nominalizer of verbs, etc. Fanning out from this area of semantic space, we find extensions into the ideas of creation (bringing into being, arranging, preparing); ability or potentiality (efficacy, omnipotence); things existing (everything, the world, creatures, “critters”); truth, rightness (“that which is, is right”; individuation (plurality, multiplicity); time or duration (immanence, staying, remaining, waiting); possession (keeping, property, goods); and of course, implicit in all these, God (and his counterparts or antitheses, spirits and demons).

These semantic relationships are crudely tabulated in Figure 1.92)

5.1 Abstract grammatical morphemes reflecting the *way alloanal

This is not the place to try to explain the interconnections among all the grammatical roles and functions that our etymology has assumed in the ST languages.93) In his important study (1982), Thurgood has assembled cognates from a dozen TB languages and Chinese, all of which have copula-related abstract grammatical meanings and a phonological shape which allows them to be derived from a prototype like *way (Thurgood’s *way).

The forms Thurgood cites include the following:94) Sherpa way ~ wye [occurs in final position in the VP, with both transitive and intransitive verbs, in certain tenses and persons]; Khaling we ‘past tense suffix after negated verb’, e ‘evidential particle marking reported speech’; Newari ye (after vowel) ~ e (after consonant) ‘marker of citation-form of verbs; of non-past conjunctive forms of verb stems ending in -n or -l’; Gallong ye ~ ye [note the variation in initial!] ‘future indefinite or negative; question-marker; incomplete past’; Jingpho we ‘1st. person sg. present indicative particle’;95) Lushai e ~ ve ‘a verbal expletive, or verbal ending’96) [ve is used in combination with va at the end of

92) We are following our usual conventions for ‘metastatic flow-charts’ (see Matisoff 1978a, pp. 199-229; 1980a “Stars, moon . . .,” p. 39; 1980b “Arm, wing . . .,” p. 82). A straight line connects semantically related points; a curved line ~ symbolizes a relationship of opposition (which is a particularly close type of semantic association).

93) Matisoff 1972b is a study of the relationships among the grammatical processes of nominalization, relativization, and genitivization—all of which are signalled by the Lahu particle ve.

94) For the moment we are reserving discussion of the forms from the LB branch of the family.

95) Several other Jingpho forms must also be brought into the discussion. See below, esp. 5.2.

96) ‘Throughout the tenses and persons of the indicative mood, e may be affixed without affecting the meaning’ (Lorrain and Savidge, p. 19). This makes e look very much like a sentence-nominalizer, closely analogous to Lahu ve.

In his comment on the first version of Thurgood’s paper, Benedict (1981) cites several related Chinese forms, especially 惟 or 韙 ‘copula; to be’, reconstructed by Karlsgen [GSR #575 n-o] as *diwər/*jiwə, revised to Archaic *sgiwə by Benedict on the basis of xiè-shēng evidence, and referred to a doubly prefixed prototype *s-g-way. The ‘negative copula’ 非 *piwər/*pijwej [GSR #579 a-b] is plausibly analyzed as a fusion of a negative labial element with *-way. [88]

To all these, we may add cognates from several other TB languages: Abor-Miri at [Lorrain 1907, p. 409] ‘clause-final particle’ (apparently an indicative nominalizer), di ‘interrogative copula’; Dulung (T=Trung) əs [Sun Hongkai 1982] ‘copula’ (e.g. ədəs, ədəsə, saə, əa, bəə, əs, naə, ələə, məə, əs ‘What he saw was a snake, it was not a fish’ [p. 163]); Tangkhul Naga wui [Pettigrew, p. 466] ‘genitive particle’; Meithei o{i}-ba ‘copula’ [cited but not exemplified in Thoudam, p. 48].[100]

Of especial importance is the Jingpho particle ʔai (already discussed in Matisoff 1972 b; not cited in Thurgood), which has a number of interrelated functions quite analogous to Lahu ve: [Hanson p. 154/Maran p. 181] ‘copulative conjunction for which there is no equivalent in English; connective used as a relative pronoun; verbal particle, 3rd. pers. sg. pres. indicative; noun affix used in the formation of abstract or verbal nouns’ [in more modern terminology we would say: ‘relativizer; marker of citation form of verbs; nominalizer of embedded clauses; indicative sentential nominalizer’].

This grammatically vital etymon is very much in evidence in Loloish.[101] Besides Lh. ve ‘genitive marker; relativizer; marker of citation-form of verbs; indicative nominalizer’, we find Akha [PL] eu~eu, ‘subordinator; citation-form marker; terminator of utterances in declarative mood’, Liso [Fraser] rgh5 (i.e. r), Phunoi Ø, Bisu hú, Mpi Ø (all cited in Bradley [#’s 838 and 184], who reconstructs PLooloish *wəy3/2).[102]

---

[77] We should add Lushai ai ‘in place of; the instrumental means of, which corresponds exactly to one of the functions of Jg. ʔai ‘instrumental’.

[88] Cf. the long list of Chinese negative morphemes with labial initial: 非 *piwər [GSR #500 a-c], 未 *pwoj [#999 a-d], 未 *miojod [#531 a], 未 *miwər [#505 a], 未 [#105 a-f], 未 [#106 a], 未 [#107 a] (all *miwo).

[99] Note the parallelism between Tangkhul wai, Lh. ve (< *way) and Tangkhul hui, Lh. hui ‘wither’ (< *hway [98]).

[100] The only copula actually illustrated in Thoudam is ni (pp. 167–8), from a distinct root. See below 6.0.

[101] As Bradley (1979a, p. 254) puts it, ‘This particle . . . occurs in every Loloish language for which there is any significant data available on particles’.

[102] We should also add Luquan vəwə-vən ‘subordinator; final particle’ [Ma 1949], as well as Tangut (Hsi-hsia) vəj [e.g. Kepping 1975].
5.11 Lahu reflexes of *-ay and *-ay(=*-iy) after *w- and *r-

Before proceeding, we would do well to justify the reconstruction *way (rather than *way) on the PLoloish level. The evidence indicates that Lahu merged the two rhymes after *r- (to a central vowel, usually i), but kept them distinct after *w-, as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
*ray & \xleftarrow{\text{Lh. gi}} & *way \\
*ray & \xrightarrow{\text{Lh. ve}} & *way \\
(=*riy) & & (=*wi)
\end{array}
\]

The reason for this asymmetry is that Lahu does not tolerate the syllable *ge. See Table VI.

| Table VI. Lahu Reflexes of *-ay and *-ay after *w- and *r- |
|---|---|---|---|
| | PLB | WB | Lahu |
| I. *ray (=*riy) | *ray (=*riy) | re | gi |
| ’water’ | *ray (=*riy) | pre | gi |
| ’run’ | *ray (=*riy) | — | gi |
| ’things; stuff’ | *ray | — | gi |
| II. *ray | *ray | rai | gi |
| ’laugh’ | *ray | hi | gi |
| ’stars’ | *ray | krai | gi |
| ’God’ | *ray | — | gi |
| ’things; stuff’ | *ray | — | gi |
| III. *way (=*wi) | *way (=*wi) | we | vi |
| ’far’ | *way (=*wi) | vi | vi |
| ’snake’ | *way (=*wi) | mrwe | vi |
| IV. *way | *way | — | ve |
| ’copula’ | *way | — | ve |

103 See below (186).
104 See below 5.2.
105 It will no doubt be immediately noticed that we are omitting from consideration the etymon BU(2) (WB way, Lh. vi) [cited in the chart in Benedict 1983, p. 89]; but this is because it descends from *ywar [STC pp. 15, 51, 89] (cf. Lushai zwar, Mikir dzor, Meithei yow-yon), and is “definitely a loan from Austro-Thai” [STC n. 170]. Note that this root is not restricted to ‘Kuki-Naga’ (contra STC’s Index of TB Roots, p. 299). It appears that this *-ar rhyme merged with *-ay at an early date to yield Lahu i.
5.2 Copula-related morphemes reflecting the *ray allofam

A number of important Jingpho forms that descend from *ray reflect both the 'core' and the 'extended' meanings of the copular etymon:
Jg. rāi 'to be, exist (occurs frequently as a verbal auxiliary or emphatic, e.g. shī sā nā rāi 'He will go'); be true, be a fact (dāi khū rāi qā ?āi 'This is the true way'; dāi rāi ?ū gā? 'Let it be so; Let us call this the truth'; rē 'to be; the copula is' (e.g. ādāi wa h-rē rāi 'This is not the person'); rū 'be able, can; form, create, fashion'; rāi 'stay over; remain overnight' (i.e. 'be immanent'); rāi 'stop, wait'; rāi 'things, goods, property'; rīrāi 'id.'

Other forms from *ray with meanings relating to 'possession/ownership' or 'staying/remaining' include: Mikir [KHG] rāy 'keep; set apart; reserve; collect; preserve', cho-rāy 'to own'; Tangkhul [Bhat] khāray 'have' (<*s-ray), khāporay 'cling' khāporay 'wait for srmn', raykan 'watchman', ngarai [Pettigrew] 'stay, remain', khōwāy [Bhat] 'have' (<*s-ray). Also belonging here is the Lahu classifier gī (<PLB *ray) 'collectivity, which only occurs after the numeral tē 'one; the whole', as in chi tē gī 'this bunch of things; all this stuff'.

5.21 *s-ray

Many words descend from the allofam *s-ray, with the *s- usually to be identified with the causative prefix that is one of the best-attested morphological elements in TB:
Jg. sārāi 'to consider, deliberate; get ready, make preparations; to effectuate, take action' (i.e. 'cause sthg to be a certain way'); Jg. also has a fused doublet (where the s- prefix seems to have 'preempted' the root-initial) sāi 'couplet of rāi 'form, create' [107]; Lushai hrai 'turn (as the wick of a lamp), fasten (as a shirt) (i.e. "cause to be a certain way, adjust"); keep (hostage), detain forcibly ['cause to remain in a certain place']; WT sgre-ba (<*s-g-ray, a doubly prefixed allofam) put or place in order; put together; compare (e.g. records); Tangkhul hai kasā 'set aside, put by, reserve' (hai apparently <*hrai, with preemption of the r by the *prefix); khādy [Bhat] (<*g-s-ray) 'place, put, keep, set, place, retain; to be' [Bhat 1969, p. 68]; sei-hāy 'place to keep cows', hok-hāy 'enclosure for pigs'.

One particularly well-defined semantic extension of *s-ray is 'plurality; everything':

106) It looks as if this rē is simply an allegro (i.e. fast-speech) variant of rāi. It is under the 'secondary' high-falling tone [mast], which often represents a sandhi variant of another underlying tone. (E.g., verbs under the low tone acquire [mast] when preceded by the negative prefix; lā 'have', h-lā 'not have'.)

107) When rāi and lāi co-occur as couplets in an elaborate expression they constitute what we have called an 'incessuous compound'; i.e. one which contains two different allofams of the same word-family. See Matisoff 1978a, pp. 118-9.
PLURAL/EVERYTHING. PTB *s-ray.
Lakher krai ‘plural affix for denoting company, etc.’; Mikir [KHG] háy ‘plural of non-animate nouns’; Boro [Bhat 1968, p. 158] stray ‘to V everything’ (e.g. za-stray ‘eat everything’, zankri-stray ‘shake everything’, ran-stray ‘distribute everything’); Lahu hi ‘pluralizer, esp. of personal pronouns’ [Matisoff 1973a, p. 65], e.g. pà-hi ‘we’, nà-hi ‘you (pl.)’, yà-hi ‘they’, Cà-là = hi ‘Cà-là and his friends/group’ [See Table VI].

5.22 *g-ray

Also well-attested in combination with our copular root is the semantically elusive *g-prefix. We have already noted this in tandem with *s: WT sgre-ba ‘put or place in order’ < *s-g-ray, which is directly comparable to Chinese 惟 or 隻 ‘copula’ < *s-g-ray [above 5.1]. With these forms belongs Jg. grrái ‘lay in order, as wood for a sacrifice or funeral pyre’. (This word also means ‘very; very much’ [probably an outgrowth of the ‘pluralizing/maximizing’ sense] and ‘(not) yet’ [used adverbially esp. before negated verbs; see the discussion of the ‘time/duration’ sense, below 5.24].)

The most striking appearance of a velar prefix with this root is the Jingpho word for ‘Supreme Being; Creator’ (krai ksaá), the existence of which was one of the chief motivations for undertaking this study.

Burmese also provides evidence for a velar-prefixed variant in the shape of two pairs of particles that display an unusual variation of initial consonant: WB kai ~ rai (Mod. Bs. ke ~ re) ‘co-ordinate marker; and (esp. in lists)’ [Okell 1969, Vol. I: 5.10, 8.2; Vol. II: p. 459] and kai ~ rai’ (creaky tone: Mod. Bs. ke’ ~ re’) (1) ‘verb-sentence marker: non-future, translatable by English present or past tense’; (2) ‘subordinate marker, possessive’ (e.g. hsei ye’ snaí ‘the smell of the medicine’) [Okell, I: 5.8, 7.4; II: p. 460]. The variants with velar initial occur only if the preceding syllable is under the stopped tone (Bs. ‘Tone 4’). Note the close parallelism in grammatical functions between kai ~ rai’, Lahu ve, and Jg. ?ai, all of which are both ‘non-future verb-sentence markers’ and subordinators.

Both in its ‘verb-sentence marker’ and ‘subordinate marker’ functions, rai’/kai’ has an elegant variant ?i’, which looks even closer phonologically to Lh. ve/Jg. ?ai.

5.23 *m-ray

Jingpho has a pair of forms with a prefixal m– that is perhaps a reduction of the widespread TB root *mi(y) ‘man, person’ [STC pp. 107, 119, 158]: Jg.

108 Burmese has another particle with this morphophonemic behavior, WB kaw~raw (Mod. Bs. ko~yo) ‘coordinate marker’ [Okell II: pp. 469-70].
marai 'human being', marai 'individuality, manhood, force, strength of character, charisma' [gloss and tones from Maran].

5.24 *lāy ≈ *la.y

A well-attested variant with lateral initial has sometimes been semantically specialized into the area of TIME/DURATION, but sometimes retains its basic copular meaning.

(a) *lāy 'copula': Tangkhul [Pettigrew, p. 340] lei 'it is; be, have'; leiya kachi 'to exist; existence'; lei kaphun 'residue, remainder'; Proto NNaga *ley 'to be' [French, pp. 450–1] > Yogli lei, Wancho le; French also cites Meithhei lei, Zeme lei, Maring lai, Ao (ǝ)lì, all 'to be'.

(b) *la.y ≈ *g-ray DURATION/DURATIVE/STILL/YET:
Lushai lāi 'time, season; in the act of; about, almost, nearly, quite' (≈ lía 'barely'); Tiddim lai 'still, yet'; Jg. gorāi [see above 5.22] 'not yet', as in shī gorāi n-dā rāi 'He has not yet arrived', gorāi khım sā 'Don't go yet!', gorāi nō? 'Wait a little! Not yet!', gorāi rāi? 'Wait a moment! Hold on!' [Hanson, pp. 185–6].

5.25 Words for ‘demon/evil spirit’ from *-ray

We are now getting very close to God. It is a commonplace of semantic theory that antonyms or opposites are particularly close conceptually, differing from each other by only a single feature for which one pole of the opposition is plus, and the other minus.109) ‘God’ and ‘demons’ stand as moral antitheses, but they share the attributes of immanence, power, eternal existence.

A couple of TB languages have words for ‘demon’ that descend from the unprefixed root *-ray:

Tangkhul rai 'unclean spirit' [Pettigrew notes 'high tone']; Boro rāy 'devil'.

Tibetan has a group of demonic forms that reflect the *g- and *d- prefixes: WT gre-bo 'a species of demons', gre-mo 'female demons of this kind' (< *g-ray); ḥdṛe 'goblin, gnome, imp, demon, evil spirit, devil; colloquially the most frequent word for such beings' [Jäschke, p. 284] (<*d-ray).

Lushai huai 'evil spirit, demon, devil, nat' comes from an allofam *s-wa.y.

Another group of words for ‘demon’ is characterized by -(~) vocalism [below 5.82].

Although this is somewhat speculative, I would also like to suggest a relationship with Chinese 危 ‘destroy, ruin, be ruined’ *g’wer/ʔwai~ *kwer/kwai~

5.3 Copula-related words with vocalism other than *-ay

5.31 *ray (=-*riy)

The WB forms rē, ?orē ‘business, affair’ seem quite parallel, both semantically and morphologically, to Jg. rāi, ?orāi ‘things, goods, property’ [above 5.21], The WB vocalism, however, points to PLB *raya (=*riy).

Notice the same e ≈ ai variation (within a single language and synchronically) in Jingpho rāi ≈ rē ‘copula’ [above 5.2].

5.32 *s-ri
t11)

In “Sino-Tibetan: another look” [STAL] (1976), Benedict cites WT sri ‘a species of devil or demon [devouring children]; a vampire’, Lushai hri ‘the spirit supposed to cause sickness’, and Chinese 山*xlia/’fie [GSR #23 a] ‘a mountain demon’ < PTB *sri-n [p. 190]. (For the allofams with final -n, see below 5.33.)

A few degrees removed in semantic space, but descending from a phonologically identical prototype is WT sri-ba ‘retain’ (cf. the forms meaning ‘keep, possess, retain’, above 5.2).

Note that Benedict does not go so far as to relate these forms for ‘demon’ in STAL to the root he reconstructed as the copula in STC #264.

5.33 *s-ri

Benedict [ibid.] cites WT srin-po (fem. srin-mo) ‘demons’ (cf. also ḥdre-srin ‘goblins and srinpo’s’) [for ḥdre, see 5.24], comparing it to Chinese 神 ‘spirit, divine, supernatural’ [Benedict modifies Karlsgren’s Archaic reconstruction from *di’en to *śiyen], and implicitly to Chinese 身 *śyen/śi’en [GSR #386 a] ‘body, person’ [Benedict modifies Karlsgren’s Archaic reconstruction to *śiyen].

I would like to include also WT srin-bu ‘insect, worm, vermin’ (2nd. element < ḥbu ‘worm, insect’). This fits very neatly into the same niche of semantic space as English critters (< creatures), i.e. creepy-crawly little varmints that are sometimes regretfully recognized to be part of God’s creation.112)

110) Benedict [p.c.] now suggests several more demonic/terrifying Chinese allofams that reflect *s-k-way or *s-h-ray, including 我 *kjuor/kjusei: [GSR #569a] ‘spirit, ghost, demon’; 犬 *jor-/juji [GSR #574a] ‘terrifying; to overawe; majesty, dignity, to fear, loathe’, and 我 *jor-/juji ‘fear’ (for the last two, Benedict reconstructs Archaic *s-kjuor).

111) This is the root reconstructed as *s-ri (actually *s-ri-t) in STC #264: “WT srid-pa ‘existence’ (with suffixed -d [i.e. dental stop]), WB hri ‘be’.”

112) It is fascinating to note that a graph meaning BUG is used as a loan for the Chinese copula in the oracle bones, and in early bronze inscriptions *t1, p. Serruys and K. Takashima], though of course this in itself doesn’t prove any organic semantic connection, but only a strong phonological similarity between BUG and COPULA.
5.34 *s-ri-t<**s-ray-t

We have already discussed this proto-allofam in the context of the Lahu -eʔ reflex (above 3.0 and set [5-A]). It is represented by WT srid-pa 'existence; state of being; life; things existing in the world' and Lh. hēʔ 'be the case, be so'. As explained above, WB hui 'be so, be true' is a sub-variant (<s-ru>) exemplifying a typical TB *-i- ≈ *-u- variational pattern.

The WT form red-pa 'be; be ready' [Jäschke, p. 585] looks as if it acquired its dental suffix after the shift PTB *-ay > WT -e had taken place. It seems to me that the Tibetan 'negative copula', WT med-pa 'be not, exist not' is most straightforwardly explained as a fusion of the negative adverb mi 'not' with red-pa. This analysis differs both from that of Jäschke (p. 417), who derives med-pa from mi yod-pa [yod-pa and yin-pa are two more WT copular verbs, neither apparently related to our present word-family], and from that of Benedict [STC p. 183, n. 481], who tries to connect med-pa to Chinese 滅 *miat 'extinguish, destroy'.

6.0 Conclusion: of gods and copulas, and the finals *-an and *-ay

The indigenous TB words for God seem to be localized in two basic semantic areas: on the one hand there are associations with SUN and SKY, and on the other with BEING.\(^{114}\)

The SUN/SKY/GOD association is especially clear in Mikir. Mk. arnam 'god' is definitely to be related to PTB *nam 'sun, sky', as tentatively suggested in STC (p. 148, n. 405). Furthermore, Mikir has another word arni [KHG] which means both 'god, deity' and 'sun, day'. This word is certainly from PTB *nī́y (=*nīy) (better, *r-nī́y) [STC #81], which also underlies such forms as WT nyi-ma 'sun, day'; Lushai ni 'id.'; Jg. ni 'day'; Lh. ni 'day', mū-ni 'sun'; WB ne 'sun', ne' [creaky tone] 'day'.

We should, I believe, go further, and also relate to this etymon WB ne 'be, dwell; stay, remain; have a residence; continuative auxiliary verb' [see Okell II: 269].

The chain of associations

SUN / SKY / GOD / BEING / DWELLING / COPULA

\(^{113}\) See above, set [45] and note 25. Another word which might well represent an old fusion of the negative morpheme with the TB copula is WB mai [creaky tone] 'be wanting, be not full' [Judson, p. 767], perhaps < *ma: + way.

See also the Chinese negative copula ndef, above 5.1.

\(^{114}\) Many TB languages of India use Indo-Aryan loanwords for 'God', especially in translations of the Bible. It would make an interesting study to trace the patterns of borrowing from religiously prestigious languages into the minority tongues, e.g. Garo isi:ol, Boro ishôr 'God', ult. < Skt. isvara.

\(^{115}\) While we are at it, I believe we should also bring in a group of forms with the durative meaning 'have, get, obtain', reconstructed as a separate root *(r-)ney in STC #294 (Bahing ne 'take', WT rneyed-pa 'get, obtain', Lushai nei 'get, have, obtain'). See [50], above.
becomes blindingly clear when we consider a group of homophonous forms from Luquan Lolo: \( \text{fē}^{11} \) ‘be; copula’; \( \text{fē}^{11} \) ‘heaven, sky’; \( \text{fē}^{11} \ \text{dž}^{16} \ \text{dzy}^{15} \) ‘name of a spirit/god’, \( \text{fē}^{11} \ \text{pē}^{14} \ \text{qē}^{14} \) ‘id.’ [Mā Xuéliáng 1949].

Throughout TB, in fact, there are copular morphemes which must belong to this etymon, e.g. Jino (Loloish) \( \text{ne}^{9} \) ‘copula’, Meithei \( \text{ni} \) ‘id.’, Lushai \( \text{ni} \) ‘id.’ (cf. Lu. \( \text{keim}^{9} \ \text{ka} \ \text{ni} \) ‘I am’ [Thurgood 1982, p. 74].

To return to our *ray root, which is planted primarily in the realm of BEING (rather than SUN/GOD), we may sum up its distribution in TB in the sense of ‘God; deity’ as follows:

(a) It is represented by at least three forms in Loloish, the first syllables of Lh. \( \text{gē}^{1} \ \text{qā}^{1} \), Liu \( \text{wu}^{4} \ \text{sa}^{9} \) and Akha \( \text{gūi}^{9} \ \text{shā}^{1} \) \( ^{117} \).

(b) The first element of the Jingpho word \( \text{korai} \ \text{kasa}^{9} \) is certainly cognate to the Loloish forms. Like \( \text{gē}^{1} \ \text{qā}^{1} \) and \( \text{wu}^{4} \ \text{sa}^{9} \), it embodies a sophisticated and abstract conception of the deity. As Hanson (1913, pp. 167–8) puts it:

“While... the everyday religion of the Kachins is spirit worship, which originated in fear of the ancestral ‘shades’, they have always apparently had an idea of a supreme power. A great spirit, \( \text{Karai Kasang} \), is above all the \( \text{nats} \), and he alone is the original creator, he is the Supreme One... immortal, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent.”

(c) Our root has acquired the antithetical meaning of ‘demon, evil spirit’ in many languages, often via a prefix and/or suffix. See the discussions of \( \text{*ray}, \text{*rī}, \text{*s-rī-n} \) [above 5. 24, 5. 32, 5. 33].

(d) This root apparently occurs with the meaning ‘God’ in several Kamarupan languages, perhaps underlying the 2nd. syllables of Maring \( \text{tharai} \) ‘God’ and Kok Borok \( \text{subrai} \) ‘Lord’.

In Meithei (Manipuri), the word \( \text{lay} \) ‘God’ that is still in common use [Thoudam, p. 242] is attested in an inscription as early as the 8th century A.D.:

\[ \text{Laai-ki} \ \text{thouchaam-taki} \ \text{laairik} \ \text{pru} \ \text{amaa} \ \text{phangchā-e} \]

GOD of grace of book ancient book; prūnhā one/a obtain PRT

‘having obtained an ancient manuscript through the grace of God’.

116 Also related conceptually must be LQ \( \text{fē}^{14} \ \text{ma} \) ‘lucky, auspicious, happy’.

117 Fraser (p. viii) defines this Liso word as ‘creator of heaven and earth... acknowledged to be the supreme head of all spirits, good and evil’.

118 This form is not in Lewis’ dictionary, and is provided by Bradley (Proto-Loloish, pp. 328–9; Lahu Dialects, p. 47). As Bradley notes, the Akha initial \( \text{g} \) does not correspond regularly to the initials of the other Loloish forms.

119 N. Khelchandra Singh, Manipuri Language: Status and Importance (pp. 10–11), quoting from the ‘Phayeng Copper Plate’, said to be from the reign of King Khongtekba of the 8th c. A.D. The same inscription contains the form \( \text{Laai-fo} \) ‘God’, with the same (honorific?) suffix as Shiva pu ‘Shiva’, \text{Shiva} Devi’, \text{ibid}.

The Meithei still preserve animism along with an overlay of Vaishnavism and Shivaism. (Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Glimpses of Manipuri Language, Literature, and Culture, pp. 7–12).

We may note parenthetically that one of the epithets for Shiva is \( \text{bhav} \), literally ‘being, existence’ [p.c. Robert P. Goldman].
The lateral initial here is paralleled in other copula-related words in Kamarupan languages (above 5.24).

In conclusion, let us return to Lahu for a moment. We have demonstrated that the basic Lahu reflex of *-ay is -e, which is the same as the reflexes of *-an and *-at (above, section 2). We may in fact envision a gradual evolution of the *-an rhyme, perhaps passing through intermediate stages of palatalization like *-aiŋ before merging with the reflex of *-ay:120)

\[
\begin{align*}
*\text{an} & \rightarrow *\text{aiŋ} \\
\text{ay} & \rightarrow e
\end{align*}
\]

Ironically, perhaps, three of the four Lahu words we have identified as descending from the copula *ray \cong *way have -e rather than -e as their vowel (gā 'classifier for collectivities' [\textless PLB *ray1], hi 'pluralizer' [\textless PLB *s-ray1 or], gē(-ta) 'God' [\textless PLB *ray1], but that is because *r- conditions this special reflex of the *-ay rhyme. The fourth is of course ve [\textless PLB *way3], our infelable ubiquitous particle, which displays the proper -e reflex, and is certainly connected to the other members of this family in the most intimate copular way.

What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

7.0 Appendix by Richard Kunst, Duke University: A NOTE ON SEVERAL POSSIBLE CASES OF THE COPULA WÉI 佪/HUĪ 燕 IN THE LINE TEXTS OF THE YIJING

This brief note may serve as a footnote to the paper presented by Graham Thurgood to the XIVth Sino-Tibetan Conference, entitled "The Sino-Tibetan Copula *way" (1981), and to the "Comment" on Thurgood's paper circulated at the conference by Paul Benedict (1981). Its purpose is to call attention to the possibility of some interesting occurrences in the oldest (Western Zhou) stratum of the Yijing 易經, or Book of Changes, of the Old Chinese (OC) copula wēi < *diwər, variously written in classical texts 佪, 燕, 唯, or simply 佪, and also the copular hui < *g'iwad 佻 or 燕 (inscrptional form), 燕 (received text form). Benedict, followed by Thurgood, sees the two forms 佪 *siwər and 燕 *g'iwad as closely related, "single- and double-prefix forms, from an earlier *g-way or *s-g-way" in Sino-Tibetan.

The copular forms wēi/hui usually appear in early OC at the beginning of a phrase, preceding a noun which is often in exposure, out of its normal place in word order, and which receives extra stress. Sometimes wēi/hui precedes

120) We have in fact noticed several cases of interplay between *-an and *-ay: cf. RED [150], ONE [148], WAR [149].
a whole sentence. In the bone and bronze inscriptions, this pattern is especially
common. E.g., *wei jiù yuè fā...* 九月伐 "It shall be in the ninth month that
we attack..." Serruys (1974:74, 114–119) has studied the pattern in the oracle
bone inscriptions (OB1), and proposes seeing a slight distinction between *wei*
and *hui* in this usage, which he describes as that between a "normal copulative
verb" *wei*  伟 and its "causative counterpart" *hui* 惠, which behave differently
grammatically, e.g., in negation (p. 115). Serruys captured the nuance in Eng-
lish by translating *wei* as "It is..." and *hui* as "Consider (it to be)..." The
latter verb "consider" turns out also to suggest neatly the related form *hui* 惠,
which is at the same time a full word meaning "considerate" and, in Shijing, a
possible alternate form for the copula *wei/hui* (p. 116).

Now when we come to the text of the Yi Jing, we find a couple of fairly
obvious cases of the copular *wei/hui* and others that are quite debatable. As is
well-known, the language of the Yi Jing is difficult to understand, and was prob-
ably so from the beginning, since it is an anthology of brief, unconnected notes
compiled as an aid to diviners who were already familiar with the subject mat-
ter, as we are emphatically not. Centuries of subsequent reinterpretation to suit
the prevailing philosophical tastes have obscured the text still further.

Here are all the cases in the Yi of the graphs 貰, 唯, 唯, 佳, 雖, 专, and 惠,
whatever their interpretation may be:

ji lù wú yú, wei rù yú lín zhōng 即鹿無虞，惟入于林中 "He approached a deer
without a gameskeeper, (it was that?) he entered into the middle of the
forest." (3.3)

jù xi zhì, nài cōng (zòng?) wei zhì 抓系之乃從 (繼?) 繋之 "They grabbed and
bound him, then loosely (?) tied him." (17.6)

yǒu fù, wei xīn, xiāng, xīng yǒu shàng 有孚 (附) 續心, 行 (行) 有尚 (賞) "There
will be captives. It is the heart of (or "tie the hearts")? Sacrifice. Travel
will have its reward." (29.0)

jǐn qí jiāo, wei yòng fā yì 几其角，維用伐邑 "It thrust forward its horns: means
use it (as an omen) in attacking the town." (35.6)

jūn zǐ wei, yǒu jiē, jí 君子維，有解，吉 "A noble’s tether-rope (or tethere
thing) was unfastened (or "a noble who was tied up was released")? auspicious."
(40.5)

yǒu fù, huì xīn, wù wèn, yuǎn, jí, yǒu fù huì wǒ dé 有孚(附) 續心，勿問，元
吉，有孚(附) 續我德 "There will be captives. It is the heart. Don’t ask! Very
auspicious. There will be captives. It is our spirit-power (mana)." (or,
with 得 for 得, "may it be we who gain"). (42.5)

suī xīn wù jiù, wāng yǒu shàng 隨旬元吉，往有尚 "Though it be a ten-
day week, there will be no misfortune. Going will have its reward." (55.1)

Those cases, like 17.6 or 40.5, in which *wei*  伟 is clearly a non-copular main
verb ‘to tie,’ or a noun ‘rope,’ may be ignored. The one case of *suī <si>**or 隨
in 55.1 is included not only because it is a copular usage, but also because it illustrates very well how the specialized, concessive sense of “although” which it had throughout the later history of the Chinese language gradually evolved from the generalized copula 为了 itself. In 55.1 another form of the copula could substitute quite nicely: e.g. 唯句无咎. In fact, this is just the way the line appears in the Mawangdui MS of the Yijing (Gao Heng 1979:47). Note that even the context of 55.1 is similar to that of 29.0, with a reference to the reward resulting from going somewhere. In the same fashion, the specialized sense of “only” later applied to some of the other forms of 为了, especially 唯 and 稀, as in, e.g. 为了耳ield de 回on 唯二人得还 “only two men managed to return” (Shiji, juan 107). Other cases of sui as an incipient ‘although’ could be cited from Shijing and other early texts.

Here, however, our main interest is in those cases in the line texts 29.0 (actually a “hexagram text”) and 42.5 where in the exact same context you fu...xin, in one sentence (29.0) the graph 为了 唯 is used, while in the other (42.5) the graph hui 惠 is used, and in that same line 42.5 hui appears a second time in another apparently copular function, hui wǒ dō “it is our spirit-power,” “consider it our Virtue.” If these are accepted as both parallel and indeed copular, this provides useful hitherto unnoticed evidence about the close relation, both phonological and semantic, of 为了<*diwɔr 为了 and hui <*g'iwɔd 惠, and also in support of the argument that the copula hui 惠 or 惠, which is so common in the oracle bone inscriptions, could be rendered with the graph 惠 in certain received texts, with the added “heart” element being perhaps analogous to the heart element added to 为了 为了 in the graph 为了.

The “if” in the previous sentence is a big one, since there are so many other proposed interpretations of the sense of these passages, several of them radically different, yet carefully bolstered with evidence. Even as they are translated above they are susceptible to varying understanding. What might “it is the heart,” “let it be the heart,” “it should be the heart,” etc. mean? If it were not so anachronistic for the Shang-W. Zhou era of the Yijing hexagram and line texts, a line such as 42.5, in which the later Confucian terms 心 xin ‘heart’, 惠 hui ‘to favor,’ 乎 fù ‘trustworthy,’ and 德 de ‘virtue’ all appear, might well be expected to involve an ethical statement. Yet this is more characteristic of post-Confucian China than the pre-moral magico-religious ethos of Shang and Western Zhou China. Given the frequency of concern with sacrifice both in ancient Chinese society and in the Yijing text itself, the most obvious interpretation would be that when a captive was offered in sacrifice, it included in this case some ritual involving the victim’s heart. The removal of a victim’s heart and various other organs is described in Confucian ritual texts like the Li ji. Both the removal and consumption of a victim’s heart are reported ethnographically both for traditional China (Eberhard 1968:172) and twentieth-
century Chinese minority ethnic groups, and familiar to readers of traditional Chinese novels like Shuihuzhuan 水滸傳 Outlaws of the Marsh. But any interpretation along these lines was quite thoroughly suppressed by Confucian China in following ages.

Certainly more evidence and careful study is needed before any final conclusions may be drawn about the sense of the lines 29.0 and 42.5, and the possible role of the copula weī/hui in them. But at the present time, I believe viewing these lines as parallel cases of copular weī/hui provides a simpler, more attractive interpretation than any other. They should be taken into account in future studies of the copula in OC and in Sino-Tibetan in general.

Notes to Appendix

(1) Reconstructed Old Chinese forms are, unless otherwise noted, the Archaic Chinese forms from Bernhard Karlgren, Grammata Serica Recensa (Stockholm, 1957). Note that the graph 鹽, when it (rarely) occurs, is traditionally read zhui, meaning "a kind of short-tailed bird."

(2) For example, Gao Heng 高亨 (1979:273) would read the phrase in 29.5 as "If there is a captive who harvests two 'hearts,' make a sacrificial offering (of him)." He would read 42.5 as "There is a captive who complies with my heart ... there is a captive who complies with my virtuous conduct." (p. 366). Li Jingchi 李鏡池 (1981:57-8) following Wen Yiduo 1956, paraphrases 29.5 as "Put a captive in a pit, and use nice talk to persuade him, or fet him with wine and food, to make him be content to be a slave." He sees in 42.5 a reference to the capture of many Shang soldiers by King Wu of Zhou at the time of the Zhou conquest. There are two ways of dealing with captives: one is "If there are captives, comfort them with nice words, and do not make presents (wên 閏)," while another is "If there are captives, they will be grateful for what they receive (徳 u.f. 得) (as presents)" (p. 84). Wen Yiduo (pp. 30-31) renders the phrase hui ... xín like hui děi: "extend one's virtue to others."

In accord with the sense of line 17.6, quoted above, which is also in a sacrificial context, it might also be possible to treat weī 韫 in 29. as the full verb 'bind': "There will be a captive. Bind the heart." Such an interpretation is encouraged by a reference to binding with ritually-colored cords a few lines later in the same hexagram-chapter, but it would not explain the same phrase occurring with hui in 42.5.

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[sets marked with an asterisk are morphophonemically and semantically related to this etymon]

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<td>scratch up from ground</td>
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<td>war</td>
<td>149 = STRIFE</td>
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</table>
watch
water
wave
wear (clothes)
weasel
whirl
whole
wind around
wither
wolf
yam
younger sibling/1
younger sibling/2
zone

= GUARD/LEAD (!)/TEND

= BRANDISH/WHIRL

= DRESS SOMEONE

= SQUIRREL

= BRANDISH/WAVE

= ONE (1)/SINGLE

= CONNECT BY ARCHING

= FADE

= DHOLE/DOG, wild

= BELT/WAIST

= SPOUSE OF YOUNGER SIBLING/Y. SIB.

= BELT/WAIST

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