

# A NEW LOOK AT THE HISTORY AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE

## TAI LANGUAGES

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0. In the field of comparative Tai one of the problems that linguists have not fully come to grips with is the problem of classification. Li (1960) divided the Tai languages into three groups; and we have his (1958) classification of the Northern branch. Brown (1965) has classified the Tai languages spoken in Thailand. Haudricourt (1956, 1968) has given us a slightly different picture of the Kadai, Kam-Sui, and Tai languages, uniting the Central and Southwestern branches of Li into one (Thai conquérant, Thai proprement dit) as distinct from the Chuang branch (Northern Branch of Li). More recently, the author (1972) has attempted to define certain phonological criteria by which to classify the Southwestern (SWT) dialects. It was suggested in the latter that these dialects be divided into two groups, P and PH, and that the languages of Sukhothai, Southern Thai, and Lao form one subgroup of PH while Neua, Phuan, Ayutthaya, and Siamese form another. Gedney (unpublished) has expressed the opinion that the Central and Southwestern languages of Li form only one branch but to date we lack data from the Tai languages spoken roughly in the expanse between the Red River and Cao Bang in North Vietnam. Now, in what might be labeled a subsumation of the author (1972), we would like to suggest the possibility that the same phonological criteria used in classifying the SWT dialects, may in fact be used in grouping the Central and Southwestern branches into one, whereas the same criteria would not be readily applicable to the Northern Branch. In addition we offer a catalogue of Central and SWT tone systems and discuss some of the historical ramifications of the classification.

### 1. Classification

#### 1.1 The phonology of Tai tone systems

In the author's previous article it was shown that certain types of tone system splitting and coalescing were associated only with the PH group and certain others only with the P group. This was summarized by stating that, historically, the P group tone system was \*ABCD 123-4 with the possibility in some modern dialects of A12-34, apparently a local development in the Northern Thailand, Keng Tung area. For the PH languages there were reconstructed two types of tone systems, \*1-23-4 / BCD 123-4 and \*ABCD 1-23-4.

The generalization was made that 1-2 splitting never occurs with P languages, and 12-34 never occurs with PH languages. At first, it appears that dissimulative pressure is coercing the two sets of identical initial stops to remain tonally distinct, just as aspirated stops of PH languages in rows 1 and 4 must always remain so. This

would explain why the A12-34 split and never A1-234 occurs in the P group as an option to the normal A123-4.<sup>1</sup> Lexical items in row 3, because of their initial voiced stops, are in no danger of being confused with those of row 4. Ordinarily, however, rows 2 and 3 behave the same.

Now, it appears that this previous generalization was not without its exceptions. In the author's work with the Nüa language spoken slightly to the north of the Sipsongpanna region of Yunnan, and in two other nearby languages, Tai Mao and Tse Fang (probably what has been referred to as Chinese Shan) it was found that these P languages have A1-234 (Nüa) and A1-23-4 (Tai Mao, Tse Fang).

This information leads one to the conclusion that tone splits are not always governed by laws of linguistic balancing. Note that in Nüa just cited A column syllables with initial p, t, k, < \*b, d, g will have identical tones to A column syllables with initial p, t, k < \*p, t, k. But in Tai Mao and Tse Fang the syllable distinctions will still remain intact for PT initials \*voiced, \*voiceless aspirated, and \*voiceless unaspirated.

The phenomena of P group A1-23(-)4 splitting is obviously not widespread (unless it occurs in more of the northern Shan dialects for which we have no reliable data at the present) but it seems peculiar enough to warrant a tentative separate subgrouping in the classification scheme.

## 1.2 SWT dialects

The languages of the Southwestern Branch may be classified according to the following hierarchy of criteria.

1. P / PH
2. \* A column
3. \* BCD columns
4. B-DL coalescence<sup>2</sup>

The chart below illustrates the SWT classification.

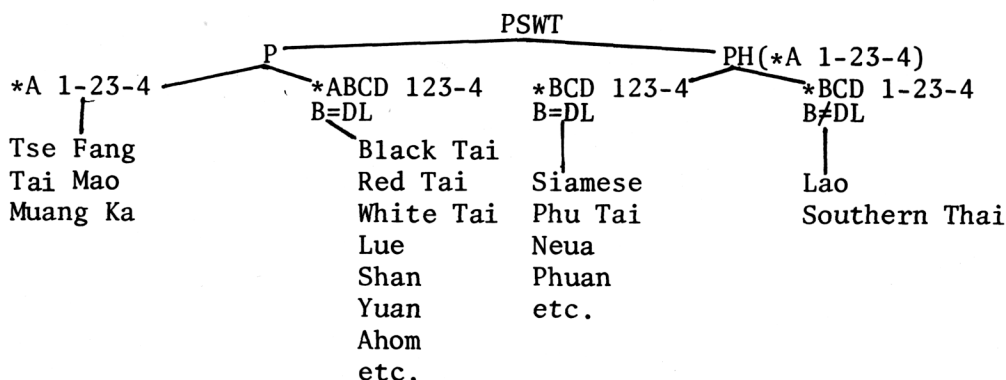


Chart 1 Classification of SWT dialects

### 1.3 Central Tai dialects

When the data from the Central dialects are included in the study and the classificatory criteria of 1.2 are applied we find exactly the same type of diversification as in the SWT dialects: e.g. a P group (Ning Ming, Sze Lo, Lung Chow, Ping Siang, Lung Ming, Western Nung) and a PH group (Lei Ping) and tone system variation which correlates in precisely the same way, A 123-4 or A12-34 in the P group and A 1-23-4 in the PH. If our criteria are at all valid, there would appear to be no reason for separating the Central and SWT branches, and certainly not in the same way that the Northern dialects may be separated. Perhaps, in time, the same principles used here may be applied to the Northern branch.

### 1.4 A tone system catalogue

We now present a catalogue of tone systems from most of the recorded Central and SWT languages. The reader will note the great variety of systems in the Lao-Southern Thai subgroup, while there is less in the Neua-Phuan and still less in the P group.

The B-DL coalescence, common to most other Tai languages and most probably a feature of PT, is found complete in only three Lao-Southern Thai languages, Yo, Kaleung, and Korat. In the remaining dialects of this group this feature is either present only partially or not at all. Because of this peculiarity the Lao-Southern Thai subgroup is certainly the most divergent tonally. Chart 2 shows the degrees of this coalescence within these languages.

- |    |           |   |          |                              |
|----|-----------|---|----------|------------------------------|
| 1. | B 123-4   | = | DL 123-4 | (8, 9)                       |
| 2. | B 1234    | = | DL 123   | (4)                          |
| 3. | B 123     | = | DL 123   | (7)                          |
| 4. | B 123     | = | DL 4     | (5)                          |
| 5. | B 4       | = | DL 4     | (11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17) |
| 6. | B 123(-)4 | = | DL 123-4 | (1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 46)         |

#### Chart 2

#### Degrees of B-DL coalescence in Lao-Southern Thai

An interesting B-DL pattern occurs in Nyq (26) where there is no split in the B or DL columns. One suspects is closely related to Phu Tai (23) which has no split in DL but has a peculiar coalescence of A4 = B123.

Another interesting tendency is the B 4 = C 123 = DL 4 coalescence found sporadically in certain Neua-Phuan languages as well as in some P languages (19, 24, 25, 30, 31, 35). This might indicate the tones of these boxes, originally separate, became similar enough to merge into a single tonal unit. But why is it restricted to only these subgroups?

1. Luang Prabang, Kene Thao,  
Dan Sai, Loei, Sisaket,  
Attapeu

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

2. Vientiane, Lom Sak

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

3. Nakohn Phanom, Chaiyaphum,  
Nong Khai, Bua Yai, Ubon,  
Khon Kaen, Udon

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

4. Muang Ngoy

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

5. Nam Bac

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

6. Lao Neua (Nam Tha), Tai Bo  
(Done Keo)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

7. Yooy

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

8. Yo, Kaleung, Korat

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

9. Kaleung (Kong Lo)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

10. Roi-et

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

11. Chaiya, Lang Suan, Sawi

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

12. Chumphon

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

13. Ranong

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

14. Phuket, Krabi

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

15. Ranot, Satun, Nakhon, Trang,  
Hua Sai, Songkhla,  
Thung Sang, Khuan Khanun

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

16. Ko Samui

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

17. Yala, Takua Pa

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

PH - \*BCD 123-4

18. Sam Neua

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

19. Pak Seng (Phuan)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

20. Muang Sen, Tai Yeuang

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

21. Phuan Lopburi

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

22. Muang Vat

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

23. Phu Tai

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

24. U Thong

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

25. Siamese, Nong Khaang  
(Hua Phan)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

26. Nyo (Na Kaang)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

P - \*ABCD 123-4

27. Lue Chiang Hung, Muang Yong

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

28. Lue Ceng Tong, Muang Sing,  
Muang Long, Ou Neua, Kanlampa,  
Sop Tiek, Houei Lao

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

29. Black Tai (Muang La),  
White Tai (Muang Lai,  
Muang Yon)

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

30. Red Tai (Ban Na Ngon)<sup>4</sup>

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

31. Red Tai Muang O, Ta Law

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

32. Tai Meuai, Tai Kuan

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

33. Tai Khang

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

34. Tai Nyuan, Tai Khün

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

35. Shan

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

P - \*A 1-23-4

36. Muang Ka (Nüa)<sup>5</sup>

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

37. Tai Mao

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4



38. Tse Fang

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

Central Languages

39. Ning Ming

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

40. Sze Lo

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

41. Lung Chow

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

42. Ping Siang

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

43. Lei Ping

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

44. Lung Ming

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

## 45. Western Nung

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

Addendum to PH - \*BCD 1-23-4

## 46. Khon Sawan

A	B	C	DL	DS
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

## 2. The historical setting

### 2.1 The age of the Tai family

The age of PT has been estimated at not older than 2000 years (Gedney unpublished), and the language diversity within the family today is perhaps comparable to that of the Romance branch of Indo-European. The next closest relative to Tai is Kam-Sui (consisting of Kam, Sui, Mak, and T'en (Li 1965)). The relationship, though readily apparent, has not been precisely defined. Beyond this, the so-called Kadai family appears to be closest, again, in a way that has not been set forth clearly due to lack of reliable data.

In the present study we are concerned with the period between PT unity and 1353 A.D. (the ascendancy of Fa Ngum and the beginning of Lao recorded history), and more especially between the eighth century and 1353.

### 2.2 Chronological table of the Tai speaking domain

On Chart 3 a number of dates of events within the Tai speaking world have been arranged so as to give the reader an historical perspective. From the dates and locations given here we might conclude that the Tai began migrating westward and southwestward from the ancient capital of Ba Thuc in the eighth century, and that during the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries they found their way approximately to their present homes in Southeast Asia.

Chart 3 -- Historical events in the 11th - 14th centuries

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nung-Tri-Cao, a Nung chief and king of Đại Lịch was proclaimed emperor of Đại-Nam in 1053 but was chased out by the Chinese and Vietnamese. (Guignard 1912)</li> <li>2. The word SYAM first occurs in the Cham inscriptions. (Luce 1958)</li> </ol>	<p>11th Century</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The word SYAM first occurs in Pagan inscriptions 1120. (Luce 1958)</li> <li>2. The Li (Đại) first recorded in Hainan by the Chinese. (Seidenfaden 1952)</li> <li>3. The word SYAM first occurs in Khmer inscriptions. (Luce 1958)</li> <li>4. Ai Lao Kingdom existed in region of Sam Neua-Xieng Kho. (Robequain 1929:108)</li> <li>5. Patseng founded the Lue kingdom of Alopi in 1180. (Chiang 1950)</li> <li>6. First use of the word Khamti in Pagan inscriptions in 1192. (Luce 1958)</li> </ol>	<p>12th Century</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. c. 1220 Pa Nuang and Bang Klang Thao conquer Sukhothai.</li> <li>2. 1228, Chao Ka Pha founded the kingdom of the Ahoms moving to the west from Burma in 1215. (Lambert 1952)</li> <li>3. The Chinese term for what is apparently Chinese Shan, Pai-i, first used in the Yüan-shih in 1278. (Luce 1958)</li> <li>4. 1262-1292, Yuan conquer Lanna. (Griswold &amp; Prasert 1969:58)</li> <li>5. 1290. Ai Lao first mentioned in the Vietnamese annals, stating that in that year King Trần-Nhân-Tông lead an expedition against them. (Vo Thu Tinh 1970:25)</li> <li>6. The first record of an orthographic system for any Tai language The Sukhothai inscription of Rama Khamheng.</li> <li>7. The Sukhothai Thai purported to be in the isthmus in the late 13th century. (Teeuw &amp; Wyatt 1970:5)</li> </ol>	<p>13th Century</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1350. Ayutthaya founded by King Rama Tibodi.</li> <li>2. 1353. Fa Ngum becomes King of Laos. He is 36th on a list of kings in that capital. The 12th king on the list is Khun Lo, purportedly the first Tai speaking king on the list, those that preceded him were Non-Khmer speaking.</li> </ol>	<p>14th Century</p>

We may observe on the historical chart that the dates increase in direct proportion to the increase in radiational distance from our proposed homeland at Ba Thục. Thus, the Cham inscription's mention of SYAM in the 11th century is closer and earlier than the founding of the Lue Kingdom of Alopi in 1180, which is again both closer and earlier than the founding of the Ahom kingdom of Assam in 1228. At the core of these imaginary semi-circular concentric rings is the capital of Ba Thục, hotbed of military and political upheavals in the eighth century which we suggest may have been the instigating factor in the westward and south-westward migrations.

### 2.3 The indigenous histories

One of the gaps in Southeast Asian history has been the failure of scholars to research thoroughly the many indigenous histories of the Tai groups. Instead, the tendency has been to lean heavily on the Chinese records, that while admittedly profuse, usually leave grave doubts as to the interpretation of exactly which ethnic group is mentioned. This was the case in the blind acceptance of the now outdated Nan Chao theory of Tai origin. The Tai-Nan Chao association was apparently first suggested by Gerini (Carthew 1952) and was eventually discredited by a close examination of the Chinese *Man Shu* (Mote 1964) and the consideration of linguistic evidence (Gedney 1965). But there do exist indigenous histories of certain Tai groups like the Lue, the Black Tai the Lao, which should be more closely examined by historians and compared to the linguistic evidence. These histories have recently begun to be available and it is hoped that evidence from them will add to the total picture we hope to sketch of Tai movements. On Chart 4 we offer the miscellaneous pieces of information this writer feels to be of importance from several indigenous histories. (Some will naturally overlap with Chart 3.)

Once again we see evidence of westerly migration. The inscription of Rama Khamheng's looking back to Laos and Luang Prabang; the Lao tracing their home to Muang Boum on the upper Black River;<sup>6</sup> the Lue of Ou Neua's claim that they came from North Vietnam before reaching Sipsongpanna<sup>7</sup>; the Black Tai histories whose first recognizable place name is Muang Lo (Nghia Lo) before moving westward<sup>8</sup>. All of these support a general picture of the Tai movement flowing to the west and the southwest.

### 3. The Tai migrations

At this point it would be premature to begin a discussion of actual migrations but perhaps it will be useful to look at our evidence from that point of view. Let us first make three assumptions: (1) The former Southwestern and Central branches are one, the South-Central branch (SCT); (2) The homeland of Proto-SCT was near the ancient capital of Ba Thục in the vicinity of Cao Bang; (3) The languages of this branch were one at the time GTS spread over China and Southeast

Chart 4 -- Indigenous Tai histories

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intimate knowledge of the Mekhong and the Ou.</li> <li>2. Possibility of the Upper Nan Valley as a migration route, the home of the Kaaw. (Griswold 1969:57)</li> <li>3. Muang Rat and Muang Bang Yang, home of the first Tai invaders of Sukhothai were probably located to the northeast of Sukhothai, between Uttaradit and Sajjanalaya. (Griswold 1967:3)</li> </ol>	Sukhothai
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the Muang Muoi Chronicle the first recognizable place name is Muang Lo (Nghia Lo), and from there the movement of the people is to the west.</li> <li>2. This same chronicle contains a pumpkin myth similar to the Lao myth of Khun Borom.</li> <li>3. Muang Then is <i>not</i> the same as Muang Theng.</li> </ol>	Black Tai
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The ruling family of Ciang Nung traces its origins to Patseng, who conquered the Kingdom of Lê (Meeng le, Muang Le ?) and founded the Kingdom Alopì (Aravi) reaching east to the Red River and west to the Salween, in 1180. (Chiang 1950:35ff)</li> <li>2. The Lue of Ou Neua claim to come from North Vietnam and they also say the first king of Sipsongpanna passed through Ou Neua on the way.</li> </ol>	Lue
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. According to the Jinakālamāli the Yuan conquered Lānna between 1262 and 1292. (Griswold and Prasert 1969:58)</li> </ol>	Yuan
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Lao of the upper Nam Ou and Nam Bac say the Lac came originally from Muang Boum which is near Muang The on the upper Black River.</li> </ol>	Lao

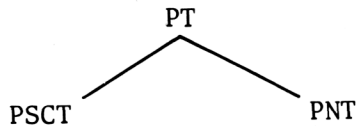
Asia.

In Ba Thục in the eighth century a series of uprisings began (Guignard: vii):

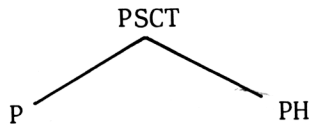
En 742-745 guerre civile entre les tribus; puis, peu après, révolte général des *Thay* qui fondent deux royaumes éphémères dans le bassin du Si-Kiang. De 780 à 794 nouvelle révolte des tribus, qui, sous la direction de la famille *Thay* des Hoàng, envahirent le Hounan et s'emparèrent du chef-lieu de cette province. Bientôt vaincus, les révoltés se soumirent pour recommencer les troubles en 816, 821, et 822.

We may imagine that these upheavals occurred shortly after GTS and that they were the cause of some major Tai migrations to the west. As we cannot trace exact routes of migration, we can schematically represent a series of rough chronological stages beginning with the earliest division of the Northern Branch from SCT<sup>9</sup>.

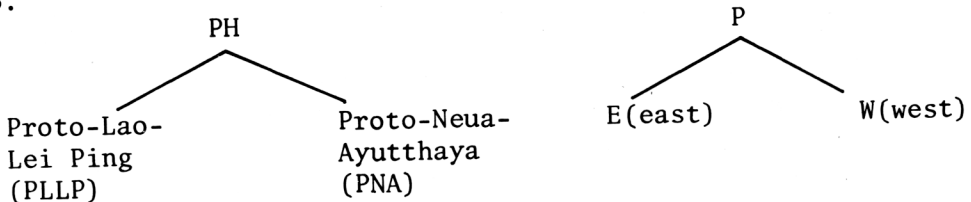
Stage 1: (250 BC ?)



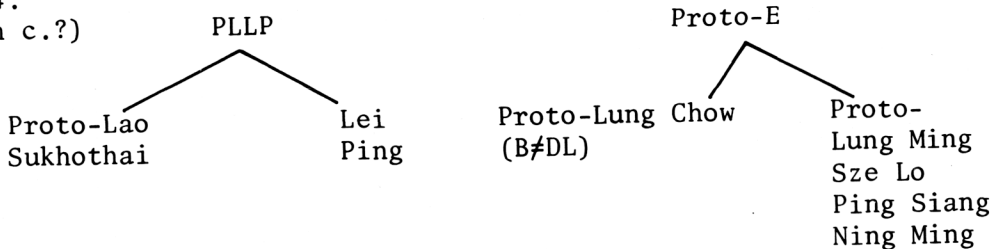
Stage 2. (8th c.)



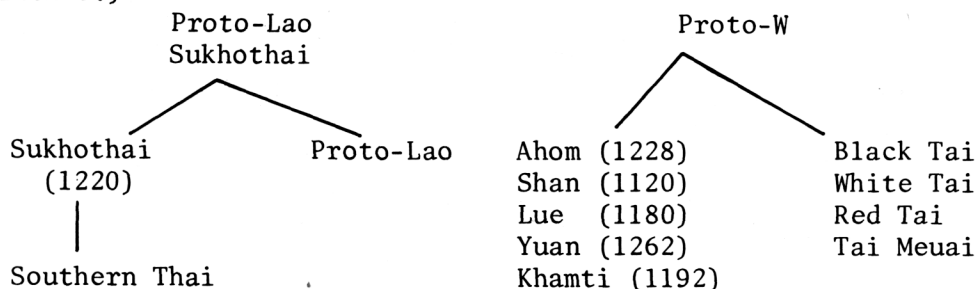
Stage 3.



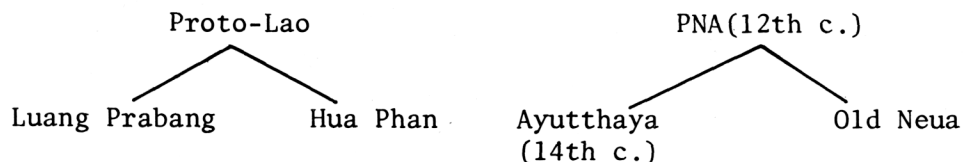
Stage 4.  
(9-10th c.?)



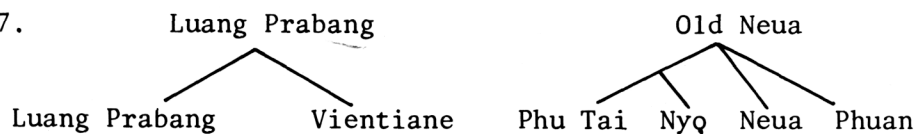
Stage 5.  
(11th-12th c.)



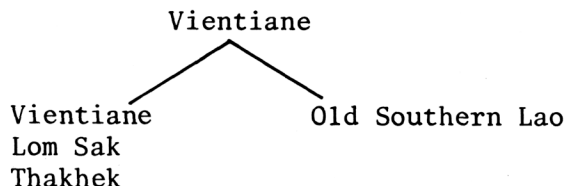
Stage 6.



Stage 7.



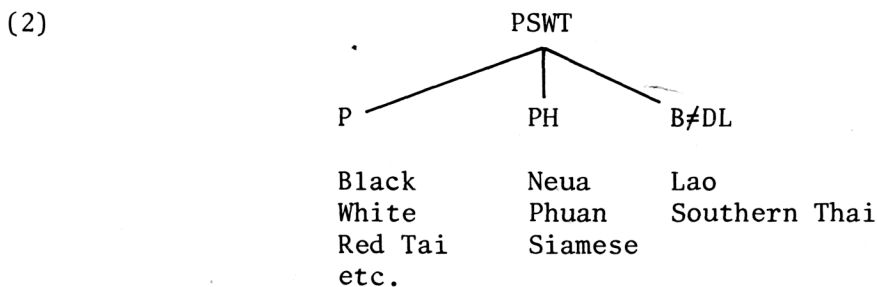
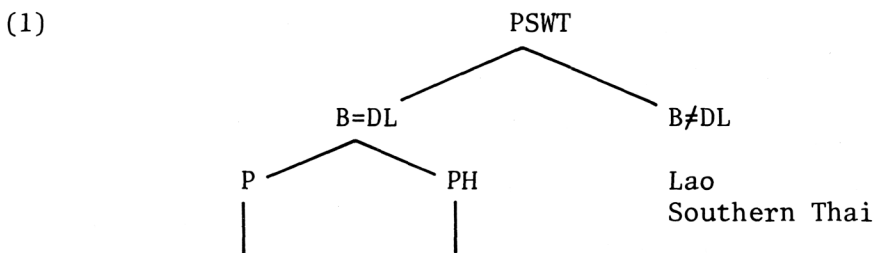
Stage 8.



There are still many obstacles to be overcome before we can accept this approximation of historico-linguistic events. What of the writing system? We assume it was created before the sound shift, yet there seems to have been little or no Indic influence in the Cao Bang area. Was it Cham-based? (Seidenfaden (1967:64) says the Ong Bes of Hainan may have used a Cham alphabet, and they were certainly a group which broke away from the Tai mainstream early.) We still await more data from the region between Cao Bang and Muang Lo (Nghia Lo). In the meantime the author hopes the above outlined approach will provide food for thought for Tai linguists.

## NOTES

- 1 Although I know of no statistical studies which have been made, it is obvious to those who have worked with Tai languages that there are more lexical items falling into the A column than all other columns combined. It is possible that BCD columns are more subject to tonal coalescing because the differentiating loads of tones in these columns are less difficult to bear. Thus, in most Lao dialects it is not surprising to find no splits at all in the B column; or in many Neua-Phuan dialects no DS split.
- 2 A propensity for B-DL coalescence in the tone systems of the Northern dialects indicates this was probably a feature of PT. Thus, it might be argued that this hierarchy of phonological criteria is arbitrary and that the primary division might just as well be based on the B-DL coalescence feature. This would allow the following possibilities:



- <sup>3</sup> Vientiane, Muang Ngoy, Nam Bac, Lao Neua, Thai Bo, Yooy, Yo, Kaleung, Kaleung Kong Lo, Sam Neua, Pak Seng, Muang Sen, Muang Vat, Phu Tai, Nong Khang, Nyō Na Kang, Yeuang, Lue Ou Neua, Lue Kanlampa, Lue Sop Tiek, Lue Houei Lao, Red Tai Muang O, Red Tai Ta Law, Tai Meuai, White Tai Muang Yon, Lao Attapeu, and Nūa Muang Ka are from the author's field notes.

Luang Prabang, all Southern Lao dialects, Phuan Lopburi, Siamese, Nyuan dialects, Shan, Kene Thao, Dan Sai, Loei, Sisaket, Lomsak, Khon Sawan, Thurakhom, Chaiyaphum, Nong Khai, Bua Yai, Ubon, Khon Kaen, Udon, U Thong, Korat, Roi-et, and from Brown (1965).

Lue Chiang Hung, Lue Muang Yong, Ning Ming, Sze Lo, Ping Siang, Lei Ping, Lung Ming, Western Nung, are from Gedney (fieldnotes).

Nakhon Phanom, Khün are from Egerod (1961).



Black Tai Son La, White Tai Muang Lai, and Red Tai Ban Na Ngon, are from Gedney (1964).

Lung Chow is from Li (1966), Lue Ceng Tong is from Li (1964).

Lue Muang Sing, Lue Muang Long, are from Seree Weroha (fieldnotes).

Tai Mao and Tse Fang are from Jimmy G. Harris (fieldnotes).

- <sup>4</sup> Gedney (1964:4) is unsure of vowel length in his Red Tai dialect.
- <sup>5</sup> The author spent but a short time on this dialect. It is possible that there is a A4=B4 coalescence but the notes are unclear.
- <sup>6</sup> Interview by the author with Thao Feng of Nam Bac on August 16, 1972, now residing in Ban Hong Sirattana in Luang Prabang. His statements were supported by Sen Kham Monti of Muang Ngoy on August 17, 1972 in Luang Prabang.
- <sup>7</sup> Interview by the author with a Lue prince of Ou Neua, Phong Saly, Chao Ong Kham, assistant provincial governor of Phong Saly province, in August of 1972.
- <sup>8</sup> History of Muang Muoi (kwaam too m'ang), a Black Tai manuscript belonging to Kham Bing of Nong Bua Thong, Vientiane, formerly of Muang Muoi in the Sip Song Chu Tai.
- <sup>9</sup> Northern Tai is taken here to mean the group of languages including Li's (1960) Northern Branch and Haudricourt's (1968) Cao-lan as well as Saek and Ong Bê.

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