

Review of *Lajiyu Yanjiu* 拉基语研究李云兵 by Li Yunbing 李云兵 .  
2000. Beijing: Zhongyang Minzu Daxue Chubanshe.

The book under review here *Lajiyu Yanjiu* (A study of the Lachi language) by Li Yubing (LYB) is one of the new series 中国新发现语言研究丛书 (Collected Research on Newly Discovered Languages of China) under the editorship of Professor Sun Hongkai of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Nationalities Research Institute. This new series plans in the years to come to describe the understudied languages and people groups within China that lie outside the fifty-five officially recognized nationalities, now that the descriptions of the officially-recognized groups, the 语言简志 (Brief linguistic sketches) series, has been completed. This undertaking is of great value and of great importance at this crucial time of rapid linguistic change and language shift, as in many homes parents are choosing to pass on Chinese or some other regional language instead of their mother tongue to their children. Moreover, in some cases the books in this new series may be the first accounts of length about these languages. That may be true of Lachi, for example. As well, this undertaking has given opportunity to many younger scholars to publish important work as China's senior researchers and linguistic scholars near retirement. In this case, Mr. Li Yunbing has provided a 333-page introduction to the Lachi language of Yunnan Province, Maguan County, which is the language of a small population of speakers living in the China-Vietnam Borderlands area. Lachi and closely related language groups in this geographic area are highly informative for comparativists studying the genetic affiliation of Thai and its linguis-

tic relatives, as has been demonstrated very convincingly by Ostapirat 2000.

*Lajiyu Yanjiu* is divided into six chapters. The study opens with a chapter on: (a) the origin and distribution of the Lachi, (b) the language use situation, (c) societal structure and means of winning a livelihood or means of production, (d) material culture, and (e) non-material culture. Chapter 2 is called *The language* with subsections on: (a) initials, (b) rhymes, (c) tones, and (d) syllable structure. Chapter 3 sketches *The lexicon* with treatments of: (a) component parts of lexical items, (b) meanings of the lexical items, (c) synonyms, antonyms, and homophones, (d) making up lexical items, and (e) expanding the lexicon. Chapter 4 is about *Grammar* with subsections on: (a) lexical categories, (b) phrases, (c) sentential elements, and (d) sentence types and sentence templates. Chapter 5 addresses *Dialectology*. Chapter 6 discusses questions of the *Genetic affiliation* of Lachi with subsections on: (a) Lachi and Kam-Tai comparisons, (b) Lachi and 羿 Yi comparisons, (c) Lachi, 仡佬 Gelao, and 木佬 Mùlǎo comparisons, (d) Lachi and 布央 Buyang and 普标 Pubiao (Qabiao) comparisons, and (e) the position of Lachi. The book ends with a discussion of Results and three short narratives.

The most important feature of the first chapter concerns the names of the Lachi, for names have always been a problem in regard to this group. Nowadays this ethnicity is called in Chinese 拉基 with *Hanyu Pinyin* form *lājī* and a pronunciation [la<sup>55</sup>ci<sup>55</sup>]. In Vietnam these people are called *La Chi* and early 20<sup>th</sup> century French sources

used the romanization *Lati*, presumably because *Lachi* would have been a French spelling for *[laf̃i]* and not for *[la tci]*. In Chinese historical books, chronicles, gazetteers, and descriptions, however, the characters often used to designate the people and language group, the Lachi, have been 喇 𪗇 • which would be pronounced *[la<sup>3</sup>po<sup>2</sup>]*; sometimes the first character was also written with a dog radical. It is to be noted, though, that 𪗇 may apparently also be read *ji* *[tci]*, as is seen in the website describing the hanging coffin burial practices of the 𪗇人 Jiren of Zhaotong County, Yunnan Province on the website [www.yunnaninfo.com/Chinesebig5/yunnan/zhaotong/scenery\\_jirenxuan-guan.htm/](http://www.yunnaninfo.com/Chinesebig5/yunnan/zhaotong/scenery_jirenxuan-guan.htm/). At a later time the characters 拉 鸡 became common. When this group is described in western languages, it has traditionally been spelled *Lachi* and not *Laji*. I follow this practice as well and use the exonym *Lachi*. Despite the bewildering flurry of monikers put on them by the Chinese, the French, and other western writers, the contemporary autonym of the Lachi people, i.e. *[li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>tjo<sup>44</sup>]*, appears to harken back to *la po*, and may have a separate history from *[la tci]*. It is to be noted though that *li<sup>35</sup>* in this name is reconstructed by Ostapirat 2000 as \*lak<sup>D2</sup> 'child, offspring', which is a term often used to refer to the people as a whole, cf. Thai *lùuk* 'child' and Kam *laak<sup>10</sup> kəm<sup>1</sup>* 'the Kam'. Further confusion is added to the history of self-designations by the Lachi themselves, as in Vietnam where in my field notes the most common autonym is recorded as *[qu<sup>31</sup> te<sup>34L</sup>]*. The form *qu<sup>31</sup>* is the etymon for 'people', cf. Ostapirat's 2000 reconstruction \*khra<sup>C1</sup>, which is manifested in Flowery Lachi as *hu<sup>33</sup>* or *fu<sup>33</sup>*. The second element of the name is unclear as to origin at the moment.

LYB points out that this group has no official status in China, but it is an officially recognized minority of Vietnam. He states Lachi are found in Yunnan Province at Maguan County where there are both written documents and oral traditions regarding the history of this group. They are also found in Vietnam. Indeed, we know from our own fieldwork in Vietnam that the Lachi are found today at Xin Mãn Township 菁门 formerly called 兴门 of Hoàng Su Phì District 黄树皮 and also at Bắc Quang District (北光), all in Hà Giang Province 河江. The village names are Bản Phùng 曼蓬 (BPh), Bản Păng 曼邦, Bản Dìu 曼尤 (BD), Bản Má, and Bản Máy 曼美; those in Bắc Quang District are originally from Bản Dìu and were moved there in 1979 during a time of hostilities on the Sino-Vietnam border. Although the original settlement of the Lachi precursor people in ancient times is thought to have been in Chinese territory, the Lachi people of Yunnan Province today are immigrants from Vietnam. LYB reports that the old people tell that the Yunnan Lachi moved to Maguan County about 300 years ago from the Vietnamese villages of Maibu, Maidu, and Maiha because of killings and conflicts, but it is not known where these places are located today. Another account has it that they came from the district of Amizhou from the places called *Rooster Village* and *Hen Village*. As the story goes, the Lachi were defeated in a dispute and needed to abandon their then homeland. The two villages agreed to emigrate at the moment of the auspicious cry of the chicken. But, in Rooster Village it was a rooster who first screamed out a greeting to an early dawn and that village heard the signal and set out, whereas those in Hen Village did not hear it and waited until noon when the brood hen began clucking when she had

laid her eggs. Only then did they commence and thus the two groups were separated. Afterward when they were asked where they were from, they say they were *A-chi* people, meaning people from 阿迷州鸡寨 Amizhou (Jizhai) Chicken Village, but some misunderstood this name hearing it as *Laji*. In the Yunnan Gazetteer of the Ming Dynasty in 1383 it states that Amizhou belonged to Lin'an Fu. In 1648 Amizhou was renamed Kaiyuan Prefecture. Later in the Qing (1644-1911 AD) it was called Ami; and in the beginning of the Republican Period (1912-49 AD) this area was definitively renamed Kaiyuan County. The Lachi are related linguistically to other borderlands peoples such as the Gelao, Qabiao, Paha, Buyang, Laha, and En ethnicities. All are associated with the people identified in Chinese chronicles as 濮 Pú.

According to the 1995 China census there were about 2,400 Lachi with four branches distinguished: (a) Flowery Lachi of Maguan County Yunnan Province at Jinchang Zhenzhong Zhai 云南省马关县金厂镇中寨, the focus of LYB's study; they call themselves *[li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>jo<sup>44</sup>ŋ<sup>44</sup>tco<sup>55</sup>]*, (b) Chinese (Han) Lachi are found at Hanjin-zhen de Niulongshan, Duzhao Zhai, Chenchang Shier Daohe, Laozhai, Renhezheng Baishiyan, Shiqiao, Huomujin, where they call themselves *[li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>tco<sup>44</sup>]*, (c) the Pocket Lachi of Nanlaoxiang of Busu and call themselves *[li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>te<sup>35</sup>]*, and (d) the Red Lachi of Xiaobazi Zhen of Tianpeng and Ladong where they call themselves *[li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>ke<sup>55</sup>]*. There are also Lachi found scattered in Yanshan, Qiubei, Xilu, and Malipo Counties. LYB reports that the Lachi of Maguan say their Vietnam relatives, numbering perhaps 7,900

include the Black Lachi who call themselves [li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>tjoŋ<sup>44</sup>], the Long-haired Lachi who call themselves [li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>pi<sup>55</sup>] and the White Lachi at Bả Pằng, Bả Máy, and who call themselves [li<sup>35</sup>pu<sup>44</sup>pu<sup>55</sup>].

In Chapter 2 the topic turns to the phonology of Flowery Lachi, the representative location in China, which has a relatively simple sound pattern in comparison to many languages of the area. In LYB's analysis there are no clusters—though some initials have secondary articulations. Initials are: /p p<sup>h</sup> m v f w pj p<sup>h</sup>j mj ts tsh z s t t<sup>h</sup> n l tj t<sup>h</sup>j lj tɕ tɕ<sup>h</sup> n z c k k<sup>h</sup> ŋ h kj k<sup>h</sup>j hj q q<sup>h</sup>/. Prominently, there are no voiced stops, but there are uvulars. There is also a much atrophied system of codas in the syllable rhymes /it ik en ien aŋ ap ak oup un uŋ uan uaŋ/ as well as /i ie ĩ e ei a ai au iau ā ə ou u ui ua uai/ in open syllables.

Chinese Lachi has six tones illustrated by: ku<sup>55</sup> 'mushroom', ku<sup>44</sup> 'alcoholic spirits', a<sup>44</sup>ku<sup>35</sup> 'shoulder', ko<sup>13</sup> 'to eat', a<sup>44</sup>qui<sup>53</sup> 'before', and ku<sup>13</sup> 'to pick, pick out'. There are also a great many tone sandhi changes in Lachi that takes LYB three pages just to list. Canonical word structure is CV(V)(C) or C exemplified by ?i<sup>44</sup> 'water', ŋ<sup>35</sup> 'a door, gate', naŋ<sup>35</sup> 'rain', pje<sup>55</sup> 'fire', ljou<sup>35</sup> 'millet', ljaŋ<sup>55</sup> 'black', ljuan<sup>35</sup> 'shadow' (in LYB's analysis secondary articulations are counted as separate segments, so pje<sup>55</sup> 'fire' would count as CCV.)

It is to be noted that without comparative help Lachi tones are quite challenging to analyze, since all syllable-final oral stops have disappeared with the result that a total of eight or ten CV-syllable tones are created which have trajectories often quite close and some differing only by their voice qualities. For the purposes of compari-

son in Table 1 below, I have used single syllable examples to contrast the values recorded by LYB, Ostapirat, and by myself for the Lachi of China and Vietnam in which sandhi effects are minimized.

Table 1 Lachi tones.

Proto-tone class	Tone (LYB)	Tone (Ostapirat)	Tone (Vietnam)
A1 <i>pje</i> <sup>55</sup> 'fire'	55	55	51
A2 <i>nay</i> <sup>35</sup> 'rain'	35	35 <i>fi</i>	341 <i>fi</i>
B1 <i>phjo</i> <sup>35</sup> 'silver'	35	45	241
B2 <i>ne</i> <sup>13</sup> 'thread'	13	24 <i>fi</i>	41 <i>fi</i>
C1 <i>ʔi</i> <sup>42</sup> 'water'	44	3 <u>1</u>	3 <u>1</u>
C2 <i>mja</i> <sup>44</sup> 'woman'	44	33 <i>fi</i>	2 <u>1</u> <i>fi</i>
D1S <i>pe</i> <sup>31</sup> / <i>pue</i> <sup>42</sup> 'ten'	31	2 <u>1</u>	4 <u>2</u>
D1L <i>qo</i> <sup>44</sup> 'duck'	44	45	3 <u>2</u>
D2S <i>tjua</i> <sup>31</sup> 'bone'	31	2 <u>1</u> <i>fi</i>	3 <u>2</u> <i>fi</i>
D2L <i>mi</i> <sup>35</sup> 'fruit'	35	24 <i>fi</i>	2 <u>1</u> <i>fi</i>

Ostapirat (2000:81) says that tones reflecting original series 2 (voiced) consonant initials, i.e. those with value 35, 24, 33, and 21, are frequently accompanied by breathiness. In our own data from Vietnam there is usually breathiness in continuant consonant initials, e.g. [*m<sup>h</sup> n<sup>h</sup> l<sup>h</sup>*], whereas voiceless stops often show voiceless aspiration, e.g. [*p<sup>h</sup> t<sup>h</sup> k<sup>h</sup> q<sup>h</sup>*], cf. Ostapirat 'bone' *t<sup>h</sup>jo*<sup>2L</sup> D2S, whereas Bả Phùng and Bả Diu Lachi have *t<sup>h</sup>ɔ*<sup>32</sup>.

The next chapter discusses the syllable structure and lexicon of Flowery Lachi. In this language there is a large inventory of basic

lexical items with one syllable. These items come from several semantic fields such as: (1) natural phenomena—*i*<sup>44</sup> ‘water’, *vu*<sup>35</sup> ‘dry field, land’, *naŋ*<sup>35</sup> ‘rain’, and *phjo*<sup>35</sup> ‘silver’; (2) animals—*mje*<sup>55</sup> ‘pig’, *nei*<sup>55</sup> ‘insect’; (3) body parts—*pjo*<sup>55</sup> ‘blood’, *tja*<sup>31</sup> ‘liver’, *ko*<sup>31</sup> ‘leg’; (4) kinship names—*po*<sup>44</sup> ‘father’, *mja*<sup>44</sup> ‘mother’, *tja*<sup>55</sup> ‘older brother’, and *zo*<sup>35</sup> ‘younger brother’; (5) tools—*thje*<sup>55</sup> ‘plow’; (6) pronouns and numerals—*tje*<sup>31</sup> ‘three’, *pu*<sup>31</sup> ‘four’, *khe*<sup>31</sup> ‘s/he’, *ne*<sup>44</sup> ‘this’. There are also a large number of polysyllabic items with prefixal elements *a*<sup>44</sup>, *ŋ*<sup>44</sup>, *ku*<sup>44</sup>, *li*<sup>44</sup>, *li*<sup>35</sup>, *ma*<sup>31</sup>, *mja*<sup>44</sup>, *ma*<sup>44</sup>, *min*<sup>44</sup>, which can be added to bound or free forms as in: *a*<sup>44</sup> *ŋ*<sup>35</sup> ‘snake’, *a*<sup>44</sup> *lje*<sup>55</sup> ‘far’, *na*<sup>44</sup> *nuŋ*<sup>44</sup> ‘belly’, and many others as well as *ŋ*<sup>44</sup> *tja*<sup>44</sup> *ti*<sup>35</sup> ‘peanut’ and *ŋ*<sup>44</sup> *tjou*<sup>55</sup> ‘moon’. One point of importance is that Lachi possesses a stock of vocabulary that it shares with Gelao and with Laha, Qabiao, Buyang, Paha, and En, but that are distinct from Kam-Tai vocabulary. These include: (1) names of natural phenomena, e.g. *i*<sup>44</sup> ‘water’, *a*<sup>44</sup> *qui*<sup>35</sup> ‘wind’, *naŋ*<sup>35</sup> ‘rain’, (2) household product names, e.g. *tci*<sup>44</sup> ‘uncooked rice’ *ɾm*<sup>44</sup> ‘cooked rice’, *phin*<sup>44</sup> ‘cloth’, *tɛ*<sup>55</sup> ‘wok’, *vu*<sup>44</sup> ‘bowl’, (3) animal and plant names, e.g. *lin*<sup>53</sup> *m*<sup>44</sup> ‘horse’, *lja*<sup>44</sup> ‘rat’, and *m*<sup>44</sup> *tje*<sup>55</sup> ‘tree’, (4) body part names, e.g. *m*<sup>35</sup> ‘face’, *si*<sup>55</sup> ‘teeth’, *no*<sup>13</sup> ‘tongue’, (5) kinship names, e.g. *mja*<sup>44</sup> ‘mother’, *tja*<sup>55</sup> ‘older brother’, *zo*<sup>35</sup> ‘younger brother’, *ni*<sup>44</sup> ‘younger sister’, (6) people and their stations, e.g. ‘adult’, ‘male’, ‘female’, ‘friend’, (7) dwellings and transportation, (8) concepts, e.g. ‘last name’, ‘ghost’, ‘talk’, ‘sound’, (9) verbs, e.g. ‘walk’, ‘eat’, ‘laugh’, ‘come’, ‘go’, ‘do’, ‘grow up’, (10) psychological states and attributes, e.g. ‘love’, ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘sweet’, ‘fragrant’, ‘stink’, (11) numerals, (12) deixis, (13) grammatical particles, e.g. *vua*<sup>35</sup> ‘very’,



$a^{44}$   $qui^{53}$  ‘before’,  $ku^{44}$   $lin^{55}$  ‘after’,  $tcu^{31}$  ‘then’, (14) pronouns, e.g.  $ki^{55}$  ‘I’,  $kje^{31}$  ‘she/he’,  $po^{44}$   $pje^{44}$  ‘we inclusive’,  $ku^{44}$   $kja^{44}$  ‘what’.

As Chapter 4, Grammar, reports, Lachi is a basically head-first language that shows isolating typology. But it is neither completely like nor unlike Chinese. There are some important differences in the order of elements from Chinese. One example involves the head-attribute structure, such as:  $thjo^{44}$   $phin^{55}$  place-flat ‘flats, plain’,  $tan^{44}$   $qe^{55}$   $i^{44}$  egg-chicken-white ‘egg white’,  $vu^{44}$   $tcuj^{44}$  bowl-bamboo ‘bamboo bowl’  $mja^{44}$   $kje^{31}$  mother-her ‘her mother’, and  $pi^{44}$   $vua^{35}$  hot-very ‘very hot’. LYB provides for twelve lexical categories: nouns, pronouns, demonstratives, numerals, prepositions, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, and auxiliaries.

The most distinctive grammatical feature of Lachi and several other languages in this group is the sentence final position of negation, which is quite unlike neighboring languages related and unrelated. The negator  $ljo^{31}$  comes last in  $ki^{55}te^{44}lje^{44}$   $ti^{33}ljo^{31}$  I-carry-knife-come-NEG ‘I did not bring a knife’. It also follows the verb in questions, e.g.  $saj^{55}$   $a^{44}$   $\eta^{35}$   $m^{55}$   $min^{35}$   $phin^{55}$   $vei^{44}$   $n^{44}$   $to^{31}$   $n^{44}$   $to^{31}$   $ljo^{31}$  [CLS-snake-you-hit-die-that]-big-big-NEG ‘Is the snake that you killed big or not?’ The form for ‘not yet’ is  $nu\eta^{44}$ , as in  $kje^{31}$   $ta^{44}$   $ma^{44}$   $ni^{44}$   $nu\eta^{44}$ . ‘He hasn’t yet come. The  $ljo^{31}$  must appear after the verb and its complements or adjuncts, as in  $pei^{31}$   $lje^{31}$   $ie^{55}$   $a^{44}$   $ljo^{44}$   $a^{44}$   $tua^{31}$   $m^{44}$   $tje^{55}$   $ljo^{31}$  child-wildly-cut down-trees-NEG ‘Children should not wildly chop down all the trees.’ This element also appears

to be cognate across the languages: Paha *θaai*<sup>45</sup>, Yalang *la*<sup>31</sup>, and Buyang *la*<sup>43</sup>. In Laha of Noong Lay, Són La Province, Vietnam, one finds the same syntactic pattern. *ai*<sup>41?</sup> *an*<sup>44?</sup> *si*<sup>41?</sup> *həu*<sup>41?</sup> 3S-have-come-NEG ‘Does he have a comb?’

Within the NP the order of constituents is numeral-classifier-head noun as in: *li*<sup>44</sup> *to*<sup>44</sup> *mjo*<sup>31</sup> one-CLS-flower ‘a flower’ *li*<sup>44</sup> *lei*<sup>44</sup> *ŋ*<sup>44</sup> one-mouthful-rice ‘a mouthful of cooked rice’. Lachi is relatively strong in its head first properties. Attributes and adjuncts follow heads as in: *mja*<sup>44</sup> *m*<sup>44</sup> *tje*<sup>55</sup> mother-tree ‘tree root’, *khin*<sup>55</sup> *qe*<sup>44</sup> road-iron ‘railroad’, *vu*<sup>44</sup> *tɕun*<sup>44</sup> bowl-bamboo ‘bamboo bowl’, *ma*<sup>35</sup> *vua*<sup>35</sup> many-very ‘very many’, etc. For the gender of animals Lachi sometimes uses an order that at first might seem opposite to its head first features, as in *pen*<sup>44</sup> *lin*<sup>55</sup> *ŋ*<sup>44</sup> male-horse ‘stallion’ and *mja*<sup>44</sup> *qe*<sup>55</sup> female-chicken ‘hen’; it is possible, however, that Lachi speakers may interpret a hen as a “chicken mother” (cf. *tree root* above) instead of a “mother chicken” with *mja*<sup>44</sup> being the head noun in the construction. This order is also found in Sui and Hlai, as he points out in Chapter 6.

In another surprising feature, the deictic pronouns of Lachi are divisible into three degrees: *ne*<sup>44</sup> the proximal deictic as in *kin*<sup>55</sup> *pei*<sup>31</sup> *-lje*<sup>31</sup> *-ie*<sup>55</sup> *ne*<sup>44</sup> *ma*<sup>31</sup> *i*<sup>55</sup> *pe*<sup>31</sup> *su*<sup>55</sup> *tje*<sup>55</sup> *pi*<sup>55</sup>. CLS-child-this-about-have-10-2-3-years ‘This child is about 12 or 13.’ The form *vei*<sup>44</sup> is used to refer to distal object that are visible, as in *saŋ*<sup>55</sup> *vei*<sup>44</sup> *ku*<sup>44</sup> *la*<sup>44</sup> *kje*<sup>31</sup> CLS-that-be-of-him ‘That is his.’ The third degree is expressed by *pje*<sup>44</sup> distal visible or invisible, as in *saŋ*<sup>55</sup> *ne*<sup>44</sup> *a*<sup>55</sup>,

*saj*<sup>55</sup> *pje*<sup>44</sup> *a*<sup>55</sup> *ljo*<sup>31</sup> CLS (animals)-this-good, CLS (animals)-that-good-NEG 'This one is good, that one is bad.'

Numerals have been in the history of study of Lachi and its linguistic relatives one area of special interest. Paul K. Benedict 1942 was first intrigued by the numerals of Gelao, etc. and continued his reconstruction of them throughout his life, cf. Benedict 1975. The numerals are: *tcaŋ*<sup>44</sup> 'one (when construction final)', *li*<sup>44</sup> 'one (when initial)', *su*<sup>31</sup> 'two', *tje*<sup>31</sup> 'three', *pu*<sup>31</sup> 'four', *ŋ*<sup>31</sup> 'five', *naŋ*<sup>31</sup> 'six', *tje*<sup>35</sup> 'seven', *ŋuai*<sup>31</sup> 'eight', *ljou*<sup>13</sup> 'nine', *pɛ*<sup>31</sup> 'ten', *qei*<sup>44</sup> 'hundred', *paŋ*<sup>35</sup> 'thousand', and *vo*<sup>55</sup> 'ten thousand'. The use of the two forms for 'one' is illustrated by examples such as: *li*<sup>44</sup> *saj*<sup>44</sup> *mje*<sup>55</sup> one-CLS-pig 'a pig' and *li*<sup>44</sup> *paŋ*<sup>35</sup> 'one thousand' in contrast to *pɛ*<sup>31</sup> *tcaŋ*<sup>44</sup> ten-one 'eleven'.

Chapter Five of this book compares Chinese Lachi data of Jinchang Zhenzhong Village designed LJ with the Lati (LT) recorded in Bonifacy 1905. Later in the chapter he compares LJ with material Nguyễn Văn Lợi and I presented at the 30<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics in Beijing. One might think from the descriptions in the beginning of the book that the various forms of Lachi would show very little interdialectal variation. But the opposite seems true; Chinese and Vietnamese forms are rather different, suggesting that the Vietnam and China forms of the language have been separated for many decades. For example, in the

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1. The etymon is realized as *tcam*<sup>31</sup> in BPh/BD as in these varieties –*m* is still a possible rhyme.

comparison of LJ and LT of the numeral ‘two’ there is a different initial, LJ *su*<sup>31</sup> vs. LT *fu* (LYB does not attempt to assign tone values from the Quốc Ngữ transcriptions of Bonifacy). My own recordings in Vietnam confirms that a sound change *s* → *f* has indeed taken place in both kinds of Vietnam Lachi I examined; both have *f*<sup>w</sup>*u*<sup>51</sup> ‘two’ with some labialization of the initial *f*. Further examples of this rule are: ‘tail’ LJ *se*<sup>31</sup> vs. BPh/BD *f*<sup>w</sup>*ε*<sup>32?</sup>, ‘dragon’ LJ *η*<sup>44</sup> *so*<sup>44</sup> vs. BPh *η*<sup>44</sup> *f*<sup>w</sup>*u*<sup>41</sup> and ‘garlic’ LJ *sei*<sup>55</sup> vs. *f*<sup>w</sup>*ε*<sup>241</sup>. Additional diversity is uncovered in some of the animal names, which have interesting contrasts between LJ and LT/BPh/BD, as tabulated below:

Gloss	LJ	LT	BPh	BD
Dog	<i>m</i> <sup>55</sup>	<i>mu</i>	<i>num</i> <sup>35</sup>	<i>nəm</i> <sup>51</sup>
Pig	<i>mje</i> <sup>55</sup>	<i>me</i>	<i>nim</i> <sup>33</sup> <i>bi</i> <sup>51</sup>	<i>nim</i> <sup>33</sup> <i>bi</i> <sup>51</sup>
Horse	<i>lin</i> <sup>53</sup> <i>η</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>ngo</i>	<i>ŋu</i> <sup>42</sup>	<i>ŋu</i> <sup>42</sup>
Fish	<i>o</i> <sup>44</sup> <i>li</i> <sup>35</sup>	<i>li</i>	<i>ʔa</i> <sup>32</sup> <i>ʔi</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>ʔa</i> <sup>32</sup> <i>ʔi</i> <sup>31</sup>
Horn	<i>quai</i> <sup>55</sup>	<i>kui</i>	<i>qε</i> <sup>341</sup>	<i>qε</i> <sup>341</sup>
Female animal	<i>mja</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>mja</i>	<i>m<sup>h</sup>ja</i> <sup>21</sup>	<i>m<sup>h</sup>ja</i> <sup>21</sup>

As these examples show, the LJ forms and BPh/BD show some secondary sound change, but—as we are about to show—the basic system of tone splitting as this language emerged from the parent language are shared among the Lachi across international borders. One of these changes occurs to the nominal presyllable *li*<sup>32</sup> or its alternate *li*<sup>44</sup>, which in LJ are frequently used in word forms for persons and animals. In BPh/BD these are *ni*<sup>32</sup> and for the most common animal names these have coalesced to one syllable: *ni*<sup>32</sup>-*m*<sup>51</sup> → *num*<sup>35</sup>

(BPh) and  $nəm^{51}$  (BD). In a slightly different development, the word form for 'pig' in BPh/BD comes from  $ni^{32} mi^{51} \rightarrow nim^{33} bi^{51}$  with anticipation of the following nasal and then dissimilation. Indeed, in the LJ word form the same tendency may be present in 'horse'  $lin^{53} \eta^{44}$  possibly derived from  $li^{32} \eta^{21}$  with anticipation of the following nasal.<sup>2</sup> The form  $ʔu^{42}$  for 'horse' in Vietnam Lachi appear at the moment not to be cognate with those in China.

The differences between LJ and BPh/BD can be illustrated for the traditional tone categories A, B, D, DI, and DS, which align well with the forms for Lachi in Ostapirat 2000.

Gloss	China	Vietnam	Gloss	China	Vietnam
seven	$tje^{35}$	$te^{51}$ (A1)	sand	$na^{55}$	$na^{51}$ (A1)
frost		$ʔi^{31} \eta w i^{51}$ (A1)	th. grass	$lo^{55} qo^{55}$	$qu^{51}$ (A1)
vegetable	$luw^{55}$	$qhe^{51}$ (A1)	mushroom	$ku^{55}$	$la^{32} qu^{51}$ (A1)
leaf	$lei^{55}$	$l^w i^{51}$ (A1)	h. louse	$\eta^{44} tjar^{35}$	$tje^{51}$ (A1)
six	$nar^{31}$	$n^{\text{h}} a^{341}$ (A2)	rain	$nar^{34}$	$n^{\text{h}} a^{341}$ (A2)
eight	$\eta uai^{31}$	$b^{\text{h}} w i^{341}$ (A2)	moon	$\eta^{44} tjou^{55}$	$m^{33} thjo^{341}$ (A2)
frost	$mu^{31}$	$m^{\text{h}} j\text{ɔ}^{341}$ (A2)	sun	$la^{44} vuar^{55} \eta^{33} v^{\text{h}} \bar{a}^{341}$ (A2)	
bear	$a^{44} mua^{55}$	$qa^{44} mj\text{ɔ}^{341}$ (A2)			
copper	$tuw^{35}$	$khi^{241}$ (B1)	ash	$tje^{35}$	$te^{241}$ (B1)
cliff	$ljou^{55}$	$th\text{ɔ}^{241}$ (B1)	gold	$ha^{35}$	$khja^{241}$ (B1)
silver	$phjo^{35}$	$phjo^{241}$ (B1)	cliff	$thjo^{35}$	$thj\text{ɔ}^{241}$ (B1)
cave	$vei^{55}$	$v^w i^{241}$ (B1)	forest	$luw^{35}$	$\eta w \text{ɔ}^{241}$ (B1)

2. Ostapirat (2000:225) records data from this same location, listing the lexical item for 'horse' as  $\eta^{33}$ .

nine	<i>ljou</i> <sup>13</sup>	<i>l<sup>h</sup>ju</i> <sup>13</sup> (B2)		
person	<i>a</i> <sup>44</sup> <i>fu</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>qu</i> <sup>3L</sup> (C1)		
mother	<i>mja</i> <sup>44</sup>	<i>m<sup>h</sup>ja</i> <sup>21</sup> (C2)	chin	<i>qhe</i> <sup>21</sup> (C2)
ten	<i>pe</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>pe</i> <sup>42</sup> -(D1)	nose	<i>mi</i> <sup>35</sup> <i>naŋ</i> <sup>53</sup> <i>na</i> <sup>42</sup> -(D1)

LYB concludes that LJ and BPh and BD are about 70% cognate in basic vocabulary. One example of loan translation is to be noted in our data. The item ‘cucumber’ is *mi*<sup>35</sup> *ti*<sup>51</sup> *a*<sup>33</sup> *lja*<sup>31</sup>, which is a loan translation of Vietnamese *đuá chuột melon-rat* ‘cucumber’. In the vocabulary set we collected there were very few examples of Vietnamese loans. Indeed, there are very few ethnic Kinh (Vietnamese) living in Hà Giang Province.

Chapter 6 is devoted to establishing the genetic relationship of Lachi first by comparative study of Lachi and the Kam-Tai (K-T) language stock, represented by: 壮 Zhuang, 侗 Kam, and 水 Sui, and by 黎 Hlai of Hainan. That completed, Lachi is then compared to other languages outside Kam-Tai and Hlai, namely: 羿 Yí, 仡佬 Gelao, and 木佬 Mùlǎo (mostly found in Guizhou Province) as well as 布央 Buyang and 普标 Pubiao (Qabiao) of Yunnan Province and Hà Giang Province, Vietnam, and 拉哈 Laha of Lao Cai and Són La Provinces, Vietnam. LYB’s method of comparison rests on examining lists of initials, rhymes, lexicon, and grammatical features of Lachi with an eye to similarities and differences of these features in counterpart languages, i.e. Kam-Tai, Hlai, Gelao, etc.. Data for these are taken from handbooks, e.g. the *Jianzhi* volumes for Kam-Tai lan-

guages, 张济民 Zhang Jimin's 1996 *Gelaoyu yanjiu* and field studies done by Chinese scholars. What is missing from the list of compared features is a system of tonal correspondence between Lachi and other languages, because LYB was unable to find a consistent pattern within Lachi, as he says (p. 232) and thus he could not tie the Lachi tone system to the well-established and rigidly consistent system of tonal category correspondence in the Kam-Tai languages. I have already remarked about the difficulty of fixing Lachi tone values and that was the problem here. Edmondson and Gregerson 1997 were partially successful in establishing such a system of tonal categories in Tamit Laha, but the problem was solved comprehensively in Ostapirat's marvelous dissertation 2000. LYB, thus hampered, begins with Lachi initials, noting that Lachi possesses neither pre-glottalization nor clusters. Rhymes are not easy either since Lachi has undergone a lot of changes of the nuclear vowel and loss of codas within rhymes; Lachi and Gelao (and its close relatives Yi and Mulao) have lost all oral stop codas /-p -t -k/ and retain only the nasal -ŋ. The comparison of grammatical features focuses on word order within the NP, the VP and the position of the gender modifier (male or female) in animal nouns and, most significantly, the position of negation. As noted before, Lachi, Kam-Tai, and other languages discussed in this chapter all demonstrate SVO head-first typology with adjuncts and complements following heads within the phrase. Thus, LYB provides good examples showing that the most common order in K-T and Lachi NP's is Num-CLS-N-Spec (Num=numeral, CLS=classifier, N=head noun, and Spec=determiner). Some exclusions to these generalization are: Hlai, which seems to use fewer classifiers than the

others and Zhuang and Maonan NPs, with the numeral 'one', which employs the order CLS-N-Num, cf. *tu<sup>2</sup> vaai<sup>2</sup> deu<sup>1</sup>* 'one-CLS-buffalo' 'one buffalo'. LYB notes, as I did earlier, the usual sentence-final position of negation except in Yi and Mulao, which show Neg-V order, possibly from contact with Chinese, and the unpredicted position of gender before noun in Lachi (also in Sui and Hlai) animal nouns, e.g. Lachi *po<sup>44</sup> qε<sup>55</sup>* 'rooster'. LYB then counts the percentages of lexical cognates (about 43% among Lachi, Gelao, Qabiao, and Buyang), considers the word structure constraints of each, and the grammatical resemblance, ultimately deciding on a genetic arrangement with Yi and Gelao sharing a branch, Lachi and Mulao another, Qabiao and Buyang yet another, and Laha on a separate branch by itself. This result is quite a lot like the outcome in Ostapirat (2000:23), who has Gelao-Lachi on one branch itself related to Laha in the west and Buyang and Qabiao (Pubiao) on a branch itself related to Paha in the geographic east.

There are two methodological problems with Chapter 6. The first of these is using lists of language data without first establishing correspondence sets. One is then forced to decide directly from individual lexical items, on the basis of gross resemblance and not from regular patterns of correspondence, when given forms are cognates and when not. For example, not knowing the tonal category and having no Lachi correspondence sets for Lachi \*hl- (Ostapirat 2000 reconstructs \*hlai<sup>A</sup> for 'rat') led LYB to regard Lachi *lja<sup>44</sup>* 'rat' and Tai \**hnu<sup>A1</sup>* as cognate, noting the change of n -> l in Shan. Among fricative initials LYB assumed a connection between *si<sup>55</sup>* 'teeth' and



*ciu*<sup>3</sup> C1, but a wider look among Laha, Buyang, and Qabiao would show respective forms *tcoŋ*, *θcoŋ*, and *θuaŋ* all in A1 tone category not C1. This weakness also vitiates the percentages of lexical cognates as a basis for comparing linguistic distance among sister languages. The second methodological problem is to rely on shared retention of features instead of shared innovation to establish genetic relationships. That both Buyang and Qabiao retain /-p -t -k/ is not a strong argument for them being close in the tree. But that Gelao, Yi, Mulao, and Lachi innovate the deletion of final consonants is a good argument for subgrouping them together, even though loss of final stops is a fairly common development.

From a wider perspective, it is also very significant that there is Lachi evidence of glottal closure in Tone C vocabulary, just as in Kam-Tai languages. This important feature is one that Lachi and others of its relatives share in common with Tai languages.

In spite of the areas mentioned there is much of worth in *Lajiyu Yanjiu*. For example, I value very highly including grammatical features in the comparison, as that is seldom done. Regrettably, they aid little in the decision making process, as they are rather properties of SVO language of the SE Asian type uniform across this group of languages (and even into Vietnamese, which is not related to these). Emphasizing the S-final position of negation, which is not found in languages of this area at all and which seems a clear anomaly in the pattern of SE Asian syntax, is also an important and surprising trait. This book presents a great deal of data on a language that has until now been recorded in only meager amounts and whatsmore the grammatical structure has been especially neglected in this paltry record-

ing endeavor. Indeed, the book has been strongly imbued with insightful and well-chosen illustrative data, rich enough in character to begin a study of the phrases and sentences of Lachi and with the help of the narratives at the end of the book perhaps even a start toward examining Lachi discourse.

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