

# CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	xiii
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Aim and Scope of the Present Work .....	1
1.2 Comparative Tai: Basic Foundations.....	2
1.2.1 Tai Languages: Some Main Features.....	2
1.2.2 Distribution of the Tai Languages .....	4
1.2.3 The Tai Homeland .....	5
1.2.4 Linguistic Affiliation .....	6
1.2.5 Internal Subdivisions .....	9
1.3 Historical Overview of Comparative Tai Research.....	11
1.3.1 Nineteenth Century to Late 1940s .....	11
1.3.2 From 1950s to Late 1970s .....	12
1.3.3 The 1970s before the Publication of <i>A Handbook of Comparative Tai</i> .....	13
1.3.4 Li's <i>A Handbook of Comparative Tai</i> .....	16
1.3.5 Post <i>Handbook</i> to the Late 1980s .....	17
1.3.6 Gedney's <i>Selected Papers on Comparative Tai Studies</i> .....	18
1.3.7 Current Research Situation and Work in Progress.....	19
1.3.8 In-depth Studies of Individual Dialects .....	21
1.3.9 Bibliographies of Tai Languages .....	22
1.4 Working Hypotheses .....	22
1.4.1 General Assumptions.....	22
1.4.2 Chinese-Based Notation .....	23
1.4.3 Thai-Based Notation.....	25
1.5 Sources of Data .....	27
1.6 Structure of the Present Work .....	27
2. LI'S CLASSIFICATION OF THE TAI LANGUAGES: A CRITIQUE.....	29
2.0 Introduction .....	29
2.1 Li's Reconstructions of Proto-Tai .....	29
2.1.1 Typological features of the Tai languages .....	29
2.1.2 Li's Proto-Tai Phonemic Inventory .....	31
2.1.2.1 Initial Consonants .....	31
2.1.2.2 Tones .....	32

## vi CONTENTS

2.1.2.3 Li's Subgroup Criteria: Tone Differentiation and Coalescence.....	33
2.1.2.4 Vowels.....	37
2.1.3 Common Patterns of Sound Correspondences among Tai Dialects.....	38
2.1.3.1 Regular Correspondences in Synchronic Perspective.....	38
2.1.3.2 Recurrent Patterns of Sound Change.....	39
2.2 The Northern Branch.....	39
2.2.1 Li's Northern features.....	40
2.2.2 Comments on Li's Northern Branch features.....	41
2.3 The Central Branch.....	42
2.3.1 Li's Account.....	43
2.3.2 Comments on the Central Branch.....	43
2.3.3 Summary on the Central Group.....	45
2.4 The Southwestern Branch.....	46
2.4.1 Philological Evidence.....	46
2.4.2 Li's Account.....	47
2.4.3 Additional Features.....	47
2.4.4 Comments on Li's SW Features.....	48
2.4.5 Internal Subgrouping in SW.....	49
2.4.6 Summary of Southwestern Tai.....	51
2.5 Summary of Li's Classification.....	51
2.6 Further Facts and Facets.....	53
2.6.1 Li's Reconstructions Reconsidered: Initial Consonants.....	54
2.6.1.1 Dentals/Dental Clusters for Labial Clusters.....	54
2.6.1.2 Simple Dentals/Liquids for Dental Clusters.....	54
2.6.1.3 Labial for Liquid.....	55
2.6.1.4 Sibilants for Velars.....	55
2.6.1.5 Simple Liquid for Velar Cluster.....	55
2.6.1.6 The Need to Reconstruct Sibilant Clusters.....	56
2.6.2 Summary of Initial Consonants.....	56
2.6.3 Some Reflections on Li's Proto-Tai Vowels.....	56
2.6.3.1 Conditioning Factors for *e-lowering.....	57
2.6.3.2 /e/ in Open Syllables—*ε-Raising or *e-Retention?.....	58
2.6.3.3 Back Vowels /o/ and /ɔ/.....	60
2.6.4 Summary of Vowels.....	63
2.7 Summary of Chapter.....	63

<b>3. EXPANDING THE PROTO-TAI LEXICON— A SUPPLEMENT TO LI (1977)</b>	<b>65</b>
3.0. Introduction.....	65
3.1. New Pan-Tai Cognates.....	66
3.1.1 Nature and Environment.....	66
3.1.2 Agricultural Terms.....	67
3.1.3. Body Part Terms.....	69
3.1.4. Cultural Beliefs, Social Activities and Residual Items .....	71
3.1.5 Pan-Tai Status for Formerly Restricted Items.....	74
3.2. Regional/Dialect Words: Implications for Subgrouping.....	75
3.2.1 Northern vs. Non-Northern.....	76
3.2.2 Non-Southwestern vs. Southwestern.....	80
3.2.2.1 The Central-Northern Alliance .....	80
3.2.2.2 The Southwestern Group .....	82
3.2.2.3 The Southwestern-Northern Connection.....	85
3.2.2.4 Terms for Social Organizations .....	88
3.2.2.5 The Case of Dehong: Implications for Lexical Classification .....	89
3.2.2.6 Summary on Dialect Words.....	92
3.3 Negation in Tai in Historical-Comparative Perspective.....	94
3.3.1 Comparative Data .....	94
3.3.2 Discussion.....	95
3.3.2.1 Li's Reconstructions.....	95
3.3.2.2 New Cognates.....	96
3.3.3 Comparison with Kam-Sui and Chinese .....	97
3.3.3.1 Comparison with Kam-Sui.....	97
3.3.3.2 Comparison with Chinese .....	98
3.3.4 Summary on Negation .....	100
3.4. Summary of Findings: Implications for Tai Subgrouping.....	100
<b>4. EVIDENCE FOR A SERIES OF SIBILANT CLUSTERS IN TAI AND SINO-TAI RELATIONSHIP.....</b>	<b>102</b>
4.0. Introduction .....	102
4.1. The Phenomenon.....	103
4.2. Internal Evidence.....	105
4.2.1 The Data .....	105
4.2.2 Sibilants + r .....	107

## viii CONTENTS

4.2.2.1 *sr-.....	107
4.2.2.2 *zr-.....	108
4.2.2.3 *žr-.....	109
4.2.2.4 *Zr-.....	109
4.2.2.5 *jř-.....	110
4.2.3 Sibilants + l.....	110
4.2.3.1 *sl-.....	110
4.2.3.2 *zl-.....	110
4.2.3.3 *žl-.....	111
4.2.3.4 *jl-.....	112
4.2.4 Sibilants + Dentals + Liquids.....	112
4.2.4.1 *st-.....	112
4.2.4.2 *stl-.....	113
4.2.4.3 *ztr-.....	113
4.2.4.4 *jř-.....	113
4.2.5 Sibilants + Velars (+ Liquids).....	114
4.2.5.1 *škb-.....	114
4.2.5.2 *sKl-.....	114
4.2.5.3 *Zkl-.....	115
4.2.5.4 *zgr-.....	115
4.2.5.5 *žgr-.....	115
4.2.6 Sibilants + Labials.....	115
4.2.6.1 *sb-.....	116
4.2.6.2 *šm-.....	116
4.2.7 Summary of Internal Evidence.....	116
4.3. External Evidence.....	116
4.3.1 Kam-Sui.....	117
4.3.2 Hlai.....	119
4.3.2.1 Hlai /z/ = Tai /l/, /r/.....	119
4.3.2.2 Hlai /ʃ/ = Tai /l/.....	119
4.3.2.3 Hlai /tsh/ = Tai /r/, /h/, /s/.....	120
4.3.2.4 Hlai /r/ = Tai /s/.....	121
4.3.2.5 Hlai /f/tsh/ = Tai /r/.....	121
4.3.3 Chinese and Tai.....	121
4.3.3.1 Sibilant Clusters in Old Chinese.....	121
4.3.3.2 The Chinese-Tai Connection.....	122

4.3.3.3 Chinese liquids vs. Tai sibilants .....	123
4.3.3.4 Chinese Retroflexes vs. Tai Liquids and Dental Clusters .....	126
4.3.3.5 Chinese Aspirated Affricates vs. Tai Liquids .....	131
4.3.3.6 Chinese Dental Fricatives vs. Tai Liquids/Dental Clusters .....	134
4.3.3.7 Chinese Semivowel vs. Tai Liquids .....	138
4.3.3.8 Chinese Retroflexes vs. Tai Liquids or Dental Clusters .....	139
4.3.4 Miao-Yao (Hmong-Mien) .....	142
4.4 Summary .....	143
<b>5. TONAL IRREGULARITIES IN TAI REVISITED</b> .....	<b>145</b>
5.0 Introduction .....	145
5.1. Tonal Irregularities: Some Synchronic Facts .....	145
5.1.1 Some Regular Patterns of Tonal Irregularities in Tai .....	145
5.1.2 More Tonal Irregularities .....	147
5.1.2.1 Dehong A2—Fengshan C2 .....	148
5.1.2.2 Dehong C2—Fengshan A2 .....	148
5.1.2.3 Dehong B2—Fengshan C2 .....	148
5.1.2.4 Dehong C2—Fengshan B2 .....	148
5.1.2.5 Dehong C2—Fengshan C1 .....	149
5.1.2.6 Dehong A1/2—Fengshan B2 .....	149
5.1.2.7 Dehong A1—Fengshan B1 .....	149
5.1.2.8 Dehong A1—Fengshan C1 .....	149
5.1.2.9 Dehong B1—Fengshan C1 .....	149
5.1.3 Tonal Alternations in Some Modern Dialects .....	150
5.1.4 Common Patterns of Tonal Coalescence in Tai .....	152
5.1.5 Further Tone Split .....	155
5.1.5.1 Split of C1 in the Northern Tai Dialects .....	155
5.1.5.2 Split of B1 in the Northern Tai Dialects .....	156
5.2 Discussion .....	156
5.2.1 Tone A .....	156
5.2.1.1 Fluctuation of A1 and A2 Between Non-Northern and Northern Tai Dialects .....	157
5.2.1.2 Non-distinction of A1 and A2 .....	159
5.2.1.3 Conditional Shift .....	160
5.2.1.4 Further Split of A1 .....	161
5.2.1.5 A2 and C2 .....	163
5.2.1.6 Summary .....	163

## x CONTENTS

5.2.2 Tone B .....	164
5.2.2.1 Shift of B1 and B2.....	164
5.2.2.2 B1 and C1.....	165
5.2.2.3 B2 and C2.....	167
5.2.2.4 Summary of tone B .....	168
5.2.3 Tone C .....	168
5.2.3.1 C1 and B1.....	168
5.2.3.2 Shift of C1 into B2.....	170
5.2.3.3 SW/CT C1 vs. NT C2.....	171
5.2.3.4 Southwestern Tai B2 vs Northern Tai C2.....	173
5.2.3.5 C1 vs. A1 .....	175
5.2.3.6 Summary of Tone C.....	177
5.2.4 Tone D.....	177
5.2.4.1 Non-Northern D1S vs Northern D2S.....	178
5.2.4.2 Shift between D1L and D2L.....	179
5.2.4.3 Summary of Tone D .....	179
5.3 Summary of Chapter.....	179
<b>6. WORD FAMILIES IN TAI: A PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT .....</b>	<b>183</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	183
6.2 Some Word Families in Tai.....	184
6.2.1 The C-om/um Type.....	185
6.2.1.1 Sibilant + um—'Wet, soak/immerse'.....	185
6.2.1.2 Sibilant + om/em—'Sharp-pointed/Stab/wedge' .....	187
6.2.1.3 Liquid + om—'To fall, topple, collapse' .....	189
6.2.1.4 r/s/t + om—'To gather together, to collect/gather around' .....	190
6.2.1.5 k + om—'To cover/conceal/obstruct from view' .....	191
6.2.1.6 k + am—'Hold with the hands/capture/feel, touch' .....	196
6.2.1.7 k + an—'Stem/handle/pole' .....	197
6.2.2 The C-ŋ Group.....	198
6.2.2.1 k + aŋ—'Wide, broad/extend/crosswise' .....	198
6.2.2.2 k + oŋ—'To bend/crooked/bow' .....	199
6.2.2.3 k/h + a/oŋ—'To make noise/to echo' .....	201
6.2.3 'To Hit/Strike/Pound/Collide' .....	203
6.2.3.1 Dental stops + V .....	203
6.2.3.2 t + V + k/ŋ .....	204

6.2.3.3 t + m/p .....	205
6.2.4 The k/t + on/t Type .....	206
6.2.4.1 k + on/t—'To cut, reap, slice, prevent' .....	206
6.2.4.2 t/r/l + on/t—'Section/piece/chunk' and 'detached, come off' .....	209
6.2.5 The p/b-en Type—'Board, Plank/Flat/Sheet/Plate' .....	212
6.2.6 'Split/Divide/Separate'~'Spread/Unfold/Multiply' .....	214
6.2.6.1 Labials + Vowels—'Spread/enlarge/separate' .....	214
6.2.6.2 Labials + Vowels + k/ŋ.....	216
6.2.6.3 Labials + vowels + n/t.....	220
6.2.7 The k-V Type .....	222
6.2.7.1 'To Call/shout/utter'.....	222
6.2.7.2 'Twist/entwine/wind around' .....	223
6.3. Summary of Results.....	224
<b>7. CONCLUSION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>225</b>
7.1 The Utility of the Comparative Method to Proto-Tai Reconstruction.....	226
7.2 Lexical Classification and Phonological Classification: Which is a More Viable Tool?.....	228
7.3 Historical Evidence and a Possible Northwestern Subgroup.....	231
7.4 Future Directions: Loan Contact, Genetic Relationship, and Evidence for Sino-Tai.....	233
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2.....</b>	<b>315</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>316</b>
<b>INDEX.....</b>	<b>362</b>