

PEOPLING OF THE NORTHEAST

Tanmoy Bhattacharya
Centre of Advanced Studies in Linguistics
Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi
& Chief Editor of Indian Linguistics

Part 3

PART 1 (vol.2, issue 3, 2016) and Part 2 (vol.2, issue 4, 2016) of this series respectively dealt with the migration of people speaking Tibeto-Burman (TB) languages into India from the Southwest of Sichuan province of China around 7000 BCE (Before Common Era) and of speakers of Bodic languages into the Tibeto-Himalayan region from the north much later around 3000 BCE. However, this cannot be the full story about migrations into the northeast or of the TB group of speakers. We need to take into account the presence of at least one more major language group in the northeast, namely, the speakers of Austroasiatic (AA) languages. At present, a major AA language of the northeast is Khasi, spoken by about 1.5 million people in the State of Meghalaya. Although, it is a major language of a state, it has not yet been included in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India, in spite of demands since the early 1970s.



THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE SCHEDULE

IN fact, it is instructive to view the distribution of Scheduled languages of India; I have colour-coded them as per the language family (Figure 1).

Scheduled Languages	
1. Assamese	12. Manipuri
2. Bengali	13. Marathi
3. Bodo	14. Nepali
4. Dogri	15. Oriya
5. Gujarati	16. Punjabi
6. Hindi	17. Sanskrit
7. Kannada	18. Santali
8. Kashmiri	19. Sindhi
9. Konkani	20. Tamil
10. Maithili	21. Telugu
11. Malayalam	22. Urdu

Fig 1: List of Scheduled Languages of India

It is quite clear that there is a predominance of Indo-Aryan (IA) (in yellow) languages in this list, Tibeto-Burman and Austroasiatic contributing only 2 and 1 language(s), respectively. However, the situation changes drastically once we look at the list of so-called Non-scheduled languages, languages that are deprived of much of the official status accorded to the Scheduled languages (Figure 2).

Some Non-Scheduled Languages	
• Adi (Arunachal Pr)	• Kinnauri (HP)
• Angami (Nagaland)	• Kurukh (JH, Chhattisgarh)
• Ao (Nagaland)	• Ladakhi (J&K)
• Balti (J&K)	• Mizo (Mizoram)
• Bhil (R, MP, G, Maha)	• Munda (O)
• Bhotia (Sikkim)	• Tibetan (HP)
• Bhumij (O, JH)	• Tripuri (Tripura)
• Coorgi (K)	• Tulu (K)
• Dimasa (A)	J&K= Jammu & Kashmir
• Garó (Meghalaya)	R= Rajasthan;
• Gondi (Chhattisgarh)	MP=Madhya Pradesh; G= Gujarat;
• Khasi (Meghalaya)	Maha= Maharashtra; O=Orissa;
	JH= Jharkhand; K=Karnataka;
	HP= Himachal Pradesh

Fig 2: Some Non-scheduled languages

Here, we notice a predominance of green colour (TB languages) and a few red colours (AA languages), whereas there is only one language in yellow. Of course, this is not about culture and literature, but much more about politics and geography.

As far as the modern situation of Khasi is concerned, apart from the Meghalaya State Language Act, 2005, notified on May 1, 2005, giving Khasi the official state language status (along with Garo), an important language family of the northeast remains neglected officially. However, this article is more about the reconstruction of the linguistic scenario of the past; and as far as the past is concerned, all the evidence point towards, in fact, an even bigger presence of AA speakers in the northeast of India. Our story of migration into the northeast, therefore, must reveal the Austroasiatic dimension of the complex linguistic pastiche of the region.

DIVERSITY IN THE PERIPHERY

HOWEVER, to understand the presence of AA speakers, and therefore their interaction with the TB speakers in the northeast of India, we must shift our base to the playground where this interaction might have first taken place, namely, southern China and the South-East Asia (SEA). As pointed out in Part 2 (vol. 2, issue 4, 2016), against the general and popular impression, China (and especially southern China) is highly multi-ethnic; the major reason for this multi-ethnicity is the fact that China is closely associated with the original homeland of five language families. To understand the position of AA within this multi-ethnic network, we need to extend our base further to include also SEA. Comparing the following maps of the linguistic situation in SEA, we get a fairly good idea of multi-ethnicity of the region; Figure 3 is a comparison of the spread of Tai-Kadai (also known as Kradai, Daic, Kadai, etc.) and AA languages, whereas Figure 4 depicts the linguistic ethnicity in Myanmar.

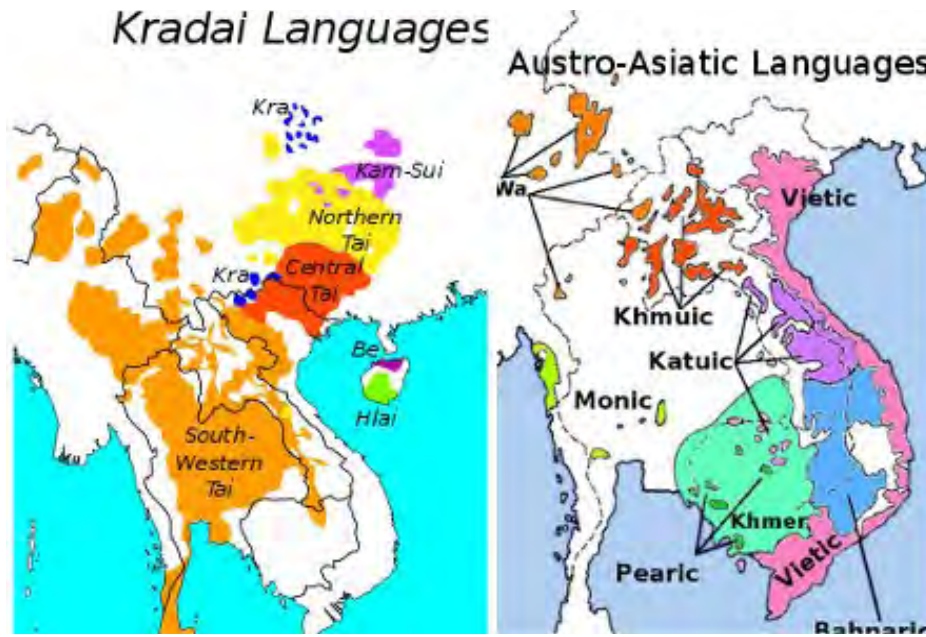


Fig 3: A Comparison of Tai-Kadai and AA Language areas in SEA
 (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5205312>)

One striking feature of this overall linguistic scenario of the SEA is the positioning of these ‘minor’ groups in the fringes or in the periphery of the linguistic geography, whereas the centre is occupied by the major linguistic groups of Indo-Aryan speakers on the Indian side and the Han Chinese in the Chinese side, both from the north. This situation, apart from pointing out the story and reality of migration, also brings forth the interesting discovery that real diversity is restricted to the periphery; it seems that various noises we make about diversity is restricted to the periphery. The language family map of India is a striking reminder of this, and the one for China is no different.

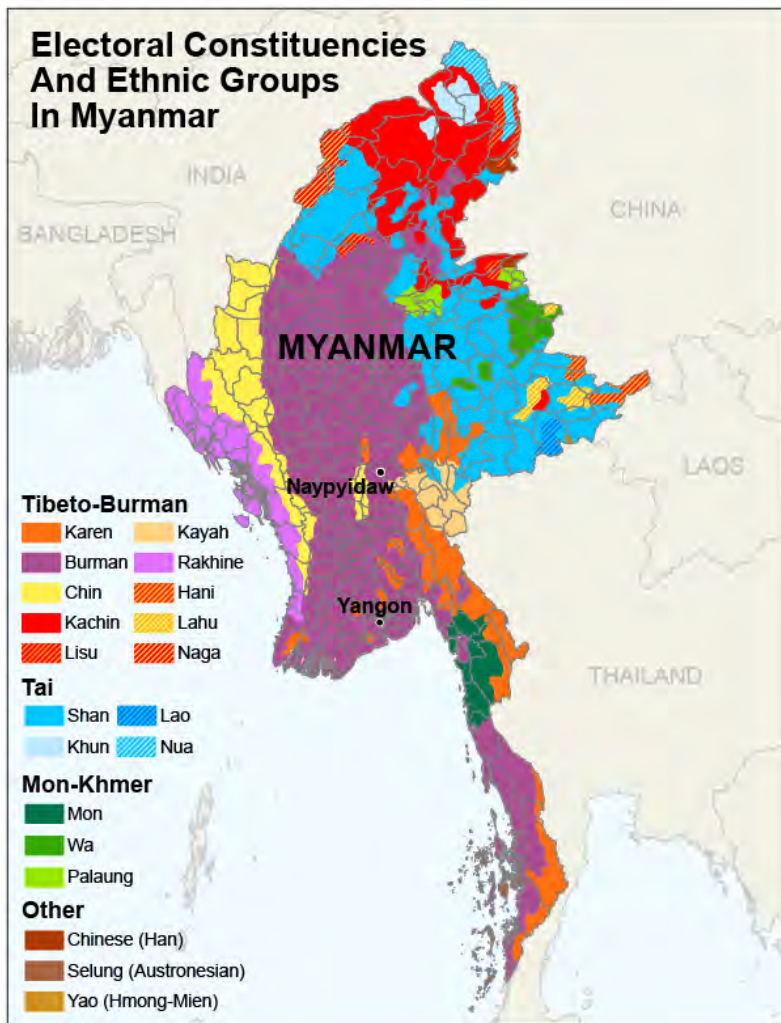


Fig. 4: Different linguistic groups in Myanmar
 (2012 The New York Times Company)

THE NAME GAME

BEFORE we recreate the past for AA languages and observe the south China and southeast Asian playground for inevitable interaction (and therefore genetic admixture), we need to settle on an issue of terminology. In fact, the careful reader may have noted that I have been glossing over a detail by identifying any language that is not IA, Dravidian or TB, as AA; for example, with regards to Santhali in Figure 1, I have identified it as the lonely AA language in the 8th Schedule. This glossing over a detail in the nomenclature that ought to be highlighted. AA is the generally recognised name of the group, of which Mon-Khmer and ‘Munda’ are two subgroups that fall within India, Khasi and Santhali, for example, belonging to these subgroups, respectively; this is more or less as per the convention in modern linguistics. However, the study of language origins has taken an explosive ‘genetic turn’ within the last decade or so, with the result that there is now a vast literature that has redefined the boundaries of the discipline studying language origins. This emerging, nascent perspective has brought along also newer terminologies, not necessarily taken deep roots within traditional language studies. In the context of the AA homeland, some genetic studies have identified three, rather than the traditional two, distinct AA subgroups in India, namely, (i) Khasi-Khmuic (represented by Khasi), (ii) Mon-Khmer (represented by Nicobarese

and Shompen in Andaman & Nicobar islands), and (iii) Munda (traditional Munda languages) (as in Kumar *et al*, 2007, “Y-chromosome evidence suggests a common paternal heritage of Austro-Asiatic populations”, *BMC Evolutionary Biology*, 7:47, which in fact identifies the third group not as Munda, as corrected here, but wrongly as ‘Mundari’ – a difference that will be made clear shortly).

The Shakespearean cliché in the form of a rhetorical question, ‘What’s in a name?’, should always be answered as ‘everything’, since it is most often the case that naming hurts, hides, and harms, in short, it is highly politicised. The precursor to the term Munda was Kohl/ Kol, the languages belonging to that subgroup thus termed ‘Kolarian’. In fact, the switch from Kolarian to Munda happened as early as 1854, Max Muller’s foresightedness being the reason behind it:



A Khasi family, ChanduBandi CCbySA 2.0

“These people call themselves “Munda”, which as an old ethnic name I have adopted for the common appellation of the aboriginal Koles. Kole is too general a name, because it is applied promiscuously to uncivilised races, and has become the English term for porters (coolee, or kholee, or kulies) all over India.” (“Letter to Chevalier Bunsen on the Classification of the Turanian Languages”)

Of course the old, ethnic term Munda itself was not held in any high regard in ancient India, as in *Mahabharata*, Satyaki speaks of the Mundas who have taken the side of the Kauravas, thus: “I shall destroy these Mundas as Indra destroyed the demons” (BhishmaParva), as pointed out in Bhattacharya, S., 1975, *Studies in Comparative Munda Linguistics*, IAS, Shimla.

In spite of this clarification from Max Muller, the term Kol was in use both before (Hodgson, B. H., 1847, “Aborigines of the Sub-Himalayas,” *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*) and after (Logan, Keane, Forbes, Caldwell, Campbell, and Chatterji, all after 1854). Not only that, but also in terms of classification, the Hodgsonian theory of considering Dravidian and ‘Kol’ as subgroups of a group like ‘Tamulic’ was back too, and more so in Anthropology. It is but clear that the differences between the two groups, Dravidians and the Mundas, were considered ‘minor’ enough in the colonial lens to warrant separate groupings; it was the looks as perceived, which drove scholarship in linguistic classification. However, I will show in the next part of this

series that it is precisely this colonial project, that accidentally threw up a possibility that may perhaps define the linguistic events that took place just outside the borders of the northeast, an event that has gone unnoticed so far. But more about that in the next issue.

After Max Muller, it was the turn of another stalwart in the linguistic world of the subcontinent, George Grierson (in 1906), to put the train back on track by re-establishing the use of the term Munda, as well as departing from racial stereotyping by distinguishing Munda from Dravidian (as was done by Max Muller before him). Though Grierson did not include Munda in volume II of the *Linguistic Survey of India* (published in 1903) in the Mon-Khmer languages, which only had discussion of Khasi, he did notice differences as well as substratum commonality between these two groups of languages; this is a theme that we shall come back to shortly.

To cut a long story short, the linguistic world has come to settle on the terms 'Munda' to depict the group of languages spoken mostly in central and east India, like Mundari, Santhali, Ho, Korku, Kharia, Juang, Gutob, Bonda (Remo), Saora/ Sora, etc.; and the term 'Mon-Khmer' to depict the group that includes Khasi and its dialects, spoken in the northeast, and Nicobarese and Shompen spoken in Andaman & Nicobar islands. The supergroup that includes Munda and Mon-Khmer is termed 'Austroasiatic'. With this clarification, let us now launch into the central theme of the article, i.e. the question of the Austroasiatic homeland.

MUNDA AND MON-KHMER: SAME OR DIFFERENT?

As mentioned above, Grierson hit the nail on its head when he noted both difference and sameness between these two subgroups. However, Grierson here was merely following a hunch that was in the air, so to speak, around that time among the scholars working in SEA and East Asia. Western scholars in mid-19th century were discovering languages of non-Chinese origin in the vast lands extending from Myanmar to Philippines and Indonesia including the Malayo-Polynesian peninsula. What bothered the scholars then and still bother more than 150 years later now, is the disjointedness of two groups of people and their languages, which ought to be different, owing to the geographic separation, and yet not so different. In trying to understand this connectedness, various theses were and are being proposed – how are these two groups of dislocated languages, connected?

Of course, the disjointedness can be understood better if we spread our net to the whole of SEA, which includes in its south-eastern corner (and in the pacific Malayo-Polynesia) the greatest concentration of Austronesian speakers. The question in the middle of the 19th century therefore was not about relating Munda with Mon-Khmer, since, as discussed above, those very terms themselves had not taken definitive shape by then, but about relating people of central Asia and Austronesia. In fact, that is precisely the title of the German book that outlined the so-called 'Austriac' theory proposed by W. Schmidt in 1906, *The Mon-Khmer People, Connecting Link between the Peoples of Central Asia and Austronesia*. Austriac for Schmidt therefore had Austroasiatic and Austronesian as subgroups, an idea that has found resonances all the way up to the present century. For Schmidt, AA meant 'Kolarian', Khasi, Mon-Khmer, etc. Thus, the scholars then and now are looking for *continuity*

– the dominant recurrent theme in any evolutionary, and by extension, migratory fable.

In spite of the pursuance of the unchanging question of sameness and difference between two groups, scholars have made progress by casting their net tighter in terms of the dyad under investigation, now looking at the same sameness versus difference theme, or the continuity question, across Munda and Mon-Khmer, instead of central Asia and Austronesia. This more specific, and modern, question can be presented no better than the following photo (in Figure 5) and the accompanying information.



Fig. 5: A Mundari and a Khasi speaker: Same or Different?

This is a recent photo of two linguist friends, Dr. Bikram Jora, a Mundari speaker from Jharkhand and Dr. Grace M. Temsen, a Khasi speaker from Meghalaya. This photo quite convincingly captures the spirit of this section, are these two language groups related? And, if so, what is the direction of the spread? These two questions have received a rather wide range of answers during the last half a century, though the answers are perceived of as involving a simple binary: either Munda is autochthonous to India or along with Khasi, it arrived in India from SEA through the northeast. In the next section, I will show that this

cannot be a simple question of binary but rather that one can discern at least six positions around the simple question of the Austroasiatic homeland, or in other words, where did Bikram and Grace come from?

THE VEXED QUESTION OF THE ORIGINAL HOMELAND OF THE AUSTROASIATIC

EARLIER, we observed the curious geographical fact, as a result of migration, of diversity being ‘pushed’ to the periphery. We can understand that point better in the current concern for the AA *urheimat* (original homeland). Though the higher-order phylogeny of east and southeast Asian languages is controversial, linguists more or less agree upon the following five major groups (from Sagart, L., 2003 “The vocabulary of cereal cultivation and the phylogeny of East Asian languages”, *Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association*, 23, (Taipei Papers) 1: 127-36; the times and places of origin are also from that study):

- (i) Austroasiatic [AA] (Eastern: Khmer, Mon, Vietnamese, Nicobarese, Aslian, Khasi; Western: Munda languages); proto-language spoken may be 6000 or 7000 ybp (Years Before Present) in south-western China;
- (ii) Austronesian [AN] (Atayal, Paiwan, Puyuma, Bunun, Amis, Rukai, Tagalog, Malay, Malagasy, Maori etc.); proto-language spoken 5500-4500 ybp in Taiwan;
- (iii) Sino-Tibetan [ST] (Chinese, Tibetan, Burmese, Meeteilon, Kachin, Bodo, Garo, etc.); proto-language spoken maybe 6000-7000 ybp in the mid- and upper Huang He Valley.
- (iv) Hmong-Mien [HM] (a.k.a. Miao-Yao: Hmong, HoNte, Bunu, Mien, etc.); proto-language spoken 2500 ybp in the mid-Yangzi Valley;
- (v) Tai-Kadai [TK] (Tai, Li, Kam, Sui, Gelao, etc.); proto-language spoken 2500 ybp in south-eastern China.

The complexity of the linguistic situation in the broad area that we are interested in, is evident from the above list. It is also clear that such an assemblage would be highly conducive for multi-ethnicity, multilinguality, and language borrowing and contact situations to emerge; in short, it is a veritable testing ground for determining language interaction. Also, recall that the northeast of India is a partial snapshot of the above complexity as

three from the above list (AA, ST, TK) as well as IA and Dravidian languages are found there.

Further, a “genetic boundary” seems to exist as follows, which corresponds closely to the linguistic boundary between north and south-west/ south-east Chinese languages; according to Sagart, southern Chinese divergence is due to the ‘Austic’ gene flow following colonisation of south China, 2000 ya (see Figure 6).

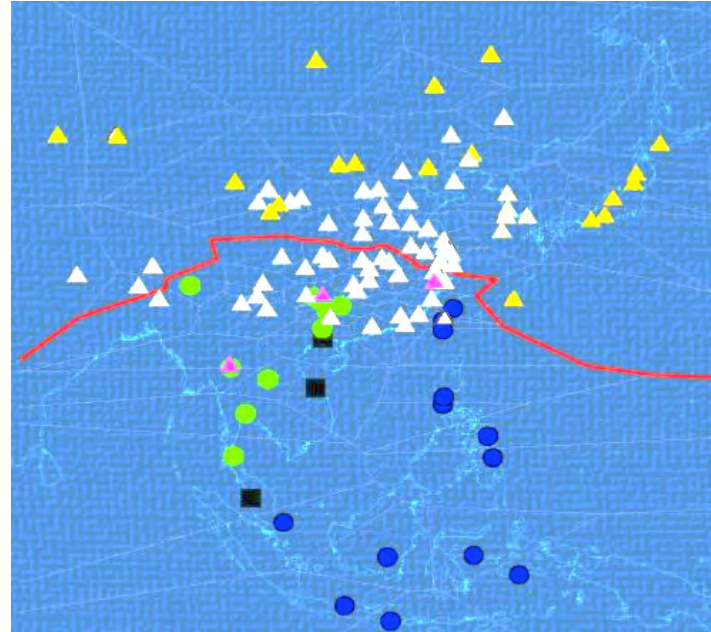


Fig. 6: Genetic Boundary
(from Sagart, L. 2013, <http://bartos.web.elte.hu/sinotib/formation-intro.pdf>) [White triangles: ST; Yellow triangles: Altaic/Japanese-Korean; Pink triangles: HM; Green circles: TK; Black squares: AA; Blue circles: AN]

Amidst this complexity lies the story – or the stories -- of the AA homeland, and like the “Rashomon effect”, some of the stories have conflicting developments.

SIX STORIES OF THE AA HOMELAND: THE RASHOMON EFFECT

THERE is often a common perception around the question of the AA homeland, which is usually translated as the relation between Munda and Mon-Khmer in the context of India, little realising that these are related but not identical questions. The simplistic view is that there are two theses about the issue at hand, namely, (a) Munda is autochthonous to India, and (b) AA originated in the SEA and arrived in India. For example, even in the genetic literature this view is expressed (Tamang, R., L. Singh, K. Thangaraj, 2012, “Complex genetic origin of Indian populations and its

implications”, *Journal of Bioscience*, 37(5): 911–919):

“There are two views on the origin and migration of this language (van Driem 2001; Fuller 2007; Kumar *et al.* 2007; Chaubey *et al.* 2011). The first view states Southeast Asia as its place of origin and their subsequent migration to South Asia during the Neolithic (Higham 2003), whereas pre-Neolithic origins and dispersal of this language family from South Asia was hypothesized by the second view (Fuller 2007).”

This common perception arises due to the India-centric nature of the problem, since Munda seems to be specific to India, understanding the Munda issue takes over the issue of the AA homeland. Like most things to do with AA, the matter is perhaps much more complex, and I have been able to detect at least six different variations of the answer to the AA original homeland question; these are listed below in brief:

- (1) AA originated in SEA and migrated into India through the northeast
- (2) AA originated in India and migrated into SEA through the northeast
- (3) The Munda branch of AA originated in India and the Mon-Khmer branch in the SEA, and this latter branch migrated into India (Khasi) through the northeast
- (4) Out-of-Africa (OoA) to India to SEA, interacting with India-specific indigenous groups on the way
- (5) Same as (iv) but the India-specific groups (Munda) as having migrated from central Asia earlier

- (6) OoA to Andaman & Nicobar islands and SEA and then to India through the northeast

So far, the linguistic and genetic accounts of the question of the original homeland of the AA group has thrown up the multiplicity of positions as above.

Although there are minor variations among these positions, we can see that there are three major types of migratory movements involved in these six positions:

- (a) SEA to India
- (b) India to SEA
- (c) Passing through India (from Africa to SEA)

Note that among the positions (i) to (vi), position (iii) is the only one that subscribes to a dual origin hypothesis; it combines the movements (a) and (b), i.e. both SEA to India and India to SEA. However this dual-origin position is only a sufficient but not necessary condition for interaction between the two subgroups of AA, namely, Munda and Mon-Khmer (Khasi), the whole basis of various positions taken. In fact, the dual-origin thesis must assume that the similarities between the two subgroups have arisen only due to interaction between them within India. However, if that were the case, we would expect a ‘distance-effect’ going from South/ Lower Munda languages like Didayi (Gta?) near the east (now southern) being closer to Khasi to North/ Upper Munda languages as far west as Maharashtra like Korku being far from Khasi; however, no such distance has been pointed out.

Note also in passing that the movements (a) and (b), and the positions (i) to (iii) are on the surface do not commit to an OoA thesis. However, it must be the case that at least the modern versions of these positions, do assume the OoA thesis, but start their account only from the perspective of the particular linguistic group in question. One reason for these positions to start their journey only from their purported place of origin (either India or SEA or both) is the availability of the linguistic evidence. Even the genetic picture captures this by showing the presence of the Y-Chromosome Haplogroup O in the land occupied by AA speakers (Figure 7).



Fig. 7: Distribution of Haplogroup O in East Asia (Constructed from <https://youtu.be/KyEPg6Xt214>)

As far as the AA speakers in India are concerned, there is a preponderance of the subclade O2a-M95 across the board, this is shown in Figure 8, where the two pie-charts in India represent the Munda and the Khasi languages, and where O2a, indicated by purple is quite prominent; although not shown here, the Nicobarese population shows a 100% frequency of O-M95.

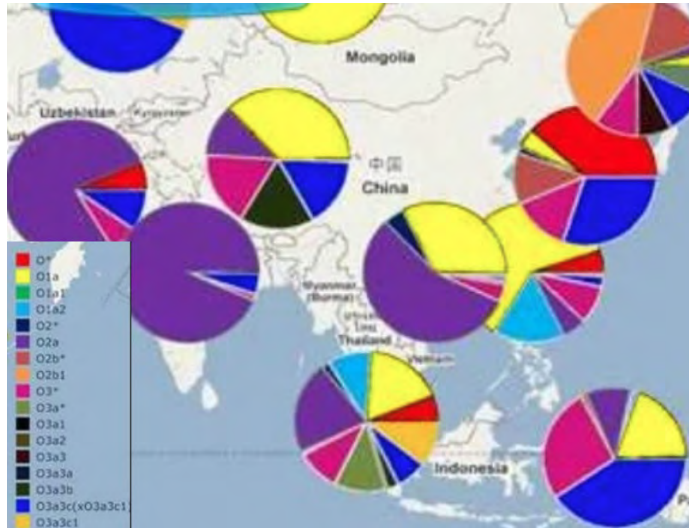


Fig. 8: Distribution of O2a in South Asia and SEA

The figures above can lead one to believe that since both O and O2 show their presence only in the regions indicated above, the story of their migration begins from there. However, these are mutations known as Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) passed down from ancient ancestors. The O-M95 is a subclade of the Y-Chromosome O-K18 and has a Time of Most Recent Common Ancestor (TMRCA) as 30,900-24,100 ya (though see below Figure 11). If we see the rough journey of this Haplogroup, the Out-of-Africa connection becomes immediately evident.



Fig. 9: The Journey of M175 out of Africa

(Created from https://web.archive.org/web/20071012044629im_/http://explore-qatar.com/imglib/spencer_4.jpg)

In Figure 9, the journey out of Africa of the M175 branch of the Haplogroup O is shown in red dotted lines; note that M175 is the upstream of M95 that we mentioned earlier. The O-M95 frequency of some of the language groups is summarised in Figure 10, where the two Mon-Khmer language groups are shaded.

Name of the population	Frequency of O-M95
Nicobarese	1.00
Juang	.98
Bonda (Remo)	.95
Santhal	.47
Mundari	.45
Khasi	.41
Garo	.18

Fig. 10: Frequency of O-M95 for select populations (adapted from Kumar, V. et al, 2007)

Note that from the numbers in Figure 10, nothing definitive about the intrusion period of either the Munda or the Mon-Khmer can be inferred. The relative TMRCA of the different relevant groups also do not hint at arrival dates as the dates for Munda and Khasi are comparable (see Figure 11). Figure 11 also shows early origins of the Haplogroup O-M95 (as claimed in Kumar et al., 2007), and a late arrival of the Nicobarese population.

Groups	TMRCA (Years)
Munda	65,730
Khasi	57,252
Nicobarese	16,578

Fig. 11: Estimated TMRCA of O-M95

In this connection, it may also be pointed out that there are some older versions of the positions (iv) and (v), though very clearly the OoA thesis itself was not available then, they thus fall within these position by virtue of a 'projected' OoA thesis. These older versions start

their journey variously from central/west Asia or Asia Minor or the Caucasus. This is partly the influence of the colonial project, the west-centric view of evolution in general, but partly also due to the desire to classify. One support in favour of the critique of the colonial thinking behind these positions comes from the total absence of any account of migratory movement through the sea routes. Position (vi) therefore is necessarily a modern version of migration OoA, also one which has been proposed by the some geneticists.

Having looked at these six positions, it becomes clear that we need to keep in mind the advice given in fact as early as 1854 by Max Muller when either the Out-of-Africa or genetic studies were absent: “it is impossible to imagine that race and language should continue to run parallel”, for, it is a truism that as tribes of people continue to move and settle elsewhere, their identities and imaginations change.

ADMIXING O2A AND O3E

TO come back to where we had started, namely, the contention that the story of migration into the northeast of India cannot be complete without an account of at least one other major linguistic group and population in the area, and having travelled through the possible migratory routes of that group of people, I will now cast my vote among the six positions above about the original homeland of the AA group of speakers.

Recall that we shifted our base to southern China and the Southeast Asia to understand better the phenomenon of coming together of different groups of people that gave rise to the complex linguistic

pastiche of today, as well as a genetic pool with differing degrees of admixture. In this connection, it may be worthwhile to point out that though O-M122 is the signature Haplogroup of the ST population (as shown in Figure 12 below), like the O-M95 being the signature Haplogroup for AA, the TB population of India carries both the O2-M95 and O3-M122, indicating admixture with the AA population.

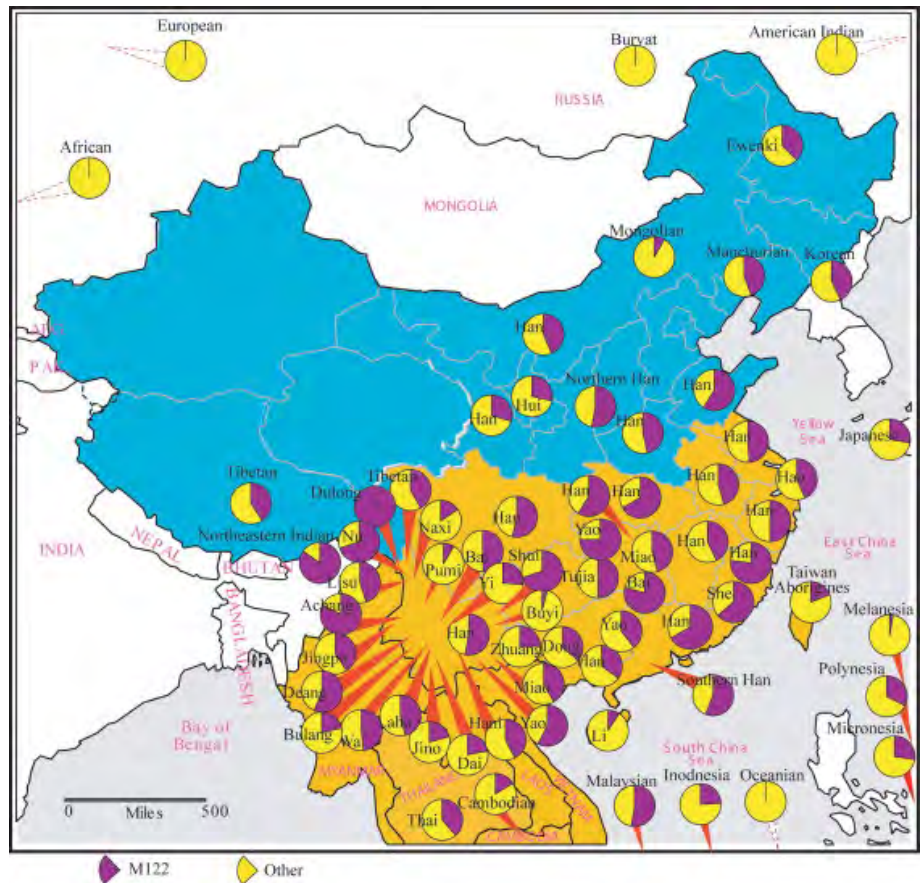


Fig. 12: The frequency distribution of the O3-M122 haplotypes (adapted from Shi et al., 2005, “Y-Chromosome Evidence of Southern Origin of the East Asian-Specific Haplogroup O3-M122”, American Journal of Human Genetics, 77:408-419)

Not only that, as Figure 13 shows, the Khasi population, and even the Mundari to some extent, has O-M122, which is a Tibeto-Burman specific Haplogroup, as shown by a much higher percentage frequency among the Garos; the presence of M122 in Khasis indicate admixing between TB and AA populations in distant and near past:

Population	O-M122
Mundari	0.13
Khasi	29.35
Garos	54.55
Nicobarese	0

Fig. 13: Frequency of O-M122 in AA and TB (Adapted from Kumar et al., 2007)

Outside of India, in China and SEA, the genetic signature of the Tai-Kadai group of speakers carry O-M95 due to extensive AA substratum influence in the past, and the AA population of that region carry both O-M122 and O-M119, the latter indicative of Austronesian influence, apart from O-M95. All this indicates a massive admixture and presentation of real diversity in the multi-ethnic regions outside India and in the northeast of India.

Finally, I want to present one point in favour of the SEA origin of the AA group, that is, position (i) in the previous section. Recall that in Part 2 of this series (vol.2, issue 4, 2016), I pointed out two TB migrations from the South-West of China, the TB in the northeast and the Bodic in the north. This is somewhat confirmed by the map in Figure 14 about the spatial distribution of the O3e tribal population of India; I have indicated the two routes in Part 2 through red dotted arrows:

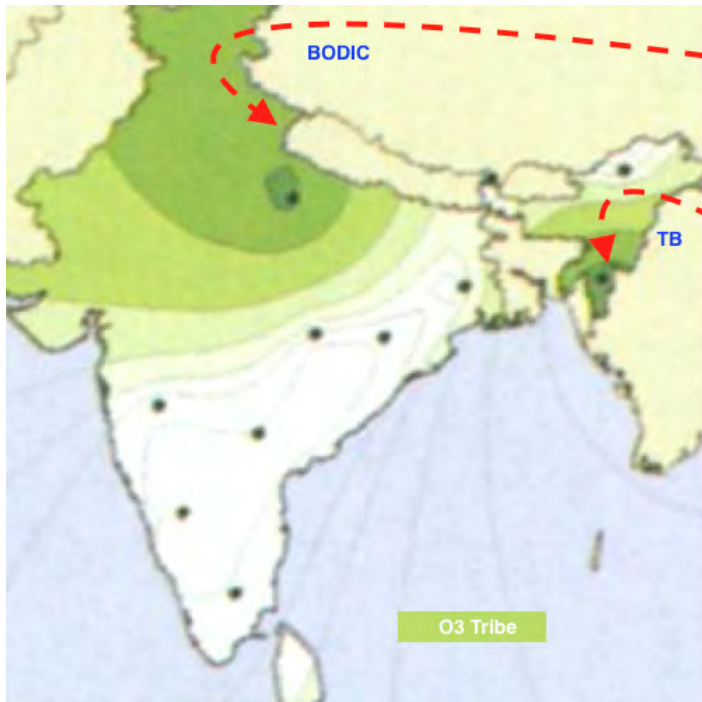


Fig. 14: Spatial Distribution Map for O3e (tribe) Population (Adapted from Sabooet et al., 2006, "A Prehistory of Indian Y-Chromosomes: Evaluating Demic Diffusion Scenarios", *Proceedings of the NASUSA*, Vol. 103.4:843-848)

Comparing this with the O2a spatial distribution reveals a difference. Note that in the case of the O2a distribution, the pockets of high density are contiguous (see Figure 15), which is not the case for O3e distribution; in fact, the presence of the natural barrier of the Himalayas between the two arrows in Figure 14 is perhaps a reason for the two different migrations of the TB population. A possible migration from the northeast pocket of density to the southeast pocket for the O2a group can be therefore be projected as shown in red dotted arrow in Figure 15:

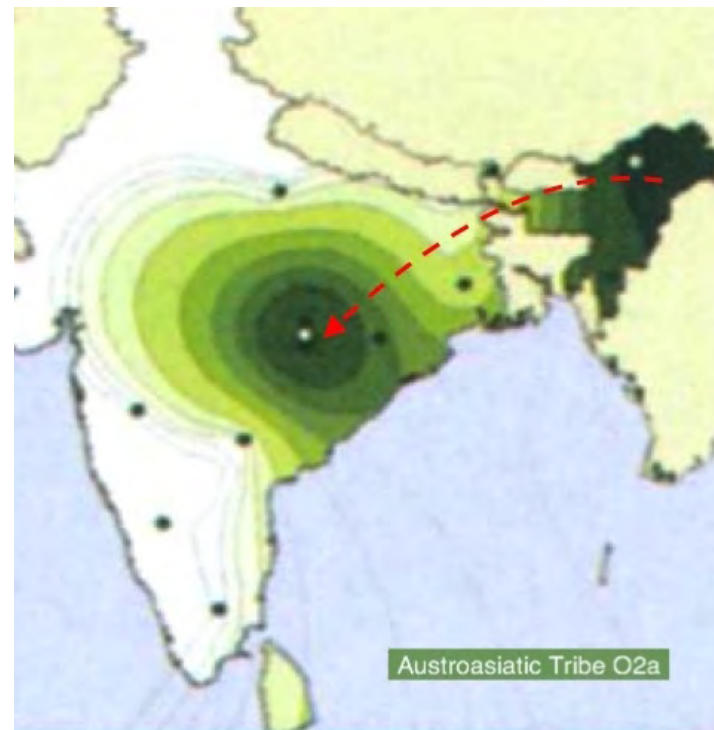


Fig. 15: Spatial Distribution Map for O2a (tribe) Population (Adapted from Sabooet et al., 2006)

Note that this proposal is therefore consistent with the position (i) of the AA *urheimat* question, i.e. SEA as the original homeland for the AA group. Of course the out-of-Africa connection remains to be seen, back-migration being the most likely scenario, for now, we can conclude that whether out of Africa or out of southeast Asia, my friends Grace and Bikram come from the same source.

