

REMNANT OF A LOST NATION & THEIR COGNATE WORDS TO OLD MON EPIGRAPH

Surprisingly, a few extraordinary discoveries on anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics have been brought to light by competent scholars of respective fields of research in recent years both in Burma and Thailand.

In 1979, U Thaw Tint and U Ba Maw of Geology Department of Mandalay University reported the new finds of fossilised primate jaws at Pondaung Hills, near Mogaung village, Pale township, North-West Burma which date back to 40 million years according to Radiocarbon test. Thus claiming to be the oldest specimen fossils of anthropoid so far found in the world. (See *Nature* Vol. 282, No. 5734, pp. 65-67, 1979 Macmillan Journals Ltd.)

Pisit Charoenwongsa and Chester German had jointly conducted the systematic excavations at Ban Chiang, a small village in North-East Thailand in the field seasons of 1974-75. Reports say that the finds from Ban Chiang Provide the earliest bronze casting technology yet discovered which Radiocarbon (C14) analysis places them 3600-2900 B.C. antedating both the bronze metallurgy of China and the Middle East. (See *Tentative Stratigraphic Sequence through the Ban Chiang Mound*, Expedition Vol. 18 No.4, p.26, 1976, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia)

In the same issue of *Expedition* on page 12, the learned editor James D. Muhly wrote: " The first radiocarbon dates from Mainland China suggest that copper metallurgy in China could as old as c.2000 BC. But no earlier, at least on the evidence now available. Yet the radiocarbon dates indicate the presence of bronze in Northern Thailand some 1500 years earlier. Perhaps bronze metallurgy actually came from Thailand to China. That is exactly what has now been claimed, but on philological rather than archaeological grounds "

Paul Benedict, the author of what is known as the 'Benedict Hypothesis' has proposed that the basic agricultural and metallurgical terminology in Chinese actually comes from what he calls the Austro-Thai language family. According to Benedict, the

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word for copper, Chinese t' ung, was borrowed by Chinese from Austro-Thai. For Benedict the graves at Ban Chiang and Non Nok Tha represent the very graves of these ancestral Austro-Thai people or peoples, with evidence of sophisticated bronze casting in the middle of the third millennium B.C. about a thousand years before the appearance of the celebrated bronze of ancient China.

Professor Paul K. Benedict writes: "We come now finally to the one cultural item which is represented, albeit with semantic shift, in Munda, viz. lu (y) aη 'copper/brass', yielding Proto-Munda luanη 'iron', the final piece in the puzzle (the missing "y" being supplied by Mon sluy 'copper' (cf. Slāk 'brass') from s/luy (aη)..... Thus it appears that the "culture word" of greatest antiquity in all Southeast Asia should designate the metal (copper/bronze) that was probably first produced in history by the people (Austro-Thai speaking) of this region" (See *Austroasiatic Studies*, Part I, p.27, 1976, Hawaii University, Honolulu).

Austro-Thai is a new term given by Benedict in a paper presented at the First International Conference on Austroasiatic Linguistics at the University of Hawaii in 1973. Old linguist W. Schmidt (1906) of Vienna started calling a language super family as "Austrie" which has two sub-divisions known as Austronesian (languages spoken on the southern islands) and Austroasiatic (languages spoken on the mainland of South Asia including Mon-Khmer but excluding Thai-Chinese and Tibeto-Burman, both belong to Sino-Tibetan, a different main family).

Among members of the Austroasiatic stock, Mon was one of the major languages which had played a considerable role in bygone days in the soil now known as Thailand.

Regarding the remnant of ancient Mon in Thailand which I prefer to call them a lost Nation, Gerard Diffloth of Chicago University brought me in 1980, a copy of his work entitled "Reconstructing Dvāravatī-Old-Mon" revealing the fact that the Nyahkur language was a sister-language to Modern Mon, which separated itself during the Old Mon period and has had an independent life since then. Strangely enough they do not consider themselves to be Mon and in fact have no knowledge of the name Mon or any older form of it such as Ramañ; Rmeñ; Rman and Man, pronounced 'Mon'. Obviously their spoken words are more closer to written Old Mon than to Modern Spoken Mon.

Despite the fact that they are illiterate they still maintain the sound of final consonants in their speech as we find in Old Mon inscriptions of both Burma and Thailand that had flourished from 6th centuries A.D.

Dr. diffloth writes in his Introduction; "The comparison of Mon and Nyah Kur

gives us not only more information (two Monic languages instead of one), but also information of a totally different kind; it allows us to construct, in part, a third language which has disappeared for ever, and to suggest the course of events which led from this reconstructed language to the ones which are still spoken today: Mon and Nyah Kur. This third language will be called Proto-Monic, following normal linguistic practice; but we will try to show in the conclusion to the present work that this language was actually the one spoken in Central Thailand in the Dvāravatī period, i.e. that Proto-Monic is Dvāravatī-Old-Mon.”

His reconstruction is admirable and I was excited to have such a very striking information about the discovery of the remnant of a lost nation of our ancestors the ancient language of Thailand that had presumed to be lost forever. As a Mon, I was delighted and would like to express my heartiest congratulations to Dr. Diffloth for his pioneer work exerting strenuous efforts in bringing to light the long hidden Nyah Kur language to be definitely affiliated to an offshoot of the Dvāravatī-Old-Mon.

Again in 1984, I was overwhelmed with joy when I received a copy of Nyah Kur (Chao-Bon)-Thai-English Dictionary by Dr. Theraphan Thongkum. It was kindly presented to me by the author herself. This rhyming dictionary consists of about 5000 entries of Nyah Kur words. The author says this dying language is spoken by a minority group scattered in remote areas of three provinces; Chaiyaphum, Khorat and Petchabun. She states that the phonological system of Nyah Kur is more similar to Old Mon of the inscriptions than to Modern Mon. The learned dictionary is arranged by semantic categories into 37 sections. The entries are transcribed in IPA script and translated into Thai and English with sample phrases and sentences. It is extremely helpful for me in comparing with my language. Therefore, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulation to Dr. Theraphan for her pioneer work on Nyah Kur. I admire her for her ability and diligence in mastering the dialect which is a sister-language of my mother tongue.

Simultaneously, Dr. Diffloth sent me a copy of his book on “The Dvaravati Old Mon Language and Nyah Kur”. It is a very extensive work proving that the Nyah Kur people are the direct linguistic descendants of Dvaravati society. He suggests that Dvaravati Old Mon was the communication medium of ancient Central Thailand before Thai supplanted it. He says that by comparing the Nyah Kur language with the various stages of Mon, a competent linguist can start reconstructing the Dvaravati Old Mon language itself. Because the Nyah Kur language (Chao Bon) is an offshoot of Old Mon.

This new theory may not be accepted by every one and even certain linguists of today do not have the notion that the Nyah Kur are actually a dialect of Mon. So also over half a century ago, Seidefaden had contributed two learned articles on Nyah Kur lan-

guage in JSS Vol.12 and 13 in 1918-19 and Phra Petchabunburi wrote about the same tribe in the same journal in 1921. Both scholars regarded Nyah Kur as a dialect of Lawa, a Mon-Khmer language. However, Seidenfaden changed his view in 1958 and said they are not Lawa. Credner, regarded them in 1935 as representative of the Kui, a Mon-Khmer dialect also known as Kuoy and Soai who dwell in the hills along both sides of the Thailand-Cambodia border between 103 E, 103 E. (See *Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia*, by 12 authors, including F.M. Lebar, G.C.Hickey, J.K.Musgrave, Human Relations Area Files Press, New haven, USA 1964).

In those days, the linguists were unable to ascertain that the Nyah Kur language was almost identical to Old Mon and linking closely with Modern Mon than to any other Mon-Khmer language because it seems that they had no authentic reference books on Old Mon epigraphy. Professor H.L.Shorto of School of Oriental and African Studies in London University who compiled "A Dictionary of the Mon Inscriptions from the Sixth to the Sixteenth Centuries" in 1971 was also silent on this dialect though he did put them as Niakual of Korat and Niakual of Petchabun in giving cross references in his learned book.

In 1970, Professors Thomas and Headley place Nyah Kur together with Mon, calling it Monic branch when a general classification of the whole family was proposed. (See "More on Mon-Khmer Subgrouping" by David D. Thomas and Robert K. Headley, *Lingua* 25,4:398-418). The notion was well accepted by Professor F.E.Huffman in 1977 and finally confirmed by Dr.Diffloth in 1980. (See Diffloth's interesting article on Nyah Kur which rendered into Thai in a Thai Journal of Bangkok 1980 and his Introduction to Reconstructing Dvaravati-Old-Mon in English appeared in a Thai publication in 1982).

Concerning the Old Mon people in Thailand, a learned and eminent scholar Phya Anuman Rajadhon wrote in JSS Vol.LIII, pt.2, p.135 in 1965.

" It is a historical fact that the central part of Thailand, the Menam Basin, a thousand or more years ago was peopled by the Mon speaking race who later mixed freely, racially and culturally with the Thai, late comers from the North of Thailand and beyond. Historians tell us that Mons at those times were a relatively civilized race as compared to the Thai and other neighbouring races".

No one has ever thought that some of those Mons of the historic past mentioned above would be still surviving in the isolated places far out from Thai speakers. Unexpectedly we can now prove that the Nyah Kur are indeed no other than remnant of the Dvaravati-Old-Mon. They represent the oldest tribe of Thailand numbering slightly over two thousand who dwell in about 25 small villages scattered in Korat, Petchabun

and Chaiyaphum provinces.

They have no close contacts with the outside world. That is why they have not yet been incorporated with the Thai language upto now. But at any rate, due to the growth of Thai population, the Nyah Kur speakers would be assimilated by the majority Thai language sooner or later as in the case of Modern Mons who migrated to Thailand from Burma in the 17th-18th centuries who had very freely mingled with the Thais. (Immigration of the Mons into Siam by Robert Halliday, JSS, 10, Part 3, 1913 pp.1-14. Reprinted in 50th Anniversary Volume, The Siam Society, Vol.I, pp. 65-77).

The Nyah Kur are called Chao Bon by the Thai which means "people of the hills". In Modern Mon, *ñah̄gū/ṅah ku*/means "people of the plantations" - *ñah̄/ṅah/or/nyah/=*people and *gū/ku/=*plantation. Perhaps this meaning had been changed from hill to plantation because old peoples used to do plantation on hillsides or on slopes of the hills. The majority of them are located in Chaiyaphum. About five villages in Korat and two in Petchabun. All the villages are found on the edge of Korat plateau. Except one all villages have mixed populations with Thai. All of them can speak Thai.

In addition there are many people in the area between the Central Plain and the North-East of Thailand where they say that their parents spoke Nyah Kur but they now speak Thai only; some say they used to speak Nyah Kur when they were young but now unable to do so. Some fifty years ago, there were at least fifty villages who spoke Nyah Kur. At present there are less than half of that number. Obviously they have been dwindling. The older people speak Nyah Kur well, but younger ones go to schools and pick up Thai words easily and perhaps they would drop off Nyah Kur language in the years ahead. There is a village on the new main road and easily accessible to buses, trucks and even tourists. So they are more exposed to the outside world than the more remote villages. Apparently no more Nyah Kur speakers could be found in this village in the next fifty years. There are of course small dialect differences among the Nyah Kur but they all understand each other without difficulty. Only the two villages in Petchabun are rather difficult for others to understand their dialect as they live very far away and do not have contact with the rest.

Most of them are wet rice cultivators and some of them raise rice and maize in the hill clearings. Of course Professor Luce has said: "The pioneers in civilization, both in Old Burma and Old Siam, were the Mons. Strongest in the deltas near the coast, where they grow their irrigated rice, they had contacts with India from very early times....." (Old Burma-Early Pagan, Vol.I, p.3, 1969, *Artibus Asiae*, Supplementum 25)

Despite the difference in language, the surviving small number of Nyah Kur tribe are not much different from Thai in out-look, dress, ornaments, manners and housing

but there are some characteristics which are peculiar. The women keep special dress what they call / knuun / corresponding to gnun / knun / of Old Mon and gnin / nhin / of Modern Mon, meaning woman's waist cloth or skirt which they wear at special occasions. The men wear dark-red skirt (sarong) at ceremonies. Of course the dark-red skirt is also a most favourite one for us in Burma.

Like us in Burma, they also believe in the unseen spirit which they call / nthook / and our word in / alook / literary *kalok* but written *kindok* in Old Mon with the supposed pronunciation / kentook / apparently almost identical. If some one falls from the house, the owner or anybody has to pour some water over the fallen person and say some words of apology to the house spirit according to their custom. Such inherited primitive custom is still existed in my native village too. At Songkran (New Year Festival), they still throw water at each other like us and use to visit each other's houses and hold parties for quite a few days—drinking home made rice wine. Even those who do not speak Nyah Kur any more also follow these old traditions. A popular game which they play between boys and girls is what they call / win ηlee^s / corresponding to our word / woiη hene^s / also woin hanai⁷ / depending on locality with variant pronunciations but in literature written weñ game⁷.

The Nyah Kur word to play / win / was spelt *wiñ* in Old Mon and its supposed pronunciation would be / win / which is strikingly identical. We have no voice of final consonant offñ/n/ in conversation but instead we have the sound of ñ / η / or n / n / according to locality. The large dark round seeds which they call/ηlee²/is not occurred in Old Mon epigraphy. It is known in Thai/sabba/a sort of bean called in English entada.

This common game is played in groups at all times and seasons but preferable at night during New Year Festival where the entada seeds are set upright in a long row at which each boy or girl from a distance of about ten or more feet would knock down in turn with the same seed that each of them holds in hand. Young people are very fond of this game. It is a sort of an old form of courtship at which they can easily get acquainted with each other. This is a typical Mon game. It is still played popularly in Mon villages both in Burma and Thailand.

Though we play the same game and follow the same custom we do not utter the same voice. Once Dr. Diffloth took a Nyah Kur to a Mon village in Rachaburi province. There he found that they could not communicate with each other, except in Thai, but everybody was amazed at finding almost identical and similar words in both the dialects. I was astonished to find certain words among the Diffloth's collection and Theraphan's entries which are very important support to the Old Mon glosses in determining the meanings.

We have lost such old words in our spoken language. Regarding this point, my old teacher Professor G.H.Luce often remarked ; “Old Mon and Middle Mon are well-nigh two different languages and Modern Mon is yet a third!” (See his paper, *Mons of the Pagan Dynasty*, JBRs Vol.XXXVI pt.I).

I could still reflect my study tours under Luce’s guidance at Pagan over three decades ago when I began to learn to read Old Mon inscriptions on stones and ink glosses on the interior walls of various temples. He read to me Old Mon words with the sound of final consonants somewhat like English words such as - das = to be ; ār = to go; kyā l = air; sac = fruit ; piñ = to be full etc. Then I smiled and said to myself: “He pronounced in such a way because he is an Englishman!” I imagined then that he was wrong because we do not have such sound in my mother tongue.

Only now I am convinced and realised that he was absolutely correct because I learnt from Diffloth and Theraphan that Nyah Kur people are still maintaining such final consonantal sound in their speech in the same way the Old Mon people of Pagan should have been spoken in the 11th century A.D. as evident by the orthography of Old Mon epigraphy. Professor Luce has also very often said that Thailand was once Monland because the oldest Mon inscription was discovered not in Burma but in Thailand. Of course, Mon inscriptions are found in Nakhon Pathom, Loburi, Lamphun and various other places in Thailand dating between 6th and 13th centuries A.D.

Authentic Chinese accounts of 7th century A.D. stated the existence of a country known as To-lo-po-ti between Isanapura (Cambodia) and Śrīkṣetra (Burma) which have been restored as Dvāravatī (Skt. word meaning city with gates). This identification was first proposed by Beal and Chavannes in 1884 and 1894 respectively and remained conjectural until two silver medals or coins bearing the writing Śrī Dvāravatīcvara-punya, were dug up in 1963. (See the *King of Śrī Dvāravatī and his Regalia* by J.J.Boeles, JSS Vol.LII pt.I, pp.99-114).

Thus approving the old theory of restoring the toponym TOLOPOTI to Dvāravatī of the Chinese text written by Hsuangtsang in 648 A.D. during his pilgrimage travel from China to India and back.

The history of Dvāravatī, an old Mon kingdom flourished in Old Siam in the 6th century A.D. after the break up of Funan Empire has been mostly described by George Coedes and many other historians. The archaeological evidences of Dvāravatī period have been established by P.Dupont who conducted systematic excavations in 1950. A book on Dvāravatī by Quaritch Wales came out in 1969. Mon inscriptions of Thailand have been edited by Coedes and Halliday in BEFEO in 1929 and 1930 respectively. While Mon inscriptions of Burma have been deciphered and translated admirably by

C.O. Blagden in *Epigraphia Birmanica* in four volumes since 1918. Old Mon ink inscriptions of Pagan temples have been read and translated by G.H. Luce in the *Bulletin of Burma Historical Commission Vol. II, 1961* and *J.B.R.S Vol. LIII, pt II 1975*.

There are some odd words in Old Mon inscriptions of Burma which are really difficult to make out their meanings. We have, however, solved such problems by comparing with the later find glosses among ink inscriptions perhaps some are slightly different in spelling. Such ink glosses are found mostly in the Jataka stories and the events from the life of Lord Buddha written below the murals that illustrate the episodes on the inner walls of Pagan monuments.

Among Diffloth's collection and Thrapan's entries shown in their books, I was thrilled to find such important words spoken by the Nyah Kur today which are very valuable evidences in confirming the rendered meanings of the obscure words found in the ancient epigraphical records of Old Burma Early Pagan.

For instance let us look at the Shwezigon Mon inscriptions written by a Burmese king known as Kyansittha in the 11th century A.D. on face C, lines 35-37, the text reads:

“ut mahājan gumloñ dus ambò ambà laḥ dus kuñci munyow laḥ dus
imāñ kandar laḥ dus kanlyānamit sahāy rumlos laḥ dus rañ skò kum
kum ci deḥ sculoḥ tubaḥ kel sak spunluk smic cir-aḥ deḥ”

Dr. Blagden's translation: “All the people, be it the faults of mother or father, nephew or brother-in-law, husband or wife, good friend or trusty companion, or the faults of one another, they shall openly declare (them), shall not conceal (them) and shall desire their purgation.” (*Epigraphia Birmanica Vol. I, Pt. II p. 119*).

Among human society, (mother and father) and (husband and wife) are normal doublets but the combination “nephew and brother-in-law” is doubtful. It is certainly a mistake in translation. The word *yow* and *kamin* from *kamun* mean elder brother-in-law and nephew or niece respectively. Therefore, Dr. Blagden was forced to translate tentatively as stated above in 1920.

Over three decades later the word *kuñci* was noticed in *Hatthipāla Jātaka* (No. 509) in Nagayon temple at Pagan. The story reads:

“ (Bodhisattva das Hatthipāl kuñci aja imò Assapāl moy Gopāl moy
Ajapāl Moy”

Translation: The Bodhisattva was Hatthipāla (Elephant keeper). His younger brother (s) (were) named one Assapāla (Horse-keeper), one Gopāla (cowherd) and one Ajapāla (Goat-herd).....”

Glossary: Bodhisattva = future Buddha or Buddha to be;

das = to be; kuñci = younger brother; aja = his;
imò = named or called; moy = one

It is certain that the word *kuñci* means younger brother because in this Jātaka story *Hatthipāla* has three younger brothers as mentioned above. In a later Old Mon inscription known as *Pagan Nganintha* (Pagan Museum stone No.68) on west face ll.22-24, the text reads:-

yañ pey kañci deḥ ui' ran ya phaw kañci heḥ
ya dwac ya si ya krac ñā pan ya sok ñā
glan ñā khan.....

Translation:

Yañ poy, his younger sister *Ui'Ran*. *Ya Phaw*, her younger sisters and younger brothers *Ya Dwac*, *Ya Si*, *Ya Krac*, *Ñā Pan*, *Ya sok*, *Ñā Glan* and *Ñā Khan*.....

This Mon inscription contains both Mon and Burmese personal names. In such proper names, the prefixes *Ya* in Mon and *Ui'* in Burmese indicate female names. Prefixes *Yañ* in Mon and *ñā* in Burmese stand for male. Therefore *kañci* here means younger siblings.

Moreover the word for younger sister-in-law appeared twice in *Kusa Jātaka* (No.531) in ink inscriptions of *Nagayon Temple*. The story reads:-

Wò kāl smin' dūmpoh tluñ biñ bārānāsī mic kuñci dnal smin'
kussarāja kuñsīr smin' kussarāja kñā tit
cinleh smin' kussarāja k-ac'ut smin' dūmpoh ku ciñ
kṣeh balabaḥ lot op abār tāw smin' kussarāja rap
'ut smin' dūmpoh goḥ rañ lop kil ku kuñsi sak or pa
s-ir or kil kuñci dnal mimoy mimoy'ut smin' dūmpoh goḥ.....

Translation:-

This is when the seven kings come and besiege Banares, demanding the *Kuñci dnal* (younger sister-in-law) of Prince *Kusa*. The father-in-law of prince *Kusa* invites him to go out and fight. Prince *Kusa* roars. All the seven kings, with (their) elephants, horses and hosts, fall down crouch and remain prostrate. Prince *Kusa* captures all the seven kings, brings (them), enters (the city) and hands over to his father-in-law, with request not to make harm (but) to present with a *kuñci dnal* each to those seven kings.....

Glossary:-

W o , = t h i s ; k ā l = t i m e ; w h e n ; s m i n ' = k i n g ,
prince; dūmpoh = seven; tluñ = come; biñ = surround,

besiege; mic = seize, want, demand; kuṁci dnal = younger sister-in-law; kuṁsīr = parent-in-law; kñā = invite, ask; tit = to go out; cinleh = fight; kac = shout, roar; 'ut = all; ku = with; ciñ = elephant; kṣeh = horse; balabaḥ = hosts, troops; lot = fall; op = to hide; to crouch; abār = prostrate; tāw = stay; remain; rap = capture, hold; rañ = bring; lop = enter; kil = give; or = to cause; sak = not, nil; pa = make; sir = harm; ill treat; mimoy = each, apiece; goḥ = that, those; bārānāsī = Banares.

Apparently the story in this Old Mon version is not completely agreeable with the modern texts which say that the seven kings have come to Sāgala simultaneously and threaten to destroy the city, if Pabhavati (Kusa's bride) is not given. King Madda of Sāgala city decided to cut down his daughter Pabhavati into seven pieces for the seven kings but she is saved by her despised husband Kusa. Prince Kusa persuades his father-in-law not to kill the seven captured kings but to give each of his seven younger sister-in-law to them.

Therefore, the term *kuṁci dnal* has a great problem. The word *kuṁci* certainly means younger sibling as shown in other records. Obviously *kuṁci dnal* means younger sister-in-law. However it contradicts with the modern version in the first place though it agrees in the second. Following or sticking on the modern texts, Professors Luce and Shorto have rendered the word *kuṁci dnal* in both places as bride, perhaps to suit the story. But they keep the city Banares as it is without any alteration or any reference to Sāgala to be in accordance with the modern Jātaka tale.

Consequently, I am inclined to consider that it was the scribe's mistakes in putting Banares instead of Sāgala and so also in using the term *kuṁci dnal* in the first place instead of Pabhavati. Despite such errors in using words in the wrong places, the original meanings of such words cannot be altered. (See G.H.Luce's rendering of Kusa Jātaka in glosses in JBRS Vol. LVIII pt. II, p.159 and H.L.Shorto's dictionary of Mon Inscriptions and his Note on Mon Epigraphy in BSOAS XVIII, pp.346-8.

The second word in the pair *munyow* occurred in Hatthipāla Jātaka in Nagayon Temple of Pagan thus:-

'ut smiñ abo' aba' aja kuṁci munyow.....trus brow j-it jnok m-ir das risi
attavi

"All the king, his mother and father, his younger siblings and elder brothers.....male and female, a great procession, renounce the world and become hermits of the forest".

Glossary:-

'ut = all; kuñci = younger sibling; munyow = elder brother; trus = male; brow = female; j-it = procession; retinue; jnok = great; m-ir = to become monk or hermit, renounce the world; das = to be; risi = hermit; aṭṭavi = forest (Skt./Pali aṭavi)

A variant of this word occurred in Sona-Nanda Jātaka (No.532) in the same Nagayon monument which is spelt minyow but it means the same. It is a common practice in the change of vowel u to i in old Mon epigraphy. The story reads:-

“We'kāl risi nan ket smiñ manoja ār dwān smiñ (klañ) moy da'ut bnas kañ ma deḥ t-eḥ pañ tiñgim ta goḥ aja cir du-il ut ku cañmakhan ma row goḥ kuñci 'ut smiñ jambudwip mleḥ ma aja pkom ket na s-ār kindo' han minyow aja ma himo' risi son”

“This is when the hermit Nanda brings king Manoja and goes to invade (one hundred and) one kings. All the spears and arrows which they shoot and thrust (at them) he even wards off all with his leather mat like that! In order to go and pay respect to his elder brother named the hermit Sona, he assembles all the kings of the whole Jambudipa”

Glossary:-

wo' = this; kāl = when; risi = hermit; ket = take; smiñ = king; ār = go; dwān = fight; klañ = 100; moy = one; 'ut = all; bnas = spear; kañ = arrow; deḥ = he; t-eḥ = plural suffix; pañ = shoot; tiñgim = thrust; ta = plural form; goḥ = that; aja = he; cir = to shade, ward; du-il = off; ku = with; cañmakhan = leather mat (Pali cammakhaṇḍa) row = like; kuñ = even; mleḥ = whole; pkom = assemble; ma = prefix; ci = indeed; da = suffix; na = in order; s-ār = to go; kindo' = to pay respect; han = to; minyow = elder brother; himo' = name; son = Sona; nan = Nanda.

In this jātaka story, the hermit Sona is elder brother of Nanda. Evidently *minyow* means elder brother. Professor Luce has also rendered it likewise but in Hatthipāla Jātaka he gave elder sibling for *munyow* a variant of *minyow* where as Professor Shorto has simply defined *munyow* / *minyow* as brother and *kañci* / *kuñci* as sister but for *kañci* he put elder sister instead of younger sister perhaps due to over sight. Professor Luce was absolutely right in rendering *kuñci* as younger sibling but *munyow* or *minyow* cannot be taken as elder sibling or simply brother. Our word for elder sister is *ḥau* / 602 / and eldest sister / 602^klus / corresponding to Nyah Kur / luu^s / elder sister and Old

Mon glu / klu^s / eldest of sibling.

Regarding the Nyah Kur term for younger sibling, Diffloth's collection and Theraphan's dictionary show:-

Northern dialect / cii^s /
 Central dialect / cii^s /
 Southern dialect / kemcii^s /

Dvāravatī Old Mon

reconstruction /kmci^s /

Thus the Nyah Kur word / kemcii^s / apparently approves the Old Mon gloss *kuṃsi* / *kaṃci* as younger sibling which we have lost and invented instead a new one *de'* / *de^s* / in the 15th century.

The Nyah Kur word for elder brother-in-law according to Diffloth's collection and Theraphan's dictionary is / *yaw* / *jàw* / which is almost identical to Modern Mon *yau* / *yèa* / and Old Mon *yow* without the prefix *mun* or *min*. Strangely enough we have the same sense with Nyah Kur in this usage which is not much different from Old Mon meaning elder brother. In the case of Modern Spoken Mon, we have adopted a Burmese word *kui* for elder brother and our own word *yau* / *yèa* / is used as elder brother-in-law instead of its original meaning elder brother. This slight shift is due to loanword as obvious in other instances. In the list of Nyah Kur dialects there is another particular word for elder brother except / *yaw* / meaning elder brother of spouse; husband of elder sister. It is / *pécŋ* / (p.27). This word also combines with / *mcii* / *ás* / *pécŋ* / for doublet elder and younger male sibling.

It is very interesting to see Theraphan's dictionary on Doublets (pp.229-235). She shows:

	Nyah Kur	O.Mon	M.Mon
dogs and pigs	Chur-khliic	cluiw-clik	kluiw / kle / clik / kloik /
rice and water	póoŋ-dáak	puñ-ḍāk	puñ-ḍāk / peŋ-daik/
teeth and tongue	ŋiek-ntáak	nek.....	nek-ltāk / nêk-ataik/
monitor and tortoise	tekúat-thii ^s ,cewii ^s	darkot.....	dakot-gwi/ hekot-kwi ^s /
head and tail	kedr̄p-patáa ^s	kḍip.....	kḍuip-bta/αap-hata ^s /
mortar and pestle	ndúl-ŋrii ^sga ² ri/hei ^s -ri ^s /
knife and matchet	búun-mràa ^s	ḅun-mra	ḅun-mra/bun-pare ^s /
shell fish and crab	ŋloo ^s -ntáam	kinlo'.....	kanu-btām/kenao ^s /hetem/

tree and bamboo	chúu?-thùuη	chu-duñ	chu-dun/chu ^s -dun/
cooking pot and water pot	mbáaj-tréη	timbāy-troñ	thamāy...../hemai.../

Note(Theraphan gives only cooking pot in her book for this doublet. Old Mon gives troñ as water pot or jar and timbāy as cooking pot but Spoken Mon has lost the word troñ. In Ananda basement we read devatāw ma rap troñ = gods holding jars or water pots (offering to Buddha). In Nagayon glosses we read troñ timbāy pāk = jars and cooking pots were broken (due to earth-quake). In Shwezigon Mon inscriptions we read troñ pupiñ = full jar which is an auspicious object.)

sambar deer and barking deer	tebúη-páy	təuñ.....tbuin-pah
fire and firewood	kamát- ^s úáyoh pmat-oh/amct ^s -oh/
elephant and horse	ciin - chéh	cin-kṣeh ciñ-khyeh/eiñ-cheh/
Buffalo-ox	priāη - cha lrw	preñ-jlow preñ-glau/preaη-klea/
Sweet potato taro	khwáaj - tráw	kwāy-krau
fish and frog	káa ^s - khàaw	ka'-'aṅgāw ka-ñau/ka ^s -ηea/
feet (leg) and hand	chùη - téj	juñ-tey juñ-tai/cāy-toa/
snake and centipede	chròom-khikiir	jrum.....jrum-gagi/sum-heki/
husband and wife	màaη-nthàr	imāñ-kandar imāñ-kalaw/ imāñ-kandor/
mother and father	mèe ^s - phàa ^s	mi-ma/mi ^s -me ^s /
younger sibling and elder brother?	mci ^s - mnàw	abo'-aba' kuñci-munyow nci ^s -nnàw....

(Note - Theraphan defines younger siblings both for/mci^s/

as well as for the doublet/mci^s-mnaw/in her dictionary. I prefer to take the doublet as younger sibling and elder brother basing on the Old Mon glosses. Logically the doublet here should be younger sibling and elder sibling. But munyow or minyow or manyow stands only for elder brother in Old Mon. We have so far not yet seen any usage of it for elder sister.)

I wonder if the Nyah Kur takes a loanword from Thai or Khmer for this word meaning elder brother in the same way the spoken Mon uses Burmese loanword ko / kao/.

It is fascinating to see the Nyah Kur word for son-in-law, younger brother-in-law which Diffloth reconstructs / gmaan / from

Northern / kemañ /
Central / khemañ /

Southern / khemaan /

with the definition - "husband of younger sister, of cousin younger than Ego, of daughter, of niece".

Both Modern Mon and Middle Mon have the same word with the same sense though the word does not appear in Old Mon. The word in Modern Spoken Mon / haman / means son-in-law, it is written in literature gamān or khamān and in Middle Mon inscription gamān / gamaan /. For the terms younger brother-in-law and younger cousin brother-in-law the word gamān is combined with *de'* a new word invented for Old Mon *kur̄nci* younger sibling. It is thought that the Old Mon term would be *gamān kur̄nci* for younger brother-in-law. I wonder whether or not / khemaan / in combined with / kemcii^s / for this term in Nyah Kur. After all Theraphan shows / nci^s phr̄aw/and/nci^s m̄aay/ for younger siblings-in-law in her dictionary on page 23.

The Nyah Kur's terminology of society are more akin, if not identical to Old Mon than to Modern Mon. We have lost some but they are still maintained by the Nyah Kur which are no doubt cognate to Old Mon. For example, the word for young child or girl of tender age in Old Mon was written *k̄num* /knóom /which we have lost but the Nyah Kur still have it as /khnóom / in one dialect and /hnóom / in another from which the reconstruction is / knóom/. However, we have a new word for it as *n̄āk* ηaik/. Shorto shows /kanem / for young boy in Nicobarese and Palaung dialects and *nem* / for young child in Praok as cross references to Old Mon *k̄num* in his dictionary p.56 which he defines as child of tender years.

The terms in Nyah Kur / m̄aay / for husband and / kenthar / for wife are almost the same with Old Mon forms written *imāñ* / imaη / and *kindar* or *kandar* / kinder / or / kender / for husband and wife respectively which are no more spoken in our tongue except in literature which are written *imāñ* / imaη / and *kalaw* / kelcw / with a normal phonological change in the second term. Modern Spoken Mon use *truh* (male,man) and *brau* / brea / (female, woman) instead. In fact, the Nyah Kur also use / phr̄aw / for wife as well as for woman and they use / truuy / for husband and for man which is *trus* (male in human) in Old Mon.

Their word for widow / khamaay / or / hmay / which is not occurred in inscriptions but Old Burmese loanword from Old Mon is *kamay* / kemew / and Thai word *หม้าย* / maay / is obviously adopted either from Nyah Kur or Mon.

Their word for parent-in-law / kemsiiir / is linking closer to Old Mon *kuṃsi* r / kemsiiir / than to Modern Mon *khāṃsi* / khamse / or / khmasei / according to localities.

The Nyah Kur word for Spinster or virgin / lehuut / or / luut / is similar to Old Mon *lwut* which we call / wut / and it is interesting to note that they keep the first initial consonant l and we keep the second w from Old Mon *lwut*.

Their term for nephew or niece / khamuun / is congnate with Old Mon *kmun* which we write *kmin* and speak / hmen / or / men / or / hmein / in different localities.

Their word for daughter-in-law / ^suay / is allied to ours which we write *kha'ah* and pronounce / he^sch / or / he^soh / but it is not found in Old Mon. Like us they combine the word with / kuan / child as / kuan^suay / which we write *kon kha'ah* and utter / kon he^soh / or / kon he^sch / in different areas.

Their term for uncle, younger brother of father / màam / is not agreeable to Old Mon *kaṃwa* / kcmwa / and Modern Mon *amū* / *emu* / for uncle.

So also their word for grandfather / péen / . Perhaps they are loanwords. We have invented aba'jnok / pa nok / great father for grandfather.

However, their words for grandchild / cáw, great grandchild/cáh/and great² grandchild / céec / are almost the same with our words cau / cao / , caḥ cáh / and cek/ coik / or / cct/.

The Nyah Kur word for bachelor, marriageable boy / phláy / is quite close to Old Mon and Modern Mon blāy / play/, plai/.

Their word for rainbow / themçṇ chyaak / is wonderful which we have knamñ *dāk* /khemeaṇ daik / or /hemeaṇ dat/ in Modern but not found in Old. Diffloth reconstructs/ themçṇ kyaak/ "rainbow" where he says / themçṇ / "place of, abode" and / kyaak / has no meaning by itself to present speakers of Nyah Kur. in Mon / khemeaṇ daik/ "beam of water" and we say / khemeaṇ suṇ daik / meaning khamañ / hemeaṇ / suṇ / suṇ / drinks / daik / water. I wonder why they put / kyaak / which we mean God, Buddha or object of worship and we have / daik / water instead. It is indeed a difficult problem to solve. Theraphan's dictionary (p.4) shows that the Nyah Kur in NL and HK provinces have lúṇchoonṇ dáak for rainbow. It means júṇdrinks water. It is more similar to Mon. Therefore, I consider that the Nyah Kur of TP province has changed the word from / dáak / to / khejáak / as they have no sense on the latter by itself. /chyaak/

Indian Loanwords

Though Indo-Aryan words are not so plenty found in Nyah Kur, they seem rather old borrowings. Tentatively the following words are considered as corrupted loanwords from Sanskrit and Pali. Pages of Theraphan Thongkum's dictionary are shown against them from where they are detected.

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Pages	Nyah Kur	Meaning	Etymology	Mon
1. XIII	nduu	season	p.utu s.rtu	'utu/u ^s tao ^s /
2. 9,180 231,264 304.	kaaj	sky	p.ākāsa s.ākāśa	'kan/ekah/
3. 10	kuh	hill,termite nest (cave)	s/p. guhā	guit/kéh / o.m. goḥ bhut/pùt/
4. 14	boot	sanctury in a Buddhist monastery	p.bhūta	
5. 19	rot	vehicle, push cart	s/p. ratha	(kwi) rat/rct/ rct/ /
6. 20/30	naaj naaj	officer,p.nāyaka address term	naai/nài/	nay
7. 21	thit	learned man	p.paṇḍita	paṇḍit pendit/ jāt/chat/
8. 22/229 466	chaat	children, family	p.Jātaka	
9. 27/28 181/195 196/203	manih	person,	p.manussa	mnih/nih /
10. 40	Khrih	liver	Skt. graha	griuh /krèh/
11. 49/232	táan	palmyra.	s/p tāla	tā/taa/
12. 54/73	chúut	silk	p.Sutta s.sutra	sut/sct/ /sut/
13. 64	thùup	incense	p.dibba	dip /dip/
14. 65	báat	alms bowl	p.piṇḍapāta pipat (food recived in the almsbowl)	pipat /pca ^s pat/
15. 101/186 350	hlīi chelīi	maize, will rice	p.sāli s. sāli	sālī/salce/
16. 107	melī ^s	jasmin	s/p mallikā	om. mlir /pclè/maluiw /mcle/
17. 107	mpáa campáa	oleander champaka	p.campaka (champaka tree having fragrant	jampā /ccmpa/

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				white and yellow flowers	
18.	109/112	mic	chilli	s/p. marica	mrek/brct/ brek /pròik/
19.	112/297	túel	cotton	s/p.tūla	omtolm m tow /to/
20.	129	kawak	white breasted water hen.	p.karavika	krawit /krawct/
21.	141	baap	sin	s/p pāpa	pāp/paap/
22.	142	ʼejùʼ	age	s/p āyu	'ayuk/eyèk/
23.	142	cheláak	letter	s/p lekha	lik/lòik/
24.	143/144 456/457	bún	merit	Skt.punya DOM punya	om;pun/pon/ puin/pcn/
25.	149	hát	cubit	p.hattha	hat/hct/
26.	159	choṅkráan	a religious day (passing, transference)	s.aam-krānti	saṅkrān /seṅkran/
27.	170/236 396.	kecét	die	p.cuti	khyuit/chct/ cuti/cuʼtceʼ/
28.	210/233	jùm cf. jum (p.236)	breath heart	p.yama	yuim /yèm/ OM yumyum
29.	231	phúm	country, city (land)	s/p.bhūmi	bhum/phùm/
30.	272	manàʼ	brave (pride)	S/P.māna	mān/maan/
31.	288	buráan bráan	ancient	P.porāṇa S.paurāṇa	om:porān porānaṁ/ /paoram/
32.	466	mcn mcn	invite	P.nimanteti S.nimatrayati	niman/mcn/ man/mcn/

Certainly, the above loanwords indicate that the Kyah-Kur are indeed remnant of the Indianised Mon People of Dvāravatī kingdom otherwise such loans cannot be found as in other primitive tribes who had no contacts with Indians in the remote past. Mon epigraphy of Dvāravatī period (6th-11th centuries) contains vast numbers of Indo-Aryan words, the same as in Old Mon inscriptions of Burma. In fact the whole line of writings found on the two silver medals of the king of Dvāravatī are merely in Sanskrit.

Cultural words adopted from Sanskrit such as vihār or bihār "monastery," upājhāy "spiritual preceptor"; punya "meritorious deed"; prajñā "wisdom, knowledge"

etc. are found in the 6th-8th centuries Mon inscriptions of Phra Pathom and Loburi.

Even the word for yoke or pair laṅgur (Skt. lāṅgula, lāṅgala) was used in offering pairs of cattle or buffaloes in Old Siam in those days. This word also appears in Mon inscription discovered in Laos dating back to around 9th century (later part of Loburi period). Though this word laṅgur is not found in Theraphan Thongkum's collections, the animals used in combination with it are shown which are akin to Old Mon glosses such as:-

	Nyah Kur	DOMR	Old Mon	Modern Mon
Cattle, bovine	/ chaḷow/	/jloow/	jlow	glau /kleḷa/
bull	/kh lrw/ /chlōw/ khleḷw/	/jlew/		
Water buffalo	/priaṅ/	/priaṅ/	preṅ	preaṅ/

It is striking to find the Nyah Kur words for metals and cultural terms and natural phenomena of nouns, verbs and adjectives which are similar and closely related to Old Mon epigraphy. These cultural terms obviously point out that the Nyah Kur are not ordinary illiterate hill tribes like Lawa or Palaung but they are apparently no other than descendants of the civilized Dvāravatī Old Mons who had ruled over both Old Siam and Old Burma after the break up of Funan Empire (1st to 6th centuries A.D.) in Indo-China. They are no doubt a daughter - language of Dvāravatī Old Mon.

"Lexical correspondences between Nyah-Kur & Mon"

English	Nyah Kur	Old Mon	literary Mon	Spoken Mon
N Gold	/ thaar /	thar	thaw	/ thc
N Iron	/ pehéy/	birsey	bases pasai	/pesoa
N Lord, Owner	/taláa ^s /	trala	tala tla	/kela ^s / /ela ^s /
N Slave	/diik/	ḍik ḍek	ḍik	/doik/ /doit/
N Sacred, God, object of worship	/khyāk/ /chyaak/	kyāk kyek	kyāk	/caik/ /cyct/ /cyaic/
N Earth	/tii ^s /	ti'	ti	/tce ^s / /tai ^s /

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V To reverend, homage, to make obeisance	/l̄η̄uar/	l̄nor	l̄now	/l̄η̄c/ l̄η̄o āη̄o/
V To build (pagoda)	/crú̄η/	cruñ	sruin̄	/sāη
V To wear, to adorn	/ghlú̄k/	sluk	sluik	helà̄k/
V To sound, to say	/phrūs/	bru	bru	/pur̄s/
V To play	/win/	wiñ	weñ	woīη
V To shout	/trá̄ak/	trāk	-	-
V Dream	/pc̄c̄s/	'em̄po'	lapa'	/kepc̄s/ /epc̄s
N Mucus	/sú̄ar/	sinmor	smow	/hemo/
V To breathe	/yù̄m/	yum	yuiñ	/yem/
N Hole	/ghrun/	sruñ	sruin̄	/sāη/
V To give	/kul/	kul kil kel	kuiw	/kc/
A Deep	/ghù̄h/	rjuh	sjuih	/sè̄h/
V To feed	/cim/	iñcim	-	-
N Roof	/kamúr/	kumir	kamī kmī	/kem̄ce/ /kmei/
V Rotten, bad, wicked	/gh̄s̄ú̄y/	suñ'ur	s'uy uai	/ui/
V To lift	/yuk/	yuk	yuik	/yà̄k/
N Mud	/lhuk/	lhuk	lhuik	/hlak/
V To hold in beak	/khūη/	guñ	guiñ	/kà̄η/
V To laugh	/khr̄ūη/	gruñ	gruiñ	/krāη/
V To lodge	/thè̄m/	dum	duim	/tè̄m/
N House post, House pole	/η̄ghūη/	jinjuñ	dayuiñ	/heȳāη/
A Soft	/l̄s̄ún/	lu'in	ḍuin	/dc̄n/
V blow	/pkhù̄h/	pgoh pguh	b̄guih	/pekeh/ /hekeh/
V Four	/ghruh/	sruh	suih	/sch/ /sah/
N Knife	/buun/	bun	bun	/bun/
V Drunk	/buul/	balbul	babū	/kebu/
N Medicine	/kduuy/	kin'uy	ga'uai ga'uy	/he'uy/
N Moon	/ntuūs/	kintu	gatu	/hetaōs/
V Over, above	/ntuul/	'antul	latū	/atao/

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V To burn	/tuur/	tur	tū	tao
N Silk	/ghuut/	sut	sut	/sut/ /sct/
N Forest	/khràp/	grip	gruip	/krèp/
V To plant	/tel/	til	tuiw	/tc/ /to/
N Plenty, much	/khleŋ/	gloñ	gluiñ	/klaŋ/
V Extinguish	/phlet/	plit	pluit	/palct/ /plct/
V Die	/kcet/	kcit	gacuit Khyuit	/hecct/ /chct/
N Corpse, meat	/ghwàa ^s /	jawa	jwa	/khwè ^s /
V All, out of, no more	/ ^s ét/	'ut	'uit	/ot/ /ct/
V Heavy	/knchen/	sjiñ	sjuiñ	/sàŋ/
V Quarrel	/ghèl/	jal	juiw	/cè/
V Shine	/khàre/	gir	guiw	/kè/
V Far	/chney/	jirney	sñoy sñoai sñai	/hàa/ /hnàa/
V Painful, ill, sick	/ghèy/	'jey	yay yai	/yoa/
V Middle, inside, Private part	/pdéy/	pdey	'pdai	/edàa/ /adᵛoa/
N Rain	/phrey/	brey	bray brai	/pràa/ /prᵛoa/
V Return	/cáw/	cow	cau	/cao/
V Run away	/thàw/	dow	dau	/tèa/
N Town, Country, village	/dóoŋ/	ᵛuñ	ᵛun	/deŋ/ /duŋ/
N Cooked rice	/pooŋ/ /puuŋ/	pūñ puñ	puñ	/puŋ/ /peŋ/
N River	/krooŋ/ /kruuŋ/	kruñ	kruñ	/kruŋ/
V To get	/khoo ^s /	go'	gwa'	/ke ^s /
V To sell	/khyoo ^s /	syo'	swa'	/sc ^s sa ^s /
N Paddy, rice	/chroo ^s /	sro'	sro'	/sc ^s sa ^s /

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N	Husked rice	/ŋkcc ^s /	sŋo'	sŋu	/kno ^s / /hao ^s /
V	To drink	/chooŋ/	suŋ	suŋ	/suŋ /seŋ/
V	To accept	/thooŋ/	duŋ	duŋ	/tuŋ/ /teŋ/
N	Water pot, vessel	/nðoŋ/	nuŋ	nuŋ	/nuŋ/ /neŋ/
V	come	/looŋ/	tluŋ	kluŋ	/kluŋ/ kueŋ/
V	What?	/chnðo ^s /	imo'	mu	/mu ^s / /mð ^s /
V	To cross	/clóo ^s /	clo'	klo' klui'	/klo ^s
V	To draw water	/took/	tuk	tuk	/tuk/ /tek/
V	To hear	/khmmŋ/	rmiŋ	miŋ	/moiŋ/
V	To carry on the back	/ŋkhuin/	ciŋgin	tŋin	/teŋen/ /ehŋen/
V	To go out, to leave	/tmt/	tit	tit	/tet/
N	Sand	/ntm̄l/	bintil	batī	/hetce/ /hetei/
V	Forget	/thawm̄t/	wit	wuit	/wèt/
V	To rise, to appear, to stand	/téer/	ktir	ktuiw	/atc/
V	To go down, descend	/cis/ /cih/	cis	ceh	/cih
I		/wèy/	'ey	'ay	/oa/ /ooa/
V	To slice, to make	/l̄aak/	mal̄at l̄at	lak	/laik/
V	to bale out	/ḡaac/	rinsat	s̄at	/sat/
Flood		/ghim/	chim	chim	/chim/
Root		/rih/	(ris)	ruih	/rèh/
To wipe		/ghit/	jit	juit	/cèt/
To sew		/ghiiŋ/	jin	jin	/coiŋ/ /ccŋ/

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House	/gɲii ^s /	sni ^ʼ sni	sni	/hce ^s / /hai ^s /
Leftside	/ghwii ^s /	jwi	jwi	/jwi ^s /
Rightside	/ctoom/	stum̄	stum̄	/hatum/
To dig	/ciir/	kir	khāy	/khai/
To attend,	/tawii/	tirmil	tawī	/kawi/
To surround				/kawi/
To look out to find, to search	/ghiir/	'agir	sni [̄] ni [̄]	/ɲè/ /ɲi/
To fear, to scare	/phiic/	phic	phek	/phcik/ /phct/
Long	/khliiɲ/	jliñ	gliñ	/kloiɲ/
To wrap	/khiiw/	gīw	gwi	/kwi/
New	/famii ^s /	tumi	tami	/kmce ^s / /amai ^s /
To run	/thriap/	drep	grip	/krip/
To take	/ciat/	ket	ket	/kit/ /ket/
Wing	/ghnianɲ/	sneñ	sneñ	/kneanɲ/
To kindle fire, to light	/pdian/	tud̄en	pden den	/den/
To make effort, energetic	/trɲéc ^s /	pno ^ʼ	lña ^ʼ	/aɲo ^s
To cause, persuade	/ʰúar/	'or	'ow	/o/
Firewood, Fuel	/ʰúas/	'oh	'oh	/oh/
To fall	/luùt/	lot	lot	/lòt/
V. To eat	/háap/	hāp	hāp	/hap/
V To lose	/khyáa ^s /	kya	kya	/ca ^s
V Torn, to depart, to be devoid of, to tear	/ɲcáak/	cāk	cāk	/caik/
V To burn	/cécɲ/	coh	cāh	/ccɲ

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N	Fire	/kmát/	pumat	pmat	/kemet/ /emot/
V	To bind	/thàk/	dak	dak	/teàk/
V	To follow	/phàk/	bak	bak	/peak/
N	Door	/mrán/	tinrañ	tarañ	/kerañ/ /erañ/
N	Horn, tusk	/thráñ/	drañ	grañ	/kreañ/
V	Adhere to	/cáp/	cap	cap	/ccp/
N	Back	/ñkraw/	krow	krau	/krao/
V	To win, victory	/ghnàh/	jnaḥ	jnaḥ	/hnèh/
V	To instruct, to order, to send word	/pacán/	pcan	phyan bakan	/phycn/ /peken/
V	To hold	/ràp/	rap	rap	/rcp/
V	To strike	/katak/	tak	tak	/tek/
V	Purgation, to clean	/c ^s ah/	c ^s ah	s ^s ah	/ ^s ah/
V	To weep	/yaam/	yām	yām	/yam/ /yèm/
N	Water	/dáak/	ḍāk	ḍāk	/daat/ /daik/
V	To cut, to shatter	/paak/	pāk	pāk	/paik/ /paat/
V	To crawl, prostrate	/mrmaar/	abār	bamā	/hemea/ /heme/
V	Low	/ghér/	sar	saw	/sc/
V	Near	/nèn/	ñan	ñan	/ncn/ non/
N	He, it	/déh/	ḍeh	ḍeh	/deh/
N	Arrow	/kám/	kam	kañ	/kcm/
N	Night	/ptám/	birtam	btam	/hetcm/
N	Day	/thây/	tney	tñay tñai	/ñoa/ /hñooa/
V	To steal	/khlec/	klac	klat	/klct
N	Fruit	/chec/	sac	sat	/sct/
V	Shoot	/pen/	pañ	pan	/pcn/

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V Male (animal)	/khmák/	kmak	kmak	/hmak/ /mak/
N Stalk, handle	/tár/	tar	taw	/tc/
V Upside down	/pkáp/	pukap	blap	/hekcp/
V To press, to strike, to massage	/pat/	pat	pat	/pct/
V To be, to become	/thèh/	das	dah	/dch/ /tch/
V To pluck	/bás/	bas	bah	/6ch/
N Cup	/khál/	khal	khaw	/khc/
V To look	/mày/	mey	mway mwai	/mooa/
V To crumble, to pinch, to learn	/ckát/	ckat	kat	/kct/
Mother	/meè ^s /	'ambo'	mi	/mi ^s /
Father	/phaa ^s /	2ba'/	ma 2pā	/aba ^s / /aba ^s / /aba/

There are many Nyah-kur words which did not occur in Old Mon epigraphy. However, they are shown below with their equivalents of Modern Mon showing that they are really sister-languages.

English	Nyah-kur	Literary Mon	Spoken Mon
Oil	/kalin/	kleñ	/klciñ/ /klcin/
Bell	/liñdiñ/	khniñ	/henoiñ/
Ash	/ptin/	pateñ	/petciñ/ /petcn/
Excrement, dung	'ic/	'ik	/oik/ /ct/
Pumpkin	/mpiir/	khapī	/hepee/ /hepei/
Centipede	/krkiir/	gagī	/heki/
Hail, to rub	/phliir/	plī	/plce/

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Swim	/biin/	biñ	/6oiŋ/ /6oin/
Peppery	/riiŋ/	riñ	/roiŋ/
Thin	/triiw/	tñ	/krce/ /krei/
Turtle	/thwii ^s /	gwi	/kwi ^s /
Pestle	/nrii ^s /	ri	/ri ^s /
Poison	/Ka6hii ^s /	gyi	/ci ^s /
Float	/hiiw/	hñ	/hi/
Wash (face)	/liiw/	lñ	/li/
kick	/ndiic/	khanik	/henoik/ /henoit/
Betel	/aphluu ^s /	jablu	/heplu ^s /
Gaur	/nthiir/	kaliñ	/keloiŋ/ /eloin/
Porcupine	/lamnian/	lamleñ	/peleaŋ/
Vegetable	/chniar/	sanew	/hanei/
Hawk	/ŋlian/	laneñ	/enean/
So	/ghian/	señ	/sean/
Stingy	/mbiat/	s'et	/he ^s et/
Scorched	/sŋhiak/	sñek	/heak/ /hneak/
Whisper	/kghiaw/	Kasey	/esca/
Real	/kweh/	kweh	/kweh/
Jar	/ceh/	ceh	/ceh/
Cockroach	/ghthee ^s /	khadc'	/hete ^s / /hetai ^s /
To clear throat	/k ^s eem/	ga'em	/he ^s em/
Short	/khlee ^s /	gle'	/klè ^s / /klai ^s /
Otter	/phee ^s /	phe'	/phe ^s /
Leech (land)	/klám/	klañ	/klcm/
Python	/khlán/	klan	/klcn/
To sneeze	/tn ^s as/	kha'ah	/he ^s ch/
Deer	/pas/	pah	/pch/
Bait	/prán/	pran	/prcn/

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Cough	/gdak/	khadaḱ	/hedek/
Gall bladder	/pmat/	kamat	/emct/
To set	/taŋ/	tañ	/taŋ/
Smoke	/yak/	yak	/yeak/
Dry	/ckas/	sakah	/kch/
To fly	/phar/	paw	/pc/
To pound	/ndak/	khanak	/henek/
Beak	/mbáw/	kamhau	/hemaol/
		camhau	
To send along	/prán/	prañ	/prán/
Crab	/ntaam/	gatām̄	/hetam/
Skin	/ghnáam/	snām̄	/hnam/
Alligator, Crocodile	/khyáam/	kyām̄	/cam/
Weave (basket)	/taan/	tān	/tan/
Tongue	/ntáak/	latak	/etaik/ /atat/
Shallow	/kdáal/	kdā	/da/
Comb, broom	/ŋraàs/	kharah̄	/herek/
To comb, to sweep	/khraas/	grah̄	/kreh/
Young man	/maam/	mām̄	/mehm/
Mint plant	/lwàn/	wāñ	/wain/
			/wan/
To be light	/kyáal/	sā	/sa/
Horse fly	/phaŋar/	plā	/pla
Put aside, reject	/páay/	pāy	/pai/
Carry on	/mphaay/	pāai	
Shoulder		camāy	/kemui/
A species of sweet potato with dark skin	/khwaay/	Kamāai	/emai/
Spew	/khláat/	kway	/kwai/
To forge	/tháac/	kwāai	
Sweet	/tdaac/	klāt	/klat/
Break	/kál/	dāt	/tat
Louse	/cáy/	dāt	/dat/
		kaw	/kc/
		cay	/coa/

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Dry in sun	/c ^o y/	cay	/coa/
To measure	/kbát/	bat	/bct/
Pierce	/céc/	cat	/cct
Hook (fish)	/nden/	khanan	/henon/
Edge, lip	/mben/	thaman	/hemon/
Hang	/kwàk/	kwak	/kwak/
Arm pit	/ŋlak/	knak	/kenak/ /enak/
Bitter	/ktaŋ/	Kataŋ	/ketaŋ/ /ataŋ/
Grasshopper	/ntáp/	gatap	/hatcp/
Charcoal	/kcáh/	khyah	/chah/
Sour	/pcáh/	phyah	/phyah/
Sourness	/ncáh/	bcah	/ha ^s cah/
Explode	/ktáh/	gatuih	/hatch/
Touch, right, correct	/thàh/	dah	/teh/
Shoulder	/phnáh/	pnah	/hanh/
Hot	/ktaw/	Ktau	/atao/
Arum tuber	/traw/	krau	/hrao/
Red ant	/Gháw/	kachau Kahyau	/achao/
Pinnacle, end	/thanát/	kanot	/anot/
Sick	/Ghas/	jah	/cch/
wear on neck	/bák/	labak	/abak/
Alive	/nyuŋ/	gyuiŋ	/càŋ/
Imperial pigeon	/prkhum/	phaguim	/hekèm/
Cover with cloth on body	/khlum/	galuim	/helem/
Cool	/buh/	buih	/bch/
To boil things	/buh/	buih	/bch/
Pour water, drop water	/cruh/	caruih	/heroh/
Bone	/ghluut/	jut	/cùt/
Termite, white ant	/thruuh/	grun	/krùn/
House fly	/rùuy/	ruy	/ruy/
Ripe	/l ^s uus/	duh	/duh/

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Swell	/khùus/	guh	/kùh/
Dove	/puur/	pū	/pao/
Wax	/phluuy/	pluy	/plce/ /plùy/
Stale	/gh ^s uut/	s ^s ut	/ ^s ut/ /sut/
Piece	/ηkuut/	dakut	/hekut/
Chisel	/pnuuc/	pnut	/nut/ /hnut/
Do wrong	/luuc/	lut	/lùt/
To sprout	/khluuc/	klut	/klùt/ /klct/
Stump	/tkhal/	daguiw	/hekè/
To be full in eating	/phey/	phay	/phoa /
Lid	/cηkép/	Sakuip	/hekcp/
Warm	/ηèm/	guim	/kem/
Thick	/ctem/	stuim tuim	/tcm/
Edging in weaving	/ηrcm/	gruim	/krem/
Roof-cover	/ηlem/	Kaluim	/elcm/
Scratch, scrape	/khwaac/	gwāt	/kwat/
Lick	/khlaan/	klān	/klan/
Open (eyes)	/mlàak/	lamlāk	/pelaik/
Tree (wood-oil)	/khyàaη/	gayān	/heyaiη/
To yawn	/gh ^s aap/	kh ^s ap	/he ^s ap/
Fork of tree	/Khàap/	gāp	/kèp/
Chaff, husk	/ηkáam/	kām	/kam/
Vomit	/taa ^s /	ta	/ta ^s /
Open (mouth)	/hāa ^s /	hā	/ha/
Cleaver	/mràa ^s /	mra	/perè ^s /
Hand span	/cdáa ^s /	cda	/da ^s /
Arm span	/phmmj/	phih	/phih/
To blossom	/iη-ràaη/	rāiη/raiη	
Cloth	/yaat/	yāt	/yāt/
Clear throat, to hawk	/kháak/	khāk	/khak/ /khaik/
Thin strip of bamboo	/sáal/	khyā	/cha/

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spit	/kcch/	khyah	/chch/
Spittle	/ηcéh/	Kasah	/kesch/
Hard, ripe	/trécη/	tràn	/krcη/
Dry	/kéh/	kah	/kch/
To scoop up	/khlèk/	glàk	/klck/
To hoe	/bék/	bàk	/bck/
House lizard, gecko	/ck/cék/	khacak	/hecek/
This, here	/ncc ^s /	ina'	/inc ^s /
		ana'	/enc ^s /
Egg plant	/tr ^s ccη/	gadoñ	/hedonη/
To cover with cloth	/khrccp/	grop	/kròp/
Mad	/tréc ^s /	Kra'	/krc ^s /
Mad person	/tamrcc ^s /	tamra'	/perc ^s /
Ant hill	/ηléc ^s /	taña'	/kenc ^s /
Itch	/cécck/	cok	/cok/
Itchy	/ghnccck/	khanok	/henok/
To vomit, to regurgitate	/tl ^s cc ^s /	tha'a'	/he ^s c ^s /
Road, path	/ηlccη/	gloñ	/kloñ/
		glàn	/klcη/
Ant	/ghmuac/	Khamot	/hemot/
Nest	/mpúay/	sapoy	/hepoa/
Stream	/cuar/	cow	/co/
Hornet	/thuar/	thow	/tho/
Hornet (bigger)	/huη/	huiñ/	/haη/
Hornet (large one)	/mrúat/	pharot	/herot/
Tree bark	/ηkúar/	jkow thakow	/heko/
Belly, stomach	/puη/	buñ	/pèη/
Dark	/khluu ^s /	glu	/klu ^s /
Salt	/p ^s úr/	buiw	/be/
Regret, miss	/khus/	guih	/kèh/
Mortar	/η ^s ul/	kha ^ī	/he ^s i/
Sleepy	/cηkùy/	dakuy	/hekui/
		dakuai	
Shrimp	/khùy/	ñuy	/ηù/
Carve, to cut	/pút/	put	/pat/
Gourd	/lùl/	luiw	/lè/

Journey, pathway	/tréw/	trau	/crao/
Hearth, stove	/phéw/	phau	/phao/
Step on	/lèn/	luin	/lèn/
To choke	/ghlèk/	gluik	/klàk/
Scare, frighten	/ŋkét/	takuit	/ekct/
Thunder	/kh-kher/	gaguiw	/hekè/
To bury	/tep/	tuip	/top/
To winnow	/khood/	gum	/kùm/
Eel	/nthoon/	galuñ	/helen/
Rafter	/c ^s oo ^s /	ja'o' tha ui	/he ^s o ^s /
Thigh	/thiuh/	đi	/ti/
Bite	/kuit/	kit	/kit/
Navel	/pnih/	pnih	/penih/
Bed bug	/ckhiut/	sgit	/hekit/
Tumeric	/miut/	mit	/mit/
Slippery	/kalmt/	kalit	/kelet/ /elet/
Roar, boasting	/khrèem/	grām	/heram/
Because	/phrc ^s /	-	-

The above comparisons of vocabulary plainly indicate that the Nyah Kur tongue still keeps phonology of final consonants *c, ñ, r, l* and *s* as found in Old Mon orthography. Significantly Modern Mon has lost all of them but retaining *k* or *t* for *c*; *n* and *ñ* for *ñ*; *w* for *r* and *l*; and *h* for *s* and *ý*. (*ý* = *sh*)

Final consonant *c* of Nyah Kur in *to kick* and *excrement* changed to *k* and in *sweet*, *chisel*, *ant*, *sprout*, *to forge* etc. changed to *t* in our speech. In the same way in *to play*, *to be full* etc. final *ñ* changed to *n* or *ñ*; final *r* in *to dig*, *to find*, *to go*, *to crawl* etc. disappeared whereas in *mucus*, *stream*, *hornet* etc. changed to *w*; final *l* in *to give*, *to plant*, *to quarrel*, *cotton* etc. changed to *w* but final *l* in *wind*, *surface*, *shallow* etc. disappeared; final *s* or *ý* in *firewood*, *index finger*, *male*, *to spread*, *to sweep*, etc. changed to *h*. Other finals and glottal stop in Nyah Kur always remain the same in Modern Mon.

Finally, it is so puzzling and so astonishing to learn from Dr. Theraphan Thongkum that the Nyah Kur people have no glottal sounds of / *b* / and / *d* / as in our speech. In reply to my letter she says: "Phonetically, / *b* / and / *d* / in Nyah Kur are voiced bilabial stops / *b*] and [*d*] not preglottalized; there are no / ?*b*, and ?*d*, *b*, *d*, / in Nyah Kur."

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However, Dr. Gerard Diffloth shows such glottal / b / and /d / in his reconstructions of Dvaravati Mon language. I wonder why Nyah Kur people have lost such glottal sounds which we are still having them but we have lost almost all the sounds of final consonants which the Nyah Kur dialects still maintain them.

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