Where did the ‘Dog’ ‘Go’: a Continuing ‘Chew’ over the Labiovelars of Northern Yi

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[Abstract]
Pan (2001) argues that the consonantal initial forms / kʰp, kʰph, gʰb, ŋɡb, ŋm/ of Adu, a Northern Yi variety, are clusters and should be reconstructed as the proto-forms of Yiyuzhi (Yi Branch), or Loloish; however, Pan’s proposal has been challenged by Matisoff (2006), who contents that these consonants are not clusters rather unit phonemes in the PLB stage. By using new evidence from Suondi and Shengza of Northern Yi, this paper continues on this hot debate. Examples, such as ‘dog’, ‘go’, ‘nest’, ‘chew’, ‘cud’, and so on of Suondi patios, suggest that there would exist not only a velar + labial initials at least at the Proto-Northern Yi stage, but also a velar + coronal fricatives could present at that stage; nevertheless, these forms seem to have developed from PLB velar plus -w- series.

Reference: