COMPARATIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROBLEM (HOMEWORK EXERCISE #3)

This assignment is based on Exercise 5.3 (Polynesian) in the Campbell textbook, pp. 145-147. Using the data given in correspondences 1-34 in the book, reconstruct a Proto-Polynesian form for each correspondence. Your answer (what you hand in) should include evidence that you have gone through the main steps of comparative reconstruction:

1) A table of sound correspondences, showing the attested sound in each language and the proto-phoneme you assigned to each correspondence.
      Note that the vowels show very simple and regular correspondences, displaying a typologically common five-vowel system: they appear to have been very stable throughout the history of Polynesian. Assume that the long vowels in 8b and 15 simply represent sequences of two identical vowels: these can be grouped together with other instances of /a/. While your table of correspondences should include the vowels, your attention should therefore be focused on the consonants: they are the main challenge of this problem.

2) An analysis of any complementary distributions found among the correspondence sets, with an explanation of how this affected your decisions about how many and what type of proto-phonemes to use in your final reconstruction.

3) A reconstruction of each word (forms 1-34, not just those Campbell asks for).

4) An inventory of the phonemes you have reconstructed for Proto-Polynesian, in conventional tabular form (consonants arranged by place and manner with labials on the left and stops on the top; vowels arranged by height and advancement with front vowels on the left and high vowels on top). As Campbell says, the data you have to work with here are limited, given only 34 correspondence sets, so you have to proceed on that basis: work with what you have and don't make guesses about what more data might tell you if you had it.

5) A list of the sound changes that derive the attested forms in each language, organized by language, with an appropriate label for each rule, and indications and explanations of ordering where/if necessary.