

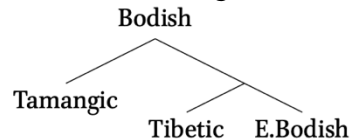
**When gone is the yod-a...**  
**Regular loss of \*\*j in Tamangic (West Bodish)**

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### High-level overview

- The internal division of the Bodish subgroup into East Bodish and West Bodish (≈Tamangic) is a generally-accepted working hypothesis (Shafer 1953, Benedict 1972, Bradley 1993, Matisoff 2003, a.o.), but is so far not well substantiated with evidence from regular sound change.



- Differential reflexes of proto-Bodish \*\*j is a promising candidate for a sound law that distinguishes WBod from the rest: **WBod has regularly lost two kinds of \*\*j**, which Tibetic and EBod preserve, each in a different pattern.

Case study: Houghton's Law cognates in WBod. *versus* Tibetic + EBod.

### Languages, branches, notational conventions & data sources

West Bodish (Bradley 1997)	WBod	≈Tamang-ish/Tamang-ic
▪ Tamang (Risianku)	Tmg <sub>ris</sub>	Mazaudon (1994)
▪ Gurung (Ghachok)	Gur <sub>gha</sub>	Glover et al. (1976)
Gurung (Sikleś)	Gur <sub>sik</sub>	fieldwork project @ ELA New York, see Ronkos (2020)
▪ Manange	Mng	Hildebrandt (2004)
Occasionally:		
Manange (Prakaa)	Mng <sub>pra</sub>	Hildebrandt (2004) citing Hoshi (1986)
▪ Thakali (Tukche)	Thak <sub>tuk</sub>	Mazaudon (1994) citing Hari (1969) & Hale (1973)
Thakali (Marpha)	Thak <sub>mar</sub>	Mazaudon (1994) citing Mazaudon (1973, 1978)
Tibetic		≈ "Tibetan varieties" descending from Old Tibetan
▪ Written Tibetan	WT	Hill (2010a) (lexicon of Tibetan verbs)
Old/pre-Tibetan is transliterated using Hill's (2019) system. Note that <ñ> = [ŋ].		
Two-letter abbreviations for particular WT lexicographical sources [i.e. published dictionaries] from Hill (2010a) are occasionally used.		
East Bodish	EBod	≈ Group of Bodish languages in E. Bhutan, W. Arunachal see Bodt (2023)
▪ Kurtöp	Kur	mainly Hyslop et al. (2022)
Occasionally on other EBod languages		Donohue (2021)
Chinese & Burmese data	Chn., Bur.	Hill (2019)

Single asterisk \*      reconstructions of lower-level subgroups: Old/pre-Tibetan, pEBod, pWBod  
 Double asterisk \*\*      reconstruction of proto-Bodish (pBod)

## 1. BACKGROUND: HOUGHTON'S LAW

In Tibetic, many palatal nasal initials  $\tilde{n}$  [ɲ] are secondary. In particular, a subset of  $\tilde{n}$  results from palatalization of pre-Tib.  $*\tilde{n}^y$  [ɲ].

- This pattern is established in early comparative work between Written Tibetan (WT) and Chinese/Burmese (Hill 2019 citing Houghton 1898, Benedict 1939), with a constrained set of comparanda.
  - Where Tib. shows a palatal nasal initial  $\tilde{n}$ , OChn. and Bur. cognates reflect the proto-velar initial ɲ.
  - Analysis: there was a pST palatalization,  $*^j$ , which is only preserved in Tibetan, and lost in Chinese and Burmese.

Table 1: “Original” comparanda for Houghton’s Law (Hill 2019:§27)

a. Bodish-external	b. Tibetic + EBod.
Bur. ཇི་ $\tilde{n}āḥ$ Chi. 魚 $ngjo < *ɲa$	Tib. ཇི་ $\tilde{n}a < *n^ya$ ‘fish’ Kurtöp $na$ ‘fish’ <div style="text-align: right;"><math>&lt; **ɲ^ja</math></div>
Bur. ཇོ་ $\tilde{n}hāḥ$ ‘borrow’	Tib. ཇོ་ $brñā < *brñ^ya$ ‘lend, borrow’ Kurtöp $nu$ ‘borrow’ <div style="text-align: right;"><math>&lt; **brɲ^ja</math></div>
Bur. $\tilde{n}anh$ ‘poisonous snake’	Tib. གཉན་པོ་ $gñan-po$ ‘antidote; opponent force’ $< *gñ^yan$ ‘pestilence’ <div style="text-align: right;"><math>&lt; **g-ɲ^jan</math></div>
Chi. 齧 $ngjin < *ɲə[n]$	Tib. རྩིལ་ $rñil \sim \tilde{s}ñil < *rñ^yil/*sñ^yil$ ‘gums’ Kurtöp $'nê$ ‘gums’ (conflicting) <div style="text-align: right;"><math>&lt; **\{r/s\}ɲ^jil</math></div>

- Hill (2019), furnishing additional data on this original “core” set of comparanda from non-Tibetic EBod languages, mainly Kurtöp, concludes that  $*ɲ^j > n$  must have occurred at an EBod-wide level (though with a flourish).
- Hill (2010b, 2019) dubs this sound change  $*ɲ^j > n$  **Houghton’s Law**.

AS A TIB+EBOD SOUND CHANGE. Hill sees Houghton’s Law as a “Bodish”-level sound change, though he was only able to base it on Tibetic + EBod data.

## 2. WBOD COGNATES TO THE “ORIGINAL” HOUGHTON’S-LAW FORMS

[CLASS 1a]

Overwhelmingly, WBod cognates of **Houghton’s-Law forms** show a velar nasal initial ɲ (and a comparable vowel), **without palatalization**.

$**ɲ^j_{1a}a$

Tib. ཇི་  $\tilde{n}a < *n^ya$  ‘fish’

- Kur.  $na$  ‘fish’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub>  $^2ta:rɲa$  ‘fish’, Gur<sub>gha</sub>  $^2tãga$  ‘fish’  $< *^Bta:r-ɲa$  ‘white-fish’

- cf. Bur. *nāh*, Chi. 魚 *ngjo* < \**ŋa* (01–31a)

**\*\*br<sub>1a</sub><sup>j</sup>a**

Tib. བློ་ *brñā* < \*brñ<sup>y</sup>a ‘borrow’

- Kur. *ju* ‘borrow & return’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> <sup>1</sup>*ŋan* ‘borrow’, Gur<sub>gha</sub> <sup>1</sup>*ŋaẽ* ‘lend (a durable item)’, Thak<sub>mar</sub> *ŋan*<sup>44</sup> ‘borrow’, Mng <sup>1</sup>*ŋjeN* ‘lend, borrow’, Mng<sub>pra</sub> <sup>3</sup>*ŋjẽ* < \*<sup>A</sup>*ŋan* ‘lend/borrow’
- Bur. ཇོ་ *nhāh* ‘borrow’

**\*\*{r/s}ŋ<sub>1a</sub><sup>j</sup>il**

Tib. རྩ་ *rñil* / སྩ་ *sñil* < \*rñ<sup>y</sup>il / \*sñ<sup>y</sup>il ‘gums’

- Kur. *nê* ‘gums’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> <sup>3</sup>*ŋil* ‘gums’, Gur<sub>gha</sub> <sup>3</sup>*ŋe* ‘gums’ though Tmg<sub>tag</sub> <sup>1</sup>*nil* ‘gums’,  
The etymology of Mng *ŋérke~jérke* seems to be a bit more obscure.  
< \*<sup>A</sup>*ŋil* ‘gums, palate’
- Chi. 齦 *ngjin* < \**ŋə[n]*

**\*\*g-ŋ<sub>1a</sub><sup>j</sup>an**

Tib. གཉན་པོ་ *gñan-po* ‘antidote; opponent force’ < \*gñ<sup>y</sup>an ‘pestilence’

- N/A
- N/A
- cf. Bur. *ñanḥ* ‘poisonous snake’

**Impression:** whereas Tib. preserves \*\**j*—thus leading to the positing of Houghton’s Law,

- EBod. **tends to preserve** \*\**j* in Houghton’s-Law forms, with one exception (Kur *nê* ‘gums’).
- WBod **regularly loses** \*\**j* in Houghton’s-Law forms

### 3. MAIN PLOT: DIFFERENT \*\**j*’S, DIFFERENT FATES

If one puts WBod into the picture and look more exhaustively for cognates involving velar *ŋ* vs. palatal *j*, **four** correspondence classes eventually emerge.

Table 2: Overview—four correspondence classes pertaining to pBod \*\**j*

EBod	Tib.	WBod	Class	Representative example	Complete list of datapoints
j	j	∅	<b>1a</b>	<b>**ŋ<sub>1a</sub><sup>j</sup>a</b> ‘fish’	§2 i.e. the original Houghton’s-Law comparanda <i>n</i> =2.5
		j	<b>1b</b>	<b>**ŋ<sub>1b</sub><sup>j</sup>an</b> ‘listen’	§3.2.2 <i>n</i> =1+
∅	j	∅	<b>2a</b>	<b>**ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>am</b> ‘feel, experience’	§3.1 <i>n</i> =4
		j	<b>2b</b>	<b>**ŋ<sub>2b</sub><sup>j</sup>o</b> ‘look~buy’	§3.2.1 <i>n</i> =1+

3.1. LOSS OF **\*\*j** IN WBOD AND EBOD

[CLASS 2a]

Looking beyond the “original” Houghton’s Law forms, one finds quite a few other cognates showing loss of **\*\*j** in WBod AND in EBod.

**\*\*ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>am**

Tib. *s-ñam* ‘think, consider, imagine, wonder, want < \*cause (oneself) to experience’, *ñam-s* ‘feeling, experience, visionary experience’ < \**ñ<sup>y</sup>am* ‘to feel, experience’<sup>1</sup>

- Kur *’jam* ‘wonder’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> *’jam* ‘experience (happiness or misfortune) > believe; be too salty’, Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’jã*, Gur<sub>sik</sub> *’ja* ‘want to, feel’

Kur *’j* regularly reflects **\*\*s-n**, as e.g. *’ja-ma* ‘previous’, *’ja-ba* ‘early’, Tib. *sña*. Note that this is in spite of Dzongkha: Dz. *he-ma* ‘early’ (Tib. *sñan-ma*), *ha-sa* ‘early’ (Tib. *sña-sa*)

**\*\*g-ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>e-n**

Tib. *gñen* ‘relative, kinsman, companion’ < \**g-n<sup>y</sup>e-n*

- Kur. *’jen* ‘partner, spouse’
- Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’jẽ-mãẽ* ‘relatives not of the same lineal family’  
Gurung *-mãẽ* is the human plural suffix.

The Tib. form contains nominalization prefix *g-* and suffix *-n* (see e.g. Jacques 2019); the underived root *\*n<sup>y</sup>e > ñe* ‘near, close’ is therefore also identifiable as a Houghton’s-Law root.

That Tib. *gñen* should be the cognate form of Gurung *’jẽ* is supported on both the preinitial and the coda fronts. Gurung tone 1 shows that the pWBod nasal initial must be voiceless **\*ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>**, which would correspond well with the presence of a preinitial in the Tib. form *gñen*. (If the Tib. had no preinitial, then pWBod would most likely attest a voiced **\*ŋ** initial.) On the other hand, the nasal vowel *ẽ* in Gurung is evidence of a pWBod nasal final, which Tib. *gñen* also corroborates.

**\*\*ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>iŋ~ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>eŋ**

Tib. *sñen* ‘be afraid’ < \**s-n<sup>y</sup>eñ* ‘cause to be afraid’; *\*n<sup>y</sup>eñ* ‘be afraid’

- Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’jĩ*, Gur<sub>sik</sub> *’ji*, ‘be frightened, afraid’ Thak<sub>tuk</sub> *’jin*, Mng *’jiN-pa* ‘frightening, scary<sub>adj</sub>’, though Mng<sub>pra</sub> *’nji* ‘fearful, cowardly’

The WT form contains a preinitial *s* but is apparently intransitive/unagentive. Considering regular correspondence between Tib. unpreinitialialed voiced onsets with pWBod tone A voiced onsets, the pre-Tib. comparandum is here identified as *\*n<sup>y</sup>eñ*, while *\*s-* is identified as the causative prefix. The erstwhile transitive verb would then have undergone secondary intransitivization in Tib; this is supported by a number of lexicographic glosses: DK glosses *sñen* as transitive ‘to frighten, fear, cause to be afraid’; DS glosses it as ‘to produce fear’, and explicitly indicates it as “archaic.”

**\*\*{r/s}ŋ<sub>2a</sub><sup>j</sup>ok**

<sup>1</sup> For this form Hill (2019:\$208c, 219e) cites Chn. 恁 *nyimX* < *\*nəm?* as a cognate. It should be noted that this Chinese form has a dental initial, which does not reflect to the velar initial as attested in Bodish. This correspondence is thus different from the ‘fish’ correspondence, where Chinese *does* reflect the velar initial.

Tib. *rñog~sñog* ‘to stir up, cause to be disorderly’; *ñog* ‘to be muddy, disorderly, disarrayed’

- Kur. *’ɲot* ‘shake<sub>tr</sub>’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> *’ɲo:* ‘tease, tickle’

The long vowel in the Tamang form straightforwardly points to a pWBod final \*-k. The final -t in Kur. can possibly be explained as a reflex of a final \*-s or \*-t, comparable e.g. to in the past stem of the Tib. *brnog-s* / *bsñog-s*. Final -s being reflected as -t is not uncommon in Kurtöp or in EBod more generally: compare Kur *nat* ‘put down, with Tib. *g-nas* ‘stay, settle down’; or Chamkhar *nat* ‘barley’, Ura *nat* ‘millet’ versus Trongsa *nas* ‘barley, wheat’, Ura *nas* ‘black barley’, Kur. *nas-phi* ‘barley flour’ with Tib. *nas* ‘barley’.

### 3.2. RETENTION OF **\*\*j** IN WBOD

[CLASS b]

In a non-trivial set of cases, where Tib. shows a palatalized initial *ñ*, WBod **retains** palatalization, i.e. WBod cognates show velar initial *ɲ* and a comparable vowel, **BUT ALSO a palatal medial j**.

#### 3.2.1. RETENTION IN WBOD, LOSS IN EBOD

[CLASS 1b]

**\*\*ɲ<sup>j</sup><sub>1b</sub>an**

Tib. *ñan* < \**ñ<sup>y</sup><sub>1</sub>an* ‘listen’

- Kur *ɲan* ‘listen, agree’
- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> *’ɲjan* ‘listen to, pay attention, obey, be persuaded’, Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’ɲe* ‘obey’, Mng *’ɲjeN-pa* ‘listen’

#### 3.2.2. RETENTION IN WBOD, RETENTION IN EBOD

[CLASS 2b]

**\*\*ɲ<sup>j</sup><sub>2b</sub>o**

Tib. *ño* < \**ñ<sup>y</sup><sub>2</sub>o* ‘buy’ < ‘look, look intently, examine’

- Kur *ɲwi* ‘buy’ < \**ɲo-s* ‘buy-PST’
- Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’ɲjo*, Gur<sub>sik</sub> *’ɲqjo*, ‘look at; look after, care for, seek, divine’; Mng *’ɲjo* ‘look; taste, test, try out’, though Mng<sub>pra</sub> *’ɲjo* < pWBod \**’ɲjo*

The semantic shift of the etymon \**ñ<sup>y</sup><sub>2</sub>o* from ‘look at, look intently, examine’ to ‘buy’ is a Tibetic innovation. Though no longer identifiable with the etymon \**ñ<sup>y</sup><sub>2</sub>o*, this shift is substantiated by the H-register verb *gzig* ‘(hon.) look at; buy’, which is the H variant of both *lta* ‘to look at’ and *ño* ‘to buy’.

#### 3.2.3. RETENTION IN WBOD, STATUS INDETERMINATE IN EBOD [CLASS 1b/2b]

Four more datapoints show retention of **\*\*j** in WBod, but remain indeterminate on the EBod side, because I do not have the EBod cognates.

**\*\*ɲ<sup>j</sup><sub>1b/2b</sub>a**

Tib. *ña* < \**ñ<sup>y</sup>a* ‘full moon’ —in compounds such as *zla-ba ña-rgyas*, *zla-ba ña-gaṅ* ‘full moon’

- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> *’ɲja* ‘full moon; *purne*’

**\*\*ɲ<sup>j</sup><sub>1b/2b</sub>al**

Tib. *ñal* ‘lie down, rest’ < \**ñ<sup>y</sup>al*

- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> *’ɲja-se* ‘evening’, Gur<sub>sik</sub> *’ɲge-sa* ‘evening’, though Gur<sub>gha</sub> *’nesa*

The vowel *e* in Gursik suggests the presence of a coronal coda in pWBod which would condition the fronting of \*a>e. This is straightforwardly corroborated by the Tmg<sub>ris</sub> form.

**\*\* $\eta^{j_{1b/2b}}$ am**

Tib. *ñam* ‘physical strength’ < \* $\eta^y$ am

- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> <sup>3</sup>*ñjam* ‘to get along well (*s’entendre bien*)’, Gur<sub>gha</sub> <sup>3</sup>*ñjã* ‘good physical condition’

**\*\* $\eta^{j_{1b/2b}}$ al**

Tib. *ñil* ‘be dessicated, crumble away/fall apart’; *sñil* ‘to destroy, crush, fragment’ < \*s- $\eta^y$ il < \*s- $\eta^y$ al?

- Tmg<sub>ris</sub> <sup>1</sup>*ñjal* ~ <sup>2</sup>*ñil* ‘pound into powder’, <sup>1</sup>*ñjal* ~ <sup>1</sup>*ñjat* ‘chew, ruminant’; Gur<sub>gha</sub> *lñe* ‘chew’; Mng <sup>1</sup>*ñje* ‘chew’

### 3.3. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Current analysis: posit four different **\*\*j**’s.

- Hill (2019:§219) already posits \* $y^1$  and \* $y^2$  for Tib+EBod:  
   \* $y^1$  conditions palatalization in both Tib. and EBod  
   \* $y^2$  conditions palatalization in Tib. only.
- With WBod in the scene, \* $y^1$  and \* $y^2$  each bifurcates, creating 4 correspondence classes.

Table 3: Four different **\*\*j**’s in pBod

*pTib+EBod (Hill 2019)	EBod	Tib.	WBod	<b>**pBod</b>	Representative example	Complete list of datapoints
* $y_1$	j	j	Ø	<b>**<math>j_{1a}</math></b>	<b>**<math>\eta^{j_{1a}}</math>a</b> ‘fish’	§2 i.e. the original Houghton’s-Law comparanda <i>n</i> =2.5
			j	<b>**<math>j_{1b}</math></b>	<b>**<math>\eta^{j_{1b}}</math>an</b> ‘listen’	§3.2.2 <i>n</i> =1+
* $y_2$	Ø	j	Ø	<b>**<math>j_{2a}</math></b>	<b>**<math>\eta^{j_{2a}}</math>am</b> ‘feel, experience’	§3.2.1 <i>n</i> =1+
			j	<b>**<math>j_{2b}</math></b>	<b>**<math>\eta^{j_{2b}}</math>o</b> ‘look~buy’	§3.1 <i>n</i> =4

Conclusion:

**WBod has regularly preserved the a-class, and regularly lost the b-class, whereas**  
 EBod has regularly preserved the 1-class, and regularly lost the 2-class,  
 Tib. has preserved both the 1/2-classes and the a/b-classes.

Outstanding questions:

- Are any of the four **\*\*j**’s collapsible? = Is there further phonological conditioning?
  - Observation:

Class-b contains the vowels {a, o}

Class-a contains the vowels {a, o, e, i} <sup>2</sup>

○ Problem:

Vowel {a, o} straddles classes a & b.

○ Guess:

Front vs. back distinction?     $**[j_a] = **^j_a a$     vs.     $**[j_a] = **^j_b a$     ?

#### 4. SOME DIACHRONIC IMPLICATIONS

##### 4.1. PALATALIZATION OF OTHER INITIALS

By and large, WBod has **not** undergone palatalization-conditioned sound changes targeting other initials: l, r, t, s.

- Explanation: WBod's loss of  $**j$  **preempts** these palatalization-conditioned sound changes.

Table 4: Tib. and/or EBod sound changes preempted by loss of  $**j$  in WBod

Tib/EBod sound change	Tib/EBod examples	WBod comparanda
a. $*l̥, r̥ > ʒ$ (Benedict's Law, Tibetic-only)	Tib. བཞི <i>bží</i> < $*b̥l̥i$ 'four'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> , Gur <sub>gha</sub> , etc. <sup>4</sup> <i>pli</i> 'four'
	Kur <i>ble</i>	
	Tib. ཞིམ <i>žim</i> < $*l̥im$ 'tasty'	Gur <sub>gha</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>li</i> 'fragrant, tasty', Thak <sub>tuk</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>lim</i> 'fragrant'
	Kur <i>lem</i>	
b. $*t̥, *s̥ > č, ś$ (Hill 2019:§15, Tibetic-only)	Tib. རྩེ <i>že</i> < $*l̥e$ 'much, excessive'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <sup>3</sup> <i>le</i> : '(for crops) to grow thick-set', Gur <sub>gha</sub> <sup>3</sup> <i>le</i> 'many, a lot'
	Tib. རྩེ <i>že</i> < $*l̥e$ 'much, excessive'	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>že</i> < $*l̥e$ 'much, excessive'	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>že</i> < $*l̥e$ 'much, excessive'	
c. $*r̥l̥ > r̥j$ (Jacques 2004; EBod)	Tib. རྩེ <i>žag</i> < $*r̥jak$ 'day'	Gur <sub>sik</sub> <i>-ro</i> 'd'ay (classifier)'
	Tib. རྩེ <i>žag</i> < $*r̥jak$ 'day'	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>žag</i> < $*r̥jak$ 'day'	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>žag</i> < $*r̥jak$ 'day'	
b. $*t̥, *s̥ > č, ś$ (Hill 2019:§15, Tibetic-only)	Tib. རྩེ <i>šig</i> < $*s̥jik$ 'louse'	Gur <sub>gha</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>se</i> 'louse'
	cf. Kur <i>se</i>	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>šin</i> < $*s̥ij$ 'tree'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>sin</i> 'wood, firewood', Gur <sub>gha</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>si</i> 'tree, wood', etc.
	Kur <i>seng</i>	
c. $*r̥l̥ > r̥j$ (Jacques 2004; EBod)	Tib. རྩེ <i>gčig</i> < $*g̥t̥iek$ 'one'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <i>ti</i> , Thak <sub>tuk</sub> <sup>H</sup> <i>ti</i> 'one'
	Kur <i>thê</i>	
	Tib. རྩེ <i>rje</i> < $*r̥l̥e$ 'exchange, barter'	Thak <sub>mar</sub> <i>li</i> <sup>55</sup> , Thak <sub>syang</sub> <i>li</i> <sup>11</sup> 'buy'
	Tib. རྩེ <i>rje</i> < $*r̥l̥e$ 'lord'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <sup>4</sup> <i>kle</i> 'king'
c. $*r̥l̥ > r̥j$ (Jacques 2004; EBod)	Tib. རྩེ <i>brjed</i> < $*mr̥l̥et$ 'forget'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>mlet</i> , Gur <sub>gha</sub> <sup>2</sup> <i>mli</i> 'forget'
	Tib. རྩེ <i>rjes</i> < $*r̥lies$ 'afterward'	Tmg <sub>ris</sub> <sup>1</sup> <i>li-cha</i> , Gur <sub>sik</sub> <sup>1</sup> <i>li</i> 'after'

<sup>2</sup> Although consider that there is only example of o in Class-a:  $**\{r/s\}j_{2a}ok$ , Tib.  $(r/s)\tilde{n}og$ , and that a Tibetan (Bodish) vowel o could be secondary, with a diphthongic origin at a higher level, notably  $***aw$  or  $***ew$ : see e.g. Hill's (2019:§22) comparison of Tib.  $\tilde{n}og-\tilde{n}oñ$  'soft, tender' with Chn. 弱 *nyak* <  $*newk$  (17-09a).

#### 4.2. NUMERAL ‘2’

WBod shows variable reflexes of the initial in numeral ‘2’ (ŋ~n).

- Possible explanation: two regular sound changes

\*\*gn<sup>h</sup>is

> Proto-WBod \*gnis

> (some pre-modern WBod) ŋis

> (other pre-modern WBod) nis

- Interestingly, this would demonstrate that the **serial contamination** involving a velar preinitial \*g on the numeral ‘2’ dates back at least to proto-Bodish.

#### 4.3. MEDIAL \*j AND LI FANG-KUEI’S LAW: NUMERALS ‘8’ AND ‘100’ IN WBOD

Medial \*j (NOTE: different from \*<sup>j</sup>, as argued by Li F.K. 1959:59), also displays complete loss in WBod.

\*\*brjat

\*\*brja:/brja<sup>h</sup>/brjay

Tib. *brgyad* ‘8’ < \*bryat

Tib. *brgyah* ‘100’ < \*bryah

Tmg<sup>ris</sup> <sup>4</sup>*prat*, Gur<sup>gha</sup>, Gur<sup>sik</sup> <sup>4</sup>*pre*, Mng <sup>4</sup>*phre*

Gur<sup>gha</sup>, Gur<sup>sik</sup> <sup>4</sup>*pra*, Mng <sup>4</sup>*phra*

< pWBod \*<sup>B</sup>brat

< pWBod \*<sup>B</sup>bra

- Possible explanation: WBod merged \*\*j and \*\*<sup>j</sup> before undergoing loss of \*<sup>j</sup><sub>b</sub>, i.e.

\*\*rj > \*r<sup>j</sup> > \*r

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