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Words for 'one' in Báimǎ*

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This article describes different words for 'one' in Báimǎ, a language spoken at the border of Sìchuān and Gānsù provinces in China. According to Sūn Hóngkǎi, the profusion of words for 'one' in Báimǎ is one of the features that distinguish Báimǎ from Tibetan. This paper discusses the distribution of various words for 'one' in a corpus of Báimǎ stories collected during a fieldwork in 2003, and comments on their meanings and functions, on restrictions of their co-occurrence, and on their interchangeability and etymology. Contrary to Sūn's conclusion, it is argued that all forms are cognate with Tibetan.

Key words : Báimǎ, numeral 'one', indefinite marker, Classical Tibetan, Tibetan dialects, etymology.

Cet article décrit des mots différents signifiant 'un' en báimǎ, langue parlée à la frontière du Sìchuān et Gānsù en Chine. D'après Sūn Hóngkǎi, la profusion des mots pour 'un' est l'une des caractéristiques qui distinguent le báimǎ des dialectes du tibétain. Cet article examine la distribution des mots pour 'un' dans un corpus de légendes báimǎ recueilli sur le terrain. Sont ici exposées les principales valeurs sémantiques ainsi que les emplois des mots pour 'un'. Sont aussi exprimées des remarques sur leur interchangeabilité et leur étymologie. Contrairement à la conclusion de Sūn, il est ici montré que tous ces mots sont apparentés au tibétain.

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Mots-clés : Báimǎ, chiffre 'un', article indéfini, tibétain classique, dialectes tibétains, étymologie.

1. INTRODUCTION: PREVIOUS STUDIES ON BÁIMǎ

Báimǎ 白马 is a Tibeto-Burman language, spoken by approximately 10.000 residents of three counties in Sìchuān 四川 Province and one county in Gānsù 甘肅 Province in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Báimǎ people (autonym [pe⁵³], Dwags-po in Tibetan) reside in mountainous areas (900 to 4.800 m. above sea level) at the borders of four counties (Jiǔzhàigōu 九寨沟, Sōngpān 松潘 (Zung-chu) and Píngwǔ 平武 in Sìchuān and Wénxiàn 文县 in Gānsù) in the immediate proximity of Qiāng 羌 (to their south-west), Chinese (east and south) and Tibetan ethnic groups (west and north).

The status of the Báimǎ language as either a separate language or a dialect of Tibetan is currently under dispute, partly due to a controversy surrounding the ethnic classification of the Báimǎ people. The Báimǎ were classified as Tibetans in the course of the PRC's State Ethnic Classification Project in 1951. They questioned this conclusion on numerous occasions in the 1960s and 1970s. Pointing out that they are different from grassland Tibetans in lifestyle, religion and folklore, the Báimǎ have repeatedly demanded reclassification. This appeal was granted in the late 1970s, when a group of PRC researchers conducted two surveys in the Báimǎ areas. As a result of these surveys of 12 (1978) and 25 (1979) days, the research group published two collections of papers (Sìchuān Shěng Mínzú Yánjiūsuǒ 1980, Zēng et al. 1987), in which the majority of researchers argued that the Báimǎ were descendants of the ancient Dī 氐 tribe (probably related to the Qiāng), which set up influential kingdoms in the 3rd through the 6th centuries CE in the areas currently inhabited by the Báimǎ.¹ At the beginning of the

¹ Dictionaries of Chinese usage (e.g. Yáo 2000: 123, 124) list the character 氐 with two readings, *dī* and *dī*. The former is the name of an ancient ethnic minority; the

Tibetan Yarlung dynasty (7th century), Dī territory was occupied by the Tibetans, with the exception of present-day Píngwǔ County, which is therefore believed to have preserved a relatively unmixed form of the language originally spoken by the Dī.

Despite the conclusion that the Báimǎ people constitute a distinct ethnic group rather than a branch of Tibetans, they were never officially reclassified. Reclassification of ethnic groups listed as Tibetans remains a sensitive issue in the PRC and is considered by many Tibetans as an attack by the Chinese government on the Tibetan identity (for a discussion see Upton 2000: 3-6). Overshadowed by such political argumentation, the Báimǎ language remains poorly documented and described.² The following scholars have conducted Báimǎ research.

Sūn Hóngkǎi participated in the aforementioned surveys of the Báimǎ areas in the late 1970s. He wrote a sketch of Báimǎ phonology and grammar (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 109-168, 209-275; Sūn 1980: 15-25) and collected over 3.000 common vocabulary items (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 321-372). Based on these, Sūn argues that although Báimǎ has features similar to Tibetan, the differences between Báimǎ and Tibetan far exceed those between the three main Tibetan dialects spoken in the PRC. Therefore, Báimǎ should be considered an independent language, distinct from Tibetan but nonetheless part of the Tibetan branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family (cf. Sūn's diagram for Tibeto-Burman in 1983: 100; see also Sūn 2003a, 2003b).

latter means 'foundation'. In spoken language, however, the latter form appears to have taken over the former, so that the name of the ethnic minority is nowadays typically pronounced *dī*. For example, at conferences on minority languages in Mainland China 'Di and Qiang' (ancient nomadic tribes in the western regions of China) are consistently named Dī Qiāng. In this article, I follow the prescriptive usage and give the name of the ethnic minority as Dī.

² For an overview of Báimǎ studies, see Huáng and Zhāng (1995: 79-81) and Sūn (2003a: 65-66, 2003b: 62-64).

Working in collaboration with Sūn Hóngkǎi in the late 1980s, Nishida Tatsuo studied records of what is currently named the Báimǎ language in the *Xīfān yìyǔ* 西番译语 [Vocabularies of Western Barbarian languages], made by Chinese officials during the Qiánlóng reign 乾隆 (1736-1796) of the Qīng dynasty. The results of their collaborative efforts were published in 1990 under the title *Hakuba yakugo no kenkyū: Hakuba no kōzō to keitō* [A study of the Báimǎ-Chinese vocabulary 'Báimǎ yìyǔ': the structure and affiliation of the Báimǎ language]. Nishida agrees with Sūn that Báimǎ should be considered an independent language and he likewise places it in the Tibetan branch.

Āwāng Cuòchéng and Wáng Jiànmin made a survey of 15 days in Píngwǔ County in 1988 and subsequently published a fieldwork report in which they label Báimǎ a dialect of Tibetan. They base this conclusion mainly on a vocabulary of 1000 words, only 150 of which have been published.

Based on language data collected by Sūn Hóngkǎi (1990), Zhāng Jichuān (1994a, 1994b, 1997) wrote three articles on Báimǎ, outlining regular correspondences between the phonological systems of Báimǎ and Classical Tibetan. He suggests that Báimǎ is related to the Khams Tibetan dialect group.

After one month of recording Báimǎ in Píngwǔ County in 1995, Huáng Bùfán and Zhāng Míng huì published an article in which they also propose a set of sound correspondences between Classical Tibetan and Báimǎ. They thus support Zhāng Jichuān's hypothesis that Báimǎ should be classified within the Khams dialect group.³

Currently, a vast scholarly majority regards Báimǎ, in Jackson Sun's (2003: 788 n. 29) words, as "merely an aberrant Tibetan dialect", while Sūn Hóngkǎi still maintains that it should be seen as an independent language.

³ For a critique of Huáng Bùfán and Zhāng Míng huì's (1995) and Zhāng Jichuān's (1994, 1997) analyses, see Sūn Hóngkǎi (2003a: 73-74, 2003b: 77-79).

On the whole, Báimǎ lexicon looks predominantly Tibetan, with some unusual developments and an admixture of words of unknown origin. Estimations of the percentage of this admixture vary. It is believed to be as high as 72% (out of 2000 basic words) by Sūn (1990: 45) and as low as 13% (out of over 3000 lexical items) by Zhāng (1994a: 114, with the reservation that there is another 25% of bisyllabic words, some syllables of which cannot be traced back to Tibetan) or 13.2% by Huáng and Zhāng (1995: 116). To my knowledge, no careful investigation into possible cognate relationships of these words with languages historically or presently surrounding Báimǎ has so far been made. Báimǎ grammar likewise exhibits some features dissimilar to Tibetan dialects (for an overview, see Huáng and Zhāng 1995: 112-115).

The question of the position of Báimǎ within Tibetan remains at this moment unanswered and more research is required before any definitive conclusions regarding the genetic affiliation of Báimǎ can be made.⁴

This article is based on my fieldwork with Báimǎ in October-December 2003. It addresses one of many issues still awaiting scholarly attention, i.e. the question why Báimǎ has so many words for 'one', as posed by Sūn (1990, 2003a, 2003b).

2. SIX WORDS FOR 'ONE'

Sūn Hóngkǎi (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 216) notes that Báimǎ has several words denoting the meaning 'one'. Three words for 'one'

⁴ As shown by Jackson Sun (2003a, 2003b), many Tibetan dialects (such as Zhongu and Chos-rje) spoken in northern Sichuan, a borderland between Tibetan and Qiāng, display, similar to Báimǎ, idiosyncratic phonological innovations and esoteric vocabulary. The position of these dialects within Tibetan remains likewise to be ascertained.

are already attested in the *Yìyǔ*: [tʃɿ⁵³] 'one', [tʃo¹³te³⁵]⁵ 'one' and [(dʒɑ)ɦɔ³⁵] 'one (pound)'.⁶ While [tʃɿ⁵³] and [(dʒɑ)ɦɔ³⁵] are translated in Chinese as *yī* 'one', [tʃo¹³te³⁵] is rendered as a combination of the numeral 'one' followed by the measure word for horses and cloth: 一疋 *yì pǐ*. In addition to these three words, Sūn mentions three more words for 'one': [ko⁵³], [ʃɿ¹³] and [ʒɿ⁵³].⁷ As Sūn points out (2003b: 68-69):

In Baima, there are many different words for the numeral 'one' which can combine with classifiers. The only one which is cognate with Tibetan is [tʃɿ⁵³], while the others include [ʃɿ¹³], [ko⁵³] and [tʃo¹³te³⁵]. [...] Currently, it is not clearly understood why there are so many different words for 'one' in Baima, nor is it clear why only certain

⁵ I transcribe this word as [tʃu¹³te³⁵]. Hereafter I will use the form [tʃo¹³te³⁵] when quoting Sūn and [tʃu¹³te³⁵] when referring to my own transcriptions.

⁶ Bǎimǎ has four tones: low rising [13], high rising [35], high falling [53], and rising-falling [341]. The original tone of a monosyllabic word is subject to change to the low rising tone, when followed by the high rising or the high falling tone. Function words (particles, prepositions, conjunctions, modal and auxiliary verbs, etc.) follow the same sandhi rule. For instance, the coordinate conjunction [ʒe⁵³] 'and' changes its original tone to the low rising when followed by a word in a high rising or high falling tone, as in example (3).

⁷ Sūn Hóngkǎi's transcriptions oppose palato-alveolars [ʃ ʒ] and alveolo-palatals [ç ʒ̥], which contrast has been argued by Hall (1997a, 1997b) to be unattested in natural languages. Sūn's opposition between palato-alveolars [ʃ ʒ] and alveolo-palatals [ç ʒ̥] is described in Huáng and Zhāng (1995) as that between retroflexes [ʃ̣ ʒ̣] and alveolo-palatals [ç ʒ̥], which analysis is adopted for my own transcriptions. To facilitate the present exposition which makes use of both Zhāng Jichuān's (1994a, 1997, based on Sūn's transcriptions) and Huáng and Zhāng's (1995) systems of sound correspondences, I preserve original transcriptions in quotations and follow Huáng and Zhāng's analysis in my transcriptions. Thus, the words for 'one' (here without tone marks) [ʃɿ] and [ʒɿ] in Sūn Hóngkǎi's (1990, 2003a, 2003b) and Zhāng Jichuān (1994a, 1994b, 1997) correspond to Huáng and Zhāng's (1995) [ʃə] and [ʒə] respectively. I am grateful to the anonymous *CLAO* reviewer for pointing out the problem with the palato-alveolar and alveolo-palatal opposition.

classifiers may combine with [tʃɪ⁵³], and why others can only be used with [ʃɪ¹³], [ko⁵³] or [tʃo¹³te³⁵]. Among these classifiers, some may combine with different forms of 'one', but this kind of interchangeability is not always possible.

Sūn elicited these different words for 'one' by translating combinations of the numeral 'one' followed by a classifier from Chinese to Báimǎ. The frequency of these words in Sūn's data varies considerably:

'One'	Frequency
tʃɪ ⁵³	13
ʃɪ ¹³	12
tʃo ¹³ te ³⁵	23
ko ⁵³	26
ɦɔ ³⁵	2
ʒɪ ⁵³	7

Table 1 - Frequency of words for 'one' in Nishida and Sūn (1990: 357-359)

As appears from this table, [tʃɪ⁵³] and [ʃɪ¹³], on the one hand, and [tʃo¹³te³⁵] and [ko⁵³], on the other, appear frequently and are distributed evenly, whereas [ɦɔ³⁵] and [ʒɪ⁵³] are less common. [ko⁵³] is the most frequent item on the list.

Moreover, according to the list of numerals and classifiers in Nishida and Sūn (1990: 357-359), only [tʃɪ⁵³], [ʃɪ¹³] and [tʃo¹³te³⁵] seem to allow some degree of interchangeability. In two instances, [tʃɪ⁵³] is reportedly interchangeable with [ʃɪ¹³], e.g. 一匹 (布) 'one bolt (of cloth)' can be rendered as either [re¹³ʒy³⁴tʃɪ⁵³] or [re¹³ʒy³⁴ʃɪ¹³] (p. 357). And in one instance, [tʃɪ⁵³] is interchangeable with [tʃo¹³te³⁵]: 一股 (份) 'one share' can be translated into Báimǎ as either [kie³⁵ tʃɪ⁵³] or [kie³⁵ tʃo¹³te³⁵] (*ibid.*). The word [ʃɪ¹³] is interchangeable with [tʃo¹³te³⁵] in three instances,

e.g. 一盒 'one box' [i¹³xo⁵³ ʃi¹³] can also be rendered as [i¹³xo⁵³ tʃo¹³te³⁵] (p. 357).

In sharp contrast to Sūn's findings, my elicitations from Chinese demonstrate a distinct preference for [ʃə¹³] (or [ʃi¹³] in Sūn's transcription), and my language consultants report it to be freely interchangeable with [tʃu¹³te³⁵]. For instance, 一条狗 'one dog' was translated by my language consultants as [tɕ^hi⁵³ ʃə¹³] or [tɕ^hi⁵³ tʃu¹³te³⁵]. Sūn lists this word only with [tʃo¹³te³⁵] (p. 358). In other words, my elicitations lead to different frequencies and different degrees of interchangeability, see Table 2 further on.

Direct elicitation of expressions taken out of context cannot clarify potential differences of various lexical items for 'one'. Moreover, the contact language, Chinese, complicates the issue, as the distinction between the stressed numeral *yí ge* 'one' and its weakened counterpart *yi ge* (denoting indefinite reference; close in meaning and function to the English indefinite article *a*) is not always obvious to non-native speakers, because written Chinese does not distinguish between these two usages.⁸ Hence, for speakers of a language with a special device to indicate indefinite reference, as is the case with Báimǎ, Chinese expressions containing the numeral 'one' can potentially be translated in their native language either with the corresponding word for 'one' or with the indefinite article.

In order to understand the differences between various words for 'one', I analyzed their distribution in a corpus of texts collected during my three months of fieldwork in 2003 in the Báimǎ Tibetan Township, Píngwǔ County, Sīchuān Province. The corpus consists of 31 Báimǎ legends and stories about Koshino village (Shuǐniújiā 水牛家 in Chinese), once a large and influential Báimǎ community. Sadly enough, Koshino no longer exists. Its population was relocated to other villages of the Báimǎ Tibetan Township in

⁸ On the semantic distinction between *yí ge* and its weakened counterpart *yi ge*, see Chao (1968: 567).

2003. The former location of Koshino will be flooded in the course of 2005 following construction of the Shuñiújiā dam 水牛家水坝. The legends and stories were narrated by Zhaga Tsere, a 69-year old native of Koshino, and translated into Chinese with the help of Lǐ Déguì 李德贵, a 64-year old native of Iarukhuai village (Luòtōngbà 洛通坝) and presently a resident of Píngwǔ. Hereafter I refer to the corpus as the Zhaga texts, after their narrator.

All the words for 'one' listed in Nishida and Sūn (1990: 357-359) have been attested in the Zhaga texts, but their relative frequency is different. In addition, [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] in the corpus exists also in the shorter (and perhaps original) form [tʃu⁵³].

Form	Meaning	Frequency
tʃə ⁵³	'one'	7
ʂə ¹³	indefinite marker	58
tʃu ⁵³ , tʃu ¹³ tɛ ³⁵	'single, alone'	30
ko ⁵³	'full'	10
ɦɔ ³⁵	'full'	9
zɛ ⁵³	indefinite marker	9

Table 2 - Frequency of words for 'one' in the Zhaga texts⁹

[tʃə⁵³], [ʂə¹³], [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] and [ko⁵³] all co-occur with a wide variety of words, whereas [ɦɔ³⁵] and [zɛ⁵³] are restricted in distribution. Of the nine occurrences of [ɦɔ³⁵], eight are in the same construction, 'one *chī* (Chinese unit measure, equivalent to 0.3 m)'. Likewise, of the nine occurrences of [zɛ⁵³], seven are in combination with 'year' and two in combination with 'tael'.

⁹ Zhāng (1997) already suggests that the forms [ko⁵³] and [ɦɔ³⁵] are cognate with the Tibetan *gang* 'full', whereas [tʃu⁵³], [ʃu¹³] and [zɪ⁵³] are all cognate with the Tibetan *gcig* 'one' (pp. 151-152). He does not, however, discuss the form [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] or the precise relationship between [tʃu⁵³], [ʃu¹³] and [zɪ⁵³].

As was the case with my direct elicitations, [sə¹³] enjoys the highest frequency and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is the second most favored way to express the meaning 'one'.

Let us now turn to the semantic distribution of these lexical items in the Zhaga texts. The generalizations below are mainly based on my fieldwork data, but I also rely on Sūn's data, whenever he reports lexical items not attested in my corpus.

3. SEMANTIC DISTRIBUTION OF WORDS FOR 'ONE' IN THE ZHAGA TEXTS

The following characteristics of words for 'one' have been taken into consideration in this analysis:

- (a) their meaning as understood from the context;
- (b) the type of classifiers with which each particular word for 'one' can co-occur.

For the convenience of the exposition, I divide Báimă classifiers into "container" and "non-container" classifiers. Container classifiers denote quantities of commodities and products, such as liquids and edibles, which normally require taking some kind of container (*cup, pot, pound, etc.*) as the measure classifier. For example, *cup* in the expression *one cup of tea* is a container classifier. Container classifiers may also function as nouns in their own right. Examples of container classifiers in Báimă are: [k^ha⁵³] 'mouth', [ka¹³zi³⁴¹] 'bowl', [sɔ¹³tʃo³⁵] 'pot', [tʃ^ho¹³zə⁵³] 'bucket', [dʒa³⁴¹] 'pound', [sɔ⁵³] 'tael'. Some measures of length (for instance, 'chi') can likewise function as container classifiers in Báimă.

As evidenced in the Zhaga texts, all lexical items for 'one' in Báimă have distinct meanings and functions.

3.1. [tʃə⁵³]

[tʃə⁵³] appears in contexts where the exact number, 'one', of the entity spoken about is communicated. Thus, it can be accounted

for as having the meaning '(exactly) one (not two, three, etc.)'. [tʃə⁵³] co-occurs with non-container classifiers, as in the following examples.¹⁰

In sentence (1), the protagonist of the story, a magic frog born into a human family, wants to bring lunch to his father, who is working in the fields. Since, as a frog, he does not have hands to carry lunch, he has to ask his mother to make a hole in one of the pancakes prepared for lunch and tie it with a rope to his neck.

- (1) k^hu⁵³ ke¹³du³⁵ ke⁵³ t^ho¹³ndzu³⁵ tʃə⁵³ ta⁵⁵ ʂə⁵³,
 1S neck on pancake one tie IMP
 ? ske.? kha ? gcig sdom shog
 fo¹³ru⁵³ p^hu⁵³ mbo¹³ ze¹³ dze³⁵.
 hole make.a.hole COM be said
 ? phug ? red bzlas
 'So he said, "Tie one pancake to my neck, make a hole in it".'

In the next example (taken from another story), the main character, a gifted Báimă scholar, travels in a company of friends to the county capital to take part in official examinations. On the way, they need to stay over in an inn.

- (2) ʂa⁵³ tʃə⁵³ ndy¹³ ji⁵³ ɕe¹³ de¹³ ʂə¹³,
 day one reside NOM made was.in 3PF
 zhag gcig 'dug ? byas bsdad ?
 ko¹³wa³⁵ ze⁵³ ndzi⁵³ ɕe¹³ de¹³ ni¹³, ʂa⁵³
 leg with go made was.in after day

¹⁰ This article represents work in progress; not all glosses and tone sandhi are final. As proposed by the anonymous *CLAO* reviewer, Classical Tibetan etymology is given for Báimă words in example sentences to make the article more accessible to Tibetologists. The "?" sign marks those cases where no good Classical Tibetan etymology can be proposed. In Tibetan transcriptions, I follow Wylie's (1959) standard system. Different verb stems are indicated in the gloss line by different tense forms of verbs.

rkang.ba	re	'gro	byas	bsdad	nas	zhag
tʃə ⁵³	ʂɑ ⁵³	ni ³⁴¹	ndy ¹³	ʕe ¹³	de ¹³	ʂə ¹³ . ¹¹
one	day	two	live	made	was.in	3PF
gcig	zhag	gnyis	'dug	byas	bsdad	?

'So, they stayed for one day... they went on foot and stayed one or two days.'

In both example sentences, [tʃə⁵³] is the numeral 'one'.

In two occurrences in the Zhaga texts, [tʃə⁵³] is reduplicated so as to express the meaning 'one by one' or 'each other' (cf. Sūn 1990: 218-219). Sentence (3) derives from a story about the rivalry between the villages of Iadzy (Huángyángguān 黄羊关) and Koshino.¹² The bone of contention was the issue who had to pay taxes for land owned by wealthy Koshino people in Iadzy. This dispute cost many people their lives and at some point, a native of Koshino urged the people of these two villages to stop fighting.

(3)	ta ⁵³	Ia ¹³ dzy ³⁵	zə ¹³	Ko ¹³ ʂə ⁵³	ni ³⁴¹	te ⁵³	ta ⁵³
	now	<i>Iadzy</i>	with	<i>Koshi</i>	two	DU	now
	da(.lta)	PN	re	PN	gnyis	do	da(.lta)
	tʃə ⁵³ tʃə ⁵³	tʂo ⁵³	ma ⁵³	zo ¹³		ʂe ⁵³ .	
	one.one	mutually	not	manufacture		IMP	
	gcig.gcig	?	ma	bzo		shog	

'People of Iadzy and Koshino, do not do this to each other.'

¹¹ The third person verbal suffix [ʂə¹³] is homophonous (i.e. identical in form, but distinct in meaning) with the indefinite marker [ʂə¹³].

¹² Ia¹³dzy³⁵ used to be populated by the Báimǎ and this name is quoted in many Báimǎ stories and legends. The Báimǎ population of Ia¹³dzy³⁵ is now completely sinified. Only older speakers have some passive knowledge of Báimǎ. The element [nɔ⁵³] in the name of the Koshino village means 'inside', thus Koshino means 'inside Koshi'. The village is variously referred to as Koshi and Koshino.

In addition, the reduplication of [tʃə⁵³] 'one' is sometimes used to emphasize the number 'one', as in the next example:

- (4) zə³⁴¹pu¹³sə³⁵ je¹³ zə⁵³ ɲe⁵³ tʃə⁵³tʃə⁵³ ndʒa¹³
 python year one person one.one eat
 sbrul.? lo zhig mi gcig.gcig 'cha
 ji⁵³ ɕe¹³ de¹³.
 NOM made was.in
 ? byas bsdad
 'Every year the python ate one human being.'

3.2. [ʂə¹³]

[ʂə¹³] is normally used when a person or thing is newly introduced in the story. It does not report the exact number 'one', but seems to act as an indefinite marker, narrowing down the reference of the preceding noun to a single member of a class. For example:¹³

- (5) ta⁵³ na⁵³na⁵³ dʒe³⁴¹ka¹³tʂi⁵³ ʂə¹³ tse⁵³ ɕ^ho¹³.
 now here Chinese.beggar¹⁴ INDF arrive appeared
 da(.lta) ('di.)na rgya.LW shig sleb byon
 'A beggar came here today.'
- (6) tɕ^hø⁵³ wɛ¹³wɑ³⁵ ʂə¹³, pu¹³ndʒa⁵³... wɛ¹³wɑ³⁵
 2S frog INDF wife frog
 khyod sbal.ba shig ? sbal.ba
 wɑ¹³gɛ³⁵, tɕ^hø⁵³ pu¹³ndʒa⁵³ ts^hə³⁵ ndʒi⁵³
 frog.old 2S wife search go

¹³ The indefinite marker [ʂə¹³] is homophonous (i.e. identical in form, but distinct in meaning) with the third person verbal suffix [ʂə¹³].

¹⁴ [-ka¹³tʂi⁵³] is probably a loan from Chinese, cf. Sichuanese 讨口子 [t^hau⁵³ k^həu⁵³tʂi⁵³] 'beggar'.

(sbal.)ba.rgas khyod ? 'tshol 'gro
 kɑ³⁵(lɑ⁵³) ts^hə³⁵ ndzi⁵³ zε¹³, dzε³⁵.
 where search go be said
 ga(.na) 'tshol 'gro red bzlas
 "'You are a frog, a wife... an old frog, where are going to
 look for a wife?" he said.'

- (7) La¹³nga⁵³ tɕiouʂɪ a¹³ji⁵³ gε¹³gu³⁵
 Langa just.be grandmother old
 PN LW a.yis rgas.rgas
 ʂə¹³ de¹³ ʂə^{13.15}
 INDF was.in 3PF
 shig bsdad ?
 'In Langa, eh... there was an old lady.'

[ʂə¹³] co-occurs with non-container classifiers and can co-occur with two other words for 'one', [ko⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tε³⁵], as seen in the following sections.

3.3. [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tε³⁵]

[tʃu¹³tε³⁵] exists in two variants, the short form [tʃu⁵³], as in sentence (8), and the long form [tʃu¹³tε³⁵], as in sentence (9). The syllable [tʃu⁵³] in [tʃu¹³tε³⁵] changes its original high falling tone to the low rising tone when accompanied by a syllable in the high rising tone (see footnote 8). [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tε³⁵] have a wide range of meanings. In this section, I will provisionally gloss [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tε³⁵] according to their meaning in each particular sentence.

- (8) k^hu⁵³ tʃu⁵³ ɦo¹³ja³⁵ ʂə¹³.
 1S only.one be.over 3PF

¹⁵ [tɕiouʂɪ] (or *jiu shi* in Pinyin transcription) is a loan from Chinese.

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? gcig.pu ? ?

'I was the only one left.' (literally, 'There was only me left.')

Sentence (8) is taken from a story about two brothers, one rich and the other poor. The poor brother leads a happy life despite his poverty, for he is always laughing and playing with his children; the rich brother feels lonely and unhappy. One day, the rich brother attempts to entertain himself and his wife by playing a ball game. Since they are very wealthy, they use lumps of silver as balls, but this does not cheer them up:

- (9) tɕ^hø⁵³ kə¹³ta⁵³, ŋɑ⁵³ kə¹³ta⁵³, tʃu¹³tɕ³⁵
 2S piece 1S piece one.item
 khyod LW nga LW gcig
 tɕε⁵⁵ tɕ^hε³⁵, tʃu¹³tɕ³⁵ t^hɔ¹³tɕo³⁵
 DIR: vertically.up set.out one.item DIR:down.the.slope
 ? chas gcig ?
 tɕ^hε³⁵ mbo¹³, ga³⁴¹ ji⁵³ me¹³ de⁵³ ʂə^{13.16}
 set.out COM laugh NOM not was.in 3PF
 chas ? dgod ? ma bsdad ?
 'You - a lump, I - a lump, one up, one down, but it did not
 make them laugh.'

- (10) α¹³ma⁵³, α¹³pa⁵³ tʃu¹³tɕ³⁵ sɔ³⁵ ma⁵³
 mother father one.entity gave.birth NOM
 a.ma a.pha gcig gsos ma
 zε¹³ dze³⁵ ʂə¹³.
 be said 3PF
 red bzlas ?
 'We are born of the same parents, he said.'

¹⁶ [kə¹³ta⁵³] 'lump' is a Chinese loan, *gēda* 'lump, knot' (cf. Zhāng 1994b: 57).

Similar to [tʃə⁵³] and [ʂə¹³], [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] does not co-occur with container classifiers. Unlike all other words for 'one' it can be used not only as an attributive, but also as a nominal phrase, e.g. in examples (9) and (11), which usage accounts for over a half of its occurrences in the Zhaga texts (19 instances out of 38). On three occasions, [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] co-occur with the indefinite marker [ʂə¹³], for example:

- (11) k^hɛ⁵³ ma¹³mu³⁵ ɲi³⁴¹ tɛ⁵³ tʃu⁵³ ʂə¹³
 1P mother.daughter two DU single INDF
 ? ma.ʔbu(.mo) gnyis do gcig.po shig
 ndʒa¹³ ʃi⁵³ zɛ¹³.
 eat NOM be
 'cha ? red
 '(The python) is going to eat one of the two of us.' (literally,
 'a single one of the two of us')

3.4. [ko⁵³]

The original meaning of [ko⁵³] is 'full', as in [tʃ^hu⁵³ ndi¹³ ko⁵³] 'so full of water'. In the Zhaga texts, it co-occurs with container classifiers exclusively.

- (12) a¹³ɲi³⁵, tʃ^hɛ³⁵ ko⁵³ t^he¹³, dze³⁵.
 grandfather tobacco full smoke said
 a.mes ? gang 'then'¹⁷ bzlas
 'Sir, smoke a pipe, he said.' (literally, 'a pipe full of tobacco')

Examples of [ko⁵³] given in Nishida and Sūn (1990: 357-359) support the hypothesis that the usage of [ko⁵³] is restricted to container classifiers. For instance, 一锅 [sɔ¹³tʃo³⁵ ko⁵³] 'pot-full' (compare 一个锅 [sɔ¹³tʃo³⁵ tʃi⁵³] 'one pot', 1990: 357), 一把(米)

¹⁷ 'then' means 'pull, draw' and is also used in the meaning 'smoke', cf. similar usage in Zhongu (Sun 2003a: 825).

[pa⁵³ri¹³ ko⁵³] 'hand-full (of rice)' (1990: 358), 一口 [k^ha⁵³ ko⁵³] 'mouth-full', 一碗 [ka¹³zi³⁴¹ ko⁵³] 'bowl-full', 一桶 [tɔ¹³zi⁵³ ko⁵³] 'bucket-full', 一缸 [dza¹³nbo⁵³ ko⁵³] 'vat-full' (ibid.).

3.5. [ɦɔ³⁵]

In Sūn's examples (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 359), [ɦɔ³⁵] appears to co-occur with only two nouns, 'pound' and '*chi*', i.e. 一斤 [dʒa¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one pound', 一尺 [k^ha¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one *chi*'. In my corpus, it is attested in combination with '*chi*' (8 occurrences) (e.g. [jɑ¹³ɕi⁵³ k^ha¹³ɦɔ³⁵ʂə¹³] 'a handkerchief of one *chi*') and on one occasion, with the word 'trough, manger', i.e. [tʃ^hu⁵³ ɣɑ¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one trough of water'. On three other instances of the use of 'trough, manger' in the Zhaga texts, this word rather co-occurs with [ko⁵³] 'full', i.e. [ʃɑ⁵³ma⁵³ ɣɑ¹³ ko⁵³] 'one manger of peas', [tʃ^hu¹³ndʒa³⁵ ɣɑ¹³ ko⁵³] 'one through of water'. 'Pound', '*chi*' and 'trough' are all container classifiers.

3.6. [zə⁵³]

Similar to [ɦɔ³⁵], [zə⁵³] is restricted in distribution. In Sūn's examples (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 359, 'year' p. 324), it is used in the following expressions:

- 一斗 [ʃo¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one bushel',
- 一两 [ʃɔ¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one tael',
- 一驮 [k^hi³⁵tʃ^ha¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one sack (load carried on the back)',
- 一对 (一对手) [tʃ^ha¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one pair (one pair of hands)',
- 一夜 [go¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one night',
- 一个月 [dza¹³zɿ⁵³] 'one month'
- 一年 [iɛ⁵³zɿ⁵³] 'year'.

Of these words, three are container classifiers ('bushel', 'tael' and 'sack') and four non-container classifiers ('pair', 'night' 'month' and 'year').

In the Zhaga texts, [zə⁵³] co-occurs seven times with 'year', as in sentence (4), and two times with the word for 'tael', as in sentence (13):

- (13) tʃ^hε³⁵ ʂα⁵³ mbo¹³ zε¹³, tʃ^hε³⁵ ʂo¹³ zə⁵³
 tobacco burn COM be tobacco tael one
 ? ?sregs ? red ? srang zhig
- jɔ³⁵k^hu⁵³ zε¹³.
 take.bring be
 ?.khur red
 'When the tobacco was used up, one used to borrow one
 tael of it.'

An explanation of the difference between [zə⁵³] and other words for 'one' follows in §4.2.

4. COUNTERPARTS OF BÁIMǼ WORDS FOR 'ONE' IN CLASSICAL TIBETAN AND TIBETAN DIALECTS

The distribution of various words for 'one' as outlined in the previous section, with the numeral 'one', [tʃə⁵³], an indefinite marker, [ʂə¹³] and the word 'full' used with container classifiers in the meaning of 'one', [ko⁵³], partly resembles the various usages of 'one' in Classical Tibetan and modern Tibetan dialects.

For the comparisons in this section, I use Classical Tibetan sources, in the tradition of BáimǼ studies (Zhāng 1994, 1997; Huáng and Zhāng 1995) and various Tibetan dialect data with an emphasis on the Khams group, to which BáimǼ allegedly belongs.

In Classical Tibetan, the numeral 'one' develops into the indefinite article, which has three phonologically conditioned forms: (1) *cig*, used if the preceding word ends in *ga*, *da*, or *ba*, as in *khab cig* 'a needle'; (2) *shig*, used after *sa*, as in *ras shig* 'a cloth'; and (3) *zhig* in all other cases (cf. Jäschke 1954: 19-20). Spoken

varieties of Tibetan usually have one form for the indefinite article, for instance [tɕi] in Khams (Mǎ and Hú 1987, vol 2, p. 7, Häsler 1999: 95).

The word for 'full', *gang* in Classical Tibetan, combines with container classifiers in the meaning 'one' in Classical Tibetan and modern Tibetan dialects. For instance, the *Zàng-Hàn dà cídiǎn* [Comprehensive Tibetan-Chinese dictionary], edited by Zhāng Yísūn (1993), gives the second meaning of the word *gang* 'full' as 'one', which is illustrated with the following examples: *rgya-ma gang* 'one pound', *dkhar-yol gang* 'one bowl' and *gom-pa gang* 'one step' (Zhāng 1993, vol. 1, p. 339).¹⁸ The expression 'one bowl' is listed in the *Tibeto-Burman lexicon* (Huáng et al. 1992) as a combination of the words 'bowl' and 'full' for, among others, Lhasa (Central) Tibetan, [p^ho:⁵⁵pa⁵⁵ (k^haŋ¹³)] and 'Ba'-thang (Khams) Tibetan, [p^ho:⁵⁵ru⁵⁵ (kō¹³)].

The three remaining Báimǎ words for 'one', [fɔ³⁵], [zə⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵], do not appear to have counterparts in Tibetan. Indigenous numeral systems are often among the earliest features lost when a language becomes endangered. They are susceptible to attrition through contact with another language even within an otherwise robust language, as argued by Comrie (2004). Do [fɔ³⁵], [zə⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] reflect some kind of substratum numeral system of Báimǎ which survived intensive contact of the Báimǎ with the Tibetans and the Chinese?

4.1. [fɔ³⁵]

As mentioned in §2.5, [fɔ³⁵] co-occurs with container classifiers ('pound', 'chi', 'trough'). The word 'trough' can be used with both [fɔ³⁵] and [ko⁵³]. Let us consider the possibility that [fɔ³⁵] is a phonologically conditioned allomorph of [ko⁵³]. Further scrutiny of the list of words with which [ko⁵³] and [fɔ³⁵] co-occur,

¹⁸ Compare Bacot (1948: 30): *nga la ja dkar-yul gang 'khyer shog* "Apporte-moi une (pleine) tasse de thé."

reveals that [ko⁵³] is normally not used after the low back vowel [ɑ], when the latter is not preceded by the nasal [nb] cluster, for instance, 一包(东西) 'one package' [tɕi⁵³nbɑ⁵³ko⁵³] (Sūn 1990: 358). Hence, it is plausible that [ɦɔ³⁵] is an allomorph of [ko⁵³] 'full' after the low back vowel [ɑ], e.g. [dʒɑ¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one pound', [k^hɑ¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one *chi*', [ɣɑ¹³ɦɔ³⁵] 'one trough'. That the word 'trough' can now co-occur with both [ɦɔ³⁵] and [ko⁵³] probably evidences erosion of this earlier distinction. It remains, however, unclear why [ko⁵³] and [ɦɔ³⁵] are dissimilar in their tonal contour. Unfortunately, the origin of this tonal dissimilarity is difficult to determine, given the limited set of examples.

4.2. [zə⁵³]

[zə⁵³] co-occurs with both container ('bushel', 'tael', 'sack') and non-container classifiers ('pair', 'night', 'year' and 'month'). To compare, in Tibetan dialects, the first three words would be used with the word for 'full'. For example, 'one bushel (of barley)' is [nɛ¹³mbo⁵³kō¹³], literally, 'barley bushel full', in Sde-dge Tibetan (Gésāng 2002: 151). 'One tael of gold' is [ser⁵⁵saŋ⁵⁵k^haŋ¹³], literally, 'gold tael full', in Gzhis-ka-rtse (Central) Tibetan (*ibid.*, p. 54).

The words 'pair', 'night', 'year' and 'month' are used with the numeral 'one' in Classical Tibetan and modern Tibetan dialects. For instance, 'one night' is *zhag gcig* in Classical Tibetan and [xɑ^{ʔ231}(tɕi^{ʔ53})] in 'Ba'-thang Tibetan; 'one month' is [zla ba (gtɕiq)] in Classical Tibetan and [ndɑ¹³(tɕi^{ʔ53})] in 'Ba'-thang Tibetan (Huáng et al. 1992: 304).

The modern Báimǎ situation does not suggest any particular feature which would unite the words that co-occur with [zə⁵³] 'one' in one group, except, maybe, their relatively high frequency of occurrence. However, so are also 'pound' and '*chi*' which co-occur with [ɦɔ³⁵].

If we examine Classical Tibetan cognates of the Báimǎ words that co-occur with [zə⁵³], on the other hand, we find out that

all of them can be grouped together by taking the phonologically conditioned form of 'one', *zhig* 'a'. Consider the following table:

English	Báimă		Tibetan	
'one bushel'	ʂo ¹³	zə ⁵³	'bo	zhig
'one tael'	ʂo ¹³	zə ⁵³	srang	zhig
'one sack'	k ^h i ³⁵ tʃ ^h a ¹³	zə ⁵³	khal-cha	zhig
'one pair'	tʃ ^h a ¹³	zə ⁵³	cha	zhig
'one night'	qo ¹³	zə ⁵³	dgong	zhig
'one month'	dza ¹³	zə ⁵³	zla-ba	zhig
'one year'	je ⁵³	zə ⁵³	lo	zhig

Table 3. Classical Tibetan cognates for 'bushel', 'tael', 'sack', 'pair', 'night', 'year' and 'month' in Báimă

In these (high frequency) combinations, Báimă probably retained the original phonologically conditioned form of the Classical Tibetan weakened form of 'one', even after Báimă underwent phonological change and simplification of syllables. The form [ʂə¹³] pervasively took over other forms as the standard rendering of the indefinite marker.

4.3. [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵]

The case of [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is more complex than that of [ʃo³⁵] and [zə⁵³], given the frequent occurrence of the former as a nominal phrase. [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] appears to be more than merely the numeral 'one'. Is it perhaps, as suggested in the *Yiyǔ*, some kind of fusion of the numeral 'one' (of which the initial cluster, [tʃ], is still present) and a classifier (cf. §2)?

Cross-linguistically, the numeral 'one' often undergoes such fusions with classifiers, as is, for instance, the case in Peking Mandarin, where the numeral 'one' *yī*, fuses with the general

classifier *ge* 'item' into the form *yí* 'one item' (see Dǒng 2003, Liú 2004, Chirkova 2004). In Malayic languages, which like Báimǎ, have a large variety of forms for the numeral 'one', this multiplicity is the result of combining proclitic 'one' with a numeral classifier, which is then further reanalyzed as a simple numeral 'one' (Gil 2004). Such a scenario is, nonetheless, unlikely for Báimǎ, given its classifier-numeral word order.

Since the use of numerals in Báimǎ resembles that in Classical Tibetan and Tibetan dialects, it is reasonable to expect that [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is a fusion of the numeral 'one' and a nominalizing suffix or a demonstrative. In fact, Classical Tibetan has at least two forms derived from the numeral 'one', which correspond to the meaning and function of [tʃu¹³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] in Báimǎ. One of these candidates is the noun *gcig-po* 'only, sole, alone, another', as for instance in *kho rang gcig-por yong-ba red* 'He came alone.' (Zhāng 1993, vol. 1, p. 740). Another form is the adverb *gcig-pu* 'alone, single, on one's own', as in *nga gcig-pur lus-pa* 'I am the only one left' (ibid.).

Overall, the relationship between Báimǎ [tʃu¹³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] with Tibetan *gcig-po* or *gcig-pu* is complex. The meaning of [tʃu¹³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] overlaps with that of *gcig-po* or *gcig-pu*, but is not restricted to it. [tʃu¹³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] can mean not only 'single' or 'alone', but also more generally 'one'. For instance, of the examples of [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] given in §3.3, [tʃu¹³] in sentence (8) would correspond to Tibetan *gcig-pu*, [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] in example (11) to *gcig-po*, while [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] in sentences (9) and (10) corresponds to the numeral *gcig* 'one' (or the numeral followed by the definite article *de* 'that'). However, given the frequent occurrence of [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] as a nominal phrase, suggesting a nominalized form of 'one' being their origin, as well as their resemblance to *gcig-po* or *gcig-pu*, I propose to explore the possibility of the former being derived from the latter. In the reconstruction below, I take the shorter form, [tʃu¹³], to be the original form and the longer one, [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵], a later development.

Based on systematic correspondences of Báimǎ to Classical Tibetan listed in Zhāng (1994a, b, 1997) and Huáng and Zhāng (1995), let us reconstruct what possible changes *gcig* on the one hand and the suffixes *po* and *pu* might have undergone in Báimǎ.

(1) words ending in *-ig* in Classical Tibetan systematically correspond to words ending in [i/ɿ] (Zhāng 1994a: 16) or [i/ə] (Huáng and Zhāng 1995: 94) in Báimǎ. For instance, [t^higs] 'drop' in Tibetan becomes [t^hi⁵³] in Báimǎ (Huáng and Zhāng 1995: 94), *gcig* 'one' becomes [tʃɿ⁵³] in Sūn's or [tʃə⁵³] in Huáng and Zhāng's transcription.

(2) The bilabial unvoiced stop *p* in the Tibetan suffixes *pa* and *po* changes to the bilabial semivowel *w* in Báimǎ, as pointed out by Huáng and Zhāng (1995: 88). For example, Tibetan [k^haŋ pa] 'house' is [ŋgo²¹wa⁵³] in Báimǎ (ibid.). When the Tibetan suffixes *pa* and *po* are preceded by *m-* or *n-*, *p* becomes *mb*. For example, 'alive' is [gson po] in Tibetan and [sə²¹mbu⁵³] in Báimǎ (ibid.).

Further examination of the examples of Tibetan-Báimǎ correspondences, listed in Zhāng (1994b) and Huáng and Zhāng (1995), suggests the following developments relevant for the present analysis:

(1) The suffix *po* systematically changes to *wu* (Huáng and Zhāng's transcription) or *u* (Sūn's transcription used by Zhāng Jichuān). When *po* is preceded by a nasal, it changes to *mbu*. For instance, Tibetan 'finely grinded (flour)' [ndz̥am po] corresponds to [ndz̥a²¹mbu⁵³] in Báimǎ (Huáng and Zhāng 1995: 93), *sel-po* 'a basket carried on the back' is [she¹³u⁵³] (Zhāng 1994b: 66).

(2) both *pa* and *po* correspond to a syllable in the high falling tone (53) in Báimǎ. For example, Tibetan 'ug-*pa* 'owl' changes into [u³⁵u⁵³] (Zhāng 1994a: 14), *bzang-po* 'good' into [ze¹³u⁵³]

('excellent' in Báimǎ), *mang-po* 'much, many' into [mɛ¹³u⁵³] (ibid., p. 13), [rtsam pa] 'roast barley flour' into [tsa²¹mba⁵³] (Huáng and Zhāng 1995: 88).

On the basis of the above, the original Tibetan *gcig-po* 'only, sole, alone' yields *[tʃɪ⁵³u⁵³] in Báimǎ.

Another probable candidate for the origin of [tʃu¹³] in Báimǎ, *gcig-pu*, is likely to undergo similar changes. I could not find any words with the suffix *pu* in either Zhāng's or Huáng and Zhāng's lists of Tibetan-Báimǎ correspondences. Given the above pattern, it is nonetheless reasonable to postulate that such a combination in Tibetan would again yield the *[tʃɪ⁵³u⁵³] form in Báimǎ.

Hence, both *gcig-po* 'lonely, single' and *gcig-pu* 'single, the only one' are likely to develop into the Báimǎ form *[tʃɪ⁵³u⁵³]. This combination is then expected to collapse into [tʃu⁵³] through frequent usage. The transformation of [tʃu⁵³] into [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] would tentatively proceed along the following lines.

In Báimǎ, topics are often marked by the word [tɛ⁵³] 'that', as in the following sentence:

- (14) ɕe¹³lo³⁵ tɛ⁵³ gu¹³ka⁵³ ndzɛ³⁵ tse⁵³ zɛ¹³
 bird.eagle that evening night arrive be
 bya.glag de dgongs.kha mtshan sleb red
 je¹³ke³⁵ tɛ⁵³ ɕe¹³lo³⁵ ti⁵³ ʂue³⁵pa⁵³
 everyday that bird.eagle that.OBL wing
 ? de bya.glag de.? gshog.pa
 zu³⁴¹ zu³⁵ ʂə¹³.
 under keep.warm 3PF
 zhabs ? ?

'As for the eagle, in the evening, at night... every day, the eagle was keeping the child warm under its wings.'

[tʃu⁵³] (and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵]) are often used as topics, cf. examples (8) to (10), in which function it commonly co-occurs with [tɛ⁵³]. The juxtaposition of [tʃu⁵³] and [tɛ⁵³] led to the change of the original high falling tone of [tʃu⁵³] to the low rising tone, i.e. [tʃu¹³]. As was the case with [ɦɔ³⁵], in this model, I again cannot explain why the high falling tone of the second syllable, [tɛ⁵³] changes to the high rising tone, [tɛ³⁵]. The same pattern (variation between the high falling and the high rising tone in the second syllable of a bisyllabic word) is observed in a number of words in Báimă, e.g. [so⁵³] 'three', but [tʃo¹³so³⁵] 'thirteen' (Nishida and Sūn 1990: 356); 'to augment' is [k^hɛ⁵³nɛ⁵³] or [ʃu⁵³nɛ³⁵], 'to devaluate' is [ko⁵³ʒɑ⁵³tʃø⁵³] and [ko⁵³ʒɑ⁵³tʃo³⁵] (ibid., p. 371). The underlying mechanism of this alternation will hopefully be understood in due time.

Being reanalyzed as one form, [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is in turn frequently followed by [tɛ⁵³] when acting as sentence topic, for example:

- (15) na⁵³ ʃo¹³ɦu³⁵ ɲe⁵³ tɕ^hø¹³nɔ⁵³ pu⁵³
 here rich person family son
 ('di.)na ɸyug.po mi khyim.nang bu

 tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵ tɛ⁵³ ʃə⁵³ mbo¹³ʃə¹³.
 only that die COM 3PF
 gcig.po de shi ? ?
 'The only son of a rich family here passed away.'

Hence, [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is [tʃu⁵³] used as topic. After having coincided into the same form, the originally distinct meanings of *gcig-po* and *gcig-pu* are expected to get obscured with the possibility that the new form is reanalyzed into a more general word 'one'.

5. CONCLUSION

The six words for 'one' in Báimă, [tʃə⁵³], [ʃə¹³], [tʃu⁵³] and [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵], [ko⁵³], [ɦɔ³⁵] and [zə⁵³], all have distinct meanings and

functions. The form [tʃə⁵³] is the numeral 'one', the form [ʃə¹³] the indefinite marker, the form [ko⁵³] means 'full'. In the meaning 'one', [ko⁵³] is restricted to co-occurrence with container classifiers. The form [hɔ³⁵] is possibly a phonologically conditioned allomorph of [ko⁵³] 'full', whereas the form [zə⁵³] appears to retain earlier phonologically conditioned form of the Classical Tibetan indefinite marker. Finally, the form [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] means '(single) one' and is frequently used as a nominal phrase.

As for the co-occurrence and interchangeability of the forms, [tʃə⁵³] and [ʃə¹³] are in a complementary relationship. They do not co-occur for the obvious reason that indefinite reference is incompatible with an exact number reference. [tʃu¹³tɛ³⁵] is a fusion of the numeral 'one' with a nominalizing suffix and a demonstrative. Serving as a noun, i.e. 'one entity', it can take the indefinite article [ʃə¹³]. In expressions without context, it is used as a synonym for (and thus interchangeable with) the word [tʃə⁵³] 'one'. Finally, [ʃə¹³] freely co-occurs with expressions with the word [ko⁵³] 'full'.

As far as the usage of various words for 'one' is concerned, Báimă resembles Tibetan. This suggests that Báimă and Tibetan share a common origin and that the former is perhaps even a dialect of the latter. At present, no one disputes the common origin of Báimă and Tibetan. As for Báimă as a Tibetan dialect, more research is required to determine the precise position of Báimă within Tibetan. This investigation promises to become one of the most exciting directions in Báimă studies.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	first, second, third person personal pronouns
COM	completion expressed by the suffix [mbo ¹³]
DIR	direction of the action
DU	dualis expressed by the form [te ⁵³] 'two'
IMP	imperative
INDF	indefinite reference expressed by the word [ʃə ¹³]

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INST	instrumental expressed by the form [re ⁵³]
LW	loan word
NOM	nominalizer expressed by [ji ⁵³] and [ma ⁵³]
OBL	oblique case form
P	plural
PF	perfective aspect
PN	place name
S	singular

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