

# **More Historical Linguistics**

<u>K'iche'</u>	<u>Tzeltal</u>	<u>Yucatec</u>	<u>Huastec</u>	<u>Proto-Mayan</u>
jaax	jah	jah	jaʔ	'sick'
jaʃ	jaʃ	--	--	'crab'
k'aj	k'aj	k'aj	tʃ'aj	'sell'

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raah	ja	jah	jah-		'hot'
riʔx	jix	jiʔih	jeh-		'old'
war	waj	waj	waj		'sleep'

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**r-->j in Tzeltal, Yucatec, and Huastec**

Proto-Mayan

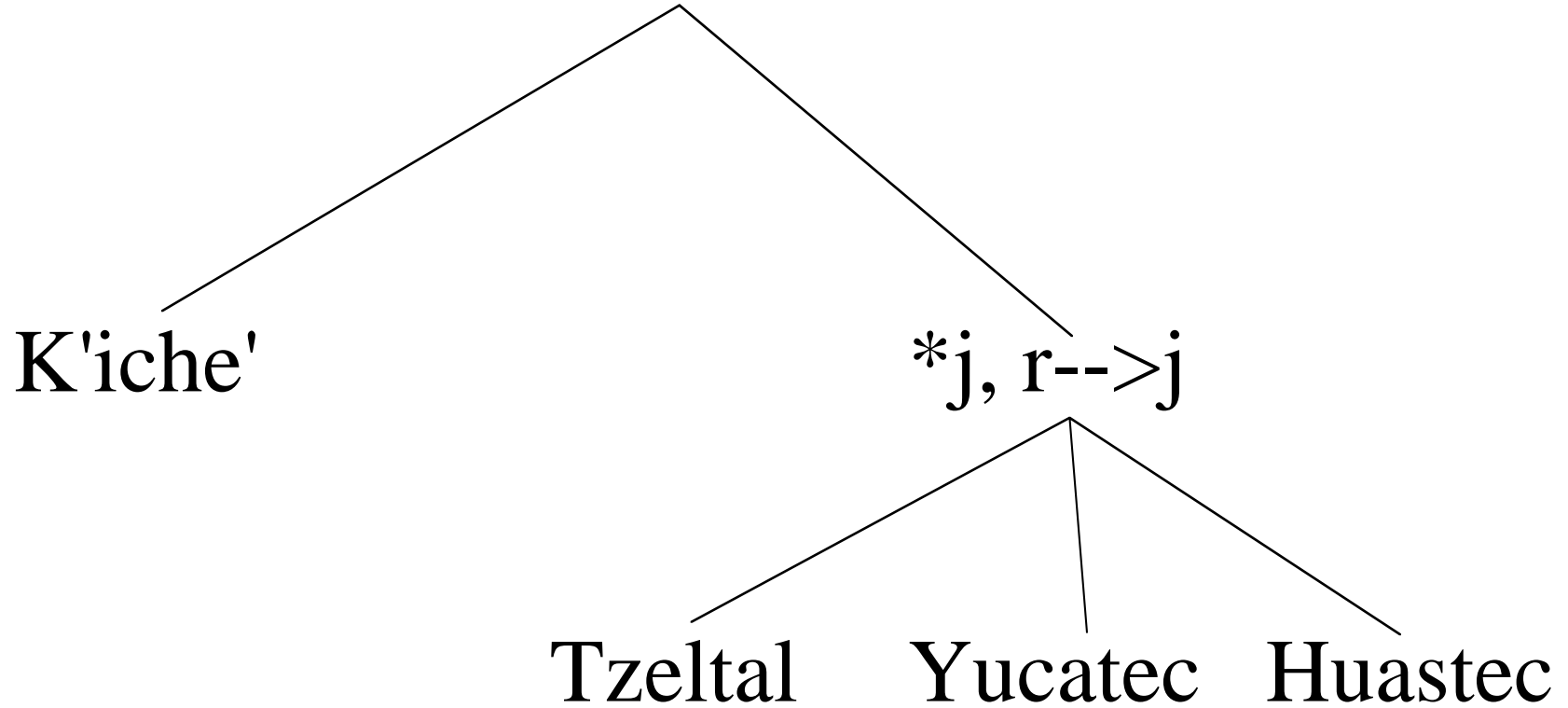
K'iche'

\*j, r-->j

Tzeltal

Yucatec

Huastec





a bad idea:

megalocomparison (Greenberg,  
Ruhlen)

# megalocomparison (Greenberg)

## Proto-World *maliq'a* 'swallow'

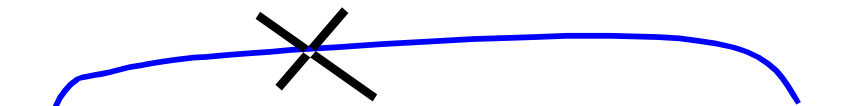
Arabic	m-l-j 'suck a breast'	(Afro-Asiatic)
English	milk	(Indo-European)
Saami	mielga 'breast'	(Finno-Ugric)
Tamil	melku 'chew'	(Dravidian)
Yupik	melug- 'suck'	(Eskimo-Aleut)
Kutenai	u'mqolh 'swallow'	(Almosan)
Tfaltik	milq 'swallow'	(Penutian)
Akwa'ala	milqi 'neck'	(Hokan)
Cuna	murki 'swallow'	(Chibchan)
Quechua	malq'a 'throat'	(Andean)

This method is guaranteed to give you false positives:

English *have*  
(German *haben*)

Latin *habere* 'have'

This method is guaranteed to give you false positives:

English *have*  Latin *habere* 'have'

h*orn*

c*ornu*

h*ear*t

c*ord-em*

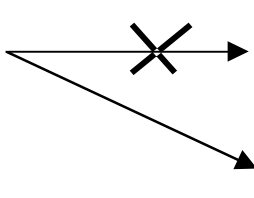
h*emp*

c*annabis*

h*undred*

c*entum*

This method is guaranteed to give you false positives:

English *have*  Latin *habere* 'have'  
Latin *capire* 'take'

...and false negatives:

Armenian *erku*, English *two*

Hindi *pa:nts*, English *five*

- failure to avoid onomatopoeia,  
"nursery words"
- semantic variation  
( 'excrement/night/grass' )
- loose criteria for phonological  
relatedness

- bad data...

'Amerind hypothesis'

Tzotzil	<i>tiʔil</i> 'hole'
Lake Miwok	<i>talok<sup>h</sup></i> 'hole'
Atakapa	<i>tol</i> 'anus'
Totonac	<i>tan</i> 'buttocks'
Takelma	<i>telkan</i> 'buttocks'



- bad data...

## 'Amerind hypothesis'

Tzotzil

*tiʔil* 'hole' →

*tiʔ*      *-il*

Lake Miwok

*talok<sup>h</sup>* 'hole'

mouth one's

Atakapa

*tol* 'anus'

Totonac

*tan* 'buttocks'

Takelma

*telkan* 'buttocks'

of course, the comparative method  
has its problems, too:

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- reanalysis

<u>English</u>	<u>German</u>	<u>Gothic</u>	<u>O.Norse</u>	
adder	Natter	nadr-	naðra	'adder, snake'

English n-->Ø / # \_\_\_?

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<u>English</u>	<u>German</u>	<u>Gothic</u>	<u>O.Norse</u>	
adder	Natter	nadr-	naðra	'adder, snake'

no: a nadder --> an adder

of course, the comparative method has its problems, too:

- reanalysis
- analogy

	<u>'to choose'</u>	<u>'chose'</u>	<u>'chosen'</u>
OE	ceos <u>a</u> n	cea <u>s</u>	geco <u>r</u> en
OHG	kio <u>s</u> an	ka <u>u</u> s	giko <u>r</u> an

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ModE	choo <u>s</u> e	cho <u>s</u> e	cho <u>s</u> en
ModG	kü <u>r</u> en	ko <u>r</u>	gek <u>o</u> ren

of course, the comparative method has its problems, too:

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- analogy

PIE \*kwetwer-, \*penkwe-:

of course, the comparative method has its problems, too:

- reanalysis
- analogy

PIE \*kwetwer-, \*penkwe-:

>English ~~w~~hour, five  
f<sup>h</sup>



of course, the comparative method has its problems, too:

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- analogy

PIE \*newn, \*dekm '9, 10'

> Russian ~~n<sup>y</sup>ev<sup>y</sup>at<sup>y</sup>~~, d<sup>y</sup>es<sup>y</sup>at<sup>y</sup>  
d<sup>y</sup> ↗

of course, the comparative method  
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ME male, femelle--> male, female

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ME male, femelle--> male, female

(cf. Malay *orang utan* > orangutang)

of course, the comparative method  
has its problems, too:

- reanalysis
- analogy
- language contact

# Language contact

Eng. *lampshade* > Tagalog *lamsyed* 'lamp'

Tag. *bundok* 'mountain' > English *boondocks*

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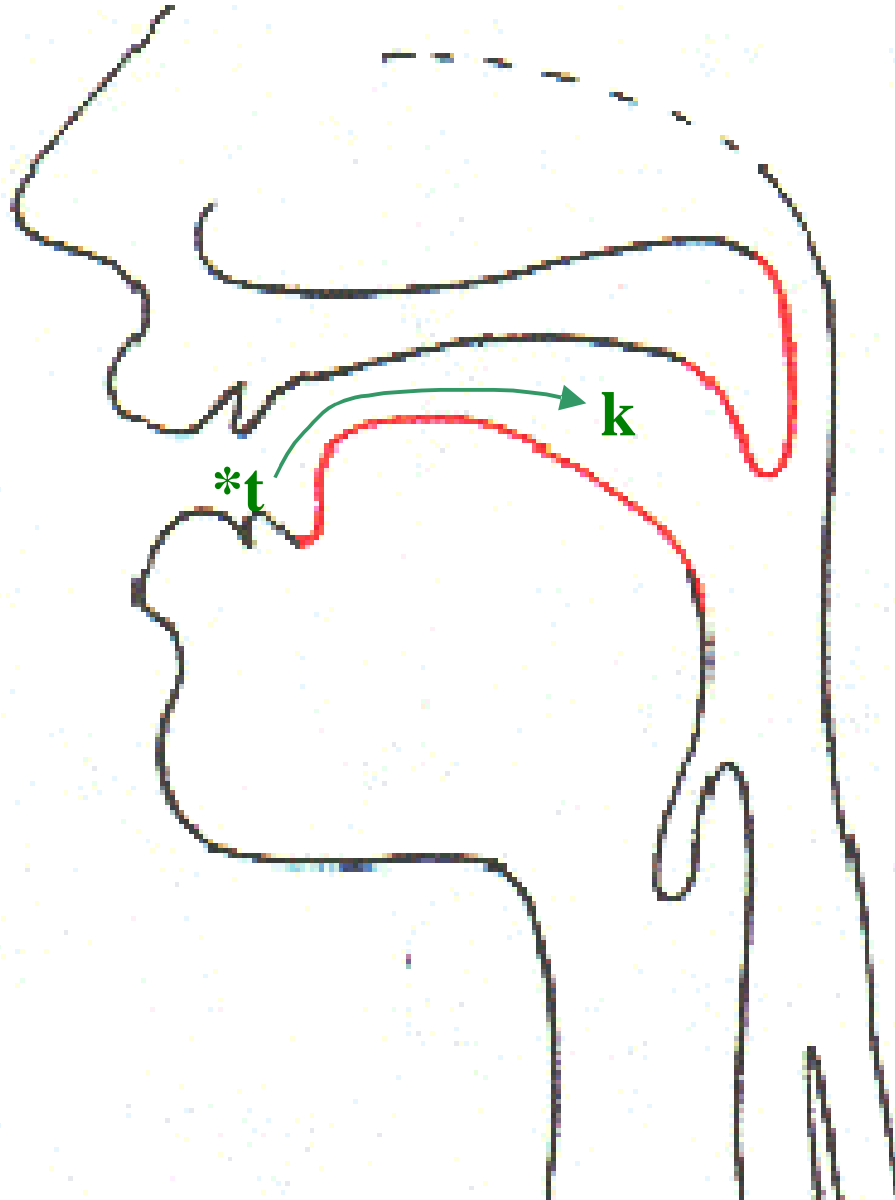
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Somerset *vox*, *vixen* → standard E *vixen*

# Hawaiian

\*ata 'dawn'  
aka



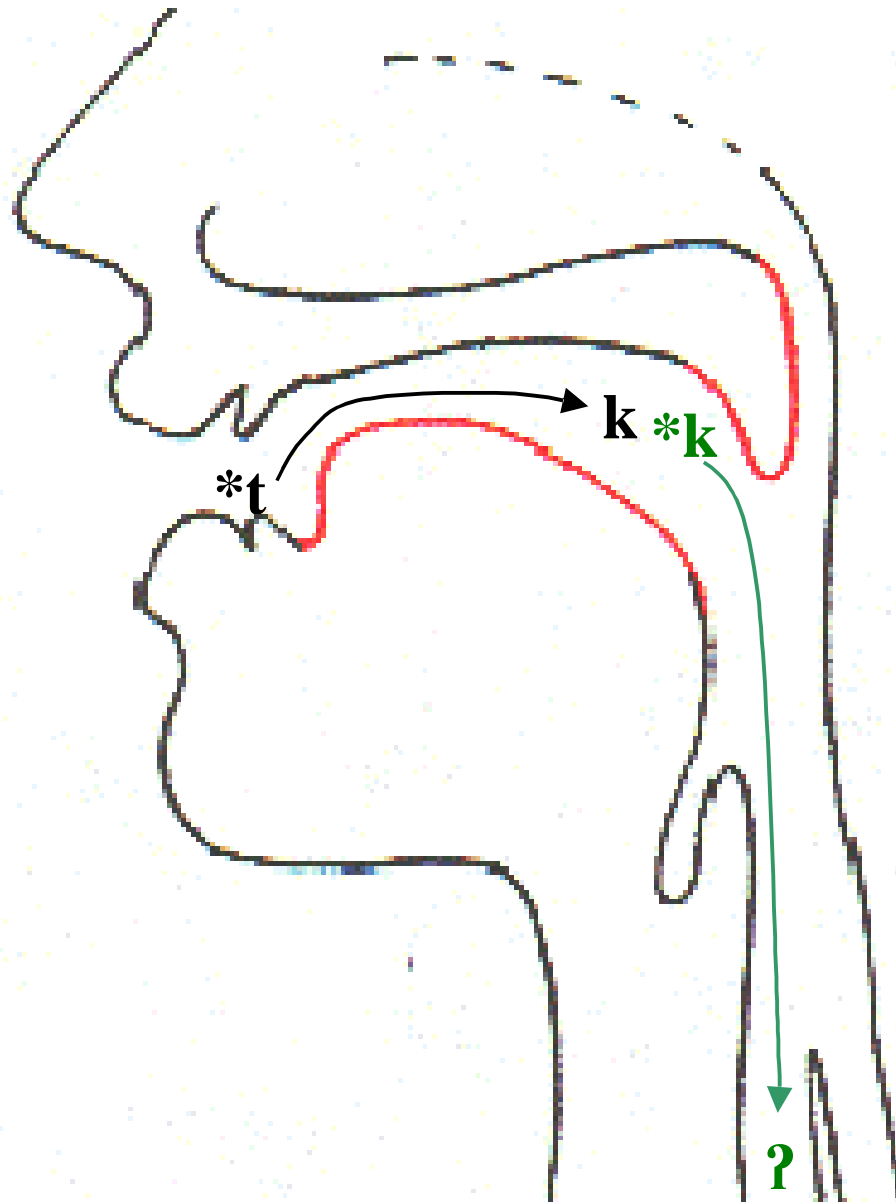
# Hawaiian

\*ata 'dawn'

↙  
aka

\*kula 'red'

↙  
ʔula

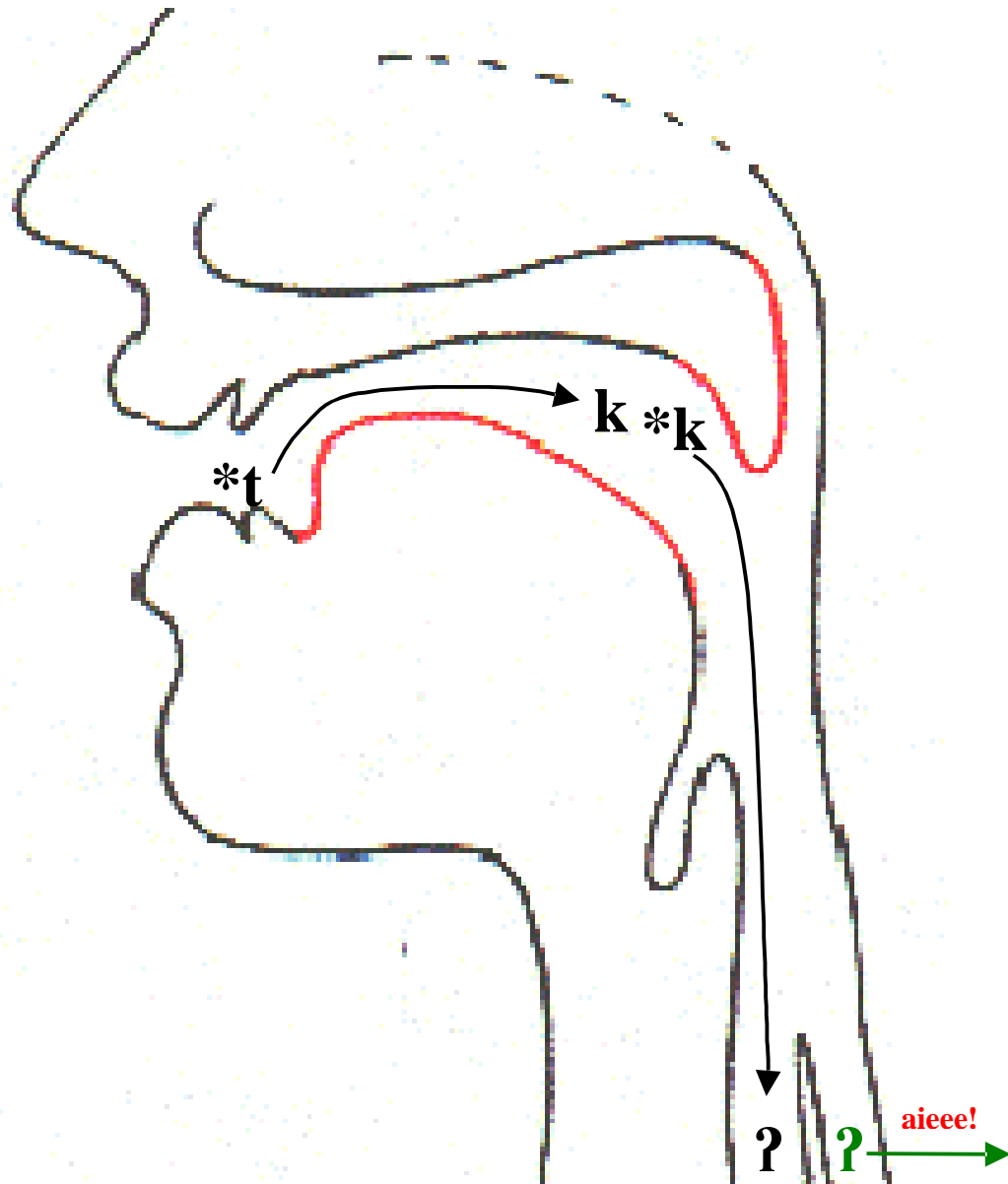


# Hawaiian

\*ata 'dawn'  
↳ aka

\*kula 'red'  
↳ ʔula

\*leʔo 'voice'  
↳ leo



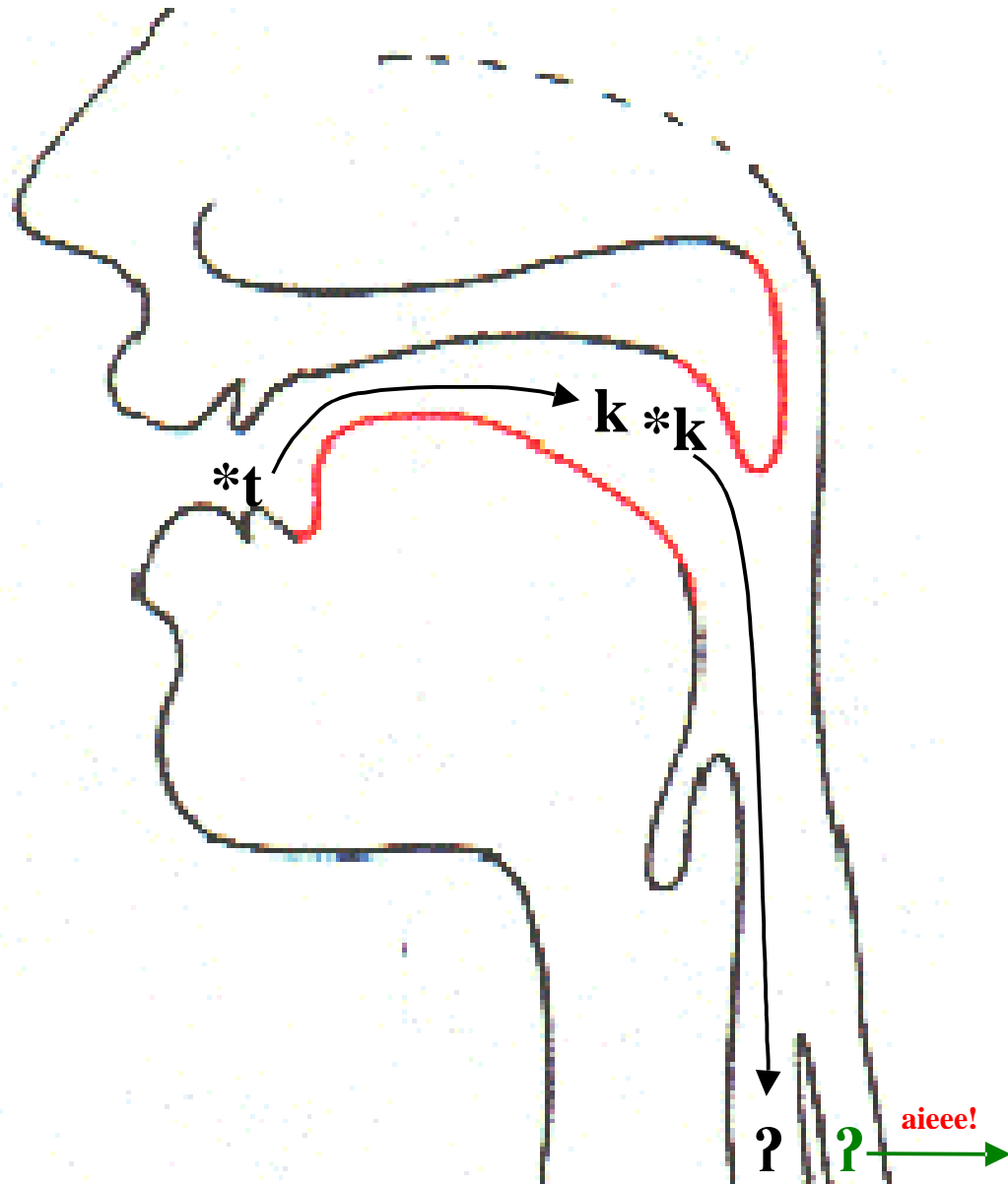
# Hawaiian

\*ata 'dawn'  
aka

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ʔula

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leo

## Chain Shift



# **The Great Vowel Shift**

English long vowels go berserk!

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English long vowels go berserk!

ME [gees]-->ModE [giis] 'geese'

ME [sɛɛ]-->ModE [sii] 'sea'



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ME [naamə]-->ModE [neem] 'name'

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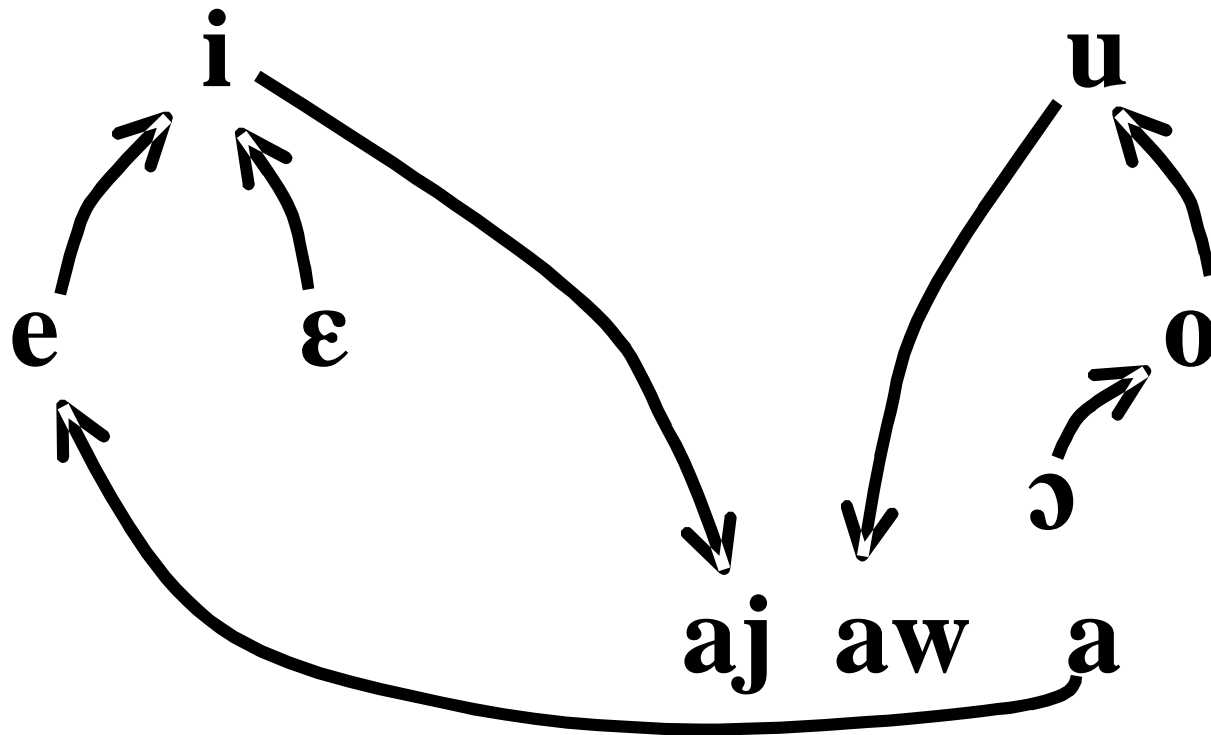
ME [goos]-->ModE [guus] 'goose'

ME [brɔəkən]-->ModE [brookən] 'broken'

ME [tiid]-->ModE [tajd] 'tide'

ME [luud]-->ModE [lawd] 'loud'

# The Great Vowel Shift



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In ME, a 'long vowel' was a longer version of a short vowel:

[faðər] 'father'      [naamə] 'name'

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In ME, a 'long vowel' was a longer version of a short vowel:

[fað̥ər] 'father'      [naamə] 'name'      ME

[fað̥ər]                      [neem] (>/nejm/) ModE

In ModE, a 'long vowel' is a diphthong, featurally distinct from the 'short' version

# The Great Vowel Shift

vowel systems:

**i**

**u**

**a**

**a normal 3-vowel system**



# The Great Vowel Shift

vowel systems:

**i**

**e**

**ɛ**

**a deeply weird 3-vowel system**

# The Great Vowel Shift

--> apparently there's something good about 'dispersing' your vowels evenly in the available space.

# The Great Vowel Shift

i

u

e

ɛ

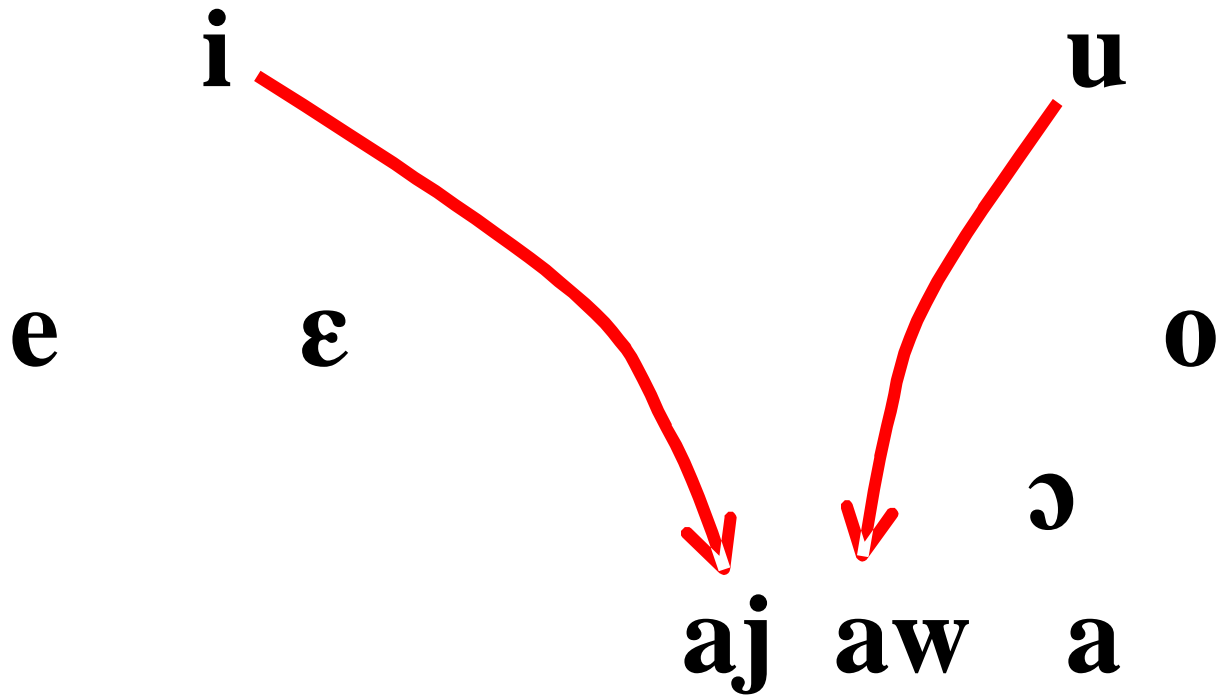
o

ɔ

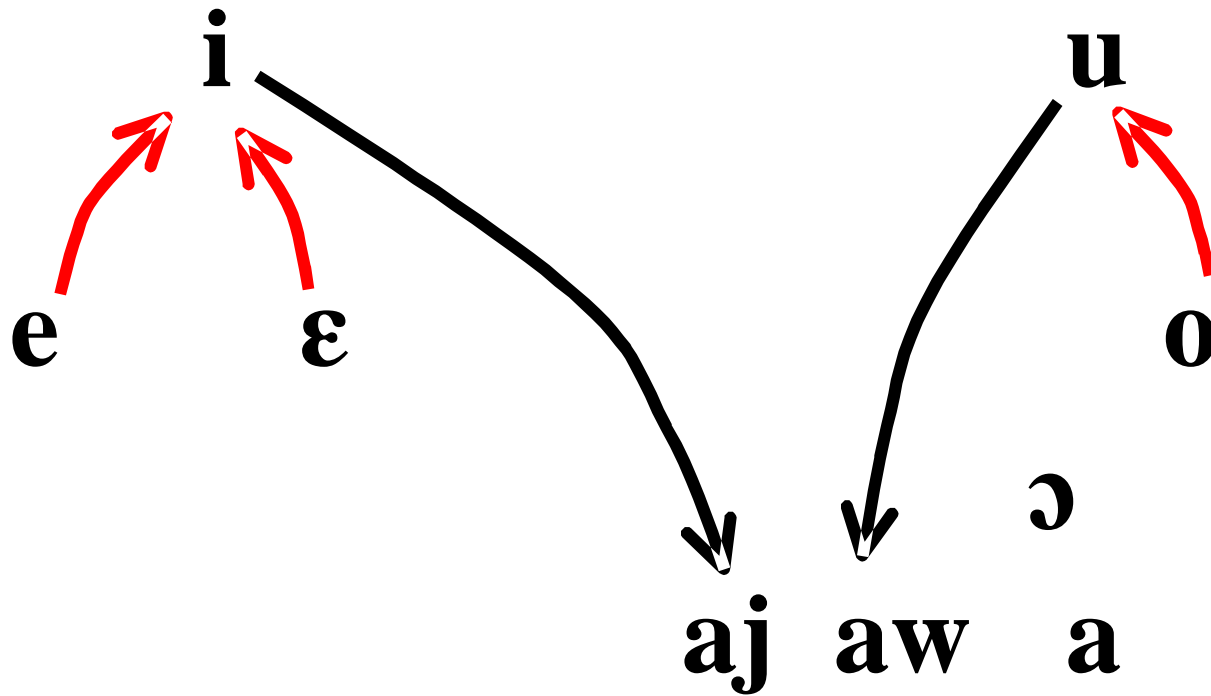
a

**The Middle English long vowels**

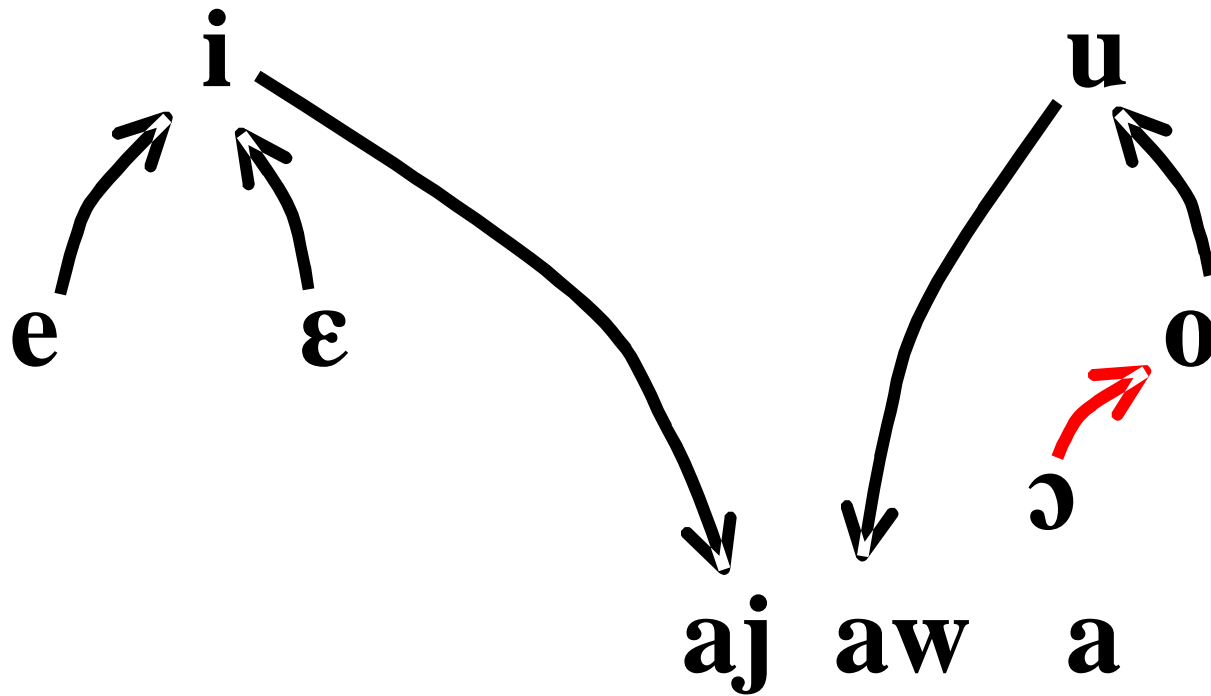
# The Great Vowel Shift



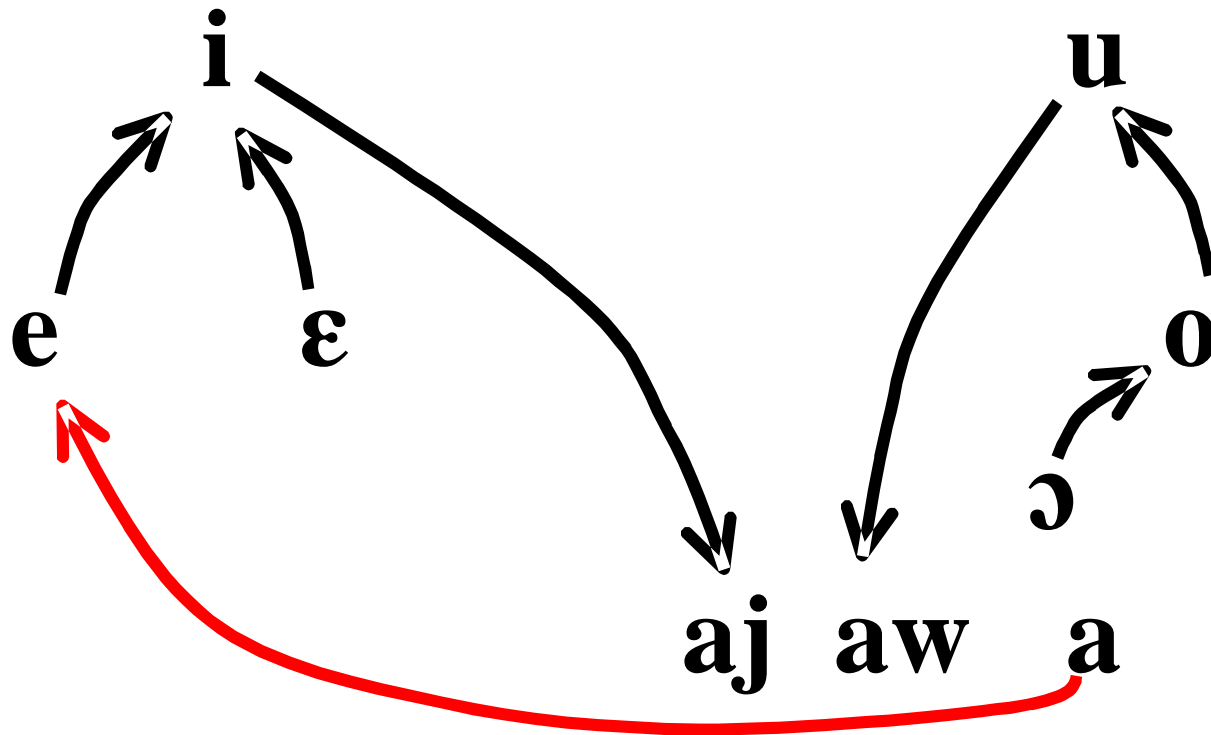
# The Great Vowel Shift



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# The Great Vowel Shift

**drag-chain: A-->B...**

...and then the language thinks,  
"Hey! I have no A!"



# The Great Vowel Shift

**drag-chain:** A-->B...

...and then the language thinks,  
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(...there may also be **push-chains**)