

UC Merced

The Journal of California Anthropology

Title

Some Northern Hokan Plant-Tree-Bush Forms

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7494t408>

Journal

The Journal of California Anthropology, 1(1)

Author

Silver, Shirley

Publication Date

1974-07-01

Peer reviewed

Some Northern Hokan Plant-Tree-Bush Forms¹

SHIRLEY SILVER

IN the conclusion of her paper on California Hokan, Mary Haas (1964) comments on *intersection*, an important problem in California linguistic prehistory. In comparing some Proto-Hokan body-part terms with Algon-Ritwan, Yukian, and Penutian similars, she demonstrates likely intersections between Hokan and Algon-Ritwan, Hokan and Yukian, and Hokan and Penutian. Haas (personal communication) uses the term *intersection* to call attention to similarities between forms (in presumably genetically unrelated languages) for which coincidence seems an unlikely explanation and for which no evidence as yet exists to support an adequate genetic or diffusional explanation.

In this paper, I extend into the domain of plant life the consideration of intersection begun by Haas within the framework of body-part terms. Under discussion here are the diachronic complexities manifested by some northern Hokan morphemes occurring in terms for plants, trees, and bushes. These morphemes, all having a general interpretation 'of the plant world', make up two separate phonological subsets whose members are cognate. The fact that there are extra-Hokan similars for each subset leads to consideration of the possible extra-Hokan connections.

The morphemes in question occur in the terms for 'sugar pine' (see Table 1) in Shasta (SH), Achumawi (AC), Atsugewi (AT), Chimariko (CH), Karok (K), the Yana (Y) dia-

lects, and Kashaya Pomo (Pk), and function either as members of noun phrasal or stem compounds or as substantival suffixes.

The constituents of the SH, AC, AT, and CH terms are noun stem + suffix. The K and Y constituents are noun stem + noun stem. The K morpheme occurs only as a postpound except in the noun theme *?ipaha* 'tree'. In Y we also find the substantives *?i(na)* in Central and Northern Yana and *?iwi* in Yahi, with the meanings 'stick, wood, tree' (-na is an absolutive suffix and -wi is probably the plural marker [with collective implication]).

The Pk term for 'sugar pine' is a type of noun phrase; however, Pk also uses noun stem compounding, e.g., *?ihtē* 'feather' + *q^hale* 'plant' > *†^heq^hale* 'elderberry bush' (Oswalt, personal communication). Pk *q^hale* is a reflex of Proto-Pomo (PPo) **q^ha · lé* 'tree', a form I

Table 1
SUGAR PINE TERMS

	<u>Sugar Pine Nut</u>	<u>Sugar Pine</u>
SH	ac'áw	ac'áwhi'hú
AC	assa	assalò
AT	ach ^h aw	ach ^h awú:p
CH	hakew	hákewná'á
K	?u's	?usip
Y	cau(na)	cau?i
Pk	cuye'	cuye' q ^h ale

assume to have two constituents, $*q^ha(\cdot) + *lé$. The basis for this assumption is as follows. Robert Oswalt (1964), in a paper on Pomo internal relationships, cites PPO $*k^hahwa \cdot (l)$, later revised to $*q^hahwa \cdot (l)$ 'bark (of a tree)', a reconstruction that fits every Pomo language except Northern Pomo (Pn); i.e., the second syllable of Pn $šewa$ 'bark' fits well with the second syllable of $*q^hahwa \cdot (l)$, whereas the first syllable does not follow established sound correspondences. Oswalt's suggestion that $šewa$ may be a blend of two elements, the second syllable representing a cognate element and the first syllable a non-cognate element, is supported by Sally McLendon's (1973:66) discussion of the aberrant Pn form as a reflection of a proto form $*k^he(h)wa$ or $*xe(h)wa$, or an early borrowing of a similarly shaped form from Central or Southeastern Pomo (Pc, Pse). The cognateness of the second syllable of $šewa$ is an argument for the morphemic complexity of $*q^hahwa \cdot (l)$, and comparing $*q^ha \cdot lé$ and $*q^hahwa \cdot (l)$ raises the possibility that the first syllables of these forms are variant shapes of the same morpheme. If this is the case, $*q^ha \cdot lé$ is also morphemically complex and $*-lé$ represents an element that may be second member of a noun stem compound.

It is worth noting here that the remarks Sapir (1917:17) made about Yana secondary stems may well hold not only for other areas of the Yana grammatical system but also for other areas of the grammatical systems of other Hokan languages, including the Pomo group: "... it is highly probable that they were originally primary stems which, being often compounded with other preceding primary stems, gradually came to lose their independence ... [;] ... loss of independence of secondary verb stems has evidently been consummated as a general process in the very remote past."

I assume here that $*-lé$ had lost its independence by the time of PPO and also

that $*q^ha \cdot lé$ had become synchronically unsegmentable, i.e., it had undergone morphemization.² In reconstructing PPO $*-b?$, an element occurring in PPO forms for 'cottonwood', 'maple', 'live oak', 'pepperwood tree', and 'soaproot', McLendon (1973:49) presents other evidence for morphemization in PPO plant-tree-bush forms in pointing out that the reflexes of $*-b?$ are segmentable only in the Pk, Pe (Eastern Pomo), Pn, and Pse forms for 'pepperwood tree' (cp. PPO $*bah \cdot é$ 'pepperwood nut', $*bah \cdot éb?$ 'pepperwood tree'). She also suggests that PPO $*-b?$ involves metathesis of an older Pre-Pomo $*-?b$ (resulting from deletion of a Proto-Hokan $*i$).

To sum up at this point, there are two PPO elements, $*-lé$ and $*-b?$, both of which occur in PPO forms for plants, trees, and bushes; $*-lé$ appears to have been nonproductive and $*-b?$ may have been quasi-productive. These two elements and the other northern Hokan plant-tree-bush markers shown in Table 1 fall into the two phonological sets given in Table 2.

In Table 2 both sets contain PPO and AC forms. As is the case with PPO $*-lé$, the evidence for AC $-lò \cdot$ is tenuous. In his dictionary of Achumawi, Olmsted (1966) lists $-lò \cdot$ 'tree (suffix to name of fruit)' in the Achumawi-English section under \underline{L} . In the section under \underline{Q} the entry $-ò \cdot (-lò \cdot$ after

Table 2
PHONOLOGICAL SETS

	Set I	Set II
AC	o·	l ó·
CH		n (a)? a
PPO	? b (>b?)	l é
SH	h i· h ú	
AT	u: p	
K	(?) i· p	
Y	? i	

vowel) 'tree' implies that there is one morpheme with two phonological shapes; however, in his work on Proto-Palaihnihan (PPa) phonology, Olmsted (1964:67) compares AC $-\dot{o} \sim -\dot{o} \cdot$ with AT $-o \cdot p$ and reconstructs PPa $*o \cdot p$ 'suffix denoting plant'. Since this reconstruction does not account for the variant shape $-l\dot{o} \cdot$, one implication is that AC $-l\dot{o} \cdot$ and $-\dot{o} \cdot$ are two morphemes with same or near-same meanings rather than phonological alternants. For further support of the two-morpheme argument compare AC $sl\dot{o} \cdot$ 'tamarack tree (*Larix laricina*)', (sla 'tamarack nut'), and $sl\dot{l}\dot{o}$ 'Murray pine (*Pinus balfouriana*)' (Olmsted 1966).

It is certainly feasible to consider the members of set I as cognate. A tentative PH reconstruction $*h/?i \cdot p^hu$, closely paralleling Proto-Shastan $*hi \cdot p^hu$ (SH $hi \cdot h\acute{u}$; Konomihu $hip(h)u$ as in $k\acute{u}wakin\acute{a}hip(h)u?$ 'peppernut bush' ($k\acute{u}wakhin$ 'peppernut'); Okwanuchu $-ihu$ as in $ats\acute{a}nihu$ 'sugar pine') would imply: (1) that in the Palaihnihan languages AC and AT (a) the vowel of the first syllable assimilated to the vowel of the second, (b) the second vowel was lost, and (c) in AC the consequent final consonant was deleted; (2) that the second vowel was lost in K and Y, and Y also deleted a consequent final consonant.

We cannot rule out the possibility that the Y form, at least, may be a reflex of only one member of a proto-bimorphemic string, especially since we do not have for Hokan an attested body of phonological rules which specify the conditions under which final consonants would be deleted. In SH, for example, there are a number of morphemized plant-tree-bush terms ending in $-h\acute{u}$ (cf. $\acute{c}a \cdot h\acute{u}?$ 'evergreen bush', not $*\acute{c}a \cdot hi \cdot h\acute{u}?$), which is presumably a reflex of Proto-Shastan $*hi \cdot p^hu$. It is unclear whether or not the conditions which account for the occurrence here of the monosyllabic shape are phonological.

In AC, where we must also account for consonant loss and where $-\dot{o} \cdot$ (set I) and $-l\dot{o} \cdot$

(set II) occur in apparent contrastive distribution, $-\dot{o} \cdot$ might be explainable as the result of diffusion from AT; however, diffusion is a more likely explanation for AC $-u \cdot p$ in $pa?yipu \cdot p$ 'mountain mahogany' (cf. AT $winayu:p$ 'mountain mahogany'). (Leonard Talmy [personal communication] says that $-u:p$ [the AT entry in set I] is the probable underlying shape; colon represents a phonological segment whose phonetic effect, under as yet incompletely specified conditions, lengthens and lowers a preceding vowel.)

K provides us with another possible case of diffusion. Haas (1964) suggests that K $\acute{a}hup$ 'wood' is a formation of $\acute{a} \cdot h$ 'fire' + $(?)i \cdot p$, with $-up$ as a rare allomorph of $(?)i \cdot p^3$ (see also $k\acute{u}sup$ 'plant, sp', Bright 1957:364). $-up$ could have come into K from one of the neighboring Shastan languages, e.g., New River Shasta.

AC $-u \cdot p$ and K $-up$ are obviously part of the diachronic problem exemplified by the forms in set I; whether they are instances of borrowing or are to be explained in terms of historical phonological processes must be determined through internal reconstruction.

Although the tentative PH reconstruction for set I is no more than a 'housekeeping' form and it is uncertain whether the members of set I are reflexes of proto-bimorphemic element, there can be little doubt that the set I forms are cognate, not only with each other but also with forms from Yuman languages in southern and Baja California. In Yuma $\acute{a}i \cdot$ occurs as a first position element in noun themes such as $\acute{a}i \cdot \acute{d}\acute{o} \cdot$ 'willow', $\acute{a}i \cdot \acute{d}\acute{u}t$ 'wild turnip', $\acute{a}i \cdot \acute{s}\acute{a}v$ 'arrowweed', and as a second position element in $\acute{a}\acute{a}\acute{a}\acute{a} \cdot$ 'wood'. In Cocopa there is a form $\acute{a}i \cdot$ 'wood'. In Kiliwa we find $thip$ 'sprout' and $\acute{a}ip\acute{a}?$ 'wood, stick', a form reminiscent of K $\acute{a}ipaha$ 'tree' ($\acute{a}i \cdot p + aha$ 'fire' [?]). Once there is a comparable Proto-Yuman form (and, hopefully, evidence from other California Hokan languages) we will be able to reconstruct for Proto-Hokan a form

whose reflexes spread geographically from the California-Oregon border in the north to Baja California in the south.

The northern Hokan forms which comprise set II are also good candidates for a Hokan cognate set, in spite of the tenuousness of the evidence for AC and PPO. (The CH entry represents the variants *-ná 'á* and *-n 'á* [cp. *äBun 'á* 'cedar' (*äBu* 'fire'), *hákeḡwná 'á* 'sugar pine'.]) The Chumash forms for 'tree' in Table 3 provide supporting evidence for the existence of a second PH plant-tree-bush element.

For this Chumash set Kathryn Klar (personal communication) has tentatively reconstructed **pono?*, a form which assumes deletion of the second vowel in all but two of the reflexes. (Possible evidence of the bimorphic status of **pono?* is found in Obispeño (*t)pono?* 'tree, wood', (*č)popo* 'bark'.)

The Yuman forms (from Wares 1968) in Table 4 offer further evidence for the cognateness within Hokan for the members of set II.

On the basis of data presently available to me, it is impossible to reconstruct the precise meanings of the PH morphemes (or morpheme strings) represented by sets I and II. The occurrence of PPO **le* as a nonproductive element and of PPO *-b?* as a quasi-productive element indicates that change in the semantic specifications of these morphemes had already taken place at least at the time depth of PPO.

Let us now examine some ways in which these two PH plant-tree-bush elements represent intersections between Hokan and other linguistic families in northern California. Similar for one or both of the two Hokan sets we have been considering occur in Yurok (Algon-Ritwan), Wappo and Yuki (Yukian), and Proto-Miwok (Penutian). Speakers of these languages lived in territories contiguous to the territories of speakers of various northern Hokan languages (see Fig. 1).

Table 3
CHUMASH FORMS FOR TREE

	<u>'Tree'</u>	
Barbareño	p o ṅ	
Inezeño	p o ṅ	
Ventureño	p o ṅ	
Purismeño	? a n i	'firewood, tree'
Cruzeño	p o ṅ	
Obispeño	(t)p o n o ?	'tree, wood'

In Yurok, Karok's neighbor to the west, there is a form *-ep'* which, as Haas (1967:359) points out, occurs in plant-tree-bush terms (e.g., *ci·sep'* 'flower, flower bush', *pa'a·p'* 'Woodwardia fern', *me'ykwelu·p'* 'poison oak'), and also in construction with *koht* 'one' where the resultant form is glossed 'one (of a tree)'. According to Haas, the status of *-ep'* is undetermined; there is question as to whether it is a concrete suffix which can be used with numerals as well as noun stems or whether it is part of the Yurok classifier system (Haas 1967:359-360) which treats members of the plant world as shape-differentiated (classifiers in Yurok occur only with adjectives and numerals).

If *-ep'* is a concrete suffix and not a classifier, does its similarity with Hokan set I forms represent possible genetic affiliation between Hokan and Algon-Ritwan, or is it an example of diffusion of a Hokan feature into Yurok? Unless the kinship of *-ep'* within Algon-Ritwan is established (and so far no such kinship has been demonstrated), we can only consider the possibility of diffusion, since the anomalous status of *-ep'*, as a concrete suffix, weakens any argument that the resemblance is fortuitous.

There are instances of borrowing occurring between Karok and Yurok (Yu): e.g., K *pu·viš*, Yu *pu·wiš* 'sack'; K *pur~pu·n* 'chokecherry', Yu *pun* 'cherry' (cp. SH *u·r*,

Table 4
YUMAN PLANT FORMS

	<u>Pine Tree</u>	<u>Mescal</u>	<u>Grass Plant</u>	<u>Mesquite</u>
Havasupai	huwál	vyál	ʔi·wíl·a	ʔanál
Walapai	hwál	viyá·l	ʔa·wíla	nál
Yavapai	huwál	viyál	iwíla	nála
Mohave		ʔamál ^Y	civi·l ^Y	hanál ^Y /ʔahnál ^Y
Maricopa	ixál úwi	vađíl ^Y		anal ^Y
Yuma			xantavʔíl ^Y	ʔa·ná·l ^Y
Cocopa		amát		an ^Y át
Diegueño		ʔamát		ʔa·nát
Tipai	xát	meʔel		
Paipai	xuwál	yél	iwil	enál
Kiliwa	(a)hál	amʔál		

AC *poʔl* 'chokecherry'); K *tí·pti·p* 'Woodwardia fern', Yu *tu·p, tu·ptu·p* 'swordfern' (cp. SH *ti·pti·p* 'swordfern'). Karok is a probable source language for Yu *-ep̣* not only because of the high degree of similarity in the biotaxonomies of the Karok and the Yurok, but also because of the structural similarities the languages share (Bright and Bright 1965). Diffusion of the Yu element into Hokan through Karok is unlikely because of the difficulties posed in accounting for the phonological and grammatical changes the form would have to undergo.

Considering Karok as a source for Yu *-ep̣* presents a problem. Karok has no glottalized consonants. According to Robins (1958), however, there are a number of plant-tree-bush terms that end in *p* rather than *p̣* (e.g., *meca·nep* 'yarrow', *wogorup* 'plant, sp.'). It may be that the variation between glottalization and non-glottalization is explainable within Yurok.

Although K (*ʔ*)*i·p* (see Table 2) as a source for Yu *-ep̣* is problematical, it is more probable than PPO **-bʔ* (<***·ʔb*) since the source of Yu *p̣* would have to be the result of

vowel deletion. Moreover, at the time of white contact the Pomo peoples were geographically separated from the Yurok by Athabaskan and Yukian peoples, and we have no evidence of Pomo-Yurok contact at or predating the time depth of PPO.

In Yuki, Wappo, and Proto-Miwok the similars for Hokan set II forms represent Hokan-Yukian and Hokan-Penutian intersections. *ʔal ~ ʔol* 'tree, stick, wood' occurs in Yuki and *hól* 'tree, stick, wood' occurs in Wappo. Jesse Sawyer (n.d.) says that *hól* occurs either as first or second member in a wide variety of compounds naming trees and objects made from wood or sticks; see also *hóle* 'stalk, stem' which is synchronically monomorphemic (Sawyer, personal communication).

There is also a similar in Wappo for Hokan set I; i.e., a recurrent *-o* occurs in a large number of names for trees and plants. Sawyer considers this *-o* to be, historically, a variant of *hól*.

**al(a·)wa . . .* 'tree' has been reconstructed for Proto-Miwok (cp. Lake Miwok [Callaghan 1965] *ʔalwa* 'tree, bush' as in

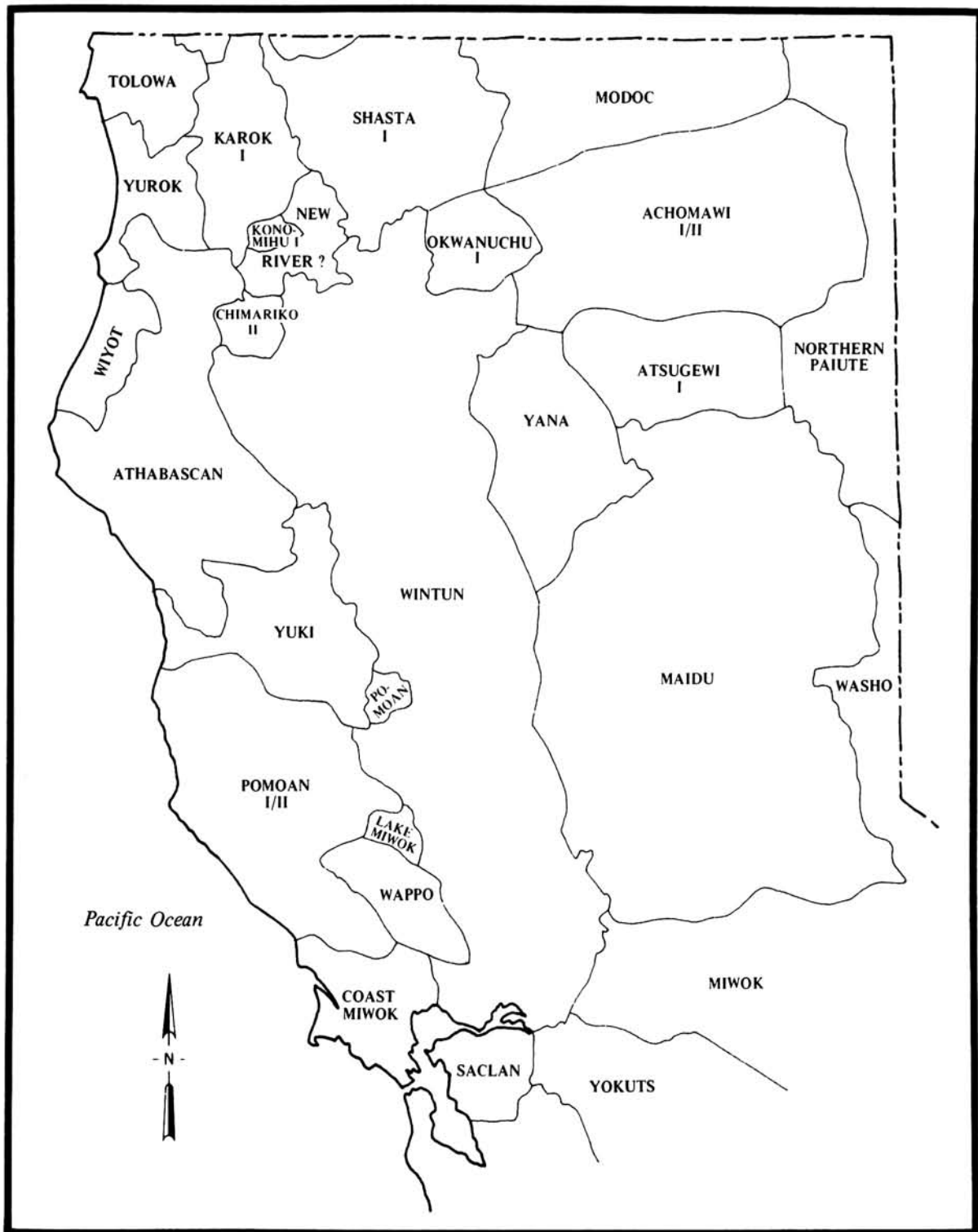


Fig. 1. Linguistic Map of Northern California.

ʔálwan mólle 'the shadow of a tree', *-ʔala* as in *luméeʔala* 'black oak', *ʔittumʔala* 'poison oak', *piilaʔala* 'toyon bush'). PPO **q^ha·lé* 'tree, plant', Proto-Miwok **all(a·)wa . . .* 'tree', and Proto-Sierra-Miwok **le·ka*, **la·ma* 'tree' (Broadbent and Callaghan 1960) suggest that diffusion into Miwokan may have occurred before Pomoan **-lé* lost its status as an independent stem. (The Wintu similar *leweq* 'tree limb' [Broadbent and Pitkin 1964] might indicate that borrowing into Wintun [Penutian] languages also took place before **-lé* lost its independence.)

So little is known about the historical development of Yukian, Penutian, and Hokan that inferences about possible genetic affiliation of the Yukian-Penutian-Hokan set II similars would be futile. The presence of cognates for set II in the Chumash and Yuman languages argues for the spread of a Hokan feature into the neighboring Yukian and Penutian languages.

The discussion in this paper of the diachronic difficulties raised by some northern Hokan plant-tree-bush forms has consisted of little more than reasoned speculation; however, such a discussion is of value in that it highlights, in a specific cultural domain (e.g., plant life), the problem of intersection. Intersections and the time depths of intersections have surely been contributing factors to the lack of satisfactory versions of proto sound systems for Hokan and Penutian. Although for Hokan, at least, we will never arrive at a reasonable working version of the PH sound system until we gain more insight into the historical intricacies of the syntactic and phonological systems of groups of languages (e.g., Pomo, Yuman, Chumash) and of individual languages, a strict focus on internal genetic concerns will not solve problems of intersection and determine how they relate to the proto-system; we must simultaneously develop more studies of prehistoric linguistic areas in California. At least two such areas

exist in northern California, both hinted at here by the plant-tree-bush similars representing intersections between Algon-Ritwan and Hokan on the one hand and between Yukian, Penutian, and Hokan on the other.

*California State College, Sonoma
Rohnert Park*

NOTES

1. The work reported on here was supported in part by a 1968 postdoctoral grant-in-aid from the American Council of Learned Societies. Some of the ideas herein were included in a series of talks on Hokan comparative problems given in a linguistics seminar at the University of California, San Diego, Spring 1968. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Southwestern Anthropological Society meetings, April 1972.

The focus here on northern Hokan languages does not imply that I assume Sapir's Northern Hokan subgroupings (Sapir 1925:525) to be anything more than an hypothesis; for consideration of the general problem of subgrouping, and, specifically, Hokan subgrouping see Haas 1963 and Olmsted 1965.

The data sources, other than those specified in the text, are: Atsugewi, Leonard Talmy's files (field data collected 1964, 1965 under auspices of the Survey of California and Other Indian Languages [SCOIL]); Chimariko, Edward Sapir's file (data collected 1922); Chumash, Kathy Klar's files; Cocopa, Crawford 1966; Karok, Bright 1957, Kiliwa, Mauricio Mixco personal communication; Konomihu, J. P. Harrington's field notes; Okwanuchu, Sapir 1917:14; Pomo, McLendon 1973; Proto-Miwok, Broadbent and Callaghan 1960; Shasta, Shirley Silver's files (field data collected 1957 and subsequently under SCOIL); Yana, Sapir and Swadesh 1960; Yuki, Jesse Sawyer's files; Yuma, Halpern 1946; Yurok, Haas 1967; Wappo, Sawyer 1965.

2. For discussion of morphemization, see Silver (n.d.).

3. K (?) *i·p* is morphophonemic. Length is manifested only in *pahi·p* 'pepperwood tree' (cf. *pa·h* 'peppernut'); *ʔ* is inferred from a single form, the apparently related theme *ʔipaha* 'tree'.

Although the morphophonemic status of ? is questionable in the K form, there is no doubt of its status in Y: cf., siiwin?i 'yellow pine'; baazai?i 'manzanita bush' (baazai (na) 'manzanita berry').

REFERENCES

- Bright, Jane O., and William Bright
1965 Semantic Structures in Northwestern California and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. *In* Formal Semantic Analysis. E. A. Hammel, Ed. American Anthropologist Special Publication 67:249-258.
- Bright, William
1957 The Karok Language. University of California Publications in Linguistics 13.
- Broadbent, Sylvia, and Catherine A. Callaghan
1960 Comparative Miwok: A Preliminary Survey. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 26:301-316.
- Broadbent, Sylvia, and Harvey Pitkin
1964 A Comparison of Miwok and Wintun. *In* Studies in Californian Linguistics. William Bright, Ed. University of California Publications in Linguistics 34:19-45.
- Callaghan, Catherine A.
1965 Lake Miwok Dictionary. University of California Publications in Linguistics 39.
- Haas, Mary R.
1963 Shasta and Proto-Hokan. *Language* 39: 40-59.
1964 California Hokan. *In* Studies in Californian Linguistics. William Bright, Ed. University of California Publications in Linguistics 34:73-87.
1967 Language and Taxonomy in Northwestern California. *American Anthropologist* 69: 358-362.
- McLendon, Sally
1973 Proto Pomo. University of California Publications in Linguistics 71.
- Oswalt, Robert
1964 The Internal Relationship of the Pomo Family of Languages. Mexico: XXXV Congreso Internacional de Americanistas. pp. 413-427.
- Robins, R. H.
1958 The Yurok Language. University of California Publications in Linguistics 15.
- Sapir, Edward
1917 The Position of Yana in the Hokan Stock. University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology 13:1-34.
1925 The Hokan Affinity of Subtiaba in Nicaragua. *American Anthropologist* 27:402-435, 491-527.
- Sapir, Edward, and Morris Swadesh
1960 Yana Dictionary. Mary R. Haas, Ed. University of California Publications in Linguistics 27.
- Sawyer, Jesse O.
1965 English-Wappo Vocabulary. University of California Publications in Linguistics 43.
n.d. Wappo Tree Names, the Nouns in Final -o. Manuscript.
- Silver, Shirley
n.d. Comparative Hokan and the Northern Hokan Languages. *In* Hokan Studies, Margaret Langdon and Shirley Silver, Eds. The Hague: Mouton. In press.
- Wares, Alan C.
1968 A Comparative Study of Yuman Consonantism. The Hague: Mouton.

