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Cochimí Vocabularies

MAURICIO J. MIXCO

At some indeterminate date in the latter half of the 1920's, J.P. Harrington, the intrepid California field linguist, crossed the international border into Mexico to make a survey of the languages indigenous to the state of Baja California. It appears from Harrington's notes that he travelled from the Diegueño-speaking area in the north as far as the ex-mission of Rosario, some two hundred miles south on the Pacific coast of the peninsula.

The results of Harrington's survey are contained in a couple of boxfuls of legal-sized sheets, many left blank, others with maps and sketches, the remainder covered with wordlists from the Yuman languages of the peninsula. These materials were, until recently, in the custody of the Survey of California and other Indian Languages at the University of California, Berkeley.

One might well wonder what novelty these materials contain today when there is no dearth of data on Yuman grammar. Yet novelty there is; for buried in the garrulous marginalia are some very brief but tantalizing vocabularies representing speech communities thought to have become extinct without leaving a trace before the twentieth century. These vocabularies are from the non-Yuman dialects of the southern part of the peninsula and pose interesting comparative problems.

The non-Yuman vocabularies bear the name of the supposed dialects of Cochimí spoken at the northernmost of the Central Desert Missions: Borjino (San Francisco de Borja Adac), Rosareño (Nuestra Señora del Rosario Viñadacó) (Fig. 1) (see Massey 1949). In this same category is a dialect labelled "Judillo" (sic) which, according to Harrington's notes, was spoken some miles south of Mount Matomi, placing it in the territory of the ex-mission of San Fernando Velicatá (see Fig. 1). These Cochimí lists, perhaps the last data available to us in this language, lend themselves admirably to the comparative method, throwing new light on the hypothesis of a genetic relationship between Cochimí and Yuman.

In the year 1766, the Jesuit missionary and explorer Wenceslaus Linck reported the discovery of the northern limits of Cochimí speech in these words: "It seems that this place marks the outermost limits of the Cochimí language. We heard these natives utter with exceptional speed a language which resembles in no way that used up to this point." Linck's expedition had penetrated the southern reaches of the Sierra San Pedro Mártir; the language he found incomprehensible was doubtless a member of the Yuman family (see Linck 1966).

The Jesuit mission system never quite reached the northern limits of Cochimí speech spoken of by Linck. San Fernando Velicatá, mentioned above, was founded by the Franciscans in 1769, a year after the expulsion of the
Fig. 1. Location of languages and missions in Baja California.
Society of Jesus from the Spanish Empire (see Mörner 1965). The last of the entirely Jesuit missions lay far to the south, namely San Francisco de Borja at Adac, founded in 1762, and Santa María Cabujacaamang founded in 1766.

The Cochimí missions were still recovering from the abrupt changes in administration in the late eighteenth century—from Jesuit to Franciscan and finally Dominican—when they were assaulted by a series of decimating plagues which Homer Aschmann (1959) described as “a fire wave of epidemics...[which] over the first twenty or thirty years of mission contact eliminated three-fourths of a given population.” The missions finally succumbed to the official policy of secularization imposed by the new republican government of Mexico in the third decade of the nineteenth century. By this time the aboriginal peoples had been reduced to a mere remnant (Aschmann 1959).

Linguistic data on the Cochimí dialects have come down to us in the writings of the Jesuit missionaries in the form of vocabularies, paradigms, and some pious texts useful in the process of Christianization. The last information available in published form is a 176-item vocabulary collected by W. Gabb in the vicinity of San Francisco de Borja Adac in the year 1867. So it is that Harrington’s “Judío” lists are perhaps the very last utterances to be gleaned from these long extinct communities of the Central Desert (see Gabb 1886, 1892).

The disintegration of the mission hamlets seems to have accelerated a long-standing process of emigration to the more promising southern and northern regions of the peninsula. This is how Carmen Melendrez, born at the ex-mission of Santa María in 1849, came to be in the vicinity of Santo Domingo where Harrington interviewed her, an elderly woman in her seventies.

At the age of five, Carmen Melendrez, along with many others, left the moribund village of her birth, trekking north. Judging from the fact that she provided Harrington with “Judío” forms, she must have spent considerable time in the company of people from San Fernando Velicatá, perhaps during a prolonged stopover on the way farther north. This is interesting in view of her place of origin and the fact that her maternal grandfather was from San Francisco Borja.

Harrington’s “Judío” lists do not all come from Carmen Melendrez. The other sources can only be guessed at from Harrington’s veiled references. These vocabularies will be presented in the order they are found in the original along with an indication of the possible consultant; the first of these is Carmen Melendrez’. All commentary will be postponed until after all the “Judío” lists are presented. It should be noted that Harrington used an IPA transcription in which [q]=[x].

The second short list is found in the midst of an interview with a/some Kiliwa(s) which may have taken place in the Arroyo León, homeland of the remaining speakers. The Kiliwa told Harrington that they had “...learned very [few] words of that idioma Judillo (sic), y es muy trabajoso—[‘it’s very difficult’]...” We can be sure this list does not come from Carmen Melendrez, for Harrington notes, “nesc. how to say vaminos (sic) in Judillo (sic)...”. Since vamonos ‘let’s go’ is one of the items found in the Melendrez list, it would be odd that she would deny knowing it.

The last “Judío” list was collected from Manuel Manriquez, from whom Harrington also obtained the more extensive “Jaka’akwal” and “Domingueño” materials to be discussed in another paper. Manriquez, like Carmen Melendrez, had heard Cochimi from relatives as a child. Manriquez’ mother, though apparently a Paipai from Santa Catarina, learned to speak it fluently. In spite of this, the consultant himself, while speaking Kiliwa and Paipai, claimed not to have been able to master Cochimi.

The large number of probable Yuman cognates (or loanwords [?]) is striking. These
### LIST 1

**“Judío”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Gloss in Harrington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>tahi munji</td>
<td>‘que es lo que quieres’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>tonának</td>
<td>‘detrás de la casa’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>kavajara kavaji</td>
<td>‘quien va a caballo’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>kavaji?</td>
<td>‘ven!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>welajjá ~yalajjá</td>
<td>‘vamonos!’ (also welajjá)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>teqer wetéj</td>
<td>‘estás loco’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>?unjij</td>
<td>‘yo quiero’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>pehere</td>
<td>‘what did you say?’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIST 2

**“Judío”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Gloss in Harrington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>¿eltejáwam</td>
<td>‘todo’ = Kil. kuspi?l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>¿eltejáwam kiviji</td>
<td>‘traelo todo’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>quiviljé tfeso</td>
<td>‘así es (todo)’ = Kil. pawin toso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>tunal</td>
<td>‘el poniente’ = Kil. teknunjám</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>miwqéjá</td>
<td>‘voy orinar’ = Kil. ?épimáj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>qa?vilaw</td>
<td>‘hombre’ same as Kil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>kumej</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIST 3

**“Judío”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Gloss in Harrington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ha? kuqw</td>
<td>‘Judillo’ (sic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>matomi</td>
<td>‘Matomi Mtn.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>katʃiči</td>
<td>‘placename near Rosario’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>turwaki?</td>
<td>‘Torowaki Mtn.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>awi?</td>
<td>‘sobrino’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIST 4

**Rosareño**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Gloss in Harrington</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>iktat</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>hōtʃeja</td>
<td>‘fire’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>noku?</td>
<td>‘grandfather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>giwit</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>giwit kixaj</td>
<td>‘give me water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>giwat kijaj qotʃeja</td>
<td>no gloss given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
parallels will now be dealt with item by item beginning with List 1. *Tahi munji* ‘que es lo que quieres’ (‘what is it you want?’) should be compared to Kiliwa \[k^w\text{it}m\text{u}^\text{n}\epsilon^\text{y}\text{u}\] which, in its underlying form, is \(\sim^?\text{k}\text{w}\text{it}=m\text{m}=\text{w}\text{n}\text{i}^\text{y}=u^?=\) \((\text{some})\text{thing}=\text{obj. you want}=\text{Interrog}). The Kiliwa indefinite \(\sim^?\text{k}^\text{w}\text{it}\) comes from the Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?\text{k}^\text{w}^?=\text{c}\) (which varied with \(\sim^?=\text{c}\)). The syntactic and phonological correspondences are striking if we can accept “Judío” *tahi* as the phonetic manifestation of a hypothetical \(\sim^?=\text{(m)}/\) or \(\sim^?=\text{t}=(\text{m})/\) ‘thing’, thus allowing us to postulate a correspondence of “Judío” (i.e., Cochimi) \(\sim^?\text{c}/\) to Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?\text{c}\). The fact that in the previous correspondence it was Cochimi \(\sim^?=\text{t}/\) to Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?\text{c}\) is not too disturbing in view of the frequent alternation of these two segments in Yuman phonologies.

The verb in the above example is transparently like Yuman. It is nearly identical with Kiliwa \(/m=\text{w}\text{n}\text{i}^\text{y}=u^?=\). Item 7, *unjij* ‘quiero’ (‘I want’), fills out the paradigm providing the first person prefix \(\sim^?=\). We should not be skeptical of this morphological congruity between Cochimi and Yuman, for it has long been a matter of record that the two languages (families) share the same set of pronominal concordance prefixes on the verb, as can be ascertained from the eighteenth century paradigm for the verb ‘levantarse después de estar acostado’ (‘arise from a prone position’), ‘Yo’ ahuyip, ‘tu’ muhuayip, ‘aquel’ huayip and the imperative kahuayip corresponding to Yuman \(\sim^?=\) 1st person, \(/m?=\) 2nd person, \(/\emptyset/=\) (zero) 3rd person, \(/k?=\) 2nd person imperative (see Barco 1973:224).

The third and fourth items of List 1 contain the verb \(\ast^?\text{k}\text{v}^?=\text{a}\text{j}\text{i}\text{r}\) ‘trajo’ (‘bring’). The imperative is repeated with the same verb root in List 2. *Kiviji* ‘traelo’ (‘bring it’). Item 3 of this list, *quivilje jeso*, is of interest in that the informant volunteers a comparison with the Kiliwa equivalent which can be analyzed as \(/\text{p}=\text{a}=\text{w}\text{in}=\text{t}=\text{d}=\text{s}=\text{u}^?=\) \((\text{that}=\text{correct} \text{nomin}=\text{be} \text{Irreal}=\text{be})\) which also means ‘that’s the way it is’. Of particular significance is the correspondence of Cochimi \(\ast^?=\text{c}\), i.e., \(\sim^?=\text{c}\), to Kiliwa \(/t/\) ‘nominative’, which itself derives from Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?\text{c}\); this then points to a correspondence of “Judío” (=Cochimi) \(\sim^?=\text{c}\) to Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?=\text{c}\). The fact that in the previous correspondence it was Cochimi \(\sim^?=\text{t}/\) to Proto-Yuman \(\ast^?=\text{c}\) is not too disturbing in view of the frequent alternation of these two segments in Yuman phonologies.

The form glossed as ‘mi madre’ (‘my mother’), Item 5 *miwqéja*, though not cognate with any Yuman form, is of interest in that it is strongly corroborated as a legitimate Cochimi form by an almost identical form in Spanish orthography collected by Meigs from an old Kiliwa woman who gave the form jwey(a) ‘mother’ in the “Juigrepa” language (see Meigs 1939). The item \(\sim^?=\) ‘sobrino’ (‘nephew’) is virtually identical to the root in Kiliwa \(\sim^n\text{a}=n=?\text{w}^?=\text{w}^?=\text{i}\text{y}^?=\text{n}^?=\text{a}\text{r}\text{a}\text{p}\text{i}\) ‘brother’s child’, both differ in the same way from the possible cognates found in this Yuman etymology for ‘brother’s child’: Havasupai pi, Yavapai pi, Mohave marapi, Maricopa marapi, Yuma varapi, Cocopa pi.

The idiom ‘to urinate’, Item 6 *qa\#vilaw*, probably analyzable as \(/x^?=\text{a}^?=\text{v}^?=\text{l}\text{a}\text{w}\) is paralleled by Kiliwa \(/x^?=\text{a}^?=\text{p}=\text{m}=\text{y}\) (water medio-passive=void) ‘urinate’. Harrington’s “Judío” data again concur with Meigs’ “Juigrepa” in that both show \(\sim^?=\text{m}\text{a}\text{f}^?=\text{e}\text{j}\text{f}^?=\text{f}^?=\text{m}^?=\text{a}\text{n}\text{e}\text{l}\text{e}\text{p}\text{a}\text{i}\) for ‘man’. The same root
HARRINGTON'S COCHIMI VOCABULARIES

LIST 5

Borjino | Gloss
---|---
1. atasi | 'water'
2. kavaji | 'give me some water'
3. hitfe winej | 'there is no meat'
4. wal humari | 'there isn’t any'
5. webū | 'I'm going'
6. hwamul | 'go a little further'
7. pīkaraaj | 'corn'

is found to occur in List 3 in the name of one of the twin mountains turwami^ apparently known to Spanish-speakers in the folk-etymologized form of 'toro macho' ('male bull') matching turwaki^ 'toro hembra' ('female bull'). The final roots in these compounds are clearly cognate with the 'male' and 'female' roots to be found in Yuman. The latter is corroborated by Meigs' vocabulary, which shows uke 'woman'. Both roots occur in the Gabb list mentioned earlier as taken from San Borjino Cochimi, viz: wanyuami 'Mann (vir)', as well as ou-amí 'Gatte', along with wahki 'Weib (mulier)' (see Gabb 1886, 1892). In this context, we might mention the very term "Cochimi" as a possible candidate for comparison, perhaps denoting ‘men’, as do so many tribal names around the world, e.g., Deutsch, Teutones, Allemani, etc.

List 4 consists of forms for which no informant is given. It is possible that Harrington elicited these forms at the ex-mission of Rosario, for one of his hand-drawn maps indicates that he may have reached this point in his travels.

The first three items in this list are quite Yuman-like. The first, iktat ‘dog’, is reminiscent of Kiliwa /ʔ= that/ ‘dog’ which, unlike the cognate in other Yuman languages, comes not from *xat, but rather from a pre-Kiliwa variant *č=xat in which the root *xat ‘domesticated animal, pet’ (perhaps a predicate) is nominalized by the *č= prefix meaning ‘(some)thing,’ which has been mentioned above in relation to “Judio” tahi’(some)thing’.

The Kiliwa root /that/ ‘dog’ reflects a stage when the prefix *č= shifted to /t/ by a regular historical process prior to being reanalyzed as a root-initial consonant. The reverse is true of /čhaʔ/ ‘juice’, from pre-Kiliwa *č=xaʔ, in which the prefix was reanalyzed prior to the sound shift. This then is a second example of a Cochimi /t/ corresponding to a Proto-Yuman *č.

The 1867 Gabb list again offers Harrington’s materials some corroboration in that it shows etad= in the compound for ‘coyote’ and ethata for ‘dog’. The form for ‘wolf’ is given as tatkil which is almost identical with Kiliwa /ʔ= that=kil/ ‘wolf’. Gabb gives the Kiliwa word for ‘dog’ as iiat, so it is difficult to tell how much to make of the th spelling in the Cochimi transcription. It could mean aspiration nonetheless.

List 5 contains the Borjino vocabulary for which no informant is mentioned.

The first item, atasi ‘water’, can be compared with the Gabb transcription tasi ‘water’ and desi ‘drink’. This indicates an interesting ambivalence between a nominal and verbal function. Thus, we can consider the Borjino noun ‘water’ as perhaps cognate with Yuman *si- ‘drink’ and more particularly with Kiliwa /čhiʔ/, which shows the fossilized dummy-object prefix *č=, discussed previously, as a nominalizer. The Kiliwa form doubtless arose from an earlier *č=si- ‘drink (some)thing’.

This again is an instance of Cochimi /t/ corresponding to Proto-Yuman *č (see Mixco 1976).
It would seem that *kavaji* 'give me water' has been improperly glossed and should be simply 'drink' in the imperative, showing a striking cognation with Kiliwa */k=chi*/ 'drink!'.

The last item which can be commented on is *pikaraj* 'corn', which concurs with the Gabb form *pechkarai* 'corn'. Though it is not cognate with any Yuman form, it could be a compound consisting of a compound *pi~pech* and a nominalized */ray*. The lack of cognition is to be expected among non-agriculturists, for outside of the Colorado River region most Yuman-speaking peoples did not have corn.

To summarize, it can be said that these Harrington vocabularies greatly enhance the hypothesis of a historical contact or genetic relationship between Cochimi and Yuman (see Troike 1976). The fragmentary nature of these materials prevents a conclusive proof, yet remarkable similarities have been shown to exist between the two languages both lexically and syntactically. Though the sound correspondences have not been listed exhaustively, the brevity of these materials allows for numerous regular sound correspondences to be noted, in particular the correspondence of Cochimi /*t/ and /*/ to Yuman *č*

A heartening feature of these data is the fortuitous corroboration of certain lexical items by independent sources, such as Meigs and Gabb. This lends credibility to the Harrington materials as truly representative of Cochimi.

University of Utah, Salt Lake City

NOTES

1. The research upon which this paper is based was carried out in 1968 when the writer was a graduate student of linguistics working on a Research Fellowship under Professor Mary R. Haas at the University of California, Berkeley. The fellowship not only allowed the writer to dig out the Cochimi materials presented here but also kept his family from starving. Professor Haas deserves more than this small acknowledgement for her kindnesses. The Harrington materials are now being remitted to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.


3. The term ‘dialect’ is used advisedly here in view of the consensus of Jesuit opinion on this matter expressed by Miguel del Barco (1973) in the words “son una sola nación, porque son de una misma lengua... pero se va mudando según va mas al norte.”

4. The term "Judillo" is more properly spelled "Judío" which, in Spanish, would have the meaning ‘Jewish’. This term is not to be sought in either the historical or ethnographic literature on the Baja peninsula. It seems to be a folk etymology of the Kiliwa word for ‘south’ */x=wiy=q* pronounced [xuwiy=q] closely resembling certain pronunciations of "judio" [xuťyo]. The same Kiliwa word in a fuller compound */x=wiy=q ?=ipǎ:/ ‘south=people' gives rise to the term “Juigrepa” in Meigs (1939).

5. The expression *teger wetej* ‘estás loco’ ('you're crazy') is followed by a note: “Es Dom. [Domingueño] ‘no lo entiende’,” i.e., ‘it’s Domingüeño, he (I) doesn’t understand it’. The form in question does recur in a separate list of "Domingueño" words to be discussed in a forthcoming article.

6. While Matomi is given in Spanish as 'sierra del lloro', i.e., 'cry mountain', ‘tierra del lloro’ or ‘cry land’ would seem to be more appropriate in view of the word ‘land’ */mat*/, which seems to be the first element in the compound *mat-mi* 'land= cry'. The other two mountains in this list, "Torowami" and "Torowaki," are shown on Harrington's map to lie on either side of the road to El Marmól from the coast. They cannot be located in standard maps of this region.

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