

ABSTRACTS

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ALL-CONFERENCE SYMPOSIUM:

THE CURRENT STATUS OF GREAT BASIN ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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INDIAN ADMINISTRATION AND ACCULTURATION IN THE GREAT BASIN

by Y. T. Witherspoon

The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact which Bureau of Indian Affairs administrative policies and actions have had upon the acculturation of the various Great Basin Indian groups. The materials are organized in the following way. A very general, theoretical framework dealing with the usual ideas about acculturation is found in the first part of the paper. The second area dealt with is a definition of administration and administrative policy as it is used in the rest of the paper.

The definition of administrative policy is not always easy. For example, at the moment the termination of Indian tribes from Federal supervision remains the explicitly stated policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the intent of Congress. There is general agreement, however, both amongst the Bureau of Indian Affairs and congressional leaders, that this policy will not be vigorously implemented. What is the policy then remains a matter of interpretation.

A second area of difficulty that is immediately apparent is that administrative policies, even though clearly stated at the Federal level, may be quite differently interpreted at the area or reservation level. One administrator may vigorously push an administrative policy whereas another may choose to pretty largely ignore it.

The impact of administrative policy varies tremendously at all levels both through the interpretation of the policy and the implementation of the policy. An analysis of the impact of administration upon culture change in the Great Basin entails the description of policy as formulated by the Congress, and the interpretation and implementation of that policy at the Federal level, the area level, and the reservation level.

Factors that are important in the explanation of differences in the impact of policies must be sought in (a) the personalities of specific administrators, (b) the interpretation which administrators make of policy, (c) the characterization of the properties of each specific culture, (d) the nature of the contact situation (that is, the contact situation between administrator and the group), (e) the analysis of the relationships established between the administrators and the group, and (f) the study of the results of these relationships.

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Still another area of useful concepts is to be found in a recent article by Frank in which he proposes three ideal types of administrative organization which are distinguished by the degree of definition of their administrative roles and sets of roles. The three types are (1) under-defined in which role expectations of administrative behavior are not well spelled out; (2) well-defined in which administrative roles are explicitly and coherently defined, and (3) over-defined in which role expectations cannot be satisfied by role incumbents.

Data presented are made up of two general classes. The first presented is the ethnological data available on specific Indian groups. The second is information that is available concerning administrative policy and the various ways in which these policies have been implemented by the various administrators involved.

The final part of the paper is made up of an effort to see, utilizing both comparative and functional methods, what has been the relationship between administration and the amount and kind of acculturation that has taken place.

#### ETHNOHISTORY IN THE GREAT BASIN

by Carling Malouf

The Great Basin in the western United States was one of its last major geographical areas to be settled by Europeans. It is an area of low economic potential with few useable resources, poor transportation, and consequently maintained with a low population density. Favorable resources alone, of course do not necessarily insure a greater population or an increase in the complexity of a civilization. The Great Basin, as Julian Steward has stressed, was removed from at least three major centers of culture in western North America--the Great Plains, the Southwest, and the Northwest. The implications are that technological advances made in these cultural centers had difficulty in diffusing to the Basin. Actually, being at the crossroads of three great areas could have been advantageous since diffusion from three areas would bring that many more ideas into the Basin upon which a civilization could advance, but a dearth of resources served to frustrate this process.

The ethnohistory of the Great Basin can be divided into several phases:

- (1) Aboriginal. (In remote times the climate, at times, could have been different than it was more recently. At any rate, the cultural, linguistic, and physical factors involved in dispersing populations from out of the Great Basin toward adjoining areas will be discussed in this section.)
- (2) Trappers and explorers. (For example, Jedediah Smith, Zenas Leonard, and others. J. C. Fremont traversed the country during the early 1840's. It was a country still seldom traveled by Europeans. The Old Spanish Trail, on the south side of the Basin, was used by Spanish-Americans until the 1850's.)

(3) Mormon period. (The Mormons settled the eastern part of the Basin along the Wasatch Mountains and extended their influence southward. Early they crossed the Basin but did very little settling in it. Brigham Young was Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the Basin. Gold discovered in California brought in masses of settlers to this coastal area and they spilled over the Sierra Nevada mountains toward the east. So, the settlement of the western portion of the Basin was from west to east. The Indians were usually ignored or only given cursory attention by government officials. Routes of transportation firmed with stage stations, telegraph systems, the pony express, and finally the railroad. These, however, still passed along only on the thoroughfares earlier discovered. Mormons gradually withdrew eastward to Utah and their influence waned.)

(4) Miners and Ranches. (Reservations for Indians in the Great Basin were scarce. Instead, many of the Indians worked for ranchers or in mining communities. This, of course, affected the acculturation of the Great Basin Indians and perpetuated their individualism. Many were educated, but they had little opportunity to learn how to live in large groups. In some sections whites settled so recently that several Indians interviewed during the 1930's could remember seeing the first whitemen.)

(5) Government influence. (This came strongest after the 1930's. Even so, the Indian Reorganization Act was accepted years after many other tribes elsewhere in the United States had accepted it. Individualism is still strong on Shoshoni and Paiute reservations. The same subsistence or geographical factors which caused Indians to leave the Basin in prehistoric times affects the Indians today. There is still a migration outward.)

There was a tendency, thus, for people in prehistoric times and even in recent times to emanate from the Great Basin. (This principle of emanation will become the center of discussion at this point in the paper.) Perhaps archaeologists, too, should consider this principle when interpreting their data in terms of culture centers, migrations, and connections. Ideas emanate from a culture center. People emanate from areas of low subsistence potential.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANIPULATION IN GREAT BASIN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

by James F. Downs

Since the appearance of Julian Steward's work on Basin-Plateau Socio-Political Groups (1938) the peoples of the Great Basin have been considered unequivocally as representative of the hunting-gathering type of society along with the Yahgan and Ona of Tierra Del Fuego, the Bushmen of South Africa, the Australian aborigines and others living on the narrow edge of survival through a direct exploitation of the environment in which they live. So frequently are the various Basin Groups viewed in this typological light that we tend to overlook the numerous departures from the type which are to be

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found in the Great Basin area. The irrigation of wild plants in the Owens Valley is of course remembered and often tentatively suggested as an illustration of the evolution of agriculture (or at least the social consequences of the evolution of agriculture). On the other hand, there is considerable evidence provided by Steward himself and confirmed and elaborated by Treganza (1956) to suggest that this practice was borrowed from early white settlers. Aside from this particular discussion, the numerous other variations on the hunting-gathering theme tend to be obscured by the typological image of the purely exploitive and opportunistic nature of this type of economy.

This paper will be devoted to illustrating other practices which do not generally conform to the accepted picture. To avoid involvement in the evolution or diffusion problem, the time level under consideration will be post-Columbia or rather mid to late 19th century.

We will examine techniques in hunting, fishing, and gathering which went beyond the mere exploitation of natural conditions and were, in fact, manipulations of the environment to increase, improve, or extend the food which might be obtained. Among the practices we will examine will be the keeping of antelope in the corral for periods, diversion of streams, planting of wild seeds, irrigation of wild plants, burning to increase plant growth, keeping the animals and birds for food, ceremony or pleasure. The paper will develop the argument that the Basin represents the extension of notions of domestication of plants and animals diffused from the post-1678 Southwest and reinforced by the appearance of Whites in the Basin. Variations will be examined in light of possible sources of borrowing, variations of environment and purely hunting and gathering practices which might operate to minimize or alternatively to encourage the borrowing of certain practices.

Steward, Julian

1938 Basin Plateau Aboriginal Socio-Political Groups.

Treganza, Adan

1956 Horticulture with Irrigation among the Great Basin Paiute: An Example of Stimulus Diffusion and Cultural Survival, in Papers of the Third Great Basin Archeological Conference. University of Utah Anthropological Papers, no. 26.

## A REVIEW OF GREAT BASIN KINSHIP AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

by Don D. Fowler

The paper will consist of two parts. First there will be a review of substantive kinship studies in the Great Basin area. This will be essentially a survey of adequate data: for which groups are there schedules of kin terms and descriptions of kinship systems, kin-based behavior, etc. For which groups are data needed?

The second part of the paper will be a discussion of theoretical analyses of Basin sociopolitical organization, using as a springboard Steward's independent family, patrilineal band, and composite band, together with Service's critique of these models. It will be suggested that alternate models of Great Basin social organization must take into account the apparent widespread networks of affinal ties, and the importance of "task groups"--temporary, eclectic groups functioning to perform a given task, then dissolving.

## ANTHROPOLOGICAL LINGUISTICS IN THE GREAT BASIN

by Wick R. Miller

### Historical

The Basin is an area of relative linguistic uniformity. Most of the languages belong to the Numic branch of Uto-Aztecan, a language family that is spread from southern Idaho to southern Idaho to southern Mexico. Historical linguistic work on this family started in the last century, but we can date the start of systematic research with the appearance of Sapir's work on Southern Paiute and Nahuatl. Since then others (Whorf, Mason, Kroeber, Hale and Voegelin) have worked with historical Uto-Aztecan linguistics, both in the reconstruction of the proto-language and in the classification of the family. The basic framework for historical studies of Uto-Aztecan is well established, but the field could hardly be characterized as well picked over. The classification within the Numic branch is well worked out, but there has been very little comparative linguistic research specifically within this branch.

In order to interpret the history of the Uto-Aztecan languages and Uto-Aztecan peoples, it is necessary to place the study in the wider framework of Western American, in particular the area of Western American where the Desert Culture was found, since the Great Basin was part of this larger area. In particular the languages of the Pueblo Southwest and of California will be considered.

A certain amount of attention must be given to methodology. How is one to interpret the linguistic and nonlinguistic evidence in arriving at historical conclusions? Most of the methods that can be used are treated by Sapir in his Time Perspective article. It is necessary to know how far one can go in making historical statements, and to know when well grounded guessing turns into fanciful guessing. It is necessary to know what underlying assumptions are made about linguistic and cultural processes before attempting historical interpretations.

W. W. Taylor (Archaeology and Language in Western North America, American Antiquity 1961) attempted to correlate the archaeological and linguistic evidence for western America. His treatment starts with the first inhabitants so that the period of time under consideration is over 10,000 years. Sydney Lamb (Linguistic Prehistory in the Great Basin, International Journal of American Linguistics 1958) has made a more modest attempt in studying the prehistory of the Basin, considering only linguistic evidence,

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and only the Numic branch of Uto-Aztecan. Kimball Romney (The Genetic Model of Uto-Aztecan Time Perspective, Davidson Journal of Anthropology, 1957) has used lexical evidence rather than historical linguistic evidence, in an attempt to specify some of the cultural inventory of the proto group and to learn something about the nature and place of the original homeland.

#### The Ethnographic Present

There has been a fair amount of descriptive linguistic work on the languages of the Basin. There is still much that could be done, but the Basin cannot be considered a linguistically unknown area. But the anthropological linguistic work is very scanty. Most of my remarks, therefore, will concern research work that can and should be done rather than what has been done.

Most of the work done on dialects has been with sedentary, socially stratified groups, such as those found in Western Europe. There has been no work, as far as I know, with unstratified seminomadic groups, such as were found in the Basin. Most of what we know about dialects applies to socially complex and sedentary groups, and cannot be applied to other kinds of people. Yet we know that dialects are universally found, and that there were dialect differences in the languages of the Basin. What was the nature of these dialects? We would expect that the kind of life led by the Basin groups--seminomadic, loose band organization, intermarriage with surrounding families so as to form a net or interrelationships throughout the whole area, low population density, no area of high prestige--would be reflected in the formation of dialect differences. It may be too late to make a detailed study, but I suspect that much interesting information could be recovered.

What were the attitudes about language socialization? Was baby talk used? What were the attitudes about speaking? Was skilled oratory valued? How much were interpersonal relationships conducted by linguistic means, how much by nonlinguistic means? Was bilingualism common, was it valued? Were there proper ways of speaking in certain kinds of situations? Was there much "linguistic specialization," the use of certain styles by certain people, e.g. shamans?

Most of these questions cannot be answered yet, and perhaps some of them can never be answered, at least not in full since the aboriginal social groups no longer exist.

#### The Present Day Language Situation

Most of the questions posed in the preceding section can be asked about the existing linguistic situation. Clearly, the more we know about the aboriginal situation the better we can interpret the present situation. For example, we can best study the dialect mixture that is taking place on reservations when we know what the original dialects were like.

There is, in addition, the study of linguistic acculturation, bilingualism, language replacement, and language extinction. The English used by the Indians should also be studied. What dialect of English is used, what styles are available to the speakers? Does English serve the same functions for the Indians as for us, or does it serve the same functions as the aboriginal languages?

## THE GEOGRAPHIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE DESERT CULTURE

by Earl H. Swanson, Jr.

Archaeological attention in the Great Basin has been focused in recent years by the concept of the Desert Culture. This culture type has been viewed as central to the Great Basin, and as the appropriate economic and social foundation for the development of agriculture in the American Southwest. The central character of the type is made clear by the interpretation of the Northern Shoshoni as a late consequence of population movement out of the Great Basin.

Recent studies in eastern Idaho permit the development of a different interpretation of the culture history of the Great Basin. Continuity of culture type is as clear in the territory of the Northern Shoshoni as it is among the more centrally located cultures of the Great Basin proper. The culture is founded on an economy appropriate to the environment of grassland and woodland in which it is found, and is clearly a culture well suited to big game hunting.

Some studies in plant ecology indicate that the Great Basin belongs to a Rocky Mountain ecological system marked, among other things, by grassland and woodland. Genetic relations at a subspecific level are found through the region and these provide a biotic unity consistent with the physiography. I would suggest that the ecological conditions found on the margins of the Great Basin are representative of initial postglacial environments. Secondly, I would suggest that the culture type of the non-horse Northern Shoshoni on the margins of the Great Basin is a better model for initial postglacial cultures in the Great Basin than is the Desert Culture. Under these circumstances, Desert Culture would appear as a secondary or marginal type resulting from adaptation to the development of desert conditions about 5,000 B. C.

## NOTES ON TECHNOLOGY WITH REFERENCE TO THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE GREAT BASIN

by Wilbur Davis

The basic problem orientation of this paper is the determination of intra-Great Basin cultural relationships through time. The problems discussed concern refinements of analytic methods and strategies which would facilitate attacks on the basic problem

Archaeological evidence to date supports the hypothesis that the Great Basin region of internal drainage may be subdivided into at least six areas of relatively distinct, but not necessarily independent, internal culture sequences which had certainly started by 7,000 B. C., and quite probably much earlier. Intra-Basin areas are recognized which appear to coincide with distinctive physiographic subregions; these are: (1) the Lahonton Basin; (2) the Bonneville Basin; (3) the southern Nevada-California basin complex; (4) the Oregon-Idaho northern periphery; (5) the eastern Rocky Mountain transhumance belt; and (6) the western Sierra Nevada transhumance belt.

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Comparisons based on technological analyses of archaeological assemblages indicate that the cultures within the above areas have undergone differential processes of development, acculturation, or succession through time. The culture chronologies are yet incomplete and fragmentary and it is still impossible to devise an accurate historical model of intra-Basin cultural relationships. The best that can be done is a very generalized presentation of the various culture sequences indicated by the published data. Workers in the Bonneville area have provided the most complete culture chronology for a portion of the Basin. Similar chronologies encompassing the earliest finds to the ethnographic present are urgently required for the remainder of the region.

Building of areal historical models for comparative purposes requires comprehensive study of archaeological assemblages through application of uniform analytic methods. Archaeological reports are far from uniform in presentation. It is this lack of uniformity which makes proper study of archaeological components and phases within the Great Basin extremely difficult. Areal syntheses depend upon recognition and description of dynamic processes, and these analyses require full reporting of manufacturing patterns and associations as well as typologies and cultural features.

Full understanding of intra-Basin culture relationships await synthesizing studies which are hampered by the reasons given above. Further, we have no over-all pictures of the status of Great Basin anthropological research to date. It is proposed as an initial step that an inventory, using uniform, explicit recording methods, be made covering description, illustration, and provenience documentation of ethnographic and archaeological collections, published and unpublished, accompanied by a listing of the institutions housing the materials and of publication sources. The inventory would hopefully lead to compilation of a comprehensive source-book of Great Basin anthropological materials which would serve as a convenient reference for future investigations.

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